



VOLUNTEER FOR SOCIAL COHESION

A Toolkit For Youth & Volunteers

UN VOLUNTEERS SRI LANKA

Resilient communities allow for dynamic interactions between people facing threats and their environments. Understanding how such interactions occur is essential for supporting people-led approaches to peace and development. Volunteerism enables individuals to work together, shaping collective opportunities for dealing with risk and connecting individuals and communities with wider systems of support. Volunteerism as a universal social behaviour is therefore a critical resource for community resilience

- State of the world's Volunteerism Report, 2018

VOLUNTEERISM – THE THREAD THAT BINDS

The term social cohesion has been perceived and defined by multiple experts and organizations in different ways. But each of these definitions do seem to hold a connecting element within. In a generic sense it is the glue that keeps our society together or the bond that makes us greet our neighbor with a friendly smile.

A socially cohesive society is one where all groups have a sense of belonging, participation, inclusion, recognition and legitimacy. Such societies are not necessarily demographically homogenous. Rather, by respecting diversity, they harness the potential residing in their societal diversity (in terms of ideas, opinions, skills, etc.). Therefore, they are less prone to slip into destructive patterns of tension and conflict when different interests collide. ¹

In contexts where social cohesion is weak, conflicts are usually more frequent, more profound, more violent, and more destructive. Just because a society is socially cohesive, however, does not mean that conflict will not exist. Conflict will still occur in these societies, but it is more likely to be effectively managed. ²

There is no doubt that social cohesion is an important element for a peaceful society. It is a core foundation upon which the human civilization can find its pathway towards sustainable development. Our human civilization has constantly faced threats and most recent being the COVID 19 pandemic. It is evidence that we as humanity need to be resilient and to find our direction to fulfill the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

The State of the Worlds' Volunteerism Report in 2018 recognizes that characteristics of local volunteerism most valued by communities are the ability to self-organize and to form connections with others. Community members appreciate the ability to set their own development priorities and to take ownership of local problems. The networks, trust and empathy generated through social action are acknowledged across all contexts.

Therefore, volunteerism serves as a key pillar in driving social cohesion and national unity.

¹ <https://www.un.org/development/desa/socialperspectiveondevelopment/issues/social-integration.html>
² https://www.sfcg.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/SC2_Framework-copy.pdf

Tips for the Trainings

The toolkit is expected to be an easy to use document for volunteers and young people to drive social cohesion and unity in Sri Lanka. There are few steps to be followed in preparation of the trainings or capacity building session and a few tips in delivering the sessions.

Non formal Education Methodologies

The toolkit is designed in a manner that it is facilitated following non-formal methodologies. This refers to forms of education that has a clear learning purpose but occurs outside the established formal system. It is expected to be a participatory learning experience centered around the participant.

Main Principles of Non-Formal Education

1. Planned – These are well-planned sessions with specific objectives, content and methodology.

2. Participant Centered – The sessions are always planned and implemented around the needs and competencies. The session and learning plans need to review and adopted based on feedback, experiences and knowledge of your participants. It is important to remember that learning is a two-way exercise in Non-Formal Education. While the trainer/ facilitator has a responsibility the learners too have a responsibility for their own learning.

3. Flexible – There needs to be the flexibility to change and adopt the session content and methodology depending on the needs and expectations of the group but it should always be within the expected outcomes or objectives of the programme.

Active and Voluntary Participation – The participation of the learners should be voluntary, and no one should be forced to be part of the group. They should join in free will and exist within the group with mutually agreed norms and practices. It is also important that the participants take the responsibility of learning and engage actively and proactively.

4. Inclusive – The trainers and the organizers must ensure and inclusive learning environment for all participants and there shall be no-barriers for the learning process of the participants. This must be considered in the planning stage as well and the level of complexity should rise with the participants not against them.

5. Recognition – Non-formal Education should recognize the participants who successfully complete a structured program through the organizing body.

• <https://unoy.org/en/youth4peace-training-toolkit/>

Inclusive Learning

There are different types of learners who prefer or adopt quickly different types of learning techniques. It is important that you try to adopt multiple techniques to ensure more types of learners.

Visual Learners: These are participants who require visual support to gain understanding or competencies that are presented to them. They can be facilitated by using pictures, images, symbols, multimedia presentations and videos.

Auditory Learners: These are participants who understand better by hearing to sounds. It can be through sounds like music but also listening to a talk or discussion. Interactive sessions facilitated with changes of voice and tone, oral presentations, reading and background music where possible could facilitate better learning for them.

Sensory Learners: These are participants who are comfortable through sensory engagements like physical activities. Conducting physical activities like energizers, games, teambuilding activities will support their learning process.

Analytical Learners: These are participants who enjoy and learn through analyzing, solving problems and creating mental models. Providing case studies, problems to solve and strategies and debriefing would work well with them.

Preparations for sessions

It is essential to prepare for the training sessions in advance. Identify the key objectives that you wish to achieve through the session and based on that develop a programme outline. It is recommended to conduct a needs assessment with the participants to identify what are the key interests and issues they may have. It will help to adopt the training in order to give the best outcomes for the participants. Develop extensive session outlines planning out on each module that will be included in the training. We have provided session outlines that are expected to support your programmes.

MODULES



Session: Understanding Society and Social Cohesion



Objective:

1. To gain an understanding about society
2. To introduce the concept of 'Social Cohesion'



Duration: 60 mins



Room Setting: A room setting with a bit of extra space. (A quiet outdoor space would be ideal)



Session Plan: (Timing / Methodology)

10 mins

Build a conversation with the participants on what would be the first thing that would come to their mind when they hear the word society. The participants will have responses such as people, family, neighbors, friends. Write down these responses on a whiteboard or using flip chart in a way that everyone can see. Ask the participants to suggest other entities that could make up the country. You can bring up examples like religious leaders and institutions, police, cleaners, shop owners etc.

20 mins

Ask participants to work in groups to map connections that they identify in the society. Basically, to list down stakeholders or members of their society/ community and to connect stakeholders that may work together. They may use flip chart for the exercise and try to make a spread-out map to make sure it's clear.

Then ask each group to present their maps and share comments and thoughts.

20 mins

Create a discussion within the group on the importance of the connections/ links that they have identified on the maps. Ask them would their society/ community be the same if these members did not work together. Explain to them that it is these links that make a society/ community. Since people do not work in isolation but work with each other in their day to lives a community is built. The expansion of the community of people working and following a common set of norms leads towards a society with a common identity. It is the link or connection with each stakeholder that keeps the society together. That is what we call 'Social Cohesion'

Introduce the following explanation or any other acceptable definition to the participants.

A socially cohesive society is one where all groups have a sense of belonging, participation, inclusion, recognition and legitimacy. Such societies are not necessarily demographically homogenous. Rather, by respecting diversity, they harness the potential residing in their societal diversity (in terms of ideas, opinions, skills, etc.). Therefore, they are less prone to slip into destructive patterns of tension and conflict when different interests collide



Debrief: 10 mins

Remind the participants again on the importance of the connections between different individual entities and that it holds the social fabric together. Use it as a moment to highlight that if more and more people worked together there can be a lot more achieved as a community and a society. Therefore, social cohesion is an important aspect of our communities.



Material: Flip chart



Remarks:

It is important to highlight that 'Social Cohesion' is what keep our communities together and it's not something new or something that comes from outside. It is up to us to strengthen the cohesiveness of our communities through

Session: Introduction to Conflict



Objective:

1. To gain an understanding about the concept 'Conflict'.
2. To be able to differentiate conflict from violence



Duration: 80 mins



Room Setting: A room setting with a bit of extra space. (A quiet outdoor space would be ideal)



Session Plan: (Timing / Methodology)

20 mins

Provide sticky notes for participants. Ask each participant to list down the first 4 things that they can think of when they hear the word conflict. Instruct them to use one word or maximum two-word answers. Then ask each participant to approach the neighbor and discuss with him/her and to list down a common 4 from the 8 both had listed. Then the groups of 2 should combine and make groups of 4 and again list down 4 things from their list of 8. Continue this till you have two main groups or depending on the number of participants till you think a good discussion is being built within the groups. Bring them all to one and ask each group to present the 4 things that they have listed down. Ask them as one group to choose the 4 and its important all sub-groups should agree on the four words.

25 mins

Ask the participants why they chose the 4 words that they listed down. They may provide different reasons. Introduce the following understanding of conflict to the participants.

Ask the participants how they managed to select 4 from the 8 options that they had each time. Also ask if having more members made it difficult to come to an agreement. Did you use strategies like voting? Did any group have arguments or fights?

Conflict is understood as a perceived or actual contradiction of goals of interrelated actors or inner, social and environmental forces which is characterized by mutual influence between them.

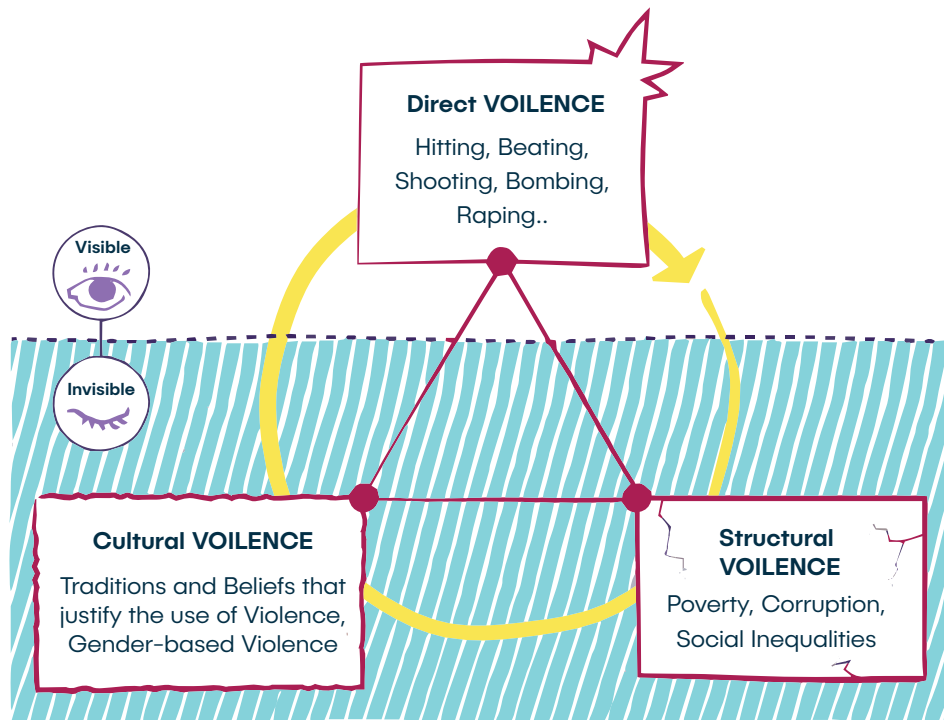
Ask them if they agree with it? If that is different from the words or terms they may have listed?

Ask them if they would see conflict as positive or negative. Explain to them that conflict is neither positive or negative but its natural. It is the reaction towards conflict that may bring positive or negative impact to society. Explain to them if reacted positively conflicts or mismatch of ideas or contraction of thoughts has led to innovations and better solutions to many issues.

25 mins

It is likely that they may have linked conflict with violence. Tell the participants that we identify a negative reaction to a conflict as violence.

Introduce Galtung's "violence triangle" to the participants.



Galtung identifies visible and invisible forms of violence. The visible type is the 'Direct forms of violence'. This includes action-based forms of violence such as physical or verbal which are clearly visible in our day to day lives. However, human action always has root and does not emerge on its own. It is important to clearly explain the structural and cultural forms of violence to the participants.

10 mins

Connect the discussion on conflict and violence and remind them that these are two different concepts. Emphasize to the participants that in a society it is natural for conflicts to emerge and it is important to approach them positively. It will support to maintain or develop social cohesion.



Material: Sticky notes, Flip charts



Remarks:

The term 'violence' is something that most of us are familiar with, but it is surprising how many may not fully understand the scope of this term. The term most often paints a picture of physical violence. It could be a physical attack, a shooting, sexual harassment and even forms of verbal abuse. But the term 'violence' has much more to it than that we would see at first. Johan Galtung says **violence is present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realizations.** He goes on to explain 'violence is that which increases the distance between the potential and the

actual, and that which impedes the decrease of this distance. Thus, if a person died from tuberculosis in the eighteenth century it would be hard to conceive of this as violence since it might have been quite unavoidable, but if he dies from it today, despite all the medical resources in the world, then violence is present according to our definition'. This explanation justifies Issac Asimov's explanation that 'violence is the last refuge of the incompetent', as it is only incompetence that could allow an avoidable potential to an actual realization.

Session: What is peace?



Objective:

1. To gain a deeper understanding about the peace
2. To what a positive reaction to conflict may look like.



Duration: 40 mins



Room Setting: A room setting with a bit of extra space. Seating should be semi-circular.



Session Plan: (Timing / Methodology)

20 mins

Ask the participants what would be the positive reaction to conflict? Once they share their thoughts tell them it is 'Peace'.

Instruct the participants to take bit of time (a minute or two) for themselves. Possibly to close their eyes and take deep breathes. Try to concentrate on themselves in a posture that they are comfortable with.

Then ask the participants what does peace mean to them as a person? The participants will provide different responses such as being free, being relaxed, being without stress and so on. Ask the participants if they feel they are at pace? The likely answer is no. Use this to highlight that peace always starts with 'me'.



- **INTERNAL PEACE**
 Respect for other persons,
 Justice, Tolerance, Cooperation
- **GLOBAL PEACE**
 Respect for other persons,
 Nations, Concern for human community
- **INTERGROUP / NATIONAL / SOCIAL PEACE**
 Respect for other groups,
 Within nation, Justice, Tolerance, Cooperation
- **PEACE BETWEEN HUMANS AND EARTH AND BEYON**
 Respect for the enviroment, Sustainable living,
 Simple lifestyle

Introduce the above model on the different levels of peace. Its expresses how peace begins with the each one of us. It is the individual peace that reflects peace between communities, countries region and beyond.

20 Mins

Ask the participants if they would identify a country without war as a country in peace? Discuss with them what features would they find in a country that they would say is at peace.

Then remind them about the violence triangle and inform them that a country, society, community, family individual who has overcome all the forms of violence is more likely to find peace.

Introduce Galtung's concept of Positive and Negative Peace.

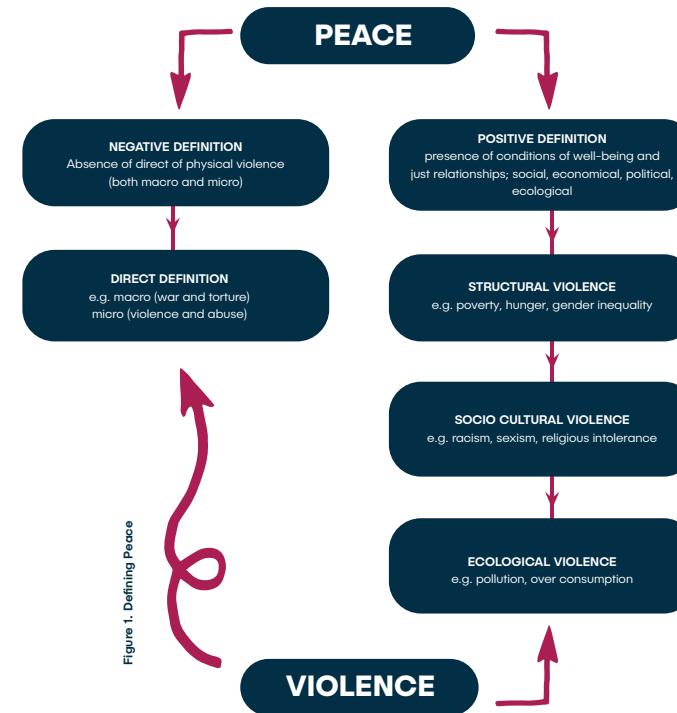


Figure 1. Defining Peace

The flow presents an understanding on the difference between the negative and positive definitions of peace. Positive peace that is without any form of violence i.e. structural, cultural, ecological or any other form is the holistic peace that the world should strive towards.



Material: Flip charts



Remarks:

“Peace is not just the absence of conflict; peace is the creation of an environment where all can flourish, regardless of race, colour, creed, religion, gender, class, caste, or any other social markers of difference. Religion, ethnicity, language, social and cultural practices are elements which enrich human civilization, adding to the wealth of our diversity. Why should they be allowed to become a cause of division and violence? We demean our common humanity by allowing that to happen.”

- Nelson Mandela

It is important to let the participants to themselves reflect on what ‘peace’ means to them personally and to reflect if they are at peace. While many authors, philosophers and leaders introduce peace in different ways an interesting school of thought is to look at it as holistic concept. In which we identify peace beyond the absence of war and direct violence but a phenomenon of the presence of justice, human rights, equality and well-being.

Session: Conflict Escalation



Objective:

1. To gain a deeper understanding about the conflict
2. To understand how conflicts escalate



Duration: 60 mins



Room Setting: A room setting with a bit of extra space. Seating should be semi-circular.



Session Plan: (Timing / Methodology)

20 mins

The participants will be divided into two groups and will be asked to form two parallel lines. Leave a bit of a gap between the two lines. One group should be provided with balloons and ask them to inflate the balloons. Once the balloons are inflated provide the other group with toothpicks.

Then provide the following instructions. Be precise and clear when providing the instructions. Follow the same order of instructions.

“Do not hurt yourself, each other or damage anything in the room. You have 30 seconds for the exercise. Your task is: Protect the balloons! Ready, GO!”

It is important to give a sense of competition when the instructions are given out.

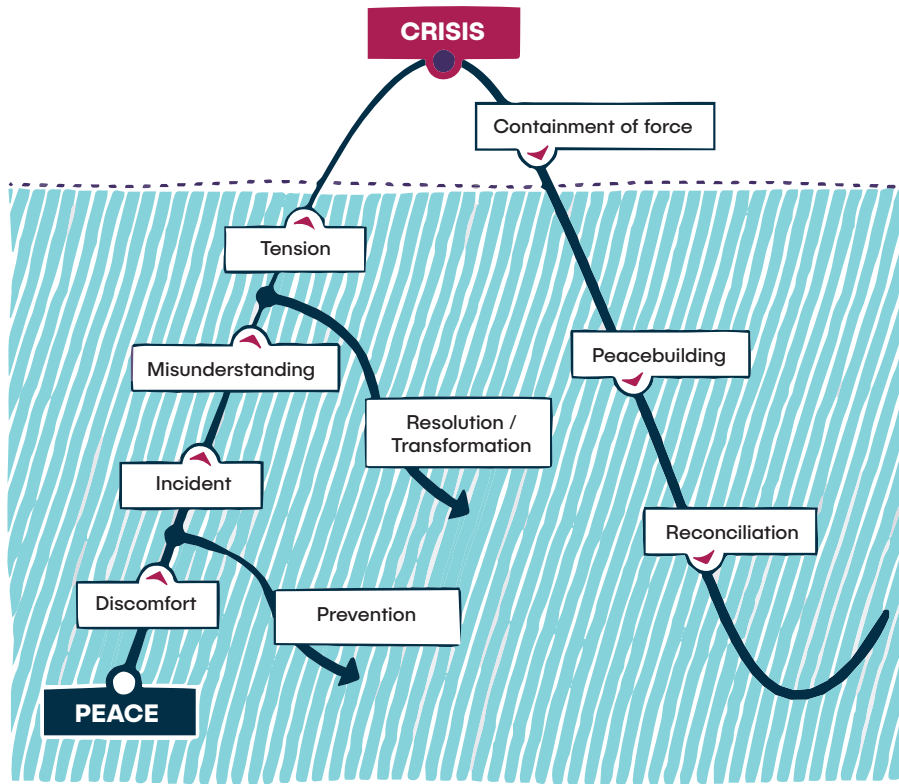


Debrief: 15 mins

Ask the participants to repeat the instructions. Remind the participants that the instructions were only to protect the balloons, but the competitive atmosphere led to violent behaviour. It could also reflect on how simple miscommunication could lead to conflicts and how easily conflicts could escalate to violent outcomes.

Theory in Conflict Escalation: 25 mins

Present the following graph to the participants and explain how simple conflicts could escalate and also the process for reconciliation. The graph also clearly shows a simple uncomfortable situation/conflict identified could prevent escalation or resolve/ transform a conflict before it becomes a crisis. However, if it is not successfully addressed at early stages an escalated conflict will require containment and reconciliation.



Material: Balloons and toothpicks



Remarks:

Session: Conflict Analysis



Objective:

1. To gain a basic insight on analyzing conflicts.
2. To introduce tools that participants can use to analyze conflicts



Duration: 30 mins



Room Setting: Semicircular seating and Sub-Group seating



Session Plan: (Timing / Methodology)

It is essential for any individual or group to be able to analyze a conflict. In order to find solutions or address any conflict it is essential to analyze and identify the root causes, actors involved, needs and wants as well as the evolution of the conflict. We will be introducing 3 key tools during this activity.

20 mins

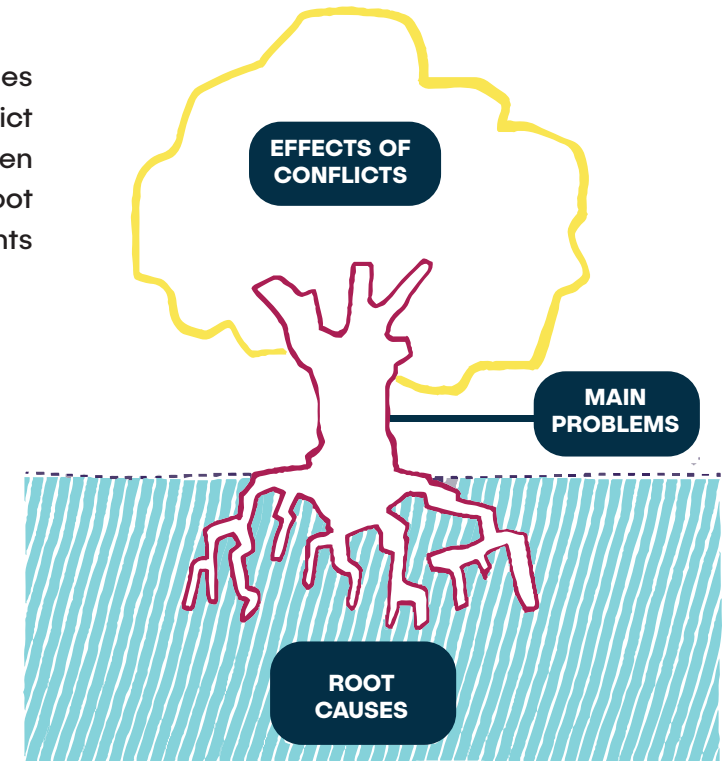
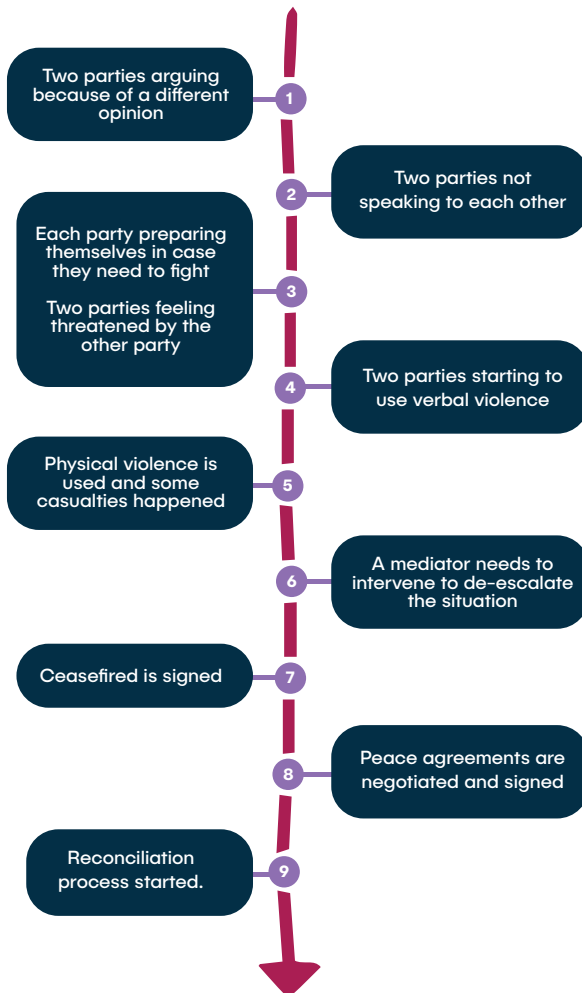
Participants should be divided into three groups. Give each group one tool to discuss. Each group must search and discuss about the tool, how to apply the tool and apply it to a simple real-life conflict. It's best that these tools are applied to simple day-to-day conflicts. It is important that the facilitators do rounds with the groups to ensure they are on track.

10 mins:

Each group can present their findings and the applications of the tool. Facilitators could add if any important point was missed.

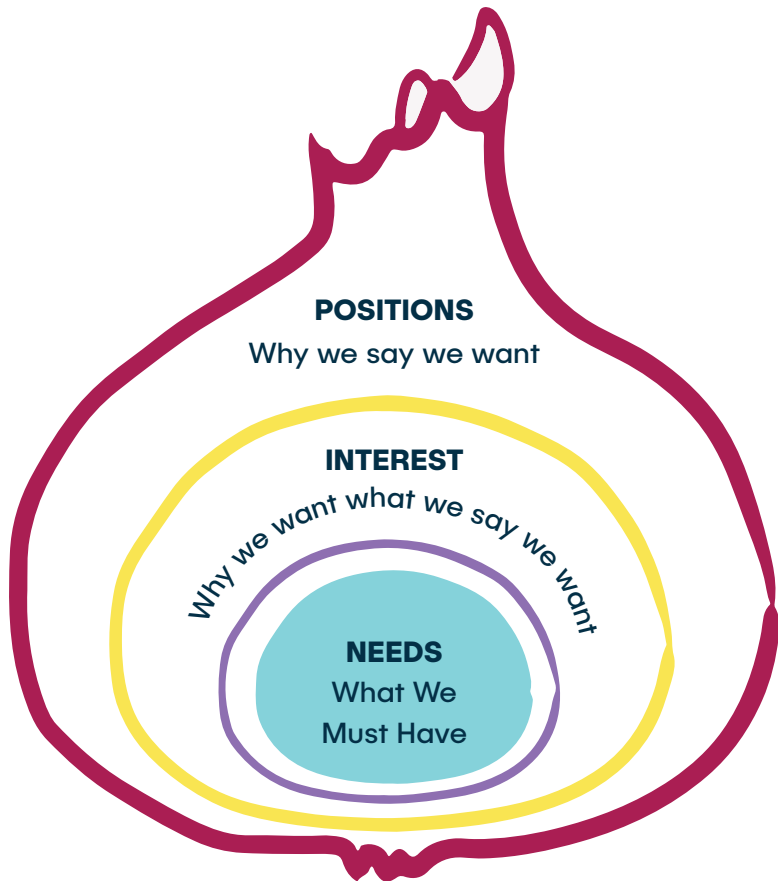
The Conflict / Problem Tree:

First step is to imagine a simple tree. The trunk of the tree represents the core issue. The branches and leaves (top part of the tree) represents the results or outcomes of the problem or conflict which is visible. The roots are the causes of the issues or conflict. It could get complicated when analyzing complex conflicts. At time you may realize that certain outcomes are also at time root causes and vice versa. If the group is at a beginner stage its important to instruct the participants to reflect on a simple everyday conflict than complicated life issues or societal problems.



The Conflict Timeline

The tool supports the participants to dig into the history of a conflict from the time of the beginning till the end. It will help participants identify when did the conflict began and what are the key moments of the conflict. It also reflects that the conflict composes of multiple issues and incidents. It will help visualize how the conflict has evolved and how it escalated. It helps to identify different stages of the conflict. If there are participants representing two or more different sides the tool will also allow you to reflect on different perspective on the conflict and its history. This may lead to a sensitive discussion but if managed will could lead to a positive outcome.



The Conflict Onion

The tool as the name suggest is to use the features of an onion for the analysis. An onion usually has layers. Similarly any conflict will have layers. The most visible will layer is the position. It is what the person or the group of people want. The second layer is the interests. This reflects on the reason behind the position of each individual or group. The final layer is the need. What does the person or the group need or what do they try to fulfil? It is important to be clear between the difference in need and interests. Provide different examples. issues or societal problems.



Tools: Conflict Tree, Conflict Timeline, Conflict Onion



Material: Flip Chart, Markers, Internet connection



Remarks: The facilitators should support the groups in their discussion phase and ensure they apply the tools correctly. Ensure the facilitator is well versed on the tools by referring to the introduction chapter but also to additional reading material. Important to mention that there are more than 3 tools that can be used in the analysis. More details can be found in reference material for further learning or online.

Session: Conflict Management



Objective:

1. To gain an understanding about different means to manage a conflict.
2. To inform participants that there is no one way to manage



Duration: 40 mins



Room Setting: A room setting with a bit of extra space.



Session Plan: (Timing / Methodology)

15 mins:

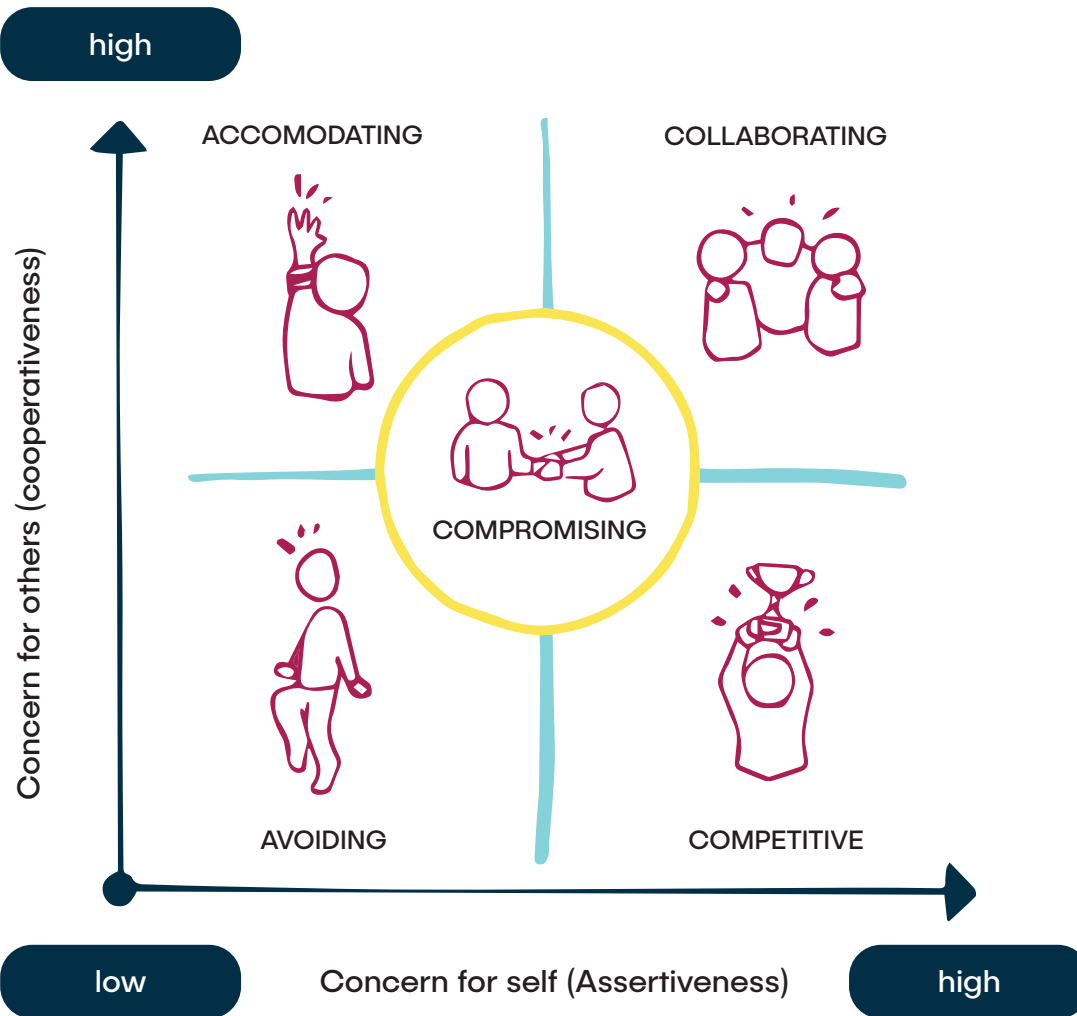
As for 10 volunteers. (The number could increase or decrease based on the number of participants and space available. It should always be an even number). Ask all the other participants to be observers. If there is space, they could come close and sit/ stand around the volunteers.

Make a straight-line using tape or chalk on the floor. The volunteers should make two parallel lines facing each other on the two sides of the line. Provide the following instructions to the volunteers. 'Get the person in front of you to your side of the line'.

Let the volunteers do one round of the activity. Ask the volunteers how they feel? If they feel satisfied based on how they managed. They could do another round if they wanted to try something different. Ask them again how they feel. Then ask the observers what they observed. See if the observers would do something different. If they do have suggestions any set of observers could volunteer to run the activity.

10 mins:

10 mins: Take two volunteers and demonstrate the 5 styles of conflict management with a debrief. Introduce the graph to clearly differentiate between concern for self and concern for others.



Material: Flip chart / Multimedia to show the graph



Remarks: It is important to differentiate between concern for self and concern for others. This could be confusing for participants.

Session: Non-Violent Communication



Objective:

1. To gain an understanding of the concept of 'Nonviolent Communication'.
2. To be able to apply and practice Nonviolent communication.



Duration: 40 mins



Room Setting: A room setting with a bit of extra space with the ability to divide into groups



Session Plan: (Timing / Methodology)

30 mins:

Introduce the concept of 'Nonviolent Communication' (NVC) to the participants.

This is an important practice in life that will help to minimize violent interactions and avoid unnecessary conflicts. In our everyday life we sometimes use language that could be aggressive unknowingly or thoughtlessly. We do not realize the word and the tone we use could lead to unfavorable responses. These can be avoided completely by carefully constructed thoughts and use of language in communication.

A framework that can support a reflection on the language we use is Nonviolent Communication (NVC). Marshall Rosenberg developed this model where communication and language could be used in a more empathic way, connecting with the humanity of the person in front of us while we are focusing on our needs, avoiding the situation to escalate into violence. The model involves:

- "I-messages": speak from your own perspective, opinions, feelings and needs. Do not pretend you know what is happening inside the other person or why she/he acted like that. We do not know.
- Active listening: be silent and listen, listen deeply and carefully, connecting with the needs of the person, not taking anything personally.

This model of NVC can be described in 4 steps:

Observation Without Evaluation - You Start By Describing The Action Or The Situation That Is Causing The Problem. This Usually Can Be Understood As A Neutral Statement: You State What You Observe From Your Perspective Without Introducing Any Judgement Or Accusation. **Example:** Yesterday I Could Not Sleep Because The Music Was Loud.

Express Your Feelings - In This Step, You Express Your Feelings, You Take Responsibility For Them And Do Not Blame Others. Share With The Other How You Feel In That Situation, Which Are The Emotions That You Feel. **Example:** I Felt Deeply Frustrated And Stressed As I Could Not Fall Asleep

Connecting feelings to needs - The next step involves trying to describe why you had the feeling you just expressed. You have to express the hidden need behind the feelings, but at the same time, it is crucial to separate positions and interests from needs, as they really are different (remember the onion tool). The needs are what you need to achieve in order to feel secure and fulfilled. Try to be honest and open as you express your needs. Entering NVC is also an act of faith and vulnerability as you express your deep needs. **Example:** I need to have at least eight hours of sleep to be able to function correctly at work and I am afraid to lose my job and miss my family responsibilities.

Making requests not demands - The last step is to express your preferred outcome with no demands. This means that you must decide what you would like to happen, and what you would like your conflict partner to do. It is important to be as specific as possible and to try to come up with creative solutions. It is helpful to provide as many options as possible, leaving the choice of solution open to the other person. **Example:** I would like to ask you to please turn off the music from 10pm.

20 mins:

Ask the participants to form groups of 4 to 5 participants and discuss real life conflicts that they have experienced and how they could utilize NVC in their communications. Get the participants to practice 4 steps for Nonviolent Communication



Material:



Remarks: Highlight how NVC could support identify commons needs and develop mutually beneficial strategies

Session: Transforming Narratives



Objective:

1. To understand what narratives are
2. To learn how narratives are created
3. To identify different perceptions of narratives



Duration: 30 mins



Room Setting: Semi circular seating and Sub-Group seating



Session Plan: (Timing / Methodology)

20 mins:

Group participants to 5 groups. Provide them a printed copy of one of the following stories.

Story 1

There once was a widower who remarried. His second wife was ill-natured, and she had two daughters who were just as unpleasant as their mother. The man had a beautiful, gentle daughter of his own, and she was soon to become the servant of her evil-stepmother and stepsisters. They made her do all the chores around the house, and she was named Cinderella, after the cinder she swept out of the fireplace. The King needed to find a queen for his prince, so he threw a huge ball. The evil stepmother and stepsisters were invited, but Cinderella was not allowed to go. After they left, Cinderella's fairy godmother appeared and changed her dirty rags into a beautiful gown with glass slippers. Next the fairy godmother changed a pumpkin into a coach and some mice into footmen. Before Cinderella left, the fairy godmother warned her to be home before midnight, because the spell would only last till then. Cinderella was a hit at the ball. The prince fell in love with her and asked her name. Just then the clock struck midnight, and Cinderella ran away. She was in such a hurry, she lost one of her glass slippers. It was the only clue the prince had to find his true love. He went to every home in the kingdom and had every single young girl try on the slipper to see if it fit. The evil stepsisters couldn't fit the slipper, but Cinderella did. The prince married her, and they all lived happily ever after.

Characters - Stepmother / Prince / Stepsister / Fairy godmother/ Neighbour

Story 2

There was a Gamarala (farmer) in a village. One day he noted that a wild animal has eaten his crops and learn there were big rounded marks like Wangedi (Rice Motor at the Kitchen) He thought it was Wangedi witchcraft works. He told villagers to tie up their Wangedi and villagers did exactly as he said. The next day when he went to Paddy Field, he saw the same outcome. He decided to keep watch at night, on the dead of the night suddenly a wonderful tusker came to the paddy field and began to eat, the crops when the Elephant tries to leave, he ran and caught it by his tail. Then the elephant takes off to the sky. After a long journey Elephant landed on the beautiful garden above the clouds. The next day he returned with the tusker to the earth and told his unbelievable story to his family that he went to heaven by hanging to the tail of flying elephant. On the following day, his family was ready to go to heaven with him. The Farmer held the elephant's tail then his wife caught farmer's legs and his child and friends also held the other's legs as a chain. When they were flying, the farmer told about the Watermelon in heaven and show its size to others using his hands. At once, all of them fell off to haystack and the elephant never return.

Character - Elephant / Wife / Neighbour / the child



Instructions: Privately assign characters to the groups. Ask the groups to rewrite the story in the perspective of the assigned character and encourage them to be creative and look into the character's perception.

10 mins: Each group can share their re-written stories with the whole group.



Material: Printed Story



Remarks: Ask the participants how they felt when writing a new story and how difficult it was to create a new one. Focus the discussion on how different perceptions/ experiences could affect narratives and reflect on empath and possibility of multiple versions of truth.

Session: Identity



Objective:

1. To understand the concepts of identity
2. To learn different perceptions on identity



Duration: 30 mins



Room Setting: Semi-circular seating



Session Plan: (Timing / Methodology)

Provide participants with a small piece of paper or a sticky note. Ask the participants to write three things about themselves. Two things should be true while one should be a lie.

First, give an example using yourself. It could be I own a car; I am married and I love the beach. One of these should be false regarding your own self. Ask the participants to guess which was a lie.

Ask the participants to move around the room sharing their 3 points with other participants and each pair guessing each other's points. Ideally, they should share with at least 5 participants.

Debrief: Discuss regarding the assumptions made. Who got many answers right or who got many wrong? What kind of assumptions have they made regarding the fellow participants? Are assumptions good or bad? All of us tend to make assumptions. But we should be open to learn about new things regarding identities and people



Material: Paper / Sticky Notes



Remarks:

Session: Stereotyping



Objective:

1. To understand the concepts of stereotyping
2. To explore how stereotyping can be inherent



Duration: 30 mins



Room Setting: Semicircular seating and extra space for the participants to move around



Session Plan: (Timing / Methodology)

40 mins

Prepare a set of stickers as dots with different colours or different shapes. Dot stickers in different colours, and 1 white dot sticker. Or Different shapes with one shape of just one shape.

Ask the participants to form a circle and close their eyes. Tell them that they are not allowed to talk during the activity. Stick one sticker on the forehead of each participant. Only one participant should have the unique sticker.

Instruct the participants to group themselves with what they have on their forehead within 2 minutes.

It is likely that the participants will group themselves according to the color of the dots or the shape of the sticker on their forehead. The person with the unique sticker will be left out. Observe how her/she is treated in the group.

In 1 round, everyone shares. How do you feel? What happened? How did you group yourselves? Did you use a strategy? How did you feel not knowing what you have on your forehead?



Debrief:

Discuss with participants what happened and what they felt? Inquire how they grouped themselves and what strategies they used. Once all the participants share their thoughts, focus on the unique participant. Ask him/her to share the experience. What he/she felt?

Ask the participants to connect this to real life in which we connect to those with similar identities and ignored/left out those with different identities based on features such as color, religion, location, language, gender or others.

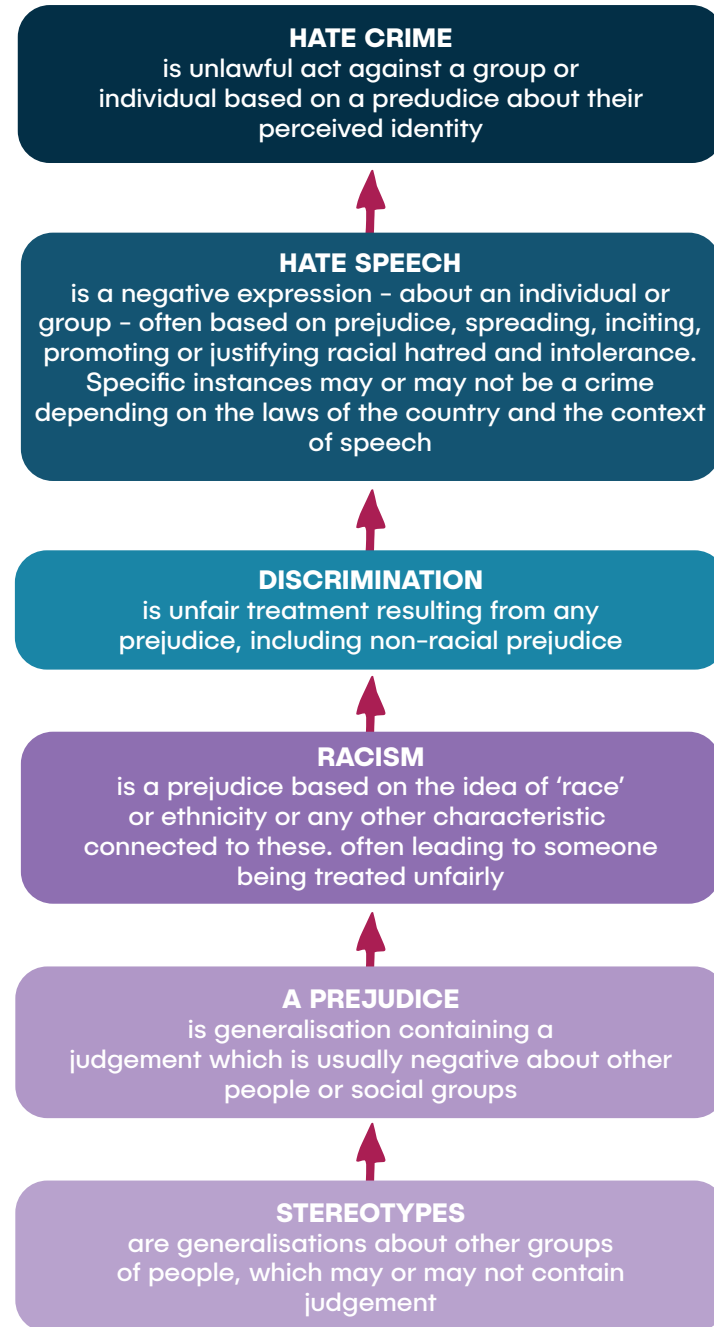
Discuss with participants how stereotyping could escalate into hate crimes



Material: Stickers with grouped shape or colour and one sticker unique



Remarks: Ensure the unique participants is not someone who is generally left out but someone who is generally social and engaging with the participants.



Session: Understanding Hate Speech



Objective:

1. To gain an understanding of hate speech.
2. To introduce certain definitions and criteria followed by organizations.
3. To attempt to prevent or counter hate narratives



Duration: 40 mins



Room Setting: A room setting semicircular seating with possibility to project on the screen. (If not available examples could be printed)



Session Plan: (Timing / Methodology)

15 mins

Take examples of different types of speech narratives could be social media posts, videos and other media items. As participants, which of those would they identify as Hate Speech?

Introduce the participants to definitions of Hate Speech.

Hate Speech is any kind of communication in speech, writing or behaviour that attacks or uses pejorative or discriminatory language with reference to a person or a group on the basis of who they are, in other words on their religion, ethnicity, nationality, race, colour, descent, gender or other identity factor. This is often rooted in, and generates intolerance and hatred and, in certain contexts, can be demeaning and divisive.

- United Nations Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech, 2019

Ask the participants if they agree or disagree? Any additional identity factor they would want to explicitly add or remove? Any changes they would suggest to the recommendation.

15 mins

Introduce Community Guidelines followed by reputed social media sites include Facebook and YouTube

https://www.facebook.com/communitystandards/hate_speech

<https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/2801939>

<https://www.tiktok.com/community-guidelines?lang=en>

<https://www.snap.com/en-US/community-guidelines>

Ask them to work in groups to identify differences in how Hate Speech has been defined/identified in each instance and what more could be changed.



Debrief: 10 mins

It is important to highlight being objective but also sensitive for different cultural and social backgrounds. Something that may not be found offensive by one might be extremely offensive for another.



Material: Printed material of samples examples and definitions and guidelines on hate speech if multimedia and accessible facilities are not available

Session: What can 'Hate Speech' do and what can we do about it?



Objective:

1. To understand the impact of hate speech.
2. To introduce different forms of hate speech and mediums.
3. To help participants look to counter hate narratives



Duration: 40 mins



Room Setting: A room setting semi-circular seating with possibility to project on the screen. (If not, available examples could be printed)



Session Plan: (Timing / Methodology)

20 mins

Show the participants a video or a case study of an instance Rwandan Genocide is one clear example of how hate speech could escalate into violent conflict. Recommend showing one of the following videos. The content may include disturbing and violent content. Viewer's discretion is recommended.

https://youtu.be/qgzHM_uSmjs

<https://www.aljazeera.com/program/the-listening-post/2020/6/14/felicien-kabuga-the-man-behind-rwandas-hate-media/>

Facilitate a discussion. Always begin with emotions and feelings. Ask the participants how they feel. Then try to build a discussion focused on how hate speech and propaganda escalated into a genocide. Refer to the escalation from stereotypes to hate crime.

15 mins

Introduce Community Guidelines followed by reputed social media sites include Facebook and YouTube

https://www.facebook.com/communitystandards/hate_speech

<https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/2801939>

<https://www.tiktok.com/community-guidelines?lang=en>

<https://www.snapp.com/en-US/community-guidelines>

Provide different examples of hate speech in different forms and intensities for the participants in the forms of text, screenshots to the groups. Ask them to work in groups to identify differences in how Hate Speech has been defined/ identified in each instance and what more could be changed. The discussion should be if the definitions and understanding on hate speech is aligned. Introduce the concept of free speech to the discussion if the facilitator feels necessary.

10 mins

Ask each group to share their key discussion points with the wider group. Try to facilitate a discussion around important points that emerge through the presentations.

10 mins

Share with the participants a simple set of actions they could do as individuals and groups.

1. Do not share unverified or hateful content
2. Always look for recommended fact checkers and sources to verify
3. Inform others that a story is not true or harmful
4. Develop possible counter narratives

Refer to resources to study about countering hate speech.



Material: Printed material of samples examples and definitions and guidelines on hate speech.

Session: Leadership



Objective:

1. To understand different forms of leadership.
2. To identify that leaders could be situational



Duration: 40 mins



Room Setting: An open space with the ability for participants to move around.



Session Plan: (Timing / Methodology)

20 mins

Form groups of 3 participants each. If the numbers are not equally sufficient a support team member or a facilitator could support as it feels best. Or the additional participants could be asked stay as observers. Each member of the group has a different role to play and a different skill.

- Member Alpha – Can Talk
- Member Gamma – Can See
- Member Zeta – Can hear

Ask all the groups to stand on a direct line. Place an object slightly far away from this line and show each group that they need to either collect and return with the object or touch and return to the starting point.

Each of the three members should be standing on a straight line. Gamma should be the first member (furthest from the object) and should face the direction of the object. Alpha should be the second member and should face the opposite direction in a way that Alpha can see Gamma. Zeta should have the direction of the object and should be closest to the object. Zeta should be blindfolded.

Zeta is the only one who can travel / walk to achieve the objective. Only Gamma can see the end goal. Only Alpha can give instructions loudly.

Gamma should signal non-verbally to Alpha who should be able to loudly communicate to Zeta on how to get the object.

Let the participants try it out for few minutes and see which groups succeed and which do not.

10 mins:

Ask each group to share how they feel about it? Inquire the groups who did not achieve the target what went wrong and then the groups who succeeded what worked for them. Ask them what skills were required? A lot of answers will be around good communication.

Finally ask the question who do you think is the leader in the group?

**Debrief: 5 mins**

Emphasize that all three members of the group played crucial roles. One would not have been able to achieve the goal without the others. Each member had a different unique skill which added value in order to be able to achieve the goal. Emphasize that all three were leaders in their own role and it is the diversity in the team which made them succeed. It is important to highlight that differences between the team members positively contributed and each of them has value to add and could be a leader in different situations.



Material: Blind fold and object to be placed.

Session: Localizing 2250: Youth, Peace and Security



Objective:

1. To understand the YPS agenda.
2. To identify means to localize the YPS agenda.



Duration: 40 mins



Room Setting: Semi-circular seating with multi-media project



Session Plan: (Timing / Methodology)

15 mins

Introduce the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda to the participants. It is important the facilitator refer to the background and the inclusion of the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda. This includes UNSCR 2250, 2419 and 2535 as well as the Missing Peace report and other material that you may openly find on the topic.

The facilitator could also use the following videos as seem fit.

<https://youtu.be/lvIMWnOHUXM>

<https://youtu.be/RGNkLE-JpPM>

https://youtu.be/4yTz7mr_5W8

Try to facilitate a discussion with the participants on their thoughts and if they agree or disagree or if they would add more to the agenda.

20 mins

Divide the participants into groups of 5 – 8 participants and distributed with the groups printed or online reference documents about UNSCR 2250 and guiding documents on Youth, Peace and Security Agenda.

<https://unoy.org/wp-content/uploads/Guiding-Principles.pdf>

<https://www.sfcg.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/SFCG-Guiding-Principles-Inforgraphic.pdf>

Ask the participants to work in groups and brainstorm about programs, activities and implementations that they can initiatives in their communities. Each group should list down their ideas and how they could connect to the youth, peace and security agenda.



Debrief: 5 mins



Material: Printed material on the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda.



Remarks: Refer to Annex 1 on more details of the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda.

Session: Community Mapping



Objective:

1. To look at the own community from a different perspective
2. To look at areas to change and improve in the own communities.



Duration: 40 mins



Room Setting: Semi-circular seating with multi-media project



Session Plan: (Timing / Methodology)

20 mins

If all the participants are from one community, they can do the activity in one group. If they are from different communities, they can be divided in different smaller groups based on their communities.

Ask the participants to draw a rough map of their community. These should include features like roads, important buildings, rivers, bridges, religious places and other important landmarks. It does not need to be an accurate sketch but a rough map. Instruct the participants to not worry about accuracy or scale. Ask the participants to colour code the map. (Eg: Green for religious places, Yellow for shops, Red for bus stand)

Ask the participants to then use sticky notes and mark the locations / landmarks with icons based on how they feel about the locations.



Positive places



Issue or place of concern



Decision making power



No access



Unknowing



Place of learning / arts and culture



Negative places

10 mins:

Discuss with participants regarding the community map and how they identified different areas of the community. Did some of the participants feel about different locations and landmarks differently? What were the reasons behind that? Does this help to uncover any negative outcomes or issues that may exist in the community.



Material: Large piece of paper, colouring pens, sticke notes



Remarks: The purpose of the activity is for the participants to identify resources and issues in their physical environment. These will support in identifying problem to which they want to find solutions to and resources that may support their work.

Session: Volunteering for Peace



Objective:

1. To support participants to develop project plans.
2. To direct participants to implement social action projects in communities.
3. To inspire on the impact that could be made by volunteers



Duration: 40 mins



Room Setting: Semi-circular seating with multi-media project



Session Plan: (Timing / Methodology)

20 mins

Ask the groups from the previous session to choose one of the projects/initiatives that they have identified and develop a structured plan to implement it. They should look into feasibility, impact and sustainability as well as timeline of implementation. Provide copies of the 'Guiding principles on Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding' as reference.

You could propose the below structure to the participants as an outline in the planning and designing process.

Project Name
Targets (SDG 16)
Impact
Location
Timeline
Description
Innovation
Cost
Sustainability
Beneficiaries

15 mins

Ask the groups to pitch the project plans within 3 to 5 minutes in a way to convince audience on the feasibility, impact, sustainability and timeliness. Facilitator and the team could provide feedback to the projects.

15 mins

It's important to emphasize the impact of volunteering. Use inspiring videos, stories or other means.

You could use the following videos:

<https://youtu.be/qLGNj-xrgvY>

<https://youtu.be/MBSf10JF3wl>

Highlight and inspire the participants to volunteer. You could also use stories from [V Awards](#) or [CNN Heroes](#).



Material: Printed project planning outline and the Guiding principles document.

<https://unoy.org/wp-content/uploads/Guiding-Principles.pdf>

Using Digital Spaces

The advancement of technology has facilitated many new technologies that enables learning through digital spaces. This includes connecting with stakeholders and participants remotely. Technology has come in handy specially in times of crisis and uncertainty. These digital spaces facilitated dissemination of information, connecting of communities and continuation of learning processes at such times. The COVID 19 pandemic situation showed to the world how much technology can do to support us.

Technology can facilitate learning sessions as well. While it is not the ideal learning experience specially in non-formal education digital spaces too can facilitate a good learning environment. It is important to keep in mind that the same principles still apply on digital spaces as well. Here are few tips if you are conducting session on digital spaces.

- Continue to follow the principles of Non-Formal Education
- Use online tools to facilitate interactive sessions like polls, quizzes and word clouds. There are online platforms that facilitate such tools free of charge.
- Try to get participants to work together possibly in smaller groups. Some online video conference platforms facilitate breakout rooms.
- Keep your video on. Participants are likely to connect to you better when they see a person. They tend to build trust on you.
- Encourage participants to speak out and share their thoughts openly.
- If you are discussing sensitive topics its best the sessions are not recorded. If it is required to be recorded for any reason, please clarify to participants that the recording is only for internal purposes and will not be published or disseminated.
- It is advisable to prepare a presentation with the relevant content as participants might find it easier to follow even if there is any technical difficulty.
- It is encouraged to use video that may keep the session engaging and active. Share the link of the video with the participants so they could view it even if the screen sharing leads to technical difficulties.
- Always keep a backup source to support you for internet connectivity.

Annex 1

Youth, Peace and Security Agenda

Many countries, regions and localities in the world are affected by conflict and violence. One group that is affected and rarely spoke about in the turmoil, instability and violence is the 'Youth'. Decades of unrest, terrorism, violent extremism and marginalization has affected generations of young people.

The United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 (2015) is the first international policy framework that recognizes the positive role young people play in preventing and resolving conflict, countering violence extremism and building peace. The resolution was a result of continuous hard work and advocacy from local, national, regional and global like-minded partners led by young people around the world. The resolution 2250 was followed by the UNSCR 2419(2018) and UNSCR 2535 (2020).

UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 2230 (2015)

ON YOUTH, PEACE AND SECURITY

“ Today's generation of youth is **THE LARGEST** the world has ever known, and... young people often form the majority of the population of **COUNTRIES AFFECTED BY ARMED CONFLICT** ”

“ Youth should actively be engaged in shaping lasting **PEACE** and contributing to **Justice and reconciliation** ”



“ Disruption of youth's access to **EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES** has a dramatic impact on durable peace and reconciliation ”

“ A large youth population presents **A UNIQUE DEMOGRAPHIC** dividend that can contribute to lasting peace and economic prosperity if **INCLUSIVE POLICIES** are in place ”

- **YOUNG WOMEN AND YOUNG MEN**
- **DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS**

Source: UNOY Peacebuilders
The UNSCR 2250 introduced 5 pillars on Youth, Peace and Security.

1. Participation

- Member states should consider ways to increase **inclusive representation of youth in decision-making at all levels** for the prevention and resolution of conflict
- All relevant actors should take into account, as appropriate, the **participation and views of youth** when negotiating and implementing peace agreements

2. Protection

- All parties to armed conflict must take the necessary measures to **protect civilians**, including those who are youth, from all forms of sexual and gender-based violence
- States must respect and ensure the **humans rights of all individuals**, including youth, within their territory

3. Prevention

- Member States should facilitate an **enabling environment** in which young people are recognized and provided adequate support to **implement violence prevention activities and support social cohesion**
- All relevant actors should promote a culture of peace, tolerance, intercultural and interreligious dialogue that involve youth

4. Partnership

- Member States should increase their **political, financial, technical and logistical support**, that take account of the needs and participants of youth in peace efforts
- Member States should engage relevant local communities and non-governmental actors in developing strategies to **counter the violent extremist narrative**

5. Disengagement and Reintegration

- **Disengagement, demobilization and reintegration activities** must consider the needs of youth affected by armed conflict, including through evidence-based and gender sensitive **youth employment opportunities and inclusive labor policies**
- All relevant actors should invest in building **young persons' capabilities and skills** through relevant education opportunities designed in a manner which promotes a culture of peace

UNSCR 2250 recognizes that youth should actively be engaged in shaping lasting peace and contributing to justice and reconciliation, and that a large youth population presents a unique demographic dividend that can contribute to lasting peace and economic prosperity if inclusive policies are in place. The later resolutions UNSCR 2419 and UNSCR 2535 calls on all relevant actors to consider ways to increase the representation of youth for the prevention and resolution of conflicts and effective and meaningful participation of youth in the peacebuilding process. UNSCR 2535 also recognizes the need for meaningful engagement of youth in humanitarian planning and response specially with the effect on and the role that young people can have in time of crisis including the COVID 19 pandemic. These recognize the role of the UN partners including the Secretary General's Envoy on Youth and Resident Coordinators and Heads of Member states to work towards the Youth, Peace and Security agenda.

Source: Source: UNOY Peacebuilders

Annex 2

Resources for Further Learning

- Social Cohesion Framework, Search for Common Grounds (2017) - https://www.sfcg.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/SC2_Framework-copy.pdf
- Strengthening Social Cohesion: Conceptual framing and programing implications, United Nations Development Program (2020) - <https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/democratic-governance/conflict-prevention/strengthening-social-cohesion--conceptual-framing-and-programmin.html>
- 2018 State of the World's Volunteerism Report: The threat that bind, UN Volunteers (2018) - https://www.unv.org/sites/default/files/UNV_SWVR_2018_English_WEB.pdf
- Youth4Peace Toolkit, United Network of Young Peacebuilders - <https://unoy.org/en/youth4peace-training-toolkit/>
- Mainstreaming Peace Education, European Intercultural Forum (2014) - <http://unoy.org/wp-content/uploads/Mainstreaming-Peace-Education.pdf>
- The Missing Peace, Independent Progress study on Youth, Peace and Security (2018) - <https://www.youth4peace.info/system/files/2018-10/youth-web-english.pdf>
- Peace Bag, United Network of Young Peacebuilders - <https://unoy.org/wp-content/uploads/PeaceBag.pdf>
- 25 Stories for Peace, United Network of Young Peacebuilders (2014) - <https://unoy.org/wp-content/uploads/25-Stories-Publication-Final-for-web.pdf>
- Peacebuilding education and advocacy in conflict-affected context programme, UNICEF (2014)



(LOGO AND OTHER INFO)

UN VOLUNTEERS SRI LANKA