



# A Systematic Policy Review of Early Childhood Development and Peacebuilding in fourteen Conflict-affected and Post-conflict countries

FINAL REPORT

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## Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	3
What Does The Systematic Policy Review Show? .....	3
Conclusions .....	7
Implications .....	7
INTRODUCTION .....	9
Structure of the Report .....	9
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Context .....	10
SECTION 1: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK.....	11
Initial Conceptual Framework .....	11
New Conceptual Framework .....	12
Conceptual analysis of children's role in policy discourse .....	2
Conceptual analysis of peacebuilding and fragility .....	2
An empirical analysis of peacebuilding interventions .....	2
Transition Theory.....	3
Early Childhood Development, Conflict and Peacebuilding .....	4
SECTION 2: DESIGN AND METHODS .....	4
Target Countries .....	5
Definitions.....	6
Research Design.....	10
Methodology .....	11
Methods.....	11
SECTION 3 FINDINGS: FOURTEEN CONFLICT AFFECTED COUNTRIES .....	16
Burundi .....	17
Chad .....	21
Côte d'Ivoire .....	25
Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).....	29
Ethiopia .....	33
Liberia .....	38
Myanmar .....	43
Pakistan .....	47
State of Palestine.....	52
Sierra Leone .....	57
Somalia .....	63
South Sudan.....	68
Uganda.....	74
Yemen.....	78

SECTION 4 FINDINGS: EXEMPLARS AND OPPORTUNITIES .....	83
Enhancing children’s participatory role in policy .....	83
Leveraging early childhood development as a cross-cutting policy issue for peacebuilding.....	84
Building alliances between early childhood development and peacebuilding .....	84
Improving policy implementation, monitoring and evaluation .....	85
Strengthening the role of children and families.....	86
SECTION 5 FINDINGS: POLICY ALIGNMENT WITH RESEARCH KNOWLEDGE ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE..	88
Absence, Appropriation and Amplification of Youth Voice.....	88
Applying a gender lens to youth agency .....	90
Responding to Specific Youth Constituencies .....	91
Work-related Programme Interventions.....	91
Education for Citizenship and Political Participation.....	93
History education .....	93
Sports interventions .....	93
Arts interventions .....	93
Intergroup contact interventions .....	94
Interfaith interventions .....	95
SECTION 6 SYNTHESIS OF FINDINGS: CHILDREN’S AGENCY AND POLICIES FOR PEACEBUILDING .....	96
A synthesis matrix.....	96
A new conceptual framework and synthesis of findings.....	105
SECTION 7 DISCUSSION.....	107
Summary of Findings .....	107
Strengths and Limitations.....	108
The wider literature.....	108
SECTION 8 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	110
Conclusions.....	110
Implications .....	110
SECTION 9: REFERENCES .....	112
References to policy documents analysed .....	112
Other references .....	115
APPENDIX 1: PRELIMINARY DATABASE SEARCH.....	124
APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE TO UNICEF COUNTRY OFFICES .....	148
APPENDIX 3: CODING TOOL.....	157
APPENDIX 4: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE.....	166
APPENDIX 5: RESEARCH EVIDENCE ABOUT YOUTH AGENCY, PEACEBUILDING AND EDUCATION .....	168

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Conflict and fragile conditions that arise as a result of adversities such as civil wars, deprivation and emergency situations invariably compromise the lives of children. This research is concerned with a major issue; that of early childhood development and peacebuilding at a policy level in conflict-affected and post-conflict countries. The subject of peacebuilding features strongly on the international agenda. In 1996, the United Nations published an 'Inventory of Post-Conflict Peacebuilding Activities' that featured the varied peacebuilding activities which have been developed to aid conflict-affected countries in their recovery (United Nations 1996). The Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, asserted that '[a]chieving sustainable peace has long been a priority for the United Nations', and the international community has an important responsibility to address the challenges that arise in the aftermath of conflict, to 'better support countries in making an irreversible transition from war to peace.' (United Nations Peacebuilding Office 2010, p2). It is also notable that 'Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions' was set as the 16th goal of the United Nations Global Goals for sustainable development 2015 (United Nations 2015).

Informed by this international context, this report presents the findings of a systematic review of early childhood development and peacebuilding policies across fourteen conflict-affected and post-conflict countries. The study sought to map existing national-level policies covering a range of cross-sectors: ECD, peacebuilding and social welfare policies. It built on extant research which recognises the enormous harm caused by conflict on children at various levels of society and to provide an evidence-based review of how children are positioned in policy development. To this end, the research aimed to review ECD policies for components relevant to the promotion of peacebuilding and conversely, to review peacebuilding policies for evidence of potential links with young children and ECD.

It did this by constructing a multilevel conceptual framework to understand children's potential roles in peacebuilding. It then considered the policies of each country in depth and presented the exemplars and opportunities for children in peacebuilding emerging from that analysis. This was followed by a comparison of what is known from research about young people's role in peacebuilding. Finally it synthesised the findings from all this work to draw out the links between how childhood is constructed in national policies and their existing or potential roles in peacebuilding predicted by the conceptual framework

### [What Does The Systematic Policy Review Show?](#)

This systematic review provided a close examination of national documentation in order to determine the ways in which children are positioned in policy. It is based on the premise that how a society constructs the notion of children and childhood is fundamentally implicated in the policies and practices of that society. Central to the study is the idea that children, even from a young age, have a role in determining their own lives and can be active agents in shaping the world around them including peacebuilding processes and social outcomes. As such, the policy opportunities for young children are paramount to the promotion of peacebuilding in conflict-affected states.

Overall, the systematic review showed that even though it is encouraging that several governments have indicated intent to promote the importance of children, early childhood development and the principles of peacebuilding, and have done so in writing in national policy discourses, there is limited evidence of children's participation in peacebuilding as agents of change. It is also not clear whether governmental aspirations exemplified in policy rhetoric are realised in practice. However, the research showed that recognising a multilevel, ecological model of determinants of peace within families, communities and wider societies, is important in supporting early childhood development and enhancing children's lives. Influencing factors that promote young children's development, and

which have the potential to contribute to a wider social justice and equality agenda include the role of parents, families, and communities, and the role they play in fostering effective environments for children; that is, the dispositions that are conducive to building resilience and social cohesion. This suggests that for children living in conflict and adverse situations, policies that encourage positive social and familial influences can help to promote and facilitate young children's developmental trajectory, with added social value. There is therefore a need to identify the policy opportunities for linking early childhood and peacebuilding at the multiple levels of the ecology of children's lives. A key implication from the findings of this study is that policy development should seek to promote strategies that support early childhood development and also work to evidence and improve the impact of interventions. The following key messages have emerged:

#### Leveraging early childhood development as a cross-cutting policy issue for peacebuilding

1. The development of early childhood development policies is a complex area that is located within a number of policy domains. It is concerned not only with children's care and early education, but also maternal and child health, nutrition, gender opportunities, social welfare and protection, social and economic equity, and poverty issues.
2. As such, children and early childhood development are often part of much wider policy agendas (eg national development, primary education, health promotion, reintegration of displaced persons). The policy goals for early childhood development are broader than simply developing and structuring services for young children but are also intrinsically linked with other larger social agendas such as tackling poverty, promoting universal primary education, improving educational standards, and establishing national security and development in post-conflict states.
3. Given the multi-sectoral nature of early childhood development and the diverse policy approaches undertaken by different governments, there are opportunities to be harnesses when thinking beyond policy dichotomies (eg early childhood development vs peacebuilding, early childhood vs primary education, children vs young people) but to undertake a polyphonic and multi-dimensional perspective of early childhood development as a cross-cutting issue, and the "added value" of aligning ECD and peacebuilding across sectors and multidisciplinary fields.
4. The majority of policies reviewed offer clear coverage of primary, youth and at times adult education. However, the focus on children 0 to 8 years is comparatively limited. Many of the policies cited do not or only marginally reflect early childhood development considerations related to 0 to 8 year olds especially as the findings show the majority of policies do not tend to disaggregate according to age group in terms of early or later childhood.
5. Protecting children's rights to education, social protection and welfare in conflict-affected countries has the potential to mediate the negative impacts of conflict and provide children with the skills, knowledge and dispositions that they need to work towards reconciliation. It is therefore important that early childhood development is appropriately prioritised as a key national agenda, especially for countries where targeted peacebuilding and/or early childhood policies are notably absent.

#### Enhancing children's participatory role in policy

6. The role and positioning of children in the policies are generally framed in a rights-based approach that is underpinned by the principles of the United Nations Convention on the

Rights of the Child (UNCRC), and simultaneously as 'subjects of concern' facing particular vulnerabilities and in need of special care and protection.

7. However, less discernible are national policies with clear intent which promote the participatory role and agency of children as having the potential to contribute to social change. For example, Ethiopia's 'Education Sector Development Program IV. [Ethiopia 2010a], recognises children as 'agents of change' (p47) within their own homes, schools and communities in the promotion of basic services in water sanitation & hygiene (WASH), and simultaneously, children's role as active learners with the agency to engage in a rich learning environment as exemplified through the Ethiopian Pastoralist Area Education Strategy [Ethiopia 2009]. However, such policy leanings that construct the role of children as influencers of social change, and contributing to national development in a post-conflict society is not consistently evidenced across the policies.

#### Building alliances between early childhood development and peacebuilding

8. There are opportunities for peacebuilding across the policies, as evident through the articulation of educational programmes, schemes, training curricula, and strategic plans. However, the links between early childhood development and peacebuilding are less strong.
9. Policies which address early childhood and peacebuilding are at times exemplified within a rhetoric of promoting nation-building and national solidarity in the government's attempts to reconcile the country's history of conflict and to create a cohesive and peaceful society. In Myanmar, Yemen and State of Palestine for example, the national policies reflect strong statements of enhancing national identity and solidarity. The Education Act (2012) in South Sudan [South Sudan 2012b] is another example which stipulates the role of education in promoting peace and social integration through national patriotism, respect and tolerance for other cultures and traditions.
10. Focusing on early childhood programmes which seek to enhance the educational opportunities for marginalized populations has the potential to enhance children's welfare and dispositions for further the peacebuilding and social cohesion agenda. For example, The Sierra Leone Education Sector Plan 2014 - 2018 'Learning to Succeed' [Sierra Leone] suggests the need to enhance the quality of early childhood provisions and develop cost-effective community-based pre-school models, particularly for the most vulnerable communities in order to build a more equitable and cohesive society.

#### Strengthening the role of children and families

11. A vital link in the ecological model of early childhood development is the relationship between children and families. When this is nurtured in an environment of support, respect, and recognition of children's rights to a quality life, children are more likely to prosper.
12. The findings of the review suggest the potential role of early childhood development in contributing indirectly to a more socially cohesive society through leveraging key areas, such as the strengthening of relationships between children and families, promoting the primary role of families in supporting early childhood education and embedding the central role of early childhood education at the level of family and community.

13. Supporting the (re)integration of internally displaced children and families in local communities who have been severely affected by conflict may help to address issues of inequality and social dissonance. For example, the policy review on Yemen shows that addressing children's reintegration and access to basic services such education and social protection can contribute positively to building a more cohesive society.
14. Prioritising early childhood education through the primary role of parents and families, and strengthening their beliefs in the value of early education can improve children's learning opportunities and later trajectory, and contribute indirectly to enhancing social equality. For example, the review of policies in Sierra Leone suggests that cultural constraints including early marriages and encouraging parents to appreciate the value of education for girls can be addressed at an early stage through emphasising the important role of early childhood education in the family and community.

#### Improving policy implementation, monitoring and evaluation

15. Policy rhetoric in the promotion of early childhood development and peacebuilding does not automatically translate to policy implementation. In countries where there is limited evidence or an absence of monitoring and evaluation systems, there are inevitable disparities between policy aspirations and actions, and evidence of what needs to be done to achieve those aspirations. It is difficult within the scope of the review to ascertain the impact of policy on the lives of children and families.
16. The policies show varying levels of government intent, aspiration, and in some cases, actions in the promotion of early childhood development and peacebuilding. More accurate and comprehensive data in regards to the monitoring and implementation of these policies is needed.

#### Common challenges and opportunities

17. Common underlying conflict drivers across all fourteen countries include deep-seated political, ethnic and religious divisions. To address these drivers, prioritisation of conflict-sensitive and culturally-sensitive early childhood education with an emphasis on building inter-ethnic understanding and trust from an early age, as well as developing resilience, has the potential to contribute favourably to social cohesion at a local and national level.
18. Some countries recognise young people, and less often young children, as active agents contributing to more cohesive societies in a political environment conducive to their involvement in developing and implementing social policies. These countries might be fruitful settings for peacebuilding programmes with children. As these predictions are made on the basis of policies written in the past, there is an opportunity to test the validity of the model by investigating the outcomes of peacebuilding programmes established in these settings.
19. Other countries lack the inclusive approaches to policy development and implementation that would be expected in more cohesive societies. Where adults' roles are limited, the role for young people and children is more so. Peacebuilding programmes with children are premature as desirable outcomes in these circumstances are unlikely to be far reaching or



sustained. Prior change is required at a national level, to develop more participatory approach, whereby adults, young people and children contribute to more cohesive societies in a political environment that is conducive to their involvement in developing and implementing peacebuilding and social policies.

## Conclusions

The overall purpose of this study is to provide a clear analysis of national policies to investigate how children are positioned in policies and their development. The research aimed to review ECD policies for components relevant to the promotion of peacebuilding and conversely, to review peacebuilding policies for evidence of potential links with young children and ECD. Overall, the findings show distinct 'policy gaps' across all fourteen countries in the recognition of the importance of early childhood development. There are also limited linkages in the policy discourses between early childhood development and peacebuilding. Yet, there is some discernible empirical and policy evidence which show the effectiveness of early childhood development and education in promoting positive changes in young children's lives and their potential contributions to social cohesion and reconciliation in conflict-affected states. The review therefore shows compelling reasons for increased prioritisation of the early years and ECD in policy development in the promotion of peacebuilding.

This will then need to be bolstered by enhancement of structural reforms and services at national level to achieve the policy aims and objectives, in order that policy aspirations or rhetoric can be effectively translated to policy implementation and actual practice. It is important that children and early childhood development are appropriately prioritised as the first key step to creating a culture of peace for future generations.

## Implications

The implications of this study have been drawn out for different users in order to guide the future development of policy and practice, as well as research. Governments can directly influence the role and participation of children in conflict-affected and post-conflict countries through clear, coherent policies and social reform agendas. The implementation of systematically monitored and evaluation policies with the support of stable and coordinated governance can also have a direct influence on programmatic practices on the ground, for example through the work of ECD practitioners and professionals in ensuring that young children and families play a central role in promoting sustainable peace and rebuilding civil society.

### *Implications for policy and practice*

1. Move early childhood development and peacebuilding up the policy ladder within a wider context of public participation in policy development and implementation.
2. Leverage early childhood development to promote community building and intergroup social cohesion in the reconciliation process.
3. Develop clear national policies and time-bound policy strategies that focus on early childhood development and peacebuilding.
4. Strengthen policies and programmes that support the integral role of young children and families in bringing about reconciliation and breaking the cycle of intergenerational conflict.

5. Strengthen policies and programmes that enable the participation and inclusion of young children and families in peacebuilding.
6. Strengthen accurate and comprehensive data on policy monitoring and implementation to promote more effective policy-making.
7. Develop a position paper with the aim of informing practice that recognises the potential role and rights of children in contributing to the peacebuilding process as active social agents to bring about transformative change in society.

*Implications for research*

8. Further research into early childhood and peacebuilding could examine the extent of policy implementation and the impact of policies at a national level in contributing to social cohesion and reconciliation. Well-designed outcome evaluations could be used to address questions as to whether policy development and interventions have contributed to social transformation and the extent to which policies and programme interventions work or do not work.
9. Research into children's perspectives and their voices in the peacebuilding process – based on the premise that children are more than just vulnerable victims of conflict, but active agents with autonomy, rights and the potential to pro-actively participate and contribute to peacebuilding and social cohesion. For example, through participation in educational programmes that foster peaceful relations among family and community, building positive attitudes in preschool and school settings that value diversity and inclusion, and developing conflict resolution skills and dispositions that can in turn contribute to building peaceful and resilient communities.
10. Research into the relationship between children and families, and the associations with peacebuilding in early childhood.
11. Further investigation into the effectiveness of early childhood programmes and intervention strategies that promote social cohesion and peacebuilding.
12. Further research into the empirical evidence that connects early childhood development, conflict and peacebuilding.
13. For each focus within this research agenda, there is an opportunity for a contextual analysis that takes into account countries with and without an ethos of public participation in policy development and implementation.

## INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study is to identify potential links between early childhood development and peacebuilding, and the policy and research opportunities to enhance children's lives in conflict-affected states. The rationale for the study is informed by extant research which suggests that conflict environments negatively impact on early development and subsequent behaviour, and that this can in turn impede children in reaching their full potential. Scholars have recognised the complex, multilevel model of determinants that contribute to peace, particularly within the whole ecology of childhood at the level of families, communities and wider societies (Britto et al. 2014; Sagi-Schwartz 2012; O'Kane, Feinstein and Giertsen 2013). This model proposes that for children living in conflict and adverse situations, policies that encourage favourable social, familial and societal influences, can help to promote and facilitate young children's development and future trajectory, with potential for wider social benefits. There is therefore a need to seek empirical support for this model and identify the policy opportunities for linking early childhood and peacebuilding, taking into account the interconnectedness across the ecological levels as well as the changes and influences that occur within and across generations.

From a policy discourse, scholars have long recognized the value of policy and policy formulation as key factors in shaping and enabling social transformation (Wyszomirski 2013; Leven 1997; Hill 2000). Government ownership through the development of strong and coherent policies to promote national security, social, economic and political stability offers the best chance yet in the progress towards sustainable peace, particularly for the benefit of children and families. Simultaneously, there is increasing focus on the potential role of early childhood development for peacebuilding (Gervais 2004; Vestal A. and Jones N. 2004; Merav M. 2001; Leckman et al 2014). Central to the concern of many researchers is that children who are casualties in conflict situations suffer disproportionately from the effects of adversity (Vestal and Jones 2004; Watson 2008). The writer Watson (2008) states, 'In the aftermath of war, children are the group most likely to suffer the long-term consequences of, among other things, inadequate health care and insufficient access to education.' (36) The strengthening of national policy frameworks for children in conflict-affected countries is therefore expected not only to enhance the services for children and families but also to contribute positively to the stability of societies. Yet, while many countries have developed social sector policies in health, education, social protection and welfare that address children and families, what is unknown is the degree to which these policies address early childhood development or young children at all. As such, this evolving policy context offers compelling rationale to build a strong evidence-base to promote early childhood development, particularly given the importance of the early years in providing the foundations for later development.

### Structure of the Report

This report is divided into eight main sections. The first section provides a critical discussion of the theoretical and conceptual framework that have informed the study, based on the central idea of placing children at the centre of policy. Informed by extant research, it theorises the complex transitional process that countries undergo in the progress from conflict to sustainable peace, and the complex interactions between policy stakeholders and the wider social and economic environment. The second section introduces the research informing the aims, research questions, methodology and data analysis. It discusses the research design and approach, the key concepts underpinning the research, and draws attention to the distinct methodological dimensions - the meta-policy analysis adopted by the research team to produce an analytical and descriptive synthesis of the macro-level and contextual features of the policy process. The third, fourth and fifth sections present the findings of the review in relation to the fourteen countries and key policy highlights that have emerged from the analysis. The final sixth and seventh sections draw together a

synthesis of the findings and explores their implications with suggestions and recommendations in developing a future agenda for ECD and peacebuilding at the level of policy, research and practice.

### United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Context

Central to UNICEF's work is enabling children to live in safe and peaceful societies that are free of conflict and violence (UNICEF Mission Statement 2003; United Nations 1989). A central impetus of UNICEF's peacebuilding, education and advocacy agenda is to improve the quality of ECD and young children's lives by building capacity for more cohesive and peaceful societies (UNICEF Mission Statement 2003; United Nations 1989). To this end, the 'Learning for Peace' initiative presents a key milestone in the advocacy agenda, as a four-year Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy Programme developed through a partnership between UNICEF, the Government of the Netherlands, and the national governments of fourteen participating countries across East Asia and the Pacific, South Asia, the Middle East and North Africa, Eastern and Southern Africa, and West and Central Africa. Integral to the initiative is a cross-sectoral programme focusing on education and peacebuilding, with the overall goal of strengthening policies and practices in education for building sustainable peace (United Nations 2015). A key outcome of the programme and related to this study, is the generation of evidence-based knowledge to inform policy development and programming pertaining to education, conflict and peacebuilding.

The work of UNICEF through its multi-sectoral delivery of education, social inclusion, child protection, health and nutrition services demonstrates the pivotal role of ECD as a cross-cutting area in which multiple research areas and programmatic initiatives can serve to protect and enact children's universal rights to a safe and secure environment. UNICEF's and the United Nations stakeholders who are engaged in national peacebuilding policies recognise that conflict and adverse conditions have detrimental effects on multiple aspects of children's development, including child survival, gender equity, poverty reduction and access to universal education (UNICEF Mission Statement 2003; United Nations 2007; United Nations. Peacebuilding Support Office 2010). It is therefore vital and timely that concerted efforts are made at a national and international level to galvanise and involve governments to commit to long-term, sustainable investment in ECD and peacebuilding programmes, to positively impact on the lives of children and families in fragile states that are in the process of rebuilding social cohesion and reconciliation in society.

## SECTION 1: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

### Initial Conceptual Framework

The research was informed by an initial conceptual framework that was derived from earlier empirical research (Ang 2014). Figure 1 below illustrates the conceptual framework employed to present the research evidence on ‘Early Childhood and Peace Building in the Asia-Pacific Region’ (Ang 2014). Working closely with UNICEF EAPRO Education unit and various stakeholders, the study provided a comprehensive review of existing research into the relationship between ECD and peacebuilding in the Asia Pacific region, with a focus on five fragile, conflict-ridden states that were purposefully identified during the review – Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Timor-Leste, Myanmar and Nepal. The framework (Ang 2014) illustrates the arena for children’s development and social interaction: the child at the centre of their family, community, civil society and broader social, historical, cultural and economic environments. When this arena is coloured by adversity, fragmented societies respond with exclusive and competing efforts to secure improvements which leads to social injustice, inequality and conflict. An alternative inclusive and collaborative approach is characteristic of cohesive societies and peace building. (Ang 2014) identified the drive towards sustainable peace that consisted of advocating for peacebuilding, conceptualising peacebuilding, and intervening for peacebuilding.

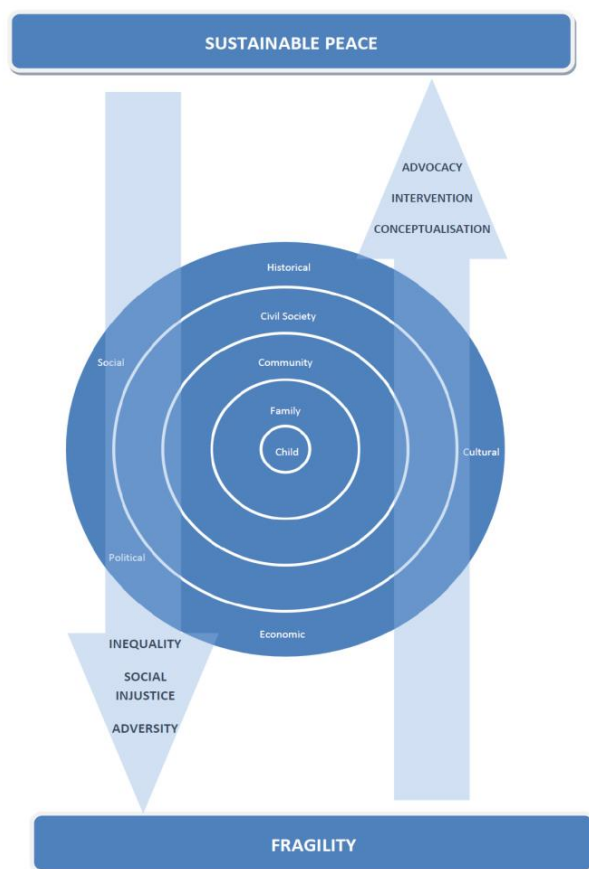


Figure 1: Initial conceptual framework for investigating children and peacebuilding

This initial conceptual framework (Ang 2014) encapsulated the key findings and main research dimensions of the field, having taken into account the many complex and overlapping factors that influence notions of ECD and peacebuilding in the Asia Pacific region. The framework offered a helpful starting point for policy analysis and provided a ready-made yet flexible typology to further inform the theoretical framing of this new study on a policy review of fourteen conflict and post-conflict countries spanning Africa, and South and East Asia. **Figure 1 Initial Conceptual Framework (Ang 2014)**

### New Conceptual Framework

A starting point of this research, and a key component of the new emergent conceptual framework, (Figure 2), is the idea of **placing children at the centre of policy**. This conceptual model has been informed by existing research which demonstrates the potential associations between ECD and peacebuilding, and the role of early childhood development in building socially cohesive and peaceful societies. (*The Lancet* 2007; 2013; Schnabel and Tabyshalieva 2013; Sagi-Schwartz 2012; National Institute Child Health Development (NICHD) Early Child Care Research Network 2005). There is research for instance, which suggests that human attitudes and personalities can significantly shape an individual's ability and willingness to build peaceful and reconciliation activities, and much can be learnt by exploring the conditions that lead to conflict, and how some children grow to become adults who are more or less willing to engage in conflict management and peacebuilding when living under extreme conditions of conflict and violence (Sagi-Schwartz 2012).

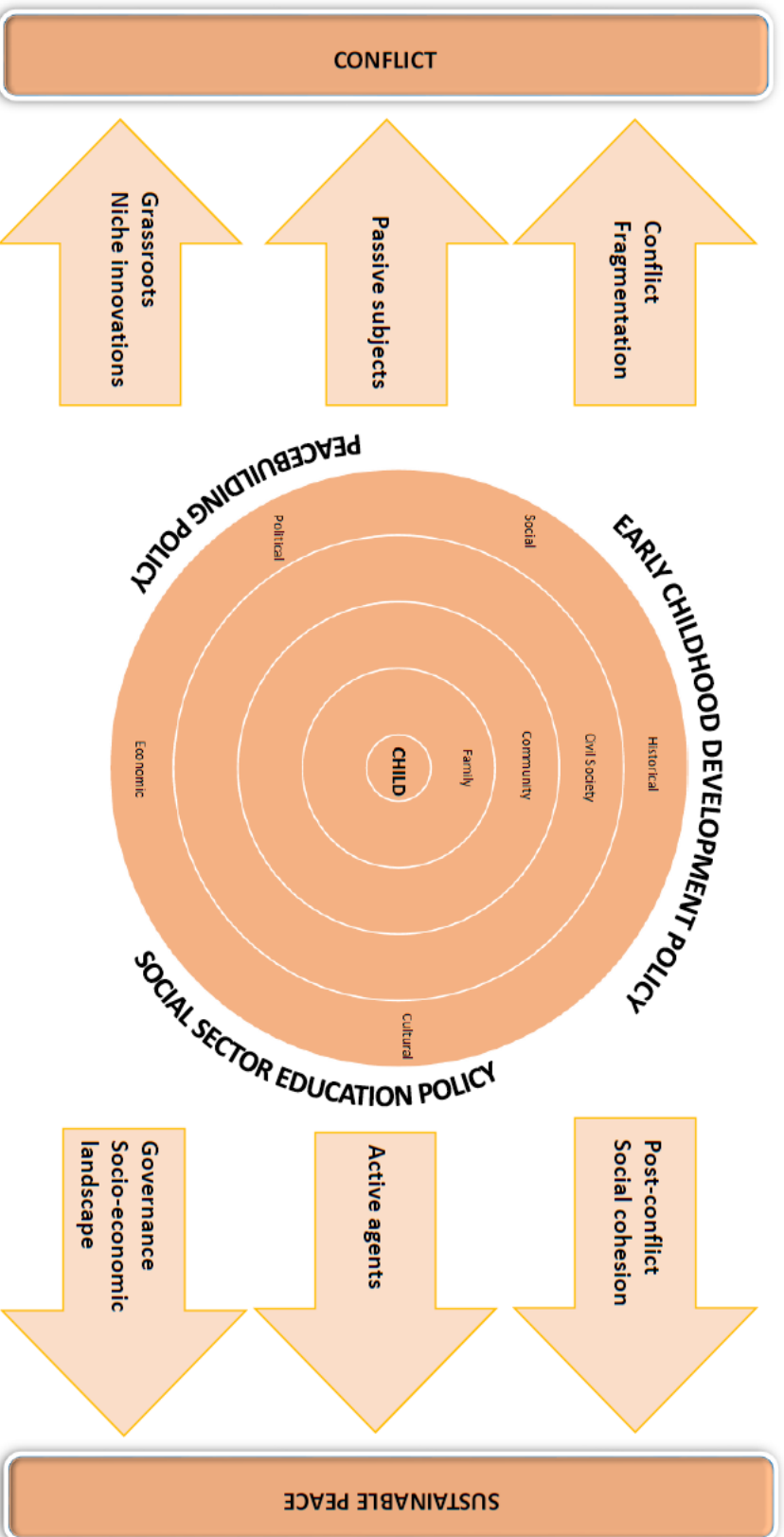
This study involving fourteen fragile states entails a critical policy analysis of policy-relevant documents for their **conceptual foundations** (e.g. children's position, rights and roles as social actors, citizens), **policy intervention components** (e.g. in-country policy-informed programmes or practice which build skills for children and families, strengthen social cohesion of communities or wider society), the **social, cultural and political contexts** that contribute to sustainable peace and fragility (e.g. policy networks or governance which are concerned with social cohesion, children's rights, social justice or wider social inequalities).

The overarching design of the conceptual framework is indicative of the complex transition processes from conflict to sustainable peace, depicted at opposite ends of the diagram. The arrows represent the movement from conflict (on the left hand side) to peace (on the right hand side) using a multi-level perspective, taking into account the complex interactions between policies, policy stakeholders, governance and the wider socio-economic environment. The circle represents the child's world. The outer perimeter of this world encapsulates the three main categories of national policies that influence the child, his/her experience and environment: 1) **Early childhood policies** – the national policies and strategies that demonstrate an explicit commitment to the holistic and integrated development of children; 2) **Social policies** – broadly defined by UNICEF as the guidelines and principles that deal with social issues of human welfare, such as those which address education, children's rights, child protection, juridical protection, social protection; and 3) **peacebuilding policies**. The top-level arrows depict the contrasting systems and political contexts characterised by conflict and post-conflict states in terms of fragmentation (conflict states) and social cohesion (post-conflict states). The middle arrows aligned with 'the child' in the innermost circle of the diagram are representations of the different ways in which children are positioned in policy and discourse e.g. as passive victims or social agents. Significantly, the framework draws on contemporary theories that acknowledge children and childhood as socially constructed, where children are perceived as active agents in the construction and shaping of their own lives and social worlds (Prout, and James 1997; Prout 2005; Jenks 1982). Prout and James (1997) contend that children participate actively 'in the construction and determination of their own social lives, the lives of those around them and of the societies in which they live.' (p8) As reflected through sociological and ethnographical research, the work of Prout and James (1997), James and James (2004), Corsaro (2005), Levine and New (2008)

and others have shown that children are not merely passive receivers in their communities. Significantly, 'ethnographic accounts have revealed children to be active participants in the social interactions and cultural learning of their early years.' (Levine and New 2008, p3). There is cross-cultural evidence which shows that children even as young as three years old are 'remarkably competent speakers of their native language', 'strikingly proficient in particular social and practical skills prevalent in their local communities' (Levine and New 2008, p5) and as they get older, continue to shape and be shaped by the cultural and social mores of their environment. As such, children have come to be viewed as active participants and contributors in their cultural and social worlds, through observing and participating actively in the community and society in which they live.

A key question threaded through the conceptual framework and research is therefore that of children's social positioning in policy and policy-contexts – what is their role? How are children perceived in society and how are they conceptualised? The conceptual framework of this study seeks to address the dynamic and relational dimensions of 'children's status' in national policies related to early childhood, peacebuilding and social policies, and particularly in terms of their activity, participation and position in shaping policy discourses. Such a theoretical approach advocates a view of children and childhood as being integral to societal change and wider historical-cultural-socio-economic developments, and recognises children's 'agency' and contribution to society as active interpreters and participants who are capable of influencing sustainable peace (or conversely fragility). As 'the child' is constructed in policy and society in myriad ways depending on the value judgements that society makes on children and childhood, it is therefore envisaged that the descriptors of children's role as depicted in the conceptual framework (Figure 2) will evolve as the research progresses, and as new themes emerge from the research in the transition from fragility to sustainable peace. The arrows at the foot of the diagram depict the level of policy interventions and capacities that are already present in society at either the niche, grassroots or governance level. Moving towards sustainable peace requires a conducive discourse, nationally and internationally, and appropriate governance interventions to support a cohesive society. Although niche interventions at grassroots level are important for innovation, relying on them alone is insufficient – successful exemplars need to be integrated into formal systems if they are to have a widespread and sustainable impact. Taken as a whole, the framework encapsulates the wide range of policy developments and political approaches that contribute to sustainable peace from an ECD and peacebuilding lens.

Figure 2 New Conceptual Framework: Placing Children at the Centre Of Policy





### Conceptual analysis of children's role in policy discourse

A key component of the conceptual framework and policy review is the role of young children in policy and society as established by extant literature, particularly in the field of early childhood (James and James (2004). Woodrow and Press (2007) suggest that notions of children and childhood are fundamentally implicated in the daily practices and policy frameworks of a particular society and that this gives rise to different constructions of 'the child' and the politicisation of early childhood education and care. It is therefore important that the research is informed by existing conceptual tools of how children and childhoods are constructed and positioned in policy discourse and diverse socio-cultural and political contexts as mediated through policy. An analysis of children's role in policy entails critically analysing the power discourses which inform understandings of how children are positioned in conflict and post-conflict countries societies. For example, are young children represented as rights-holders whose rights to survival, development protection and participation need to be upheld in society, or as family members where human rights are expressed primarily for adults? Are young children recognized as passive victims and vulnerable subjects of adversity or as active social actors with legitimate roles in peacebuilding? The policy review will aim to critically examine these multi-dimensions of children's role as they are represented in the policy documents.

### Conceptual analysis of peacebuilding and fragility

Building on empirical data in the established literature on peacebuilding and fragility (Ang 2014; Lambourne and Herro 2008; Alan Bryden et al. 2005), theoretical notions of peace, peacebuilding and fragility will be used to inform the policy review. The research shows an established, albeit sometimes contentious and tenuous link between peacebuilding and fragility in that strong governance and effective policy at national-level are central to peacebuilding efforts in conflict and post-conflict countries. The conceptual framework and policy review will be informed by existing conceptualisations of peacebuilding and fragility to better understand the policy context within and across the fourteen countries. Key dimensions of this analysis include:

- Peacebuilding as 'the comprehensive efforts to identify and support structures which will tend to consolidate peace and advance a sense of confidence and well-being among people.' Boutris-Ghali (1992)
- Peacebuilding as not only the absence of conflict, but as a dynamic and participatory process that enables and enhances the transition from a state of fragility and adversity to the realisation of sustainable peace (Johnson and Johnson 2005; Ang 2014)
- Peacebuilding as an ecological paradigm in which the child and children's development are positioned at the centre of the system and influenced by the home, family, community and wider environment (Sagi-Schwartz 2012; Yale University & ACEV Partnership 2012)
- Fragility as the breakdown of peace (Klein et al 2008)
- Fragility characterised by states that are plagued by abject conflict and adversity (OECD 2013)

### An empirical analysis of peacebuilding interventions

Moshe (2001) sees both conflict and peacebuilding as rooted in the struggle for communal growth and development. The distinction between them depends upon that nature of participation in collective decision-making during this process. Securing conditions and entitlements for growth and development can be competitive or collaborative. The former relies on exclusive participation in decision-making which seeds discrimination and conflict. The latter involves inclusive participation in decision-making, which requires recognition of social injustices, enhanced group worth and mutual respect through securing social rights, and greater participatory democracy for peacebuilding.

Inclusive participation in decision-making can be supported by social work and protected by law to advance the development of individuals and groups. The foundations of social work professional practice include: inter-group work, mediation, conflict resolution, empowerment-based practice, community building, and group-community problem-solving efforts form, with the goal being the promotion of social justice and the enhancement of individual and communal well-being. Law provides the necessary structure to govern and protect relationships. It outlines rights and obligations between individuals, groups, and the state. Law articulates the expectations, patterns, mores, and duties implicit in relationship, and which are essential for individual and communal welfare. Legal principles that inform human action can advocate for just and peaceful relationships. When combined, social work and law form the interdisciplinary practice for peace building through community building, which promotes civil participation, and through universal human rights law, which addresses issues of *individual and group rights*, equality, justice, and basic human needs (Torczyner, 2000).

With this understanding of peacebuilding we shall inspect policy documents for:

- Recognition of past or current inequalities, social injustice
- Inclusive, autonomous communities enjoying or seeking mutual rights rather than competitive rights
- Reference to human rights as a tool to promote relationships within and between societies
- Evidence of policies supporting social work programmes, regulating organisational activities or legislating participation in decision-making to secure conditions and entitlements for growth and development

Novelli's et al (2015) framework (presented below), informed by the work of Fraser (2005), is particularly useful for helping those engaged in social change processes to be aware of the divergent forms and functions of participation, depending on who is participating in whose process. A variety of typologies of education and peacebuilding have been developed in order to categorise the degree, level or form of peacebuilding that is taking place in the education context. A framework particularly helpful for analysing the contribution of education to sustainable peacebuilding was the 4Rs in Conflict-Affected Contexts' (Novelli et al 2015).

This framework suggests to build a sustainable peace through a framework of social justice that embraces:

- Redistribution: resources, structures, opportunities
- Recognition: status, interaction, diversity
- Representation: framing, decision making, justice
- Reconciliation: reparation, forgiveness, positive relations

### Transition Theory

Transition theory (Geels and Shot 2007) predicts that moving from fragmentation and conflict to cohesion and peace involves innovation at the niche level, integration at the regime level, and discourse and consolidation at the landscape level. Applied in a policy context, transition theory conceptualises the move towards peacebuilding and sustainable peace as a transition process in order to understand how effective policies can drive the social transformation of society from fragility/adversity to sustainable peace. Adopting a transition theoretical approach entails a close inspection of policy documents for developments at the niche level, regime level and landscape level to understand how policies relate to change across various stages of development in society. These may include:

- Niche level pilot projects: investment in innovations, increasing fit with organisations at regime level

- Regime level: recognised ‘best practice’, organisational support for innovation
- Landscape level: laws articulating the expectations, patterns, mores, and duties implicit in relationship, which are essential for individual and communal welfare

The different theoretical threads above intertwine to inform the overall conceptual framework that underpins this policy review. The aim of the conceptual framework is to help to distil some of the complex concepts and theoretical frameworks encountered in the research to bring a more strategic and coherent approach to the policy analysis and data collection. It is envisaged that the conceptual framework will evolve as the project progresses, in light of new emergent findings, in order to offer an integrated conceptual approach to the overall analysis.

### Early Childhood Development, Conflict and Peacebuilding

The study was also informed by an analysis of the literature around early childhood development, conflict and peacebuilding. Developing research on the brain and neuroscience suggest that the earliest years in a child’s life (the early childhood phase) are crucial in human development as it is during these formative years, from birth to preschool age, that lay the foundations for children’s subsequent outcomes (Leckman et al.2014; Lindsey 1998; Shore 1997; Leseman 2002; Thompson et al. 2009; OECD 2002).The relationship between early childhood development, conflict and peacebuilding are being explored in the areas of neuroscience, family studies and education (Leckman et al.2014). Growing interest in an ecology of peace framework has also prompted hypotheses linking children’s immediate environment with their brain development and subsequently with violent or peaceful behaviour; and efforts to develop a propensity for peaceful behaviour through family or community intervention (Britto et al 2014 in Leckford et al 2014). There is research which points towards the brain’s plasticity and physiological capacities during childhood and even adolescence, and the impact on later life including the possibility of building human resilience and ameliorating social ills. For example, some researchers (Teicher et al. 2004; Meaney 2010; Carter and Porges 2014) contend that children’s experience of stress or trauma, especially during the early stages of life occur at a ‘sensitive period’ when aversive experiences such as maltreatment, chronic stress and other chronic childhood trauma can negatively affect children’s brain functions leading to anxiety disorders. Conversely, the absence of such intense and adverse trauma can promote positive early development and cognitive functioning as children experience much lesser stress. These associations between neuroscience and early development are being explored as important determinants for peacebuilding (Leckman et al.2014).

However, as an emerging area of research, there continues to be ensuing debates and contentions around the application of neuroscience perspectives to research in early development, where the connections between early childhood, conflict and peacebuilding could be strengthened with further empirical research. As Abu-Nimer and Nasser ask (2014), ‘Two major questions remain: What are the most influential factors that influence children to choose nonviolent behaviours and embrace a peaceful way to address conflicts? Are peaceful behaviours innate and biologically motivated ... or are they learned behaviours?’ (325) (Abu-Nimer and Nasser 2014) As advances in scientific research seek answers to these questions, it is notable that emergent explorations in biology and neuroscience is advancing new knowledge in the field and has set out some interesting and promising directions for future research, not least when exploring the connections between early childhood development, conflict and peacebuilding.

## SECTION 2: DESIGN AND METHODS

The overarching purpose of the study is to identify potential links between early childhood development and peacebuilding, and the policy and research opportunities to enhance children’s lives in conflict-affected states. The research objectives are to:

1. **Establish** a clear rationale for establishing the important role of ECD in peacebuilding in national-level policy (at the level of policy development and implementation).
2. **Identify** clear exemplars of how children and childhood are constructed in national policies that promote ECD and peacebuilding.
3. **Develop** a research-informed conceptual framework for investigating the links between early childhood and peacebuilding policies
4. **Provide** policy makers and governments with an evidence-based framework for developing and installing effective global and national policies for the benefit of young children and their families to participate in, and contribute to, sustainable peace.

In meeting the above aims, the research will identify the potential opportunities and exemplars of policies which acknowledge and foster links between ECD and peacebuilding. The research addresses the following question and four sub-questions:

What is the relationship between national-level policies related to peacebuilding, social cohesion and ECD? This will be explored through four sub-questions:

1. In what ways do these national-level policies acknowledge and foster links between ECD and peacebuilding?
2. To what degree do national-level policies that relate to peacebuilding and social cohesion address ECD and young children?
3. What kinds of indicators characterise children's place in these national-level policies?
4. What lessons can be drawn for policy and research from a cross-country, gap-analysis of ECD and peacebuilding policy across the fourteen conflict-affected and post-conflict countries?

### Target Countries

Given the context above, UNICEF has funded this research to provide an in-depth review and meta-analysis of national-level policies relating to Early Childhood Development (ECD) and peacebuilding in fourteen conflict-affected and post-conflict countries across the Peace Building Education and Advocacy (PBEA) programme. The study covers the regions of East Asia and Pacific, South Asia, Middle East and North Africa, Eastern and Southern Africa and West and Central Africa, including fourteen countries: **Burundi, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Liberia, Myanmar, Pakistan, the State of Palestine, Sierra Leone, Somali, South Sudan, Uganda and Yemen**. The criteria for selection of the target PBEA countries were driven by various factors including countries which are part of the 'Fast Track Initiative list' (Actionaid 2003) of fragile states that have been identified as needing increased support to help to accelerate their progress towards the Education for All (EFA) goals, low income countries which are listed on the Education for All Global Monitoring Report list (UNESCO (2015), UNICEF regional priorities, and national government's specific interest in the coordination of a PBEA programme.

Within each country, three types of policies were reviewed comprising ECD, peacebuilding and social sector policies (such as social welfare and education policies). The policy review was multi-dimensional in examining first, whether ECD policies include components relevant to peacebuilding (e.g. promoting social cohesion and non-violence, building skills and behaviours in young children and caregivers that are relevant for building sustained peace) and second, whether peacebuilding policies address and promote links to young children or ECD.

## Fourteen Conflict-affected and Post-conflict Countries



### Definitions

The key concepts and definitions used in this report – conflict, peace, peacebuilding and early childhood development - are in keeping with the work of the UN and UNICEF. The terms are also used frequently in the extant literature by various stakeholders (e.g. researchers, academics, practitioners, education and early childhood advisors) and can be highly contested as their definitions are almost always relative to the particular context in which they are used. The research team therefore recognises that there are multiple interpretations to these concepts but that for the purpose of this report and study, an operational definition is required. The definitions provide a useful starting point from which to inform discussions on the policies and provide a reference point to build an analytical framework. Importantly, the concepts below are working definitions, employed with the knowledge that their meanings are not fixed, but will continue to evolve with emerging research beyond the scope of this study.

### Conflict

Countries damaged by disaster and armed conflict are precisely those where the failures of development have already undermined social resilience, institutional capacity and effective governance. (UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery 2008)

The notion of conflict is defined in this study as a state of fragility in war-torn countries as a result of in-state or inter-state conflict, leading to 'severely weakened state capacity, destroyed physical, human and social capital, distorted economic incentives, widespread poverty and massive



unemployment' (UNDP 2008, piv). Within the extant literature, there is general consensus that 'conflict' is defined by the existence of informal or formal wars and acts of aggression which give rise to cycles of violence, leading ultimately to deaths with significant cost to human lives and resources (Davies 2005; Halperin et al.2014). In extreme cases of adversity, the term 'intractable conflicts' have also been used to describe conflicts which are 'protracted (enduring for at least one generation) and perceived by society members as irresolvable.' (Halperin, et al. 2014, p3). For instance, prolonged civil wars in the Middle East, Kashmir, Sri Lanka or Rwanda, exemplify the enduring intractable conflict and magnitude of fear, hatred, despair, and contempt that have been inflicted on these societies. It is also widely recognised that *conflict and post-conflict societies* are countries which are experiencing or have experienced violence, war and/or extreme political and economic upheaval. War includes inter-country belligerence, civil war as well as ethnic and religious conflict (Arnhold et al. 1998). The UNDP offers a useful framework for the study in defining conflict-affected societies as countries that have been damaged by disaster and armed conflict and characterised by the failures of development which has undermined social resilience, institutional capacity and effective governance. (UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery 2008).

### Peace

'Peace is not only the absence of differences and conflicts. It is a positive, dynamic, participatory process linked intrinsically to democracy, justice and development for all by which differences are respected, dialogue is encouraged and conflicts are constantly transformed by non-violent means into new avenues of cooperation.' (United Nations General Assembly 1997, p3)

The term 'peace' has been variously defined in the emerging scholarship and international literature around early childhood development and peacebuilding (Leckman et al. 2014; Coleman et al. 2014). While recognising the elusiveness of the term, Leckman et al. (2014) offers a useful typology of defining peace in terms of different 'peace manifestations' (6) - as an outcome, process, human disposition and culture. These five components take into account the multidisciplinary approaches to understanding 'peace', for instance, the biological sciences (measurable outcomes and indicators of peace), social and political sciences (the social processes and practices that shape everyday life and engagement of peace), the state of minds and behaviour (dispositions), as well as the historical and cultural context which constitute the foundations of peace that can influence social change across generations. The word 'peace' in other words, denote a state of 'harmony and social justice' (7) which enables individuals to think and behave in ways that promote equity and cohesive relationships (Leckman et al.2014; Coleman et al.2014).

Informed by the extant literature, we define sustainable peace in this report as a concept that it is rooted in notions of social justice, inclusion, and resilience - concepts that together promote the idea of nurturing positive attitudes, and maintaining cohesive and respectful relationships among individuals in societies. The extant literature describes the notion of peace in 'relational terms', in the way individuals co-exist, relate with each other and build mutually respectful relationships. Building sustainable peace have also been described as a human process of building and maintaining cooperative systems and long-term harmonious relationships (Merav 2001; and Klein et. al 2008; Johnson and Johnson 2005; Clark 2001). The UN defines peace not only as the absence of conflict, but as an evolving, collaborative process of building respectful dialogue, reconciliation and promoting social justice in a society. 'Peace is not only the absence of differences and conflicts. It is a positive, dynamic, participatory process linked intrinsically to democracy, justice and development for all by which differences are respected, dialogue is encouraged and conflicts are constantly transformed by non-violent means into new avenues of cooperation.' (UN Resolutions, 1997) The UN General Assembly (2000) resolution (Assembly resolution 55/377) offers a descriptor of peace

that is characterised by a list of actionable indicators, and which have also been pivotal in informing the concept of sustainable peace used in the study:

- (a) A culture of peace through education;
- (b) Sustainable economic and social development;
- (c) Respect for all human rights;
- (d) Equality between women and men;
- (e) Democratic participation;
- (f) Understanding, tolerance and solidarity;
- (g) Participatory communication and the free flow of information and knowledge;
- (h) International peace and security (p2)

### *Peacebuilding*

‘an action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict’  
UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali (United Nations 1992)

The term ‘peacebuilding’ was thought to first emerge in the 1970s when it was coined by the Norwegian sociologist Johan Galtung, who was a pioneer in the field of Peace and Conflict studies in the Social Science discipline, and who established the Peace Research Institute in Oslo [in 1959] and the *Journal of Peace Research* [in 1964]. The definition has evolved over the years in the context of international policy and politics. The current UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, in his report on peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict, places social services, including education, among the five recurrent priorities for peacebuilding in post-conflict transition (United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office 2010). In 1992, the former UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali used the term in his report ‘An Agenda for Peace’ to the UN Security Council when he raised concern about continuing global threats to social peace and international stability (United Nations, 1992). ‘Peacebuilding’, Boutros-Ghali proposes, is ‘the comprehensive efforts to identify and support structures which will tend to consolidate peace and advance a sense of confidence and well-being among people (p14).’ This entails improving respect for human rights and promoting conflict resolution and reconciliation. Reviewing the changing global contexts and ideological challenges that have given rise to conflict and fragile situations in various nation-states, he asserts that social peace and international security continue to be challenged by threats of discrimination and exclusion. He advocates the need for clear policies and governance at a national and international level to ‘identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict’ (p5) in order to maintain global stability and international security. A subsequent Position Paper submitted to the UN in 1995 (United Nations 1995) outlined further the notion of peacebuilding as the ‘Demilitarization, the control of small arms, institutional reform, improved police and judicial systems, the monitoring of human rights, electoral reform and social and economic development’ (p16) and the concerted efforts by the UN Secretariat to increase capacity to achieve this. In essence, the concept of peace building, as defined by Boutros-Ghali, is ‘the construction of a new environment [that] should be viewed as the counterpart of preventive diplomacy, which seeks to avoid the breakdown of peaceful conditions.’ (United Nations, 1992)

The concept of peace used in this study builds on a theoretical framework that articulates the transformative role of education in promoting peacebuilding (Novelli et al 2015). The framework proposes a conceptualisation of peace through a framework of social justice and social transformation that embraces four main dimensions:

- Recognition: status, respecting difference and diversity
- Redistribution: resources, structures, opportunities

- Representation: policy framing, political decision-making, governance and justice
- Reconciliation: reparation, forgiveness, positive relations, social cohesion

(Novelli et al.2015)

The central tenets of Recognition, Redistribution, Representation and Reconciliation are inherently connected to the notion of social justice, and recognises the importance of the *redistribution* of resources and opportunities (economic interventions), the necessary political, social and cultural “remedies” that can lead to better recognition and representation, and the process of reconciliation that is required to foster peace. This notion of peacebuilding recognises the interdisciplinarity nature of the concept in relation to those conditions that will enhance a country’s transition from a state of conflict to reconciliation (Moshe 2001). A key aspect of this process is the idea of ‘recognition’ which emphasises the transformation of injustices and disentitlements that have resulted from past, conflictual relationships to transformative policies that promote social cohesion and the restoration peace. The definition recognises ‘peacebuilding’ as a concept that has emerged from deep inequalities and socioeconomic depravity, and denotes ‘a process that transpires in the transition from conflict to coexistence’ (Moshe 2001, 14).

### *Early Childhood Development*

Early childhood development (ECD) denotes a period of development from prenatal to 8 years of age, and encompasses the interrelated and inter-dependent domains and processes through which young children interacts with and develop in their ecological environment including the most proximal contexts such as the home and immediate family, to the more distal context such as the national and international policy milieu.  
(United Nations 2003; UNICEF 2011; 2012)

The report uses the term ‘early childhood development’ in keeping with conceptualisations from UNICEF and the United Nations which encompass the notion of the ‘whole child’, taking into account their multidimensional needs including their psychosocial well-being, cognitive, social, emotional, and physiological development. Early childhood development (ECD) denotes a period of development from prenatal to 8 years of age, and encompasses the interrelated and inter-dependent domains and processes through which young children interacts with and develop in their ecological environment including the most proximal contexts such as the home and immediate family, to the more distal contexts such as the national and international policy milieu (UNICEF 2012 *Peace Building through Early Childhood Development. A Guidance Note*).

There are various conceptualisations of early childhood in the international literature. In the field of early childhood, terms such as early childhood care and education, early childhood care and development, and early childhood development are used simultaneously in different contexts. The conceptual differences vary as each term reflects a differing world perspective, resulting in varying perceptions and understandings of the concepts of early childhood development. The OECD defines early childhood as all arrangements providing education and care for children under compulsory school age regardless of setting, funding, opening hours, or programme content (OECD, 2006). This study adopts the conventional UN and UNICEF’s usage of the term early childhood development, which adopts a holistic view of children as a central part of the whole ecology of their immediate and wider environment in the community and society. Underpinned by the concept of ‘early childhood development’, this study also defers to the ratified United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (United Nations 1989). in its operational definition of ‘children’ or ‘the child’ as anyone below the age of eighteen years, while recognising that age determinants can differ across countries and social contexts. These variations in conceptual and material definitions will manifest in



a more nuanced discussion in the latter sections of the report in the analysis and findings of the data, which show that policies and laws across the fourteen countries can sometimes signal different age range and limits as constructed in differing policy types and contexts such as social sector, peacebuilding or educational policies.

### Policy

The stated intentions, usually in written form, of a national or central government in establishing national or central government in establishing their expectations and/or course of actions for society, and can be defined broadly as the framework of rights, obligations and general principles which all stakeholders have to adhere.

For the purpose of this study, 'policy' refers to the stated intentions, usually in written form, of a national or central government in establishing the expectations and/or course of actions for the country. It can be defined broadly as the framework of rights, obligations and general principles which all stakeholders (eg. government agencies, ministerial departments, civil organisations) have to adhere (Leven 1997). What constitutes a policy is complex to define as the term carries different meanings. Wyszomirski (2013) differentiates between two main levels of policy development: macro-policy denoting a higher level organisational or institutional policy development and micro-policies referring to more local, specific program-level policies. Spicker (2008) contends that policy, in particular social policy, is concerned about the structures, function, organisation, and administration of a society. 'Policy' is also defined loosely as a term which refers to the value commitments, strategic objectives, and operational instruments adopted by a government (Finlay et al., 2007, p 138). Leven (1997) suggests that all policies across sectors such as social welfare, education, health and also economic, share some generic features which denote 1. belongingness (eg a policy which belongs to a political party or government department), 2. commitment (entails a commitment to a particular principle or proposed actions), 3. status (eg a policy that has been formally accepted by the body that owns it), and 4. specificity (specific ways of dealing with a particular issue). All four features or attributes could be said to reflect the way policies are considered and constructed. This definition of policy recognises the pivotal role of governments and their undertaking of local ownership in shaping and influencing national policies as a vital tool of governance, particularly in conflict-affected countries which are at varying levels of recovery and rebuilding their civil society. Such a concept of policy also acknowledges the formal and informal collaborative mechanisms (e.g. monitoring and evaluation systems) which are required to sustain the delivery and implementation of policies over time. In sum, policies as defined in this report represents an indication of the formal status of a text which outlines the strategic aims, vision and/or plans and guidelines for public sector services including education, health or social welfare.

### Research Design

The research is based on a multi-strategy, systematic review design, involving a review of policies on early childhood and peacebuilding, with the use of questionnaires and semi-structured interviews with stakeholder-participants. Guided by the conceptual framework, the project offers a focused, critical examination of the role(s) of children and families in policy discourse and in contributing to a peace building agenda. The research approach adopted in this study was exploratory and multi-disciplinary. It integrated questionnaire responses and national, governmental documentary evidence across-disciplines and cross-sectors such as health, education, social sector within the policy domain.

The research design is essentially a **meta-policy analysis**, which attempts to explain public policies and their development. The concept of meta-policy, an established field of study in policy sciences which examines public policy and policy contexts as a developmental process (Dror 1971; Brewer 1974; Ringquist 2013), is used as both theoretical framework and methodological approach to guide

this study. A meta-analysis is essentially an ‘analysis of analyses’ (Imbeau et al. 2001: 3) which aims to critically evaluate and derive common elements from previous studies in order to better understand a particular subject area or phenomenon (Gray 2014). Such an analysis also views policy as a social practice which develops and evolves within a discursive process (Torfing et al 2012). Within this context, policy is conceptualised as a tool for transforming practice and the lived realities of key stakeholders, in order to advance the development of particular individuals or groups to achieve a wider social-justice agenda, in this case the development of young children and families in conflict and post-conflict societies to drive towards social cohesion and sustainable peace.

## Methodology

The project was informed by a **participatory research methodology** (Ang et al 2015; McIntyre A 2008; Koch and Kralik 2006) that is based on the premise that the research inquiry is closely connected to a social justice agenda and an overall purpose to engender social advocacy and reform. The participatory methodology entailed the research team working in close collaboration with key stakeholders to guide and inform the research design and process. It is a prevalent methodology exemplified through the work of supra-international organisations such as UNICEF, UNESCO, The World Bank, and Amnesty International in their advocacy for social justice and transformation (Hickey & Mohan 2004; Campbell 2002; Gristy 2014). To this end, the methodology was informed by a **policy-focused** and **applied social research agenda**, where participants are involved as collaborators and encouraged to take an active role in influencing policy development at a national level. The study addressed country-specific policy contexts across the fourteen participating countries, acknowledging that the target countries are considerably diverse, where each country has their own distinct policy drivers, frameworks, guidelines, action plans and agendas. A participatory methodology with stakeholder engagement therefore helped to inform a more nuanced understanding of each country policy context and an exploration of the potential policy links between ECD and peacebuilding that are present (or absent) within each country.

## Methods

The research was informed by a triangulation of sources including international policy repositories, in-country government databases, UNICEF country office participants and key informants:

### *‘Best fit’ framework synthesis*

The study began with an initial conceptual framework, based on earlier research on peacebuilding in South East Asia and the Asia Pacific region (Ang 2014), which was refined as key concepts emerged. This approach of a ‘best fit’ framework synthesis (Carroll et al 2013) suits reviews where teamwork is required for timely delivery of a policy relevant product within a defined project scope, in this case within ten months.

### *Ongoing consultations with UNICEF key stakeholders and advisors*

Ongoing consultations were undertaken with UNICEF NYHQ ECD Section and the project external advisors as a form of quality assurance to keep in check the focus of the review and methodology. The primary aim of this collaborative work was to ensure that the research process and review is fit-for-purpose to achieve UNICEF’s strategic agenda. Ongoing consultations throughout the research process also elicited stakeholders’ perspectives of policy sensitive issues and considerations that emerged during the research process.

### *Policy documents eligible for analysis*

Characteristics of policy documents of interest were developed with UNICEF stakeholders and it was agreed that the following criteria would be applied:

Inclusion criteria:

- National policies on the fourteen countries
- Policy sectors: early childhood – includes education, social care (eg early childhood care, displacement, social integration, child protection, workforce), health care, (e.g. nutrition and child development), peacebuilding
- Action oriented policies (action plans, strategy plans, implementation tools)

Exclusion criteria:

- Declarations and agreements
- International policies, reports
- Policy briefs and background papers
- Country profile, factsheets and reports from international organisations

From this selection criteria, all country reports made by national or international bodies were excluded from the main review as they served a different function and purpose from national policies which were secondary to the research focus. However, they were used as supplementary, background reading to provide a critical understanding of the legislation and policies in a country. Using the predetermined inclusion exclusion criteria, a final 74 items from the overall 139 items on the database were included and coded for full-text analysis. More than 50 'parent' and 'child' codes were used to code the items based on themes from the literature and new themes that emerged as the review progressed.

*Preliminary database search (Appendix 1)*

A preliminary database search was undertaken to locate the national policies on all fourteen countries. The purpose of this initial searching was to identify potential databases and where possible to retrieve published as well as 'grey' policy literature. This initial search also offered the opportunity to conduct 'test searches' to assess if the defined search terms were appropriate for locating the relevant literature. In conducting the preliminary search, the research team purposefully used a targeted search strategy which included online holdings of regional and international agencies such as UNESCO and The World Bank and research firms and those databases that possibly held national policy documentation. Additionally, the research team also supplemented the searches of databases with targeted government websites and internet sites sourced through the team's professional networks and contact groups such as academics and consultant NGOs. A range of databases were searched including the UNESCO Planpolis online library, the International Labour Organisation, Google Scholar and country-specific national government ministry websites, with the use of search terms in different permutations such as [Country] AND Early Childhood AND/OR Policy; [Country] AND/OR Children AND/OR Policy; Early Childhood Development AND/OR policy. From this preliminary search, over a hundred policy related items were located and uploaded onto the EPPI-Reviewer 4 database which gave the research team a base line of collated data to work from. **Appendix 1** provides an overview of the searches undertaken during this first phase of the research process. Additional policy documents were subsequently located through other secondary search platforms such as UNICEF Country Offices, in-country Ministerial contacts and professional networks.

*Key informant questionnaire (Appendix 2)*

A key focus at the start of the research was to identify where the policies were located across sectors. Given the complexity of the policy contexts within and across the fourteen countries, it was anticipated that the policies and policy contexts would be diverse, with each country having their

own distinct policy frameworks, legislations and guidelines and not necessarily with the same identifying policy names e.g. peacebuilding, ECD, or education etc. Key informants were therefore sought through UNICEF offices in the 14 countries to identify specific policies, legislations, or strategic plans which relate to children and families, and specifically to children and peacebuilding.

A questionnaire for key informants was designed and administered via the online tool Survey Monkey, and a link to the questionnaire disseminated via email to all target UNICEF offices and policy contacts in order to elicit baseline information about the specific types of national policies, key policy actors, and where the policies are located. Participants were identified from target conflict and post-conflict countries, either through the relevant UNICEF regional offices or official networks. The questionnaire was sent out to a total of 33 participants, with responses from 25 individuals from across the countries.

As policies that address children and peacebuilding might be placed in cross-cutting locations e.g. inside education policies, ECD policies or perhaps as part of a wider focus on social policies, the questionnaire gathered general details of the type of sectors and policy areas that exist, and if and how they foster links between ECD and peacebuilding e.g. health and education sectors. The questionnaire also helped to identify key technical terms and descriptors which were used in the database search to capture the relevant policy documents. It was found that key terminologies such as ECD, early years and early childhood are used differently and are sometimes overlapping concepts depending on the country and policy context.

#### *Targeted sample of semi-structured interviews (Appendix 3)*

A small sample of strategic, targeted follow-up interviews with in-country stakeholders were undertaken virtually via emails to add validity to the systematic review and questionnaire responses. Email has been found a useful medium to explore the experiences of key informants internationally, especially those for whom English is not their first language, and has the added benefit of respondents reflecting on and analysing their own email responses and thereby participating in a process of collaborative knowledge building on particular questions (Reid, Petocz and Gordon 2008). This was particularly appropriate for the context of the study where respondents were based across fourteen countries, many for whom English is a second or third language.

The interviews included more specific questions around the types of policies and policy gaps that exists. Key stakeholders from each country to be interviewed were identified in collaboration with UNICEF ECD Unit and stakeholders. Together with the questionnaire responses, the information collected from the interviews helped to form a more holistic understanding of the different types of policies and policy areas that address the target areas of early childhood, education and peace. The interview responses provided further insights into the country-specific policy contexts, and helped to ascertain the value placed on ECD in national policy implementation and the role of peacebuilding in ECD policies.

#### *Data Analysis*

The overall analysis was informed by a theoretical approach which enabled the research team to take a reflexive stance during the research process, and which took into consideration multiple dimensions and interpretations of the datasets. Critical theorists such as MacLure (1995), Packwood and Sikes (1996) have sought to challenge certain positivist 'truths' when undertaking research and urge researchers to engage in a creative process of thinking about the human experience through multi-dimensional perspectives, thereby challenging their own assumptions of the world and opening up new possibilities of knowledge. In this vein, the analysis of the policies in this study resisted the idea of deriving any definitive, fixed meanings from the data but employed the concept of '**polyphonic policies**' when analysing and exploring the documents through different lens, such as

from a peacebuilding or early childhood development perspective, in order to uncover multiple meanings of the data within and across the fourteen countries.

The research team meta-analysed the policy documents using framework synthesis, adapted from systematic review methodology (Oliver et al 2008; Carroll et al 2013). To keep children at the centre of this analysis, we sought to clarify how childhood and children's roles have been constructed within policy documents as informed by the extant research literature (James et al. 1998). For example, in an earlier systematic review, Sutcliffe K (2007) suggests a typology of children's roles in shared decision-making where at one end of the continuum children are 'dispossessed of intentionality and agency' with no valid contribution to make to society generally, or policy development or implementation in particular (**unconscious childhood**). Moving along the scale, children's role may be as crucial informants about their own lives and policy development (**childhood as a source of knowledge**), and at the other end of the continuum, children are social actors in their own right, whose views and experiences are ascribed an inherent worth that would position them as valuable contributors to policy development and implementation (**childhood with social agency**). This analysis was informed by the emerging conceptual framework and established scholarship which provided empirical accounts of the ways in which children participate in and contribute to society and the world around them in myriad ways, and which exemplify their agency and competencies at multiple levels (James and James 2004; Corsaro 2005; Levine and New 2008).

In total, 139 policy related items were reviewed and analysed on the EPPI-Reviewer tool. Each item was carefully read and reviewed by the research team and following close screening, a final selection of 75 items were included in the review. The included items were then coded and analysed using a systematic code-set and review protocol, details of which are explained in the following section on data analysis. Each policy item retrieved was scrutinised as to the degree to which it addressed children and families, and how children were positioned in the policy and politics of peacebuilding. Each policy was also read and analysed to confirm, extend, refine or refute key concepts in the framework as key issues and recurrent themes emerged in relation to the concepts in our initial framework as illustrated in Figure 2. The analysis was undertaken in an iterative process as the research team coded the policies according to the framework, revisiting policies as the framework was refined. The codes were then employed as an index to navigate the data and allow the literature to be sub-divided into sections, albeit overlapping, to render it more manageable for in-depth analysis. Subsequently, each element of the framework was interrogated in turn, tabulating the data under key themes in order to present distilled summaries. In the last stage of the analysis, the research team drew together what can be learnt from the tables and summaries, finding associations between themes and providing explanations for those findings across the policies to illuminate ECD and peacebuilding efforts. This approach provided a clear path from the original policy text, to the findings of the policy meta-analysis.

To ensure consistency, a coding tool (**Appendix 2**) was applied in an electronic format (EPPI-Reviewer 4) to allow the codes to be stored immediately and securely. The codes were initially derived from the conceptual framework, then developed in consultation with key informants, and further reviewed in relation to the extant literature and theoretical perspectives on ECD and peacebuilding. The overall coding tool evolved in an iterative process of adjustment and adaptation as the research developed. Each policy document retrieved was analysed against the tool. A coding table such as the one presented therefore enabled the research team to label and categorise the policies and policy-relevant items retrieved from the desk research in a much more targeted and methodical way, and to make sense of the complex dataset, through an inductive process of narrowing the data into broad themes, such as the role of children, peacebuilding and types of policies. The coding tool also enabled the research team to triangulate the data and gain deeper insights into the diverse policies using different lens – e.g. from an early childhood and peacebuilding

lens or perspective. As the study progressed, the list of codes or organisation of the codes was adapted, for example, new codes were added as new themes from the policy documents emerged and similar codes were aggregated together to form broader themes.

A staged approach was undertaken when analysing the data. This included a preliminary phase of constructing 'parent' and 'child' codes in order to gain a broad picture of the documents available. Early coding quickly situated each document in the following terms:

- Policy setting
- Language
- Type of document
- Status of policy document
- Year of publication
- Broad aims of policy
- Policy authority

This first phase coding was useful in showing the balance of the documents already identified, and revealed gaps that helped to prompt the research team and stakeholders to seek or signpost documents to fill those gaps. Codes were supplemented with text offering further details or clarification. This initial coding informed the first set of tabulated findings to present the consistency and relevancy of the descriptors across the policies and inform refinements of the coding tool. A second, more in-depth phase of coding was then conducted. A selection of items on the database was double, at times triple-coded by members of the team, where differences in the codes were discussed and resolved before an agreed version was used in the final synthesis to ensure consistency across the coding process.

To complement this theoretical approach to coding, policy documents were also inspected for examples of youth agency that research has associated with a movement towards peace in conflict-affected settings (Novelli et al 2015). Novelli et al.'s themes covered:

- Absence, Appropriation and Amplification of Youth Voice
- Gender
- Responding to Specific Youth Constituencies
- Work-related Programme Interventions
- Education for Citizenship and Political Participation
- Sexual and Reproductive Health Education Interventions
- History education
- Sports interventions
- Arts Interventions
- Intergroup-Contact Interventions
- Interfaith Interventions

See Appendix 5 for further details.

Lastly, a synthesis matrix was constructed to summarise key evidence about the development and content of policies in terms of peacebuilding, where peacebuilding is recognised as: a dynamic and participatory process that enables and enhances the transition from a state of fragility and adversity to the realisation of sustainable peace (Johnson and Johnson 2005; Ang 2014); and an ecological paradigm in which the child and children's development are positioned at the centre of the system and influenced by the home, family, community and wider environment (Sagi-Schwartz 2012; Yale University & ACEV Partnership 2012).

## SECTION 3 FINDINGS: FOURTEEN CONFLICT AFFECTED COUNTRIES

The analysis of the policies took into account the larger political, social and cultural contexts in which they were developed. The analysis took a ‘context-appropriate approach’, set out by the UNDP (2008) in a publication on Post-Conflict Economic Recovery which recognises that countries differ in many important respects and require different policies to direct their recovery, and the importance of adopting context-appropriate and conflict-sensitive policies and mechanisms for promoting the successful reconstruction of post-conflict states (p9). The purpose of this section is therefore to provide a ‘situational understanding’ of the policies, and offer a nuanced discussion of the findings in relation to the social, cultural and political environment in which the policies occur. Each narrative begins with a brief country profile, including a reference list of policy items that have informed the analyses. Each narrative has been compiled by drawing upon a range of sources: evidence from the included policy documents, secondary literature related to ECD and peacebuilding, and relevant empirical literature to provide a more critical discussion of the policy drivers and evolution that has taken place in each country. Framed by the research questions, the reports have been structured with the aim of highlighting the role of children in policy and evidence of the policy links between ECD and peacebuilding. Each report contains three main sections: 1) What national-level policies are there related to children, early childhood development and peacebuilding? 2) How are children and childhood portrayed in policy? and 3) How is peacebuilding encouraged? Each narrative then concludes with reflections on the policy highlights with reference to some of the strengths and challenges pertinent to policy development in the country.

### Basic information on target countries

Understanding that both conflict and peacebuilding are rooted in collaborative or competitive development efforts (Moshe 2001), it is pertinent to consider the development contexts of the fourteen countries investigated. Table 3.1 shows that all fourteen countries rank low in terms of the Human Development Index Human Development Index (HDI), a composite statistical indicator related to life expectancy, national income per capita, education and poverty levels ((The United Nations Human Development Report 2014).

Table 3.1

	<b>Human Development Index Ranking (out of 187 countries)</b>	<b>Gross national income (GNI) per capita 2011 (purchasing power parity (PPP) \$)</b>	<b>Mean years of Schooling (Average number of years of education received by people ages 25 and older)</b>	<b>Population below income national poverty line (%) (Percentage of the population living below the national poverty line)</b>
<b>Burundi</b>	180	749	2.7	66.9
<b>Chad</b>	184	1,622	1.5	-
<b>Côte d’Ivoire</b>	171	2,774	4.3	42.7
<b>Democratic Republic of the Congo</b>	186	444	3.1	71.3
<b>Ethiopia</b>	173	1,303	2.4	29.6
<b>Liberia</b>	175	752	3.9	63.8
<b>Myanmar</b>	150	3,998	4.0	-
<b>Pakistan</b>	146	4,652	4.7	22.3
<b>Sierra Leone</b>	183	1,815	2.9	52.9
<b>Somalia</b>	unranked	-	-	-

<b>South Sudan</b>	unranked	1,450	-	-
<b>State of Palestine</b>	107	5,168	8.9	21.9
<b>Uganda</b>	164	1,335		24.5
<b>Yemen</b>	154	3,945	2.5	34.8

Source: United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Report (2014) United Nations Development Programme.

## Burundi

### *Country Profile*

The Republic of Burundi is in the Great Lakes region of East Africa, with a long-standing history of warfare and conflict. In August 2000, supported by the international community, negotiations for the restoration of peace, judicial law and stability were initiated through the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement with Member states of the Great Lakes region as signatories. Seventeen political parties were among the signatories to the Agreement in Arusha [Burundi 2000]. The signing of the Peace Accord marked a turning point in the country's political transition to the reinstatement of judicial law and democratic institutions in a bid to re-establish socioeconomic stability and growth. However, despite initial progress, the political situation in the country remains fragile with recurrent threats of violent conflicts among ethnic groups [Burundi 2006]. A lengthy process of disarmament of soldiers and former rebels was precipitated by collaborations between the national government, United Nations and the international community but political instability, particularly given the country's disputed elections in 2010, has had a negative impact on the reconciliation process. To-date, the Republic of Burundi is continuing its struggle to emerge from the effects of a sustained period of more than ten years of ethnic-based civil war. Political unrest and civil protests in 2015 in opposition to the President's rule, raises questions about the country's democratic future. A conflict analysis emphasised the severe underdevelopment and cyclical violence that the country continues to face, with outbreaks of communal and ethnic conflict (UNICEF 2015a). Conflict drivers such as weak governance, discriminatory political and governance systems, social and ethnic division persist. As such, improving governance and security, and restoring an environment that is conducive to economic recovery and national reconciliation remains a priority of the national government as the country continues the process of reconciliation and rebuilding its post-conflict socio-economic landscape [Burundi 2000].

### *What national-level policies are there related to children, early childhood development and peacebuilding?*

The review identified seven key policies related to early childhood development and peacebuilding in Burundi:

1. Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for Burundi (2000)
2. Minister of Finance (2006) Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper.
3. Le Ministere de l'Education Nationale et de la Recher (2008) Le Developpement de l'Education. Rapport National du Burundi.
4. Government of Burundi (2011) Burundi Global Health Initiative 2011-2015.
5. Republique du Burundi (2012) Plan sectoriel de developpement de l'education et de la formation 2012 - 2020.
6. International Monetary Fund (2012) Burundi: Poverty Reduction Strategy 2012. International Monetary Fund.
7. Republique Du Burundi (2012) Programme Par Pays De Promotion Du Travail Decent Au Burundi (PPTD/BURUNDI) Revise 2012-2015.

Policy developments in the Republic of Burundi continues to evolve in times of political change. The national government recognises that 'innovative policies and reforms must be initiated to salve the



wounds left by a conflict that lasted more than a decade'(7) [Burundi 2006] amidst challenges to social transformation and security. The documents reviewed in this study demonstrates key policy reforms in terms of basic public services such as education, health and social services. The policy of free healthcare for pregnant women and children under age five is reflective of increased government expenditure on health provisions. A national gender policy was adopted by the national government in terms of promoting women's rights and interests, including women's representation in the political system (through the National Assembly, Senate, and the executive branch) [Burundi 2012]. In addition, the education policy of universal free primary education aimed at improving gender parity in access to education, indicates some evidence of impact on increased enrolment rates [Burundi 2012]. The emergent evidence of national-level policies relating to children, early childhood development and peacebuilding listed below shows a country that is beginning to develop frameworks for its public sector policy development and implementation.

#### *How are children and childhood portrayed in policy?*

Early childhood services in Burundi are jointly administered by several ministries and organisations comprising The Ministry of Education (Pre-school Education Department), Ministry of Public Health, Ministry for Social Action and the Promotion of Women, and various non-governmental organizations (UNESCO International Bureau of Education (2007)). The Pre-school Education Department is overall tasked to organize and coordinate public and private pre-school education activities. Key national goals were set to improve the early childhood sector which entailed:

- setting standards for the organization of pre-school education;
- guidance for, coordination and assessment of nursery schools' activities;
- curriculum development and the production of teaching materials;
- involvement of the population and local authorities in the organization of this type of education (UNESCO International Bureau of Education (2007)).

The establishment of the Pre-school Education Department in 1998 as an administrative body within the Ministry of Education with the sole purpose of managing and supervising pre-primary education is reflective of the government's political will to improve early childhood provisions in the country (UNESCO International Bureau of Education (2007)).

Early childhood or pre-primary education in Burundi is considered part of basic non-formal education. Two main types of pre-school services exist: 1) nursery classes attached to primary schools and managed directly by the directors of primary schools and 2) community preschool services managed by the private sector e.g. community care centres, preschool circles. However, despite clear government intent to improve early childhood services, issues pertaining to the access and quality of provisions and teacher training remain, with no official programme or legislation governing the opening and management of preschools in Burundi [Burundi 2008]. Policies showed some articulation of the importance of children's role in terms of their rights to education and security, although this articulation is mainly evident through the education and social sector policies, rather than early childhood development or peacebuilding policies per se.

#### *How is peacebuilding encouraged?*

Over the years Burundi's fragility and conflict crises have had significant impact on the country's socio-economic development and public sector services including education, health and social services. As reflected through the policy documents reviewed in this study, the country's post-conflict challenges include insufficient capital production and domestic growth, limited public resources, and inadequate levels of public sector management [Burundi 2006]. The instability of the macroeconomic climate, weak infrastructure and quality of basic social services remain key challenges to the country's development.

However, despite these challenges, the policy review shows evidence of the national government's commitment to maintaining peace. In the latest Poverty Strategy Paper [Burundi 2012b], there is clear recognition of peacebuilding as 'integral to creating an environment that will foster a new national process of shared prosperity', moving from a framework of policy development dictated by urgency and humanitarian needs to more long-term policy strategies based on growth and sustainable development' [Burundi 2012b].

References to peacebuilding are also strongly embedded in the policies pertaining to the rebuilding of public sector services at both the niche and regime level. For example, in March 2002, the transitional government established a sectoral education policy with action plans to achieve a more equitable education system, covering all levels of education from preschool to higher education. A major drive of the education policy is to improve literacy rates and access to education. A notable action plan cited in this policy are measures undertaken to reach those excluded from the education system including 'The construction and rehabilitation of schools in disadvantaged rural school infrastructure to reduce the student / teacher ratio and allow the removal of the double shift classes' (p15) [Burundi 2008] In both Burundi's Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers published in 2006 and 2012, there is evidence of community mobilisation and interventions, with numerous mentions of grassroots activities and grassroots involvement in building a community infrastructure for peace and reconciliation. The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper [Burundi 2012] states that the government has adopted a national health development plan for 2011-2015 (p21) and national-level programmes on reintegration to facilitate the demobilization and disarmament of former soldiers. There is a clear statement that 'one of the government's major priorities in its national reconciliation and peace consolidation policy is to seek peaceful cohabitation through socioeconomic reintegration programs.' [Burundi 2012] (49) In sum, peacebuilding is strongly featured in the policies with the inclusion of children as part of the general population and more specifically, as a vulnerable group needing protection.

#### *Policy highlights*

A wide range of policies and policy-related items were retrieved and reviewed on the Republic of Burundi. This included social sector related policies such as the Poverty Reduction Strategies Papers, Education policies and Health initiatives policy. The review showed evidence of the Burundi's government's intent in promoting sustainable peace, through the fostering of links between education and peace, to improving formal education, pre-primary education and the development of coherent national policies in order to create an integrated and peaceful society. As the education policy document states [Burundi 2008], the mission of the Ministry in charge of education is to 'design, plan and implement a coherent national policy on formal education;', 'Promote the development of preschool education;', 'Ensure school children, pupils and students a civic, moral and own intellectual foster an acute awareness of national realities;', and 'Participate in the education for peace, democracy and the rule of law and freedoms of the human person in the school and academia.' There is also evidence of the development of related strategies in key areas such as gender equality and child protection, and the strengthening of community-based interventions to support and protect children especially those who particularly disadvantaged such as orphans and other vulnerable children; thus highlighting the commitment of the national government and non-government organisations to improve the lives of the children in Burundi in its post-conflict state.

However, despite clear national government intentions towards the promotion of sustainable peace, key challenges remain:

1. While there are acknowledged links between the role of education and peace, including children's rights to education and a peaceful society, there does not appear to be clear

articulation of children's participation and role as active contributors to the peacebuilding process.

2. There is clear policy intent to demobilise and disarm former combats of conflict from the country's long-standing civil war history, but evidence of successful reintegration of children and young people in the post-conflict society remains unclear.
3. Uncertainties with the country's political stability continues to have an impact on basic public services and this can constitute a threat to children's lives and the general population in the transition from conflict and emergency to reconciliation and peace.
4. A policy gap remains in the prioritisation of ECD and the linkages with peacebuilding and national development. There is government recognition of children's rights to education and basic social services, as well as acknowledgement of their vulnerability as a result of the country's conflict. However, a comprehensive coverage of ECD in engendering structural social reforms through the enhancement of child protection and children's holistic development is yet to be adequately addressed at policy level, which has significant potential leverage for peacebuilding and social cohesion (UNICEF 2015a).
5. Policy focus on children and families – the policy alludes to the importance of 'building and sustaining families and communities' [Burundi 2000] and creating a favourable climate for community cohesion and development [Burundi 2012]. However, a more explicit policy strategy and direction in creating opportunities for children and families in the ways in which they can contribute to building community cohesion is absent.

## Chad

### *Country Profile*

The Republic of Chad is part of Central Africa, bordering Libya, Sudan, Cameroon and Nigeria. The country is strategically situated within an important transit zone for trade in the region (African Development Bank 2009). It is ethnically diverse and divided into multiple regions with over two hundred ethnic and linguistic groups. Chad has experienced a long history of conflict as a result of political violence and recurrent political coups, including two political and military crises in 2006 and 2008 (N'djamena-Tchad (2013)). Over the last two decades, the country has been confronted with conflicts and instability as a result of discord among armed political groups and the Government; the most recent of these conflict having taken place in May 2009 (African Development Bank 2009). A conflict analysis of Chad highlights the recurring coup d'états, civil war, and violence that are fuelled by political groups competing for power (UNICEF 2015b). The key conflict drivers include regional, ethnic and sectarian divides, internal displacement, food insecurity and humanitarian crises, and deep-seated poverty. To-date, the country is governed by the ruling party, the Patriotic Salvation Movement (PSM), but political stability and national security are tenuous. The country is also subject to cross-border instability and the impact of conflict with neighbouring countries. Chad generates rich mining and oil production but is subject to the exploitation of natural resources and disasters. Thus, despite its rich resource, the country is ranked 184 out of 187 on the Human Development Index as one of the poorest nations in the world (United Nations Development Programme (2013)). It has a significantly high level of poverty and is identified by the OECD as a 'fragile' state (OECD 2013). There are however, encouraging developments made by the Chad government in moving the country towards reconciliation and the resolution of regional conflicts among armed groups (UNICEF 2015b).

### *What national-level policies are there related to children, early childhood development and peacebuilding?*

The review identified four policies related to early childhood development and peacebuilding:

1. Le Ministere de l'Education Nationale (2008) Le Developpement de l'Education: Rapport National du Tchad.
2. République du Tchad (2012) Stratégie intérimaire pour l'Education et l'alphabetisation 2013 - 2015.
3. N'djamena-Tchad (2013) Programme Pays pour un Travail Décent (PPTD) 2013 – 2015.
4. Government of Chad with the support of the United Nations Development (2014) Chad Plan D'Organisation Des Secours Du Tchad 2014.

Chad is supported in part by international stakeholders working in collaboration with the Government to facilitate the coordination and implementation of national policy agendas. The review shows an evolving policy landscape that is informed by dialogues between the Government and various governmental and non-governmental groups to promote social and economic reforms. Key partner agencies include the European Union (EU), the Bank Group, the World Bank, IMF, the French Development Agency (AFD), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (KfW-GTZ) and the Swiss Cooperation Agency (CS) (African Development Bank 2009). The review shows recognition of the weaknesses and challenges facing the country as a result of sustained conflict, marked by persistent poverty and vulnerability.

A key policy impetus is the strengthening of the country's governance and basic infrastructures such as water and sanitation, electricity and transportation (African Development Bank 2009). There is evidence of a national focus across the policies in enhancing Chad's socioeconomic growth and the alleviation of poverty. For example, an early poverty reduction strategy paper set out by the International Monetary Fund (2007) outlined a key strategic objective in addressing poverty issues

and reducing poverty indicators by 2015. The policy highlighted the role of institutional mechanism and monitoring tools for the implementation of sectoral strategies by various government ministries in Chad in meeting their responsibility for poverty reduction (International Monetary Fund 2007). The policy proposed that a high level government committee was to be held responsible for supervising the implementation of the strategy and the adoption of a planned schedule for monitoring and assessment to ensure that the country's poverty reduction projects and programmes are effectively implemented locally and regionally, and to assess their impact on beneficiaries (International Monetary Fund 2007, p.20). A subsequent policy document, a country strategy paper produced by the African Development Bank (2009) for the period of 2010 to 2014 addressed major constraints facing the country, in particular poor governance and inadequacies in its basic infrastructure. The policy revealed a clear focus on the Government's strategic vision to promote national development through medium and long-term economic growth in order to reduce poverty and vulnerability. The policy strategies set out in the strategy paper 2010-2014 (2009) included (i) an ecological challenge to protect the environment and natural resource (ii) a political challenge to settle and prevent conflicts and consolidate peace so as to promote economic and social development and (iii) an economic challenge to define and implement a coherent set of sectoral policies to accelerate growth, strengthen the social sector and reduce poverty (African Development Bank. 2009, p9).

Reinforcing the rhetoric of national development, the Country Programme for Decent Work (DWCPs) or N'djamena-Tchad (2013) Programme Pays pour un Travail Décent (PPTD) 2013-2015 articulates the Government's vision to promote decent work and employment conditions for the people of Chad as a national priority. Targeting the general population of Chad, the policy states that the 'fundamental aim is to place employment at the heart of social and economic policies to create more quality jobs.' (N'djamena-Tchad 2013, p.1). It outlines the implementation of an integrated strategy for Education, Training and Employment (EFE), with the primary objectives of ensuring the promotion of human resources and creating the relevant conditions that enable the people of Chad to participate in and contribute to socioeconomic growth. Overall, the policies show clear government intent and national focus on the rebuilding of the Chad society for the future.

#### *How are children and childhood portrayed in policy?*

The country strategy paper 2010-2014 (African Development Bank. 2009) outlined pertinent policy issues to be addressed in regards to improving young children's lives in Chad. The policy agenda covered the reduction of child mortality, the high percentage of underweight children, and the alleviation of malnutrition of under 5-year olds. The government recognised the important role of education for national development and took action to improve education across the age groups from basic education for young children to adult literacy. For example, the education policy [Chad 2008] introduces a new education sector strategy 'Decennial Plan for Development of Education and Literacy' to achieve the national objectives of increasing educational enrolment and improvements in the level of education and literacy among the Chad people. It recognised the important place of education, including the role of early childhood education [Chad 2008 p3] as a specialised provision of nursery schools and kindergartens for children aged three to six years. Pre-school education in Chad was recognised as the responsibility of several government departments such as the Ministry for Social Action, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education. Within the Ministry of Education, the 'Basic Education Division' has been tasked with the responsibility of implementing, monitoring and regulating the country's basic education policy including that of teacher supervision and the administration of public primary schools. The 'childhood division' of the Ministry for Social Action and the Family took responsibility for supervising early childhood education through pre-school education in public and private kindergartens and in community nurseries for three to five year-olds (UNESCO International Bureau of Education 2006). An overarching national agenda was the restoration of effective administration and management of the education system in Chad.

Reinforcing a similar rhetoric of the promotion of education for children, the policy document on an Interim Strategy for Education and Literacy 2013-2015 [Chad 2012] encouraged the promotion of basic universal primary education to ensure greater efficiency in the management and monitoring of the education system for the benefit of children.

There was a general recognition of the vulnerability of children as a result of prevailing poverty and weak governance. In the education policy [Chad 2008, p17], children were portrayed predominantly as victims and vulnerable. The policy highlighted strategies to improve access to education for disadvantaged and vulnerable children such as girls, nomadic children, child refugees, displaced children, street children, and all who are victims of conflict and vulnerable. Children were referred to in general as a group which was most vulnerable to various forms of social exclusion, and whose socio-economic or social vulnerability impeded their opportunities to schooling and education [Chad 2008 p24].

A later policy document, [Chad 2012], maintained a national focus in addressing the vulnerability of children and prioritising the promotion of basic primary education. The impetus for this was the country's high illiteracy rate particularly for girls and women, and low retention in primary education. With reference to older children, the social sector policy programme on Decent Work [Chad 2013] re-instated the government's commitment to youth education. The policy revealed that in his inaugural speech in 2011, the President of Chad affirmed the primacy of the role of youth and women in contributing to the country's development, 'Young people and women are the primary vector of this struggle for development (N'djamena-Tchad 2013, p.5). The policy referred to the promotion of education as essentially to enable sustainable development and socioeconomic regeneration, 'Ultimately, it is about ensuring that all Chadian children a universal quality primary education, eliminate inequalities in access to education, health, nutrition and non-agricultural employment and establish social safety nets needed to improve the living conditions of street children, the disabled, women, people of the third age and other underprivileged of society.' (N'djamena-Tchad 2013, p.5).

#### *How is peacebuilding encouraged?*

The term 'peacebuilding' was not explicitly referenced in the policies on Chad, but the review showed some national intent at encouraging the principles of peacebuilding through the promotion of national reconciliation, good governance and national development (African Development Bank 2009). The Government's strategic policy approach appeared to be one of continual strengthening of public sector governance that was aimed at 'improving transparency and accountability in public financial management' in order to advance the progress in the national reconciliation process (African Development Bank 2009). The Government took efforts in initiating peace negotiations with Sudan under the auspices of the African Union, as reflected by some of the progress made in building lasting peace and national reconstruction (African Development Bank 2009, p1). This progress was exemplified by the formation of a broad-based union Government in 2008 with members of the political oppositions that helped to enable some improvements in national security and the gradual recovery of some economic activities in Chad (African Development Bank 2009, p11).

In the education policy [Chad 2008], there was some discernible evidence of the recognition of Chad's past and current inequalities in the promotion of sustainable peace, even though peacebuilding per se is not explicitly mentioned. The policy recognised the country's stark socioeconomic inequalities as a consequence of conflict and in causing a massive surge of refugees and internally displaced people [Chad 2008]. The policy pointed towards the implementation of an emergency plan for displaced children or refugees from disaster areas due to inter-community conflicts and a focus on inclusive education [Chad 2008]. There was clear government intent to

review its policy strategies to improve access to education for girls, children who are displaced, nomadic and living in disadvantaged conditions. The policy suggested the mobilisation of all resources are necessary in order to promote inclusive education as a future educational vision for Chad and the realization of all children's rights to education. The policy advocated the strengthening of local, national and community partnerships, including partnerships with parents, civil society and religious leaders as agents of national development [Chad 2008 p.18]. The policy document for decent work [Chad 2013] promoted the importance of 'social dialogue and tripartism' and the social protection of workers in Chad. Overall, the policies on Chad therefore showed some evidence of encouraging peace and social security, primarily through the fostering of economic and social development.

#### *Policy highlights*

The review showed emerging strengths in the government's drive towards enhancing socioeconomic and national development. There was a clear national level focus on the role of education for the benefit of children in general, with some references to national reconciliation. The latest UNESCO report on Education for All (UNESCO 2015a) indicated that the country has made some progress in rebuilding the Chad society, in particular with an increase in its educational enrolment and primary school completion rates. However, alongside these strengths, challenges remain:

1. Capacity development for risk-informed, conflict-sensitive administration of education services - A key challenge is that of building institutional capacities in public administration and improving socioeconomic conditions. The country continues to be limited by its weak governance and limited public infrastructure (African Development Bank 2009).
2. Gender inequality - the review showed that while some progress has been made in enhancing gender equality through increased enrolment of girls in schooling and primary education, significant disparities remained in terms of access to education for girls and boys (African Development Bank 2009; UNESCO 2015a).
3. Strengthening peacebuilding - the findings showed that a stronger and more explicit emphasis on peacebuilding and the promotion of sustainable peace across the policies is needed.
4. Limited provision and access to early childhood education – young children's access to quality early childhood education programmes and public provisions, for example through kindergarten or community childcare centre provisions remains low. There is a lack of clear, identifiable policies that are focused specifically on early childhood development (UNESCO International Bureau of Education 2006).
5. Limited focus on Early Childhood Development – the review showed the absence of a targeted ECD policy with very limited focus on children 0 to 8 years. Preschool education is alluded to in an early policy *Le Développement de l'Éducation: Rapport National du Tchad* (2008) but is only regarded in-so-far as a precursor to primary education and education in general.



## Côte d'Ivoire

### *Country Profile*

The republic of Côte d'Ivoire or the Ivory Coast is a country located in Western sub-Saharan Africa, and shares its borders with Liberia, Ghana, Mali, Burkina Faso and Guinea. The country was previously a French colony during the nineteenth century and was established an independent state in 1960. Côte d'Ivoire has a long history of social and political unrest, with recurring conflict since the late 90s [Côte D'Ivoire Government; 2011]. It is one of the most resource-rich but socio-political fragile states in the world (OECD Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development 2013), with a low human development and high levels of poverty. The nation has experienced deep conflict with a coup d'état in 1999 and two civil wars, the most recent during 2010-2011. In 2011, a general election was held in a move to re-establish some constitutional order but a post-election crisis subsequently occurred. Since 2013, political dialogues between the ruling government party and those in opposition were initiated, with the support of international agencies. However, the impact of decades of violence and political uncertainty continue to beset the country (The World Bank, 2015). A country analysis shows the key drivers of conflict continues to be ethnic divisions, political corruption and a general climate of violence (UNICEF 2014a). A United Nations periodic review raised concerns about the inadequacy of the government in addressing issues of national security and reconciliation in ensuring a safe and enabling environment (Amnesty International 2015). A 2015 United Nations Resolution further affirms the need for continued improvement in the country's tenuous security situation and to work towards conflict resolution, asserting that 'the Government of Côte d'Ivoire bears primary responsibility for ensuring peace, stability and the protection of civilians in Côte d'Ivoire' (United National Security Council (2015b) S/RES/2226 2015, p.2). To date, the country continues to face threats of instability, notably in regards to issues related to human rights, socio-political conflict, social integration particularly with the reintegration of former combatants.

### *What national-level policies are there related to children, early childhood development and peacebuilding?*

The review identified four policies related to early childhood development and peacebuilding:

1. Ministère de l'Éducation et de la Formation de Base (1998) Plan National de Développement du secteur Éducation/Formation 1998-2010 Côte d'Ivoire.  
[http://www.ilo.org/public/french/employment/skills/hrdr/topic\\_n/t3\\_cot.htm](http://www.ilo.org/public/french/employment/skills/hrdr/topic_n/t3_cot.htm)
2. Organisation Internationale Du Travail (2008) Programme pays pour un travail decent 2008-2013 Côte d'Ivoire.
3. Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur; (2009) Plan d'actions à moyen terme du secteur de l'éducation Côte d'Ivoire
4. Côte d'IvoireGovernment (2011) Côte d'Ivoire Plan d'Actions A Moyen Terme RPAMT\_2011.

The findings suggest that a policy priority for the government of Côte d'Ivoire is that of establishing national security and development. A report submitted to the United Nations Security Country described an ongoing challenge towards national reconciliation and building a social cohesion strategy (United Nations Security Council 2015). An early national education policy [Côte d'Ivoire 1998] emphasised the importance of key reforms to strengthen the sector's role in Education / Training in poverty reduction and national development A similar rhetoric of national development was later Côte d'Ivoire with a focus on restoring the education sector [Côte D'Ivoire 2011]. The overarching policy drive was to 'reinstall urgently the education system in its fundamentals with a focus on post-crisis cyclical challenges; and ensure a solid foundation for its development over time, taking into account the structural challenges prior to the crisis and that remain.' [Côte D'Ivoire 2011, p4). The policy outlined the structural challenges facing the future of the country and the



importance of ensuring the development of an effective and equitable education sector. Significantly, the document defined the policy priorities of the government of Côte d'Ivoire ranging from early childhood education to higher education in terms of restoring the education system which has suffered gravely from conflict and crisis. The policy also recognised the pivotal role of education and vocational training in contributing to the country's overall development in terms of enhancing employment and labour productivity, growth and poverty reduction [Côte D'Ivoire 2011, p15]. Supported by external stakeholders such as UNICEF, The World Bank, and the African Development Bank, the government of Côte d'Ivoire indicated its intention to invest in the financing of universal primary education [Côte D'Ivoire 2011, p13]. However, while policy developments over the last two decades indicated that Côte d'Ivoire has achieved some progress in terms of the re-establishment of macroeconomic, structural and social policies, challenges nonetheless remain to consolidate peace and strengthen social cohesion (International Monetary Fund 2015).

#### *How are children and childhood portrayed in policy?*

Preschool education in Côte d'Ivoire is generally overseen by the Ministry of Education. Although there are no identifiable policy targeted specifically at early childhood development, the review showed some intention by the government of Côte d'Ivoire to develop and promote the education sector including childcare provisions, in a bid to prepare children for subsequent schooling [Côte d'Ivoire 2011, p16]. The policy evidence showed the role of children as constructed predominantly in terms of their vulnerability and their rights to education and a stable environment. The national education policy [Côte d'Ivoire 1998], explicitly recognised children as having human rights with their basic rights to education. The policy asserted that 'Significant efforts have been made by the government to alleviate the financial costs to families. These include the abolition of tuition fees in primary education and the elimination of parallel contributions. Specific measures were planned to reduce the opportunity cost of the children's education represents for poor households.' [Côte d'Ivoire 1998, p.4]. A later document [Côte d'Ivoire 2011], showed more extensive coverage of children from the early childhood stage to higher education, as it defined the policy priorities for education. The policy plan essentially outlined the government's vision for the next three years in enhancing provisions for children, by restoring the education system through the prioritisation of primary education in areas that have been most affected, and to initiate progress towards the universalization of quality primary education [Côte d'Ivoire 2011]. The document went on to highlight the role of early childhood education in benefitting the most vulnerable children: 'Early Childhood Education (ECE) essentially limited at the preschool, concentrated mainly in urban areas, covering less than 10% of the pre-school population. Developing alternatives are necessary to "develop and improve the care and education of young children and especially for the benefit of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.' [Côte d'Ivoire 2011]. The review also revealed a focus on parental education, with government intent to promote parental education within supportive community structures. Strongly featured as part of the education plan in Côte d'Ivoire, there was some evidence of the promotion of early childhood education and to increase provisions from 10% to 20% by 2020, particularly in rural areas for vulnerable and disadvantaged populations [Côte d'Ivoire 2011, p9].

Significantly, an overriding discourse in the policies on Côte d'Ivoire is the focus on vulnerable children, and the recognition that a significant number of Ivorian children live in vulnerable conditions due to poverty. The mid-term statement for education, for example, stated that "Many children do not attend school, even if there is a nearby often because of family poverty. The strategy aimed to help the most vulnerable children to attend school through measures that reduce or offset the costs of families." [Côte d'Ivoire 2009 p.10]. The policy articulated the government's commitment towards the promotion of early childhood programmes in that 'Large section of classes for children of five years will be gradually implemented in public primary schools and in rural areas as a priority and for the poor' [Côte d'Ivoire 2009 p.7]. In a move towards the delivery of more

integrated provisions, the document stated that a national policy on a school nutrition strategy will seek to 'prioritise improvement of service (with the aim of providing one meal a day school) in favour of children with the most acute risk of failure in school attendance. This targeting will be done geographically, priority areas being determined by two criteria of poverty and access rates / completion rates.' [Côte d'Ivoire 2009 p.11]. An inherent link was therefore established between education and health policies with the aim of improving children's welfare. Similarly, the subsequent policy asserted the need to increase access to education for the most vulnerable children, in particular girls. The policy set out several measures to enhance education access and reduce the financial implications for families in their children's schooling, through for instance '(i) building school canteens, (ii) free distribution of school kits to children orphaned by AIDS, (iii) the distribution of dry rations to girls, (iv) the provision of micronutrients and essential drugs; (v) the removal of barriers related to enrolment in primary education.' [Côte d'Ivoire 2011, p9]. A rhetoric of child protection is therefore consistent across the policies. In particular, the social sector policy for decent work specifically mentioned children and their protection against all forms of child labour and exploitation. The undertaking of a national survey on child labour was an indication that due attention has been placed on the social protection of children at national government level (Organisation Internationale Du Travail 2008).

#### *How is peacebuilding encouraged?*

The review on Côte d'Ivoire showed some policy evidence of the promotion of the principles of peacebuilding through social reforms in schooling and education. For example, the early 1998 education policy [Côte d'Ivoire 1998] described the role of schools in promoting social integration and equality: 'To this end, the school should play a key role, ... in order to give everyone the opportunity to integrate into society for all children of all social strata', to ensure 'equal opportunities between rural and urban, equal opportunities between men and women.' [Côte d'Ivoire 1998 p2]. The document went on to assert the important role of schooling in contributing to the principles of sustainable peace in 'building a society of tolerance, increased freedom and peaceful democracy' [Côte d'Ivoire 1998 p.2]. The document was clearly driven by a key policy objective to establish equity for the future progress of the country. In addition, it affirmed the right to education for all citizens in Côte d'Ivoire as a way of building human capital and encouraging citizenship. The policy showed the intentions of the government of Côte d'Ivoire in providing opportunities for people to improve their standard of living and increase participation in the building of sustainable development in Ivory Coast.

The mid-term education policy document [Côte d'Ivoire 2009], highlighted the provision of niche or grassroots activities in the promotion of national development and social integration. For example, the policy mentioned the development of parenting programmes and education for preschool children and the reorientation of the education system in encouraging social justice in terms of greater fairness and equality. The subsequent mid-term policy recognised past and present social inequalities as the first step in the development of new policy strategy, with establishing the foundations of a healthy sector development, equitable and conscious of using the human, financial and material resources efficiently [Côte d'Ivoire 2011]. The policy also alluded to the reparation and reconciliation towards sustainable peace through the rebuilding of the education sector in the 'the rehabilitation and reconstruction of movable and immovable property of the degraded education or destroyed during the crisis' [Côte d'Ivoire 1998, p7]. Thus, while peacebuilding was not explicitly mentioned in the policies, there is evidence of a national drive to promote social equality and justice as core principles in the progress towards sustainable peace.

#### *Policy highlights*

The policy review on Côte d'Ivoire showed government intent to address issues of national security, and the social and economic inequalities in society. Significantly, there was also a distinct policy

drive to enhance the education system for the benefit of society, for example through the promotion of universal primary education. However, despite government intent and aspirations, key challenges persist:

1. Ongoing structural challenges - the country faces significant challenges in the implementation of an efficient and equitable education sector due to the country's longstanding social and economic crisis.
2. Inequality in access to education remains a major concern – less than half of Ivorian pupils complete primary school which is well below the regional average [Côte d'Ivoire 2011]. There is a need for clear actionable policies to enhance equal opportunities and access to Education for All. A conflict analysis report showed that the country's long-standing experience of conflict and natural disasters have had severe impact on Chad's education system in compromising access, equity and quality for its people (UNICEF 2014a).
3. Funding of the education sector – the country has been affected by difficult macroeconomic conditions in the last two decades which has had dire consequences in terms of the decline and freezing of external funding for education. Funding constraints have considerably inhibited the effective use of resources and improvements to the education sector [Côte d'Ivoire 2011].
4. Absence of policies related to children and early childhood development - the questionnaire responses suggested there are no discernible policies related to children or early childhood development, largely due to limited resources and a lack of coordination among government ministries. A key area of advocacy is therefore policy development with a clear vision of prioritising children and early childhood development for the immediate future.<sup>1</sup> Concerted policy focus and direction for the value of early childhood education and supporting children's holistic development have the potential to contribute significantly to building social cohesion in Côte d'Ivoire.

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<sup>1</sup> Corroborated by key informants.

## Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

### *Country Profile*

Previously known as Zaire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is located in Central Africa. The country is rich in natural resources with oil, mining and minerals but political instability and conflict have resulted in weak governance and deep, fragile conditions. The country has witnessed a series of major conflicts and uprisings over the years, notably as a result of the Congolese Civil Wars in 1996 which resulted in the deaths of millions of people. The DRC is one of the world's poorest countries, with more than seventy percent of the population living below the income national poverty line and ranked 186 out of 187 with one of the lowest levels of human development (United Nations Development Programme 2013). The impact of conflict continues to have a detrimental effect on the country and its people. The security situation in the DRC remains dire with an upsurge in violence by armed groups with significant numbers of civilians displaced and human rights abuses (Amnesty International 2015). The report reveals sustained abuse have been inflicted by armed groups against the Congolese civilians including the recruitment of children as child soldiers. The DRC is on the list of fragile nations which are susceptible to instability and which possess very limited capacity to carry out basic governance functions. It is also one of ten most aid-dependent countries in the world where a significant proportion (over half) of the country's aid is dependent on donor contributions from the international community (OECD 2013). The underlying conflict drivers in the country include the persistent presence of armed groups, ethnic and tribal conflict, and weak governance (UNICEF 2015c). In recent years, some efforts have been made by the government to initiate peace consolidation and re-establish stability to engender economic recovery, as supported by international agencies such as the World Bank, the European Union and the International Monetary Fund [DRC 2013]. In 2011, a general election was held in the country. However, this was marred by irregularities in the election process and renewed fighting. The country continues to be mired in acute crisis and enormous challenges persist in the country's recovery towards sustainable peace.

### *What national-level policies are there related to children, early childhood development and peacebuilding?*

The review identified seven policies related to early childhood development and peacebuilding:

1. Commission Nationale de la République Démocratique du Congo pour l'UNES (2008) Le Développement de l'Éducation: Rapport National de la République Démocratique du Congo.
2. Ministère de l'Enseignement Primaire, Secondaire et Professionnel; République Démocratique du Congo (2010) Stratégie pour le Développement du Sous-Secteur de l'EPSP 2010/2011 - 2015/2016. <http://www.eduquepsp.cd/une-strategie-de-developpement-pour-un-ministere-determinant-gest-lenseignement-primaire-secondaire-et-professionnel.html>
3. Democratic Republic of the Congo. Ministry of Planning (2011) Second Generation Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (GPRSP2) 2011 -2015.
4. République Démocratique Du Congo (2012) Programme Pays pour un Travail Decent (PPTD) 2013-2016.
5. Ministère de l'Enseignement Primaire, Secondaire et Professionnel; République Démocratique du Congo (2012) Plan Intérimaire de l'Éducation 2012 -2014 République Démocratique du Congo . <http://www.eduquepsp.cd/plan-interimaire-de-leducation.html>
6. Ministry of Primary, Secondary, Vocational Education (2013) All Children in School by 2015. Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children. National Survey on the situation of out-of-school in Democratic Republic of Congo.

7. Republique du Congo. The Minister of Primary, Secondary, Literacy, The Minister of Higher Education, The Minister of Technical, Vocational Education, Skills Training, Employment (2015) Strategie Sectorielle de l'Education 2015-2025.

The policy review indicated that as key policy drivers, international stakeholders such as The World Bank, United Nations (UN) and UN agencies play a vital role in the DRC's national policy development, with a focus on re-establishing social cohesion and peaceful relations. A 2015 UN resolution concerning the DRC conflict situation aimed to reaffirm 'the basic principles of peacekeeping' and reinforces the importance of peace and security, including the protection of children and civilians in armed conflicts (United National Security Council 2015a, p1). The Resolution also affirmed continued international support for the DRC government to encourage and accelerate national sector reforms, and the development of a national strategy for the establishment of effective and accountable security institutions. Following decades of acute conflict and fragility, the impact of conflict and poor economic conditions have severely impacted on the country's education system and public sector. A distinct policy strategy has been the implementation of strategic objectives for the development of the education sector [DRC 2013]. The policy advocated for enhanced resources and equipment such as the provision of textbooks and teaching materials as a way of improving learning conditions (Ministry of Primary, Secondary and Vocational Education 2013, p85).

An overarching policy strategy of the government was also the promotion of social and economic recovery, particularly in terms of building capacity of its public sector provisions and community development. For example, a ministerial order was introduced in 2011 on the creation and operation of 'awakening community spaces' in DRC as a way of rebuilding the country (Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo 2011). The focus here was supporting the provision of community-based integrated activities for children aged three to five and the promotion of early childhood areas such as health, nutrition and sanitation. It was a key step towards the strengthening of the early childhood sector in DRC (UNICEF 2015d). A priority for the country is also the reduction of poverty, and establishing strong governance, macroeconomic stability and growth [DRC 2010]. A national aim was to build an inclusive education system and quality, alongside a national effort to promote economic growth and peace [DRC 2012b]. The three strategic objectives stated in the policy document are 1) to increase access, equity and retention in education 2) improve the quality and relevance of education, and 3) strengthen governance. The Interim Plan for Education seeks to focus on educational reforms including the provision of 'free' primary education. A national strategy of development for the primary, secondary and professional education sector [DRC 2010] recognised the structural challenges compounded by the DRC's post-conflict and reconstruction situation and affirmed the commitment of the Ministry of Primary, Secondary and Vocational Education (MEPSP) in initiating educational reform. There was also a clear national-level intent to improve access and accessibility to primary education; improve the quality of teaching and learning; and strengthen overall governance [DRC 2013] Overall, the review of national policies on DRC showed emerging progression towards the country's recovery and reconciliation.

#### *How are children and childhood portrayed in policy?*

The review showed government recognition across the policies for the basic rights of children in the Congolese society. Education policy focused on children's rights to an inclusive education with an emphasis on vulnerable children as a key policy strategy. The policy advocated the principles of free primary education for all children and the importance of gender equity in facilitating access to schooling for all girls in the DRC [DRC 2008]. The National Education Act established the importance of education for all children as part of state provisions in the DRC (République Démocratique du Congo 2014). In recent years, a key policy drive has been the promotion of universal education and children's rights to education. To this extent, the Interim Plan for Education 2012/2014 and 'Global

Initiative on Out-of-School Children' [DRC 2013] exemplified two national level policies which aim to promote inclusive education and schooling, particularly for marginalised children and girls. The document proposed targeted policy strategies such as national campaigns and raising awareness for the provision of educational programmes including the award of scholarships and the provision of financial incentives for households. The 'Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children' [DRC 2013] document pertained to two main groups: school-age out-of-school children and children attending school but at high risk of dropping out. This included children across the spectrum from pre-primary and primary school aged children who are not enrolled in pre-primary or primary school; secondary school age children who are enrolled neither in secondary school nor at a higher level; children enrolled in primary school who are at risk of dropping out; as well as children enrolled in secondary school who are at risk of dropping out (DRC 2013, p16). The comprehensive coverage of children across the age groups indicated clear government intent on promoting the role of education for the benefit of children. The policy raised concerns about low levels of education and literacy, and the role of families in supporting children's rights to basic education [DRC 2013, p12]. There was also clear focus on the social protection of children particularly as vulnerable individuals who are at risk of social and economic exploitation. The 'Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children' [DRC 2013] policy document stated 'Regarding child labour, especially where hazardous work is concerned, there is a need to reinforce the laws protecting children's rights and to expand parenting programmes [DRC 2013, p12]. An overarching discourse of children's rights and protection therefore permeates the policy documents.

#### *How is peacebuilding encouraged?*

The review demonstrated government recognition of the importance of ensuring the DRC's progress towards sustainable peace, with the support of external international partners such as The World Bank, the African Development Bank and European Union, and the efforts made by the Congolese government to establish democracy and peace to enable socioeconomic recovery [DRC 2013, p14]. The Policy Dialogue Forum on Education and Peace in the Democratic Republic of Congo (2012) was seminal in promoting the creation of a national peace education committee and establishing a peace curriculum in the education system of the DRC (Ministry of Primary, Secondary and Professional Training MEPSP) DRC INEE Working Group on Education and Fragility, UNICEF, Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), United States Agency for International Development (USAID) 2012). The initiative brought together a global network of NGOs, UN agencies, donor agencies, governments, academic institutions and other stakeholders to develop a space for dialogue and information sharing on the role of education in promoting national development and conflict-sensitive policies that are aligned with national priorities which can contribute to peacebuilding in the fragile context of the DRC.

In addition, the 'Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children' [DRC 2013] document encouraged the consolidation of peace through targeted actions such as publicising the laws on children's rights and the introduction of training courses for all stakeholders on consolidating peace and promotion of children's rights [DRC 2013, p98]. The policy also recognised recent efforts being undertaken by the Congolese government in establishing a sustainable socioeconomic environment characterised by democracy and peace. While there were no known peacebuilding policy per se, the principles of peacebuilding were underpinned in an earlier policy through the 'Programme Pays pour un Travail Decent (PPTD) 2013-2016 [DRC 2012a]'. The document focused on employment generation in a post-conflict context and demonstrated the willingness of the Government to achieve key strategic objectives such as the reduction of poverty and the strengthening of basic socio-economic infrastructures. The principles of peacebuilding were encouraged through a policy of redistribution and recognition of past or current inequalities to improve financial and economic governance, and the consolidation of peace and democracy [DRC 2012a].

Similarly, in an earlier policy 'Le Developpment de l'Education: Rapport National de la Republique Democratique du Congo (2008)', although not explicitly mentioned, there was recognition of the destructive impact of conflict on children and society particularly those on the education sector and the importance of rebuilding social cohesion [DRC 2008]. A more updated policy document the Second Generation Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (GPRSP2) 2011 -2015 (2011) articulated the government's progressive long-term vision for the DRC to become a peaceful country existing within secure borders, with political, economic and social institutions that are built on democratic values of equality. The poverty reduction strategy also included the development of a stable rural and urban economy with an inclusive and sustainable growth, and a country that is equipped with modern communication infrastructures and advances [DRC 2011]. The review therefore showed some evidence of national government agreement and support of the principles of peacebuilding, and the role of sustainable peace in rebuilding the Congolese society. With the support of international NGOs such as UNICEF, the DRC remains a central focus in the four-year Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy Programme (2012-2015) to strengthen resilience and social cohesion in the country.

### *Policy highlights*

The review showed that policy developments in the DRC as exemplified through the Interim Plan for Education 2012/2014 and other policy-related documents, demonstrated emerging efforts undertaken by the DRC government to rebuild public sector provisions and ensure children's basic rights are met, particularly in regards to education. With the support of the international community, policy strategies related to the promotion of universal education is being encouraged. Yet, while recognising the progress made in recent years, the DRC faced ongoing challenges, particularly related to policy, governance and funding:

1. Strengthen policy focus and need for clear strategic direction on early childhood development - the findings of the review was corroborated by responses from the questionnaire indicated which suggests there is a lack of clear, identifiable policies related specifically to children, early childhood development and/or peacebuilding in the DRC.<sup>2</sup>
2. Increased funding for education - The policy document on the Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children [DRC 2013] reported that limited or lack of funding remains a major obstacle for the delivery of educational provision in the DRC. The document advocated explicitly for 'a substantial increase in the State resources allocated to education' [DRC 2013 p12]. A significant percentage of teachers in the country were unpaid and this remains a major constraint in limiting the future development of the education sector.
3. Implementation of policy for primary education - While access to free universal primary education remained a key national goal as underpinned by the Millennium Development Goals, the report indicates that despite policy intentions, 'implementing measures did not follow' [DRC 2013 p87]. It has been known that free primary education (especially for the first four years of primary school) is far from being fully effective. Key factors that have been known to inhibit access to education and which remain key challenges facing the Congolese government is the availability and proximity of educational facilities, equipment, affordability, and availability of resources [DRC 2013 p55].
4. Political, social and economic stability - A fundamental challenge for the DRC is the maintenance of national security and political stability. A report by Amnesty International (2015) suggested that violence against women and girls is prevalent throughout the country with ongoing threats of human rights abuses, and renewed threats of conflict by armed groups (Amnesty International 2015). The country's social and economic instability remains a barrier to its growth and progress, exacerbated by a lack of effective structural reforms (UNICEF 2015c).

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<sup>2</sup> Corroborated by key informants.



## Ethiopia

### *Country Profile*

The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in east-central Africa, is one of the most densely populated nations in Africa with an estimated 84.7 million people reported in 2011 and comprises nine regional states [Ethiopia 2014]. Since the 1970s, the country has endured significant government and regime upheavals with several coups, political uprisings and natural disasters such as wide-scale drought and famines. In 1991, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front assumed governance of the capital, and in May a separatist guerrilla organization, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front, assumed control of Eritrea, a border province. Years of conflict followed between Eritrea and Ethiopia as a result of political disagreements over the demarcation of their borders, and in 1998, a full-scale war developed between the two countries with detrimental effects on both countries' already ailing economies. A formal peace agreement was eventually signed between in 2000 but political stability of the country remained tenuous. In 2010, Prime Minister Meles Zenawi of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) won the country's parliamentary elections, amidst international controversy that the votes had failed to meet international standards. Nevertheless, Zenawi became elected to Ethiopia's parliament to a fourth term. A few years of growth ensued, with the death of Prime Minister Zenawi in 2012. Since 2013, Mulatu Teshome Wirtu was voted to be the fourth president of Ethiopia and remains in government today. The ruling Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front remains in-situ, with a landslide victory in the recent elections in 2015. With its emergence from a period of instability and conflict, the country is making gradual progression in three main sectors - agriculture, industry and services, despite facing new onsets of droughts and natural disasters. A country analysis of the conflict situation also revealed persistent threats of geopolitical conflicts among neighbouring states, territorial disputes, ethnic and religious divisions (UNICEF 2015d). However, it is also apparent that internal relations within the country have improved significantly since 1991, with new political focus on cultural plurality and developing community group resilience (UNICEF 2015d). Increased government and donor investment in recent years in public services such as the education and health sectors appeared to have made positive impact on the country's human development indicators [Ethiopia 2014].

### *What national-level policies are there related to children, early childhood development and peacebuilding?*

The review identified seven policies related to early childhood development and peacebuilding in Ethiopia:

1. Federal Democratic Republic Government of Ethiopia (1994) Education and Training Policy
2. Ministry of Education (2002) The Education and Training Policy and Its Implementation.
3. Ministry of Education (2005) Education Sector Development Program III (Esdp-iii) 2005/2006 – 2010/2011. Program Action Plan.
4. Federal Ministry of Education (2009) Pastoralist Area Education Strategy. Ethiopia. [http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Ethiopia/Ethiopia\\_Pastoralist\\_Area\\_Education\\_Strategy.pdf](http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Ethiopia/Ethiopia_Pastoralist_Area_Education_Strategy.pdf)
5. The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. Federal Ministry (2010) Education Sector Development Program IV. Program Action Plan.
6. Ministry of Education (2010) School Improvement Program Guidelines. Final Draft. Improving the quality of education and student results for all children at primary and secondary schools.
7. International Labour Organisation (2014) Decent Work Country Programme 2014-15.



A key policy drive of the Ethiopian government is the development of its national plans for the future development of the country and improved public sector provisions (Ethiopia statistics summary 2002). A clear progression on the development of key national policies is evidenced in the country context. The Ethiopia Education policy (2002) for instance exemplified a clear sense of regeneration and rebuilding of society through new policy developments. The policy marked a key milestone in the context of Ethiopia as the government and Ethiopian people embarked on a new historical path to re-establish civil society and initiate reforms of its educational system. Referring to the historical context, the policy states, 'It was a time when the Ethiopian peoples liberated themselves from a centuries-old system of oppression, and rose up to form a new order of national equality and freedom, of development and democracy [Ethiopia 2002 p4]. The development of a latter educational policy by the Ethiopian Ministry of Education, The Education and Training Policy (2002) placed emphasis on gender equality and the education for girls as a focal point. The policy made reference to the gender equitability as a key indicator of the quality of its educational system. The policy called for the education of women in creating 'an enabling environment for the expansion of education' [Ethiopia 2002, p41] in that 'Educating a mother is educating the whole family' is a truth that must be respected by increasing women's involvement including in the expansion of Education' [Ethiopia 2002, p41].

Across the policy review on Ethiopia, the country's progress has been attributed to the development of clear national policy agendas, strong government commitment and cross-sectoral collaborations with international partners. A report by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (2012) lists Ethiopia as one of Africa's 20 fastest-growing economies compared with China, India and Brazil (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa 2014). A United Nations report on Ethiopia's progress on the MDGs showed significant advancement has been made in the country's attainment of the target goals including the reduction of extreme poverty and child mortality, and achieving universal primary education (United Nations Country Team 2012). The report noted sustained economic growth has been made over the over the past eight years with more than 65% of public expenditure has been spent on public welfare sectors such as education, health, agriculture, and basic infrastructure (United Nations Country Team 2012). The findings of the review indicated demonstrable government commitment to enhancing the country's macroeconomic development, including 'efforts to boost domestic resource mobilization to create the fiscal space needed to scale up pro-poor public expenditures including on social protection and building economic and social infrastructure.' (United Nations Country Team 2012, pix)

The policy agenda of the Ethiopian government and policymakers reflected a continued focus on developing strong social sector and education policies with the aim of reducing urban and rural inequality and strengthening social protection strategies (United Nations Country Team 2012). The Education Sector Development Program III (Esdp-iii) 2005/2006 – 2010/2011. Program Action Plan. [Ethiopia 2005] articulated the government's vision "to see all school-age children get access to quality primary education by the year 2015 and realize the creation of trained and skilled human power at all levels who will be driving forces in the promotion of democracy and development in the country" [Ethiopia 2010a p5]. Significantly, the engagement of communities to extend the quality of primary education for all school-age children to bring about sustainable development in the education sector is emphasised, with increased involvement of different stakeholders in the country [Ethiopia 2005, p5]. A subsequent proposed education plan in the form of 'School Improvement Program Guidelines.' highlighted the development of a national programme by the Ministry of Education to improve student results in primary and secondary schools [Ethiopia 2010b]. Thus, overall, the national-level policies on Ethiopia revealed a country that is rapidly evolving in the transformation of its education, social welfare and public sector development to bring about sustainable progress at all levels of society.

### *How are children and childhood portrayed in policy?*

According to a UNESCO country profile (UNESCO 2006), early childhood in Ethiopia covers the age range of 4 to 6 years with compulsory education ranging from 7 to 12 years (UNESCO 2006a). Early Childhood is managed under the jurisdiction of three main government bodies - The Ethiopian Ministry of Education supports the development of the curriculum, administrates, and sets the overall standards and legislation for early childhood institutions. The Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Social Affairs provide further support for early childhood by way of supervision and contributing to the comprehensive provision for children and families (UNESCO 2006b). A diverse network of key stakeholders are involved in the provision of early childhood services in the country including local governments, non-governmental institutions, public, private, and community-based providers. In addition, parental involvement and government support are recognised as playing a crucial role in policy development and the setting of standards in the early childhood sector (UNESCO 2006a).

The review showed that children in general feature strongly in several national-level policies. A key driver for early childhood education in Ethiopia is perceived as the holistic development of children and the preparation of children for formal schooling (UNESCO 2006b). The Education and Training Policy [Ethiopia 2002] for instance, made explicit reference to the importance of maintaining a kindergarten structure, curriculum development and teacher training programmes. Children's rights to universal primary education are enshrined in the policy: 'Since the expansion of quality primary education to all citizens is not only a right but also a guarantee for development, the policy direction indicates that the aim is not merely to raise the standard of the education of the few, but to: Universalize primary education [Ethiopia 2002, p33]. An integrated national Early Childhood Care Education (ECCE) Policy and Strategic Framework was launched in 2010, which called for a collective effort by all sectors in achieving the overall goal of promoting early stimulation, health care and early education for all children from prenatal to seven years. A key focus of the policy was to enhance the quality, accessibility and equitable distribution of services for children through building more effective partnerships and capacity building programmes such as parental education, health and early stimulation, and pre-school community-based kindergarten programmes for children four to six years. The introduction of the policy was a formal acknowledgement of the Ethiopian government's commitment to young children and early childhood (UNICEF 2010b). A ratified national policy framework for early childhood care and education (2012) had also been introduced and endorsed by government through the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Women's Affairs.<sup>3</sup> In addition, the protection of vulnerable children was emphasised in the social sector policy through the Decent Work Country Programme 2014-15 [Ethiopia 2014], which advocated for the prevention of child labour with clear legislation to safeguard children against exploitative labour, employment practices [Ethiopia 2014]. Alongside this, the portrayal of children as active participants in education was also highlighted. The Education Strategy [Ethiopia 2009] emphasised the importance of education as 'participatory and student-centred' and engaging community leaders and local partners in the teaching-learning process share in and promote a rich educational experience for children [Ethiopia 2009, p11].

The policy review therefore demonstrated some evidence of increased government commitment to ensuring the equity of educational opportunities and services. A key target for Ethiopia is in achieving universal primary education and addressing the gender gap in enrolment. This is reflected through policy measures initiated by the Government to promote basic education and building capacity in the education sector, for instance through the construction of new schools, teacher recruitment and training and school feeding programmes particularly for children in remote areas. The Education and Training Policy affirmed the government's commitment and responsibility in the provision of education, 'The government has a responsibility to provide education to the large sector

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<sup>3</sup> Corroborated by key informants.

of the society whose capacity to pay for education is very limited; The value of education is not only to those who are involved in formal learning, but also to the society at large [Ethiopia 2002, p64].

#### *How is peacebuilding encouraged?*

The policies reviewed on Ethiopia indicate a strong national focus on the restoration of a socially cohesive and stable post-conflict state. Although there was no discernible peacebuilding policy per se, the principles of peacebuilding are referenced in some of the early and latter policies. The Education and Training Policy [Ethiopia 1994] for instance made references to the principles of peacebuilding as it asserts the government's aims to '[b]ring up citizens who respect human rights, stand for the well-being of people, as well as for equality, justice and peace, endowed with democratic culture and discipline' [Ethiopia 1994, p7] The policy also urged the respect of differences and the provision of an educational system that promotes 'democratic culture, tolerance and peaceful resolutions of differences' [Ethiopia 1994, p10]. In an updated document, The Education and Training Policy and its Implementation [Ethiopia 2002] reinforced the role of education as a medium for contributing to social cohesion. The policy stated, 'Education has a useful role in creating a common nation-wide understanding of issues and is pivotal in deepening common cultural and social ties (relationships) [Ethiopia 2002, p64] Notably, the ratified document also shows clear recognition of past or current social inequalities as a result of conflict and the notion of building peace through addressing these structural inequalities. Articles 2.2.9, 2.2.10, 2.2.12, and 2.2.13 for instance, stipulated the 'democratization of the curriculum' and emphasized the purpose of the curriculum for 'the cultivation of democratic culture, tolerance, peaceful resolution of differences through dialogue, and a sense of responsibility towards one's own society.' The policy stressed the importance of inculcating in students 'the values of equality, liberty, justice and democracy' and adhering to the ethics of respecting diversity [Ethiopia 2002, p23]. Similarly, the Education Sector Development Program IV. Program Action Plan [Ethiopia 2010a] provides a strong statement of the Ethiopian government's commitment to strengthening the role of education in achieving conflict resolution. There was evidence of national government support and agreement to improving education and schooling, as a way of rebuilding of the basic infrastructures of society. Through its various policy drives and the implementation of an education sector development programme, the policies in general reflected a strong national government's intent to create a peaceful and stable society, whereby 'children do not feel threatened going to school and that communities see investment in the education of their children as a source for future development.' [Ethiopia 2010a, p104].

#### *Policy highlights*

The policy review on Ethiopia demonstrated numerous strengths, not least the strides that the country has made in recent years to engender social and economic progress. Ethiopia has endured sustained periods of internal and external unrest but it is encouraging that the national-level policies indicate some progress towards the restoration of stability and peace. There was also evidence of a policy vision and political commitment to accelerate growth and reduce poverty, with government ambition to improve the country social and macroeconomic management. Some of the key highlights included a national policy agenda on enabling socioeconomic growth. The country's economy is reported to be 'undergoing a rapid growth and transformation' as reflected in the rebuilding of its infrastructures and capital (United Nations Country Team 2012, pviii). Recent international reports on the country also reveal strong efforts are being made by the Ethiopian government to achieving key targets of the MDGs on reducing extreme poverty levels and improving access to education. This is reflected through existing national policies prioritising interventions that have reported to generate progressive impact on the country's overall development and transformation agenda. As the MDG report (2012) states with reference to Ethiopia: 'There has been a clear vision and political commitment to accelerate growth and reduce poverty.' (United Nations Country Team 2012).

Yet, despite the strengthening of Ethiopia's policy context, challenges remain. A key task facing the country is the continued and sustained growth of a stable and peaceful society. The UNDP's Human Development report ranks the country 173rd out of 186 countries, indicating that stark inequalities remain and the country is classified as a country with a low human development index in a composite statistic of life expectancy, education, and per capita income indicators (UNDP 2014). The social sector issues that the country continues to face include:

1. Gender equality - The issue of gender and gender disparities have significant linkages with the policy development for the promotion of education. Early marriage and household division of labour, with children performing numerous domestic chores and participating in livelihood activities, have led to a high attrition rate of children dropping out of school, especially girls. However, gender disparities remain a key challenge, with necessary advocacy and commitment from the government, 'Bridging gender gaps requires that the Government commit to developing empowerment programs for women in political and economic arenas.' (United Nations Country Team 2012, p17)
2. Quality of education – maintaining the quality of Ethiopia's educational provision is a crucial challenge across the levels. There is a reported high percentage of drop-out rates in the early phases of primary schooling, thus highlighting the gaps with access and quality of early childhood education in preparing children for primary school [Ethiopia 2010a].
3. Prioritising early childhood - the policies reviewed reflected the Ethiopian government's recognition of the formative role of ECD. However, there were some tensions between the prioritisation of primary and early years education. The Education and Training Policy and Its Implementation (2002) indicated that 'Viewed from the perspective of Ethiopia's economic capacity, the opening of kindergartens involving massive expenditure cannot be a top priority, as regular universal primary education has not yet been achieved.' [Ethiopia 2002, p77]. While updated educational policies have since reinforced the important role of early childhood, the challenge of prioritising children's care and education remains.
4. Stronger linkages between early childhood and peacebuilding – the findings of the review indicated that while there are some acknowledged links between peacebuilding and education in general, as well as the recognition of children's participatory role in the promotion of peace, the linkages between early childhood and peacebuilding is less discernible.

## Liberia

### *Country Profile*

The Republic of Liberia is a country in West Africa and was a member of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) established in 1963 to promote the cooperation of African member-states. A former colony of the United States, Liberia came into independence as a democratic republic in 1862. The West African nation has a long-standing history of conflict. In 1980, the ruling True-Whig Party was overthrown by the military which marked a subsequent period of military rule by the People Redemption Council. This was subsequently followed by the country's first civil war from 1989 to 1997 and the second in 1999. The country has one of the highest levels of poverty in the world (United Nations Agencies 2012) and is regarded by the OECD as a low-income fragile State (OECD 2013). Prolonged civil conflicts has had devastating effects on the country's political stability and declining economy (United Nations Agencies 2012). The highly destructive conflicts experienced by Liberia has greatly undermined basic social services, especially its health and education systems. In 2003, the Accra Peace Agreement peace agreement was mandated by The Independent National Commission on Human Rights (INCHR) and has led in-part to democratic elections in Liberia in 2005 with a new government coming into power. The signing of the Peace Accord in 2003 was widely perceived as a way of consolidating peace and accelerating the country's political and economic recovery (United Nations Agencies 2012). However, despite attempts at reforms by the current government, Liberia has a low Human Development Index (HDI), and ranked 174 out of 186 countries (UNDP 2014). Although the country today is working to recover its economic and political stability, the country's population is prone to high incidence of diseases such as cholera and malaria, with high under-fives and maternal mortality rates [Liberia 2007]. Health outbreaks such as the recent Ebola virus epidemic has also impeded its growth and recovery [Liberia 2004].

### *What national-level policies are there related to children, early childhood development and peacebuilding?*

The review identified six policies related to early childhood development and peacebuilding in Liberia:

1. Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2002) An Act to Adopt the Education Law of A.D. 2001.
2. Liberia Government Results Focused Transitional Framework Working Committee (2004) National Community Resettlement and Reintegration Strategy.
3. Ministry of Education (2007) Liberian Primary Education Recovery Program Prepared for Fast Track Initiative.
4. Ministry of Education (2010) The Education Sector Plan of Liberia - A Commitment to Making a Difference
5. Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2011) An Act to Repeal an Act to Adopt the Education of Law.
6. Ministry of Education (2011) Liberia National Inter-Sectoral Policy on Early Childhood Development

Liberia's political and policy landscape is gradually recovering following almost two decades of civil conflict. The review revealed a number of key national policy documents listed in the table below that have been developed by the government of Liberia. There is a clear policy drive towards the rebuilding of society and the reconstruction of basic public infrastructure including education and social services. The Liberian Constitution stated that "all persons are born equally free and independent and have certain natural, inherent and inalienable rights" including the rights to equality and freedom of expression (United Nations Agencies 2012). The Education Law (2002) mandated free, compulsory primary education for all children, and the Education Reform Act (2011) established free compulsory primary education and free compulsory basic education for all Liberian citizens [Liberia 2002; Liberia 2011b]. The elected government of Liberia which took office in 2006 has actively promoted an equal rights and universal primary education policy. Education is recognised in the ratified policies as essential for the success of the Liberia democratic society

[Liberia 2002]. There is also evidence of a national-level policy drive to ensure gender equality and non-discrimination in education, including strategies to promote the attendance of girls in schools and strategies to ensure that the content of curricula is free of gender bias (United Nations Agencies 2012). Liberia's constitution stipulates equal access to educational opportunities and facilities for all citizens, and the government has ratified key regional and international conventions protecting the rights of education. In addition, the documents reviewed showed a clear focus on communities and community engagement, as reflected through the Community Resettlement and Reintegration Strategy (2004) which provided a policy framework for the reintegration and resettlement of displaced populations [Liberia 2004]. There is therefore clear evidence of national-level policy intent and drive to rebuild civil society and ensuring that all Liberians are provided with the opportunity to access affordable, quality education for the development of the nation [Liberia 2010].

#### *How are children and childhood portrayed in policy?*

The education system in Liberia is composed of primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Basic education in the country is defined as all education which provides the foundation for continuous and lifelong learning for all Liberians [Liberia 2002]. Early childhood or pre-primary education covers three to five years, followed by six years of primary education (Grades 1 to 6) [Liberia 2007, p.9]. The policies reviewed in the study suggested a level of commitment by the government of Liberia to education as well as early childhood education. As the Education Law of 2002 states, 'The Government of Liberia shall be committed to ensuring that provisions be made for all children to receive sound pre-first or early childhood education as being essential to the later development and the rapid educational advancement of children to the level of primary education and beyond (Liberia, p4).'

The Liberian Education sectoral plan [Liberia 2010] articulated the policy goals and strategies for children and early childhood in Liberia. The main policy for pre-primary education in Liberia was to ensure that all children achieve their full potential and are ready for primary schooling by providing quality, integrated ECD services and programs for all children from zero to age five through an inter-sectoral collaborative approach [Liberia 2010]. A key policy drive was to increase literacy levels and provide a solid foundation for children's long-term educational achievement [Liberia 2010]. Children were portrayed as having innate human rights with the opportunity to freely develop his or her human potential [Liberia 2002]. At the same time, children were also largely perceived as a vulnerable group having been subjects of the country's long standing conflict. As the Community Resettlement and Reintegration Strategy (2004) stated, 'Special efforts should be made to ensure that information reaches vulnerable groups such as the elderly, the chronically ill, the disabled, women and children.' [Liberia 2004, p37]. The 2011 National Inter-Sectoral Policy on Early Childhood Development showed a keen focus on early childhood development and exemplifies clear government's intent to provide an 'organized system of integrated services for young children' [Liberia 2011s, p10] from birth to eight years. Led by the Liberian Ministry of Education in collaboration with various cross-sectoral ministries such as the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Gender and Development, Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance with civil society organisations and international stakeholders, the 2011 policy aimed to ensure the effective implementation of an early childhood development policy and strategic implementation plan. The policy emphasised the importance of early childhood education in ensuring that all children 'receive sound pre-first or early childhood education as being essential to the later development' [Liberia 2011a, p16] and promoted a national commitment to 'increase children's participation in quality ECD programming.' [Liberia 2011, p.32].

Notably, in the national education policies reviewed, there was some acknowledgement of children as participants in education who are responsible for their own learning, particularly in relation to

older children. There was evidence of children's role in democratic participation in school and education being acknowledged [Liberia 2007]. There was clear recognition across the policies reviewed of the important relationships between children, family and the community in the Liberian society, with goals to support greater community and family involvement in provisions and programs for those aged 0 to 5 years [Liberia 2007, p44]. For example, the Liberian Primary Education Recovery Program Prepared for Fast Track Initiative [Liberia 2007] noted the actionable policy strategies to support the delivery of community-based early childhood development Centers to complement pre-primary provisions, especially in the poverty-stricken rural areas with the encouragement of the use of community languages where appropriate. [Liberia 2007 2007, p44].

The policies showed that the relationships between children and families are important, but also paradoxical. The Liberian education policy (2007) noted that while families play an important role in supporting education, they can also serve as an impediment in exacerbating the situation for children accessing education. The policy revealed that with the levels of poverty in the country, children are relied upon in their families for commercial and financial purposes such as farm workers, street traders and even prostitutes, as the funds that these children bring are used to supplement the family income and essential to the survival of the family [Liberia 2007]. While primary education is free in Liberia, widespread poverty has limited children's access to education as children are expected to engage in employment and the workforce in order to meet their families' needs (United Nations Agencies 2012). Convincing parents and families of the value of schooling and early childhood education is an ongoing challenge. The interdependent relationship between children and their role in the family is therefore complex and a key area to be addressed at the level of policy.

#### *How is peacebuilding encouraged?*

Liberia is a country still recovering from civil war and continues to face difficult constraints with its basic public infrastructures and the reintegration of displaced populations. In the health and education sectors, infrastructure was largely destroyed amidst the conflict, where basic supplies for service delivery discontinued with most skilled professionals leaving neighbouring countries and fleeing the country. The government noted that intermittent and long-lasting nature of the conflict made it difficult for children to attend school, leaving an entire generation virtually uneducated, leading to an unstable and unsustainable system [Liberia 2010]. The policies reviewed in this study showed a distinct focus on social reconciliation and cohesion in the building of partnerships with communities and civil society organisations to aid the recovering of the country. The Education sector and its policies for instance, was informed by a philosophy which promotes the Liberian cultural heritage, 'respect for human rights and dignity, world peace and economic development.' [Liberia 2002 p2]. The Liberian Primary Education Recovery Program Prepared for Fast Track Initiative [Liberia 2007] advocated for the promotion of peace, social cohesion and national stability. The government's National Community Resettlement and Reintegration Strategy [Liberia 2004] highlighted the implementation of community reconciliation and consolidation of peace programmes which address the consolidation of peace among the different communities in Liberia, with priority placed on addressing the country's past inter-group conflicts and to avoid potential conflicts among different war affected populations [Liberia 2004]. There is some evidence of niche level (grassroots) activity through the delivery of education programmes which promote the Integration of peace and education. The policies showed inter-sectoral linkages with the promotion of education, reconciliation and issues of gender, HIV/AIDS and environment issues in schools curricula, and the promotion of equal participation for girls. [Liberia 2004, p23] Although there were no distinct links made between peacebuilding and early childhood, the policies reviewed showed a commitment towards reconciling past and present conflict at regime and niche levels in order to move towards consolidating peace following the years of conflict in Liberia. The Resettlement and Reintegration strategy advocated explicitly for peacebuilding and targets the support of 'all needy



populations in order to consolidate peace and community cohesion.’ [Liberia 2004, p13]. There was also a stress on the engagement of communities in peacebuilding activities to support the recovery of the victims and perpetrators of violence – ‘Reconciliation processes (such as peace building activities) should be in place at the community level to support the protection concerns of people associated with the fighting forces and victims of the war. [Liberia 2004, p37] ‘Peacebuilding’ was not specifically mentioned in the Liberia National Inter-Sectoral Policy on Early Childhood Development [Liberia 2011a] but there was some recognition of the role of early childhood programmes in promoting positive cultural values and establishing a cohesive society and communities. In general, at both regime and niche levels, the policies therefore showed government commitment to create the principles of peacebuilding and achieve sustainable peace.

### *Policy highlights*

Fourteen years of brutal conflict has had a significant effect on Liberia’s economy, physical infrastructure and human resources. The subsequent social and human capital costs on Liberian society is immense with significant deficiencies in both physical and human capital. The policy review of Liberia showed both challenges and potential areas for development. A key strength to emerge from the review is a clear intention of the government of Liberia to promote education, peacebuilding and early childhood education as key national policy objectives, although the linkages between these three entities were variable. From an early childhood development lens, the policies reviewed were underpinned by an inter-sectorial approach as reflected through the National Inter-Sectorial ECD Policy developed by the Ministry of Education [Liberia 2010]. Responses from key informants through the questionnaire reinforced the Liberian government’s commitment to develop and implement early childhood programmes, with the development of a range of policy tools to support an implementation strategy such as the ‘Early Childhood Development Community Education and Awareness Program (ECDCEAP)’, the Early Childhood Development Skill Training Education Program (ECDSTEP) short training for in-service teachers and early childhood curriculum development. Beyond education, responses from the questionnaire also revealed government endorsement of holistic early childhood services through the provision of free health care for children under twelve including dental care. The review findings also suggested close governmental engagement with INGOs and local NGOs in implementing and supporting early childhood projects at niche or grassroots level, to ensure that early childhood education programmes are in keeping with government intentions to improve educational outcomes.<sup>4</sup> These initiatives are evidence of a commitment at national-level to improve the services for children and families in general. However, despite positive signs of recovery, the challenges facing the government of Liberia are monumental. The major challenges are the constraints of funding and resources in the rebuilding of basic public sector provisions. The move towards sustainable peace and the building of stable and strong governance remain contested issues. Further related challenges include:

1. Limited resourcing and funding for educators in primary schools across the country. The Ministry of Education noted that within the education sector, limited funds and resources meant that those who remained have not been paid consistently since 1989. In schools which have continued to function, teachers who left were replaced by teachers without formal qualifications or experience [Liberia 2007].
2. The regeneration and upskilling of the education and early childhood workforce to ensure the sustainable future of these public service systems [Liberia 2010]. This is a direct result of the nation’s prolonged civil war had a detrimental effect on its public sector workers and the population in general, many of whom were displaced or forced to leave the country during the conflict.

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<sup>4</sup> Corroborated by key informants.



3. Retention and access to education with an increasing out-of-school population remains a challenge. The long-lasting nature of the conflict has made it difficult for children to attend school, leaving an entire generation virtually uneducated. There is also a significant number of withdrawal from school due to an inability of parents to afford primary education. The country is listed in the UNESCO Teaching and Learning Report as one of the ten countries with the highest relative increases in out-of-school populations (UNESCO 2014). Despite the Education policy of free and compulsory primary education, the Transitional National Government of Liberia was constrained by the lack of resources and political leadership to enforce the policy [Liberia 2007].
4. Constraints in the comprehensive implementation of an inter-sectoral early childhood policy at national-level is a continuing challenge, even though an early childhood development policy had been developed in 2011.
5. There was no distinct policy which made explicit linkages between peacebuilding, early childhood development and children's participation in the peacebuilding process.

## Myanmar

### *Country Profile*

Formerly known as Burma, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar is one of the largest country in South-East Asia with an estimated population of over 58 million. The country is ethnically diverse with more than a hundred distinct ethnic groups (Department of Population Ministry of Immigration and Population. Myanmar 2014). The largest ethnic group is the Bamar people, alongside various communities such as the Karen, Mon, Chin, Kachin and other minority groups. Myanmar has endured sustained conflict over the years through rampant ethnic strife and political uprisings. For more than two decades, the country was led by an entrenched military junta, described by commentators as a 'military-backed quasi-socialist regime' (Holliday 2010, p.116), with a 'unique isolationist policy known as the "Burmese way to socialism"' (Mieno 2013, p.94). A conflict analysis of the country showed a history of isolation and a people governed by a series of repressive military governments (UNICEF 2014b).

During the socialist era, military rule and dictatorship effectively distanced the country from the rest of the world with little engagement with the international community. Years of political conflict and instability ensued until the country's transition from a dominantly authoritarian, military rule (1988-2011) to a civilianised government through its first general election held in twenty years in 2010. This was a pivotal moment in the country's political reforms, poignantly marked by the release of the pro-democracy leader Aung Sun Suu Kyi from house arrest and the establishment of a National Human Rights Commission. The initiation of a parliamentary-based constitution and a general election saw a new era in the country's development. To-date, accelerating political and economic change is shaping the country considerably, with a growing private sector and emerging socioeconomic developments. Myanmar's nomination as Chair for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' (ASEAN) general meeting held in 2014 is indicative of the country's return to the global community (Mieno 2013). However, despite its emerging progress, significant socio-economic disparities remain, as reflected in the country's low Human Development Index (HDI). Myanmar is ranked 150 out of 187 countries in terms of life expectancy at birth, standard of living and the general human development outcomes of the country's population (UNDP 2014), and the country is listed by the OECD as one of forty-seven fragile states that are vulnerable to conflict, poverty and adverse sociopolitical conditions (OECD 2013).

### *What national-level policies are there related to children, early childhood development and peacebuilding?*

The review identified two key policies related to early childhood development and peacebuilding in Myanmar:

1. Ministry of Education (2008) Country Report: Myanmar Education Development Strategy Focusing on Inclusive Education.
2. Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief, Resettlement (2014) Myanmar Policy for Early Childhood Care and Development.

The policy context in Myanmar has to be understood in the context of the country's political history. During the period of military rule in Myanmar, a socialist ideology dominated the country with an entrenched policy of state ownership and nationalisation on all aspects of governance. With recent political change, researchers and commentators have noted a shift in the development of national policy by the new Myanmar government, with global targets for alleviating poverty in the country, engendering human rights, and prioritising societal agendas such as education and early childhood care and education (Pedersen 2013; Ware 2011). As Ware (2011) highlights, there appears to be a discernible desire by the Myanmar government to bring about growth and development in the country, as reflected through its more progressive public policies. The findings from the review

showed that latest policy developments demonstrate the Myanmar government's intention for education to play a significant role in promoting the values and knowledge that will support the advancement of a sustainable and inclusive education sector (UNESCO 2014, 2013; Cheesman 2003). Schooling and education in Myanmar have historically played an integral role 'as a device for social and political legitimacy' (Cheesman 2003 p.45). This is particularly poignant given the strong drive towards the improvement of education standards regionally among the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries, and the Myanmar government's desire to garner a level of legitimacy and prestige internationally. It could also be argued that the burgeoning role of education, and the rising profile of early children's care and education in Myanmar's public policy as evident from the national-level policies reviewed below, is in part due to rapidly emerging policy reforms, with an increasing focus on public services and provisions. The country report [Myanmar 2008] and Myanmar policy for early childhood care and development [Myanmar 2014] show a clear focus on education, care and children, targeting improvement of services for '[a]ll school aged children, from primary to secondary education 5-15 years.' [Myanmar 2008, p8]. While a level of uncertainty remains an undercurrent in the country's surge towards political change, it is evident that emerging democratisation and socio-economic reforms has significantly influenced the country's policy context (Mieno 2013; Pedersen 2013).

#### *How are children and childhood portrayed in policy?*

Early childhood development or pre-primary as commonly known in Myanmar is generally defined as the phase from birth to five years old. The compulsory school age is five years and early childhood care and education programmes cater for children three to four years (UNESCO 2014). A diverse range of early childhood provisions are offered including center-based day care, community-based, home-based and parenting education (UNESCO 2011a). The provisions are serviced by various sources including the government – mainly the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and Ministry of Education, private, voluntary and international non-government organizations (INGOs) and private individuals. Early childhood programmes or preschools that are serviced by the state through the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement also serve a dual purpose as Centres for the training of preschool teachers and upskilling of the early childhood workforce.

The introduction of the Myanmar policy for Early Childhood Care and Development [Myanmar 2014] was a clear indication that children's care and education is an increasing focus in Myanmar's national policy. In a widely publicised report in July 2014, the Myanmar government launched its inaugural multi-sectoral policy on Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) (MITV news 2014). This was in part motivated by the government's attempts to address stark disparities in access to early childhood care and education services. The report highlighted the government's recognition of the importance of investment in early childhood as a driver for national development and alleviating poverty, supported by the country's President U Thein Sein in his support for the implementation of early childhood activities. The report on a local online forum Myawady news stated '[I]n launching the ECCD policy is the first concrete step toward mobilizing more resources across ministries for the support to early childhood development and a crucial measure in tackling child poverty and reducing inequalities.' (Myawady News 2014, p.1). The report also called for a more integrated, holistic approach to ECCE with collaboration among key ministries - the Department of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement (DSWRR) and Ministry of Education (MOE) to achieve a collective vision for the country's children, with a projection of 28 per cent of the budget from the Department of Social Welfare. Within the policies reviewed, there is clear positioning of children as vulnerable with innate human rights. In the report by the Ministry of Education [Myanmar 2008], particular focus was placed on safeguarding children who are disadvantaged and vulnerable such as those with disability, HIV affected, the 'unreached children in Myanmar' [Myanmar 2008p.8] and those in general 'who are vulnerable to marginalisation and exclusion' [Myanmar 2008, p.4].

### *How is peacebuilding encouraged?*

A country analysis suggested that disarmament and demobilization, ethnic and religious divisions remain the underlying causes of conflict (UNICEF 2014b). As a fragile state that has endured sustained periods of volatile political and socio-economic change, the documents reviewed in this study showed that Myanmar is just beginning to rebuild its civil society and the promotion of peaceful relations among its diverse ethnic groups. Although the notion of peacebuilding is not explicitly mentioned in the documents reviewed, there is clear recognition of the importance of promoting an inclusive society in ensuring that everyone has equal access to education, and in '[p]romoting national unity and eliminating discrimination' [Myanmar 2008, p.2] Within the Myanmar policy for early childhood care and development [Myanmar 2014], there was explicit government encouragement and stress on the delivery of 'culturally-appropriate' early childhood programmes and the importance of kindergartens and early childhood curricula to be 'mother tongue-based' with the use of local languages [Myanmar 2014, p4]. A strong rhetoric of building a cohesive society particularly for vulnerable children and those from minority ethnic groups permeated the documents. As the Myanmar policy for early childhood makes clear, culturally and linguistically appropriate early childhood care and development services 'will help to achieve peaceful relations among ethnic groups, and will enable children from all ethnic groups to succeed in school.' (p.17). The items reviewed also showed that the relationships between parents, families and parent involvement in child development are considered essential for the building of the Myanmar society including 'education for peaceful and positive relationships, and good and respectful values' [Myanmar 2014p.91] In sum, the notion of a 'culturally and linguistically appropriate' environment for the promotion of social cohesion and unity for Myanmar appeared to be acknowledged at niche level activities in general including parental education and national support systems for the promotion of early childhood services [Myanmar 2014, p3].

### *Policy highlights*

Notably, the policy review showed a strong focus on the role and place of children in Myanmar society, with clear recognition of their rights as individuals and led by the principles of the United Conventions of the Rights of the Child. A key strength of the national-level policies reviewed in the study was the clear positioning of children as participants in education as well as in the (re)building of the country's civil society and sustainable peace. In the country report for instance, children are perceived as participants in child-centred forms of learning and in the training of teachers to deliver 'child-centred methodologies' and interactions with children to make learning and enjoyable and meaningful experience for children' (p.8). There was acknowledgement of gender disparities and the role of education in promoting gender equality in that girls should be 'given the same opportunities as boys' [Myanmar 2008, p8]. Although the term peacebuilding was not prevalent or explicit in the documents reviewed, the pivotal role of early childhood for social cohesion was also recognised in the Myanmar policy for early childhood care development [Myanmar 2014] with the emphasis on social cohesion and the development of a democratic nation. Yet, despite the notable focus of children and early childhood in public policy in Myanmar, the emergent challenges from the policy review include:

1. An inherent paradox whereby early childhood is recognised by the government and policy-makers as an essential 'public good' but the sector in general and its existing systems, structures and governance face considerable challenges amidst rising demands for quality services in a largely resource-limited environment.
2. Prioritisation of conflict-sensitive and culturally-sensitive early childhood education – the review showed a concerted focus on children 0 to 8 years with the introduction of a Myanmar Policy for Early Childhood Care and Development (2014). However, there was limited evidence of policy implementation for peacebuilding and social cohesion.

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3. In a highly politicised environment, it remains to be seen whether there will be continued policy support for early childhood care and development, and clear discernible links between the role of early childhood and children place in building sustainable peace in the Myanmar society.

## Pakistan

### *Country Profile*

The Islamic Republic of Pakistan is a country in South Asia and is one of the most densely populated in the world with over a hundred and eighty million people (World Population Review 2015). The country was established as an independent nation with Muslims as the majority population following the partition from India in 1947. The nation has endured a history of political conflicts and unrest since the 1950s with military coupes, ongoing border conflicts with India and a turbulent Kashmir war in the 1960s. The country has experienced prolonged military and political tensions, with internal civil battles amongst its political leaders vying for power, leading to the assassination of its then Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in 2007. The country's current Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was elected as a result of a majority vote in the general elections in 2013 with the establishment of the main political party the Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N). However, despite its shift towards democracy, the country today continues to face major challenges in terms of poverty, illiteracy, and threats of conflict and terrorism. It is regarded by the United Nations as a country with a low human development and is mired by the detrimental effects of political instability and geopolitical wars with its regional neighbours (UNDP2013).

### *What national-level policies are there related to children, early childhood development and peacebuilding?*

The review identified six key policies related to early childhood development and peacebuilding in Pakistan:

1. Minister for Education. State of Pakistan (1998) The National Education Policy 1998-2010.
2. Government of Pakistan. Ministry of Education (2002) The Road Ahead. Education Sector Reforms Action Plan 2001-02-2005-06.
3. Ministry of Education. Policy; Planning Wing Government of Pakistan (2007) Financing of Education in the Public Sector.
4. Government of Pakistan. Ministry of Education (2009) National Education Policy 2009.
5. International Labour Organisation (2010) Decent Country Work Programme 2010-15.
6. Ministry of Education, Trainings, Standards in Higher Education (2013) National Plan of Action 2013-2016. Achieving Universal Primary Education in Pakistan. MDG Acceleration Framework.

The review showed a number of key national policies introduced by the Pakistan government over the years with clear political intent to improve the country's socio-economic and public service conditions. A range of major policy documents relating to education and early childhood education were reviewed including publications on the Financing of an Education plan [Pakistan 2007], the National Education Policy [Pakistan 2009], and the National Plan of Action 2013-2016 for Achieving Universal Primary Education [Pakistan 2013]. At regime level, The National Education Policy 1998-2010 reflected national government support and agreement among the Prime Minister, provincial chief ministers, Chiefs of National and Regional Education Council support in achieving national education targets [Pakistan 1998, p3]. The National Education Policy [Pakistan 2009] focused on governance as an issue and calls for higher government investment on education. The policy (2009) set out the government's vision for the nation and the role of education – 'Our education system must provide quality education to our children and youth to enable them to realize their individual potential and contribute to development of society and nation....' [Pakistan 2009, p10]. The implementation framework elaborated on a federal-inter-provincial process that would involve providing provinces with the autonomy in the development of implementation strategies and plans. There was a strong focus in the policy on community engagement and the role of the community in the strengthening and implementation of education policies, for instance through the links between

schooling and community service programmes [Pakistan 2009, p.29]. The issue of gender inequality is a key policy agenda in Pakistan. The education policies sought to redress gender disparities in ensuring universal primary education with a key policy goal to 'promote gender equality and empower women' and eliminating gender disparity at all levels of education no later than 2015 [Pakistan 2013]. The policy on labour and the workforce recognises gender equality as one of four cross cutting issues, along with human rights, refugee rights and civil society engagement. [Pakistan 2010, p7] There was clear policy emphasis in Pakistan on the equitable distribution of opportunities for both women and men and their development (p2). The planning framework of National Plan of Action (NPA) [Pakistan 2002] stipulated sector-wide priorities to improve the relevance and quality of basic education in relation to primary education, adult literacy and early childhood education [Pakistan 2002].

There appeared to be clear intention in the national-level policies in progressing towards gender equality and alleviating gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls have full and equal access to achieving basic education of good quality. As the Education Sector Reforms Action Plan [Pakistan 2002] stated, 'Gender stereotyping in the textbooks and curriculum has been under review and efforts are under way to ensure a rights-based gender sensitive portrayal of girls/women, with respect to diversity of roles. The Government of Pakistan had already identified focal persons for gender issues with a mandate to ensure a higher attention in public policy and develop strategies for girls participation in education provision at all levels through various incentives.' [Pakistan 2002, pp2-3].

#### *How are children and childhood portrayed in policy?*

Early Childhood Education (ECE) or pre-primary in Pakistan comprises both formal and informal, private and public educational services for children aged three to five years (UNESCO International Bureau of Education 2006c). ECE services in Pakistan is delivered predominantly through the private sector, including programmes for teacher training (UNESCO International Bureau of Education 2006c). The policy review demonstrated clear government recognition of the importance of early childhood as a critical phase of learning and development that has life-long effects on children's outcomes and achievement. Children were featured prominently across the national-level policies reviewed in the study. The policies showed evidence of the Pakistan government's commitment to the Dakar Framework of Action, the first goal of which is to expand and improve comprehensive early childhood care and education for all children, especially for those most vulnerable and disadvantaged (UNESCO International Bureau of Education (IBE) 2006).

The policies showed clear progression over the years in the rising profile of early childhood education in Pakistan's public policy agenda. In an education plan on the Financing of Education [Pakistan 2007], early childhood education was not mentioned as an item of public expenditure. However, later recommendations from the national education policy review [Pakistan 2009] included one year pre-primary education to be universally provided by the State, and that this is catered for by a separate budget. The National Education Policy [Pakistan 2009] states that historically, although ECE has not been formally recognized by the public sector in Pakistan, there is now recognition of early childhood and its important linkages between education, early child and other social welfare policies [Pakistan 2009, pp27-28]. Alongside the policy, provincial education sector plans and a national early childhood curriculum have also been introduced. The questionnaire responses on the policies in Pakistan suggested that increased advocacy for early childhood education by international non-governmental organisations and local civil organisations over the years has contributed to enhanced government commitment to the sector. It was also noted that the decentralisation of education provision to the provinces in the country entails each province

developing its provincial education sector plan based on specific provincial needs and priorities.<sup>5</sup> The education policies also appeared to have major intersections with other policies such as social welfare policies, education and skills, economic, labour force and regional development policies. It is significant that for the first time in Pakistan's history, ECE has been included as a component in the Education Sector Reform programme and National education policy, and some funding has been provided to the provincial governments for ECE programmes [Pakistan 2009]. ECE was also included in the National Plan of Action as a separate item of attention in its own right, with other new initiatives including a separate curriculum for ECE, formation of an ECE Cell in the Ministry of Education, and the sponsorship of pilot ECE programmes by donor agencies. A white paper by the Pakistan National Education Policy Review Team (2007) stated that ECE programmes will be focused on the increased use of child-centered methods, family participation, and improved attendance and retention rates to improve greater access to pre-primary and primary schooling for children. Importantly, the policy recognised that the 'key to success for any ECE programme is to involve the community and the government offices in a true spirit of public-private partnership.' (National Education Policy Review Team 2007, p37)

The policies overall revealed a focus on children who are vulnerable and under-privileged, to ensure their equal access to education through 'the provision of basic facilities for girls and boys alike, under-privileged/marginalized groups and special children and adults.' [Pakistan 2009 p11] The National Plan of Action on achieving universal primary education in Pakistan (2013) made an explicit focus on 'expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable disadvantaged children' [Pakistan 2013, p1]. There was also recognition of children's fundamental rights to education across the policies.

#### *How is peacebuilding encouraged?*

There was no discernible peacebuilding policy per se from the items reviewed in the study and the term 'peacebuilding' is not used as such in the various policy documents. However, the notion of peacebuilding and social cohesion was closely referenced in a few of the policy items included in the study. In the country's post-conflict context, the 'Return Policy Framework' (Government of the North Western Frontier Province (NWFP) 2009) for instance, states the government's focus on building a cohesive society and to 'undertake the implementation of voluntary, safe and dignified return of people internally displaced' and the return of full human rights (Government of the North Western Frontier Province (NWFP) 2009). The National Education policy [Pakistan 2009] recognised the importance of building a peaceful society and the emphasis on creating 'a tolerant and peace loving society with vision of finding solutions to the real life problems through the teachings of the Holy Qura'an and Sunnah' [Pakistan 2009, pp23-24] In the chapter 'Overarching Challenges & Deficiencies: Their Causes and The Way Forward' [Pakistan 2009, p3], the document discussed the challenges and opportunities of social exclusion and social cohesion in a way that has not been considered or addressed in previous policies. The National Education policy (2009) recognised the role of the educational system in ensuring the rights of all individuals to benefit socially and economically through the attainment of education and training. Importantly, the document highlighted the negative impact of social exclusion in exacerbating or leading to conflict such as the uneven distribution of resources and opportunities in society, poverty, ethnic strife, sectarianism and extremism, all of which require a concerted government response at a national and regional level.

In an earlier policy 'The Road Ahead. Education Sector Reforms Action Plan' [Pakistan 2002], there was implicit reference in the mission statement to the building of human resources for 'global peace, progress and prosperity [Pakistan 2002, p1]. In the updated National Plan of Action 2013-2016

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<sup>5</sup> Corroborated by key informants.



(2013), there was government recognition of past and current inequalities, and the building of peace through education. The promotion of equality, tolerance and civil relationships are also mentioned. As the policy stated, 'education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace. [Pakistan 2013, p1]. There was added recognition of the promotion of equity through education with the aim of eliminating social exclusion and promoting national cohesion, where '[g]reater opportunities shall be provided to marginalized groups of society, particularly girls.' [Pakistan 2013, p5]. The national-level policies in general therefore reflected the promotion of peacebuilding principles and consistent national-level government agreement on the important links between education and the building of civil society and sustainable peace.

### *Policy highlights*

There are several highlights to Pakistan's policy context relating to early childhood, peacebuilding and education. The ratified national policies reviewed in the study demonstrate clear political ambition on the part of the Pakistan government to promote the advancement of society through the promotion of education, early childhood education and social cohesion. The inclusion of linkages with gender issues and social equality indicated the government's commitment to strengthen civil society and its social fabric. However, as international reports have noted, despite the government's policy intentions, a key challenge is in the implementation and execution of the policies, and the realising of the policy goals (Aga Khan Foundation 2002). There continues to be issues of access, quality, inequitable distribution of early childhood and education provision remain. Key challenges for the country include:

1. Participation and retention of children in education – children who are vulnerable and living in poverty continue to face discrimination in access as well as quality, particularly given the disparities between state or public and private education provisions. Education and early childhood education remain inequitably distributed among various income groups and regions in the country. The National Education Policy Review Team (2007) noted that the issue of equity runs through the entire education system and has serious implications for sustainable and equitable development in the country (National Education Policy Review Team 2007). Pakistan is listed as one of the countries where 'Universal access to primary schooling is likely to remain elusive' (UNESCO 2014, p.57) A more recent international report by UNESCO indicated that the country is still a long way from achieving universal education with less than 3% expenditure of GNP on education (UNESCO 2014). There are also national-level reports which indicate that access to education for school age children remains inadequate, with literacy and participation rates below those in other South Asian countries with similar level of economic development [Pakistan 2002].
2. Prioritising of early childhood education - In a queue of policy priorities, early childhood education often followed on primary education and adult literacy, with emerging government attention and investment. 'Studies in 1995 and 1997-8 revealed that one third of primary school children in government schools are sitting in a pre-primary class called 'Kachi' which needs to be recognized as an Early Childhood Education (ECE) learning group. It is only very recent that the provincial EMIS offices have begun to record the registered children in Kachi classes. There are still considerable number of children below age 5 who are not being registered at schools, but they attend schools with their siblings.' [Pakistan 2002, p39)
3. Stronger links between early childhood education and peacebuilding - although the findings of the review showed a level of commitment towards early childhood education and social cohesion, the linkages between the two aspects of development are not clearly discernible

in policy as well as in practice. The questionnaire responses revealed that the National Policy (2009) is being revised and there is room for strengthening Early Childhood Development and peace building.<sup>6</sup>

4. Policy implementation – Overall, the policies on Pakistan revealed increasing government consideration of pertinent issues to promote education and social cohesion. However, it remains to be seen the extent to which these policies are effectively implemented and which contribute to enhanced social inclusiveness and social mobility through education and training.

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<sup>6</sup> Corroborated by key informants.

## State of Palestine

### *Country Profile*

The State of Palestine is a country in the Middle East that is situated between Egypt, Syria and Arabia. The region has a tumultuous history that is immersed in regional conflicts and political strife, and remains at a crossroads of religious and political discord. The country is regarded by UNESCO as one of the most conflict-affected states with a high record of armed conflict and battle deaths (UNESCO 2014). The State of Palestine consists of three main government institutions that are associated with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. These include the President of the State of Palestine, the Palestinian National Council, and the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organisation. The PLO declared the country's status as an independent state in 1988 and laid claims to the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and Jerusalem as its designated capital. Over the years, the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people as a sovereign nationhood have also been recognised by the majority of the international community. Despite tenuous political tensions between the State of Palestine and Israel, in 1993, the PLO and its then Chairman Yasser Arafat agreed to a ceasefire and to adhere to the principles of the United Nations Security Resolutions 242 and 338 which recognised 'the right to exist in peace and security for all'. In 2011, the country applied for United Nations (UN) membership and was granted a non-member observer state status in 2012. The UN General Assembly voted in favour of the State of Palestine being granted a non-member observer state status which reflected a broad consensus of the country's independence and the recognition of its official title as the 'State of Palestine' (Ministry of Planning and Administrative Development. State of Palestine 2013). The UK House of Commons voted by in favour of recognising the state of Palestine in 2014 and likewise, the French Parliament voted in favour of urging their government to recognise the country's sovereignty, with the aim of resolving the political conflicts. However, the status of Palestine remains a contentious issue with Israel's continued occupation. Most of the areas claimed by the State of Palestine have been occupied by Israel since 1967 in the aftermath of the civil war. Sustained military conflict between the Israeli military and Gaza has had a detrimental effect on the Palestinian people leading to widespread humanitarian, economic and environmental crisis. The issue of Palestine's sovereignty and independence from Israel remains controversial and the region continues to be marked by threats of territorial conflict, political unrest and instability (UNESCO 2014).

### *What national-level policies are there related to children, early childhood development and peacebuilding?*

The review identified five policies related to early childhood development and peacebuilding in the State of Palestine:

1. The Palestinian Legislative Council (2003) Draft Palestinian Child Law.
2. Palestinian National Authority. Ministry of Education and Higher Education. Ministry of Labour (2010) TVET Strategy (Revised)
3. International Labour Organization. Regional Office for the Arab States (2013) The Palestinian Decent Work Programme 2013-2016.
4. State of Palestine. Council of Ministers (2014) National Development Plan 2014-16. State Building to Sovereignty  
[http://www.mopad.pna.ps/en/images/PDFs/Palestine%20State\\_final.pdf](http://www.mopad.pna.ps/en/images/PDFs/Palestine%20State_final.pdf)
5. State of Palestine. The National Consensus Government (2014) The National Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan for Gaza 2014-2017.

A key policy drive in the State of Palestine is the alleviation of conflict and instability in the country and the progress towards the recovery and reconstruction of civil society. The review showed key national policies which reflected the government's commitment to proactively tackle inequitable

socio-economic conditions and improve the quality of life of its people (Ministry of Planning and Administrative Development. State of Palestine 2013). The Palestinian National Development Plan 2011-13 included policy objectives to help rebuild the country's foundations for longer term development and growth with support from the international community. The Palestinian National Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan [State of Palestine 2014b] was developed by the national government to provide a policy 'roadmap' through the country's humanitarian crisis to long-term development, with collaborations between the Palestinian ministries and agencies with the support of local and international partners. A major policy impetus has been to move the country beyond its conflict conditions towards social cohesion and reconciliation. The Reconstruction Plan (2014) was developed with the intention to enable transition from relief efforts to longer-term development needs across four key sectors in the State of Palestine – social, infrastructure, economic, and governance [State of Palestine 2014b]. The country's education policy for vocational education and training (2010) for instance [State of Palestine 2010], stated as its main objective to promote lifelong learning for within the Palestinian society where all citizens are encouraged to become active lifelong learners to promote an integrated educational system in Palestinian society [State of Palestine 2010, p14]. The engagement of local communities and civil society organisations is emphasised in policy development and implementation of the education and training system to meet the social needs of the people especially those of the marginalized groups. (Palestinian National Authority. Ministry of Education; Higher Education Ministry of Labour 2010, p19). As a social sector policy, the Early Recovery and Reconstruction plan [State of Palestine 2014] presented a comprehensive action plan to alleviate social disintegration and improve social and economic conditions. As the policy stated, the Government's goal is 'not simply to alleviate the suffering of citizens and repair the physical damage, but also to make substantive improvements in the economic and social situation of Gaza residents, particularly by dealing with the chronic problems of poverty and unemployment.' [State of Palestine 2014, p17]

#### *How are children and childhood portrayed in policy?*

The UNESCO international report (2011) on armed conflict and education recognises the detrimental impact of conflict and that Palestinian children grow up in the shadow of occupation and adversity given the country's tumultuous experience of civil war and instability (UNESCO 2011b). Early childhood or preschool education in the State of Palestine covers children three to five years of age, with compulsory schooling ranging from six to sixteen years old (UNESCO International Bureau of Education (IBE) 2006d). There was limited corroborated data on early childhood statistics pertaining to the enrolment and access to early childhood services although it is known that a large proportion of provisions are catered for by the private sector. Public sector preschool education in the form of kindergartens and nurseries are supervised by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MOEHE) and funding is provided mainly by government and donor organisations through international non-governmental organisations operating in the country. The MOEHE was also involved in the monitoring of early childhood services including the training of staff, licensing and regulation of services and setting the standards for the quality of early childhood programmes.

There was no known national policy specifically related to children or early childhood, although it has been noted that a national early childhood development policy strategy has been drafted by the Palestinian authorities which is due to be launched by the end of December 2015.<sup>7</sup> However, children and childhoods did feature in a few key national-level policies. The Palestinian Child Law [State of Palestine 2003] introduced by the Palestinian Legislative Council for instance, focused on children up to nineteen years of age, and emphasises the building of strong relationships between children and families, and the rights of all children to live in a cohesive and supportive family. The legislation reiterated the government's commitment to supporting children's development and the

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<sup>7</sup> Corroborated by key informants.

role of the family unit, 'The state shall undertake all measures, to secure the commitment of the parents, or other individuals legally responsible in their stead, to shoulder their joint responsibilities and duties, in raising, caring for, guiding and developing the child in the best possible manner.' (p5) Article (20) of the policy reaffirmed the rights of children and their important link with the family, 'Every child shall have the right to know his or her parents and to be cared for by them. A child shall not be related to others than his or her parents' [State of Palestine 2003, p5]. The role of local communities, parents and civil organisations were also acknowledged at policy level in informing the development and support of education for all children.

There was therefore perceivable focus on children and their role in the family and society in general across the policy items reviewed on the State of Palestine, with targeted efforts at alleviating conflict and adverse conditions particularly for children who are vulnerable or disadvantaged (UNESCO International Bureau of Education (IBE) 2006d). The Palestinian Decent Work Programme 2013-2016 (2013) for instance, aimed to promote education for all children and youths, especially those who are vulnerable to exclusion and marginalization to ensure increased opportunities for their learning, including through various technical and vocational education and training (TCET) and non-formal educational programmes [State of Palestine 2013]. The role of children in building the Palestinian society was also highlighted in the National Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan for Gaza 2014-2017 (2014), a social sector policy which seeks to improve the quality of social service provisions, with specific attention paid to building the Palestinian human capital and improving the quality of public services in order 'to prepare and empower our children and youth (males and females) to positively and effectively engage in our social development endeavour' [State of Palestine 2014b, p60]. The policy review also showed evidence of the recognition of children rights and role as agents in participating and contributing freely to society. As Article (40) of the Palestinian Child Law asserted, 'Every student in the school shall have the right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to his or her age, and to participate free in the cultural life and the arts. It shall also ensure the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts' [State of Palestine 2003, p8] Thus, while a specific early childhood policy is yet to be ratified in policy, the review showed discernible government commitment in promoting and protecting the rights of children in the State of Palestine to participate in society and have an appropriate quality of life and standard of living.

#### *How is peacebuilding encouraged?*

The peacebuilding context in the State of Palestine has to be considered in light of the country's political history, and prevailing economic and political conditions. The long standing Israeli-Palestinian conflict continues to be a source of tension in the region, contributing to the country's fragile context. There were no known policies that related specifically to peacebuilding, although the findings showed a demonstrable level of government's commitment to alleviating the country's fragile state and building a cohesive and post-conflict society.

The National Development Plan 2014-16. State Building to Sovereignty (2014) for instance, advocated a rights-based approach to social protection and the future development of the country for the Palestinian people. The policy indicated the government's ambition to provide sustainable, high-quality, social services with the aim of alleviating poverty and maintaining social justice between social groups particularly for those who are disadvantaged. The government's intentions for social cohesion and national solidarity was embedded in the National Development Plan. As the policy document states, these measures 'will provide protection and empowerment to children, women, young people, the elderly and people with disabilities in a society governed by a pluralistic, innovative national culture, which safeguards its heritage and preserves its social cohesion and solidarity' [State of Palestine 2014, p60]. The National Development Plan (2014) also reflected niche

or grassroots level activities for the promotion of programmes for social welfare and development from early childhood (kindergarten programmes) to basic education, secondary and higher education. At regime level, the policy showed evidence of government support for policy development, monitoring and evaluation. It indicated a national commitment to ensuring that over the next three years, the government will carry out activities to making linkages and collaborations with key partners across government ministries, agencies, and other stakeholders including international donors and civil society organisations to participate in a monitoring and evaluation process to strengthen its organisational and administrative structures to monitor budget strengthen civil society. The policy review therefore showed clear government intentions to build on its 'National Monitoring and Evaluation System' to strengthen the country's national governance and organisations to secure a sustainable and cohesive society (National Development Plan 2014-16. State Building to Sovereignty 2014, p115). The National Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan for Gaza 2014-2017 (2014) reflected strong national will at regime level to work towards maintaining peaceful relations in the country and its liberation from Israeli occupation. The policy states that 'a comprehensive and just peaceful settlement is essential to stopping the continuing, destructive conflict. Only an independent Palestinian state, free of Israeli occupation, can ensure peace, stability and security, side by side with Israel on the 1967 borders.' [State of Palestine 2014, p12]. Alluding to the notion of peacebuilding, the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) strategy (Revised) 2010) made reference to providing an education system that provides equal opportunities, social cohesion and building sustainable development for all groups of people regardless of 'gender, age, religion with special care to marginalized groups.' [State of Palestine 2010, p14]. Thus, although 'peacebuilding' was not explicitly mentioned, the principles of creating a sustainable and peaceful society was encouraged through the policies, in this case, in the redistribution of resources and capital. Overall, the policy review on the State of Palestine indicated a strong level of government commitment and ambition to the reconstruction of society and the importance of maintaining some form of stability. Inevitably, the challenge for the Palestinian people is in the implementation and enactment of its policies in practice and reality.

#### *Policy highlights*

A key highlight of the policies reviewed on the State of Palestine is the discernible government commitment towards the reconstruction of a resettled and peaceful Palestinian society. Children and young people in general are included in this recovery process and there is clear recognition in the policies of their rights to participate equally in society. The legislation in the Palestinian Child Law (2003) states the government's commitment to 'take all suitable measures to protect and safeguard children from all forms of discrimination in order to secure actual equality and benefiting from all the rights.' State of Palestine 2003, p3]. The National Development Plan 2014-16. State Building to Sovereignty (2014) makes explicit the government's recognition of the importance of social cohesion and the value of building the country's national and cultural identity, and the promotion of social cohesion. As the policy stated, 'It is committed to peaceful coexistence with the world community of nations.' [State of Palestine 2014, p42]. Yet, while there are acknowledged links between education, reconciliation and peace, as well as children's participation in education for the promotion of peaceful relations and equality, the linkages between early childhood and peacebuilding were not explicit. Specific challenges remain in the implementation and monitoring of the policies, including key areas for future development:

1. Resource allocation – the review findings indicated that the issue of resource allocation is key to the recovery of the State of Palestine and building capacity for its progress towards sustainable peace. For policy action plans to be successfully implemented, sufficient resources are required. An international report by UNESCO revealed that funding and resourcing in conflict and post-conflict countries such as the State of Palestine remain inadequate, with much needed support required for the maintenance of public sector

services such as the costs of teaching and learning including teacher education and teaching materials (UNESCO 2014).

2. Increase education quality - The review showed some evidence of national policies that placed a high priority on improving learning, teaching and education in general, to ensure that all children in schooling obtain the essential skills and knowledge they are meant to acquire. However, a key challenge is in ensuring that strategic objectives are in place to increase the quality of early childhood provisions and education in general. In the State of Palestine, improving the quality of education could be aligned with increased government investment and budget (UNESCO 2014)
3. Training and upskilling of the early childhood workforce – a key challenge from the policy review is that of ensuring that practitioners or teachers in kindergartens possess the necessary academic, training or scientific qualification (UNESCO International Bureau of Education (IBE) 2006d). There are emerging regulations stipulated by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MOEHE) which specify that any director or administrator of a kindergarten should hold at least an Intermediate Diploma, but a challenge is in ensuring that the legislation is enacted throughout the sector
4. Strengthening the links between early childhood and peacebuilding – while the importance of peacebuilding and early childhood education were alluded to in a few of the national policies reviewed, the linkages between the two aspects of development were not explicit. A more coherent policy emphasis linking the two areas of advocacy in the State of Palestine will work positively to further strengthen the important role of early childhood and peacebuilding in nationally and regionally as the country works towards building a sustainable society.

## Sierra Leone

### *Country Profile*

Officially known as the Republic of Sierra Leone, the country is situated in West Africa and shares its borders with the Republic of Guinea and Liberia. Its largest city and capital is Freetown. An ethnically diverse country, Sierra Leone has approximately sixteen ethnic groups, each with its own distinct culture, language and tradition. The country was once a colony of Britain up to 1961, when the country gained independence and was officially conferred a Republican status as a Commonwealth nation. The country held its first general election as an independent nation in 1962, which saw the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLP) initiated into parliament. However, the years following independence was fraught with conflict and volatile changes, with the country experiencing political crisis and military coups. Sierra Leone endured a prolonged civil war for over a decade from 1991 to 2002 which devastated resources and infrastructures. During the war, a significant number of schools were severely damaged or destroyed, with thousands of teachers and children killed or displaced [Sierra Leone 2007].

Sustained conflict considerably weakened most of the country's social, economic, and physical infrastructures, and exacerbated the impact on its population and civil society. A report by the International Labour Organisation (2010) indicates that at the core of the conflict lay a class of marginalized young people who are socially disaffected and marginalised, having experienced high levels of poverty, and a lack of education and employment opportunities [Sierra Leone 2010]. Since its independence, Sierra Leone's politics has been dominated by two major political parties, the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) and the ruling All People's Congress (APC). The current President and leader of the APC is Ernest Bai Koroma whose party has been in power since 2007. In recent years, the country has been significantly affected by illness and epidemic with the recent Ebola outbreak in 2014 that led to a humanitarian crisis. The country is gradually emerging from protracted adversity with the gradual strengthening of its economic and social growth, although the impact of war and fragility continue to reverberate in the nation and the Sierra Leonean people.

### *What national-level policies are there related to children, early childhood development and peacebuilding?*

The review identified eight policies related to early childhood development and peacebuilding in Sierra Leone:

1. Sierra Leone Government. Department of Education (1995) New Education Policy for Sierra Leone.
2. National Commission for Reconstruction, Resettlement and Rehabilitation (2001) Sierra Leone. Resettlement Strategy. Enabling the displaced to rebuild their lives back in their communities with safety and dignity.
3. National Recovery Committee (2002) Sierra Leone. Recovery Strategy for Newly Accessible Areas.
4. Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (2007) Sierra Leone Education Sector Plan. A Road Map to a Better Future 2007-2015.
5. International Labour Organisation (2010) Sierra Leone Decent Work Country Programme. Final Version.
6. Government of Sierra Leone (2011) Sierra Leone. Education Sector Capacity Development Strategy 2012-2016.
7. Ministry of Health and Sanitation (2012) Sierra Leone National Food and Nutrition Security Policy 2012-2016.
8. Government of Sierra Leone. Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (2014) Education Sector Plan 2014 - 2018 Learning to Succeed.



Sierra Leone's policy context has been significantly influenced by the country's conflict and political crisis. The national-level policies reflected the Sierra Leonean government's attempts to support efforts to create stability and develop an effective and democratic nation. There is recognition at policy level that the country is still recovering from a decade of civil war which officially ended in January 2002 and is on a gradual path in its progress towards a peaceful and free society [Sierra Leone 2010]. The decent work country programme endorsed by the International Labour Organisation [Sierra Leone 2010] in collaboration with the Sierra Leonean government articulated the government's commitment on dealing with post-conflict challenges as building national security and good governance, rebuilding infrastructure and social services, and promoting reconciliation through the reintegration of ex-combatants and other war-affected groups. The policy document sets out the government's vision for the long-term development of the nation and a political agenda for change, 'The Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) has taken a resolute and methodical approach to the elaboration of a long-term development strategy' and to promote a high quality of life for all the country's population (p1).

A major policy driver is the improvement of socio-economic conditions and the sustainable development of the nation through the role of education. Key educational policies for instance, reflected the government's attempts at using education as a tool to sustain peace and alleviate poverty [Sierra Leone]. The Sierra Leone. Recovery Strategy for Newly Accessible Areas [Sierra Leone 2002] is a social sector policy which promotes a national recovery strategy focused on the basic needs of the Sierra Leonean people, 'while laying the foundations for the transition towards sustainable development' [Sierra Leone 2002, p6]. The policy serves to promote social integration and governance through formal education, and outlines the government aims to facilitate the people's acquisition of basic skills for future employment and education (National Recovery Committee 2002 p28). Significantly, the Education Sector Plan. A Road Map to a Better Future 2007-2015 (2007) and the 2004 Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper mapped out the government's intention in building capacity for education since the civil and ensuring that all children have access to schooling and a quality education [Sierra Leone 2007]. It is interesting that the Education Sector Plan (2007) also raised a key point about engaging with the Sierra Leone Diasporic community in contributing to the country's education sector. The Plan states, 'In addition to tapping skills and expertise from resident Sierra Leoneans, there is a large and well-educated community of Sierra Leoneans living abroad, who could contribute significantly towards the development of the education sector. Many have already shown their willingness to support education by paying school fees for family members, making contributions to their alma mater, and by setting up NGOs that work with community schools [Sierra Leone 2007, p125]. The document outlined the government's policy drive and strategies in addressing key issues such as building up the country's infrastructure, supporting a qualified teaching workforce, developing effective policies to address gender inequalities, and tackling the problem of out-of-school children, particularly for those who are disadvantaged with special educational needs or live in extreme poverty. There was also the Sierra Leone National Food and Nutrition Security Policy 2012-2016 (2012) which reflected a cross-sectoral policy ratified by the Ministry of Health and Sanitation which indicates important linkages between food, nutrition, and education, with a focus on promoting public education on food and nutrition to improve the level of health and nutrition for all in the country. The policies therefore revealed concerted steps being taken in the promotion of socio-economic generation, with a focus on enhancing education and other public sector services. Some of the policies contain strategic plans for implementation including monitoring, planning and accountability systems [Sierra Leone 2007]. For example, the social sector policy Sierra Leone. Recovery Strategy for Newly Accessible Areas (2002) sought to address the priority needs of the Sierra Leone on people, for example through the implementation of social welfare programmes to reintegrate former child soldiers into civil society. The strategic plans included the implementation of interim care services such as family tracing, counselling and primary health care and reunification, and the provision of reintegration

opportunities through two key programmes: the Community Education and Investment Programme (CEIP) and Training and Employment Programme (TEP) [Sierra Leone 2002].

#### *How are children and childhood portrayed in policy?*

The review showed an increasing focus on children and early childhood in Sierra Leone's national policy agenda. There was no specific early childhood policy and the linkages between early childhood and peacebuilding is less clear. However, the first national integrated early childhood development policy is being developed, with a working draft undergoing revisions at the time of this report. This indicates a stepped increase in the focus on early childhood education. Historically, an early 1995 education policy shows some resistance in the recognition of early childhood education as a basic right, with the stipulation that 'while education is a right, preschool education is not' [Sierra Leone 1995, p20]. As the policy states, 'Preschool education cannot, at this stage of our development, be a 'right' for every child. It is now given in private schools of varying quality in Freetown and the large towns [Sierra Leone 1995, p28]. However, a later education policy demonstrates a stronger articulation of the importance of early childhood education and reflects the enhanced role of children and childhood in the country's national policy agenda. Significantly, the Sierra Leone Education Sector Plan. A Road Map to a Better Future 2007-2015 [Sierra Leone 2007], included a distinct section (chapter nine) on '[p]roviding Early Childhood Care and Pre-School Opportunities for More Children.' The policy sets out a key national goal in developing 'high quality ECCE programs that would contribute positively to the cognitive, social, physical, and emotional development of all children.' The policy also stated it aims to develop 1. 'a comprehensive national policy for ECCE and pre-schooling', 2. improve access to ECCE and pre-school programmes, 3. establish good quality ECCE and pre-school programmes and 4. develop inter-sectoral and institutional partnerships to address ECCE in a comprehensive manner (Ministry of Education, Science; Technology 2007 p100). In subsequent and more recent policies, the Education Sector Capacity Development Strategy 2012-2016 [Sierra Leone 2011] and the Education Sector Plan 2014 - 2018 'Learning to Succeed' [Sierra Leone 2014] reiterated the government's commitment to promoting its strategic objective of providing early childhood care and education, and to 'develop and promulgate standards for early childhood care and education providers that ensure safe and friendly environments' for all children [Sierra Leone 2011, p51]. The policy also articulated the government's commitment to developing capacity across the education sector as a whole [Sierra Leone 2011]. The Education Sector Plan 2014 - 2018 'Learning to Succeed' [Sierra Leone 2014] recognised education as one of the most transformative social services and reinforces the government's commitment to strengthen opportunities for education and learning for all children to adulthood. It proposed a strategic objective to increase access to pre-school education for children three to five year olds. A national pre-school curriculum, in the process of being revised, has also been drafted by the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology [Sierra Leone 2012] which articulated the government's position on early childhood. The draft policy document states:

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology believes strongly in an early childhood programme ... Here are its positions beliefs: 1. Early childhood, both formal and informal, is an important time for growth and development. 2. Children's rights start at birth and young children are dependent on adults to ensure those rights. 3. Quality Early Childhood Care and Education programmes and policies aim to ensure that children grow up healthy, well-nourished, and protected from harm, abuse and neglect, with a sense of self-worth, identity, enthusiasm, and opportunity to learn. 4. Education for all, especially Early Childhood Care and Education are the first steps toward meeting both the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and Millennium Development Goals [Sierra Leone 2010].

There was also some recognition of the cross-sectoral linkages between early childhood and other social sector issues such gender and class inequalities, and the alleviation of intergenerational

poverty. The policy encouraged the promotion of gender equality from the start of education including early childhood education and improving the overall quality of early childhood services [Sierra Leone 2012]. In addition, the policies indicated a focus on children's rights and need for protections. The Sierra Leone. Recovery Strategy for Newly Accessible Areas (2002) emphasises the rights and protection of all children, especially those who are vulnerable and disadvantaged. The policy stated the importance of ensuring that 'all children enter primary schooling at the age of 6 years' and the need for 'schools [to] provide a safe environment for all children especially with regard to sexual exploitation and abuse and discrimination [Sierra Leone 2002, p22]. The Sierra Leone. Resettlement Strategy. Enabling the displaced to rebuild their lives back [Sierra Leone 2001] focuses on the reintegration of displaced children as a result of civil war and recognises the integral role of children as part of the family. The policy calls for 'children to develop in a family and friendly community environment and contribute to the future development of the country' [Sierra Leone 2001, p9]. A draft national policy for inter-sectoral early childhood development in Sierra Leone is reported to be developed by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, although an implementation plan or operational framework is not yet available.<sup>8</sup> The review therefore showed an early childhood landscape that is in the process of developing, with an emerging focus on children and childhood at policy level. It remains to be seen the extent to which the implementation and impact of these policies are realised in the context of the country's evolving political landscape.

#### *How is peacebuilding encouraged?*

Although there were no known peacebuilding policies per se, the national-level policies showed some indication of Sierra Leone government's efforts at the fostering of social stability and cohesion through the rebuilding of civil society. The Education Sector Plan 2014 - 2018 'Learning to Succeed' [Sierra Leone 2014] acknowledged the impact of prolonged conflict on the country, despite emerging signs of reconciliation and recovery: 'Although the quality of life is steadily improving, a majority of our nearly 5.6 million inhabitants live in poverty. The nation was devastated by a ten-year civil war, which ended in 2002. A decade has passed in relative peace, but the effects of the conflict linger.' [Sierra Leone 2014, p8]. The policy encouraged the promotion of national development and peace through the fostering of education. It stated, 'A highly educated society is more likely to prosper in all areas.' [Sierra Leone 2014, p8].

The policies reviewed generally point to the promotion of peacebuilding through enhancing the role of education and meeting social sector agendas. In an early education policy, the New Education Policy for Sierra Leone (1995) recognised the country's past and current social inequalities, and importantly, the role of education in 'building free, just and peace-loving society', a 'democratic and harmonious society' (p20). Indeed, with the ending of the civil war in 2002, a key policy drive has been the creation of a stable and socially cohesive society through capacity building and the restoration of its public sector services. The policies reviewed in this study highlight some progress made in the education sector in terms of the government's commitment and increased access to primary education. The government's offer of free universal primary education has reportedly led to an increase in primary school enrolment and is in part, a step forward in the rebuilding of society [Sierra Leone 2007]. The Sierra Leone. Resettlement Strategy [Sierra Leone 2001] offered a clear focus on post-conflict resolution and the reintegration of displaced children, families and communities in the aftermath of war. The policy promotes the reintegration of child ex-soldiers and increased government investment in the education of child ex-combatants, for example with the implementation of the Community Education Investment Programme (CEIP) which centers on the reintegration of children with their families and communities. As described in the policy document, 'This programme not only benefits children from the fighting forces, but also other children in the targeted schools. This is an important component of facilitating social reintegration as well as

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<sup>8</sup> Corroborated by key informants.

forming the basis for access to future economic opportunities. It is envisaged that as part of reintegration assistance, the child ex-combatants would be included in the larger education framework established by the Ministry of Education development programmes [Sierra Leone 2001, p9]. It is significant that the policy encourages the notion of reconciliation where a central requirement of the peace process is the disarmament and demobilisation of ex-combatants and their reintegration back into society. The policy stated, 'the Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) together with its local and international partners are endeavouring to extend humanitarian assistance to previously inaccessible parts of the country, re-engage in reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts in support of war-affected populations and restore civil authority' [Sierra Leone 2001, p4].

The Sierra Leone Decent Work Country Programme [Sierra Leone 2010] was informed by the rhetoric of peacebuilding which aims to promote peaceful relation among the people through social integration and development. The document stated the programmatic aims of the policy by highlighting the 'overall priority to further consolidate peace in Sierra Leone through four programme priorities: (i) the economic integration of rural areas, (ii) the economic and social integration of the youth, (iii) an equitable access to health services; (iv) an accessible and credible public service.' [Sierra Leone 2010, p12]. There was a discernible focus on social integration of the Sierra Leone people, in the promotion of the work force, social and economic development. The policy offers cross-sectoral linkages in setting out the government's commitment to promote the economic and social integration of the youth, equitable access to health services, and accessible and credible public service [Sierra Leone 2010, p12]. There was also evidence of programmatic activities initiated at a niche (grassroots) as well as regime (policy and political) level through for instance the development of social welfare programmes. The Sierra Leone. Recovery Strategy for Newly Accessible Areas [Sierra Leone 2002] highlighted provisions for the reintegration of ex-child soldiers and the provision of accelerated learning programmes in communities including ex-combatants to support the return of child ex-combatants between 15-17 years of age to formal education. To this end, the policies showed a clear national prioritisation of the regeneration of a post-conflict society in addressing the needs of a society in which prolonged conflict has created a community of vulnerable people who require social protection [Sierra Leone 2010].

#### *Policy highlights*

As the country facing a tenuous and gradual transition towards a post-conflict state, the policy review on Sierra Leone showed a policy landscape that is constantly evolving, as current developments continue to shape the country's progress. Some of the national level policies reflected encouraging steps being undertaken by the Sierra Leone government in the rebuilding of its society in the aftermath of a prolonged civil war. The policies indicate some progression towards post-conflict recovery and a national commitment in ensuring the maintenance of peace and stability. There was also discernible government commitment towards employment generation, social protection and the improvement of social services. As the Sierra Leone Decent Work Country Programme [Sierra Leone 2010] showed, a key national goal is to promote the social and economic development of the country and social cohesion, and the Education Sector Capacity Development Strategy 2012-2016 [Sierra Leone 2011] aims to build capacity across the education sector as a whole [Sierra Leone 2011]. However, despite the government's promising intentions, Sierra Leone's recovery remains fragile and the country is ranked amongst the least developed countries. The country faces key challenges:

1. Sustained recovery of civil society - As the decent work country programme endorsed by the International Labour Organisation [Sierra Leone 2010] states, 'At the core of the conflict lay a class of marginalized young people, especially from rural areas, lacking education and access to livelihood opportunities (p2). A major challenge that the country continues to face

is the reintegration of its displaced people and the rehabilitation of communities as the nation recovers from the effects of war. The lack of a conducive environment continues to impede the restoration of sustainable peace and the recovery of civil society [Sierra Leone 2007].

2. Gender equality in education – the provision of equal opportunities for both men and women remains as challenge. The policies indicated that family and culture in Sierra Leone society offer valuable support but can also serve as constraints to education. As the Education Sector Plan (2007) reported, cultural constraints including early marriages and getting parents to appreciate the value of education for girls is a key challenge [Sierra Leone 2007, p137]
3. Strengthening national-level system to enhance the provision and monitoring of early childhood education – A report by The World Bank (2013) indicated that the service delivery, infrastructure, and quality monitoring mechanisms for ECD provisions are not yet fully developed in Sierra Leone. The Education Sector Plan 2014 - 2018 'Learning to Succeed' [Sierra Leone 2014] suggested the need to enhance the quality of early childhood provisions and develop cost-effective community-based pre-school models, particularly for the most vulnerable and marginalised communities. There is no clear ratified early childhood policy that is focused on children's care and education (UNESCO International Bureau of Education (IBE) 2006; The World Bank 2013a).
4. Strengthening the links between early childhood and peacebuilding – the linkages between the role of early childhood development in conflict resolution and the progress towards sustainable peace could be further strengthened. As the country re-establishes aspects of its infrastructures and socioeconomic systems, building on the relationship between early childhood development and peacebuilding would inevitably lead to more effective policies for the benefit of young children and their families.

## Somalia

### *Country Profile*

Officially known as the Federal Republic of Somalia, the country is located in the Horn of Africa bordering Ethiopia and Kenya. Somalia has an estimated population of 10 million with ethnic Somalis as the majority group (World Population Review 2015). The country is known to constitute three main areas: the South Central Zone (SCZ), Somaliland and Puntland, although the status of the two latter regions remain contentious. Located north-western of Somalia, Somaliland has declared itself to be a separate region and has claimed independence from a union with Somalia, although the sovereignty of Somaliland has yet to receive international recognition (Republic of Somaliland. Minister of Education, Higher Education 2012; UNICEF 2014c). Puntland, in northeastern Somalia, was established as a semi-autonomous state in 1998 with its own legislation and government (One World Nations 2015; UNICEF 2013a; 2013b). The region's relative stability in recent years has enabled it to establish a basic level of social services, political and administrative functions, with a developing civil society (UNICEF 2013b).

As a country, Somalia has experienced a long standing history of conflict and instability, with the absence of a permanent government and formal parliament for more than a decade. The outbreak of a Somali civil war in the 1990s with the collapse of the Barre regime and armed factions vying for power had led to the death of many civilians. The interim Transitional National Government (TNG) of Somalia was established in 2000 in an attempt to re-establish some governance and administrative framework. Following the end of the TFG's interim mandate, the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS), the first permanent central government since the civil war, was installed in 2012, and is internationally recognised as the current ruling government. Throughout the civil war and post-conflict period, Somalia continues to face major challenges with continued threats of political crisis and violence. The nation is characterised as a low-income fragile state, mired in chronic crisis and violence (OECD 2013). Poverty is rife as the country is plagued by bouts of famine and drought. The situation is exacerbated by large-scale displacement of the Somali people which has led to a humanitarian crisis. The United Nations Development Programme (2013) reported that an estimated 63 percent of the population live in severe poverty with over 95 percent living in poverty in the rural areas (UNDP 2013). Years of conflict in the country have also resulted in the destruction of essential infrastructure with detrimental impact on the Somali people and communities (Barasa-Mang'eni 2014). In May 2013, the UN Security Council passed a unanimous resolution to establish the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) in support of the Federal Government of Somalia's agenda for peacebuilding and national security (United Nations 2013). The resolution focused on key areas such as national recovery and reconciliation. To-date, Somalia is a fragile nation that is making gradual attempts at establishing peace and national reconciliation. Some progress is being made towards stability and the reconstruction of its civil society but immense challenges remain. A conflict analysis summary report (UNICEF 2014) indicated that threats of violence continue but there have been positive changes since 2012 including the establishment of a post-transitional government that is committed to reconciliation and peace (UNICEF 2014c).

### *What national-level policies are there related to children, early childhood development and peacebuilding?*

As a conflict-affected nation, the dearth of national policies from the country is reflective of the policy gaps in Somalia and of a country that is characterised by fragility. The review identified two key policies related to early childhood development and peacebuilding that are relevant to Somalia as a whole:

1. Somalia Federal Republic. Ministry of Human Development and Public Services (2013) Go-2-School Initiative 2013-2016.
2. The Federal Republic of Somalia (2013) The Somali Compact.

The policy landscape in the Federal Republic of Somalia has been invariably shaped by conflict and upheavals. The country's policy development is largely driven by the international community through the support of various donor organisations and non-government agencies working in collaboration with the Federal Government of Somalia. Prolonged conflict in Somalia has severely disrupted basic public services and created widespread fragmentation and vulnerability among its people. A key policy drive has therefore been the rebuilding of the country's state institutions and national development. The launch of The Somali Compact (2013) that was endorsed by the Federal Government of Somalia in collaboration with other civil society and international organisations, helped to establish the beginnings of a recovery plan and new direction of progress for the country. The policy document presented a clear statement of the government's intention to restore a level of stability to ensure its long-term sustainable growth and future; a strategic policy objective being socioeconomic regeneration, and to '[r]evitalize and expand the Somali economy with a focus on livelihood enhancement, employment generation, and broad-based inclusive growth.' [Somalia 2013a, p8]. The policy signalled clear government intent at regime or landscape level in the recognition of the critical role of the economy in nation building and (re)establishing trust in the government for promoting social cohesion. As the policy stated, 'a growing economy can generate critical revenue to support public service delivery and build the legitimacy of public institutions. An improved economy, with a vibrant private sector, can also increase opportunities for peace and reduce conflict.' [Somalia 2013a, p8]. Along similar rhetoric of nation building and development, the Go-2-School Initiative 2013-2016 presented a joint policy strategy established by the Ministry of Human Development and Public Services in collaboration with donor agencies and international non-government organisations such as UNICEF in the promotion of peacebuilding. A key policy priority was the progress towards sustainable peace and recovery from conflict, and significantly, to foster resilience among the Somali people and national institutions. A major policy drive is in 'restoring the Somali people's trust in the state and its ability to protect and serve their basic needs for inclusive politics, security, justice, an economic foundation and revenue and services, in full respect of human rights.' [Somalia 2013b, p2-3]. Overall, the policy review showed an emerging policy landscape and the intention of the Federal Government in building capacity and enabling the recovery of the nation, bolstered by close support from the international community.

#### *How are children and childhood portrayed in policy?*

The policy review showed a key focus on children in general and the recognition of children's inherent rights to a secure and peaceful society. The Somali Compact (2013) articulates the government's vision for sustainable peace with a focus on women and children. The policy aimed 'to create a more secure, safer and accountable Somalia that is able to maintain peace within its borders and with its neighbours; is increasingly capable of restoring and maintaining internal security; protects its civilians, with special attention to securing the rights of women, youth and children' [Somalia 2013a, p6]. The policy document also highlighted the stark reality and national concerns of the impact of conflict on children and their role in society. The Go-2-School Initiative 2013-2016 indicated that Somalia has one of the world's lowest enrolment rates for primary school-aged children with an estimated only 42 per cent of children attending in school and of those, only 36 per cent are girls [2013a].

The national level policies in Somalia have also been shaped in part by developments at a landscape level through the international community, for example through a series of resolutions submitted to the UN Security Council concerning the conflict situation. A 2015 UN resolution recognised the impact of conflict on children in Somalia and the importance of protecting civilians, especially women and children, from all armed groups (United National Security Council 2015). The report advocated for 'Somalia's progress towards ratifying the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). It called for the strengthening of the legal framework for the protection of children, especially in light of continued abductions and recruitment of children' (United National Security Council 2015



p8), while a preceding policy document, the UN 2014 Resolution expressed concerns about the reported involvement of children in conflict and the exploitation of women and girls.

Early childhood in Somalia covers five to six year olds, and developments in this sector appears to be underpinned by a policy drive to 'Provide equitable access for children in their pre-school year (5-6 year olds) to quality Early Childhood Development programmes.' [Somalia 2013b, p17] Specifically, in the regions of Somaliland and Puntland, there was notable focus on children and early childhood development. For example, the 'Integrated Early Childhood Development Implementation Framework for Somaliland' (UNICEF and the Government of Somalia, 2013) refers to early childhood development as 'an important component for Somaliland to achieve its vision of becoming a stable and democratic country where people enjoy high quality of life by 2030.'(UNICEF 2013a, p1). The document set out the rationale for an integrated approach to early childhood development for children 0 to 6 years and the promotion of a multi-agency and inter-sectoral system. With the support of various government ministries and departments, the framework recognised the need to support the holistic development of children in Somaliland including enhancing health and nutrition provision, improving the learning environment of Quranic Education Schools (QES) to benefit children's spiritual, mental and physical development, and the promotion of school readiness and children's rights.

In Puntland, there is also growing emphasis on the importance of early childhood education (ECE). The Government of Puntland underscored the role of quality integrated services and the impact on children in the region, with a focus on those from disadvantaged and marginalised families. The Puntland Ministry of Education acknowledged the importance of early childhood education as an integral part of basic education (UNICEF 2013b, p1). The implementation framework for early childhood development recognises that 'the government is committed to promote equity, relevance, quality, efficiency, and sustainability of ECE' (UNICEF 2013b, p1). It also highlighted the need for strong strategic policies as well as governance, particularly as early childhood provision is serviced mainly by the private sector. The document set out the vision for integrated early childhood development to ensure that 'all infants and young children up to six years of age in Puntland fully attain their optimal developmental potential' (UNICEF 2013b, p7).

The review on Somalia demonstrated clear evidence of the promotion of early childhood development, as supported by the Ministry of Human Development and Public Services of Somalia in collaboration with international non-government organisations and donor agencies. The Go-2-School Initiative 2013-2016 for example, put forward the rationale for enhancing the role of early childhood development, 'Provision of a quality pre-school year experience will increase the number of children likely to enter Grade 1 as well as improving their chances of completing a full cycle of primary education.' (p16) Significantly, the policy addresses the notion of resilience and building competency in young children who are living in fragile conditions. The document stated, 'Quality ECD interventions can increase the resilience in young children and thus reduce the negative impact that persistent household poverty can have on the child's capacity to cope.' (Somalia Federal Republic. Ministry of Human Development and Public Services 2013, p16). The Go-2-School Initiative 2013-2016 document indicated the government's intent to prioritise the development of integrated ECD in their respective Education Sector Strategic Plans and national plans to conduct a Feasibility Study on the current status and provision of ECD. [Somalia 2013b, p16] To this extent, the Initiative puts forward an interim plan outlining a two-pronged approach. The first entails the establishment of ECD units that will be attached to selected basic education facilities in the provision of a one-year pre-school programme for five year olds, and the second approach entails collaboration with the private sector to increase access to early childhood provisions for five year old children from vulnerable households [Somalia 2013b, p16] Thus, in sum, the policies on Somalia demonstrated

gradual and emerging government intent in promoting the role of early childhood development and the rights of children in the development of the country.

#### *How is peacebuilding encouraged?*

The policies demonstrated an emerging focus on the promotion of peacebuilding and in creating a socially equitable and stable society. A constant policy rhetoric is the rebuilding of governance and trust in the national government. The Somali Compact (2013) for example, aimed to foster resilience among the Somali people, and 'restoring the Somali people's trust in the state and its ability to protect and serve their basic needs for inclusive politics, security, justice, an economic foundation and revenue and services, in full respect of human rights.' [Somalia 2013a pp2-3]. The policy was underpinned by a rights-based discourse as it advocates for the respect of human rights, asserting that 'sustainable peace and development will require a human rights sensitive approach across all of the PSG priorities in the Compact, including through the promotion of access to justice, human-rights sensitive legislation, security sector reform and addressing past injustices and violations.' (The Federal Republic of Somalia 2013, p12). A particular policy focus is the protection of the rights of children, women and the elderly as the most vulnerable groups. The document also recognised the redistribution of resources and capital in order to aid the recovery of socioeconomic conditions in the country as a way of promoting peacebuilding. As the Compact stated 'The economy has a critical role to play in Somalia's state building and peacebuilding processes.' [Somalia 2013a, p8]. In addition, the G2S Initiative (2013-2016) indicates the impact of joint global initiatives and support from international organisations in maintaining peace in Somalia. Initiatives jointly led by the Government of the Netherlands and UNICEF such as the 'Education in Emergencies and Post-Crisis Transition (2007-2011) programme' and the subsequent Peace Building, Education and Advocacy Programme (2011-2013) has aimed to improve emergency education interventions and provide targeted assistance to countries in post-crisis transition including Somalia. The policy indicated some efforts have been made to increase children's access to basic education alongside the construction of learning spaces, provision of teaching learning materials, and enhancing of teacher recruitment and training. Overall, the review showed that with the support of the international community, steps were being made by the Somali government to promote sustainable peace through the delivery of strategic national policies and social sector programmes [Somalia 2013, p2].

#### *Policy highlights*

The policy review on Somalia revealed areas of strengths but also significant challenges. Following decades of conflict and strife that have resulted in social stagnation and upheavals, the national policies indicated emerging government intent in building a functioning level of governance and stability. For example, as a part of the Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy Programme (2011-2013), targeted assistance have been provided to support the Somali government's efforts in building the country's basic infrastructures and supporting the country through its post-conflict transition. However, while there is some evidence of recovery, key challenges remain:

1. Barriers to education with limited or lack of education facilities – While the Go-2-School Initiative 2013-2016 reports that gradual progress has been achieved with an increase in the enrolment of pre-primary children (5 year olds) and those benefiting from quality early childhood development programmes increased [Somalia 2013b p39], a low national enrolment rate persists. There is also the issue of gender disparity as education participation for girls in Somalia is reported to be much lower than for boys. Increasing enrolment and improving retention in formal primary schooling and access to quality education remains a key concern among donor government and agencies, particularly for children living in marginalised communities [Somalia 2013b].

2. Building a sustainable and stable society – The Somalia conflict analysis summary indicated that weak governance and fragility remains a key conflict driver at a national level (UNICEF 2014c).

The policies on Somalia recognised the importance of maintaining stable political and socioeconomic conditions. A policy priority and challenge is to precipitate a new political security to ensure that the country's transition to a post-conflict state and progress towards long-term sustainable peace is maintained. As the report to the UN National Security Council emphasised (United National Security Council 2015), 'enabling stabilisation efforts through supporting the delivery of security for the Somali people to facilitate the wider process of peacebuilding and reconciliation' is required in order that basic governance and public services for the Somali people in general can function.

3. Effective ECD policy implementation and monitoring - while the review showed there were some references relating to children and nation building goals, there was a notable absence of an ECD or peacebuilding policy per se. Responses from the questionnaire suggested that ECD has not been adequately prioritized and whilst the Go-to-School Initiative presented a current flagship policy, ECD or early learning is not a key priority, largely due to a general lack of funding and actions to enact the policy.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Corroborated by key informants.

## South Sudan

### *Country Profile*

The Republic of South Sudan is located in northeastern Africa bordering the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, Uganda, and the Central African Republic. The country is considerably diverse with approximately sixty-three ethnic groups and over 60 indigenous languages. It is largely dependent on subsistence agriculture with the majority of the population living in the rural areas. The country gained independence from Sudan in July 2011 and is the world's newest nation in its transition to a constitutional democracy. However, South Sudan has experienced long periods of conflict over the years and continues to face threats of political upheavals and fragile conditions, including the effects of two internal civil wars (from 1955 to 1972 and then 1983 to 2005) (UNESCO 2015b). A UNESCO (2015) national review indicates that more than half the population live below the national poverty line. Decades of war have had a detrimental effect on the South Sudanese people who have had little or no access to basic services and educational opportunities. Schools, teacher training and educational institutes have been decimated or forced to close, with teachers and students contributing to the conflict as freedom fighters, displaced persons or refugees. The UNESCO report suggests that generations of South Sudanese people have completely missed out on any education or skills training as a result of the civil wars (UNESCO 2015b). The country is also prone to outbreaks of epidemics from cholera and malaria with detrimental effects on children and families (UNESCO 2015b). An internal political crisis ensued in December 2013 following a period of unrest which has led to 2.2 million people having to leave their homes (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs 2015). In 2015, negotiations for a ceasefire and peace process were mediated by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), in dialogue with the President of South Sudan and the leader of the Opposition party the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A). A peace process was negotiated among the political parties to establish a transitional government and work towards resolving the conflict. However, the situation remains tenuous and a 2015 report by the Secretary-General on South Sudan to the United Nations Security Council stated that little progress has been made without consensus between the parties to reach a settlement (UNESCO 2015b). The report asserted the humanitarian situation in South Sudan remains dire, the latest OCHA figures point to 3.9 million people requiring humanitarian assistance (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs 2015). A conflict analysis summary report indicated that chronic insecurity, weak governance, ethnic and political tensions continue to be key conflict drivers (UNICEF 2015e). It is evident that the political, social and economic challenges facing the country are immense.

### *What national-level policies are there related to children, early childhood development and peacebuilding?*

The review identified four policies related to early childhood development and peacebuilding in South Sudan:

1. Republic of the Sudan. Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs (2009) The National Policy for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs).
2. Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies. Ministry of General, Instruction (2012) South Sudan Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies
3. Juba Republic of South Sudan (2012) General Education Strategic Plan 2012-2017. Promoting Learning for All.
4. The Republic of South Sudan. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (2014) Achieving education for all children in South Sudan. The National Inclusive Education Policy

The policy context of South Sudan is invariably shaped by the country's political history as a result of prolonged conflict. The country's independence in 2011 entailed not only the need to develop a new

political constitution but also the introduction social policy reforms largely from scratch in a context of ongoing instability and an uncertain socioeconomic climate. The UNESCO (2015) national report stated that the impact of conflict in South Sudan has resulted in significant numbers of school-aged children being displaced from their communities with little or no access to education, with schools in the conflict-affected regions either destroyed, damaged or occupied by armed groups. In areas where there is some access to schooling, there is a reported high drop-out rate (UNESCO 2015b). In its independent status as the Republic of South Sudan, national policies have been developed in response to the country's post-conflict recovery with a focus on rebuilding national solidarity and its public sector provisions. The South Sudan Development Plan 2011-2013 for instance, provided a policy framework for addressing key areas of development including improving governance, expanding health and education services, and promoting national security. The National Inclusive Education Policy [South Sudan 2014]. by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) presented the government's policy position on achieving education for all children in South Sudan including a national integrated plan for early childhood development as a way of alleviating social equity and inter-generational poverty. The country's five year General Education Strategic Plan 2012-2017 and its accompanying action plan [South Sudan 2012b] set out the government's ambition for progression to achieve the Education for All and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by the year 2022 and a fully literate society by 2040 (UNESCO 2015b). The five-year plan identified the government's strategic policy goals in terms of building education capacity through for instance enhancing provisions with textbooks and education materials, and strengthening school governing bodies and parent-teacher associations, increasing access to general education and promoting equity, and facilitating access to learning for students with educational needs. There was also a focus on ensuring gender equality in education with a national focus on educational provisions for girls especially for those who cannot easily access education (UNESCO 2015b).

The policy review also showed a clear legislative framework being developed in recent years. The Transitional Constitution of the Republic of South Sudan (2011) for instance, provides the basis for the country's overall legal framework for education and national policy development. Articles 29 on the 'Right of Education' and Article 38 on 'Education, Art and Science' of the Constitution recognises the rights of all citizens to free, universal access to education without discrimination. The Education Act 2012 [South Sudan 2012b] established the basic principles of policy development and implementation for the education sector in South Sudan with a clear vision for achieving social equity, and recognising the rights of all citizens to free, compulsory basic primary education. The 2012 Education Act is applicable to the development of South Sudan's formal education system which comprises of two years pre-primary, eight years of primary and four years of formal secondary education. Importantly, the Act articulated the government's philosophy in regards to the promotion of inclusive education, 'We believe Inclusive Education is a public good that is as much about the kind of society that we want to have, as it is about ensuring that all of our children, regardless of race, gender, class, ethnicity, sexuality, religion, background, familial status or connection, upbringing, disability and/or ability are given the education and support to achieve to their potential.' [South Sudan 2014, p24]. The national policies and strategic plans therefore indicated strong government objectives and intent to building the country's education sector, and promoting equitable social participation. The policies also demonstrated a rapidly expanding policy landscape that is geared towards the promotion of the sustainable development of the South Sudanese society (UNESCO 2015b).

#### *How are children and childhood portrayed in policy?*

The Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology (MoEST) is the main ministerial department responsible for the overall education system in South Sudan including early childhood development. Early Childhood Education in South Sudan generally refers to children three to six years in the period leading up to primary schooling (UNESCO 2015b). The importance of children's participation and

rights to universal primary education is enshrined in the Education Act 2012 which stipulated the provision of two years of pre-primary education and free, universal primary education for all citizens without discrimination. The country's five-year "General Education Strategic Plan, 2012-2017" [South Sudan 2012b] set clear ambitions for achieving the Education for All goals by 2022 including enhancing pre-primary and early childhood development provisions.

While the early childhood sector mainly in South Sudan is dominated by the private sector with limited information available on the nature and type of provisions, the policy review showed increasing emphasis on the important role of early childhood development. Children and families are incorporated across the policies in a full range of roles, including as vulnerable subjects of conflict requiring protection of their rights, as well as participants in education and a key source of knowledge. There was a strong policy statement on early childhood development as an important aspect of inclusive education through the initiation of a national integrated plan for Early Childhood Development [South Sudan 2014]. The policy acknowledged the importance of quality early childhood development (ECD) programmes in addressing social inequalities and inter-generational poverty.

The policies indicated some evidence of the implementation of comprehensive and equitable early childhood care and education programmes. The UNESCO (2015) national report demonstrated key policy developments in recent years including a policy for the management and administration of pre-Schools (2007), the development of an early childhood development and education (ECDE) curriculum (2006), guidelines for teacher training manuals (2008), and draft guidelines and regulations for the establishment and management of pre-primary schools (2012) (UNESCO 2015b). There was therefore evidence of the rising profile of early childhood development and related activities at a regime (government), as well as niche or grassroots levels. The National Inclusive Education Policy (The Republic of South Sudan. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology 2014) identified the role of children as strong and competent beings who are capable of taking an active participation in their education and society. The policy endorsed a 'child-centred pedagogy' as a philosophy that underpins the notion of early childhood development. It emphasised 'the need to put children at the centre of learning' and providing an environment where children will be 'empowered to think, question, investigate, and explore as a basis for learning. Child-centred learning views development as a holistic, complex and interrelated process that includes the domains of emotional, social, cognitive, communication, language and physical learning, growth and well-being.' [South Sudan 2014, p6]. The General Education Strategic Plan 2012-2017 [South Sudan 2012b] also highlighted the government's commitment to children's participation in an inclusive education system through the adoption of 'a Child-Friendly School approach' (p25) particularly for children with special educational needs. Notably, the national inclusive Education Policy (2014) also acknowledged the important role of children in relation to the family. The policy encouraged the involvement of families in promoting schooling and education, through 'increased parent, family and community involvement and advocacy including a national campaign to get all children to school'. [South Sudan 2014, p11]. The rights of parents in the participation of Education is also enshrined in the policy in their contribution to children's overall development at home as well as in schools. The policy supported the participation of parents in school-related decision making and working in collaboration to promote inclusion in education [South Sudan 2014]. However, despite increasing policy advocacy for children and their role in education, there have also been prevalent concerns raised by the government of the need for increased support for early childhood development in policy implementation including the implementation of Education management information systems, monitoring and evaluation tools, and consistent standards and quality of provisions [South Sudan 2012b]. There was also recognition of the need for a clear strategic direction and budgetary support for achieving the policy pronouncements, to ensure equitable access to preschool education is achieved, and is similarly prioritised alongside primary education.

Significantly, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, with support of UNICEF as the Managing Entity of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Programme has developed and launched the first National Education Curriculum Framework, inclusive of the ECCD curriculum. This Curriculum Framework is in line with the Government's vision of ECCD as set out in the policy documents. The curriculum promotes quality and excellence in early childhood education by providing guidelines for practices that would promote optimum learning and development of all young children in South Sudan.

#### *How is peacebuilding encouraged?*

The review showed evidence of the promotion of peacebuilding across key national policies in South Sudan. The Education Act 2012 which sets out the South Sudanese government's policy position on education and national development stipulated the role of education in fostering social integration as well as peace and national unity. The Act promoted the principles of sustainable peace through the respect and tolerance for other cultures, traditions, and beliefs. It also advocated for national patriotism among the South Sudanese people through the preservation of the country's local cultures and traditions, including the use of national languages in formal education. The National Educational Inclusive Education policy (2014) reinforces the government's intention to secure the future stability of the country through nation-building and peacebuilding. The policy stated, 'Emerging from decades of conflict, the new Republic of South Sudan (RSS) is focused on the tasks of nation-building, state-building and peace-building to provide the basis for national development' [South Sudan 2014, p17]. In addition, a formal written statement in the 'Protocol on Agreed Principles on Transitional Arrangements Towards Resolution of the Crisis in South Sudan' endorsed by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (2014) demonstrates a regional and national-level policy agreement on the resolution of conflict in South Sudan (Intergovernmental Authority on Development 2014). The Protocol reflected the government's assurance in the restoration of peace and stability, and concerted efforts at a regime level in working towards a 'negotiated resolution of the crisis'. (p2) At a niche or grassroots level, the social sector policy, the National Policy for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) (2009) indicated a clear strategy for the promotion of social cohesion and the integration of displaced persons as a result of conflict. The focus of the policy was on reintegrating victims of conflict into communities through a national action plan of 'reunifying displaced families and reintegrating them into their original areas or to other places of their choice.' ([South Sudan 2009, p4]. Along a similar rhetoric in promoting the principles of sustainable peace, the education policy document 'South Sudan Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies' [South Sudan 2012a] included suggestions of implementable strategies on building capacity for contingency and preparedness planning such as 'teacher preparation', and provision of emergency learning materials including early childhood development kits, recreation kits, blackboards, first aid kits, and 'the establishment of temporary learning spaces, teaching of life-saving messages, psychosocial support and activities' to support 'peace building, conflict mitigation, disaster risk reduction' [South Sudan 2012a, p17]. There is therefore strong articulation at both governance, landscape level and at niche level of the promotion of peacebuilding and early childhood development.

#### *Policy highlights*

As a newly emerged independent state, South Sudan is at a historic moment of change. The policy review shows clear strides are being made in the country's attempts at national development and conflict resolution, with an increased emphasis on the promotion of Early Childhood Development and Education (ECDE), education and the links with peacebuilding (UNESCO 2015b). The Education Sector Strategic Paper (2012-2017) [South Sudan 2012] and its accompanying action plan provided the overall policy framework for the development of the education sector over the next five years with ambitious targets for the sector to improve the quality of as well as access to education. There



was also perceivable progress in the work of international non-government organisations in supporting the delivery of early childhood programmes. For example, recognising the importance of early childhood development as part of the Education in Emergencies response stemming from the December 2013 conflict, UNICEF took the lead in providing ECD in Emergencies Training of Trainers for key Education Cluster partners in 2014. These partners further support the training to ECD teachers and facilitators in conflict-affected areas. There was clear international recognition that the provision of quality education and other social services in South Sudan can contribute positively to poverty reduction, for example through vocational development and enhanced economic opportunity, which can in turn contribute to peacebuilding (UNICEF 2015e). However, as a country that has suffered from decades of depravity and conflict, South Sudan faces significant challenges with continued threats to national security, widespread poverty, and poor infrastructure of basic services. The country faces key challenges in terms of:

1. Improving and maintaining sustainable socioeconomic conditions – There is recognition across the policies of the fragility of socioeconomic and political conditions in South Sudan which can have a detrimental impact on the country’s progress. The General Education Strategic Plan 2012-2017 (2012) acknowledged that a significant proportion of Sudanese people live below the national poverty line with a high percentage of severe or moderate stunting in children due to malnutrition and poor health indicators as the country continues to face serious challenges to food and economic security. This stark reality is that until socioeconomic conditions improve, progress in education and other social sector services will be severely limited [South Sudan 2012b, p.13]
2. Increasing access to education - As a result of the country’s weakened infrastructure and capacity, access to primary education and education in general remains a major challenge. The country’s strategic plan suggests that less than half of the children in South Sudan are enrolled in school in 2013 (UNESCO 2015b). The country’s education challenge is exacerbated given that the population of school-age children includes a high percentage of internally displaced children. The General Education Strategic Plan 2012-2017 (2012) indicated that many older youth have not acquired basic literacy, numeracy or life skills as a result of the lack of educational provisions during the civil wars [South Sudan 2012]. The UNESCO national review on education (2015) further indicated significant disparities and inequalities exist in South Sudan, particularly girls with limited access to education and a high dropout rate before completion of primary or secondary schooling (UNESCO 2015b)
3. Teacher training and delivering the appropriate pedagogy for early childhood development – At present, there is limited training available to teachers at all levels to support the implementation of an appropriate ‘child-centred’ pedagogy as espoused by The National Inclusive Education Policy (The Republic of South Sudan. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology 2014). The provision of teacher training to deliver quality early childhood education is an important agenda in the strengthening of the ECD sector. To achieve a comprehensive package of quality early childhood development for all young children aged 3 to 6, there is a need to develop an ECD policy framework to guide stakeholders in the management of ECD programmes. There is also need to strengthen the professionalism of ECD teachers. To ensure quality of the ECD workforce, an ECD teacher training curriculum is required. Since the conflict in December 2013, ECD teachers continue to be trained by education partners in emergency setting as part of the Education in Emergencies response, although not all these trainings are adequate.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Corroborated by UNICEF Country Office in South Sudan.

4. Expanding and improving comprehensive integrated Early Childhood Care and Education (UNESCO 2015b) - Despite the country's laudable policy on inclusive education, access to early childhood development remains an issue. It has been recognised at an international, regime level that provisions for children in South Sudan are wholly inadequate, and children are 'often poorly advocated for, despite international recognition of its importance and inclusion in [Education for All] EFA and the common knowledge that it encourages children to enter and stay in school.' (UNESCO 2015b, p18)

## Uganda

### *Country Profile*

Officially known as the Republic of Uganda, the country is located in East Africa and is one of the world's most densely populated with an estimated population of over 40 million (World Population Review 2015). The country is geographically situated in the African Great Lakes region alongside Kenya and Tanzania, with Kampala as its capital city. Paradoxically, Uganda is one of the most resource rich developing countries with mineral deposits and natural resources but is characterised by its low human development index with its history of conflict and fragility (OECD 2013). The country has witnessed several civil wars internally and regionally since the late 1980s, with devastating effects on the country's infrastructure and governance. The President of Uganda is both the Head of State and the Government, and presides over a parliament formed by a national assembly. Since becoming president in 1986, Yoweri Museveni has introduced democratic reforms with the aim of restoring political and socio-economic stability. In 2011, Museveni was re-elected as President of Uganda for a fourth term. In its post-conflict state and gradual emergence from civil war, the government of Uganda has actively promoted a 'development agenda' [Uganda 2007] in working towards the reduction of poverty and enhance the basic welfare of Ugandans, with a keen focus on improving access to basic public services such as health, education, water and sanitation. Yet, despite its gradual progress, prolonged conflict in the North for over two decades have significantly impacted on the country with poverty levels remaining significantly high. A UNESCO report (2013) on the country reports that 'poverty still persists in many communities especially in the rural areas where they [Ugandans] live on less than a dollar a day.' (Uganda National Commission for UNESCO 2012, p1). A significant percentage of the population of Uganda continue to live in deep-rooted poverty in the rural areas and the country is marked by low literacy rates and poor living conditions. A conflict analysis highlights persistent regional and national security concerns, and unresolved issues of violence (UNICEF 2014d). Uganda's long standing experience of conflict and fragility continues to be a major impediment to increasing socioeconomic growth [Uganda 2007a].

### *What national-level policies are there related to children, early childhood development and peacebuilding?*

The review identified seven policies related to early childhood development and peacebuilding in Uganda:

1. Office of the Prime Minister. Department of Preparedness, Refugees (2004) The National Policy for Internally Displaced Persons.
2. Ministry of Education, Sports The Republic of Uganda Education Planning Department (2004) Education Sector Strategic Plan 2004-2015.
3. Government of Uganda (2007) Peace, Recovery and Development Plan for Northern Uganda 2007-2010.
4. Minister of Gender, Labour, Social Development (2007) The Uganda Gender Policy.
5. Ministry of Health. The Republic of Uganda (2010) The Second National Health Policy. Promoting People's Health to Enhance Socio-economic Development.
6. Ministry of Education and Sport. The Republic of Uganda (2011) Skilling Uganda Skilling BTVET Strategic Plan 2011-2020. Final Draft.
7. International Labour Organisation (2012) Decent Work Country Programme 2013-2017. Final Draft.

A wide range of policies and policy-related items pertaining to education, health and the social sector was reviewed. The review exemplified an explicit policy drive initiated by the government of Uganda to formulate a comprehensive policy strategy to alleviate poverty and improve the welfare of the Ugandan people. A raft of policies have been introduced in the last decade as part of a

strategic plan for social and economic development. The Education Sector Strategic Plan 2004-2015 (Ministry of Education, Sports and The Republic of Uganda Education Planning Department 2004) for instance, denotes a clear social and educational sector national-level strategy to providing quality early childhood and primary education programmes. Building on an educational policy agenda, the final draft of a strategic plan on education and training have sought to 'promote skills development in Uganda for employment, enhanced productivity and growth.' (Skilling Uganda Skilling Business, Technical and Vocational Education and Training BTJET Strategic Plan 2011-2020 [Uganda 2011]. The national 'Peace, Recovery and Development Plan (2007) for Northern Uganda (PRDP) presented a national strategy 'to eradicate poverty and improve the welfare of the populace in Northern Uganda.' [Uganda 2007a, piii]. The policy presented a commitment by the Uganda Government to stabilise and recover the country's socio-economic conditions in its post-conflict era. Underpinned by a national agenda to improve public welfare services, the 'Second National Health Policy. Promoting People's Health to Enhance Socio-economic Development (2010)' initiates a national drive '[t]o promote health and education, and to ensure that all citizens have access to health services, clean and safe water and education [Uganda 2010, p10]. Notably, a Uganda Gender Policy [Uganda 2007b] offered an example of a ratified social sector policy to promote social equality and gender equity in Ugandan society. The policy promoted the ' fairness and justice in the distribution of resources, benefits, and responsibilities between men and women, girls and boys in all spheres of life.' [Uganda 2007b, p3], and aims to support communities and civil organisations on the promotion of equal opportunities and gender equality. The findings from the policy review therefore showed clear government intent in driving a national development agenda. Increased advocacy and enhanced government interest in prioritising the development of the Uganda society are cited as main reasons for the policy drive. Importantly, as the policy landscape of the country continues to evolve, it remains to be seen the extent to which these national-level policies are translated in practice and serve to enhance the overall welfare and well-being of the Ugandan people.

#### *How are children and childhood portrayed in policy?*

The policies indicated the government's recognition of the importance of children and early childhood in the Ugandan society. The Education Sector Strategic Plan 2004-2015 (2004) for instance presented a key national policy which offered a comprehensive strategy for the promotion of education for all including early childhood services and primary schooling [Uganda 2004b]. As an Education plan, the policy revealed burgeoning recognition of children as participants in their learning with attention placed on improving the quality of education in terms of what children learn and how they learn [Uganda 2004b, p18]. There was also recognition in the constitution of Uganda of the centrality of children's role in society with indisputable rights to basic quality education [Uganda 2004, p11]. The importance of protecting vulnerable children is stressed as the policy calls for the 'improvement of comprehensive Early Childhood Care and Education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children [Uganda 2004b, p25]. The policy review also indicated the development of a Ugandan Education sector Early Childhood Development policy that was launched in 2007 [[Uganda 2004b]]. The policy marked a significant milestone in the early childhood sector with the recognition of early childhood as or pre-primary education as the first level of education in Uganda, and the advocacy for increased awareness on the importance of early childhood development and added government funding for the provision of children with special needs (Uganda National Commission for UNESCO, 2012,p.vii).

Overall, children and childhood appeared to feature strongly across the policies reviewed on Uganda. The early childhood context in Uganda can be characterised by three main policy goals: the establishing of an enabling environment for children, the wide implementation of a comprehensive early childhood development programmes, and the monitoring and quality assurance of provisions (The World Bank 2012). There was clear recognition of children's rights to education and a peaceful

society, and importantly, children as active participants in contributing to society. This largely pertains to children's role as learners in education, with emphasis on 'what participants (children) learn and how they learn' (Education Sector strategic Plan 2004-2015: 18). The peacebuilding policy exemplified through the Peace, Recovery and Development Plan 2007-2010 (2007) also recognised children as victims of conflict and the need to progress towards the recovery and resettlement of children in a post-conflict state. As the policy acknowledges, 'children are among the groups that have been principal victims of the conflict' and children's rights to family, parental support, education and health services need to be met [Uganda 2007a]. It is also significant that the importance of families and communities is encouraged through The Uganda Gender Policy (2007) which aimed to promote cohesive relations between children and families, and the mobilisation of communities to bring about a more equal and just society in Uganda [Uganda 2007b].

#### *How is peacebuilding encouraged?*

The policy review showed concerted intention on the part of the Ugandan government to drive forwards a peace process and enable the restoration of civil security and peaceful relations in the country. The Education Sector Strategic Plan (2004) encouraged the strengthening of links between peacebuilding and education through the redistribution of resources and capital, and the delivery of social welfare and educational programmes. The National Internally Displaced Persons Return, Re-settlement and Re-integration Strategic Plan for Lango and Teso Sub Regions (Department of Disaster Preparedness, Refugees Office of the Prime Minister Uganda 2005) reflected the government's commitment to maintaining sustainable peace and diplomatic relations nationally and regionally (Department of Disaster Preparedness, Refugees Office of the Prime Minister Uganda 2005). The policy was underpinned by the principles of peacebuilding as evident through the government's encouragement for the return and resettlement of internally displaced people. There was evidence of the implementation of social welfare programmes to facilitate the reintegration of displaced persons into the community. The policy acknowledged that the 'Government will seek suitable reintegration of displaced children in community-based facilities' (Department of Disaster Preparedness, Refugees Office of the Prime Minister Uganda 2005, p26). Actionable policy initiatives relating to peacebuilding include for instance the initiation of the Southern Sudan peace process and renewed diplomatic relations between Sudan and Uganda. The policy emphasised the government's policy agenda of maintaining 'peace and security' internally as well as in the Teso and Lago subregions (Department of Disaster Preparedness; Refugees Office of the Prime Minister Uganda 2005). Underpinned by similar peacebuilding principles, the Peace, Recovery and Development Plan for Northern Uganda 2007-2010 (2007) reinforced the national drive to promote peace through education, through the 'Re-education and re-orientation of the minds and hearts of the population towards peace and development rather than war and psychosocial counselling for children and others rescued from LRA fighting ranks (Department of Disaster Preparedness, Refugees Office of the Prime Minister Uganda 2005, p18). Notably, a key strategic objective of the policy was the promotion of peace building and reconciliation. It is also significant that the Education Sector Strategic Plan 2004-2015 (2004) recognises peacebuilding as a cross-cutting issue that relates to other key facets of Ugandan society including the environment, peace and human rights education, in order to bring about changes in 'national social and economic policies.' [Uganda 2004b]. The notion of peacebuilding is constructed in Uganda's policies as a multi-dimensional framework that is relevant to other cross-sectoral policy reforms including the delivery of HIV/AIDS education programmes and the pursuit of gender equity, peace and human rights education [Uganda 2004b, pp70-71].

#### *Policy highlights*

The policy review on Uganda revealed several highlights. These included the acknowledged links at the level of policy and practice of the vital role of education, early childhood education, and peacebuilding in the Ugandan society. The important links between education and peace is

encouraged, including children's participatory role in education for the promotion of peace and democracy. The policies in general reflected clear government intent to pursue an agenda of national development to improve the socio-economic conditions and welfare of the Ugandan people. The main challenge revealed through the policy review is in the implementation and impact of the policies in the longer term. The policies also reveal key issues to be addressed:

1. Retention in schooling – as with many developing countries in sub-Saharan Africa, the retention of children in primary education remains a challenge in Uganda. Despite attempts to increase access to early childhood education and schooling, the country continues to face the task of student retention and meeting the needs of vulnerable children who are being excluded from the education system. A report by the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (2012) revealed Uganda to have one of the highest dropout rates in schooling at 68% (UNESCO Institute of Statistics 2012).
2. Actionable policy delivery and implementation – a key challenge pertaining to the policy landscape in Uganda is the absence of a clear implementation plan or operational framework. The findings from the policy review and responses from key informants indicated that the implementation of national policies is left largely in the hands of the private sector, raising issues of impact and accountability.<sup>11</sup>
3. Prioritisation of early childhood development for peacebuilding – while there was discernible government ambition in promoting early childhood development and the restoration of peace in the country, the long term linkages between early childhood and peacebuilding at the level of programme implementation and practice require further evidence. A World Bank report (2012) on Uganda's early childhood sector contends that access to essential early childhood services particularly for children from disadvantaged families remain low and the monitoring of the quality of services a challenge (The World Bank 2012). In the context of the country's progress towards progressive development and sustainable peace, an important task is in the implementation of key policies and interventions to place children at centre stage of Ugandan society.
4. Disparities in education access and quality – stark inequalities remain an underlying conflict driver in Uganda (UNICEF 2014d). It remains to be seen the extent to which new policy development can engenders social reforms for the building of peace and social cohesion for families, communities and the wider Ugandan society.

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<sup>11</sup> Corroborated by key informants.

## Yemen

### *Country Profile*

The Republic of Yemen is an Arab country in Southwest Asia. It is the second largest country situated in the Arabian Peninsula with a population of more than 20 million recorded in 2012 (The World Bank 2014). The country has experienced prolonged political upheavals and unrest. A series of protests against poverty, unemployment, corruption erupted amongst the Yemeni people in 2011. In 2012, the then Vice President Abd Mansour Hadi was formally elected as president. A national dialogue followed the same year to reach consensus on major issues facing the country's future. However, political instability ensued with the resignation of President Hadi, his prime minister and the cabinet in January 2015, amid a political impasse against the opposing political factions with ongoing violence in the country. To-date, ongoing attempts at conflict resolution are being brokered by the United Nations and the international community in a bid to restore stability to the country. As a country, Yemen faces major challenges resulting from conflict as well as natural disasters. The country is highly exposed to a number of natural adversities such as floods and droughts, with floods being the most recurrent. The government has undertaken some measures in recent years to address its disaster risk management (DRM) and the development of risk-reduction programs for key public sectors such as food security, water, and urban development. A nation-wide disaster risk management plan was drafted in 2006 and updated in 2010, although these are not yet officially approved by the government. The country is currently experiencing a period of political and social transition, and continues to face threats of internal civil war among different rebel forces (UNHRC The UN Refugee Agency 2015). As a fragile state, Yemen was ranked 154 out of 186 countries in the Human Development Index in 2013 as a composite measure of the welfare and well-being of its people, as major issues persist with widespread poverty, malnutrition, ongoing conflict, and weakened resources and national security (UNDP 2014).

### *What national-level policies are there related to children, early childhood development and peacebuilding?*

The review identified six policies related to early childhood development and peacebuilding in Yemen:

1. Republic of Yemen (2002) Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) 2003 - 2005.
2. Medium Term Results Framework team under the coordination of the Ministry of Education (2006) Implementation of the National Basic Education Development Strategy (NBEDS).
3. Government of Yemen (2006) The National Children and Youth Strategy of the Republic of Yemen 2006-2015.
4. Ministry of Education (2007) Allocation of resources to achieve Education Outcomes in Yemen, 2007 - 2011.
5. International Labour Office: Republic of Yemen (2008) Decent Work Country Programme 2008.
6. Republic of Yemen Council of Ministers Executive Unit for Internally Displaced Persons (2013) National policy for addressing internal displacement in Republic of Yemen.

The policy context of Yemen is intrinsically shaped by the country's experience of adversity, and has been driven largely by the urgent need for clear policy strategies to maintain national security and stability. A major challenge facing the government of Yemen and Yemeni people is that of internal displacement, that has occurred as a result of conflict and violence over the years. A national policy on internally displaced persons indicated that nearly half a million Yemenis as being "internally displaced persons" (IDPs) in their own country due to natural and human adversities [Yemen 2013]. The policy review therefore demonstrates the Yemeni government's attempts at responding to the country's volatile changes, with the development of national-level policies to provide for some



stability and basic provision of governance and infrastructure for the Yemeni people. The social sector policy, reflected through the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) 2003 – 2005 (2002) for instance, made a clear statement on the alleviation of poverty and the promotion of basic education and health services (Republic of Yemen 2002, pix) The policy sets out the government's intention to enhance economic growth, socio-economic and national stability [Yemen 2002]. There were also discernible policy strategies relating to education, peacebuilding and the national development of the Yemeni society. In a national drive towards the reduction of poverty, the policy also emphasised the links between family size and socioeconomic growth, raising the government's concern that large family size raises the probability of poverty, in that 'families with a large number of infants and children have a higher probability of being poor whether it is located in rural or urban areas' [Yemen 2002,pix]. The policy went on to reiterate the important role of community and civil society, and the engagement of civil society and community organizations to enhance the social and economic activity and growth of the Yemeni society. The allied report on 'Development of Education in the Republic of Yemen' (Ministry of Education 2008)and the Implementation of the National Basic Education Development Strategy (NBEDS) (Yemen 2006a) reflected the government's commitment to strengthening education planning, financing and governance. A key aim of the 'Development of Education' strategy (2008) was the implementation of a basic education development, with government intent to increase enrolment rates for all children, covering preschool to tertiary education (p3). There was also evidence within the policy to work towards the narrowing of the gender gap and enhance workforce teacher training (Yemen 2006a). Significantly, the national policy for addressing internal displacement in Republic of Yemen (2013) indicated the government's aims of restoring social stability with a focus on displacement-affected communities and the provision of specifically tailored reintegration programmes for children and families. The policy emphasised the importance of reuniting families and children who have been separated by displacement as a matter of urgency [Yemen 2013]. To this end, the policies reviewed on Yemen demonstrates clear government concern and commitment to improving the socio-economic conditions of the country and the recovery of civil society, even as the implementation and delivery of these policies remain to be seen.

#### *How are children and childhood portrayed in policy?*

Amidst a landscape of conflict and adversity, the review shows a myriad ways in which children play a central role in the national policies in Yemen. The policies indicated the government's recognition of children's intrinsic civil and human rights, and alongside this, the acknowledgement of the detrimental impact of conflict on children and the Yemeni society. The national policy on internal displacement in the Republic of Yemen (2013) for instance, reported that approximately thirty percent of internally displaced persons in Yemen are school-aged children (6-18 years) [Yemen 2013]. The policy explicitly sought to address the situation of displacement-affected communities, with a focus on targeted intervention programmes for children. The policy asserts the central role of children and families in order to '[f]acilitate the reunification of families which are separated by displacement, as quickly as possible, particularly when children are involved [Yemen 2013, p22]. In addition, the Development of Education in the Republic of Yemen (the national report) (2008) also made strong reference to the educational provision for children from early childhood to primary schooling (Ministry of Education 2008).Along similar lines, the National Children and Youth Strategy of the Republic of Yemen 2006-2015 (2006) [Yemen 2006b] focused on three critical life stages: 0-5 years, 6-14 years, 15-24 years [Yemen 2006b, p6]. This was a key educational policy aimed at 'Enhancing inclusive education' across the lifespan covering early childhood, youth and beyond. (Government of Yemen 2006, p6). Children were portrayed as central to society, with universal rights and requiring protection. The policy asserts the importance of '[p]rotecting children from risk Pregnancy, birth, infancy and early childhood (0 – 5 years)' and advocates for cross-sectoral links between early childhood and other social sector domains including the important role of children across in relation to health to education [Yemen 2006b, p.9]. Significantly, the policy articulated the

government's vision for children and youth in creating a society 'where all Yemeni children and young men and women are protected, valued and respected for their unique contributions and creativity' [Yemen 2006b, p38].

It would appear that the Government of Yemen has enacted several key laws and policies to ensure the central role and well-being of young children. The National Strategy for Early Childhood 2011-2015 aims to expand access to preschool enrolment (The World Bank 2013b) and the country's General Education Law 45 (1992) recognized preschool as part of the country's education system. Even though preschool attendance is reported to be low, the policy states that all levels of education are provided for free, starting at age 3. The introduction of a National Strategy for Early Childhood Development (2011-2015) in 2010 was an important step in the government's attempts to expand access to quality preschool and other essential early childhood development services. The principles of supporting early childhood development and valuing the role of children in society therefore appeared to permeate the national level policies in Yemen, even as it remains to be seen the extent to which these principles and aspirations are realised in practice, in a sector and country that have been greatly weakened by conflict and adversity (The World Bank 2013b).

#### *How is peacebuilding encouraged?*

The findings of the review indicated that the principles of peacebuilding and social cohesion underpin some, but not all of the national-level policies in Yemen. There was no mention of peacebuilding in two early policies reviewed in the study - the Implementation of the National Basic Education Development Strategy (NBEDS) [Yemen 2006a] and the document 'Allocation of resources to achieve Education Outcomes in Yemen, 2007 - 2011' [Yemen 2007]. However, there was some reference to peacebuilding in other policy sources. For instance, the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) 2003 – 2005 (2002) aimed to promote social integration and stability amidst the country's ongoing conflict and volatile conditions. The policy mentioned programmes and mechanisms that have been set up as part of rebuilding the country's social infrastructure and aims to 'enhance social solidarity and to secure social equilibrium' [Yemen 2002, p.47] Underpinned by a similar rhetoric of developing sustainable peace, the national policy for addressing internal displacement in the Republic of Yemen [Yemen 2013] represented a social sector policy which promotes the social integration of internationally displaced people. The policy aims to '(a) Promote lasting solutions to conflicts and sustainable security, stability and peace (b) Ensure the rule of law throughout the country through the adequate presence of effective law-enforcement authorities, including in areas of IDP return and resettlement (Republic of Yemen Council of Ministers Executive Unit for IDPs 2013 p39).

The social sector policy, the National Children and Youth Strategy of the Republic of Yemen 2006-2015 [Yemen 2006] asserted the role of children and youth in contributing to a 'peaceful and prosperous' society. It calls upon the building of 'a strong sense of Yemeni identity and loyalty to their country and its true Islamic values and have equitable access to a full range of social, health, educational, employment and leisure opportunities to reach their potential and develop as healthy, responsible and active citizens within a peaceful and prosperous Yemen' [Yemen 2006b, p38]. It would appear from the policy analysis that the fostering of a 'Yemeni identity' is an important driver in the country's progress towards conflict resolution and recovery of the Yemeni society as highlighted in the policy vision, although it is unclear as to how this vision might be achieved. The National Children and Youth Strategy of the Republic of Yemen 2006-2015 [Yemen 2006b] also made an explicit statement of the role of peacebuilding as a key national agenda, and highlights a national consensus in building a 'stronger focus on human rights, good governance, democracy, conflict prevention and peacebuilding'[Yemen 2006b, p68]. The review therefore showed some evidence of references made to peacebuilding and the Yemeni government's commitment to building a cohesive and stable society. The policies addressed challenging issues of the adverse socioeconomic and

national security conditions that the country is experiencing, and the importance of strengthening the resilience of children, communities and the wider society. What remains to be seen is the extent to which the Yemeni government's commitment and policy aspirations are followed through and sustained in practice and reality.

#### *Policy highlights*

Facing continuing civil conflict and crisis, a major policy drive for the Yemeni government is the restoration of peace and stability in civil society. The policy review showed key strengths in the government's commitment to the rebuilding of core faculties in the country including coherent strategic policies and governance. There was recognition of the links between education and peace, including children's participatory role in the education for the promotion of peace and democracy. Notably, the National policy for addressing internal displacement in Republic of Yemen (2013) acknowledged the detrimental effects of conflict and unrest on children and families, and calls for the reintegration of displaced children. The national policies revealed demonstrable government intent in the promotion of coordinated and integrated ECD interventions for young children and their families, and the importance of building social cohesion and sustainable peace (The World Bank 2013b). There was also evidence of the need for cross-sectoral policies related to early childhood, peacebuilding and other key social sectors including health, nutrition and education interventions young children. However, despite some beneficial policies, challenges for Yemen remain. These include:

1. Access to early childhood and social sector services - it was not entirely clear from the policies the extent to which basic education and welfare services are being accessed, and inequities in the Yemeni society remain particularly stark between families in urban and rural areas (The World Bank 2013b). Weak institutional and governmental capacity, particularly in the rural areas makes policy implementation difficult (The World Bank 2013b). The figures showed that only 3% of children age 3 to 5 access early childhood development (ECD) and only a quarter (26%) under the age of 5 engage in ECD activities (World Bank Group 2015). Children's access to ECD differs greatly and is dependent on family circumstances. A World Bank report suggested that the most advantaged child is five times more likely to experience activities that will help him/ her to develop cognitively, socially and emotionally. In most cases, ECD centres charge several types of fees which affect access for children from disadvantaged communities (World Bank Group 2015).
2. Reintegration of displaced children - a significant percentage of children remain displaced and separated from their families. The policy on internal displacement in Yemen reports obstacles relating to children's reintegration and access to basic services such education as a result of conflict, including the loss of identification documents, educational certificates, poverty resulting in high dropout rates, psychological trauma, and damaged educational infrastructure and facilities [Yemen 2013].
3. Awareness of the importance of early childhood development (ECD) – the government recognised the country's inadequacies in early childhood provisions and the need to raise further awareness of the importance of ECD. These include critical Issues such as parental education, availability of child health and education facilities in low income communities and families, and need for increased financial and human resources [Yemen 2006b]. The findings also indicated that even though the national policy in Yemen allows for free education at all levels starting at age 3, government funding and the country's finance systems are weak, and funding for the sector remains inadequate (The World Bank 2013b).
4. Monitoring and evaluation of educational quality – there was limited data on provisions for early childhood development and children's outcomes. More established quality standards, including mechanisms for monitoring the standards and evaluation of implementation plans

are required to improve the quality of early childhood development services (The World Bank 2013b).

In general, the review showed some evidence of national policies promoting the importance of early childhood and the principles of peacebuilding, and there was discernible government intent in this area. However, the linkages and implementation of cross-sectoral policies relating to both domains were largely limited.

## SECTION 4 FINDINGS: EXEMPLARS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The country reports have shown the extent to which the policy milieu of early childhood and peacebuilding varies among the fourteen countries. Countries take different approaches to policy development and have differing authority and accountability bodies, as evidenced by the varied sets of policies across all the countries. Depending on the country context, the policies on early childhood development and peacebuilding reviewed in this study also exist on a continuum in their function, purpose and status, ranging from ratified national policies endorsed by the government, ‘finalised but not yet endorsed by the government’, ‘in advanced stages of being endorsed’ and ‘at initial drafting stage’<sup>12</sup>, and with different policies supported by government ministries, regional governments, international NGOs, and/ or all of them.

The following presents the key emergent trends that have been identified from the overall findings:

### Enhancing children’s participatory role in policy

The role and positioning of children across the policies are generally framed in two broad categories: firstly, a rights-based discourse as influenced by the international legislation the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC 1989), and secondly, a framing of children as ‘subjects of concern’ who face particular vulnerabilities and are in need of special care and protection. All the policies reviewed in the study subscribe to the notion of children’s rights as underpinned by the principles of the UNCRC. This rights-based approach discourse is underpinned predominantly by the recognition of children as a minority, vulnerable group alongside other minority individuals such as women, displaced persons and those who are disabled and with special needs requiring special protection from exploitation and harm. The policy review on Pakistan for example, reveals an overarching focus on children as vulnerable and under-privileged, and the importance of ensuring their access to basic provisions of as part of ‘under-privileged/marginalized groups and special children’ [Pakistan2009, p11]; similarly with the case of Uganda’s social sector policy in the Peace, Recovery and Development Plan 2007-2010 (2007) which recognises children as victims of conflict and the promotion of children’s rights to family, parental support, education and health services need to be met [Uganda 2007a].

The discourse of children’s rights and subjects of conflict are therefore generally well articulated across the policies. However, what is less discernible are policy statements that promote the autonomous role and agency of children as having the potential to be active agents in the peacebuilding process. There is some evidence of the promotion of children’s participatory role in education, for example in the Education Sector Plan of Liberia - A Commitment to Making a Difference (2010) which makes reference to children’s role in the democratic participation in schooling and education, and a ‘Child Friendly Schools (CFS) model’ of curricular delivery which is underpinned by the key principles of ‘child centeredness, inclusiveness and democratic participation’ [Liberia 2010, p61], or the General Education Strategic Plan 2012-2017 [South Sudan 2012b] in South Sudan which advocates the government’s commitment to children’s participation in an inclusive education system through the adoption of ‘a Child-Friendly School approach’ (p25) particularly for children with special educational needs. However, in general, the role and position of children in policy is embodied in a discourse of vulnerability and rights, and the need for provision and protection as part of these rights. In addition, while some cross-sectoral policies address young children and families, what is not always explicit is the recognition of the importance of children’s ‘early development’ in the sense of the all-encompassing holistic care and education, and their multidimensional needs of psychosocial well-being, cognitive, social and emotional development as defined in the study. Arguably, while acknowledging children’s inimitable and legitimate rights as

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<sup>12</sup> Corroborated by key informants.

individuals is important and offers much needed leverage in elevating the welfare of children at national policy level, especially in conflict and adversity conditions, it invariably positions children as essentially vulnerable beings, needing protection with limited agency and on the margins of exclusion. Such a discourse brings into question the incongruence of framing children as ‘rights bearing individuals’ on the one hand, and subjects of vulnerability, and needing care and protection on the other. It also raises questions about how interpretations of the protection, provision and participation rights (UNCRC 1989) of young children are defined, what is meant by ‘children’s rights’, how this is construed in societies experiencing or emerging from conflict, and what this means in policy and practice.

### Leveraging early childhood development as a cross-cutting policy issue for peacebuilding

The findings of the review suggest that children and early childhood development are part of much wider policy agendas (eg national development, primary education, health promotion, reintegration of displaced persons). For example, in Liberia, Pakistan, and Sierra Leone, early childhood development or pre-primary education is featured in the national education policies and education sector plans. In South Sudan and Liberia, the strengthening of early childhood development and peacebuilding is perceived as more effective through the promotion of a ‘poverty reduction policy’,<sup>13</sup> the rationale being that raising awareness of the importance of ECD will have a corresponding effect on the reduction in poverty rates and vice versa. In Uganda, children are featured in the Peace, Recovery and Development Plan and national health policy, in contrast to Myanmar which has developed a clear, specific Myanmar Policy for Early Childhood Care and Development (2014). As such, the policy goals for early childhood development are broader than simply developing and structuring services for young children but are also intrinsically linked with other larger social agendas such as tackling poverty, promoting universal primary education, and improving educational standards. There is also evidence of different divisions and levels of government being responsible for the welfare of children and families. The involvement of multiple ministries in matters related to ECD is a common cross-country trend and lends credence to the notion of ECD as a cross-cutting policy issue. It is not unusual for ECD to fall under the jurisdiction of different policy domains and ministerial bodies. For example, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (Sierra Leone), Ministry of Education in collaboration with other Ministries such as Health and Social Welfare, Gender, Justice, Internal affairs, Planning and Economic Affairs, Finance and Youth and Sports (Liberia), Ministry of Education jointly with Ministry of Health and Ministry of Women's Affairs (Ethiopia), Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development (Uganda), Provincial Education Department (Pakistan) Ministry of Child, Gender and Social Welfare (South Sudan), the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement in collaboration with nine other Ministries and NGO partners (Myanmar). While the involvement of several ministries demonstrates the multi-sectoral nature of early childhood development, it nonetheless highlights challenges in regards to the need for cooperation at national level between Ministries and the importance of clearly defined goals and a coherent line of accountability in policy development. In Côte d’Ivoire for instance, the lack of any formal structures for the coordination and collaboration among the main ministries (Education, Social Affairs and Health) to promote ECD, is exacerbated by a lack of a clear ECD policy with a clear vision of priorities for children’s services and this remains a major issue.<sup>14</sup>

### Building alliances between early childhood development and peacebuilding

The findings suggest that ensuring an explicit and coherent policy link between early childhood development and peacebuilding remains a challenge particularly in countries whose policies on children (and families) and social cohesion are administered by different government ministries,

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<sup>13</sup> Corroborated by key informants.

<sup>14</sup> Corroborated by key informants.

regional and/or international stakeholders. There is some evidence where ECD programmatic activities are perceived to play a major role in the rebuilding of communities, and promoting socio-economic development, and reconciliation. For example in the Myanmar Policy for Early Childhood Care and Development (2014), there is recognition of the need for urgent expansion of outreach early childhood care and development services to promote national development, particularly for young children and families who live in remote or disadvantaged that lack access to preventive and basic child development services, and the promotion of 'peaceful and positive relationships' through education [Myanmar 2014, p.91.] Thus, while the principles of peacebuilding are somewhat alluded to in the policy, a more clearly defined policy statement for the promotion of ECD and peacebuilding or social cohesion could be strengthened. Similarly in Uganda, in the absence of any while there is no specific early childhood or peacebuilding policy per se, the promotion of peace and children's welfare through education including human rights education, gender equality, and physical education and sports, arise in response to changes in national social and economic policies. [Uganda 2004b, p44].

### Improving policy implementation, monitoring and evaluation

The policies in general point towards show government intent in their ambition to address the importance of children's health, education and social welfare in general, for all young children from 0 to 5 or from pre-primary up to and beyond school starting age. The review shows examples of discernible policy rhetoric across the countries related to children, families, and peacebuilding which are all ratified documents in their own right. However, what is not yet clear is the extent to which these policies have been implemented, the goals achieved, and whether systematic monitoring and evaluation systems at national-level exist. For example, out of the fourteen countries, only four are known to have developed a policy implementation or operational framework (Pakistan, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone) and only two appear to have undertaken costings for an implementation plan in whole (Pakistan and Myanmar). In some countries such as Uganda, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, the questionnaire respondents indicate an absence of any policy implementation or costing. There is also limited evidence of a systematic monitoring and evaluation system across the policies. The findings are therefore stark, in that the process of policy formulation in regards to ECD and peacebuilding is severely limited and uneven across the countries. The questionnaire responses suggest that the policies across the board are at varying stages of development from policy strategies not yet being translated into a clear, costed implementation plan, to 'partial implementation', 'currently being implemented by being run by the private sector'<sup>15</sup> with no clear accountability. In South Sudan, the country's emergency situation has contributed to poor management information, monitoring and evaluation systems particularly in catering for the needs of children affected by emergencies. The General Education Strategic Plan 2012-2017 (2012) states that a major problem is the absence of any national data collection on the number of educational facilities and infrastructure that have been severely damaged or destroyed due to conflict or natural disasters [South Sudan 2012b]. A consistent trend from the findings therefore seems to be the lack of or limited evidence of policy implementation, monitoring and evaluation of ECD provision. A possible reason is that many of the target conflict-affected countries have experienced sustained changes over the last two decades where the lines of responsibility for policy development and decision-making are often blurred. Regardless, the findings suggest a key challenge in maintaining transparent and rigorous monitoring and evaluation processes in order to ensure that policies related to children and families are well implemented with clear evidence of evaluation and impact, as the corollary of this is that unless strong and coherent policies are enforced, the impact on children can be negligible, or even detrimental.

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<sup>15</sup> Corroborated by key informants.



## Strengthening the role of children and families

The findings show a general recognition of the integral relationships between children and families in society, and the primary role of families in supporting children's care and education, and indirectly in the promotion of stability and peace in conflict and fragile environments. The national policies across all fourteen countries demonstrate at varying degrees, the role of parents and families in supporting children's holistic development and in many cases, the reintegration of displaced families into society in a post-conflict situation. The policies show emerging government commitment in the promotion of intervention programmes that involve parents, families and primary caregivers taking an active role in supporting familial and societal cohesion, although more emphasis could be placed on the associations with young children 0 to 8 years and early childhood development programmes.

The important role of children and families is largely informed by the rights-based discourse of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) which make explicit references to the family 'as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and particularly children' (Preamble). The findings overall recognise the important relationship between children and families as a vital link in the ecological model of early childhood development, and that when this is nurtured in an environment that is supportive, respectful and equitable, children are more likely to prosper. This is underpinned by extant research which shows that parental and community engagement within the immediate familial as well as wider social and cultural environment is strongly associated with their developmental trajectories and adaptation in society (Corsaro 2005; Rogoff 2003; Rogoff and Wertsch 1984; Levine and New 2008). In fragile and conflict-affected states, the role of families and communities becomes all the more important as a way of mitigating the negative impact of adversarial conditions as children are gravely affected socially, morally and emotionally when growing up in a society affected by violence and conflict, and in the drive towards social recovery and reconciliation (Sagi-Schwartz 2008; 2012; Connolly and Hayden 2007; Coleman, Deutsch and Marcus 2014). Sagi-Schwartz (2012) reports that 'Children in war zones who are competently cared for by their own parents or familiar adults were reported to suffer far fewer negative effects and to have more trustful relationships than those without such support.' (938)

Thus, while acknowledging the focus on children 0 to 8 years is not consistently evident across all fourteen countries, the findings do show some examples of policy articulation where parents and communities are regarded as "partners" in working towards a collective goal of building social cohesion and reconciliation. For example, the Education Sector Development Program IV. Program Action Plan [Ethiopia 2010a] endorsed by the Federal Ministry of Ethiopia, show a clear focus on children, families and community participation in the (re)building of an inclusive civil society through equitable access to education. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, the policy document *Le Développement de l'Éducation: Rapport National de la République Démocratique du Congo* [DRC 2008] recognise families at the core of the community and society; while the education policy *Stratégie pour le Développement du Sous-Secteur de l'EPSP 2010/2011 - 2015/2016* [DRC 2010] encourages building a foundation of trust and partnerships among local stakeholders - parents, families, community leaders, religious communities and the government in working towards building a strong education system, as well as a more inclusive and cohesive society.

However, while there are policies which acknowledge the important relationship between children and families, and the role of children and families as the social fabric of society, this relationship is not unambiguous and without tension. For example, while acknowledging the important relationship between children and families in the Liberian society, with policy goals to support greater community and family involvement in provisions for those aged 0 to 5 years, the Liberian education policy [Liberia 2007] notes that families can also exacerbate the difficulties that children face in accessing education. The policy highlights that with the levels of poverty in the country, children are

often relied upon by their families for financial purposes to supplement the family income and are essential to the survival of the family. Thus, while the national policy promotes free primary education in Liberia, widespread poverty means that families do not readily support their children in accessing education (United Nations Agencies 2012). In Ethiopia, the national education and social sector policies [Ethiopia 2002] strongly acknowledge the collaborations between children, families and communities and the important role of families in supporting children's education. However, the policies also stress the need to 'devise strategies' that alleviate child labour and support families in providing opportunities for children's learning. The country's strategic policy goals include the need to raise families' awareness of pertinent issues as 'gender roles, harmful traditional practices, early marriage, value of secular education and co-education through continuous workshops, adult education programs, local radio programs, etc.' in order to engage with families and the community at large to promote education [Ethiopia 2009 pp9-10].

The Sierra Leone Education Sector Plan. A Road Map to a Better Future 2007-2015 [Sierra Leone 2007] recognises the important role of families and family engagement in promoting education, but at the same time acknowledges the barriers that families can pose to education. The policy highlights the difficulties in navigating cultural expectations and practices, for example that of early marriages. A concern is the prevalent beliefs held by some in the community that schooling inhibits girls from taking up their traditional roles in the family and hence the reluctance of some parents and families to support education for girls (p137). Similar issues are reported in the policy document *Strategie pour le Developpement du Sous-Secteur de l'EPSP 2010/2011 - 2015/2016* [DRC 2010] from the Democratic Republic of Congo which highlights several factors that drive gender disparity in the country and inhibit progress. These includes cultural and economic factors such as early marriages and pregnancy, as well as families privileging the education of boys at the expense of girls when choices have to be made among siblings about access to education. In addition, inadequate structural facilities such as the lack of separate toilets in educational settings exacerbate the situation as it deters girls from attending school. A common challenge here is in raising awareness, and convincing parents and families of the value of schooling and early childhood education.

The findings therefore suggest that engagement with parents and families can act as a strong policy lever to address important social agendas. The interdependent relationship between children and their role in the family is complex and at times paradoxical, but is a key area to be addressed in future policy development. As conflict-affected countries continue to work towards recovery, strong policies and support mechanisms that encourage parental and family engagement through communication and outreach with the wider community can only help towards enhancing social equity and cohesion.

## SECTION 5 FINDINGS: POLICY ALIGNMENT WITH RESEARCH KNOWLEDGE ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE

Insights about youth agency and the dynamics of peace and in conflict-affected settings peacebuilding and education have been drawn from a systematic search for research followed by a thematic analysis (Novelli et al 2015). The key messages for this review can be found in Appendix 5. In this section, we match these key messages to some examples of initiatives drawn from policies developed across the countries.

### Absence, Appropriation and Amplification of Youth Voice

Many policies were developed through widespread consultation exercises. For instance, in Myanmar the process included leaders of social development activities at all levels, from communities to townships, regions/ states and the nation. They included parents, teachers, health care providers, leaders and experts from non-governmental, faith-based, community-based and other organisations, ministerial leaders and personnel, and representatives of the media and private sector (Myanmar Policy for Early Childhood Care and Development).

Similarly, the State of Palestine adopted participatory approaches to preparing its National Development Plan [State of Palestine 20014a], with broad-based consultations, involving relevant specialists and stakeholders from across the public and private sectors as well as civil society. Broad and effective participation was a guiding principle for policy development, in order to develop a national consensus on major issues, challenges, policies and implementation. Indeed, the aim was to 'ensure broader participation, coordination, and consultation between all relevant actors. These include the political leadership, public and private sectors, civil society organisations, and relevant international agencies'. A strategic objective of the Social Protection and Development Sector was for greater participation of Palestinian youth in the labour and social, political, cultural and sports events, and more effective contributions towards national development. There was a commitment to renewing efforts to enable children and young people to engage fully and actively in the development of the nation, with a 'priority to develop laws, regulations and processes which ensure access to information and freedom of expression and freedom of the press, particularly among *children*, youth and women. Volunteerism will also be encouraged in all walks of life' [emphasis added].

In Burundi, for poverty reduction, consultation was widened to include young people. The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) [Burundi 2006] drew on the general consensus arising from participatory consultations with an extensive list of target groups (rural communities, government agencies, the private sector, civil society, certain vulnerable groups, Parliament, and development partners) purposely included more of the poorest strata of society and other segments such as youths, women, and other marginal groups who were often poorly represented, if at all, in community organizations. Target groups comprising 50 participants representing the communes were chosen democratically by the people themselves, with men and women equally represented. Specialist participatory approaches and group dynamic skills came from partnering NGOs. Consultation for developing policy was followed by participatory plans for implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Ultimately, a highly educated youth was one of the elements of the long term vision for Burundi and specific plans included the creation of a Children's Parliament. Six years later development of the second Poverty Reduction Strategy [Burundi 2012b] similarly emphasised participation, consistent with the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action, that involved all parties, representing sector and thematic groups, local communities, the private sector, civil society, Parliament, and the development partners, although youth were not specifically mentioned in this description of the process.

Other education policies were similarly inclusive in their development e.g [Somalia 2013b]. Some established governance arrangements with roles for local communities, and a few specified a role for students in this process. For instance, Ethiopia's education and training policy [Ethiopia 1994] envisaged educational institutions that were to be autonomous in their internal administration and in the designing and implementing of education and training programs, with an overall coordination and democratic leadership by boards or committees, consisting of members from the community (society), development and research institutions, teachers and *students* [emphasis added].

In Ethiopia, the vision was for the democratization of the organization and administration of education:

Educational institutions will be autonomous in their internal administration and in the designing and implementing of education and training programs, with an overall coordination and democratic leadership by boards or committees, consisting of members from the community (society), development and research institutions, teachers and students.

At the same time however, it is also recognised that the heavy reliance on community contributions to constructing and managing schools could lead to inequalities [Ethiopia 2010a].

Inclusive engagement was also a feature in Liberia, where the Education Sector Plan - A Commitment to Making a Difference [Liberia 2010] was subsequently ratified through an extensive process of national consultations by ministers of education (pxi). Seven consultations held across the country each lasted for two days followed by a national summit. They were well advertised, well attended and well reported locally.

Delegates clearly knew the direction in which they wanted the education sector to go. *Youths, students* and women were very vocal [emphasis added]. Being illiterate and/or not being able to speak English was not a barrier to participation as use was made of translators from amongst the participants. The greatest challenge to the moderators was keeping to the time schedule as many delegates insisted on having their voices heard on various topics.

When consulted about the intersectoral policy for early childhood development [Liberia 2011a], there was enthusiasm from communities for 'youth based institutions, such as Liberia Student Union, Federation of Liberian Youth etc.'

In Pakistan, consultation for the development of policy includes central and provincial government representatives and major organisational players: Employers Federation of Pakistan and Pakistan Workers' Federation for developing the Decent Work Programme [Pakistan 2010] and Education departments, non-governmental organizations, private sector, UN agencies and bilateral and multilateral donor agencies for developing primary education [Pakistan 2009]. Wider consultation, described below, was limited to the implementation phase and had limited success.

Pakistan's National Education Policy 1998 – 2010 [Pakistan 1989] envisaged School Management Committees at the village level, with locally elected chairs. Consultation of local governments and civil society organizations, at sub national and national levels, was seen as part of iterative planning for education reform [Pakistan 2002]. There was increasing demand for 'increasing local participation in choosing and managing education by the *communities and the students*' [emphasis added]. Micro-planning at the community level was required to reach groups disadvantaged by their gender or socioeconomic status, but faced the challenge of disparities between districts and provinces. As part of the implementation of education section reforms, formal approval was given to

mobilising civil society organizations (CSOs), the community and private sector, although children and young people themselves were not mentioned specifically (p17). Indeed, involvement of CSOs was also integrated into the Interim Poverty Re-education Strategy 2001-2004 and Education For All and Local Government Plan for Devolution. Efforts to combat child labour were more imaginative and successful where implementing agencies developed a 'strong rapport with major stakeholders through consultation and dialogue. Key problems included weak ownership by communities and little effort to build linkages with existing institutions.

However, twenty years later Pakistan's National Education Policy [Pakistan 2009] acknowledged having weak stakeholder involvement in policy development and implementation, particularly so in terms of community involvement (p22). School Management Committees or Parent Teachers Associations (PTAs) have had limited success; with exceptions being due to a dynamic head teacher or a local non-government organization liaising between community and the school. Five clear policy actions are proposed for strengthening School Management Committees by involving students, teachers, educationists, parents and society. This initiative could provide opportunities for developing young people's voices within a more democratic education system and, subsequently, in public life more broadly.

In Somalia, mounting an inclusive political dialogue with representatives from all segments of the communities in each region (women, *youth*, civil society organisations, traditional elders, religious leaders, Diaspora and business community) [emphasis added] was seen as critical for reconciliation and healing between communities at the local level, to restore trust through community dialogue and mediation [Somalia 2013a].

However, inclusive political dialogue was not apparent in all countries. In Yemen, although education for citizenship was strong, in the workers' and employers' participation in policy formulation through strengthened social dialogue remained a goal to be achieved with support from the International Labor Office [Yemen 2008]. Similarly in Uganda, widespread consultation for policy development was rare, and greater participation by young people's in local governance and decision making processes remained a goal [Uganda 2012].

### Applying a gender lens to youth agency

Gender analyses were widespread in education policy documents, where concern was expressed about girls' low school attendance. This was particularly so in Pakistan where, by 2004, provincial governments had their own policies for encouraging wider access to education and reducing gender disparities, which included the appointment of female teachers only at the primary level, scholarships for girls in middle schools, reaching out-of-school children through non formal initiatives to prepare them for entry into the formal system, and upgrading physical facilities, including toilets [Pakistan 2002]. The vision was for 'gender sensitive' schools and the National Education Policy [Pakistan 2009] referred to Article 34 in the Constitution of Pakistan which required that 'steps shall be taken to ensure full participation of women in all the spheres of national life'.

Girls were less likely to attend school even though education girls was seen as beneficial to the country, socially and economically, as early as 1997 [Pakistan 1989]. A gender disparity of 26% in primary schools and 40% in middle schools was noted in The Financing of Education in the Public Sector (2007) where Provinces were exhorted to incentivise District Governments to establishment of middle, secondary and higher secondary schools for girls; District Governments were encouraged to invest in the recruitment of female teachers; and the private sector was called to invest in new schools for girls, especially in rural areas which had a higher gender gap. By 2009, the widening access policy focused on providing greater opportunities to marginalised groups, particularly girls; efforts to increase school attendance included: food based incentives to increase enrolment and

improve retention and completion rates in elementary schools, especially for girls; expanding secondary school provision in rural areas, including girls' schools; and eliminating gender bias in text books, particularly through female membership of curriculum and textbooks review committees [Pakistan 2009]. The National Plan of Action 2013---16 for achieving universal primary education continues to focus on raising awareness of the importance of education and targeted incentives, such as stipends, food-for-education and uniforms for disadvantaged groups, especially girls.

However, gender inequity was recognised as a problem across society as a whole. The Liberian Primary Education Recovery Program [Liberia 2007] noted that not only were girls were missing in schools (p7) but women were also missing in the professions; there was a shortage of qualified women as certificated primary school teachers, medical doctors, nurses or police women, etc. (p26). Gaining a more equal balance would take time. In the short term, 'the Ministry will need to make the best use possible of those teachers, especially women, who have undergone some basic training with the assistance of NGOs' (p45).

### Responding to Specific Youth Constituencies

In Burundi, the National Demobilization, Rehabilitation, and Reintegration Programme (PNDRR) supported demobilized combatants reintegrating into civilian life, with the demobilized individuals able to participate in self-help activities within their social milieu. Effort was invested in training and educating demobilized child soldiers and in training of civil society representatives (especially those with experience of upholding traditional justice) in conflict prevention and resolution. [Burundi 2006]

Similarly, the Somali Compact [Somalia 2013a] prioritised the disengagement of combatants, an end to the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict, taking into account the needs of women and girls associated with armed groups and encourage conditions that reduce the influence of extremism within Somali society. In Pakistan, beyond schools, within the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides movement, young people are seen as potential contributors to society. With well over a million of them in 1998 the expectation was for them to deliver non-formal literacy programmes [Pakistan 1989, p22].

### Work-related Programme Interventions

How young people relate to the world of work had a high profile in many policies. This emphasis matched public concerns expressed in Burundi. Providing productive work there for former combatants was an explicit policy for strengthening security, and beginning training in school for the world of work (acknowledging the large informal sector) was integral to the strategy for poverty reduction. The private sector had little or no investment, and the credit system that was 'too cumbersome, too restrictive, and [did] not encourage young people who have ideas about starting businesses' [emphasis added]. The policy priorities for consolidating peace emphasised '(i) promoting youth entrepreneurship, access to credit, and job creation; (ii) improving supervision of the young; (iii) promoting human rights and rights of young people; and (iv) promoting the right of young people to decent work'. Employment policy was required to: expand job opportunities; adapt training and education to suit jobs, particularly for young people; improve the effectiveness of the job market; and promote voluntary service for youths.

Education and training in Ethiopia focused on technical and vocational training, and apprenticeships in for agriculture, crafts, construction, and basic book keeping. A focus on secular education, research, traditional and modern technology was planned to meet the countries need for a skilled workforce [Ethiopia 1994]. Technical, Vocational, Education and Training (TVET) commonly focused on young people. The Education Sector Plan of Liberia - A Commitment to Making a Difference placed considerable emphasis on a literacy strategy and Technical Vocational Education and Training

(TVET). The latter has a cross-government collaborative strategy, to improve quality, relevance and access to TVET, and with links between TVET and secondary education (pxv). Both strategies include monitoring and evaluation.

Work was also integral to resettlement programmes. The first objective of the 'Liberia Government National Community Resettlement and Reintegration Strategy' [Liberia 2004] was 'To support the resettlement and reintegration of internally displaced, refugees and ex-combatants to return voluntarily, in safety, and with dignity, to their homes or habitual place of residence, or location of their choice and to strengthen their livelihood security and promote reconciliation' (p5). This objective is largely sought through employment and training programmes. The policy focuses on self-reliance support in urban areas, which includes 'Opportunities through employment-based schemes, such as skills training and youth employment projects' (p24). Such 'TVET approaches that seek to enhance the livelihoods and economic prospects of young people have a key role to play in addressing the drivers of youth alienation and promoting their active participation in peacebuilding processes' (review).

In particular the Liberian resettlement policy allows 'returnee and internally displaced persons returning to urban areas [to] benefit from non-farm, start-up livelihood support measures as alternative safety nets and means of subsistence. These livelihood programmes will include; micro credit schemes, small business management training, technical skills training, [and] marketing assistance' (p24). 'All displaced populations will also benefit from targeted employment-based safety net schemes... Following resettlement, continued support may be available in the form of... livelihood development... [including] leadership training for women, girls and youths' (p.25). The policy includes a monitoring strategy which focuses particularly on groups without family support, such as unaccompanied or separated children and ex-combatants who may be rejected by their parents (p38).

In Pakistan the development of work related skills in school were explicitly part of effort that focused on structural divides in society. Employment prospects for young people were strongly linked to their experience of an education system of very uneven quality. A particular source of social tension was the social exclusion felt by children leaving Madrassahs/ Madaris with few skills transferable from the role of clerics. Policy actions focused on developing a more equitable education system with more widespread teaching of English (the language required for white collar employment). The last involves working collaboratively with Madrassahs to develop a curriculum that includes more market-oriented and skills-based subjects to offer graduating children wider employment options, plans for which were in train as early as 2002 [Pakistan 2002].

Pakistan's Decent Country Work Programme 2010-15 [Pakistan 2010] recognised that, although often better skilled than the rest of the labour force, young men and women faced high rates of unemployment. With organised representation of workers' and employers' low, and the voice of women and young people especially under-represented, efforts were to be made for greater empowerment. At the same time, efforts to implement the National Policy and Plan of Action to Combat Child Labour (2000) were making very slow progress. Supporting institutional efforts to prevent, withdraw and rehabilitate child labourers was a priority.

The Somali Compact [Somalia 2013a] aimed to generate work and education opportunities for young people as positive alternatives to participating in violence and conflict: income-generating activities, short-term labour intensive employment projects and skills development programmes, and skills development and training. Vocational and technical training and a special business fund for young entrepreneurs were routes for increasing employment. Beyond schools were plans for the special

literacy skills programmes for older child labourers, boys and girls (aged between 14 and 17 years), which included special educational stipends to rehabilitate child labourers [Pakistan 2009].

### Education for Citizenship and Political Participation

In Burundi, education for citizenship was not a school activity. Citizenship for peace included facilitating 'access to justice for the most vulnerable categories of society, especially by educating them about their rights and about judicial practices and facilitating their understanding of the law' through a 'public information and education program on the rights and responsibilities of citizens'. [Burundi 2006]

Overall, the education and training policy in Ethiopia envisaged bringing-up citizens endowed with humane outlook, countrywide responsibility and democratic values having developed the necessary productive, creative and appreciative capacity in order to participate fruitfully in development and the utilization of resources and the environment at large (Ethiopia 1994). However, the high ideals were not translated into practical tasks, such as participation in arts, sports or cultural activities to encourage peacebuilding [Ethiopia 1994; Ethiopia 2002].

### History education

Although research shows that 'History education which links the study of the past with current and contemporary issues faced by young people enhances peacebuilding agency in a range of ways by developing values, attitudes and skills and a concern for ethical values', we found no such link in any of the policy documents. The Liberian Ministry of Education alone specified history as a core area alongside mathematics, English language, social studies and elementary basic science, but without commenting on its potential to support peacebuilding.

Burundi public policy placed greater value on history. Its Ministry for Education and Culture History was given the responsibility for re-writing the history of Burundi, with the success being measured by consensus of the population.

### Sports interventions

Although making no explicit reference to peacebuilding, Burundi's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (2006) justified investment in sport as a route for nurturing young talent [Burundi 2006; 2012b], boosting the image of Burundi in the family of nations [Burundi 2006; 2012b], and diversifying jobs through infrastructure projects for sport [Burundi 2012b]. This investment was aligned with participation in the Confederation of the Ministers for Youth and Sports, construction of youth centres and rehabilitation of a major stadium.

In contrast, the potential of sporting activities (and arts and cultural activities), which are largely lacking in Pakistani schools, to contribute to school children's overall development has inspired 16 policy actions, although almost exclusively focusing on sporting activities. Two of these in particular could provide opportunities for interaction across social divisions [Pakistan2009, p.41]:

- Regular summer camps in various sports disciplines shall be arranged by educational institutions, during the summer vacations.
- Annual inter-schools, inter-colleges and inter-universities sports competitions shall be held regularly in all Provinces/Areas.

### Arts interventions

In Burundi, culture, sports, and leisure activities were strongly promoted, including the promotion of positive cultural values. Plans included strengthening education in the arts and support for music clubs, traditional and modern dance, drawing and painting, and the creation of a support fund for



literary and artistic creation. The Ministry of Education and Culture supported the organization of competitions and expositions and promoted adult literacy training, especially for women. [Burundi 2006]

Liberia similarly valued its arts and culture with the intention stated in an education act (2001)

to reflect our education philosophy in the cultivation of the finer and more lasting intangible disciplines of life - the moral, aesthetic and spiritual values that are the functional and vitalizing forces in individuals and the nation. The Liberian education philosophy shall flow from the wholesome Liberian Cultural Heritage - beliefs, customs, folklore, arts, crafts, and literature - as well as from our new outlook, new needs and priorities dictated by present national and international demands; respect for human rights and dignity, world peace and economic development

The recent Intersectoral Policy on Early Childhood Development [Liberia 2011a] was developed with widespread consultation which elicited feedback specifically about infusing childhood development with a Liberian context, for instance, with grandparents telling stories 'with good moral lessons and positive cultural values' in local vernaculars. Ultimately, the principles underpinning the policy included activities being community driven, including diversity and indigenous aspects and be accountable to society at large. The policy recognises that in many countries civil society organisations have been key providers for early childhood development, and sees an on-going role for them through consultations, advocacy activities and service delivery partnerships. This appears to be an appropriate policy area for integrating peacebuilding through 'triggering attitudinal and behavioural changes... [providing] an outlet for the expression of youth identity... [and] building bridges between different ethnic communities, religions and nationalities'.

Respect for culture was explicitly integrated into the Myanmar Policy for Early Childhood Care and Development with expectations for culturally and linguistically appropriate preschool education. All preschool services were to respect local cultures and provide education in the mother tongue of the children and their parents, even if this necessitated using two or more languages in some preschools. Provision of primary education in the children's mother tongue was to be introduced as soon as possible. This policy required many more persons from minority ethnic groups to be trained as teachers, and learning materials prepared in local languages.

In the State of Palestine, the National Development Plan (Article 35) asserted children's rights 'to broad participation in determining and implementing recreational, cultural, artistic, and scientific programs which conform with public order and morals, in order to ascertain his right to access of information, and to means of creativity and innovation. Objective 4 gave a performance indicator of the number of cultural activities implemented by the Ministry of Culture at public and children's libraries.

### [Intergroup contact interventions](#)

Although research suggests that intergroup contact interventions have an important role in peacebuilding, they received little attention in policy documents.

An exception was the State of Palestine where the strategy for social protection and development [2014a] was 'to provide sustainable, high-quality, rights-based and gender-sensitive social services, contributing to maintaining social justice between social groups and areas, [which would] provide protection and empowerment to children, women, young people, the elderly and people with disabilities in a society governed by a pluralistic, innovative national culture, which safeguards its heritage and preserves its social cohesion and solidarity'.

### Interfaith interventions

In Somalia, Pakistan and Liberia, many children attended religious schools. In Somalia the state sought to improve these schools by investing in teacher training and teaching and learning materials [Somalia 2013b].

In Pakistan, the National Education Policy [Pakistan 2009] is set within broader, explicit aims (p.10) to: promote national cohesion by respecting all faiths and religions and recognise cultural and ethnic diversity; and promote social and cultural harmony through the conscious use of the educational process. The intention was to take into account religion, culture and modern life 'to make the whole education purposeful and to create a just civil society that respects diversity of views, beliefs and faiths' (p.23). Curriculum reform was to include a broad range of life issues including Peace Education and inter-faith harmony, accompanied by training materials developed for students and teachers, 'keeping in view cultural values and sensitivities'. This 2009 policy acknowledged an 'unresolved and continuing debate on how and what religious and moral values to be taught through the educational system and how to accommodate non-Muslim minorities'. Nevertheless, this would be a suitable context for interfaith programmes that encourage attitudes and practices conducive to peacebuilding.

In Liberia, faith-based organisations were to be represented on the Education Development Partners Coordination Committee for managing the Primary Education Plan. With committee membership spanning multiple faiths, this model of stakeholder management could encourage schools 'to provide opportunities for critical reflection of religious messages, rather than dogmatic and single-narrative views that could obstruct reconciliation. Hence, care needs to be taken to avoid possible (unintended) consequences of exclusion, segregation or stigmatisation' [Liberia 2010].

## SECTION 6 SYNTHESIS OF FINDINGS: CHILDREN'S AGENCY AND POLICIES FOR PEACEBUILDING

This study first considered constructed a multilevel conceptual framework to understand children's potential roles in peacebuilding (section 1). It then considered the policies of each country in depth (section 3) and presented the exemplars and opportunities for children in peacebuilding emerging from that analysis (section 4). This was followed by a comparison of what is known from research about young people's role in peacebuilding (section 5). This chapter synthesises the findings from of the earlier work to draw out the links between how childhood is constructed in national policies and their existing or potential roles in peacebuilding predicted by the conceptual framework.

### A synthesis matrix

A synthesis matrix (**Table 6.1**) was constructed to summarise key evidence about the development and content of policies in terms of peacebuilding, where peacebuilding is recognised as: a dynamic and participatory process that enables and enhances the transition from a state of fragility and adversity to the realisation of sustainable peace (Johnson and Johnson 2005; Ang 2014); and an ecological paradigm in which the child and children's development are positioned at the centre of the system and influenced by the home, family, community and wider environment (Sagi-Schwartz 2012; Yale University & ACEV Partnership 2012).

This conceptual framework for peacebuilding anticipates a role for young children in participatory democracies which highlight young children in their existing policies, portray them as having agency and have developed policies for include wide participation in the implementation, possibly participation of children.

The matrix presents in successive columns:

- the visibility of children, particularly young children in policies (column 3)
- the portrayal and recognition of children's agency in policies (column 4)
- planned strategies or opportunities that prior research supports as part of the peacebuilding process with and for children (column 5); and
- the participatory nature of policy development in each country, indicating an environment conducive to sustained participation in public life (column 6).

Potential policy opportunities for peacebuilding for each country can be deduced by reading the findings presented in each row.

Table 6.1: Matrix synthesising construction of childhood and policy opportunities for peacebuilding

	HDI <sup>1</sup>	Policy focus in relation to children	Portrayal of children in policy	Policy strategies addressing children and peacebuilding	Stakeholder participation in policy development
<b>State of Palestine</b>	107	Focus on children in general up to 19 years [State of Palestine 2003] Focus on children and youths [State of Palestine 2013]	Children's rights to participate freely in society [State of Palestine 2003] Children and youths as vulnerable, especially those vulnerable to exclusion and marginalization [State of Palestine 2013]	High-quality, rights-based and gender-sensitive social services, contributing to maintaining social justice between social groups and areas... protection and empowerment to children, women, young people, the elderly and people with disabilities in a society governed by a pluralistic, innovative national culture, which safeguards its heritage and preserves its social cohesion and solidarity [State of Palestine 2014a]	Participatory approach to preparing National Development Plan: broad-based consultations, involving relevant specialists and stakeholders from across the public and private sectors as well as civil society [State of Palestine 2014a]
<b>Pakistan</b>	146	Focus on school-aged children for basic education and universal primary education; Some reference to young children in expansion of early childhood care and education [Pakistan 2013] Focus on children 5-16 years and free compulsory education [Pakistan 2010]	Children as vulnerable and disadvantaged; Children having rights to education – [Pakistan 2013]	Vision of local school governance for implementing policy not consistently realised [Pakistan 2009]. Boy Scouts & Girl Guides delivering literacy programme [Pakistan 1998] Potential of sport [Pakistan 2009] Curriculum broadened in faith schools [Pakistan 2009] Implementation of child labour policies more successful with stakeholder dialogue and strong rapport [Pakistan 2002]	Decent Work Programme developed with: Central and provincial government representatives, Employers Federation of Pakistan, Pakistan Workers' Federation [Pakistan 2010] Primary Education policy developed with: Education departments, non-governments organizations, private sector, UN agencies and bilateral and multilateral donor agencies. [Pakistan 2009]

	HDI <sup>1</sup>	Policy focus in relation to children	Portrayal of children in policy	Policy strategies addressing children and peacebuilding	Stakeholder participation in policy development
					Wider consultation is only at implementation level for education sector reforms.
<b>Myanmar</b>	150	Focus on children 0-8 years; early childhood care and development [Myanmar 2014]	Children as vulnerable in disadvantaged and needing protection, Children with rights to education and the universal rights [Myanmar 2008; 2014]	Early Child Care and Development collaborations to include governmental, non-governmental, faith-based and community-based organisations, professional associations, foundations, higher education institutions, private sector groups and international development partners. [Myanmar 2014] Culturally and linguistically appropriate preschool education [Myanmar 2014]	Consultation workshops with community leaders, townships, regions/states and ministries, including parents, teachers, health care providers, and representatives of non-governmental, faith-based, community-based and other organisations, including representatives of the media and private sector [Myanmar 2014]
<b>Yemen</b>	154	Focus on children in general 0 – 19 [Yemen 2008] Focus on school-aged children 6-18 years with some reference to unaccompanied minors and younger children [Yemen 2013]	Children as vulnerable suffering from poverty and deprivation; Children with rights to protection [Yemen 2002]	Improved workers' and employers' participation in policy formulation through strengthened social dialogue was a development goal [Yemen 2008]. Youth had a role in encouraging environmental conservation and family planning [Yemen 2002]	Poverty reduction policies developed with consultation of government agencies and 'voices of the poor' survey [Yemen 2002]
<b>Uganda</b>	164	Focus on school-aged children including primary and secondary – [Uganda 2004a]	Children as vulnerable as victims of conflict [Uganda 2007a]	National Action Plan for youth employment sought to increase their participation in local	Widespread consultation of stakeholders for Business, Technical and Vocational

	HDI <sup>1</sup>	Policy focus in relation to children	Portrayal of children in policy	Policy strategies addressing children and peacebuilding	Stakeholder participation in policy development
		Focus on children in general who have been displaced by conflict [Uganda 2007a]	Children with rights to education [Uganda 2004a]	governance and decision making processes [Uganda 2012]	Education and Training policy [Uganda 2011] Otherwise, consultative meetings only part of implementation, not policy development
<b>Côte d'Ivoire</b>	171	Focus on school-age children [Côte d'Ivoire 2009] Focus on youth in promoting youth and adult literacy [Côte d'Ivoire 2009]	Children as vulnerable in disadvantaged areas [Côte d'Ivoire 1998] Children vulnerable and needing protection from all forms of child labour and child exploitation - [Côte d'Ivoire 2008] Children with rights to equality and education for all. (p.8) [Côte d'Ivoire 2011].	Envisage parental education for children aged 0-3, and in supervised community structures for children aged 3-5 [Côte d'Ivoire 2011] Youth/ adult literacy programme [Côte d'Ivoire 2011] Accelerated curriculum for youth/ adults who missed school [Côte d'Ivoire 2011] Considering reintegration of ex-combatants [Côte d'Ivoire 2011]	Education policies were developed by three ministries: Education; Technical Education and Vocational Training; Higher Education and Scientific Research [Côte d'Ivoire 2009; 2011]
<b>Ethiopia</b>	173	Focus on school-age children at primary and secondary schools, and improving quality of education [Ethiopia 2010b] Some focus on promoting kindergarten education and 'pre-school preparatory education' for children 4 to 6 years [Ethiopia 2002]	Children as vulnerable who are out of school and victims of intergenerational poverty; Children as agents of change for influencing schools, communities and homes in improving water and sanitation facilities in schools [Ethiopia 2010a]	Inclusive local governance of education & training, including students [Ethiopia 1994] Ideals of education for citizenship [Ethiopia 2002] Heavy reliance on communities for the construction and management of schools [Ethiopia 2010a] Teaching in mother tongue [Ethiopia 1994]	Government ministries and regional agencies developed the education policy with extensive public input [Ethiopia 2002]
<b>Liberia</b>	175	Focus on children including 0-8 years to receive sound pre-first or early childhood education as	Children with basic rights to education and development of human potential to the fullest [Liberia 2002]	History a core curriculum subject [Liberia 2002]	Extensive process of national consultations for developing education policy, with youths,

	HDI <sup>1</sup>	Policy focus in relation to children	Portrayal of children in policy	Policy strategies addressing children and peacebuilding	Stakeholder participation in policy development
		essential for later development [Liberia 2002; 2011a] Focus on children 0 - 5 years through an inter-sectoral collaborative approach to early childhood development and education [Liberia 2010]	Children having access to quality ECD programmes [Liberia 2011a] Children with rights to basic education and equal opportunities as with all citizens [Liberia 2010]	Governance of education includes faith-based organisations [Liberia 2007]	students and women being very vocal [Liberia 2010]
<b>Burundi</b>	180	Focus mainly on school-age children with some reference to under-fives. Policy indicates 'free primary education, and free healthcare for pregnant women and children under age 5' [Burundi 2012b] Focus on general population and basic healthcare for all Burundian citizens [Burundi 2011]	Children (and women) as vulnerable e.g. orphans and malnourished children [Burundi 2011]. Children as vulnerable victims of conflict and AIDS, also as orphans, street children, and former child soldiers; Children with human rights [Burundi 2012b]	Re-integrating child soldiers [Burundi 2006] Children's parliament [Burundi 2006] Promoting arts, sport & culture [Burundi 2006]	Specialist participatory approaches to widespread consultation, including young people [Burundi 2006] Re-writing history with consensus of population [Burundi 2006]
<b>Sierra Leone</b>	183	Focus on early childhood and primary children to develop high quality early childhood programmes [Sierra Leone 2007] Focus on youth and equitable access to basic services [Sierra Leone 2010]	Children vulnerable including women and the elderly, many of whom have been displaced during conflict and vulnerable to human rights violations; Children with rights to protection [Sierra Leone. 2002]. Children with rights to education [Sierra Leone 2007]. Older children as participants in education sector planning [Sierra Leone 2014]	Promoting education for child ex-combatants e.g. the 'Community Education Investment Programme (CEIP)' for the reintegration of children back into their families and communities, to promote social reintegration [Sierra Leone 2001] Strategies for mediation for the social acceptance of displaced ex-combatants in their home communities through a network of referral and counselling officers; fostering reconciliation	Students, the disabled and unemployed youths were included in consultations around education [Sierra Leone 2014] ESP: "Consultations in order to ensure broad national ownership of the ESP, nation-wide consultations were carried out before commencement of drafting the document followed by consultations on the draft itself. All 19 Local Councils were visited and discussions held with a



	HDI <sup>1</sup>	Policy focus in relation to children	Portrayal of children in policy	Policy strategies addressing children and peacebuilding	Stakeholder participation in policy development
				among divergent population groups (eg Internally displaced persons, refugees) [Sierra Leone 2002]	broad cross-section of stakeholders.
<b>Chad</b>	184	Focus on school-age children and education; Some reference to pre-school education in specialized structures such as nursery schools and kindergartens for children aged 3 to 6 years [Chad 2008] Focus on primary-age children [Chad 2012]	Children as victims and vulnerable - children refugees, displaced children (continued conflict), street children, children living on the streets, children in Koranic schools, the disabled (p17); Children with rights to education [Chad 2008] Children with rights to universal quality primary education [Chad 2012]	Employers' and workers' organizations on boards for vocational training, social welfare and employment [Chad 2013]	Lack of social dialogue [Chad 2013]
<b>Democratic Republic of Congo</b>	186	Focus on school-age children and free primary education [DRC 2008] Main focus on school age children, also older children in secondary and professional Education [DRC 2013] Some reference to Pre-school education for children aged 3 and 5 years in preparation for primary education [DRC 2015]	Children with rights to an inclusive and quality education system [DRC 2012b] Children as vulnerable, needing safeguarding and social protection [DRC 2013] Some articulation of older children (youth) as participants in education and post conflict sustainable development [DRC 2012a]	Promoting free primary education for all children [DRC 2008] Strengthening human capital in two main social sectors: education (with particular emphasis on primary and secondary education, vocational training, adult literacy, higher and university education and scientific research), and health (including nutrition). [DRC 2011]	Intention for development of partnerships between the State and the private sector, with annual fora for dialogue organised on preventing the economic exploitation of children and young people [DRC 2013].
<b>Somalia</b>	-	Focus on school-age children and youth 6-18 years; some articulation of early childhood [Somalia 2013b]	Children as vulnerable at risk of marginalisation and needing protection 'Action Plan to end the Recruitment and Use of Children in Armed Conflict', and will take into account the needs	Community Education Committees generally manage schools in the absence of strong state systems; investment in training for management planned. [Somalia 2013a]	A consultation of citizens, civil society and government culminated in a stakeholder meeting to validate the Somali Compact. More inclusive politics are planned [Somalia 2013a]

	HDI <sup>1</sup>	Policy focus in relation to children	Portrayal of children in policy	Policy strategies addressing children and peacebuilding	Stakeholder participation in policy development
	-	Focus on school-aged children, as well as older children and youth who have missed out on school [South Sudan 2012a]	Children as vulnerable in emergencies [South Sudan 2012a]	Principle 1 for education in emergencies: Minimum Standard of community members participating actively, transparently and without discrimination in analysis, planning, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of education responses [South Sudan 2012a]	Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies were adapted for South Sudan by government education departments and two international NGOs [South Sudan 2012a]
<b>South Sudan</b>		Focus on all children including early childhood with reference to early childhood education National Integrated Plan for Early Childhood Development [South Sudan 2014]	Children with rights to education [South Sudan 2012b]	Education Ministry will work with the states, development partners and civil society, to ensure that curricula and textbooks effectively incorporate cross-cutting issues such as life	General Education Strategic Plan developed in consultation with key stakeholders in all states, as well as consultations with youth and people with disabilities to determine the specific needs of different groups. Voice of consultees apparent in policy [South Sudan 2012b]
			of women and girls associated with armed groups [Somalia 2013a, p7]. Children with rights to basic safety and security, 'with special attention to securing the rights of women, youth and children.' [Somalia 2013a, p6] Childhood with social agency and capacity for building resilience. <i>Policy aims to strengthen 'systems that deliver while building the resilience of children and their families through the uptake of quality education services'</i> [Somalia 2013b, p1]	Action Plan to End the Recruitment and Use of Children in Armed Conflict [Somalia 2013a] Job creation and skills development [Somalia 2013a]. Out-of-school and unemployed youth to act as advocates for school enrolment [Somalia 2013b] Local reconciliation and healing between communities through community dialogue and mediation, including youths [Somalia 2013a]	

	HDI <sup>1</sup>	Policy focus in relation to children	Portrayal of children in policy	Policy strategies addressing children and peacebuilding	Stakeholder participation in policy development
			cultures and communities, and reducing and eliminating exclusion within and from education. [South Sudan 2014, p5]	skills, HIV and AIDS, gender, peace education, environmental education, and learners' special needs... and develop and implement a policy on the use of National Languages in learning [South Sudan 2012b].	

Source: United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Report (2014) United Nations Development Programme.

<sup>1</sup> Human Development Index Ranking (out of 187 countries)

<sup>2</sup> Gross national income (GNI) per capita 2011 (purchasing power parity (PPP) \$)

<sup>3</sup> Average number of years of education received by people ages 25 and older

<sup>4</sup> Percentage of the population living below the national poverty line

The matrix shows young children are visible in the policies of some countries: Myanmar (aged 0-8), Ethiopia (aged 4-6), Liberia (0-8), Burundi (<5), Sierra Leone (early childhood and primary children), Chad (3-6), Democratic Republic of Congo (3-5). In the remaining countries, either older children are the focus of attention or children generally.

Where young children are visible, they are most often portrayed as vulnerable and needing protection, albeit with rights to education and other services, and the universal human rights. Older children were sometimes recognised for their agency. In South Sudan, school children were perceived as competent, independent, and central to knowledge and learning with educators and parents encouraged to take their cues from children, drawing upon their interests, needs and natural curiosities [South Sudan 2014]. In Ethiopia, children were portrayed as local agents of change [Ethiopia 2010a]. In Sierra Leone, older children were seen as potential participants in education sector planning [Sierra Leone 2014]; in Somalia, where education and interventions for developing resilience were planned for strengthening children's coping mechanisms [Somalia 2013b].

In some of these countries, not only was children's agency recognised, but there were opportunities for this agency to be exercised in the implementation of policies. In Somalia, out-of-school and unemployed young people were to act as advocates for school enrolment [Somalia 2013b] and community dialogue and mediation for local reconciliation and healing between communities was to include young people [Somalia 2013a]. In Sierra Leone older children were seen as participants in education sector planning [Sierra Leone 2014], and Ugandan young people had roles in their communities, schools and homes in improving water and sanitation facilities [Uganda 2010a]. Although Burundi children were generally portrayed as vulnerable, there were plans for a children's parliament [Burundi 2011]. In Myanmar, although young children were not portrayed as active agents, a diverse yet cohesive society was sought through policies for inclusive approaches to developing early childcare and culturally and linguistically appropriate preschool education [Myanmar 2014].

Such inclusive attitudes towards young people in implementing policy are more likely to be successful where they had already been involved in developing policy. This had been the case for the General Education Strategic Plan in South Sudan [South Sudan 2012b]. Students and unemployed young people were included in consultations around education in Sierra Leone [Sierra Leone 2014]. Similarly, in Liberia extensive national consultations informed the education policy, with youths, students and women being very vocal [Liberia 2010]. In Ethiopia, government ministries and regional agencies developed the education policy with extensive public input [Ethiopia 2002]. Specialist participatory approaches to widespread consultation were adopted in Burundi, and included young people [Burundi 2006].

In conclusion, these countries fit the conceptual model of young people, and less often young children, as active agents contributing to more cohesive societies in a political environment conducive to their involvement in developing and implementing social policies. These countries might be fruitful settings for peacebuilding programmes with children. As these predictions are made on the basis of policies written in the past, there is an opportunity to test the validity of the model by investigating the outcomes of peacebuilding programmes established in these settings.

Conversely, other countries lack the vision of children's agency and lack a strong commitment to inclusive policy development. In these circumstances, such as in Pakistan, local participatory efforts to govern local schools was not consistently successful [Pakistan 2013]. Similarly, implementation of child labour policies were more successful where there was stakeholder dialogue and strong rapport [Pakistan 2002]. Extrapolating from these experiences, where there is no modelling by government

of consultation for policy, doubt is cast on the likely success of children's and young people's role in peacebuilding through policies for expanding literacy [Pakistan 1998], broadening their curriculum in faith schools [Pakistan 2009], or creating opportunities for greater cohesion through sport [Pakistan 2009]. Uganda, widespread consultation of stakeholders was limited to the policy for Business, Technical and Vocational Education and Training policy [Uganda 2011]. Yet, there were plans for increasing youth participation in local governance and decision making processes [Uganda 2012]. Côte d'Ivoire, where stakeholder involvement was lacking in both development and implementation of policy [Côte d'Ivoire 2009, 2011], envisaged parental education for children aged 0-3, supervised community structures for children aged 3-5 [Côte d'Ivoire 2011]. The multilevel model of pathways to peace suggests that outcomes of such programmes would be limited without a wider supportive environment. Also challenging is the situation in Yemen, where consultation for policy was relatively limited and there was no active role for children or young people apparent in policies [Yemen 2002]. The same argument cast doubt on the success their role in encouraging environmental conservation and family planning [Yemen 2002]. Chad seems similarly uncondusive to children and young people playing a role in peacebuilding: they are not portrayed as active agents; they are offered no opportunities for such a role; and an explicit lack of social dialogue was recognised in the policy for decent work [Chad 2013].

In conclusion, these countries lack the inclusive approaches to policy development and implementation that, according to the model, would be expected in more cohesive societies. Where adults' roles are limited, the role for children and young people is more so. The conceptual framework predicts that peacebuilding programmes with children in these circumstances are premature and prior change is required at a national level, to develop a more participatory democracy if such programmes, and any desirable outcomes, might be sustained.

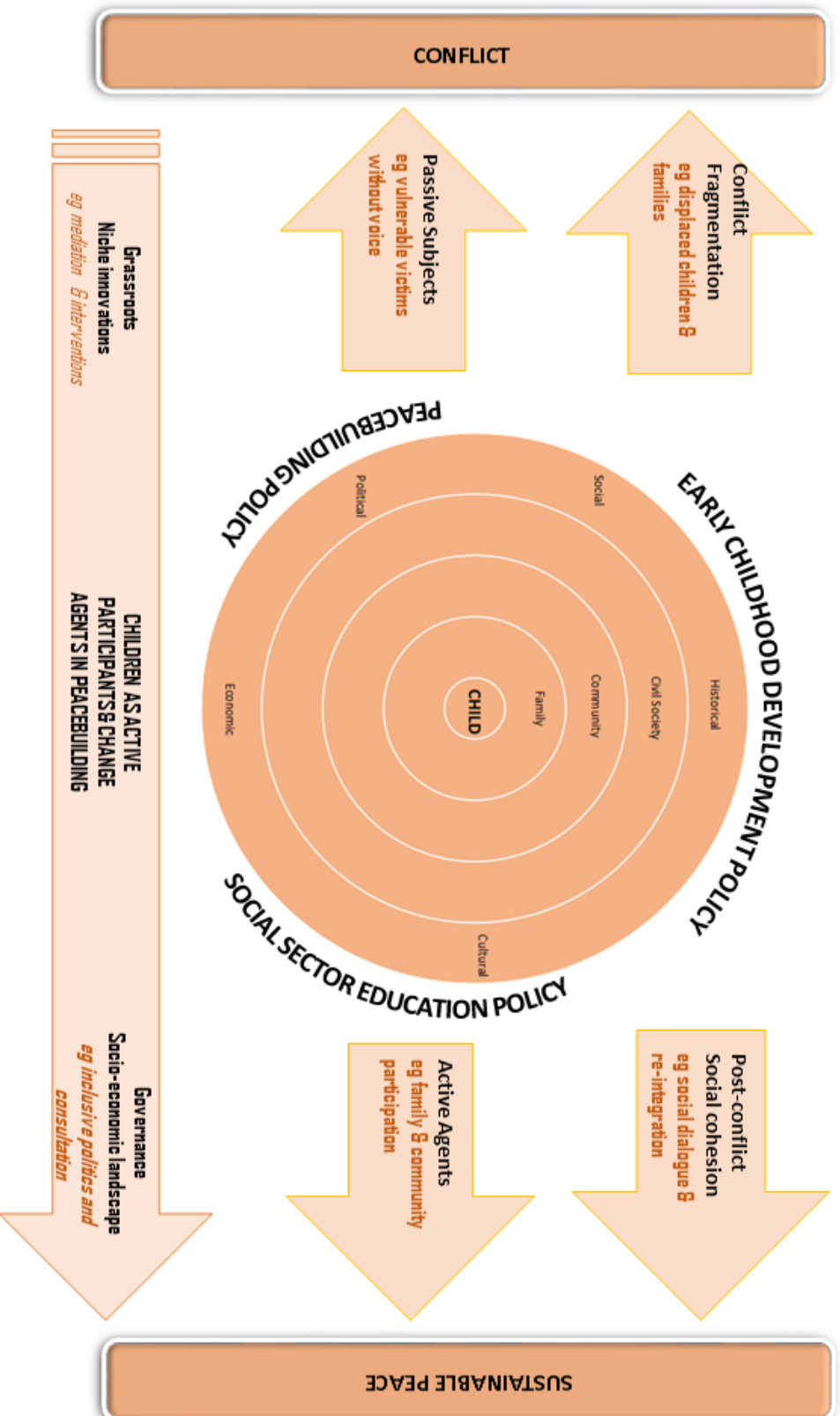
### [A new conceptual framework and synthesis of findings](#)

These findings confirmed and refined the conceptual framework of this study which addressed children's role in national policies particularly in terms of their activity, participation and position in shaping policy discourses. 'The child' is constructed in policy and society in myriad ways, depending on the value judgements that society makes on children and childhood. The conceptual framework (Figure 3) shows a multilevel, ecological model linking young children to conflict and peace that is supported by growing research evidence from biological and social science, and which was reflected in the national policies of conflict affected countries. The descriptors of children's role such as 'active agents' or 'passive subjects' depicted in the framework were informed by the findings and conceptualisation of the transition from fragility to sustainable peace. The arrows at the foot of the diagram depict the level of policy interventions and capacities that are present in society at either the grassroots or governance level. Taken as a whole, this new conceptual framework (Figure 3) that is evidenced by the synthesis of findings encapsulates the wide range of policy approaches that contribute to sustainable peace from an ECD and peacebuilding lens.

Placing children at the centre of policy analysis revealed opportunities for them as active participants and agents of change to promote social cohesion. The policy analysis also showed that moving towards sustainable peace requires a conducive discourse, nationally and internationally, and appropriate interventions at grassroots and policy levels to support a cohesive society. Although niche interventions at grassroots level are important for innovation, relying on them alone is insufficient – the findings showed that successful exemplars needed to be integrated into formal systems if they are to have widespread and sustainable impact.

# Placing Children at the Centre of Policy

Figure 3 New Conceptual Framework: Placing Children at the Centre Of Policy



## SECTION 7 DISCUSSION

This section of the report provides a summary of the findings, considers the strengths and limitations of the study and focuses on what can be learnt about the national policies and the implications in relation to the wider research literature.

### Summary of Findings

This systematic review examined a range of cross-sectoral policies related to early childhood development and peacebuilding across fourteen conflict-affected and post-conflict countries. The study adopted a multi-dimensional approach to investigate the extent to which early childhood development policies included components relevant to peacebuilding and conversely, the ways in which peacebuilding policies address and promote links to young children and early childhood development. The research also built on empirical scholarship to align the policy review with research knowledge that added to the evidence-base of how children are positioned in policy development, as well as the policy opportunities that can be derived from these analyses. Over a hundred policy-related documents were identified and retrieved from multiple sources including international policy repositories, in-country government databases, UNICEF country office participants and key informants, with seventy-five policy items eventually included in the review. The national policies identified within each country formed a core reference point of analysis that resulted in fourteen country-specific narratives comprising country profiles and policy highlights. A cross-country comparative analysis was also conducted across the policy datasets.

The overall findings identified potential links between early childhood development and peacebuilding, as well as the policy and research opportunities that may contribute to enhancing children's lives in conflict-affected states. The review showed that governments have taken different approaches to policy development, and operated within differing ministerial authorities and accountability bodies, as evidenced by the varied sets of policies across all the countries. Five key themes emerged from the research -1) enhancing children's participatory role in policy; 2) leveraging early childhood development as a cross-cutting policy issue; 3) building alliances between early childhood development and peacebuilding; 4) improving policy implementation, monitoring and evaluation; and 5) strengthening the role of children and families.

The review showed that social, cultural, political and economic factors are significant in influencing the ways in which policies are shaped and have evolved over time in each country. There is general recognition across the composite policies of children's rights to education and a peaceful society as set out in the United Conventions of the Rights of the Child (United Nations 1989), and children's rights to social protection and the negative impacts of conflict on children, families and communities. In addition, many policy statements accentuate the underlying values of social cohesion and equity as important steps toward reconciliation and recovery. However, what was less discernible are the links between early childhood development and peacebuilding, and the policy considerations related specifically to children 0 to 8 year olds. It was also not consistently clear how the policy aspirations of central governments are realised in practice. In many of the policy items reviewed, there was a lack or limited evidence of evaluation indicators and criteria set for monitoring effectiveness and progress of policies and policy interventions. Overall, the findings of this systematic review illustrated that considerations for children and early childhood development are embedded in broader policy agendas such as national development, compulsory education, health promotion and the reintegration of displaced persons, but that a clear, explicit policy focus on early childhood development, and the connections between children, families and peacebuilding was inconsistent across the fourteen countries.



## Strengths and Limitations

This review is a first study of its kind which systematically examines a wide range of policies to synthesise the available policy evidence on the links between ECD and peacebuilding. A strength of the research is its systematic reviewing techniques with the use of the EPPI-reviewer 4 tool which helped to make the process of review more transparent and objective. However, the research also faced several challenges. Firstly, the study was conducted under a tight scope and timeframe. As such, it does not aim to provide a definitive analysis of the policies but rather to map out some of the key policy highlights to explore the linkages between peacebuilding and early childhood development. Secondly, a key challenge has been locating some of the hard-to-reach policies and gaining adequate information on the current status of policy development. This was a particular challenge as some of the conflict-affected countries are facing volatile changes with limited access to national level information and documentation. There was limited information for instance, available online or via in-country networks on Somalia, Chad, Yemen and Burundi given ongoing conflict within the countries and Yemen in a state of emergency at the time of the study. Reliable policy data on the ECD landscape across the countries are also generally limited largely due to the conflict status of the countries as mentioned above, but also partly due to the private nature of the sector where ECD provisions are often supported by private organisations or individuals with less clear accountability of structures and systems. Thus, while drawing on different sources, the research has limitations in the difficulty of locating the policies, accessing reliable evidence on the policies and assessing the relevancy of the data. Finally, the review focused on original policy documents which were published in local languages, predominantly in English, with some in French. Where English versions cannot be found or prepared through the UNICEF ECD unit or country offices, the research team turned to on-line translation services. However, an inevitable limitation is that free services tend to lose the formatting of documents (especially pdfs), need considerable tidying after translation, and may lose some accuracy of meaning in the process of translation.

The scoping questionnaire exercise to elicit key terminology was therefore particularly useful to inform a more nuanced conceptual framework and review. This ensured that the systematic review was fit-for-purpose for the retrieval of the relevant policy related literature.

## The wider literature

The research identified the potential policy exemplars and opportunities across the fourteen countries which acknowledge and foster links between early childhood development and peacebuilding, and the ways in which children are positioned in policy development. The review revealed the complexities of synthesising two distinct policy fields, that of early childhood development and peacebuilding. The unwieldy task of undertaking research in a dynamic and constantly evolving policy sector is well recognised by scholars in the field who contend that the study of early childhood 'is quintessentially multi- and inter-disciplinary' (Miller and Hevey 2012, p2) and young children's lives cannot be neatly partitioned into health, education, social welfare or any other professional area or discourse (Moss 2003; Brannen and Moss 2003). This is exemplified through the findings of this review which revealed the multiple dimensions of early childhood development as a cross-cutting issue that is located within a number of policy domains, and where considerations of children and families are intricately woven with wider policy objectives such as tackling inequality and poverty, promoting education, national development and (re)building civil society in a post-conflict state.

Significantly, the findings of the review showed the importance of taking into account a multilevel, ecological framework for supporting early childhood development and peacebuilding in conflict-affected states. This correlates with research that illustrates the powerful influence of the broader social, cultural and environmental domains - at the level of the family, community and wider society - on children's development and well-being (Bronfenbrenner 1979; 1995; Sagi- Schwartz 2012; Yale

University & ACEV Partnership 2012). Bronfenbrenner (1979; 1995) highlights the pivotal role of the environment, 'conceptualised as a set of nested structures' (Bronfenbrenner 1995, p.637), that encompasses various levels from the micro to the macro, as crucial determinants in shaping children's lives. As depicted through the conceptual model of this study, the child is positioned at the centre of the structure within a series of multi-layered systems, and who both influences and is influenced by the complex web of interacting and overlapping environments that affect their life experiences and worlds. The basic tenets of this framework is the differential impact of social and political changes (such as conflict and civil war) on children and families, and the effects on the individual child, family and community, and how this often reverberates across generations. According to Bronfenbrenner (1995), 'In sum, historical events can alter the course of human development, in either direction, not only for individuals, but for large segments of the population.' (p643) The complex reciprocal interactions that occur between children and their distal and more immediate environment – for example through parent-child relationships and children's peer interactions, play a substantial role in children's subsequent development. In addition, the values and behaviours adopted by a community and society can impact on later generations or what Bronfenbrenner terms 'cross-generational transmission' (p631). The implications of this on the findings of the review therefore suggest that systemic social transformation that enhances the lives of children, is more likely to take place in an environment where a multi-level, ecology of determinants of peace is taken into account; and where macro-level policy and the political landscape (regime level) is conducive to the participation of children and families in policy development, and there are programmatic opportunities on the ground (niche or grassroots level) that contribute to peacebuilding activities.

The findings also provide evidence to support the engagement of effective early childhood programmes in contributing to peacebuilding. There are policy exemplars which acknowledge that access to and participation in quality early childhood provision is positively associated with the re(building) of post-conflict societies, where children at the early childhood stage (0 to 8 years) and those older in compulsory schooling are encouraged and supported to engage in schooling and develop positive attitudes towards social values and relationships. The findings also recognise the important role of governments in maintaining strong governance and infrastructure in facilitating access to education for the most vulnerable group of children in society, and in some cases to reintegrate displaced children in the host communities, to promote a more inclusive society. The findings are consistent with extant research which evidenced the potential role of early childhood programmes in enabling children, families and community stakeholders to realise their roles in promoting social cohesion through intervention and outreach community programmes (Schnabel and Tabyshaliev 2013; Vestal and Jones 2004; O'Kane, Feinstein. and Giertsen 2013; Connolly and Hayden 2007). In the aftermath of conflict, Schnabel and Tabyshaliev (2013) contend, repairing the social fabric of society must be a priority and programmatic initiatives that involve the active participation of the young generation, and which engages with their voices and interests can help to build bridges within and between communities, and contribute significantly to the peacebuilding agenda. Placing children at the centre of policy as supported by the findings, this systematic review therefore showed the importance of turning societal challenges into policy opportunities in the recovery of conflict-affected countries.

## SECTION 8 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusions

The overall purpose of this study is to provide a clear analysis of national policies to investigate how children are positioned in policies and their development. The research aimed to review ECD policies for components relevant to the promotion of peacebuilding and conversely, to review peacebuilding policies for evidence of potential links with young children and ECD. Overall, the findings show distinct 'policy gaps' across all fourteen countries in the recognition of the importance of early childhood development. There are also limited linkages in the policy discourses between early childhood development and peacebuilding. Yet, there is some discernible empirical and policy evidence which show the effectiveness of early childhood development and education in promoting positive changes in young children's lives and their potential contributions to social cohesion and reconciliation in conflict-affected states. The review therefore shows compelling reasons for increased prioritisation of the early years and ECD in policy development in the promotion of peacebuilding.

This will then need to be bolstered by enhancement of structural reforms and services at national level to achieve the policy aims and objectives, in order that policy aspirations or rhetoric can be effectively translated to policy implementation and actual practice. It is important that children and early childhood development are appropriately prioritised as the first key step to creating a culture of peace for future generations.

### Implications

The implications of this study have been drawn out for different users in order to guide the future development of policy and practice, as well as research. Governments can directly influence the role and participation of children in conflict-affected and post-conflict countries through clear, coherent policies and social reform agendas. The implementation of systematically monitored and evaluation policies with the support of stable and coordinated governance can also have a direct influence on programmatic practices on the ground, for example through the work of ECD practitioners and professionals in ensuring that young children and families play a central role in promoting sustainable peace and rebuilding civil society.

#### *Implications for policy and practice*

1. Move early childhood development and peacebuilding up the policy ladder within a wider context of public participation in policy development and implementation.
2. Leverage early childhood development to promote community building and intergroup social cohesion in the reconciliation process.
3. Develop clear national policies and time-bound policy strategies that focus on early childhood development and peacebuilding.
4. Strengthen policies and programmes that support the integral role of young children and families in bringing about reconciliation and breaking the cycle of intergenerational conflict.
5. Strengthen policies and programmes that enable the participation and inclusion of young children and families in peacebuilding.

6. Strengthen accurate and comprehensive data on policy monitoring and implementation to promote more effective policy-making.
7. Develop a position paper with the aim of informing practice that recognises the potential role and rights of children in contributing to the peacebuilding process as active social agents to bring about transformative change in society.

#### *Implications for research*

8. Further research into early childhood and peacebuilding could examine the extent of policy implementation and the impact of policies at a national level in contributing to social cohesion and reconciliation. Well-designed outcome evaluations could be used to address questions as to whether policy development and interventions have contributed to social transformation and the extent to which policies and programme interventions work or do not work.
9. Research into children's perspectives and their voices in the peacebuilding process – based on the premise that children are more than just vulnerable victims of conflict, but active agents with autonomy, rights and the potential to pro-actively participate and contribute to peacebuilding and social cohesion. For example, through participation in educational programmes that foster peaceful relations among family and community, building positive attitudes in preschool and school settings that value diversity and inclusion, and developing conflict resolution skills and dispositions that can in turn contribute to building peaceful and resilient communities.
10. Research into the relationship between children and families, and the associations with peacebuilding in early childhood.
11. Further investigation into the effectiveness of early childhood programmes and intervention strategies that promote social cohesion and peacebuilding.
12. Further research into the empirical evidence that connects early childhood development, conflict and peacebuilding.
13. For each focus within this research agenda, there is an opportunity for a contextual analysis that takes into account countries with and without an ethos of public participation in policy development and implementation.

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## APPENDIX 1: PRELIMINARY DATABASE SEARCH

Database	UNESCO Planpols	Brookings (Pre Institution devoted to the study of national public policy issues) <a href="http://www.brookings.edu/about/history">http://www.brookings.edu/about/history</a>	Google Scholar	International Labour Organisation <a href="http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/program/dwcp/countries/index.htm">http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/program/dwcp/countries/index.htm</a>
Date searched	23-3-15	25-3-15	25-3-15 – 5-4-15	28-3-15
Type of policy	Education Policy	Displacement and peacebuilding policies	Social Sector and ECD policy	Country Programmes (Policy tools and outputs) – related to Child Welfare Children + Policy
Search words	Education	Peacebuilding + children	[Country] + Early Childhood + Policy [Country] + Children + Policy Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (2006) <a href="http://www.ruralpovertyportal.org/country/approaches/tags/burundi">http://www.ruralpovertyportal.org/country/approaches/tags/burundi</a>	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper – also includes children (cuts across ECD)
1. BURUNDI	<b>Burundi : rapport national. 48e session de la Conférence internationale de l'éducation, CIE : "L'éducation pour l'inclusion : la voie de l'avenir", Genève, 25-28 novembre 2008</b> <i>Ministère de l'éducation nationale et de la recherche scientifique, 2008, 30 p.</i>	Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for Burundi (2000)	International Fund For Agricultural Development (IFAD) Country strategic opportunities paper (2003)	Programme Par Pays De Promotion Du Travail Decent Au Burundi (Pptd/Burundi) Revise 2012-2015
	Authors / Organisations : Burundi. Ministère de l'éducation nationale et de la recherche scientifique; UNESCO-IBE Type of document: National Education Policies	Protocol For The Creation Of A Permanent Framework For Consultation On The Protection Of Displaced Persons (Cpf/Pdp) (2001) Programme National de Réhabilitation des Sinistrés (2004) (French) <i>Purpose:</i> To contribute to peace and reconciliation through the reintegration of displaced persons, rehabilitation of social services in areas of return and the creation of durable solutions (Art. II.1). <i>Responsibilities:</i> The Ministry for Repatriation, Reinstallation and Reinsertion of Displaced and Repatriated Persons is the lead organization responsible for overall implementation of the Program. The CNRS constitutes the Technical Secretariat (Ch. V). <i>Content:</i> Priority areas of focus include: humanitarian assistance; voluntary return; reintegration; and the creation of professional opportunities for the displaced, particularly in the area of agriculture (Art. II.D.1). Protection activities identified in the Program include: demining; and creating access to social services including education, health, water and sanitation, and nutrition (Ch. III). The Annexes to the Program set out details of recipient assistance packages, including food rations and sheeting.	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper – also includes children (cuts across ECD)	



Brookings (Pre Institution devoted to the study of national public policy issues)  
<http://www.brookings.edu/about/history>

International Labour Organisation  
<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bure>  
[au/](http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bure)  
[program/dwcp/countries/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bure)

gouvernemental, permettant d'organiser la réponse en cas de catastrophe de grande ampleur qui dépasse les moyens habituellement mis en place pour y répondre. Il permet d'appuyer le leadership du gouvernement sur l'organisation de cette réponse en clarifiant les rôles et responsabilités de chacun mais aussi de lui donner des informations précises des moyens dont il dispose. Un Directeur des Opérations de Secours est désigné suivant l'ampleur de l'urgence.

Le plan ORSEC, est un plan standard de coordination général pour faire face à tout type de catastrophe. Il considère les catastrophes suivantes: (i) les catastrophes naturelles, dont raz de marée, cyclones, ouragans, séismes, glissements de terrain, éruptions volcaniques, incendies, inondations, avalanches; (ii) les catastrophes technologiques dues aux transports aériens, ferroviaires, routiers, maritimes, et fluviaux, dues à un agent physique (eau, charbon, gaz, pétrole), explosif, nucléaire, bactériologique, chimique; (iii) les catastrophes socio-économiques, telles que famine, sécheresse, épidémies, épizooties, etc.; (iv) les catastrophes conflictuelles (terrorisme, action de guerre); et (v) les catastrophes mixtes. Il est là pour les compléter si les moyens prévus sont dépassés ou si aucun plan n'existait pour celui-ci.

Database	UNESCO Piampolis	Brookings (Pre Institution devoted to the study of national public policy issues) <a href="http://www.brookings.edu/about/history">http://www.brookings.edu/about/history</a>	Google Scholar	International Labour Organisation <a href="http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/program/dwcp/countries/index.htm">http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/program/dwcp/countries/index.htm</a>
Date searched	23-3-15	25-3-15	25-3-15 – 5-4-15	28-3-15
Type of policy	Education Policy	Displacement and peacebuilding policies	Social Sector and ECD policy	Country Programmes (Policy tools and outputs) – related to Child Welfare
Search words	-	-	[Country] + Early Childhood + Policy [Country] + Children + Policy ECD Policy – In process (according to SABER status)	Children + Policy
3. Côte d'Ivoire	<b>Education Policy - NIL</b>  Plan d'actions à moyen terme - PAMT secteur éducation/formation 2012-2014 <i>République de Côte d'Ivoire, 2011, 121 p. (French)</i>  Auteurs / Organisations : Côte d'Ivoire. Ministère de l'éducation nationale; Côte d'Ivoire. Ministère de l'enseignement technique et de la formation professionnelle; Côte d'Ivoire. Ministère de l'enseignement supérieur et de la recherche scientifique Type of document : National Education Plans Plan d'actions à moyen terme du secteur de l'éducation 2009 (French) – (Tr: Map of medium-term actions the education sector)	NIL		Decent work country programme 2008-2013
	Plan National de Développement du secteur Education/Formation (PNDEF) 1998-2010 Abidjan, MENFB, 1999, 28 p.  Auteurs / Organisations : Côte d'Ivoire. Ministère de l'éducation nationale et de la formation de base, MENFB Type of document : National Education Plans			

Database	UNESCO Planpolis	Brookings (Pre Institution devoted to the study of national public policy issues)	Google Scholar	International Labour Organisation
Date searched	23-3-15	25-3-15	25-3-15 – 5-4-15	28-3-15
Type of policy	Education Policy	Displacement and peacebuilding policies	Social Sector and ECD policy	Country Programmes (Policy tools and outputs) – related to Child Welfare
Search words	-	-	[Country] + Early Childhood + Policy [Country] + Children + Policy Early Childhood Development in Emergencies and Post-Crisis Transition Case Study from Democratic Republic of the Congo (Case study Report, Not policy), 2011 <a href="http://www.unicef.org/earlychildhood/files/EEPCT_ECDIE_DRC_casestudy_Dec2011.pdf">http://www.unicef.org/earlychildhood/files/EEPCT_ECDIE_DRC_casestudy_Dec2011.pdf</a>	Children + Policy Congo Programme Pays pour un Travail Decent 2013-2016
	4. DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO  Congo RD : rapport national. 48e session de la Conférence internationale de l'éducation, CIE : "L'éducation pour l'inclusion : la voie de l'avenir", Genève, 25-28 novembre 2008 Kinshasa, Congo RD. National Commission for UNESCO, 2008, 19 p. (French)			
	Authors / Organisations : Congo DR. National Commission for UNESCO; UNESCO-IBE Type of document : National Education Policies			

Database	UNESCO Planpolis	Brookings (Pte Institution devoted to the study of national public policy issues) <a href="http://www.brookings.edu/about/history">http://www.brookings.edu/about/history</a>	Google Scholar	International Labour Organisation <a href="http://www.ilo.org/publig/english/bureau/program/dwcp/countries/index.htm">http://www.ilo.org/publig/english/bureau/program/dwcp/countries/index.htm</a>
<b>Date searched</b>	23-3-15	25-3-15	25-3-15 – 5-4-15	28-3-15
<b>Type of policy</b>	Education Policy	Displacement and peacebuilding policies	Social Sector and ECD policy	Country Programmes (Policy tools and outputs) – related to Child Welfare Children + Policy
<b>Search words</b>	-	-	[Country] + Early Childhood + Policy [Country] + Children + Policy Ethiopia Education and Training Policy (1997) <a href="http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Ethiopia/Ethiopia%20Education%20and%20Training%20Policy.pdf">http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Ethiopia/Ethiopia%20Education%20and%20Training%20Policy.pdf</a> Ethiopia Child Protection Policy (2013)	Ethiopia Decent Country Work Programme 2014-15
<b>5. ETHIOPIA</b>	<b>Ethiopia: national report: 48th session of the International Conference on Education, ICE: "Inclusive Education: The Way of the Future", Geneva, 25-28 November 2008</b> <i>Ministry of Education, 2008, 13 p.</i>	NIL		
	Authors / Organisations : Ethiopia. Ministry of Education; UNESCO-IBE Type of document : National Education Policies			
	<b>The Education and training policy and its implementation</b> <i>Addis Ababa, Ministry of Education, 2002, 147 p.</i>			
	Authors / Organisations : Ethiopia. Ministry of Education Type of document : National Education Policies <b>Education and training policy</b> <i>Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Government, 1994, 36 p.</i>			
	<b>Authors / Organisations</b> : Ethiopia. Government <b>Type of document</b> : National Education Policies Education Sector Development Program IV (ESDP IV) 2010/2011 - 2014/2015 - 2003 EC - 2007 EC: program action plan <i>Addis Ababa, Federal Ministry of Education, 2010, 112 p.</i>			
	Authors / Organisations : Ethiopia. Federal Ministry of Education Type of document : National Education Plans			

School improvement program guidelines. Final draft  
*Ministry of Education, 2010, 101 p.*

Authors / Organisations : Ethiopia. Ministry of  
Education  
Type of document : National Education Plans  
Pastoralist area education strategy  
*Addis Ababa, Ministry of Education, 2009?, 21 p.*

Authors / Organisations : Ethiopia. Ministry of  
Education  
Type of document : National Education Plans (question  
mark also on UNESCO website)  
Education Sector Development Program III (ESDP III)  
2005/2006 - 2010/2011 (1998 EFY - 2002 EFY):  
program action plan (PAP). final draft  
*Addis Ababa, Ministry of Education, 2005, 93 p.*

Authors / Organisations: Ethiopia. Ministry of Education  
Type of document : National Education Plans  
Five-Year Education Sector- Development Program  
(ESDP II) (2002/03-2004/05)  
*Addis Ababa, Ministry of Education, 2002, 70-xxxix p.*

Authors / Organisations : Ethiopia. Ministry of  
Education  
Type of document : National Education Plans



Database	UNESCO Planpols	Brookings (Pte Institution devoted to the study of national public policy issues) <a href="http://www.brookings.edu/about/history">http://www.brookings.edu/about/history</a>	Google Scholar	International Labour Organisation <a href="http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/program/dwcp/countries/index.htm">http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/program/dwcp/countries/index.htm</a>
Date searched	23-3-15	25-3-15	25-3-15 – 5-4-15	28-3-15
Type of policy	Education Policy	Displacement and peacebuilding policies	Social Sector and ECD policy	Country Programmes (Policy tools and outputs) – related to Child Welfare Children + Policy
Search words	-	-	[Country] + Early Childhood + Policy [Country] + Children + Policy Right To Education Country Factsheet: Liberia (2012)	
<b>6. LIBERIA</b>	<b>Education Reform Act of 2011</b> <i>Morrovia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011, 46 p.</i>	Declaration of the Rights and Protection of Liberian Internally Displaced Persons (2002)	The Children's Law (2012) <a href="http://agaliprogram.org/eng/wp-content/uploads/2009/05/AGALI-Policy-Brief-Childrens-Law-2011-Liberia.pdf">http://agaliprogram.org/eng/wp-content/uploads/2009/05/AGALI-Policy-Brief-Childrens-Law-2011-Liberia.pdf</a>	
	Authors / Organisations : Liberia. Government Type of document : National Education Legislations <i>[Mostly education plans and reports. No explicit education policies.]</i> Liberian Primary Education Recovery Program prepared for Fast Track Initiative <i>Morrovia, Ministry of Education, 2007, 70 p.</i>	National Community Resettlement and Reintegration Strategy (2004) Guiding Principles on Internally Displaced Persons: Instrument of Adoption (2004)		
	Authors / Organisations : Liberia. Ministry of Education Type of document : National Education Plans The Education sector plan of Liberia - A commitment to making a difference <i>Morrovia, Ministry of Education, 2010, 238 p.</i>			
	Authors / Organisations : Liberia. Ministry of Education Type of document : National Education Plans Education for All (FFA) national action plan, 2004-2015 [draft] 57 p.			
	Authors / Organisations : Liberia. Ministry of Education Type of document : Education for All National Action Plans (EFA-NAP)			

Database	UNESCO Planpols	Brookings (Pre Institution devoted to the study of national public policy issues)	Google Scholar	International Labour Organisation
Date searched	23-3-15	25-3-15	25-3-15 – 5-4-15	28-3-15
Type of policy	Education Policy	Displacement and peacebuilding policies	Social Sector and ECD policy	Country Programmes (Policy tools and outputs) – related to Child Welfare Children + Policy
Search words	-	-	[Country] + Early Childhood + Policy [Country] + Children + Policy <b>Myanmar Policy for Early Childhood Care and Development 2014</b> <a href="http://www.themiru.info/sites/themiru.info/files/documents/Ref_Doc_Early_Childhood_Care_Development_Policy_2014.pdf">http://www.themiru.info/sites/themiru.info/files/documents/Ref_Doc_Early_Childhood_Care_Development_Policy_2014.pdf</a>	NIL
7. MYANMAR	Myanmar: national report. 48th session of the International Conference on Education, ICE: "Inclusive Education: The Way of the Future", Geneva, 25-28 November 2008 <i>Yangon, Ministry of Education, 2008, 21 p.</i>	NIL		
	Authors / Organisations : Myanmar. Ministry of Education; UNESCO-IBE Type of document : National Education Policies			

Database	UNESCO Planpols	Brookings (Pre Institution devoted to the study of national public policy issues)	Google Scholar	International Labour Organisation
Date searched	23-3-15	25-3-15	25-3-15 – 5-4-15	28-3-15
Type of policy	Education Policy	Displacement and peacebuilding policies	Social Sector and ECD policy	Country Programmes (Policy tools and outputs) – related to Child Welfare
Search words	-	-	[Country] + Early Childhood + Policy [Country] + Children + Policy	Children + Policy
<b>8. PAKISTAN</b>	<b>National education policy 2009</b> <i>Islamabad, Ministry of Education, 2009, 63 p.</i>	Return Policy Framework (2009)	ECE POLICY REVIEW Policies, Profile and Programs of Early Childhood Education (ECE) in Pakistan (2008)	Pakistan Decent Work Country Programme 2013- 2017
	Authors / Organisations : Pakistan. Ministry of Education Type of document : National Education Policies		Pakistan Education Sector Reform 2002-2006	
	<b>Education in Pakistan: a white paper revised document to debate and finalize the national education policy</b> <i>Islamabad, Ministry of Education, 2007, 85 p.</i>		Education Policy in Pakistan: A Framework for Reform. Policy Brief. (2010)	
	<b>Authors / Organisations :</b> Pakistan. Ministry of Education and Planning Wing <b>Type of document :</b> National Education Policies <b>Green Papers: National education policy review process, January 2006</b> <i>Islamabad, 2006, 54 p.</i>			
	Authors / Organisations : Pakistan. National Education Policy Review Team Type of document : National Education Policies			
	<b>National education policy 1998-2010</b> <i>Islamabad, Ministry of Education, 1998, 134 p.</i>			
	<b>Authors / Organisations :</b> Pakistan. Ministry of Education <b>Type of document :</b> National Education Policies			

Database	UNESCO Planpols	Brookings (Pte Institution devoted to the study of national public policy issues) <a href="http://www.brookings.edu/about/history">http://www.brookings.edu/about/history</a>	Google Scholar	International Labour Organisation <a href="http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/program/dwcp/countries/index.htm">http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/program/dwcp/countries/index.htm</a>
Date searched	23-3-15	25-3-15	25-3-15 – 5-4-15	28-3-15
Type of policy	Education Policy	Displacement and peacebuilding policies	Social Sector and ECD policy	Country Programmes (Policy tools and outputs) – related to Child Welfare Children + Policy
Search words	-	-	[Country] + Early Childhood + Policy [Country] + Children + Policy Sierra Leone Free Health Care Initiative – Including maternal mortality <a href="http://www.healthpovertyaction.org/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2012/07/SierraleoneFHbrieftingweb12.pdf">http://www.healthpovertyaction.org/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2012/07/SierraleoneFHbrieftingweb12.pdf</a>	Sierra Leone Decent Work Country Programme (2010-2012)
9. SIERRA LEONE	<b>New education policy for Sierra Leone</b> <i>Freetown, Department of Education, 1995, 105 p.</i> Authors / Organisations : Sierra Leone. Dept of Education Type of document : National Education Policies Sierra Leone Education Sector Capacity Development Strategy 2012-2016 <i>Government, 2011, 85 p.</i>	<b>Resettlement Strategy (October 2001)</b> <i>Purpose:</i> The Strategy was developed by the National Commission for Reconstruction, Resettlement and Rehabilitation (NCRRR) in December 2000 following the reactivation of the peace process as a means of contributing to peace and reconciliation in the country. Revised in 2001, the Strategy aimed to contribute to the transition from conflict to peace by establishing the plan for resettlement and reintegration of internally displaced persons, refugees and ex-combatants	Child Rights Act (2007) – but not available for download	
	Authors / Organisations : Sierra Leone. Government Type of document : National Education Plans Sierra Leone education sector plan: a road map to a better future 2007 - 2015 Sierra Leone. Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2007, 160 p. Authors / Organisations: Sierra Leone. Ministry of Education, Science and Technology Type of document : National Education Plans	<b>Recovery Strategy for Newly Accessible Areas (May 2002)</b> <i>Purpose:</i> In 2001, in order to coordinate the restoration of civil authority and broader recovery throughout Sierra Leone, the National Recovery Committee (NRC) was established, chaired by the Vice-President. In May 2002, the NRC developed the Recovery Strategy with the overall goal of contributing to the consolidation of peace and stability while laying the foundations for longer-term development (p. 6).		

Database	UNESCO Planpolis	Brookings (Pre Institution devoted to the study of national public policy issues) <a href="http://www.brookings.edu/about/history">http://www.brookings.edu/about/history</a>	Google Scholar	International Labour Organisation <a href="http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/program/dwcp/countries/index.htm">http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/program/dwcp/countries/index.htm</a>
Date searched	23-3-15	25-3-15	25-3-15 – 5-4-15	28-3-15
Type of policy	Education Policy	Displacement and peacebuilding policies	Social Sector and ECD policy	Country Programmes (Policy tools and outputs) – related to Child Welfare
Search words	-	-	[Country] + Early Childhood + Policy [Country] + Children + Policy Somaliland's Education Sector Strategic Plan 2012-2016 <a href="http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Somalia/Somalia-Somaliland-Education-Sector-Plan-2012-2016.pdf">http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Somalia/Somalia-Somaliland-Education-Sector-Plan-2012-2016.pdf</a>	Children + Policy
10. SOMALI	Somaliland's Education Sector Strategic Plan 2012-2016 <a href="http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Somalia/Somalia-Somaliland-Education-Sector-Plan-2012-2016.pdf">http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Somalia/Somalia-Somaliland-Education-Sector-Plan-2012-2016.pdf</a>	NIL	Child Protection in the Somali Region of Ethiopia Marlijn Lelleveld April 2011	NIL
			A report for the BRIDGES Project <i>piloting the delivery of quality education services in the developing regional states of Ethiopia</i> (Report, not policy) <a href="http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/sites/default/files/docs/FINALChild_Protection_in_the_Somali_Region_30511.pdf">http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/sites/default/files/docs/FINALChild_Protection_in_the_Somali_Region_30511.pdf</a>	

Database	UNESCO Planpols	Brookings (Pre Institution devoted to the study of national public policy issues) <a href="http://www.brookings.edu/about/history">http://www.brookings.edu/about/history</a>	Google Scholar	International Labour Organisation <a href="http://www.ilo.org/public/englib/sh/bureau/">http://www.ilo.org/public/englib/sh/bureau/</a> <a href="http://www.dwcp/countries/index.htm">http://www.dwcp/countries/index.htm</a>
Date searched	23-3-15	25-3-15	25-3-15 – 5-4-15	28-3-15
Type of policy	Education Policy	Displacement and peacebuilding policies	Social Sector and ECD policy	Country Programmes (Policy tools and outputs) – related to Child Welfare Children + Policy
Search words	-	-	[Country] + Early Childhood + Policy [Country] + Children + Policy South Sudan Minimum Standards For Education In Emergencies (2012) <a href="http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Juba/pdf/South_Sudan_Minimum_Standards_4th_copy.pdf">http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Juba/pdf/South_Sudan_Minimum_Standards_4th_copy.pdf</a>	NIL
11. SOUTH SUDAN	<b>The National inclusive education policy 2014: The policy position paper. Achieving education for all children in South Sudan</b> <i>Juba, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2014, Draft, 48 p.</i>	<b>Sudan's National Policy on Internal Displacement (2009)</b> <b>Purpose:</b> Sudan's national policy on IDPs recognizes the civil and political, as well as economic, social and cultural rights of the country's internally displaced persons. It strives to promote voluntary settlement and reunification of IDP families, and involve affected groups and communities in the planning of programs and projects which seek to respond to their needs. Through the promotion of reintegration, the government seeks to establish sustainable peace and development programs which they hope will reduce relief dependency and encourage self-reliance.	<b>Building a Culture of Peace through Dialogue in South Sudan</b> (2015) Benjamin A. Machar   17 March 2015 Policy Brief <a href="http://www.suddinstitute.org/assets/Publications/Culture-of-peaceformattd3.pdf">http://www.suddinstitute.org/assets/Publications/Culture-of-peaceformattd3.pdf</a>	
	<b>Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology policy framework</b> <i>Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology, 2011, 13 p.</i>		Protocol on Agreed Principles on Transitional Arrangements Towards Resolution of the Crisis in South Sudan (2014) <a href="https://radiotamazui.org/sites/default/files/Pr otoocol%20signed%2025%20Aug%2014_0.pdf">https://radiotamazui.org/sites/default/files/Pr otoocol%20signed%2025%20Aug%2014_0.pdf</a>	
	Authors / Organisations : South Sudan. Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology Type of document : National Education Policies <i>Juba, Ministry of General Education and Instruction, 2012, Draft, 116 p.</i>			
	Authors / Organisations : South Sudan. Ministry of General Education and Instruction Type of document : National Education Plans			

Database	UNESCO Planpols	Brookings (Pre Institution devoted to the study of national public policy issues)	Google Scholar	International Labour Organisation <a href="http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/program/dwcp/countries/index.htm">http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/program/dwcp/countries/index.htm</a>
<b>Date searched</b>	23-3-15	25-3-15	25-3-15 – 5-4-15	28-3-15
<b>Type of policy</b>	Education Policy	Displacement and peacebuilding policies	Social Sector and ECD policy	Country Programmes (Policy tools and outputs) – related to Child Welfare
<b>Search words</b>	-	-	[Country] + Early Childhood + Policy Draft Palestine Child Law 2003 <a href="http://www.dd-palestine.org/sites/default/files/child_law_-_non-official_english_translation.pdf">http://www.dd-palestine.org/sites/default/files/child_law_-_non-official_english_translation.pdf</a>	Children + Policy Palestine The Palestinian Decent Work Programme 2013-2016 <a href="http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/program/dwcp/download/palestine.pdf">http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/program/dwcp/download/palestine.pdf</a>
<b>12. STATE OF PALESTINE</b>	<b>TVET strategy (Revised)</b> <i>Ramallah, Ministry of Education and Higher Education, Ministry of Labour, 2010, 64 p.</i> Authors / Organisations : Palestine. Ministry of Education and Higher Education; Palestine. Ministry of Labour Type of document : National Education Policies	NIL		
<b>Date searched</b>	23-3-15	25-3-15		25-3-15 – 5-4-15
<b>Type of policy</b>	Education Policy	Displacement and peacebuilding policies	Social Sector and ECD policy	Country Programmes (Policy tools and outputs) – related to Child Welfare
<b>Search words</b>	-	-	[Country] + Early Childhood + Policy [Country] + Children + Policy	Children + Policy

### 13. UGANDA

<p><b>Ministerial policy statement education and sports 2012/2013</b>  <i>Ministry of Education and Sports, 2012, 646 p.</i></p> <p>Authors / Organisations : Uganda. Ministry of Education and Sports, MoES          Type of document : National Education Policies          The Education and Sports Sector Annual Performance Report. Theme: Addressing Learning Outcomes for Enhanced Competencies  <i>Kampala, MoES, 2012, 218 p.</i></p> <p>Authors / Organisations : Uganda. Ministry of Education and Sports, MoES          Type of document : National Education Plans          Skilling Uganda: BVET strategic plan 2011-2020          Ministry of Education and Sports, 2011, Final draft, 112 p.</p> <p>Authors / Organisations : Uganda. Ministry of Education and Sports, MoES          Type of document : National Education Plans          Updated Education Sector Strategic Plan 2010-2015          Kampala, Ministry of Education and Sports, 2010, 83 p.</p> <p>Authors / Organisations : Uganda. Ministry of Education and Sports          Type of document : National Education Plans          Revised education sector strategic plan 2007-2015. Draft</p>	<p><b>National Policy for Internally Displaced Persons (August 2004)</b>  <i>Purpose: the National Policy was developed in August 2004 primarily to address the needs of those displaced by the conflict, but also to address those displaced by natural or human-made disasters. The policy's objectives are to minimize internal displacement and its effects by providing an enabling environment for upholding rights and entitlements of the internally displaced; to promote integrated and coordinated response mechanisms to address the causes and effects of internal displacement; to assist in the safe and voluntary return of the internally displaced; and to guide the development of sectoral programs for recovery through rehabilitation and reconstruction of social and economic infrastructure in support of the return and resettlement of IDPs (p. 1).</i></p> <p><i>Responsibilities: the Office of the Prime Minister – Department of Disaster Preparedness and Refugees is the lead agency for the protection and assistance of IDPs (section 2.1). Multi-sectoral planning mechanisms are established at the National, District and Sub-County levels to address the protection and provision of humanitarian assistance of IDPs (section 2.2).</i></p> <p><i>Content: the Ugandan Policy, drawing from the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (p. 2), approximates a comprehensive policy, addressing all causes of internal displacement.</i></p> <p><b>National Internally Displaced Persons Return, Resettlement and Re-integration Strategic Plan for Lango and Teso Sub Regions (November 2005)</b>  <i>Purpose: in November 2005, the government considered that sufficient stability was returning to the sub regions of Lango and Teso that the return process for internally displaced persons could begin. Consequently, the Office of the Prime Minister developed this Plan to assist the displaced in the two sub-regions to return home.</i></p> <p><a href="#">Peace, Recovery and Development Plan for Northern Uganda (2007)</a></p>	<p>The status of the implementation of the Education Sector ECD Policy in Uganda (2012)  <a href="http://www.education.go.ug/files/downloads/Early%20Childhood%20Development%20Policy%20Review.pdf">http://www.education.go.ug/files/downloads/Early%20Childhood%20Development%20Policy%20Review.pdf</a></p> <p>Uganda Universal Primary Education (2006)  <a href="http://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/4072.pdf">http://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/4072.pdf</a></p> <p>Uganda Second National Health Policy. Promoting People's Health to Enhance Socio-Economic Development (2010)  <a href="http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1860/National_Health_Policy_July_2010.pdf">http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1860/National_Health_Policy_July_2010.pdf</a></p> <p>Uganda Gender Policy (2007)  <a href="http://www.mgisd.go.ug/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/policies/Uganda-Gender-Policy.pdf">http://www.mgisd.go.ug/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/policies/Uganda-Gender-Policy.pdf</a></p>	<p>Uganda Decent Work Country Programme 2013 - 2017</p>
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Kampala, Ministry of Education and Sports,  
2008, 52 p.

Authors / Organisations : Uganda. Ministry  
of education and sports

Type of document : National Education  
Plans

Education sector strategic plan 2004-2015  
Ministry of Education and Sports, 2004,  
134 p.

Authors / Organisations : Uganda. Ministry  
of Education and Sports, MOES

Type of document : National Education  
Plans

Database	UNESCO Planpols	Brookings (Pre Institution devoted to the study of national public policy issues) <a href="http://www.brookings.edu/about/history">http://www.brookings.edu/about/history</a>	Google Scholar	International Labour Organisation <a href="http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/program/dwcp/countries/index.htm">http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/program/dwcp/countries/index.htm</a>
Date searched	23-3-15	25-3-15	25-3-15 – 5-4-15	28-3-15
Type of policy	Education Policy	Displacement and peacebuilding policies	Social Sector and ECD policy	Country Programmes (Policy tools and outputs) – related to Child Welfare Children + Policy
Search words	-	-	[Country] + Early Childhood + Policy [Country] + Children + Policy ECD National Policy Country Report (2013) Yemen: National progress report on the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (2013-2015)	Yemen Decent Work Country Programme 2008-2010
<b>14. YEMEN</b>	<b>Yemen: national report. 48th session of the International Conference on Education, ICE: "Inclusive Education: The Way of the Future", Geneva, 25-28 November 2008</b> <i>Sana'a, Ministry of Education, 2008, 59 p.</i>	<b>National Policy for Addressing Internal Displacement in Republic of Yemen, (July 2013)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Arabic)</li> <li>• <b>Publication date:</b> 2014</li> <li>• <b>Source:</b> <a href="#">Yemen - government</a></li> </ul> <p>The preparation of this National Progress Report has been undertaken within the framework of the 2013-15 HFA Monitoring and Progress Review process, facilitated by UNISDR and the ISDR partnership. The progress report assesses current national strategic priorities with regard to the implementation of disaster risk reduction actions, and establishes baselines on levels of progress achieved with respect to the implementation of the HFA's five priorities for action. Yemen Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) 2003-2005</p>	
	<p>Authors / Organisations : Yemen. Ministry of Education; UNESCO-IBE Type of document : National Education Policies</p> <p><b>Medium Term Expenditure Framework: allocation of resources to achieve education outcomes in Yemen 2007 to 2011: for presentation to the Joint Annual Review (JAR) May 2007</b> <i>Sana'a, Ministry of Education, 2007, 32 p.</i></p> <p>Authors / Organisations : Yemen. Ministry of Education</p>			

Type of document : National Education Policies

**Medium Term Results Framework 2006 to 2010: outcomes, strategy and policy framework: Implementation of the National Basic Education Development Strategy (NBEDS): a joint framework for all NBEDS partners**

*Sana'a, Ministry of Education, 2006, 39 p.*

Authors / Organisations : Yemen.

Ministry of Education

Type of document : National Education Policies

Database	UNESCO Planpols	Brookings (Pte Institution devoted to the study of national public policy issues) <a href="http://www.brookings.edu/about/history">http://www.brookings.edu/about/history</a>	Google Scholar	International Labour Organisation <a href="http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/program/dwcp/countrtes/index.htm">http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/program/dwcp/countrtes/index.htm</a>
Date searched	23-3-15	25-3-15	25-3-15 – 5-4-15	28-3-15
Type of policy	Education Policy	Displacement and peacebuilding policies	Social Sector and ECD policy [Country] + Early Childhood + Policy [Country] + Children + Policy	Country Programmes (Policy tools and outputs) – related to Child Welfare Children + Policy
Search words	-	-	NIL	The East African Community Decent Work Programme 2010-2015 <a href="http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/program/dwcp/download/eacfinal.pdf">http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/program/dwcp/download/eacfinal.pdf</a>
15. Regional Policies	NIL	Great Lakes Region o <a href="#">Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region, 2006</a> African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (2009) African Union 17th Session, July 2010, Executive Council Declarations on Kampala Convention o <a href="#">Declarations on Kampala Convention</a> o African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, Resolution on Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons fleeing the conflict in the North of Mali, 29 February 2012 (ACHPR/RES.210) EXT.OS/XI) 2012 (PDF) <a href="#">General Assembly Resolution 2417, (AG/RES. 2417), June 2008</a> Commonwealth of Independent States Treaty on Support to Refugees and Forced Migrants, 1993	NIL	

**International Policy**

**Database**  
UNICEF

**Policies**

UN General Assembly, Rights of the Child (2010)

[http://www.childrights.org/sites/default/files/submissions\\_reports/files/UNCRCEnglish\\_0.pdf](http://www.childrights.org/sites/default/files/submissions_reports/files/UNCRCEnglish_0.pdf)

Status of the Conventions of the Rights of the Child (2012)

<http://undesadspd.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=NTZQMp28QoE%3D&tabid=70>

World Bank

Learning for All: Investing in People's Knowledge and Skills to Promote Development (2011)

[http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EDUCATION/Resources/ESSU/Education\\_Strategy\\_4\\_12\\_2011.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EDUCATION/Resources/ESSU/Education_Strategy_4_12_2011.pdf)

Search Words	Found	Comments	Date
Burundi + Government	<a href="http://www.burundi.gov.bi/">http://www.burundi.gov.bi/</a>	Not a very useful website, just a welcome page and some news – no links	16/04/15
burundi ministry of education		Through browsing the results here found searching in French might be a better option	
Burundi ministere de l'enseignement	<a href="http://www.enseignementsuperieur.gov.bi/">http://www.enseignementsuperieur.gov.bi/</a>	There are several departments – the Ministere de l'enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche Scientifique Also: Ministre des Relations extérieures et de la Coopération internationale Ministre de la Jeunesse, des Sports et de la Culture Ministère de l'Éducation de Base et Secondaire, de l'Enseignement des Métiers, de la Formation Professionnelle et de l'Alphabétisation	
BURUNDI - Ministère de l'Éducation de Base et Secondaire, de l'Enseignement des Métiers, de la Formation Professionnelle et de l'Alphabétisation (MEBSEMPPA)	Link found from previous search and this website: <a href="http://atd.dgmarket.com/tenders/adminshowBuyer.do?buyerId=6588290">http://atd.dgmarket.com/tenders/adminshowBuyer.do?buyerId=6588290</a>		
BURUNDI - Ministère de l'Éducation de Base et Secondaire, de l'Enseignement des Métiers, de la Formation Professionnelle et de l'Alphabétisation (MEBSEMPPA)	Went to this page: <a href="http://www.burundiconference.gov.bi/IMG/pdf/Note_Sectorielle_Education.pdf">http://www.burundiconference.gov.bi/IMG/pdf/Note_Sectorielle_Education.pdf</a>	Notes that there is a Plan Sectoriel de Développement de l'Éducation et de la Formation 2012 – 2020 (PSDEF endossé en juillet 2012 et ses annexes dont son Plan d'actions triennal 2013-2015) from a 2012 session called Cadre Stratégique de Croissance et de Lutte contre la Pauvreté (CSLP II), part of the Government's 2025 vision to develop human capital. One of 8 pillars. In regards to preschool, it states: "4.1. preschool Preschool mainly grow on community participation base. In 2020, the target is to host 86% of enrolled in community structures. A grant will be awarded to communities to acquire educational and entertaining materials and support them in the care of educators. Awareness-raising activities for parents and training activities on the programs are planned."	

<http://www.cnidh.bi/sites/default/files/LES%20REFORMES%20DU%20SYSTEME%20EDUCATIF%20BURUNDAIS%20ET%20LE%20DROIT%20A%20L'EDUCATION.pdf>

Report from the Burundi Independent Commission on Human Rights on the reform of the Burundi Education system, and the right to education. p.61 talks about preschool

#### 1. Pre-school education

##### 1.1 Access to the preschool education

Pre-school education is mentioned for the first time in Decree No 100/054 of 19 August 1998 on the reorganization of the Ministry of Education in its Article 26.

Today, three structures set up the training of early childhood. These kindergartens usually attached to primary schools, community care centers supervised by the Burundi Scout Association with support from UNICEF, community circles framed by the NGO TWITEZIMBERE and associations of parents.

The objective followed is the one defined in the framework of the World Education Forum held in Dakar in 2000, namely,

"Expanding and improving all aspects protection and early childhood education, especially of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children."

TM

The Sector Plan for the Development of Education and Training (PSDEF) 2009-2016 notes that the main challenge for the integrated development of the young child "is quantitative since it is envisaged to host the horizon 2015-2016 three times more children than at present. To do so, within a limited budget, most of the increase in staff will be at the level of community structures. The policy document on the integrated development of young children, being adopted by the government, will be a guide for the actions to be undertaken in the coming years."

In reality, the commitments made in access to early childhood education are not achieved because the GER for that level increased from 6.2% in 2009-2010 to 5.5% in 2011-2012 and TNS 2.1% in 2009-2010 to 2.1 in 2011 to 201229.

##### 1.2. Access to quality education in preschool

In access to quality education for young children, there is no official program for waking early childhood activities. But a framework was proposed with the support of UNICEF in 2003. It includes the following activities: childcare, language, graphic design, pre-writing, pre-reading, pre-calculus, study of the environment, coloring -collage, singing, dancing, recitation. Booklets were printed and distributed to guide activities.

However, some kindergartens seem prepared only entry to primary school and essentially teach writing, reading and even the French and arithmetic. Educators serving in these schools have not received specific training in the supervision of young children. For this level of preschool education, major findings can be summarized as follows. The bearing of preschool education is characterized by a very low access and therefore the lack of protection of the right to education for this age group of children. The authorities do not give priority to this sub-sector and show a strong tendency to let the private sector and local communities, as these partners are not sufficiently aware of the importance of early childhood education. In terms of quality, early stimulation of young children are not standardized for all reception centers for young children. Initial training of supervisors for education level is not yet organized in the country. An almost general lack of teaching materials to implement these stimulating activities can be observed in almost all pre-school establishments.

Same search words different entry [www.globalpartnership.org/fr/download/file/fr/d/45526](http://www.globalpartnership.org/fr/download/file/fr/d/45526)

This is a link to the full Plan sectoriel de développement de l'éducation et de la formation. 2012-2020  
From July 2012

Ministère de l'Education de Base et  
Secondaire, de l'Enseignement des  
Métiers, de la Formation  
Professionnelle et de l'Alphabétisation

<http://www.presidence.bi/spip.php?article1439>

This is a link to the Burundi President's website, outlining the 2010 decree on this Ministry and its mission – and on here there is a reference to a commitment to peace education in Chapter 1, article 1:

*“participer à l'éducation à la paix, à la démocratie et aux respects des droits et libertés de la personne humaine dans le milieu scolaire;”*

Translated as: “participate in education for peace, democracy and respect of the rights and freedoms of the individual in the school environment;”

MEBSEMPPA

No really useful finds.

Conclusions

There are a few departments in Burundi looking at education

- Ministère de l'enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche Scientifique (Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research)
- Ministère des Relations extérieures et de la Coopération internationale (Minister of External Relations and International Cooperation)
- Ministre de la Jeunesse, des Sports et de la Culture (Minister of Youth, Sports and Culture)
- Ministère de l'Education de Base et Secondaire, de l'Enseignement des Métiers, de la Formation Professionnelle et de l'Alphabétisation (Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education, Teaching Professions, Vocational Training and Literacy)



Main document found is the “Plan sectoriel de développement de l’éducation et de la formation. 2012-2020” This is in EPII. Quite an interesting report from the Burundi Independent Commission on Human Rights on the reform of the Burundi Education system, and the right to education... “Today, three structures set up the training of early childhood. These kindergartens usually attached to primary schools, community care centers supervised by the Burundi Scout Association with support from UNICEF, community circles framed by the NGO TWITEZIMBERE and associations of parents.”

And in the “Plan sectoriel de développement de l’éducation et de la formation. 2012-2020” it does talk about strengthening the community base for early years.

Presidential page with full decree from 2010 might be of use?

## APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE TO UNICEF COUNTRY OFFICES



Institute of Education

### Questionnaire Mapping Early Childhood Development and Peacebuilding Policies

#### Introduction

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this survey on Early Childhood Development (ECD) and Peacebuilding policies in your country. This study, commissioned by UNICEF, will be used to inform a United Nations Resolution on Peacebuilding in the Early Years. As country-experts working in the field, you have an in-depth knowledge of the national-level policies that relate to early childhood and peacebuilding. We value your inside knowledge in locating the national-level policies and appreciate your expertise on the project. Thank you in advance for your valuable contributions.

#### Section One: General Information

Please provide some information about your current post.

Which country do you work in?

Which organisation do you work for?

eg. Government ministry, UNICEF Country Office:

What is your job title?

Please give a brief description of your role:

## Section Two: Early Childhood Development and Peacebuilding policies

Please list all the policies related to children, early childhood development and/or peacebuilding that you know and indicate where the policies are located eg. weblinks or document sources

Name of policy	Where is the policy located? E.g. web-links, database	What is the original language of the policy document? If not in English, is an English language version available and where can it be found?	Which government office or organisation is responsible for developing these policies?	Is it a legal requirement or compulsory in your state or country to implement such policies?	How strongly do children feature in this policy? Please indicate: Very strongly Strongly Somewhat strongly Not strongly at all Not sure	At what stage is this policy? Please indicate: Endorsed by the government Finalised but not yet endorsed by the government In advanced stages of being endorsed At initial drafting stage

Can you suggest possible reasons why children feature strongly or not strongly in the policies?	
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--

**Section Three: The Context of Policy Development**

Can you suggest why policies on ECD and/ or peacebuilding do or do not exist in your country? E.g. Increased advocacy (if policies do exist), Lack of government interest or limited resources (if policies do not exist)	
Which area(s) of policies require strengthening to address ECD and peacebuilding?	
Are there any other policies that you see as linked to Early Childhood Development and Peacebuilding that have not been identified above?	
In the last two years, have there been new policies developed that address children, early childhood and peacebuilding? If so, please list them	

**Section Four: UN Resolution on Peacebuilding in the Early Years**

To what extent would you agree that a UN Resolution on Peacebuilding in the Early Years would make a positive impact on children and families in the country?	Very strongly Strongly Not sure Somewhat strongly Not strongly at all
Do you have any comments you would like to add?	
To what extent do you agree that governments should prioritise children at the centre of early childhood development and peacebuilding policies. Please circle	Very strongly Strongly Not sure Somewhat strongly Not strongly at all
Do you have any comments you would like to add on this subject?	

**Conclusion**

<p>We very much value your expertise and may wish to have a follow-up conversation with you on the policy context. We would very much appreciate if you could let us know when you will be available to speak with a member of the research team. Please indicate the best way to contact you e.g. email, phone, skype. Kindly include your contact number or email address.</p>	<p><b>Best way to contact me:</b></p> <p><b>Best time to contact me:</b></p> <p><b>Phone:</b></p> <p><b>Email:</b></p>
<p>If there is anything that you would like to add, please let us know.</p>	

Thank you

Section One: General Information

Please provide some information about your current post.

1. Which country do you work in?

Other (please specify)

2. Which organisation do you work for?

e.g. Government ministry, UNICEF Country Office

3. What is your job title?

4. Please give a brief description of your role.

Section Two: Early Childhood Development and Peacebuilding Policies

Please tell us which policies you know of.

1. Are there any policies related to children, early childhood development and/or peacebuilding in your country?

2. Can you suggest why policies on early childhood development and/ or peacebuilding do or do not exist in your country? e.g. increased advocacy, increased government interest (if policies do exist), lack of government interest or limited resources (if policies do not exist)

## Mapping Early Childhood Development and Peacebuilding Policies

### Section Two: Early Childhood Development and Peacebuilding Policies

1. For each policy related to children, early childhood development and/or peacebuilding, please answer the following questions.

(There will be an option to add more policies at the end of this section.)

Name of policy

Date of policy (year)

Where is the policy located? e.g. web-links, database

What is the original language of the policy document?

If not in English, is an English language version available and where can it be found?

Which government office or organisation is responsible for developing these policies?

2. Is there an implementation plan or operational framework for this policy?

If Yes, please proceed to question 4.

If No, please explain why in the comment box.

If there is no implementation plan or operational framework, please explain.

Mapping Early Childhood Development and Peacebuilding Policies

Section Two: Early Childhood Development and Peacebuilding Policies

1. For each policy related to children, early childhood development and/or peacebuilding, please answer the following questions.

(There will be an option to add more policies at the end of this section.)

Name of policy

Date of policy (year)

Where is the policy located? e.g. web-links, database

What is the original language of the policy document?

If not in English, is an English language version available and where can it be found?

Which government office or organisation is responsible for developing these policies?

2. Is there an implementation plan or operational framework for this policy?

If Yes, please proceed to question 4.

If No, please explain why in the comment box.

If there is no implementation plan or operational framework, please explain.



3. Is the whole or part of the implementation plan or operational framework for this policy costed?

If the implementation plan is not costed, or only costed in part, please explain.

4. What tools have been developed to support implementation for this policy? e.g. curriculum, training

5. Is there a monitoring and evaluation plan in place for this policy?

Please comment

6. Are roles, responsibilities and accountabilities clearly defined for the implementation of the policy?

Please comment

7. What programmes/ sectors are linked with this policy implementation?

8. At what stage is this policy?

Other (please specify)

\*9. Do you have another policy to add?

## Mapping Early Childhood Development and Peacebuilding Policies

### Section Three: Your Expert Opinion

1. Which policies require strengthening to address early childhood development and peacebuilding?

Any other policy? Add details

2. Do you foresee any new policies being developed that address children, early childhood and peacebuilding? If so, please list them below.

3. In order to make a positive impact on children and families, how can we improve the influence of a UN Resolution on national policies addressing peacebuilding in the early years?

4. To what extent do you agree that governments should prioritise children at the centre of early childhood development and peacebuilding policies? Please select a response from the dropdown menu.

Please add comments

## Mapping Early Childhood Development and Peacebuilding Policies

### Contact Details

**We very much value your expertise and may wish to have a follow-up conversation with you on the policy context. We would very much appreciate if you could let us know when you will be available to speak with a member of the research team.**

1. Please indicate the best way to contact you e.g. email, phone, skype.

2. Please indicate your contact number and skype address if available.

3. Please indicate the best time to contact you, stating if this is local or GMT time.

## APPENDIX 3: CODING TOOL



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Coding Tool

Questions	Answers	Definitions/ notes/ examples
<b>Section A: Core keywords</b>		
<b>A.1 Name of reviewer</b>	A.1.1 Details (specify)	
	A.3.1 English	
	A.3.2 Not English (specify)	
<b>Section B: Policy setting</b>		
<b>B.1 Policy setting</b>	B.1.1 Not stated	
	B.1.2 Burundi	
	B.1.1 Chad	
	B.1.2 Côte d'Ivoire	
	B.1.3 Democratic Republic of the Congo	
	B.1.4 Ethiopia	
	B.1.5 Liberia	
	B.1.6 Myanmar	

Questions	Answers	Definitions/ notes/ examples
	B.1.7 Pakistan	
	B.1.8 Sierra Leone	
	B.1.9 Somali	
	B.1.10 South Sudan	
	B.1.11 State of Palestine	
	B.1.12 Uganda	
	B.1.13 Yemen	
	B.1.14 Regional	This could be any policy pertaining to a region rather than a specific country e.g. Asia pacific region, African, Sub-saharan etc
	B.1.15 International	International policy relating to children and peacebuilding
<b>Section C: Document characteristics</b>		
<b>C.1 Document Type</b> <i>Use this to describe what kind of document the policy is</i>	C.1.1. Education Policy	
	C.1.2. Education Plan/Programme	
	C.1.3. Early Childhood Policy	
	C.1.4. Peacebuilding Policy	
	C.1.5. Social Sector Policy	Refers to any policy that relates to the wider social environment and society - anything that does not fit directly into education or peacebuilding. This would include things like Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
	C.1.6. Workforce Policy	For example... International Labour Organisation Relating to child labour

Questions	Answers	Definitions/ notes/ examples
	C.1.7. Country policy brief/ Fact sheet	
	C.1.8. Policy Consultation/ Proposal	
	C.1.9. Treaty/Agreement	Signed treaty or agreement within country or region
	C.1.10. Allied Journal Article	
	C.1.11. Allied Technical Report	
	C.1.12. Other	
	C.2.1 Draft Policy	Policy which distinctly states 'Draft'
<b>C.2 Status of Policy/Document</b>	C.2.2. Ratified policy document	
	C.2.3 Historical Policy	When the policy has been superseded by a more recent policy
	C.2.4 Published report	Any published document that is based on a report on a particular area.
	C.2.5 Not stated/Unclear	
	C.2.6 Other, Please specify	
<b>C.3 Year of Publication</b>	C.3.1 1989-1994	
	C.3.2 1995-1999	

Questions	Answers	Definitions/ notes/ examples	
	C.3.3 2000-2004		
	C.3.4 2005-2009		
	C.3.5 2010-2015		
	C.3.7 Not stated/Unclear		
	C.4.1 1989-1994		
	C.4.2 1995-1999		
	C.4.3 2000-2004		
C.4 When was the policy implemented?	C.4.4 2005-2009		
	C.4.5 2010-2015		
	C.4.6 Not implemented		
	C.4.6 Not-stated/Unclear		
	C.5 Broad aims of the policy	C.5.1 Peacebuilding (specify)	
		C.5.2 Early childhood development (specify)	
C.5.3 Social/ educational (specify)			

Questions	Answers	Definitions/ notes/ examples
	C.5.4 Social Integration (specify)	Policy or agreement that relates to integrating certain populations, minority communities with the wider society.
	C.5.5 Other (specify)	
	C.5.6 Not stated/ Unclear (specify)	
<b>C.6 Policy authority</b>	C.6.1 Private agency	
	C.6.2 Government or government-related body (specify)	
	C.6.3 Donor country government agency	
	C.6.4 Non-governmental organisation (NGO) (specify)	
	C.6.5 International authority (specify)	
	C.6.7 Other (specify)	
	C.6.8. Not stated/ Unclear (specify)	
	<b>Section D: Study population</b>	
<b>D.1 Who is the focus of the policy?</b>	D.1.1. Children	
	D.1.2 Families	
	D.1.3 Communities	Local level, grassroots ethnic or cultural groups

Questions	Answers	Definitions/ notes/ examples
	D.1.4 Civil society	The focus is on a broader level encompassing multiple diverse communities, possibly national citizens, and society in general. Broader level encompassing multiple diverse communities, possibly national
	D.1.5 Public sector organisations (e.g. schools)	
	D.1.6 Private organisations	
	D.1.7 Other	
	D1.8 Not stated/ Unclear (Specify)	
	D.2.1 Children Not included	No mention of children or childhood at all.
	D.2.2 Children as participants	Where children are described as key participants in society, and contributing to society in one way or another.
	D.2.3 Children as vulnerable	Where children as described as victims, vulnerable and needing protection.
	D.2.4 Children having human rights	
	D.2.5 Unconscious childhood	With no valid contribution to make to society generally, or policy development or implementation in particular.
	D.2.6 Minority group childhood	Children seen as powerless and disadvantaged relative to adults; recognises advocacy efforts for children's rights, interests and purposes
D.2 How are children and childhood portrayed?	D.2.7 Socially developing childhood	Children are seen as incomplete versions of adults, gradually equipped with competence to participate in the social world. The focus of attention is not on their own perspectives but on their developing competencies.



Questions	Answers	Definitions/ notes/ examples
	D.2.8 Childhood as a source of knowledge	Children are seen as crucial informants about their own lives
	D.2.9 Childhood with social agency	In which children are social actors, with roles for peacebuilding, whose views and experiences are ascribed an inherent worth that would position them as valuable contributors to policy development and implementation.
	D.2.10 Unclear	
	C.2.11 Other (specify)	
	D.3.1 Children (0-8)	
	D.3.2 Adolescents (9-12)	
<b>D.3 What populations are included? (tick all that apply)</b>	D.3.3 Children (13-18)	
	D.3.4 Parents/ families	
	D.3.5 Settled populations	
	D.3.6 Migrant populations	
	D.3.7 Other (specify)	
	D.3.8 Not stated/unclear (specify)	
<b>Section E: Peacebuilding</b>		
<b>E.1 How is peacebuilding encouraged?</b>	E.1.1. Recognition of past or current inequalities, social injustice	

Questions	Answers	Definitions/ notes/ examples
	E.1.2 Recognition of inclusive human rights for all local populations	
	E.1.3 Supporting social work programmes	
	E.1.4 Integrated into early childhood development programmes	
	E.1.5 Integrated into social/ educational programmes	
	E.1.6 Regulating organisational activities	
	E.1.7 Legislating participation in decision-making	
	E.1.8 Other (specify)	
	E.1.9 Unclear	
	E.2.1 Isolated programmes	
	E.2.2 Parenting programmes	
	E.2.3 Community intervention, initiative and agreement	This could relate a wide range of areas e.g. return of land, peace agreement, nutrition policy, community intervention etc
	E.2.4 Programmes with good organisational fit with local structures	
	E.2.5 Other (specify)	

**E.2 What niche level activity is recognised?**

Questions	Answers	Definitions/ notes/ examples
	E.2.6 None/Unclear	
	E.3.1 Recognition of 'best practice'	
<b>E.3 What regime level activity is recognised?</b>	E.3.2 International Non-governmental organisational support	INGOs intervention or support
	E.3.3 National government support and agreement	Signed agreement within or among governments
	E.3.4 Organisational support (e.g. school curriculum)	
	E.3.5 Organisational policy (e.g. professional code of ethics)	
	E.3.6 Other (specify)	
	E.3.7 None/ Unclear (specify)	

## APPENDIX 4: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE



### Interview Schedule Mapping Early Childhood Development and Peacebuilding Policy

Interview questions with country officers and policy contacts. Questions can be adapted according to the interview context and participant.

#### Preamble

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. As explained in the initial information letter, the purpose of this interview is to find out further details about the current policies related to Early Childhood Development and Peacebuilding in conflict-affected and post-conflict countries. Your views are important in helping us to understand better the national level policy context of ECD and peacebuilding in [country].

#### Questions

1. The idea of ECD and peacebuilding mean different things to different people. As someone who works in the sector (or at the center of policy development), what does 'ECD and peacebuilding' mean to you? *(please write down 3 things that come to mind)*
2. Do you think current policies in your country sufficiently address the role of children and families adequately in peacebuilding?
3. What do the policies aim to do?
4. Who do you think should be involved in developing these policies?
5. Do you feel that the national policies in your country that relate to ECD and peacebuilding are being implemented at a local level?
6. Prompt: Can you give examples of programme work or practice that is currently happening which show ECD and peacebuilding policies being implemented well?
7. In your opinion, how can stronger links be established between ECD and peacebuilding policies? And what difference would this make to children and families in conflict and post-conflict states?
8. What in your view are the difficulties and challenges in addressing children's role in ECD and peacebuilding policies in your country?
9. Do you feel that there are specific areas of national policy in your country which need strengthening to include children and families more explicitly?
10. What do you think needs to be done to ensure that children and families have a central role in policies relating to ECD and peacebuilding?

11. What outcomes would you like to see from this policy review in terms of informing a UN Resolution for children and peacebuilding?
12. How could a UN Resolution on Peacebuilding in the Early Years make a difference to children and families?
13. Is there anything that you would like to add to help convince governments of the importance of ECD and peacebuilding?
14. Prompt: What do you think needs to be done to achieved at national level to ensure that children have a central role in peacebuilding policy?
15. Is there anyone else you think we should contact?

Thank you very much for your time

Note: the interviews will be semi-structured and the above questions/order may change during the interview process.

## APPENDIX 5: RESEARCH EVIDENCE ABOUT YOUTH AGENCY, PEACEBUILDING AND EDUCATION

A systematic search for research followed by a thematic analysis of approaches, issues and contexts linked to youth peacebuilding agency and interventions has provided insights into young agency and the dynamics of peace and in conflict-affected settings.<sup>16</sup> The key messages from this review are listed here. How policies match these research findings is described in Section 5.

### *Key Messages on Absence, Appropriation and Amplification of Youth Voice*

- Seeking the perspectives of young people on the issues that affect them is essential to ensure the genuine participation of youth in peacebuilding during and after conflict.
- Previous trends in literature have demonstrated a lack of youth voice and perspectives, or an appropriation of youth concerns to serve an underlying agenda.
- There is growing attention in research to amplify the voices and experiences of youth to ensure that their concerns are addressed more responsibly in programming.
- In seeking to amplify youth voices, care must be taken that some voices are not disproportionately prioritised over others, which might engender feelings of resentment and marginalisation.
- Particular efforts should be made to engage with and involve youth constituencies beyond elites, including marginalised groups such as hard to reach young people, for example, the disabled, rural youth, young mothers and minority groups.

### *Key Messages on gender*

- Youth-oriented programmes that fail to acknowledge and consider the gendered differences of participants do not challenge pre-existing hierarchies and structural constraint and may reinforce stereotypes and subordination.
- Gender is too often considered only as a binary without due regard to the complexity of young peoples' identities, which risks reinforcing assumptions about male and female behaviours.
- The links between masculinities and violence are complex and highly contextual – oversimplifying this association does not do justice to the many varied experiences of young men.
- Similarly, conceptualising violence as an exclusively male act fails to acknowledge the multiple roles of young women in conflict, including as combatants.
- There is a failure to address the sexual health needs of young boys/men and young girls/women in conflict affected contexts.
- The sexuality and sexual orientation of young people in conflict-affected contexts is almost universally ignored within health related educational interventions.

### *Key Messages on Responding to Specific Youth Constituencies*

- Specific groups of conflict-affected young people have varying needs in a variety of contexts, which should be considered through participatory and collaborative approaches to programme design, implementation, evaluation and research.
- Engaging with the context and constituency specific needs of young people involves recognising and building on their initiative, creativity and resourcefulness as citizens, carers and peacebuilders.

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<sup>16</sup> Lopes Cardozo, M.T.A., Higgins, S., Maber, E., Brandt, C.O., Kusmallah, N., Le Mat, M.L.J (2015), Literature Review: Youth Agency, Peacebuilding and Education, Research Consortium Education and Peacebuilding, University of Amsterdam, available online: <http://learningforpeace.unicef.org/partners/research-consortium/research-outputs/>

- There is scope for mobilising the skills of some groups of youth (for example, child soldiers) exercised and developed during conflict for peaceful purposes in post-conflict situations.

#### *Key Messages for Work-related Programme Interventions*

- 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.
- TVET approaches that seek to enhance the livelihoods and economic prospects of young people have a key role to play in addressing the drivers of youth alienation and promoting their active participation in peacebuilding processes.
- A proper and realistic analysis of macro-economic dynamics, employment prospects and post-conflict economic development is a necessary step to manage youth's job expectations, as unrealised expectations may themselves generate alienation and conflict.

#### *Key Messages on Education for Citizenship and Political Participation*

- Both formal and non-formal citizenship education can provide young people with skills, experiences and dispositions to enable them to participate critically and constructively in peaceful democratic processes linked to the pursuit of social justice.
- Citizenship education can help to modify sectarian or other prejudices, by opening up for reflection and recognition of their own and others' commitment to multiple civic identities.
- Active citizenship programmes can enhance the agency of youth within processes of representation by equipping them with practical knowledge and experience of political and democratic processes.
- However, citizenship education as delivered in many conflict-affected countries is failing young people by the pedagogical approaches used, and its inattention to the particularities of the challenging contexts in which they aspire to exercise political agency.
- Hence, programmes should be carefully tailored in consultation with young people and their communities since citizenship education is considered most effective in contributing to young people's agency when it responds directly their direct situation, priorities, needs and struggles. The capacity of citizenship education to enhance the agency of young people is undermined when there is a mismatch between curriculum content and the wider political context in which they are situated.

#### *Key Messages on Sexual and Reproductive Health Education Interventions*

- Educational interventions to promote the sexual and reproductive health and rights of young people contributes not only to their personal well being, but is integral to their exercise of civic agency and the development of relevant skills including advocacy and networking.
- Successful interventions deploy context and community responsive strategies to ensure that youth, including the most marginalised groups, can access SRH provision.
- Particular consideration should be given to planning provision in gender-friendly environments.
- Interventions are most successful in enhancing youth agency when they harness the 'buy in' and support of local communities and key stakeholders.
- Mobilising youth peer educators in relation to health education promotion is a proven effective strategy linked to comprehensive consultation with youth about their needs and priorities, as is the creative use of social media, mobile phones, ICT, as well as music and the arts.

#### *Key Messages on history education*

- Young people themselves recognise the key role history plays in their self-defined priorities as potential peacebuilders and it is considered crucial to engage with their views and voices
- History education which links the study of the past with current and contemporary issues faced by young people enhances peacebuilding agency in a range of ways by developing values, attitudes and skills and a concern for ethical values.
- Engagement with the past can provide opportunities for young people to explore ethical issues they face within their daily lives, equipping them with insights and understandings they can use as potential agents of peacebuilding.
- The processes of teaching and learning are important in exploiting the subject's potential to enhance agency, by connecting study of the past with present realities and challenges as well as recognising the affective dimensions of the subject.

#### *Key Messages on sports interventions*

- The experience of sport related educational programming can support to build self-esteem and communication skills, including: conflict resolution capacities; trust, empathy, mutual understanding across social divisions; the creation of a common social identity and sense of belonging; trauma relief and psychological rehabilitation, as well as new friendship networks;
- Because of its widespread popular appeal, the inclusion of sports in educational interventions can act as an effective hook to involve young people from divided communities in peacebuilding processes;
- Sports interventions should avoid top-down approaches and connect with the political, social and economic aspirations as well as the initiative and creativity demonstrated by young people.
- The highly gendered nature of many sports interventions based around football is a particular weakness in relation to promoting inclusive peacebuilding agency.

#### *Key Messages on Arts Interventions*

- Arts programmes aim to enhance peacebuilding agency by triggering attitudinal and behavioural changes in people, e.g. interpersonal skills, changing perceptions of themselves and other people, as well as mental and emotional well-being and healing; they can provide a distinctively effective vehicle for the enhancement of youth self-efficacy and self-confidence
- The arts can act as an outlet for the expression of youth identity, in particular, for the socio-political and economic issues at stake for youth.
- Programme interventions that are not youth-led often fail to capitalise on the potential of the arts to enhance the political and civic as well as the economic agency of young people
- Programmatic responses that use arts have been shown to be effective in building bridges between different ethnic communities, religions and nationalities, and might provide strategies to resolve communal tensions peacefully.
- Programmes focusing on art are often not sufficiently context-specific and as such not adequately responding to youth constituencies, including young women and girls, and other marginalised groups of youth.



#### *Key Messages on Intergroup-Contact Interventions*

- Inter-group contact can support young people in reconciliation processes by encouraging mutual understanding, respect and prejudice reduction.
- Programmes' inattention to supporting young people to take action against the structural socio-economic and political factors which constrain and condition youth agency and drive conflicts and alienation is a major weakness; Innovative approaches to inter-group contact which draw on the direct lived experiences and agency e.g. of ex-combatants as a peacebuilding resources have proven fruitful in selected contexts.
- There is a danger that inter-group contact programmes serve to consolidate and reify identity differences rather than encouraging young people to question and critique individual and collective identity categories to promote reconciliation.

#### *Key Messages on Interfaith Interventions*

- The capacity of inter-faith programmes to enhance the agency of young people as peacebuilders is largely neglected and underestimated, as religious values can provide a resource to predispose to peacebuilding attitudes and practices.
- Because faith is an important part of young people's identity in many conflict-affected contexts it can provide a culturally appropriate entry point for context and youth constituency specific engagement.
- Religious extremism can fuel conflict and violence and such radicalisation of youth in some conflict affected contexts is directly linked to socio-economic and political and cultural marginalisation.
- Schools should ideally provide opportunities for critical reflection of religious messages, rather than dogmatic and single-narrative views that could obstruct reconciliation. Hence, care needs to be taken to avoid possible (unintended) consequences of exclusion, segregation or stigmatisation.