Strengthening
Culture of Peace

Incorporating the Culture of Peace Framework
within Civil Society Organizations' Strategic Work

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"The willingness to make peace is not enough, we also need to practice"
Thich Nhat Hanh

Introduction

The concept of the culture of peace (CoP) arose after the Cold War and was developed by UNESCO as the organization's response to "Agenda for Peace" at the United Nations Security Council in 1992[1]. As such, the culture of peace concept was meant to expand the agenda for peace from negative peace to positive peace, incorporating not only the nation state but society at large. A wide range of actors have since researched, developed and expanded the study of the concept, and proposed a number of approaches to achieving the culture of peace in various contexts.

This report is mainly concerned with providing guidelines towards incorporating the culture of peace in the strategic development of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and their project designs. The researchers come from three contexts in the South Caucasus: Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia. They have significant experience in the Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) sector working around themes of peacebuilding, conflict transformation, democracy, human rights, gender and justice. We define the culture of peace as *a set of values, beliefs, norms and modes of behaviour that acknowledge and affirm a nonviolent approach to transforming destructive conflicts by promoting education for peace and justice, respecting diversity and human rights, ensuring gender equality, accessible participation and socio-economic sustainability.*

The objective for providing the culture of peace framework is to support civil society actors in building sustainable movements based on shared values of nonviolence, justice, participation, accessibility, respect and transformation of harmful power dynamics, which can ultimately contribute to coordinated strategic interventions within civil society. Furthermore, the guidelines provide recommendations aimed at addressing the consequences of violent structures and an approach for integrating a wide range of issues into a more intersectional strategy for achieving social change through a deeper understanding and practice of the culture of peace.

The guidelines we propose have been developed through desk research looking into how culture of peace has developed as a field of study and praxis, and in consultation with experienced project coordinators and researchers working on a number of issues in various contexts of the South Caucasus. Thereby, these guidelines are designed for actors working in various programs and projects encompassing not only themes of peacebuilding and conflict transformation, but also democracy, human rights, gender equality, environmental justice, youth policy, minority rights and more.

The development of this report came after a needs assessment done in a number of contexts of the region with project coordinators as an attempt to better grasp the needs, challenges and gaps when envisioning the culture of peace approach to project design and strategic development. In the following sections, we will present the findings of the needs assessment, our methodology in developing this report, clarification of terminology, and step by step guidelines suggesting a number of ways to incorporate the culture of peace within project cycles and organizational structures. Although the guideline discusses

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[1] INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES INVOLVING ETHICS AND JUSTICE – Vol.III – Culture of Peace - Federico Mayor; http://www.eolss.net/sample-chapters/c14/e1-37-05-15.pdf

specific topics such as the culture of peace and its incorporation into CSOs strategic work, it can be widely used by various actors and groups such as established organisations, informal and initiative groups, collectives, educators, activists, etc. as a toolkit to mainstream CoP in project management and internal organisational structures.

Methodology

The main components comprising the methodology of this report are based in qualitative research, encompassing both desk research and in-depth interviews, as well as two researchers' seminars to develop the concepts of the culture of peace and peace education, and finally, an expert workshop to receive feedback and critically review the proposed guidelines for incorporating the culture of peace approach to strategic project design. The researchers' seminar was composed of six researchers, three of whom are the authors of this report, and two project coordinators from the Academy for Peace and Development based in Tbilisi within the scope of the *Strengthening Culture of Peace* project supported by Bread for the World. This project began in August 2017 and will run until August 2020 with the aim to strengthen the work of civil society organizations towards the culture of peace. This research, the seminars and the researchers' meetings were funded by the Black Sea Trust in cooperation with the Robert Bosch Foundation.

The desk research undertaken by the researchers provide a frame for two components of the report: understanding the rather wide concept of culture of peace and distinguishing it from other terms in the field of peace and conflict, and grounding the guidelines for incorporating the culture of peace approach in strategic project design in previous research looking at how civil society organizations have practiced mainstreaming of peace, gender and conflict sensitivity in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of their programs.

The in-depth interviews undertaken by the researchers serve two functions within the scope of this report:
- The first component aims to assess the needs of project coordinators working in various fields with an interest for incorporating the culture of peace within the projects they implement;
- The second component aims to draw out already existing practices and tools, which have been successful in incorporating various elements of the culture of peace in projects undertaken by the organizations of the project coordinators that were interviewed.

A large part of the suggested approaches in the guidelines we have developed have come out of these already existing praxes. In annex I, please see the list of questions that have been asked of the 23 respondents from Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia working in CSOs that are active in a number of spheres, which will detailed in the needs assessment section of the report. As mentioned above, these questions aim to grasp the challenges, needs and gaps that project coordinators encounter when working to incorporate various elements of the culture of peace, in addition to gathering useful information for the guidelines we suggest in terms of incorporating the culture of peace in organizations' strategic work. Through these questions we have also been able to assess the direct needs of project coordinators to make the guidelines as relevant as possible for a wide range of civil society actors involved with project coordination for social change in the region.

In addition to desk-research and in-depth interviews, two workshops with experts working within civil society, as well as two researchers' meetings were conducted. The expert workshops were composed of 15 project coordinators and 15 non-formal and peace educators within the NGO field from Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. The workshop served as a venture to discuss and validate all research terminology, specifically, the concept of culture of peace and its underlying values. In the framework of the workshop, researchers received initial feedback on the guidelines, which assisted them to make the

research more user-friendly for project coordinators in translating the culture of peace to the strategic design and project cycles of their organizations. Researchers' meetings were another key part of the methodology, which was comprised of deeper discussions among the larger researcher's team as well as smaller meetings among the CoP research team, a significant result of which was the operationalization of the culture of peace as a concept, which can be broken down to particular indicators. This discussion and operationalization is elaborated on in the terminology section of this report, whereby it is applied to the project cycle, recommending a set of indicators for how to incorporate the culture of peace within the different stages and structures of projects and organizational strategic development.

Needs Assessment

Context Analysis
The following research was conducted in Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia. These are countries affected by unresolved conflicts, economic inequality, gender-based violence, increased militarization, and corruption, which enables a culture of violence and limited space for acting in accordance to the concept culture of peace. Such a context strengthens the image of the enemy, hate speech and intolerance towards minority groups and/or opinions. Furthermore, the political culture in the region still lacks grounded democratic traditions, critical thinking and a strong culture of independent civil society, active and participatory dialogue as well as trust among diverse groups. Also local contexts have been taken into consideration within this research to have more relevant and practical recommendations to incorporate the culture of peace into the project cycle for those organizations and groups working in the South Caucasus.

The research revealed that in terms of Civil Society Organizations' (CSOs) work, challenges and opportunities vary from country to country. Although the national context and conditions for CSOs differ from region to region, mainstreaming the culture of peace has common challenges. One of the leading difficulties is the existing culture of violence which justifies and accepts, for example, militarization and violence as the mechanism for conflict resolution, in addition to the promotion of war/hero's narratives, the rise of right and neo-fascist movements, hate speech and discriminative (intolerant) attitudes towards minority groups, direct violence within and among individuals based in a patriarchal system that upholds violent masculinity as the norm, structural injustice based in corrupt economic models, etc. Additionally, CSOs working in the South Caucasus are dependent on foreign donations and experience scarcity of funds, which hinders long-term, strategic planning to conduct the work of altering the prevailing culture of violence.

CSOs working in Georgia are known as being stronger, more vibrant and more active than most in the region, and they have had a number of advocacy accomplishments in various settings[2]. Although CSOs can advocate for human rights as well as government reforms and accountability, divisions within civil society are still the reality of the country. Examples such as the appearance of Georgian March Movement with exclusionist ideas, non-acceptance and hatred towards sexual and other minority groups nourish pro-violent norms and behaviors. This creates an environment where the work for CSOs supporting freedom, justice, equality and equity across Georgian society becomes more complex and challenging. Ongoing ethno-territorial and political conflicts also increase divisions and limit space for mainstreaming the culture of peace in CSO's strategic planning. Looking at the current discourses within Georgian society, it becomes clear that there is lack of a comprehensive understanding of violence, destructive conflicts and their impact on everyday life, as well as the importance

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[2]EUROPE FOUNDATION: Situation Analysis of Civil Society in Georgiahttp://www.epfound.ge/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Situation-Analysis-of-CSOs-in-Georgia.pdf

of mainstreaming the culture of peace and critical thinking to transform violent norms. Thereby, advocating for the culture of peace sensitive project planning has the potential to change cultural and social norms, which justify and accept violent norms and behaviors and can, as a result, strengthen peaceful and non-discriminatory beliefs and practices.

In Azerbaijan, opportunities for civil society have been shrinking since 2014 after amendments made to the law on NGO and Grants regulation. Those amendments complicated receiving funds from foreign donors and increased control over civil society by the state. Since then a sufficient number of CSOs in Azerbaijan have suspended their activities due to lack of funding[3]. Moreover, civil society has been transformed into the working union of dedicated individuals, initiative groups and youth-led movements rather than institutions. CSO's inability to perform fully and sustainably in Azerbaijan challenges the impact of social change and justice against violent structures. The 2016 April War along the Nagorno-Karabakh line of contact strengthened the non-existence of the culture of peace and increased violent narratives, hatred, and hopelessness for a peaceful settlement of the ongoing conflict. Solving conflicts through violent means has become a predominant norm not only for society but also for some CSOs in Azerbaijan despite contradicting their values. Thus, mainstreaming the culture of peace in CSOs strategic planning has the potential to transform values, bring new vision and strengthen the existing civil society in Azerbaijan for social change.

In Armenia, civil society has grown and become a powerful actor since the collapse of the Soviet Union, sometimes acting and serving societal needs where the state has failed to take responsibility, and act in accordance to its mandate. This is quite a challenging task given that the state does not always work toward the same end goal as CSOs and has often inhibited transforming attitudes and behaviors . Given the current climate in post-revolutionary Armenia, CSOs are more hopeful about collaborating with the state and seeing the impact of their work on people's lives, ending corruption, the growth of the economy and the implementation of human rights. Armenia remains a country at war, which has meant and continues to mean that the justification for war and militarization permeates all spheres of life from the state, to civil society, to how people relate to structures and one another. In this regard, the culture of peace must be rooted in healing historical trauma and the transformation of narratives upholding violence as the norm to create more possibilities for relating to each other, to structures and to history itself from a place of deep understanding, listening, respect and justice.

Main Findings from the Needs Assessment
Representatives of civil society organizations as well as informal groups, including project coordinators, educators and volunteers were interviewed within the scope of this research in order to understand their needs regarding the incorporation of culture of peace within project cycles and organizational structures. The work respondents focus on varied in scope from peacebuilding, confidence building, women's rights, ethnic minority integration, conflict resolution, environmental issues, human rights, democracy and civil society development. There were also differences regarding organizational capacity and development with regards to internal structures and systems as well as program management. Some of the organizations and groups had more experience with results based management and systematic strategic thinking as well as design, while others - grassroots organizations - were focused more on themes and content, with emphasis more on output levels of change.

Respondents showed a general weakness or a lack conceptual understanding of the culture of peace and its transformative effects. This gap translated to the lack of conceptual and practical understanding of the link between existing challenges in the spheres of life that civil society organizations work to change and the dominant culture of violence that sustains the existence of those challenges. In probing deeper with project coordinators, we discovered that the term culture of peace

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[3]USAID: 2016 CSO Sustainability Indexhttps://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1866/CSOSI_Report_7-28-17.pdf

often gets confused with other terms within the field of peace and conflict such as peacebuilding, peacemaking, peacekeeping, conflict sensitivity, conflict transformation, conflict resolution, conflict management and nonviolence. Yet it was observed that most organizations working for social change across contexts were, in fact, incorporating many elements of the culture of peace within their organizations and project directions. Due to confusion over terms, they were hesitant to claim using the culture of peace approach. Thereby, a significant need in terms of incorporating the culture of peace approach to strategic project design for many civil society organizations not branding themselves as peacebuilding organizations is to shift the understanding of the culture of peace into a wider concept, encompassing a number of underlying values shared within civil society work. Besides the general needs for incorporating CoP in projects, there were various ideas and needs for being able to practically implement a CoP approach in relation to core team members, target communities and other stakeholders.

Envisioning Projects with the Culture of Peace Approach
Respondents were asked how they envision a project based in the culture of peace to understand their perspectives regarding incorporation of the culture of peace within projects. Although respondents did not have a comprehensive understanding of CoP approach in projects, they still mentioned different elements, values and principles in project management, which they believe can contribute to peace and project impact. At organisational level, respondents mention few crucial needs in program development and team-building. Most respondents emphasized that such a program must incorporate elements of *breaking stereotypes, which includes having an open mind and getting out of limited mentalities imposed by society.* Some organizations working on raising awareness on democratic values, civic engagement, peace awareness or non-violence believe that they already contribute to CoP, in their given definition of CoP. An organization working on peacebuilding does not, by default, incorporate a CoP approach though they may work specifically with political conflicts, often separating such conflict from social conflicts. Relations between core team members of an organization are believed to be among some of the most important elements in maintaining equal and meaningful participation of all team members throughout the project. Some of the strategies mentioned by respondents regarding this element were positive communication, active listening, creating an environment for dialogue, criticism, and creative tension.

At external level, respondents mentioned various needs which they believe could contribute to the successful implementation of CoP in their projects. Among them, relations between project participants and inclusivity, as well as accessibility of the project to various groups believed to be important components. Furthermore, *respect toward others* was mentioned which would *allow differences to exist among individuals or groups involved in a project without judgement or discrimination. Active listening* was also mentioned, especially as a method to eliminate misunderstandings and *creating a safe space* for everyone *to feel empowered to express themselves* without fear. Part of creating a safe space was also dependent on implementing projects in *peaceful environments, in nature without noise or daily stress* where *mindfulness* could be cultivated among project participants. Additionally, it was mentioned that in order to incorporate the culture of peace within projects, it is important to have a *critical approach*, which includes *sensitivity to gender and other differences people* have. A few respondents mentioned that according to their experience cooperating with partners that integrate human rights, peace and justice is a crucial indicator for being able to incorporate CoP in projects. Thus, there is a need to conduct stakeholder analyses in relation to projects in order *to cooperate with the partners, which are not discriminative and have respect for diversity.*

One major gap with regards to incorporating CoP into projects is the lack of understanding and envisioning of CoP elements within projects. Respondents who brought up all the above-mentioned elements often did not have a practical vision for how to include these into their projects and/or organizations. In addition to the challenge of defining CoP, it was also difficult

to comprehensively and practically realize a CoP approach. While for some CoP was an abstract set of values and norms, for others it could be practically doable through various actions. These scattered competences and understandings need to be put together and assist the organizations and actors involved in a project to be aware of various components/indicators of the CoP and work together to attain it.

Understanding Needs for Strategically Incorporating the culture of peace Approach
In order to understand the experience of respondents' in strategic planning of programs within their organizations and to find out the challenges and gaps they have encountered if/when they have attempted to incorporate CoP in their work, they were asked to elaborate on the strategic planning practices of their organizations. The capacity and experience for strategic planning of project cycles varied from organization to organization. In Armenia, out of six respondents, two did not have a systemic practice of strategic planning in their organizations; two mentioned that they had just started to incorporate strategic planning into the structures of their organizations, and the other two mentioned their practical approach with strategic planning. All organizations interviewed in Georgia had strong organizational structure in terms of organizational management. Four organizations out of eight had an external board which designed organizations' strategic direction for several years. The other four organizations claimed to have a horizontal approach in determining their organization's strategic directions and creating action plan. Respondents said that every organization is run by a board of directors or other form of top management, however, in the majority of cases, all staff is engaged in decision-making to ensure inclusivity and active participation. In the context of Azerbaijan, it has become difficult and less feasible for CSOs to design strategic plans for their organizations due to limited resources as well as unpredictability of the environment for civil society. The majority of respondents spoke of the shift in their agendas and plans due to scarcity of resources, opportunities, and increased barriers. This causes long-term plans to lose their efficiency and some organizations are already looking for alternative ways to survive as an institution. In Azerbaijan, interviewed organizations also had various competences, in terms of strategic planning and organizational management. More experienced organizations have different skill-sets and expertise, which help them to assess the needs and priorities of the organization and beneficiaries they are working with. For others, the next steps are formulated through informal gatherings, discussions and exchange of ideas.

Overall, across all three contexts it was evident that the organizations interviewed had a format for gathering with staff, discussing plans, themes, and approaches to reaching goals before and during project implementation. However, there is a great need to find a more organized, but also flexible method to strategically incorporate the culture of peace into the entire project cycle of an organization, including both the external component of project planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation as well as the internal component of organizations, including internal structures and the overall organizational environment.

An important gap with the issue of strategic thinking in general expressed by many project coordinators was the reality of donor-driven projects, which are not always conducive to thinking strategically in terms of both the needs of an organization and the needs of the communities the organizations aims to work with. There is a need from the donor's side to fully understand the local context and needs, and to do so, donors can increase their quality of communication with local partners and be more flexible in terms of their priorities. Once an organization understands the broad implications for transforming power dynamics on a wider scale through thinking in terms of creating the culture of peace both within the organization as well as through the organization's work, a shift in power dynamics can also take place between implementing organizations and funders. Another gap that came out as a result of the interviews was the difference in the CoP approach for internal and external management. The majority of interviewed organizations are unsure and perhaps hesitant about integration of CoP in their internal management, while all of them also emphasize the necessity and interest of strengthening CoP in their strategic planning.

Expectations from a Manual for Incorporating the Culture of Peace

In order to make the manual as relevant as possible for project coordinators looking to incorporate CoP into strategic thinking in terms of the project cycle and also internal organizational structures, it was important to understand what expectations respondents would have from such a manual. The main expectations and needs for general, internal and external management, which became clearer after conducting the interviews are the following:

- Clearly defined terminologies, explaining components of CoP and its comparison with other terms such as peacebuilding, conflict-management, conflict-sensitivity, gender-sensitivity etc.
- Understanding the importance of context: connection between militarisation and violence (rape, domestic violence, etc.), economic and social implications of violence, post-war psychological implications on communities, a deeper understanding of the cost of violence (for communities, development, government, etc.);
- Understanding the intersectionality of peace and all other issues (disability rights, women's rights, environmental rights, etc.) in various settings; specifically, in conflict-affected areas, and vulnerable communities, or when facing bureaucratic challenges;
- Examples of success where other organizations managed to have meaningful experiences with incorporating the culture of peace into their project cycles and organizational management.

Internally, organizations need to understand:
- Tools and ways of breaking stereotypes among team members, ensuring inclusivity and meaningful participation of all members on all levels of the project cycle;
- Indicators for internal management, which would maintain CoP inside the organization.

Externally, needs are:
- Mechanisms to increase cooperation and good relations with other actors, stakeholders, beneficiaries and target communities within the project;
- How to integrate the meaningful participation of people with various backgrounds, including minorities in the organizational management and project management;
- Indicators for partnering with truly value-based partners/stakeholders.

There was a general interest voiced about learning more on how to incorporate the culture of peace within the work projects coordinators do and within their organizations. There is however a need to shift the mentality regarding terminology, which creates boundaries between those working with peace and conflict and those not working with these issues directly, in order to make the case that "culture of peace" refers not only to those activities, which are peacebuilding and conflict transformation related, but rather that it is a broader culture, an approach and way of relating to oneself, others, structures, environments and the world at large. In the next section, we will discuss some of the terms around the topic, the meanings they have been given by a wide range of actors and then give our own definition of "culture of peace" based on desk research and other experts in the field, which you will find incorporates most of the concepts reflected by respondents. As per the need assessed from interviews with respondents, we will also provide a brief understanding of violence and culture of violence, which can ground the necessity for transformation of internal organizational structures as well as strategic project planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation toward a more culture of peace oriented civil society.

Terminology

Both the initial and detailed needs assessments within the frames of the research revealed confusion around peace and conflict terminology and the concept of culture of peace among respondents. This section aims to clarify terminology specifically as it relates to the following terms: *peace, peacebuilding, peacemaking, peacekeeping, nonviolence, conflict, conflict resolution, conflict management, conflict transformation and conflict sensitivity*. In addition to the abovementioned terms, a definition of *violence and culture of violence* is also provided by incorporating structural theories on the topic. Once these concepts are clarified to avoid further confusion, a deeper discussion on the main topic of the research - Culture of Peace - will follow.

Peace

Since the end of World War II, the concept of "peace" has become a wider topic of discussion outside of theology and various spiritual practices from East to West, with attempts being made to better understand how to achieve peace in the world. In a 1996 article on creating a global and local culture of peace, Linda Groff and Paul Smoker provide a brief history of the evolution of the concept to encompass six versions of peace, building upon each other. In brief, these concepts are *peace as the absence of war* implicating "negative peace" as in any situation where physical violence has stopped; *peace as balance of forces in the international system* proposed by Quincy Wright, which built on the notion of absence of war to imply that war takes place when the balance of political, social, cultural and technological factors break down and thereby, peace can be achieved when that balance is maintained; *peace as negative peace (no war) and positive peace (no structural violence),* which builds on Johan Galtung's concept of structural violence, implying that peace is the absence of not only physical violence but also the violence that takes place from the way that economic, social and political structures are organized in any given context; *feminist peace,* which "expanded the concept of structural violence to include personal, micro- and macro-level structures that harm or discriminate against particular individuals or groups"[4] stressing the "holistic, non-hierarchical interactions between human beings" as components of positive peace; *peace with the environment* (holistic peace), which places high value on the relationship that humans have with the bioenvironmental systems on the planet we inhabit; and finally *inner peace*, which implies a deeper connection to self as a spiritual element, from which peacefulness can emanate onto others and the environment for the attainment of outer peace.

The research team of this report defines peace as *a participatory, non-violent process that seeks to address all forms of violence and creates conditions for inner, socio-political, economic and environmental well-being*.

Peacekeeping

The main function of peacekeeping is to facilitate the transition from a state of violence to a state of peace through the provision of peacekeepers, often from UN member states' national armies and interstate organizations, to post-conflict zones. The concept rests on three main principles, the first being that the peacekeeping mission must maintain the consent of the host state(s) and immediate parties to the dispute; the peacekeeping mission must act impartially and; behave in a non-violent and non-threatening manner[5].

Peacemaking

Peacemaking refers to the process of supporting conflicting parties to forge a settlement through what is often called *track one diplomacy*, which refers to efforts made at resolving a conflict at an elite political level. The terms *negotiation* and

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[4] Creating Global-Local Culture of Peace; Linda Groff and Paul Smoker; http://www.gmu.edu/programs/icar/pcs/smoker.htm
[5] United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines; http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/documents/capstone_eng.pdf

mediation often refer to the *peacemaking* element of ending and/or resolving a conflict, where negotiations often take place between the different conflicting actors with the support of a third-party mediator. The role of a mediator in this case is to "assist with process and communication problems, and help the parties work effectively together to draft a workable peace accord"[6].

Peacebuilding

It is generally accepted that peacebuilding is a wider and longer process encompassing a range of recovery, rehabilitation, justice, democracy and trust-building activities in a post-conflict society. As such, peacebuilding aims to address structural causes of violence in society, ensuring that sustainable peace can be achieved by transforming violent structures regardless of what stage a peace process is in. Thereby, addressing the root causes of violence such as poverty, political and social inequality, corruption, discrimination, lack of access to education, medical care, shelter and other basic needs are integral to peacebuilding as a method to achieve sustainable peace. As the concept of peacebuilding has developed, it has also become understood that transformation of violent structures within society are not only a means to end and transform conflict, but also a means to prevent conflict from occurring at all. In societies with strong existing divides among its members, peacebuilding also aims to support "individuals, communities and societies transform the way they perceive and manage conflicts"[7] in order to rebuild trust and transform broken relations.

Nonviolence

The concept of nonviolence was popularized by well-known nonviolence philosopher and practitioner, Mahatma Ghandi, who was guided by a spiritual philosophy of nonviolence and who was the "first person to take ideas of nonviolence and apply them to a mass movement for social and political change"[8]. The main philosophy behind nonviolence is that the means are ends in the making, which basically implies that rejecting violence as a means to achieve a goal will ensure that whatever is achieved through nonviolence will also reject violence as a method to maintain itself. The concept relies on respect for oneself and for others, which implies that "in a nonviolent struggle, one has the goal of not dehumanizing one's own opponent"[9] as dehumanization is the process by which violence toward another becomes justified. Overall, nonviolence is positioned as an active, rather than a passive, struggle against unjust laws and policies, which aims to include constructive alternatives to violence in order to create new models for organizing structures within society based on the principles of respect, nonviolence and non-hierarchical relations between peoples.

Peace Education (non-formal)

Peace Education is aimed at building the culture of peace by using non-formal methodology. It is the process of acquiring knowledge and developing skills and attitudes, build inner, social and environmental peace, thus to be in harmony with oneself, with others and with the environment.

Conflict

Conflict is defined as a disagreement in which the parties involved perceive a threat to their needs, interests or concerns. Conflict arises when the parties to conflict believe that their goals cannot be achieved simultaneously or when they perceive

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[6] International Online Training Program on Intractable Conflict, Conflict Research Consortium, University of Colorado, USA; https://www.colorado.edu/conflict/peace/treatment/peacemkg.htm

[7] International Association for Humanitarian Policy and Conflict Research; Peace Building Initiative; http://www.peacebuildinginitiative.org/index34ac.html

[8] Smoker, Paul and Groff, Linda (1996) "Creating Global-Local Cultures of Peace," *Peace and Conflict Studies*: Vol. 3: No. 1 , Article 3. Available at: http://nsuworks.nova.edu/pcs/vol3/iss1/3

[9] Ibid

that their values are not compatible. Conflict is mistakenly assumed as inherently violent. However, conflict is a naturally occurring phenomenon that has both constructive and destructive potential, depending on how it is managed. Engaging in conflict tends to generate anxiety in many people who associate it with negative or violent outcomes, which leads to fight or flight responses. In fact, conflict can provide an opportunity to learn about ourselves and others, motivate necessary changes in the status quo, challenge obsolete ways of thinking and relating to others and ourselves. Conflict often occurs as a catalyst for change in relations, structures or systems that are not working. Some want change, while others oppose it. It is the way that conflict is managed that will determine whether the conflict has a positive or negative impact on our lives. It is when conflict is not managed properly that it becomes violent. In other words, conflicts are inevitable, violence is not. If disagreement and conflict are addressed peacefully and creatively, the process can be positive. Positive conflict can build relationships, create coalitions, foster communication, strengthen institutions, and create new ideas, rules and laws.

Conflict Management
Conflict management is defined as a process that aims at reducing the negative aspect of the conflict and increasing the positive aspect of it. There are five conflict management strategies: competing, avoiding, accommodating, compromising and collaborating.

Conflict Resolution
Conflict resolution is defined as a process to achieve a negative peace through a mutually acceptable agreement with the help of third party mediation and facilitation. Although initially conflict resolution has mainly "focused on stopping violence... [in contemporary times] it has broadened greatly to incorporate building the conditions for peace, including post-violence reconciliation, enhancing justice, establishing conflict management systems, and many other issues"[10]. As such it incorporates some conflict transformation and peacebuilding elements, but the main focus is to end violence as a result of a conflict through mediation, negotiation and dialogue between conflicting parties.

Conflict Transformation
Building on conflict resolution and management theories, conflict transformation aims to address root causes of conflict by "engaging with and transforming the relationships, interests, discourses and, if necessary, the very constitution of society that supports the continuation of violent conflict"[11]. As such, theorists and practitioners of conflict transformation perceive conflict as an opportunity for a shift to take place in structures and relations within a given society through active involvement of its people and resources, as opposed to intervention from a third-party. According to John Paul Lederach, "a sustainable transformative approach [to conflict] suggests that the key lies in the relationships of the involved parties, with all that the term encompasses at the psychological, spiritual, social, economic, political and military levels"[12]. In a sense, conflict transformation shares many elements with peacebuilding as a "dynamic social construct"[13], which can contribute to more peaceful, just and healthy societies.

Conflict Sensitivity
Humanitarian, development or peacebuilding initiatives have different and sometimes unintended negative side effects. Therefore, the context for operation and the interaction between conflicting parties as well as between the intervention and the context must be carefully analysed and taken into consideration. Conflict sensitivity indicates that the capacity to

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[10] The Evolution of Conflict Resolution; Louis Kriesberg; Bercovitch, Jacob, Victor Kremenyuk and I. William Zartman (Eds.) 2009. The Sage Handbook of Conflict Resolution. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

[11]Conflict Transformation: A Multi-Dimensional Task; Hugh Miall; http://edoc.vifapol.de/opus/volltexte/2013/4682/pdf/miall_handbook.pdf

[12]Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies; John Paul Lederach; Washington, D.C.: U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 1997; 20, 75, 84-85.

[13]Ibid

maximize positive impact of the intervention and avoid harmful effects should be strengthened and promoted. DO NO HARM is one of the core principles of conflict sensitivity, which affirms an ethical and conscious approach to intervention in order to avoid any unintended, harmful impact on the situation or the targeted groups[14].

Violence

Violence is a behavior that involves intentional use of physical force or power to harm, hurt, damage, threaten oneself, individuals, groups or any physical and biological beings. According to Johan Galtung's triangle, core typology of violence is direct, structural and cultural[15]. Direct violence represents acts of physiological, physical harm, abuse or neglect that aims to kill, manipulate, assault and/or cause damage. Structural violence is when systems or structures legitimize and institutionalize social injustice, present unequal opportunities, in addition to preventing or threatening the existence of living beings. Cultural violence refers to the social norms, value systems that justify structural or direct violence. While direct violence is visible, structural and cultural violence are more invisible and less addressed.

Culture of Violence

Culture of violence is the values, norms and behaviours that promote, legitimize, or perpetrate all forms of violence, often causing distrust, suspicion, intolerance and hatred[16]. Culture of violence affirms predominant norms of supporting cultural and structural violence, which causes economic, social, political and environmental injustices. Some examples of how this plays out include the increasing gap between rich and poor, using power over marginalized groups, exploitation of human and other living beings for the purpose of economic profit, militarization and the promotion of war.

Culture of Peace

What other experts are saying about the culture of peace

In resolution 52/13 of the United Nations General Assembly, "Culture of Peace" regards "a set of actions taken by individuals, groups and institutions, which aim to transform values, attitudes, modes of behaviour and ways of life that reject violence and offer an alternative to the culture of war and violence by advancing human rights, democracy, tolerance, promotion of development, education for peace, the free flow of information, and the wider participation of women"[17]. Since the end of the 20th century, the concept has been taken up by academics and practitioners aiming to advance the culture of peace agenda to develop it further for policy and practice in the field of international relations and civil society. As defined by Elise Boulding, "the main point about the culture of peace is that it deals creatively with difference and conflict, and it is a listening culture[...]by creating more and more spaces for problem-solving[18]". Taking into account Galtung's perspective of conflict as "a social system of actors with incompatibility [perceived or real] between their goal-states[19]", the culture of peace would imply acting upon conflict attitudes and behaviours in a nonviolent manner so as to provide space for transformation of attitudes, which will in turn translate to nonviolent modes of addressing a conflict. In order to shift unjust and hierarchical relations between people, within structures and institutions, a mentality of "the strong dominate the weak" must be rejected and instead societies must be structured "so that positions of power and status in hierarchies are based on caring for others rather than dominating them[20]".

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[14]Conflict Sensitive Approaches to Humanitarian Assistance and Peacebuilding Resources: Introduction to the Resource Pack
[15] Galtung, Johan. "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research" *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (1969)
[16]   UNESCO From A Culture of Violence to A Culture of Peace 1996
[17] INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES INVOLVING ETHICS AND JUSTICE – Vol.III – Culture of Peace - Federico Mayor; http://www.eolss.net/sample-chapters/c14/e1-37-05-15.pdf
[18]Building a Culture of Peace: Some Priorities; Elise Boulding; 2001, NWSA Journal; Vol 13, No 2; http://web.pdx.edu/~abyron/peace_ed/Wk4/culture2.pdf
[19]Theories of Conflict: Definitions, Dimensions, Negations, Formations; Johan Galtung; Colombia University, 1958.
[20] Maslow, Abraham H., 1977. The Farther Reaches of Human Nature. New York: Penguin.

The concept of human security can be incorporated within the culture of peace paradigm based on prioritization of economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the individuals and communities negatively affected by structural violence[21]. In this sense, the foundations of the culture of peace do not solely rest on the shoulders of individuals to shift values, attitudes and behaviours but also upon transnational multinational corporations, which have globalized unequal distribution of power and resources resulting in "manifestations of structural violence, namely poverty, starvation and preventable disease[22]." In some feminist perspectives, attainment of the culture of peace must also regard the domain of daily lived experience, implying that "structures" are more "circular patterns as opposed to the complex, hierarchical notions associated with Galtungian definitions of structural violence[23]". The emphasis here is on how people relate to themselves, to one another, to structures and institutions based on power dynamics in a given context and situation. According to Michel Foucault, "the exercise of power is not simply a relationship between "partners," individual or collective; it is a way in which some act on others[24]" This implies that power forms in relation and "exists only as exercised by on others, only when it is put into action, even though, of course, it is inscribed in a field of sparsely available possibilities underpinned by permanent structures[25]". As such, moving toward the culture of peace implies a continuous process to shift societal values aimed at the transformation of hierarchical power dynamics among and between individuals, groups, structures and global institutions.

What the research respondents are saying about culture of peace
The most common conceptualization of the term "culture of peace" for all respondents interviewed in the three contexts included first and furthermore a *rejection of violence* and *an environment free from violence*. Further analysis found that respondents conceive culture of peace as *relations between and among people based on listening and understanding, non-discrimination and mutual respect,* which would enable them *to solve conflicts, problems and disagreements through nonviolent communication and dialogue*. Respondents also mentioned the significance of *compromise, tolerance and respect for human rights, including the right to peace* as important components of creating the culture of peace.

According to respondents, the *culture* element of creating an environment of peace was based on a *value system starting at the individual level with inner peace*, *an attitude of willingness to take risks*, and *active participation in creating democratic structures*, which allow *for acceptance of differences, accessible well-being and equal opportunities for all*. On an organizational level, respondents also emphasized the importance of *strengthening democratic values, culture of equality and justice, community participation and positive integration of minorities* as crucial elements of practicing the culture of peace.

Upon closer look, it is evident that our respondents' values associated with the culture of peace are in line with the values expressed by experts studying and practicing the culture of peace. These include rejection of violence, nonviolent modes of solving conflicts, respect of human rights, tolerance, democracy, education, and equality. In order to not leave the conceptualization of culture of peace at an abstract level of mere values, the following section will attempt to operationalize the concept into practical parts with relevant indicators that can aid the process of integrating these values into the daily work of project planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

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[21]Assessing the Basis for a Culture of Peace in Contemporary Societies; Joseph De Rivera
http://web.pdx.edu/~abyron/peace_ed/Wk4/culture1.pdf
[22]Ibid
[23]Ibid
[24]Michel Foucault; The Subject and the Power; http://www.michel-foucault.com/dulwich/subject.pdf
[25]Ibid

The researchers' definition of the culture of peace

The researchers of this report have discussed the concept of culture of peace in depth among each other and agreed upon a definition: culture of peace is *a set of values, beliefs, norms and modes of behaviour that acknowledge and affirm a nonviolent approach to transforming destructive conflicts by promoting education for peace and justice, respecting diversity and human rights, ensuring gender equity, accessible participation and transformation of harmful economic, socio-political and environmental structures.*

A brief explanation of the motivation with regards to this conceptualization of culture of peace starts with an agreement the researchers had about the "culture" element of the term, which implies values, beliefs, norms and modes of behaviour. This means that the importance of both attitudes within a given society as well as the behaviours that result from those attitudes as building blocks of a "culture" are taken into account. Then the researchers aimed to provide a positive approach to how such a culture can be built through acknowledgment and affirmation of values they see as imperative for the practice of the culture of peace. These values include nonviolence and rejection of violence when dealing with conflict, education focusing on peace and justice, respecting differences among people and human rights, working toward gender equality and ensuring that participation is effective and accessible to all, and finally working toward economic and social sustainability. The values underlying this conceptualization of culture of peace can be summarized as the following keywords.

Figure 1: Underlying Values of Culture of Peace
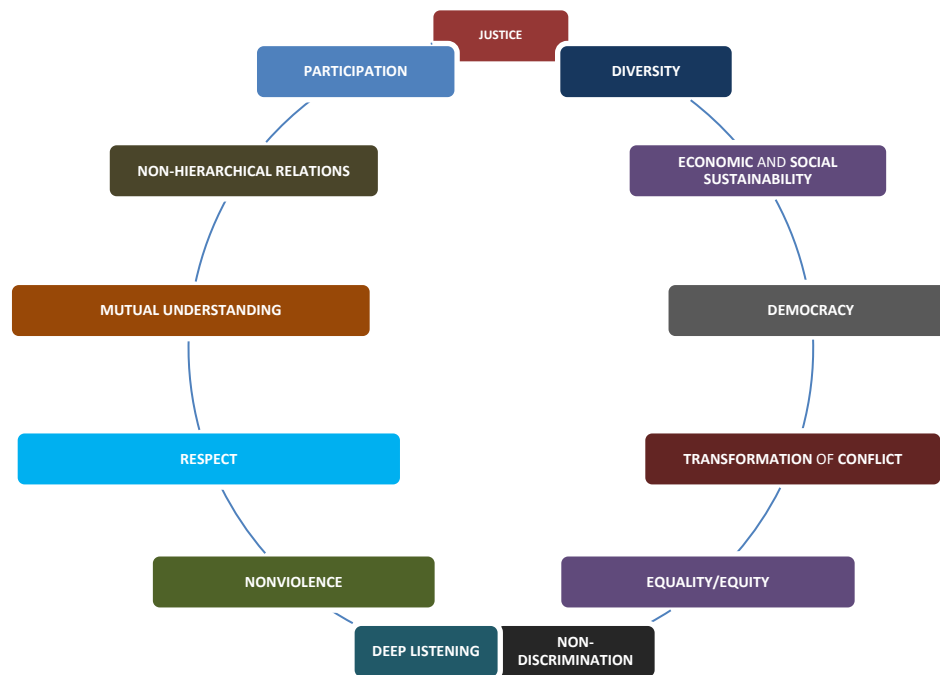
In order to ensure practicality and user-friendly character of the research, the following part will illustrate all key values, principles and actions, which will ensure the culture of peace sensitivity within the project team and project cycle.

Table 1: Operationalization of Culture of Peace (How to DO CoP)

Action proposed	Mechanisms & Tools for Action	Brief Discuss on the Action
Reflecting on Values, Beliefs and Norms	- *Critical thinking* - *Analysing self and collective identities* - *Deconstructing existing values, beliefs and norms*	*Values, belief and norms are socially constructed principles that govern one's life and actions, often reflecting dominant modes of thinking around how to relate to oneself, to others, as well as the environment. These values, beliefs and norms can be subject to transformation upon critical thinking and a willingness to analyse and deconstruct one's role in reproducing certain dominant modes of thinking and relating.*
Adopting Nonviolent Approaches	- *Breathing* - *Mindfulness* - *Being aware of self, others and environment* - *Initiating communication* - *Maintaining communication* - *Using Nonviolent language* - *Transformation of anger*	*Upon critically thinking, deconstructing and analysing dominant values, beliefs and norms a number of possibilities for constructing positive modes of relating to one self, to others and to the environment can be practiced systematically. The suggestions in the second column are tools for obtaining justice without violence, and include a personal practice of being harmless to self and others under every condition, as well as rejecting all forms of violence. Nonviolence includes communication, dialogue (active listening and empathy) and inclusion as methods. Using nonviolent language is part of this approach, being free from hate speech, free from aggression, anger and violence. This approach does not reject anger as abnormal, rather it suggests tools for not allowing it to transform into violence. Here a core belief is that one starts from oneself, following an approach for demanding respect as a way to defend oneself in a nonviolent way. This approach is also about being aware of power relations and being mindful of not using power over others in a violent way, but rather sharing power/ power with.*
Sustaining Nonviolent Modes of Behaviour	- *Re-evaluating violent actions in the past and understanding their consequences on the present* - *Acting based on a commitment to a nonviolent approach of relating to self and to others*	*Following the adoption of a nonviolent approach, it is imperative to act according to values steeped in nonviolence, respect, open and honest communication, transparency, trust, etc. This implies that one's behavior will reflect these abovementioned values, beliefs and norms based on rejection of violence as a method of communication/action. In order to sustain such behavior, it is crucial to stay committed to constant reflection and (re)evaluation of violent actions and/or attitudes in the present and the past.*
	- *Transparent communication* - *Commitment to honesty*	*Having the intention for transformation of situations where conflict is or can become violent is crucial in*

Transforming Destructive Conflicts	- *Collaboration* - *Dialogue* - *Active listening* - *Not judging* - *Being empathetic* - *Understanding one's needs and the needs of the other* - *Self-awareness* - *Not projecting onto others*	*working with destructive conflicts. Destructive conflict has a negative intention, it aims to destroy or harm people's physical and/or psychological wellbeing. It is also a method/process of dealing with conflict in a violent way, meaning that a person, a group or an institution practice cruelty, neglect, control, abuse, harassment, bullying, manipulating, withholding, disrespect, physical harm, emotional harm.* *Constructive conflict is a way of having disputes, different ideas, conflicting ideologies, but having space for exchanging different ideas to have positive results. Through this method it is possible to transform differences into something that can strengthen relations (you can agree to disagree without imposing your ideas on others), organizations by strengthening teamwork, trust-building and cooperation. All parties involved in a conflict are responsible for the transformation of that conflict by having the intention to do no harm.*
Promote Education for Peace and Justice	- *Providing access to educational materials, non-formal education settings, resources and opportunities on peace and justice* - *Incorporating theories, practices and examples of nonviolence, peace and justice from other contexts into project activities*	*Education is one of the most important mechanisms to encourage critical thinking. However, being educated does not guarantee peaceful and nonviolent attitudes. On the one hand, education can be a source for the change, while on the other, it can be a driver of violent structures. Despite the ambivalent nature of education, universal access to the [primary] education is one of the basic human rights. Within the project cycle it is possible to incorporate the importance of education by providing access to resources, knowledge and exchange as well as encouraging critical thinking.*
Respecting Human Rights	- *Acknowledging and actively practicing basic human rights to dignity, respect and integrity* - *Being mindful of others' emotional and/or physical borders* - *Not demeaning or dehumanizing someone* - *Treating oneself and others with respect* - *Respecting and implementing worker's rights, the rights of participants of projects, and the rights of communities an organization works with*	*Respect alone is not enough when it comes to human rights, it must be translated to action and implementation. This means that wherever there is a violation of human rights, a project must not benefit from it and/or an organization must seek to address it, mitigate it, end it.* *Respect of human rights also implies that a project team and a project process progresses with the principles of human rights in mind. Respect means not crossing someone else's boundaries. Human rights do not mean one is free to do whatever they want, one cannot violate someone else's right to practice their own rights. All humans have the right to be free from violence, oppression and exploitation.*

		The main principle should be that each person is entitled to human rights, each person deserves to be treated with dignity. In some communities' human rights may need to be translated into value-based principles that can be understood by people who are perceiving it as a legal term and believing that it contradicts their cultural values.
Ensuring Gender Equity	- *Being aware of gender roles and stereotypes internally and externally and working to transform harmful gender stereotypes* - *Not discriminating based on gender differences* - *Speaking with non-sexist language* - *Being aware of intersectional realities, acknowledging that gender is not binary and people are not only women and/or men, in addition to belonging to various ethnic, racial, religious, class, sexuality backgrounds* - *Being aware of and acknowledging privileges people have regarding their intersecting experiences/identities* - *Gender budgeting to ensure projects have gender balance/equity*	*Equity regarding gender refers to fair treatment, non-prejudice and justice in gender relations and roles. On a very surface level having a balance of gender representation and participation as well as ensuring that people are not violated, harassed or discriminated based on their gender is crucial as a first step. Additionally, constant reflection on how gender, race, class, sexuality, age, and other markers of identity are reflected, projected and reproduced within any given setting is necessary for the transformation of rigid and oppressive structures.*
Establishing Inclusive and Accessible Participation	- *Ensuring equal access to information for making informed decisions* - *Creating safe space for all to participate and express themselves* - *Sharing decision making power* - *Outreach and promoting activities in communities that don't have access to information, not relying on internet only, etc.* - *Empower people to take initiative* - *Sharing responsibility/Ensuring that only one person is not dominating an activity* - *Ensure that spaces are accessible for all and if not possible, find alternatives*	*Inclusive and accessible participation is an active process of engaging people, sharing responsibility and decision-making power, operating in a non-hierarchical manner, being inclusive of all relevant actors/individuals for whom a project works for and with and working toward decentralization. When aiming to be as representative as possible it is important not to tokenize people and ask individuals to represent a whole group, but rather create opportunities and spaces that can resonate with a diverse contingency of people who would be able to see themselves in those spaces and attend on their own will.*

Facilitating transformation of harmful socio-political, economic and environmental structures	- *Being aware and acknowledging privileges of class and social status due to having had access to higher education, economic opportunities, etc.* - *Sharing resources with communities that projects are implemented with and for* - *Empowering members of communities to participate in decision making processes* - *Facilitating access to social and economic benefits for communities* - *Awareness of environmental impact of projects and mitigation of harm to the environment by going paperless, decentralizing activities (stay local) so that there are less flights using fuels, having separate funds in some projects to decrease environmental damage* - *An additional tool aimed at donors would be for the donors to be aware of and demand accountability from companies and/or their states investing in environmentally damaging activities in countries where donors have projects with goals for democracy, freedom. equality, etc.*	*Structural violence includes social, political, economic and environmental violation of rights/wellbeing. Often social change actors, organizations and donors connect development and sustainability with progress in social and economic spheres of influence, however the root causes of inequality and structural violence often go unaddressed. From the culture of peace perspective transformation of harmful structures and practices within socio-political, economic and environmental fields must be at the centre of the work of undoing culture of violence and the perpetuation of structures that continue to cause environmental damage and disadvantage certain populations.*

Incorporating the Culture of Peace Elements in the Project Cycle

In this section, a brief explanation of each component of the project cycle is provided, which is generally applied when working with projects within civil society organizations. It is understood that not all organizations and groups work with all components of the project cycle, therefore this report tries to be as comprehensive in its approach as possible to be inclusive of both those organisations, which are highly evolved in their organisational structures as well as those organizations and groups, which have a more grassroots and organic approach to achieving social change. Following the project cycle section, some guidelines for incorporating the culture of peace within the internal structures of organisations and groups are provided. Both the external work of planning and implementing projects, communicating with donors and other stakeholders, as well as the internal work of organisational capacity, relating to staff, stakeholders and beneficiaries, systems and routines in place for the optimal functioning of an organisation are interconnected. However, to make the guidelines as comprehensive as possible, these interconnected components are discussed in two different sections. Nevertheless, it is clear

that there are many intersecting ideas and suggestions for incorporating the culture of peace in both the external and internal components of civil society work. It is the researchers' deepest conviction that the culture of peace approach must integrate both external and internal modes of working within civil society in order to be truly sustainable in the long run.

The Project Cycle

The project cycle comprises of four stages: planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation[26].

Table 2: Discussion on project cycle

Project Cycle	Brief Discussion
Planning	*At the **planning** stage, specific problems relevant to the context and the community/society are identified, the causes are analysed and efficient solutions are designed. The result of the planning can be a project or program with an overall goal, specific objectives, activities, outcomes and indicators, which is implemented for dealing with identified problems and needs.*
Implementation	*The process of realizing project objectives and launching developed activities is the project **implementation** stage, which requires regular progress reviews and adjustment of activities as needed.*
Monitoring and Evaluation	***Monitoring** is a process of carefully observing and generating data in order to assess the successes and drawbacks of the implementation phase and use this data for assessing project's effectiveness, which is also called project evaluation.* *The **evaluation** particularly focuses on the achievement of defined objectives, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the action, based on specific explicit or implicit indicators.*

The following part of the research seeks to demonstrate how CoP elements can be integrated in the project cycle and what can be specific tools for supporting this process.

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[26]Conflict Sensitive Approaches to Humanitarian Assistance and Peacebuilding Resources: Introduction to the Resource Pack

Planning

The planning stage is crucial in the project cycle and often lack of invested time and energy in this process results in less effective projects. All interviewees from three countries outlined that the planning stage has to be *participatory, transparent and flexible*. Transparent and flexible planning ensures that everyone has equal access to the resources, which are essential for project development and any necessary adjustments can take place due to changed context. Participatory planning means that team members and any other relevant stakeholders should have equal access to the information and opportunity to participate and influence all stages of project development.

A project planned with the culture of peace approach will implement a **participatory needs assessment**, will be **based on trust between the community where the need for change is identified and project implementers**, will **design the project with cultural, conflict and gender sensitivity in mind**, will **provide transparent communication and access to information regarding the project to all relevant actors**, will **centre the community and include actors from the community in the project team**, will be **based on a collaborative theory of change** and **will hold respect and do no harm as highly regarded principles** throughout the entire duration of the project.

Participatory Needs Assessment

Needs assessment is a key part of the planning stage. In order to develop relevant objectives and activities, the existing problem and needs of the communities where a need is assessed have to be adequately understood. Some classic methods for conducting a needs assessment are through surveys, interviews, focus groups, previous experience, feedback from different groups, desk research and analyses of existing resources. In order to make a needs assessment participatory and thereby incorporate the culture of peace into this process, the researchers suggest that organizers facilitate a platform and space where the community can gather, discuss the context, needs and priorities. In order to ensure that this platform and space is continuous, the community should have access to the space of the organisation and/or other spaces where the organisation has access to meet and organize themselves whenever they feel the need. This is in line with the culture of peace mode of planning a project where transformation of economic and socio-political structures can take place by providing access to resources to communities. Once the ideas are gathered, the project team can design the project based on priorities identified by the community and present the project back to the community for feedback.

Trust between project implementers and community

Several practices ensure trust building between project implementers and the community. In most cases, the best approach is to build trust with the community before actually implementing a program. Furthermore, trust building can be seen as an ongoing process of willingness to stay open, honest and transparent. In order to do this, first of all, it is imperative that there is a relevant number of members from the community as part of the project team from the start. If the project is very small, at least one staff should be a member of the community where the project will be implemented; if the project is larger then consider having 25-55 percent of staff coming from the relevant communities. The purpose of this is not to tokenize one or several persons as responsible for being a bridge between community members and other project implementers, but to ensure that everyone shares the responsibility to understand the specific context, understand the needs of the community and stay on track with priorities as they come up. Second of all, transparent and clear communication between the project team and the community is another way to ensure trust during all phases of the project. Transparent communication does not mean giving away sensitive information about project implementers, participants and communities where the work is done, which may cause harm. Rather transparent communication implies communicating about the organisation implementing a project, the resources available for implementation and donors supporting said project, the project design

and activities planned, methodology and limitations keeping in mind confidentiality and respect for sensitive information. Third, it is important that the implementing organisation does not have an approach that is only funding based, so that once the project ends, there are alternative means for continuing to collaborate with the community and providing opportunities for the community to become involved in other projects. Often times, having team members who are part of the community is one way of ensuring this type of sustainability and continued collaboration.

Sensitive and inclusive project design
The project team responsible for designing the project is responsible for listening and learning the different sensitivities of a particular context, community and approaches for implementing a project with said community. This implies learning cultural, conflict, gender and environmental sensitivities relevant to the specific context and community. A key component of being sensitive in all these areas is first and foremost the task of being/becoming more self-aware (internal) and sharing this within the team (externally). Therefore, a space for cultivating listening, reflecting and openness to mindful criticism is crucial.

For fostering **cultural sensitivity,** it is not necessary that there be a conflict in a community, but rather that there be an understanding that the people approached may have certain cultural elements that are not known for the project team. Cultural sensitivity is based on assuming that the individuals and communities differ from one to another. Understanding and respecting any given cultural context includes understanding and respecting differences in language, dialect, appearance, behaviour, ethnicity, religion, race, etc. It also includes being aware of and prepared to deal with differences. It is not about imposing one truth, but rather creating a space where differences can be seen and considered. Therefore, a space for asking questions, rather than making assumptions is critical.

Table 3: Questions to reflect on cultural sensitivity

What to ask yourself (and within your team) to become more culturally aware/sensitive
1. What do you and your team know about the community/ies you are working with?
2. What assumptions/stereotypes do you and your team have about the community/ies you are working with?
3. What do you and your team know about the opportunities and limits of the community/ies you are working with?
4. What do you and your team need to know more about to get a better sense of the cultural context?

When the researchers were reflecting on what it means to be culturally sensitive, they asked themselves whether cultural sensitivity can also mean being sensitive to sexism, patriarchal attitudes, homophobia and other discriminatory perceptions that can be defended within a given community as part of their "culture". Since these perceptions oppose the culture of peace, the researchers suggest that project implementers acknowledge such discriminatory attitudes, but refuse to accept them and actively challenge sexist, homophobic, racist and any other violent attitudes prevalent within a given community keeping in mind that within the same community there can be people who are gay, lesbian, transgender, belonging to other ethnic groups and/or religious backgrounds, etc. In order to stay true to the values of the culture of peace, it is important to

foster spaces where all differences are respected and where all people can feel welcome and supported regardless of their sex, gender, orientation, religion, ethnicity and race.

For fostering **conflict sensitivity** especially in communities directly affected by armed conflict, it is important to understand the needs and priorities of those living in borderline areas, including IDP communities, refugees and people who have lost loved ones to war. What this often means is that one can't just go into a community dealing with armed conflict and immediately start talking about peace. An important first step is to familiarize oneself with the context of the conflict, the different versions of how the conflict is narrated in different communities and to understand the realities of propaganda that may be affecting those communities. Furthermore, one needs to be keenly aware that armed conflict has consequences and that in fostering dialogue, one cannot undermine the suffering of people who have been through/are going through the consequences of armed violence. As a project implementer, one's job is not to accuse or judge anyone, but rather to create space for discussing, listening, learning and transforming a culture of violence that may be a result of armed conflict and its consequences. Another important step is to use sensitive language when speaking about the conflict. What this often means is to listen and to understand why certain terminology is used in certain contexts.

Table 4: Questions to reflect on conflict sensitivity

What to ask yourself (and within your team) to become more conflict aware/sensitive
1. What do you and your team know about the conflict/s (armed conflicts, frozen conflicts, community conflicts, etc.) in the context you plan to work with?
2. Are you and your team well versed/aware of the sensitive terminology and language regarding the conflict/s with which to refer to the community/ies in order to do no harm?
3. Are you and your team aware of what position you have about a particular conflict experienced by the community/ies you are working with and how it can affect/influence the project?

For fostering **gender sensitivity** and having a more culture of peace orientated approach to gender it is important to have a practice of constantly reflecting on gender. This includes understanding how masculinity, femininity, gender roles and stereotypes are perceived and acted out in different contexts. It is important to understand that the culture of peace approach to gender is not only about having a gender balance, which is sometimes the only indicator for mainstreaming gender in different projects. Having a 50/50 approach to gender is not enough to ensure that a project will be gender sensitive or meaningful for women and men. Therefore, having the culture of peace approach while mainstreaming gender implies having a deeper understanding of gender theory, including gender roles, gender stereotypes, gender biases, and the role of patriarchy in perpetuating gender stereotypes and roles.

Before starting the project, it is important to reflect on how to make a project accessible to both girls and boys, men and women and keeping in mind that gender is not binary, so that there might be people who identify as neither a man or a woman. To ensure that a project is relevant for all genders, it is also important to include topics within the program that are relevant for women, men, girls and boys. Additionally, throughout the project, the team leaders can continuously reflect on gender in order to be prepared to challenge any inequalities, discriminatory perspectives and behaviours that may rise up before, during and after implementation. As examples, when working in rural areas it might be a challenge to ensure that

young women and girls are able to participate. Often, it may require that project coordinators speak to parents or school and/or community leaders in advance to allow for trust between the community and the project team so as to ensure young girls are permitted to take part in a given program.

Table 5: Questions to reflect on gender sensitivity

What to ask yourself (and within your team) to become more gender aware/sensitive
1. What is the work that needs to be done in advance to involve women and girls where society places more restrictions on women's participation and active engagement?
2. Do you and your team know the limitations for women and men in being able to participate and be involved in the project?
3. How can you and your team challenge those limitations? What can you do that these limitations do not prevent women and men from fully participating? Have you taken gender budgeting into account?
4. Are you and the project team aware of gender stereotypes and avoid planning a project that is reproducing gender stereotypes?

In addition to taking gender into account, projects can also take diversity of backgrounds into account. For example, if the project is for women only, the culture of peace approach to gender would be to ensure inclusivity of women from all classes, ethnicities, religious backgrounds, sexual orientations, etc.

For maintaining sensitivity in the planning stage of project design it is important to commit to a process of transformation of attitudes, perspectives and behaviours based in culture of violence into the culture of peace. Each project and project team are different, however in order to plan and implement projects with the culture of peace approach, the project team must evaluate the need for creating space for having difficult conversations regarding harmful attitudes and behaviours based in any discriminatory and violent culture, which cannot be compromised for the sake of avoiding confrontation. At the same time, in certain contexts bringing up such topics can marginalize the project team and make it difficult to implement a particular project. In this case, it is important to reflect on possible alternative modes of relating to diverse communities when working together toward a culture based on values of peace.

Transparent communication with all relevant stakeholders and partners
Good relations and trust between the project team and community is equally as important as with other stakeholders and implementing partners. Accountability and respecting diversity are key elements of this process. When considering a stakeholder analysis during the planning stage of the project cycle, including partners you will work with, it is important to think about who could be an obstacle to project implementation. In some cases, community leaders can be either a partner or can stop one from entering the community. Therefore, it is important to have strategies to work with different partners that are based on culture of peace elements such as transparency, trust building, open communication and an in depth understanding of the context.

Sometimes one might have to consider working with partners in a situation where there is no alternative to culture of violence, where relevant partners do not necessarily share values of peace. In this case, one approach is to sacrifice some

part of the project and to refuse to work with partners that do not have the culture of peace approach. If the entire project will be sacrificed as a result, one might still consider working with such partners and create space for having constant dialogue in order to find key points of agreement on important values regarding peace in terms of how the work can be done with a more culture of peace approach.

Placing the community in the centre of the project design process
Once a needs assessment reveals the priorities of a particular community, the project team can take all the above-mentioned sensitivities in mind when designing a relevant project. In order to ensure that a relevant project has been designed, the community with and for whom said project will be implemented should be consulted on activities, project outcomes and indicators of change. Such a process can ensure trust is being built between the community and project team, transparency in communication of planned activities and thinking behind rationale for activities, and respect for the community priorities where change is needed.

Collaborative Theory of Change
Often when coming up with a theory of change and clear objectives and indicators during the project planning phase, the community for whom a project is being planned is left out of the process. This report suggests engaging the community in as many spheres of the planning and implementation work as possible, which includes getting feedback on the project design as well as consulting on a theory of change. The platform that is created from the beginning of the planning stage with involving the community in the needs assessment can be utilized for involving the community in understanding how those needs can be translated into activities for change. The project team can do a simple exercise with the community to understand and agree on the context, the priorities identified, the activities suggested and the expected change. This way the community not only shares their needs and priorities with project members and other community members, but also shares their vision for what is needed in order for change to take place. Such a process can also ensure that the activities and methods for achieving change will do no harm to the community itself.

Finally, as part of the process of ensuring the culture of peace approach to results based management, it is important to come up with output and outcome level indicators that are not only culture of peace specific, but are also part of the objectives (for example: not only having quantitative indicators for measuring diversity, access, participation, etc. but also having qualitative indicators to measure the extent to which a particular community transforms attitudes and behaviours based in a culture of violence to the culture of peace.)

In conclusion, here are some general questions the project team might ask its members for ensuring the process of planning a project is culture of peace sensitive:

Table 6: Questions to reflect on planning stage

What to ask yourself (and within your team) to plan culture of peace sensitive project
1. Have you and your team created a space and opportunity for members of the community you plan to serve to gather and discuss their context, needs and priorities?
2. Do you and your team have community member/s represented in the project team? Do they have a substantial role and decision- making power in all stages of the project?
3. Is the project team sensitized to the particular context, needs and identity of the community/ies the project is serving?
4. Have you and your team reached out to a diverse contingency of people to be inclusive with the target group for the project?
5. Have you and your team considered that all activities, objectives and methods in the design of the project will do no harm to the relevant community?

Implementation

In order for the implementation process to have the culture of peace approach, it should be sensitive, participatory, accessible and transparent. Some of the actions that can be practiced here are the adoption of non-violent approaches and sustaining of nonviolent behaviour throughout the implementation process. Often the implementation phase includes logistical arrangements (where, when/how many days, how, who, why (methods)), coordination and communication between all relevant actors and the community, facilitation, and ongoing monitoring of set events/meetings/conferences/training/etc., and a risk mitigation strategy.

Logistics

The methods chosen for implementing specific activities must be chosen with context sensitivity in mind so as to ensure that respect toward the diversity of all participants/community is considered. It is also equally important that project coordinators create safe space for all parties of the project ensuring the adoption of a nonviolent approach where all can have room to freely express their feelings, thoughts and ideas without fear of judgment or violence. In some cases when choosing the environment where a particular activity will take place (especially if it entails staying overnight) it is important to arrange participants' stay in such a way so as to create comfort for all, respecting the fact that participants made an effort to leave the comfort of their homes to contribute to a given event/activity/goal of a project.

The details of planned activities must take into account the space where an activity is taking place and ensure that it is accessible to all participants in terms of mobility, time of day, duration and security. In order to establish inclusive and accessible participation, it is important that people with disabilities can physically access the space and be able to follow what is taking place in terms of language accessibility (this can also imply the need for interpretation from one language to another, including sign language). Accessibility must also be ensured for people coming from far places, which implies that the relevant travel costs to make an activity accessible to a diverse contingency of people must also be included in the budget. Logistical arrangements must also take into account the security and safety of those attending, which implies that not only must the physical space where an activity is to take place be chosen in such a way as to not hinder participants from coming due to security concerns, but that the participants' backgrounds are also evaluated prior to selection (for example, citizens of particular countries can face serious legal risks if they happen to be in the same space as citizens from other particular countries due to their state's legislation). All of these precautions must be based on an in-depth knowledge of different contexts that are relevant for a particular activity/event.

In terms of making calls/applications and a selection process of participants for certain activities it is important to have transparent and accessible outreach, including gender consideration. This may include arranging of informational meetings, supporting people who may not have access to computers/internet to still have the opportunity to participate in projects, empowering young women to apply even if they don't feel confident. Sometimes an applicant may not be the best writer, but that does mean they are not motivated. In this case, more resources may be required to have interviews with potential participants to ensure that an assessment is not solely based on an individual's writing/language abilities, but on their willingness/motivation to contribute to change. Selection of participants should also ensure that there is a diversity of participants, including diversity of opinions as well as gender balance.

Table 7: Questions to reflect on logistics during implementation

What to ask yourself (and within your team) to ensure the culture of peace approach to logistics?
1. Is the space where you are organizing an activity accessible to diverse groups of people? Are the activities accessible to a diverse group of people?
2. Have you and your team made an in-depth assessment of the context where the activity is to take place and the type of activity that will take place in order to ensure the security of all participants is maintained?
3. Has your selection of participant for a particular activity been based on respect for diversity, understanding of context and inclusion of diverse layers of society?
4. Have you managed to create a space where all participants feel safe to express themselves without fear of judgment? Is the space set up in a way so as to not create additional tension or discomfort for participants?

Coordination and communication between all relevant actors and the community
As part of the commitment to the culture of peace approach to project implementation, it is important to maintain transparent and continuous communication between all relevant actors and the community. This means that the times, dates, locations, and details of a program should be accessible to the people implied in the program prior to an activity taking place keeping in mind what information may be sensitive and maintaining confidentiality where necessary in order to ensure the security of all involved in the project. Such an approach will also contribute to increased trust between the project team, partners and the community. During the actual activity, this is again an important tool to keep in mind. In order to make the project more participatory it is also important that there is space to receive feedback from the community where a project is taking place and adapting it accordingly.

Facilitation
Facilitation is a big part of the implementation process for many activities that may be planned, and the culture of peace approach is crucial to ensure that the values of peace are maintained throughout the facilitation process. When there is a diversity of participants regarding social backgrounds and ideological convictions, it is important that the facilitation process creates an opportunity of sharing, exchanging and learning from one another in an environment free of judgment. In some cases, the breaking of stereotypes will be a major part of the facilitation process and in order to ensure that dominant mentalities are not marginalizing specific groups of people, facilitators should encourage and stand up to any discriminatory remarks, attitudes and behaviours. This often implies that facilitators encourage people to ask questions, as opposed to making comments/judgments based on assumptions. The tone can be set from the beginning so that participants are aware that there is a zero-tolerance attitude to discriminatory language, attitudes and behaviours. If a particular participant is unwilling to change their oppressive ways of relating to others, then the facilitators must take measures to ensure that a transformation of attitude can take place. If the situation does not change, it can be a possibility to ask an oppressive participant to leave the project in order for the ones who are in a more vulnerable position to have the possibility to feel safe and build trust within the group. Furthermore, the facilitators should acknowledge that there is a certain power dynamic in which they have a particular power over the trajectory of an activity and in situations where conflict arises, facilitators can create an opportunity for a transformative process to take place. Such a process should take into account a reflection of values, beliefs and norms, adoption of nonviolent approaches and sustaining of nonviolent behaviours. If a destructive

conflict arises, the facilitation must ensure that dialogue, active listening, self-awareness, not projecting onto others and empathetic listening are tools practiced by the project team and participants as a way to transform destructive conflict into a constructive change.

Ongoing monitoring

Monitoring can be seen as one of the most important components for bringing the culture of peace approach to the implementation process, because it allows room for observation and reflection on what is taking place. In this sense, the cultural, conflict and gender sensitivities of a set activity can be monitored throughout the implementation process to ensure that there is a relevant response to a process moving in a direction that values the culture of violence over the culture of peace. First of all, agreements can be made from the beginning regarding ways in which actors/individuals involved in any activity will relate to one another, which often means that active listening is key, respect and a general rejection of any violent modes of relating should be adopted. Second of all, project implementers can monitor whether there are any cases of gender roles being reproducing among individuals, groups and other actors involved in the activity and bring it into the awareness. Often times during particular activities it is common for women to take on the role of caretaker, cook, cleaner, etc. whereas men take on the role of protector, builder, etc. The project team should be aware of the fact that gender roles can be reproduced and bring awareness to this, creating space to discuss the how's, why's and strategies to transform these rigid societal roles places on individuals based on their gender presentation/identity. Similarly, awareness of differences in culture and contexts can also be part of the process of monitoring, where project implementers can bring to light the ways in which within a set group certain differences are given value while others are rendered less than in comparison to the dominant norm.

Finally, monitoring also implies being aware when a set activity is not relevant, even if it was carefully planned. The culture of peace approach to such a process would be to take the risk of shifting, rearranging and making an activity relevant for the process in the here and now. In this way it is about respecting and trusting the project process, rearranging activities where necessary in order to address harmful processes and being open to less visible and/or direct effects that need to be changed for the project to maintain its relevance. An important tool in this process is to continue to engage the community/ies implied in the project and to ask for their feedback on a regular basis. This is a part of a longer process where the project team is in constant dialogue and communication with the given community the project is in, making it possible to adapt the project in accordance to changed needs and priorities. In this regard it is also useful to have a risk mitigation strategy to have action plans in place for how to respond to unexpected changes in a planned activity once it has already started to take place. Monitoring the process is the first step to being able to recognize when something is not going according to plan. This does not always mean it is going wrong or failing, in fact without straying from a planned trajectory, there can be no true learning. It is especially in the process of how change is responded to that the culture of peace can take shape.

The actual work of integrating the culture of peace approach to dealing with risks is mainly done in the implementation phase. As mentioned in the above paragraph, readiness and willingness to deal with challenges and risks that may come up in the implementation phase is one of the main ways to ensure that the implementation process as a whole is culture of peace sensitive. In accordance with culture of peace principles speaking to people directly impacted by the project is the best approach to finding strategies and solutions for mitigating those risks. In this sense one does not only look at risks from the perspective of project implementers, but also from the perspective of participants perspective.

Table 8: Questions to reflect on implementation stage

What to ask yourself (and within your team) to ensure the culture of peace approach to the overall implementation phase?
1. Is there clear and transparent communication regarding planned activities, including both the logistical aspect of activities as well as the content?
2. Has the facilitation process succeeded to create a space for open dialogue, critical reflection and a safe environment for the expression of a diverse range of ideas, thoughts, feelings?
3. Are conflicts that arise given the proper space to be dealt with and transformed if possible?
4. Have agreements been made regarding how a group is willing and ready to relate to one another from the culture of peace based value system?
5. Is there space for participants to give feedback regarding the project process and is there space/time for the project implementation group to respond to any particular needs/challenges that come up?

Monitoring and Evaluation

The overall Monitoring and Evaluation phases of a project often tend to be given less significance than the actual implementation phase, mainly due to a tendency to perceive monitoring and evaluation as mere ways to check, to prove and highlight how successful (or how much of a failure) a project is. Often this perception is a result of more top-down approaches that come from donor requirements, however the culture of peace approach to these important processes in observing, tracking and following up as well as evaluating whether an action has been relevant and resulted in necessary changes would mean that the project team regards this process as a process of accountability to the community/ies they work with. What this means is that the project implementers feel a sense of responsibility and hold respect in high regard toward the communities they work with and thereby are committed to learning from the overall process of implementing projects that aim to transform/change a given context for the benefit of given communities. Understanding the benefit and usefulness for these processes is key, but it requires shifting from a donor-driven mentality to a community-centred one.

The main tools for incorporating the culture of peace in these cycles of the project is to maintain a transparent and honest dialogue with the community/ies where projects are taking place and maintain opportunities for those communities to give feedback, to decide what should be monitored and how it should be monitored, evaluated and learned. In this sense a common theme throughout the entire project cycle starting with the planning phase and especially with regards to ensuring a collaborative theory of change is active engagement of the community/ies in planning and deciding what is relevant to achieve and how to evaluate results of actions. This process must be inclusive of diverse perspectives, transparent and committed to continuing trust building. As a result, projects and their results can be more sustainable in the long run because communities will be empowered to bring about the change they seek and become co-creators of that change along with a wider network of actors collaborating toward a common goal.

Here again it is important to be transparent, open and flexible with monitoring and evaluating a project. For example, if failures/mistakes are openly and transparently acknowledged, then there is a CoP approach to a project because it allows for flexibility to shift dynamics/assumptions that are not working. Also, when addressing challenges, they need to be openly discussed with communities, rather than withholding information and coming up with solutions within a set project team. On the other hand, sometimes a project can have successes that go unnoticed because one may take such successes for granted when not taking a particular context into account. This is often the case with more difficult, closed and conflicted contexts where even a small-scale change is in fact a significant success given the circumstances. The culture of peace approach to evaluation would look deeper at the extent to which a particular change is significant when placed against the background of a particular context. Therefore, context, conflict and cultural sensitivity must be taken into account for evaluation in order to respect the extent of change that occurs given these sensitivities. Consequently, a qualitative assessment can often contribute to this process and provide much more learning than a quantitative assessment. This is not to say that evaluating based on quantitative measurement is insignificant, however any quantitative measurement by itself is not enough for the culture of peace approach to evaluation because it does not give the full picture of what the numbers mean in real life.

Monitoring

While preparing a results-based framework (also called logical framework/matrix), as well as a monitoring and evaluation plan, certain indicators can be taken into account in order to integrate the culture of peace into the results framework as well as monitoring plan. These indicators can be both qualitative and quantitative. Some things to keep in mind when considering indicators in monitoring plans:

- keeping context and cultural sensitivity in mind; being aware and mindful of context;
- building and maintaining trust with and among communities where projects are implemented;
- promoting nonviolent modes of relating to others and respecting diversity during the monitoring process;
- ensuring effective communication where the purpose of monitoring is transparent to all involved in a project, and where observations are shared with relevant actors for assessment and evaluation;
- reflection meetings as a tool to make the monitoring and evaluation process more participatory and horizontal;
- staying open to changes that are not planned for and/or any results or lack of results that can be deemed as a failure instead of a success - these are important to notice and document for learning; the main idea is to learn from mistakes and keep an open mind about what may be considered as failures

Doing a baseline study initially can improve the final evaluation process of a project by giving a baseline for measuring change in a particular context once the implementation phase is complete. The CoP way of doing this is value based and includes respect toward communities by keeping communities informed and seeking their feedback with trust, understanding that information and knowledge is non-linear and that what may be provided as research by leading institutions such as the UNDP, academic institutions, etc are not any more relevant than what comes from the grassroots. If a baseline study involves interviews with individuals and/or focus groups, then it must be clear for what purpose the study is being conducted for the interviewees to ensure a high ethical standard. Furthermore, in the process of monitoring, collecting data and tracking changes, it is crucial to maintain the confidentiality of sensitive data and in most contexts of the South Caucasus, it is crucial to save information on encrypted files in order to maintain safety of people involved in any given project. This ensures respect to individuals involved in a given project and a commitment to do no harm as ways to practice monitoring in the culture of peace sensitive way.

Table 9: Questions to reflect on the monitoring stage

What to ask yourself (and within your team) to ensure the culture of peace approach to monitoring
1. Have you and your team planned for reflection meetings inclusive of all relevant actors involved in a project?
2. To what extent are you and your team engaging the community in the monitoring process and creating space for feedback?
3. How flexible are you and your team to changing activities where necessary in order to ensure the process flows organically and to avoid the process stagnating?
4. Are you and your team acknowledging and reacting accordingly to any unexpected progress in your project that goes against the original expected results?
5. Are you and your team staying sensitive to confidentiality of data and encrypting all saved files?

Evaluation

Depending on the extent of the trust and transparent communication within the project team, it could be most conducive to the culture of peace approach when conducting an internal evaluation for a project and involving participants as co-evaluators, instead of beneficiaries of the activities and merely questioning them about how those activities impacted them. This would mean that the platform for gathering the community set up from the planning stage of the project is maintained throughout the project cycle. Given that the project team knows best the process through which a given project has been planned, implemented, monitored and followed up, it can be useful to evaluate the project with the support of any self-assessment tool and possibly external support. Such a process can build even more trust within the group and support the learning process of the team and participants of a project overall as they navigate the challenges faced, the way challenges have been addressed, the shortcomings of any given component of the project cycle and any successes that may have gone unnoticed. At the same time, an external evaluation can also contribute to the culture of peace approach to evaluating a project by allowing for more distance from the project and internal dynamics of a project team. Such an approach to evaluation is usually best done when there are challenges within the team that have not yet been overcome and a need for an outside perspective can assess the project successes and challenges with a fresh eye.

Both short-term and long-term evaluation should contribute to the ongoing and future assessment of results. What this means is that any observation evaluated as not conducive to the overall objective of the project should be considered as a motivation to change what is not working. For instance, conducting daily evaluations among participants in training allows for feedback with which it is possible to improve the program for the next day. It is important to get feedback from participants on a regular basis, taking into account their perspectives and planning reflection sessions to have better insights into what worked well and what did not during project implementation. While evaluating a project's results, several points should be taken into consideration:

- Timing and design for monitoring and evaluation should be relevant and should not disadvantage any group participating in the project;
- The evaluator/s should know the context in which the project occurred, have sensitivity towards the local context and sufficient language skills to find out all relevant details;
- Analysis of assessed results during an evaluation process is as important as the results themselves. Often this work does not get done and the most important component of the learning process gets lost. Analysis contributes to great learning by getting to the bottom of the "how's" of results, regardless of whether the changes observed are positive or negative. If one does not learn why and how something works or does not work, one cannot have sustainable programs and projects cannot evolve in an accountable and respectful manner toward all involved.

In the culture of peace approach participants of a project are perceived and accepted as co-creators/implementers, which means that they are seen as human beings who have agency over an outcome. During the monitoring and evaluation process, it is important to move away from simply perceiving participants as recipients of benefits or target groups and involve them more in all processes of the entire project cycle. This means, as mentioned previously, that with any reflection of observations, evaluations, etc. participants are also consulted. Such an approach will not only create more trust between project implementers and participants but will also make the project stronger by ensuring that the process stays relevant and meaningful for all involved. Furthermore, such a process will involve beneficiaries and target groups in the learning process and thereby ensure the position of co-creators for continued action for social change even after a particular project ends.

Table 10: Questions to reflect on the evaluation stage

What to ask yourself (and within your team) to ensure that the evaluation process is culture of peace sensitive
1. Is your evaluation planned in an inclusive and participatory manner? Do project participants get to decide what should be measured and how?
2. Is there an openness, willingness and focus on learning from challenges and successes of the project?
3. Is there sufficient effort put into analysis of evaluation results for further learning?
4. Is feedback from project beneficiaries taken into account for next steps?
5. Are evaluation results presented to the community as well as donors and other relevant actors such as other NGOs or groups working with similar issues that can learn from the experience of your team?

Incorporating the Culture of Peace within Internal Organisational Structures

Throughout the duration of the research one of the key tasks has been to translate the value of peace and the concept of the culture of peace into practice. The researchers have asked themselves the question of how to link values, beliefs and norms based in the culture of peace to actual behaviours of individuals in relation to themselves, to others, to the environment and to any given situation that arises. In this process it has become evident that practicing and fostering the culture of peace is an ongoing process - *process* being the keyword here. Practicing and fostering are also keywords - one must continually assess whether she is practicing the values necessary for fostering the culture of peace. In other words: are you walking the talk of peace? It is not always as easy as it may seem. One may see many "successful" projects on paper, but often when looking in depth at the internal processes that have taken place preceding the "project success" it is evident that the organisational environment has suffered. When one focuses too much on the end result instead of the process taking place in the moment/s of the entire project cycle, one tends to sacrifice the possibility of meaningful relations between and among project staff, beneficiaries and any other actors involved in bringing a project to life. Is it possible to say that a project that has had such a trajectory is actually successful? Do we want successful projects, or do we want meaningful processes of project realization that result in greater learning for the benefit of not only a single organisation or group, but a larger network of social change makers?

Although within this report the researchers have separated what they consider to be more the external aspect of the project cycle from what can be considered to be more the internal aspect of the organisational structure, there is no doubt about the interconnectedness of the two for the purpose of integrating the culture of peace approach within the work civil society does in the South Caucasus region. One of the main tools for incorporating the culture of peace within organisational structures is the commitment to systematically assess relations between and among project staff and any other actors relevant for the realization of a given project. What this implies is a willingness to assess power dynamics and shift the ways one relates to oneself and to others so that there is enough openness and capacity to fully engage each person's potential.

Some of the tools to use for achieving a strong, open and vibrant team are: clear and transparent communication, active listening, mindfulness, trust-building, conflict transformation and horizontal organizing.

Clear and Transparent Communication

All of the abovementioned tools are interrelated, as trust allows for clear and transparent communication, but so does clear and transparent communication open possibilities for trust. And obviously for communication to serve its function active listening must be practiced. In the case of integrating culture of peace elements into organisational structures and relations it is important to be clear when communicating and to be transparent. One of the organisations interviewed for this research considered the fact that sometimes people misunderstand each other. In such a case staff within the organisation try to clarify the issue and they consider it to be important not to do so through a second or third person, but directly. This is how transparent communication is practiced. Another organization spoke of conversations as a method, emphasizing honesty as a key component to transforming conflicts and seeking solutions for problems that may arise within a team. Finally, transparent communication entails the effort put into understanding when one holds the power of information and/or knowledge and shares that with anyone who may be a relevant actor for a project.

Active Listening

Active listening is something we often say we do, but fail to do. Active listening requires the full attention of the one listening to take in all that the one speaking says. What this means is that the person listening focuses only on what the

person speaking is saying and tries to let go of any responses they wish to say while the speakers speaks. If active listening is practiced in a project team, with beneficiaries, targets groups and any other relevant actors then the culture of peace begins to take shape within a given environment.

Mindfulness

Being mindful is a long-term process that one must engage in our fast-paced, result-oriented world to not allow extra stimuli from taking over and distracting us from what is most important in a given moment. What this mainly relates to is the noise of our contemporary world permeating our minds and not allowing us to see clearly, be mindful of our actions and words. In order to cultivate mindfulness among a project team it can be useful to meditate together, to take breaks to breathe together and/or to create spaces in the work environment where people can go to be in silence for some time. Mindfulness allows a person to better observe and catch their thoughts, understand certain patterns of behaviour and become clearer with themselves on their boundaries when relating to others. When a person cultivates mindfulness, they are less likely to react and more likely to create possibilities for meaningful exchange.

One key thing to be mindful of when working with social change projects is the context and how one might be shaped by it. If we live in a nationalistic, homophobic, sexist, etc. context, we might not realize we are affected negatively and can sometimes act in ways other than what we say our values are because we have internalized these societal stereotypes. It is crucial for spaces to be created for being mindful, cultivating awareness of these internalizations without judgment and with the goal to transform harmful attitudes in a team for the benefit of projects and the overall work for social change.

Trust-building

Building trust is an ongoing process. It is never simply that someone has your trust and that's the end. Trust is something that must also be maintained, and it requires all of the abovementioned elements: clear and transparent communication, active listening, mindfulness. If communication is not transparent, it breeds distrust within a group. If we are unable to actively listen, the one speaking begins to distrust the one listening. If we are not mindful, we can harm each other and break any trust that was already there and/or fail to cultivate trust by not acknowledging our mistakes. When there is trust within a team there is also less of a need to micro-manage, watch over someone's work and/or to question whether a decision someone made is correct or not. Trust allows for more support between and among the team and in turn allows for more trust with all the actors the team engages with in the scopes of a given project.

Conflict transformation

The practice of transforming conflicts starts from the principle that conflicts are not necessarily a bad thing, and therefore we do not need to avoid and/or be afraid of them. Conflicts are a clash between people and/or groups based on a disagreement and conflict does not always mean violence. But if we avoid a conflict then we let a bad situation fester and it can either explode in the end or simply cause unnecessary stress and worry. If a project team is invested in incorporating the culture of peace within their team and all the work they do, there needs to be a positive attitude toward conflict. And if there is a positive attitude toward conflict it means that all members of a team are prepared to be open, transparent and trusting toward themselves and to each other for raising difficult issues that may result in a clash, in bad feelings, in discomfort and a tense environment for the purpose of restoring balance where it may be lacking due to unjust behaviours or attitudes, or even sometimes simple misunderstandings.

Horizontal organizing

Many of the project coordinators interviewed and also a larger number of the participants of the seminar held within the frame of this research to receive feedback on how to incorporate the culture of peace within the project cycle, believe that hierarchical organising is important for advancing projects within the work they do. The researchers are not necessarily promoting a severing with such vertical modes of organizing as we understand that in many organizations this is the structure that is set up and functioning to some degree to implement projects. At the same time, we see how hierarchical modes of organizing can contribute to organizational cultures that are not in line with values of peace and projects can suffer as a result of this. So here, we would like to offer possible ways to incorporate more principles from horizontal modes of organizing so that project coordinators can integrate this in their work if they see the value of such methods over those methods that they are engaging in most of the time due to the way organizational structures are set up already.

Horizontal organising means that tasks and decision making are shared within a team, so that there is no need to have set roles that only one person takes on. For example, a project manager does not need to always and only manage, because everyone in the team can take responsibility for this and therefore, the project manager can also take responsibility for other tasks such as administration, coordination, etc. Once it is clear what the strengths in the team are, the work can also be divided according to strengths, but it should not mean that standard/technical/boring tasks are left to one person only. In addition, members of a team can have their capacity built in a particular area so that it is not always one person who has a particular "strength" or "expertise" in a particular area, and therefore an unequal relation of power is set up where the one with a particular knowledge is always the expert. Therefore, it is also important to provide a space for sharing skills, teaching others and exchanging information and knowledge (which translates to exchanging power within a team). As an example: if one person knows how to write grants, the other doesn't, but wants to learn, it is possible to create a space for learning, which in turn allows for the opportunity for all to share the power of communicating to donors. Likewise, if someone understands finances and accounting better, in creating a space for all members of a team to learn the particularities of this field, there is a sharing of power in understanding how the finances are decided upon and worked with.

In conclusion, one method of strengthening and maintaining the culture of peace within organizational structures is to practice what author Adrienne Maree Brown calls "critical connections, not critical mass"[27]. What this implies is that connections that are meaningful and thereby based on trust, respect and collaboration are more critical for social change than achieving critical mass. Some ways this can be practiced within a team are by building true connections with team members, sharing personal experiences and stories, exchanging strategies for self-development and a willingness to collaborate with one another as opposed to seeing one another as competitors.

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[27] Emergent Strategy, adrienne maree brown; 2017.

Table 11: Questions to reflect on Internal Organisational Structures

What to ask yourself (and within your team) to ensure that the internal structure of an organization is culture of peace sensitive
1. Is there a space for you and your team members to have open and transparent communication regarding the organization, the project management and other relevant decisions?
2. How willing are you and your team members to engage in active listening and be mindful of relations among and between each other?
3. How willing are you and your team members to bring up issues within the team and/or in a project that may be harmful to the team and/or project?
4. Is there a space for you and your team members to bring up issues and trust that they will be discussed with the intention to transform harmful practices, behaviours and attitudes?
5. Where is there trust in a group and where is there distrust? Is it possible to openly discuss these issues and find collective solutions?
6. To what extent are decisions made collectively? To what extent are technical tasks shared among the team?

Indicators for the culture of peace Sensitive Project Cycle

Table 11: Success Indicators for the culture of peace Sensitive Project Cycle

Project Cycle	Culture of Peace Sensitive Elements	Success Indicators
Planning	Participatory Needs Assessment	*A platform or space where the community can gather to discuss their context, needs and priorities is provided*
		Context, needs and priorities are incorporated into the project design
		The project is presented back to community for feedback and adapted accordingly
	Trust Between Implementers and Community	*Community members are part of the project team from the start*
		Transparent and clear communication between project team and the community is ensured
		After project ends, alternative means to collaborate with community are provided
	Sensitive and Inclusive Project Design	*Project staff understands and respects the given cultural context of the community*
		Project staff is familiarized with the context of the conflict and its consequences
		Conflict sensitive language is used when speaking about the conflict
		Practice of constantly reflecting on gender roles is established
	Transparent Communication with all Relevant Stakeholders and Partners	*Strategies to work with diversity of partners are designed*
		Space for having a constant dialogue with partners is created
	Centering the Community in Project Design	*Community with and for whom project will be implemented is consulted on activities, project outcomes and indicators of change*
	Collaborative Theory of Change	*Do NO Harm principle across the activities and methods for achieving change is ensured*

		Qualitative indicators to measure the extent to which a particular community transformed attitudes and behaviors based in the culture of violence to the culture of peace are designed
Implementation	Logistics	The space where activities take place is accessible to all participants in terms of mobility, time of day, duration and security
		Outreach to isolated communities to inform about opportunities to take part in relevant projects is ensured
		Selection process is fair, transparent and ensures equal opportunities for all interested candidates
		In depth analysis of assessment of the context where project takes place is made
	Coordination and Communication between all relevant actor and community	Times, dates, locations, and details of a program is accessible to the people implied in the program prior to an activity taking place
	Facilitation	Space and opportunity of sharing, exchanging and learning from one another in an environment free of judgment is ensured
		Power dynamics are acknowledged and opportunities for transformative processes are created
	Ongoing Monitoring	Strategies to deal with stereotypes, which are reproduced during project implementation are designed
		Strategy to shift, rearrange and make an activity relevant to the process is developed
	Risk Mitigation Strategy	Risk mitigation plan is prepared prior to the project implementation in consultation with community/ies involved in the project
		Non-violent approach to any unexpected risks, tensions raised during project implementation is ensured
		Non-violent modes of relating to others is ensured

Monitoring And Evaluation	Transparent and Participatory Monitoring	Observations are shared with relevant actors for assessment and evaluation
		Reflection meetings are organized to make monitoring process more accessible and horizontal
		Confidentiality is guaranteed and ensured while collecting data and tracking changes
	Accountable Evaluation	Self-assessment tool for evaluators is developed
		Analysis of the assessed results is ensured
		Beneficiaries of the project are accepted as co-creators/ implementers and they are consulted while evaluating project's results
Internal Organizational Structure	Clear and Transparent Communication	Direct communication between staff members is fostered
		Group/ individual conversations among staff members are organized
		Information and knowledge is shared among staff members through various methods, such as group discussions, consultations, bilateral meetings, etc.
	Active Listening	Tools for active listening are designed and shared/practiced among team members
	Mindfulness	Space in the work environment where people can go to be in silence, meditate together, take breaks to breathe together or alone is created
	Trust-building	Team-building exercises/ trips are organized
		Informal gatherings for staff members to ensure friendly working environment is encouraged
	Conflict transformation	Organization has internal conflict management strategy
		Open, trusted and transparent communication is encouraged among staff members
	Horizontal organizing	Tasks and decision-making are shared within a team
		Work is divided according to the strengths of particular staff members, but all share responsibilities for common tasks
		Space for sharing skills, teaching others, exchanging information and knowledge is provided

Concluding Remarks

This research can be considered a first step in clarifying what is meant by culture of peace and how values rooted in such a culture can be translated into action and continued practice by actors engaged in social change activities, organizations and movements in the South Caucasus. A discussion on terminology that often gets confused with culture of peace can contribute to this clarification and is provided within this report. In addition, an operationalization of the term culture of peace can be referred to in order to have more clarity on how the principles can be translated into action, also provided in this report. And finally, a large section of the research provides guidelines for incorporating the culture of peace within the project cycle as well as within organizational structures. In the future it would be interesting to build upon this research with regards to specifically how structures that reproduce and are maintained through violence, whether direct or indirect, can be transformed in light of principles of the culture of peace that refer to justice, accountability and nonviolence.

In this light, something to consider incorporating into the team building and/or reflection meetings within a team that wishes to build its sensitivity to the culture of peace is in depth discussions and a deeper understanding of the history of the non-profit sector, the terminology used within the NGO sphere and the culture of violence from which much of the ways in which we engage with social change was born. When the researchers were brainstorming on the section for how to incorporate the culture of peace within the project cycle and organizational structures, they reflected on the terminology used within the NGO sphere and how it is derived from a history of slavery in the United States, incarceration and militarization. The terms overseeing, monitoring, field/field-work, CEO (chief executive officer), program officer, target, impact is merely some of the most obvious examples. An overseer was someone who was given the task of watching over the work of slaves in the plantation fields to ensure that they were doing their job and often taking violent action against them to show the other slaves what can befall them if they were perceived to stray from the work forced upon them. Many overseers were themselves slaves, which was a method used to create status divisions between slaves. "Field" is also a term borrowed from slavery - the plantation fields were where the slave-hands worked and working in the field was perceived to have less status than working in the master's house, for example. Although merely calling anything as having status within the institution of slavery is disturbing. In showing the parallels between the sphere of NGOs and slavery, it can be said that those people who work in the "field" are often paid less and perceived to have less status than those people who work in the office, or in many cases - a head office where the CEO, or chief executive officer works. This language is one of war and militarization, but also of the prison industrial complex. In many ways the two can be perceived as parallel institutions - an army is like a prison where men go to learn how to produce violence and become products of violence. Chief and officer are both military terms - an officer serves and being a chief officer means one who serves directly to the institution, in this case the NGO institution with its many links to state institutions and corporate institutions. A program officer serves the program and has a rank below the CEO, so a program officer in a sense serves the CEO. And consider the term "executive". Historically, executing has been a tool for punishment at the hands of the state against those who were judged to have

committed unforgivable crimes. In this sense, a CEO is someone who "executes" plans and decisions, but the term itself implies a violent mode of action. In the sense of prison language, we also have the term "monitoring" - a monitor watching over prisoners while they do their daily tasks - eating, being outside, socializing, sleeping, etc. Again, it is a term referring to control over others. Moving over to the terms target and impact, it becomes obvious how militarized these terms are. A target is what/who/where you shoot at or throw a bomb. An impact is also related to war - did your bomb that you targeted at a certain village make an impact when it hit the ground? Another thing to consider when drawing parallels with militarized language to the non-profit sector is the creation of the logical framework, which was originally created during the Vietnam war by the U.S. military to strategize about the impact of their "action" on Vietnamese soil.

Here is a lot of information to dive into in a team if an organization is willing and daring to understand all the ways in which its structure and the institutions it is reliant on (states bodies, donors, banks, etc.) are based in histories and cultures of violence. This is a very difficult task, but a final remark we as the researchers on strengthening the culture of peace within project cycles and organizational structures encourage you and your team to reflect upon together as an attempt to find parallels to the smallest detail of methods, values and beliefs as well as actions we take as social change-makers in the South Caucasus. We do not have all the answers for how to work with an alternative language for example, although we are aware of attempts being made to replace certain terms with others (for example: saying "rights holder" instead of "beneficiary"). But we believe that the best place to start is within each team, so that the terms you come up with are relevant to your realities, contexts and experiences. Hopefully, thinking around these questions can open up more possibilities for incorporating the culture of peace to each and every single micro-level of the work to transform the prevalence of a culture of violence in our societies to the culture of peace.

ANNEX I

List of the Interview Questions:

1. What type of projects do you normally work with?
2. What is Culture of Peace for you?
3. What is a project with the culture of peace approach according to you?
4. What is your experience as a project coordinator on projects, which support the culture of peace?
5. What are some of the tools you have used to incorporate culture of peace into the projects/work you have done?
6. What are some of the challenges and gaps you see when implementing such projects?
7. How do you normally design the strategic planning of your organization?
8. Are you interested in strengthening the culture of peace of your organization and within work you do?
9. Do you think it is possible to integrate culture of peace elements in the strategic planning of your organization?
10. If you would have access to a manual /guideline to integrate culture of peace to your overall strategy, to the internal working culture of the organization, organizational structure, project design and project cycles, what would you need to find there?