Search For Common Ground
Children Youth & Conflict
An Introductory Toolkit for Engaging Children & Youth in Conflict Transformation
If youth can be such a powerful force that can destroy a whole nation, why do people overlook our resources when working for peace?

- Rwandan Youth Movement Leader
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I. Introduction
In dozens of countries throughout the world, youth play a major role in conflicts. While many young people are victimized by war and see their livelihoods, families, and educational opportunities stripped away, others are pulled into violence as members of militias, gangs, armed factions, and ideological or nationalist groups. Still more act as peace-builders, reaching out across political and ethnic lines to protect their peers and to avoid being drawn into violence.

After wars, children and youth struggle to transition to more peaceful settings and from childhood to adulthood. To succeed, they need opportunities to take on positive identities and become agents of social change thereby preventing recruitment to or re-enlistment by armed groups. This toolkit is designed to show, step-by-step, how to efficiently design programmes for children and youth in conflict settings. It is aimed at a wide range of young people within the context of conflict, but targets those who have the most potential to contribute to building peace at all levels of society. This includes, but is not limited to: young leaders, young people who have been affected by armed conflict, children who have been associated with armed forces and armed groups, and displaced youth. This toolkit is not designed specifically for child soldiers. For programmes targeted to that population, please read about or forthcoming Child Soldier Toolkit at http://www.childsoldiersinitiative.org.

From Angola to Burundi, Monrovia to Freetown and from Kathmandu to Banda Aceh, the effects of war can be seen on local communities. A number of studies have shown that women, children and youth bear the brunt of the impact of these catastrophes as their families have little or no income to support them, and education and health facilities are either non-existent or of very poor quality.existent, or of very poor quality. Youth who are not integrated into community and social structures, or who do not acquire the skills needed for peaceful and constructive adult lives, are at high risk. A deprived, frustrated, or traumatized youth cohort, if left without help, can continue to foment conflict for decades. As if this were not enough, political, military and other adult groups have historically used children and youth to carry out massive destruction and atrocities. Manipulated into fighting for “the cause”, they have been used to destabilize governments and support groups more interested in enriching themselves than building sustainable communities and economies.

Despite this bleak outlook, children and youth exhibit a resilience that serves them in mitigating the impact of this devastation on their lives. Using the collective power of the millions who stood steadfast and did not serve as perpetrators of violence, children and youth are moving beyond being victims, and are establishing themselves as true agents of social change.

This toolkit is primarily designed for colleagues and others within Search for Common Ground (SFCG) who want to engage children and youth in conflict transformation. The toolkit is an introduction to ways that children and youth can be included in programming and project design around conflict resolution and peace-building. We would like to improve this document with examples and experiences that you may have. Please send us any materials you feel would strengthen this toolkit.

We also hope that the tools presented in this toolkit can be of use to others in the peace-building community as individuals engaging children and youth are equipped with the knowledge to ensure that children and youth are mainstreamed in conflict resolution activities. It is our hope that some of these tools will

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be incorporated in other programmatic responses to the vulnerabilities that children and youth face.

The tools described in this toolkit are based on lessons learned from years of experience in the work of SFCG and follows the pillars and key principles that underpin all SFCG activities.

**Pillars**

**Self-Transformation:** SFCG helps youth manage the way conflict affects their lives by creating space for them to contemplate or understand conflict. This helps facilitate a personal transformation and the internalization of the principles of conflict transformation. SFCG strategies take many forms, from pre-kindergarten education to dialogue and radio work. They combine approaches that focus on giving youth those tools and skills, and informing them about what affects them, supporting them to develop strategies to address those issues, and creating experiences to help their personal transformations.

**Voice:** Often youth want to reach across the divide but they do not have access. SFCG's work focuses on enabling youth to find their voices and creates platforms for young people's voices to be heard, so that they may contribute to the debates that are taking place in their society. In order for the youth voice to be effective, parallel strategies need to be used with adults to help them see the value in the creativity and energy that youth bring to the dialogue, and also help both groups build on the experience of adults.

**Cooperative Action:** SFCG moves participants beyond dialogue to action, e.g. youth taking on concrete activities across the divide, addressing root causes of the conflict with concrete actions such as leadership training. This cooperative action must engage not only youth but also elders in a multi-generational dialogue. For example, SFCG developed a Bike Riders Association project in Sierra Leone where youth veterans who created a taxi association but were harassed by police built up their leadership capacity and facilitated a dialogue with the authorities after training from SFCG.

**Policy:** We address the ways children and youth are dealt with by influencing policy at the local, national and international level with the aim to create a safe space for young people to inform policies that concern them and to facilitate the rights of young people as stated in the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Children. One example of this is the Child Soldiers Initiative, a Search for Common Ground programme that aims to end the use of children as soldiers through facilitating a dialogue between the military and other stakeholders. Another example is the Washington Network on Children in Armed Conflict (WNCAC) forum, which facilitates a dialogue between practitioners and policy-makers around issues of Children and Youth affected by conflict.

**Key Principles**

**Work with influential youth leaders (multiplier youth)** – Young people organize themselves naturally and have leaders who influence their attitudes and behaviours. SFCG seeks to work with those youth who play leadership roles among their peers, whose transformation leads to the transformation of many others.

**Create five-degree shifts** – When working with youth who are involved in violence or negative activities, it is help-
ful to think, not of “turning them around”, but of helping them to direct their energies and resources to positive activities, e.g. helping potential electoral thugs to become election monitors.

**Work directly with youth organizations** – In zones of conflict, young people have created formal and informal groups to address their own developmental needs. It is important to work within those structures to empower them and to help them develop the skills needed to deliver effective programs.

**Replace the power of the gun** – The gun is extraordinarily powerful in changing the roles of young people. It creates a sense of meaning and immediacy for them and flips the power dynamic between youth and elders on its head. Programming should identify the needs and motivations of youth and build on them.

**Foster adult-youth partnerships** – The most effective youth participation in promoting peace or protecting children’s rights is done in partnership with adults. This can mean building alliances between youth-led and adult-led civil society organizations, for example.

Finally, we hope that programmers use this toolkit as a touchstone to continually ask themselves the critical questions that ensure that their engagement with children-and youth fully consider the immediate and paramount needs of children and youth in conflict settings. In addition, it is hoped that this toolkit will enable full-scale mainstreaming of children and youth participation in projects and programmes, and will help agencies reflect on the approaches that will best suit the communities where they operate.
II. Engaging Children & Youth Using the Common Ground Approach
When one has no one left on the earth, neither father nor mother, neither brother nor sister, and when one is small, a little boy in a damned and barbaric country where everyone slashes each other’s throat, what does one do? Of course, one becomes a child soldier, a small soldier, to get one’s fair share of eating and butchering as well. Only that remains - Ahmadou Kourouma, Children at War, P.W. Singer, 2005

The Common Ground Approach

For 27 years, the mission of Search for Common Ground has been to shift the way the world deals with conflict: away from adversarial approaches (pitching one side against the other) toward cooperative solutions (allowing the parties to collectively focus on the issue rather than each other). For this shift to happen, the focus is on change at different levels:

Change Perception of Self: changing from a perpetrator of violence to a peace- and bridge-builder. Conflicts mould people's identity, and a successful transformation can only take place when people's identities are consistent with the desired result. The change needed may be a shift from a disempowered, victimized subject to an active citizen; or from a fearful refugee to a reintegrated member of society; or from a perpetrator of violence to a peace- and bridge-builder.

Change Perception of “The Other”: challenging stereotypes and prejudices by giving people an opportunity to hear each other's stories and see one another's humanity. One significant characteristic of conflicts is that communication between the parties breaks down and, as they become increasingly isolated from one another, their perceptions of one another become distorted. An important part of conflict transformation is therefore to challenge stereotypes and prejudices by giving people an opportunity to hear each other's stories and see one another's humanity.

Change Perception of the Issues: Helping parties focus on the source of the conflict by increasing their knowledge and understanding of the issues. Conflicts emerge from disagreements over specific issues, yet very quickly, parties spend more energy on blaming the other side than on solving the problems. Part of our work is therefore to help parties focus again on the source of the conflict. By increasing people’s knowledge and understanding of the issues, by presenting the many different perspectives that exist and, when necessary, by naming and exploring the “unspoken” issues, we can help people make decisions in a safe space, based on their interests rather than fear.
Transform the Process: Our work can only take place if the parties have the opportunity to constructively engage one another, and the results of their dialogue can only last if systems and institutions support them. We must therefore model and demonstrate inclusive, participatory processes; train people to participate in them; and support the creation of new, more collaborative institutions at the community, national, regional and international level.

How do we apply the Common Ground approach?

Integration of all five common ground approaches in one overarching intervention: When possible, integrating all five components of the Common Ground approaches is a good head start to resolving conflicts. However, conflict situations are complex systems and only a combination of strategies can be successful at operating a change at the societal level. The context should determine what approach or combination of approaches ought to be applied.

We work with different stakeholders at different levels of society. We also use different tools and different interventions to maximize their effects. For example, in post-conflict settings like Liberia and Sierra Leone with large numbers of former child soldiers and high rates of child protection issues, we designed Golden Kids and Jujay, two radio programs for kids by kids, which raise awareness of issues facing children in these environments. Children of mixed backgrounds serve as producers, reporters and actors to identify issues for and about children and advocate on their behalf. These shows create forums for children to discuss their hopes and fears, advocate their issues and present events important to them.

Taking the Intervention to Scale: In all of our work we aim for maximum effect and think about how to best leverage each intervention. We do that by using the media to reach out to large audiences, by seeking ways to institutionalize our work or by organizing symbolic events that can shift people's attitudes. For example, we target young people in Macedonia, Nigeria and Lebanon, which have a history of ethnic, tribal and religious tensions, by infusing conflict resolution messages into soap operas to reinforce our trainings on the ground. Nashe Maalo in Macedonia, The Station in Nigeria and Kilna bil Hayy in Lebanon were created to promote intercultural understanding, to encourage conflict prevention in a multicultural society, and to impart specific conflict-resolution skills that children can use in their everyday lives.

Committing for the Long-Term: A shift from violence to collaboration takes many years and our programmes are designed for long-term engagement. The longer we stay in one place, the more effective we can be, as we become a trusted voice and broker. For instance, SFCG remained in Burundi when the civil war broke out and as a result, we are now perceived as a credible source of information.

Engaging All Sides with Equal Respect and Compassion: Our reputation is our most important asset. Who we hire, how we conduct our work, how we collaborate with local organizations, everything that we do must reflect our commitment to an inclusive, participatory process and our impartiality on the issues themselves.

Grounding Our Work in the Local Culture: In some places where we work, we are not known as SFCG but under the name of the local project, such as Talking Drum Studio or
Centre Lokole. It is important for us to be perceived as much as possible as a local player in order to be effective and trusted. By being a team of mostly local staff and by often having reporters on the ground, we are able to constantly assess the situation and develop new ideas that are indigenous to the context.

**Being Social Entrepreneurs:** We respond not only to needs but also to opportunities and encourage innovative initiatives. While the vision is always bold, we concentrate on pragmatic, achievable projects that can bring about concrete results and the greatest return for the resources invested. *Atunda Ayenda (Lost and Found)*, our popular Sierra Leonean radio drama series, came to life in 2001 when two former child soldiers from opposing factions met at SFCG’s office in Sierra Leone. Today, *Atunda Ayenda* has grown to be one of SFCG Sierra Leone’s biggest programmes and have impacted the lives of many ex-combatants. A more recent example of our entrepreneurial spirit was the idea of using the World Cup as a theme for two TV soap operas in Ivory Coast and Angola, allowing us to emphasize the need for unity and model problem-solving through a fictional football team.

Using a variety of tools and community-based initiatives, SFCG empowers local communities to work towards sustainable peace and reconciliation. Within these communities, our programmes work closely with men, women, youth, and children to ensure that the contributions of all levels of society are evident and appreciated.

**SFCG Children and Youth Programming**

SFCG’s children and youth initiatives are shaped by the unique interaction of our observations and principles:

**Observations** - derived from our long-term children and youth work and analysis in several of the world’s regions in conflict.

**Principles** – emerged as a result of these observations; guide our programming and ensure a participatory and useful approach. Refer to table 1.1 on page 16

The goal of Search for Common Ground’s Children and Youth division is to transform the role of young people in conflicts so that they have concrete alternatives to violence and can significantly contribute to building lasting peace.

These observations and principles set the foundation for the activities carried out by our country programmes. These activities span:

**Educational projects** – Formal and non-formal activities geared toward providing information in entertaining ways that allow children to understand their rights, analyse differences, and positively transform their attitudes towards building cooperative relationships.

**Voice projects** – Media activities that create platforms for children and youth to participate in the local and national dialogues on issues that affect them.

**Action projects** – Activities that allow children and youth to come together across dividing lines to take concrete actions in changing the communities in which they live.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observations</th>
<th>Principles</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children and youth have influenced how today’s conflicts unfold.</td>
<td>See youth as being not only the future, but also the present, influencing and shaping the future by their participation in addressing today’s issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children and youth have innate skills and abilities, which are often manipulated to promote fear and cause violence.</td>
<td>Create 5-degree shifts$^2$—Gradually shift the innate skills and abilities of children and youth toward positive activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people are well positioned and capable of addressing many of the issues that affect them.</td>
<td>Work with multiplier youth, youth leaders whose transformations can lead to the transformation of many others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection of children is central to their well-being.</td>
<td>Work directly with youth organizations created by young people to address their own developmental needs, including youth gangs and educational institutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children denied their human rights are least likely to contribute to civil society.</td>
<td>Empower children and youth by creating knowledge and awareness, at all levels, of their rights and responsibilities.</td>
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Mainstreaming Children and Youth

The Children and Youth Unit at SFCG aims to ensure that young people are fully included or mainstreamed in programmes and/or agendas where their incorporation can be seen as bringing an added value to programme activities. Mainstreaming leads to their participation in all aspects of the programme: planning/design, implementation, assessment and post-project analysis. The participation section of this toolkit looks more closely at what a full level of participation means and suggests, and what critical questions to ask when mainstreaming children and youth. Several of the other tools discussed in this toolkit also look specifically at how children and youth can be mainstreamed into those activities.

Why Mainstreaming?

Mainstreaming children and youth in constructive project activities provides an important alternative to the negative role they often play in unfolding conflicts. Children and youth can be important agents in the transformation and prevention of conflicts. Other benefits of mainstreaming include:

A deeper understanding of the issues and how to address them – Asking children and youth for their perspectives on the causes of conflict and possible solutions can deepen understanding of the conflict and illuminate its effect on young people.

Comparative advantage – Programmes that incorporate children and youth in roles other than those of recipients of services or as the audience increase their interest in becoming a part of project activities because they become active contributors to the process of cohesion in their communities. This initiates a chain reaction, sparking the interest of many, and contributing to the development of a culture of peace and non-violence.

“When you’re a stranger in a town and need to know what’s going on, talk to the children.” – West African proverb. The same can be applied to conflict transformation activities, where children and youth can be a major source of information on the issues, as well as the solution...especially if it relates directly to them.

Leadership development – Programmes that mainstream children and youth give them the opportunity to fully develop their potential, preparing them for engagement with other levels of actors in their societies.

Mainstreaming Examples

How mainstreaming is done will vary from one country programme to another and, in some cases, from project to project. The context in which the programme is operating plays a large part in when and how mainstreaming occurs, e.g. the political situation, activities within the community, and prevailing cultural attitudes towards the youth. For example, in Nepal, Children and Youth programming was most effective when the programme team identified youth and children as a key target group for achieving their aim of supporting the peace process mandate and key strategic objectives of the programme. For Search USA, which has a different mandate of bridging the Republican – Democrat divide at the policy
level, this mandate is not necessarily appropriate for youth involvement, particularly since they don’t inherently contribute or bring power to this goal.

In Burundi, the Community Outreach Team works across entire communities to ensure social cohesion and understanding. Within this framework, youth-related issues are addressed along with the issues faced by other members of the community.

Some programmes mainstream children and youth through activities that are designed to specifically respond to a particular set of child- or youth-related issues.

Developing these assessments will also tell you when and how to effectively channel your resources and deliver your programme for maximum results. (See “Mainstreaming Considerations” and “Context”)

Mainstreaming helps ensure that the specific needs and concerns of children and youth are at the forefront. In these settings, the voices of children and youth can be distinctly heard.

Other programmes include children and youth as one of the cohorts that benefit from programme activities. While children and youth are not the primary focus, they still may have specific roles, and their issues may be addressed within the larger context of issues faced by the community as a whole.

In the Sisi Watoto programme in DRC, children and adolescents are trained as young journalists to conduct interviews and raise awareness of the issues faced by Congolese children. The young reporters select relevant topics, conduct interviews with key individuals (including other children), and produce programmes that are aired for the whole South Kivu community.

This approach gives a balance to programmes whose effects can potentially touch all aspects of a given community. No group is left out of the process and all are encouraged to leverage what other groups bring to the table.

Mainstreaming considerations

The needs of children and youth in a conflict-affected environment are numerous and often dire, thereby making it difficult to arrive at a programme agenda that is clearly prioritized and systematic to address these needs.

The goal of mainstreaming is to transform the role of children and youth in conflicts. The subsequent objectives are to engage children and youth in all aspects of programming, and provide a structure for creating projects to work with children and youth. The goal and objectives guide the decisions made about what kind of activities will take place, which players will be involved and what partnerships are needed.
A process of decision-making occurs at each phase of a project: before, during and after. There are broad questions to ask at each phase that can help guide those decisions. Refer to table 2.1

The following are some aspects that need to be taken into account when creating and conducting projects that work effectively with children and youth:

**Context assessment** — Designing a programme that acts in response to a specific conflict setting and makes the most of opportunities for change requires analysis of the dynamics of the conflict, i.e. understanding the context at both the local and national levels.

**Risk assessment** — Conflict environments are volatile, therefore developing an awareness of the risks involved and creating plans to address those risks are extremely important.

**Needs/Asset assessment**— In a needs assessment you are looking for potential challenges and problems facing young people, as well as the existing services available to them in the community. For example, you will need to know how people are responding to the conflict (do they organize to resist conflict?). Developing the objectives that will address these challenges and problems should be based on your identified needs/assets and the creation of activities that are focused on addressing the desired change(s). It is very important that the objectives of the project are linked to the overall country programme mandate.

**Monitoring activities** — Documenting implementation

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**Before**

- What is the general conflict? What is the context?
- What is the role of young people in this context?
- What is the overall mission/strategy of the programme?
- What power do children and youth have towards achieving that?
- What is the change we seek for children and youth in this context?
- Who are the relevant actors to involve in this programme?
- What activities would help us do that?
- What resources do we have?
- What are the risks?
- How will we monitor our work?

**During**

- Is the context changing?
- How are we monitoring our activities?
- What unexpected events have occurred?
- Do we need to adjust our activities?
- How are we managing risks?
- Do we have the relevant actors in programme?

**After**

- Did our evaluation answer the question: “What changed for participants”?
- Did our programme affect the change?
- Did context influence the change?
- What are the lessons learned?
- Were there unexpected outcomes?
- Should we continue working here?
- How did young people feel about the project?
and changes in participants during the project enhances your readiness to adjust activities where needed.

**Evaluation strategies** – Having processes in place to collect lessons learned from the project, to understand what worked/did not work and why.

It is important to note that the assessment of a project’s programmatic context and risks is not a one-off event, but rather a continuous process. The monitoring and evaluation section of this toolkit will suggest key strategies in carrying out this cycle, which ensure that programmatic responses are relevant and justified.

**Context**

Context is a critical aspect to take into account throughout the project. In children and youth programming, it is critically important to understand what role youth play in the conflict, how they engage in it and how they are affected by it. Prior to beginning a project, a full understanding of the context can help shape the choices to be made about focus and activities. This is especially true in settings with on-going conflicts as the context is constantly changing. Staying aware of the context during a project creates opportunities for making needed changes. After the project, a look at the context can help determine whether to continue or change focus.

Search for Common Ground work in a variety of contexts, from regions of violent conflict to areas of political stability; and in cultures that have different norms with regard to the role and voice of children and youth. These contexts affect our approaches for engaging children and youth in conflict transformation programming. They may limit what we can do, as well as shape the kinds of changes we are trying to create. Taking the time to clearly understand the conflict and its larger context can help focus that work.

The more clearly we can understand and monitor the context throughout the project, the better able we will be to apply our findings to programme modification and improvement. This includes understanding the reasons behind the conflict, paying attention to changes that occur, and being aware of the risks that exist.

Different contexts raise different issues for children/youth and suggest particular areas of focus for our projects. The political and/or conflict situation in a country or community often dictates how the context is viewed. Below are some examples of SFCG’s programmes.

### Table 3.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Critical Issues for Children/Youth</th>
<th>Programme Focus</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unstable, potentially violent</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Guinea</td>
<td>• Lack of access to accurate information on the political/social/religious issues within the country&lt;br&gt;• Manipulation by political/social elites&lt;br&gt;• Lack of access to food and other social services&lt;br&gt;• Safety</td>
<td>• Information dissemination (to all of the conflicting parties)&lt;br&gt;• Dialogue about the issue(s)&lt;br&gt;• Conflict resolution training&lt;br&gt;• Awareness/prevention of manipulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ongoing armed conflict</strong>&lt;br&gt;• DRC&lt;br&gt;• Bangui&lt;br&gt;• Burundi&lt;br&gt;• Nigeria&lt;br&gt;• Middle East</td>
<td>• Safety and security&lt;br&gt;• Recruitment of child soldiers and sex slaves&lt;br&gt;• Displacement&lt;br&gt;• Becoming heads of households&lt;br&gt;• Lack of employment/education&lt;br&gt;• Health concerns</td>
<td>• Raising awareness of issues pertaining to the conflict&lt;br&gt;• Dialogue between conflicting groups of children/youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Post-conflict</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Angola&lt;br&gt;• Sierra Leone&lt;br&gt;• Liberia&lt;br&gt;• Nepal&lt;br&gt;• Indonesia&lt;br&gt;• Côte d’Ivoire</td>
<td>• Understanding role in the community&lt;br&gt;• Further marginalization from power&lt;br&gt;• DDR³&lt;br&gt;• Dealing with the causes of the conflict&lt;br&gt;• Livelihood concerns such as education and employment</td>
<td>• Training on the rights and responsibilities of children and youth&lt;br&gt;• Clarifying criteria for good governance&lt;br&gt;• Information dissemination&lt;br&gt;• Leadership skills training&lt;br&gt;• Dialogue between conflicting groups of children/youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Political Stability</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Morocco&lt;br&gt;• Macedonia</td>
<td>• Livelihood issues such as education, employment, and health&lt;br&gt;• Questioning their role in the community&lt;br&gt;• Trying to find ways to contribute and be heard&lt;br&gt;• Tensions over race, ethnicity, or class&lt;br&gt;• Addressing stereotypes/prejudice</td>
<td>• Training in leadership or mediation skills&lt;br&gt;• Providing opportunities for youth to discuss their role in society&lt;br&gt;• Assisting governments with engaging youth in decision-making&lt;br&gt;• Providing opportunities for interaction among different groups</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Additional Resources

The University of Victoria School of Child and Youth Care
http://www.cyc.uvic.ca/naty/guide/index.html

A Strong Start, Good Practices In Using a Local Situation Assessment to Begin A Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Program, (2004) UNODC

Youth and Conflict, A Toolkit for Intervention (2005) USAID

Engaging Children & Youth

Project Design

Working on children and youth in conflict transformation projects means creating change in the knowledge, attitudes, skills and behaviour of not only young people but adults as well. Analyzing the conflict context, the role of young people within the context as well as the effect of the context on young people will help expose characteristics within young people, that if changed, we believe could alter how young people respond to conflict and therefore alter the path of the conflict itself. The question then becomes how to make decisions about what kind of projects can help us bring about changes that alter the mindset of young people in conflict environments. Please read the mainstreaming considerations on page 18 for context, needs and risk assessments.

Context assessment and conflict analysis provide the information we need to design good projects.

Starting Point

The results of a needs/asset assessment often suggest what types of changes might be useful in a specific community, e.g. youths from different political groups are fighting and need programmes to reduce those tensions and help the youth learn to respect each other. It is at this point that planners often leap directly to selecting activities they think will solve the problem or meet the need, e.g. a theatre group that encourages young people to role-play and learn new communication tools. This may be the right activity, but activities should only be selected based on their fit in a holistic design process. The starting point does not always matter and may vary from situation to situation. For example in Nepal, it was only after conducting a context assessment that identified the role of young people within the conflict and the potential of these young people to contribute to the peace process that SFCG decided to work with youth. In essence, the assessment determined who should participate in the programme.

Design Components

One of the most important parts of planning is to make sure that all components are in place to lead to an increased likelihood of successful outcomes. For example, ask yourself whether your goals are properly defined and achievable. One tool for making these connections is to identify the theories of change that are implied from the assessment or from the types of activities that seem appropriate. This theory identification process can be very simple. Programme designers can ask “if-then” questions. For example,
if we want to decrease tension and increase respect among the youth members of opposing youth groups, then we need to provide programmes such as interactive theatre that increase their positive communication skills. Developing a few theory-of-change statements helps everyone come to agreement why it is that they do certain things. At SFCG, a dominant theory of change among children and youth workers is “if we can shape the role of young people in conflict contexts so that they contribute to peace, then we can shape the dynamics of the whole conflict”.

A theory of change guides the next steps: the development of goals and objectives followed by selection of activities.

**Goal:** the major change or long-term impact desired. A single children and youth programme can achieve some goals, but often, a goal may be so far out in time and/or so big that one programme cannot be expected to reach it alone. In that case, we want to ask what our programme can contribute to the goal. The answer may lead to smaller goals that the programme can accomplish or to the objectives that will contribute to a bigger goal.

**Objectives:** the short-term changes or results/outcomes that will contribute to reaching the goal. Objectives describe the desired behaviour change for participants, e.g., practicing new problem-solving skills, participating in dialogue groups, etc. The type of changes desired will indicate what programme activities to select.

**Activities:** There are two types of activities. First, process activities (or inputs) that are needed to complete a children and youth programme design and to implement a programme, e.g., developing a curriculum, finding meeting sites, identifying participants, etc. Second, children and youth programme activities (or outputs) are those activities that involve conducting the curriculum as written, youth participation in activities (e.g., a theatre group) that will actually bring about the changes in the behaviour, knowledge, skills, and attitudes of young people as set out in the objectives.

Whether one is starting with the activity or the goal, all parts of the design must be developed. If starting with the activity, then the question to answer in order to build the full design of the project is “Why this activity for this problem?” or “How will this activity get us to that objective?” Ask the “if-then” questions.

While the ideal order is shown in the diagram below, you can start at any point in the process and do it well if you answer the “how,” “what,” and “why” questions as shown here.
### Table 4.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is our theory of change?</th>
<th>If we do ___ xxx ___ then we will achieve ___ xxx ___</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How are you going to contribute toward this goal? What objectives will help us reach this goal?</td>
<td><strong>Goal</strong>—the major change you want to achieve or contribute to usually one goal is enough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How are you going to achieve these objectives?</td>
<td><strong>Objective</strong>—short term changes in knowledge, skills or attitudes that, if reached, will achieve or contribute to the goal—usually two to four</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activities</strong>—work to be done to achieve the changes we seek, both process and programme</td>
<td>What goal do the objectives suggest? Why will these contribute to this goal?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Why will the selected activities achieve the objectives? What does experience or research tell us about why they work for this problem?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With the goals, objectives, and activities linked together in a logical order, programmers can see whether they are indeed creating the desired changes through the project. This process may be time-intensive at the beginning of a project, but the payoff is a clear roadmap to the intended results. See Appendix A for a Programme Planning Chart that can be used to guide the planning process.
Additional Resources

www.sida.se/shared/jsp/download.jsp?file=SIDA4334en_web.pdf&aa=3351

http://go.worldbank.org/QFX23VB250

Child and youth participation resource guide

Designing for Results, Integrating Monitoring and Evaluation in Conflict Transformation Programs (2006)
Search for Common Ground
Participation

UNICEF defines youth programme participation as the active and meaningful involvement of young people in all stages of programme decision-making, including planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. (See article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child). In the past, organizations responding to children and youth issues in situations of armed conflict or emerging from conflict responded from the perspective of working for children and/or youth rather than with them. This approach failed to capitalize on what children and youth can bring to the rebuilding of their communities. Ensuring the participation of children and youth is vital to leveraging the capacities that they bring to the rebuilding process. Despite the challenge, a growing number of organizations are now embracing and actively involving young people in their activities to shape policies that affect their own lives.

In Sierra Leone, the youth reporters from the Olu radio programme organized a weekly meeting about what interviews they would do and what themes they were hearing from the community. They elected officers and took their own minutes.

At SFCG, our youth participation mechanism goes further in its design to involve youth participation at the “societal level”. In practice, this means that we are facilitating the participation of young people in their community’s decision-making mechanisms and thereby giving young people space to contribute to peace-building in their communities. We do this by creating non-political networks and organizing dialogues on key issues that bring people together from across the political dividing lines.

The Nepal program is now facilitating interactions between youth groups and adult-led community decision-making bodies.

Ensuring the participation of children and youth is a key element of working with this population. Developing such participation is at the heart of leveraging the capacities that they bring to the rebuilding process. It is very important to make critical analyses and take measures of the potential risks that might be associated with children and youth participation in the programme.

This emphasis on participation is informed by the observations and principles described in the Introduction:

- Children and youth influence how today’s conflicts unfold; they are not only the future, but also the present.
- Children and youth have skills and abilities developed during war that can be channelled toward creating positive change in their communities.
- Young people are well-positioned and capable of addressing many of the issues that affect them. They are influential leaders and parts of relevant organizations with which we can work.
Benefits of Participation

**For Children and Youth**
- Understanding their rights and responsibilities
- Opportunity to contribute to the rebuilding of their societies
- Chance to develop their potential as well as new skills
- Gain a voice in what affects them
- Strengthened self-esteem
- Opportunity to serve as models for peers

**For Programme Adults**
- Opportunity to better understand the issues that children/youth face
- Develops advocates for the programme by providing opportunities to give feedback to the program and to engage with children and youth

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Selection of participants

The selection of participants is an important aspect affecting the outcome of the project. The most important component of this is identifying the dividing lines that separate young people. At SFCG, our main purpose is to bring people together from across those lines to enable them to understand each other and cooperate. This means mapping the way in which youth are organized in relation to the conflict.

The needs/asset assessment process will indicate the target group to be addressed by a programme as well as the need that has to be met. Further criteria can be applied to narrow the group to a reasonable number who can participate in a programme.

Factors to consider:
- Gender
- Age
- Multiplier youth
- Geographic location
- Ethnicity
- Political, religious etc. affiliation

In other instances, the project will be focused on only one or two factors.

Engaging Key Adults

Engaging key adults in the community to build relationships with young people is critical to the peace-building process as armed conflict often disrupts generational dynamics.
Firstly, young people end up with power created by the gun and then lose it again once peace is established. Secondly, inter-generational conflict is often identified as a root cause of conflict and of youth involvement in armed groups. Thirdly, the concept of youth empowerment could be threatening to the power of elders and cause conflict.

Adults often say they see children and youth as the future, and they understand that young people need to be prepared for taking charge someday, but these same adults may not know how to work with youth in the present to support youth involvement in creating change. Parents, teachers, community, and government decision makers need to be involved in parallel processes or partnerships with youth in order to make sure that adults and youth learn to engage one another in respectful and constructive ways.

**Key Strategies**

**Tie participant selection to goals and objectives**
- What changes do we want to achieve?
- With whom do we want to achieve them?
- Are the activities we selected known to result in these changes with this target group?

**Determine selection criteria**
- What criteria will we use to choose individual participants?
- How diverse should the participants be?
- What balance is required between groups (if dealing with more than one group)?

**Structuring Participation**
Each stage of the project holds opportunities for including child-

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**table 6.1**

**Before**
- How can we learn from children/youth – focus groups, interviews, surveys, etc?
- What specific roles can children/youth have in this project?
- How will we select the children/youth to fulfill those roles?
- What skills/training will they need?
- What risks do we face working with children/youth in this community or on this issue? What risks do the children/youth face by being involved?
- How do we structure the activities so that they do not affect other activities such as school, family duties?
- How do we ensure gender equality?

**During**
- Are children/youth fulfilling the roles we identified?
- Are participants representative of the community/issues?
- What groups are not represented?
- How can we learn from children/youth during the project to monitor the work?
- Are we creating conflict between groups and generations?
- Are youth genuinely participating and to what level?
- What do we need to do to sustain the program and its outcomes?

**After**
- How can we hear from children/youth after the project to assess the work?
- What project follow-up is necessary?
- What follow-up is immediate?
- What follow up is long-term?
- What steps can we put in place to keep youth engaged in this work as they get older?
Some SFCG programs have found the Ladder of Participation from Roger Hart or Paul Sully to be very useful and use it to identify how well they work.

In Sierra Leone, after the children in the Golden Kids News programme get too old to participate, they have the option to be a part of Straight Talk (in Krio). This is a similar programme for youth aged 14 and above, raising awareness about various issues such as HIV/AIDS.

Participation Tips

Defining youth is problematic as definitions are often based on age in order to provide a degree of objectivity. For statistical reasons, many world organizations define ‘youth’, as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years. The meaning of youth, and the way society regards youth, varies across time and space, as well as within societies. Youth has an important gender dimension: boys and girls might experience being young in a considerably different way. Hence, in addition to being defined chronologically (as a period of age between certain ages), youth is also defined functionally (involving a process of transition from childhood to adulthood, marked by rituals or physical changes), as well as culturally (pertaining to the role that individuals play in a given social context).

Although there is no clear definition of what constitutes a child or a youth, it is widely recognised in literature and in practice that interventions need to be age- and gender-sensitive, as well as culturally appropriate. There are often overlaps in the approaches that are appropriate to use with different age groups. There are also interventions and approaches that would be appropriate to use solely with older youth and not with young children.

It is important to note that the basis for any child participation should be such that is in the best interest of the child and one that complies with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) including the optional protocol to the convention, Article 1-41. (Visit http://www.unicef.org/crc/ for detailed information.) The World Bank uses a Life Cycle Approach to identify opportunities and vulnerabilities in working with children and youth.

Levels of engagement with young people, as with any community group, can range from simply providing relevant information and consulting on particular issues, to involvement, to full partnership approaches where those involved are empowered to have responsibility for design, monitoring, evaluation and decisions. An assessment should be made in advance of engagement to determine which approach is most appropriate to the context, the group involved, the decision to be made and the resources available.

A set of tips are set out below. The first list refers to the important things to bear in mind when interviewing and engaging with younger children. This is followed by additional tips for engaging youth.
Programme Issues

Allow children to develop. It is important to have patience when working with children, taking into account their development process and maturity when deciding how to involve them in programmes. Consider the context-specific needs of the children.

- Provide safe and reliable transportation methods.
- Make sure that all participants understand their role.
- Provide training in communication and assertiveness if deemed necessary.
- Be open and approachable.
- Provide information using different communication methods to avoid marginalizing certain groups.
- Consider literacy level.

Engaging Youth

- Set up clear goals for partnership and participation. Everyone involved should understand the reasons and objectives of the project. Remember that the objectives should be linked to those of the young people involved.
- Participation means sharing decision-making power. Share power and responsibilities between youth and adults. Be clear on the roles and responsibilities of each participant.
- Provide training to all participants. If possible, the training should be done collectively, i.e., adults and youth together.
- Provide information using different communication methods to avoid marginalizing certain groups.
- Consider literacy level and age difference.

General tips for working with children and youth

Support – Children and youth need ongoing support for what they do. This could be through updating or increasing their skills using training, providing resources to do the work, holding regular meetings to hear concerns or ideas, and providing adult sponsors.

Transitioning – Work with youth through times of transition. When a youth reaches an age above the project’s focus, provide guidance and support for how to make that change. Find ways of easing the transitions by developing follow-up activities for youth.

Bring in new faces – While working with the same group can be very comfortable and efficient, bringing in new participants can bring in fresh ideas and expand the reach of the project.

Include all relevant groups – Involving hard-to-reach or marginalized groups may be difficult, but including them can begin to address their status and contribute toward diminishing divisions within the community.

Be wary of creating “star” participants – Some projects highlight one or two child or youth participants who become the main representatives of the project. This has the potential to elevate participants that are more vocal and leave thoughtful, less vocal ones behind.
Engaging Children

Minimum standards when interviewing children
- Informed consent should be acquired before starting an interview where possible.
- Ask the permission of the child before taking notes.
- Inform the child of what will take place and how long it will take.
- Inform the child of what will be done with the information collected.
- Confidentiality must be respected.
- Take time to close the interview/discussion.
- Follow up documentation (if any) should be made available to the child.

Attitude when interviewing children
- Use simple language and short sentences.
- Use an informal (relaxed) and friendly approach.
- Ensure adequate time (not too long, not too short).
- Take into account the concentration span of the child.
- Avoid questions/phrases that seem judgmental.

Facilitate the child’s personal expression
- Use a calm tone.
- Be aware of body language.
- Use appropriate visual contact.
- Practice active listening.
- Respect and acknowledge the child’s feelings.
- Avoid interrupting the child.

Indicators of child vulnerability/trauma
- Lack of interest and energy.
- Difficulty concentrating or staying in one place.
- Aggressive and destructive behaviour.
- Preoccupied with games that portray violence, suffering and separation.

Communicating with vulnerable children
- Allow the child to establish the pace of the discussion.
- Give the child enough time to express him/herself.
- Offer emotional support and encourage the child.
- Accept the child’s emotions.
- Do not give the child false assurances/promises.
- Refer the child to trauma specialists.

Additional Resources

http://www.crin.org/docs/unicef_cyp_part.pdf

http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/_iles/93044411E35345F240C66D411CA0270D.pdf

International Youth Foundation,

So You Want to Involve Children in Research? (2004) Save the Children,
http://www.savethechildren.net/alliance/resources/publications.html

Save the Children,
http://www.savethechildren.net/alliance/resources/childconsult_toolkit_final.pdf


EQUIP3/Youth Trust. Some Principles for Youth Programming and Working with Youth. Expanded version, 2006, Melanie Beavry
http://www.equip123.net/docs/e3-PrinciplesforYouthProgramming.pdf
III. Tools for Engaging Children and Youth
Children and Youth Partnerships:

Leveraging the Work and Experiences of Complimentary Groups

Whether through a formalized process with signed memorandums of understanding, verbal agreements, or mutually beneficial action, having good partnerships with youth-led organizations or child- and youth-focused institutions is essential to the success of our initiatives. Our work is part of a bigger picture; no one organization can be the answer to the often-large problems faced by children and youth. Establishing partnerships is therefore a crucial part of working with children and youth. These partnerships allow us to:

- Complement our work with that of others so as to fully address the diverse needs of the children and youth in the communities where we work, including child protection, education, employment and income generation, etc.

- Learn from the specific expertise of other children and youth organizations who address similar issues, but from different perspectives; and create allies with other children- and youth-focused organizations who extend our activities, potentially allowing us to reach greater numbers of young people within society. For example, the diagram on page 36 represents partnership coordination within SFCG on the issue of DRR and the children and youth program.

In Angola, the word “partnership” refers to a formal and signed agreement between two or more actors. If this formal agreement does not exist, then the partnership does not exist, even though the groups may be working with each other on an ongoing basis. In DRC, Burundi, and most parts of West Africa, the expectation of a formal agreement is not as critical in the understanding of partnership.

Types of Partnerships

Different types of partnerships may be appropriate in different places or even for different projects. Partnerships range from formal to informal. Formal partnerships usually have a full agreement (written or oral), e.g. memorandum of understanding (MOU), between two organizations regarding how they will work together in the implementation of a project. Non-formal partnerships refer to the mutually beneficial interaction of groups or organizations in a given project without having an oral or written partnership agreement.

Who are possible partners?

Our view of partnership normally includes groups such as local and international NGOs, radio and television stations, theatre companies, and governments. While these groups make up key and strategic partners, we often forget other obvious but equally important actors who are crucial to the full implementation of our work. Below are examples of some of SFCG’s partnerships:

Country offices within SFCG with similar programmes – SFCG offices work in cooperation with each other but their primary partners are those working in the field. These partnerships allow for the sharing of methodology, challenges, achievements,
and lessons. They strengthen the organization and make good use of “in-house” expertise. Imagine making a similar connection around other themes such as elections, leadership development, civil responsibility, or good governance.

Donors and funders - Funders are also crucial partners in moving our goals and objectives forward. They fund projects that share their goals and objectives, and we should engage them throughout the course of our programs. Funders who are involved throughout are more likely to assist with further funding and/or point to other resources.

Youth-led organizations – SFCG is a partner within a project called Pathways to Peace, which a consortium is made up of three youth-led organizations. Additionally, we have partnerships with numerous youth clubs and networks at the grassroots level.

Child protection agencies - We partner with UNICEF, IRC, Save the Children and a plethora of child protection agencies. These kinds of partnerships are growing because groups are beginning to see the benefits of building relationships between peace-building and protection work.

Economic development and job creation groups - While we presently do not partner with any economic development or job creation agency, we are aware of the potential therein.

Radio and media outlets - SFCG partners with radio, TV stations and other media outlets to create platforms for youth voices. Creating platforms for young people to voice their opinions is vital to our overall children and youth programming.

Schools - We partner with many different educational institutions to create an interface between practice and theory.

Communities – Local communities play an extremely crucial role in moving our work forward. Without these communities, our initiatives become one-time events, which die almost immediately after we leave.

Similar or complementary organizations – SFCG is not a “know it all, be it all, and do it all” organization. We can be clear about the specific niche we occupy within communities and turn to other organizations that can complement our work.
Developing partnerships

Developing appropriate partnerships can take time and energy. Be mindful that working with youth groups may mean working with people that may be considerably younger than you are and have other skill sets and other ways of seeing things.

All partnerships have inherent challenges, for example, partnerships between child protection and child participatory agencies could run aground if a single partnership philosophy and approach are not developed and agreed upon by all concerned. A number of questions need to be considered at each phase of a project cycle to make sure that all pertinent concerns are tabled and addressed.

**Additional Resources**

  http://www.neighbourhood.gov.uk/displaypagedoc.asp?id=876

- Pathways to Partnerships Toolkit (1999)

- COPS INNOVATIONS, A closer look, Creative Partnerships, supporting youth and Building Communities, U.S. Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services

**Table 7.1**

**Before**
- What are the overall project goals and objectives?
- Do you have the capacity to reach the goals and objectives?
- If not, what specific gaps exist?
- Are there strategic reasons to create partnerships?
- Are the goals and objectives of potential partners aligned with those of your project?
- What can we do together that none of us could do alone?

**During**
- What will be the specific roles of both partners?
- Does everyone have a clear understanding of the project goal?
- Does everyone have a clear understanding of timelines?
- Does everyone have a clear understanding of deliverables?
- Do we have a good communication system in place?

**After**
- What follow up activities are needed?
- What will be the specific roles for each partner in those follow up activities?
Radio can play a significant role in transforming the way children and youth respond to the conflicts they face. It offers the means to provide communities with accurate information on critical issues and creates space for a variety of voices to be heard (See Appendix E for case study). The decision on when to use radio as a format to address issues should be based on your assessments. It is very important to investigate the medium used by the locals and the context in which they might receive information. Different settings use different methods to convey information. For example, Nigeria, Ivory Coast, Lebanon and Morocco are TV countries while Liberia, Sierra Leone and Burundi mainly transmit information using radio technology.

The School Conflict Resolution Center in Ukraine is piloting peer mediation in several schools in Kyiv, Ukraine. These peer mediation centers create a platform where pupils cannot only practice non-violent responses to conflict, but can also serve as catalysts of mediation and non-violence.

Why Use Radio?

If youth can be such a powerful force that can destroy a whole nation, why do people overlook our resources when working for peace? — Rwandan Youth Movement Leader.

As rightly stated above, young people are a powerful force with the potential to redefine their communities by how they choose to act. If youth potentials are recognized and positively capitalized on by targeting resources that gives them voice and the opportunity to influence policies concerning them, then communities would have good prospects of maintaining their
peace processes. For example, by targeting the content of radio programmes toward young people and involving them in production, they gain opportunities to constructively and meaningfully contribute their views on issues in their communities. With access to radio, children and youth can:

- Have a voice in communities where they would normally be silent
- Exemplify their positive capacities and attributes
- Open avenues of communication with adults
- Create awareness of the issues they face and channels to address those issues
- Build their self-esteem and communications skills
- Encourage their peers to contribute to community rebuilding and reconstruction

**Key Strategies**

**Identify goals and objectives**

Ask yourself: what changes do I want to achieve? Some examples of transformative radio programming formats in conflict and post-conflict settings include:

- facilitating the return and reintegration of former child soldiers;
- facilitating the participation of youth in peace-building;
- educating young people on conflict resolution;
- advocating tolerance and strengthening understanding of others’ needs;
- providing an outlet for emotional expression; and
- allowing face-saving.

**Determine availability of resources**

- Do we have access to studios and equipment?
- Do we have the expertise to implement radio programming?
- Do we have the expertise to train others in radio work?

**Determine radio format and content** (refer to table/next page)

- How is radio currently used in this community/country?
- What do children and youth report that they want to hear?
- What programme format captures the best way to get children/youth listening and involved?

**Identify target audience**

- Who are the children/youth you want to listen to your programme?
- Why do you want them to listen to your programme?
- What topics/issues are most relevant to this group?

**Identify project team**

What roles can children/youth have in the project? What kind of representation is important to have on the project team?

- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Religious
- Geographical
- Political

What is the relationship of the team to the potential audience?
**Monitor progress**

- How can we monitor audience responses to the programmes?
- What children/youth can we talk to in order to determine the relevance of the programming?
- Is the programming captivating and entertaining? Does the audience appreciate the way in which the programme is presented?
- Does the programme use a language, “accent” “tone” and format that are appropriate for the target audience?
- Is the programming interactive and participative? Having dialogues with the audience reinforces the pressure for peace. SFCG’s experience indicates that a vast majority of audiences favour this format. When listeners participate in programming, through vox-pops or phone-ins or having their letters read on the air, for example, the more likely it will be to build audience loyalty.

**Some SFCG Radio Programming Examples and Formats**

**Providing a ‘voice’ to the ‘voiceless’**

One essential element of conflict transformation is to create opportunities for all parties to be heard regardless of religion, ethnicity, gender, age, political affiliation or military history. Providing a ‘voice’ can help ensure that political decisions represent the views of the people who will be impacted, for example, *Golden Kids News*, a news programme produced by and for kids to promote the views and goals of children, and to provide money and skills to the children while educating and entertaining others. Many of the children involved are former armed combatants.
Assisting in the reintegration of refugees, IDPs and ex-combatants

Such programmes use various strategies to help refugees, IDPs and ex-combatants to reintegrate themselves into their communities after a conflict. Programmes can serve as a line of communication between communities, governments, and international organizations and those attempting to reintegrate. The programmes present an opportunity to raise awareness of the reintegration process to a large audience and ensure that the people and communities are prepared. One example is *Leh Wi Mek Salone (Let’s Build Sierra Leone)*, a programme originally hosted by two well-known former combatants from different warring factions, which was designed to help convince other combatants to join the NCDDR (National Commission for Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration), and to provide a forum for ex-combatants to discuss their concerns and issues. As the disarmament process is now complete and peace is solidifying, the programme now focuses on current issues facing the volatile youth population. It airs twice a week for fifteen minutes on each of Sierra Leone’s eleven stations.

Breaking down stereotypes

These programmes aim to recognize and analyze the origins of stereotypes in the hopes of eventually breaking them down. Addressing the root causes of and culturally inherent tendencies toward stereotyping can allow one to recognize ‘stereotypes’ as a concept not a reality. One example of SFCC programming that utilizes this model is *Nasha Ulitsa (Our Street)*, a radio soap opera focusing listener-attention on interethnic issues and conflict in Ukraine. The programme was produced in collaboration with Youth and Children’s Theatre on Moskoltso and features a multi-ethnic cast. It was aimed at Crimean youth 14-21 years old, and aired in 2002. The programme was designed to decrease perceptions of distance between the groups, and according to the impact assessment it largely succeeded in delivering the cluster of interrelated messages which it intended to deliver.

Additional Resources

http://www.radiopeaceafrica.org/assets/texts/pdf/manual_03_EN_color.pdf


IttrainOnline Multimedia Training Kit (MMTK) (visited August/12/2008)
http://www.ittrainonline.org/ittrainonline/english/site_map.shtml

The National Federation of Community Broadcasters (NFCB) (Visited Sept 16/2008)

Soul Beat (Visited Sep 24/2008)
Training

Training can be used in many different ways while working with children and youth. For example, it can be used as a tool within the partner peace-building process to bring conflicting partners together for dialogue. Training develops skills and creates space for action that can be used in many different settings and inspires youth to put into practice what they learn.

In Angola, following a 3-phase training with youth on leadership and conflict resolution offered by SFCG, some youth formed the League of Students for Development (LED). This group of youth now trains other students around the province of Huambo in conflict resolution and reconciliation.

Why Training?

Training is often a strategy that supports other tools described in this guide. It provides the basis for working with children and youth in theatre/drama productions and for ensuring that the interviewers, reporters, and announcers have the skills they need to create good radio programming. It is often an important part of the mentoring process, helping other organizations develop the leadership and decision-making skills they need. It is important to receive feedback on the training provided and to follow-up with participants after trainings to monitor any effects.

Key Strategies

Assess Needs and Resources

· How does training fit with our project’s objectives?
· Do we have the personnel and other resources we need to conduct the training?
· Are we ready to make the changes needed?

Select and Assess Participants

· Who will participate in the training? How will that be decided?
· What kind of setting or location will draw the participants we want?
· What are their beliefs and attitudes on the conflict? Which ones will need to either be challenged or reinforced?
· What do they need to know or be able to do in order to participate fully?
· How will they apply what they have learned?

Choose Relevant Topics

· What topics are most relevant to the participants?
· What specific topics will help us reach our objectives?
· What specific topics can we address given our resources, the participants, the political situation, community expectations, etc?

Establish Guidelines

· How frequently do we need to offer the training to children and youth staff?
· How can we establish consistent implementation over multiple sites?
· Locations? Rural/urban, etc.

Choose Trainer(s)

· What criteria do you have for choosing the trainer?
• Do you have a trainer on staff or will you need to find someone?
• Are there children and youth who can themselves be trained as trainers on certain topics?

Training Tips

Use children/youth as trainers in appropriate settings
• Though it involves a commitment of time to develop these skills, it can also create an effective group of trainers for the future. It also continues to develop the skills of the youth that can be used in a professional career.

Ask for feedback
• It is helpful to get feedback from the participants after each training session so as to better tailor the training to their needs and goals, and provide continuous improvement of the training.

Outside the workshop room
• What happens outside the workshop room is often more important than what happens during the training. Create space for music, dancing, informal communication and planning to happen.

Additional Resources

http://www.sfcg.org/resources/resources_home.html
Developing Capacity for Conflict Analysis and Early Response, A Training Manual
Training for Conflict Transformation – An Overview of Approaches and Resources, Berghof-Handbook
Programme Mentoring

Organizational mentoring involves helping other organizations through the challenges of formation and sustainability. Mentoring can extend the reach or the work of a programme, often in ways that do not necessarily require additional funding. It can create possible future local partners or help ensure the continuity of the programme’s goals in a community or region.

Mentoring opportunities arise in a variety of ways:

- Like-minded groups that need some initial assistance to become established.
- Participants from a current or recently completed programme.
- Government initiatives aimed at youth participation.

Why Mentoring?

Mentoring can be a win-win situation for all programmes involved. When helping organizations and/or initiatives get off the ground, the mentor organization is fulfilling an important goal of giving the youth a voice in the community and a space where their ideas and organizations are welcome, as well as a place they can come to for support. Mentoring can create the possibility for future partners to work in the community.

Key Strategies

Assess Needs and Available Resources

- What is the mentee requesting?
- What resources do you have to offer?

Define Roles

- Do both organizations share the same definition of mentoring?
- What are the expectations of each group? How much time will be required?
- How much time will be required?
- Are the mentored organization’s goals and mission aligned with those of your programme?
Maintain Communication
- Who are the key contact people?
- What communication mechanisms are available (phone, scheduled meetings, email, mail, etc.)?

Plan for Transitions
- Are the needs or resources of the mentored organization changing?
- When should the mentored organization take on more responsibility?
- What other resources might exist to help the mentored organization?

Mentoring Tips

Be strategic about who you mentor.
- Mentor groups should share your mission and vision as a programme.

Keep roles defined.
- Be clear so as to minimize confusion over what you can offer and what responsibilities you can realistically take on.

Maintain open communication.
- Discuss changes that are happening in both organizations and how they might affect or change the mentoring relationship.

Additional Resources

Mentoring Program Development: A Start-Up Toolkit,
National Mentoring Centre

How to Build a Successful Mentoring Program Using the
Elements of Effective Practice, A Step-by-Step Tool Kit For
Program Managers, National Mentoring Partnership
Tools for Engaging

Theatre

Theatre can be a great way to get children and youth engaged in a project. Theatre can capture their imagination and their attention. It can also serve as a platform for their voices as well as an avenue to express ideas and mobilize action for peace-building. It can create “pretend” situations that help them work through issues or give them a voice in the community.

In Sierra Leone, SFCG supplements their radio project with theatre to reach communities that are unable to broadcast the radio programme or that find it difficult to talk directly about issues.

In addressing conflict, theatre is a useful tool to engage communities that are having a hard time with taboo or culturally sensitive issues. By using role-play, theatre can help children and youth understand difficult issues better and feel more comfortable addressing them. Refer to table 9.1 on page 48

Key Strategies

It is worth noting that it is a good practice to link theatre work with dramas and soap operas where possible. This helps to increase the identities in the show and reinforces the message and grounds the contents.

Work directly with the children and youth groups, clubs and organizations

- What are the children and youth concerned about in their community?

- What ideas do they have for addressing those issues?

Align with the project’s objectives

- What issue relates most to the goal of the project?

Decide on a theatre group

- Are there youth theatre groups already in the community with whom we can partner?
- Can we develop local talent?
- What training/coaching is needed for the new actors?
- Do we have the resources to provide the necessary support?

Develop the Script

- What story are you trying to tell? What angles are relevant?
- Will all participants understand the language used?
- What characters are important?
- Do the characters resemble all the target issues and audiences?
- It is important to support youth to develop scripts.

Theatre Tips

Popularity

Many youth who become actors and present themselves to the public are often recognized in their communities and among peers for their work. This is an exciting time in their lives and an important positive acknowledgment for what they are doing as they become models in their communities. Handling this popularity can often present challenges, especially since they may develop a false sense of importance. Another challenge has to do with addressing the political sensitivity of some of the issues
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Theatre Offers</th>
<th>Why It Works</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Involvement</strong> – Theatre gives children and youth the chance to engage with the questions of peace-building, shaping the future, and conflict resolution</td>
<td>Many of the communities most affected by conflict are also vulnerable to poverty, geographic isolation, and limited communications infrastructure. As a result, children and youth are often unable to access media such as television, print, and radio, let alone contribute to them. Theatre offers these children and youth a chance for entertainment, reflection, and dialogue that may be lacking in their communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Connection</strong> – Engaging with the actors can help community members viscerally connect with the deeper interests that lie at the root of each conflict and bring people together from across dividing lines</td>
<td>Conflict resolution discourse can often be technical and intellectual, but theatre is the opposite. It offers the opportunity for the community to embody the various sides of a conflict and develop a greater understanding of each side’s motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contribution</strong> – Theatre harnesses the creativity of children and youth - as artists, actors, or members of the public - in the pursuit of peace. It creates positive models and cooperative solutions to complex conflicts</td>
<td>Children and youth are often more attracted to creative approaches. Theatre provides an outlet for that creativity and helps their voices contribute to the process of reconciliation. It encourages them and their communities to engage creatively in the process of conflict transformation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
that we are dealing with. How can youth groups perform about complex issues without getting in trouble?

**Separating the Role and Reality**
Keeping the role separate from the actor can be difficult, particularly for children and youth. Communities and peers recognize the actor and may have expectations because of the role. Using regular debriefing sessions helps the actors develop a clear understanding of this and using the right resources to help them is important.

In Liberia, the children actors in Jujay find it hard to play the “bad” roles when they are ex-combatants, street children, young mothers, and the like. Since they are well known throughout the community and school, they are easily made fun of for the role they played. However, the children view their roles with significance, as they believe they are educating their peers.

**Additional Resources**

- Theatre –Based Techniques for Youth Peer Education: A Training Manual, by Youth Peer, [http://www.fhi.org/NR/rdonlyres/e2fspi7ecrjugssthlim77z4ygd2enbyhfwfyyqjlszyinaot2qddhabtofn5vhsksz5c4grq13tp/theatrefull1.pdf](http://www.fhi.org/NR/rdonlyres/e2fspi7ecrjugssthlim77z4ygd2enbyhfwfyyqjlszyinaot2qddhabtofn5vhsksz5c4grq13tp/theatrefull1.pdf)


IV. Institutionalising Children and Youth Activities
Monitoring

How will we know that we are doing the right activities to support the children and youth that we have set out to support? How will we know if we achieve the changes we seek? And how do we define youth success? Monitoring, evaluating and providing input into our projects provides the information we need to better understand what we did and if it worked. We can then use that information to make adjustments, continue activities, or branch off in new directions.

"Those of us using the media for social transformation face multiple challenges, not only in finding the best ways to cause social change, but also to develop rigorous methods to measure the success of what we do. When a country is in conflict or a period of transition, obstacles multiply. How do we measure the changing environment and its impact, how do we ensure that what we are doing is relevant to the new context and when we start to see results? How do we understand the alchemy between what we have done in our project, the contribution of other organizations working on similar goals, and the impact of the unpredictable external circumstances? Monitoring and evaluation has been largely donor-driven, and perhaps one of the greatest challenges is not only to understand and measure the results of what we do, but also to ensure that we interpret and learn from those results in a meaningful way".10

Monitoring is an activity that should be built into the day-to-day work of the project at the design stage or start of the project. It is therefore most often done by children and youth staff, the main audience of this toolkit. Evaluation is usually a task taken on by people other than the staff, often an external expert who will bring an objective perspective to the project. The connection between monitoring and evaluation is important, even though both elements are often carried out by different people. The clearer and more accurate the information monitoring staff collect during the lifetime of the project, the more comprehensive the evaluation can be, and the more useful it will be to the project and to the funder.

What to Monitor

Process activities are monitored by tracking numbers, gender, demographics, etc. Questions asked may include “how many participants?”, “how many boys?”, “how many girls?”, “who was there?”, “what events occurred?” or “how many radio programmes?” This information requires little interpretation or analysis and the collection of it can be built into day-to-day programme implementation. The information simply provides documentation of what happened.

Two different kinds of information can be gathered through monitoring (see table 10.1, next page):

- A description of process activities (inputs) and programme activities (outputs)
- Participant reaction/thoughts/learning/change (outcomes)

Programme activities are monitored by documenting or describing the components of training or a radio programme that are conducted to bring about desired changes in participants. Programme checklists or documentation forms are examples of tools for monitoring at this level.

### Table 10.1

#### Areas to Monitor

- **Process Monitoring**
  - Numbers
    - Of participants
    - Of trainings
    - Of shows
    - Of presentations
    - Of meetings
  - Formats of
    - Radio shows
    - Theatre shows
    - Trainings
    - Presentations
    - Meetings
  - **Participant Satisfaction**
    - What did participants think about the activity (e.g., show, training, meeting) of radio shows?

- **Programme Monitoring**
  - Numbers
    - Of participants
    - Of trainings
    - Of shows
    - Of presentations
    - Of meetings
  - Formats of
    - Radio shows
    - Theatre shows
    - Trainings
    - Presentations
    - Meetings
  - **Participant Satisfaction**
    - What did participants think about the activity (e.g., show, training, meeting) of radio shows?

#### What to Look For

- **Numbers**
  - Of participants
  - Of trainings
  - Of shows
  - Of presentations
  - Of meetings

- **Demographics**
  - Gender
  - Age
  - Ethnicity
  - Religion
  - Political party
  - Urban/rural
  - Neighbourhood/Region

- **Participant Satisfaction**
  - What did participants think about the activity (e.g., show, training, meeting) of radio shows?

#### Why It Helps

- Details what actions you took (and didn’t take)
- Clarifies who you interacted with (and didn’t interact with)
- Helps you review your balance of activities and participants
- Feeds into the bigger organizational picture
- Provides facts for the funder
- If a programme is implemented more than once or with more than one group of participants, we can track differences in implementation that might affect outcomes (participant changes)
- Provides information on potential risks to participants, staff, etc.

- Provides evidence that you are working from the correct theory of change
- Provides information that may suggest altering activities during the project, e.g., adding topics of importance to participants
- Lets you know which activities are achieving objectives
- Gives needed encouragement to project staff (things are going well, they can make a difference)
Measuring changes in knowledge, attitude and skills requires a variety of tools. It is this information that helps us know whether our activities are leading to the objectives set for the programme. Tools for monitoring objectives include pre/post-training tests, focus group discussions, surveys, etc.

Each tool focuses on different kinds of information; used together, they can provide a more complete picture of who our activities are affecting and how. With this information, adjustments can be made to the activities so that the project has the best chance of accomplishing what it set out to do.

**Indicators**

An indicator describes the manifestation of a process of change resulting from the pursuit of an action.

Indicators are what we observe in order to verify whether – or to what extent – it is true that progress is being made towards our goals, which define what we want to achieve.

Indicators make it possible to demonstrate results and can be used to produce results by providing a reference point for designing, monitoring, decision-making and evaluation. In particular, indicators can help to:

- Measure progress and achievements;
- Clarify consistency between activities, outputs, outcomes and goals;
- Ensure legitimacy and accountability to all stakeholders by demonstrating progress;
- Assess projects.\(^{11}\)

Caution should be taken when using indicators to measure the effectiveness of a youth programme or to make comparison. Many programmes that are valuable to youth may not spark an immediate change in these indicators, particularly if the programme is run over a short period or is not very intensive. In such a case, giving young people the indicators in the form of a pre- and post- test may not always yield results, and most likely will not capture subtle changes. The most appropriate measures may be more specific to the content of a project. Adapt indicators to fit your needs, and add new indicators to the list. Supplement any evaluations with additional measures and other types of data - particularly qualitative data that will give you a better idea of the uniqueness of your program and the young people you work with.\(^{12}\)

**How will I know if results are occurring? How do I know change is occurring?**

Determining what information you need to answer this question and how you will prove it is the process of developing results indicators.

**Here is how to do it** - Visualize for yourself the desired “state” and clearly define the change you are seeking to achieve with your project, e.g. children are no longer recruited by armed groups.

**Ask yourself** how you will know you have attained results, e.g. “How will I know that children are not recruited by armed groups?”

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\(^{12}\) Civic Youth Engagement, Circle (visited September 24 2006) [http://www.civicyouth.org/practitioners/index.htm]
Ask yourself what the possible responses to the above question could be, e.g. that there are no children reported to be living with the armed groups, or that no parents reported that their children disappeared or were abducted.

This is the start of your indicator design. What you do next is ensure that the indicators can actually be verifiable.

There are key criteria that will help you design a useful and SMART indicator. SMART is an acronym that stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound. Essentially, you have to read your indicator and ask yourself each of these questions. If the answer to any of these questions is “no”, then you will have to work more on it.

Key Strategies

- Set up a system for gathering information when the project starts. Creating this at the beginning allows you to gather information all the way through the project and can keep you responsive to new things that happen.

- If monitoring is new to the project team, keep the system simple to start. Pick two or three things from each area discussed above and focus on how those will be monitored. You can add more as you get comfortable.

- Include children/youth in information gathering, not just as those who will give information, but also as the ones who help gather the information. This builds skills, expands available resources, and might offer ways to get information may be difficult to get. Make sure they are trained on how to collect data.

- Consider carefully the ethical considerations in gathering information from/with children and youth. Power dynamics, vulnerabilities, and cultural expectations can all be a part of when and how children and youth are asked questions. Peer-to-peer interactions carry many of the same risks as adult-to-child interactions.

Use the information gathered. Have regular meetings where the team reviews the outputs and outcomes of the project and discuss how to improve their work.

Appendix A provides a chart that shows how to fill in the blanks to effectively monitor a project and prepare for an evaluation.

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Additional Resources


This toolkit outlines both the requisite considerations for planning to engage children and youth, and a number of tools that can be incorporated in creating spaces for them to engage their communities and peers in rebuilding and reconciliation. Both components must be present in order to capitalize on the resources children and youth bring to the process and to effectively harness those skills and talents.

As mentioned earlier, engagement with children and youth is not static and must be continually analysed and checked to ensure the scheduled and completed activities adequately respond to their issues. This continual analysis must include the following:

The tools presented in this toolkit are designed to support and enhance the work of programmes wishing to develop the capacity of children and youth to address and resolve their own conflicts on an interpersonal and intergroup level. Used as described, these tools will help children and youth to find their voice and make a place for them in constructive change processes by contributing to their ability to support reconciliation and healing in their communities and nations. Refer to table 11.1

**Before**
- Have an awareness of the current context in the country, and the resulting children/youth issues
- Set up clear project goals, objectives, specific activities and tools for achieving those goals
- Resource/leverage past efforts, potential partners, and value-added
- Have an understanding of the risks faced by both the programming staff and the children/youth by carrying out/participating in the proposed activities
- Be clear about the skills required by children/youth participants to fully engage in the project, as well as potential training to be provided to equip children/youth to meaningfully participate

**During**
- Understand and highlight the changes in context, attitude, and target groups
- Know and anticipate current and potential responses to the changes (context, attitude, etc.)
- Move beyond typically selected groups to reach other children and youth
- Understand potential risks of harm caused by the project and address them
- Monitor progress, challenges and achievements
- Look for unexpected outcomes

**After**
- Conduct project closing activities and prepare for transitions
- Plan for follow-up including timeframes
- Outline roles and responsibilities for follow-up (i.e. implementers, participants, partners, etc.)
- Identify engagement and ownership moving beyond the sponsor’s presence
Feedback

We would love to have your feedback on this toolkit. If you have views on the content or presentation, or have materials that you would like to suggest we add in order to improve the toolkit, please contact Felix Unogwu, Children and Youth Specialist at Search for Common Ground (funogwu@sfcg.org) or Nick Oatley, Director, Institutional Learning Team at Search (noatley@sfcg.org)

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APPENDIX A: PROGRAMME PLANNING CHART (See Appendix F for more examples)

Theory of change:
If we provide radio programming for children/youth, then we will reduce the conflict between opposing youth gangs/political factions.

Goal: What is the long-term change our programme can achieve or contribute to, along with other partners or stakeholders? For example, Programme Peace will conduct media programmes for youth in XYZ to increase the capacity of youth to participate in joint reconciliation activities in their community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What indicators will we use to know what the programme achieved?</th>
<th>How will we monitor or track these indicators?</th>
<th>Who is responsible?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objective/outcomes expected:</strong> What is the short-term change our programme can achieve? Describe knowledge increase, attitude change, and/or skill development. For example, SFCG’s curriculum-based, participatory youth-oriented multi-media initiative is aimed at enabling youth to gain the knowledge and awareness to actively contribute to peace and reconciliation in their communities.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Enhanced ability of youth radio club members to constructively discuss issues related to peace and conflict</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increased awareness amongst listeners of the challenges and conflict risks of the region</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increased awareness of appropriate response to rumours and how to resist manipulation;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increased awareness of the ways in which conflicts at all levels can be peacefully managed by youth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Document the training, provide a pre/post-test to measure change in knowledge, attitudes, and/or skills in participants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Conduct a focus group for youth involved in designing and implementing the radio programme to collect descriptions of what they learned through the process</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Process Activities/inputs: |
| 1. Identify and hire staff |
| 2. Identify and collect resources |
| 3. Develop a curriculum for youth training |
| 4. Other |
| Programme Activities/Outputs: |
| 1. Implement youth training |
| 2. Support youth in designing radio programme content and in writing scripts For example, Youth from SFCG programmes will use collaborative problem-solving skills to design their own radio programme focused on community reconciliation. |
| 1. One radio programme, script developed |
| 2. One radio show produced |
| 3. Five radio stations carry the show |
| 1. Keep a staff roster |
| 2. Develop budget and do financial tracking |
| 3. Use curriculum for the training |
| 1. Document implementation and conduct a satisfaction survey, track numbers of participants, how many times training was done, etc. |
| 2. Document design meetings, keep recordings of programmes. |
### Theory of change:

If we do ______ then ______ will result

**Goal:** What is the long-term change our programme can achieve or contribute to, along with other partners or stakeholders?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective/outcomes expected</th>
<th>What indicators will we use to know what the programme achieved?</th>
<th>How will we monitor or track these indicators?</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Objective/outcomes expected:** What is the short-term change our programme can achieve? Describe knowledge increase, attitude change, and/or skill development.

**Process Activities/inputs:**
1. 
2. 
3. 
4. etc
APPENDIX C: CASE STUDY: GOLDEN KIDS IN SIERRA LEONE

Golden Kids was started in Liberia as a radio programme by kids about kids covering a wide range of issues that affect children. Search for Common Ground started the programme in Sierra Leone in 2000. The initial target population was children in Freetown who were considered well-educated and articulate. It soon became clear that a more diverse range of children could benefit from the programme and it was expanded to include less privileged children. This expansion included handicapped children, rural children, and street children. The programme became a platform for dialogue and an avenue for children to find their voice on the issues in Sierra Leone.

The growing popularity and growing numbers of participants suggested that it might be time to expand the programme beyond Freetown. SFCG decided to expand to two new areas: Makeni and Bo in Sierra Leone where there were studios that could be used to meet the information needs in the North, South and East. The plan was to bring the radio shows featuring the views of children from these areas to Freetown in order to share the dialogue from other regions.

SFCG took further advantage of its field offices and their staff around the country and expanded its reach to more children. Ten locations were selected through partnerships with child protection (CP) agencies such as Save the Children, Christian Children Fund, and more. Children who wanted to join were identified and led to the CP agencies that became the channels for their participation. This expansion was a collaborative, cost-effective model.

The Kailahun district shares a border with Guinea and Liberia. Save the Children asked to expand the programme to work in this area. UNICEF was present in these countries and became a partner. This led to regional expansion using the Golden Kids channel. An example of a project done by the programme is one on trafficking where youth were primary targets for the radio programming and also became the conveyors of the information.

As the Golden Kids programme grew and other children's projects such as Straight Talk and Sisi Aminata developed more stakeholders became involved. UNICEF was one of these, along with the Ministry of Social Welfare. It became clear that a regional strategy was needed. After holding a stakeholder meeting, lessons learned and methodology were shared with Guinea, Liberia and across Sierra Leone and a partnership with UNICEF and USAID-WARP (trafficking unit) was developed.
APPENDIX D: DM&E MEASURING IMPACT OF TWO PROGRAMMES

In 2004, Search for Common Ground – Sierra Leone, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST), CARE and UNICEF, initiated a radio programme called *Sisi Aminata*, following the format of *Sisi Lorpu* in Liberia. The radio shows are designed to help youth between the ages of 12-19 years old by increasing their knowledge discussing adolescent sexual and reproductive health and related issues. The shows are produced in an inquiry-based, interactive format between young people and an older female presenter. In the question-answer format, a woman representing an older sister answers youth’s questions about issues of sexual and reproductive health. The answers are then also discussed by a peer group of young people to explore their relevance and analysis.

Five evaluation tools used

**Surveys:** A small non-statically relevant population was asked 9 questions with the intent to get information on general trends.

**Individual interviews:** Longer interviews with youth that were part of the target group, mixing girls and boys, rural and urban. We talked to both youth who listened to the programme and youth who do not. The objective of this interview was to find the reason behind interviewee answers and opinions.

**Key informants interviews:** Interviews to get the perspective of government officials, CARE staff and community leaders about the effect of the programme.

**Focus groups:** Groups of people sharing five characteristics (age/gender/education/rural vs. urban) to compare answers between different types of listeners and focus groups. Focus groups provide a sense of cultural trends.

**Most significant change:** Ask only one question: what has been the most significant change that you have observed because of this programme? Very easy to do and brings out stories and unexpected results that other tools do not capture.

How the data was collected

At these sites, the monitors went to schools, talked to people in the streets, and went to villages and asked to speak to youth. They also went to tailor training shops to reach out to uneducated youth. It was important to check with authorities and get permission. Every country has different laws and constraints for research, especially with children, who may need written parental permission.

It was very important to document how the data was collected and justified. People who read the report will always look at the methodology first to see if they can trust the results. If data is collected only from schools and one did not reach out to rural and uneducated youth, results will be biased.
Using five different research tools created the opportunity to get many different perspectives, see the different levels and nuances of change, compare different groups, etc. Often we are only able to use 1 or 2 tools, which results in capturing less of the full picture and makes the data less rich. With each tool, an attempt was made to measure changes in knowledge gained, attitudes, and behaviour. Doing evaluations in two countries allowed us to check assumptions. Research was completed in only 3 weeks by one person and yet brought out very rich information.

Reporting back to the community increased their ownership of the programme; by asking questions, people felt appreciated and heard, and then could see the results of their input. The results of the research were shared with the partners.

Results:

In an area where sexuality was taboo, huge changes were observed. The programme opened up conversations on sensitive issues like HIV/AIDS. In areas where sexuality is less of a cultural taboo, the programme had less of an effect.

In Liberia, only 5 focus groups were conducted: 4 youth groups and one parent group. The research showed that the programme is having an impact on the youth population because it is providing a venue for them to learn about sexual health. Prior to the programme, youth did not have a venue or people from whom to seek advice on such issues. The findings in two countries helped launch a similar programme in Guinea and Côte d’Ivoire.

Discussion

Monitoring is a peace-building tool in itself. By asking people about the soap opera, they became involved and they started identifying with the programme. As a result, they become stronger advocates for the message of the show. It is important to share results, even if they are negative; donors appreciate honesty and lessons learned.
APPENDIX E: YOUTH RADIO PROGRAMME CASE STUDY

1) What did you do? Who was involved?

In early 2006, Search for Common Ground-Nepal launched a multi-pronged youth program aimed at facilitating the participation of young people (aged 15 to 25) in peace-building activities. Through a mixture of media and community peace-building, the project supported youth in the western, conflict-affected region of the country to participate in the peace process.

SFCG worked with the Nepali media house, Antenna Foundation Nepal, to produce and broadcast a three-time weekly radio soap opera, Naya Bato Naya Paila (New Path, New Footprints). The soap opera used an intended outcomes approach, creating behaviour changes in the targeted populations. The objectives were for youth to:

- analyze the pressures on them caused by conflict;
- organize to address root causes of conflict;
- participate in community decision-making processes; and
- conduct dispute resolution at community levels.

The soap opera told the story of a fictional village in the foothills of the Himalayas and its diverse groups of young people who were seeking to resist manipulation into violence and to do positive work in their own communities for peace.

The radio show was complemented by community-based work with young people most vulnerable to manipulation into violence. SFCG worked in rural, remote areas to engage youth groups and clubs (with members often in conflict with one another) into a leadership development program. Staff started by mapping the ways in which youth were organized and identifying how they were being involved in conflict. At that point, key young leaders – both young men and women - were selected and brought together from across political, caste, and ethnic lines into a dialogue and leadership process. Youth participated in a leadership workshop and then created cooperative actions for peace-building in their communities. Actions that resulted included a variety of activities, including street dramas and activities to facilitate the reintegration of former child soldiers.

2) Why did you do it? How did you know there was a need?

SFCG implemented this project for a number of reasons. Youth in Nepal have been at the centre of the conflict. Many have been victimized, suffering direct violence, losing their educational and vocational opportunities, and being displaced.
APPENDIX E: YOUTH RADIO PROGRAMME CASE STUDY (continued)

Many other youth – including children – were compelled to fight in the conflict as soldiers and young people within the transition continued to be manipulated into violence by political elites. Yet, throughout the country, youth were organizing to create opportunities to participate in the society and a vibrant youth movement had begun. SFCG conducted an initial assessment in mid-2005 and found that, at the time, very few in the international community were providing support to youth issues beyond traditional education. Therefore, youth were identified as a leverage point through which we could work.

In 2006, SFCG conducted a baseline study which confirmed some of the assumptions on which the project was launched. Youth were organizing a great deal but were not sure how they could best contribute to peace-building. They had few channels for participation in their communities and were unsure of how to best use their organizing power. And they were vulnerable to manipulation.

3) Did you face any challenges? How were they overcome?

The project faced a great deal of challenges in its implementation. The most significant was that the context was evolving very quickly, with the country moving from civil war and a dictatorship to a ceasefire and transitional government to a comprehensive peace agreement. As a result, SFCG and its partners had to adapt an extremely flexible implementation process. While the activities largely remained the same, the content changed constantly. For the radio program, SFCG employed community focal points to monitor the responses of the target audience to the drama and to provide inputs on the dynamics on the ground. For example, an issue that emerged was conflict over land between displaced persons as they returned home and those who had stayed behind. The drama team quickly identified the issue as key and incorporated a storyline on how such conflicts could be addressed. As a result, the show reflected the realities in communities accurately, leading listeners to often comment in letters and to our staff that they couldn’t believe how real the show felt.

The community-based work was easier to adapt. As the ceasefire took hold in mid-2006, staff members were able to work in more remote areas that had been controlled by the Maoists, the rebel forces. The dialogue-to-cooperative-action process that SFCG implemented took on more relevancy: the challenge was to effectively respond to the rapidly changing conflicts that were emerging in communities. For example, soon after the programs started, former soldiers began returning to their communities bringing up feelings of revenge and exclusion. SFCG programs responded by mobilizing youth clubs and groups to contribute to the long-term reintegration of former soldiers.
APPENDIX E: YOUTH RADIO PROGRAMME CASE STUDY (continued)

4) What was the impact? How do you know?

This project has had a positive impact on the way in which youth perceive themselves and their role in this historic and turbulent time in Nepal. Based on an independent evaluation conducted in early 2008, there have been some specific results:

- Youth are more likely to believe that they have a positive role to play in the society and that, if well organized, they could contribute to the peace process;
- The radio program is reported to have increased the confidence level of its young listeners, enabling them to analyze the pressures on them with regards to conflict and make positive decisions;
- There has been an increase reported in youth involvement in peace-building activities, bringing people together from across dividing lines. This has been seen particularly among those young people who participated in the community peace-building program who have organized activities aimed at bridging gaps among different caste, political, and ethnic groups;
- Some adults have come to see young people as potential partners in peace-building rather than threats to security. This has the potential to create channels of participation in community decision-making for young people. This is known based on accounts of adults who have begun attending youth-led activities; and
- Many youth – especially those involved in the community work – reported getting involved in dispute resolution in their own communities.

5) What lessons did you learn? What, if anything, would you do differently?

The project gave rise to some fundamental lessons learned that have been incorporated into our ongoing programs. Some of these include:

- The link between radio programming and community work is vital to creating results with target groups, meaning that those in communities need to understand the radio show and its intentions, using it as a tool to mobilize opportunities for people to engage in peace-building;
- It’s helpful to involve broadcasting partners (e.g., local FM stations) in collecting feedback on the radio soap opera. They have a stake in how the population perceives the show and can provide honest insights into the responses from the listeners;
- In peace-building programming with youth, it is vital to work with existing, youth-led organizations. However, it is equally vital to engage with respected adult community members and help them build mentorship relationships with youth leaders.

While the project has been largely successful, SFCG would do a few things differently e.g. The main one would be to work with youth in urban areas in addition to those in rural areas. While those in remote places are clearly the most vulnerable, youth in urban areas also have a significant impact on how conflicts unfold. Because of this, SFCG has expanded its youth program to include young people from a range of backgrounds.
APPENDIX F: EXAMPLES OF INDICATORS

Main Objective 1: Increase the knowledge of adults and children on the rights and duties of children to prevent their association with armed groups.

Sub-objective 1: Increase true information based on current law on the rights and duties of children for their protection.

Indicators:
Number of targeted youth who claim they have followed and are interested in the program
Number of children who have followed the program and who can cite at least 3 rights and duties and cases of violations of these rights.

Sub-objective 2: Increase the knowledge of adults and children to prevent the latter from associating with armed groups.

Indicators:
Number of children and youth who claim that they have left the armed group thanks to the program
Number of children and youth who cite 3 rights and duties related to the non-recruitment of children by armed groups.

Main Objective 2: Effective participation of women, men and youth, boys and girls, in the democratic governance process.

Sub-objective: Youth - girls and boys - are educated about democratic life and their future participation to political life.

Indicators:
Percentage of boys and girls, in pilot schools, who think that women should be involved in governance
Percentage of boys and girls who say they are involved in political life 6 months after the project.
APPENDIX G: SFCG: AN ORIGINAL PROFILE

Since 1982, Search for Common Ground (SFCG), an international NGO headquartered in Washington, D.C., has been working in situations of conflict around the world. SFCG employs approximately 350 staff members in its programmes in twenty countries: Angola, Burundi, Côte d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Guinea, Indonesia, Iran, Liberia, Macedonia, Middle East (with offices in Jerusalem and Amman), Morocco, Nepal, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Ukraine, Belgium, and the U.S.A. SFCG also runs four crosscutting projects: Partners in Humanity (with the C-100 group of the World Economic Forum), which supports joint action projects between the Western and Muslim worlds; Radio for Peace-building, Africa, which promotes conflict resolution over the airwaves in 21 Sub-Saharan African countries; Common Ground Productions, the media arm of SFCG which uses television, radio and internet to transform the way individuals deal with conflict; and finally, a Child Soldiers Initiative which aims to foster dialogue among military, human rights, and humanitarian organizations in order to develop tools to prevent the use of children as soldiers.

SFCG is engaged in a long-term process of incremental transformation, pursued on a realistic scale and with practical means. It works with local partners to find culturally appropriate ways to strengthen indigenous capacity to deal with conflicts constructively. Each programme seeks to engage multiple sectors of the society that it serves, including governments, armed groups, demobilised combatants, rural populations and urbanites, youth and children, women’s groups and community organizations. SFCG’s toolbox contains a wide variety of techniques, ranging from traditional means of conflict transformation such as mediation and facilitation to more innovative means like media, athletic exchanges, music, and community organizing.

SFCG has a particular focus on vulnerable populations who are adversely affected by armed conflict. Through media and community-based programming, SFCG empowers women, children, youth, and displaced persons so that they have voice and create responses to the conflicts in their communities. With approximately a third of its programming focused on children and youth, SFCG is considered one of the leaders in the field, helping young people choose positive leadership.

The Children and Youth Unit of Search for Common Ground (SFCG) seeks to transform the role of young people in conflicts so that they have concrete alternatives to violence and can significantly contribute to building sustainable peace. Through projects in 21 countries, SFCG is committed to fostering the participation of youth as leaders for protection, peace-building, dialogue, and reconciliation in their own communities and countries. We do this through three operational methods: formal and non-formal education, platforms for them to have a voice in society, and opportunities for them to take concrete action in their communities.
ABOUT SEARCH FOR COMMON GROUND

Our mission is to transform how the world deals with conflict – away from adversarial approaches, toward cooperative solutions. We have a vision of a peaceful world in which all people are able to satisfy their basics needs, and we see ourselves as applied visionaries, capable of producing concrete results in the real world.

We seek to be social entrepreneurs – nimble innovators able to take advantage of new opportunities and create value on a global scale. During the past year, the Skoll Foundation and Ashoka, two of the world’s leading organizations promoting social entrepreneurship, have recognized and honored us.

All our programs are firmly rooted in the societies they serve. We do not believe in parachuting in expertise from outside. We engage with multiple partners, including international organizations (such as the UN, World Bank, and European Union), national governments, civil society, and increasingly, the business sector.

We have no single operating model or prototype, since we are convinced that every conflict and culture is different and that an unswerving, off-the-shelf approach simply does not work.

Still, all our projects aim to be inclusive and to operate as widely as possible across whole societies. We are dedicated to building local capacity through our work.
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