(Setting)

Comprehensive Toolkit for Youth Empowerment and Rehabilitation

Youth Work in Conflict



Toolkit implemented in the framework of the project Youth Work for Rehabilitation of Young People Affected by War

2024

CC BY 4.0 DEED

Attribution 4.0 International

You are free to:

Share — copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format for any purpose, even commercially.
Adapt — remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, even commercially.
The licensor cannot revoke these freedoms as long as you follow the license terms.

Under the following terms:
Attribution. You must give appropriate credit , provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made . You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use.
No additional restrictions. You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits.

Notices:
You do not have to comply with the license for elements of the material in the public domain or where your use is permitted by an applicable exception or limitation .
No warranties are given. The license may not give you all of the permissions necessary for your intended use. For example, other rights such as publicity, privacy, or moral rights may limit how you use the material.

Designed and edited by Arturo Ongil Rodriguez.



Co-funded by the European Union

Project co-founded by European Union

With contributions by:

2024

INDEX

Introduction 6–9

Participating Organisations 10–15

The Project's Journey 16–17

Our Research 16–209

Introduction: 18–33

Legal Framework regarding Youthwork for Rehabilitation of Youth Affected by War and Armed Conflicts 34–43

Psychological Support and Emotional Well-being for Youth Workers 44–63

Intercultural sensivility approach multi-actor dialogues 64–89

From safe espace to brave space 114–117

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) for Youth Workers 118–122

Communication skills 123–124

NON-VIOLENTcommunication and active listening 124–130

The Role of Art in Youth Work for Rehabilitation of Young People Affected by War 131–148

Media literacy education 149–152

The Assessment Process and the Risk Matrix 153–159

Youth Advocacy and Youth Participation in War Affected Contexts with young people coming from War Affected Context 160–183

Non-Violent Debate as a Tool for Youth Participation and countering youth polarisation and radicalisation 184–191

Local actions in the context of the project 192–33

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Youth Work in Conflict (Setting):Comprehensive Toolkit for Youth Empowerment and Rehabilitation", theoutcome of the project "Youth Work For Rehabilitation of Young People Affected by War"

The project Youth Work for Rehabilitation of Youth Affected by War is a project born out of a pressing need, written between February and March 2022 from the proposal and initiative of the Ukrainian partner CEI, which in the midst of the escalation of the war, in a situation of precariousness and displacement, was coming to terms with the inadequacy of the youth work model carried out up to that moment in the face of the mounting emergency. How to do youth work with war-affected youth? How to intertwine youth work with emergency work? How to keep peace education alive in times of war? How to deal with the condition of stress and born-out that the educators themselves experienced as they shared the trauma and impact of war with the young people they worked with? How can youth work remain a tool for community building and supporting the resilience of local communities? These are just some of the questions from which this project arose, questions that developed in a context of an almost total absence of literature on the relationship between youth work and war.

We consider it a priority to work on the development of youth work tools and approaches with young people from armed conflict contexts, the reason being primarily demographic. It is estimated that 408 million youth (or 23% of the global population aged 15-29) live in a context affected by armed conflict or organised violence,10 which means that 1 out of 4 young persons are influenced daily by wars or armed conflicts in some way.11 Millions of these youngsters are displaced, most of them in neighbouring countries where they remain vulnerable. And over 900 peace agreements have been signed globally in the last two decades, through negotiations in which the voices of young generations have been largely absent.[1]

The project is co-funded by the European Union under the Erasmus+ programme and is a Cooperation partnerships in youth action aimed at promoting the development of cooperation between organisations active in the field of youth work. 9 organisations formed the project consortium with the aim of building a partnership with complementary elements.

Some numbers of the project :

About 90 youth workers involved
180 young beneficiaries of experimental local activities
1 seminar, one training, one workshop and one toolkit
1 international online and face-to-face conference with approximately 75 participants
9 local dissemination activities involving a total of 180 operators

Our project has been a path of research of which we have probably only scratched the tip of an iceberg: a work of research, experimentation and modelling that started by trying to compare experiences, different contexts, approaches and different youth work histories and traditions, not in search of a definitive recipe and tools but of some working tracks. The result is a choral narrative, more than 20 educators and trainers have contributed to the outcome of the tool kit, and a mosaic made up of the revisiting of classical youth work models and approaches in the light of the context and the specific target with which we work, reflections and tips on the implementation of educational activities with youth affected by war, proposals of activities and narratives of personal experience.

Young people affected by war are not an homogeneus group, first of all in respect to the experience and scale of violence. We have contexts, such as Ukraine, where we see organised violence on a large scale impacting the entire educational system, formal, non-formal and informal, where trauma from violence is ongoing. We have contexts such as Poland, where the emergency reception on a large scale has led in the first instance to a standardised response to essential needs, neglecting the educational and personal development dimension of the individual, where people, although out of danger, experience contradictory emotions towards the country they have left and strong difficulties with their life choices (whether to invest in integration in the host country or to aspire to return).In France, Italy, Germany and Spain, the target group of young people affected by war is mainly made up of young adults and unaccompanied minors who have behind them a complex migratory path in highly vulnerable conditions. These young people have to build a path of integration, often with low levels of education and without the support of any social network, young people whose risk of replicating a trauma is continuous. Then we have contexts like Armenia and Azerbaijan experience war between the two countries themselves: in this case the priority for youth work is the deconstruction of hate language and the prevention of radicalisation: these are contexts where youth work becomes a bridge of mutual knowledge and dialogue. And finally, contexts, such as that of Kosovo, of so-called post-conflict societies, where society is strongly divided and polarized along lines of ethnicity and the youth work focuses on building spaces of encounter and mutual knowledge. Each of these contexts brings a different view of young people affected by violent conflict from which it has been possible to learn mutually and of whose richness we hope to give an insight within the framework of this cxonference.

[1] *Strengthening the role of young people in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, Report1 Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media Parliamentary Assembly, Council of Euroe, Rapporteur: Ms Inka HOPSU, Finland, Socialists, Democrats and Greens Group*

The research and learning process developed by the partners during the project started with an analysis of the needs of youth workers working with these target groups of young people in the 9 partner countries. From this first research phase, we then developed training modules, local experimental activities, and all of this was sedimented in the tool kit.

The most significant learning from the project lies in the vision of young people that we seek to promote. Youth work inherently involves a vision of youth:

- Seeing young people as vulnerable may lead to a protective approach, focusing on their shortcomings.
- Viewing young people as deviant or potentially dangerous may result in a securitarian approach, aiming to prevent antisocial behavior.
- Considering young people as consumers may prioritize image-focused initiatives over long-term development.
- Ultimately, embracing young people as capable individuals, and believing in their resilience and contributions to society, is paramount.

The project's key learning is navigating between these different visions of young people:

- Recognizing the trauma and complexity of the experiences of the youth we work with without reducing them solely to victims.
- Acknowledging the role young people can play in societal polarization while advocating for their potential as peacemakers.
- Balancing short-term impact projects with sustained educational processes and building trusting relationships with young people.

Youth work must approach young people with a positive and purposeful mindset, recognizing their humanity and potential. Two concepts, - Ubuntu and vulner-Ability, are particularly relevant:

Ubuntu is a concept found in languages, spoken mainly in the area of the South African continent and it refers to the ritual of greeting whose exchange works like this: I SEE YOU to which the other person replies I AM HERE. Until the Other sees me I am not here, or, 'I am what I am by virtue of what we all are'. This concept speaks of rights but also of responsibilities, of the individual but also of the community, of the interrelationship between all living things. This concept seems to us to be important and generative in the perspective of youth work in contexts affected by the violence of war, first of all to SEE young people, to recognise them, without instrumentalising them, and to be recognised by them as adults of reference even when all the caring figures around them are in crisis or fail, to make the whole community recognise young people as a priority social group in which to invest even in times of war, and to make youth work recognised as essential in contexts of violence.

The second concept is borrowed from the work of researcher Brené Brown and is the concept of **Vulner-ABILITY.** What makes us vulnerable is what makes us human and therefore courageous, empathetic, able to make mistakes, to plan, to act and to develop. We cannot, when looking at young people affected by war simply look at them in their vulnerabilities but help and accompany them to recognise in their vulnerabilities their abilities and potential.

Several foundational themes for youth work with young people affected by war are addressed throughout this publication:
- Self-care and preventing burnout for youth workers.
- Ensuring a salutogenic approach in working with young people.
- Addressing radicalization and the allure of war.
- Promoting peace and nonviolence and empowering young people in the face of violence.
- Utilizing artistic tools in youth work.
- Developing intercultural competencies to bridge gaps between arriving young people and the local community.
- Building constructive social networks around young people.
- Together, these themes provide a comprehensive framework for engaging with and supporting young people affected by war.

We wish you a good read and ask you to send us feedback, reflections and experiences so that the research can progress and the community of practce of youth work in war affected contexts can grow and develop.

PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS

CENTRO STUDI SERENO REGIS

serenoregis.org

Association founded in 1982. Our mission is to spread a culture of peace and nonviolence. Our goal is to address all forms of violence: direct, structural and cultural and we organize our efforts around three pillars: research, education and finally nonviolent action. Nonviolence means to understand and recognize that we are all interconnected and that our actions should always be reversible. We are committed to 6 areas of action:

- Alternatives to war: we explore the history of nonviolent struggles and support reconciliation processes after violence; we study the effects of war and the possible conversion of the military industry; we support civilian interventions in war zones;
- Peace education: we support the innate capacities of young people to deal nonviolently with violence, we promote inclusive, participatory, non-formal educational methodologies and a nonviolent approach to both teaching and learning.
- library: we take care of the biggest library in Italy on peace and nonviolence issues and we preserve the historical archives of nonviolent movements.
- "People Power", we support processes of participatory democracy in local communities and within the associations of civil society; we promote awareness of the importance of nonviolence. We promote awareness of the role of media in supporting violence, promote media activism and spread the idea of peace journalism.
- Environment: support the diffusion of the "Gaia Paradigm" and focus on sustainability and social control over forms of production, we also put our efforts on underlying the effects of the war on the environment
- Art and nonviolence: we deepen the artistic approach as a tool for capacitation and reconciliation, as a tool of awareness and reconciliation.

CENTER FOR EUROINITIATIVES

www.eu.sumy.ua

Center for Euroinitiatives is a public non-profit organization that aims at assisting the reformation of Ukraine in accordance with European standards, introducing democratic values, and developing civil society in Ukraine using educational and informational methodologies. Founded in 2008, and previously known as Center for European Initiatives, our organization is a team of experts in youth work with international experience, youth leaders, enthusiasts, and volunteers.

We put much effort to pursue the following objectives:

- Develop educational and informational programs directed toward the question of European integration for citizens of Ukraine;
- Develop educational programs for young people, directed toward leadership, tolerance, respect of human rights and the awareness of democratic values;
- Develop youth exchange programs between the youth of Ukraine and youth of other countries with the direct purpose of eliminating stereotypes and developing multicultural dialog and collaboration;
- Develop international exchange programs for representatives of professional

groups with the purpose of exchanging ideas and developing collaboration;
- Develop a program directed at developing youth Euroclubs, local and national network of youth Euroclubs;
- Develop programs directed at the promotion of volunteering movement at local, regional, national, and international levels;
- Develop programs directed at forming of active social position in young people;
- Help to form the culture of peace through implementation of informal education and education in human rights;
- Promotion of the ideas of peace, national unity, human rights, gender equality, democratic values in the Ukrainian society;
- Develop programs directed at the upbringing of ecological awareness and responsible attitude towards the environment.

The objectives are reached through our continuous work with the local community in our city and region, and through implementing international initiatives with the help of our partners throughout Europe.
Since 2017 the organisation has run an official Erasmus+ Youth Info Centre in Ukraine. The Centre provides information on opportunities for young people and youth organisations within the Erasmus+ programme and supports stakeholders in the implementation of their projects.

Youth Peace Ambassadors Network France

https://ypa.network/

Youth Peace Ambassadors Network was created as a result of the 3.5 year long program of the Council of Europe, that started in 2011 and its mission is to develop a culture of peace by empowering young people, promoting human rights, dignity, equality and respect of diversity through education, advocacy and other actions. One of the main focuses of the organization is active involvement in human rights oriented actions. The activities of the organisation focuses on 3 mainareas: human rights in general, gender equality and human rights education. The aim of our activities is to raise people awareness on the human rights, tolerance, equality, racism, discrimination, peace culture, nationalism and intercultural dialogue. Along with peace work and conflict transformation. YPAN France is a new organisation in the field of Erasmus+ however, YPAN France gathers members and co-workers who are experienced in designing and implementing the projects in the Erasmus+ ecosystem.

Peace Up!

Verein für Friedenspädagogik und gewaltfreier Konflikttransformation

Peace Up! is an NGO established in 2020.
Peace Up! is youth organisation, gathering young people between 18-35 years old. The organisations is led by young people, and all activities are implemented and organised for and by young people. We collaborate with youth, youth workers, artists and in general young people interested in the topics of peacebuilding, conflict transformation, trauma healing, dealing with the past and human rights.

Aims of the organisation are:

1. to promote the theory and practice of peace education, non-violent conflict transformation and reconciliation work at local, national and international level
2. to raise public awareness of the ideas of peace work and non-violence.

The purpose of the statutes is particularly realised through:

1. organising and conducting seminars, workshops, training courses and further education in the theory and practice of peace education, non-violent conflict transformation and reconciliation work.
2. producing and disseminating materials, scientific papers and cultural products on the subjects of peace education, nonviolent conflict transformation and reconciliation work.
3. organisation of events and public relations work in the fields of peace, human rights, peacebuilding, environment, reconciliation in divided societies, minority rights, intercultural exchange and gender justice, which serve to promote general education.
4. youth work and participation in youth education in the above-mentioned areas. Organisation of cultural events, conferences, study trips, international meetings, advice for (extracurricular) educational institutions, training.

Asociación de libre-pensadores de la sierra (LPS)

The Asociación de Libre-pensadores de la sierra de Madrid (LPS) is a cultural organization managed by young people fromthe region of Madrid. It was started in 2013 from an informal group of friends motivated by the need of collaboration with relevant institutions in the field of social transformation through arts, education and sports.

The organization aims to promote participative processes inclusive with youngsters and the spread of culture of respect, human rights advocacy and democratic values.

The organization's activities started in 2013 taking part in more than 30 events, workshops and actions in Spain and otherEuropean countries (The Netherlands, Belgium, France, Portugal and the UK).

LPS is a member of Youth Peace Ambassadors Network and has joined actions in peacebuilding and nonviolent communication. The organization has established sustainable collaboration with local governments in the north-west region of Madrid consisting in facilitating the participation of youngsters in different decision making processes, organization of workshops, training and cultural events.

Local Peace

Local Peace is non-governmental organization based in Leposavic, Kosovo. Its main aim is to work on peace-building process in Kosovo while focusing on bottom-up approach towards it. That means that Local Peace is focused on working with citizens of Kosovo and their role in the process of building peace and achieving reconciliation. Local Peace NGO works mostly with young people and its aim is to equip them with skill in competences in human rights and peace education.

SAGLAM DUSUNCE GENCLER TESKILATI ICTIMAI BIRLIYI

www.csyo-az.org

"COMMON SENSE" Youth Organization was founded by a group of young people as a non-political, non-profit, nongovernmental organization in the city of Sumgait in 2006. "Common Sense" Youth Organization (CSYO) has 15 years of experience working through non-formal education, concentrating on youth work, voluntarism, peace-building, social economy, active citizenship and participation. We have more than 90 members who support and help us in our activities. The main aims of our organization are:

- to deliver the importance of non-formal education inlifelong learning process;
- to make the youth be aware of their civic responsibility and increase active citizenship;
- to promote a healthy lifestyle and show the consequences of bad habits;
- to raise environmental awareness and the significance of environmental protection among the youth;
- to advocate for human rights and equality;
- to underpin peacebuilding and conflict prevention;
- to promote the concept of social entrepreneurship;
- to support local schoolchildren and students in their self-development process.

CSYO is working in different social, educational and cultural fields with different target groups: youth, students, refugees, IDPs etc. Organization cooperates with different NGOs in Europe and is actively involved in Erasmus+ (previously Youth in Action) programme as a promoter/partner and hosts projects in Azerbaijan.

Organization is a full member of 2 big networks in Europe: "Youth Express Network" and "Youth and Environment Europe". Generally, CSYO has successfully organized and hosted international training and youth exchanges about Human rights, migration, cultural diversity, tolerance, environment and related topics, in the frame of Youth in Action/Erasmus+ programme. We have implemented a plenty of local projects in direction of our priorities and in the framework of our projects, we have worked with many international organizations and governmental bodies.

Since January 2019, CSYO has been selected as Erasmus+ Youth and European Solidarity Corps INFO CENTRE for Azerbaijan by SALTO EECA. As Info Center, CSYO gives consultations for youth and organizations interested in Erasmus+ Youth and European Solidarity Corps (ESC) opportunities, organizes promotional/informational activities about Erasmus+ Youth and European Solidarity Corps opportunities aiming, creates and manages a community of youth workers and policymakers interested in Erasmus+ Youth and European Solidarity Corpsaround dedicated, cooperates with SALTO EECA on its own promotional/informational activities.

"Common Sense" Youth organization has more than 90 permanent active members who are mostly students of different universities. They are highly-skilled in the different phases of project management and each knows at least 2 languages. In the initial phase, you are going to contact the International Affairs team which consists of 8 members. Regularly participating in youth exchanges or trainings, these team members are experienced in Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps volunteering projects, also they are professional in writing and implementing local and international projects.

GYUMRI YOUTH INITIATIVE CENTRE NGO

www.yic.am

Youth Initiative Centre is a non-governmental organization which was established by a group of active young people experienced and well recognized in the field of youth work.
The Mission of YIC: contribute to the quality of life of the youth through a youth-centered approach.
YIC possesses the following strategic goals and objectives:

GOAL 1. To contribute to the improvement of the social-economic conditions for the youth through the following objectives:
- Engaging young people in continuous non-formal learning processes,
- Developing a healthy lifestyle culture among the young people,
- Increasing youth participation in cultural life,
- Raising the competitiveness of the young people in the labour market.

GOAL 2. To promote youth initativeness through the following objectives
- Increasing the role of young people in solving social issues,
- Supporting the implementation of innovative ideas by young people,
- Supporting the youth entrepreneurship,
- Developing volunteering culture among the young people.

GOAL 3. To contribute to increasing the role of young people in the society through the following objectives
- Raising the level of legal awareness of the youth,
- Strengthening the dialogue between the youth and the decision-makers,
- Raising the awareness about the youth issues in the society,
- Protecting youth's rights and interests.

Fundacja Help. NGO Polska

Help.NGO is an international Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) specializing in emergency response, preparedness, risk mitigation and prevention. Help.NGO leverages cutting-edge technological solutions and subject matter expertise to national and international disaster response mechanisms prior, during, and after emergencies in operations across the globe. With a focus on implementing complex solutions at scale, Help.NGO works to encourage the democratization of use and localization of capacity through research and development, training and the prepositioning of solutions. Help.NGO is currently one of 29 NGO standby partners of the United Nations, with work extending across operational, strategic, and administrative aspects of humanitarian and development work. Help.NGO has successfully provided its assistance in coordination with the UN, Clusters, and Governments in dozens of missions. These include: the Haiti earthquake (2010, 2021); Japan Earthquake and Nuclear Emergency (2011), New York City Hurricane Sandy (2012); Mediterranean rescuing refugees (2016), Puerto Rico and USVI Hurricanes (2017-18), in Mozambique after Hurricanes Idai & Keneth (2019) the Bahamas following Hurricane Dorian (2019-20), Louisiana following hurricane Ida (2021), among others.

Registered in Poland in November 2020, Foundation Help.NGO Polska is the EU branch of the organization.

As a subsidiary of the US foundation, Help.NGO Polska operates and supports the NGOs global administration and education programmes. Help.NGO Polska spreads knowledge about humanitarian assistance by: (i) training volunteers and disaster response teams, (ii) conducting research work and obtaining information on aid needs, states, conflicts, infrastructure, (iii) disseminating the knowledge in the field of humanitarian and development aid, international relations, and global education (including trainings and courses for professionals and academics). Help.NGO Polska also supports local community by organizing education events that promote humanitarian aid, supporting schools for kids with disabilities.

Our activities are addressed to:

- Local communities affected by humanitarian disasters,
- Academic, both students and senior researchers,
_ Policymakers,
_ Members of society interested in volunteering and humanitarian issues.
- Gdańsk local community.

Youth Work for Rehabilitation of Young People Affected by War: the Project's Journey

Youth work provides critical support for the individual empowerment of young people affected by war, offering a safe space for them to be themselves and integrate into host societies. It fosters confidence, resilience, and trust, helping them build positive relationships, including with their peers. This work requires flexibility, tolerance of ambiguity, and a focus on integrating youth into society. It offers young people a platform to express themselves, participate in societal activities, and highlight their valuable contributions. Youth work also plays a crucial role in cross-sectoral cooperation, complementing other services like legal aid, education, housing, and employment.

The KA2 Erasmus+ "Youth Work for Rehabilitation of Young People Affected by War and Armed Conflicts" project addressed the needs of 9 organizations and youth workers engaged in supporting young people affected by war. This initiative aimed to enhance the capacity, quality, and impact of youth work, fostering integration and resilience among these young individuals. The project emphasized the importance of youth work in providing a safe space for personal development and societal participation, recognizing the vital role youth workers played in this process.

The objectives of the project were multifaceted, including creating a platform for exchanging youth work practices with those affected by war and armed conflicts, fostering changes and improvements tailored to the context of each participating organization, and strengthening the capacity of nine organizations working with youth affected by war and conflict. Additionally, the project aimed to equip 30 representatives from nine partner organizations with tools and methods for youth rehabilitation, support the rehabilitation of young people through capacity-building and local initiatives in nine communities, and encourage peace work through youth activities for those affected by war and armed conflict.

Throughout the project, participants enhanced their understanding of European practices and adapted their activities accordingly. Research on the needs of youth workers was conducted in nine communities, and 30 representatives from the partner organizations developed essential competencies for working with youth affected by war.
The project also boosted the capacities of the nine participating organizations. At least 135 young people received support, developed resilience, and engaged in social and community life through youth work activities. Furthermore, at least nine youth work activities were implemented in different communities. Youth work tools for rehabilitation were developed and piloted, and the activities of youth work were transformed based on local contexts. The project produced a toolkit in nine languages, enhancing the quality of youth work for those affected by war. Additionally, peace work was advocated at local, European, and international levels.

The project promoted social inclusion and aimed to improve outreach to young people affected by war, supporting their integration into host communities. It fostered solidarity and civic engagement by providing tools and practices for youth rehabilitation and enhancing awareness of the European context. By increasing the quality and recognition of youth work through capacity building, sharing best practices, and developing a comprehensive toolkit, the project aimed to support the inclusion and participation of young people affected by war and armed conflict.

Addressing both organizational needs and the needs of youth workers, the project focused on building capacities to mobilize resources, transforming activities in response to emergencies, developing a clear action plan for crisis response, and training staff to work with youth affected by war. For youth workers, the project aimed to provide experience, tools, and methodologies for working with young people affected by war, as well as establishing a community of practice for mutual learning and sharing strategies.

In conclusion, the "Youth Work for Rehabilitation of Young People Affected by War" project was a proactive response to the challenges faced by young people impacted by conflict. By building capacities, sharing best practices, and developing practical tools, the project sought to create a supportive environment where young people could overcome the difficulties of their circumstances, integrate into their communities, and contribute positively to society. Through international cooperation and innovative approaches, this project aspired to create lasting positive change for youth affected by war and armed conflict.

OUR RESEARCH

Introduction

In an ever-evolving global landscape, the consequences of war and armed conflicts reverberate deeply within societies, particularly impacting the lives of young individuals. The project titled **"Youth Work for Rehabilitation of Young People Affected by War"** stands as a beacon of hope and collaboration amidst these challenges. Envisioned as a Cooperation Partnership under the Youth-Erasmus+ Programme, this initiative unites a diverse array of organizations from across Europe, each with a common aspiration: to empower and rehabilitate young people whose lives have been touched by the harsh realities of armed conflicts and war.

Led by the Centro Studi Sereno Regis and fortified by the support of Erasmus plus national agency in Italy, this project embodies a collaborative effort that stretches beyond borders. This collaboration is fortified through connections with esteemed partners, including the Center for Euroinitiatives in Ukraine, the Youth Peace Ambassadors Network in France, Peace Up! in Germany, Asociación de Librepensadores de la Sierra in Spain, Local Peace in Kosovo, "Common Sense" Youth Organization Public Association in Azerbaijan, Gyumri Youth Initiative Center NGO in Armenia, and Fundacja Help.NGO Polska in Poland. Each partner brings unique perspectives and experiences to this project, enriching the collective mission to foster positive change in the lives of those affected by conflict.

The objectives of the project are firmly rooted in a desire to create safe spaces for the sharing of effective youth work practices. This project aims to initiate transformative processes that yield novel approaches, tailored to the context of each participating organization. By enhancing the capacities of these organizations, the project seeks to equip young people with the necessary tools and methodologies for the rehabilitation of young individuals scarred by the traumas of war and violence. Moreover, this undertaking aspires to promote peace and rehabilitation through locally driven initiatives, thereby fostering a sense of empowerment and resilience among the affected youth.

Throughout this project, representatives from the partnering organizations engaged themselves in the European youth work practices, adapting and enriching their strategies for supporting young individuals affected by conflict.
Ultimately, this project seeks to touch the lives of young individuals, offering them not just support, but the means to overcome their traumatic experiences and reintegrate into society through the nurturing context of youth work. The project's scope extends beyond a mere collection of initiatives: it aims to instigate tangible change and produce resources that empower organizations across the partnership. With a steadfast commitment to improved quality, the project aims to contribute to the enhancement of youth work within the context of violence, armed conflict and its aftermath, not only at local levels but also on a broader European and international scale.

1.1. Research methods, research question and ethics

Incorporating a multifaceted approach, the project "Youth Work for Rehabilitation of Young People Affected by War" also encompasses a significant research phase. This pivotal component aimed to delve deeply into the needs and challenges faced by youth workers and organizations engaged in supporting young individuals affected by war and armed conflicts.

Through conducting in-depth research, in nine partner countries (Italy, Germany, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Spain, Poland, France, Kosovo and Ukriane) the project endeavors to pinpoint the intricate needs of youth workers and organizations operating within the realm of war- and violence-affected youth. By engaging in qualitative investigations, the project seeks to extract nuanced insights, identifying challenges, gaps, and opportunities that arise within the unique contexts of each partner community. This research process spans nine distinct regions, generating a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted dimensions of youth work in the aftermath of conflict.

Throughout the research phase, nine researchers based in respective partner countries, have conducted local research focused on:

- **Identified Needs** - Through comprehensive research efforts, the unique needs and challenges faced by youth workers and youth work activities within each community are meticulously identified.
- **Development Directions** - The research findings provide a roadmap for the progression and refinement of youth work activities not only within the partnership but also on broader European and international platforms.
- **Training Program Topics** - The research outcomes directly influenced the crafting of the training program, dictating the specific topics, modules, and methodologies that will be employed to address the identified needs and challenges.

Furthermore, this research aims to answer three main areas divided in different research questions:

- Understanding Needs and Responses:
- What are the distinct needs of young people affected by armed conflicts, and how do organizations respond to these needs through youth work activities?
- How do youth workers personally address the identified needs of young people affected by war, and what challenges do they encounter in providing support?

Capacity Enhancement and Learning Needs:
- What challenges do organizations face in their efforts to work with young people affected by conflict, and what types of support do they require to enhance their capacity?
- What specific knowledge areas, skills, tools, and methods do youth workers seek to acquire to better engage with and rehabilitate young people affected by armed conflicts?

Effective Approaches and Role of Youth Work:

- What positive examples can be highlighted from youth work experiences in successfully addressing the needs of young people affected by wars, and what are the contributing factors to these successes?
- How do youth workers perceive the role of youth work in the rehabilitation of young people impacted by armed conflicts, and which activities, tools, methods, or approaches do they find most effective in their engagement?

The research was underpinned by a thoughtful blend of methods and ethical considerations. Central to this approach were in-depth interviews, which served as a conduit for capturing the nuanced experiences and insights of youth workers, local organizations, and young individuals affected by conflict. The interviews were conducted in a variety of languages, including English and the native languages of the partner communities, reflecting a commitment to ensuring open communication and understanding.

Prior to each interview, participants were provided with a clear explanation of the research's purpose, the role of the researchers, and the anticipated outcomes. In seeking informed consent, researchers transparently communicated the intended use of interview data, the steps taken to ensure confidentiality, and the voluntary nature of participation. To preserve the privacy and dignity of participants, the interviews were conducted with a firm commitment to anonymity, and no records were retained under participants' names. Audio recording, with participants' consent, was employed to ensure accuracy and fidelity in the data collection process while respecting individual preferences and comfort levels.

Throughout this process, researchers upheld the principles of respect and empathy, acknowledging the sensitivities surrounding the experiences of war-affected individuals. Additionally, researchers remained vigilant in considering potential cultural and linguistic nuances, adjusting their approach to ensure meaningful engagement with participants from diverse backgrounds. This meticulous approach to research methods and ethics not only ensured the reliability and authenticity of the collected data but also emphasized the project's dedication to the well-being and empowerment of all those involved.

2. Background information

The research unfolds against a backdrop of varied experiences and expertise, encompassing a wide spectrum of contexts and challenges. Each region offers a unique narrative, revealing the resilience and resourcefulness of those engaged in supporting youth affected by armed conflicts. This chapter delves deeper into the backgrounds and experiences of the participants, showcasing their contributions to the field.

Poland: **Border Solidarity Amidst Rising Tensions**

In Poland, the surge of irregular cross-border mixed migration during the summer of 2021 marked a pivotal turning point. As Lukashenka orchestrated attempts to erode the EU Eastern borders, anti-refugee sentiments surged within the Polish state. This catalyzed the emergence of Grupa Granica, an exemplar of border solidarity infrastructure. They valiantly countered the criminalization of migration, navigating an intricate landscape fraught with legal complexities and political pressures. The story of these activists not only mirrors their unwavering commitment but also sheds light on the stark challenges they face within a shifting borderscape.

Ukraine: **Evolving Dynamics and Unprecedented Response to the War**

The Ukrainian landscape shifted dramatically after the Russian invasion in 2022, altering the contours of conflict engagement. The emergence of a 'second border' propelled an unprecedented surge in international attention and resources. While state policies and international support evolved, activists were left to balance their commitment to affected populations while adapting to dynamic realities. The Ukrainian case study underscores the nuances of navigating evolving conflicts and emergent opportunities, revealing the complex intersections of state responses, humanitarian aid, and youth involvement.

Azerbaijan: **Youth Empowerment in Conflict Resolution**

Azerbaijan's youth work scenario encapsulates the central role of youth in conflict transformation. The Second Karabakh War underscored the importance of empowering youth for peacebuilding. Efforts to foster active citizenship and engagement, coupled with addressing participation gaps in rural regions, showcase the adaptive nature of youth work in conflict contexts. The Azerbaijani experience highlights how youth workers serve as catalysts for rehabilitation, reconciliation, and empowerment amid post-conflict challenges.

Armenia: **Navigating Healing and Reintegration**

Armenia's experience is steeped in the aftermath of historical conflicts, including the Nagorno-Karabakh War, especially the Second Karabakh war. Youth workers in this region have played a crucial role in supporting young people directly and indirectly impacted by armed conflicts. These efforts span from aiding war participants and the disabled to addressing the needs of family members and displaced persons. The Armenian case underscores the delicate journey of healing, rebuilding, and reintegration undertaken by both youth and those who support them.

Spain: **Global Engagement and Grassroots Resilience**

Spain's youth workers shine a light on the global dimensions of their engagement, addressing refugees and asylum seekers in multiple settings. From Palestine, Afghanistan, Serbia, to Mexico, their initiatives span psychological and health support, humanitarian aid, and raising awareness about border atrocities. These stories resonate as a testament to the resilience and adaptability of grassroots initiatives, showcasing how local engagement reverberates across borders, offering solace to those affected by conflicts far from home.

France: **Nurturing Holistic Integration**

France's youth workers epitomize the holistic approach needed to support asylum seekers and refugees. By providing a comprehensive array of services, from psychological assistance to sports activities and educational training, they create avenues for holistic integration. Their use of needs assessments, qualitative methods, and quantitative data collection ensures tailor-made support for young individuals navigating the aftermath of conflict. Their initiatives empower youth to transcend challenges and foster holistic integration into their adopted communities.

Italy: **Bridging Immediate Needs to Long-Term Integration**

In Italy, youth workers are pivotal in bridging immediate humanitarian needs to long-term integration efforts. Organizations like Casa dei Popoli, Fondazione Comunità Solidale, and CISV ONG exemplify structured programs that address multifaceted aspects of integration, from job orientation to psychological healing. The Italian Red Cross goes further, offering comprehensive assistance covering accommodation, education, mental health, and legal guidance. The Italian case unveils how support for young refugees traverses the gamut from urgent relief to sustainable empowerment.

Kosovo: **Empowering Youth and Addressing Trauma**

In Kosovo, organizations like the Youth Initiative for Human Rights (YiHR) and the Kosova Rehabilitation Center for Torture Victims (KRCT) play pivotal roles in empowering and rehabilitating young individuals affected by past conflicts. With a focus on providing psychological support, legal assistance, and opportunities for growth, these organizations recognize the enduring impact of the 1998/1999 war in Kosovo and strive to create platforms for healing and integration.

Germany: **Addressing Trauma and Integration**

In Germany, the youth workers interviewed operate on diverse fronts. From aiding Ukrainian war refugees to supporting unaccompanied minors and new adults, these youth workers address the emotional and practical challenges of war-affected individuals. They employ trauma-informed approaches and provide linguistic, psychological, and legal support to foster integration and healing.

This research offers various approaches to the topic and represents diverse experiences reflected in dedication, adaptability, and collaboration. Through their stories, the research illuminates the intricate landscape of youth work in conflict zones and in the places that people affected by war moved, unearthing the shared challenges and unique solutions that thread through different geographical contexts. The depth and breadth of these experiences collectively enrich the research's understanding, capturing the multifaceted nature of supporting young people affected by armed conflicts.

3. Needs of youth affected by conflict

In this chapter, we will delve into the multifaceted needs of youth affected by armed conflicts, encompassing a wide range of aspects such as psychological support, cultural sensitivity, education, communication, and integration. These needs are shaped, as mentioned before, by the diverse contexts of conflicts in different regions of Europe, and collected throughout the research process.

One of the most highlighted needs among youth was focused on psychological support. Youth affected by conflict often require emotional and mental health support. Trauma healing, counselling, and psychological assistance are perceived crucial for helping them cope with the emotional toll of their experiences. Bearing in mind that youth workers are not psychologists, as a main tool for this support was suggested the use of artistic tools to help individuals express their emotions and heal their psychological wounds. The interviewees emphasized the importance of resources and knowledge in this area. Art therapy and creative expression have proven to be powerful methods for coping with trauma and stress.

Moreover, cultural sensitivity emerged as a fundamental need emphasized by interviewees. They stressed the importance of gaining knowledge on how to intervene with respect for cultural differences. Recognizing and respecting diverse backgrounds and traditions are essential components of building trust and rapport with young people affected by conflict, and are strongly emphasized in interviews with young people. In this same regard, to better support and create awareness, it is crucial to comprehend the entire process that individuals go through when leaving their countries due to conflict. This includes understanding the various steps and timelines involved. Such knowledge helps youth workers provide more informed and cultural/trauma sensitive assistance.

Another need that appeared to be important for young people is access to information about available help, government programs, funds, and fundraising opportunities is essential for acquiring more resources to effectively assist those in need. Navigating complex bureaucracies and legal systems can be challenging, especially due to situations in which young people move to another country or due to language barriers, which is making this knowledge invaluable and essential.

Besides that, another need expressed is for tools to facilitate communication with individuals, even in cases where there is no common language. Suggested solutions included drawing, translation tools, and art as means of communication, underlining the importance of overcoming language barriers. Once again, art appeared to play a crucial role in addressing needs of young people affected by war, either psychologically or in overcoming other barriers, such as language.

The needs of youth affected by conflict differ significantly based on various factors, including the context of their experience. Integration into the new environment is fundamental, requiring support in regaining a sense of agency, pursuing education or professional opportunities, and rebuilding trust in host country services and systems. Furthermore, dealing with radicalization among young people and combating racism and xenophobia against refugees were highlighted as important topics where additional guidance and knowledge would be beneficial.

Additionally, to that, specialized support for refugees with intersectional exclusion is a pressing need. This includes addressing the unique challenges faced by LGBTQ+ individuals, refugees with disabilities, Roma refugees, and others who may encounter discrimination and limited access to services. One of the employees of the reception desk for refugees with disabilities describes this need wel, emphasizing that differences between refugees cannot be made. “They are invisible. A refugee is a refugee, which means that he should have some special needs (...) Children after amputation come to us, in wheelchairs. And they find out that, for example, the Polish state requires them to pay for accommodation. How? While working, the provincial authorities explain. Well, because the statistics show that it’s a group of 18-30, first or second degree of disability, everything is great (...) And in practice, no one will employ a refugee or a disabled person in Poland, there are no support programs. This invisibility is not symbolic, it is very real.” (May 2023).

Another important need specified by youth people is infrastructure for youth, such as youth centres and common gathering spaces, needs to be inclusive and women-friendly. Creating safe spaces for young people to socialize and engage in extracurricular activities is seen as vital for their well-being and development, but also creating safe space that can serve them for further development.

Talking about development, financial aspect also plays a big role in answering the needs of young people. Young people affected by armed conflicts often face financial challenges. Vocational training programs are seen as essential

to equip them with the skills necessary to access job opportunities and gain financial independence.

Finally, young people affected by conflict need spaces, people, and processes that recognize and validate their past experiences, skills, and aspirations. This recognition can be instrumental in their integration and healing processes. Moreover, involving young people in community life, decision-making, volunteering, and exchange programs can help them gain independence, develop critical skills, and contribute positively to their communities.

At the end, it is important to mention, the needs of youth affected by armed conflicts are diverse and complex, shaped by various factors. Addressing these needs requires a comprehensive and holistic approach that encompasses educational, psychological, social, and cultural components. It is crucial to be aware of this challenge and tackle it from different perspectives, not only through one component. Recognizing the multifaceted nature of these needs is essential to create effective and sustainable support systems that can truly make a difference in the lives of young people affected by conflict.

4. Learning Needs of Youth Workers engaged with youth affected by conflict

In the realm of youth work related to conflict affected young people, the pursuit of knowledge and skills is not just a choice but a necessity. The young lives at stake and the unique challenges of this environment demand a constant quest for learning and growth. In this chapter, we delve into the core learning needs of youth workers, encompassing a diverse spectrum of topics, from emotional well-being to legal intricacies.
Even though in a content need to learn, youth workers face many other problems that stop them in this attempt. Most of them are related to psychological issues and burn out. Furthermore, as emphasized in one of the interviews, managing time to focus on learning is also a challenge that is linked with all other issues. *"We want to learn. But when? How much is it, a year, when we work 10, 14 hours a day, in constant crisis mode. It's better now, we learn from our mistakes (...) You can't learn much when a person is exhausted and depressed".*

Regardless difficulties to find time and (mental) space for learning, still many needs related to learning of youth workers are still to be fulfilled. At the heart of their learning needs lies the essential requirement for psychological and emotional competence. The youth workers, who stand as pillars of support for young people traumatized by conflict, expressed a dire need for training in working with trauma survivors. This training encompasses understanding the nuanced psychology of trauma, providing effective psychological support, and equipping themselves to manage their own emotional well-being in the face of harrowing stories and experiences. More specifically, the research show that there is a big need to focus on trauma informed work, psychological support, competencies in social work, and self-care and well-being.

Trauma-Informed youth work
Youth workers frequently encounter young people who have experienced trauma. To effectively support these individuals, youth workers need training in trauma-informed care. This includes understanding the psychological impact of trauma, recognizing its symptoms, and employing strategies to create safe and healing environments. As one interviewee mentioned, academia doesn't prepare youth workers for scenarios like the Russian invasion, emphasizing the need for practical training in trauma-related issues.

Psychological Support
The demands of working with young people who have experienced trauma or conflict-related stress can take a toll on youth workers' own mental well-being. Therefore, they require access to psychological support themselves. Learning to manage their own emotional responses and building resilience are essential aspects of their professional development, as noted by several interviewees who expressed concerns about burnout and even post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Self-Care and Well-Being
To follow up on the previous aspect, self-care and well-being needs are to be added to the list as well. Supporting others can be emotionally draining, and youth workers need to prioritize their own well-being. Training programs should focus on self-care techniques, stress management, and maintaining a healthy work-life balance. One interviewer's comment about not being able to care for others without first caring for oneself underscores the importance of these aspects. "We don't care about ourselves. How are we supposed to care for others?" bring light to the need of youth workers of being well with themselves before they intend to support the others.

Social Work Competence
Those engaged in youth work often collaborate with vulnerable groups, including those who are marginalized and refugees. Specialized training in social work is vital for understanding the unique challenges these individuals face and providing effective support. This includes skills in street work, family support, cultural sensitivity, professional counselling, and educational guidance, all of which are crucial in helping young people adapt to their new environments and overcome difficulties.

Legal Competencies
Besides psychological focus, navigating the legal labyrinth, particularly in the context of migration and human rights, emerged as another pressing learning need. The intricate, ever-evolving landscape of legal regulations related to refugees, housing, and education often leaves youth workers grappling with uncertainty. They seek education in migration law, human rights, and an array of legal disciplines, recognizing that their proficiency in these areas is pivotal in advocating for the rights of young people affected by war.

Working with Minorities
Furthermore, youth workers often find themselves in situations demanding highly specialized knowledge and skills. These may include working with marginalized groups, understanding cultural nuances, and offering assistance in preventing domestic violence. In some cases, youth workers operate with particularly vulnerable populations, such as LGBTQ+ youth, the Roma minority, or victims of torture. These unique challenges require specialized training tailored to the specific needs of these groups.

Professional Development
To add to that, the youth work landscape extends far beyond emotional and legal competencies. There is a palpable thirst for professional development that encompasses project and team management, effective communication, fact-checking, and countering disinformation. In a rapidly changing world, these skills are indispensable for navigating the complexities of youth work, especially in the context of conflict.

Peacebuilding Competencies
Finally, the learning needs to extend into the realm of interpersonal, cultural and peacebuidling competence. Effective peacebuilding, conflict transformation, dialogue and mediation skills are essential for building trust and rapport with young people, their families, schools, and public institutions. These skills are vital for youth workers to tailor their support to the unique needs of each individual, ensuring that young people affected by war find their place in various social spheres. Besides that, youth workers emphasized the importance of learning from one another. Peer learning, exchanges of experiences, and collaborative initiatives, are valuable means of acquiring knowledge and skills. In a field where the challenges are ever-evolving, youth workers seek opportunities for sharing strategies and insights, fostering collective responses to the needs of young people.

Continuous Learning
At the end, it is important to mention the culture of continuous learning as a basics of youth work. Youth workers acknowledge that the learning journey doesn't have an endpoint. Instead, it's a perpetual process of growth and adaptation. This culture not only benefits the youth they serve, but also helps maintain their own motivation and resilience, crucial for long-term success in this demanding field. It is important to emphasize that the learning needs of youth workers engaged with conflict affected youth are diverse and comprehensive. From psychological support to legal proficiency, specialized training to interpersonal and peacebuilding competencies, the quest for knowledge and skill development is a central tenet of their mission. In a world marked by change and adversity, youth workers are committed to continuous learning, even though it can be challenging and many times hardly manageable and accessible.

5. Facing challenges, or another name for youth work?

Unfortunately, youth work even though crucial in many aspects still faces many problems and challenges. Challenges that youth workers face correlate strongly with their learning needs, but still can be differed. Furthermore, these challenges shape their ability to provide essential support to young individuals whose lives have been profoundly affected by protracted armed conflicts. This chapter delves into these challenges, shedding light on the complexities and hurdles youth workers encounter in their important mission.

Psychological support is one of the things that interconnects throughout the entire research. It appears to be one of the challenges, too. Youth workers who dedicate themselves to supporting conflict-affected young people face a significant emotional burden. Witnessing the suffering, fear, and traumatic experiences of those they assist takes a toll on their mental well-being. Unfortunately, many youth workers lack adequate emotional support systems to cope with the psychological challenges of their work. This often leads to burnout and anxiety among workers, highlighting the need for robust psychological support mechanisms within the profession. One of the mentioned challenges in this regard is also a shortage of local therapists familiar with war-affected populations and the inadequacy of internationally adapted methods that do not align with the local context. This challenge underscores the need for tailored psychological assistance for youth workers.
Besides psychological support, one of the primary challenges that youth workers encounter is the scarcity of resources and governmental blockades. The ability to effectively provide aid is often hindered by limited funding and bureaucratic obstacles. In regions affected by armed conflict, this challenge is exacerbated by the absence of state institutions. Governmental support, particularly in areas such as education and housing, cannot be effectively replaced by the non-governmental sector. Youth workers emphasize the importance of grants, empathy, and increased visibility as potential solutions to address these challenges.

Furthermore, bureaucratic hurdles pose significant challenges to youth work in conflict regions. These obstacles often result in delays and complications in program implementation. Stable and consistent funding would significantly facilitate the work of youth workers by mitigating the impact of these bureaucratic challenges. Advocacy for more flexible funding mechanisms is essential. Another challenge identified in the research is the reluctance toward youth work and the absence of community builders discourage young people from creating NGOs in conflict-affected areas. The lack of institutionalized organizations complicates efforts to mobilize resources and support youth work initiatives.

Besides lacking NGOs, assessing the needs of youth in conflict-affected regions is also hindered by the absence of reliable data and qualified researchers. The lack of quantitative and qualitative data collection, as well as the absence of a professional approach to data gathering, leads to inefficiencies and delays in responding to the needs of young people. One problem that many counties and youth workers face is lack of engagement of young peo-

ple. This leads to weak civic engagement and community-building efforts, and finally resulting in limited youth participation in rehabilitation activities. This lack of engagement makes it challenging to address the emotional and social needs of young people affected by conflict effectively. In this regard, some youth workers identified another challenge within their field: a lack of adequate training. This gap in knowledge, particularly in areas such as legal changes, gender-based violence, and support for LGBTQ+ individuals, hinders their ability to address the diverse and evolving needs of the young people they serve.

Finally, youth work in relies heavily on government and international donor funding. However, the lack of institutionalized organizations and misallocation of resources jeopardize the sustainability of funds. This challenge makes it difficult to secure long-term support for youth work initiatives. Even though many institutions provide support for young people and organizations, it is not always youth friendly and open for those with lack of experience.

Regardless of so many challenges and obstacles, youth workers still remain steadfast in their commitment to addressing the multifaceted needs of young people affected by armed conflicts. It is essential to recognize and confront these challenges comprehensively, as they shape the landscape of youth work with conflict-affected young people. Based on challenges they face, strategies to overcome these hurdles include increased funding flexibility, enhanced training programs, robust emotional support systems, and a collective commitment to addressing the evolving needs of youth affected by war.

6. Positive examples in youth work

Even though there are many learning needs and challenges, youth work with armed conflict affected youth still offers various positive examples. In this chapter, we will explore the effective practices employed by dedicated youth workers to support and empower young people affected by armed conflicts. These practices emphasize collaboration, needs assessment, targeted support, long-term assistance, and advocacy. Through their relentless efforts, youth workers have successfully facilitated the integration, rehabilitation, and well-being of these resilient young individuals. They also recognize the power of collaboration and holistic thinking. They bridge formal and informal sectors, governmental and non-governmental organizations, creating a united front to address the multifaceted challenges of conflict-affected youth.

Example 1: **“Dudek,” the Intercultural Assistant**

“Dudek,” an intercultural assistant, exemplifies this approach, stating, “First, we check what the state is not doing. Second, what the state doesn’t do well. And thirdly, what it does not do in the long run.” This strategy helps identify gaps in support systems and build systemic, long-term solutions.

Besides that, youth workers have innovatively recruited young people with refugee experiences, harnessing their unique skills and perspectives. This approach not only aids integration, but also empowers these individuals to contribute positively to their host countries. Furthermore, they prioritize conducting needs assessments to tailor their support to the specific requirements of conflict-affected youth. They focus on identifying unsupported activities, groups with special needs, and psychological support while closely monitoring violations and needs.

Example 2: **Targeted Support in Reception Centres**

Youth workers have been proactive in reaching out to young people isolated in reception centers, especially in remote areas. They create alternative psychological, educational, and legal support systems, intervening in issues like family separation, domestic violence, and gender-based violence.

In order to ensure sustained positive outcomes, youth workers emphasize the importance of long-term support activities. This includes addressing issues like hate speech and marginalization that young people may face after leaving reception and detention facilities. Additionally, advocacy activities play a vital role in ensuring continued integration and well-being.

Example 3: **Psychological Support and Burnout Prevention**

Recognizing the immense mental and emotional strain experienced by both conflict-affected youth and youth workers, organizations have introduced practices to combat burnout. Offering psychological evaluation and support free of charge has become a new practice highly valued by youth workers. What brought them to successful story is human to human approach, as one of the interviewees emphasized is “the ability to listen, caution, empathy, mutual trust and cooperation with young people.”

The efforts of youth workers have yielded positive outcomes, showcasing the effectiveness of their approaches. These success stories underline the significance of maintaining consistency in activities and fostering a sense of community among participants.

Example 4: **Reception and Integration of a Venezuelan Baseball Player**

In one case, an organization facilitated the reception and integration of a young Venezuelan baseball player. By mediating with a local sports society, they not only enabled him to join the team but also encouraged his participation in various social activities. This approach expedited his language acquisition, school integration, and community engagement.

Example 5: **Educational Success of an Afghan Girl**

Another success story involves a determined 16-year-old Afghan girl who aspired to study in a scientific school. Despite initial resistance from the school, the organization's mediation secured her enrolment. Through continuous support and language assistance, the girl excelled academically, demonstrating the positive impact of tailored educational support."This was a very satisfying case for us, it was a particularly successful goal, but the most difficult part was to agree with the school, enter into a process of mediation with the teachers to insist that they be more understandable and make them understand that with the time together we can achieve results."

Example 6: **Music as Expression and Integration**

Youth workers have also used music as a means of expression and storytelling. Projects like creating music with young people from different countries have fostered cultural exchange and emotional expression, ultimately contributing to their integration.

. "Music is a fantastic thing, anyone feels involved for the right rhythm. Music makes you connect emotions with the diversity of cultures and rhythms."

Example 7: **Impactful Work of the Italian Red Cross**

The Italian Red Cross has reported several success stories, including the successful integration of young people into accommodation, school, and work. Additionally, the organization takes pride in reuniting families and witnessing the progress of young people as they transition to self-sufficiency.

Finally, it is important to emphasize that youth workers' effective practices are rooted in collaboration, holistic thinking, targeted support, and long-term assistance. These practices have led to numerous success stories, highlighting the vital role of youth work in rehabilitating and integrating young people affected by armed conflicts. Through these efforts, youth workers managed to provide crucial support systems that empower young individuals to rebuild their lives and become active members of their communities.

7. Conclusion

The extensive research conducted, drawing from the experiences and insights of dedicated youth workers operating with conflict-affected youth, paints a vivid and compelling picture of the challenges and triumphs encountered in supporting young individuals whose lives have been profoundly affected by protracted armed conflicts.

Over time, the needs of young people coming from conflict-affected areas have undergone significant transformations. The persistent presence of armed conflicts has instilled in them a heightened interest in diverse domains, extending beyond traditional education. There is a burgeoning appetite for non-formal education, greater political engagement, access to economic opportunities, and the establishment of community-building structures. Notably, there's an emergent demand for gender and sex education, conflict resolution skills, and career guidance.

Amidst the backdrop of limited physical interaction and communication channels, the youth centres and activities organized by youth NGOs have assumed pivotal roles as safe spaces for young individuals to satiate these evolving needs. These centres, however, come with a perpetual caveat: the physical safety of participants is an ever-present concern. Within these sanctuaries, young people access intellectual leisure activities, imbibe essential leadership skills, and foster tolerance—a cornerstone for their rehabilitation.

Furthermore, the youth workers, the heroes of this narrative, navigate a complex labyrinth of challenges. Insufficient funding, intermittent electricity supply (such as the case in Ukraine showed), and bureaucratic red tape cast a looming shadow over their endeavours. The emotional toll, compounded by the relentless stress associated with protracted conflict, adds another layer of complexity to their mission. Yet, despite many obstacles, the indomitable spirit of youth workers shines through—they remain steadfast in their commitment to addressing the multifaceted needs of the young people they serve.

Besides focusing on needs of young people, this research offers a few recommendations for future actions of young people. These actions are focused on:

– Training and Empowerment: Initiatives must prioritize the training and empowerment of youth workers. This includes equipping them with emotional resilience, psychological first aid capabilities, and trauma awareness.
– Mental Health and Psychosocial Support: Robust mental health and psychosocial support systems tailored to the unique needs of young people affected by war must be fortified.
– Capacity Building: Initiatives and NGOs must enhance their capacities for program evaluation, train resilience mentors for young individuals, and establish long-term development programs.
– Collaboration and Networks: The power of collaboration cannot be underestimated. By fostering cooperation, networking, and partnerships, organizations can amplify the impact of youth-focused initiatives.

– Advocacy for Flexibility: Advocacy is essential in pushing for funding mechanisms and policies that exhibit the flexibility required to adapt to the ever-changing needs of young people affected by war.
– Awareness and Advocacy: Raising awareness at multiple levels — among policymakers, local communities, and the public — regarding the pivotal role of youth work in these contexts is a perpetual necessity.

Finally, it is important to say that this research underscores the irreplaceable role of youth work in the journey of rehabilitating and integrating young individuals impacted by armed conflicts. It serves as a poignant reminder that dedication, perpetual learning, and international collaboration are the cornerstones of ensuring a brighter future for these resilient young souls. Every stride towards ameliorating their circumstances is a stride towards a more equitable, just, and promising world for all youth affected by war and armed conflict.

Legal Framework regarding Youthwork for Rehabilitation of Youth Affected by War and Armed Conflicts

By Manish Dutta, Judith Geschwinder and Luise Gisa Domina

The complexities of migration rules pose substantial obstacles in the numerous settings where youth workers work, which span multiple nations and even differ significantly within federal systems. While it is impractical to go into detailed detail due to the complexities of the legal landscape, we strongly advise youth workers and their organisations to become acquainted with the migration mechanisms that exist in their individual regions. Our findings highlight a key need of navigating the complicated legal labyrinth, notably in the areas of migration and human rights as a pressing learning priority for youth workers. The ever-changing legal frameworks regulating refugees, housing, and education frequently perplex youth workers, leaving them feeling uncertain. Recognising the critical necessity of their knowledge in these areas, they actively pursue education in migration law, human rights, and a variety of other legal fields. Their motivation arises from a deep recognition that advocating for the rights of young people affected by war requires an expert awareness of the legal landscape.
Therefore, it is impossible to get into too much detail, but we still encourage youth workers and their organizations to get informed about the migration process for the following reasons:

- Managing expectations of youth/Mitigating disappointment in the future.
- Some countries focus heavily on paper documents (e.g. birth certificates, degrees...) which in cases of armed conflict can be hard to obtain; knowing what documents will be required and obtaining them as soon as possible can influence outcomes of legal processes
- Youth and especially minors enjoy special legal protections.

It's crucial to emphasize that while youth workers play a vital role, they aren't lawyers or legal advisors. Their focus should lie in educating themselves about the legal frameworks surrounding the individuals they work with, comprehending the processes that impact them, and discerning the types of support required. Simultaneously, our research has identified another pressing requirement within the context of youth work for the rehabilitation of youth affected by war and armed conflicts: the imperative need to establish and sustain referral systems among various sectors, organizations, and individuals involved, to provide young people with the support adequate to their needs.

In this chapter we will explore the basics of the international law regarding migration and recognition of youthwork, that is useful in the context of youthwork for rehabilitation of youth affected by war and armed conflicts.
Which international and EU statutes are relevant?
It is impossible to give a comprehensive overview of the applicable law for youth fleeing war within their countries borders or fleeing beyond. There are differences in treatment and law depending on the country of origin (EU/non-EU), the nature of the conflict they are fleeing from and the governments directives on how to interpret existing laws and regulations in practice (this can vary widely). Still, to equip youth workers with some very general information on the main legal frameworks, we summarized the three most important international and supranational laws.

Infobox: The Geneva Convention

1. Refugees Covered: The Geneva Conventions, particularly the Fourth Convention, offer protection to refugees who find themselves in situations of armed conflict. These provisions apply to refugees regardless of their nationality.Article 1 of the 1951 Convention defines a refugee as someone who "owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of [their] nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail [themself] of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of [their] former habitual residence, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it."

2. Nnon-refoulement principle: The principle of non-refoulement, enshrined in the Geneva Conventions and the 1967 Protocol, prohibits the expulsion or return of refugees to areas where their lives or freedom may be seriously threatened. due to armed conflict.

3. Civilian Status: Refugees who do not take part in hostilities and who are not members of armed forces are considered civilians under the Geneva Conventions and are entitled to protection as such.

4. Treatment of Refugees: Refugees are entitled to humane treatment, including access to shelter, food, medical care, and protection from violence or harm during armed conflicts.

5. Access to Humanitarian Assistance: Humanitarian organizations and agencies, including the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), are permitted to provide humanitarian assistance to refugees in conflict zones, ensuring access to essential resources.

6. Protection from Violence: Refugees must be protected from violence, including acts of violence committed against them because of their refugee status. This includes protection from arbitrary detention, torture, or other forms of mistreatment.

7. Red Cross/Red Crescent Emblem: Refugees and humanitarian workers are entitled to the protection provided by distinctive emblems, such as the Red Cross or Red Crescent, as recognized symbols of assistance and protection.

8. Safe Passage: The Geneva Conventions and the 1967 Protocol emphasize the need for safe passage for refugees and the provision of humanitarian corridors to ensure their safe movement out of conflict zones.

9. Access to Asylum: Refugees have the right to seek asylum and protection in other countries when fleeing armed conflicts. States are encouraged to provide asylum and protect the rights of refugees on their territories.

10. Prohibition of Collective Expulsion: The Geneva Conventions and the 1967 Protocol prohibit the collective expulsion of refugees during armed con-

flicts. Each case must be individually examined to determine the need for protection.

11. International Responsibility: States that are parties to the Geneva Conventions and the 1967 Protocol have international obligations to ensure the protection and well-being of refugees during armed conflicts.

These points highlight the specific protections and rights afforded to refugees under the Geneva Conventions and the 1967 Protocol in the context of armed conflicts. These provisions are crucial for safeguarding the well-being of refugees and ensuring their rights are upheld during times of crisis.

Main contents of the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol

- Defining who is a refugee and who is not a refugee.
- Provisions that define the legal status of refugees.
- Determines how the contracting states work together with the UNHCR.

The meaning of a well-founded fear of persecution

The term "well-founded fear of persecution" is a crucial part of the definition of a refugee which in turn determines their status under this international law.

- The term well-founded both points out the presence of subjective and objective fear. Since being afraid or fearful is subjective, it has been complemented by the objectivity of being well-founded.
- As a result, a personal assessment of the applicant is carried out to determine their membership in a particular social community and their family or political history.
- Possession of a national passport doesn't prove that a person is not in need of protection.
- However, if the person shows a willingness to retain their origin country passport, it can show sufficient doubt to determine the criteria of "well-founded fear". However, there can be always exceptional situations that should be individually determined.

What constitutes persecution?

From Article 33 of the 1951 Convention, it may be inferred that a threat to life or freedom on account of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a particular social group is always persecution. Other serious violations of human rights – for the same reasons – would also constitute persecution.
Furthermore, sometimes applicants face a number of situations that cannot directly be labelled as persecution, but such situations together can amount to a feeling of being persecuted and therefore the necessity of an evaluation.

The role of discrimination in persecution

Not every type of discriminatory behaviour amounts to persecution. It is in only certain cases it can be labelled as persecution like,

- As a result of discrimination, there is a restriction on the right of the person to earn their livelihood.
- Because of discrimination, there is a restriction on their right to practice their religion or normally available educational facilities.

Differentiating persecution from punishment

To differ between punishment for actual crimes done and persecution on the basis of whether fundamental human rights of the person concerned have been violated or the punishment is based on political, religious or racial grounds.

Being outside the country of nationality

The person in question of being granted refugee status must be outside the territory of the country of which they have the nationality. There is no rule to this exception since in most cases a personcases person applying for refugee status has their national passport in possession.

> *A person who was not a refugee when he left his country, but who becomes a refugee at a later date, is called a refugee "sur place".*

https://euaa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/easo-flowchart-for-practicioners-qualification-for-international-protection-2018.pdf

Definition of stateless refugees

Stateless refugees are individuals who are not considered citizens or nationals of any country. They may have been forcibly displaced from their home countries due to factors like armed conflict, persecution, or human rights abuses.

Infobox: The Dublin Regulation

The Dublin Regulation, also called Dublin III, is an agreement between the EU member states, Iceland, Switzerland, Liechtenstein and Norway. It determines which country is responsible for considering an asylum application. Normally that is the State where the asylum seeker first entered the EU.
If the asylum seeker applies for protection in another Dublin country, he or she will be sent back to the country that has already considered his/her application or that is responsible for considering the application. The International Protection Office (IPO) is able to transfer the asylum seeker on that basis back to the country they first applied for or alsoapplied or also decide that another country should be responsible for the asylum application for other reasons.

Reasons why another country could be responsible for the asylum application are:
- Your husband or wife, or your dependent children have international protection, or are asylum seekers in another Dublin country
- You have (or previously had) a visa or residence permit in another Dublin country
- Your fingerprints were taken in another Dublin country
- There is evidence that you were in another Dublin country, even if your fingerprints were not taken

It is possible to appeal a transfer decision to the International Protection Appeals Tribunal (IPAT). Your appeal must be received within 10 days of the transfer decision. As the EU law on migration and asylum is very complex and can constantly change we recommend you informto inform yourself regularly. Important information you can find i.e. here:

- Handbook on European law
- EU agency for asylum - practical tools and guides
- Common European Asylum System

Sources:
https://www.unhcr.org/media/dublin-regulation
https://www.udi.no/en/word-definitions/cooperation-under-the-dublin-regulation/
https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/moving-country/asylum-seekers-and-refugees/the-asylum-process-in-ireland/dublin-convention/

Special Protection for Minors:

In regard to minors – the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the EU rules on unaccompanied minors are part of the legal framework

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (ratified by all UN member states, except for the United States of America) is quite long, but some of its points are the following:
- States need to protect children from any discrimination based on their or their parents/guardian identities
- Enshrines the inherent right to life of every child
- Children have the right to a complete identity (name, nationality, the right to know their parents and be cared for by them)
- States need to inform children and their guardians on the whereabouts of the parents if necessary
- When a child's parents live in different states they have a right to maintain contact on a regular basis
- States need to combat the illicit transfer and non-return of children abroad
- Children have the freedom of expression, freedom of thought, conscience, religion and privacy
- ...and many more. The complete text of the convention can be found here: https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-child

When a person under the age of 18, enters the EU unaccompanied, some different rules generally apply:
- States have a responsibility to look after unaccompanied children and must not abandon them when they are released from border detention
- Any decision concerning a child must be based on the CRC, regardless of immigration status
- The fundamental principle of "the best interest of the child" is fundamental
- Children must be provided with a representative (either a family member in the state responsible or someone appointed by the state)
- Representatives need to have knowledge of the special needs of that group and undergo special training
- Children are never allowed to be detained in prison accommodation
- Resident changes need to be kept at a minimum
- "Under the ECHR, the ECtHR has held that in cases concerning foreign children, whether accompanied or unaccompanied, the child's situation of extreme vulnerability is the decisive factor. This factor takes precedence over considerations relating to his or her status as an irregular migrant." (ECHR Handbook, p. 287)
- EU law allows member states to use medical examination to determine the age of an unaccompanied child. These usually include in depth interviews with psychologist or social workers and X-Rays analyzed by a schooled pediatrician. There is also a big focus on consent and keeping this examination as non-invasive as possible. If the results are inconclusive, the individual will usually be considered a child (Benefit of the doubt).
- More information on this, including some of the relevant case law can be found in the ECHR Handbook linked above

Recognition of youth work

The status of youth workers across Europe is very diverse, as are the practices of youth work. Youth work can be organised by a variety of institutions and organisations, individually and in teams. The history and traditions of youth work differ from each other in each European country, ranging from long-established professional youth work provisions to relying mostly on voluntary youth work structures and youth organisations.

In the document "Council of Europe Youth Work Portfolio" the Council of Europe defines youth workers as "all those involved in an active role in carrying out youth work, as qualified staff or volunteer youth leaders in organisations, as individuals or teams"

The Council of Europe Youth Work Portfolio is for any person or organisation doing youth work, whatever their status – voluntary or professional – and in whichever constellation – individual, team or organisational partnership. It has been developed to consider the wide variety of youth work realities in Europe. You can find it here: https://rm.coe.int/council-of-europe-youth-work-portfolio/16809eaa04

The Council of Europe also provides information about the recognition of youth work on their Website, i.e. about the four types of recognition, the national situations and already existing European policy documents: https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/visible-value-recognition-of-youth-work

The four types of recognition

The four types of recognition were for the first time defined in the „Pathways 2.0 towards recognition of non-formal learning/education and of youth work in Europe working paper" by the Council of Europe, and later expanded and adapted in other publications.

Self recognition: Recognition starts with us! It is about recognising who we are, what we do, and knowing the value our work has. It is also about recognising who else is part of the community of practice and recognising what it is they do. Self recognition includes being able to gather evidence of what it is we do. Self-recognition means being able to see the developments that are needed to improve the quality of youth work.

Social recognition: is when others gain a better understanding of what we are doing. It is about the social players acknowledging and valuing the positive impact of youth work and non-formal learning/education on young people and therefore on their communities as a whole. In practice it means that both the community (the public) and the other sectors (NGOs, private, municipal, media, institutions, education...) not only know what youth work is, but have a positive attitude towards it. In essence it is about gaining visibility for young people, youth work and the organisations providing this work.

Political recognition: is when young people and or youth work are included in policies about young people and/or are the focus of policies. This can be at local, regional, national and international levels. It is about youth work getting onto the political agenda, entering legislation and becoming a part of political strategies - and supporting the involvement of young people and youth work in those strategies. It is the political level acknowledging and recognising youth work and the value of youth work.

Formal recognition: has two areas of focus. It refers to the 'validation' of learning outcomes and the 'certification' of learning processes in youth work through recognised and accepted certification. It also refers to the training and education of youth workers, either within the context of youth work itself or through the formal education system. This includes the recognition of competencies acquired when entering formal education; official accreditation of non-formal education/learning programmes by formal accreditation bodies; licensing of youth workers and youth work trainers; officially recognised occupation of "youth worker" by the state, etc.

What are practical steps within an youth work organization where the youthworkers are working at, that can be implemented?

Create a "Migration Law Navigator"
Not everyone in an organization needs to be informed and up to date on the legal context. To save staff and time resources it can be useful to appoint one member of staff to familiarize themselves with the basics that apply to the context in which the organization is working. This navigator can be the point of contact within an organization for legal matters. As laws and practices can change, part of their responsibility can be to keep informed about changes. Obviously, they will not be a legal expert, but having one person with some understanding in a team can clear up some initial confusions and help with decisions.

Find out who to ask and where to look for expertise!
Obviously/Usually, youth organization do not keep migration lawyers on staff. But especially in cities, finding experts willing to assist and share their knowledge can be found.
- Universities with law departments/student law clinics
- Counsellors working with international organizations like Caritas, Malteser, Red Cross
- Socially active lawyers who are known to work on migration law and can be convinced to answer questions occasionally.

Share resources and databases among organizations
No organization has to reinvent the wheel. Yes, legal situations can change rapidly in developing conflicts, but sharing already gathered information and making these available to likeminded organizations can make everyone's lives easier.
- Create database with useful links, numbers of lawyers working in migration law, counsellors that can be approached if a question comes up.
- Implement regular updates of these shared databases.

What are best practices and smaller tasks that can be done?

Encourage/Help with organization of documents.
Especially in countries that rely heavily on paper documents, helping clients to keep these organized and ready to go can make life a lot easier. It can be as easy as telling them to buy a folder and sort their documents chronologically.
Practical Background: One of the workshop participants who has worked with refugees in Germany in the past shared her experiences of having to go through stacks of completely unorganized government letters and other paperwork. Thanks to a large donation of file folders from a sponsor company, her organization was able to provide their clients with the opportunity to get their files in order and make the work of counsellors and government officials easier.

Find out which private companies and government offices offer translation services and can notarize documents in the area and for which price.
This is a one-time time investment into helping with the bureaucratic processes that often require translated and/or notarized documents.

Check existing government resources and their translations.
Many governments and their immigration departments have guides on the basics of the processes in different languages available on their websites. Finding them, saving them and maybe having some copies to hand out can save a lot of time and money and give clients some time to familiarize themselves with the system and manage their anxiety.

If you notice topics that keep coming up and you feel like they should be shared, and you have the time: create flyers or info pages to fill the gap. For example:
- what are your rights when getting interviewed?
- What welfare services are available to certain groups?
- Which organizations offer services/help for women/LGBT* folks/people with disabilities?
- Guides to the local landscape: where are the relevant government offices? The Youth Centers? Supermarkets? The Hospitals?

If you have a motivated group of youth that is willing to assist with this, creating these information materials can be used as the basis for an activity and to familiarize them with their surroundings.

A complex web of issues exists at the intersection of human rights and migration, which has a significant impact on youngsters affected by war and armed conflict. Despite universal support for international human rights accords, their implementation remains inconsistent, with many nations, including some in the EU, failing to uphold their values. Asylum seekers' predicament serves as a glaring example of this reality, as they frequently face violence, opposition, and restriction of basic requirements and liberties when seeking sanctuary in other countries. These experiences exacerbate the trauma already caused by war and conflict, making young people doubly vulnerable to physical and psychological harm.

Furthermore, the current international human rights framework, while admirable in intent, is displaying indications of strain and obsolescence. The refugee definition's narrow breadth ignores the numerous circumstances in which people are compelled to escape their homes, including those caused by natural disasters and the negative effects of climate change, such as protracted droughts and conflicts caused by it. This inadequacy is especially evident in circumstances where nations (ex. Greece)unilaterally assess the "safety" of applicants' places of origin, ignoring human rights advocates' protests and denying asylum to many deserving individuals.

In dealing with these difficulties, it is critical to recognise the urgent need for reform and revitalization of the legal frameworks governing human rights and migration. Only by working together to bridge the gap between rhetoric and reality can we hope to secure a future in which the rights and dignity of all people, particularly the most vulnerable, are truly preserved and protected.

Until these reforms materialize, the imperative of youth work is twofold: first, to acknowledge and address the harsh realities faced by the young people we engage with, and second, to establish a robust referral system that facilitates access to professional support along their journey. Central to this mission is the creation of a "brave space" wherein these youth can freely learn, share, and express themselves, unencumbered by the weight of their traumatic pasts or the uncertainties of their asylum-seeking status.

Despite the profound challenges they confront, it is essential that these young individuals are empowered to chart their own paths and envision a brighter future for themselves. By fostering an environment that encourages growth, resilience, and self-expression, youth workers play a pivotal role in nurturing the potential of those affected by war and armed conflicts. Through education, mentorship, and holistic support, we can equip them with the tools and confidence they need to overcome adversity and pursue their dreams with optimism and determination.

In essence, the essence of youth work in the context of rehabilitation for youth affected by war and armed conflicts is not merely to mitigate the immediate impacts of trauma and displacement, but to instill within them a sense of agency, purpose, and hope for the future. Only by fostering such resilience and empowerment can we truly unlock the transformative potential of these remarkable young individuals and pave the way for a more just and compassionate society

Psychological Support and Emotional Well-being for Youth Workers

By Astghik Hovhannisyan

Youth work is constantly developing and being assigned new roles and functions, such as building civil society, improving social inclusion, preventing health risks, etc. With this continual evolution, the focus and aim of youth work is to ensure quality systems and frameworks that guarantee its improvement and show its impact and value.

The concept of quality youth work, however, can't only focus on the development of standards, indicators, methods and manuals. Youth workers are facing multiple challenges, such as burnout, municipal employee burnout, and lack of support from employers. In addition, they've carried the weight of a global health crisis.

War and armed conflicts have a deep and diverse impact on young people. Among the numerous challenges they face, our research has identified one of the most pressing needs: psychological support. Our project investigated the experiences of conflict-affected youth, showing that one of the most highlighted needs among youth was focused on psychological support.: they frequently require extensive emotional and mental health support to heal from the scars left by their traumatic experiences.

It's essential to recognize the distinction between youth workers and psychologists in the context of post-conflict rehabilitation. While youth workers may not possess formal training in psychology, they nonetheless play a pivotal role in the healing journey of youth affected by war and armed conflicts. Youth workers often serve as trusted mentors, advocates, and allies, providing invaluable support and guidance to young people navigating the complexities of trauma and emotional distress.

Our research has underscored the crucial need for resources and knowledge in psychological support within the youth work framework. Unlike psychologists who undergo specialized training in mental health assessment and therapy techniques, youth workers bring a unique set of skills and perspectives to the table. They excel in building rapport, fostering trust, and creating safe spaces for open dialogue and self-expression. Through active listening, empathy, and validation, youth workers can help youth process their experiences, develop coping strategies, and rebuild their sense of agency and resilience.

However, it's important to acknowledge the limitations of youth workers in addressing complex mental health issues. While they can provide invaluable emotional support and guidance, they are not equipped to offer formal diagnosis or therapeutic interventions. Our research has highlighted the pressing need for a referral system that facilitates collaboration between youth workers and mental health professionals. Establishing clear pathways for referrals ensures that young people receive the professional help and support that are tailored to their unique needs and circumstances.

In addition to fostering collaboration between youth workers and psychologists, our research has emphasized the importance of building a robust referral network across various individuals and organizations working with youth affected by war and armed conflicts. This network encompasses social workers, counselors, community leaders, and humanitarian organizations, among others. By establishing strong connections and communication channels, we can ensure that young people have access to a continuum of care and support services, from informal youth work interventions to specialized mental health treatment.

In this chapter, we will look at the strategies that youth workers can use to provide psycho-emotional assistance to young people affected by war and armed conflicts within their areas of expertise. Our findings highlight the critical need for such assistance, recognising that young workers frequently serve as important pillars of resilience for these vulnerable populations.

Recently, there have been the destructive consequences of COVID-19 and war nearby, and all of these bring the urgent necessity to light to address all issues around the emotional and mental well-being of youth workers and provide them with the knowledge of Psychological First Aid.

What is Psychological First Aid?

Psychological First Aid (PFA) is an evidence-informed approach that is built on the concept of human resilience. PFA aims to reduce stress symptoms and assist in a healthy recovery following a traumatic event, natural disaster, public health emergency, or even a personal crisis.

While Physical First Aid is used to reduce physical discomfort due to a bodily injury, Psychological First Aid is a strategy to reduce the painful range of emotions and responses experienced by people exposed to high stress.

Why use PFA?
Emotional distress is not always as visible as a physical injury but is just as painful and debilitating. After going through a life-altering experience it is common to be affected emotionally.
- Everybody who experiences a disaster is touched by it
- Reactions manifest differently at different periods during and after the incident.

Some common stress reactions include:
- Confusion
- Fear
- Feelings of hopelessness and helplessness
- Sleep problems
- Physical pain
- Anxiety
- Anger
- Grief
- Shock
- Aggressiveness
- Withdrawal
- Guilt
- Shaken religious faith
- Loss of confidence in self or others.

The goal of Psychological First Aid
The goal of Psychological First Aid is to create and sustain an environment of:
- Safety
- Calm and comfort
- Connectedness
- Self-Empowerment
- Hope

Where can I find more information on PFA?
The University of Minnesota has developed a PFA phone app and mobile website.
- Psychological First Aid Tutorial For iPhone and Android
- Psychological First Aide Tutorial
by Regents of the University of Minnesota

Additional PFA resources are available online at MDH Behavioral Health and Emergency Preparedness.
Psychological First Aid is a tool that each of us can use to deal with our emotions and reduce our stress levels. By understanding your stress reactions and utilizing Psychological First Aid principles, you can enhance resilience in yourself, your family, your workplace, and your community.

Training pills to improve a fine-tuned view
"Emotional pain is not something that should be hidden away and never spoken about. There is truth in your pain, there is growth in your pain, but only if it's first brought out into the open".
Steven Aitchison *(@StevenAitchinson (Twitter), 6.06.2018)*

Coming from youth work for many years, and working now as a psychologist mostly with teenagers and in collaboration with youth workers in prevention programmes, I consider below some useful little "pills of information" to improve and sharpen our interventions.

What is the (dis-)Stress-Anxiety-Depression continuum?

Stress is what our bodies and minds experience as we adapt to a repeatedly changing environment, to life. "I am so stressed..." How many times have you heard, thought, or said so? What you are experiencing there is that you feel incapable of managing all you are supposed to do: too much workload, too little time, and fewer resources as needed... that is DIS-stress. When you perceive that a situation, event or problem exceeds your resources or abilities, your body reacts automatically with the "fight or flight" response. When (dis)stress builds up over time, you may experience irritability, pains, sleep problems, or a decline in performance. If stress is left unchecked, symptoms will worsen, causing forgetfulness, severe physical complaints, illness, feelings of anxiety, panic and/or depression. Stress, anxiety and depression are placed on a continuum, so the earlier we start doing something about it, the better.

How do emotions work?
Emotion, from the Latin emovere, from e- "out" and movere "move".
Emotions are inner energy, which guides us to do and act. Emotions can be divided into pleasant and unpleasant, but they are adaptive, and they provide information about our needs. For example, nausea prevents us from ingesting spoiled or poisonous food, or fear activates the fight-or-flight response, and love we need to create our affective bonds from birth, necessary for healthy growth.

We feel and place emotions in our body: in our stomach, throat or our back. These feelings are the way our emotions have to express themselves. These feelings need to be heard, in order to find out what we really need. We need to give space for feelings to express even if they are pleasant or unpleasant.
Proper emotional intelligence is achieved when we recognise our emotions, and the emotions of others, and we are able to manage them, to hold them. To do this, it is interesting to know that the way we think affects what we feel. For example, if you think and believe that there is a high possibility of your loved ones dying of COVID-19 or not coming back from war, you may feel anxious, and as a result, you may not leave your home even or you will not let anyone get close to your loved ones, you will not be able to support the youngsters and etc. If you can change your way of thinking about the specific situation, you are faced with and stay positive, your anxiety will decrease, and it's more likely you will not self-isolate. More and more, youth work is including specific programmes and generic actions to develop emotional intelligence.

What are defence mechanisms?
Defence mechanisms are psychological strategies people use to separate themselves from unpleasant events, actions or thoughts. These may help people put distance between themselves and unwanted (or unmanageable) feelings. Some defence mechanisms are denial, repression, projection, rationalisation, etc. These mechanisms have a function to protect people's well-being. If someone is not prepared to face a traumatic event, these mechanisms are put in place. A defence mechanism can become pathological when its persistent use leads to maladaptive behaviour, resulting in an adverse effect on an individual's social functioning, and physical or mental health.

Youth workers and self-care

"Self-care is how you take your power back"
Lalah Delia *(@LalahDelia (Twitter), 31.03.2021)*

Da Silva and Neto (2021) mention that health and care professionals are experiencing higher levels of anxiety (13% versus 8.5%) and depression (12.2% versus 9.5%) compared to professionals from other areas. Blanco-Donoso et al. (2020) detail the psychosocial risks health professionals are facing at work during COVID-19, such as job stress, secondary traumatic stress, burnout, work-family conflict, or violence at work. We need to be aware and act accordingly. We need to prevent burnout.

Youth workers face unique challenges in their efforts to support young people who have experienced trauma or conflict-related stress. Our research reveals that the demands of this work can take a toll on their own mental well-being. Concerns about burnout and even post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) were expressed by several interviewees, highlighting the importance of self-care and well-being strategies for youth workers.

Self-care and well-being are crucial aspects of youth work in conflict-affected areas. Youth workers must prioritize their own mental health to effectively support others. Training programs should incorporate self-care techniques, stress management strategies, and guidance on maintaining a healthy work-life balance. As one interviewer aptly stated, "We don't care about ourselves. How are we supposed to care for others?" This sentiment underscores the fundamental truth that youth workers must be well-supported themselves in order to provide effective support to others.

In the following sections, we will explore practical strategies for youth workers to enhance their own well-being while effectively supporting young people affected by war and armed conflicts. By prioritizing self-care and building resilience, youth workers can better fulfill their roles as agents of positive change in the lives of vulnerable youth.

How can I do it being a youthworker?

Expand your resources: training in specifics like crisis intervention, emotional intelligence, etc. can help you feel more competent. Implement supervision: this is the process whereby a team regularly discusses their work with someone experienced. Therefore, it is recommended to create interdisciplinary teams, share your concerns and problems with colleagues, supervisors and managers, and find solutions within your team. On your own, you may:

- exercise, be active;
- eat healthily;
- make time for sleep;
- create and connect to a support network;
- learn and practise meditation techniques such as mindfulness.

Mental health and youth work go hand in hand

What are mental health and emotional well-being? How we should take care of ourselves, protect ourselves and prevent burnout we are going to answer those raised questions in this chapter.

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make healthy choices.

The first step is Self-care, which means any activity that we do deliberately to take care of our mental, emotional, and physical health. Learning how to eat right, reduce stress, exercise regularly, and take a time-out when you need it are touchstones of self-care and can help you stay healthy, happy, and resilient.

In turn staying healthy, happy and resilient means that you are:
- More confident
- More energetic
- More Productive
- More creative
- More helpful
- More forgiving
- More Popular
- More kind to others.

"We need common sense and the human touch, not a person being clinical."
– Young person, Right Here Sheffield

The New Economics Foundation (NEF) highlights five actions that research tells us can improve our mental wellbeing: connect, keep learning, give, take notice and be active.

Below are some ways youth organisations can build these approaches into their work.

Five Ways to Well-being

Connet:
Youth organisations often provide opportunities for young people to get together, build connections and friendships, and provide peer support among themselves. This can help to build tolerance and empathy amongst young people and can be particularly powerful for groups of young people known to be at higher risk of developing mental health problems.
Peer support groups developed through Right Here have included:
- A group of young mothers, which aims to promote their own independence and remind them of their aspirations and strengths (Fermanagh)
- Groups of young men (Newham and Fermanagh)
- Groups of young volunteers who have designed and delivered well-being improvement activities for their peers (all sites)

"I've learnt how to give respect to people. We've been given activities to help us – what to do if you are stuck in a group and you want to get to know them. Team building skills and activities. When I first joined, it was really useful; there were people locally I could then get to meet. People around me say that I have started talking and talking now."
– Young person, Right Here

Keep learning:
Opportunities for learning can occur through structured educational courses and training, but also through the development of practical knowledge and life skills. All of these offer the opportunity for young people to build their confidence and self-esteem.
Examples of Right Here's approach to supporting learning include:
- Well-being Champions – a ten-week accredited training programme which runs for two hours each week encouraging young people to advocate for well-being enhancement activities (Newham)
- Dare you Share? – a board game designed by young people to increase understanding about mental health issues and the associated stigma experienced by young people (Sheffield)

GIVENEF says that "seeing yourself and your happiness linked to the wider community can be incredibly rewarding and creates connections with the people around you."12 Developing opportunities for young people to make a difference in their communities can have considerable value in improving mental well-being and social connectedness.

The Right Here approach has supported volunteering and community activity in several ways, including:
- Youth Bank, a youth-led community grant-making programme (Fermanagh)
- Mental Health Ambassadors (Sheffield)
- Youth panels and groups of volunteers, working with staff, to shape and deliver programmes (all sites)

"Starting with the Youth Bank and people helping themselves and their own community... that was something great... It was just fantastic taking part in helping other people know about mental health."

– Young person, Right Here Fermanagh

Take notice

Taking notice can mean looking at the world around you, but it can also include reflecting on what you are feeling and appreciating what matters to you. Several Right Here courses have focused on recognising and dealing with negative emotions, such as anger:

- Cage the Rage (Sheffield)
- Keep Calm and Carry On (Brighton and Hove)

"It's taught me how to deal with my anger issues. Sometimes I do forget but when I give myself the time to think about things I just don't get angry. It's just amazing. I never would have known this myself if I didn't come here."

– Young person, Right Here Brighton and Hove

Be active

Exercise and physical activity can be promoted through specific groups, clubs and activities run by youth groups or in partnership with leisure centres. In addition to physical health benefits, these activities can promote a range of mental well-being benefits including boosting mood and promoting social interaction and friendship. It can also help young people to understand the connections between mental health and physical health.

Examples of physical activity groups developed in Right Here are:

- Indoor rock climbing drop-in (Brighton and Hove)
- Non-contact boxing classes (Newham)
- Fishing (Fermanagh)
- Walk and Talk (Sheffield and Brighton and Hove).

The field of subjective well-being (SWB) is primarily concerned with people's evaluation of their lives: however, it includes a wide range of concepts, from momentary moods to global life satisfaction judgments.

Elements of Subjective Well-being

- Happiness: an emotional state of how you feel about yourself and theworld.
- Satisfaction with Life: more global judgment about your acceptance of your life more of a cognitive assessment.

Youth Work can Help young people to become:

· Better able to understand and manage their emotions more hopeful and optimistic
· Stronger and more resilient
· Happier
· Less impulsive (Frude, 2).

Five Ways to Wellbeing:
- Give
- Be active
- Keep learning
- Take notice
- Connect

Constructionist view of resilience the focus and aim of youth work is to ensure quality systems and frameworks that guarantee its improvement and show its impact and value.

Resilience is the ability to recover from setbacks and adapt to challenging circumstances which is required to thrive and flourish.
It is a foundational psychological tool that empowers us to feel effective and capable of handling uncertainty.

Constructionist view of resilience the focus and aim of youth work is to ensure quality systems and frameworks that guarantee its improvement and show its impact and value.

Resilience is the ability to recover from setbacks and adapt to challenging circumstances which is required to thrive and flourish.
It is a foundational psychological tool that empowers us to feel effective and capable of handling uncertainty.

Resilience is crucial in war-affected contexts due to the extraordinary challenges and adversities faced by individuals and communities living in such environments. Here's why resilience is important in these contexts:

Coping with Trauma: War and armed conflicts expose individuals to extreme violence, loss, displacement, and other traumatic experiences. Resilience enables individuals to cope with these traumas, adapt to adverse circumstances, and navigate the emotional aftermath of conflict.

Rebuilding Lives: Resilience empowers individuals to rebuild their lives in the wake of destruction and upheaval caused by war. It fosters a sense of hope, agency, and determination to overcome obstacles and pursue meaningful goals despite immense challenges.

Protecting Mental Health: Resilience plays a protective role in preserving mental health amidst the chaos and instability of war-affected environments. It helps individuals maintain emotional equilibrium, resist the development of mental health disorders such as depression and anxiety, and bounce back from setbacks.

Fostering Community Strength: Resilience is not just an individual attribute but also a collective phenomenon. In war-affected communities, resilience strengthens social bonds, fosters mutual support networks, and promotes solidarity in the face of adversity. It enables communities to come together, mobilize resources, and collaborate in rebuilding efforts.

Promoting Recovery and Reconstruction: Resilience is essential for long-term recovery and reconstruction efforts in war-affected areas. It fuels innovation, resourcefulness, and adaptability, facilitating the development of sustainable solutions to complex challenges such as rebuilding infrastructure, revitalizing economies, and promoting reconciliation.

Overall, resilience serves as a vital resource for individuals and communities to withstand the profound disruptions and hardships caused by war and armed conflicts. It is a cornerstone of survival, recovery, and renewal in the midst of adversity, offering a beacon of hope and strength in the darkest of times.

Take your Resiliency Inventory

The late Al Siebert, PhD founded The Resiliency Center in Portland, Oregon. He developed a quick resilience test. Take this quiz, adapted from The Resilience Advantage (2015).



Rate yourself from 1 to 5 (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree):

- I'm usually optimistic. I see difficulties as temporary and expect to overcome them.
- Feelings of anger, loss and discouragement don't last long.
- I can tolerate high levels of ambiguity and uncertainty about situations.
- I adapt quickly to new developments. I'm curious. I ask questions.
- I'm playful. I find humour in rough situations and can laugh at myself.
- I learn valuable lessons from my experiences and the experiences of others.
- I'm good at solving problems. I'm good at making things work well.
- I'm strong and durable. I hold up well during tough times.
- I've converted misfortune into good luck and found benefits in bad experiences.

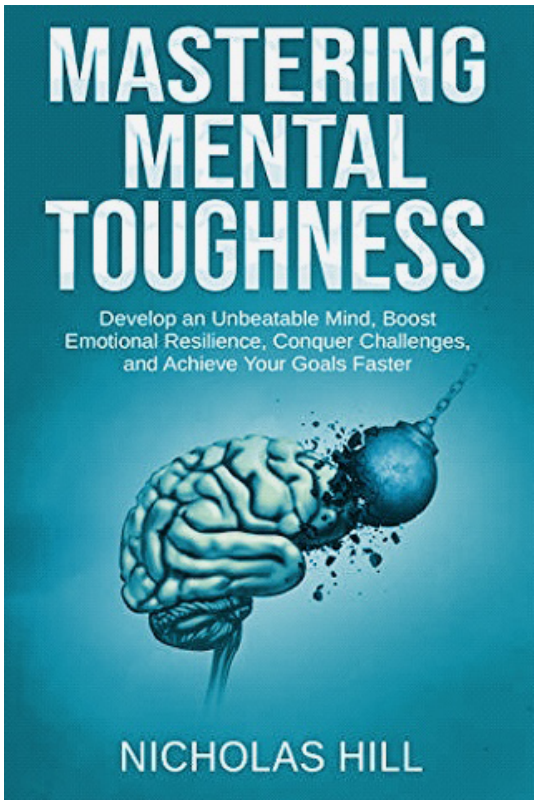
Convert your scores with the following key:

Less than 20: Low Resilience — You may have trouble handling pressure or setbacks, and may feel deeply hurt by any criticism. When things don't go well, you may feel helpless and without hope. Consider seeking some professional counsel or support in developing your resiliency skills. Connect with others who share your developmental goals.
10–30: Some Resilience — You have some valuable pro-resiliency skills, but also plenty of room for improvement. Strive to strengthen the characteristics you already have and to cultivate the characteristics you lack. You may also wish to seek some outside coaching or support.

30–35: Adequate Resilience — You are a self-motivated learner who recovers well from most challenges. Learning more about resilience, and consciously building your resiliency skills, will empower you to find more joy in life, even in the face of adversity.

35–45: Highly Resilient — You bounce back well from life's setbacks and can thrive even under pressure. You could be of service to others who are trying to cope better with adversity.

Mental Toughness 2-Minute Hack Activity
This activity is a life hack to develop mental toughness in less than two minutes. Tempting, but is it too good to be true?



Jason Selk, a performance coach who has trained a range of Olympic and professional athletes, uses this exercise:

Try this 2-minute centring hack:

Start with a centring breath. Breathe in for six seconds. Hold it for two seconds. Breathe out for seven seconds.

Recite a personalized identity statement that emphasizes a positive quality and specifies something you want to become in five seconds, such as "I am confident and passionate," or "I'm consistently excellent every day as a leader, executive, and mother."

Visualize your highlight reel for 60 seconds—
think of three things you've done well in the past day. Mentally rehearse three important things you need to do today. Repeat your identity statement for five seconds. Finish with another centring breath cycle—breathing in for six seconds, holding for two and then exhaling for seven.

Early warning, early response

Mental health promotion attempts to encourage and increase protective factors and healthy behaviours that can help prevent the onset of a diagnosable mental disorder and reduce risk factors that can lead to the development of a mental disorder.
Why prevention and mental health are important? Mental health is important because it can help you to:
- Cope with the stresses of life;
- Be physically healthy;
- Have good relationships;
- Make meaningful contributions to your community;
- Work productively;
- Realize your full potential.

So mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make healthy choices.
Screening strategies and early detection interventions may allow for more effective healthcare pathways, by taking action long before health problems worsen or by preventing their onset.
Prevention is always better and easier because it is easier to stop a problem, illness, etc., from happening than to stop or correct it after it has started.
So how to recognize that person, a youth worker needs professional psychology help?

Everyone needs this reflection time, Just to sit in a quiet place and think about what is happening in their life. How do you feel? Is everything alright? We may feel a state of exhaustion and overwhelm. While this is partly true, burnout is much more complex.

Burnout begins in a seemingly harmless way – with less enthusiasm towards your work. If you say "yes" to more assignments and tasks, you realize that you can't fit everything into normal office hours. As a result, work begins to affect your personal everyday life and your

health too. What are these early signs exactly? You may have problems concentrating or learning. Sometimes even irritability or anger. Sometimes even excessive worry, fear, or sadness. Do you have enough sleep? When you're not getting enough sleep, you might begin to have more negative thoughts or become more emotional. Do you feel hopeless more days than not? Feeling hopeless can create a spiral of negative thinking. It can make us see the light at the end of a tunnel. If you suddenly begin eating more or less than what's normal for you, it could be a sign too. Are you feeling guilty or worthless when you work with youth, it becomes harder for you to understand their problems, and you feel that you can't help anyone. It's another sign. Still wondering. Do I need counselling or psychological support?

The first step is finding out how severe your symptoms are so you know if it's time to take the next step. So let's conclude: If you have:

1 I can manage or control my emotions. when you work or even when you meet with friends

2 Overwhelmed. You might feel like you have too many things to do or too many issues to cope with. · Fatigue.

3 Hopelessness: You could feel demotivated from time to time, but if you feel there's no motivation in anything you do, or you don't look forward to the next day at work and are not even excited to meet your friends or when something pleasant happened.

4 Changes in sleeping. You lack sleep or instead always want to go to bed

5 Your mood is affecting your work. It's normal to feel down or anxious sometimes but if you find yourself constantly questioning your life and struggling with finishing daily tasks at work or at home, seeking therapy is a good idea.

6 Eating disorders. You want to eat more or have no appetite and even your favorite dishes can attract your attention.

7 Social withdrawal. There are many introverts who prefer spending time on their own, but if you feel troubled being around others or fear being with others, it could be an early sign too.

So these signs say that it's time to see a psychologist and improve your life.

Burnout Prevention

Is a state of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress. It occurs when you feel overwhelmed, emotionally drained, and unable to meet constant demands. As the stress continues, you begin to lose the interest and motivation that led you to take on a certain role in the first place.

Burnout reduces productivity and saps your energy, leaving you feeling increasingly helpless, hopeless, cynical, and resentful. Eventually, you may feel like you have nothing more to give.w

The negative effects of burnout spill over into every area of life—including your home, work, and social life. Burnout can also cause long-term changes to your body that make you vulnerable to illnesses like colds and flu. Because of its many consequences, it's important to deal with burnout right away.

You may be on the road to burnout if:

- Every day is a bad day
- Caring about your work or home life seems like a total waste of energy;
- You're exhausted all the time;
- The majority of your day is spent on tasks you find either mind-numbingly dull or overwhelming;
- You feel like nothing you do makes a difference or is appreciated.

Physical signs and symptoms of burnout

- Feeling tired and drained most of the time;
- Lowered immunity, frequent illnesses;
- Frequent headaches or muscle pain;
- Change in appetite or sleep habits.

Emotional signs and symptoms of burnout
- Sense of failure and self-doubt.
- Feeling helpless, trapped, and defeated.
- Detachment, feeling alone in the world.
- Loss of motivation. Increasingly cynical and negative outlook.
- Decreased satisfaction and sense of accomplishment.

Behavioural signs and symptoms of burnout
- Withdrawing from responsibilities.
- Isolating from others.
- Procrastinating, taking longer to get things done.

Using food, drugs, or alcohol to cope.
- Taking frustrations out on others.
- Skipping work or coming in late and leaving early.

The difference between stress and burnout
Burnout may be the result of unrelenting stress, but it isn't the same as too much stress. Stress, by and large, involves too much: too many pressures that demand too much of you physically and mentally. However, stressed people can still imagine that if they can just get everything under control, they'll feel better.

Stress vs. Burnout

Stress	Burnout
Characterized by over-engagement	Characterized by disengagement
Emotions are overreactive	Emotions are blunted
Produces urgency and hyperactivity	Produces helplessness and hopelessness
Loss of energy	Loss of motivation, ideals, and hope
Leads to anxiety disorders	Leads to detachment and depression
Primary damage is physical	Primary damage is emotional
May kill you prematurely	May make life seem not worth living

Dealing with burnout:

Turn to other people
Social contact is nature's antidote to stress and talking face-to-face with a good listener is one of the fastest ways to calm your nervous system and relieve stress. The person you talk to doesn't have to be able to "fix" your stressors: they just have to be a good listener, someone who'll listen attentively without becoming distracted or expressing judgment.

Reevaluate your priorities
Take time to think about your hopes, goals, and dreams. Are you neglecting something truly important to you? This can be an opportunity to rediscover what makes you happy and to slow down and give yourself time to rest, reflect, and heal.
Set boundaries. Don't overextend yourself. Learn how to say "no" to requests on your time. If you find this difficult, remind yourself that saying "no" allows you to say "yes" to the commitments you want to make.

Take a daily break from technology.
Set a time each day when you completely disconnect. Put away your laptop, turn off your phone, and stop checking email or social media.
Nourish your creative side. Creativity is a powerful antidote to burnout. Try something new, start a fun project, or resume a favourite hobby. Choose activities that have nothing to do with work or whatever is causing your stress.
Set aside relaxation time. Relaxation techniques such as yoga, meditation, and deep breathing activate the body's relaxation response, a state of restfulness that is the opposite of the stress response.

Get plenty of sleep. Feeling tired can exacerbate burnout by causing you to think irrationally. Keep your cool in stressful situations by getting a good night's sleep.

Boost your ability to stay on task
- Learn how to reduce stress in the moment.
- Manage troublesome thoughts and feelings.
- Motivate yourself to take the steps that can relieve stress and burnout.
- Improve your relationships at work and home.
- Rediscover joy and meaning that make work and life worthwhile.
- Increase your overall health and happiness.

Make exercise a priority
Aim to exercise for 30 minutes or more per day or break that up into short, 10-minute bursts of activity. A 10-minute walk can improve your mood for two hours. Rhythmic exercise, where you move both your arms and legs, is a hugely effective way to lift your mood, increase energy, sharpen focus, and relax both the mind and body. Try walking, running, weight training, swimming, martial arts, or even dancing. To maximize stress relief, instead of continuing to focus on your thoughts, focus on your body and how it feels as you move: the sensation of your feet hitting the ground, for example, or the wind on your skin.

Support for Youth Workers

ACT is ideal for developing psychological flexibility in youth workers who work with vulnerable young people because it directs us toward values and committed actions while teaching us how to accept what we cannot change. This would enable youth workers to better deal with the feelings that arise in their roles, to switch off from their work, and to avoid burnout. Equally, if youth workers not only develop psychological flexibility but gain the tools with which they, in turn, can help young people to establish their psychological flexibility, their hard work would be supported in an even more meaningful way.

The six core principles of ACT are all interrelated. Learning about and following these principles would support youth workers in targeting unhelpful control and avoidance behaviours while empowering psychological flexibility:

- Cognitive diffusion: Learning methods to reduce the tendency to rectify thoughts, images, emotions, and memories
- Acceptance: Allowing unwanted private experiences (thoughts, feelings and urges) to come and go without struggling with them
- Contact with the present moment: Being aware of the here and now, experienced with openness, interest, and receptiveness (such as mindfulness)
- The observing self: Accessing a transcendent sense of self, a continuity of consciousness which is unchanging
- Values: Discovering what is most important to the person
- Committed action: Setting goals according to values and carrying them out responsibly, in the service of a meaningful life.

Traditional face-to-face psychotherapy like ACT may not be available or accessible for many youth workers supporting young people in difficult circumstances, especially those living in rural or under-resourced areas. However, computerized CBT treatments show promising results in treating anxiety and depression disorders, as well as in creating healthy ways of dealing with stress. These kinds of developments will hopefully be part of a future in which youth workers can better protect themselves against stress and burnout, feel more fulfilled in their work, and transfer their positive mental health knowledge and skills to the young people they work with.

Identification of your personal/ own boundaries

Firstly, it is about why setting healthy boundaries in youth work is important, not just for the youth worker but also for the youth and the organisation. Afterwards, the chapter presents two methods that can be used to reflect on and identify personal boundaries.
Successful youth work is built upon a trusted relationship that supports open communication and information sharing. Boundaries are intended to support this effective and professional relationship, whilst identifying limits around appropriate behaviours in the relationship. To practice successful youth work it is necessary to prioritise healthy boundaries. Boundaries not only protect the youth that is worked with but also the youth worker and the youth organisation.

Healthy boundaries with young people will:
- Ensure a safe space for all;
- Build the confidence of young people, youth workers, organisations, and the wider community;
- Promote empowerment and avoid unhealthy, dependent relationships.

Furthermore, they:
- Promote well-being and avoid burnout for the youth worker;
- Role modelling healthy boundaries in a way that promotes empowerment and independence, avoiding dependency for the youth;
- Promote a professional environment to deliver impactful services and mitigate undue risk by promoting physical and emotional safety for all in the organisation.

To promote the identification and the setting of boundaries as a youth worker, this chapter wants to present different methods and strategies that youth workers can use. Moreover, for youth workers to practice identifying their boundaries, but at the same time the strategies can be also useful in their work with the youth.

Strategies for identifying personal boundaries

Boundaries: Boundaries are an external representation of your values. You will have different boundaries in different situations based on your values and society's norms.

If you repeatedly find yourself in situations with people who make you feel uncomfortable, stressed, anxious, depressed, mad, or frustrated, you need to set stricter boundaries. When people do or say things that trigger an intense emotional reaction within us, it is a signal that they have crossed a boundary.

Find more information on personal boundaries on this info sheet:
https://www.therapistaid.com/therapy-worksheet/boundaries-psychoeducation-printout

Question exercise

To get a sense of your boundaries, start by answering the following questions:

- Are there any individuals that make you feel insecure, hurt, frustrated, sad, or angry after spending time with them?
- What do your typical interactions with these people look like?
- What have you done in the past to control the situation?
- What has worked and what hasn't?
- What behaviours or actions would you like people to stop directing at you?
- What statements do you wish people would no longer say to you?
- What things do people say to you that undermine your confidence or self-esteem?
- Do people assume you're comfortable with certain topics that you're not?
- When certain people ask for favours, does it leave you feeling overwhelmed?
- What things do people say about others that make you feel uncomfortable?
- Are there things you feel uncomfortable sharing with others?
- Do you feel the need to behave differently with different social groups?
- Do you feel pressure to engage in activities that you don't want to do?
- What situations make you feel attacked or defensive?
- Who do you feel confident asserting a need with?
- Who do you feel would disrespect your personal space and values?
- What situations can you be most flexible with?
- What has happened in the past that makes these people, behaviours, or situations uncomfortable?
- What do you want to prevent from happening in the future?

Using these questions as a guide, you will be able to identify times in your life when someone has made you feel uncomfortable. As you identify the discomfort, you are labelling a boundary. Your boundary is the point of the situation right before you feel uncomfortable. Once you have answered the questions and developed an awareness of times in the past when your unidentified boundaries have been crossed, you can formulate sentences that will express your boundaries in the future.

You can fill out these sentences as an exercise:

People may not _____
I have the right to ask for _____
To protect myself it is ok for me to _____
To prevent anxiety or depression I need _____

Take the answers from your questions and the examples above as guidelines for developing your own boundaries. Use the answers about past situations at your work to gain comprehension of what words, actions, topics, people, places, events, and situations you don't want to repeat because of the negative impact they had on your well-being.

Boundary Exploration Worksheet

Think about a person, or a group of people, with whom you struggle to set healthy boundaries. This could mean that your boundaries are too rigid (you keep this person at a distance), too porous (you open up too much), or there is some other problem that isn't easily labelled.

Who do you struggle to set healthy boundaries with?
In your relationship with the person you listed above, what are your boundaries in each of the following categories? Add a check in the appropriate column for each boundary category.

Boundary Category	Porous	Rigid	Healthy	Other
Physical Boundaries				
Intellectual Boundaries				
Emotional Boundaries				
Sexual Boundaries				
Material Boundaries				
Time Boundaries				

Take a moment to imagine what it will be like when you begin to establish healthy boundaries with this person. If your boundaries are too rigid, that might mean opening up. If they're porous, it means setting limits and saying "no".

After filling out the table, you can answer the following questions as an exercise:

- What are some specific actions you can take to improve your boundaries?
- How do you think the other person will respond to these changes?
- How do you think your life will be different once you've established healthy boundaries?

Conclusions

Supporting the development of quality to create a lasting impact on the lives of young people includes the quality of well-being and wellness of youth workers themselves.

Youth workers' mental and emotional well-being directly affects productivity and motivation at work. Having good mental and emotional health for youth workers is fundamental to fostering resilience, self-awareness, and overall contentment. And it goes together with the capability to be more productive in their work hours, staying motivated, raising their problem-solving skills and helping to be more solution-oriented.

"Mental health problems don't define who you are. They are something you experience. You walk in the rain and you feel the rain, but, importantly, YOU ARE NOT THE RAIN". **Matt Haig** *(The Comfort Book, 2021)*

Mental health affects everyone, from our youngsters to policymakers to youth workers. Our intervention as youth workers often lies on the borders of therapeutic work, and it is good practice to attend to our youngsters' needs. To develop quality work with mental health-related problems, which are likely to appear more and more in the future due to COVID-19 and war nearby, youth workers need to acquire specific competencies and skills. Together with working in interdisciplinary teams and enhancing cooperation between different professionals and resources may help struggling youngsters, or prevent them from developing mental health problems. Ah, and also take care of yourself!

Youth workers are on the front line, and our job can make a difference for many young people!

Resources:

https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/coyote-magazine/psychological-first-aid-in-youth-work
https://www.nya.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/guidance-on-personal-professional-and-environmental-boudnaries.pdf
https://www.phf.org.uk/reader/right-promote-mental-wellbeing-youth-work-practice/youth-work-mental-wellbeing-go-hand-hand/
www.forbes.com/sites/melodywilding/2023/02/21/am-i-burned-out-how-to-recognize-the-12-stages-of-burnout/
https://www.talkspace.com/blog/do-i-need-therapy/10 Signs You Need a Psychologist-When to see a psychologist (drnehamehta.com)
https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/ep/behavioral/pfa.html#:~:text=What%20is%20Psychological%20First%20Aid,or%20even%20a%20personal%20crisis.
Prevention and early intervention in youth mental health: is it time for a multidisciplinary and trans-diagnostic model for care? | International Journal of Mental Health Systems | Full Text (biomedcentral.com)
https://inside.ewu.edu/calelearning/psychological-skills/preventing-burnout/
https://www.helpguide.org/articles/stress/burnout-prevention-and-recovery.htm
https://www.thecenterforgrowth.com/tips/identifying-your-boundaries
https://www.therapistaid.com/therapy-worksheet/boundaries-exploration-activity
https://www.therapistaid.com/therapy-worksheet/boundaries-psychoeducation-printout
https://www.nya.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/guidance-on-personal-professional-and-environmental-boudnaries.pdf
https://www.thecenterforgrowth.com/tips/identifying-your-boundaries
https://www.therapistaid.com/therapy-worksheet/boundaries-exploration-activity
https://www.therapistaid.com/therapy-worksheet/boundaries-psychoeducation-printout
https://www.stpatricks.ie/media-centre/blogs-articles/2021/october/youth-worker-mental-health

Intercultural sensivility approach multi-actor dialogues.

Carlos Eduardo Cubillos Pérez *(Libre Pensadores de la Sierra and Centro Studi Sereno Regis)*
Antonios Hazim, Amer Katbeh (Hiwarat e.V.)
Erion Krasniqi (Youth Peace Ambassadors Kosovo)

This chapter presents the approach of intercultural sensitivity and multi-actor dialogue as two tools for youth work in contexts of war or with young people affected by armed conflicts. The chapter first presents a theoretical approach to interculturality and multi-actor dialogue. Subsequently, practical methods are presented to activate interculturality and dialogue between different actors in youth work. Finally, two local activities implemented in the project are shown with these two approaches that highlight the proposal of the approach of intercultural sensitivity and dialogue as useful instruments for the rehabilitation of young people affected by armed conflicts.

The principle of interculturality covers all forms and processes of socialization: economic, political, ethical, legal, labor, health, sports, among others. As a principle, it promotes exchange and interpersonal and collective relationships, eradicating all types of inequality without suppressing differences or cultural identities. In this framework, interculturality has a very clear purposeful socio-political orientation expressed in actions aimed at recognizing the possibilities and riches of our diversity, the maintenance of our identities and the fight against the inequalities installed in society in order to contribute to the transformation of conflicts between cultures and the structural framework that causes political, socio-economic and cultural inequality.
Youth workers must use instruments that allow them to work with the impacts that armed conflicts have on young people: lack of self-recognition, communication difficulties, jumps in the phases of the life cycle, loss of family and social ties, difficulties in trusting and building relationships, social marginalization, inaccessibility to the world of school and work, among many others. In addition to this, youth workers must constantly create a space for dialogue between multiple actors that converge in their work, starting from the young beneficiaries, passing through primary care services, social services, legal institutions, schools, families, policyholders. of decisions.

From this analysis arises the need to incorporate an approach of interculturality and multi-actor dialogue that allows youth workers to respect diverse cultural backgrounds, fostering trust and rapport, empathize with the unique challenges and traumas that young people face, tailor interventions to be culturally sensitive and effective and create safe and supportive environments where youth feel understood and valued, in order to provide comprehensive support to young people affected by armed conflicts.

From multiculturalism to interculturality:

"Interculturality is then constituted as a propositional notion that points towards the articulation of differences, and the search for complementarity between culturally different peoples, but not to the disappearance of differences. (López, 2004)".

From this quote it is possible to make another distinction between multiculturalism and interculturalism. It is not just about the static versus the

dynamic, the descriptive versus the propositional, but rather the relationship established between different cultures. While multiculturalism speaks of the presence of diverse cultures with specific contents, interculturality puts emphasis on points of contact and therefore on the necessary dialogue between cultures. The first position respects the particularities and the second proposes the possibility of building links between them. Hence this position of improvement or advancement, in the sense that it is not enough to recognize the differences, but it is necessary to see how there can be enrichment from the interrelation of cultures.

Multiculturalist positions recognize the presence of different cultures, but do not promote their exchange or interconnection. For some authors, such as Bauman (2001), this produces a more negative than positive effect.
"Apparently, multiculturalism is guided by the postulate of liberal tolerance and by attention to the right of communities to self-affirmation and public recognition of their chosen (or inherited) identities. However, it acts as an essentially conservative force: its effect is a recasting of inequalities, which are unlikely to gain public approval, as "cultural differences": something to cultivate and obey."

From this we deduce, on the one hand, the danger of the multicultural approach that, by respecting difference without the possibility of any intervention, falls into the acceptance of inequalities. On the other hand, the impossibility of connection between those who are different somehow isolates them and prevents them from growing from mutual enrichment.
Interculturality, on the other hand, recognizes the differences between cultures, but also seeks reciprocal dialogue, also avoiding unilateral assimilationism. It implies the explicit recognition of the right to difference, the recognition of diverse cultures, but developing relationships and exchanges between individuals, groups and institutions of different cultures. Exchange is the basis of this position.

"Multicultural, beyond expressing the juxtaposition of cultures without necessarily having any link or common purpose, often presupposes the existence of an autonomous culture and another or other added cultures on which integrative policies can be applied, at best. cases, or assimilationist, at worst. (...) Interculturality, on the contrary, implies an egalitarian position between all cultures and the adoption of a less unidirectional and more active conceptual approach: while multicultural evokes situation, intercultural evokes action – relationship by entailing interrelation for enrichment mutual"
(Vidal 2003 in Garín Sallán, 2004)

The intercultural has to do with cultural practices and specific ways of life of people who interact, with the understanding that the field of the intercultural is not outside of us but rather we are involved in it, and this is the space – or walkability – which is created through dialogue and communication between cultures. The mechanism that puts interculturality into action, which is thought to be the most developed form of dialogue between cultures and civilizations, is intercultural dialogue.

Intercultural communicative competence consists of a generic communicative skill that allows us all to be flexible, non-dogmatic and open in adapting to the challenge of intercultural interactions: that is, not reducing new experiences to preconceived categories and rejecting ethnocentrism. This communication must promote critical reflection on our values and culture and attitudes without prejudice towards difference, for which it is essential to acquire information about the history, values, institutions and behavioral systems of the other society or societies. With the acquisition of cultural competence about the "Other", interculturality is made possible and the negative stereotypes and prejudices that are usually a product of the absence or poor quality of information about the lifestyles of the others with whom one interacts are destroyed (Barabas, 2014).

Intercultural dialogue

Intercultural Dialogue is a process of communication and exchange that can translate into the interaction between two or more individuals and/or groups that come from different origins or cultures, where each of them expresses their ideas, opinions, provides information and/or searches. Establish agreements or acceptance of divergences in an environment of respect and recognition of cultural differences, through symmetrical and reciprocal relationships. It is a process that encompasses the open and respectful exchange of opinions between people and groups with different ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic traditions and backgrounds, in a spirit of mutual understanding and respect (anesh & Holmes, 2011).

The European Institute for Comparative Cultural Research, formulated a working definition for the term:
Intercultural dialogue is a process that comprises an open and respectful exchange or interaction between individuals, groups and organisations with different cultural backgrounds or worldviews. Among its aims are: to develop a deeper understanding of diverse perspectives and practices; to increase participation and the freedom and ability to make choices; to foster equality; and to enhance creative processes. (Council of Europe, p. 10)

Understanding intercultural processes as constitutive of dialogue is particularly evident in studies that position difference as key points or moments of negotiation in dialogue processes. Such scholarship is likely to view all dialogic encounters as inherently intercultural, embedded in national, political, economic, religious, and historical interests and identities and contexts; they recognize culture as continuously under (re)construction and(re)negotiation; and they acknowledge the complex and diverse relationship webs we enact both within and across groups (Warren, 2008).

Tips for carrying out intercultural dialogues (Ministry of Culture of Peru, 2015):
- Know the actors immersed in intercultural dialogue: identify the different population groups, know their culture and socio-cultural context, previous experiences of the population and their expectations.

- Know the socio-cultural context of the populations immersed in intercultural dialogue: history of the population and geographical scope, local socio-cultural dynamics and structures, their forms of expression and predominant language, their forms of daily communication and their means of information.
- Develop capabilities and competencies in the facilitating team: all staff must be sensitized to the issues of cultural diversity and non-discrimination; trained in the intercultural approach; obtain information from population groups immersed in intercultural dialogues; Incorporate the figure of interpreters, translators and intercultural mediators; know existing regulatory frameworks.
- Design communication strategies that accompany the intercultural encounter: adapt communication resources: videos, posters, radio spots, booklets or others to daily life, colloquial language, and when relevant, to the language of the ethnic-cultural group; ensure that communication resources are free of stereotypes and prejudices; establish communication networks, resorting to alternative forms of interconnection, which will make the initiated process sustainable over time and strengthen the institutionalization of dialogue; develop an agreed agenda, with all the actors or groups involved in the dialogue process.
- Assume responsibility for the results of the dialogue: the dialogue process should not end with the meeting between population groups, the process must end with the feedback, validation and legitimacy of the populations.
- Recognize the importance of spaces: ensure that spaces allow for fluid communication, face to face, without interruptions and where the dialogue partners are on equal terms for dialogue.

Multi-actor Dialogues

Multi-actor dialogues can be a useful tool to support social work with war-affected youth. Such dialogues bring together different actors, such as youth, community leaders, and youth workers, to engage in open and respectful communication. They have been shown to be an effective way to help war-affected youth process their trauma, begin to heal, and empower them to actively take their lives in the hand.

To elaborate on these aspects, here are some ways in which multi-actor dialogues can support war-affected youth:
- Foster healing: Multi-actor dialogues can provide a safe space for youth to share their experiences and feelings, which can help them process their trauma and begin to heal.
- Building relationships: By bringing together different actors, multi-actor dialogues can help build relationships and trust between youth and other members of their community.
- Empower youth: Multi-actor dialogues can give youth a voice and help them feel empowered to make positive changes in their lives and communities.
- Promoting peace: By fostering open communication and understanding among different actors, multi-actor dialogues can help promote peace and reduce conflict.

This chapter explains how multi-actor dialogues can be a valuable tool for youth workers to help war-affected youth process their own trauma, develop coping strategies, and promote healing, empowerment, and peace. While the first part will present the basic principles on which dialogues are built, the

second part will introduce several dialogue methods that cover the most important useful dialogue skills. Finally, we'll conclude with a brief discussion of potential challenges for dialogue facilitators.

Basic Principles

Preventing radicalization is one of the common approaches in working with war-affected youth, like refugees, which is often based on the needs and interest of governments, donors, and organizations through securitization of the war-affected youth without taking into consideration their needs and interests. Instead of this approach, we suggest following an approach that promotes the more genuine goal of strengthening participation when working with war-affected youth. This vision builds on several recent approaches and concepts in the context of civic education, notably:

- **Needs orientation:** Psychologically sensitive and participatory approaches that focus on the individual. Addressing the complex issues of identity, discrimination and diversity.
- **Contextualization (rather than culturalization):** Culturalization involves emphasizing the role of culture as a static source and argument for specific approaches in working with particular individuals. This may seem a logical and sensitive approach, but it has proven to be too fragile - since cultures aren't static - resulting in "othering" coupled with the reproduction of stereotypes. Contextualization, on the other hand, tries to get a clear picture of the individual's reality. This can be achieved by taking into account the individual's multiple identities, the current state/situation and by involving related actors.
- **Relationship (rather than instruction):** This is an essential aspect upon which participation is built. The central means of applying this approach is to avoid hierarchical types of relationships and to see the individuals with whom we work at eye level, as fully independent individuals.
- **Value discourse (instead of value mediation):** Dialogical social work should aim at the discussion of values instead of the one-sided mediation of values. This is all the more true when the target group has had experiences that we can't fully understand, such as war. A peer-to-peer approach can help to achieve this.

In addition, our work builds on a conceptual framework of criteria for civic education known as the "Frankfurt Declaration", introduced in 2015. With critical and interdisciplinary aspects, it builds on the well-established "Beutelsbach Consensus".

Beutelsbach Consensus 1976	Frankfurt Declaration 2015	
Overwhelming prohibition		It is not permissible to catch the learner unprepared or unawares - by whatever means - in order to impart desired opinions and prevent them from "forming an independent judgment".
	Critique of power	Self-determined thought and action is limited by dependencies and overlapping social inequalities. These relations of power and domination must be perceived and analyzed.
	Reflexivity	Civic education is itself part of the political, learning relationships are not free of domination, civic education reveals this involvement.
Controversy	Controversy	Make conflicts and disagreements visible and discuss alternatives.
	Crises	Consider the upheavals and multiple crises of our time.
Interests-oriented		Learners must be able to analyze a political situation and assess how their personal interests are affected, as well as seek ways and means to influence the political situation they have identified according to their personal interests.
	Encouragement	Civic education creates an empowering learning environment where experiences of power and powerlessness are addressed and challenged.
	Change	The goal is to create opportunities for social change through individual and collective action.

To sum up, in this introduction we have highlighted the possible functions of integrating dialogue in social work with war-affected youth, presented and clarified the basic approaches to establishing healthy dialogue, and made clear the main principles of such a critical approach. In the next step, we'll discuss the various applications and their methodical implementation.

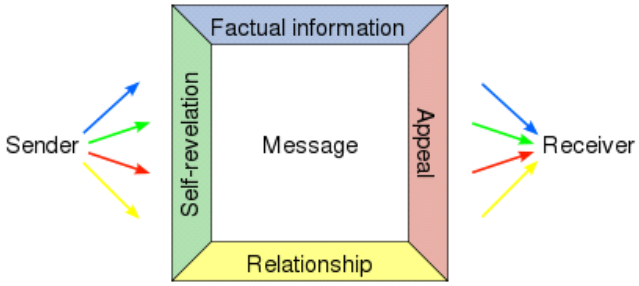
Aspects To successfully implement dialogue as a format for social work, it's imperative to understand how communication works and how to create an environment in which actors can communicate freely.

As Karl Lorenz, a behavioral scientist, notes:

"Said does not always mean said,
said does not always mean heard,
heard does not always mean understood,
understood does not always mean agreed to,
agreed to does not always mean applied,
applied does not always mean retained."

We are constantly communicating in different ways: through body language, through facial expressions, through speech or writing. In addition, there are different types of communication: verbal, printed, and digital. To better understand how communication works, we use Schulz and Thun's "communication square" model, also known as the "four-ear model"), which distinguishes four different dimensions for messages:

- Factual information (What): This refers to the factual content of the message, such as information, data, or statements of fact.



- Self-revelation (Who): This refers to the personal information the sender reveals about himself or herself through the message.
- Relationship (How): This refers to the relationship between the sender and the receiver, and how the message affects that relationship.
- Appeal (Why): This refers to the action that the sender wants the receiver to take as a result of the message.

When communicating with war-affected youth, we as youth workers should be very careful about the relational aspect of the communication. As already explained, we should try to build a relationship with the youth instead of instructing them (Relationship instead of Instructing), so it's quite important that we avoid implying any kind of hierarchical relationship, but communicate at eye level. Furthermore, as far as the level of appeal is concerned, we could also try to be more sensitive to possible misunderstandings based on different contexts and experiences (contextualization instead of culturalization).

In sensitive contexts, such as working with war-affected youth, it's easy to unknowingly and unwillingly enter taboo areas and controversial topics, which can either complicate the healing process or damage any kind of relationship that has been established. For this reason, it can be quite helpful to follow certain guidelines(6,7,8) to better facilitate such sensitive dialogues:
- Always allow extra time for these formats
- Allow time to get to know each other
- Define and make clear what the goal of the dialog session is
- Provide some scientific facts/research/definitions to avoid misunderstandings about the topic under discussion
- Develop concrete questions and prepare clear (written) questions and tasks to avoid misunderstandings.
- Make sure that everyone has a chance to participate in the discussion (e.g., alternate between individual and group participation).
- Discuss and raise issues without embarrassing or excluding anyone.
- Emphasize respect and privacy by not personalizing the topic and by asking direct, personal questions.
- Emphasize listening and sharing opinions and perspectives.
- Present multiple perspectives
- Be flexible and as patient as possible
- Allow time for discussion, but bring the dialog back to focus when necessary.

- Keep track of time and remind participants from time to time.
- Be firm when necessary (e.g., take a break when needed)
- Be prepared for unexpected situations

And specifically for structured dialogues:
- Clarify your role as facilitator and establish ground rules for communication
- Be aware of the balance of power
- Emphasize rules and create new ones as needed, possibly by the participants themselves

To go a step further in managing dialogues, it's important to understand the difference between discussions/debates and dialogues, which are often used interchangeably, but have some fundamental differences (6,7,8,9):

	Dialogue	Discussion
Goal	- Seeking a common connection and a collective perspective. - The primary purpose is to expand ideas, not diminish them. - New understanding is created. - Not concerned with winning or losing.	- Consideration of an issue in an open, and usually informal, discussion. - Different points of view are explored. - Interest in promoting one's own views and challenging those of others. - Ego, control and power over others are often at the forefront of this style of conversation. - Most discussions are decision based, aimed at structuring and deciding on the plan. - Pushing a winning ide.
Participants	- Participants listen deeply and try to understand each other's perspective. - They ask open-ended questions and share their own experiences and feelings. - The focus is on exploring issues, options and ideas freely and creatively. - They suspend their own views in search of something new. - This creates a flow of meaning for all participants. - Provides access to a greater pool of knowledge.	- Participants share information, experiences, and beliefs, and challenge each other's points of view. - They ask closed-ended questions and try to convince others of their point of view. - The focus is on finding solutions or reaching a decision. - The flow of ideas is often disrupted as people try to prove the validity of their idea. - In a healthy discussion, people are open to the ideas of others.
Emotions	- Dialogue creates an emotional and cognitive safety zone where ideas can flow for examination without judgment. - Suspension is an essential internal skill in dialogue, and participants must become aware of personal assumptions.	- Discussion focuses on the goal of saying the "right" thing, and participants may feel pressure to perform and impress others. - There may be social inequalities and problematic power relations that are active and uninterrupted during the course of the discussion.

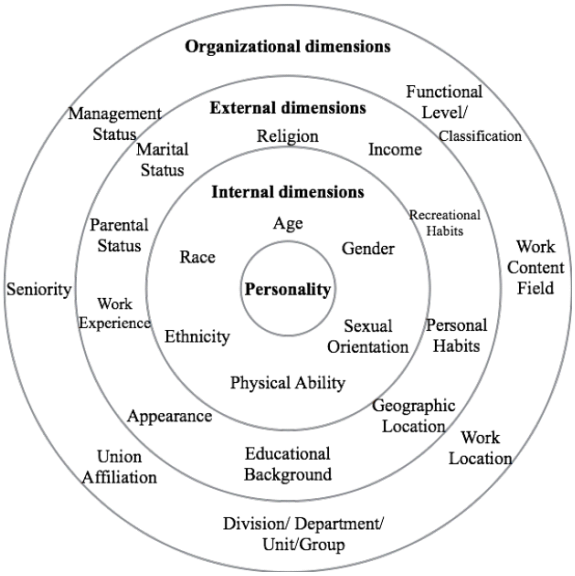
In summary, it's important for us as youth workers to understand that communication happens on multiple levels and that the message sent includes much more than the factual content. Specifically, we should be aware of the relationships and appeals that are communicated, which can have different implications for our work with war-affected youth.

In addition, facilitating dialogues sensitively follows certain guidelines that help us build a good foundation for dialogue at eye level. In this context, we should be clear about what distinguishes dialog from informal discussions, and that our role in this context should focus on helping the war-affected youth to share their ideas and feelings, to raise issues and to feel free to do so(10).

Methods

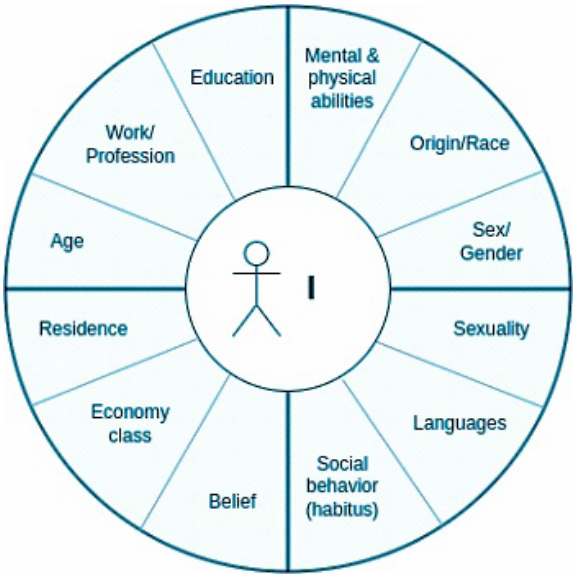
Tools/activities for intercultural processes

Identity Flower
Based on Gardenswartz and Rowe's identity model (13), there are different layers of identity, based on which different diversity characteristics can be identified. This differentiation allows us to apply different settings for self-awareness activities.
The one we would like to introduce is the "Flower of Identity" aka "Identity Flower". This aims to raise awareness of the different facets of identity, social discrimination and empowerment potential.



Since our target group is young people, it's logical to reduce the complexity of the above model, so we have reduced the complexity and the number of dimensions to 12, which is more descriptive and understandable for most people.

Now for the general steps of our exercise:
- Introduce the purpose and explain the process, emphasizing that this is a way to reflect on who we are and what identities we draw on to move through life. These are mostly flexible and changeable over time.
- Depending on the age of the participants, the desired depth, and the focus of our work, the model presented may include 6 to 12 identities. Ask each participant to comment on the identities for themselves only.



- Now ask each person to draw several large petals, each extending one of these identities.
- Once participants have drawn their flowers of identity, they can fill in the petals of identities that are considered positive in the community.
This first step should help each participant explore the complexities and intersections of people's identities.

In a second step, participants are divided into groups of two and asked to discuss specific preferred identities. Depending on the time allotted for the activity and the number of identities: 2 to 5 rounds, about 5-10 minutes each.

Possible specific identities to discuss:
- Your one identity that is perceived as most positive in society.
- Your one identity that's perceived as most negative in society.
- Your one identity with the most discrepancy between your own view and society's view (e.g., society perceives it as negative, but you perceive it as positive).
- The identity that means the most to you.
- The one identity you'd like to change.

This second step is meant to help participants see how their differences and similarities can serve to strengthen alliances and how certain norms or views in society should be avoided.

Other variations with larger groups and longer discussion times are possible, but may change the function of the exercise from identifying identities to a discursive discussion about the interactions between individuals and society, which is certainly useful for movement building (14), but doesn't contribute much to our main goal of empowering youth self-awareness.

Simulation Game

Often, simulation games are used as a method to discuss some issues interactively and indirectly, creating space to discuss issues more objectively. In addition, and more importantly, it allows participants to change perspectives and avoid black-and-white binary opinions. This raises awareness of democratic values.

Depending on the complexity of the topic to be discussed and the number of participants, simulation games can take several hours. However, given the limited time we usually have with youth, their interest and stamina in role-playing while participating in longer discussions, we can start with 45 minutes. A simulation game can also take place in several consecutive sessions.
Fortunately, when planning the simulation game, we can choose one of the many scenarios freely provided by various civic education organizations, such as CRISP or planpolitik (15, 16). One of the best-known simulation game setups is the "Desert Island Simulation," in which participants take on the role of a group stranded on a deserted island, where they must regulate their lives and build a society together. There are a huge number of variants, each with a certain focus and complexity (17,18,19,20).

Living library:

Library where readers can learn about the stories of people who belong to more or less marginalized categories or suffer discrimination of some kind, to overcome the prejudices they may have against them. This Living Library is an open space in which each reader is invited to establish an open dialogue with human books, that is, a person willing, on a voluntary basis, to tell their story and answer the questions of those who listen to it.
Taking the experience of The Human Library Organization, "the Human Library is designed to build a positive framework for conversations that can challenge stereotypes and prejudices through dialogue. The Human Library is a place where real people are on loan to readers. A place where difficult questions are expected, appreciated and answered" (Human Library Organisation).

The Living Library is a valuable tool for fostering empathy and understanding among young people affected by war. It allows them to engage in meaningful conversations with individuals from diverse backgrounds, promoting dialogue and breaking down stereotypes. However, there are risks of re-traumatization, stereotyping, and boundary violations. Safeguards such as informed consent, training, and clear guidelines are necessary to mitigate these risks and ensure a positive experience for all involved.



(Human Library in the project Youth Work for Rehabilitation of Young People Affected by War - Torino, Italy – 06/04/2023)

The Living Library is a diversity, equity and inclusion space that incorporate social understanding, as well as growth of cultural awareness. The Living Library works to create a safe framework for personal conversations that can help to challenge prejudice, get aim to help rid discrimination, prevent conflicts and contribute to greater human cohesion across social, religious and ethnic divisions.

Some opportunities about this method in relation to young people affected by war and armed conflict:
- Empowerment: Letting young people affected by war share their own stories can make them feel stronger and more confident.
- Learning: Holding the human library in a place affected by war can help everyone understand better what war does to young people.
- Healing: Being part of the human library might help young people feel better and stronger by letting them talk about their feelings and connect with others.

On the other hand, some of the challenges to be faced with this method:
- Feelings: It's important to be careful with the emotions of young people affected by war. They might be hurt, so we need to be gentle.
- Safety: If we're doing this in a place affected by war, there might be danger. We have to make sure everyone is safe and talk to people who know about the area.
- Being Respectful: We must be careful to treat the young people's stories with respect and not cause any problems for them by sharing too much.

In simple terms, organizing a human library with young people affected by war can help them feel stronger and teach others about their experiences, but we need to be careful not to hurt them or put anyone in danger.

Intercultural exchanges

Intercultural interaction means creating conditions for meaningful and constructive everyday encounters across cultural and other differences. Prejudice and discrimination can thrive where there is segregation or a lack of contact and dialogue between people, even where there are protective laws. Under the right conditions, the more contact people with different backgrounds and lifestyles have with each other, the less likely they are to think and behave in prejudicial ways.

Intercultural exchanges require understanding that diversity and positive interaction between different cultures can be an advantage. It moves beyond simply accepting different cultures and celebrates both the differences and similarities between them as something that can make communities stronger. This of course does not mean that it is only about praising new or stranger cultures, but also about honoring traditional and local sides of culture, and valuing the relationship between these. It is about understanding the many aspects that make up a community such - as but not limited to- nationality, ethnic origin, language, gender identity and sexual orientation and religious beliefs (Council of Europe, Intercultural Cities Programme).

Intercultural exchanges offer chances to learn and make friends, but they can also involve misunderstandings and the need for respect. Some opportunities offered by the implementation of these activities:
- Learning Together: Interacting with people from different cultures can help everyone learn new things and understand each other better.
- Making Friends: Intercultural exchanges give us a chance to meet new people and make friends from all over the world.
- Sharing Ideas: We can exchange ideas and traditions, which helps us appreciate and respect different cultures.

On the other hand, some challenges that may arise in the implementation of intercultural exchanges:
- Misunderstandings: Sometimes, we might not understand each other because of language or cultural differences. We need to be patient and clear in our communication.
- Stereotypes: We should be careful not to judge people based on stereotypes or assumptions about their culture.
- Respect: It's important to respect each other's customs and beliefs, even if they're different from our own. We should avoid doing or saying anything that might offend someone from another culture.

In simple terms, intercultural exchanges are a great way to learn from each other and make friends, but we need to be careful not to misunderstand or disrespect each other.

Intercultural checklist – Council of Europe:
The Intercultural Cities Programme of the Council of Europe offers three easy-to-use intercultural checklists and a full guide to check if their planned or proposed project, policies or actions are intercultural compared to the three principles of intercultural integration: real equality, diversity advantage and meaningful interaction.
https://www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/intercultural-checklist#{%22123377040%22:[0]}

Alternative narratives

Intercultural approach aim to transform the understanding, narrative and actions with regard to diversity, both within the public sphere and in the institutions themselves. An intercultural strategy therefore should seek a change in the relationships between authorities, institutions, individuals and groups.
Alternative narratives aim to - in a direct way - dismantle and delegitimize ne-

gative narratives or hate speech. Alternative narratives propose alternative messages and ideas from a constructive and propositional point of view. It is a matter of trying to ensure that negative and prejudice-based discourses do not expand, and instead creating and communicating a more inclusive and propositional framework which can connect with the concerns and needs of a broad social majority. They are positive, pluralist or progressive narratives that are based on intercultural principles and respect for human rights. They are defined in contrast to the (often) dominant narratives of media and politics that tend to scapegoat or vilify migrants and refugees, depicting them as a threat or burden (Council of Europe, 2021).
When working with young people affected by war, especially those from minority backgrounds or subjected to dehumanizing narratives, using alternative narratives becomes crucial. Here's the difference and an example of an activity:

Difference:
- Dehumanizing Narrative: In a dehumanizing narrative, individuals affected by war may be portrayed solely as victims or perpetrators, stripping them of their agency, dignity, and individuality. This narrative can perpetuate stereotypes, reinforce power imbalances, and hinder the healing and empowerment of young people.
- Alternative Narrative: An alternative narrative seeks to counter dehumanization by highlighting the diverse experiences, strengths, and resilience of young people affected by war. It acknowledges their agency, complexities, and contributions to their communities, offering a more nuanced and empowering perspective.

Example Activity:
- Photo Voice Project: This activity empowers young people to reclaim their narratives through photography and storytelling. Youth workers provide cameras to participants and encourage them to capture images that represent their experiences, emotions, and aspirations related to war and armed conflict.
For instance, a young person might photograph symbols of hope amidst destruction, moments of resilience within their community, or expressions of cultural identity. Afterward, participants share their photos with the group and narrate the stories behind them, discussing how these images challenge stereotypes and amplify their voices.
Through this activity, young people gain agency in shaping their narratives, fostering a sense of empowerment, and promoting understanding among peers and community members. It also serves as a platform for collective healing and advocacy, amplifying the voices of those often marginalized in mainstream discourse.

Storytelling
Finally, we would like to shift the focus to supporting young people's expressiveness by introducing "storytelling", also known as "narratives". The main beneficial features of storytelling include a general increase in comprehension and the creation of a human, personal relationship with the stories.
Storytelling is increasingly used in marketing and journalism because of its power to engage. And that's why it has started to be part of the portfolio of methods trained in the field of civic education and social work. As it should be

clear by now, storytelling can and does use different means and formats (e.g. short videos, podcasts), which opens a lot of possibilities for materials to train this competence. While basic structural elements of storytelling include (21):
- One or more protagonists
- A problem or occurrence
- A resolution of the problem, either successful or unsuccessful.

Added to that there's a set of narrative patterns known as "The Seven Basic Plots" that covers most of patterns used by writers(22):
- **Overcoming the Monster:** In this pattern, the protagonist must defeat an antagonist that threatens them and the wider world, e.g., Alien, Batman.
- **Rags to Riches:** In this pattern, the protagonist achieves something they lack, loses what they've gained, and then gets it back again, e.g., Cinderella, Aladdin.
- **The Quest:** In this pattern, the protagonist sets out on a journey to find or achieve something, facing obstacles and challenges along the way, e.g., The Lord of the Rings, Indiana Jones.
- **Voyage and Return:** In this pattern, the protagonist goes to a strange land, experiences a series of adventures, and then returns home, e.g., Alice in Wonderland, The Wizard of Oz.
- **Comedy:** In this pattern, the story is humorous and often involves mistaken identities, misunderstandings, and other comedic elements, e.g., Friends, The Hangover.
- **Tragedy:** In this pattern, the protagonist moves from a generally positive or successful point to one of failure or loss, suffering increasing hardships because of their choices before their ultimate demise, e.g., Romeo and Juliet, The Fault in Our Stars.
- **Rebirth:** In this pattern, the story focuses on a character's development and subsequent transformation, e.g., The Lion King, The Joker.

In addition, effective stories share a number of common characteristics (21):
- **Stimulating:** Encourage the recipient to listen and engage with the topic.
- **Emotive:** Invites an emotional response from the recipient.
- Inspiring: Generating enthusiasm for an idea, process, cause, or product; or even being so motivating that the recipient continues to spread the story of their own accord.
- **Captivate:** Create a longer-term connection with the recipient.

As a first step, we introduce easily understood and well-structured stories to encourage participants to create and tell their own stories in the following parts/sessions. It's important to note that while we are free to create stories on any topic, we should consider the youth's willingness to open up and participate in the process when choosing a topic.
Thus, a storytelling workshop can take different forms depending on the time available, the number of participants and their openness (23). StoryComp (24) provides a set of guidelines for acquiring the skills necessary for successful storytelling workshops, ranging from identifying the space for stories to involving listeners.
It's also possible to combine storytelling with a simulation game, similar to Civic Mirror (20), through longer sessions where participants create new characters, interact with their environment and tell their stories.

Example of local activities with Intercultural Approach
Below you will find two examples of the local activities implemented in the project with an intercultural approach.

Intercultural Exchange between Unaccompanied Minor of CivicoZero

CivicoZero is the headquarter of a Save the Children project, located in Turin's historic and popular Borgo Dora neighborhood. CivicoZero is a gathering point for unaccompanied migrant minors and young people, offering basic services of first reception, health and legal counseling, social inclusion and integration activities and language training, orientation and accompaniment to work, with a view to preventing risks on the street.

This proposal can be used as a prototype of potentially replicable activities in different contexts. In its preparation, the **Do No Harm approach** was always taken into account. Firstly, the Centro Studi operators analyzed the context through working in synergy with CivicoZero operators, meeting before the start of activities to gather all necessary information about the beneficiaries. In fact, the participants involved was already included in an educational path (language learning and school and work orientation) with CivicoZero: it consisted of unaccompanied minors and young people (14–19 years old) with migration background, in a vulnerable condition and at risk of marginalization, recently arrived in the new country, who are learning the hostland language. Also, the program of activities was co-constructed together with all the actors involved: educators, language mediators and the beneficiaries; in fact, the participants proposed and facilitated traditional games from their place of origin for the group, as well as proposed traditional recipes and participated in the preparation of lunch with the help of a cook. Among the actors involved were also local residents whom the group met during the activities: vendors from the city's central market, café employees. The activities, in fact, were held in different places of the Turin area with the aim of communicating to participants that **inhabiting public space is their right.** Public space is by definition accessible to the entire population, but only in theory. In practice it is often differently usable, based on physical, economic, cultural and social factors. The result is that the most fragile and marginalized people often perceive that they are "out of place" in certain spaces and, at the same time, relegated, and potentially ghettoized, to other places in the city. This is particularly evident in Turin towards young people coming from other countries or internally displaced, since zones, neighborhoods have been created specifically for structurally marginalized people. These places are separate, stereotyped, and systemically excluded.

A prior meeting with CivicoZero operators was devoted to defining the impact of the planned activities on the target group, according to the identified needs. The action was planned and carried out with the following intentions:
- Offer participants the opportunity to feel welcome in a safe place and strengthen their sense of trust;

- Recover the dimension of play and fun in adolescents and young people who are precociously adultized;
- Offer the opportunity to learn about and occupy aesthetically evocative spaces to experience beauty;
- Support the process of rebuilding a sense of belonging and identity, lost due to separation from the country of origin, by enhancing their culture of origin (e.g., through their typical games and food recipes). Offering these adolescents the opportunity to freely express aspects of their own culture in a safe place, on the one hand allows them to alleviate their sense of disorientation, on the other allows them to channel their need for identity and belonging into a sense of sharing, instead of closure, mistrust and hostility toward otherness.

Description of the activities

DAY 1: Get to know each other, feel welcome in a safe place

Activity 1, "Names dance"

Time: 10 min.
Materials: /

Aim: Learn and remember the names of the participants; increase the ability to observe each other; express themselves through movements having fun.
Instructions: Participants create a circle. Each person says his or her name and associates it with a movement. Each participant repeats the name and movement of the person before him or her and says his or her name in turn inventing a movement. Eventually the whole group simultaneously repeats everyone's name and movement creating a "dance."

Activity 2, "Portraits"

Time: 40 min.
Materials: sheets and colored markers

Aim: Increase the ability to observe each other; let the other observe me; pay attention to how I feel while I observe someone and someone observe me.
Instructions: Participants create two concentric circles, face to face. The outer circle moves clockwise, while the inner circle is stationary. Those who are seated in the outer circle draw the person in front of them. Every 20 seconds the outer circle rotates one place clockwise: when the outer circle moves, the drawing remains stationary and is continued by the next person. The portrait is thus completed by several hands. When an entire round is completed the portraits are kept, the circles are reversed: the person who was previously the model now draws and vice versa. New sheets are handed out and the activity is repeated.
Debriefing questions: How did it feel to be a model? How did you feel portraying the person in front of you? Did you notice a power dynamic? Are you satisfied with your portrait?

Once each participant has their portrait, they reflect on themselves: each participant is asked to express one aspect he or she appreciates about his or her character. They write the adjectives that emerged in the hostland language on a sheet of paper so they can implement their vocabulary. The opportunity is taken to point out that similarities may emerge.

Activity 3, "Molecules"

Time: 10 min.
Materials: A flipchart with body parts.

Aim: Building trust in the group, making contact (including physical contact) with others in mutual respect, increasing the ability to trust new people having fun with them.
This objective is particularly important for young people affected by armed conflicts. One of the consequences of war is the rupture of the social fabric, of human relationships, of the vision of the other as an equal. Hence the importance of working on rebuilding relationships, trust and creating new support networks.Contextually, a secondary goal is also to increase the vocabulary of body parts in the hostland language: interact and communicate with the others.
Instructions: Participants are atoms and move freely in space. The facilitator says a body part (hand, foot, elbow, shoulder) and a number. The name of the body part indicates that people should group together creating a molecule by all connecting through the named body part. The number indicates how many people the molecule is to consist of. After that, the molecules dissolve and start over again.

Activity 4, "Bubble"

Time: 20 min.
Materials: Stripes of fabric to blindfold.

Aim: Increase trust in others and communication. Experiencing care primarily in the sense of being the object of care, but also of caring for others, building trust, learning to rely on new caregivers and new people.
Instructions: We divide into groups that stand in a circle holding hands, one blindfolded person stands in the center of each group and moves freely. The rest of the group has to "protect" the core by following it and preventing it from bumping somewhere.
Debriefing questions: Reflect about trust. Have I managed to trust others? How did I feel when I was blindfolded and had to rely completely on the people around me? How much do I feel safe when I trust in others?

Closing time
Time: 10 min.

A circle is created. Each participant in turn describes how he or she feels with one word. A brief recap is made of the day's acquisitions and it is explained what will happen in the next meeting

DAY 2: Sharing experiences, finding similarities

Activity 1, "Make a line"
Time: 5 min.
Materials: /
Aim: Experiencing nonverbal communication, finding creative solutions to achieve the goal.
Instructions: participants should line up next to each other according to their day and month of birth without speaking.

Activity 2, "The wind blows"
Time: 20 min.
Materials: As many chairs as there are participants minus one
Aim: the activity responds to the principle of interculturality. In general, it is about getting to know each other and creating the group by finding common elements. Specifically, through this activity, participants can become aware that one can have things in common, despite different origins and experiences, discover all that unites rather than what divides. I
nstructions: Participants are arranged in a circle, sitting in chairs. One remains standing, in the center, and utters the phrase "The wind blows for all those who...", completing as he prefers with something about himself (what he does, thinks, has, has experience of, ...). When the sentence is finished, everyone who agrees with what was said look for another chair and those who are standing try to sit down. Those left without a chair go to the center. The goal is to discover all that unites rather than what divides.
Debriefing questions: Is there anyone who has never stood up? Have you found things in common? Did you feel embarrassed when you stood inside the circle?

Activity 3, "Minefield"
Time: 30 min.
Materials: Sheets of paper with a flower drawn; stripes of fabric to blindfold
Aim: Offering participants the opportunity to feel welcome in a safe place and strengthen their sense of trust in others. Building communication of needs. Experiencing care and being cared for.
Instructions: Arrange a lot of sheets of paper with a flower drawn on it on the floor, which will form the "minefield". Participants work in pairs, in which one member is blindfolded and his partner outside the area guides her/him

from one end of the course to the other without the "blind" touching any of the flowers. The guide can talk but can't touch the partner. Afterwards the roles in the pair are reversed.
Debriefing questions: This activity can make reflect on the role we tend to assume in your relationships with others
Did you prefer to be a guide or to be led? Was it difficult to trust the directions while you were blindfolded?

Activity 4, "Typical games of their own culture"

Time: 45 min.
Materials: Sheets and pens

Aim: Recover the dimension of play and fun in adolescents and young people who are precociously adultized. Share experiences and memories of the country of origin; find similarities between cultures; practicing the hostland language.
Instructions: Participants are divided into language groups. There is a facilitator in each group. Participants share the rules of some of their childhood games typical of their home country. Then they choose one, write the rules on a sheet of paper in the language of the hostland. At the next meeting they share it with the rest of the group and play their games together.

DAY 3: Let's play interculturality!

Time: The entire duration of the meeting
Materials: The materials that participants require to play their games.
Aim: Expressing oneself through sharing the different games of each participant's childhood; respectfully welcome other participants' sharing; get involved and have fun; experience firsthand the difficulties of the facilitator's role (as a result, when it is the others' turn you will be more likely to listen without obstructing them). The educational method of reference is ludo-pedagogy (for more details see https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ZndXVtG0qP-t7Tg4zR01f0qXNnR9lssqqdClSeiAgAzo/edit#heading=h.2is7lpm1dgcr)
Instructions: a circle is created. In turn, each group shares the rules of their game with the rest of the group in the hostland language, with the help of the language facilitators. You try to play the game.

DAY 4: Let's eat interculturality!

Time: The entire duration of the meeting.
Aim: Expressing oneself through sharing their own culture throughout typical food; use food sharing as a channel of communication and relationship with others; implement openness, comparison, curiosity about other cultures; recreate a familiar environment in the hostland; feel both welcoming and welcomed; learning to self-manage space and share it with others.
Preparation: the participants divided into groups from the same country and chose a recipe to propose to the rest of the group, then they wrote on a sheet of paper the preparation and the ingredient list in the hostland language.

The collection of recipes would have been scheduled for the third meeting but in our case, due to lack of time, participants thought up and wrote the recipes in class with the help of the teacher.



(Local activity – Centro Studi Sereno Civico Zero – 11-28/08/2023)

Structure of the day:
- Each group, accompanied by a facilitator, bought the ingredients they needed at the city's largest market, using the hostland language;
- Each group cooked their own recipes by sharing space and kitchen;
- We all eat together at the same table and everyone tries each other's recipes;
- We all go together to a historic bar in the city and each person orders what they want using the hostland language.

Intercultural recognition process with unaccompanied minors at the Centro Teobaldo Fenoglio of the Italian Red Cross

The Centro Polifunzionale Teobaldo Fenoglio is a reception center in Settimo Torinese managed by the Italian Red Cross. Since 2008, the center has managed reception projects for asylum seekers as well as other solidarity projects such as social canteen, collection of unsold fresh produce in supermarkets and housing emergencies.

In November 2023, the Centro Fenoglio welcomed 16 unaccompanied minors from Benin, Cameroon, Gambia, Niger, Nigeria.

After various meetings with the Red Cross operators and the minors to find out their needs and expectations, in February we designed a process of non-formal education to work on the inclusion of the minors within the center, in the city of arrival and complement the learning process of the Italian that they were already studying at school.
The transversal principle during all activities was recognition. At first, work

on self-recognizing, their own qualities, abilities, passions and interests. Subsequently, address the recognition of others, through activities of trust and strengthen relationships between the minors. Then, intercultural recognition, with the appreciation of traditions, food, memories and games from the country of origin. Finally, the recognition of the current context, walking the city of Settimo Torinese, appropriating the public space and writing proposals for the local administration on how to achieve a city that also includes them.

Description of the activities

DAY 1: Self-recognition

Activity 1. Rainbow of names

Time: 30 minutes.
Aims: Identify and learn the names of the members of the main socialization group in which they are found; increase the ability to observe each other;
Instructions: In a circle the participants take turns naming names. Next, a person located in the center will have to point to the participants at random so that they can know the names of their classmates, as follows:
- Yellow: proper name
- Blue: name of the person on the right
- Red: name of the person on the left

Activity 2. The collective portrait

Time: 30 minutes
Aims: Recognize each of the members as equals and create relationships between each other; Increase the ability to observe each other; let the other observe me; pay attention to how I feel while I observe someone and someone observe me.
Instructions: In two circumscribed circles, participants will collectively draw a portrait of the person in front of them. The people in the inner circle remain static, while those in the outer circle move every 30 seconds until the portraits are completed with everyone's contributions.

Activity 3. The portrait of identity

Time: 30 minutes.
Aims: Recognize their own strengths, passions, interests and contribution.
Instructions: Each participant complete the portrait prepared collectively in the previous activity, recognizing around the draw their own strengths, passions, interests, cultural aspects and their contributions to the group.

DAY 2: Recognition of others and strengthening social ties

Activity 1. Obstacle race

Time: 30 minutes
Aims: Create relationships of trust between members of the social group; Offering participants the opportunity to feel welcome in a safe place and

strengthen their sense of trust in others. Building communication of needs. Experiencing care and being cared for.
Instructions: In groups of approximately 4-5 people, a leader stands at the finish line of a path full of obstacles. The other members of the small groups will be blindfolded on the other side of the road.
The leader must give instructions one by one to his companions to cross the path without touching the obstacles. Words written in Italian will be distributed along the path that each member must collect with the leader's instructions.

Activity 2. Acting the word

Time: 30 minutes
Aims: Create relationships of trust between members of the social group and promote language learning through cooperative exercises.
Instructions: Once the words have been collected and the path with the obstacles has been crossed, each group will act out their words one by one so that they can be guessed by the other groups.
The words worked on are important for the process of social inclusion of minors: school, work, diversity, pray, friendship, help.

Activity 3. The group's slogan

Time: 30 minutes
Aims: Strengthen ties between participants and create a sense of belonging to the social group.
Instructions: With the words found in the previous activity they will create a slogan that represents them. This will be written on a large poster, decorated with all the material the participants want.

DAY 3: Intercultural recognition

Activity 1. Marbles around the world.

Time: 30 minutes
Aims: Recognize and value one's own culture.
Instructions: On the world map the participants will throw the marble in their country of origin. Once located in their countries of origin, they will tell the traditions, food, and festivals that they like most about their own countries.

Activity 2. Playing interculturality.

Time: 1 hour.
Aims: Expressing oneself through sharing the different games of each participant's childhood; respectfully welcome other participants' sharing; get involved and have fun; experience firsthand the difficulties of the facilitator's role (as a result, when it is the others' turn you will be more likely to listen without obstructing them); find similarities between cultures
Instructions: The participants form into groups based on their countries of origin. Together they talk about the traditional games they played in their childhood. Subsequently, they will facilitate a traditional game chosen to be played by the entire group of participants.

DAY 4:

Activity 1. Arriving to the current context

Time: 10 minutes.

Aims: Recognize the current context in which they find themselves; value the learning and relationships built so far; activate the perception of the current context.

Instructions: Placed on a map, they throw a marble over the city they are currently in: Settimo Torinese, Italy.At this point they share what they have known, learned, enjoyed, relationships that they have created so far in the city of Settimo.

Activity 2. Appropriating and inhabiting Settimo Torinese

Time: 2 hours.

Aims: Recognize the current context in which they find themselves; activate the perception of the current context; take ownership of the current context; get to know associations, groups, opportunities and services offered by the territory.

Instructions: After the previous dialogue, we leave to walk around the city. They are taken to visit places of interest to them: City center, Municipal library, Municipality, Oratori di Settimo, Dega Urban Lab, sports places.
In each place we found the people in charge who told us about the services and opportunities that each place offers and that the minors can access.
This walk will be done in small groups who will have to take photos of each place and talk about energizing questions: what I didn't know, what I like about what I see.

DAY 5: Transforming my current context

Activity 1. Poster of the Settimo discovered.

Time: 20 minutes.

Aims: Recognize and value the actual context in which they occur; experiment with youth participation mechanisms through the formulation of proposals to transform the city where they are located

Instructions: Photos taken by participants will be printed and brought to this meeting. Participants will place photos on the map of Settimo and tell what surprised them, what opportunities does that place give them and how could they use/be part of that place.

Activity 2. Transforming Settimo Torinese with my proposals.

Time: 30 minutes.

Aims: Experience the mechanisms of youth participation through the formulation of proposals for the decision-makers; experience mechanisms of active participation and political advocacy.

Instructions: Once all the places visited have been remembered and recognized, participants are invited to write recommendations to make Settimo a safe place for them, to build a Settimo that is inclusive and respectful of diversity, the changes they want to see in the city to feel like yours, like a safe place. These proposals will be taken to the decision makers of the local administration.

Analyzing Intercultural Activities in Youth Work from a Conflict-Sensitive Viewpoint

In our collective efforts to support young individuals affected by conflict, it's crucial to adopt a conflict-sensitive approach when designing intercultural activities. This subchapter delves into this critical aspect by drawing insights from various sources and established best practices.

Identifying Potential Pitfalls:
Research suggests that certain activities, such as "A Step Forward," may inadvertently evoke emotional distress or exacerbate existing divisions among participants (Stevenson & Broussard, 2019). Recognizing the nuances of power dynamics and the lingering effects of past conflicts is essential to mitigating these risks.

Remedial Measures:
Best practices outlined in the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies' Toolkit for Youth Workers emphasize the importance of refining activities to ensure the well-being and dignity of all participants (IFRC, 2020). This may involve rephrasing statements for neutrality and facilitating post-activity discussions to address any discomfort or misunderstanding.

Transforming Conflict into Constructive Discourse:
UNESCO's guidelines on intercultural competence underscore the value of using activities as platforms for deeper exploration and understanding (UNESCO, 2018). By encouraging dialogue surrounding the emotional impact of statements and seeking common ground, we foster mutual respect and cooperation amidst diversity.

Intercultural Sensitivity, Conflict Awareness, and "Do No Harm" Principles:
Integrating insights from Smith's exploration of youth work practice in conflict settings, we recognize the imperative of respecting the diverse backgrounds of young participants while acknowledging the influence of past conflicts on their lived experiences (Smith, 2018). Upholding the principles of non-harmful intervention outlined in UNICEF's guidance on youth engagement in conflict-affected regions, we commit to creating safe and inclusive spaces for our youth (UNICEF, 2017).

In essence, by scrutinizing intercultural activities through a conflict-sensitive lens and drawing upon established best practices, we cultivate environments conducive to the growth and empowerment of young individuals affected by conflict.





(Local activity – Centro Studi Sereno Regis and Civico Zero – 11-28/08/2023)

References:

- Anesh, S., & Holmes, P. (2011). Positioning intercultural dialoguetheories, pragmatics, and an agenda. Journal of international and intercultural communication., 4 (2). pp. 81-86.
- Barabas, A. M. (2014). Multiculturalism, Cultural Pluralism and Interculturalism in the context of Latin America: the presence of Indigenous Peoples.
- Council of Europe. (2021). MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION Which alternative narratives work and why. Obtenido de https://rm.coe.int/policy-brief-migration-and-integration-which-narratives-work-and-why-o/1680a20cfc
- Hans-Georg Wehling (1977): Konsens à la Beutelsbach? Nachlese zu einem Expertengespräch. In: Siegfried Schiele / Herbert Schneider (Hrsg.): Das Konsensproblem in der politischen Bildung. Stuttgart, S. 173 - 184, hier S. 179f. or - https://www.lpb-bw.de/beutelsbacher-konsens
- Human Library Organisation. (s.f.).
- International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). (2020). "Toolkit for Youth Workers: Promoting Conflict Sensitivity in Intercultural Activities."
- International Youth Foundation. (2016). "Youth Work in Conflict-Affected Settings: A Handbook for Practitioners."
- Levy et al. (2022). "Dialogue intervention for youth amidst intractable conflict attenuates neural prejudice response and promotes adults' peacemaking". PNAS Nexus, Volume 1, Issue 5. https://academic.oup.com/pnasnexus/article/1/5/pgac236/6761418
- Ministry of Culture of Peru. (2015). Diálogo Intercultural. Pautas para un mejor diálogo en contextos de diversidad intercultural. Obtenido de https://centroderecursos.cultura.pe/sites/default/files/rb/pdf/DIALOGO%20INTERCULTURAL%20-%20A5.pdf
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). (2017). "Youth Engagement in Conflict-Affected Regions: Best Practices and Considerations."
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). (2018). "Intercultural Competence in Youth Work: Guidelines for Practitioners.
- Smith, L. (2018). "Youth Work Practice in the Time of War: A Conflict-Sensitive Approach." Journal of Youth Studies, 21(3), 325-340.
- Stevenson, A., & Broussard, M. (2019). "Understanding Conflict Sensitivity in Youth Work: A Practical Guide for Practitioners." Peacebuilding & Development, 14(2), 169-185.

Inclusive Youth Work

The concepts of social inclusion and barrier-free environment and their relevance to work with young people affected by war.

1.1. The concept of social inclusion

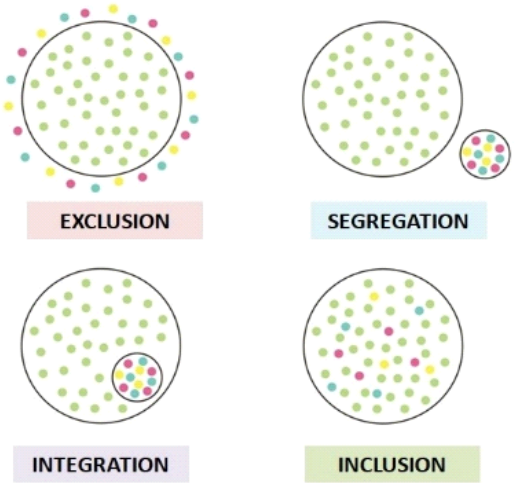
Speaking about the level of inclusion or exclusion of different social groups of the population in all fields of social life, a scheme of 4 approaches is often used, which reflects different processes that can be observed in society in relation to different social groups: exclusion, segregation, integration, inclusion.

Exclusion (or Social Exclusion) is a process that prevents individuals, groups or communities from accessing the rights, opportunities and resources that are normally available to members of society and that are key to social integration. Even if exclusion is usually associated with poverty and lack of financial resources, it is also caused by many factors: gender, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, etc.

Segregation is a type of discrimination, which consists in the actual or legal separation within one society of those social groups that are distinguished by racial, gender, social, religious, linguistic or other characteristics, which most often happens intentionally.

Integration is the primary process of involving a previously excluded part of society or a social group, which has not yet been completed, but has prospects for coexistence on equal terms and rights.

Inclusion (social inclusion) is a term widely used in social and educational policy to express the idea that all people living in a given society should have rights of access and participation on equal terms. This means, on the one hand, that institutions, structures and activities must be designed to positively accommodate the diversity of circumstances, identities and ways of life. On the other hand, it means that opportunities and resources must be allocated in such a way as to minimise disadvantage and marginalisation.
From a youth perspective social inclusion is the process of individual's self-realisation within a society, acceptance and recognition of one's po-



Picture. Scheme of 4 approaches

tential by social institutions, integration (through study, employment, volunteer work or other forms of participation) on the web of social relations in a community. In present-day European societies the concept is relevant to all young people as youth is the life stage when young people make the transition from family dependence to autonomy within the larger society under rapidly evolving circumstances. It has a particular meaning to those young people who come from disadvantaged backgrounds and live in precarious conditions this can also refer to young people with refugee and IDP background and young people going through the consequences of war and armed conflict. For them social inclusion involves breaking various barriers before acquiring their social rights as full members of society.
In the field of European youth work and non-formal education, inclusion is seen as a comprehensive strategy and practice to ensure that young people with fewer opportunities have access to the structures and programmes offered, as well as equal rights and opportunities in different spheres of community life.

Young people's access to rights is an important component of building a culture of human rights, democracy and the rule of law in today's Europe and beyond. Youth organisations and youth work play a critical role in ensuring young people's access to rights and supporting young people's active citizenship. Access to rights requires young people, youth organisations and youth workers to be informed and educated about the rights that young people should use and how to act if these rights are violated.
In the conditions of war and the post-war period, the issue of social inclusion of young people requires special attention, since a huge number of young people feel the negative consequences of war and military actions. The number of young people who have fewer opportunities is growing rapidly. Vulnerable social groups due to the consequences of war are becoming more vulnerable to unfavourable conditions and require a response from both the state and its representatives, as well as non-governmental institutions and representatives of civil society, in order to reduce displays of inequality and ensure access to rights. Therefore, in order to minimise these risks and reduce negative consequences of war, inclusive youth work should become a key area of the activity in the youth sector both in the areas affected by war and regions where there are young people affected by war.

1.2. Young people with fewer opportunities

In times of war and armed conflicts, young people with fewer opportunities become even more vulnerable, their access to rights is even more limited, and even those young people who have had full access to their rights may face various obstacles during war or armed conflict.
Since the war in 2014 and full scale war in 2023 began, new communities of young people with fewer opportunities have appeared in Ukraine such as: IDP youth, young female and male veterans, constantly growing number of young people with disabilities among military and civilians, a huge number of IDP youth, young female and male veterans whose needs need to be addressed, and other communities of young people (ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+ youth) whose inclusion is becoming "out of date" due to other issues that are supposedly more important and other "more needy groups".

Young people with fewer opportunities - young people from less privileged cultural, geographical or socio-economic backgrounds, or young people with disabilities.
This can be for a variety of reasons:
Social obstacles: people facing discrimination because of gender, age, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, etc., people with limited social skills or anti-social or risky sexual behaviour, people in a precarious situation, (ex-)offenders, (ex-)drug or alcohol abusers, young and/or single parents, orphans, young people from broken families, etc.
Cultural differences: immigrants or refugees or descendants from immigrant or refugee families, people belonging to a national or ethnic minority, people with linguistic adaptation and cultural inclusion problems, etc.
Economic obstacles: people with a low standard of living, low income, dependence on social welfare system, people in long-term unemployment or poverty, people in debt or with financial problems, etc.
Educational difficulties: people with learning difficulties, early school-leavers and school dropouts, lower qualified persons, people with poor school performance, etc.
Disability: (i.e. participants with special needs): people with mental (intellectual, cognitive, learning), physical, sensory or other disabilities.
Health problems: people with chronic health problems, severe illnesses or psychiatric conditions, young people with mental health problems, etc.
Geographical obstacles: people from remote or rural areas, people living on small islands or in peripheral regions, people from urban problem zones, people from less serviced areas (limited public transport, poor facilities, abandoned villages...), etc.

1.3. Barrier free environment as a tool of young people inclusion and National Strategy for Barrier-Free Environment in Ukraine up to 2030

A state policy for a barrier-free environment means coming up with an approach that will allow every single person in our country to have free access to all aspects of life: education, career growth, unhindered travel and so on. In April of 2021 Ukraine approved the National Strategy for Barrier-Free Environment, which was developed as part of First Lady of Ukraine Ms Olena Zelenska's Barrier-free initiative and in accordance with the President of Ukraine's decree. The Strategy is a long-term action plan that will be implemented up until 2030, and its goal is to create a barrier-free society in 6 major directions.

The first aspect concerns physical barriers, which will be overcome with the help of new, inclusive architectural standards. This means that everything around us (the buildings, sidewalks, streets and public transport) will become easily accessible for people with reduced mobility (this includes people with disabilities, elderly people, children and guardians of small children and so on).
The second aspect deals with equal opportunities in civil society, so that all kinds of people can take part in political and social life. This approach means that every single person feels free to express their thoughts and doesn't fear to be judged because of certain differences. On the contrary, our differences will help create a more diverse, vibrant society.

The third aspect is economic. It is our aim to create conditions that will allow equal access to jobs and protect people from any kind of workplace discrimination. Our work in this direction will also include creating additional opportunities for people from different backgrounds to receive financial aid and other support that will help them start their own businesses.
The fourth aspect deals with education, although we might have mentioned it as the first direction of our work. After all, everything starts with our education. And everyone should have equal access to education – throughout their lives as well as in childhood. And this is what our state will work to provide.

The fifth aspect concerns the digital world – something we cannot imagine our lives without in the XXI century. A barrier-free digital space means that all social groups will have access to all kinds of online services and resources, as well as to the Internet itself.
The sixth aspect deals with information. This means creating conditions under which people, regardless of their mobility, functional disabilities or communication capabilities, will be able to access information and use all the necessary technologies.
Creating a barrier-free society also entails working on the misconceptions and stereotypes concerning various social groups.

2. Recommendations on how to promote social inclusion and create a barrier-free environment while working with young people affected by war.

2.1. General recommendations for creating a barrier-free environment in youth work

Creating a barrier-free environment is one of the main tools for promoting social inclusion of young people affected by war, therefore it is important that youth workers take into account different areas of accessibility in their work and create conditions for young people's access to rights and opportunities, including opportunities in youth work and non-formal education.

Physical accessibility:
First of all, physical accessibility includes the accessibility of all objects of the physical environment for all social groups, regardless of health, disability, property status, gender, place of residence, and other characteristics. In the context of youth work, this direction of accessibility includes the physical access of young people to youth work, non-formal education, and consulting services, projects and activities implemented with, for and by young people. This means not only adapting physical spaces to the needs of different young people, but also making youth work accessible to those young people who do not or cannot visit youth centres or spaces for one reason or another.In terms of physical accessibility, we recommend taking into account the following aspects:
- Convenient location of youth infrastructure including youth centres, youth spaces or youth clubs, where youth work is usually carried out; and an available transport interchange that makes it possible to get easily to the places of youth infrastructure;

- Adaptation of buildings and physical objects to the needs of different young people including young people with disabilities (availability of ramps, elevators, lavatories etc.);
- The use of various types of youth work (street youth work, mobile, outreach and detached youth work, online youth work) with those young people who, due to various obstacles, do not have the opportunity to visit youth centres, youth spaces or youth clubs, for example, with young people from disadvantaged areas or remote areas, from rural areas, with different cultural background, etc.

Informational accessibility

Informational accessibility means that people, regardless of their functional impairments or communication abilities, have access to information in a variety of formats and technologies, including braille, large print, audio description, sign language translation, subtitling, screen-readable format, and idle formats language, easy reading, means of alternative communication, language (especially taking into consideration refugee young people, language minority groups). In the context of youth work, this direction of accessibility means access of different young people, including young people with fewer opportunities and young people affected by war, to all kinds of information regarding youth work and non-formal education as well as various consultancy and social services.

To provide informational accessibility for all young people in the community, the following aspects should be taken into account:

- Availability of information in various formats including appropriate fonts and colours in visual materials, Braille font in youth infrastructure objects and buildings etc.;
- The use of youth-friendly language and content (including visual and video materials) which could be easy to understand for different young people;
- The use of various communication channels to disseminate information about youth opportunities and services - those that young people use and that are available to them, including not only Internet pages and social networks, but also offline means and channels of information dissemination, including through street, mobile, outreach youth work;
- An opportunity for young people to receive information about specialised services from youth workers - psychological, social, etc. with the possibility of referral to the necessary specialists if needed.

Digital accessibility

Digital accessibility means that all social groups have access to high-speed Internet, public services and public digital information. In the context of youth work, in order to provide this area of accessibility the following aspects should be taken into account:

- Possibility for young people to use Internet and appropriate technical equipment (computers, laptops, PlayStations, etc.) in youth centres and youth spaces - for purposes of communication, leisure and education;
- Availability of information about services for young people on various web resources, taking into account their capabilities and needs;
- Providing access to digital education by creating opportunities for diverse people to develop digital competencies through youth work and non-formal education.

Social and civil accessibility

Social and civil accessibility means equal opportunities for the participation of all people, their associations and specific social groups in the life of communities and the state, equal access to socio-political and cultural life, a favourable environment for physical development and self-realisation, as well as an inclusive environment as a precondition for participation in all forms of social life and public activity. In the context of youth work, this means equal access for all young people to:

- Opportunities to participate in various spheres of community life,
- Opportunities for civic participation and influence on decision-making processes affecting young people,
- Participation in various projects and activities aimed at community development,
- Opportunities to make one's own contribution to the development of the community,
- Human rights education and education for democratic citizenship.

In order to provide this area of accessibility in youth work, we recommend taking into account the following aspects:

- Constant monitoring of young people's needs and responding to them;
- Planning activities based on the needs of different young people;
- Creating a safe space for the participation of young people, which includes both physical and psycho-emotional safety, where young people can feel free and where their voices will be heard and where they will be supported;
- Using a "peer-to-peer" approach in the activities both during the interaction of young people with each other and during their interaction with youth workers.
- Involving young people in decision-making processes regarding youth work at different levels, according to their capacity and readiness, for example, in the arrangement of youth centres and spaces, joint planning of activities, etc.;
- Taking into account the different opportunities of young people to participate in offline and online youth work (for example, access to the Internet, the presence or absence of gadgets, the level of digital competences, physical capabilities, etc.).
- Promoting the representation of various groups of young people in youth councils, parliaments and other consultative bodies, to protect their needs and concerns at the local, regional, national levels and European level;
- Consideration of the principle of voluntary participation.
- Educational accessibility.

This area of accessibility means equal opportunities and free access to education, including lifelong education, as well as acquiring another profession, improving qualifications and acquiring additional competencies. For young people affected by war it means an opportunity to use all types and forms of education, meeting their special educational needs and creating an inclusive educational environment with minimisation of possible risks and challenges. The role of youth work in this process is extremely important, as it ensures the access of young people primarily to non-formal and informal education, and cooperates with the field of formal education as well.

In order to provide educational accessibility in youth work, we recommend taking into account the following aspects:

- Basing educational activities on the needs and concerns of different young people;
- Using different forms and methods of non-formal education available to young people, according to their capabilities, taking into account offline and online formats;
- Informing different young people about non-formal education opportunities, using different information channels and through different types of youth work, including outreach, detached and mobile youth work;
- Taking into account different physical capabilities and health conditions of young people when planning educational activities;
- Using the principles and approaches of trauma informed youth work, including the principle of "Do no harm"; adaptation of activities taking into account the context, background and experience of young people;
- Creation of an atmosphere of tolerance, respect for differences and appreciation of diversity during educational activities.

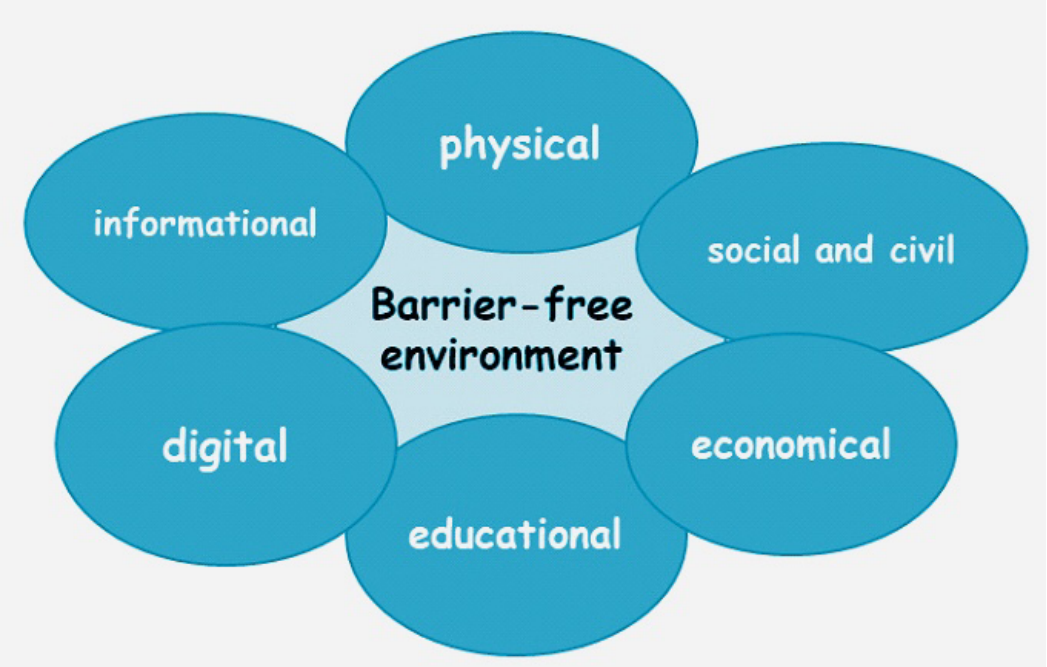
Economic accessibility

In a general sense, it means that all people, regardless of age, gender, marital status or health status, have conditions and opportunities for employment, obtaining financial and other resources for entrepreneurship or self-employment. For young people affected by war, this is reflected by ensuring conditions for young people's employment, ensuring access to entrepreneurial activity and self-employment and increasing the level of employment of the most vulnerable groups on the labour market. Although youth work often does not directly provide young people with jobs, it can significantly contribute to these thanks to the whole range of competences it forms and develops in young people and the experience they gain by participating in the activities offered to them by youth workers.

In order to strengthen the role of youth work in ensuring economic accessibility, we recommend taking into account the following aspects:

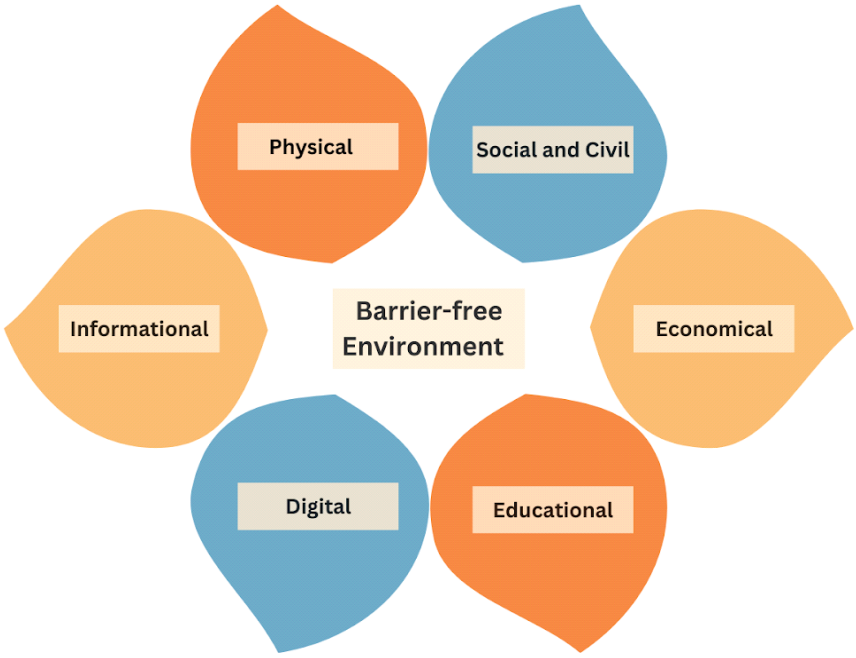
- Conducting career guidance events and projects in accordance with the needs and concerns of different young people;
- Mediation between employers and young people, that can be one of the directions of the activities of youth centres/spaces or individual youth workers;
- Cooperation with institutions of higher education and professional technical education and employment centres;
- Development of soft skills and various competences of young people according to their needs and concerns - to increase their competitiveness in the labour market.

Although we considered the accessibility areas separately from each other, it is still worth noting that they are all interrelated, complementary and interdependent, and it is possible to achieve real and comprehensive inclusion of young people only if all areas of accessibility are ensured.



Picture. Areas of barrier-free environment

Picture. Areas of barrier-free environment



2.2. Recommendations for additional competencies of youth workers working with young people affected by war

Youth work plays a role in supporting the recovery, resilience, and reconnection of young trauma survivors. It's important to note that a significant majority (75-80%) of those affected by trauma can achieve self-recovery, a process involving gradual restoration of functioning and enhanced adaptation capabilities. Key principles in trauma recovery are safety and capacity expansion, with resilience and reconnection being crucial factors in aiding recovery.

Young people become more resilient through engagement in youth work. Supportive relationships with youth workers are important in developing this skill. The safe and welcoming space that youth work provides enables young people to step out of their comfort zone, try new opportunities, make mistakes and learn from them without fear of judgement. Through youth work, young people are encouraged to develop plans and goals that help them to manage or overcome the challenges they face.

The traumatic event provisionally divides the person's life into "before" and "after" the event, which causes the sense of interrupted life. The stronger sense of reconnection is maintained by resumption of the ordinary lifestyle and youth work can be very supportive in this process of cognitive, functional, social, emotional and psychophysiological reconnection through providing healthy measure activities, non-formal education activities, engaging into voluntary projects, etc. everything which corresponds to young people needs and support the multilevel reconnection.

When working with young people affected by war and armed conflict, it is very important for youth workers to take into account the context. Even if youth workers have a great experience of working with young people with fewer opportunities, they need to pay attention and use a trauma-informed approach.

Trauma informed approaches in youth work are underpinned by an understanding and awareness of trauma; and the recognition of the impact of trauma on individuals and across settings, services, and communities, following four key fundamentals of trauma informed approaches: realising the prevalence of trauma, understanding potential pathways to recovery, and understanding potential barriers to positive outcomes; recognising how trauma directly or indirectly impacts on and affects individuals, families, communities, services, systems and employees; responding by incorporating knowledge into practice, policies and procedures; and resisting re-traumatisation of service users and staff through organisational systems and cultures.

The competence of the youth workers related to applying trauma-informed approach in youth work are the following:
- Knowledge of the methods for determining educational goals, self-reflection
- Knowledge of trauma informed youth work
- Knowledge of what stress, traumatic event, traumatic stress are
- Knowledge of salutogenic approach to interaction with a person affected by traumatic events
- Knowledge of stress responses of a human and origin thereof
- Knowledge of displays of traumatic experience in the person's conduct over time
- Knowledge of the principles of legitimation and normalisation in interaction with the people affected by traumatic events.- Knowledge of self-care and self-recovery techniques during stressful events, and impact of stressful events.
- Knowledge of psychological first aid and criteria for its provision
- Knowledge of the burnout and compassion fatigue and ways of its prevention
- Knowledge of empathy and effect of "imagining" as secondary traumatic stress factors.
- Knowledge of coping strategies and resource channels, application thereof in a crisis.
- Knowledge of do no harm" principle in work with young people affected by traumatic events.
- Knowledge of different labour functions of a youth worker and a psychologist.
Additionally, to the aspects of trauma-informed approach, the youth workers should be conscious of the ethos on which their educational actions are based, as they may have important roles such as providing support and mentoring to the young persons they work with:
- This support should be regular but should avoid creating dependency-based relationships, as these lead to obstacles to young people's empowerment and personal autonomy instead of enhancing them;
- Youth workers should aim to become superfluous once they have coached the young persons to achieve independence;
- Youth workers can provide young people with different opportunities that hopefully inspire and boost their empowerment and active participation in society.

Also, youth workers should take under consideration the Barrier-free language according to the young people they work with. You can use Glossary of "Compass - the manual for human rights education with young people"

2.3. How to ensure safe space and Do No Harm principle in the youth work activities with young people affected by war and armed conflict

Any of our activities with young people can affect their lives.
The IASC Guidelines on Working with and for Young People in Humanitarian and Protracted Crises explain the principle of "do no harm" as follows: Young people need a physically, socially and emotionally safe and supportive environment. Duty-bearers should be sensitive to divisions and inequities among and between young people and their communities, to avoid making them worse. Participation should not put young people at risk of backlash from the

family or community, or from other young people. Many may have suffered trauma: youth workers must be equipped to refer them to specialised services, and must pay particular attention to the potential for harm among those living in vulnerable situations.

The principle means not putting young people at additional risks, acting in the best interests of young people and avoid doing physical, psychological or emotional harm or injuries. The activity must be centred around young people, their well-being and development of quality relations with them based on: respect, non-discrimination, trust, confidentiality and privacy, well-being of young people.

In practice: Do no harm in such settings means that youth workers do not try to take on the role of psychologist/other, but should be prepared to refer such young people to specialist services and should pay particular attention to the possibility of harm to those in vulnerable situations.

The "do no harm" approach should be used at all stages of activity, from identifying needs, implementing activities, monitoring and evaluation. At each stage of its application, three simple steps must be taken into account:
- Understanding the context in which we operate, including political dynamics, institutions, attitudes, values, social norms held by communities, services available in the community, the needs of young people;
- Understanding the interaction between our actions and the context;
- Using this understanding to avoid the negative impact and enhance the positive impact of our actions on young people and the community as a whole.
Nine components of "Do no harm" in youth work
- Whenever we intervene with our activity in a certain context, it becomes part of the context.
- In any context in which we intervene, there are two factors: dividing and unifying. Divisive factors are those that cause tension in society. Unifying factors are those that bring people together and/or reduce tension. Both include structures, institutions, attitudes and actions, values and interests, symbols, etc.
- Any intervention in the context interacts with other factors, and can reduce or strengthen the factors that divide society or reduce or strengthen the factors that unite it.
- Actions and behaviour have consequences that create impact: our activities and how we behave in the implementation of our activities, the values and ethical principles we use have consequences (improving or worsening the situation).
- The details of our activities matter: what, why, who, who, when, where and how.
- There are always OPTIONS to change activities to eliminate negative effects or enhance positive changes.
- Building relationships with young people based on respect, non-discrimination, trust, confidentiality and privacy, well-being of young people.
- Creating a safe space for young people to participate.
To prevent negative influences and prevent them, we need to create a safe space for young people to participate.

What is a safe space?
- it is a space where young people can come together, engage in activities related to their diverse needs and interests, participate in decision-making processes and express themselves freely.
- it is a space that ensures human dignity and safety of young people (physical, psychological, emotional), promotes the development of young people's abilities that serve their general well-being.
- it is a space that meets the needs of diverse youth, particularly those vulnerable to marginalisation or violence.

For safe spaces to be inclusive, young people from diverse backgrounds, especially those from outside the local community, need to feel respected. For example, in humanitarian or conflict situations, young people may lack the space to fully express themselves without feeling uncomfortable or hostile. Similarly, if there is no safe space, young people of different race/ethnicity, gender, religious affiliation, or cultural background may feel afraid to contribute to the community. When young people have a safe space to communicate, they can effectively contribute to development, including peace-building and promoting social cohesion.

What conditions contribute to creating a sense of security?
- Everyone feels accepted and included;
- Everyone is treated with respect and without judgement;
- Everyone can feel equally valued;
- Everyone can be themselves;
- Everyone is protected from physical, sexual and emotional harassment and violence;
- Everyone has space to express their needs;
- Everyone can gain new knowledge and skills;
- Everyone is not afraid to make a mistake

Many other criteria can be added to this list, because each person, as well as each individual community, has different needs and expectations. It is important that young people are involved in developing these criteria.

3. Practices of youth work with young people affected by war and in times of war

Board Game Club (Ukraine, 2021 – ongoing)

The board game club "Igrobum" emerged as an initiative of the civic organisation "Sumy Youth Organization 'Litsei'" located in Sumy, Ukraine, in 2021. The idea to establish the club originated among the methodologists of the Sumy Palace of Children and Youth and high school students in the city of Sumy. From 2015 to 2021, this initiative was held several times a year during the holidays. It's important to note that in 2015, board games were not as popular in our region, and the club had significant potential for development and uniting young people.

The objectives of the initiative include:

- Advancing intellectual leisure;
- Creating a platform for developing strategic thinking and communicative interaction skills;
- Seeking creative initiatives from the target audience for the target audience;
- Promoting a healthy lifestyle by creating a friendly and open atmosphere in the club;
- Advocating boarding games culture in society and popularising new games.
- Expressing and fostering the creative potential of club participants through the development of their own board and modelling games.

Our target audience includes high school students in the region, university students, and young individuals who are already in the workforce.

The club's activities assist young people in acquiring new skills in solving various tasks related to organising and hosting events in the club. Importantly, the support for networking at the community level in the region contributes to the emergence of new initiatives and their joint implementation. Thus, we facilitate the consolidation of youth around vital social issues in the region and the country. In the summer of 2022, the club resumed its regular activities. Currently, participants gather twice a week to enjoy Board games. During blackout periods at the club, the organisation and Sumy State University, where the club is located, ensure the availability of light and the opportunity to study, as well as charge gadgets thanks to available backup power sources, such as charging systems and generators.

Training program "Easy for Busy: what they won't talk about at school" (Ukraine, 2022)

The training program for young people "Easy for Busy: what they don't talk about at school" was a part of the "Education in Crisis Situations", a large-scale project which was implemented by the public organisation "Donetsk Youth Debate Center" in different regions of Ukraine in partnership with the Communal Institution "Youth Center "Romantika" (Sumy, Sumy region), public organisation "Youth Resource Center "New Wings" (Novovolynsk, Volyn region), public organisation "Kremenchuk Information and Educational Center "European Club" (Kremenchuk, Poltava region), Kyiv Regional Institute of Postgraduate Pedagogical Education (Bila Tserkva, Kyiv region) and the communal institution "Centre of Culture and Leisure" (Klevan', Rivne region) with the support of Street Child UK.

In Sumy, during eight months, young people aged 13-17 had the opportunity to attend educational and psychological meetings in an interactive training format, during which they acquired knowledge and skills important for today, and also had the opportunity to have fun and useful time in the environment of peers and competent trainers. As part of the program, 40 educational interactive meetings and 5 psychological meetings were held, in which about 150 teenagers took part, including both local residents of the city of Sumy and internally displaced young people.

The educational meetings were devoted to the topics of team building, emotional intelligence, conflict resolution, sex education, tolerance and diversity, stress resistance, media literacy, planning for the future in conditions of uncertainty. During psychological meetings, the topics of stress resistance and self-recovery were revealed, art therapy techniques were used. An important achievement of the project was the creation of a safe, friendly space for children and young people, in which they felt free and relaxed, communicated with their peers, shared their thoughts and feelings, were not ashamed to be themselves and spoke openly about various issues that concern them. It is also important that during the project, children and young people had the opportunity to learn more about other opportunities in the field of non-formal education that exist in the city, and actively participated and continue to participate in various activities and projects that help children and young people to discover their potential, acquire vital skills and increase their participation in community life.

"Simply about complex things... An incredible project that is more "on time" than ever. Talking about conflicts, relationships, emotions, intimate relationships, dignity, equality and the future is always necessary and even more necessary in this turbulent period. Our participants are living their precious adolescence during the time of covid and war... Such projects help them not to become a "lost generation", as it was after the Second World War. Power outages, constant air raid alerts warning of possible shelling, and despite everything, they have the opportunity to communicate, joke, share their thoughts and feel each other's warmth." (Anna, youth worker, trainer of the Program)

"Voices of Young People in Ukraine" (Ukraine, 2022)

The project "Voices of Young People in Ukraine" was implemented by the Donetsk Youth Debate Center with the support of the European Youth Foundation of the Council of Europe as part of the youth campaign "Democracy Here Now" in partnership with the Youth Center "New Wings" (Novovolynsk, Volyn region), NGO "Kremenchuk Information and Educational Center "European Club" (Kremenchuk, Poltava region), Nizhyn Youth Center (Nizhyn, Chernihiv region), Okhtyrka Youth Center (Okhtyrka, Sumy region), Donetsk Regional Children and Youth Center (Kramatorsk, Donetsk region).

The goal of the project was to spread the voices of young people from 5 regions of Ukraine regarding the impact of the war on youth in Ukraine. The project included:

- Discussion of experiences related to the impact of war on young people;

- Development of skills of young people from 5 regions in defending the concerns and solving problems of young people during the war;
- Creating and distributing video stories on social networks aimed at protecting the concerns and solving problems of young people affected by the war;
- Communicating the needs of young people in times of war to key stakeholders at local, national and international levels.

As part of the project, online training was also held for young people from 5 cities of Ukraine (Kremenchuk, Novovolynsk, Okhtyrka, Nizhyn, Kramatorsk), during which young people learned to collect stories and shoot videos, organise and implement an advocacy campaign in social networks; joined the process of collecting stories of young people in their communities; received mentoring support in collecting and filming the stories of young people in their communities, joined the dialogue with local authorities in the field of youth regarding the promotion of the needs and concerns of young people in Ukraine.

"I would like to attend more trainings. I would like to organise them. I want to help people cope with the emotional stress we are going through right now. It needs to be done somewhere.. I agreed to the interview quite easily. Because I was looking for just what to do. For sure, I want my opinion to be heard. I didn't want to say it, but for me it's self-therapy because I, first of all, help myself cope with this stress." *(Masha, 18 y.o., twice internally displaced person, participant of the project "Voices of Young People in Ukraine" whose story was published in one of the videos shot within the project)*

More about the project and videos here: *https://www.instagram.com/voices_of_young_ppl_inukraine/?hl=en*

"Educational Course on Trauma Informed Youth Work" (Ukraine, 2022)

In 2022 the Council of Europe Project "Youth for Democracy in Ukraine: Phase II" in cooperation with the Council of Europe Project "Internal Displacement in Ukraine: Building Solutions. Phase II" developed the Guide on the Educational Course of Trauma Informed Youth Work.

The idea of the Guide as a methodological basis for training on trauma-informed youth work arose in April 2022 during a series of meetings of Ukrainian youth workers. The meetings were dedicated to discussing current challenges and priorities of youth work during armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine after 24 February 2022. In its turn, the series of meetings was held in response to the findings of the survey at the end of March 2022 regarding the essential matters and needs of youth workers in Ukraine.

The Programme on trauma informed youth work has been implemented for four months in 2022 by the Council of Europe Project "Youth for Democracy in Ukraine: Phase II" in cooperation with the Council of Europe Project "Internal Displacement in Ukraine: Building Solutions. Phase II" and the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine.

The programme included training seminars for youth workers and implementation of educational programmes in their communities in accordance with the content of the Guide.

In October – November 2022 twelve youth centres organised educational activities for youth workers and young people on prevention of burnout and compassion fatigue, first psychological aid in crisis situations based on the developed Guide of the Trauma Informed Youth Work training programme. The Guide contains the description of the educational programme and relevant sessions for the five-day training for youth workers. Moreover, the educational programme may be used as an educational kit and adapted to the needs of the target group, the format and available time. Each session constitutes a complete educational module and contains explanations on the preconditions and possible follow-up.

In 2023, the Council of Europe Project "Youth for Democracy in Ukraine: Phase III" in cooperation with the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine and the All-Ukrainian Youth Centre held an three-day (advanced) training for trainers of the Programme, developed and conducted a specialised course "Trauma Informed Youth Work" within the framework of the state program "Youth Worker Ukraine" and the all-Ukrainian week of mapping psychological services for young people in communities for the referrals in the work of youth centres and youth workers.

The Project «Youth for Democracy in Ukraine: Phase III» is carried out in the framework of the Council of Europe Action Plan for Ukraine 2023-2026. The Project was built on the results and experience of the projects "Youth for Democracy in Ukraine" in 2020-2022 and will extend the systematic influence by strengthening participatory youth policies and reinforce youth work in the war and in a post war context taking into account the specific needs of young people.

The Guide was translated into the English language and is accessible online. To learn more about the Guide on the Educational course of trauma informed youth work, you may use this QR code or follow the link below: https://www.coe.int/en/web/kyiv/-/guide-on-trauma-informed-youth-work-is-translated-in-the-english-language

"Collection of Experience of Youth Work, Based on the Approaches and Standards of the Council of Europe, in the Context of the Armed Aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine" (Ukraine, 2022)

The Council of Europe Project "Youth for Democracy in Ukraine: Phase II" has collected in November 2022 and described the experience and practices of youth work in the context of the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine in the period after 24 February 2022. The collection includes twenty stories of experience and reflection, both team projects, initiatives of youth centres and non-governmental organisations etc., and individual experience directed at social, cultural, educational, environmental transformations implemented by, with and for young people. On 12 October 2022, the Council of Europe Project "Youth for Democracy in Ukraine: Phase II" together with the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine published an open invitation to share the experience and practices of youth work in time of war.

In order to create and spread the collection of experience and practice of youth work, based on the approaches and standards of the Council of Europe, in time of war for the purposes of recording, training and inspiration of youth workers in Ukraine and other member states of the Council of Europe, in accordance with the methodology, the following persons were invited to participate in creating the collection of experience: participants of the events and trainings held by the Youth Department of the Council of Europe; partnering organisations of the Council of Europe Project "Youth for Democracy in Ukraine" (Phases I and II of 2020-2022). Collection and description of the experience of youth work do not provide an assessment and do not claim representative nature and coverage of all the youth work in Ukraine in 2022. The experience and reflections are presented in the collection in the free order. Each story in the collection is first presented with a brief overview, followed by a full interview about the experience, which describes in detail practices, considerations, resources and approaches of the Council of Europe that have promoted the youth work, based on principles of human rights and youth participation.

To learn more about the collection of experience of youth work, you may use the QR code or follow the link below: https://rm.coe.int/collection-of-experience-of-youth-work/1680abad35

"Time to Be Welcome" (Greece, France, 2016)

"Time to be welcome" is a collaborative partnership between 10 youth organisations: Bureau Européen du Scoutisme ASBL (WOSM); Soma Hellinon Proskopon (Scouts of Greece); Scouting Ireland – IE; Scout Association of Macedonia; Youth for Exchange and Understanding (YEU) International; European Federation for Intercultural Learning (EFIL); British Red Cross; Skata-Mot efh (Icelandic Scout Association); Eclaireurs et Eclaireuses Unionistes de France; and SINGA France. The project was co-funded by the ERASMUS+ programme of the European Union.
The project aimed at encouraging young volunteers and youth organisations all over Europe to welcome young refugees and migrants and to support their integration process, through the use of non-formal education and youth work.

The objectives were:
- To give young Europeans the opportunity to take action to welcome young migrants who are newly arrived in Europe;
- To provide young migrants with access to education and leisure, by developing their skills and competences through non-formal activities to promote education and well-being;
- To increase understanding and respect between communities, and overcome cultural and religious prejudice and disparities, in order to facilitate integration in European societies;
- To provide migrants, refugees and asylum seekers with the knowledge and support that will help them to feel integrated in their host country, enabling them to pass this knowledge on to other migrants arriving in Greece and France (specifically, Athens and Paris);
- To help asylum seekers and migrants on a daily basis with access to psychological and healthcare support;
- To raise awareness about the situation faced by asylum seekers, and encourage local communities to welcome newcomers from different backgrounds and cultures;
- To develop the capacity of youth organisations and support them to develop their youth work practices to ensure long-term integration of migrants;
- To empower volunteers to implement actions aimed at welcoming young refugees and newly arrived migrants into their host communities;
- To facilitate the interaction between refugees and local communities, thus setting a strong foundation for their future cooperation and mutual understanding.

Over 40 young volunteers working with refugees in Greece and France were trained in a two- day course on "introduction to psychological first aid". This course enabled them to learn concrete tools to identify trauma and to be able to react in a stressful situation in order to calm others and themselves down. The training course was provided by the Intercultural Institute for Systemic Competences (IICoS).

"Time to Be Welcome" (Greece, France, 2016)

"Time to be welcome" is a collaborative partnership between 10 youth organisations: Bureau Européen du Scoutisme ASBL (WOSM); Soma Hellinon Proskopon (Scouts of Greece); Scouting Ireland – IE; Scout Association of Macedonia; Youth for Exchange and Understanding (YEU) International; European Federation for Intercultural Learning (EFIL); British Red Cross; Skata-Mot efh (Icelandic Scout Association); Eclaireurs et Eclaireuses Unionistes de France; and SINGA France. The project was co-funded by the ERASMUS+ programme of the European Union.
The project aimed at encouraging young volunteers and youth organisations all over Europe to welcome young refugees and migrants and to support their integration process, through the use of non-formal education and youth work.

The objectives were:
- To give young Europeans the opportunity to take action to welcome young migrants who are newly arrived in Europe;
- To provide young migrants with access to education and leisure, by developing their skills and competences through non-formal activities to promote education and well-being;
- To increase understanding and respect between communities, and overcome cultural and religious prejudice and disparities, in order to facilitate integration in European societies;
- To provide migrants, refugees and asylum seekers with the knowledge and support that will help them to feel integrated in their host country, enabling them to pass this knowledge on to other migrants arriving in Greece and France (specifically, Athens and Paris);
- To help asylum seekers and migrants on a daily basis with access to psychological and healthcare support;
- To raise awareness about the situation faced by asylum seekers, and encourage local communities to welcome newcomers from different backgrounds and cultures;
- To develop the capacity of youth organisations and support them to develop their youth work practices to ensure long-term integration of migrants;
- To empower volunteers to implement actions aimed at welcoming young refugees and newly arrived migrants into their host communities;
- To facilitate the interaction between refugees and local communities, thus setting a strong foundation for their future cooperation and mutual understanding.

Over 40 young volunteers working with refugees in Greece and France were trained in a two- day course on "introduction to psychological first aid". This course enabled them to learn concrete tools to identify trauma and to be able to react in a stressful situation in order to calm others and themselves down. The training course was provided by the Intercultural Institute for Systemic Competences (IICoS).

"Seeds for Integration" (10 European countries, 2016 – 2019)

"Seeds for Integration" was a project of the Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions (OBESSU) funded by Open Society Foundations. OBESSU provided seed-funding to secondary school students so that they could implement their own initiatives on the inclusion of migrants and refugees in the secondary education environment. Students with and without a migration background and their communities were the main beneficiaries of the initiatives.
The overall aim was to provide small-, medium- and large-scale seed-funding to secondary school student unions operating at local, regional or national level or, if there was no student council in the school, to independent groups representing the school students, in order to empower them to implement initiatives aimed at enhancing the integration of refugee students and pupils with a migration background. The project is designed around the core idea that school students – regardless of where they are from – have the will and capacity to come up with targeted initiatives to tackle issues regarding the integration of migrant pupils in the field of education. During the Seeds for Integration project implementation there were three application periods when secondary school students could submit their initiative proposals.

There were more than 30 ongoing student-led initiatives in more than 10 countries with different impact levels and outcomes. To support the development of new initiatives around Europe, OBESSU and 15 project leaders were working together to draft guidelines on how to successfully design and implement projects tackling the topic of the inclusion of migrants and refugees into the secondary school environment at grass-roots, regional and national levels; and on what kinds of activities could have a sustainable impact at national, regional and local levels. The aim of these guidelines is to support secondary student unions or groups of students and youth organisations throughout Europe in having a good overview on the possible activities to organise and the potential steps to take to implement solid projects on migrant and refugee inclusion.

"Speak Out!" (Switzerland, 2010)

Speak Out! was an initiative of the National Youth Council of Switzerland, in partnership with the cantonal centres for asylum seekers and Anlaufstelle für Sans-Papiers (Basel).

The goal was to give children on the move in Switzerland the possibility to make their voices heard and to improve their participation. Speak Out! targeted unaccompanied migrant minors (UMM) seeking asylum and undocumented minors.

This project encompassed a policy-making and a youth work dimension. The participants shared the positive and negative aspects of their lives in Switzerland, provided their ideas and messages and defined priorities with the determined issues. The rights-based approach was crucial for the project;

that meant that the UMM seeking asylum were not only included to decide about the project contents and the external guests to be met, but were also informed about their individual rights, responsibilities and their role in Swiss society. They learned about children's rights, Swiss institutions and the functioning of Swiss politics, so that they could place their demands in the context of Swiss and international institutions. They also had an active role in managing the project (for example through the peer-to-peer approach). Activities varied greatly from local to national activities, group building, public space initiatives with regional authorities, summer camps and workshops in collaboration with partners. National conferences or encounters with federal authorities were also organised. Young women were also part of the project, even if they were less represented among the participants. To discuss topics specific to women and to men, two separate workshops were organised each year.

Through the project Speak Out!, it was ensured that UMM seeking asylum and undocumented were in a better position to deal with the problems and risks they might encounter during their stay in Switzerland. Moreover, they themselves could raise the awareness of the responsible policy makers and young people living in Switzerland; they could also suggest adequate solutions. The MNA Charta written by the UMM during the project had already been considered by the Conference of the Cantonal Director for social affairs in Switzerland for its recommendations concerning access to school, accommodation, health, support and transition to adulthood (www.sajv.ch/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/MNA-Charta-A4_D.pdf). In addition, films had been produced to give voice to participants' aspirations and had been shown. The work was going further in 2018 with more workshops on UMM and their challenges and with advocacy activities to raise their claims. The participative methodology of the Speak Out! project could also be transferred to give a voice to other young migrants in other countries, as well as at a local and regional level.

To find more information about European practices of work with young refugees, you may use the QR code or follow the link below: https://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/42128013/47261953/FINAL+step+by+step+together_reduced_size.pdf/8103c431-afc3-f978-9117-20776950bedf

"Ankommen_Weiterkommen": working with young asylum seekers (Germany, 2017)

The project Ankommen_Weiterkommen came into being in response to the needs surfacing from the practical work done with unaccompanied minor asylum seekers at Parzival School Centre and Parzival Youth Support (Parzival Jugendhilfe) in Karlsruhe, Baden-Württemberg, Germany. Besides several kindergartens and schools, the centre also had a crisis unit which caters for the needs of children suffering from stress as a result of experiencing adversity. With its focus upon recovery and the facilitation of self-healing processes, the Parzival School Centre observed that among the unaccompanied minor asylum seekers, psychological stress was particularly high. There was a general feeling that such levels of stress were having a negative effect on the young learners' school performance, social skills and personal development. Parzival Youth Support (Parzival Jugendhilfe) also observed that between school and leisure time in the youth shelters, there would be substantial gaps in age-specific, professional, social and self-reflexive fields of learning and experience.

The Ankommen_Weiterkommen project accordingly started off with the aim to respond to this need, and fill the gaps between the support offered by school staff and social workers. The Ankommen_Weiterkommen project focused on age-specific and individual development tasks concerning self-reflexivity, social skills and professional orientation. Within the project a team of four practitioners with a variety of expertise and competencies were working with around 50-80 unaccompanied minor asylum seekers and almost all of them were males between 16 and 20 years of age. The main therapeutic and educational methods that were chosen were individual counselling in addition to outdoor, theatre and art activities. The activities also included sports, arts, games as well as reaching out to German young people, and organising short excursions to Karlsruhe and other cities to allow for a variety of social settings to be explored. There were also group sessions within the school, actual school lessons at the premises of Parzival School Centre, along with workshops at the youth shelters too, for example to aid civic orientation, reflections on peace and conflict, and opportunities to explore individual means for artistic self-expression.

To give some practical examples, as a summer excursion, one of the activities the young men experienced had been canoeing. Body control and coordination, personal skills and teamwork are only some of the competences required to manoeuvre the canoe safely. Such an activity further allowed for experiencing self-efficacy, relaxation and fun. Theatre provided another important educational practice. The young men were taught theatre methods and wrote and performed their own play on stage. As part of this activity, they could experience and train their ability to use mime, body language and voice consciously. They could reflect upon their strengths and fears within playful interactions and in performance. They could experience themselves and their peers in unfamiliar situations and roles. And of course, they could experience completing a complex creative process (and product) and receiving recognition for it.

One of the strategies taught and promoted to the young men was creative methods, thanks to which several of them already knew well how to use them to their benefit. Creative processes, depending on how they are used, can be of great therapeutic value. At least several young men used different forms of creative self-expression as a means to relax, contemplate, or calm themselves, find new forms of self-expression, or as a kind of valve to cope with stress or other challenges.

Transformation of youth work for young refugees from emergency aid to integration initiatives (Turkey)

As a result of the migration flows following the outbreak of the Syrian Civil War, Turkey has transformed into one of the leading refugee hosting countries in the world, with around 3.2 million Syrians. Contrary to initial expectations, after several years it became clear that the Syrians would be permanent members of Turkish society rather than temporary guests. Turkey developed immediate responses and legal tools at a state level to provide the required services for Syrians both inside and outside the camps. However, the size of the Syrian population in Turkey and the permanency of their situation necessitate the involvement and contribution of other actors. Integration policies for the Syrians in Turkey could only be properly developed and implemented by the complementary contributions of these actors. Within this picture, youth work in Turkey constitutes one of the primary complementary elements, and the involvement of youth in this process through the activities of non-governmental organisations can facilitate the integration of Syrians.

One important common characteristic of the youth work initiatives for refugees and migrants is that they were mostly developed within the structure of NGOs and universities rather than youth organisations or other specific settings established by youth. However, this is very consistent with the development of youth work in Turkey, which has relied on the efforts of NGOs for many years. An increase in the number of youth-based initiatives can be expected in the short term, in particular with the help of EU programmes and university students' further engagement in the process. Another important note regarding youth work with refugees is related to the geographical development of initiatives. All 81 cities in Turkey (as of 2017) have been hosting different numbers of refugees. As might be expected, the initial youth work efforts for refugees were observed in the border cities and the three big cities of Turkey (Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir) due to the high number of refugees settled in those areas. However, as refugees have become a part of the social fabric in almost every city in Turkey, nationwide policies and practices are becoming more and more necessary. There is also a need for state level policies addressing the nexus between youth and refugees in Turkey, in particular in the realms of education, social policies, integration and mutual interaction.

The role of meaningful leisure in the lives of young refugees
(Finland, 2015 – ongoing)

An estimated 95 000 unaccompanied minors arrived in the European Union in 2015, of which around 3 000 in Finland. Many of these children and adolescents had faced inhuman behaviour and treatment during their journey, and attacks to asylum centres around Europe were reported in the media (Kuusisto-Arponen 2016). Unaccompanied minors are in a vulnerable position due to their age and asylum status. The UN's Convention on the Rights of the Child sets out that the special status of children must be taken into consideration in asylum processes. Despite the fact that the Finnish Immigration Service's (MIGRI) policy is to expedite the residence permit processing for minors (MIGRI processing times 2016; section 5 of the Act on the Reception of Persons Seeking International Protection), in practice this had rarely happened.

The most difficult circumstance in the lives of unaccompanied young asylum seekers in Finland was that no official authority alone was responsible for these young people; rather, the responsibility was scattered among different official institutions (see, for example, Honkasalo 2017). This lack of coordination and responsibility often made the lives of young asylum seekers unpredictable and chaotic. Furthermore, the fact that many young people, once they had received a residence permit, were moved from the reception centre to another institution or registered in a municipality somewhere else in Finland was problematic. During the move, the often fragile social network that the young person had managed to build was broken. These transitions were also frightening and caused tremendous stress.
The young people reported that waiting for the residence permit was the hardest thing to cope with in their everyday lives – it disturbed their concentration, caused anxiety and made it difficult for them to fall asleep at night. The young, unaccompanied minors said that the best way to resist the consequences of waiting was active participation in school and leisure activities. Going to school gave a rhythm and meaning to everyday life and the opportunity of making contact with Finnish youth. The reception centre where one of the studies was conducted focused intensively on finding suitable hobbies for all the young people. The Ministry of Education also gave financial support to NGOs in late 2015, especially for leisure activities for refugee children and youth. Some of the representatives of these organisations told that they had been surprised how much coordination the leisure activities for young refugees required. According to the informants, special attention had to be given, for example, to guiding young people towards leisure activities and ways of developing trustful relationships with other young people in this environment.

Meaningful leisure, school and friendship networks frame the everyday lives of young refugees. However, these contacts and practices do not develop by themselves; young people need special support and understanding. To find more practices and reflections on youth work with young refugees, you may use the QR-code or follow the link below: https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/between-insecurity-and-hope

Fron safe space to brave space.

By Raminta Bagdonaite and Weronika Knowska

What is safe space?

According to Cole Conshell *"safe spaces are physical, emotional, social and imaginative spaces that foster young people's abilities to make healthy life choices that promote their overall well-being (Cole, 2013). "*

It is possible to find many different definitions of safe space. Sometimes the term refers mainly to freedom of speech during discussions, the other time it is used to describe the healing environment, especially during therapy. However, for us, safe space is a way broader term. We define it as a community of people who interact with each other on the basis of non-judgement, care, and understanding.

Importantly, safe space doesn't need to be a physical location, it's more of a supportive and non-discriminating environment. Safe space is particularly crucial for young people on their journey towards self-identification and finding purpose in the world, because in the safe space everyone can feel free to be themselves and to try new things, even if that means making mistakes.

What are favourable conditions that enable the creation of this safety?

- Everyone feels accepted and included;
- Everyone is treated with respect and non-judgement
- Everyone is committed to provide each other with emotional support;
- Everyone can feel equally valuable;
- Everyone can be themselves;
- Everyone feels encouraged to explore their creative expression;
- Everyone is safe or physical, sexual and emotional harassment, abuse and violence;
- Everyone feels invited to express their needs
- Everyone can gain new knowledge and skills
- Everyone feels safe to make mistakes;
- Everyone can expand their social capital by building friendships.

Many other elements could contribute to creating a safe space. It's impossible to mention all of them, as every person, and so every community has different needs and expectations. It is also important to emphasise that even the above qualities of safe space could be understood in a unique way by every group. There are also a variety of methods to achieve certain elements of safe space. Therefore, the most crucial thing is to involve every member of the community in creating a co-living/co-working/co-existence agreement and to make sure everyone feels content with it.
Remember to be open to adapting the agreement over time, as members of the safe space constantly experience new situations, which have an impact on them. The agreement is made to fit its members, not the other way.

Now it is your turn to reflect. Take this as an opportunity to explore yourself and think deeply about your needs. Which of the elements above do you identify with when creating safe spaces for yourself or others? Which other elements would you think about? There are no bad or good answers, just think of what community you need to feel safe and empowered to grow.

Why is it important to have a safe space?
Safe spaces provide a "sanctuary" to explore feelings, share experiences, engage creatively, and build essential and empowering life skills. Safe spaces create opportunities for young people to be vulnerable and to open up to others without fear of judgement or harm. This is a crucial part of building self-confidence and resilience, which allows youth to be strong and engage maturely with the outside world while staying the most authentic versions of themselves. Safe spaces provide the possibility to practice self-care and community care. The latter skill is invaluable for social life, yet it's often forgotten in youth education. Sharing safe space with others motivates young changemakers to become more attentive and thoughtful towards themselves and others. This results in great benefits to everyone's mental health.
Explore more about safe space here:
WHO - International Youth Day: Safe Spaces for Healthy Adolescents (link opens in new window) Initiatives of Change Switzerland - 10 Tips for Creating a Safe Space (link opens in new window)

Safe space creation when working with youth affected by war or armed conflict : from safe space to brave space

Creating safer spaces for youth affected by war or armed conflict is not just a matter of convenience; it's a critical cornerstone for their recovery and development. The aftermath of such traumatic experiences can deeply scar young minds, leaving them vulnerable to a range of mental health issues and emotional distress. These spaces provide a nurturing environment where these youths can find solace, rebuild a sense of security, and regain their footing in the world. Though in the context of working with youth affected by war many youth-workers argue that creation of safe space is impossible as safe space can be usually interpreted as the comfort zone and inner peace which isn't really possible in the context of youth affected by armed conflicts, especially when working in the war zones or reception centres for the refugees where basic needs aren't met and generally with people dealing with trauma caused by war and armed conflicts. This is why more and more often the safe space concept is replaced with brave space concept.In this understanding the brave space is a space where you're feeling relatively safe and welcome and you have the space for self expression and development but unlike the ultimate safe space it requires a brave attitude to express yourself and get out of your comfort zone in order to learn new things and look forward to the future.

Creating a bravesafe space for youth affected by war or armed conflict involves a multifaceted approach that prioritises physical safety, emotional well-being, and a supportive environment. Here are strategies to establish such spaces:

- Physical Safety Measures: Try to Ensure the physical location is secure and free from potential threats. Implement safety protocols and procedures to address any emergency situations. This includes having secure entry points, safe transportation to and from the space, and trained staff to handle security concerns.

- Trauma-Informed Care: Train staff and volunteers in trauma-informed approaches to understand and respond to the needs of traumatized youth. Incorporate counseling and mental health support services led by professionals who specialize in trauma recovery.
- Establish Trust and Confidentiality: Build trust by creating a non-judgmental and confidential atmosphere. Youth affected by conflict may be hesitant to open up due to fear or past experiences. Ensuring confidentiality can encourage them to share their thoughts and feelings without fear of repercussions.
- Cultural Sensitivity and Inclusivity: Acknowledge and respect cultural differences among the youth. Create an inclusive environment that celebrates diversity and promotes understanding among different ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds.
- Provide Educational and Recreational Activities: Offer educational programs, skill-building workshops, and recreational activities tailored to the needs and interests of the youth. These activities not only contribute to their personal development but also serve as a distraction from traumatic experiences.
- Peer Support and Community Building: Encourage peer-to-peer support networks where youth can connect, share experiences, and provide mutual support. Foster a sense of community and belonging to combat feelings of isolation.
- Engage Families and Communities: Involve families and the broader community in the safe space initiatives. This fosters a supportive network beyond the physical space, ensuring continuity of care and support for the youth.
- Regular Evaluation and Adaptation: Continuously assess the effectiveness of the safe space through feedback mechanisms from the youth and staff. Adapt programs and services based on these evaluations to better meet the evolving needs of the participants.
By integrating these strategies, safe spaces can serve as sanctuaries that facilitate healing, learning, and resilience-building for youth affected by war or armed conflict.

References:

- Tol, W. A., et al. (2011). Family and community rejection and a Congolese led mediation intervention to reintegrate rejected survivors of sexual violence in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. Health care for women international, 32(9), 841-856.
- Inter-Agency Standing Committee. (2007). IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings.
- Wessells, M. G. (2009). Supporting the mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of youth in post-conflict communities. Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinics, 18(3), 519-532.

Activities examples:
Introducing the concepts of safe spaces and brave spaces to young people:

- Defining Safe Spaces
During the plenary session, inform the young participants that the upcoming exercise will involve individual reflection. Allocate 15 minutes for them to contemplate and journal about what the concept of a safe space means to them personally. Emphasize that this reflection is entirely private, and they are not obligated to share their thoughts or writing with others. The purpose of this exercise is to encourage them to focus on their own thoughts and

needs, which may be unfamiliar but valuable.
After the self-reflection period, invite the participants to reconvene in the plenary session. Set up a flipchart and encourage them to collaborate in listing the elements they believe contribute to a safe space. Facilitate a discussion around their contributions, allowing for diverse perspectives and experiences to be shared.

Once the list is complete, engage the participants in a dialogue about the feasibility of creating a safe space within the context of your collective work. Encourage them to reflect on any challenges or barriers they anticipate and brainstorm potential strategies for overcoming them. This discussion will foster a deeper understanding of the practical steps needed to establish and maintain a safe and supportive environment for all involved.

At this juncture, introduce the concept of "brave spaces" to the participants. Explain that while safe spaces aim to provide a sense of security and comfort, brave spaces go a step further by encouraging open dialogue, vulnerability, and the willingness to engage with discomfort and difficult topics. Emphasize that brave spaces are characterized by respectful communication, active listening, and a commitment to challenging assumptions and confronting biases. Encourage the participants to consider how brave spaces complement safe spaces and contribute to deeper understanding, personal growth, and meaningful dialogue. Invite them to reflect on occasions when they have experienced or facilitated brave spaces in the past, and discuss the potential benefits and challenges of integrating this concept into your collective work moving forward. This introduction will lay the groundwork for further exploration and implementation of brave space principles throughout your activities.

– Contributing to brave space – social agreement
Following the conversation on the importance of brave spaces, before starting your other activities, encourage the participants to create a "social agreement" – a flipchart with community rules that will contribute to creating a brave space. Ask participants to brainstorm together and share the ideas on what should be there. If the participants are hesitant to participate you can propose certain ideas or lead them to possible answers by asking questions such as:
Do you have any needs concerning the space that we are working at? (light, temperature etc)
What is important to you when you're working in a group?
Imagine a perfect group work setting – what we can do to get closer to that?
At the end of the session discuss with participants how did they feel creating that social agreement. Did they feel heard? Do they feel like something is missing?
Underline that all of you are bounded by this agreement (including the facilitators etc) and if in the following time of working together they feel like something is missing here or the rules are not respected, we can go back to it. Put the flipchart up in a visible place so everyone has access to it.

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) for Youth Workers

By Leyla Jabbarzade

This article explores the synergy between Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) and youth work. While research highlights the value of SEL for young people's mental health, a disconnect exists between its established benefits and its integration into youth work practices (Fish, 2014). This article argues that youth work inherently fosters SEL competencies, making it a powerful tool for youth development.

Alignment Between SEL and Youth Work Principles

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is a process defined by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) as one in which "children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions" (CASEL Guide, 2013, p. 4).

However, a potential disconnect exists between the established value of SEL and its integration into youth work practices. Matthew Fish (2014) highlights a lack of appreciation within the youth work profession for the significance of SEL in promoting young people's mental health. Fish further emphasizes the limited understanding of how youth services contribute to social and emotional learning (Fish, "The Value of Youth Services towards Child and Adolescent Mental Health"). He concludes by stating that "this is a shame, as the evidence from social and emotional learning theory implicitly lends significant credence to youth work's potential role in promoting SEL" (Fish, "The Value of Youth Services towards Child and Adolescent Mental Health").

In the paragraph below, we will explore the alignment between Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) competencies and the core principles of youth work. Research indicates that fostering social and emotional competencies in young people directly contributes to their social and emotional learning (CASEL Guide, 2013). The CASEL framework highlights the importance of supportive relationships, engaging learning experiences, and the development of essential life skills for positive youth development (CASEL Guide, 2013). Furthermore, multi-year, integrated approaches are crucial for preventing or reducing risky behaviors (CASEL Guide, 2013).

The inherent connection between youth work and SEL becomes evident when examining youth activities. The core values of youth work, as outlined by Resourcing Excellent Youth Services (DfES, 2002), demonstrably reinforce the development of SEL competencies. These values emphasize youth participation, meeting young people where they are at, fostering critical thinking and exploration, and respecting diverse communities and cultures (DfES, 2002). Youth work also prioritizes building strong relationships, collective identities, and emotional well-being among young people (DfES, 2002). Additionally, youth work empowers young people, respects individual differences, and collaborates with other key figures in their lives (DfES, 2002).

Building SEL Competencies Through Youth Work

Building upon the established framework of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) competencies outlined by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) this section explores the synergy between these competencies and the core objectives of youth work. In essence, the five CASEL competencies – self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making – serve as the main pillars for designing and facilitating effective SEL programs within a youth work context. We will examine how youth work practices effectively cultivate each of these competencies:



The definitions of the five competency clusters for young people are:

- **Self-awareness:** The ability to accurately recognize one's emotions and thoughts and their influence on behaviour. This includes accurately assessing one's strengths and limitations and possessing a well-grounded sense of confidence and optimism.
From the youth work perspective, Young people play the equivalent role in achieving this by saying concisely that it helps 'young people to see themselves' (Young, 2006:75), and that it encourages young people to examine their values and morals as well as their sense of self. As well as unmasking self-image, one of the main goals of youth work is to support the development of a positive self-concept through challenging negative self-perceptions and providing opportunities to find positive strengths. Meanwhile, Bamfield states that Youth work can 'transform young people's outlook and dispositions' (Bamfield, 2007: 20).

- Self-management: The ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviours effectively in different situations. This includes managing stress, controlling impulses, motivating oneself, and setting and working toward achieving personal and academic goals.

Larson (2000) examines how positive youth activities can boost motivation, autonomy and initiative, and Bamfield (2007) indicates how non-formal

education can support young people to foster skills in motivation, aspiration, self-determination and self-control. Youth work-led group work activities test and challenge young people's self-control, as well as this learning is fostered in an environment governed by rules and boundaries (Fish 2014). Fish (2014) also comments on the young people-derived goal-oriented tasks, such as organising a camping trip, or a funding or art project adding that these types of activities are particularly constructive for young people learning to handle conflicts, disappointments and upsets.

- **Social awareness:** The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures, to understand social and ethical norms for behaviour, and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.

- **Relationship skills:** The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups. This includes communicating clearly, listening actively, cooperating, resisting inappropriate social pressure, negotiating conflict constructively, and seeking and offering help when needed.

Jeffs and Smith (1999) claim that building relationships is central to youth work highlighting the significance of the relationship between youth workers and young people in equipping young people for their relationships, while Merton et al (2004) show how youth work helps provide key relationship-building skills. Within youth work, relationship skills are often gained in group work settings, providing a safe place for young people to learn and reflect on practical experience. Youth workers also often work with young people on a one-to-one basis, which gives space and safety for young people to talk through their emotions (Fish, 2014). This seemingly mere act of talking between a youth worker and a young person is considered by some as therapeutic in itself (Jeffs and Smith, 2005). Youth workers also at times provide constructive feedback about relationship skills which include empathy awareness.

- **Responsible decision-making:** The ability to make constructive and respectful choices about personal behaviour and social interactions based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, social norms, the realistic evaluation of consequences of various actions, and the well-being of self and others.

We have explored how youth work practices inherently cultivate the five CASEL competencies essential for SEL development in young people. However, integrating SEL principles more intentionally into youth work programs requires acknowledging some potential challenges.

Fish (2014) also highlights the challenges with this approach focusing on professional identity. He adds that "some youth workers may perceive a greater emphasis on mental health as a threat to their professional identity, or there may be an expectation of greater workloads or commitments". However, the development of the SEL competencies does not only lead to the chan-

ge in youth workers' skills but also the youth activities they organise for the diverse group of young people.
The current global climate, with rising conflicts and natural disasters, underscores the importance of SEL competencies not just for youth workers, but also for the young people they serve. A newly published study from Lebanon, conducted by researchers from Global TIES for Children at New York University and the International Rescue Committee (IRC), provides promising evidence that such SEL programmes can improve children's social and emotional skills at scale without causing more harm to vulnerable children. The statistics also prove that children who had experienced high levels of conflict, especially war violence and bullying, had poorer mental health as well as poorer cognitive and emotional regulation skills. In a nutshell, if the youth workers acquire the SEL competencies, they can also lead the young people or children to develop these competencies and improve the effectiveness of the youth activities and their safety.

Building Effective SEL Programs

Effective Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) programs are built upon a strong foundation. This foundation consists of several key pillars that guide program development and implementation. These pillars include:

- **Alignment with CASEL Competencies**: As previously mentioned, CASEL outlines five core competencies that serve as the cornerstone of SEL development. Any effective program should intentionally target these competencies through its activities and lessons.
- **Developmentally Appropriate Activities:** The design of activities should consider the age and developmental stage of the participants. Younger children will require different approaches compared to older youth.
- **Experiential Learning:** SEL programs benefit greatly from incorporating experiential learning strategies. This includes activities, games, role-playing scenarios, and discussions that allow participants to actively engage with the material.
- **Assessment and Evaluation:** Regular assessment allows program facilitators to gauge the program's effectiveness and adjust as needed. This can involve pre- and post-program assessments, as well as ongoing observations of participants' behaviour and engagement.

Key Differences between Non-Formal Education and SEL programs
While non-formal education and SEL programs aim to equip young people with valuable skills and knowledge, their primary focus and approach differ.

Focus:
- **Non-formal education:** Imparts specific skills or knowledge in areas like computer literacy, arts, or vocational training.
- **SEL programs:** Prioritize the development of social and emotional intelligence, including self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.

Learning Approach:

- Non-formal education: Often utilises structured learning activities with a defined curriculum and potential assessments.
- SEL programs: Emphasize experiential learning strategies such as activities, games, role-playing, and discussions to create an engaging environment for ongoing skill development.

Here's a table summarizing the key differences:

Feature	Non-Formal Education	SEL Programs
Focus	Specific skills or knowledge	Social and emotional intelligence
Learning Approach	Structured, curriculum-based	Experiential, engaging activities
Knowledge Transfer	One-time transfer of knowledge	Ongoing skill development

This article explored how SEL can be a game-changer for youth work. Even though the activities young people attend already allow them to develop these skills, a more intentional focus on SEL can make a big difference. Imagine youth workers equipped to guide young people in building self-awareness, managing emotions, and navigating relationships – that's the power of SEL. While there might be some initial concerns for youth workers, like feeling their role is changing or having more on their plate, the benefits for young people, especially in today's world, are undeniable. Research proves the efficiency of large-scale SEL programs, and by embracing SEL, youth work can become an even more effective tool to help young people thrive, emotionally and socially, alongside the valuable skills they already gain.

References

Bamfield , A. (2007) The contribution of Non Formal learning to young people's life chances. Leicester: NYA.
CASEL Guide, (2013), Effective Social and Emotional Learning Programs, [retrieved from https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WO8uod6FhAlNFYlXzvfZ-VOtfuCDuMsd/view]
Fish, M. (2014), The Value of Youth Services towards Child and Adolescent mental health, Youth Policy
Jeffs, T. and smith, M. k. (2005) Informal education: conversation, democracy and learning. (Third ed.) Nottingham: educational Heretics Press.
Larson, r. N. (2000) 'Towards a psychology of positive youth development. American Psychologist (Jan.) University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.
Merton, B. (2004) An evaluation of the impact of youth work in England. London: dfes
Young, L. (1999) The Art of Youth Work. London: russell House Publishing.

Communication skills

By Raminta Bagdonaitew

When communicating with youth affected by war or armed conflict, prioritising effective communication skills becomes paramount. These skills not only facilitate understanding but also foster trust, empathy, and healing. Employing nonviolent communication (NVC) techniques can be particularly impactful in these scenarios, as they emphasise empathy, active listening, and understanding without judgement or aggression.

Drawing from years of experience with youth activities organised by the Youth Peace Ambassadors Network in Kosovo, it is evident that creating a brave space and fostering an atmosphere of non-judgment are critical elements in engaging with youth affected by war, especially in the context of storytelling. Central to this approach is the practice of active listening and employing non-violent communication techniques. By providing a safe environment where individuals feel heard and respected, we can cultivate understanding and empathy among conflicted groups. Reframing narratives through the lens of non-violent communication not only facilitates dialogue but also helps break down the barriers that divide communities. Through this process, youth are empowered to share their experiences, challenge stereotypes, and build bridges of understanding, ultimately contributing to reconciliation and peacebuilding efforts in post-conflict settings like Kosovo. From our experience these are the key non-violent communication aspects when working with youth affected by war and armed conflicts:

- **Active Listening and Empathy:** Active listening involves not just hearing but understanding the emotions and underlying messages conveyed by the youth. Empathy is crucial; it allows you to connect with their experiences, validating their feelings without imposing personal biases. NVC encourages practitioners to listen with full attention, offering a safe space for the youth to express themselves without fear of judgement.
- **Avoiding Judgment and Assumptions:** NVC emphasises the importance of refraining from making assumptions or passing judgement. When working with traumatised youth, it's essential to approach conversations with an open mind, allowing them to share their experiences at their own pace without feeling misunderstood or judged.
- **Empowering Language and Choice:** Using language that empowers and offers choices is key. NVC encourages practitioners to frame conversations in a way that acknowledges the autonomy and agency of the youth. This approach fosters a sense of control and self-expression, important elements in rebuilding a sense of personal empowerment after experiencing conflict.
- **Managing Conflict Peacefully:** Conflict resolution is integral when working in these contexts. NVC provides tools to navigate conflicts peacefully, emphasising finding solutions that meet the needs of all parties involved without resorting to aggression or violence. This is particularly relevant in environments where tensions might still run high.
- **Cultural Sensitivity and Adaptability:** Understanding cultural nuances and adapting communication styles accordingly is crucial. NVC principles can be applied universally, but cultural sensitivity ensures that communication approaches are respectful and considerate of cultural differences.
- **Building Trust and Rapport:** Establishing trust is a cornerstone of effec-

tive communication. NVC techniques encourage building rapport by being genuine, transparent, and consistent in interactions. Trust allows for a deeper connection and a more conducive environment for the healing process. By integrating NVC techniques into communication strategies, practitioners can create a space where youth affected by conflict feel heard, understood, and respected, fostering an environment conducive to healing and growth.

Non-violent communication and active listening

Dealing with Conflicts

By Raminta Bagdonaite Weronika Knowska and Ilaria Zomer

What is conflict?

Conflict is a disagreement between two parties (can be two persons, two groups, two countries, etc.) or more, or a "perceived or actual contradiction in goals".

A conflict itself is not, per se, positive or negative. How we deal with conflict is what makes the difference - we can either transform it into something positive or not. It is crucial that youth understand that having different opinions on certain matters is not negative and it can actually be transformative and beneficial for both parties.

Conflict is a natural part of the human experience and occurs in our everyday life: you may have had a disagreement with your parents, partner, at school, at work... but that does not mean you use violence as a way of dealing with it. Navigating conflicts when working with youth affected by war or armed conflict demands a delicate balance of empathy, understanding, and structured conflict transformation approaches. Conflict transformation, a process that seeks to address the root causes of conflict and transform relationships, is instrumental in fostering reconciliation and peacebuilding among affected youths.

- Understanding the Nature of Conflict: Conflict can manifest in various forms, from interpersonal disputes to broader community tensions. Acknowledging the complexity and underlying causes of these conflicts is crucial. Often, the trauma of war can exacerbate interpersonal conflicts, making it essential to approach conflict resolution with sensitivity and empathy.
- Utilising Conflict Transformation Approaches: Conflict transformation strategies emphasise addressing the core issues rather than merely managing surface-level disagreements. It involves fostering dialogue, empathy, and understanding among conflicting parties. This approach encourages youth to explore the root causes of their conflicts, empowering them to find sustainable solutions that promote peace and reconciliation.
- Creating Safe Spaces for Dialogue: Establishing safe spaces where conflicting parties can engage in open and respectful dialogue is essential. These spaces should encourage active listening, empathy, and understanding. Conflict transformation involves facilitating these discussions, ensuring that each party feels heard and validated.

- Promoting Restorative Justice: Restorative justice principles can be pivotal in conflict transformation. It focuses on repairing harm caused by conflicts, emphasizing accountability, healing, and reconciliation. Encouraging affected youths to take responsibility for their actions while also providing opportunities for healing is crucial in this process.
- Building Trust and Reconciliation: Conflict transformation aims at rebuilding trust and fostering reconciliation among conflicting parties. This involves promoting understanding, forgiveness, and finding common ground despite differences. It's a gradual process that requires patience, persistence, and a commitment to long-term peacebuilding.
- Cultural Sensitivity and Contextual Understanding: Cultural nuances and contextual understanding are essential in conflict transformation. Considering the cultural backgrounds and specific experiences of those involved helps in designing conflict resolution approaches that are respectful and relevant.
- Engaging Stakeholders and Community Involvement: Involving key stakeholders and the broader community in conflict resolution initiatives ensures sustainable and community-driven solutions. Collaboration with local leaders, families, and community members can strengthen the impact of conflict transformation efforts.

By integrating conflict transformation approaches, practitioners can help youth affected by conflict navigate and transform their conflicts into opportunities for healing, understanding, and ultimately, peacebuilding.

References:

- Lederach, J. P. (2003). The Little Book of Conflict Transformation. Good Books.
- Fisher, S. (2001). Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In. Penguin Books.
- Galtung, J. (2000). Conflict Transformation by Peaceful Means (the Transcend Method). United Nations University Press.

What is nonviolent communication (NVC)?

Nonviolent Communication (NVC) is a communication method developed by Marshall Rosenberg who encourages greater compassion and clarity in our communications. According to him: 'NVC shows us a way of being very honest, but without any criticism, insults, or put downs, and without any intellectual diagnosis implying wrongness. '. This way of communication focuses on two things: **1) honest self-expression** - exposing what matters to oneself in a way that's likely to inspire compassion in others, and **2) empathy** - listening with deep compassion.

The basic model for NVC is quite straightforward and simple. It is a process that combines four components listed below.They are the basis for Marshall's ideas of giving and receiving from the heart. The purpose of NVC is to help all involved to sharpen their awareness of language so that they can express what really matters to them, and also hear what really matters to others.You can find the NVC process described here: NVC process (link opens in new window).

Four Components:

– Observation: Observation without evaluation consists of noticing concrete things and actions around us. We learn to distinguish between judgment and what we sense in the present moment, and to simply observe what is there.
- **Feeling:** When we notice things around us, we inevitably experience varying emotions and physical sensations in each particular moment. Here, distinguishing feelings from thoughts is an essential step to the NVC process.
– Needs: All individuals have needs and values that sustain and enrich their lives. When those needs are met, we experience comfortable feelings, such as happiness or peacefulness.When they are not, we experience uncomfortable feelings, like frustration. Understanding that we, as well as those around us, have these needs is perhaps the most important step in learning to practice NVC and to live empathically.
– Request: To make clear and present requests is crucial to NVC's transformative mission. When we learn to request concrete actions that can be carried out in the present moment, we begin to find ways to cooperatively and creatively ensure that everyone's needs are met.

From these four components, Marshall has created a model for life enriching communication that can be highly effective in solving conflict with our family members, friends, coworkers, and with ourselves. The basic outline of the model is the following:

When I (see, hear) _____,
I (feel, am) _____,
because I (need, want) _____.
Would you be willing to _____?

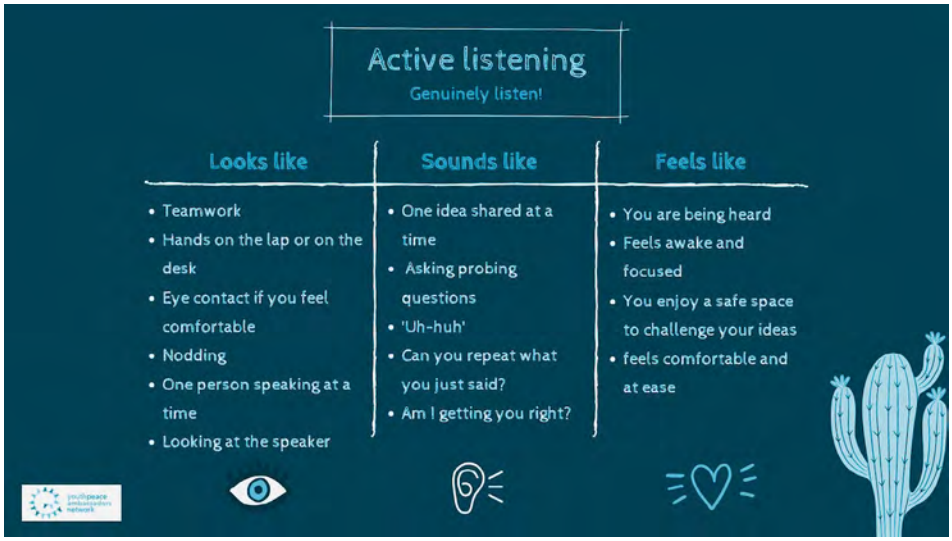
Keep in mind that this is just a model and that using this form and this language is not the most important aspect of NVC. In fact, as you practice and learn more, you'll begin to notice that all four of these components can be present in the complete absence of the form. Also, it is important to highlight that NVC helps to practice and facilitate active listening.

More on NVC:*Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life by Marshall B. Rosenberg (link opens in new window)How Expansive is your Emotional Vocabulary? (link opens in new window)*

ACTIVE LISTENING

Active listening is a communication technique that requires the listener to provide feedback on what they hear to the speaker, by way of restating or paraphrasing what they have heard in their own words. The goal of this repetition is to confirm what the listener has heard and to confirm the understanding of both parties. The ability to listen actively can improve personal relationships through fostering understanding, strengthening cooperation, and reducing conflicts.

When interacting, people are often not listening attentively. They may be distracted, thinking about other things, or thinking about what they are going to say next. The latter case is particularly true in conflict situations or disagreements. Active listening is a structured way of listening and responding to others, focusing attention on the speaker. Suspending one's own frame of reference, suspending judgment and avoiding other internal mental activities are important to fully attend to the speaker.



Active listening is a foundational communication technique that holds significant potential in the context of working with youth affected by armed conflicts. By actively listening to the experiences, emotions, and needs of these young individuals, youth workers can create a supportive environment where their voices feel heard and validated. This practice goes beyond mere acknowledgment; it signifies a genuine commitment to understanding the unique challenges and traumas these youth face. Through active listening, youth workers can cultivate trust and rapport, essential components for effective intervention and rehabilitation. Moreover, by affirming their perspectives and emotions, active listening empowers youth to express themselves authentically, fostering a sense of agency and control amidst the chaos and uncertainty of conflict. In this way, active listening becomes not only a communication tool but also a catalyst for healing, resilience, and positive growth in the lives of youth affected by armed conflicts.

Workshops for youth workers

We propose a description of a workshop for youth workers, caution the activity can be triggering so it is not suitable to be proposed directly to a group of young people unless the operator knows the group in depth and has a solid relationship of trust with them.

The workshop aims to build awareness among practitioners of what is active listening and what is not.

The group is asked who likes to be listened to and who likes to practice active listening. Those who are listened to are asked to think of a theme/dilemma/issue/question on which they feel the need to gain clarity and on which they are happy to tell and be listened to. It is explained to this group that the facilitator will go away with the group of listeners to explain some active listening techniques that will then be used during the workshop.

Once the groups have been split up, the facilitator explains to the facilitators who will play the role of listeners that they will have to, instead of applying active listening, activate 3 different forms of not listening, at the end of the exercise we will try to ask the group of participants who spoke whether they felt listened to or not. The facilitator will make hand gestures (usually indicating numbers) to help the listeners move from one type of "not listening" to the next.

The first step is 'non-verbal' non-listening, the listener becomes distracted, his gaze escapes from the face of the listener and his inattention is perceptible from his non-verbal language.

The second step is the 'judgmental' non-listening, the listener always relates what the other person is saying to his or her experience 'I understand you, I too was left, I was angry'. The listener empathises on the situation not on the emotion of the one who is speaking by projecting his own emotions and ultimately his own solutions (advice). The listener begins to talk about himself, he is a participant and active in the conversation, he appears interested but his listening is judgmental because he reduces the other person's experience to his own or asks questions aimed at answering his personal curiosity or confirming an interpretation of the situation that is being built up in his head.

The third step is manipulative non-listening. The listener tries to lead the interlocutor to his/her own solution to the problem, proposes interpretations of the situation (in my opinion... if I were you I would do... etc.) and gives advice.

The activity concludes with a plenary restitution during which people are asked whether they felt listened to. Almost always people are able to recognise the first level of not listening, but rarely are they able to recognise that the type of listening done with them is not active listening. Following the activity and the unveiling of the dynamic, a space is left for discussion in pairs and the techniques of active listening are explained.

How can we introduce Active listening methods to youth affected by war?

Workshop on active listening:

1. Introducing young people to elements of active listening – in the plenary present the following elements of active listening:
- Pay attention: Emphasise the importance of being fully present in the moment, both mentally and physically. Encourage participants to focus their attention on the speaker without distractions, such as electronic devices or internal thoughts and to pay attention to their body language.
- Withhold judgement: Stress the need to suspend personal judgments or assumptions about the speaker's experiences or perspectives. Encourage an open-minded and non-critical approach to listening. Underline that it's a hard thing to do as emotional reactions to things we hear are in human nature, but active listening is about giving the speaker a space to express themselves in a neutral, non judgmental atmosphere of trust and respect.
- Ask for clarification: Explain the concept of seeking clarification to ensure understanding. Encourage participants to ask questions or seek clarification on any points that are unclear or ambiguous.
- Summarise what the speaker said: Teach participants the skill of summarising the speaker's main points or feelings to demonstrate active engagement and comprehension as well as seeking understanding of the things we're being told.
Emotional mirroring: the listener may perceive a strong emotional component while the other is speaking. He/she may then decide to 'mirror' the emotions he/she feels, thus helping the person who is speaking to recognise them. Let us not allow ourselves to be 'blocked' by the fact that we may not be sure of the emotion the other person is feeling, even if our mirroring is wrong, we are creating space for the other person to 'correct' us and thus increase their own emotional awareness: 'I am not angry, I am disappointed!
- Verbal mirroring: during the conversation we can perceive in our interlocutor "pauses" in the discourse: "I would love to do it but..." again we can create the space for our interlocutor to explore that BUT and go deeper into his reflection simply by catching that doubt or pause, turning it into a question: "BUT?"

2. Discuss each element:
- Facilitate a group discussion on each element, exploring its significance and practical application in communication. Use examples to illustrate how each element can enhance understanding and empathy in interactions with others.

3 Divide the participants into pairs:
- Organize participants into pairs, ensuring that each pair consists of individuals who haven't had much opportunity to interact previously. This encourages participants to engage with new perspectives and experiences.

4. Ask Participants to speak about a topic that would like to be listened and that they feel they need to clarify themselves about, they can choose the topic and the level of sharing (it is important before to create a "brave space" inside the group):
- The listener apply the rules of active listening.

5. Reflect and discuss:
- After the active listening exercise, reconvene the group and facilitate a discussion on their experiences. Encourage participants to reflect on the challenges they faced as both speakers and listeners. Explore how it felt to be actively listened to and the impact it had on their sense of validation and connection with others.

By following these steps, the workshop can effectively introduce young people affected by war to the principles and practice of active listening, fostering greater understanding, empathy, and communication skills.

It is important to underline though that while Nonviolent Communication (NVC) and communication skills in general are valuable tools for fostering understanding and empathy, it's important to recognize their limitations, particularly when working with often traumatised young people affected by war. Trauma can significantly impact an individual's ability to engage in open communication and may even trigger adverse reactions to certain communication techniques. For instance, pressing individuals to express their emotions in a structured manner, as NVC often advocates, could potentially retraumatize them or exacerbate feelings of vulnerability and distress. In such cases, it's crucial to exercise sensitivity and flexibility in communication approaches, prioritising safety and trust-building above rigid adherence to specific frameworks. Additionally, there may be instances where nonverbal forms of communication, such as art or movement-based activities, prove more effective in facilitating expression and healing for youth affected by war and armed conflicts. Therefore, while communication skills remain valuable, it's essential to adapt their application thoughtfully and respectfully in the context of supporting youth affected by war-related trauma.

References:

- Rosenberg, M. B. (2015). Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life. PuddleDancer Press.
- Wood, L. A., & Kroger, R. O. (2000). Doing discourse analysis: Methods for studying action in talk and text. Sage Publications.
- Pupavac, V. (2004). Therapeutic governance: Psycho-social intervention and trauma risk management. Disasters, 28(4), 406-420.

The Role of Art in Youth Work for Rehabilitation of Young People Affected by War

Aynur Zarrintac

Conflict situations can have especially devastating effects on youth and children who become victims of war, genocide, forced labor, enlisting for the army, recruitment into militias, and child prostitution. These young individuals often face not only the physical and psychological trauma of their experiences but also the challenges of rebuilding their lives in the aftermath of war. Here are some key points to consider:

– Forced Labor: Youth forced into labor, whether in conflict zones or as a result of displacement, often suffer from physical and emotional abuse. They may be deprived of education and opportunities for personal development, hindering their future prospects.
- **Recruitment in Militias:** Children and young adults recruited into armed groups often endure extreme violence and are forced to engage in combat. This not only traumatizes them but also robs them of their childhood and education.
– Child Prostitution: Conflict can create an environment where child prostitution becomes prevalent due to a lack of law enforcement and economic desperation. This leaves many young people vulnerable to exploitation and lifelong psychological scars.
– Displacement and Separation: Many youth are displaced from their homes, separated from their families, or orphaned as a result of conflict. This not only disrupts their social and familial bonds but also leaves them in precarious situations with limited access to basic necessities.
– Rebuilding Lives: Reintegrating and rehabilitating these young victims is a complex and lengthy process. They often require psychological support, access to education, vocational training, and opportunities for social reintegration. Reuniting them with their families when possible is also crucial.

Art is an expressive vehicle for communication that plays a significant role in the rehabilitation of young people affected by war. Providing a creative and therapeutic outlet can help youth to heal, to transform or rebuild their lives, recover from violence in all forms and all stages of conflict. Here are some key ways the arts contribute to peacebuilding, recovering process.
– Healing Trauma: Creating art, whether through painting, drawing, sculpture, or other forms, allows young people to express their emotions and experiences in a non-verbal way. This can be especially helpful for those who have experienced traumatic events, as it offers an alternative to verbal communication and can provide a sense of control over their feelings.
– Building Resilience: Engaging in artistic activities can help young people develop resilience and coping skills. It allows them to explore their creativity, problem-solving abilities, and adaptability, which are valuable life skills for dealing with the challenges they face.
– Empowerment: Art can empower young people by giving them a sense of agency and self-worth. Creating something beautiful or meaningful can boost their self-esteem and provide a sense of accomplishment, which is especially important for those who have suffered from feelings of helplessness.

- **Communication and Connection:** Art can be a medium for communication and connection, not only with others but also with one's inner self. It can serve as a bridge for sharing experiences and emotions with peers, therapists, and caregivers, fostering a sense of belonging and understanding.
- **Cultural Expression:** Art can be a powerful way for young people to reconnect with their cultural heritage and traditions. It can help them maintain a sense of identity and pride, even in the face of displacement and loss.
- **Education and Skill Development:** Art can be a valuable educational tool, providing young people with opportunities to learn new skills and expand their horizons. This can include learning about various art forms, techniques, and even art history.
- **Reintegration into Society:** Through art programs and exhibitions, young people can showcase their talents and creative expressions, which can help them reintegrate into society and gain recognition for their abilities rather than being defined solely by their past experiences in conflict.
- **Advocacy and Awareness:** Art can also serve as a means of advocacy and raising awareness about the impact of war on young people. Art exhibitions and projects can convey powerful messages to the public and policymakers, encouraging them to support programs that assist these youth.

Art also encompasses various creative activities, such as drawing, collage-making, or sculpting with clay which can help individuals convey their emotions in a safe and expressive manner. It will be useful to become familiar with some of them:

- **Expressive Art** involves using various art forms, such as painting, drawing, sculpting, and collage, to encourage self-expression and the release of repressed emotions related to trauma, and fear.
- **Narrative Art** helps individuals create visual narratives or stories through art and externalize their trauma experiences, making it easier to process and understand.
- **Sculpture Art:** Creating three-dimensional art, such as clay sculptures, can be a powerful way to explore and release traumatic experiences. The tactile nature of sculpture can provide a sense of control and catharsis.
- **Sandplay Art:** This type of art uses miniature figures and a sand tray to create scenes or stories. It's particularly effective for individuals who struggle to verbalize their trauma.
- **Movement–Based Art:** Using dance, movement, and bodily expression, this approach allows individuals to access and process trauma through physical movements and creative expression.
- **Music and Art**: Combining art and music can help individuals express and process trauma. They may create visual art in response to music or use music as a backdrop for their art-making.
- **Mindfulness-Based Art:** This approach incorporates mindfulness techniques with art-making. It helps individuals stay present and focused on the creative process while processing trauma-related emotions.
- **Digital Art:** In today's digital age, the use of technology and digital tools can be integrated into art therapy. It allows individuals to create and manipulate digital art as a means of processing trauma.
- **Phototherapy:** The use of photographs, whether taking them or working with existing images, can be a way to explore and discuss traumatic experiences.
- **Bibliotherapy**: Though not strictly art therapy, reading and engaging with

literature and stories can also be therapeutic for trauma healing. Art therapists may incorporate this approach as well.
– **Invisible Theatre** is a public theatre that involves the public as participants in the action without their knowing it.
– **Symbolic Reinterpretation** is art that intentionally mirrors an existing symbol (e.g., flag, logo, or icon) but "reinterprets" the symbol by adding new text, new colors, or new design.
– **Documentary Filmmaking** Documentary filmmaking is an art form that attempts to document on film or digital tape that which is factual or nonfictional.
– **Public Murals** Public murals are paintings displayed in public spaces, for example, unused sides of buildings, highway partitions.
– **Installation Art:** takes a specific environment (e.g., park, government building, or plaza) and temporarily transforms it into a gallery.
– **Creative Drama** uses role-play, improvisation, and performance techniques for healing, catharsis, problem solving, and other psychotherapeutic purposes.
– **Playback Theatre** is a form of improvisational theatre in which audience or group members tell stories from their lives and watch them enacted immediately by an ensemble of actors.
– **Image Theatre** is a process in which participants make still images of their lives, feelings, and experiences, using nonverbal communication to reveal truths about society.
– **Forum Theatre** is a process in which an unresolved problem is shown theatrically to an audience, after which the audience is invited to suggest and enact solutions.
– **Arts Education** Art education is a school-based curriculum that actively incorporates visual, literary, performance, and movement art forms within the classroom setting.

The list is long and every youth worker can select which art form is most appropriate for their setting. Certain art forms, not universally, possess a distinct ability to convey messages without words, a valuable asset in the realm of peacebuilding. While individuals exchange verbal messages through spoken language, they communicate nonverbally through body language, eye contact, vocal tone, and facial expressions. Attending the symbolic channels of facial expressions, body postures, and eye movements becomes crucial, as these channels carry essential information about emotions, energy, and thoughts. Art forms such as music, dance, theatre, and visual arts leverage symbolic references to communicate nonverbally about the real world, surpassing the direct logic of words. Art has the capacity to articulate emotions, ideas, or feelings that words alone cannot encapsulate. Youth workers working in higher-context communities may find participants more responsive to communication that is indirect, informal, relational, face-saving, and collectivistic. Conversely, practitioners working in lower-context communities may find participants more responsive to communication that is direct, formal, rational, explicit, and individualistic.

List of risks to avoid when using Art

The youth workers should be very careful while employing these methods. They can do a small survey to check their target groups' needs, fears and background stories to get familiar with the things they have been through. The main goal here is to refrain from triggering their trauma without any purpose. The youth workers should make sure that they do not use any real story based on violence and trauma and any tools can symbolize the violent acts.

Engaging in art activities facilitated by a youth worker instead of a professional artist may pose certain psychological risks, although the impact can vary depending on factors such as the nature of the activity, the participants involved, and the skills and training of the youth worker. Here are some potential psychological risks to consider:
Lack of Expertise: A non-professional facilitator may lack the specialized knowledge and skills in art therapy or specific art techniques. This could result in activities that are not well-suited to addressing the psychological needs of participants.
Misinterpretation of Artwork: Without proper training, a youth worker may struggle to interpret the artwork created by participants accurately. Misinterpretations could lead to misunderstandings or inappropriate interventions, potentially causing distress.
Inadequate Emotional Support: Art activities can bring up deep emotions and personal issues. If a youth worker is not adequately trained in providing emotional support, participants may not receive the help they need in processing and managing their feelings.
Unintentional Triggering: Certain art activities may unintentionally trigger negative emotions or traumatic memories. A youth worker without proper training may not recognize potential triggers or know how to handle them appropriately.
Confidentiality Concerns: Art activities often involve self-expression, and participants may reveal personal and sensitive information through their artwork. Without a clear understanding of confidentiality and privacy, there may be risks of inappropriate disclosure or breach of trust.
Limited Scope of Interventions: Professional artists with training in art therapy can provide a wider range of therapeutic interventions. A youth worker may have limited tools and techniques to address various psychological needs that may arise during art activities.
Lack of Structured Framework: Professional artists often work within a structured therapeutic framework. Without this structure, art activities facilitated by a youth worker may lack a clear therapeutic focus, potentially diminishing their effectiveness.
It's essential for youth workers to be aware of these potential risks and, if they are facilitating art activities, to seek guidance, training, or collaboration with professionals in the mental health and art therapy fields. Additionally, clear guidelines and protocols should be established to ensure the well-being and safety of participants in any art-based interventions.

I would like to share from my experience working with the people: On 6 February 2023, 7.8 earthquake struck southern and central Turkey and northern and western Syria. In August, 2023 I had to facilitate site-specific theatre training in Suleyman Demirel University in Isparta. Ongoing process, our character building process organically turned to storytelling. I started to use meditation techniques which helped participants to create their characters in their mind and transform it to their bodies. In the next step I started to ask questions from participants one by one and consider their answers allowing them to choose one specific sentence and create a choir. Whole space turned to another place where we started to hear our characters and did not see ourselves. The next participant whom I asked from the participant where she is now and what she is doing? She replied she is in their home and try to find small table ühich made her father for her when she was child. We started our meditation, than follow my question I lead her to look for the table in her imaginary world. She found it, but it was very far rom her. We started dialog between her and table which the table voice was me. And in ongoing process I asked her what she wants to tell table (me). She said some good memories and than asked her it is time to say good bye to table. She did as I lead her. "Bye little table. That was very nice to spend time with you in my childhood". At the end when we finished activity I asked everybody to sit in circle. The participant who said good bye to the table told that now she feel better.

The border between educational activity and art therapy can be nuanced and may vary depending on the goals, methods, and intentions of the facilitator. Here are some key distinctions:

Purpose and Goals:
- Educational Activity: The primary purpose of educational activities is to impart knowledge, teach skills, or promote cognitive development. The focus is on learning specific content or gaining particular skills related to the subject matter.
- Art Therapy: The primary goal of art therapy is therapeutic, focusing on emotional expression, self-exploration, and psychological well-being. The emphasis is on the process of creating art rather than the final product.

Facilitator's Role:
- Educational Activity: In educational settings, facilitators, such as teachers, aim to convey information, guide learning, and assess understanding. Their role is instructional, and the emphasis is on achieving predefined learning outcomes.
- Art Therapy: Art therapists, on the other hand, are trained mental health professionals who use art as a therapeutic tool. Their role involves guiding individuals in exploring their emotions, promoting self-awareness, and addressing psychological concerns.

Structure and Approach:
- Educational Activity: Educational activities often follow a structured curriculum with specific lesson plans and assessments. The focus is on skill acquisition, knowledge transfer, and meeting educational standards.

- Art Therapy: Art therapy is more process-oriented and less structured. The emphasis is on the individual's unique creative expression, and there may not be a predetermined curriculum. The therapeutic process evolves based on the client's needs.

Outcome Orientation:
- Educational Activity: The success of educational activities is often measured by the acquisition of knowledge or skills, academic achievement, or the completion of assignments and assessments.
- Art Therapy: The success of art therapy is more focused on the therapeutic benefits, such as increased self-awareness, emotional expression, and improved mental well-being. The emphasis is on personal growth rather than external benchmarks.

Informed Consent and Confidentiality:
- Educational Activity: In educational settings, the focus is on delivering content to a group, and there may be less emphasis on the need for informed consent or confidentiality related to personal disclosures.
- Art Therapy: In art therapy, confidentiality is crucial, and participants are informed about the therapeutic nature of the process. The therapist ensures a safe space for individuals to explore personal emotions and experiences.

While these distinctions help highlight the differences between educational activities and art therapy, it'simportant to note that there can be overlap, especially in informal educational settings or community-based programs. Some activities may have both educational and therapeutic elements. Additionally, individuals with diverse training backgrounds may incorporate therapeutic principles into educational practices. Clear communication about the goals and intentions of the facilitator is key to managing expectations and ensuring a positive experience for participants.
Working with youth affected by armed conflicts or wars requires a thoughtful approach, and the border between educational activity and art therapy may be fluid, given the unique needs of the population. Here are some considerations for youth workers collaborating with artist professionals in such contexts:

Define Goals and Intentions:
- Clearly outline the goals of the program or intervention. Are you primarily aiming to provide educational content, or is there a therapeutic aspect involved? Understanding the objectives will guide the overall approach.

Assess Individual Needs:
- Recognize the diverse needs of the youth participants. Some may benefit from educational support, while others may require therapeutic interventions. Conduct assessments to identify individual strengths, challenges, and preferences.

Collaborate with Mental Health Professionals:
- In situations involving trauma, collaborate with mental health professionals, such as psychologists or art therapists. Their expertise can help integrate therapeutic elements into the program and provide necessary support for participants dealing with trauma.

Establish Safe Spaces:
- Create a safe and supportive environment where youth feel comfortable expressing themselves. This involves fostering trust, ensuring confidentiality, and promoting open communication.

Balancing Education and Expression:
- Acknowledge that the line between education and therapy may blur. Educational activities can incorporate elements of expression, allowing youth to process emotions through creative outlets. Be flexible in adapting the approach based on the evolving needs of participants.

Sensitivity to Trauma:
- Artist professionals and youth workers should be trained in trauma-informed practices. Understand the potential triggers related to violence and trauma, and approach discussions or activities related to these topics with sensitivity.

Structured Reflection and Processing:
- Integrate structured reflection and processing sessions into the program. These sessions, led by a trained facilitator, can help participants make sense of their experiences and emotions in a supportive setting.

Informed Consent and Boundaries:
- Clearly communicate the purpose of the program and obtain informed consent from participants, particularly when addressing sensitive topics. Establish clear boundaries to ensure the well-being of the participants and maintain ethical standards.

Continuous Professional Development:
- Both youth workers and artist professionals should engage in continuous professional development, staying informed about trauma-informed approaches, cultural sensitivity, and best practices in working with youth affected by armed conflicts.

Cultural Competence:
- Understand the cultural context and nuances of the communities you are working with. Cultural competence is crucial for building trust and ensuring that interventions are respectful and appropriate.

We would like to list a few activities for the youth workers that can be used with children and young people. We particularly focus on the theatre methods considering the background of the author.

Useful Exercises:

Warmup exercises:
Age: 7+ (Can be adapted for all ages and physical possibilities)
Number: More than 2 persons

1. Work your neck. Roll your neck around forward, side to side, backward. Roll it around in one direction, then the other.
2. Shoulders. Shrug your shoulders up, down, then roll them forward and backward.
3. Circle your arms. Swing your arms in a circle in one direction, then the other, then in opposite directions.
4. Stretch your ribs by raising your arms above your head, then leaning to one side, feeling the tension release on your ribcage. Hold for a beat, then return to the upright position and lean to the other side.
5. Breathwork. Assume an erect posture, and inhale deeply and slowly through your nose. Exhale slowly and deliberately through your mouth. Repeat a few times to slow your heart rate down and relax.
6. Bend forward at the waist, dropping your head, with arms extended down, holding for 10. Then come back up all the way into a slight backward bend, holding for another 10 seconds. Repeat a few times until you feel your posture has improved.
7. Shake everything out. Start shaking your hands, then your arms, then your entire body to release any lingering tension.

Acting Games and Warm-Up Techniques to warm participants emotions, feelings and body.

Body Warm-Up

Age: All ages
Number: More than 2 persons

Aim: This game will focus your energy while also getting you moving.
Description: Energy Ball. Face a wall. Imagine that you're holding an invisible ball with both hands in front of you. Now imagine that you're gathering energy into the ball, feeling it throb and pulse as the energy grows. The energy becomes so intense you have to throw the ball against the wall. As the ball bounces back, lean in to catch it. Pitch it back forcefully.
Materials: No any
Source *© MasterClass*

Reflection

Age:All ages
Number: 2 persons.

Aim: This game will focus to strengthen of concentration
Description: Face your partner and try to get inside their head. Observe their movements closely. As they move, mirror their movements and facial

expressions as exactly as you can in real time. Mirror their facial expressions.
Materials: No any
Source *© MasterClass*

Theme Song

Age: All ages
Number: 2 persons

Aim: Character Warm Up
Description: If you're prepping for a particular character, think of a theme song or music that captures their essence. Put it on while you warm up, playing it over and over again to get yourself into the character's emotional space.
Materials: No any
Source *© MasterClass*

Receive and pass

Age: All ages
Number: More than 2

Aim: Voice Warm Up
Description: Get everyone moving around a space. You make a clicking noise or utter a single word aimed at one of your partners. They must catch it, then pass it audibly to another person while continuing to move. Increase the speed at which the clicks pass from one person to another.
Materials: No any
Source *© MasterClass*

Circle work

Age: All ages
Numbe: This exercise is best done with a team

Aim: Improvisation
Description: This exercise is a good warmup for a group working on a particular production. One stands in a circle. Start in the middle of a line of dialogue from somewhere in the poem or spontanius that contains a cue for one of the other paticipant. That one must play out the rest of the scene from the center of the circle. If the scene contains a cue to another person, that person enters the circle. If not, another person must come up with a new line with a new cue, and the process continues.
Materials: No any
Source *© MasterClass*

Create a story

Age: 10+
Number: This exercise is best done with a team.

Aim: Improvisation
Description: Participants sit in a circle. Facilitator gives them a title for a story. "My Dream" The story is told one word at a time around the circle. Remind them that the story has to make sense. They are building sentences, not throwing in funny words to try and get a laugh. Everyone has to work together to remember where they've been and try to create a cohesive throughout.
Materials: No any
Source *© Theatre Folk*

Family Portrait

Age: 10+
Number: This exercise is best done with a team

Aim: Improvisation
Description: Divide participants into groups. Each group comes up one at a time and is given a title for a picture that revolves around a type of family. "Family of Dentists. Family of Cheerleaders. Family of Lost Librarians." You can even get more specific. "Right after grandma's big announcement" or "The Dentists Convention" or "Cheerleaders Lose the Championship." Groups have ten seconds to form a portrait based on the title. Remind participants to think about the characters involved in the picture and to talk to each other so that there are no repeat characters. They have to tell a story, even though they are frozen in place. A time limit forces participants to work quickly. Count them down and at the end of 10 seconds yell out FREEZE! The end result should be a cohesive picture.
Materials: No any
Source *© Theatre Folk*

Same Circle

Age: All ages
Number: This exercise is best done with a team

Aim: Improvisation
Description: Everyone stands in a circle. Person A makes a small gesture. The person beside them repeats the gesture and so on around the circle. The point of the exercise is to keep the gesture exactly the same. Everyone has to concentrate and pay attention to the gesture. It's not supposed to get bigger, or change hands, or twist. It must be repeated exactly. Harder to do than you think. You can do the same exercise with sounds.
Materials: No any
Source *© Theatre Folk*

“Sadako – The Story of 1000 Cranes”

Workshop program for children
© designed by Aynur Zarrintac

Age: 7+
Number: This exercise is best done with a team
Description: Workshop starts with warm-up exercises. Then the group listened to a short story of little girl Sadako - a Japanese girl who became a victim of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945.

“She was two years of age when the bombs were dropped and was severely irradiated. She survived for another ten years, becoming one of the most widely known hibakusha - a Japanese term meaning “bomb-affected person”. She is remembered through the story of the more than one thousand origami cranes she folded before her death. She died at the age of 12 on October 25, 1955, at the Hiroshima Red Cross Hospital.” What does it mean to make 1000 origami cranes?

It symbolizes honor, good fortune, loyalty, and longevity. These formidable characteristics give the crane such special meaning and why the Japanese believed that anyone with the patience and commitment to fold 1,000 origami cranes would be given good fortune and granted a wish.
Then group discussion starts with children:
-What is peace?
- How do we achieve it?
- What is the color of peace?
- Where do we see it?
Questions can be changed and adapted to related topics.
After this youth worker can use different types of art related to the topic of Sadako and Peace.

Method 1. Make Cranes Origami (Age: 13)
Ask children to choose the color of paper which they like most. To follow the structure of making origami step by step is the best way to use the site ‘Saving Cranes’.
1. Using a square piece of paper, fold the paper in half to form a triangle. If using a piece of paper colored on one side only, begin with the colored side facing up. Unfold the paper and repeat to make the folds seen in the image above.
2. Flip the paper so the colored side is facing down and fold the paper in half forming a rectangle. Unfold the paper and repeat to make the folds seen in the image above.
3. Now fold along all four creases at once to form a square with the open end facing you.
4. Fold two edges in, to form a kite shape on top. Repeat on the other side.
5. Fold the point down and crease above the other two folds. Flip the paper and repeat the fold. Undo the folds you made in steps 4 and 5.
6. Pull the bottom corner (top layer only) up above the top corner. Fold along the creases you made in steps 4 and 5. Repeat on the other side.
7. Fold two edges in to form a kite shape. Repeat on the other side.
8. Fold the top layer (right side) to lay on top of the left side like turning the

page of a book. Flip over and repeat on the other side.
9. Fold up the top layer as far as you can on each side.
10. Fold the top layer (right side) to lay on top of the left side like turning the page of a book. Flip over and repeat on the other side.
11. Fold down the wings.
12. Bend down the head to give the crane a long beak. Pull the wings straight out from the body so that the body inflates.

© https://savingcranes.org/learn/origami-cranes/

Method 2: Storytelling

Certainly, storytelling exercises can be powerful tools for youth affected by armed conflict or displacement. These exercises can provide a safe and creative space for them to express their thoughts and emotions. Here's a storytelling exercise designed for such youth:

Title: "Strength in Stories"
Objective: Encourage self-expression, resilience, and a sense of community among the youth.
Materials needed:
- Paper
- Drawing/coloring materials
- Writing materials (pens, pencils)
- Optional: Digital recording devices for those who prefer audio storytelling

Instructions:
- Introduction (15 minutes):
- Begin by creating a safe and supportive environment. Emphasize that there is no right or wrong way to tell a story.
- Share a brief personal story or example of how storytelling can be a powerful tool for healing and connection.
- Explain that the exercise is a chance for each person to share their unique experiences and perspectives.
- Storytelling Warm-Up (15 minutes):
- Start with a simple icebreaker. Ask each participant to share a positive or neutral story from their life before the conflict or displacement.
- This helps to ease into storytelling and sets a positive tone.
- Guided Reflection (20 minutes):
- Provide prompts for reflection. Ask questions such as:
- What are the strengths and qualities that helped you through challenging times?
- Are there moments of resilience or courage that stand out in your memory?
- How have you or your community supported each other during difficult times?
- Story Creation (30 minutes):
- Encourage participants to create a short story or narrative that reflects their experiences. This could be fictional or based on real events.
- Participants can choose to write, draw, or use a combination of both to tell their stories.

- Emphasize the importance of expressing emotions and finding strength in their narratives.
- Sharing Circle (30 minutes):
- Create a safe and respectful space for participants to share their stories. This can be done in small groups or as a whole group, depending on the size and comfort level of the participants.
- Encourage active listening and provide positive feedback after each story is shared.
- Reflection and Support (15 minutes):
- Facilitate a discussion about the experience. Ask participants how it felt to share their stories and listen to others.
- Offer resources or information about additional support if needed, such as counseling services or community programs.
Remember to approach this exercise with sensitivity and flexibility. Participants may choose not to share their stories, and that choice should be respected. The goal is to empower and provide a platform for expression while fostering a sense of community and support.

Method 3: Shadow Theatre

Group starts to follow the youth worker and draw a figure of the character whom they created. After cutting off the character all figures are attached to the sticks.
For making the shadow theater screen, place a paper box the bottom faces up. Cut a large rectangular opening. Use the thin white paper sheet or parchment paper for the screen, sticking it to the inside of the opening with the tape. Flip over and attach the cover's corners with tape. Place the light inside the box and point it to the screen.
Dividing into two, or three members they meet their characters-heros and create one short play using improvisation. After a short rehearsal, they stand behind the screen and start to perform shadow play.

List of materials:
For box screen:
- Cardboard box
- Thin white paper or parchment paper (baking paper)
- Scissors or paper cutter
- Light source (headlamp, desk lamp, phone`s flashlight)
- Tape
For shadow puppet:
- Cardboard or thick paper
- Craft sticks or straws
- Scissors
- Tape

Creating a shadow theatre exercise for youth affected by armed conflict or war can provide a unique and creative outlet for self-expression. Shadow theatre can be a powerful form of storytelling that allows participants to share their experiences in a symbolic and less direct manner. Here's an exercise you can try:

Title: "Shadows of Resilience"

Objective: Use shadow theatre as a medium for youth to express their feelings, experiences, and hopes in the context of armed conflict.

Materials needed:

- Blank sheets of sturdy paper or cardboard
- Scissors
- Pencils, markers, or other drawing materials
- Small handheld lights or flashlights
- A blank wall or large sheet as a projection surface

Instructions:

- Introduction (15 minutes)
- Begin by discussing the concept of shadow theatre and its use as a storytelling medium. Explain that participants will create shadow scenes representing aspects of their experiences and resilience.
- Reflection and Brainstorming (20 minutes)
- Lead a guided reflection on the themes of resilience, strength, and hope. Ask participants to think about specific moments or symbols that represent these concepts to them.
- Encourage them to jot down or sketch these ideas on paper.
- Scene Creation (40 minutes)
- Distribute the blank sheets of paper or cardboard to each participant.
- Instruct them to create cut-out scenes or figures that represent their chosen themes. These can include symbols, characters, or landscapes.
- Emphasize that simplicity can be effective in shadow theatre, and details can be conveyed through the play of light and shadow.
- Assembling Scenes (20 minutes)
- Have participants arrange their cut-out scenes on the sheets of paper or cardboard.
- Instruct them to consider the positioning of the scenes to create a visually compelling shadow story.
- Rehearsal (30 minutes)
- Provide handheld lights or flashlights to participants.
- Give them time to practice casting shadows on a wall or large sheet, experimenting with the placement of lights and scenes to tell their stories effectively.
- Shadow Play Performance (45 minutes)
- Arrange the performance space with a blank wall or large sheet as a projection surface.
- Invite participants to take turns presenting their shadow plays to the group.
- Encourage them to briefly explain the symbolism behind their scenes before or after their performance.
- Group Reflection (20 minutes)
- Facilitate a group discussion about the experience. Ask participants how creating and sharing their shadow scenes made them feel.
- Discuss the symbolism and themes that emerged during the performances.
- Optional: Documentation and Display (30 minutes)
- Allow participants to document their shadow scenes through photography or video.
- Create a display of the shadow scenes, either physically or digitally, to ser-

ve as a lasting representation of the participants' creativity and resilience. This exercise aims to provide a creative outlet for participants to share their stories in a symbolic and non-confrontational manner. It allows for self-expression while fostering a sense of community through the shared experience of shadow theatre.

Method 4: Mediation

Short structure of Meditation guideline following from 'guided meditation framework':

- Start with a brief discussion to bring participants' focus in one direction.
- When everyone is comfortable, this time, start to guide participants into a meditative state. Start slow, focus on breathing. Establish the rhythm of inhalation and exhalation for participants initially by silently counting to yourself: 4 seconds on the inhalation, 2 seconds at the top of the breath, 4 seconds on the exhalation, and 2 seconds at the bottom of the breath. Next, help participants release tension in their body, specifically in areas where they hold stress & other feelings/emotions. Try to keep guiding in simple ways.
- When everybody's mind and body are relaxed,they can start to use their imagination. Guide them to explore their thoughts and feelings to utilize this fertile state of mind to contemplate and self-reflect.
- For participants, the most impactful moments of a meditation class will always happen in the moments when you are not speaking, when your participants can explore their own thoughts, feelings & emotions without interruption or suggestion.
- After engaging the imagination, inspire them with thought-provoking questions or guided imagery, allowing time for silent self-reflection. Before going silent, say something like, "my voice will be quiet for a bit..." It's important that you say this to make your participants aware that you are intentionally creating the space for them to go within. Otherwise, they may be waiting for your next instruction rather than using their imagination to contemplate & explore.
- After a sufficient amount of silent reflection time has passed, gently reintroduce your voice by saying something like, "And slowly, coming back to the sound of my voice." This is a great time to ask participants to take something with them from the experience. It can be in the form of a realization or a simple recognition of a feeling.
- Then, bring your participants through a progressive re-engagement with their body. Starting at the feet, having them wiggle their toes & roll their ankles, slowly working the way up their body & torso, possibly asking them to stretch, etc. The idea is that you want to slowly bring them back into their body & transition them out of a meditative state and into a state of waking consciousness so the end of the meditation does not abruptly jolt them out of a deep state of relaxation, which can actually be harmful.
- Finally, ask participants to open their eyes. Offer them to acknowledge the experience they had and solidify any insights into their memory. If possible, have them write for a few minutes in a journal, about anything.

Title: "Journey of Strength"

Objective: Facilitate a drama exercise that encourages collaboration, empathy, and the exploration of personal and collective strengths.

Materials needed:

- Open space for movement
- Markers and large sheets of paper
- Small props or costume items (optional)

Instructions:

- Warm-up (15 minutes):
- Begin with a physical warm-up to help participants relax and focus. Include stretching, breathing exercises, and simple movement activities.
- Encourage participants to express themselves physically, letting go of tension.
- Introduction to the Theme (15 minutes):
- Discuss the concept of personal and collective strength. Ask participants to reflect on times when they felt strong, resilient, or supported by others.
- Share a brief inspirational story related to resilience to set a positive tone.
- Story Circle (20 minutes):
- Form a circle and invite each participant to share a brief personal story of strength or resilience. Emphasize that they can choose the level of detail they feel comfortable sharing.
- Encourage active listening and supportive responses from the group.
- Collective Story Sculpture (40 minutes):
- Explain that the group will collectively create a "living sculpture" representing the journey of strength. Each participant will contribute a frozen pose or movement that symbolizes an aspect of resilience or personal strength.
- Start with one participant in the center, establishing a pose that represents the beginning of the journey. Others gradually join, adding their poses to create a dynamic and interconnected sculpture.
- Encourage participants to use their bodies, facial expressions, and gestures to convey emotions and experiences.
- Improvisational Scenes (30 minutes):
- Divide the group into smaller teams and provide each team with a prompt related to resilience or strength.
- Teams have a short time to create and perform a brief improvisational scene based on their prompt. Encourage creativity and collaboration.
- Reflection and Discussion (20 minutes):
- After the performances, gather the participants for a reflection on the experience.
- Discuss common themes that emerged and how the exercise made participants feel.
- Ask if there are insights or realizations about their own strength or the strength of the group.
- Creation of Symbolic Art (30 minutes):
- Provide participants with markers and large sheets of paper.
- Ask them to individually or collaboratively create symbolic artwork representing the collective strength or resilience portrayed in the drama exercise.
- Group Showcase (15 minutes): Allow participants to showcase their artwork and briefly explain the symbolism to the group. This can be a powerful moment of shared accomplishment and reflection.

Remember to approach these activities with sensitivity, allowing participants to choose their level of engagement and respecting their emotional responses. The goal is to provide a supportive space for expression, collaboration, and the exploration of personal and collective strengths.

The body map exercise can be a therapeutic and expressive activity for youth affected by armed conflict and war. This exercise allows participants to visually represent and explore their emotions, memories, and experiences on a life-sized outline of their bodies. Here's a step-by-step guide:

Title: "Mapping Resilience"
Objective: Facilitate a body mapping exercise to help participants express and reflect on their experiences in a visual and symbolic way.
Materials needed:
- Large sheets of paper
- Markers, colored pencils, or crayons
- Tape or adhesive to attach the sheets to the wall
- Scissors
- Magazines or printed images (optional)
- Glue (optional)

Instructions:
- Introduction (15 minutes):
- Begin by creating a safe and supportive environment. Emphasize that this activity is a personal and expressive journey, and participants can choose the depth at which they share their experiences.
- Warm-up and Relaxation (15 minutes):
- Lead a brief relaxation exercise to help participants become more aware of their bodies and feelings. Incorporate deep breathing and gentle stretching.
- Explanation of Body Mapping (15 minutes):
- Discuss the purpose of the body map exercise. Explain that participants will create a visual representation of their experiences, emotions, and strengths by drawing or writing on a life-sized outline of their bodies.
- Body Outline Creation (40 minutes):
- Provide each participant with a large sheet of paper.
- Instruct them to lie down on the paper while a facilitator or a peer traces their outline.
- Encourage participants to be creative in how they position their bodies on the paper, and assure them that they can choose to represent only specific parts or the entire body.
- Symbolic Representation (30 minutes):
- Once the body outlines are created, participants can use markers, colored pencils, or crayons to symbolically represent their emotions, memories, and experiences on their body maps.
- They can use colors, shapes, and symbols to convey different aspects of their journey, such as challenges, strengths, support systems, and aspirations.
- Optional Collage Element (20 minutes):
- Provide magazines or printed images related to positive themes, resilience, and hope.

- Participants can cut out images that resonate with them and incorporate these into their body maps using glue.
- Reflection and Sharing (30 minutes):
- After completing their body maps, give participants an opportunity to reflect on their creations.
- Encourage a voluntary sharing session where participants can discuss their artwork and the symbolism behind their choices. However, emphasize that sharing is optional.
- Display and Closure (15 minutes):
- Tape or attach the completed body maps to the wall in a gallery-style display.
- Have a closing discussion about the experience, focusing on the insights gained and the strength demonstrated through the creative process.

This body map exercise provides a non-verbal and symbolic outlet for participants to express their thoughts and emotions related to their experiences with armed conflict and war. It also allows for individualized expressions of resilience and strength, fostering a sense of empowerment and connection within the group.

Sources:

Masterclass
https://www.masterclass.com/articles/7-acting-warmups-games-and-techniques-for-actors#sK89k81XBlKq3zVMlNrtm
Theatre Folk: https://www.theatrefolk.com/blog/improv-games-for-collaboration/
0.https://kids.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/frym.2017.00006
1.https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/home-garden-safety/use-arts-crafts-materials-safely.html
2.https://www.shamimasworkshop.com/art-and-craft-safety
3.Shelley Klammer: 100 Art Therapy Exercises
https://intuitivecreativity.typepad.com/expressiveartinspirations/100-art-therapy-exercises.html
Positive Psychology: https://positivepsychology.com/expressive-arts-therapy/
Drama games: https://dramaresource.com/drama-games/
1.https://guidedmeditationframework.com/blog/how-to-guide-a-meditation-class
2.https://www.michaelshank.tv/strategic-arts-based-peacebuilding/

Media literacy education

By Weronika Knowska

In regions ravaged by war and armed conflicts, the youth often find themselves ensnared in a web of radicalization and polarization. The intertwining of biased narratives and propaganda, propagated both by those close to them and through media channels, further fuels the flames of hatred and radical bias. The pervasive influence of social media, coupled with news intertwined with hybrid warfare methods, creates information bubbles that imprison the youth within an inescapable "us versus them" narrative. In such challenging circumstances, the imperative for media literacy and online critical thinking education becomes evident. Empowering young individuals with the skills to navigate through distorted narratives, question sources, and discern the nuances of information is crucial for breaking free from the shackles of polarization and fostering a more informed, resilient youth in the face of conflict. In the following chapter we will explore the different parts of media literacy education in the context of working with youth affected by war and armed conflicts.

What is media literacy?

American Association of Media Literacy Educators defines media literacy as: "The ability to **acces, analyze, evaluate, create, and act** using all forms of communication".

How can we explain it to the young people that we are working with?

Imagine you're scrolling through your social media feed, and you come across a news article or a post about a current event. Media literacy, in a nutshell, is like having a superpower that helps you make sense of what you see and read.

Here's what the American Association of Media Literacy Educators is getting at:

Access: It's about being able to find and get information. So, if you're good at accessing media, you know where to look for news or content that interests you.

Analyze: This means looking at the information closely. Is it coming from a reliable source? Does it seem balanced, or is there a specific perspective or bias?

Evaluate: Once you've analyzed the information, you decide if it's trustworthy or not. You're like a detective checking for clues to see if something is accurate and fair.

Create: This part is about you! Media literacy is also about expressing yourself through different forms of communication. It could be writing a blog, creating videos, or even just sharing your thoughts online.

Act: Now, the superhero part! It's not just about understanding media; it's about using that knowledge to make informed decisions or take action. It could be sharing reliable information, standing up against misinformation, or even just being mindful of how media influences your views.

So, being media literate is like having a toolkit for navigating the vast world of information, understanding it, and using that understanding to be an informed and active participant in today's media-driven society.

Is all misleading information the same and necessarily bad?

We identify 3 main types of misleading information:
- Misinformation: Information that is false or misleading, but not created with the intention of causing harm
- Disinformation: Information that is false and deliberately created to harm a person, social group, organization or country.
- Mal-information: Information that is based on reality, used to inflict harm on a person, organization or country

How can we explain it to the young people that we are working with?
Use real life examples:
- Misinformation can be an information shared by mistake, a joke or a satire – not created to cause any harm or inflict hatred. A good example of that can be found on a satire websites such as The Onion or in sketches mocking public figures such as the ones made by the SNL.
- Disinformation is an information that is false and deliberately created to harm a person. You can find a lot of examples of disinformation online on factchecking websites. Here's a Wikipedia list of the factchecking sites in different regions and countries: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_fact-checking_websites

Malinformation is probably the trickiest one of all three to explain as it's an information based on reality, used to inflict harm on a person, group or nation. Usually, a picture or a video from a previous incident is used in a new way to hurt and incite hatred toward particular communities. It might also be a historically manipulated statistic. Examples of this can be found on fact-checking websites; just be sure to look up the original source of the image or figure used to illustrate how the use of malinformation can alter context or perception of the same information.

Give the young people examples of each type of manipulated information, and then give them more examples while they play the game "guess the type of manipulated information." This will allow them to practice the knowledge they have learned using real-world examples, and you can determine whether they understand the different types of manipulated information.

IMPORTANT NOTE FOR FACILITATORS: The goal of incorporating media literacy education into the youthwork for those affected by war and armed conflicts is not to pass judgment on their perspectives regarding specific situations or groups, nor is it intended to highlight biases or, most importantly, expose them to traumatic information about events they have experienced. Instead, the primary objective is to equip them with essential tools for identifying manipulated information and employing critical thinking skills when navigating various news and information sources. In light of this, it is crucial for facilitators to be mindful of the examples used to introduce media literacy concepts. To create a safe and neutral learning environment, examples should avoid focusing on armed conflicts, migrants, or refugees. By maintaining a neutral stance in the examples provided, facilitators can effectively empower young individuals to develop the skills needed to assess and cri-

tically engage with media content without triggering potentially distressing memories or sentiments related to their personal experiences.

ESC Rule for detecting misleading information

ESC (Emotions, Source, Claim) rule is a very simple yet effective method that empowers individuals to engage their critical thinking skills in discerning manipulated information. The ESC rule serves as a valuable guide when navigating the complex landscape of media content, providing a structured approach to evaluati on.

How can we explain it to young people that we're working with?

Emotions: Think about how something you see or read makes you feel. Are they trying to make you really happy, angry, or scared on purpose? That's a big red flag. Sometimes, people use strong emotions to get a reaction, so it's essential to notice if something is trying to play with your feelings.

Source: Consider where the information is coming from. Imagine it's like checking if your favourite online store is legit before buying something. Is the source a reliable place, like a trusted news site or a well-known organization? If it's from an unknown or sketchy source, it might not be trustworthy.

Claim: Look at the main point or idea they're telling you. Does it make sense, or does it sound too crazy to be true? It's like fact-checking your friend's wild story before believing it. If the central idea doesn't match up with what you know, there might be something fishy going on.

So, the ESC rule is like having a checklist in our minds for figuring out if what you're seeing or hearing is reliable. It's all about watching out for sneaky emotions, checking if the source is trustworthy, and making sure the main idea actually makes sense. This way, you can be a smart media detective and not get fooled by misleading information.

How can we practice it?

Give the young people examples of different news – both manipulated and trust-worthy and then give them more examples while they play the game "is it fake?" This will allow them to practice the knowledge they have learned using real-world examples, and you can determine whether they can use the ESC Rule.

Further questions to ask about the purpose and presentation of media

ESC rule is very useful for the first assessment of the news but it's quite limited. Here are some other questions you should ask yourself to think more about the purpose and presentation of the information that you're subjected to:

- What is the main message?
- Who created the message?
- Why was this message made? Who paid for (or is paying for) this message?
- How is the message trying to get your attention?
- Who is represented in the message? And who is missing?

How can we practice it?
Prepare the "case study" examples of the news messages – find online the articles (preferably ones with manipulated content), divide the young people who you're working with into 3/4 person groups, give them an example to work on and let them answer the questions basing on that article. Afterwards let the participants present the effects of their work and discuss them in the plenary with the group.

Why should we talk about the media literacy in the context of conflicts?
You can conclude the media literacy sessions with the youth that you're working with with and open discussion on the topic of why should we talk about the media literacy in the context of conflicts.

Why should we?
Talking about media literacy in the context of conflicts is crucial for a few important reasons:

- Navigate the Information Jungle: In times of conflict, there's a lot of information swirling around, and not all of it is accurate. Media literacy helps you become a savvy explorer in this information jungle. It's like having a treasure map that guides you to trustworthy sources and away from misleading or biased information.
- Protect Yourself from Manipulation: Sometimes, people try to manipulate information to make you think a certain way or feel a certain emotion. Media literacy is your superhero power to recognize when someone is trying to play tricks with the information. It helps you see through the smoke and mirrors, making you less likely to be fooled or influenced by misinformation.
- Understand Different Perspectives: Conflicts often involve different sides with their own stories. Media literacy is like putting on special glasses that allow you to see things from various perspectives. It helps you understand different points of view, promoting empathy and preventing you from getting stuck in a one-sided view of the situation.
- Be an Active, Informed Citizen: In the midst of conflicts, it's essential to be an active and informed citizen. Media literacy empowers you to engage with the world critically. You can share accurate information, ask important questions, and contribute to discussions in a meaningful way. It's about being part of the solution rather than just a passive observer.
- Protect Your Mental Well-being: Conflicts can be emotionally charged, and media literacy acts as a shield for your mental well-being. It helps you filter out content that might be distressing or harmful, allowing you to engage with information in a way that doesn't negatively impact your mental health.

The Assessment Process and the Risk Matrix

By Weronika Knowska and Giulia Stefanelli

.In contexts of armed conflict, young people, especially minors, constitute a particularly vulnerable group for which organisations need to equip themselves with risk assessment tools. When planning or having to revise from a child protection perspective a program or project activity, a Risk Assessment should be conducted (Risk Assessment) inherent to the protection of children from the risk of abuse or exploitation, in order to identify the most appropriate measures to mitigate and manage any identified risks.

Below is an example of a basic Risk Assessment. It involves an analysis of the activities project according to a few key points/questions that allow for the compilation of a Matrix of Risk inclusive of management actions and indications of responsibilities to manage and monitor the identified risks.

THE RISK ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Step 1- Identify child protection risks.

Different approaches typically used to identify risks include: checklists to be verified, assessments and judgments based on experience, intuition, and systems and situation analysis.

The key questions that need to be answered to enter into this first and most general Risk Assessment are:

- What are the practical details of the project (e.g., of the design actions in the different cities) in light of the key risk factors?
- What could go wrong/happen wrong?
- How likely is it?
- What might be the consequences?
- What should be done to minimize the risks? Who needs to do this?
- How do we monitor this process?

When we evaluate design actions or programs to make sure that they are safe for the the girls, children and adolescents they target and so that the children we work for are protected from any type of abuse or exploitation as established by the Child Safeguarding Policy (CSP), we keep in mind “at least” seven specific risk factors, articulated according to certain aspects of which examples are given.

The model is borrowed from the standards promoted by https://www.keepingchildrensafe.global/international-child-safeguarding-standards/, which we suggest you consult for more details.

RISK FACTORS	ASPECTS OF RISK, EXAMPLES
AGE/VULNERABILITY OF THE CHILD	-very young children -low level of schooling -orphaned or abandoned children -children with disabilities -children who have already been abused or exploited sexually -lack of parental supervision -children who have been dislocated from their community/context
PLACE/PROCEDURES	-isolated areas -disaster areas in war or civil unrest -crowded areas -refugee camps -projects placed far from the community or in isolated places -caregivers who visit children's homes -physical hazards present in the environment (e.g. lack of water, traffic, etc.)
ACTIVITIES	-working in direct contact with children activities carried out "one to one" -expected physical contact -tasks to provide personal hygiene -use of volunteers
STAFF	-operators not properly vetted (e.g.interviews, criminal records, and references) -quick recruitment to respond to an emergency -inadequate supervision by a manager -operators not aware of and trained on CSP -not signing the code of conduct.
SUPERVISION (by a responsible)	-operators work without supervision by a supervisor -volunteers not supervised by operators (staff) -lack of formal supervision -lack of accountability or transparency in practices -nonexistent or informal supervision (e.g., visitors who may attend the project while activities with children that are not supervised by staff)
ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE	-organization closed or unaware of the rights of child protection -low level of adherence to issues of child protection by managers or staff -no promotion of protection measures or key messages -presence of a culture of "not raising concerns" or of "not reporting inappropriate staff behavior"
LOCAL RISK FACTORS	-deficiency in the enforcement of laws for the protection or punishment of child abuse -deficiencies in child welfare services -territory where there are organizations criminals impacting children and the community -trafficking for sexual exploitation -child labor

The presence or detection of one or more of these factors should lead to verifying, for eachindividual project action, the likelihood that children may be abused, understand which ones and by whom and identify actions to mitigate or nullify that risk.

Step 2– CONSIDER THE PROBABILITY THAT THE RISK WILL CONCRETE.
Within the Matrix, a number (from 5 to 1) will be assigned to indicate how much we consider it likely that the identified area of risk will occur, according to the following scale:

5- practically certain (expected to happen in almost all circumstances)
4- likely (will probably happen in many circumstances)
3- possible (might happen sometimes)
2- unlikely (not expected to happen)
1- rare (expected to happen only in exceptional circumstances)
Assigning a score is useful in setting priorities or urgency of actions: in organizing measures to reduce/cancel risks, we will start with those that are most likely to materialize (4 or 5) but we will also consider those for which the possible consequences are severe.

Consider then the consequences of the risk:
They are equally important as the probability of that risk factor being present/occurring. occurrence. They are defined according to the following scale: 5-serious, 4-large, 3-moderate, 2-minor, 1-nearly none.
For example, it might be unlikely (2) that a potential operator has a history of suspicious or abusive behavior toward minors: nevertheless, the consequences of hiring a person to work in a community of vulnerable individuals would be severe

Step 3– STRATEGIES FOR MINIMIZING RISKS.
We will then try to outline what strategies or actions we can put in place to minimize the risks identified. Some examples of possible interventions to mitigate risks are:
- Monitor and evaluate (when risk is low)
- Avoiding activities (when risk too high)
- Modifying policies or procedures or plans to reduce the possibility of harm
- Transfer the activity to another organization or form partnerships
- Continue the project and accept the risk of something happening
- Other:.....

When defining strategies to mitigate risks, it is also necessary to indicate: how it will be done, who will do it, how it will be monitored 2.

Step 4– RISK MONITORING.
The risk assessment and management process inherent in Child Protection should be precisely a process, continuous over time. Monitoring risk is also an essential in the revision of the Safeguarding Policy and Guidelines. In filling out the Matrix of Risk below, it is necessary to indicate how, when, and responsibilities/roles in the monitoring.

- Are the previously identified risks still present?
- Have they been reduced, controlled, managed by the strategies put in place?
- Are there new types of risks?
- What new strategies are needed to reduce, eliminate, or control risks emerging?

THE RISK MATRIX

To facilitate the Risk Assessment process we use a descriptive matrix that should be compiled with the above points in mind. The matrix serves to indicate and summarize in an immediate specific project risks detected in individual contexts/locations.
The matrix will require the person completing it to summarize the context, an analysis of the individual risk, the likelihood of occurrence, and the actions to be put in place to mitigate that risk. This is for each project activity for which a probability of risk inherent in the protection of minors.
Below is an example of a matrix compiled for the annual review of program activities (Save the Children Australia, 2010)

FOR EACH ACTIVITY UPDATE OR INITIATION RISK MATRIX

Key activity	Areas of risk	Posibility ocurring (level)	Migration of risk
Project	**Name:**		

The contexts of armed conflict is war can be fertile for human trafficking phenomena, although youth workers are not social workers it is important to activate at least some forms of primary screening to identify risk situations to be then reported to professionals and competent authorities. Here are some elements that can guide observation.

Article 3 of the Additional Protocol on Trafficking defines trafficking as follows: **"Trafficking in persons"** means the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the use or threat of the use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability, by giving or receiving sums of money or benefits in order to obtain the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation includes, at a minimum, the exploitation of prostitution or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.

The identification of trafficked persons is based on an understanding of general elements that may emerge from an interview with the social worker or in further circumstances.
The identification of a trafficked person is crucial in order to ensure adequate protection and assistance to the victim, as it constitutes the first step in giving the person the opportunity to get out of the position of subjection in which he/she finds him/herself.

After the preliminary identification, of course, follows a formal identification carried out by qualified and authorised persons following a referral from the social organisation, the operator, etc.

INITIAL SCREENING (PRELIMINARY IDENTIFICATION)

- First facing (person's profile, gender, age, origin, physical signs, person's attitude, sexual orientation)
- Background (family, economic situation)
- Woman or minor travelling alone
- Vulnerable person accompanied by someone they do not know or with whom they do not have a clear relationship
- Presence of a benefactor at departure
- Route presenting typical characteristics of routes used by criminal organisations
- Poor knowledge of the journey
- Passage from 'host' to 'host person
- Experiences of exploitation
- Failure to pay for the journey
- Withdrawal of identity documents in the country of transit or destination
- Many past abortions
- Closure towards the operator
- Distrust and refusal of medical assistance
- Homelessness
- No fixed abode, hospitality with acquaintances
- Irregular presence in the hosting country for a long time
- No knowledge of the local language despite being in the territory
- Physical signs
- Excessive tiredness and physical discomfort
- Abnormal daily schedule (goes out very late at night)
- Anxious attitude
- Declares not having a SIM card in his phone or not having a phone
- Poor freedom of movement in the area
- Flashy, new clothing and accessories despite claiming not to work

The role of the youth worker during the hypothetical preliminary identification is the observation of factors: in addition to those mentioned above, there are also very useful details for the recognition of potential victims such as:

- Fear, anxiety, lack of trust, fear of the police;
- Lack of clarity both in the account of the journey and in personal information;
- The victim allows others to speak for her;
- Spends a lot of time on the phone;
- Has tattoos, branding or other symbols that recall the concept of 'belonging';
NB. The operator's special attention should initially be paid to non-verbal communication, physical signs, and the person's attitude.

A trafficked person may be physically very closed, often keeps a low gaze, never looks the interlocutor in the face, isolates him/herself from the group

(unless it is a group of people who speak the same dialect as him/her and could potentially be a group of victims).
Every situation is different, but the role of the youth worker is to control the imagination, which 'can create many tricks'. Sometimes we get informed, study certain issues and risk factors related to phenomena in the field we work and get so focused on them that we no longer see situations as they really are.

Sometimes some people who may appear to be victims are not.

The operator therefore has to find the objectivity of the situation without forcing a hypothetical victim and without creating risk or identification factors that do not exist.

In the case of a possible victim, it is important to distance him/her (even with an excuse), if present, from the neighbouring person who could hypothetically be the exploiter. (Often they may present themselves as a family member, husband, close family friend)

HOW TO IDENTIFY THE 'UNSAFE' PERSON AT THE VICTIM'S SIDE?
(if present)
- speaks in the victim's place
- possesses the victim's material possessions (money, telephone, documents)
- does not know the victim's personal details (date of birth, passions, childhood details, ambitions)
- if he/she approaches the victim, the latter has an attitude of 'fear', distancing

It is necessary to remove this person in order to find an appropriate and safe space to conduct an interview with the potential victim.
Adequate space ensures confidentiality.
NB. Some trafficking victims, especially young women, may not be able to recognise the traumatic experiences they have undergone. In addition, they may not trust the facilitator because they see him/her as akin to an authoritarian force.
One way to create a safe space is to provide a female worker and mediator in the case of a female victim and to inquire about the culture, religion of the country of origin.

SERENE ENVIRONMENT:

- tolerant attitudes
- non-judgement
- respect for the person's suffering and time
- not concentrating everything in one interview

Not concentrating everything in one interview allows the practitioner to observe the victim in even everyday moments.

It is very important to give the victim useful information, even if there is no

confirmation from the victim. Inform a possible victim about the possibilities he/she may have, the services, the professionals who may intervene.

We have discussed at length in the chapter risk prevention and response concerning the target group of our project, but we can also construct a risk analysis matrix for project activities and operators.
We propose here a Risk Assessment and Management Tool developed by Save the Children, we chose this tool because we found it to have elements of affinity with youth work and because Civico Zero, a Save the Children project in Turin, Italy was one of the contexts in which we developed the local experimentation of the project contents.

The SRM tool is used to identify risks (B-J); identify mitigation measures (K-O); identify contingency measures, i.e. which strategies to activate when the risky situation occurs (P)
The template consists of 6 fields and should be filled in if possible in the context of team discussions every 3 months or if there are substantial changes in the working environment:

1) Risk assessment in which the risk and context are qualitatively described

Risk Assessment	
Type of Risk	***Situation analysis***
Example: Attacks/threats	

2) Specific assessment of individual projects and programmes against the specific risk. What are the vulnerabilities of the individual programme with respect to the specific risk and what are the strengths and possible mitigations of the risk presented by the programme.

	Analysis of vulnerability	
Programe Assessment	***Vulnerabillity***	***Strenghs/mitigations***

3) The objective of the risk analysis is to give a quantitative and numerical value from 1 to 5 to the impact of the risk on the project if it materialises and the probability of it materialising. The risk is given by the relationship between these two elements.

Risk Amalysis

Impact	*Probabilities*	*Risk*
3	*3*	

4) The risk mitigation strategies column requires a qualitative description of the strategies to prevent the risk from occurring.

Mitigation

Proposed strategies

5) In the residual risk, it is required to quantify again the risk, at this point residual, after application of the mitigation strategies.

Residual risk

Impact	*Probabilities*	*Risk*
3		

6) Contingency strategies are those that are applied in the event of a risk occurring in order to mitigate its negative impact on the programme.

Contingency

Proposed Strategies

References

"Identificazione delle vittime di tratta tra i richiedenti protezione internazionale e procedure di referral"
"Manuale formativo sulla tratta di esseri umani per operatori e operatrici di centri di accoglienza per persone migranti, richiedenti asilo e rifugiate"
"Piano nazionale d'azione contro la tratta e il grave sfruttamento 2022-2025"

Security Risk Assessment & Management (SRM) tool, Simona Mortolini, Operations Quality, Innovation and Support Lead, Safety and Security focal point, Save the Children Italia

Youth Advocacy and Youth Participation in War Affected Contexts with young people coming from War Affected Contexts

By Erion Krasniqi

Introduction

Advocacy is the embodiment of action, driven by the passionate commitment to support, recommend, or implement actions aligned with causes that resonate deeply within us. It is the assertion of our right to have a voice in decisions that impact our lives, regardless of age or status. When we advocate for a cause, we stand as vigilant guardians of our rights, holding those in authority accountable to ensure the preservation and fulfillment of our fundamental entitlements.

It is crucial to recognize that advocacy is not about seeking favors or handouts; rather, it is about making our voices resound, particularly on behalf of the most vulnerable segments of society. Through advocacy, we harness the collective strength of youth to defend rights, champion initiatives, and galvanize change. It is a potent tool capable of shaping policies, programs, behaviors, institutions, and investments, driving transformative shifts in society.

While the spotlight often shines on large-scale advocacy movements, such as #FeesMustFall, #FridaysForFuture, and #BlackLivesMatter, it's essential to understand that advocacy encompasses a spectrum of actions, both grand and subtle. From the sweeping momentum of global movements to the quiet resolve of individual gestures, advocacy manifests in myriad forms. It can be as simple as intervening to prevent bullying, disseminating health information to promote well-being, or expressing ideas through blogs and personal narratives. Additionally, advocacy extends to effecting legislative change through organized demonstrations and rallies, amplifying voices to catalyze societal progress.

("UNICEF youth advocacy guide")

We start from the knowledge that all social, political, cultural changes have been driven by young people within society. In his texts on conflict analysis Lederach speaks of young people as potentials for peace. Potential because they are a social group that can generate positive changes and have greater motivation to seek and pursue them, also because it is precisely the young people who are the main victims of peace.because it is precisely young people who are the main victims of direct, cultural and systemic violence.Being potential means that society and those who work with young people must activate pathways that allow this potential to be expressed. Fundamental is not use a paternalistic lens and an adult-centred view that focuses on alleged shortcomings, from an adult point of view, of young people, and not on their abilities.

In the study published in 2021 by the Youth Partnership between the European Union and the Council of Europe in the field of youth entitled 'Meaningful Youth Political Participation' were new trends in youth political participation were analysed. Specifically speaks of 'individualised political participation', a form of participation that has developed hand in hand, according to Bennett (2012), with social fragmentation and the decline of group memberships, giving of group memberships, giving way to a form of participation based on individual expressions and choices that lead to collective actions capable of contributing to political causes. This could be defined as the 'politicisation of individual choices'.

Today's wars and armed conflicts, characterised in most contexts by a geopardization of experiences, push this individualisation of choices to the extreme: some young people choose to join the army or armed groups, even irregular ones, some flee within or outside the country, some become involved in civil society, some try to survive and maintain their own standard and habits of living, almost ignoring the war, some take a strong stand against the war or find themselves questioning their own identity, many experience strong psychological traumas that take the form of social withdrawal, apathy, depression and in some cases actual psychiatric illnesses. In this context, it is very difficult to animate and support the construction of youth movements that place the rights of young people at the centre and that see young people as protagonists in the construction of societies that are resilient to organised violence.

But why promote youth participation?

1. The Convention on the Rights of the Child first and foremost establishes the right to participate in matters that directly affect them because the right to participate is
relevant to the exercise of other rights.
2. Participation enables young people to promote change around themselves, a power sharing and the inclusion of young people in decision-making processes.
3. Young people are the most experienced with regard to the challenges that affect them personally , their involvement enables an analysis of needs and the structuring of
more efficient solutions.
4. Because it provides a concrete experience in which to develop skills personal and professional skills.

Lundy's participation model describes 4 central needs for young people tobe involved in participation processes:

- the need for Space: young people need safe spaces and inclusive opportunities.
- the need to have one's voice heard; to support the ability to express one's opinions and to argue them; value the opinions of young people and ensure that they can
be accompanied by territorial and needs analyses;
- the need to have an audience: the opinions of young people must be communicated through effective and horizontal channels to those who have the responsibility and duty to listen to them but also to public opinion so that young people are no longer stigmatised
as a social group;
- the need to have an influence: firstly on one's own life and then on the reality that surrounds us by directly influencing decision-making processes or by helping to construct
solutions in response to problems that young people themselves identify.

There is no hierarchy of forms of youth participation, all can be constructive and purposeful as long as one takes into account a) the tendency towards individualised political participation, b) the specific purpose for which it is to be promote it, c) the environment of political participation that one intends to develop, d) which young people it is intended to involve in participatory processes:
- The participation of young people is directly proportional to the accessibility of the processes, related to the level of commitment required and the perceived effectiveness of the actions carried out.

In light of these elements, therefore, the first big question is: How can participation processes be made accessible for young people?
Can we activate pathways that are intersectional and that take into account the multiple identities of young people in the area, that give movements and paths of participation that are aware of the intersections between environmental justicel, social, gender equality and the fight against all forms of discrimination and keep these topics as priorities also in TIME OF WAR and for young people coming from war contexts.

Intersectionality must guide the choice of places in which to start processes, the languages used, the valorisation of different tools while trying to build new solidarity on the 'peer' dimension of being equally young.

But again, why promote the active participation of young people in war, armed conflict and post-conflict contexts and why promote the active participation of young people from these types of contexts?

The UN Secretary-General highlighted, in his 2012 report on "Peacebuilding in the Aftermath of Conflict", that, "a successful peacebuilding process must be transformative and create space for a wider set of actors — including, but not limited to, representatives of women, young people, victims and marginalized communities; community and religious leaders; civil society actors; and refugees and internally displaced persons — to participate in public decision-making on all aspects of post-conflict governance and recovery".
Youth involvement is therefore a central element in a successful peacebuilding process. In the literature of the last 20 years, there are at least 4 approaches in terms of policies that have been promoted to promote youth participation in peacebuilding processes:
(1) A human rights-based approach, grounded in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the World Programme of Action on Youth;
(2) An economic approach that identifies young people as central to the economic development of their country, and promote their access to economic opportunities as essential for their own development;
(3) A socio-political approach that connects young people to civil society and the political arena, and provides them with opportunities, training and support for their active engagement and participation in public life; and
(4) A socio-cultural approach that analyses the roles of young people in existing structures and supports dialogue, including an intergenerational dialogue, about these structures.
There is now a consensus in the literature that none of these approaches

can be used exclusively but that all 4 approaches must be intertwined and presented in a complementary manner and strongly linked to the local context. It therefore becomes a priority to develop policies in these four areas together with the youth population, with its strong and active involvement, so that the proposed policies are effective and respond to local needs. Without forgetting other principles mentioned in this publication such as 'do no harm' which requires awareness and active avoidance of the negative consequences that interventions may inadvertently create.
There are several reasons why youth participation in peacebuilding processes must be prioritised:

-The first one is demographic: It is estimated that 408 million youth (or 23% of the global population aged 15-29) live in a context affected by armed conflict or organised violence,10 which means that 1 out of 4 young persons are influenced daily by wars or armed conflicts in some way.11 Millions of these youngsters are displaced, most of them in neighbouring countries where they remain vulnerable. And over 900 peace agreements have been signed globally in the last two decades, through negotiations in which the voices of young generations have been largely absent..
- The second is related to the prejudices surrounding the new generations, seen as perpetrators of violence, victims or citizens of the future but not really as active participants in the present of society;
- The third is linked to the under-representation of young people in representative institutions, around 2% of the world's elected representatives are under 30 years of age, so it becomes a priority to build alternative paths of participation in civil society and youth work can play a central role in these empowerment processes.

Understanding Advocacy

Youth participation serves as a vast umbrella, encompassing diverse avenues of engagement. While all forms of advocacy undertaken by young people fall under the umbrella of youth participation, not every instance of youth participation qualifies as advocacy. To demystify this distinction, let's delve deeper.

Youth participation can manifest in two primary forms: active and passive engagement. Active participation denotes a proactive stance, where individuals are actively involved or prepared to engage. Conversely, passive participation entails a willingness to remain spectators, accepting events without intervention or influence.
For instance, passive participation might entail merely listening to a speaker at an event without intending to take action or effect change. On the other hand, active participation involves conducting research, identifying actionable steps, and raising awareness with the aim of instigating behavioral change in others.

Both modes of participation hold relevance in various contexts. There are instances where passive involvement may be appropriate, while in other scenarios, active engagement becomes imperative. Recognizing the distinction between the two and discerning their applicability to individual circumstan-

ces is essential for effective advocacy. It empowers advocates to strategize their approach, engage others, and negotiate with decision-makers adeptly.

("UNICEF youth advocacy guide")

Now, let's further delineate the terms advocacy, lobbying, and campaigning, which although interconnected, represent distinct facets of the advocacy landscape:

Advocacy encompasses a broad spectrum of actions and initiatives undertaken by civil society, businesses, or other stakeholders to influence decision-makers regarding the development, amendment, and implementation of policies. These decisions span political, economic, and social realms, ranging from advocating for budget allocations to effecting legislative changes or policy initiatives.

Lobbying, often used interchangeably with advocacy, carries a specific connotation related to actions primarily undertaken by private sector stakeholders, such as businesses or trade associations. While lobbying involves advocating for specific interests, it can also encompass direct engagement with politicians and decision-makers to influence policy outcomes.

Campaigning, distinct from advocacy and lobbying, revolves around mobilizing public support, raising awareness, and organizing communities to effect change. It entails a coordinated series of activities aimed at galvanizing widespread participation and fostering public mobilization toward a common cause or objective.

Understanding the nuances of these terms equips advocates with the knowledge necessary to navigate the advocacy landscape effectively. It enables strategic planning, fosters collaboration across diverse sectors, and facilitates meaningful engagement with decision-makers and stakeholders. (3) ("Advocacy handbook")

Importance of Advocacy

For young people, advocacy is not just a tool for change; it is a transformative force that empowers them to shape their futures, influence decision-making processes, and champion causes that resonate with their values and aspirations. Here's why advocacy holds particular importance for the youth:

- Empowerment: Advocacy empowers young people to reclaim their agency and assert their voices in matters that directly affect their lives. By engaging in advocacy efforts, young people gain the confidence, skills, and knowledge needed to navigate complex societal challenges, fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility for their communities and futures.
- Education and Awareness: Through advocacy, young people gain a deeper understanding of pressing social, environmental, and political issues, fostering critical thinking, empathy, and civic engagement. By raising awareness and initiating dialogue around these issues, young advocates become catalysts for social change, igniting conversations and mobilizing peers to take action.
- Representation and Inclusion: Advocacy amplifies the voices of young people, ensuring that their perspectives, concerns, and experiences are heard and valued in decision-making processes. By advocating for youth-centered policies and initiatives, young people contribute to building more inclusive and equitable societies, where every voice is recognized and respected.
- Leadership Development: Engaging in advocacy cultivates leadership skills,

resilience, and adaptability among young people, preparing them to become effective agents of change in their communities and beyond. By taking on roles as advocates, organizers, and spokespersons, young people hone their communication, negotiation, and problem-solving abilities, laying the groundwork for future leadership roles.
- Social Impact: Youth-led advocacy initiatives have the power to drive meaningful social change and address systemic inequities, from advocating for educational reform to fighting against climate change and environmental degradation. By mobilizing peers, allies, and stakeholders, young advocates can effect tangible improvements in their communities, leaving a lasting legacy of positive change.
- Intergenerational Dialogue: Advocacy creates opportunities for intergenerational dialogue and collaboration, fostering mentorship, mutual learning, and solidarity between young people and older generations. By bridging generational divides and leveraging the wisdom and experience of elders, young advocates can build coalitions and alliances that amplify their impact and drive sustainable change.
- Building a Better Future: Ultimately, advocacy equips young people with the tools, resources, and resilience needed to build a better future for themselves and future generations. By advocating for progressive policies, social justice, and sustainable development, young people contribute to creating a world that is more just, equitable, and inclusive for all.
In summary, advocacy holds profound importance for young people, offering them a pathway to empowerment, education, representation, and social impact. By harnessing the power of advocacy, young people can become catalysts for positive change, driving transformative shifts in society and shaping a brighter future for themselves and generations to come.

Step-by-Step Advocacy Planning

Before you can start any advocacy process, you need to start with yourself. Think a little bit about what you want to do and why. Also think about what you bring to the discussion and where you might be able to make a difference. Remember that advocacy is not always immediate and sometimes your efforts need to continue long-term. It is also important to identify areas that you need to develop and become better at. Advocacy is a constant process of learning and understanding. Reflecting on these areas will also help you identify other people you need to work with. Some of the main roles of people involved in the advocacy process include researchers, speakers, writers or implementers.

Researcher Research is all about investigation, finding out why things are a certain way, how they came to be that way, and how they might be able to change. Speaker Speaking with people is a powerful way to share ideas. Good speakers connect with their audience and can inspire people to take action in different ways. Writer Good writing connects things – ideas, concepts, realities – and helps to tell a story that people can connect to. Implementer An implementer likes to get things done, be involved in activities and get their hands dirty. They have an important role to play throughout the advocacy process, helping to move activities along in a systematic way

Advocacy has a place for everyone. Each individual brings a unique set of skills and abilities that play a role in the process. This is why teamwork is so important. You can gather a group of people who collectively provide all the skills and abilities needed to effectively achieve your advocacy goals. The advocacy process includes fact-finding, planning, engaging with policy, building momentum and making individual lifestyle choices. In some ways, these components are linear – you gather information and become knowledgeable before you develop a plan. In other ways they are circular – the more you engage with policy, the more you may identify activities to include in your plan or issues you need to research further.(4)

Step-by-Step Advocacy Planning

"Enough is enough! Something needs to change!" As a youth organisation activist this is a feeling you probably encounter on a daily basis. It is a necessary one. It is the feeling that will channel your energy towards change and fuel the fight for your cause! This feeling is at the very foundation of all advocacy processes. But once the anger triggered by an unjust situation or a violated right has passed, questions start to come:
How do I prove the current situation is bad?
How can I change this situation?
What does the ideal situation look like?
What is the current situation?
What solutions can I bring forward?
Am I the only one thinking there is a problem?
Who has the power to change the situation?
What do I do to get their attention and convince them to act?
How do I make my point of view heard in society?
How can I see if I actually triggered change?

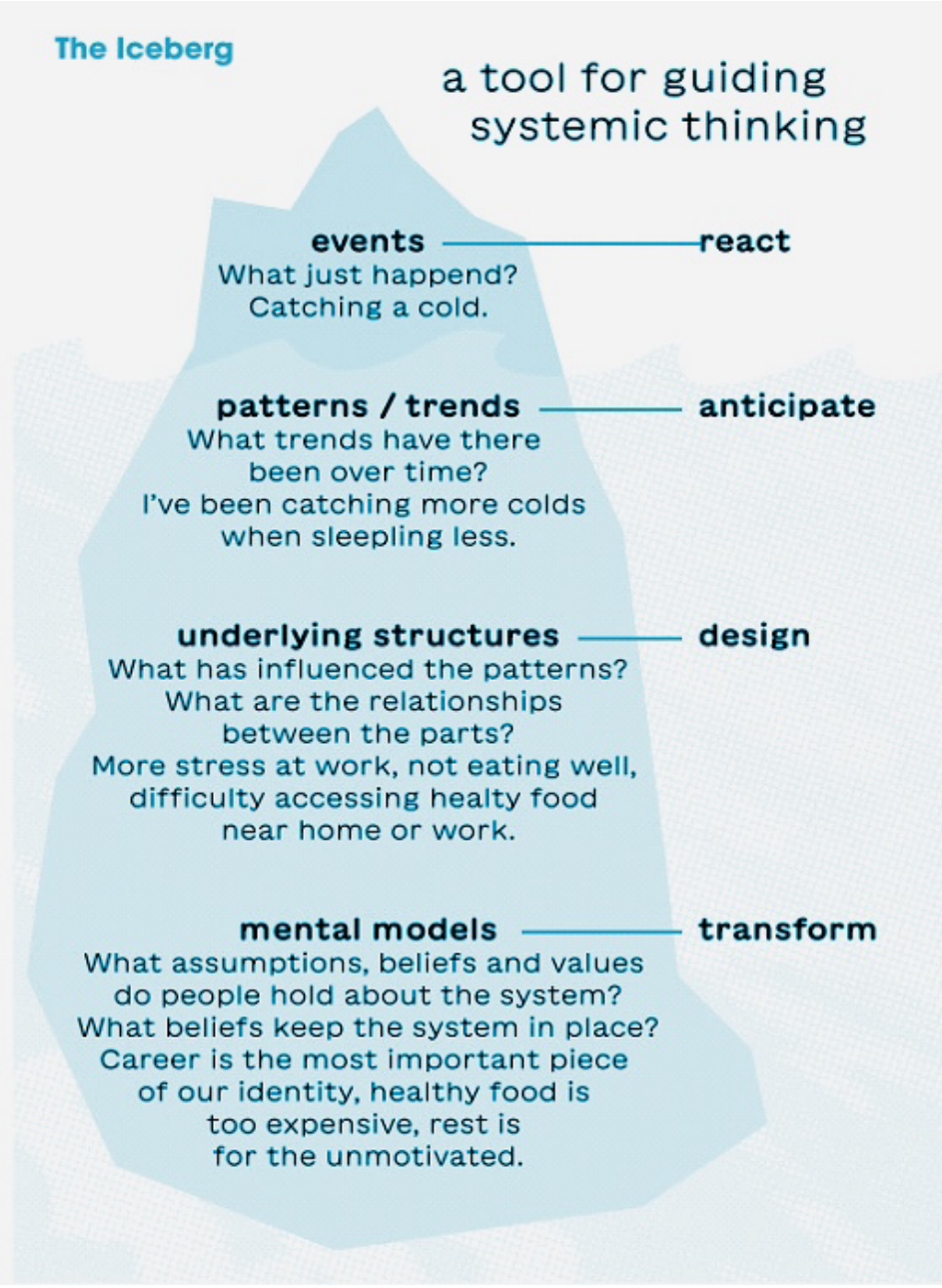
A full advocacy process consists of answering all these questions in a structured way. This is so you and your organisation can plan and implement a series of actions that will lead to a positive change for young people at the political and societal levels

1. Define your vision and your goals - what needs to change?
2. From problems to solutions - models, models and more models!
3. Do your research -facts and data.
4. Map your ecosystem - stakeholder power mapping.
5. Craft your message - framing, storytelling and narratives.
6. Get your message out there - working with the media.
7. Build, engage and activate your community - power to the people!
8. Plan your actions.
9. Monitor and evaluate - measure the change you created.
10. Upgrade your skills - competences for advocates.

Define your vision and your goals – what needs to change?

Your organisation may have a very clear vision and mission, maybe you are fighting for a change that is very concrete and well-defined. If this is the case you are lucky and you can probably skip the first step. But most often, you will find it difficult to pin down exactly what is wrong, what needs to chan-

ge: it might at first be a vague feeling that something is wrong or it could be the accumulation of unacceptable individual situations. This first step is very much about putting your thoughts together in a structured way about the problem at hand. Answering some standard questions can be very useful: · What is the problem you want to tackle? · Why is it a problem? · Is what I am seeing the actual problem or the symptom of another underlying problem? · What is causing the problem? What are the underlying structures and belief systems that support this dysfunctional state? · Who are the individuals or groups affected by the problem? · What would the ideal situation look like for these individuals or groups? From this very first layer of reflection, you can already draw a big picture vision of the change you want to achieve. Try to describe in one sentence the change that your advocacy actions should lead to. 12/68 In order to remain at the level of the big picture but also to structure your thoughts a bit more, you can use the iceberg model From problems to solutions - models, models and more models!



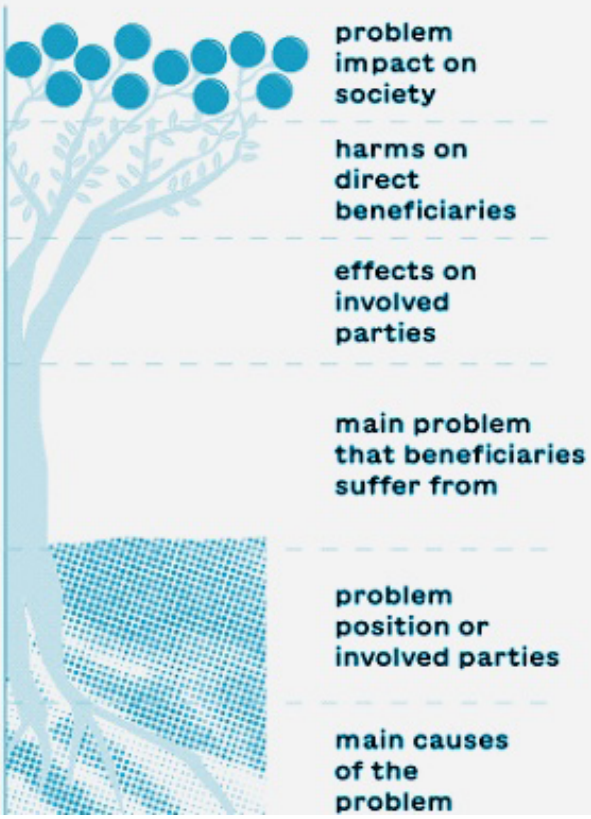
You've asked yourself a series of broad questions and it's a very good start. Yet, it's still all a bit fluffy and cloudy: a lot of your answers are going to be based on assumptions you haven't yet clarified. 13/68 This is what this second stage is about: structuring your thoughts towards a more systematic approach to the problem at hand. Advocacy textbooks, handbooks and toolkits are filled with models you can use to help you with this step. Here are three that we think are particularly relevant and easy to use.

PEST Analysis

PEST is a broad fact-gathering activity aimed at figuring out the external factors impacting your issue. It stands for Political, Economic, Sociological, Technological. The results of a PEST analysis are very valuable for identifying the different possible causes of a problem.

Political	Economic	Sociological	Technological
Stability of government	Economic growth	Demographic influences	International influences
Potential changes to legislation	Employment rates	Lifestyle factors	Changes in information technology
Global influences		Culture changes	

Problem and Objectives Tree



The problem tree is an effective reflection and visualisation tool to analyse the causes and effects of the main problem(s) you have identified. At the centre of the tree, its trunk, represents your main problem which you should have identified by now. Below the trunk, the roots represent the causes of your problem: there can of course be several causes and they can have several layers. They answer the question: "why is your problem happening?" On top of the trunk stand the branches and leaves, they represent the further effects of your problem. They answer the question "what is the impact of the problem on people and groups?" Start by writing the problem in the trunk. Then, use cards or post-its to identify and articulate the causes you can identify. Follow this by writing down the concrete effects and impacts of the problem on individuals and target groups. At this stage your tree will be full of negative statements. The last stage consists of turning all of the negative effects and impacts into positive statements: often using terms like increase, improve, decrease, etc.

SMART Objectives

From this big picture thinking, you can go to specifics and try to define precise goals for your advocacy process. Try to formulate the desired change in the form of the famous SMART objectives: • Specific: what needs to change and for whom? • Measurable: How can the change be measured? For example: how many people will be impacted and how? • Achievable: is the change realistic considering the context and your capacities? • Result-oriented: what are the concrete steps that can and will lead to change? • Time-bound: do you already have a broad and realistic time frame for when the change should happen

Research and Stakeholder Mapping in Advocacy:

Before embarking on any advocacy action, thorough research is essential to equip advocates with the knowledge and understanding needed to effectively address the issues at hand. By delving deep into the intricacies of the problem and its potential solutions, advocates can shape their proposals and actions in a targeted and relevant manner. Here's why research is crucial in advocacy:

– **Building Expertise:** Engaging in research not only enhances advocates' understanding of the issue but also builds their expertise, which proves invaluable during later stages of advocacy. By becoming well-versed in the nuances of the problem, advocates can effectively exchange information with partners and stakeholders, enhancing the credibility and legitimacy of their advocacy efforts.

– **Gathering Information:** Research involves collecting a wide range of information, including existing initiatives, key statistics, arguments for and against change, and the framing of the issue by various stakeholders. This comprehensive understanding serves as the foundation for informed advocacy strategies and actions.

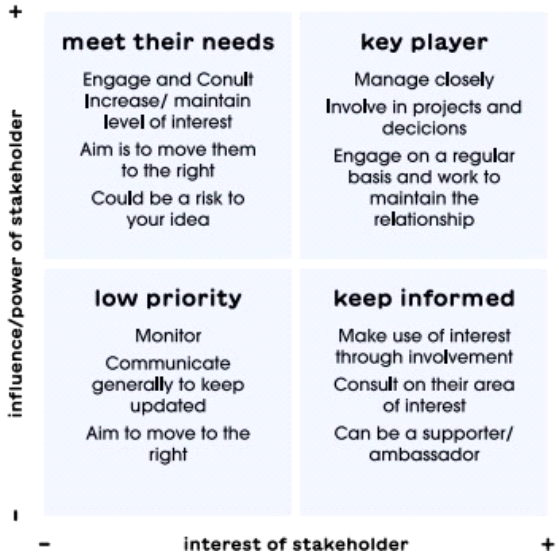
– **Resourceful Information Gathering:** Even with limited resources, advocates can gather valuable information through various means. Existing policies, academic papers, and advocacy efforts by other organizations can provide valuable insights. Additionally, engaging directly with the target group affec-

ted by the issue enables advocates to gather firsthand perspectives and experiences, enriching their understanding of the problem.

To summarize the research process:
- Step 1: Research your issue thoroughly, gathering information from policies, academic papers, media sources, and civil society knowledge.
- Step 2: Prepare a fact sheet outlining key issues, statistics, testimonies, and arguments from both sides of the issue.
- Step 3: Create a comprehensive knowledge folder for internal use by members and stakeholders.
- Step 4: Share this knowledge with members and organize learning meetings to ensure everyone is informed and prepared.

In addition to research, stakeholder mapping is essential for effective advocacy. Understanding the diverse range of individuals and groups with an interest or stake in the issue is crucial for collaboration, communication, and confrontation. Here's how to conduct stakeholder mapping:

- **Identify Stakeholders:** Compile a comprehensive list of all stakeholders related to the issue, including youth organizations, decision-makers, target groups, beneficiaries, and other relevant actors.
- **Analyze Stakeholders:** Analyze each stakeholder's level of interest, resources, power, and potential alignment with your advocacy goals. This analysis helps determine the most appropriate strategies for engagement.
- **Define Relationships:** Based on the analysis, define the nature of your relationship with each stakeholder, identifying allies, opponents, and potential influencers. This clarity enables advocates to tailor their approaches and messages accordingly.



Once you have drawn your matrix, the next step is to fill it in: · For each stakeholder identified as a high priority, you should try to define how they can be influenced and who and what has an influence on them? · For the stakeholders identified as low influence and low interest, you should of course dedicate less time and resources to try and engage them.

Crafting Your Message in Advocacy:

At the heart of every advocacy endeavor lies communication – the art of compelling individuals and groups in power to embrace policy change through effective messaging. Crafting messages that not only reach key stakeholders but also elicit a change in belief and behavior is paramount for successful advocacy efforts. While there's no one-size-fits-all formula for crafting a compelling message, certain strategies can enhance its impact and resonance. Here's how to shape a relevant and impactful message:

- Frame Your Core Message: Carefully selecting language for your main messages or slogans is essential for framing your advocacy narrative. Just like the abortion debate's framing of "pro-choice" versus "pro-life," framing your message effectively provides a strong narrative foundation for your cause.
- Speak to the Heart, Head, and Hand: Engage your audience emotionally (heart) by triggering emotions like hope, anger, or fear. Appeal to the intellect (head) by presenting striking facts and practical solutions. Finally, motivate action (hand) by including a clear call to action in your message.
- Understand Your Audiences: Tailor your messages to different audience segments based on their interests, knowledge, and availability. A message that resonates with a fresh activist may not appeal to an experienced politician. Adapt your tone, content, and delivery to suit each audience's preferences and priorities.
- Test Your Message: Conduct real-world tests of your message to gauge its effectiveness. Solicit feedback from members and test reactions to different messages within your campaign. Additionally, test your messages on audiences unrelated to your work to ensure clarity and resonance.
- Beyond Text: Remember that your message encompasses more than just text. Consider incorporating images, videos, and sounds to enhance its impact and memorability. Non-text elements can evoke powerful emotions and convey complex ideas more effectively than words alone.

Getting Your Message Out There - Working with the Media:
In the ever-evolving landscape of information dissemination, traditional media platforms such as TV, press, and radio still wield considerable influence in shaping public opinion. While their power may have diminished in recent years, they remain vital channels for amplifying your advocacy message and capturing the attention of policymakers. Here's how you can leverage traditional media to effectively communicate your advocacy campaign:
- Embrace Novelty: The key to attracting media attention lies in the novelty of your message. Journalists are drawn to stories that offer a fresh perspective or uncover new angles on existing issues. Look for elements of shock, surprise, or scandal that can make your message stand out. Additionally, aligning your topic with broader societal trends increases its newsworthiness.
- Accessibility and Appeal: Ensure that your message is accessible and easy to understand for a diverse audience. Craft messages that are not only easy to digest but also resonate with a wide range of people, increasing your chances of garnering mainstream media attention. Utilize social media platforms like Twitter to engage with journalists and increase visibility.

- Traditional Engagement Strategies: Employ traditional methods to engage with the media, such as writing and sending press releases, securing interviews with newspapers, radio, or TV, and writing OpEds for publication. Press releases should be concise, containing newsworthy elements, quotes, images, and catchy titles to capture journalists' interest. Follow up with targeted journalists via phone calls to maximize impact.
- Prepare for Interviews: Interviews are valuable opportunities to directly convey your message to a broader audience. Ensure thorough preparation, covering key talking points, data, and anecdotes to effectively communicate your advocacy goals. Provide journalists with all necessary background information before the event, and accompany them during the event to facilitate coverage of key moments.
- Expanding into New Media: Consider leveraging new media platforms such as YouTube, blogs, and podcasts to reach niche yet highly engaged audiences. While these platforms may attract smaller audiences, they offer an opportunity to connect with well-informed supporters who can become advocates for your cause.
- Writing OpEds: Many newspapers accept OpEds, allowing external contributors to share their perspectives on various issues. Explore the possibility of writing OpEds to disseminate your message to a broader audience and stimulate public discourse.
- Building Relationships: View media relations as a long-term effort, seeking to cultivate relationships with journalists even when you don't have a newsworthy story to share. Building rapport and understanding journalists' interests can enhance your chances of securing coverage in the future.
By strategically engaging with traditional and new media platforms, you can amplify your advocacy message, reach a broader audience, and exert influence on public opinion and policymaking. Effective media engagement is essential for elevating your advocacy campaign and driving meaningful change in society.

Building, Engaging, and Activating Your Community:
In today's advocacy landscape, terms like community management, digital mobilization, and organization are gaining prominence for good reason—they are integral to successful advocacy campaigns. These approaches recognize that communication is no longer a one-way street; grassroots citizens wield significant influence and play a crucial role in advocacy efforts.
Mobilizing and engaging your community can yield numerous benefits:
- Mobilize More People: Active communities can bolster participation in high-profile actions, amplifying your impact and visibility.
- Multiply Resources: Engaging volunteers diversifies your skill set and expands your resources, enabling you to tackle a broader range of tasks and initiatives.
- **Reach New Audiences:** Leveraging community networks allows you to reach audiences beyond your immediate reach, broadening your advocacy's scope and impact.
- Increase Pressure on Decision-Makers: A united and active community exerts greater pressure on decision-makers, amplifying your advocacy's influence and effectiveness.

Understanding the traditional engagement ladder or funnel is key to harnessing the full potential of community engagement. This framework helps you visualize the progression of engagement levels within your community, guiding your efforts to deepen connections, foster participation, and empower advocates at every stage of the advocacy journey.
By prioritizing community building, engagement, and activation, you empower individuals to become agents of change, driving collective action and advancing your advocacy goals.

Planning Your Actions:
Advocacy encompasses a diverse range of actions, from communication-based strategies like media relations to event-based initiatives such as organizing protests and rallies. To lead a successful advocacy campaign, careful planning and resource management are essential. Here's how to approach planning your actions effectively:
– Decide on Your Actions: Determine which actions align best with your advocacy goals and resources. Plan them in advance, organizing financial and human resources efficiently. Anticipate potential challenges and develop contingency plans.
– Project Management Basics: Treat advocacy planning like project management. Create detailed task lists, smart calendars, and realistic budgets. Allocate responsibilities, anticipate needed competencies within your team, and determine resource, time, and financial requirements.
– Timing is Key: Consider both project management and strategic timing when planning your actions. Allow sufficient time for smooth execution while aligning with the political calendar. Success in advocacy often hinges on timing, such as key policy-making stages or significant political events like elections.
– Budgeting and Risk Management: Develop well-planned, risk-inclusive budgets that are regularly updated and monitored. Maintain balanced budgets that account for both optimistic and pessimistic scenarios. Share responsibility for budget management across team members to mitigate risks effectively.

By applying project management principles, strategic timing considerations, and robust budgeting practices, you can optimize the effectiveness of your advocacy actions and increase the likelihood of achieving your desired outcomes.

Monitoring and Evaluation:
Monitoring and evaluation are essential processes for assessing the effectiveness of your advocacy actions and driving improvement. Here's how they work:
– Monitoring: This ongoing process involves tracking your actions as you implement them, ensuring they meet quality and efficiency standards. Monitoring allows for flexibility and adjustment of strategies in dynamic environments.
– Evaluation: This assesses the final success of your actions. It measures whether your goals were achieved and if desired political and societal changes occurred as a result. Despite resource constraints, monitoring and evaluation are crucial for organizational learning and ensuring impactful advocacy.

- Key Measurements: In advocacy, monitoring and evaluation focus on determining if actions occurred as planned, if direct goals were achieved, and if desired changes happened. Establishing indicators of success helps gauge outcomes effectively.

Upgrade Your Skills:
To navigate the challenges of advocacy effectively, continual skill development is essential. Consider the following competencies:
- Communication Skills: Writing press releases, engaging on social media, graphic design, video editing, public speaking, networking, framing, and storytelling.
- Political Skills: Negotiation, analytical and legal skills, policy paper writing, research, and knowledge of institutions and stakeholders.
- Project Management Skills: Event management, budget planning, and time management.
- Leadership and People Skills: Volunteer management, training, and effective listening.
Regularly assessing and upgrading these skills equips your team to execute advocacy campaigns successfully and adapt to evolving challenges.(5). ("Advocacy handbook")

Pick and Choose Your Actions
In advocacy, selecting the right actions is crucial for maximizing impact and achieving desired outcomes. Each action carries its own advantages, requirements, difficulties, and risks. This section explores various advocacy actions, from online campaigns to protests, empowering advocates to strategically choose the most effective methods for their cause. By understanding the nuances of each action, advocates can tailor their approach to engage stakeholders, raise awareness, and drive meaningful change.

Organize an Online Campaign:
In the digital age, online campaigns have become indispensable tools for advocacy, offering unprecedented reach and engagement opportunities. From social media movements to email petitions, online campaigns empower advocates to mobilize supporters, raise awareness, and influence decision-makers. This section delves into the advantages, requirements, difficulties, and risks associated with organizing online campaigns, equipping advocates with the knowledge to harness the full potential of digital advocacy.
- Advantages: Wide reach, cost-effective, easily shareable, potential for viral impact, allows for diverse engagement strategies (e.g., petitions, social media hashtags, email campaigns).
- Requirements: Access to internet and digital platforms, strong communication and digital marketing skills, clear campaign goals and messaging.
- Difficulty: Moderate. Requires digital literacy and strategic planning but generally accessible.
- Risks: Limited engagement or impact if not well-promoted or if messaging is unclear. Potential for backlash or negative attention on social media platforms.

Hold a Protest:
Protests have long served as powerful expressions of dissent and demands for change, capturing public attention and galvanizing movements. Whether in the streets or online, protests provide a platform for collective action, amplifying voices and exerting pressure on decision-makers. This section explores the intricacies of holding protests, from logistical planning to risk mitigation, empowering advocates to effectively utilize this time-honored advocacy tactic.
- Advantages: Visible demonstration of public support, can attract media attention, fosters community solidarity and empowerment, can pressure decision-makers.
- Requirements: Permits (depending on location), logistical planning (e.g., location, signage, speakers), crowd control measures, legal awareness.
- Difficulty: Moderate to high. Requires organization, coordination, and ensuring safety of participants.
- Risks: Possibility of confrontation with authorities or counter-protestors, legal repercussions, negative portrayal in media if not conducted peacefully.

Hold a Conference or Meeting:
Conferences and meetings offer invaluable opportunities for dialogue, collaboration, and knowledge-sharing among advocates, stakeholders, and decision-makers. By convening key actors, these events facilitate consensus-building, idea exchange, and strategic planning for advocacy initiatives. This section examines the benefits, requirements, challenges, and risks associated with organizing conferences and meetings, empowering advocates to harness the power of face-to-face engagement in advancing their cause.
- Advantages: Facilitates dialogue and collaboration, opportunity to educate and inform stakeholders, can lead to networking and partnership opportunities.
- Requirements: Venue, speakers or presenters, agenda development, marketing and promotion, logistical arrangements.
- Difficulty: Moderate. Requires planning and coordination but can be tailored to fit various budgets and scales.
- Risks: Low attendance, lack of engagement or interest from target audience, logistical challenges leading to disruptions.

Set Up a Petition:
Petitions serve as accessible and impactful tools for mobilizing support, amplifying voices, and pressuring decision-makers to take action on specific issues. Whether circulated online or in-person, petitions empower individuals to voice their concerns, demonstrate solidarity, and effect change through collective action. This section explores the process of setting up petitions, highlighting their advantages, requirements, difficulties, and risks, to equip advocates with the knowledge to leverage this advocacy tactic effectively.

- Advantages: Easily accessible form of engagement, can demonstrate public support for an issue, can be shared widely and attract media attention.
- Requirements: Clear and achievable goal, online platform for hosting petition, promotion and outreach efforts.
- Difficulty: Low to moderate. Requires clear messaging and promotion but relatively straightforward to set up.

- Risks: Low impact if not well-promoted, potential for fraudulent signatures, may not lead to tangible outcomes if not supported by other advocacy efforts.

Organize an Event Engaging with Media or Online Platforms:
Engaging with media and online platforms offers advocates a direct avenue to amplify their message, reach wider audiences, and shape public discourse. Whether through press conferences, interviews, or social media campaigns, media engagement enables advocates to garner attention, build credibility, and influence public opinion. This section delves into the intricacies of organizing events to engage with media and online platforms, examining the advantages, requirements, difficulties, and risks involved in leveraging these channels for advocacy.
- Advantages: Direct interaction with journalists or online influencers, opportunity for media coverage, amplifies advocacy message to wider audience.
- Requirements: Media contacts or relationships, compelling story or angle, event planning and logistics.
- Difficulty: Moderate. Requires networking skills, effective storytelling, and event coordination.
- Risks: Limited media interest or coverage, misrepresentation of advocacy message by media, negative backlash or criticism.

Maintaining mental wellness as an advocate
Advocacy work is deeply rewarding, but it can also be emotionally taxing, particularly for young activists navigating complex issues and challenging environments. From stress and overwhelm to feelings of guilt and hopelessness, the emotional toll of advocacy is real and valid. Recognizing and addressing these challenges is essential for sustaining both personal well-being and effective advocacy efforts.
As young advocates, you are often driven by empathy and a genuine desire to make a difference in the world. While your passion for social change is admirable, it's important to prioritize self-care and mental wellness to avoid burnout and maintain resilience in the face of adversity. This section explores practical strategies for managing emotions, seeking support, and prioritizing self-care, empowering young activists to navigate the ups and downs of advocacy while staying mentally healthy and resilient.

Caring for your emotions
Emotional regulation is key to maintaining both physical and mental well-being. Here are some strategies to help you identify and manage your emotions:
Check in with yourself regularly: Take time each day to reflect on your emotions. Ask yourself questions like: What feelings have I experienced today? What are the top three common feelings I've experienced this week? Identifying patterns in your emotions can help you recognize triggers and better understand how you respond to different situations.
Remind yourself that all feelings are okay: It's important to validate your emotions and recognize that it's normal to experience a wide range of feelings. Avoid dismissing or suppressing your emotions, as this can lead to negative consequences. Instead, practice acceptance and self-compassion when

experiencing difficult emotions.
Reframe negative thinking: Negative emotions can sometimes lead to negative thoughts, affecting your behavior and coping mechanisms. Try reframing these thoughts by challenging negative beliefs and focusing on more positive perspectives. For example, instead of thinking "I'm not good enough," reframe it as "I am capable and deserving of success."
By checking in with yourself regularly, validating your emotions, and reframing negative thinking, you can develop healthier emotional regulation skills and better manage the ups and downs of advocacy work.

FIND POSITIVE WAYS TO COPE

When you experience negative or difficult feelings, it's important to find positive and safe ways to help you get through them. Some ideas include:
- Listening to music
- Watching your favorite movie or TV show
- Eating healthy meals
- Talking to a friend
- Getting a hug from someone you trust
- Getting advice from a trusted adult
- Moving your body for some exercise
- Reducing online screen time

Another activity is to write down three things you find fun and enjoyable and three people in your life who always help you feel good. Keep these as your go-tos when you feel you are having a difficult time.

RESPECTFULLY COMMUNICATE WHAT YOU WANT AND NEED

Feedback from youth advocates around the world reveal a common theme: Sometimes, it can be hard to say no or to ask for the things you need. In fact, being assertive is a learned skill, and as with any skill you become better at it with practice. As a youth activist and advocate, you might be good at communicating what you think and standing up for issues or others. How might you apply those same skills to communicating and advocating for your own needs? Here are some tips:
- Take time to think about what you want and need, as opposed to only what others want and need from you.
- Use 'I' statements. Ask for what you want or need by starting with 'I' or 'my':
- "My worry is that..."
- "I think that I..."
- "I feel that I..."
- "When I'm..."
- "I need to..."
- "I would like to..."
- "I hope that..."
- Say no. Learning when and how to say no is an important way to take care of yourself. Saying no can be difficult.

Here are some thoughts and phrases that might help.
- Let others know that they matter, but you do, too:
- "I appreciate that, but no thank you."
- "I care about you, but I can't."
- "I can see why this might suit you, but it doesn't work well for me."
- Suggest an alternative, but make sure it's one that works for you:
- "Today I don't have time, but perhaps in a few weeks?"
- "This isn't very realistic for me, perhaps you could ask X?"
- "I don't want to do X right now, but what about if we did Y instead?

MANAGE STRESS

Many experiences or events can cause stress in daily life, and some larger events can cause greater strain. You're not alone. Everyone experiences stress at some point in their lives, and different techniques can help you positively handle this. Checking in with yourself, as noted above, is a good start. Simply pause to think and reflect. What are the top three things that have caused you stress this week? What are the top three things that have helped you reduce stress this week? You can't escape stress, but you can aim to maintain balance in your life.

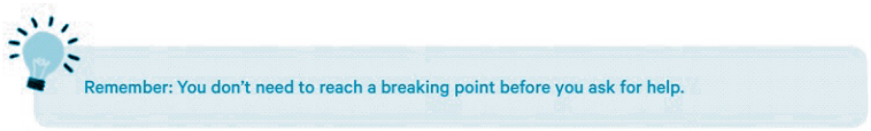
It may also be useful to recognize how stress affects your body and mind:
- Emotional symptoms might include feeling sad or withdrawn or experiencing sudden overwhelming fear, intense worry, or severe mood swings.
- Physical symptoms might include a racing heart, fast breathing, sweating, headaches, nausea or vomiting, loss of appetite, or drastic weight changes.
- Behavioural symptoms might include engaging in arguments or sudden outbursts of anger, self-harm, increased or unusual drug or alcohol use or smoking, withdrawing from friends or family, changes in sleeping patterns, or drastic personality changes.
- Cognitive symptoms might include racing thoughts, inability to concentrate or cloudy thinking.

Calming exercises
Slow, deep breathing is one of the simplest and quickest ways to calm the body when you feel overly stressed or experience strong difficult feelings. Here is a link to a breathing exercise video to help guide you.
Keep this trick in your back pocket for overwhelming moments. This short video by the World Health Organization also provides a grounding technique that can help:
- Close your eyes and sit comfortably.
- Notice how you are feeling and what you are thinking.
- Slow down and connect with your body by taking three slow and deep breaths.
- Refocus on your surroundings by engaging your different senses – what do you see, what do you hear, what do you smell, what do you taste, and what do you feel? (If at any point you feel uncomfortable, feel free to pause or stop and reset. It can take a bit of practice to get it right and get the full benefits, but stick with it.)

For more practical skills to help cope with stress, see the WHO publication 'Doing What Matters in Times of Stress: An Illustrated Guide'. A few minutes each day are enough to practice the self-help techniques discussed in the guide, which can be used alone or with the accompanying audio exercises.

Determining when you need help

It can feel scary to admit that you need support, but doing so is a sign of courage and strength.



Here are eight signs that you might need support with managing your feelings or supporting your mental health and well-being:
- Finding it hard to get out of bed or feeling tired all the time
- Withdrawing from and avoiding friends or tasks you need to do
- Losing interest in usual activities
- Having trouble concentrating
- Experiencing irritability
- Feeling sad most of the day, nearly every day
- Having thoughts or feelings of wanting to harm yourself, or feeling like there is no point to life
- Experiencing any of the above for more than a couple of weeks

Finding help
Maintaining a healthy mind and body means consistently looking for different actions you can take and methods you can use to support your journey. It's equally important to know where to get information and support when you need them. You are never alone. Different support structures and methods are available to you at different points along your advocacy journey. Building a strong toolkit filled with supportive resources can help during difficult times. You already have some tools that have taught you how to breathe, reflect on a situation or feelings, and gently move through adversity. If at any point you feel you are having a true mental health crisis, call your local emergency number or your medical contacts for referrals. If, however, you are not facing an emergency, you can find support in your friends and colleagues.

When you need:
- Comfort, talk to a friend who you trust
- Guidance, turn to an adult you trust
- Support, talk to a community leader or someone in your community who supports you
- Perspective, interact and engage with other young people going through similar situations

Though asking for help can feel scary, help from other people can positively change your life. If you are struggling and don't know what to say or how to express that you need help, try some of these examples:

- When you don't know what you need: "I'm feeling _____. I'm not sure what to ask for, but I think I need some support. Are you free to talk (day/ time)?"
- When you feel stuck: "I'm struggling. Can we (meet up/ etc.) on (date)? I'd love your help in thinking through some ideas and making a plan."
- When you don't want to talk about it: "I'm in a bad place but I'm also not ready to talk about it. I'd love to chat/do an activity together to help me feel distracted."
- When you need to feel connected: "Can you check in with me (on date/ every day) to make sure I'm doing OK?"
- "I haven't been doing well. Would you mind texting me every morning to say hi? It would really help me."
- "Hey friend. I've been kind of sad lately. Do you want to Snapchat/send selfies to each other before bed every night, just to check in?"
- "I'm feeling down. What do you think about being self-care buddies? We could text each other once a day, something that we did to care for ourselves, and would love to have any ideas you have?"
- "I've been isolating myself lately. What do you think about checking in with eachother a few times a week? I'd love to be in better touch."
- Can you share a favorite memory with me or remind me of some of our good times together?

Your personal resource list

Your toolkit isn't complete without additional resources. Take some time to find the supportive organizations and groups in your communities (before you need them).

Some examples include:

- Helplines: Find the phone numbers or web addresses for local, provincial, national and international helplines that support mental and physical health.
- Support groups: Seek contact information for various groups that offer peer support, whether online or in person.
- Websites: Keep a list of organizations focused on mental health and well-being, along with their website information.
- Social media: Follow accounts that provide daily motivation, as well as the accounts of organizations focused on mental health and well-being.
- Professional groups: Join groups of people with similar interests to support your cause and your journey; they may also help when you are feeling overwhelmed.
- Professional: See a mental health worker during difficult times

Feeling stuck

At various points throughout the advocacy process you might feel stuck, confused or demotivated. Do not despair. This is a normal part of the process, and often in these moments you will do your best learning

Get support.

Try to find someone who you can talk to and share ideas with – a friend, guardian, parent, teacher or colleague. Personal support and encouragement are important, so try to find someone to connect with.

Remember that you are not alone.
Sometimes you will be the first person to make a path that others can follow, and this can be a lonely experience. Remember that youth from around the world have undertaken similar tasks and faced similar challenges. Read other people's stories, look for examples similar to yours, and see how other people have handled their situations. Connect with young people on different platforms – in your local community or an online group – to share ideas. As you do this, you will start to develop creative or innovative solutions.

Don't try to do everything by yourself.
You might serve as the main driver of a cause, but you are not superhuman and cannot do everything alone. It's easy to take on too much and burn out easily, so make sure you look after yourself, as well as your cause. Start building a team of people who can help you achieve your goals. Remember, everyone has a different set of skills and abilities, and by working with a team you can start to distribute the workload and engage in the advocacy process more effectivel.

Turn to available resources and people.
Many resources exist to support you during your advocacy journey. Have a look through Voices of Youth, Internet of Good Things, and other platforms for inspiration and guidance. Seek out organizations that work on your issue area for support and potential collaboration with other young people. ("UNICEF youth advocacy guide")

Navigating Ethical Advocacy: Do No Harm in Youth Advocacy Efforts

- Avoiding Instrumentalization of Young People and Their Objectives
- In youth advocacy, it's crucial to protect young people and their goals from being used for other purposes, especially in places where power imbalances might take advantage of their enthusiasm and idealism. This danger is particularly high in areas affected by conflict, where different groups might try to use youth movements for political reasons or to keep violence going.
- To reduce this risk, advocates need to focus on genuinely empowering young people. That means making sure their opinions are not just listened to but also taken seriously and acted upon. Some ways to do this are encouraging youth to take leadership roles, teaching them how to think critically and advocate for themselves, and making decision-making processes more open and accountable.
- Navigating Advocacy in Divided Societies and Engaging Different Communities
- Advocating for peace in deeply divided societies requires navigating complex social, political, and historical dynamics. In conflict areas, communities may be polarized along ethnic, religious, or ideological lines, making it challenging to foster unity and reconciliation.
- Effective advocacy entails building bridges across divides, promoting dialogue and understanding, and addressing the root causes of conflict. It's essential to engage with diverse communities in a respectful and inclusive

manner, acknowledging their perspectives and experiences.
- Conflict-sensitive approaches, such as conflict analysis and peace education, can help advocates navigate sensitive issues and build trust among stakeholders. Collaboration with local grassroots organizations and community leaders is also crucial for ensuring the relevance and legitimacy of advocacy efforts.
- Advocating for Peace in Conflict Areas
- Advocating for peace in conflict areas carries inherent risks due to the volatile and often hostile environment. In addition to facing opposition from armed groups and entrenched power structures, peace advocates may also encounter resistance from segments of the population who benefit from the status quo or perceive peace efforts as a threat to their interests.
- Risks to advocates include threats to personal safety, intimidation, harassment, and even violence. In conflict-affected regions, advocating for peace can be seen as challenging the existing power dynamics and vested interests, making advocates vulnerable to reprisals.
- Despite these risks, advocating for peace is essential for breaking the cycle of violence and building sustainable peace. Advocates must prioritize the safety and security of themselves and their communities, while also seeking support from local and international allies to amplify their voices and protect their rights.
- Mitigating Risks and Building Resilience
- To mitigate risks and build resilience, peace advocates in conflict areas should conduct thorough risk assessments, identify potential threats, and develop contingency plans for emergencies. This may include establishing communication networks, safe spaces, and evacuation routes in case of danger.
- Building alliances with civil society organizations, human rights defenders, and international peacebuilding initiatives can provide additional support and solidarity. Advocates should also advocate for legal protections for human rights defenders and mechanisms for accountability for perpetrators of violence and intimidation.
- By prioritizing safety and well-being while remaining steadfast in their commitment to peace, advocates can navigate the challenges of advocating for peace in conflict areas and contribute to positive change in their communities.

Conclusion

As you continue your journey as an advocate, remember that caring for your emotional well-being is just as important as fighting for your cause. By practicing emotional regulation, checking in with yourself regularly, and reframing negative thinking, you can cultivate resilience and maintain a strong foundation for your advocacy efforts.

It's essential to acknowledge that advocacy work can be emotionally challenging, and it's okay to seek support when needed. Whether it's talking to a trusted friend, seeking professional help, or engaging in self-care activities, prioritize your mental wellness as you work towards creating positive change in the world.

While advocacy can be incredibly rewarding, it's important to approach it with caution and mindfulness. Take care to avoid burnout by setting boundaries, pacing yourself, and seeking balance in your life. Remember that your well-being is paramount, and by caring for yourself, you can continue to make a meaningful impact in your community and beyond.

Disclaimer: Advocacy work involves inherent risks, including emotional strain and burnout. It's essential to prioritize self-care and seek support when needed. Additionally, be mindful of your limits and boundaries, and remember that it's okay to take breaks and ask for help. By taking care of yourself, you can sustain your advocacy efforts and continue to make a difference in the world.

Remember, even superheroes take naps! Take care of yourself, because the world needs your powers, but it also needs you to recharge your batteries.

Resources

"Advocacy handbook." European Youth Forum, https://www.youthforum.org/topics/advocacy-handbook. Accessed 27 April 2024.
"UNICEF youth advocacy guide." UNICEF, 29 July 2022, https://www.unicef.org/lac/en/reports/unicef-youth-advocacy-guide. Accessed 27 April 2024.
Strengthening the role of young people in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, Report1 Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media Parliamentary Assembly, Council of Euroe, Rapporteur: Ms Inka HOPSU, Finland, Socialists, Democrats and Greens Group
GUIDING PRINCIPLES ON YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION IN PEACEBUILDING, Interagency Network pon Youth Development, United Nations,

Non-Violent Debate as a Tool for Youth Participation and countering youth polarisation and radicalisation.

By Centro Studi Sereno Regis

The approach of Non-Violent Debate, developed by Centro Studi Sereno Regis, between 2020 and 2024 is based on essential pillars, each aimed at building an effective and meaningful dialogue:
- The creation of a safe space where every voice can be freely expressed and respectfully listened;
- The promotion of active listening, inspired by the model of Marianella Sclavi, which emphasises the importance of truly understanding truly understand the perspectives of others.
- Focuses on awareness of personal dilemmas and inner and social contradictions, an approach inspired by Betzavá. This includes the distinction between positions, interests and needs, essential for understanding the dynamics of adebate.

The approach addresses the escalation of violence and awareness of its foundations, following the teachings of Pat Patfoort. it emphasises the importance of communicating by fundamentals' again according to Patfoort's approach, and explores various facilitation techniques for effectively guiding discussions. These pillars are at the heart of the project, ensuring that each discussion is constructive, inclusive and transformative.

Non-Violent Debate can be a good practice and an interesting approach to be used to develop essential skills to support civic participation in war or post-conflict contexts, to support the resilience of the social fabric and to counter polarisation and radicalisation phenomena among the youth population.
Example of a workshop flow using non-violent debate

DISCUSSION PROCESSES

Participants pair up and discuss their expectations and fears forthe course they are beginning. Subsequently, pairs group intolarger teams, and each team is tasked with synthesizing thecontent emerged from its constituent pairs.
Debriefing in plenary on the process (word, leadership, power):
How was the organization for everyone to speak?
Do you think there was an equal use of the word?
Did someone take the lead? Why? How?

Participants pair up and discuss "what I offer, what do I need thegroup to give me to create a safe space?" for the course theyare beginning. Subsequently, pairs group into larger teams, andeach team is tasked with uniting the content emerged from itsconstituent pairs. Enriching with content and needs of otherpeople.
Debriefing in plenary on the process (word, leadership, power):
How was the organization for everyone to speak?
Do you think there was an equal use of the word?
Did someone take the lead? Because? How?
Was this exercise different from the previous one?

TEAM BUILDING

Groups are formed. Each group is tasked with building a towerusing only sheets of paper. The structure must meet criteria of stability and height and must stand independently for a minute.Teams are given dedicated time to discuss and define the construction strategy: think creatively, exchange ideas, anddevelop a well-considered plan that utilizes their collective abilities and strengths. Once armed with a clear plan, teamsembark on the construction phase of the challenge. Facilitators and participants measure each tower by counting the time.

Debriefing in plenary:
Were there challenges or obstacles you encountered during the construction of the structure? How did you overcome them?
Did your team experience disagreements or conflicts during the process? How were they resolved?
Did your team's initial plan or strategy change as you built the structure? If yes, what prompted these changes?
Reflecting on the decision-making process, how did your team make choices and prioritize certain ideas or approaches?
Did your team experience any unexpected discoveries during the process? If yes, how did you adapt?
Looking back, what would you do differently if you were to face the challenge again?

EQUITY

Divide into pairs. Each pair has only one sheet and one markereach. The task is to draw the word "equity" on the same sheetwithout talking.
Debriefing in plenary:
Was it equal to get the goal?
Equity of daily life

FREEDOM

The facilitator is at the center of the room and asks the question How important is freedom to you?
Participants are invited to align themselves (position near or far from the facilitator based on their personal response).
Participants divide into groups and write a collective definition of freedom.

Comparison in plenary:
Were you satisfied with the definition you wrote?
Did you feel free in the process of the definition?

20-minute break during which participants will remain tied togroups (previous groups) by the fingers with a thread. Debriefingin plenary after the break:

How did you feel?
Did the definition hold up under the test of limitation?
Did you maintain the principles of freedom you thought of ina context where freedom was deprived?
How do my personal values intertwine/mediate with socialrelationships?
How democratic are you?
why does this opinion resonate with you?

The facilitator reads aloud a series of potentially polarizing statements (e.g., military conscription at age 18 should be mandatory) and each participant stands on an imaginary line ranging from 0% agree to 100% agree (or stands more or less close to the facilitator depending on how much they agree). It is also possible to have the participants themselves write down on a post-it note topics that they feel are polarizing, which the facilitator will pick up and read aloud. The most polarizing topics will be discussed in pairs during a reflective walk, using active listening (i.e., repeating, before stating one's opinion, what the interlocutor has said to make sure one has understood) and foundations*(see the definitions section). The goal is to go deeper and deeper through questions such as these:
Why does this opinion resonate with you?
How did I come to hold this opinion?
Who or what has influenced my life to form this opinion

THE MAJORITY DECIDES

Each participant individually reflects on his or her positionregarding the following issues, writing yes or no next to each:then discusses them in pairs through the previous method(reflective walk, active listening, foundations):
The majority should decide...
Whether I am allowed to smoke in public spaces?
If there should be religious symbols allowed in schools?
If an airport should be built in my neighborhood?
To cut funding for NGO's?
If plastic bags should be banned?
Whether the interruption of pregnancy should be legal?
Whether euthanasia should be legal?
Whether or not to let migrants enter in my country?
If same-sex adoption should be legal

MASKS

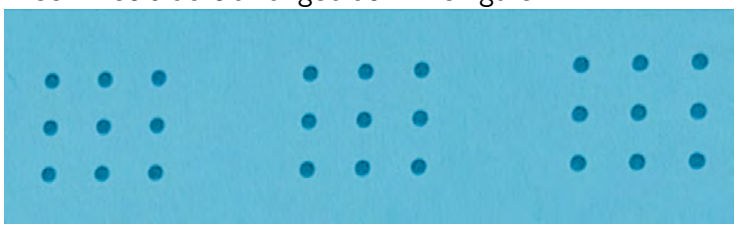
Each participant has created a mask that represents them indiscussions/debates, reflecting on questions such as:
Do I wear masks on certain topics?
Do I prefer to wear a mask in certain discussions to conformto the most accepted opinion? And why: to avoid discomfort,fear of rejection, or to avoid debate?
Do I think I have a strong opinion when I actually do not?
Each participant then constructs their mask and presents it.Pairs will be for-

med for the final reflection.

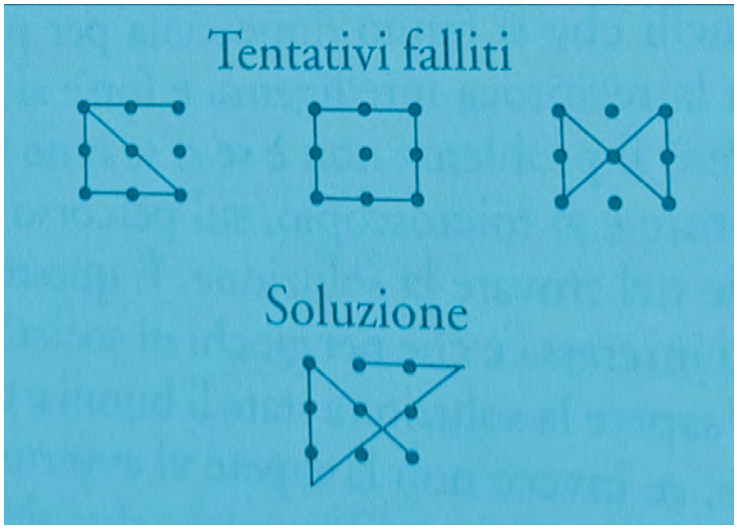
7 Rules of the Art of Listening

A series of activities are proposed to participants, eachconnected to a rule of the art of listening (see Marianella Sclavi).The activity is proposed before reading the rule to theparticipants, so that they can reflect on the basis of theexperience just had and derive the rule as independently aspossible.

Dots: A sheet is handed to each participant, and they are askedto draw on it at least three times 9 dots arranged as in the figure:



The objective is to connect the 9 dots with 4 straight lines without lifting the pencil from the paper. Where one line ends,another must begin. Participants are asked to make the variouspaths that come to mind visible by quickly drawing three attempts on the three reproductions of the nine dots, even if they realize that those paths do not solve the problem and seem useless.



As can be seen in Fig. 2, most people imagine a frame whenseeing the dots. As long as one stays within this **"imaginaryframe,"** it is not possible to solve the problem.

Debriefing in plenary

The rule associated with this activity **is: what you see dependson your point of view. To see your point of view, you need tochange perspective.**

Client/Receptionist: The group arranges in a circle. Among thegroup of participants, one person is chosen to be thereceptionist and another to be a hotel customer. It is crucial thatboth people speak a language that the other does notunderstand. The receptionist leaves the room while thecustomer, with the help of the rest of the group, invents anabsurd situation or problem

to report to the receptionist.
When the receptionist re-enters the room, the discussionbegins: the customer outlines the situation, and the receptionisttries to understand and help solve the problem. Each of the twopeople can only speak in the language that the other does notunderstand. The rest of the group observes. After a few minutes,the discussion is interrupted.
Debriefing in plenary.

The rule associated with this activity is: **if you want tounderstand what another is saying, you must be willing tobelieve that they are right and ask them to help youunderstand why they think so.**

Videomarketing: Participants divide into groups. Each group hasan object (any object is fine) and must stage a videomarketingpresentation, presenting it as essential for survival on a desertedisland. They are given 20 minutes to prepare. Each groupperforms.
Debriefing in plenary.

The rule associated with this activity is: **to become an expert inthe art of listening, you must use a humorous method, butonce you have learned to listen, humor comes naturally.**

Beans: Participants are organized into circle-formed groups.Each group is given a quantity of dry beans that exceeds the number of group members by two. These beans are placed in the center of the circle. Each participant can take as many beans as they wish, with the goal of reaching a predetermined total number of beans (this total is set based on the initial allocation of beans to each group). The game proceeds in rounds, and atthe end of each round, the facilitator doubles the beans remaining in the center of each circle that nobody took,providing additional beans for the next round. The objective for each group is to **strategize effectively** so that one member can accumulate the required number of beans to win.
The principle tied to this activity is that a good listener explores the **realms of the possible.** The signals of greatest importance are those that are perceived as insignificant and bothersome, onthe margins and irritating, especially when they challenge established beliefs.

10 STEPS

Participants arrange themselves randomly around the room.They begin to walk freely around the space following the facilitator's instructions:
take ten steps with their eyes open
take eight open-eyed steps and two closed-eyed steps
take six open-eyed steps and four closed-eyed steps
take four open-eyed steps and six closed-eyed steps
take two open-eyed steps and eight closed-eyed steps
take ten steps with eyes closed

Participants are asked to stay with their eyes closed and arrange themselves

in pairs with the person next to them (without knowing who the person is). Each pair positions themselves back to back and, still with eyes closed, start dancing to the music.
Plenary debriefing.

The rule associated with this activity is: **"emotions are the basic cognitive tools if you can understand their language. They do not inform you about what you see, but how you look. Their code is relational and analogical."**

WAR OF CHAIRS

Participants form a circle. The facilitator tells each person a task(speaking in a whisper in their ear so other people cannot hear).Each participant knows only his or her own task and not theothers'. There are three tasks: arrange all the chairs in a circle,have all the participants sit on the chairs, arrange all the chairsaround a column (or something else in the room). When eachparticipant has received his or her task, the activity begins.
Plenary Debriefing.

The rule associated with this activity is: **"a good listener doesnot avoid conflicts, but approaches them as opportunities topractice in a field he or she is passionate about: creativeconflict management".**
The remaining Rules:

if you want to understand what another is saying, you must be willing to believe that they are right and ask them to help you understand why they think so.

what you see depends on your point of view. to see your point of view, you need to change perspective.

Some theoretical pills....
Foundations: foundations are on the base of theviewpoints. They are the why a viewpoints exists: needs,emotions, objectives, interests, values, habits.
Rules to express foundations:
Every foundations need to answer to the question why;
Every foundations need to start with the word "I";
Avoid verbs such us "I want". "I know" and expressionslike "I think that you...";
Use verbs that express emotions.

Attention!:
Do not transform our foundations in positive arguments→Generalizing our thought;
Do not transform our foundations in a negativeargumentation against other point of view:Do not transform our foundations in a negativeargumentation against other person.

Violence: The Root and the Mechanisms

The underlying model of violence is the Major (M) - minor(m) model. In this model, the two conflicting parties are in aposition of disparity, which produces the domination ofone and the submission of the other. The underlying modelof nonviolence, on the other hand, is the equivalencemodel (E - E), where the two parties are in a position ofequality, and the goal is to resolve the conflict in a way thatsatisfies both.

Both a violent reaction (aggression) and a nonviolentreaction (nonviolent resistance) are based on the instinct ofself-preservation. In the mechanism of violence, aggressioncan occur in the form of escalation of violence (M attacksm, who reacts by attacking M in turn), the chain of violence(M attacks m, who reacts by putting a third party in theposition of m), and the internalization of violence (Mattacks m, who does not react by attacking M in turn or byputting a third party in the position of m, but vents theviolence on himself).

Betzavta method: Betzavta is a Hebrew word and means"together". The title of this method of learning democracy,which was developed by the Adam Institute in Israel, makesup the programme and philosophical background at thesame time. The Betzavta method aims to bring to lightdilemmas and conflicts, both in society and in oneself.Often in a conflict, each side believes that they are 'right'. Adilemma allows you to experience both sides, movingbeyond the need to be right or to prove the other wrong.Bringing out the dilemma gives people a deeperunderstanding of themselves. Participants come to realizethings that may have been obvious to others but hiddenfrom their own view (for example: "I want equality, but Idon't really want equality").

Tips for designing and facilitating a nonviolent debate
Emphasize the dimension of Non-Judgment.
Create a non-competitive climate for exploration.
Allow space for reflection on personal beliefs and values.
Shift from group to interpersonal dimension.
Propose questions that shatter certainties to reconstruct dialogue with others.
Do not mediate, but help people stay in the process.
Do not aim for a predefined learning outcome; do not seek solutions.
Focus on the process.
Welcome the vulnerability of not knowing: do not force oneself to have an opinion.

Slow down the discussion.

Tips for democratically distributing speaking power

Facilitators should be aware of the context: group dynamics, avoid engaging in one-on-one discussions.

Use inclusive language.

Maintain complexity and do not oversimplify.

Tips for Preparing Questions: simple and clear,stimulating, should bring energy, invite deeper explorationand investigation, make the implicit visible, and open newpossibilities for reasoning.

Local actions in the context of the project

In this chapter, we explore the impactful efforts of partner organizations involved in the project "Youth Work for Rehabilitation of Young People Affected by War and Armed Conflicts." These local actions took place from January 5, 2023, to August 31, 2023, across nine partner countries. Dedicated youth workers led initiatives to support young people aged 14-30 impacted by war.

Seeking an impact each workshop was structured around three modules—Know and Understand Yourself, Know and Understand Others, and Know and Understand Society—the activities covered essential topics such as health, self-care, identity, values, and social engagement.

Also, the partner organizations received instructions for measuring Impact and Outcomes by using:
- Focus groups with youth workers conducted by each partner.
- Explored preparation, implementation, and creation of safe spaces.
- Evaluated effectiveness in supporting socialization and integration.
- Assessed impact through observed changes in behaviour, attitudes, and thoughts of young participants.

The intention was to evaluate each methodology, understand its potential and weaknesses as well and identify the best practices of the facilitators in order to develop a toolkit to improve our repertories when working with youth affected by war.

This chapter encompasses the efforts of nine partner organizations across:
- Centre for Euroinitiatives (Ukraine)
- Youth Peace Ambassadors Network (France)
- Peace Up! – Verein für Friedenspädagogik und gewaltfreier Konflikttransformation (Germany)
- Asociación de libre-pensadores de la sierra (LPS) (Spain)
- Local Peace Kosovo (Kosovo)
- SAGLAMDU SUNCE GENCLER TESKILATI ICTIMAI BIRLIYI (Azerbaijan)
- GYUMRI YOUTH INITIATIVE CENTRE NGO (Armenia)
- Fundacja Help.NGO Polska (Poland)

Each organization played a crucial role in shaping local actions, emphasizing the potential of youth-led initiatives to foster resilience, hope, and healing in communities affected by armed conflicts.

Crucially, the youth work activities were orchestrated by trained youth workers who had undergone a specialized training course. Armed with the knowledge gained during this course, these facilitators crafted curricula comprising at least five 90-minute sessions, tailored to the specific needs of the communities in which the activities unfolded. The focus was twofold: emergency youth work for those on the move and long-term youth work for those seeking integration in their communities.

FRANCE

Name of the action: Youth Work for Rehabilitation of Young People Affected by War and Armed Conflicts through Dance
Leading organization: Youth Peace Ambassadors France
Place: Thonon-les-Bains
Summary: Thonon-les-Bains, a town located in the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region, like many towns in France, faces several social issues. These include concerns related to unemployment, particularly among the youth, and the integration of immigrants, such as Ukrainian refugees, who may struggle to adapt to a new cultural and social environment. The initiative of YPAN France addresses the rehabilitation of young people affected by war, particularly Ukrainian refugees through a series of innovative dance and movement workshops as tools for healing and integration.
The primary aim of the initiative was to provide a therapeutic and expressive outlet for young people affected by war and armed conflicts through dance and movement, allowing them to process their trauma and emotions in a creative and non-verbal way.
The objectives include enhancing physical and mental well-being, fostering empowerment and self-confidence, promoting cross-cultural understanding, and measuring the impact of the rehabilitation programs on emotional and social well-being.



Workshops reported:
The initiative kicked off with a series of workshops led by facilitator Vavenko Nataliia. The workshops, spanning three hours each, focused on different aspects of dance therapy:

- Improvisation Workshop (October 5, 2023): Emphasizing the expression of emotions, body awareness, and interaction among participants.
- Stretching Workshop (October 12, 2023): Using stretching as a tool for relaxation and overall well-being.
- Contemporary Dance Workshop (October 22, 2023): Targeting the therapeutic aspects of contemporary dance for posttraumatic symptom relief.

The project utilized available venues, including the organization's headquarters and public spaces and a sustainable number of 10 participants joined each one of the three meetings.
One clear indicator of the pre-existing emotional baggage of the participants is that some participants hesitated to sign up or be photographed, reflecting a higher level of fear and a lack of perceived safety in the community. The organizers addressed this by assuring participants that they could engage without signing the list or appearing in photos. The initiative also expressed a desire to reach a wider audience, emphasizing the universal relevance of the topic beyond the target group.

Participants found the experience transformative, providing a therapeutic and creative outlet for processing trauma and emotions. The initiative successfully improved physical and mental well-being, boosted self-confidence, and facilitated social integration and cross-cultural understanding. In this line, one participant declared: *"The cultural exchange through dance has been eye-opening. It's not just about movement; it's about understanding each other's stories and finding mutual respect. I've made lifelong friends here, and I'm grateful for that."*

The initiative aims to continue creating a safe and inclusive space while incorporating feedback for improvement. Cultural sensitivity remains a priority, and plans include involving the community, securing more resources, and conducting ongoing research for better results. The ultimate goal is to make a more significant impact on the rehabilitation and integration of those affected by war and armed conflicts.

GERMANY

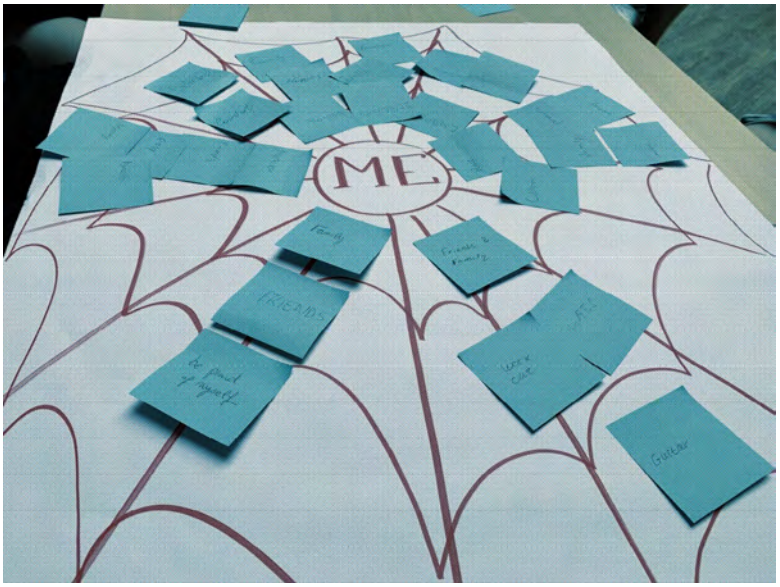
Name of the action: Building Bridges of Peace: A Transformative Journey at HeleneCamp
Length of actions:
Leading organization: Peace up!
Place: Brandenburg, Frankfurt
Summary: Intercultural understanding, mental health awareness, and a sense of peace and reconciliation among 60 young participants from Poland, Germany, Bulgaria, Ukraine, France, and Israel.

In collaboration with associated partner Pewobe gGmbH in Frankfurt (Oder), the initiative "Past and Future: Let's build the bridge of Peace" unfolded in the serene surroundings of HeleneCamp near Frankfurt Oder, Brandenburg. This project, conducted within the framework of the Twin Towns' annual summer camp at Lake Helene, aimed to foster intercultural understanding, mental health awareness, and a sense of peace and reconciliation among 60 young participants from Poland, Germany, Bulgaria, Ukraine, France, and Israel.

Situated 8 km from Frankfurt is the town of Oder in the forest, the remote venue provided an invaluable backdrop for personal growth, team building, and a holistic experience. The diverse group of participants, facing various challenges, came together to explore peace and build connections amidst their unique backgrounds.

The initiative comprised six modules, each designed to address specific objectives and contribute to the overall goals of the project:

- Day 1/June 17, 2023 Getting to Know Each Other. Message of Peace: Focused on community building, crafting a shared message of peace, and inspiring participants to initiate or engage in peace-related projects.
- Day 2/July 30th, 2023 Getting to Know Each Other. Individual and Collective Identity. Stereotypes – Prejudice – Discrimination: Delved into the impact of stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination, promoting critical thinking, self-reflection, empathy, and tolerance.
- Day 3/July 31st, 2023 European Youth Goals: Introduced participants to European Youth Goals, fostering discussions on the role of youth in shaping a better future, and exploring the connection between these goals and peace.
- Day 4/August 1st, 2023 My Inner Peace. Mental Health: Online VS Offline. What Makes Our Mental Health?: Explored self-awareness, factors influencing mental health, and strategies for mental well-being, incorporating mindfulness practices.
- Day 5/August 2nd, 2023 Conflicts. Understanding of Peace in Different Countries: Fostered understanding of peace perspectives, encouraged dialogue, critical thinking, empathy, and cooperation in addressing global challenges.
- Day 6/August 3rd, 2023 Remembrance and Reconciliation: Facilitated discussions on historical remembrance, reconciliation, and prepared participants for a visit to the Sachsenhausen Memorial and Museum.



An unexpected challenge emerged during discussions on peace perspectives in different countries, specifically related to the Israeli participants' feelings of being inadequately represented. This led to a tailored session and smaller group discussions, fostering a more inclusive environment.

The initiative yielded tangible outcomes, including a photo exhibition, article, podcast, video, and paintings, showcasing participants' perspectives on peace and their visit to the Sachsenhausen Memorial and Museum. Additionally, 49 messages of peace were displayed in Frankfurt Oder on International Kids Day.

The initiative positively impacted participants by promoting cultural understanding, reducing prejudices, increasing mental health awareness, and empowering youth for positive community engagement. These changes are expected to extend to their respective communities, enhancing social cohesion, mental health support, youth engagement, conflict resolution, and the promotion of global citizenship.

Participant Testimonial:
"Why do people still have conflicts and wars? Maybe because they do not communicate with each other? ... So, share, explain, prof, discuss and try to understand!" - Liza, Germany, 15 y.o.

Conclusion:

The "Past and Future: Let's Build the bridge of Peace" initiative successfully bridged diverse backgrounds, fostering understanding, empathy, and peace. The engagement of multiple moderators and the thoughtful design of modules ensured the effective facilitation of group dynamics, making this initiative a model for intercultural dialogue and personal growth.

ITALY

Name of the action: CivicoZero Torino: Nurturing Belonging and Identity in Young Refugees through Cultural Exchange
Leading organization: Centro Studi Sereno Regis
Place: Torino, Italy
Summary: Rebuilding a sense of belonging and identity through the creation of a safe environment, recovering the dimension of play and fun, and offering aesthetically evocative spaces to experience beauty.

In collaboration with CivicoZero Torino, Centro Studi Sereno Regis in Torino, embarked on a transformative initiative focused on the rehabilitation of young people affected by war and armed conflicts. This youth work initiative specifically targeted unaccompanied minors and young migrants aged 14-19 who recently arrived in the host country, Italy. These minor people were facing the challenges of language acquisition and at risk of marginalization in the context of political polarization and the presence of disinformation and media campaigns targeting this specific group.

The program, conducted in locations across Torino, including CivicoZero's headquarters, an Open Market, Centro Studi Sereno Regis library and Caffé San Carlo, aimed to address the needs of these young individuals. The participants were recruited through a specialized Italian language academy and identified their needs together with the teacher. Those included creating a safe space, building trust, recovering a sense of childhood, and rebuilding a feeling of belonging and identity.

The overarching goal was to rebuild a sense of belonging and identity, lost due to separation from the country of origin, by enhancing their culture of origin through activities like typical games and food recipes. Specific objectives included creating a safe environment, recovering the dimension of play and fun, and offering aesthetically evocative spaces to experience beauty.

The initiative comprised four meetings, each employing non-formal education with nonviolent methodology:
- Cortile del Maglio, 11/08/23: Introductory activities to foster introspection and relationship-building (90 min).
- Centro Studi Sereno Regis (CSSR), 18/08: Activities to strengthen trust and a sense of belonging by identifying common interests (90 min).
- CSSR, 24/08: Expression through sharing childhood games and respectful interaction (90 min).
- Porta Palazzo Market, CSSR, Caffè San Carlo, 28/08: Recreating a familiar environment by preparing and sharing typical food (all day).

Each meeting involved 15-20 participants, led by one expert facilitator, supported by four facilitators, 2-3 language mediators, and one language teacher.



Being the participants recently arrived in Italy, all of them were learning the local language, the initiative successfully addressed language barriers through the facilitators' multilingual capabilities. An additional challenge involving potential exclusion during the visit to a local coffee shop was proactively managed by establishing communication with the staff beforehand.

Teens initially distrustful of other cultures showed curiosity and gradually formed bonds of friendship. The meetings became anticipated regular appointments, leading to increased positive attitudes and exchanges of contact information among participants. Participant feedback emphasized the enjoyment of cultural exchange moments involving games and food. The importance of language mediators was underscored, and future plans include informing teachers about planned activities and designing longer educational paths for a more significant impact.

Through cultural exchange, trust-building, and enjoyable activities, the initiative has left a positive impact on the lives of these young individuals, providing them with a supportive community as they navigate the challenges of their new reality.

UKRAINE

Name of the action: Puppetry for Peace: Ukrainian Youth Empower Forcibly Displaced Children
Leading organization: Center for Euroinitiatives
Place: Sumy, Ukraine
Summary: Puppet theater to provide a creative outlet and moments of peace for internally displaced children in Sumy, Ukraine

Following their participation in the training programme "Youth Work for Rehabilitation of Young People Affected by War and Armed Conflicts," the team of the Ukrainian organization Center for Euroinnitiatives, initiated a meaningful project aimed at engaging young people in peace-related activities. Focusing on creating a puppet theater to provide a creative outlet and moments of peace for internally displaced children in Sumy, recognizing the challenges they face due to the ongoing war in Ukraine.

The choice of puppet theater was intentional, given its immersive and imaginative nature, allowing children to escape the harsh realities of war while fostering creativity, communication, and self-expression. Targeting adolescents aged 14 to 19, the team recruited 17 enthusiastic participants through social media platforms and Center for Euroinitiatives organization.

The project unfolded through several meetings, each dedicated to different aspects of puppet show creation:
- Day 1 "Getting to know each other. The theoretical backgrounds of peace and peacebuilding" (15.06.2023)
- Day 2 "Writing stories for the future puppet show's script" (20.06.2023)
- Day 3 "Artistic workshop in preparing for the future puppet show" (22.06.2023)
- Day 4 "Working with the screen" (27.06.2023)
- Day5 "How to work with puppets, with audience" (29.06.2023)
- Day 6 "Rehearsing the roles, the work with the audience, combining all the elements: puppets, music, light, work with the audience" (30.06.2023)
- Day 7 "The general rehearsal" (06.07.2023)



All the days were half a day activity in the morning in the local youth centre in Sumy.

The Ukrainian team's puppet theatre project stands as a testament to the transformative power of youth-led initiatives. By engaging internally displaced young people, the project not only provided moments of peace but also empowered participants and spectators alike. The success of the initiative highlights the potential for art and creativity to bring solace and joy to those affected by conflict. The team's commitment and the positive impact on participants and spectators emphasize the importance of such projects in fostering resilience and hope in communities facing adversity.

KOSOVO:
Name of the action: Art Fest in Mitrovica: Fostering Healing, Dialogue, and Skill Development
Length of actions: 3 days
Leading organization: Local Peace
Place: South Mitrovica
Summary: bi-communitarian cooperation in art festival for dialogue and Human Rights

The 'Art Fest' in Mitrovica, Kosovo, organized by Localpeace in collaboration with the Social Space for Deconstruction, emerged as a transformative event addressing post-war trauma, ethnic tensions, and skill development among young people. Mitrovica's unique historical context, marked by ethnic divisions, provided the backdrop for a three-day immersive experience aimed at engaging and rehabilitating the youth affected by conflict.

Mitrovica is a city divided by the Ibar river with the north side populated by Serbians from Kosovo and the southern side by Albanians from Kosovo. The tension between the two communities is visible and very present in the city's idiosyncratic while several escalation episodes happen every year. The target group of the project 'Art Fest' included young people from various communities and the three-day event addressed issues related to post-war trauma, ethnic tensions, and skill development, giving responses to the needs identified in advance through online research and community engagement.

Utilizing spaces in South Mitrovica, the project benefited from an open garden provided by Social Space for Deconstruction and indoor facilities from the Deaf and Mute Association.

The primary aim of the 'Art Fest' was to engage and rehabilitate young people affected by conflict. Objectives included fostering self-expression through art, raising Human Rights awareness, promoting cross-community dialogue, and providing practical skills development opportunities.

Program Summary:

- Day 1/28.07.2023: Commenced with a Collective Writing Workshop, encouraging participants to express their memories and traumas anonymously through art. Culminated in the 'Inscribing Care' exhibition, fostering reflection and dialogue.
- Day 2/29.07.2023: Featured an 'Open Art Station,' face painting, and Human Rights discussions. Concluded with an inclusive language and communication workshop to enhance cross-community understanding.
- Day 3/30.07.2023: Included another 'Open Art Station,' a session on the depth of peace, and a peacebuilding workshop, inspiring participants to actively contribute to peace efforts.

Addressing sensitive issues and handling post-war trauma and ethnic tensions required careful facilitation to ensure participants felt safe and supported, while at the same time, diverse linguistic backgrounds posed challenges in communication, requiring facilitators to find effective ways to ensure clear understanding. At the logistical level, coordinating the use of different venues presented challenges, demanding meticulous planning and coordination.



On the other hand, the involvement of young workers from Germany, France, and Switzerland, along with local organizations like Bone Vet Mitrovica, offering free 3D printing courses on the second day, added unexpected value to the event.

The tangible outcomes, such as art and writing exhibits showcasing participants' creativity and heightened awareness of Human Rights. The project also had broader impacts, fostering improved relations among participants from different communities and providing practical skills in sewing and 3D printing.

For future activities, it's recommended to actively involve local partners to align initiatives with community needs. Tailoring activities to the specific challenges of the target audience enhances the relevance while seeking opportunities for wider community engagement ensures broader outreach. To amplify impact, exploring avenues for additional funding is crucial, ensuring sustained success and meaningful contributions to the communities involved.

ARMENIA

Name of the action:
- Personal development: Self-awareness, self-esteem, and self-education.
- Understand the distinctions between conflict and violence.
- Practice effective communication and conflict management techniques.
- Learn stress management strategies and explore our values.

Length of actions: 9 days
Leading organization: YIC Armenia: Youth Initiative Centre
Place: Gyumri, Armavir and Gavar, Armenia
Summary: Fostering personal growth of young people through exploration of self-awareness, self-esteem, self-education, conflict resolution, effective communication, stress management, and value discovery.

After engaging in the training programs of the "Youth Work for Rehabilitation of Young People Affected by War and Armed Conflicts" project, the participants from YIC Armenia ("Youth Initiative Centre" NGO) led 9 (nine) different activities at the "Youth Hous" open youth centres in Gyumri, Armavir and Gavar communities, aiming to foster personal growth of young people from 13-18 years old through exploration of self-awareness, self-esteem, self-education, conflict resolution, effective communication, stress management, and value discovery.

Through the activities, young people explored key elements crucial for personal and interpersonal growth. We delved into the significance of self-awareness, self-esteem, and self-education, recognising their pivotal roles in shaping individuals. Additionally, we examined the disparities between conflict and violence, emphasizing the importance of constructive conflict resolution. We also discussed strategies for effective communication and conflict management, essential skills for fostering healthy relationships. Moreover, we explored stress management techniques to promote well-being and uncovered the significance of discovering and aligning with our values.

By addressing these topics, we aimed to empower young people as individuals to navigate life's challenges with resilience and authenticity.



AZERBAIJAN

Name of the action: Symbolic needs in conflict transformation: national identity and collective memory
Length of actions: Two workshops of half a day
Leading organization: "COMMON SENSE"
Place: Sumgait, Azerbaijan
Summary: Half-day workshops on identity and nationalism in the context of an armed conflict with internally displaced young people (IDPs)

In the cities of Sumgait and Barda, near the capital city of Baku, where the echoes of the Karabakh war still resonate, the "COMMON SENSE" Youth Organization conducted a transformative conflict transformation initiative aiming to gain a better understanding of the symbolism of war, with a focus on national identity and collective memory.

In the region, a significant number of refugees have been settled since the 90s war with Armenia, for this reason, it provided a relevant backdrop for this exploration. The target group for this activity comprised young people aged 15-25, primarily from the conflict-affected Absheron region. Many participants had direct or indirect experiences with war, and a notable portion had engaged in peacebuilding activities previously, showcasing a keen interest in conflict resolution.

To understand the needs of the participants, a dynamic approach was taken; instead of a predefined needs assessment scheme, participants were invited to share their perspectives on conflicts, violence prevention, peacebuilding, and reintegration at the outset of the training session. The organization was equipped with the necessary resources, including venue, technical support, and volunteers and facilitated a program that aimed to explore the role of symbolic needs in conflict resolution.



Activity overview:

Activity 1 lasted for half a day (8.8.2023) from 11:00 to 15:00 in Barda. 16 people participated. One facilitator - Vafa Farajli.

Activity 2 lasted for half a day (17.09) from 11.00-15.00 in Sumgayit Youth House. 8 participants were present. One facilitator – Nigar Muzaffarova conducted the training session.

- Introduction and presentation of the topic (11:00 - 11:15)
- Action - "It's me!" (11:15 - 11:45)
- Screening of a short film on conflict origins + discussion (11:45 - 12:15)
- National identity and its role in conflicts, including sub-themes (12:15 - 13:00)
- Lunch and tea break (13:00 - 13:45)
- "Collective memory as a symbolic need in conflict transformation" (13:45 - 14:15)
- Activity (14:15 - 14:45)
- Final remarks, closing of the session, and reflection (14:45-15:00)

The primary challenge faced was low youth representation due to societal underestimation of peacebuilding and conflict transformation topics. Despite active promotion on social media, only a third of the expected participants attended. The challenge persisted until the last moment of implementation. However, the active engagement of the small group compensated for the limited numbers, contributing positively to the training's quality.

Example of activity – "Me or not me"

Put two cards in the room, one card with the words "me", and "not me". Read out questions and let the participants choose the card and take their position. After taking the position make a short pause and participants can look around and ask themselves: Who am I standing with? Do I belong to the majority or the minority? How do I feel in the chosen position? Comments are not allowed. Everyone can decide for themselves whether they want to answer a question out loud or not.

Example questions:

· Who still lives in the area where he/she was born?
· Who of you is a girl/woman?
· Who of you is a boy/man?
· Who of you is left-handed?
· Who of you came to school by car today?
· Who of you grew up as a child with a father and mother?
· Who of you has more than two siblings?
· Who of you can speak more than two languages?
· Who does sport regularly? · Who plays an instrument?
· Who of you already has children of your own?

Debriefing questions:
· How did you feel? · What did you notice? · Which questions provoked the strongest reactions? · In which group (majority/minority) did I find myself most often? What feelings did this trigger?

An unexpected positive element was the participation of schoolchildren, injecting new perspectives and vitality into the discussions. This unforeseen contribution enhanced the overall quality and interest of the sessions. Despite the initial low awareness, the engagement of younger participants highlighted the importance of addressing such topics among the youth in Sumgait.

Participants feedback at the end of the session reflected the relevance of the training to their learning needs. All participants acknowledged the importance of identity-related narratives in conflict transformation. Two participants indicated a complete shift in their views, while four partially agreed that the training positively influenced their perspectives regarding nationalism and identity in the context of a conflict.

To amplify the impact, the organization recognizes the need for longer and more comprehensive training programs, emphasizing a multiplication effect. One-day sessions, while impactful, may not be sufficient to create awareness among larger groups. A comprehensive, long-term project addressing various aspects of identity formation, its impact on conflict, and the broader socio-political challenges is deemed essential for creating a lasting impact in the community.

POLAND

Name of the action: Building Bridges between youth affected by war and
Local community: Empowering Youth through Local Actions
Length of actions: 4 workshops
Leading organization: Fundacja Help.NGO
Place: Gdańsk, Gdynia
Summary:

Activity 1. Trauma-informed Youthwork Workshop
In collaboration with Peace Ambassadors Poland, Fundacja Help.NGO conducted a Trauma-informed Youthwork workshop titled "Working with Young People Affected by War in Ukraine." The event took place at The Social Zone in Gdansk, a prominent venue for NGO celebrations. This gathering attracted 150 NGOs, civic movements, and groups from across Poland.
The target group included representatives of NGOs working with youth in Poland and Ukraine, youth workers, and young people impacted by war. The workshop aimed to address mental health challenges, educational disruptions, and economic hardships faced by war-affected youth. Promotion of the event took place through social media channels and collaboration with Peace Ambassadors Poland.

The workshop, conducted bilingually in Polish and Ukrainian, spanned 90 minutes. It covered trauma statistics, trauma-informed youthwork principles, and the "4 Spirits" method. Despite concerns about the time slot and the noisy location, the event successfully trained 12 individuals interested in working with war-affected youth. Participant enthusiasm and eagerness to learn were notable positive outcomes.
An important learning for future events is to consider a more closed environment for improved participant attention.

Activity 2. Conflict Analysis and Resolution Workshop
In collaboration with Peace Ambassadors Poland, Fundacja Help.NGO organized two workshops titled "Building Bridges Among Conflicted Communities" at the Polish Naval Academy in Gdynia. The location's social dynamics, influenced by maritime culture and nationalism, provided a unique backdrop.

The target group included students from the Polish Naval Academy studying international relations and pedagogy, potential youth workers, and future decision-makers. The workshop aimed to facilitate a comprehensive understanding of conflict dynamics and reflect on conflicts and radicalization.

The event took place in a conference room at the library of the Polish Naval Academy, equipped with resources such as flip charts, markers, water, and seats. The workshop spanned two 90-minute sessions covering group discussions, needs mapping, factor identification, and final reflection.
Despite challenges such as violent communication and time constraints, the event successfully trained 10 individuals interested in working with people affected by war.

Participant enthusiasm and a keen interest in learning were positive surprises. Recommendations for future events include considering longer sessions and organizing follow-up activities.

Activity 3. Combating Hate Speech Workshop
In collaboration with Peace Ambassadors Poland, Fundacja Help.NGO conducted a workshop on "Combating Hate Speech and Interacting with People with Experience of War and Armed Conflicts" at the Polish Naval Academy in Gdynia.

Similar to the previous event, the target group comprised students from the Polish Naval Academy studying international relations and pedagogy, potential youth workers, and future decision-makers. The workshop aimed to equip participants with knowledge and skills to combat hate speech and interact sensitively with individuals who have experienced war.
The event took place in a conference room at the library of the Polish Naval Academy, with similar resources and seating arrangements. The two 90-minute sessions covered defining hate speech, consequences reflection, interaction with war-affected individuals, and final reflection. Overcoming challenges such as violent communication and low participation, the workshop successfully trained 15 individuals interested in working with people affected by war.

Participant enthusiasm and a keen interest in learning were positive surprises. Recommendations for future events include considering longer sessions and organizing follow-up activities.

SPAIN

Name of the action: Exploring the Local Context: Nature in Cercedilla & Exploring the Opportunities We Have as Citizens
Leading organization: Libre Pensadores de la Sierra with the association Diaconia
Place: Cercedilla, northwest part of Madrid
Summary:

In Cercedilla, a rural village in the northwest part of Madrid, hosts a variety of social issues, notably among refugees from armed conflict areas and young people needing integration and support. Libre Pensadores de la Sierra, in collaboration with Diaconia, organized activities aimed at fostering cultural exchange and offering local opportunities to these young individuals, ranging from 14 to 35 years old and affected by violent contexts in their place of origine.

The primary aim of the initiative was to create a space where young refugees and local people could meet, exchange cultural learnings, and explore the opportunities available to them in Spain. The objectives included spreading awareness of Erasmus Plus and local opportunities, fostering friendships, and creating a sustainable network of local and migrant people.

Workshops:
The initiative began with a series of workshops on February 2, 2024, led by two facilitators and attended by nine participants. The activities were conducted throughout the day at a shelter run by Diaconia in Cercedilla:
Introduction and Energizer: Started with a brief introduction to Libre Pensadores de la Sierra, followed by an energizer session to break the ice and create a relaxed atmosphere.

Opportunity Exploration: Explanation of the opportunities available to the participants in Spain, tailored to their specific situations.
Brainstorming Session: Discussion on what participants felt was missing in their current lives, leading to brainstorming on possible solutions.
Interest Identification: Identified participants' interests in painting, music, and writing, and created a list of local resources, people, and associations to support these interests.
Training Invitations: Informed participants about training sessions and personally invited them to participate.

The principal challenger where the Initial discomfort and reluctance among participants to engage openly were overcome by using icebreakers and creating a relaxed atmosphere. Language barriers were addressed with the help of facilitators for translation and leveraging Google Translate. Additionally, bilingual participants assisted in translating for those who only spoke their native language.

Curiosity played a significant role once trust was established.
The participants' enjoyment led to stronger bonds and a more engaging experience, enhancing the impact of the activities. This enjoyment and bonding fostered a sense of community and mutual support.

The outputs of the local action are:
- Created a sustainable group of support.
- Enhanced awareness of local and European opportunities.
- Fostered new relations and plans among local and migrant communities.
- A quotation from a participant that shows the crude reality of the lack of integration is "Since I arrived, nobody ever invited me to an event."



Youth Work in Conflict

Comprehensive Toolkit for Youth Empowerment and Rehabilitation

Toolkit implemented in the framework of
the project Youth Work for Rehabilitation
of Young People Affected by War

Designed and edited by Arturo Ongil Rodriguez.



Co-funded by the European Union

Project co-founded by European Union

With contributions by:













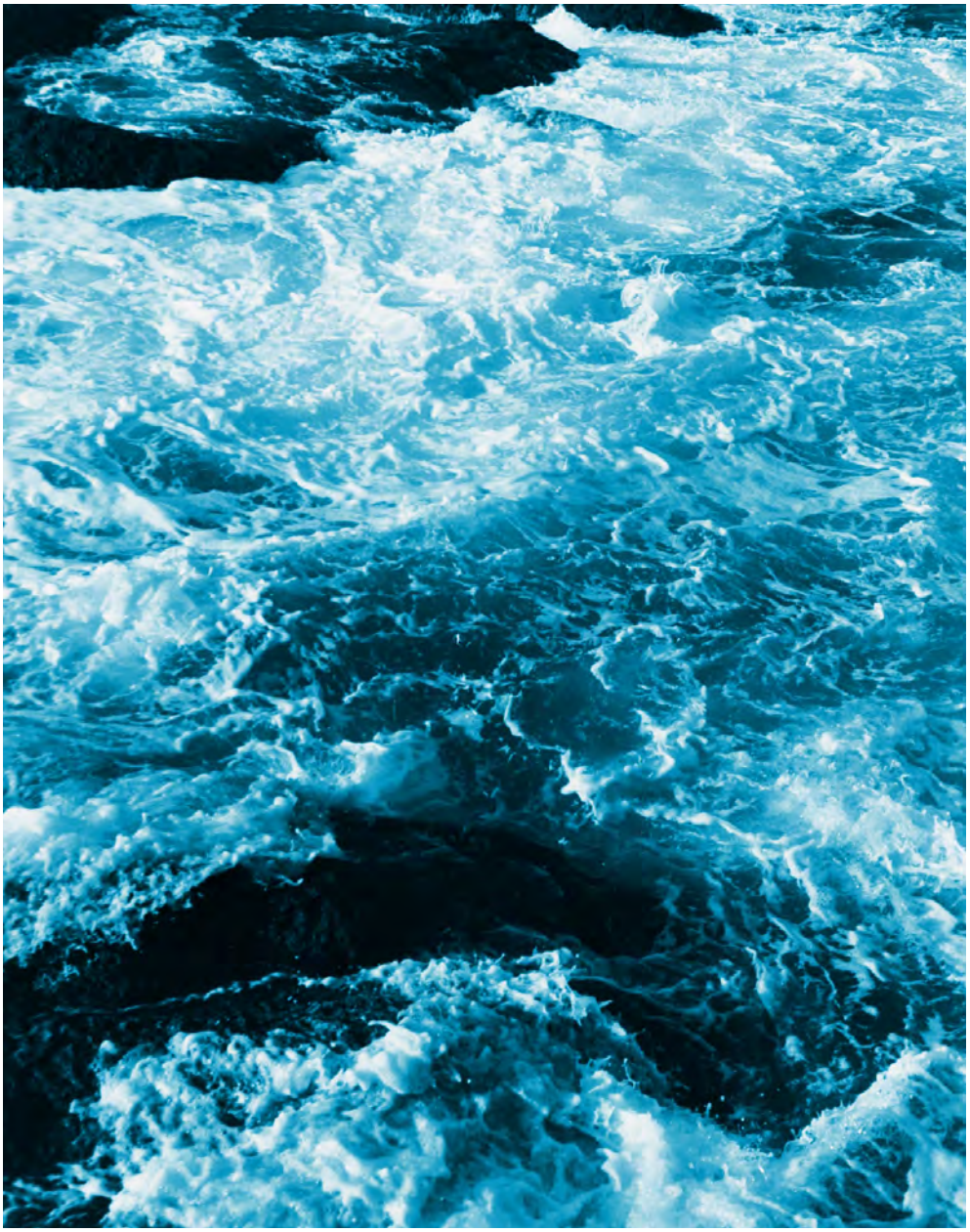






2024

Youth Work in Conflict



Comprehensive Toolkit for Youth Empowerment and Rehabilitation

Co-funded by the European Union

Toolkit implemented in the framework of the project Youth Work for Rehabilitation of Young People Affected by War by: **LIST OF PARTNER ORGANISATION**