

## PEACEBUILDING, EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY



Adolescents discuss ways in which they have contributed to peacebuilding. A sign language interpreter supports communication between deaf and hearing participants (Photo: Juliet Young, Kitgum, Uganda, December 2012)

## ENGAGING ADOLESCENTS IN CONFLICT ANALYSIS

### A GUIDANCE NOTE

Prepared by Claudia Seymour for the Adolescent Development and Participation Section, UNICEF

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**Note:** This Guidance Note remains a living document and will improve from input from Country Offices at any point throughout the PBEA programme cycle. For questions or input please contact the Adolescent Development and Participation Section, HQ ([mpkramer@unicef.org](mailto:mpkramer@unicef.org)).

## OVERVIEW

This Guidance Note has been developed to support the engagement of adolescents – individuals between 10 and 19 years of age (UNICEF 2011) - in the Conflict Analysis process of the UNICEF Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy programme (PBEA). This Guidance Note offers tools and methods which UNICEF Country Offices can use to ensure the safe and meaningful participation of adolescents when doing a conflict analysis. However, the methods and tools contained within are relevant to later stages of the PBEA, as well as to UNICEF's peacebuilding interventions more generally.

### **Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy programme**

To support the positive role that education can play for conflict transformation and peacebuilding, UNICEF initiated the Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy programme (PBEA) in 2012 with funding from the Government of the Netherlands.<sup>1</sup> The overall aim of the PBEA is “to strengthen resilience, social cohesion and human security in conflict-affected contexts, including countries at risk of– or experiencing and recovering from– conflict” (UNICEF/ Novelli and Smith 2013, p. 1). Through the integration of peacebuilding and education policies and programmes, the PBEA supports activities which aim to prevent and reduce conflict and to strengthen coping capacities.

The PBEA is a four year programme that has been designed to achieve five main outcomes:

1. increase inclusion of education into peacebuilding and conflict reduction policies, analyses and implementation;
2. increase institutional capacities to supply conflict-sensitive education;
3. increase the capacities of children, parents, teachers and other duty bearers to prevent, reduce and cope with conflict and promote peace;
4. increase access to quality and relevant conflict-sensitive education that contributes to peace; and
5. contribute to the generation and use of evidence and knowledge in policies and programming related to education, conflict and peacebuilding.

The participation of adolescents in all matters affecting them is a fundamental right, as enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It is also considered a core strategy for UNICEF programming. By focusing specifically on the engagement of adolescents, this Guidance Note emphasises the importance of ensuring that the experiences, perspectives and priorities of adolescents are integrated in the PBEA Conflict Analysis as well as in other stages of the programme cycle. In countries where the PBEA is being implemented, adolescents represent a significant proportion of the population- it is therefore expected that by seeking their inputs and perspectives, the impact and effectiveness of UNICEF's PBEA programme will be strengthened. By

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<sup>1</sup> The Peacebuilding Education and Advocacy programme (PBEA) received US\$150 million for programming between 2012 and 2015. The 13 UNICEF Country Offices currently participating in the PBEA are: Burundi, Chad, Côte D'Ivoire, DRC, Ethiopia, Liberia, Palestine, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Uganda and Yemen.

engaging with adolescents at the earliest stages of the PBEA programme cycle, the peacebuilding and education programmes are likely to be more relevant and effective in responding to their needs and realities.

This Guidance Note has been developed following an extensive review of the literature relating to the policy and practice of peacebuilding, adolescent participation in humanitarian and development programming, as well as a review of UNICEF documents specific to the PBEA and to peacebuilding more generally. Methods, tools, lessons and good practices relating to young people's participation and local-level engagement in peacebuilding interventions have also been integrated into this guidance based on experiences documented by non-governmental organisations and other UN agencies. Several UNICEF Country Offices which have already completed the PBEA Conflict Analysis have also provided important insights into this Guidance Note, as have multiple sections and divisions of UNICEF.

### Conflict Analysis

As with other carefully-conceived peacebuilding initiatives, the Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy programme (PBEA) is a comprehensive programme that begins with a Conflict Analysis, which then informs the development and elaboration of peacebuilding and education programming.<sup>2</sup> A Conflict Analysis is a systematic study of the political, social, economic and security dimensions of a conflict. Its aim is to provide a better understanding of the proximate and structural causes of conflict, and to identify its main stakeholders. A Conflict Analysis should examine the causes and dynamics of conflict while also identifying the factors which contribute to peace; in this way it can support the elaboration and prioritization of conflict-sensitive programming.<sup>3</sup> According to UNICEF (EMOPS 2012, p. 12) a Conflict Analysis should capture the multidimensionality (political, social, economic, security, etc.) of a conflict, and can be tailored to any geographic area or programmatic level. The essence of a conflict analysis therefore provides:

- a better understanding of the causes (proximate, intermediate and root), dynamics and forces promoting either violent conflict and/or peace; and
- an opportunity to identify and prioritize key underlying causes (e.g. root causes) of conflicts as the basis to inform programming (development, humanitarian, peacebuilding at all levels—project, programme, and sectoral).

In the context of a Conflict Analysis adolescents' voices can and should be represented

<sup>2</sup> As of April 2013, four UNICEF Country Offices had conducted the PBEA Conflict Analysis (DRC, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Uganda), and it was underway in four other countries.

<sup>3</sup> The UNICEF Conflict Analysis is based on a five-part methodology which includes (adapted from UNICEF/Naumann and Le Provost 2012, p. 19):

1. **Conflict profile/Situation analysis:** clearly describes the current situation;
2. **Causal analysis:** identifies key sources of tensions or conflicts that could lead to instability;
3. **Stakeholder analysis:** identifies critical local, national, regional and international actors or groups of people with common interests and concerns;
4. **Analysis of conflict dynamics:** identifies conflict drivers and windows of opportunity by looking at how causes and actors impact each other;
5. **Prioritisation:** Programmes are prioritised as part of a multi-stakeholder, strategic planning processes.

along with those of other stakeholders. In addition, the findings of the Conflict Analysis will not remain static and new information can be incorporated over time. It is never too late to begin consultations with young people in order to enhance and revise existing research and analysis.

This Guidance Note is structured in four sections:

- The **first section** highlights the importance of engaging with adolescents in the PBEA Conflict Analysis and reviews the rights-based framework which supports the participation of young people. It discusses the specific developmental benefits of adolescent participation at the individual level and at the level of the broader community, with particular reference to contexts affected by conflict.
- The **second section** provides an overview of the main considerations which need to be taken into account prior to and during any efforts to engage with adolescents to ensure that their participation is safe, ethical, meaningful and inclusive. This section offers practical guidance on the use of participative data collection tools which can be used during the Conflict Analysis, as well as a sample of questions which can then be adapted and elaborated by UNICEF Country Offices.
- The **third section** briefly documents experiences of UNICEF Uganda, Sierra Leone and Liberia in engaging with young people during the Conflict Analysis in the hopes that other Country Offices may benefit from their experiences and lessons learnt.
- Going beyond the Conflict Analysis, the **fourth section** suggests ways in which adolescent engagement may continue through later stages of the PBEA programme cycle, including through feedback sessions, programme design and monitoring and evaluation.

### **Peacebuilding and Education Programming**

Peacebuilding interventions aim to reduce the causes of conflict through long-term development programmes that reform economic and social policies and contribute to building more inclusive and equitable societies.<sup>4</sup> Making a conscious effort to go further than the minimum standard principles of 'do no harm' and conflict-sensitivity, peacebuilding interventions can contribute to peace in constructive and tangible ways. Peacebuilding interventions can take place prior to the outbreak of violence, during conflict, or once hostilities have already ended (UNICEF EMOPS 2012).

There are multiple strategic and programmatic entry-points for engaging in peacebuilding; one such entry point for UNICEF is through education programming. Education is of particular importance for the transformation of values, attitudes and behaviours as it governs how "existing social relations

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<sup>4</sup> The United Nations Secretary General's Report on Peacebuilding in the Aftermath of Conflict (United Nations 2009) lists the provision of administrative and social services as a key priority for peacebuilding, while its 2012 progress report has shown that equitable access to social services, prioritising the most excluded, can lead to greater social cohesion and stable economic growth.

are reproduced, legitimated, challenged, or transformed” (Ginsberg 2000, p. xvii). The powerfully reproductive role of education in society (Bourdieu 2000) means that it can either contribute to the production or exacerbation of conflict and violence or lay the social and political foundations for peace. For example, inequalities in access to education services or policies and practices which are not inclusive or which are insensitive to the diversity of the population can contribute to reinforcing dynamics of violence (UNICEF/ Knutzen and Smith 2012). Such tendencies can be embedded in the education curricula or in teaching practices that reinforce existing exclusion and stereotypes and replicate the factors which lead to violence across generations.

More positively, targeted education programming can be integral to processes of conflict transformation and peacebuilding. For example, with formal education, schools have the potential to “provide the means to learn how to think critically, resolve conflict non-violently, and offer a venue where students can develop positive relationships across conflict divides. Schools have the power to shape the attitudes and skills of young people toward peaceful relations” (UNICEF EMOPS 2012, p. 23). Outside of formal classroom settings, education and training programmes can contribute to the development of livelihood and employment skills, strengthen political engagement, and improve social relations between groups of people who might otherwise be opposed.

## I. WHY ENGAGE ADOLESCENTS?

The principle of participation is enshrined in several international conventions. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC 1989) includes five articles (articles 12, 13, 14, 15, and 17) which make explicit reference to the right of children<sup>5</sup> to participate in decisions and processes which have an impact in their lives. This right to participation extends equally to girls and boys, complemented by equal participation being enshrined in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW 1979). Similarly advancing the rights of equal participation, Article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Optional Protocol (CRPD 2006) urges the full and effective participation of people with disabilities on an equal basis with others, while Article 7 maintains that “children with disabilities have the right to express their views freely on all matters affecting them, their views being given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity, on an equal basis with other children, and to be provided with disability and age-appropriate assistance to realize that right.” The right to participation is also enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of Indigenous People (2006) through Articles 5, 18, 27 and 41.

Adolescence is a time of “intense physical, psychological, emotional and economic changes” (UNICEF 2012b, p. 5), a foundational period when social, behavioural and attitudinal patterns—already set from early childhood (Chopra 2013) are reinforced and solidified. In this crucial period, supporting adolescents to participate in matters affecting their lives contributes to healthy individual developmental processes. Participation can contribute to strengthen adolescents’ cognitive, social and emotional development, build life skills and leadership capacities and strengthen capacities for decision-making and planning (Save the Children Sweden 2004). By increasing adolescents’ self-esteem and social skills (Women’s Commission for Refugee Women and Children 2005), the participation of adolescents can be understood more as “‘empowerment’ rather than simply ‘taking part’” (Boyden and Ennew 1997, p. 58); in this way, fulfilling the right to participation enables the achievement of other rights.

The participation of adolescents also has important positive feedback effects at the societal level. Although often considered by adults as a source of problem and conflict (see Sommers 2006), adolescents are social actors with “skills and capacities to bring about constructive solutions to societal issues that directly affect them” (ILO 2009, p. 10). Viewing the participation of adolescents from a socio-ecological perspective, the role of parents, families, other care givers and social institutions is of fundamental importance. Through participation, adolescents can become active citizens and learn skills to negotiate with others, listen to different points of view and “build a critical appreciation for the democratic process” (Family Health International 2008, p. 2).

From a programmatic perspective the involvement of adolescents at all stages of programming<sup>6</sup> is a strategic priority; as noted in the UNICEF Programme Policy and Procedure Manual: “Children and

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<sup>5</sup> Defined as individuals up to the age of 18.

<sup>6</sup> A large body of policy materials for engaging adolescents in programming already exists; examples include: NORAD (2005)- ‘Three billion reasons – Norway’s development strategy for children and young people in the south’; Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation Youth Policy (2007); UNFPA (2005)- ‘The case for investing in young people as part of a

adolescents are often much better placed than external duty-bearers to take the lead in assessing and analysing their own situation, and coming up with possible solutions.” The UNICEF Medium Term Strategic Plan 2006- 2013 describes the importance of creating “opportunities for equitable participation of girls and boys and adolescents in design and implementation of policies, especially in poverty and crisis situations and addressing disability issues” (UNICEF 2012a, p. 35).<sup>7</sup> Equitable participation requires the inclusion of traditionally excluded groups, such as young people with disabilities, children and adolescents from ethnic minorities or other young people who are otherwise socially or economically marginalised.

In contexts affected by conflict, adolescents make up a significant proportion of the population, providing all the more reason to consider them when planning and developing peacebuilding interventions. In much of the conflict and development literature, adolescents– described as part of the demographic ‘youth bulge’- are perceived to be an ‘unstable’ population that threatens the social, economic and political equilibrium necessary for peace (see Sommers 2006, cited Kaplan 1996 and Urdal 2004). In conflict-affected contexts, the lack of livelihood and education opportunities available to adolescents can leave them at higher risk of becoming engaged in violence. At the same time, adolescents’ experiences of conflict and peace are influenced by their knowledge of the constraints and opportunities available to them; this element can be a key conflict driver, as “for many young people there is an increasing gap between their expectations and the opportunities available to them” (Asia-Pacific Inter-Agency Working Group on Youth 2011, p. 5). However, despite the often negative association between young people and violence, adolescents have significant potential to serve as agents of peace (Reilly 2012).

Able to engage in and influence their own environments (Boyden and de Berry 2004), adolescents make key contributions to their families and communities (Reilly 2009), with their evolving capabilities and responsibilities gaining importance as they become older. Especially during times of conflict and instability, young people express great resourcefulness in coping with adversity (Seymour 2012) as they negotiate their own survival and protection (Newman 2005). Rather than being merely victims who have been affected by violence (see also Saferworld and Conciliation Resources 2012), adolescents are agents of their own situations, often assuming great responsibilities from an early age.

Sensitive interventions designed with a gender lens and with a priority on ‘doing no harm’ can contribute to more equitable outcomes in the post-conflict period (see Conciliation Resources 2013). While violence and instability have generalized negative effects on the population, conflict and its associated risks will often be experienced differentially by boys and girls. For example, boys may be more at risk of being recruited to armed groups, while girls are at greater risk of being targeted for sexual violence and exploitation (United Nations 1996). Both during and after conflict, social and

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national poverty reduction strategy’; Commonwealth Secretariat (2007)- ‘The Commonwealth plan of action for youth empowerment 2007-2015’; Danida (2007)- ‘Children and young people in Danish development co-operation’; United Nations (2007)- ‘World Youth Report 2007: young peoples’ transition to adulthood: progress and challenges’; UNFPA (2007)- ‘Framework for action on adolescents and youth: opening doors with young people: 4 keys’; World Bank (2007)- ‘World Development Report 2007 – Development and the next generation’; and Africa Commission (2009)- ‘Realising the potential of Africa’s youth – report of the Africa Commission’ (cited in DFID–CSO Youth Working Group 2010, p. 14).

<sup>7</sup> Focus Area 5, Key Result Area 4: Enhanced participation by children and young people. Available from: [http://www.unicef.org/about/execboard/files/2012-MTSP-Revised\\_Annexes-Final-30Jan11.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/about/execboard/files/2012-MTSP-Revised_Annexes-Final-30Jan11.pdf) [Accessed 5 February 2013].

economic responsibilities faced by adolescents will also be differentially distributed according to local gender norms; for example, the burden of care for siblings and household support may fall disproportionately on girls, while boys may be more likely to migrate in search of income-earning opportunities. Beyond conflict, peacebuilding interventions offer a unique opportunity to engage with existing gender dynamics as “gender roles are rarely fixed; they are constantly evolving in response to changes in social/political situations, security issues and economic arrangements” (Children and Youth as Peacebuilders n.d., p. 8).

Involving adolescents in peacebuilding programming “can make peacebuilding efforts more effective and sustainable and their roles can range from creating a culture of peace, supporting reconciliation and the rebuilding of social relationships to searching for protection and rights” (UNICEF EMOPS 2012, p. 3).<sup>8</sup> Adolescents have significant knowledge to offer with regard to the conflict situation, its historic roots and how it affects their daily lives. Often having lived through years of violent conflict, the coping and survival skills they learnt will remain with them and can be drawn upon in contributing to peace in the post-conflict period (Pichette 2012 cited McEvoy-Levy 2001). By facilitating adolescents’ analyses of the situation, the causes of the conflict and its effects, adolescents become part of the process of seeking solutions.

#### Further resources on the participation of adolescents in programming and peacebuilding

- Academy for Educational Development, 2005. Youth as a catalyst for peace: Helping Youth Develop the Vision, Skills, and Behaviours to Promote Peace.  
<http://www.ngoconnect.net/documents/592341/749044/Youth+as+a+Catalyst+for+Peace+Helping+Youth+Develop+Vision,+Skills+and+Beh>
- Asia-Pacific Interagency Group on Youth, 2011. Investing in Youth Policy: Sharing good practices to advance policy development for young people in the Asia-Pacific region.  
[http://www.investinginyouthpolicy.com/Investing\\_In\\_Youth\\_Policy.pdf](http://www.investinginyouthpolicy.com/Investing_In_Youth_Policy.pdf)
- Children and Youth as Peacebuilders, n.d. Resource Manual.  
[http://www.childrenyouthaspeacebuilders.ca/pdfs/resources/resource\\_manual.pdf](http://www.childrenyouthaspeacebuilders.ca/pdfs/resources/resource_manual.pdf)
- Commonwealth Secretariat, 2005. Tools for Adolescent and Youth Participation.  
[http://www.thecommonwealth.org/Shared\\_ASP\\_Files/UploadedFiles/983621CB-D789-48B3-A84C-F2CB6023E458\\_Four-ToolsforAdolescentandYouthParticipation.pdf](http://www.thecommonwealth.org/Shared_ASP_Files/UploadedFiles/983621CB-D789-48B3-A84C-F2CB6023E458_Four-ToolsforAdolescentandYouthParticipation.pdf)
- DFID–CSO Youth Working Group, 2010. Youth Participation in Development: A Guide for Development Agencies and Policy Makers.  
[http://ygproject.org/sites/default/files/6962\\_Youth\\_Participation\\_in\\_Development.pdf](http://ygproject.org/sites/default/files/6962_Youth_Participation_in_Development.pdf)
- Lowicki, J., 2002. Beyond consultation: in support of more meaningful adolescent

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<sup>8</sup> UNICEF is not alone in addressing the important role of adolescents in peacebuilding. Initiatives within the United Nations are already underway to improve the way in which adolescents are engaged in policies and programmes for peacebuilding; within the Inter-Agency Network on Youth and Development (IANYD), there is a subgroup on Youth and Peacebuilding which is developing principles for how to support the participation of young people in peacebuilding programmes.

participation, Forced Migration Review 15.

[www.fmreview.org/FMRpdfs/FMR15/fmr15.14.pdf](http://www.fmreview.org/FMRpdfs/FMR15/fmr15.14.pdf)

- Save the Children, 2005. Practice Standards in Children's Participation. London: International Save the Children Alliance.  
<http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/resources/online-library/practice-standards-children%E2%80%99s-participation>
- War Child Holland, 2009. Conflict and Peace: Module of War Childs I DEAL intervention.  
[www.warchildlearning.org](http://www.warchildlearning.org)
- Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, 2005. Youth Speak Out: New Voices on the Protection and Participation of Adolescents Affected by Armed Conflict.

## II. ENGAGING ADOLESCENTS IN THE PBEA CONFLICT ANALYSIS

This section offers practical guidance to UNICEF Country Offices for engaging with adolescents in the PBEA Conflict Analysis.

- The first part reviews the **preliminary considerations** which need to be taken into account before engaging with adolescents.
- The second part lists some **practical preparations** which are required before beginning consultations.
- The third part describes **participative tools** which may be used in engaging adolescents in the PBEA Conflict Analysis.

### PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS BEFORE CONSULTING WITH ADOLESCENTS

To ensure that adolescents' participation in the PBEA Conflict Analysis is conducted to the highest ethical and professional standards, the following considerations should be taken into account:

#### **Safety and security measures are of fundamental importance**

Given the sensitive political context in which the PBEA is implemented, UNICEF Country Offices will need to assess any possible risks which may be associated with involving adolescents in the Conflict Analysis. Participatory activities "can lead adolescents to take action or speak about issues that local adults find objectionable or which are perceived as a challenge to existing power relations" (Hart 2004, p. 29). Depending on the context, risks may be specifically gendered, with girls facing greater obstacles to their participation than boys. With the priority on 'doing no harm', efforts to protect participants from any potentially negative impacts must be considered. In addition the location of where consultation activities are held should be carefully evaluated to ensure that there are no threats to adolescents' physical security. Adolescents' right to informed consent (including choosing *not* to participate in consultation) is inherent to ensuring their protection, as discussed further on page 14.

#### **Conflict sensitivity is essential**

Caution and sensitivity should guide all aspects of the Conflict Analysis process to ensure that adolescents' participation does not exacerbate existing tensions or create new ones. The topics that will be covered and questions that will be asked need to be carefully prepared in advance to appropriately respond to and manage potentially controversial issues which adolescents are likely to bring up, for example tensions between different identity groups or experiences of gender-based violence. In some contexts, terminology can be a sensitive issue, and Country Offices will need to reflect on whether or not to use terms such as 'conflict' or 'peace'. Depending on the local situation, it may be more appropriate to conduct the analysis along more neutral terms, allowing the 'conflict' to remain implicit while discussing other aspects of adolescents' lives and experiences. Throughout, awareness of the conflict dynamics are needed, with sensitivity to potential 'dividers'- such as identity, language, gender, religion, socio-economic status or education level- taken into careful account when organising group activities.

**Referrals and follow-up support must be provided**

It is the ethical responsibility of those engaging with adolescents to ensure follow-up services and referral to appropriate support services when protection concerns are raised (Boyden and Ennew 1997). UNICEF Country Offices will need to ensure that established child protection standards and protocols for the referral of abuse are followed. Collaboration and partnership with local government services or appropriate NGOs will be important in this regard. During the course of consultations, issues relating to the experiences and consequences of the conflict may be raised which may be psychologically or emotionally difficult for some individuals to deal with. Therefore it is advised not to interview individuals who have been repeatedly interviewed by others, particularly when they have experienced abuse (UNICEF 2012c).

**Honesty and accountability is key and expectations need to be managed**

Throughout any consultation process, it is essential to be honest with adolescents so that they can fully understand both what is expected of them as well as what they can expect as a result of their participation (Save the Children 2004). Honest and forthright discussions on what adolescents might be able to expect from their participation in the Conflict Analysis should be held at the earliest stages of consultation to help mitigate any future disillusionment or disappointment. Adolescents (as adults) may not have an understanding of how UNICEF and partners plan, collaborate and make decisions about programming and resources. However, ensuring their basic understanding of these matters – which may require time for explanation and clarification - is fundamental to a true mutual agreement of the nature of their participation. In the long run, trust is a necessary element for successful programming, and the time and effort taken to clear expectations in these early stages is likely to be a valuable investment.

In addition, as “adolescents may travel long distances, negotiate their participation with family members, leave work or school and delay their household duties until a later moment” (Reilly 2009, p. 2), nominal compensation such as travel costs or refreshments may be considered (Save the Children 1998); this should be carefully managed in line with fair and established standards. Consulting other organizations working with adolescents in the host community or country, and harmonizing compensation or incentive with their practices, may also be a valuable process for future collaboration or initiatives

**Staff working with adolescents need to be trained and supported**

Adults working with adolescents can only encourage genuine participation effectively and confidently if they have the necessary understanding and skills. Efforts should be made to provide relevant briefing and possibly training opportunities to enhance knowledge and facilitations skills. It is likely that sensitive or difficult topics will be raised during group exercises or individual interviews. It is essential that UNICEF staff and consultants in contact with adolescents be fully trained in basic child protection standards and practices, and that they are able to sensitively and appropriately respond when difficult issues or protection concerns are raised. UNICEF Country Offices should also be aware of the potential emotional and psychological impact on staff and provide them with wellbeing support (Interaction Protection Working Group, n.d.).

**Participation is a process to be sustained throughout the PBEA programme cycle**

The participation of adolescents in the PBEA Conflict Analysis should be considered only as the entry point for their sustained participation throughout the duration of the PBEA programme. Adolescent participation should not be a one-time 'extractive' exercise- i.e. merely collecting information (Saferworld and Conciliation Resources 2012); rather, adolescents can contribute both to the identification of problems and conflict factors, and to recommending possible solutions and peacebuilding opportunities. Moreover, consultations with adolescents carried out for the Conflict Analysis process should include opportunities for them to articulate their aspirations for peace, their priorities for education programming, and possibilities for how they can participate in peacebuilding processes. These, in turn, should be considered in program planning processes along with other findings from the Conflict Analysis. Adolescents' continued engagement throughout the programme cycle will increase their ownership in the PBEA programme and allow them to derive more meaningful benefits from their involvement in the longer term (see Academy for Educational Development 2005).

## PRACTICAL STEPS FOR CONSULTING ADOLESCENTS

The practical steps explained in this section and the tools described further below should be adapted to diverse operating and security environments, geographical accessibility, the amount of time and the available budget. The main priority for facilitators will always be to ensure the safety, security, and best interests of the participants. While the ways in which adolescents participate in the Conflict Analysis will depend largely on the specific context, the following practical steps should be considered by all UNICEF Country Offices involved in the PBEA programme:

### **Community support for and engagement with adolescents' participation**

The first step in any effort to engage with adolescents will require informing and seeking the support from members of the community where the Conflict Analysis is to be conducted. In line with UNICEF's standard operating procedures in each context, initial meetings should be held with key local stakeholders, including the relevant government authorities, local leaders, parents and adolescents themselves. During these meetings, the PBEA programme should be explained carefully as well as the rationale for seeking the participation of adolescents.

Adult and adolescent community members alike should help to plan a consultation process that ensures their safety, as well as the authentic expression of their ideas and opinions. Particular attention should be given to managing expectations (discussed above under "Honesty and Accountability is Key," page 12). Once there is local agreement on the engagement of adolescents, then the details of how consultations will occur- time, location, and who will participate- should be discussed. Plans and agreements in this regard should have the endorsement of all relevant participants and stakeholders, including adolescents, parents, and local officials.

### **Participant selection**

There is no singular or 'representative' adolescent voice, so efforts to engage adolescents should endeavour to include as wide a range of participants as possible in order to reflect the great diversity of experiences and perspectives. To the extent possible, there should be a range of ages and education levels. Gender-balanced participation should be assured, while group activities can be conducted in sex-segregated groups or with both boys and girls together depending on social and cultural norms specific to each local context. Special efforts should also be made to involve adolescents who are usually difficult to reach, those who are not at school or those who are otherwise isolated or marginalised, including young people with disabilities. Depending on where the PBEA will be implemented, geographical diversity will need to be accounted for by including adolescents from minority identity groups and young people from both rural and urban areas. Moreover, the adolescents should be representative of groups (whether ethnic, religious, geographic, or others) that may have different perspectives regarding conflicts or priorities for peace.

In terms of reaching adolescents, they themselves can be extremely helpful in identifying their peers, especially those who might be difficult to reach. Ensuring the participation of a few influential adolescents- or 'multiplier youth' (Search for Common Ground 2009) - may encourage the participation of others; these adolescents may eventually become key actors throughout the

PBEA programme. Similarly, working through local organisations such as disabled people's organisations or other local groups can help to ensure that especially marginalized adolescents are given the opportunity to participate. That said, whenever possible, adolescents who have not been reached by programmes and services should also be included, as they are likely to have a unique and valuable insight into how to make future programming accessible and relevant for their priorities.

### **Location and time**

The location of participatory activities needs to be neutral, safe and convenient for adolescents, as well as accessible for participants with disabilities. The location will need to allow for the protection of confidentiality and also be socially and culturally appropriate for both male and female participants. To include working adolescents, activities should be conducted at a time of day which is convenient. Provisions should also be made for young mothers so that they may be able to participate, for example through the provision of child care. To make informed choices about timing, discussions of adolescents' daily responsibilities (differentiating between those of boys and girls) should be included in the preliminary conversations with host communities.

### **Informed consent**

Gaining informed consent is a necessary prerequisite to beginning research with adolescents. Informed consent requires that participants and their parents or caregivers understand the reasons why they are being asked to participate, the themes which will be discussed, the types of questions that will be asked, the possible risks and benefits of participating, and how the information they provide will be used (WHO Standards 2007). If the participant is younger than 18 years of age then consent from a parent or care-giver should be sought (although consent from an adult caregiver may not be needed if the adolescent is an emancipated minor- i.e. if they are economically self-sufficient, living independently or married).<sup>9</sup>

A genuine choice about participation needs to be presented and upheld throughout the entire consultation process, with adolescents being given the option of not participating, not answering all questions, or ending their participation at any stage of the process (Save the Children 1998). (This option not to participate is directly interconnected with adolescents' right to protection and security, as adolescents are often experts in whether and when they can share their ideas safely). Facilitators should use methods that uphold adolescents' right not to speak, including by respecting both verbal and nonverbal cues.<sup>10</sup> It should be made clear that one's participation or not will have no effect on access to future programmes or services. Adolescents should also be reminded that the consent of a parent or care-giver does not mean that they are necessarily expected to participate.

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<sup>9</sup> Gaining consent can be a complex issue, one with direct bearing on the question of young people's participation or exclusion. As questioned by Hart (2012, p. 136): "Should a young person... be excluded from the opportunity to have their views heard because of the lack of consent by an adult?" Such questions do not have simple answers and need careful reflection on the part of those conducting research.

<sup>10</sup> Facilitators conducting focus groups with adolescents, especially in conflict-affected contexts, are encouraged to seek training and guidance in psychosocial support and other key protection issues, to learn methods by which to create a protective environment in which adolescents can express their views freely and safely.

Given the context and associated sensitivities of conflict-affected settings, the use of consent forms is not recommended (Hart 2012), although reading out a standard script and seeking oral consent is advised.<sup>11</sup> Permission should also be gained if any photographs or other forms of documentation are to be used during the data collection. At the end of each discussion, it is also recommended that participants be asked if they are in agreement with what has been discussed, and if not to explain why.

### **Protecting confidentiality**

At the beginning of any consultation, the principle of confidentiality should be clearly explained. Due to the potentially sensitive nature of information disclosed, participants in group discussions should either commit themselves to confidentiality or be aware that they should not share personal and sensitive information in the group. In some cultural contexts confidentiality is not a familiar concept and may be difficult to uphold in practice; moreover, adolescents may not have developed the judgment to keep each other's comments confidential after a discussion. Facilitators should be aware of these factors, and should help guide adolescents through appropriate expectations and choices accordingly. It will also be important to note that when protection concerns are raised during the discussion, such as testimony regarding specific experiences of child abuse or exploitation, confidentiality may be broken by the facilitator to protect adolescents' best interests (Save the Children 2004).

### **Communicating with adolescents**

The basic principles of communicating with adolescents are not significantly different from those required for communicating with adults, such as ensuring mutual respect and trust. However, certain adaptations will need to be made when communicating with adolescents. While clarity of concepts is needed- especially in consideration of the potential sensitivity of themes relating to peace and conflict- facilitators and interviewers should not patronise or 'talk down' to young participants. Questions should be expressed simply, with only one question asked at a time (Reilly 2009). Questions will also have to be adapted depending on the age of the participants; i.e. questions will be presented differently to younger adolescents than to older adolescents. It is also suggested to begin the discussion with neutral topics before addressing more difficult or sensitive ones. Discussion in the language individuals are more comfortable speaking should be assured, and it will be important to ensure that the translator, if present, prevents any alteration in concepts so that meanings are not lost or misinterpreted (Reilly 2012).

Sensitivity is also needed in relation to how the heterogeneity of gender, age, class, education level, or identity may affect participants' level of comfort in expressing themselves in group discussions or in interviews. For example, out-of-school adolescents may be less comfortable in voicing their opinions in front of adolescents who are in formal education. Similarly, younger adolescents may be intimidated by the presence of older adolescents in their group. In the initial

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<sup>11</sup> Hart (2012, p. 134) also notes that: "... in settings of political violence and instability, local people are often very reluctant to sign forms and to have their names registered in any semi-official manner: maintaining anonymity may be an important element of efforts to protect themselves and their families. To insist on a signed form can alienate potential research participants or even put them at risk." One technique to avert such risks might be to write a consent statement on a flip chart (which is read out for participants who cannot read) on which adolescents then outline their hands as a 'signature' which documents a mutual understanding between facilitator and participant.

meetings to prepare for the consultations, adolescents themselves can explain how they might feel most comfortable, with groups being organised accordingly.

Finally, facilitators need to have an understanding of the social model of disability and be able to communicate effectively and appropriately with participants who have disabilities.

Communication will need to be accessible for young people who are blind, deaf or have other disabilities.

### **Adapt engagement to specific stages of adolescent development**

Despite great global diversity adolescence in all contexts represents an important phase in an individual's life cycle, a transitional period of personal and social identity formation.

Developmental considerations should be kept in mind when engaging with adolescents.

Facilitators should remain sensitive, adapting their approaches according to their best understanding of the cognitive, physical, social and emotional development of the adolescents with whom they are working.

To respond to the psychosocial and development needs of adolescents, interactive warm up activities and games should be used at the beginning of each discussion to help the participants feel at ease with each other and with the facilitators. Adapted to each context, these activities need to be accessible and inclusive for all types of abilities and should be age and gender appropriate. For younger or "less mature" adolescents, shorter sessions may be more appropriate and comfortable for their attention levels and interest. Questions and examples dealing with concrete experiences may be more accessible than abstract issues. Accommodating the social awareness and perceptual concerns which adolescents may have in relation to each other should be an overarching consideration.

### **Further resources for communicating with adolescents, ethical research, warm-up activities and games**

- Boyden, J. and Ennew, J. (eds.), 1997. Children in Focus: A manual for participatory research with children. <http://resourcecentre.savethechildren.se/content/library/documents/children-focus-manual-participatory-research-children>
- Children and Youth as Peacebuilders, n.d. Resource Manual. [http://www.childrenyouthaspeacebuilders.ca/pdfs/resources/resource\\_manual.pdf](http://www.childrenyouthaspeacebuilders.ca/pdfs/resources/resource_manual.pdf)
- Children and Youth as Peacebuilders Gender Maps: <http://www.savethechildren.ca/document.doc?id=184>
- DFID–CSO Youth Working Group, 2010. Youth Participation in Development: A Guide for Development Agencies and Policy Makers. [http://ygproject.org/sites/default/files/6962\\_Youth\\_Participation\\_in\\_Development.pdf](http://ygproject.org/sites/default/files/6962_Youth_Participation_in_Development.pdf)
- Hart, J. 2012. Ethical issues in research with children living amidst political violence. <https://www.etikkom.no/Documents/Publikasjoner-som-PDF/Cross->

[cultural%20child%20research/Cross%20Cultural%20child%20research,%20webutgave.pdf](#)

- Knox, G. n.d., 40 Icebreakers for Small Groups.  
[http://insight.typepad.co.uk/40\\_icebreakers\\_for\\_small\\_groups.pdf](http://insight.typepad.co.uk/40_icebreakers_for_small_groups.pdf)
- Save the Children, 2004. So you want to involve children in research? A toolkit supporting children's meaningful and ethical participation in research relating to violence against children. <http://images.savethechildren.it/f/download/Policies/st/strumenti.pdf>
- UNICEF/ Kolucki, B. and Lemish, D., 2011. Communicating with Children: Principles and Practices to Nurture, Inspire, Excite, Educate and Heal.  
[http://www.unicef.org/cwc/files/CwC\\_Web\(2\).pdf](http://www.unicef.org/cwc/files/CwC_Web(2).pdf)
- War Child Holland, 2009. IDEAL Modules. [www.warchildlearning.org](http://www.warchildlearning.org)

## APPROACHES FOR CONSULTING ADOLESCENTS

The tools described in this section are standard participatory research tools which will be relevant when engaging with adolescents in the PBEA Conflict Analysis.<sup>12</sup> They are organised into two separate sections- **focus group discussions** and **individual interviews**. To add depth and nuance to the information collected, **complementary participatory tools** are also described, including ranking, mapping, timelines, problem tree analysis, role play, case studies or life histories, and drawing. By using multiple and complementary data collection tools, the information can be triangulated and verified, thus strengthening the overall analysis. Each tool is described and guidance is offered on how it can be used. The sample questions or discussion points listed with each tool are intended only as suggestions; in all cases, the questions will have to be carefully elaborated and specifically targeted by each UNICEF Country Office in order to collect the most relevant data for the Conflict Analysis. Within each country, the same questions will need to be asked in all areas where the research is being conducted and with each of the groups consulted in order to support data analysis and comparison and the local and country levels.

### FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

A focus group discussion (FGD) is defined as “a purposeful, facilitated discussion between a group of respondents with similar characteristics, within a fixed timeframe, focusing on a limited number of topics that may be chosen either by the researchers or respondents” (Boyden and Ennew 1997, p. 129). An FGD is intended to be highly participative, offering a forum for lively exchange and free-flowing discussion. Compared to other research tools, FGDs can provide a rich base of information to support analysis and programme design.

#### **To consider before beginning an FGD:**

- Recalling that the term ‘facilitate’ means to ‘make easier’ (Search for Common Ground 2003), the role of the facilitator in FGDs is of crucial importance. The facilitator is responsible for creating an environment of respect and open exchange, encouraging the involvement of all in an inclusive way.
- Awareness of and sensitivity to local power and gender dynamics are essential and is especially important in a context affected by conflict, where sensitive or difficult themes may lead to increased tension.
- Ideally, an FGD should involve between 6 and 10 participants to ensure that the discussion can reach the required depth to make it useful and to ensure that all participants have the space to express their voice.
- Adolescents who have responsibilities for caring for younger siblings or their own children should be able to participate. Facilitators can explore arrangements for the care of younger children in the proximity of where the FGD is being conducted. In some cases, it may be convenient and not disruptive for adolescents to bring young children in their care to the FGDs.

<sup>12</sup> These tools can also be used for data collection at other stages of the PBEA programme cycle.

- When involving adolescents in FGDs, convening them according to relevant age cohorts can allow for more in-depth discussions particular to each age group.
- In some contexts it will be most appropriate to disaggregate the groups according to gender, although this is not always the case. Participants can be asked what their preference is (i.e. female or male only, or mixed groups).
- A team approach to facilitation whether with co-facilitators, a facilitation assistant, or a translator (who shares some facilitation responsibilities) is helpful in managing any contingencies that may arise.
- The questions prepared for the FGD need to be context-specific. They should be simple, open-ended and limited in number. Grouped in a theme, they will be used to guide the discussion in a fluid and semi-structured way to support the discussion.
- The FGD should be conducted in a neutral and safe place, protected from onlookers and where participants can feel comfortable discussing openly. A challenge in more open venues can be interested onlookers who may join the discussion, including adults who may overpower or distract from adolescents' voices. A co-facilitator or assistant may help to manage this situation if it should arise.
- The discussion should take place in the language in which adolescents are most comfortable communicating; provisions for translation (including sign language translation) needs to be taken into account during planning.
- Ensure that support for consultations by the relevant local stakeholders has been sought (see the paragraph "Community engagement and support for adolescent participation" on page 13 above).
- Ensure that informed consent has been gained by the participants and their parents or caregivers (see the paragraph 'Informed consent' on page 14 above).
- If working with a translator or interpreter, meet in advance to ensure mutual understanding and expectations about his or her role (see the paragraph "Communicating with adolescents" on page 16 above).

### **How to conduct an FGD:**

1. Invite the participants to sit in a circular arrangement so that eye contact is possible between them.
2. Remind the participants that they can end their participation at any time and allow participants to raise any questions or concerns they may have in advance of the discussion.
3. Discuss and clarify participants' expectations prior to beginning the focus group discussion. Perhaps the most common expectation of adolescents is that programmes and resources may be immediately forthcoming in direct response to the requests and ideas they share, and addressing this immediately is key to upholding the principles of honesty and informed consent. In most cases, managing expectations will entail explaining how adolescents' suggestions and ideas will be considered as part of a programme planning process, while also clarifying whether or not and when resources may be forthcoming. If adolescents choose to leave the FGD because it does not meet their expectations, their choice should be respected although facilitators may remind them of the potential value of their insights. This discussion

may include any clarification of what incentive or compensation adolescents may expect for their participation.

4. Introduce the purpose of the FGD and the themes to be discussed. Initial discussion may be needed to ensure that there is a common understanding of concepts which will be raised.
5. Highlight the importance of respect for others' opinions and clarify agreements regarding confidentiality.
6. Agree ground rules with the participants prior to beginning the FGD and agree on ways to "self-regulate" each other and the discussion in order to ensure that a few participants do not dominate the discussion.<sup>13</sup>
7. Begin with more neutral questions to allow the conversation to build its momentum before broaching more sensitive questions. When needed, the facilitator can reformulate the answers to ensure that the intervention is clearly understood.
8. The facilitator may need to support the flow of the discussion by reframing questions or providing examples. When it comes to sensitive topics that participants may be less willing to discuss, the facilitator should remind the participants that personal experiences need not be shared and that examples can relate to adolescents in general.
9. The facilitator may explicitly ask participants to consider boys and girls, marginalised young people or young people with disabilities when contributing to the discussion to ensure that the concerns of all young people are raised.
10. A FGD can take between 45- 90 minutes; the length will depend on the participants' availability of time and other developmental factors such as their interest and attention span. The facilitator can also determine when saturation of information has been reached.
11. At the end of the FGD, the facilitator should review the main themes of the discussion.
12. Thank the participants and let them know what the next steps will be, if any. Invite participants to speak separately to you in case of individual concerns.
13. Review the discussion with the translator and complete the notes of the discussion. If necessary, review the list of questions that were prepared and adapt as necessary for the next discussion.

### Sample FGD questions

Questions need to be aligned with the broader conflict analysis and programme planning process. The below sample questions are only suggestions.

#### **Situation of adolescents**

- What is life like for adolescents here?
- What is a typical day like for an adolescent boy? An adolescent girl? (Providing ages may be helpful).

#### **Peace**

- What does the word 'peace' mean?
- Is there peace here?

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<sup>13</sup> It should be noted that there is a risk in FGDs that divergent opinions may be silenced due to the group norm, leading to a false consensus. One possible way of dealing with this is through the use of non-verbal signs or actions – for example certain motions, locally available objects or coloured cards provided by the facilitator- can be used to express appreciation, discomfort, or if participants feel that one opinion is dominating

- How do young people your age contribute to peace?
- What are the most valuable ways that young people your age contribute to peace?

#### **Causes and impacts of conflict**

- Explain what the conflict is/was about. (If adolescents feel there is more than one conflict at issue, these should all be explored.)
- What are/were the main causes of the conflict(s)?
- How has the conflict affected the lives of adolescents?
- What impact has the conflict had on education?
- How might violence and education relate to each other?

#### **Possibilities for peacebuilding**

- How do people usually resolve conflicts here?
- Who are the people here who have the power to influence peace?
- How might education contribute to building peace?
- What can adolescents do to contribute to peace – including what they are already doing, and other things they could do?
- What additional skills and knowledge would adolescents need to transform conflict and promote peace?

## COMPLEMENTARY TOOLS TO FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

### Ranking

Ranking exercises are used as a complementary tool which can help to understand which issues are of greatest concern for adolescents. Within an FGD, a ranking exercise can be used to provide greater analytical clarity on a particular theme raised during the discussion. They are also very useful in programme design, helping to understand the relative importance of problems and the feasibility of proposed solutions.

#### **How to conduct a ranking exercise:**<sup>14</sup>

1. Begin the exercise by asking participants to identify key issues relating to the specific theme under discussion.
2. The facilitator keeps track of the statements made; it is likely that several common issues will be identified.
3. The facilitator asks questions about these issues to better understand the impact on the lives of the participants.
4. The facilitator then asks the group to rank the issues in order of their significance/ relevance/ feasibility.
5. When the ranking exercise has focussed on key problems facing adolescents, the discussion may then continue to identify potential solutions, which should then ranked in terms of feasibility.

#### Sample ranking exercises

- List the main strengths which adolescents contribute to the life of the community here, then rank them according to which are the most relevant for peacebuilding.
- List the main problems affecting adolescents here, then rank them according to the extent to which they have had a negative impact on adolescents' lives.
- List the main causes of conflict here, then rank them according to which are the most difficult to resolve.

### Mapping

Mapping exercises can be used to collect a range of data from multiple perspectives, and are especially useful to gain insight on conflict drivers or other significant factors relating to conflict and peacebuilding that might not otherwise be acknowledged or articulated. Two types of mapping exercises suggested here are:

1. **Geographical mapping:** to gain insights about the spaces such as the neighbourhood or village which define and delimit adolescents' everyday lives.

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<sup>14</sup> Adapted from Onyango and Worthen 2010, p.18.

2. **Asset mapping:** to identify the individual, social and institutional assets and resources which are available in the community to support adolescents and peacebuilding efforts.

It is suggested that the geographical mapping is conducted first, followed by the asset mapping. The maps developed by the groups can be drawn on flipchart paper with markers, or on the ground using materials that are available. Mapping exercises and the subsequent discussion can last between 30- 60 minutes.

### **How to conduct mapping exercises:**

1. Explain that the purpose of the mapping exercise is to better understand the environment of adolescents' lives and the positive resources available to them.
2. When conducting the geographical mapping, determine the spaces that will be mapped. Let the participants know that the scale of the map need not be accurate; rather the aim is to portray the spaces which are relevant in their lives.
3. When continuing with the asset mapping, adolescents are encouraged to identify the individual, social and institutional resources that are available in the community towards the building of peace. These can be written directly on the geographical map, or written on another sheet of paper as a chart or in concentric circles (with the innermost circle containing individual assets, working outwards to the social then institutional).
4. The facilitator may need to explicitly raise issues relating to disability or other forms of marginalisation will as they may not otherwise be considered by the participants.
5. The group then discusses the maps.

### **Sample questions to guide mapping:**

#### **Geographical mapping**

**Note: In many contexts, boys and girls access and use the physical spaces of their community according to very different patterns. It may be useful to conduct this exercise in two iterations (or in gender-segregated groups) to focus on the experiences of boys and girls respectively.**

- Define the outer limits of the physical space which you consider as your community.
- In this space, where do adolescents spend their time?
- Are there places girls prefer? Are there places boys prefer? Why?
- Are there places boys avoid? Are there places girls avoid? Why?
- Are there places certain groups of adolescents never go? Why?
- Where might be sites of conflict?
- Where do people come together peacefully?

#### **Asset mapping for peacebuilding**

- What skills, capacities and experiences of adolescents can contribute to building peace here?
- Which social institutions contribute to peace in this community (e.g. churches, local organisations, youth groups, etc.)?
- Which local government institutions contribute to building peace here?
- Discuss how the individual, social and institutional assets and resources link together. How can these linkages be strengthened?

## *Timelines*

Timelines can be used to gain understanding about how key events have had an impact on adolescents and their communities. The aim of a timeline is to build a chronological understanding of group histories by describing significant events as they occurred in the past (Boyden and Ennew 1997). Timelines can be constructed to describe events in local history, providing a social, economic and environmental perspective on the current situation (Commonwealth Secretariat 2005a).

Especially in contexts affected by conflict, sensitivity will be required when conducting a timeline exercise as contested events may be evoked during the discussion. The facilitator will need to ensure that any difficult moments are carefully managed so that they provide an opportunity for constructive discussion among the participants rather than conflictual disagreement. In contexts where history is highly contested and the political situation tenuous, the timeline exercise might be more effectively conducted on an individual basis.

The timeline can be drawn on flipchart paper with markers, or on the ground using materials that are available. This activity can take 30- 60 minutes.

### **How to conduct a timeline exercise:**

1. Introduce the purpose of the timeline. Explain to the participants that this is a subjective exercise and that the point is to understand which events in the past they consider to be important. The main point is that the events which are documented have had an impact in some way on the present.
2. The kind of timeline is chosen by the participants. For example, the passage of time might be represented as a simple chronology or symbolically, for example as river or a journey along a road (Commonwealth Secretariat 2005a). It is up to the participants to decide the earliest point in the timeline.
3. If this is a large group exercise, designate a recorder who will note the events mentioned by the participants. If the exercise is conducted in smaller groups, the participants will report back to the plenary.

### **Sample timeline exercise**

- The end of the line represents where we are today. Looking backwards, what are the events which have been most important to the current situation? You can go as far back in history as you consider relevant. Continue filling in the timeline until all the most relevant events have been included. Discuss.

## *Problem Tree Analysis*

The Problem Tree Analysis allows for in-depth exploration of the root causes and effects of problems which have been identified by the participants during the FGD. By illustrating how the

causes and effects of problems are interconnected, deeper insights are gained about the problems experienced, thus making it easier to identify possible solutions. The 'tree' can most easily be drawn on a flipchart by the facilitator, with the participants providing guidance on which 'roots' and 'leaves' are to be drawn, where, and how they might relate to each other. This exercise can be conducted in a large group to analyse one problem, or in smaller groups to analyse multiple problems which are then reported back to the plenary. The time allocated to each 'Problem Tree' will vary; the point is to explore in sufficient depth the causes and effects of the selected problem.

If appropriate to the context, the 'Problem Tree' may be renamed as a 'Conflict Tree' to reinforce the purpose of the analysis with a focus on the conflict. For a more positive, asset-based approach, this tool can be adapted and presented as an 'Opportunity Tree' analysis, where the focus is instead on identifying opportunities for building peace.

### **How to conduct a Problem Tree Analysis:**

1. Introduce the purpose of the Problem Tree Analysis.
2. Agree with the group the problem that is to be discussed- usually it will have been raised during the FGD.
3. The problem is then written on the trunk of the tree. The causes of the problem are the roots and the branches are the effects: these are noted on the flipchart. When causes are identified in the discussion, try to identify the effects in order to clarify the cause-and-effect relationship.
4. The facilitator may need to make explicit reference to how the problems may have differential impacts, for example on girls or on adolescents who are otherwise marginalised, e.g. adolescents from minority groups or adolescents with disabilities.
5. Once the tree is completed, discuss what steps would be needed to begin addressing the problem.

### **Sample questions to guide Problem Tree Analysis:**

- Describe the problem that we are going to analyse.
- What are some of the causes of the problem? What are the effects of each cause identified?
- Which of the causes are currently being addressed?
- Which causes of the problem remain? What would be needed to address each cause?

### ***Role play***

Role play can be useful in engaging with adolescents in a creative and dynamic way. Role play enables participants to explore and discuss sensitive issues with fewer personal inhibitions (Boyden and Ennew 1997), but requires careful instruction and guidance. The themes should be relevant to the context and realistic examples of the situations and dilemmas adolescents might experience in their daily lives.

### **How to conduct a role play exercise:**

1. The subject of the role play can be decided by the participants following the themes and issues which have been raised during the FGD.
2. Those who will perform the role play are given the subject to prepare. The numbers of participants in each role play will depend on the theme that is elaborated.
3. The performance should not be long (e.g. not more than 5 minutes). The groups are given a period of time to prepare the role play (e.g. 20 minutes) before returning to the group to perform it.
4. After each pair/group performs for the plenary, a discussion is facilitated to elaborate the main themes which emerged. The participants can be asked a series of questions, including;
  - What happened in this play?
  - Was it realistic?
  - Are you satisfied with the role you played?
  - How can such a situation lead to greater conflict?
  - What opportunities might be represented for supporting peace?

### **Sample themes for role plays**

- A young person meets two of his/her peers in the middle of an intense argument. How does s/he intervene?
- A young person (male/female) is in conflict with his/her family over a certain issue. How is the problem addressed?
- Two neighbours are in competition over the boundaries of their property. How do they deal with it?

## INTERVIEWS

Interviews provide the opportunity to collect detailed information at an individual level. They contribute to gaining a deeper understanding about the experiences of individual lives and how they have been affected by conflict and peace.

### **To consider before beginning an individual interview:**

- Consent to participate in an interview will need to be gained before beginning the process- both of the adolescent and of their parents/ caregivers (see the paragraph on 'Informed consent' on page 14 above). As in a FGD, interviewees should understand their right to end an interview or to choose not to answer a question if they wish.
- The modalities for interviewing adolescents will depend on the context. It may not be appropriate to interview an adolescent individually; in such cases participants can be interviewed in pairs or small groups. It should also be discussed with the adolescent how the interview will be recorded and ensure they are comfortable with this method.
- Gender considerations should be taken into account, especially in contexts where it is important for a girl to be interviewed by a woman or a boy by a man. This may also be relevant in cases where a translator is used.
- In these and other situations it may also be appropriate to have an adult from the community present to witness and support the interview process, although care should be taken to ensure that the adolescent interviewee(s) feel that they can share their perspectives freely.
- The time and place of the interview should be suggested by the adolescent to ensure that it accords with their other responsibilities and use of time. The interviews should be conducted in a safe place where the interviewee feels comfortable and where confidentiality is assured.
- Ensure the presence of a translator if needed and prepare in advance with the translator to ensure that he/she understands his/her role and does not interfere with or reinterpret the interviewee's comments.
- Interview questions should be prepared in advance. They should be clear and simply asked, and open-ended to allow the interviewee to express their own opinions at length. Adherence to the list of questions is not necessary; rather, the discussion should flow freely based on the rhythm at which the interviewee is comfortable.
- Difficult issues or protection concerns may be raised during the interview; in these cases referrals will need to be made and follow-up assured in line with UNICEF child protection standards and protocols. If it is a consultant conducting the research for UNICEF, they must be fully briefed on these standards and protocols.

### **How to conduct an individual interview:**

1. Introduce yourself and the translator and explain the purpose of the interview.
2. Discuss interviewees' expectations for the interview, and address any expectations that are unlikely to be fulfilled. Provide an opportunity for questions, and inform adolescents that they can ask questions again at the end of the interview or any other time if they wish.
3. Ensure that the adolescent is aware of the norms of confidentiality. Assure them that they can stop the discussion at any time they feel uncomfortable or do not want to continue for any other reason.
4. Encourage them to express themselves in the language in which they feel most comfortable.
5. Begin with more neutral questions before advancing to more sensitive topics.
6. If the interviewee expresses difficulty in answering a question, the question should be reframed or examples provided. When it comes to sensitive topics that the interviewee may be less willing to discuss, remind them that personal experiences need not be shared and that they can discuss the situation of adolescents in general. Move on from questions if adolescents express, whether through verbal or nonverbal cues, that they do not wish to respond.
7. Explicit reference may need to be made on how the situation may vary for different adolescents, for example girls or adolescents who are otherwise marginalised, e.g. from minority groups or adolescents with disabilities.
8. At the end of an interview, ask the interviewee if they have any questions.
9. Thank the interviewee for their participation.

### **Sample interview questions**

**Interviewers (or those organizing the research and consultations) are strongly encouraged to develop questions that are relevant to the adolescents and community in which they are working. Questions should be harmonized with the research questions of the broader Conflict Analysis. Following are a few questions that could be considered and/or adapted:**

- What is life like for people your age here?
- What does peace mean to you?
- What are your hopes for peace in this area? What would peace look like?
- What effect would peace have on your life?
- What would be needed to ensure peace here?
- What does conflict mean to you?
- How has the conflict had an impact on your life?
- What role do you think adolescents have in contributing to peace?
- What contribution could you make to peace? What would you need in order to do this?

## COMPLEMENTARY TOOLS TO INTERVIEWS

### *Case studies and life histories*

Case studies and life histories allow for in-depth analysis of the lives of adolescents and can illustrate how larger social, political and economic factors impact upon individual lives (Boyden and Ennew 1997). The detailed information documented through case studies and life histories can provide significant insights on the situation of adolescents, the challenges and constraints as well as the opportunities present in their lives. The documentation of case studies and life histories provides individuals the opportunity to express their personal experiences and perspectives in open and flexible ways which they can control, enabling them to tell their story in the way they choose (Pickering 1994).

The participants selected for case studies or life histories should be comfortable sharing information about themselves. To support inclusiveness, special efforts should be made to document the narratives of young people who are normally marginalised and whose voices are not often heard. Trust between the participant and the interviewer and translator is essential, and case studies and life histories should be documented only if there is sufficient time available to do them well. The documentation of case studies and life histories should be done in a safe place and at a time suggested by the adolescent. Considerations of cultural appropriateness, including gender, are needed when conducting the case studies, as will be provisions to ensure that the young person can speak in the language in which they are most comfortable.

#### **How to document a case study or life history:**

1. Explain the purpose of documenting the individual's personal story.
2. Begin asking the questions to start their narrative in line with the sample questions below.
3. At the end of the discussion, provide a brief verbal summary to validate their contribution.
4. Provide the opportunity to ask any questions.
5. Thank them for their participation.
6. Following the discussion, complete documentation of the case study or life history.

#### **Sample questions for case studies and life histories**

- Tell me a little bit about yourself (name, age, where you live, etc.).
- Tell me about your family (parents, siblings, etc.).
- How do you usually spend your days?
- What things do you like?
- What things don't you like?
- In what ways has the conflict had an impact on your life?
- What do you hope for yourself in the future?

## *Drawing*

Drawing serves as a complementary data collection tool to generate discussion on selected issues.<sup>15</sup> Drawing exercises should only be used in contexts where participants are familiar with drawing and able to express themselves visually. If the interviewee has not been to school, this exercise is not recommended.

### **How to conduct a drawing exercise:**

1. Explain to the interviewee the themes to be addressed in the drawing exercise.
2. Let the participants know that any representation they choose to draw is acceptable and that they will not be judged on the quality of the drawing. The priority is to stimulate reflection and discussion.
3. Provide the drawing materials and a set amount of time (e.g. 20 minutes) to draw a picture on the selected theme.
4. On completion of the exercise, invite the interviewee to describe their drawing and explain why they have depicted what they have.

### **Sample drawing exercise themes**

- Draw what an adolescent looks like. Describe their characteristics. How different are the characteristics for boys and girls? How different are the characteristics for rural and urban adolescents?
- Draw three images of one scene: The first image depicts a place before the conflict. The second image shows any changes to the place because of the conflict. The third image imagines how the place might look in the future.

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<sup>15</sup> Although included here as a complementary tool to individual interviews, drawing exercises can also be conducted as a group activity, e.g. following a FGD.

## FURTHER RESOURCES FOR PARTICIPATORY METHODOLOGIES

- Boyden, J. and Ennew, J. (eds.), 1997. Children in Focus: A manual for participatory research with children. <http://resourcecentre.savethechildren.se/content/library/documents/children-focus-manual-participatory-research-children>
- Child Friendly Cities, 2011. A Child Friendly Community Self-Assessment Tool for Adolescents. <http://childfriendlycities.org/en/research/final-toolkit>
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- Inter-Agency Working Group on Children's Participation, 2007. Operations Manual on Children's Participation in Consultations. [http://www.unicef.org/lac/Operations\\_manual\(1\).pdf](http://www.unicef.org/lac/Operations_manual(1).pdf)
- Medecins du Monde, n.d. The KAP Survey Model. <http://www.medecinsdumonde.org/Publications/Guides-a-l-usage-des-professionnels-de-l-humanitaire/Collecte-de-donnees-methodes-quantitatives>
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- Onyango, G. and Worthen, M., 2010. Handbook on Participatory Methods for Community-based Projects: A Guide for Programmers and Implementers Based on the Participatory Action Research Project with Young Mothers and their Children in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Northern Uganda. <http://www.uwyo.edu/girlmotherspar/files/pubs-handbook.pdf>
- Overseas Development Institute, 2009. Planning tools: Problem Tree Analysis. <http://www.odi.org.uk/publications/5258-problem-tree-analysis>

### **III. UNICEF EXPERIENCE ENGAGING WITH ADOLESCENTS IN THE PBEA CONFLICT ANALYSIS**

At the time of writing this Guidance Note, the PBEA Conflict Analysis had been completed in four UNICEF Country Offices (DRC, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Uganda), was underway in three Country Offices (Chad, Ivory Coast, South Sudan), and was planned for 2013 in four other Country Offices (Burundi, Ethiopia, Somalia, Yemen). In Palestine a UN Country Team analysis had been conducted, while in Pakistan a Situation Analysis had been completed prior to the beginning of the PBEA. Some of the experiences of engaging with adolescents are shared here in the hopes that other UNICEF Country Offices may benefit.

#### **Uganda**

Involving adolescents in the PBEA is a key strategic priority for UNICEF Uganda as 79% of the Ugandan population is below the age of 30 years (UNICEF Uganda 2012). To support the process of participant selection in the Conflict Analysis, UNICEF Zonal Offices worked through existing partners and contacts in secondary schools and youth centres, which were then responsible for the selection of participants based on a request for ensuring diversity of participants in terms of gender, socio-economic status and geography. The methodology used when engaging with adolescents in the Uganda Conflict Analysis was centred on FGDs. Adolescents were the focus of the research and discussion questions were elaborated knowing that they would be the main interlocutors. The questions were initially developed for secondary school students and then adapted for out-of-school adolescents.

As a result of the Conflict Analysis, UNICEF Uganda has established peacebuilding interventions to specifically address the needs of youth. For example, the Conflict Analysis revealed how high levels of unemployment have meant that education is losing its relevance given the lack of job opportunities for young people once they have completed schooling. The Conflict Analysis therefore revealed the need for an integrated vocational approach to education, offering practical skills training which will benefit young people in the longer term.

One of UNICEF Uganda's innovations in engaging with adolescents is the U-Report programme, a free SMS service designed to give young Ugandans a chance to voice their opinions on issues that they care about. Each week an SMS poll or alert is sent to all of the participants asking for their opinion on a given issue, collecting both quantitative and qualitative data which is then mapped and analysed. Each month U-report results are publicised in national media channels and within Parliament to ensure decision makers have access to information regarding their districts or ministries. Launched in 2011, there are now 180,000 U-Reporters in Uganda. U-Report will be used during UNICEF Uganda's implementation of the PBEA to gather youth perspectives and for monitoring and evaluation throughout the programme. For more information, see: [www.ureport.ug](http://www.ureport.ug).

#### **Sierra Leone**

Adolescents were also key participants in the Sierra Leone Conflict Analysis. The process of participant selection was conducted through schools, clubs and local NGOs. UNICEF sent letters of invitation to randomly selected primary and secondary schools explaining the purpose of the

Conflict Analysis and requesting school authorities to send a stated number of boys and girls between the ages of 12 and 19 years to participate in a special session organised for them. Out-of-school children of the same age range were also targeted within the communities through Mothers' Clubs and NGOs working with out-of-school children. The information was collected during regional workshops which included FGDs, brainstorming sessions and presentations. The tools used were the same as those used for adult participants, although the questions were simplified to be sure that they could be easily understood by adolescents.

One of the lessons emerging from the Sierra Leone Conflict Analysis is the importance of engaging with children and adolescents separately from adults, with dedicated sessions allowing for adolescents to communicate more freely in the discussions so that their voices can more effectively inform the analysis. The main issues identified by adolescents through the Conflict Analysis relate to the lack of employment opportunities for youth, their lack of inclusion in political processes, the inequalities in access to tertiary education, and unjust distribution of land. During the consultations, young participants highlighted their desire to feel a sense of belonging to the nation and their sense that their potential was not being realised (UNICEF Sierra Leone 2012, p. 7). During the analysis, young participants identified issues relating to corporal punishment and poor parenting as key areas of conflict and violence.

Based on learning emerging from the Conflict Analysis, UNICEF Sierra Leone is now working with adolescents to engage parents, teachers and community members through the use of drama and media advocacy. The Sierra Leone Country Office plans to conduct research on adolescents and educational opportunities in 2013- especially focusing on teenage mothers- to inform future programming. UNICEF Sierra Leone also anticipates including adolescents in participatory monitoring and evaluation of PBEA programme activities once they get underway.

## **Liberia**

The lack of job opportunities for youth has been repeatedly identified as a key conflict driver in Liberia, and for this reason the participation of young people was actively sought for the PBEA Conflict Analysis. Specific categories of young people most affected by unemployment were targeted for participation including: motorbike riders (who for the most part were former combatants), students at vocational centres, young women who work in the markets, high school students, out-of-school youth and those who have dropped out of school, domestic workers and blind and mute students. To reach these participants, UNICEF staff visited designated communities in each county and held brief meetings with youth representatives to seek their participation and to set up a convenient time for subsequent meetings; these pre-engagement meetings were important to adequately inform adolescents about the purpose of the consultations. The youth expressed a keen willingness to participate in the Conflict Analysis and considered it as a way to support Liberia's development process. They were eager to share their inputs, but expected that rapid action would be taken in response to their recommendations- expectations that required careful and honest management.

Most of the youth participants in the Liberia Conflict Analysis were not literate. Data was therefore collected during informal meetings, workshops and focus group discussions, while the questions were simplified in order to enable a free flow of discussion. Games and story-telling were also used

to facilitate the involvement of younger adolescents (up to the age of 13 years) at the beginning of discussions before talking about more sensitive issues relating to the conflict. The facilitators offered stories and examples to encourage laughter and to help participants feel more comfortable in expressing their views. The facilitator also had to be careful to ensure that certain participants did not dominate the discussions as this made others in the group reluctant to share their views. In Liberia, it was necessary to separate male and female participants as it was found that girls were less likely to participate in the presence of boys. It was also found that disaggregating the participants according to age groups was also important as they felt comfortable among peers of their own age. Throughout the consultations with adolescents, a spirit of respect among all participants was encouraged.

#### IV. BEYOND THE CONFLICT ANALYSIS: NEXT STEPS FOR ENGAGING WITH ADOLESCENTS IN THE PBEA

This section offers suggestions on how to ensure that the engagement of adolescents continues in a meaningful way beyond the Conflict Analysis into later stages of the PBEA.

- ✓ **Share the completed Conflict Analysis with adolescent participants and elicit their feedback.** Once the first stage of the Conflict Analysis is completed, adolescents who participated in the data collection should be invited to provide feedback on the completed analysis, ideally in an adolescent-friendly version and in the local knowledge. This process ensures that their ideas and perspectives are authentically and accurately represented in the Conflict Analysis and any further context in which it may be used. Such feedback sessions can be conducted as less formal discussions or meetings, or can be conducted more formally in a workshop format depending on the availability of time and resources. Feedback sessions can also lead to engaging adolescents in the next stage of PBEA programme design.
- ✓ **Include the opinions, ideas and suggestions adolescents have shared in PBEA programme planning discussions, along with other findings in the Conflict Analysis.** By considering and using adolescents' inputs to guide programming decisions, UNICEF Country Offices fulfil their commitment to respecting adolescents' perspectives and ideas and that they are seriously considered as partners in the PBEA. Moreover, UNICEF and partners benefit from this valuable reservoir of knowledge and strategies as they plan effective programmes.
- ✓ **Invite adolescents to participate in programme design and implementation** UNICEF guidance on peacebuilding interventions holds that: "Community (including children and youth) and other stakeholders should actively participate in the design, management, monitoring and evaluation of peacebuilding interventions" (UNICEF EMOPS 2012, p. 18). As has been shown in a wide range of contexts, meaningfully consulting with targeted beneficiaries is essential to ensure programme effectiveness. As one of the main aims of engaging with adolescents in the Conflict Analysis is to support them as actors who are able to influence the situation and contribute to building peace, it will be important to include them in PBEA programme design and implementation. How this is done will vary in each setting, but the methods for doing so can draw on the tools presented in this guidance note, including ranking exercises and asset mapping. Working with adolescents as researchers and data collectors can be an especially effective way of ensuring that adolescent perspectives are heard and responses appropriately adapted. Including adolescents from the planning stage of any project- such as youth groups, livelihood activities or life skills training- will be essential for programming success.

While not intending to offer an exhaustive list of the ways in which adolescents can support education programme design, the following PBEA activities may especially benefit from their inputs:

- **Life skills programming:** Life skills programming is a key entry point for supporting adolescents; plans for these programmes should be elaborated in

close consultation with them to ensure that they are responsive to adolescents' actual needs and concerns. Such programmes should be accessible to both in-school and out-of-school adolescents to help facilitate cohesion across social divides. Specific gender-appropriate approaches for life skills programmes should take a creative approach which responds to the interests and concerns of adolescents while also allowing them to also fulfil other family and work responsibilities.

- **Vocational training and income-generating activities:** Unemployment among adolescents and lack of opportunities for earning sustainable livelihoods is consistently mentioned as a key conflict driver. Adolescents should be closely involved in the design and implementation of any income-generating, employment-creation and vocational training activities. Vocational training programmes should include strengthening capacities for entrepreneurship, business skills, and the use of information technology in ways that can help to bridge the gaps which contribute to unequal access to jobs and opportunities. Skills and vocational training need to be adapted to labour market or agricultural sector demands.
- **Youth groups and clubs:** Engaging with adolescents through youth groups, clubs and associations can be a particularly effective approach for supporting leadership, team-building, self-confidence and fair play. To ensure sustainability of the support offered, groups which already exist should be engaged (rather than creating new organisations). Activities to support skills in conflict resolution and peacebuilding dialogue might include drama, music and sports.
- **Curricula development and training materials:** The development or updating of school curricula and teacher training materials are among the planned PBEA programme activities. Adolescent inputs could be solicited from the beginning of this process as the materials should be adapted to their needs and interests. In some cases, curricula may need to be reformed to strengthen participatory learning or approaches which develop critical thinking and problem-solving among adolescents. To reach adolescents who are out of school, curricula should be also be adapted for youth centres or other areas where adolescents can be reached.

✓ **Monitoring and evaluation**

Engaging adolescents in monitoring and evaluation of the PBEA can be an effective way of ensuring programme relevance and quality. During the programme design process, adolescents can be involved in defining the project objectives and identifying indicators, while during programme evaluation they can be involved in data collection and analysis (Sommers 2001). By contributing to monitoring and evaluation activities, adolescents can share valuable insights concerning the effectiveness of programmes and policies and programme relevance in responding to their needs (UNICEF ADAP 2009). Adolescents can be involved in monitoring

by providing information in line with standard process indicators, or more innovatively through “participatory outcome indicators” that are developed with adolescents themselves to measure outcomes of the project which are relevant to their own lives and situations (see Onyango and Worthen 2010).

#### Further resources for engaging adolescents in the programme cycle

- Commonwealth Secretariat, 2005b. Adolescent Participation and the Project Cycle. [http://www.thecommonwealth.org/Shared\\_ASP\\_Files/UploadedFiles/309D076B-1FA1-4D10-A65B-582F7336340C\\_Three-AdolescentParticipationandtheProjectCycle.pdf](http://www.thecommonwealth.org/Shared_ASP_Files/UploadedFiles/309D076B-1FA1-4D10-A65B-582F7336340C_Three-AdolescentParticipationandtheProjectCycle.pdf)
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For more information contact:  
United Nations Children's Fund  
3 United Nations Plaza  
New York, NY 10017, USA  
[www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org)  
Tel: 212 326 1234

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