The Global Partnership for Children and Youth in Peacebuilding, launched in 2012, seeks to improve child and youth peacebuilding (CYP) practices, and to impact and strengthen the evidence base supporting CYP and related best practices. In July 2014, the Global Partnership initiated a multi-agency, multi-country, multi-donor (3M) evaluation in Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Nepal to 1) Map who is doing what and where to support CYP, 2) Nurture durable partnerships increasing CYP quantity, quality, and impact 3) With children and youth, assess the quality and impact of child and youth participation in peacebuilding and variables influencing CYP impact; 4) Build the capacity of children and youth to meaningfully participate in CYP evaluations; and 5) Present key findings and recommendations to stakeholders to help increase the quantity, quality and impact of CYP work.

The 3M evaluation was overseen by a Global Steering Team consisting of representatives from World Vision International, Save the Children Norway, United Network of Young Peacebuilders (UNOY Peacebuilders), Search for Common Ground (SFCG) and Peace Action Training and Research Institute of Romania (PATRIR). Two Global Evaluators worked with the Global Steering Team to design the evaluation methodology and to encourage the formation of Country Partnerships. The evaluation methodology supported a participatory evaluation process involving children, youth, and adults as evaluators in Local Evaluation Teams (LETs). The evaluation was primarily qualitative. A multi-method approach was applied, including focus group discussions (FGDs), using participatory evaluation tools with different age groups, online mapping, interviews, drawing, stories, and analysis of available secondary data. In particular, visual participatory evaluation tools including a Timeline, a before and after Body Map, and other tools were applied.

In Colombia, DRC and Nepal Country Partnerships for Children and Youth in Peacebuilding were established involving: 5 agencies in Colombia; 3 agencies in the DRC; and 6 agencies in Nepal. In each country a Country Evaluator was recruited, and 3-4 LETs were formed in key locations. Global Evaluators supported a National Capacity Building Workshop for LET members and the Country Evaluator in each country to enhance their knowledge, values, and skills to undertake the participatory evaluation. Ethical guidelines were introduced and their application was encouraged through ongoing communication among concerned stakeholders. The Country Evaluators mentored the LET members to support meaningful participation of children and youth as evaluators, advisers, respondents, documenters, and analysts. Lessons learned concerning factors that enabled or hindered meaningful participation have been documented to inform future practice.

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1 Authors: Dr Michael McGill and Claire O’Kane, with supporting authors Bibhuti Bista (Nepal), Nicolas Meslaoui (Colombia), Sarah Zingg (DRC) for the Global Partnership for Children and Youth in Peacebuilding, www.GPCYP.com, July 2015
### Table: Number of LET Members by Country, Gender, Age and Role

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>10-14 years</th>
<th>15-17 years</th>
<th>18-29 years</th>
<th>18+ Adult Supporters</th>
<th>total</th>
<th>total</th>
<th>ALL TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Colombia 4 LET Totals</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DRC 3 LET Totals</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nepal 4 LET Totals</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All LETs Totals</strong></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the evaluation, the definition of peacebuilding used was, peacebuilding is work to prevent, stop, or heal the occurrence of any form of violence. Peacebuilding includes reconciliation, non-violence, or conflict-transformation efforts preventing or limiting violence. The definition recognised the different types of violence: direct, cultural, and structural violence described by Galtung (1969), which are inter-related. In Colombia, 10 CYP initiatives were evaluated which pro-actively engaged children and youth as peacebuilders. In the DRC, 18 organisations were evaluated which involved children and youth in peacebuilding activities. Some of these organizations had not planned to involve children and/or youth in peacebuilding, thus, young people were included incidentally rather than intentionally. In Nepal, peacebuilding activities undertaken by 17 child clubs and 17 youth clubs were evaluated.

### Number of FGDs Completed by Tool and Participant Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>10-14 years</th>
<th>15-17 years</th>
<th>18-29 years</th>
<th>18+ Adult Supporters</th>
<th>ALL TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Timeline Totals</strong></td>
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<td>45</td>
<td>36</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Body Map Totals</strong></td>
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<td>56</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>C &amp; Y in Context Totals</strong></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Pots and Stones Totals</strong></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>38</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Colombia FGDs</strong></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total DRC FGDs</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Nepal FGDs</strong></td>
<td>33</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All FGD Totals</strong></td>
<td>83</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Draw and Write, poems and stories</strong></td>
<td>202</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Draw and Write Totals</strong></td>
<td>202</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>540</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Number of Participants who participated in FGD or Interview by Gender, Age and Location (excluding Draw & Write).

Participants are only counted once in this table though some participants participated in multiple evaluation activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>10-14 years</th>
<th>15-17 years</th>
<th>18-29 years</th>
<th>18+ Adult Supporters</th>
<th>total</th>
<th>total</th>
<th>ALL TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
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<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Colombia Totals</strong></td>
<td>63</td>
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<td>49</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DRC Totals</strong></td>
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<td>62</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nepal Totals</strong></td>
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<td>70</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participant Totals</strong></td>
<td>201</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Impact of Child and Youth Participation in Peacebuilding

The evaluation results revealed that child and youth peacebuilders have contributed to impact in four key areas: 1) young peacebuilders often became more aware and active citizens for peace; 2) young peacebuilders increased peaceful cohabitation and reduced discrimination; 3) young peacebuilders reduced violence; and 4) young peacebuilders increased support to vulnerable groups. A few of the changes under each of these key impact areas, particularly the changes concerning children and youth as aware and active citizens were experienced by males and females of different ages participating in different peacebuilding initiatives across different regions. Other changes were more localized resulting from specific peacebuilding initiatives carried out by children or youth, often in collaboration with adults in particular geographic areas.

**Theme One: Young peacebuilders often became more aware and active citizens for peace.**

This prominent theme covered numerous impact sub-themes emerging from individual changes, development, and actions. Child and youth involvement in peacebuilding helped them develop as individuals and become more responsible citizens. Practicing peacebuilding not only allowed young people to improve their peacebuilding skills, more broadly, it contributed to their more effective positive involvement in their communities. Participants highlighted that individual changes and actions resulted in positive impact at community, family, and school levels.

The transformation of young people into more aware and active citizens for peace seemed to start as they became more aware of peace as a concept and possibility. They then began to hope and believe in peace in their families, communities, and nation. This energized young people to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to do so. As their knowledge and skill improved, both through training and through practicing peacebuilding action, young people's confidence in their ability improved. This dynamic process increased their commitment to peacebuilding which increased their peacebuilding actions and improved their knowledge, skills, and confidence. These young, skilled, and confident peacebuilders applied their developing capacity throughout their daily lives and, thereby, became aware and active citizens for peace. This development process was critical for increasing the impact of their peacebuilding actions.

**Theme Two: Young peacebuilders increased peaceful cohabitation and reduced discrimination.**

Cohabitation moves beyond coexistence, toward peaceful dynamic relationships within and between diverse groups resulting in norms such as interethnic marriages, visiting or studying inter-ethnically, and intergenerational civic collaborations. Children and youth contributed significantly to increased peaceful cohabitation within and between a variety of different groups. Young peacebuilders addressed different forms of discrimination based on age, gender, ethnicity, tribe, and caste in order to increase peaceful cohabitation.

**Theme Three: Young peacebuilders reduced violence.**

Child and youth peacebuilders prevented and reduced different forms of violence and exploitation as evidenced by evaluation participant's claims and supporting research. The type of violence reduced varied significantly in each country. Following are just some of the examples of reduced violence in each context.

In Nepal, reduced violence against children, women, or men and creation of a more peaceful environment was widely reported by evaluation participants. This included reporting of reduced gender-based violence and domestic violence, including reduced scolding of children by their parents. Children and youth also described positive changes in their own behaviour and attitudes to be less violent as a result of participating in their CYP initiative. Reduced alcohol use and associated...
domestic violence and fighting in two communities was reported. In one such community, collaborative efforts by youth clubs, women’s groups, and local officials, resulted in the declaration of an alcohol free VDC. Reduced early marriage was reported by children, adolescents, and youth from 6 child clubs (2 Doti, 2 Rolpa, 1 Nawalparasi, 1 Mahottari) and 4 youth clubs (3 Rolpa, 1 Doti). Inter-agency research on child marriage in Nepal carried out in 15 districts identified how, “the activities of child clubs, adolescents and girls were found to be very useful in preventing child marriage” (Plan Nepal et al., 2012, p.10).

In DRC, CYP appeared to reduce violence of different kinds in all 3 LET areas. In Kitchanga, participants suggested there was success peacefully resolving and reducing a number of individual land conflicts. This impact came about through peace education on the land law and the importance of solving conflicts peacefully, as well as through mediation of existing land conflicts. Children and youth were especially involved in awareness raising efforts, while some youth also mediated conflicts. Acts of land conflicts signed, and actual recuperations of land, were mentioned by several organizations as evidence. Children and youth also reduced sexual and gender based violence by raising awareness on gender equality within families, schools and communities, and by addressing forms of sexual exploitation.

In Colombia, a clear difference was discerned between participants under 18 and youth participants. There was an observable majority of children and adolescents (10-17 years old) stressing that they had learned to dialogue instead of fighting, to respect their relatives and peers, and to recognize their own emotional feelings. By contrast, youth, and adults, directed their responses on impacts that increased integration between communities and improved communication within families. More than 50% of answers under the category of reduced conflicts and violence in schools and families (n=94) used terms related to ‘communication’ to describe how children and youth had experienced greater peace in their relationships at home and in school. Dialogue, listening to others, using proper language, and expressing their feelings are considered as the main strategies they learnt and used through their involvement in peacebuilding activities. Participants from Cali described how bullying significantly decreased in their school and led to decreased school dropout.

Theme Four: Young peacebuilders increased support to vulnerable groups. In Colombia, DRC, and Nepal, CYP increased assistance offered to vulnerable groups. Following are some examples.

In Colombia. In the Montes de Maria region, the Antonio Restrepo Barco Foundation created a multi-purpose fund providing child and youth groups and organizations with crucial support to develop sustainable and income generating projects. These initiatives positively impact the society by supporting recycling and trash collection youth brigades, creating a playground for disabled children, creating music schools, and by offering economic opportunities for children and youth in a region highly affected by poverty and unemployment (Fundación Restrepo Barco, 2008).

In DRC, children and youth implemented concrete activities to allow children and youth to develop in safe environments in all three sites. In Bukavu, child and youth peacebuilders claimed to have improved the conditions of children in prisons and reduced the number of children there in the first place. A 34 year old adult supporter from Bukavu explained that there is now an “acceptance [by prison authorities] to liberate children from prisons.” Also, “children find food now” an 18 year old male youth claimed, and “children have their own space in the prison,” a 22 year old female youth confirmed. In Goma and Kitchanga, children and youth have contributed to reunifying children and their families who were separated by war, and supporting their reintegration in families and communities.

In Nepal, participants reported increased reintegration of conflict-affected children and youth. Dialogue and interaction programmes among young people who were part of armed groups and youth club members in Mahottari led to increased understanding of their motives and needs. Increased reintegration support of conflict affected children and youth in their communities, schools, and families as a result of child and youth club initiatives was also reported by others (Binadi, 2011; Save the Children Nepal, 2008; Save the Children, 2008; Save the Children, 2013).
Factors Influencing CYP Impact

Eleven key factors were identified which hinder or enable the impact of child and youth peacebuilding efforts, and there is a strong interplay and dynamic relationship among the factors.

1) Attitudes, motivation, and commitment of children and youth, and their organisations:
Good role models, effective communication, teamwork, and the responsibility and commitment of individuals were identified as key success factors. Children and youth were motivating each other, accessing information, and organising themselves in their own clubs, associations, and movements to organise peacebuilding and violence prevention initiatives.

A lack of commitment and interest by children and youth were described as significant hurdles to successfully implementing peacebuilding programs. When only a few children and youth were actively participating and when sufficient preparation was not undertaken for their peacebuilding activities, their initiatives struggled to have significant impact. Reasons for limited participation in peacebuilding initiatives were varied. For example in Nepal reasons included: a lack of parental support for their children to participate; difficulties in reaching children and youth from the most remote communities; insufficient information and awareness about peacebuilding; a lack of local government support; and poor communication and internal conflicts within the clubs. Shyness, rivalry, a lack of information sharing, and disrespectful communication were identified as hurdles in Colombia.

2) Capacity, knowledge, skills, and experience of children and youth:
Through their CYP initiatives some children and youth in different contexts have gained increased opportunities to access training on child rights/ women’s rights, peacebuilding, conflict management, and leadership skills. In the well functioning associations and clubs, children and youth had improved leadership, communication, analysis, and problem solving skills which enhanced their competencies as peacebuilders. Insufficient capacity building on conflict analysis for many children and youth contributed to some ineffective CYP efforts. In addition many CYP initiatives had insufficient mechanisms in place to effectively document, monitor, and collect data on the process and impact of their peacebuilding initiatives.

3) Family attitudes and support:
Parental support for children’s participation in peacebuilding was crucial. When there was a general lack of parental support for child peacebuilding efforts within the community, there tended to be lower morale among children and less active participation from girls and boys. Parental permission was also important for female youth in the Nepali context, as they faced more restrictions in terms of their mobility, compared to male youth. In addition, some families who were most affected by poverty tended to be more reluctant to allow their sons and daughters to engage in peacebuilding activities, as they felt their time could be better spent contributing to the family livelihood. Findings from the evaluation exhibited positive indications that children and youth peacebuilders in a number of locations were gaining increased support from their parents for their CYP efforts.

4) Cultural attitudes, beliefs, and practices:
Cultural attitudes and traditions concerning gender equality, marriage within tribal groups, and inheritance rights were mentioned as factors affecting peacebuilding efforts in the DRC. For example, cultural attitudes regarding male inheritance negatively affected efforts to promote gender equality. Similarly, in Nepal traditional cultural attitudes, beliefs, and practices towards gender, caste, ethnicity, and age were deep rooted and contributed to different forms of discrimination and cultural violence, including early marriage.

5) Key stakeholders motivation, commitment, and support:
In some communities in Colombia, the DRC and Nepal children and youth reported a lack of willingness and commitment from the local government authorities and other relevant stakeholders to engage children and youth in peacebuilding. Thus, children and youth in some areas felt unsupported and were less able to address direct, cultural and structural forms of violence without support from adults. In some communities in
the DRC some youth and children faced hostility and negative reactions to their peacebuilding efforts from key stakeholders. For example, in Kitchanga certain local chiefs prohibited awareness-raising activities and mediations on land conflicts due to vested interests.

In a number of communities in Nepal, and in some communities in Colombia close collaboration with key stakeholders (in schools, communities, local authorities) has increased the successful impact of CYP.

6) **Awareness raising, sensitization, and campaigns among key stakeholders:** Significant awareness raising and sensitization has been required both to change attitudes regarding the positive roles that children and youth can play in peacebuilding; and to change the attitudes and practices of different stakeholders that contribute to violence and conflict. Awareness raising activities in schools, communities, municipalities, and districts have been a key component of peacebuilding initiatives by child and youth peacebuilders in diverse locations in Colombia, DRC and Nepal. The media (radio, television, and new forms of social media) has also played an important role in raising awareness and sharing information about peacebuilding and good governance initiatives among the general public.

7) **Culture, theatre, arts, and sports as a means of engaging children and youth:** Creative methods are being effectively used to engage and sustain the motivation of children and youth in peacebuilding; and to promote awareness and peacebuilding messages. Cultural arts, theatre, drawing, poems, games, quizzes, debates, speeches, singing, and dancing were identified as effective approaches for children and youth to show their talents, to express their views and messages on peace, violence and conflict issues concerning them, and to build social relations among groups.

8) **Existence and implementation of government laws, policies, strategies, and provisions:** In line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child numerous laws, policies and directives have been developed to protect people from different forms of violence and discrimination including child marriage, child labour, trafficking, discrimination etc. Furthermore, there are increasing development of laws and regulations supporting children and youth participation in decision making processes concerning them. In Colombia, a recent law has also mandated incorporation of the topic of ‘peace’ in all school curriculums. However, despite provisions for child and youth representation in various local governance structures concerning them in Nepal, there continues to be a lack of provision for child and youth representation in Local Peace Committees. In addition, some parents, community members, and sometimes even local government officials remain unaware of relevant laws and policies, and there is insufficient implementation and monitoring of laws and policies, especially at the local levels.

9) **Financial and material support given to CYP efforts:** Child and youth peacebuilders in the DRC emphasized that financial means allowed them to reach a larger number of participants in peacebuilding, in more numerous and remote places. For example, in Bukavu, participants mentioned the need for funds to organize more multi-ethnic debates and to do more peace education. It was suggested that while financial means were important, financial support should also go hand in hand with peacebuilding capacity building and other inputs. In Colombia, while participants affirmed that long-term financial and logistical support was needed, they placed more emphasis on the importance of the support from stakeholders, particularly the need to increase and strengthen partnerships with the state institutions, as well as with other public and private institutions. Child and youth clubs in Nepal are increasingly gaining access to financial and material support from the local government; and they are influencing local government planning and budgeting processes which is increasing the sustainability of their efforts. Yet, many CYP initiatives continued to face challenges in securing sufficient material and financial support for their CYP initiatives in Nepal.

10) **Income generation support for marginalized groups:** In Nepal evaluation participants reported that efforts to reach and engage marginalized youth and children in their CYP efforts were more successful if their programs included income generation or skill development opportunities for youth or family members. The evaluation revealed the importance of approaches which are conflict sensitive, and the importance of analysing the unintended economic impact of child and youth
peacebuilding activities on families, particularly the most marginalized families, so that risks and negative impacts can be avoided. For example, in efforts to ban alcohol production in Doti in Nepal, it was found that some of the most marginalized families who gained an income from alcohol production left the community when alcohol production was banned, and that this had negative impacts on their children’s education.

11) Conflict, political instability, and insecurity: In the context of Eastern DRC, violence and conflict were identified as an important hindering factor. Implementation of peacebuilding activities created risks for child and youth peacebuilders. In addition, the experience and fear of violence and destruction, often with ethnic connotations, influenced the readiness of community members to accept peacebuilding messages. Political insecurity, armed conflict, and strikes were also reported as hindering factors to CYP initiatives in Nepal. During the period of armed conflict, some child and youth club activities were stopped due to insecurity and associated risks (Save the Children, 2008). Furthermore, in recent years political strikes have created delays and adjustments to child and youth peacebuilders plans and activities.

Quality of Child and Youth Participation in Peacebuilding

Eight principles were used to evaluate the quality of child and youth participation in peacebuilding. A Pots and Stones tool was used to evaluate the 8 principles in 4 CYP initiatives in Colombia, and in 20 CYP initiatives in Nepal. Information relating to quality was also drawn upon from the 3 CYP case studies in DRC. Overall, the results from Colombia and Nepal were different, as CYP initiatives in Nepal scored higher in relation to investments in intergenerational partnerships, and lower in relation to participation that was relevant and respectful to children and youth; and participation that encouraged diversity and inclusion. In Colombia the weakest scores concerned participation that was safe and sensitive to risk, and investments in intergenerational partnerships. In Nepal there were mixed scores for each principle among different CYP initiatives within the country. However, scores from children and youth indicated that there was less transparent information sharing with children, and less opportunities for younger children to be involved in all stages of programming.

Principle One: Participation is Transparent and Informative: In a few CYP initiatives transparent information was shared with children and youth. In many CYP initiatives increased efforts were needed to share more detailed information about the proposed activities and budget for increased clarity among children and youth about their roles and responsibilities, and to ensure informed consent.

Principle Two: Participation is Relevant and Respectful: The 4 CYP initiatives in Colombia reported that their participation in peacebuilding was relevant and respectful, particularly as activities were organised at times that suited children and youth, and young peacebuilders were respectful to one another. In Nepal, adult supporters felt that children and youth were being respected and valued, and that their participation was relevant. However, children and youth gave lower scores, as the availability and time constraints of children and youth were not sufficiently considered, and children and youth sometimes faced pressure from parents or teachers to participate. Furthermore, in a few initiatives some tokenistic examples of participation were described. The importance of sensitising parents and communities about CYP was emphasised by participation in all 3 countries to increase meaningful participation.

Principle Three: Participation Encourages Diversity and Inclusion: Children and youth representatives from the 4 CYP initiatives in Colombia, and the 3 CYP initiatives in DRC thought that their initiatives were inclusive as children and youth from different backgrounds were encouraged to join, and efforts were made to avoid and address discrimination. However, challenges to involving children and youth with disabilities was recognised by a few adolescents in Colombia. CYP initiatives that were evaluated in Nepal had mixed scores. Some CYP initiatives pro-actively engaged children
and youth from different caste, ethnic, religious backgrounds. Some tried to involve the most marginalised children and youth, with varying degrees of success. In two youth initiatives low scores were given, as youth organized themselves among people that they already knew who tended to be from the same social or ethnic group.

**Principle Four: Participation is Sensitive to Gender Dynamics:** The 4 CYP initiatives in Colombia provided relatively high scores, as children and youth asserted that respect and acceptance of different genders was often taken into account within their initiatives. In Nepal there were more mixed results. In each context participants responses indicated a general awareness of the importance of promoting gender equality, but challenges to overcome gender discrimination were considered quite difficult to tackle as they were rooted in socio-cultural traditions and discriminatory practices. The importance of involving boys and men, as well as girls and women in efforts to promote gender equality were emphasised.

**Principle Five: Participation is Safe and Sensitive to Risks:** Although some efforts were usually made within CYP initiatives to ensure child safeguarding, in many CYP initiatives there were insufficient efforts to assess and minimise risks associated with child and youth participation in peacebuilding. Furthermore, when protection concerns were identified by children and youth, there was not always adequate follow up by concerned duty bearers. The importance of improved risk management to identify and plan how to minimise risks was emphasized by participants in both Nepal and Colombia.

**Principle Six: Investments are made in Intergenerational Partnerships in Young People’s Communities:** This principle received one of the lowest scores for CYP initiatives that were evaluated in Colombia. Furthermore, very mixed scores were made by CYP initiatives in Nepal, with some high scores, some low scores, and many medium scores, indicating while some efforts were made, more systematic efforts were still needed. In Colombia the imperative to get more support for CYP initiatives from municipal entities and to better involve parents were emphasised. Young peacebuilders in Nepal also emphasised that intergenerational partnerships involving children, youth, and the local government authorities helped to ensure that children and youth’s recommendations were taken seriously. Increased efforts were needed to build trust between different generations.

**Principle Seven: Participation is Accountable:** Some efforts are made by children and youth to share information with their peers in CYP initiatives in each of the 3 countries; and in some communities adults are giving feedback to children and youth. However, increased efforts are needed to increase participation in peacebuilding that is accountable. Some evaluation participants suggested that there should be: increased training on accountability so that more children, youth and adults understand what it is and how to apply it; increased collaboration among different agencies working on peacebuilding; and increased advocacy to the local authorities to give feedback to children and youth.

**Principle Eight: Involve Young People in all stages of Peacebuilding and Post-Conflict Programming:** Results regarding the extent to which children and youth have been involved in all stages of peacebuilding and post conflict programming were mixed in both Colombia and Nepal. In Nepal, child participants provided low scores of one indicating significantly less efforts to engage children in all stages of peacebuilding and post conflict programming, compared with efforts to engage youth. Participants in Colombia emphasised the importance of more systematic efforts to involve children and youth in planning, monitoring, and evaluation processes of their CYP initiatives. Participants in Nepal wanted to advocate for legal provisions for child and youth representation in the Local Peace Committees at the VDC, district, and central levels.
Conclusions and Recommendations

The final part of the report presents three overarching recommendations concerning child and youth participation in peacebuilding, more specific recommendations for different stakeholders, and conclusions. Three thematic recommendations include:

1) Engage children as peacebuilders from a young age to ensure continuity and increased impact: During this evaluation it became evident that many girls and boys who are empowered through their participation and peacebuilding initiatives continue their active engagement in social change and peacebuilding work as youth. Skills and confidence gained as children are transferred and built upon as youth. Thus, agencies are encouraged to engage children to ensure continuity and increased impact.

2) Encourage multi-pronged and multi-stakeholder efforts supporting CYP to multiply and amplify peacebuilding impact: There is no single solution to effectively engaging children and youth as peacebuilders. The 11 factors highlighted earlier are key, but are not a comprehensive list. What did appear clearly across the 3 countries evaluated was that CYP impact was more likely to increase when the right combination of factors were at play. When only one sector, strategy, or stakeholder was engaged to support CYP, challenges were met from other areas. Therefore, cross-sector support for young peacebuilders is recommended in order to maximize peacebuilding impact.

3) Engage with children and youth as partners in formal and informal governance and peace structures in a wide range of contexts, not only in contexts affected by armed conflict: Children and youth are calling for increased space for representation and meaningful participation in their schools, municipalities, districts, and at national level to better address a range of protection, security, and injustice issues affecting them. Children and youth have a broader concept of peacebuilding that is relevant beyond contexts affected by armed conflict. They are addressing different types of violence, discrimination, and injustice that affects them in their families, schools, and communities, including domestic violence, gender based violence, early marriage, ethnic discrimination, and disrespect. Efforts should be made to engage multiple sectors (education, social welfare and protection, security sector etc) to support CYP. Furthermore, increased efforts are needed to include children and youth in local governance mechanisms and peace structures. This necessitates increased efforts to navigate tensions concerning child and youth protection from and participation in politics, ensuring a focus on informed, voluntary, and safe participation.

Examples of recommendations to key stakeholders,

a) Government, political leaders and policy makers at all levels are encouraged to ensure spaces for inclusive and meaningful participation of children and youth in peacebuilding, decision making, and local governance processes, with particular efforts to engage marginalized children and youth.

b) Agencies working on peacebuilding or child/ youth related programs, including local, national, international, UN agencies are encouraged to apply the Operational Guidelines to implement the Guiding Principles for Young People’s Participation in Peacebuilding to increase the quality of CYP initiatives with attention to: do no harm; gender sensitivity; valuing diversity; promoting intergenerational partnerships; and involving young people in all stages of programming.

c) Community and religious leaders, parents, family members, teachers, and peers are encouraged to support girls, boys, and female and male youth to participate in peacebuilding, while avoiding coercion; and support CYP initiatives.

d) Child and youth peacebuilders are encouraged to engage more female and male children and youth in peacebuilding and participation initiatives, making special efforts to involve: children and youth with disabilities; children and youth who are involved in gangs or political groups; and children and youth from ethnic minorities, the poorest families and/or those who live in remote areas.
e) **Media journalists using print, television, radio and social media** are encouraged to disseminate information on CYP efforts to increase awareness, and avoid showing violence and using media to fuel conflicts among groups.

f) **Donors** are encouraged to allocate budgets to support CYP initiatives and long term peacebuilding efforts; and ensure transparent information sharing with children and youth about funding opportunities.

Young peacebuilders in Colombia, the DRC, and Nepal are working to prevent different forms of violence, and to promote peace through their own clubs, organisations, and movements, as well as through their collaborative engagement in programmes developed by adult agencies. Working as active citizens for peace, children and youth have primarily contributed to peacebuilding in their communities, schools, and families. Significant changes were most frequently reported at the individual level with positive changes in children and youth’s attitudes and behaviour, which increased their peacebuilding actions, and improved their relationships. Through their peacebuilding efforts, children and youth also contributed to reduced violence, reduced discrimination, and increased peaceful cohabitation. It is crucial that the authorities and adults in different settings recognise and embrace child and youth peacebuilders as genuine partners, so that the impact of their innovations and commitment can have wider impact and contribute to more sustainable peace.

References


