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Publication date
2015
Document Version
Final published version

Link to publication

Citation for published version (APA):
Lopes Cardozo, M., Higgins, S., Maber, E., Brandt, C. O., Kusmallah, N., & Le Mat, M. (2015). *Literature review: Youth agency, peacebuilding and education*. Research Consortium Education and Peacebuilding. https://educationanddevelopment.files.wordpress.com/2014/11/youth-literature-review.pdf

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Research Consortium on Education and Peacebuilding

Literature Review: Youth Agency, Peacebuilding and Education

January 2015

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Reference suggestion: Lopes Cardozo, M.T.A., Higgins, S., Maber, E., Brandt, C.O., Kusmallah, N., Le Mat, M.L.J (2015), *Literature Review: Youth Agency, Peacebuilding and Education*, Research Consortium Education and Peacebuilding, University of Amsterdam, available online: http://learningforpeace.unicef.org/partners/research-consortium/research-outputs/

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Executive summary

This Literature Review on Youth Agency, Peacebuilding and Education is part of the work of the Research Consortium on Education and Peacebuilding, supported by the UNICEF Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy Programme. It aims to provide insights into youth agency and the dynamics of conflict and peace in conflict-affected contexts. In particular it focuses on how educational interventions may contribute to enhancing the agency of youth as peacebuilders. The review draws on the theoretical framework developed for the consortium, which locates youth within peacebuilding processes of reconciliation, redistribution, recognition and representation (four R's). The review aims to communicate its findings to a broad audience, including academic researchers, professional practitioners, policy makers and interested young people.

The methodology for searching relevant literature was underpinned by clarifications of the meaning of our key terms to ensure transparency, coherence and scope (see also boxes 1.1.1 – 1.1.4). We defined youth broadly as those within their second and third decade of life. We followed a broad understanding of education initiatives, which include formal (government-led, formal curricula following) schooling, parallel non(-governmental) systems of schooling and interventions developed and implemented by international and national NGOS. We defined peacebuilding as involving core social, economic, political and cultural transformations that contribute to social justice and 'positive' peace in conflict-affected societies. Finally, moving beyond narrow perceptions of youth agency and a 'youth bulge' as mere threats to peace, agency is defined as the space for manoeuvre available to young people in developing (un)conscious strategies that either support or hinder peacebuilding in relation to the broader cultural political economy context.

In searching for relevant literature we followed the stages of systematic review methods. Firstly, we identified search terms which captured the key dimensions of the research field which included youth agency, peacebuilding, education, cultural political economy context, conflict affected states, and gender. Secondly, electronic searches were conducted in several databases including Google Scholar, Scopus, Eric, Web of Science as well as those of key development agencies. During the third stage we applied inclusion and exclusion criteria to make a selection of studies to include for in-depth review. These included 1) reference to youth peacebuilding agency; 2) reference to educational interventions or programmes; 3) reference to conflict-affected context; and 4) the quality of the research. In stage four the selected literature was thematised to clarify key emergent approaches. These included attention to the distinct needs and potential of different youth constituencies, the context-specific nature of youth agency, the diverse framings and definitions of youth as peacebuilders, gender- related issues. A range of types of educational interventions were identified which mobilized sports, music, the arts, history, citizenship inter-faith and health education as well as those which explicitly addressed the political and economic empowerment of young people. Stage five involved further literature searches drawing on the advice of specialists in the field of youth, education and peacebuilding and using purposive sampling and snowballing methods.

The selected literature for review is diverse in provenance, drawing on publications by academic researchers, practitioners and aid organisations and situates youth in a range of geographical and conflict-affected contexts. The diversity of the literature reviewed is a particular strength, enabling the review to go beyond homogenizing and generic approaches to this large and complex constituency. While acknowledging and building on existing reviews on similar themes in relation to youth, what makes this review unique is its strong connection to the concept of youth agency. This focus has enabled a particular analytical lens through which we present our findings in the second and third chapters.

In chapter two, we start by outlining the diverse ways in which youth are perceived within the policies of international aid agencies and actors. We found that youth are envisaged as actors that operate in a myriad of ways: as heroic agents contributing to societal transformation and community peacebuilding; as criminals or troublemakers or security threats; as victims of challenging circumstances in need of the protection of international legal instruments; and as resilient people in their own right. That these diverse perceptions of youth within global policy are being circulated and produced without much attention to the voices of youth themselves is a second key thematic finding of this review. Considering a widespread lack of collaboration or engagement with youth in the planning and implementation of educational interventions, a more collaborative approach that includes youth perspectives on their agency, their needs and challenges is essential. Particular efforts should be made to engage with and involve youth constituencies that go beyond elites, and include the more marginalized groups, such as hard to reach young people (e.g. the disabled, rural youth, young mothers and other minority groups). Thirdly, the review finds that gender-related issues are too frequently neglected in youth programming for peacebuilding. Gender is often considered only as a binary without due regard to the complexity of young people's identities, which risks reinforcing assumptions about male and female behaviours and can undermine the potential to support their peacebuilding agency. With similar importance, the links between masculinities, femininities and violence are complex and highly contextual; oversimplifying this association does not do justice to the many varied experiences of young men and women. Fourthly, this review highlights the fact that specific groups of conflict-affected young people (e.g. the disabled, child soldiers, youth carers and orphans) have varying needs in a multiplicity of contexts, which should be considered through participatory and collaborative approaches to programme design and implementation. Moreover, engaging with the context and constituency specific needs of young people involves recognizing and building on their initiative, creativity and resourcefulness as citizens, carers and peacebuilders. There is also scope for mobilizing the skills of some groups of youth (e.g. child soldiers) exercised and developed during the conflict period for peaceful purposes in post-conflict situations.

In chapter three, in analyzing the literature on educational interventions the review focuses on the different dimensions of youth peacebuilding agency that they aim to promote – in particular its economic, socio-political and socio-cultural dimensions. Nevertheless, what this review underlines throughout is their inter-connnected nature and the distorting effect of identifying or engaging with one dimension in isolation from another.

Studies of economic approaches to enhancing youth peacebuilding agency found that vocational education that seeks to enhance the livelihood and economic prospects of young

people has a key role to play in addressing the drivers of youth alienation and promoting their active participation in peacebuilding processes. Nevertheless, a proper and realistic analysis of macro-economic dynamics, employment prospects and post-conflict economic development is necessary to manage youth's job expectations. Unrealised expectations may themselves generate alienation and conflict. Studies of socio-political approaches underline that in contrast to a more apathetic view, many youth *are* occupying political stances. Hence, there is a necessity to acknowledge and build upon such skills and experiences. There is also a need to acknowledge youth as integral constituents of and contributors to current as well as future peace. In the long term, youth experiences with the peacebuilding processes, particularly in the way grievances such as social inequalities are addressed, will be decisive for their success. Hence, there is a need to value young people's own existence in the actual moment, rather than viewing then as mere future citizens.

The review also found that both formal and non-formal citizenship education *can* provide young people with the skills, experiences and dispositions to enable them to participate critically and constructively in peaceful democratic processes linked to the pursuit of social justice. Moreover, citizenship education *can* also help to modify sectarian or other prejudices, by opening up for reflection and recognition by youth of their own and others' commitment to multiple civic identities. However, citizenship education as delivered in many conflict-affected countries is failing young people by the pedagogical approaches used and its inattention to the particularities and injustices of the challenging contexts in which they aspire to exercise political agency. The literature reviewed how integral to young people's personal well-being and well as their exercise of civic agency, are advocacy and networking skills developed through educational interventions that promote sexual and reproductive health and rights. Finally, in relation to socio-political peacebuilding agency exercised by youth, this review finds that young people themselves recognize the key role history plays in their self-defined priorities as potential peacebuilders. Thus, history education which links the study of the past with current and contemporary issues faced by young people can enhance their peacebuilding agency. Engagement with the past can provide opportunities for young people to explore social awareness and reflect on the ethical challenges they face within their daily lives, equipping them with the insights and understanding they can use as potential agents of peacebuilding and social justice.

In our review of the socio-cultural aspects of youth agency we emphasize the importance of the underlying narratives and discourses as being part of the way interventions are shaped and enacted. In doing so, we can view education interventions (formal and non-formal) impacting on youth agency as key sites of cultural production and social reproduction. Therefore, processes of cultural recognition, in close relation to issues of redistribution, representation and reconciliation, do not only happen at the 'micro' community level, but are shaping and shaped by global agenda's, national ideologies and political discourses, local narratives and personal life histories. Nonetheless, there is a significant absence of attention to those large numbers of young people who exist peacefully within conflict-affected situations and who are demonstrating huge resourcefulness on an everyday basis. Interventions need to engage and connect with such everyday peacebuilding activities, while also bearing in mind the wider structural challenges and opportunities.

In relation to the day to day realities of youth interventions, studies of sports-related programmes note that they can support youth to build self-esteem and communication skills including conflict resolution capacities, the creation of a common social identity and sense of belonging, trauma relief and psychological rehabilitation as well as new friendship networks. Nevertheless the highly gendered nature of many sports interventions based around football is a particular weakness. Studies of collaborative arts programming also highlighted its contribution to catalyzing attitudinal and behavioural changes in young people. The arts can act as an outlet for the expression of youth agency in particular, for instance with regards to the socio-economic and political issues at stake for youth. However, interventions that are not youth-led often fail to capitalize on the potential of the arts to enhance the political and civic as well as the economic agency of young people. The review found that inter-group contact can support young people in reconciliation processes by encouraging mutual understanding, respect and prejudice reduction. However, their inattention to supporting young people to take action against the structural socio-economic and political factors that constrain and condition youth agency and drive conflicts is a major weakness. Finally, studies of inter-faith interventions indicate that their capacity to enhance young people's role as peacebuilders is largely neglected and under-estimated, as religious values can provide a resource to predispose to peacebuilding attitudes and practices. Conversely, religious extremism can fuel conflict and violence and such radicalization of youth in some conflict-affected contexts is directly linked to socio-economic and political and cultural marginalization.

Bringing together these insights of the review's analysis of multiple approaches to youth peacebuilding agency and the diverse educational interventions to enhance their roles, our final key messages highlight the need for:

1. Comprehensive understandings of youth agency for peacebuilding which will move away from a victim-perpetrators binary to an understanding of heterogeneous youth constituencies as embedded within and reacting to processes of conflict and peace.
2. More rigorous evaluative and empirical data on the impact of educational interventions on youth peacebuilding agency.
3. Context-specific, conflict-sensitive and youth-specific policy and programming.
4. Engagement with youth voices, identities and needs.
5. Involvement of community and youth peer educators in promoting youth agency.
6. Adapting the content and processes of teaching and learning so that they enhance young people's agency for peacebuilding by: 1) connecting studies of the past with present realities and challenges: 2) recognizing the affective and context-relevant dimensions of teaching and learning for/about peace; 3) providing opportunities for (critical) reflection on political/religious/ideological/media messages; 4) encouraging mutual understanding, respect and prejudice reduction; and 5) triggering attitudinal and behavioural changes in youth e.g. inter-personal skills, changing perceptions of themselves and others as well as mental and emotional well-being and healing.
7. Integrated programmatic responses which avoid narrow framings of the potential of education and which connect educational processes to the political, economic, cultural and potential conciliatory dimensions of youth's exercise of agency and the peacebuilding processes in which they are located.

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Aims, relevance and working definitions

This literature review on *Youth Agency, Peacebuilding and Education* is part of the work of the Research Consortium on Education and Peacebuilding, which is co-led by the Universities of Amsterdam, Sussex and Ulster, and supported by UNICEF's Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy (PBEA) programme. The partnership with UNICEF runs between July 2014 and December 2015, and seeks to build knowledge on the relationship between education and peacebuilding in conflict-affected contexts. The consortium will carry out research in five PBEA countries: Myanmar, Pakistan, Rwanda, South Africa and Uganda. The research will be carried out in partnership with colleagues in each of the participating countries and will seek to contribute both to theory and practice in the field of education and peacebuilding, developing theoretically informed, policy relevant outputs.[1] The consortium works on three key thematic areas: 1) The integration of education in UN peacebuilding missions and frameworks and vice versa, the integration of peacebuilding in national education systems, policies and programmes (led by the University of Ulster); 2) The role of teachers in peacebuilding in conflict contexts (led by the University of Sussex); and 3) The role of education in peacebuilding initiatives targeting youth agency in conflict-affected contexts (led by the University of Amsterdam). It is this last research area 3 on 'youth' that this literature review focuses on.

In this review document we are committed to not to take for granted the interconnections between youth agency and dynamics of conflict and peace, recognizing them as being relational with a view to clarifying positive and negative possibilities of education for youth agency in processes of peacebuilding. This leads us to an analysis that draws from the theoretical framework developed for this broader consortium (Novelli, Lopes Cardozo, Smith, 2014), which gives a distinctive focus on youth agency as peacebuilders from a "4 R's perspective", including the analytical and strongly interconnected dimensions of redistribution, recognition, representation and reconciliation. Without aiming to 'force' this analytical frame on our analysis of the current relevant literature, we aim to apply these insights where useful and relevant.

We start out this literature review by sharing our working definitions, the methodology of the review and an elaborate description of the used sources to enhance transparency of our working processes. In our second chapter, by mapping and reflecting on the relevant recent literature and viewpoints (post 2000) from a range of sources – which is elaborated below – we start out by providing a brief overview of how youth are defined and positioned within the policies of international aid organisations and international actors. In the remainder of the chapter, we argue for 1) the need to include and amplify youth voices; 2) to apply a gender-focused lens into analysis, policy-development and programmatic response; and 3) to acknowledge a wide diversity of "youth constituencies" in order to establish a nuanced and holistic understanding of "youth". We then continue in chapter 3 to provide insights into the

[1] See Research Consortium on Education and Peacebuilding (2014) Research Briefing 1: Introducing the research. Available at http://learningforpeace.unicef.org/partners/research-consortium/research-outputs/

diverse ways in which youth agency is understood and conceptualised – as economic, socio-political and/or cultural forms of agency. We then connect this to our analysis of literature on specific interventions and educational programmatic responses that aim to enhance these various forms of agency of youth as peacebuilders. It is hoped that this ordering of the material will do justice both to the many lenses through which youth peacebuilding agency may be perceived as well as enable a constructive and also critical review of concrete examples of programming interventions. In the final chapter 4, and in the summary chart and key messages we bring together the insights from all sections of the review together to highlight key emergent insights.

We are aware that this review may be of interest to a broad audience, including academic researchers, professional practitioners, policy makers, students and interested young people. Mindful of this wide readership we have included throughout the text textboxes with brief 'key messages', which summarise the key findings of each section. We have also presented our main insights and conclusions in chapter 4 and a summary table (4.1). This review will be freely accessible online. The findings of this review, and particularly the importance of engaging with young people's voices, experiences and needs, feed directly into the methodological approaches applied to the fieldwork developing out of this thematic research area on youth.

Definitions

Defining Youth

There is a lack of consensus within the international community over the precise chronological definition of youth (see UNICEF, 2009:11). The UN (2007) and World Bank (2007) define youth as those between 15-25, while the African Union (2006) and many African nations define youth as those aged between 15 and 35 (UNICEF, Larsen, 2009: 11). Meanwhile, UNICEF defines adolescents as children between 10 and 19 years (UNICEF, 2009:11).For the purpose of this research project, we have broadly defined youth as those within the second and third decade of life. We recognize that this is a culturally and contextually specific category of the population that needs an adapted working definition in each specific research location.

Defining 'Policies' and 'education initiatives'

When studying policies we include a broad understanding that includes policy texts (reforms, laws, reports, memos) as well as the discourse/narratives of policy-makers. We follow a broad understanding of education initiatives, which includes formal (government-led, formal curricula following) schooling, parallel (non)governmental systems of schooling and (I)NGO or CBO led learning activities.

Defining Peacebuilding

In moving beyond the dominant 'security-first' and 'Liberal Peacebuilding' model, the theoretical framework of this research consortium develops a normative, but non-prescriptive vision of the broad components of a peaceful and just society and applies these to the education sector. We recognise there are multiple interpretations of the term 'peacebuilding', but the research consortium has developed a framework based on what we consider to be

core transformations that may contribute to post-conflict societies moving towards sustainable peace. We claim that the key post-conflict transformations necessary to produce sustainable peace – or positive peace, as Galtung (1990) refers to - involve redistribution, recognition and representation, to bring about greater social justice as suggested by the work of Fraser (2005), together with post-conflict issues of reconciliation

Defining (Youth) Agency (for Peacebuilding)
In moving beyond narrow perceptions of youth agency and a 'youth bulge' as mere threats to peace, for this research project agency is defined as the space for manoeuvre available to young people (in their 2nd and 3rd decade of life) in developing conscious or unconscious strategies that either support or hinder peacebuilding in relation to the broader cultural political economy context.

1.2 Methodology

Our methodology was an iterative process, which followed five stages of systematic review methods.

Stage 1

The first stage involved identifying search terms which captured the key dimensions of the research field based on the research questions and theoretical framework which included youth agency (23 search terms), peacebuilding (8 search terms), education (15 search terms), cultural political economy contexts (20 search terms), conflict-affected states (5 search terms) and gender (10 search terms). These terms formed the basis of word threads which were deployed in initial searches to ensure the search strategy was as inclusive as possible (see Appendix table 1).

Stage 2

During **Stage 2** we conducted electronic searches in several databases including Google Scholar, Scopus, Eric, Web of Science. We also searched the databases of key development agencies including The World Bank, International Rescue Committee, Save the Children, United States Institute of Peace, UNICEF and Department of International Development. We decided to conduct searches for literature in the public domain after 2000 both to limit the research scope in the face of an impossible quantity of data to process within a short time and also to enable us to include material linked to recent conflict-affected contexts. This was an interactive process during which we were able to progressively refine our word thread combinations using Boolean searching to yield relevant initial data (see Appendix 1). This process yielded 241 studies (see Appendix 2).

Stage 3

During **Stage 3** we applied inclusion and exclusion criteria to make a selection of studies to include for in-depth review. This process is recorded in Appendix 2. We decided to include studies if they satisfied all of the following criteria:

1. Referred to youth peacebuilding agency
2. Referred to educational interventions or programmes
3. Located 1 and 2 within a conflict-affected context
4. Where relevant was based on quality research

This process resulted in a selection of 64 studies which are identified in Appendix 2. However, the process of acquiring relevant literature was ongoing and through snowballing methods and purposive sampling, as well as communication with leading scholars in the field we gathered a further 101 additional studies which satisfied our criteria. This produced a total of 165 studies for in-depth review which are referenced in the bibliography.

Stage 4

In stage 4 we thematised what was a heterogeneous body of literatures in terms of approaches, issues and contexts linked to youth peacebuilding agency and interventions. The literature is described and analysed in the following section. Emergent themes (noted in Appendix 2) included attention to how youth are defined and understood within conflict affected contexts, gender-related issues, the relevance of context in understanding youth peacebuilding agency as well as the diverse needs of different youth constituencies. Programming related literature highlighted the (non-formal) mobilisation of sports, music, the arts, and faith to enhance peacebuilding agency as well as interventions which addressed the political and economic empowerment of young people. The contribution of formal history and citizenship education to youth potential as peacebuilders was also addressed.

Stage 5

This process involved synthesising the insights drawn from the various thematic sections of the review in order to draw conclusions which do justice to the multi-layered understandings and perspectives offered in the range of literatures accessed. A key aim of this stage was to bring into critical and constructive relation the programme-related literature with broader insights into the agency and potential of youth as peacebuilders.

1.3 Description of the literature

In order to convey the richness and diversity of the literature selected for the review the studies and programmes have been classified according to the following descriptive criteria: provenance, disciplinary approach and geographic focus.

Through its diverse provenance as indicated in Table 1, the selected literature pools insights and expertise from different networks within the field of education and development. These include practitioners, academic researchers and aid organisations. The review has also relied on very helpful informal communications with lead thinkers and specialists in the field of youth, conflict and peacebuilding.[2] These contacts have enabled us to respond to some of the

[2] In particular, we have drawn on the expertise of Marc Sommers (recently fellow at the United States Institute of Peace), Lindsey McLean-Hilker (University of Sussex), Dana Bird and Elizabeth King (both from New York University's Steinhardt School of Culture, Education and Human Development).

current issues and concerns in relation to youth peacebuilding which are being emphasised by specialists. Access to recent, relevant literature has also been helped by contacts with professional organisations involved in youth related educational interventions, including UNICEF, Child and Youth Finance International, the European Association of History Educators (EUROCLIO), and the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict. The literature also draws on a range of independent Research Organisations and Think Tanks including the United States Institute of Peace, International Alert and the Institute for International Peace Studies.

Table 1: **Provenance of Literature**

Provenance	Number of studies
Academic Journal	90
Books or book chapters	18
Programme Documentation	14
Reports	42
Total	165

The literature also draws on a diverse disciplinary base and mobilises a variety of approaches as shown in Tables 2 and 3. They indicate how understanding and supporting youth agency in peacebuilding processes mobilises a range of knowledges and perspectives. This amounts to a rich, if fragmented body of material. It is hoped that by bringing these different lenses and strands together and into relation with each other this review will be helpful to practitioner and academic audiences alike.

Table 2: **Approaches to understanding youth agency**

Approaches	Example resources
Conceptual – how youth agency is framed and understood	Berents (2014); Del Felice & Wisler (2007); Drummond-Mundal & Cave (2007); McEvoy-Levy (2001, 2006).
Education and Pedagogy	Barton & Mccully (2005, 2010, 2012); Van Ommering (2014); Weldon (2010).
Economics	Batmanglich & Enria (2014); Izzi (2013); Schwartz (2010); Walton (2010).
Ethnography/ Anthropology	Sommers (2012).

Gender studies	Baines & Gauvin (2014); MacKenzie (2009); Park (2009); Pruitt (2013).
Music and the Arts	McClain (2012); Pruitt (2011); Shepler (2010).
Media Studies	Khoury-Machool (2007).
Faith related	Hayward (2012); Rusyana (2013); Abu-Nimer & Kadayifci-Orellana (2008).
Social psychology	Kollontai (2010).
Sports Science	Kidd (2008); Schulenkorf & Sugden (2011); Sugden (2006).
Political Economy	Amarasuriya, H., Gündüz, C., & Mayer, M. (2009); Larson 2014.

Table 3: **List of Academic Journals**

Titles of Academic Journals
International Journal of Intercultural relations
Development in Practice
Anthropologica
International Feminist Journal of Politics
International Journal of Human Rights
Nationalism and Ethnic Politics
The Journal of Peace Research
American Political Scientific Review
African Conflict and Peacebuilding
Journal of Inter-religious dialogue
The International Journal of Personal, Social and Emotional Development
International Review for the Sociology of Sport
Journal of Youth Studies

The literature also situates youth in a range of geographical as well as country and conflict context-affected contexts as shown in Appendix 3. This diversity is a particular strength, enabling the review to provide insights into the peacebuilding agency of youth in multiple locations and situations, thus avoiding homogenising and generic approaches to this constituency.

The review also accesses data referring to youth in a diversity of conflict affected-regions including areas of on-going conflict (which sometimes does not correspond to the entire state territory, e.g. Northern Uganda), cross-border conflicts (e.g. Lebanon) as well as post-conflict contexts. While recognising that there is a rich body of (both English and non English)

literature on youth agency, education and conflict/peace around the world (including, e.g., Latin America), for the purpose and in line with the scope of this research project, this review has only to a limited extent been able to engage with all geographic regions. To conclude, the selected literature represents the eclectic and rich but fragmented state of knowledge generation within a constantly evolving field linking youth, conflict and peacebuilding.

Chapter 2. Acknowledging youth-diversity and retrieving the youth 'voice'

This chapter starts by exploring the existing understanding of main global actors on youth (agency), and how this impacts policy discourse on youth positive and negative contributions to processes of peacebuilding (section 2.1). The chapter continues with an elaboration of the need to include and amplify youth voices; the need to apply a gender-focused lens into analysis, policy-development and programmatic response; and finally the need to acknowledge a wide diversity of "youth constituencies" in order to establish a nuanced and holistic understanding of "youth".

2.1 International agenda's and global political perspective

In understanding how educational interventions aim to enhance the agency of youth as peacebuilders, it is helpful to consider how youth are positioned within the global policies of international aid organisations. Indeed, the education interventions and approaches discussed in this review are informed by a range of assumptions about the situation, capacity, priorities, challenges and needs of youth within conflict affected societies. These approaches, whether implicitly or explicitly, underpin the decisions about the nature and scope of the interventions to which we refer. Insights on these various positions (Kemper, 2005) highlights just how differentiated current understandings of youth agency are that inform interventions. These vary according to the dimensions of the roles and potential of youth they emphasize and the peacebuilding processes in which youth are located. Besides this, they differ according to the degree of independent agency and initiative they vest in young people and the spaces and contexts in which they envisage youth contributing to peacebuilding.

So youth are envisaged as economic or political actors that can contribute to societal transformation, as security threats or contributors to community peace, as victims of challenging circumstances and in need of the protection of international legal instruments or as resilient people in their own right (Kemper, 2005). There are also divergent positionings of youth in relation to ethical characterisations of their agency. They run from a negative 'deficit' understanding of young people as risks to peace and security, as potential criminals or troublemakers, to celebrations of their pivotal and heroic role in post-conflict transformation and peacebuilding. What is evident then within this diversity of approaches is the complexity of getting a coherent grip on the agency of youth as peacebuilders. While distinctive approaches can be identified - and each has particular merits and weaknesses - a lack of connectivity between them across the global policy landscape suggests that there remains unresolved thinking about how youth peacebuilding agency may be understood and supported. A key goal of this review then is to illuminate and clarify these issues and to provide analysis and reflection, which aims to sharpen and deepen our understanding. However, considering the scope of this literature review, we have not included a full analysis of the ways in which such conceptual understanding are consequently materialised in terms of international aid flows, national country level investments or local resources available to the enhancement of youth agency for peacebuilding. These may well be addressed in our own or other future empirical research endeavours.

2.2 Absence, appropriation and amplification of youth voice

There is a clear need to move away from singular, isolated conceptualisations of youth, to a more rounded, comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the variety and multiplicity of young peoples' identities, experiences and environments which shape their interactions across social, economic and political spheres. Consequently, there is a growing consensus that greater consideration needs to be afforded to the demands and desires of youth themselves (Drummond-Mundal and Cave, 2007:68), highlighting the need to "study further how youth think and feel about war and peace, peace processes, conflict and conflict resolution, politics and violence, themselves, the "other", and the future" (McEvoy-Levy, 2006:285).

2.2.1 Implications for programming: the absence of youth voice

Vocational training courses in Sierra Leone that neglected to consult beneficiaries as to the types of vocations they would like to pursue resulted in a reduction of take up, particularly amongst young women who reacted against the highly stereotyped assumptions of their interests, such as hairdressing and traditional fabric dyeing (MacKenzie, 2009:209). This was also seen to contribute to their further marginalisation by excluding them from vocations that attracted greater status and financial reward (MacKenzie, 2009:212). Such a neglect reveals the implications of failing to incorporate the perspectives of youth themselves within programming to support them.

Youth perspectives should therefore be sought and included in peace processes as well as within programmes that seek to support youth peacebuilding activities: as Gervais et al (2009) underline, "community development and rebuilding programmes should be regarded as an interactive process that increases the capacity of voiceless groups to control their destinies" (Gervais et al., 2009:21). Moreover, this insight underscores just how far the retrieval of youth voice is one dimension of a broader need to engage with the viewpoints of the poor and the marginalised within peacebuilding, development and education interventions. The authors go on to illustrate precisely why such a perspective is important: when girls affected by conflict in Rwanda and living on the streets were provided cameras and asked to take pictures of what resonated with them as places of safety and of insecurity, images of sports grounds and footballers' lodgings recurred as sites associated with threat, which ran counter to a national campaign which harnessed the appeal of high-profile footballers to raise awareness of domestic violence. The girls' contribution to the research indicated that greater sensitivity towards gender-based violence was required at a local level within the sport, which was not being addressed in current promotions (Gervais et al., 2009:20)

However, too often these investigations into perceptions of youth are not made and although both formal and non-formal education initiatives may claim to promote youth engagement and empowerment, such an outcome may be undermined by a lack of collaboration and the failure to take into account the varying priorities of different constituencies (Pruitt, 2013 see textbox 2.1.1).

As has been noted, there is a clear need to actively seek and include the perspectives of young people when designing peace programming for youth. As many of the formal peacebuilding processes exclude youth voice, a deliberate effort needs to be made to retrieve these perspectives in education initiatives, and where this is not done varying constituencies of youth may find themselves excluded, or worse, further marginalised (MacKenzie, 2009:209; Pruitt, 2013:65).

As highlighted by Sukarieh and Tannock (2008) of the World Bank World Development Report 2007, youth concerns are frequently appropriated to serve an underlying agenda, in this case that of bolstering neoliberal preoccupations with business interests (Sukarieh and Tannock, 2008:301) The same might be said of *Voices of Youth in Post-Conflict Burundi: Perspectives on Exclusion, Gender & Conflict* (World Bank, 2006) which emphasises the link between education and the economy to the detriment of other influencing sectors, and is almost entirely dedicated to the perspectives of young men. Such exclusion of the perspectives and experiences of young women highlights the relevance of Hilker and Fraser's warning of the dangers of reproducing gender inequalities when "youth is used as shorthand for young men and the potential threat posed by male youth" (Hilker & Fraser, 2009:9).

A number of more recent studies seek to redress the absence of youth voices through qualitative research (Pruitt, 2013; Uvin, 2007; MacKenzie, 2009; Denov & Maclure, 2006). These provide examples of the amplification of youth voice by seeking to engage those young people who have been afforded little attention. So for example, in MacKenzie's study of young female ex-combatants in Sierra Leone (2009), she includes the perspectives both of women who took part in DDR initiatives and those who did not. As Becker highlights (2012:7), consulting and including the voices of young people is the first step in inclusive programming, but programmes that aim to promote youth empowerment and agency must go beyond participation to share responsibility and power.

Stewart (2011) indicates that "disenfranchised youth may begin to see themselves as the 'other' and (un)consciously assume a deviant counter-identity" (Stewart, 2011:305), hence including the perspectives and participation of youth in programmes that aim to support peacebuilding, post-conflict reconstruction or reintegration is key to ensuring their engagement. Likewise, McEvoy-Levy (2001) underscores the importance of engaging youth in politics by highlighting that "when mainstream or establishment politics are barred, children will still engage in political activity, often violent and structured by confrontation and brinkmanship rather than dialogue and cooperation" (McEvoy-Levy, 2001: 24).

2.2.3 Implications for programming: the amplification of youth voice

Through exploring the perspectives of youth participants in an intercommunal reconciliation project in Bosnia and Hertzegovina, Gillard (2001) reveals that the ways youth in conflict view and articulate identity are much more complex than they are frequently given credit for. He finds the approaches of many in the international community to simplify the relationship between identity and conflict which does not reflect the fluidity of young people's identifications which "are negotiated and renegotiated, intersubjectively, as people interact" (Gillard, 2001:77). He concludes: "Theoretical understandings should be negotiated in context, on the basis of actual qualities of experience and identification reported by those that the project seeks to serve. Only then can peace be won" (Gillard, 2001:95).

However, it is also very important that certain (violent) voices are not disproportionately amplified, as it should not be seen that active participation in violent conflict is 'rewarded' with an increased stake in decision-making to the detriment of peaceful youth (UN-IANYD, 2014:2). Key to the inclusion of youth perspectives is the recognition that these perspectives may be contradictory – that youth inhabit vastly different positions within their societies and that the issues that affect different groups vary significantly. Prioritising one voice over another, or one set of issues over another, does not therefore further the engagement of youth as *artisans* of peace in their communities. Nevertheless, from a social justice perspective, there may be a need for affirmative action, which explicitly targets youth constituencies who are and have been historically marginalised and lack social, economic or political power.

Indeed, there is a danger that programming interventions reproduce the marginalisation of some youth constituencies by engaging with elites, thereby reproducing a key driver of conflict. In this way, the need to respond to and diversify the youth voice within peacebuilding interventions is part of a broader responsibility to ensure that programmes are truly socially inclusive. Hence, the UN Guiding Principles on Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding (2014) advises that strategies and programmes should 'involve hard to reach young people and those who belong to groups often disproportionately affected by conflict such as disabled young people and young people from minority or indigenous groups'. In particular it warns that programming should 'not assume that elite youth leaders from civil society represent them' (2014: Article 2.3/4).

Key Messages on Absence, Appropriation and Amplification of Youth Voice
▪ Seeking the perspectives of young people on the issues that affect them is essential to ensure the genuine participatiion of youth in peacebuilding during and after conflict.
▪ Previous trends in literature have demonstrated a lack of youth voice and perspectives, or an appropriation of youth concerns to serve an underlying agenda.
▪ There is growing attention in research to amplify the voices and experiences of youth to ensure that their concerns are addressed more responsibly in programming.
▪ In seeking to amplify youth voices, care must be taken that some voices are not disproportinately prioritised over others, which might engender feelings of resentment and marginalisation.
▪ Particular efforts should be made to engage with and involve youth constituencies beyond elites, including marginalised groups auch as hard to reach young people, for example, the disabled, rural youth, young mothers and minority groups.

2.3 Applying a gender lens to analyse youth agency

As highlighted in some of the examples above, the needs of girls and young women during and after conflict vary from those of boys and young men, as do their social position and their influence over structures around them. However, gender is too frequently neglected in youth programming especially in regard to the influence over young people's participation, experiences and opportunities in and of conflict and peace (Pruitt, 2013:12). The victim-perpetrator binary which pervades the representation of youth in conflict reflects underlying assumptions of feminine and masculine characteristics and behaviours, which reduce both women and men to limiting roles, reinforcing subordination, and denying the capacity of both to exercise agency (Becker, 2012). Responding to the key gender-related issues within the literature selected for review, this section firstly considers the distinct and differentiated experiences of girls and young women followed by a focus on issues related to sexuality, masculinity and violence.

Recognizing the varying roles of girls and young women

Although the shift towards a recognition of women's varying roles in peace and security was initiated by the UN Security Council Resolution 1325, there is still a lack of specific attention to young women within these conceptualizations (Becker, 2012:6-7). Several explanations have been presented for this, including the reductive presentation of girls as victims (Becker, 2012:10), the lack of attention to structural inequalities that limit young women's participation (McKay, 2004:156), the devaluing of young women's agency to contribute to peacebuilding (Pruitt, 2013:14), and because they are not perceived as a threat (Hilker & Fraser, 2009:9). For example, when the impact of the lack of employment and economic opportunities for young people is only viewed as a precursory condition for violence rather than a social inequality, the focus of attention is largely diverted to ensuring the economic engagement of young men. Hence, unemployment amongst young women is neglected because they are not viewed as direct threats to peace (Becker, 2012:8). Value therefore needs to be placed on promoting positive peace that can be equally shared by all members of society. Without due consideration to addressing their specific contexts, including issues of access, relevance and articulated demands, girls and young women are at risk of finding themselves as equally excluded from participation in social institutions as they were prior to conflict (Denov & Maclure, 2006). As shall be illustrated further below, the differing motivations to participate in violence and the strategies to avoid or limit such participation should not be reduced through assumptions of gendered behaviour. Similarly, it is important to acknowledge the agency that young women and men may exhibit in such actions while also considering the structural conditions that limit and condition their spaces to manoeuvre.

First of all, attempts are being made to move away from the image of girls as passive victims of war, to acknowledge that girls and young women may be both willing and forced participants in conflict, that young women may strategically seek opportunities in conflict, and that many young women exercise resistance, subversion and hidden autonomy in the worst of

circumstances (Denov & Maclure, 2006; McKay & Mazurana, 2004; McKay, 2004:156; Becker, 2012,:10). For instance, in Sierra Leone, women were found to be perpetrators and empowered through their roles in the conflict while acting as a soldier (MacKenzie, 2009). In the same vein, such an emphasis on the agency of young women in conflict requires a reassessment of the recurrent gendered stereotypes of women as inherently peaceful, and young women, by virtue of their idealised innocence, as inherently the most peaceful (Galtung, 2006). To illustrate, Yablon (2009) suggests that learner styles, communication methods and course design may lie behind the more positive responses of female participants in an Israeli high school peacebuilding programme rather than an assumption that the girls were naturally more peaceful than their male peers. This problematizes the notion that women and girls are inherently more peace-seeking than men and boys, and that the display of more peace-oriented attitudes such as strategic negotiation may rather be a result from culture and social transactions. Nonetheless, Yablon (2009) suggests that because the girls placed higher value on intimate friendships, they may have benefitted more from peace-building dialogue and friendship-forming initiatives, indicating the implications for contact-based programming to be mindful of gender differences when designing courses.

However, at the same time girls frequently find themselves stereotyped through reductive and restrictive characterisations in programming considerations (if not found to be entirely absent). For instance in Sierra Leone, training courses offered to female ex-combatants were limited to highly gendered options such as gara tie-dying, soap-making, catering, hairdressing and weaving (MacKenzie, 2009:209). These did not attract significant financial reward and were often not in demand in their communities, compared with options available to men such as carpentry, metalwork, plumbing and auto-mechanics (MacKenzie, 2009). In Northern Ireland, Pruitt (2013) found that urban music and dance programmes reinforced girls' exclusion despite their desire to participate through choosing activity types such as rapping and crumping that were identified as male practices. She specifies that "facilitators either ignored gender differences in participation or attempted to 'fix' girls by teaching them to engage with boys on their terms" (Pruitt, 2013:59).

Two clear omissions are evident in these two very different programme examples: attempts were not made to identify what might attract girls and young women to participate, nor to identify what might be deterring or preventing them from doing so. In both these cases, reductive gendered assumptions were made and insufficient thought was given about the design of inclusive practices. Worryingly, this also reveals a tendency towards 'girl blaming' (Park, 2009) where girls are deemed absent from programming or in positions of disadvantage because of moral failure or because they are not motivated, instead of attributing this to programme failure to include them appropriately. A reluctance to consider or recognize the normative role that gender politics might play in peacebuilding programmes, might thus privilege boys' participation over girls' (Pruitt, 2013). Such insights confirm the recommendations on sensitivity to gender dynamics within the UN Guiding Principles on Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding (2014). In particular they underscore the relevance of advice that interventions should 'avoid stereotypical assumptions about the roles and aspirations of girls, boys, young women, young men and young transgender people in conflict' (UN 2014, 3.1).

2.3.1 Transitions into adulthood: Contextual renegotiations of motherhood

Sommers (2006) and Hilker and Fraser (2009) draw attention to the fact that in many situations "motherhood tends to alter the social status of female youth far more than fatherhood changes the lives of male youth" (Hilker & Fraser, 2009:9). Increased prevalence of rape, transactional sex and early marriage as a form of protection in many conflict contexts, together with high numbers of male casualties, mean that many young women find themselves enacting motherhood at an early age, on their own or in other ways beyond their cultural traditions and expectations.

In Northern Uganda, for instance, young mothers have shown to, in their attempt to be a culturally understood 'good mother' when returning home after displacement, "begin to reweave the social relationships that confer on them societal status, authority, rights, and protection," (Baines & Gauvin, 2014:297). In doing so, these young women act upon their agency to renegotiate traditional cultural practices that have been undermined and eroded through displacement and war and in the absence of supportive family and community networks. In such a way space to negotiate (although not necessarily successfully) power and authoritarian relations are opened by their practices of motherhood (Baines & Gauvin, 2014).

Sex and Sexuality

The sexuality, gender identities and sexual orientations of young people in conflict are almost universally ignored. Accepting "post-conflict development as a time and space in which the construction of 'legitimate' subjects and behaviours occurs" (MacKenzie, 2009:201), this omission has serious implications for the image of citizenship that young people are being asked to conform to and the resultant marginalisation felt by those excluded. Binary constructions of gender and the reinforcement of assumptions of masculine and feminine behaviour fail to encourage young people to explore roles beyond the reductive stereotypes that are cast for them (Pruitt, 2013).

2.3.2. Transitions into adulthood: Financial independence

As Sommers (2006) reveals in Rwanda, where men need to build a house in order to be able to marry and build a family life, this maker of adulthood is highly prized and consequently may be valued more strongly than education. Nonetheless, the government prioritizes education and has – maybe involuntarily - created severe constraints for the transition into adulthood. This is embedded in the national project of Imidugudu, house building is restricted to Imidugudu land instead of inherited land. Moreover, due to government regulation, roof tile prices have radically increased, while other means of roofing are either too expensive or socially disrespected. Hence, government policies have led to a reduced access to land and more expensive building of houses. As a consequence, youth migrate to cities, especially Kigali, leading to uncontrolled urbanization and exacerbating urban poverty, which reinforces social inequalities leaving young men vulnerable to manipulation and exploitation (Sommers, 2006).

Likewise, the reluctance to acknowledge sexuality and sexual practices results in uninformed and risky sexual behaviour including the low prevalence of contraceptive use in certain post-conflict contexts (Gervais et al, 2009:18). While these are not unique to (post) conflict settings, the specific impacts of conflict on youth, including increased exposure to sexual violence, displacement from familial and community structures and restricted access to quality health and education services amplifies the implications of the neglect of addressing sexual health needs (World Youth Report, 2005). Failure to address healthy sexual practices amongst young girls/women and young boys/men exposes them to greater risk: the high prevalence of HIV transmissions in some conflict-affected contexts, such as Rwanda, reinforces the importance of sexual and reproductive health education and access to health services as positive contribution to peacebuilding (Gervais et al, 2009; Porter, 2013). In addition, the proliferation of sexual violence in conflict affects youths of all genders and sexual orientations, and its psychological, physical and social impacts require clear and sensitive consideration in programme planning. Examples of some more successful programming practices in this area are reviewed in Chapter 4.

Hayhurst (2013), in exploring the unintended consequences of corporate funded girls empowerment/sports programmes in Uganda, found that the programme promoted a form of empowerment but also "attempted to 'govern' their sexuality and sexual relations with boys and men by promoting individual avoidance and encouraging the use of self-defence strategies against potential abusers" (Hayhurst, 2013:1). The transferal of responsibility to girls to defend themselves against sexual assault is deeply worrying and deflects obligations to address the causes of sexual violence. More worryingly, Park (2009) finds a Sierra Leone based NGO running 'character reform' initiatives intended to rehabilitate girl sex workers, characterised them as "lazy, vain, easily led astray, and dependent" (Park, 2009:166), through "using transformative strategies such as *shaming*, "conscientising," empowering, and sensitizing to incite girls to change their own lives" (Park, 2009:170, emphasis added). As both authors reveal, such attitudes to sexual violence and to transactional sex make no attempt to understand the causes (or implications) of these sexual practices and demonstrate a failure to recognise the subordinated position girls find themselves in, as well as their subversive responses to this subordination.

Masculinities and violence

Much literature draws the link between constructions of masculinity and expressions of violence, and points to the frustration at not being able to fulfil expected performances of masculinity as an instigating factor for young men's participation in conflict (Hilker & Fraser, 2009:27-28; Sommers, 2012). Conflict can also limit young men's abilities to express their masculinity in non-violent forms and can lead to feelings of helplessness at not being able to protect, defend or provide for loved ones. The sense of hopelessness articulated by young men who feel that the significant cultural markers of transition to manhood, such as marrying, starting a family and owning a home are beyond their reach, indicates how deeply affecting renegotiations of masculinity can be (World Bank, 2013; Hilker & Fraser, 2009; Evans & Lo Forte, 2013; Lwambo, 2013; see textbox 2.2.2).

While these constraints may constitute triggers to violence for some young men, Sommers (2006) also highlights that this is the minority. There is a risk that the over-association of young men and violence diverts attention and contributes to the misrepresentation of youth as male as noted by Hilker and Fraser (2009), whereby "'youth' is used as shorthand for young men and the potential 'threat' posed by male youth" (Hilker & Fraser, 2009: 9).

2.3.3 Transitions into adulthood: Rites of passage

Being recognized as adult means very different things in different contexts. When hierarchies based on age are important orders for social structures, being recognized as an adult leads to respect, voice and authority. Peteet (1994) argues that in the Palestinian case, imprisonment and beatings by Israeli authorities can be seen as a "rite of passage" (1994:31) for young men into adulthood. In an occupied territory, spaces for autonomous displays of manhood, inextricably linked to understandings of honor, are rare. Re-interpreting and appropriating spaces such as the prison and means of oppression has become a powerful tool of resistance and detached the transition into adulthood from "established hierarchies of generation, nationality, and class" Peteet (1994:34)

Likewise, these associations vary vastly across cultural contexts and conflicts. In some circumstances violent acts may be used as an initiation into manhood and consequently idealized by younger male youth (see textbox 2.2.3); in others, participation in violence may reinforce exclusion and present a deviant counter-identity to challenge expected modes of behaviour (Stewart, 2011). Lwambo (2013) found that for many men military experience in the DRC was in fact disempowering as it was associated with dehumanization, a lack of autonomous choice and a loss of respect from their community.

While evidence of men behaving violently in conflict is vast, the relationship between masculinity and violence is not automatic and must not be assumed (Sommers, 2006). The characterization of male youth exclusively as perpetrators of violence misrepresents the many young men who do not engage in violence and undermines the evasive actions they may take to avoid such participation (Lwambo, 2013; Harland, 2010), as well as obscuring the processes of socialization that contribute to the constructions of accepted masculine behaviour (Porter, 2013).As highlighted above, this over-emphasis further conceals the active roles that young women may play in conflict reinforcing their exclusion from rehabilitation programmes.

Key Messages
▪ Youth-oriented programmes that fail to acknowledge and consider the gendered differences of participants do not challenge pre-existing hierarchies and structural constraints and may reinforce stereotypes and subordination.
▪ Gender is too often considered only as a binary without due regard to the complexity of young peoples' identities, which risks reinforcing assumptions about male and female behaviours.
▪ The links between masculinities and violence are complex and highly contextual – oversimplifying this association does not do justice to the many varied experiences of young men.
▪ Similarly, conceptualising violence as an exclusively male act fails to acknowledge the multiple roles of young women in conflict, including as combatants.
▪ There is a failure to address the sexual health needs of young boys/men and young girls/women in conflict affected contexts.
▪ The sexuality and sexual orientation of young people in conflict-affected contexts is almost universally ignored within health related educational interventions.

2.4 Responding to specific youth constituencies

As highlighted above, young people from vastly diverse constituencies and social and class backgrounds with multiple and varied experiences of conflict which affect their capacity and motivation to work for peace differently, require individual consideration when planning programme interventions. Amongst these different constituencies one might find orphans and parents, married and single, youth with disabilities and with caring responsibilities, youth with varying education trajectories and learning experiences, youth in and out of employment, homeless youth, elite youth, LGBTI youth, former child soldiers, youth living with HIV/Aids, young sex workers and a myriad of other variations of position (UNHCR, 2013). Other variables impacting the agency of youth include race (e.g. in South Africa) and religion (e.g. Pakistan), as well as sexual identity, ethnicity, class, geographical situation, age, etc.

2.4.1 Youth in context: Collectivity in Palestine

Social networks made up of friends and families, outside the internet, have always been important, mostly supportive structures for youth. This collectivity can go unnoticed in Western understandings of resilience and individualistic psychosocial approaches. "The Palestinian concept of *sumud* goes beyond an individualistic interpretation: resilience is (re)constituted as a wider collective and social representation of what it means to endure." (Nguyen-Gilham et al: 292). However, this again ought not to be understood simplistically, as there can also be "an underlying climate of suspicion and tension … and the erosion of trust and security" due to stories about collaborators" (Nguyen-Gilham et al 2008: 294).

Acknowledging, then, the diversity of youth groups and their contexts, a small number of specific examples will be addressed in more detail below as illustrative of some of the many varied issues that affect young people differently. The discussion below focuses on child soldiers, the disabled, orphans and refugee/displaced youth. In highlighting the particular needs of these groups our aim is not to be representative, but to underline how misguided the homogenising category 'youth' can be in suppressing or ignoring specific, contextualised and highly diverse needs and aspirations of certain groups of young people.

It is important to recognise that many of the multiple constituents of youth overlap and may intersect to reinforce disadvantage and also to recognise that some programmes may unwittingly exclude these groups or privilege elite youth through choices such as the location of intervention and the language of instruction. In addition, we also recognise and emphasise the need to understand if and how these constituencies discussed below might (not) overlap with other variables impacting youth identity and agency including race, ethnicity, class, geographical situation, and age.

Disabled Youth

Within conflict affected contexts, disabled youth are frequently excluded from participation in multiple social contexts, partly because of a lack of consideration afforded to their specific needs in terms of access and support and partly because of the persistent devaluing of the agency of young people with disabilities. Literature suggests there is much greater attention devoted to disabled war veterans than to young people with disabilities, which reinforces "hierarchies of disability" (Miles, 2013; Burton et al, 2013). Simultaneously, while conflict contributes to greater cohorts of young people disabled through injuries, disabled youth are already operating from a position of marginalisation and are particularly vulnerable to abandonment and abuse during and after conflict (UNICEF, 2013). It is important in peacebuilding practices that value is placed on the contributions of disabled young people and that efforts are made to ensure their inclusion (UNICEF, 2013). Researching an inclusive education project for disabled children in Iraq, Miles (2013) sees an opportunity for post-conflict education systems to provide better integration of disability services, by exposing discriminatory practices and promoting more inclusive forms of education, and arguing the case for collaborative studies to raise the profile of young people with disabilities in conflict.

Youth Carers

Many youth in conflict affected settings take on caring responsibilities within their extended families and community, which may place constraints on their mobility and availability. These responsibilities leave them less able to participate in education initiatives or in their communities more broadly speaking. Consequently the care, responsibility and maturity that these young people are demonstrating often goes unseen and unsupported (McEvoy-Levy, 2001; 2006).

Orphans

Many young people are left without parents or surviving relatives in the aftermath of violent conflicts. Kline and Mone (2003) highlight the isolation of young people without family support, the need for psychosocial interventions to address trauma in the absence of support networks and the value that can be contributed by building bonds with peers (Kline and Mone, 2003). However, Gervais et al (2009) and Baines and Gauvin (2014) also demonstrate the independence, resourcefulness and agency of young people acting as heads of households, and highlight both how orphaned youth can be disadvantaged by the denial of inheritance (Gervais et al, 2009) but also how they can creatively seek ways to overcome this (Baines & Gauvin, 2014,). Similarly, Nordstrom (2006) finds orphaned and abandoned street children and youths in Luanda, Angola creating alternative, peaceful communities and proxy-familial support systems as a counter point to adult violence.

Child soldiers

Significant attention has been afforded to the challenges of rehabilitation for former child soldiers, with disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) programmes frequently drawing criticism for the narrow focus of inclusion (Denov & Maclure, 2006; MacKenzie, 2009; McKay & Mazurana, 2004; Olonisakin, 2009). Child and rebel soldiers have been overwhelmingly characterised as male rendering female fighters invisible and unattended (McKay & Mazurana, 2004). Denov and Maclure (2006) highlight that despite the fact that 30% of child combatants in Sierra Leone were female, girls were vastly underrepresented in DDR programmes, underscoring the subordination of girls by denying them access to rehabilitation and skills training programmes and further reinforcing their social marginalisation.

Young people, male and female, may be forcibly recruited into fighting forces or they may join voluntarily for multiple motives, which include disillusionment, retribution or a desire to act (Sanford, 2006; Schwartz, 2010). These variances, together with the dehumanizing violence that many young soldiers are subjected to and expected to perform necessitates sensitive attention in programming to their “fractured subject positions” (Sanford, 2006:75). Equally important is to consider the contextual needs of former combatants in terms of education and employment training. Many former child soldiers have missed out on schooling but may be unwilling to return to formal education because of the perceived reduction in status (Olonisakin, 2009). Vocational training programmes need to take this into account, but also must consider the employment market and sustainability of jobs in a certain community where a number of young people may be newly trained in the same skills (Izzi, 2013; MacKenzie, 2009).

Equally, many young soldiers have exercised authority, developed certain skills and applied agency both in participation in violence and/or in resisting or subverting participation. For young combatants who participated voluntarily in fighting forces, the desire to exercise control and make decisions may have motivated them to participate (Kemper, 2005). Underlining the point that the agency which young people have exercised during conflict may be put to positive purposes in post-conflict settings, some commentators have noted a link between past violence and increased political engagement among ex-combatants (Blattman 2009). Consequently the return to communities where they do not feel they have a place or a voice can increase feelings of powerlessness and resentment. This means that it is important for programmes to foster a sense of positive purpose amongst former young combatants (Wessells & Jonah, 2006; Kline and Mone, 2003). In some cases, skills training programmes have reported positive responses by the wider community, being seen as an added contribution by youth combatants demonstrating a desire to reconcile (Wessells & Jonah, 2006). However this is a sensitive balance, as in other communities resentment may be generated by the apparent privileging of opportunities offered to those who have participated in violence (Kemper, 2005; MacKenzie, 2009; UN-IANYD, 2014).

Displaced / Refugee youth

Displacement can affect all constituencies of youth and has distinctive implications for peacebuilding education where reconciliation is felt to be incomplete or impossible as long as displacement persists. Mobility is identified as a condition for peace amongst many of the youth investigations surveyed (Leonard, 2013; McEvoy-Levy, 2012; Stewart, 2011), and consequently the restricted confines of refugee and displacement camps limit the performances of peace-making practices. Many youth in refugee camps find themselves unable to escape reminders of conflict and trauma and consequently unable to rebuild or imagine a peaceful future (Kline and Mone, 2003). Additionally, camp structures including the establishment of community representatives may reinforce traditional practices which exclude youth from decision making (Clark-Kazak, 2011) and result in 'youth representative' positions, where they exist, being occupied by elite, older, male youth (Clark-Kazak, 2011)

Nonetheless, Sanford (2006) finds youth in Guatemala and Colombia challenging the "nonsubject status often attributed to displaced people (especially youth and children) who daily remake their lives in the midst of violence" (Sanford, 2006:51). Equally, Gopal (2013) finds Karenni refugee youth in Thailand to be "political actors who not only interrogate the restrictive policies and discourses that impede their agency but also mobilise unique strategies to surmount them" (Gopal, 2013:16) and are likely to covertly maintain mobility across borders and take advantage of education opportunities at multiple sites in order to support community education practices amongst fellow refugees. More commonly, the onus falls on young men to risk traversing the boundaries of camps and host communities to pursue economic opportunities unavailable within their confines (UNHCR, 2013).

Key Messages on Responding to Specific Youth Constituencies
▪ Specific groups of conflict-affected young people have varying needs in a variety of contexts, which should be considered through particpatory and collaborative approaches to programme design, implementation, evaluation and research.
▪ Engaging with the context and constituency specific needs of young people involves recognising and building on their initiative, creativity and resourcefulness as citizens, carers and peacebuilders.
▪ There is scope for mobilising the skills of some groups of youth (for example, child soldiers) exercised and developed during conflict for peaceful purposes in post-conflict situations.

Chapter 3. Conceptual understandings and programmatic approaches to youth's economic, political and socio-cultural agency for peacebuilding

Youth are frequently portrayed either as victims or as perpetrators of violence in conflict (Del Felice & Wisler, 2007; Drummond-Mundal & Cave, 2007; McEvoy-Levy, 2006; Sommers, 2006). This often over-simplifies the many varied positions that young people may occupy during and after conflict: youth may inhabit both of these roles, simultaneously or alternately, or they may inhabit neither (Del Felice & Wisler, 2007; McEvoy-Levy, 2006). Such a characterisation similarly constrains the framing of youth as potential peacebuilders, limiting the ways in which youth may be understood to contribute towards peace beyond a pacification of the perceived threat they demonstrate (Izzi, 2013). This document argues for a comprehensive understanding of *youth agency for peacebuilding*, by moving away from a victim-perpetrators binary to an understanding of heterogeneous constituents embedded within and reacting to processes of conflict *and* peace.

We then continue to explore the various (economic, political and socio-cultural) dimensions of conceptualisations of youth agency that are reflected in the literature. It is recognised that too often the multiple dimensions of youth contributions to both conflict and peacebuilding are treated in isolation and therefore attempts are made to highlight the ways in which these dimensions intersect within varying contexts. For analytical purposes, we have developed distinctive sections, of which section 3.1 deals specifically with economic and redistributive aspects of conceptualisations and programmatic responses to youth economic agency. Consequently, section 3.2 then elaborates on the socio-political aspects of youth agency in relation to peace/conflict. This section will similarly first highlight main conceptual understanding, and continue to discuss the various programmatic responses that directly target youth's political forms of agency for peace/conflict. Finally, section 3.3 takes a similar approach to discussing youth's socio-cultural forms of agency and related interventions. By presenting our findings in this way, and drawing on a critical realist understanding of the interconnections between discourse and materialities, we recognise that discourse and ways of understanding youth agency are closely related to the way educational interventions are developed and implemented.

In line with the research project's theoretical framework the section will also indicate how programming equips young people education to participate in the inter-related dimensions of peacebuilding and social justice identified in the 4 R's frameworks of redistribution, representation and recognition and reconciliation. Our analysis will therefore aim to clarify how educational programmes support young people within processes of achieving: (1) economic justice (e.g. their access to work and resources); (2) socio-political justice (e.g. their participation in decision making and/or political processes); (3) cultural recognition (e.g. acknowledgement of their diversity, and the distinct needs, identities and status of different youth constituencies), and; (4) reconciliation (e.g. their role in healing social divides and legacies of conflict). In doing so, we reflect upon the extent to which programmes implicate young people in the forging of a "positive" peace, which addresses structural inequalities that

often lie at the roots of conflict, or a "negative" peace, more oriented to stability and pacification.

3.1. Economic approaches to understanding youth agency for peacebuilding

As noted in the UN Guiding Principles on Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding, an economic approach 'identifies young people as central to the economic development of their country and promotes their access to economic opportunities as essential for their own development' (UN-IANYD 2014). Interventions, in particular, TVET (Technical and Vocational Education Training Programmes), aim to enhance the agency of young people as participants in and beneficiaries of peacebuilding processes through linking education to employability and in turn to poverty reduction, citizenship participation and community activism. Given the fact that lack of employment opportunities, high levels of poverty and economic marginalisation of many different constituencies of youth are key drivers of conflict, such interventions have the potential to contribute directly to peacebuilding and to the support the agency of youth within economic and political post-conflict processes (Johnson and Kane, 2009; Izzi, 2013; Walton, 2010). Indeed, there is a common agreement that a lack of economic opportunities available to young adults can lead to feelings of disempowerment and disillusionment. As financial independence is often linked to the progression to adulthood, poor youth can find themselves trapped in a seemingly hopeless situation that reduces their perceived prospects to a secure status as autonomous adults (Hilker & Fraser, 2009; Sommers, 2006). In addressing such challenges, TVET interventions can directly impact on drivers of conflict and social alienation amongst conflict-affected youth.

The impact of TVET on the peacebuilding agency of young people may be understood at two levels. Firstly, as one component of broader, macro-level long term post-conflict economic planning and policy development (at the national and international level) to generate economic opportunities and livelihoods for youth and to ensure that the economy can flourish in an equitable way. Secondly, at a micro level in relation to contributing to the well being, self-esteem, dignity and personal development of youth as well as providing leverage to enhance their social, political and economic participation (Kane (2009); Johnson and Kane (2009); Benson Greene (2009). Moreover, Johnson and Kane (2009: 768) highlight the potential of vocational education provision to address 'inequality of opportunity' in access to education, to work and earnings and to participation in civil society'. By potentially providing opportunities for income and employment with important spin-offs for the health, nutrition and political position of young people, vocational education can help to address the "horizontal inequalities" as well as "inequalities between different groups in society[…]which have been shown to be a source of violent conflict" (2009: 768).

Offering a useful context and conflict-sensitive understanding of the potential impact of TVET Paulson (2009) and Fithen and Richards (2005), in relation to Sierra Leone's ex-combatant youth, point out how skills training leading to real work opportunities enables them to capitalise on the space for individual initiative opened up by the conflict. Moreover, it also enables them to participate in community rebuilding, thereby facilitating their social reintegration. As Frith notes, equipped with the benefits of vocational education, 'these ex-

combatants are not just fitting into such a society – they are helping to forge it' (Fithen and Richards , 2005: 134-35), quoted in Paulson 2009:46). In this way, TVET's distinct capacity to enhance the agency of young people is based on its linkage of education to employment and livelihood opportunities, in turn connecting with social and political participation. In contributing to a range of dimensions of the agency of young people, TVET exemplifies the potential of education to contribute to the social justice processes of redistribution, representation, recognition and reconciliation which frame this research project.

The relevance and appeal of TVET provision in satisfying the needs and aspirations of post-conflict youth is evident in a recent study of TVET in post-conflict Liberia (Kane 2009). This study found that the majority of the 'lost generation' of youth (World Bank, 2006) who had been unable to pursue their education during the Liberian civil war were 'choosing to access vocational-related training rather than formal education' (Kane, 2009:790). This included agricultural vocational training, apprenticeship programmes and public works. Moreover, the peacebuilding role of TVET in enhancing the agency of particular groups such as ex-combatants within DDR programmes has been noted in many studies (Humphreys & Weinsten, 2005; Paulson, 2009:835). Their assimilation into post-conflict communities is greatly facilitated by their acquisition of skills to generate new livelihoods.

Also exemplifying the potential of holistic, context- responsive vocational educational provision to meet the distinct needs of war-affected youth, a recent study of the implementation of TVET in Uganda (Barakat et al (2009) draws attention to the UNICEF Commissioned Survey for War Affected Youth (Annan et al 2006). This sought to elicit the particular social, economic and psychological needs of young people targeted for vocational education programming in a war-affected region. In particular it highlighted the 'financial pressures arising from poverty, insecurity and lack of financial support' (quoted in Barakat et al, 2009:780) which were affecting all youth, not only those abducted, for which 'income generating activities' and 'age appropriate education' were necessary. Pinpointing the relevance of improved vocational education to addressing these needs, the report (Amman et al 2006) points out that 'technical/vocational training exists but is far too limited in its scope. Apprenticeships and the provision of tools upon graduation would go far to assist graduating students in finding and being able to work' (WCRWC, 2005: 10). The report also highlighted health related issues, which prevented young people's ability to work including war-related injuries, poverty related nutrition problems and also the effect of HIV/AIDS in creating single headed households (Stites et al 2006 quoted in Barakat et al 2009). Such findings underscore the need for vocational provision to adopt a holistic approach, integrate health as well as livelihood-related curricula into programming (Barakat, 2009: 785).

However, studies of the implementation of TVET points to its unrealised potential in many post-conflict contexts and identify particular challenges. The limited and short term employment opportunities available to youth (e.g. in construction and public works) who have participated in TVET is frequently critiqued within implementation studies (Kane, 2009: 794) as is their low rates of pay. Such critiques highlight the need to link TVET provision to local context-related employment opportunities and local market dynamics (Kane 2009:795; Barakat, Kane and Inglis 2009; Paulson 2009) through macro-economic planning and also to ensure more effective co-ordination between national governments, donors, and NGOs and

the private economic sector. Hence, several authors demand that programmes should be based on proper and realistic analyses of market dynamics, so as not to create expectations among youth that cannot be met: "Failing to manage expectations is arguably a bigger potential driver of conflict than the absence of jobs itself" (Batmanglich & Enria, 2014:20). There is also a need for more rigorous evaluation of TVET programmes and reliable data in relation to peacebuilding outcomes (Johnson & Kane, 2009:769).

It should also be noted that regardless of the worthy aspirations of TVET programming at the micro or meso-levels, the dominance of global macro-economic neoliberal tendencies that are driving processes of privatisation, often tend to delimit employment opportunities in the public sector. Cubitt (2011) makes this argument explicit in the case of Sierra Leone, as she states how "the liberalising nature of post-conflict reforms meant that employment opportunities in the public sector shrank dramatically. Expansion of the private sector was imperative for job creation, especially for the marginalised and restless youth of the country, who had played a central role in the armed conflict and who's expectations from the peace were high. Yet the post-conflict reforms have thus far failed to deliver" (Cubitt, 2011: 3). Hence, those young people trained through TVET often find themselves in a structurally restricting environment that does not deliver their expectations of sustainable employment opportunities. Given these structural constraints, TVET potential to contribute to the multi-dimensional peacebuilding agency of young people is still largely unrealised.

3.1.1 (Un)employment for youth based on political networks and socio-cultural characteristics in Sri Lanka

Amarasuyia et al. (2009) make a compelling case against a narrow understanding of the relation between education and employment markets. Firstly, in the case of Sri Lanka, employability is as much based on skills as on personal traits and cultural characteristics: "Etiquette and appearance often discriminate against candidates who lack urban, middle-class and bi-lingual backgrounds or who do not wish to conform to these expectations" (Amarasuyia et al, 2009:18). Secondly, social and political networks are described as patronage. Hiring practices based on political choice and connections are commonplace and value personal relationships higher than skills and merits. For many youth this has become a "necessary evil" and a phrase that is often uttered is "if you can't beat them, join them" (Amarasuyia et al., 2009).

Finally, in addition to more macro level structural constraints, some studies also point to a range of micro level contextual constraints faced by youth when applying for jobs (see box 3.1). Let us now turn to discuss the work-related interventions targeting youth in conflict-affected contexts.

3.1.1 Work-related programming

This section builds on the earlier discussion of Economic Approaches to enhancing youth agency, in particular through the provision of technical and vocational education. It reviews selected examples of work-related interventions and clarifies how they may contribute to the agency of youth as peacebuilders within a field where there is admittedly little rigorous evaluation. The main rationales of such programmes are improved income situations through the enhancement of employability. In order to achieve this, they focus on productivity-enhancing skills, with some adopting more structural approaches to improve business

environments through organizational capacity-building and labour market policies (Filmer et al. 2014; GIZ, n.d. 1-5; World Bank, 2010).

The skills-mismatch hypothesis - i.e. that skills learned in schools are not relevant for the labour market - is a common theme and is tackled e.g. through reforms of curriculum and teaching methods according to the needs of the private sector, practical work experience and an improvement of regulation and harmonization of non-formal education programmes (World Bank, 2010). Such programmes underline the implications of economic empowerment in enhancing the personal growth into adulthood of young people as well as their capacity to exercise responsibilities within the contexts of their families, and in the broader civic and political arenas. This is evident in the claims that jobs are "more than just income" (Filmer et al., 2014: 43) and also that programmes seek to support youth in their transitions "from school, to work, through risky behaviours, to founding a family, and to exercising citizenship" (Filmer et al., 2014: 49).

A GIZ programme, for instance, seeks to design a participatory programme for bringing unskilled out-of-school youth and poorer students together with "representatives from the public and private sector in the district in the process of assessing economic opportunities" (GIZ, n.d. 2: 1). In terms of sustainability, the programme also envisages to enable the Sierra Leonean partners to "offer their own functional literacy and vocational education training" (GIZ, n.d. 5: 1), thus creating opportunities for inter-generational support of youth. Recognising the potential of economic empowerment to contribute to the community socialisation of conflict-affected youth, the programme aims to reintegrate "displaced and unemployed or underemployed youths in their rural home communities" as well as improve their "skill levels and productivity" and "secure their sustainable livelihoods" (GIZ,n.d.4:1). Moreover, the possibility that the improved self-efficacy connected with earning a living may catalyse the civic participation of programme beneficiaries is envisaged in its aspiration to "ensure they are active in local governance structures and contribute to rural development" (GIZ, n.d,4:1).

Key Messages for Work-related Programme Interventions
▪ The reduction of youth to either victims or perpetrators of violence in conflict does not reflect the multiple ways in which young people are affected by conflict, nor their potential contribution to peacebuilding.
▪ TVET approaches that seek to enhance the livelihoods and economic prospects of young people have a key role to play in addressing the drivers of youth alienation and promoting their active participation in peacebuilding processes.
▪ A proper and realistic analysis of macro-economic dynamics, employment prospects and post-conflict economic development is a necessary step to manage youth's job expectations, as unrealised expectations may themselves generate alienation and conflict.

3.2. Socio-political approaches to understanding youth agency for peacebuilding

As stated earlier on, while for analytical reasons we now turn to discuss the more socio-political aspects of youth agency in conflict-affected situations, there is a need to bear in mind the close connections to the (earlier discussed) economic dimensions, and the (still to come) socio-cultural aspects of youth agency in peacebuilding. In doing so, this section allows us to particularly zoom in on issues of representation that are at stake for young people, while positioning them in relation to issues of redistribution, recognition and reconciliation.

Several scholars have highlighted the exclusion of youth from formal political practices and peacebuilding processes (Helsing et al., 2006; McEvoy-Levy, 2006), and hence a limited representation of youth voice in these processes. This is often due to age restrictions, but also due in part to a devaluing of young people's potential contribution to positive peacebuilding through political processes. Additionally, there is an assumption that youth are uninterested in politics, particularly extended to young women, and this assumed apathy of youth further obscures them from engagement (Pruitt, 2013). The political nature of many young people's involvement in conflict is therefore often overshadowed (Drummond-Mundal & Cave, 2007; Leonard, 2013; McEvoy-Levy, 2001).

However, many youth are occupying highly political stances – from conscientious objectors in Israel (Del Felice & Wisler, 2007; Helsing et al., 2006), to protestors in the Arab Spring demonstrations (Sedra, 2013), and active participation in the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa (O'Kane, Feinstein and Giertsen, 2009). There is a necessity, therefore, to acknowledge and build upon such experiences and skills that youth may have developed within highly politicized conflict situations, which is likewise constitutive of their identities and aspirations (McEvoy-Levy, 2001). A similar tension is reflected in the need to consider youth as integral constituents of and contributors to current as well as future peace. In the long-term, youth experiences with the peacebuilding process, particularly in the ways grievances such as social inequalities are addressed, will be decisive for the processes' success. As we are often reminded, today's youths are tomorrow's leaders (McEvoy-Levy, 2001). At the same time, "young people are citizens *now*, rather than citizens in preparation" (Smyth, 2012:8, quoted in Smith Ellison, 2014:40, emphasis added) and consequently their perspectives should not be overlooked in current processes and their rights to participation ensured (McEvoy-Levy, 2001).

Education programmes targeted at political and social participation are closely linked to questions around citizenship and are therefore, by necessity, highly context-specific (UNICEF, 2009). Their objectives may range from individual psychosocial recovery to inter-community dialogues and gaining greater awareness of the multiple sides to understanding truth (Smith Ellison, 2014; MacLay, 2010). Smith Ellison 2014) also points to the limits of such approaches, which often fail to enable youth to analyse power relations within society. While participation may be an aspiration of many interventions, social hierarchies and cultural norms may limit the actual engagement of youth, or even alienate youth from political processes depending, for instance, on gender, wealth and residence (Dunne et al, 2014:3). Hence, here we see a close connection between issues of political representation and issues of socio-cultural recognition. Moreover, the degree to which political (democratic) processes and institutions in conflict-affected settings enable the participation of youth also constrains and conditions their agency as civic actors. Thus to be relevant and context-specific, programming to enhance the participation of youth in public life necessitates a careful analysis of the broader political arena within which young people are located.

3.2.1 Youth in context: The ambivalence of *Wasita* (patronage networks) in Afghanistan

Insights from case studies on youths' political participation in Afghanistan reveal that it is necessary to think beyond Western imaginations of democratic participation. Afghanistan has a long tradition of youth challenging traditional political elites (Giustozzi, 2010; Larson & Coburn, 2014). Despite the recent war and concomitant political changes, the setup of these political leaders has not changed drastically. Larson and Coburn (2014) provide compelling examples for ambivalent forms of youths' political participation. These are ambivalent because they do not take place in what are usually understood as political spaces, and because they exhibit hybrid forms of participation and *Wasita* (patronage networks). Because of a lack of overt political spaces, youth may meet in alternative venues such as sport clubs, which can become politicized when members decide for instance to give their joint voices for a certain candidate in an election. On the one hand this can be a collective form of political participation. On the other hand, these voices (or votes) can also be bought by politicians. For that reason, local elites attempt to assert influence over similar associations, mainly by controlling the youth in charge, as was the case in this study, when three patrons assigned their candidate as the sport association's leader. This could have led to substantial conflicts, but in this case the three youth leaders stayed united. In fact, they managed to take advantage of the tensions between the three patrons and secured funds for their association from each one of the three sources.

The exercise of active citizenship is vital in contributing to the potential of youth to strengthen democracy, address inequality and contribute to sustainable peace as well as to ensure that governments are accountable and effective. Even though these benefits are widely recognized, including by development organisations (Dunne et al, 2014), as "the potential value of youth as active citizens might appear self-evident" (Dunne et al, 2014:1), there is still uncertainty as to how this might best be achieved in different contexts and how to understand, connect with and promote the political agency of youth in relation to peacebuilding processes.

In many contexts there is an intricate link between structures considered as patronage or corruption and activities that foster youths' political participation (see textbox). This sheds light on the necessity to engage with an ambivalent reality, made up of structures that simultaneously exhibit characteristics beneficial and detrimental for peacebuilding (Larson & Coburn, 2014). Attempts (by donors) to condemn and go beyond the existing institutional setup and power structures will often yield resistance by powerful local actors, and possibly by the people who value them for their provision of funds and social services.

Importantly, societal structures, as well as people young and old, can and do change as a result of conflict. Consequently, for instance the notion of "reintegration" for ex-combatants or aggrieved parties needs to be accompanied by the question "reintegration into what?" (Özerdem, 2009, quoted in Maclay & Özerdem, 2010). Reintegration is a long-term process and is situated in a highly political context of peacebuilding. Hence more emphasis is needed on potential transformation efforts rather than short-term training programmes (Smith Ellison, 2014). Following from our theoretical explorations of the 4 R's, this section illustrates how failing to address issues of representation and recognition, can potentially hinder the longer-term objective of successful reintegration, trust-building and reconciliation.

3.2.2 Youth in context: E-resistance in Palestine

In an occupied territory where movement is restricted, arenas for peaceful political participation are scarce. Consequently, the internet has become a platform to give voice to Palestinian youth, neglected in mainstream media, and to connect with the global diaspora. Traditionally, youth have been at the forefront of political movements and are still considered as major actors by the Palestinian government. With the internet becoming more accessible, the term "e-resistance" has been coined, (Khoury-Machool, 2007:25). University websites launched since 1994, online radio-stations, e-learning opportunities and reports on various events are all important facets of this e-resistance, which have been recognized and supported by international actors such as UNDP and USAID. In contrast to these peaceful acts, the second Intifada advanced an online-battleground for "hacktivism" and "cyber-war" (Khoury-Machool 2007: 26).

In promoting peace, youth are at the "frontlines of peacebuilding" (McEvoy-Levy, 2001:24) in their communities, often in ways that engage their peers, as illustrated by examples of indigenous youth in Guatemala leading conflict resolution and peace training (O'Kane, Feinstein and Giertsen, 2009). Where youth seek out opportunities to work in peace promotion with fellow young people, this may be indicative of the exclusion they feel from decision-making through more formal mechanisms, choosing instead to side-step adult involvement and contribute directly to their peer group in ways that appeal to them. As a result, this work goes largely un-rewarded and often unseen, and in some cases is explicitly disrupted by the enactment of policy decisions from which young people are denied a voice. Reaching for alternative ways of expressing themselves and being heard in some post-conflict settings youth are more likely to use other platforms of communication and contact, such as social media and online networks (Sedra, 2013; see textbox 3.2.2). These may serve as a tool to

instigate either peaceful protest or violence, or may likewise be used either to promote activism and advocacy for peace or perpetuate misinformation and hate speech (Dolan & Gray, 2014).

It has been argued that youth, rather than adults, are "epitomizing grassroots change" as "young people have less of an interest vested in the status quo than adults and thus have the greatest incentive to push for change" (Helsing et al., 2006:197). However, this approach can run the risk of presenting an over-idealised image of youth, as is apparent in Galtung's (2006) blanket characterisation of youth as more open-minded than adults and therefore more willing to embrace change. Yet, drawing attention to those frequently overlooked youth who are making significant efforts to support peace in their communities, does promote a positive model for their peers as well as "break[ing] down stereotypes of young people as disengaged, lazy, and self-centred" (Helsing et al., 2006:196). Youth should thus not be seen as disengaged political subjects, nor should they be over-idealised as political activists for progressive change. Rather, a continuum of youth political agency needs to be understood in close relation to the socio-economic environment they relate to.

3.2.1. a Citizenship and civics education as part of the formal curriculum

The potential of citizenship education as part of the formal school curriculum (i.e. when there is such a subject offered to secondary school pupils) to contribute to the peacebuilding agency of young people through equipping them with relevant skills, experiences and dispositions is highlighted in a series of studies by Davies (2004, 2005, and 2011). In particular, forms of civic and political education may contribute to young people's ability to engage in 'positive conflict, negotiation, compromise, responsible use of free speech and critical recognition of rights and claims' (Davies, 2011:1). These skills furnish the capacity to exercise what she terms 'interruptive democracy' within post-conflict civic cultures. By this she means equipping young people to participate in an 'interruptive' process that necessitates peaceful questioning, dissent, critique and the ability to reach compromise. Here young people's peacebuilding agency is understood to start with their possession or development of what Davies calls the 'hands up, excuse me, reflexive' when injustice or wrong is perceived (Davies, 2011:1). Citizenship education can then also give them the ability to act peacefully on such a sense of injustice by participating in 'deliberative' democratic processes (Davies, 2004; Davies, 2011). This includes learning how to discuss controversial political and religious issues as well as taking action themselves or with others depending on the specific possibilities of their contexts and circumstances. While situating young people within processes of 'interruptive democracy', this view of the potential impact of formal citizenship education underlines the capacity of youth to develop attitudes that contribute to the forging of a 'positive peace' geared to the pursuit of social transformation and justice. It also recognises young people as informed, aware, emotionally engaged political actors, and underscores the key role of citizenship education in channelling their sense of outrage and frustration.

The capacity of young people to participate constructively in democratic processes may also benefit from the curricular content of (global) citizenship education, which may include knowledge of democratic processes such as voting procedures or an understanding of human rights and the values they represent (Reilly & Niens, 2014; Smith, 2003:25). Moreover, Davies argues that it can provide an opportunity for critical reflection on how identities are shaped and social positions in relation to citizenship are developed. In doing so, it can encourage young people to enter into civil society with an inclusive and pluralistic understanding of their own and others civic identities that counter particularistic or nationalistic affiliations, which might threaten peaceful coexistence (Davies, 2004:239).

3.2.1.a1 Engaging ex-combatants in civic education in Northern Ireland

Building directly on the pre-existing agency of young people, but this time specifically focusing on ex-combatants, is a civic education programme operating in Northern Ireland *From Prison to Peace* (Emerson, 2012). This provides young people aged 14-16 in secondary schools with an opportunity to engage directly with experiences of ex-combatants from both sides of the conflict and to hear about their engagement in community-based peacebuilding. By stimulating context-specific reflections on how to deal with the violent legacy of the past and the practical possibilities of peacebuilding across sectarian divides, these meetings may predispose young people against involvement in sectarian behaviours. The programme thus enlists ex-combatants not as security threats but as peacebuilding agents whose demonstrations of "political generosity" may educate and inspire other young people. Highlighting the particular strengths of such interactions in enhancing the agency of youth as peacebuilders, the study underscores their explicit focus on a ''political landscape'' and "real issues" to which young people are ''exposed' rather than more generic and "ill focused" exercises in "prejudice reduction'' (Emerson, 2012:290: McEvoy, McEvoy & McConnachie, 2006:99).

However, studies of the practice rather than the aspirations of citizenship education in conflict-affected settings highlight its frequent failure to actually engage young people. Indeed, some studies point to its capacity, when badly delivered, to thwart rather than enhance youth's peacebuilding agency (Quaynor, 2014; Leonard, 2007). Firstly, critiques note its "abstract" and decontextualized content, which is often "a world away from the lived reality of many young people" (Davies, 2014:241). For instance, Akar's (2014) study of student perceptions of the citizenship curriculum in Lebanon draws attention to widespread resentment at its irrelevance to their lives and civic aspirations. Students were particularly frustrated at its failure to respond to their motivation to participate in a range of community development projects (Akar, 2014:18,22). Similarly, Emerson (2012) reports that the cross-curricular Education for Mutual Understanding programme in Northern Ireland, despite laudable objectives, fails to address some of the key, yet contentious, issues that matter to young people. These include sectarianism, the origins and nature of community conflict, as well as the political processes required for peaceful transition (Emerson, 2012; see also McEvoy, 2007; Magill, Smith and Hamber, 2009; Magill & Hamber, 2010). Secondly, the subject's 'abstract' content may be linked to the failure of curriculum designers and teachers

to consider the views, experiences and priorities of children and young people living within conflict-affected communities. Leonard's study of the development and implementation of citizenship curricula in Northern Ireland for example spotlights the treatment of children as 'passive' recipients of a preconceived, adult-centred curriculum (Leonard, 2007:494). Thirdly, the often traditional pedagogical approaches in many civic education classrooms run counter to the aspirations to help young people develop the skills required for critically aware active citizenship. For instance, Akar's study of students' responses to the implementation of the prescribed citizenship curriculum in Lebanon reveals their frustrations with rote learning and the reluctance of their teachers to allow discussion of controversial issues (Akar, 2014: 20; see also Quaynor, 2014:45).

3.2.1.a1 Building civic and democratic awareness through youth parliaments in Pakistan and Angola

Giving them an understanding and experience of democratic processes, involvement in youth parliaments can enhance young people's civic activism. The *Youth and School Parliament Programmes* in Pakistan (PILDAT, 2007) and in Angola (Search for Common Ground, Vigani, 2012) aim to improve young people's understanding of the role of parliament and national governance processes. These programmes aim to give them opportunities to interact with parliamentarians on youth-related issues including human rights, constitutional reform and the electoral process. Through increased understanding of parliamentary processes and positive interaction with members of parliament, youth are expected to develop constructive attitudes to democratic involvement. In these programmes, youth are also encouraged to use the local media and radio and to develop research and advocacy skills. Reports prepared by youth delegates in Pakistan presented to parliamentarians on issues including madrasa education and reform, tax reforms, and the status of religious minorities, indicate their development of research and advocacy skills on relevant civic issues. Participants in these projects reported greater confidence and a sense of political empowerment resulting from improved knowledge of legislative processes as well as contact with parliamentarians.

At the same time, some studies do spotlight examples of approaches to citizenship education that demonstrate a more context-specific engagement with youth concerns and experiences. For instance, a micro-study of Quaynor (2014) of a civics education classroom in a school run by an NGO in Liberia highlights the advantages to students of a pedagogical approach which deliberately departs from the content of the official textbook to focus on their "rich civic experiences" (Quaynor, 2014:5) and the "realities of daily life". This treatment of the subject made the citizenship education classroom a site of "democratic dialogue", which was responsive to the concerns of students for whom "politics mattered in a very real and personal way" (Quaynor, 2014:16). These included critiques of the current functioning of democratic processes relating to corruption, their fears of incitements to violence by elites during elections and the challenges of making the government accountable for social services. The students were also encouraged to develop "problem solving tools", including how to "advocate for justice in their society" (Quaynor, 2014:15). This approach to the delivery of

citizenship education recognizes young people as "informed political actors" (Quaynor, 2014:15) whose agency is conditioned by particular contexts, which are inseparable from the broader structural challenges of a nascent post-conflict democracy.

In short, there is thus a need to carefully explore the ways in which citizenship (and the education thereof) is constructed in each specific context: whether and how citizenship education relates to and aims to address structural societal inequalities or rather foresees a continuation of an (often highly unequal) status quo. Recognition is needed that in some cases, the interpretation of citizenship (education and trainings) might be either influenced by a universalistic human rights, western-driven agendas, or that citizenship might be used as a means of social control rather than social emancipation.

3.2.1.b Non-formal education for political participation and mobilisation

Similar to the concerns for citizenship education within the formal schooling system, for non-formal programmes focusing on political participation it is evenly important to tailor agency enhancement interventions to the specific situations of youth. In this sense, young people need to be recognised as (potential) actors in particular social, cultural and political contexts that are frequently not conducive to their civic participation. The success of certain programmes has been ascribed to a genuine consideration of the practical and social difficulties from the perspective of youth in their localities, including rural youth and women. For instance, programmes in the West Bank, Pakistan and Senegal (Dunne et al, 2014) that integrated activities for youth into established community events all facilitated youth engagement because of their responsiveness to young people's circumstances. They addressed relevant practical issues that matter to them, provided livelihood support to encourage attendance, and actually went to those sites where youth reside, and/or used social media and radio. Catalysing the agency of youth as peer educators, youth ambassadors and young researchers can be a fruitful strategy for capitalising on their energy and enthusiasm (Dunne et al, 2014). Another intervention with Muslim and Christian men and women aged between 15 and 30 in the wake of inter-sectarian riots in 2007-2008 in Kaduna Nigeria, underlines the usefulness of in-depth reflections with youth on their responses to community gender norms and local power relations (Harris, 2009). The project mobilised a "transformative pedagogy" (Harris, 2009:34), which aimed to make an impact on civic behaviour through shifting young people's "frames of reference" and encouraging critical thinking. A mapping of social divisions in the area resulted in the realisation by youth that differences based on wealth were more significant than religious divisions. This recognition paved the way for a commitment both to reducing inter-religious violence and for voluntary work to improve conditions in both Christian and Muslim communities.

Other interventions emphasise a similar mix of knowledge development, networking opportunities, skills building and opportunities for practical projects, but mobilise these to build the capacity of young people to exercise citizenship within their local communities. For instance, *The British Council Active Citizenship Programme for Youth* project in Pakistan (PILDAT, 2007), the *Kosovo Youth for Democracy and Peacebuilding* (Rea Prishtina, 2011) and an *Action Aid* project to enhance young people's capacity to engage in governance processes in the Nkayi district of Zimbabwe (Ndebele & Billing, 2011) all include variations of capacity

building in the areas of leadership and communication, advocacy, volunteering and social action, project delivery, fundraising and social entrepreneurship. Young people are also encouraged to engage in dialogues with policy makers, to develop networks with civil society organisations, and to initiate and implement social action projects to improve life in their communities. Such projects combine strategic needs-based capacity building with context-specific and meaningful practical activities chosen and implemented by youth (see also the textbox on Youth Parliaments in Pakistan and Angola).

Nevertheless, working with communities and recognising local religious and cultural values rather than targeting youth in isolation is essential, as enhancing youth as active citizens in areas such as advocacy for social, political and economic rights may threaten established social practices and norms. For instance, the success of a life skills based education curriculum in Pakistan, which addressed social and reproductive health issues, managed to avoid potential resistance on religious and cultural grounds by widespread consultation and agreement with parents, communities, youth and teachers (Dunne et al, 2014:8). Secondly, it is challenging to define what "participation" and "active citizenship" mean in practice, and programming and policy rhetoric do not necessarily match with implementation realities (Barber, 2009).

Thus, participation opportunities are not always democratic or egalitarian, given adult domination, the exclusive involvement of youth from particular socio-economic backgrounds, and frequently tokenistic approaches to youth participation. In addition, the dangers of youth frustration resulting from an inability to apply skills learned within active citizenship programmes are underlined. So, "once young people have gained confidence and self-esteem through co-operatively working with others, to then unrealistically raise their expectations within the confines of a heavily constrained socio-political environment is akin to leaving them as beached whales" (Barry et al, 1997:68: quoted in Young, 2009:27). Such insights are a further reminder of the need for programmes to tailor interventions to address the contexts and constraints of young people's daily lives rather than work with an abstract notion of youth empowerment or motivation to peacebuilding.

Key Messages on Education for Citizenship and Political Participation
▪ Both formal and non-formal citizenship education can provide young people with skills, experiences and dispositions to enable them to participate critically and constructively in peaceful democratic processes linked to the pursuit of social justice.
▪ Citizenship education can help to modify sectarian or other prejudices, by opening up for reflection and recognition of their own and others' commitment to multiple civic identities.
▪ Active citizenship programmes can enhance the agency of youth within processes of representation by equipping them with practical knowledge and experience of political and democratic processes.
▪ However, citizenship education as delivered in many conflict-affected countries is failing young people by the pedagogical approaches used, and its inattention to the particularities of the challenging contexts in which they aspire to exercise political agency.

- Hence, programmes should be carefully tailored in consultation with young people and their communities since citizenship education is considered most effective in contributing to young people's agency when it responds directly their direct situation, priorities, needs and struggles.

- The capacity of citizenship education to enhance the agency of young people is undermined when there is a mismatch between curriculum content and the wider political context in which they are situated.

3.2.1.c Sexual and reproductive health education

As noted in previous sections enhancing the roles of youth as civic and economic actors in relation to peacebuilding processes necessitates an exercise of agency that assumes and requires their mental and physical well-being. Educational interventions that seek to improve access to sexual and reproductive health rights, including HIV and Aids awareness, in conflict-affected contexts thus forms an important component within holistic youth empowerment strategies. Indeed, youth advocacy for health and related rights is frequently itself a feature of their exercise of civic agency (Dunne et al 2014; UNESCO and UNAIDS 2001). A recent synthesis report (Dunne et al, 2014) drawing on a desk review and empirical findings from the West Bank, Gaza and Senegal provides useful insights into how this area of programming may most effectively connect with and enhance the capacity of young people to: 1) exercise their civic rights; 2) to contribute to their own and their community's health and empowerment; and 3) to equip them with relevant skills.

Firstly, the study indicates the need to pay careful attention to effectively targeting and accessing youth "by going to where youth are rather than trying to assemble them at designated 'spaces' chosen by adults" (Dunne et al, 2014; 6). This may be achieved through deploying a range of strategies which include: imaginative use of physical spaces already frequented by youth; using the radio, social media and ICT (including mobile phones and SMS messaging); integrating interventions into established community events; funnelling educational activities through community youth-based organisations; and using existing publicly provided sites like youth/community centres and schools or voluntary institutions like faith based organisations, churches and mosques. This emphasis on the place and location of educational activities is particularly important given the fact that "cultural taboos around sexual and reproductive health may interfere with their ability to access services"(Dunne et al, 2014: 6). In addition, attending local clinics is likely to be subject to community surveillance, stigma or also be specifically problematic. The report underscores the gender considerations linked to the provision of education in 'safe spaces'. This is demonstrated in an example from Ghana where "female-only spaces were accepted as safe spaces, in which otherwise excluded young women were able to take up their rights to education and opportunities to develop and exercise a range of skills and build their self-confidence" (Akapire et al, 2011 quoted in Dunne et al 2014: 6).

Ensuring local community buy-in to the content and approach of SRH interventions through building communication with local officials and religious leaders, civil society groups, parents

as well as youth themselves is also recommended. This is a key means through which to bridge cultural and religious norms and address social anxieties. The report also notes that active and participatory learning was a "key component of successful projects" (Dunne et al, 2014; 12). Finally, the report emphasizes the effectiveness of using youth to work with other youth through 'youth peer educators' (ibid). So "successful youth participation programmes have found that young people most often interact with those similar to themselves and identify peers as the most common source of information on sensitive issues such as SRH" (Dunne et al, 2014: 12).

Key Messages on Sexual and Reproductive Health Education Interventions
▪ Educational interventions to promote the sexual and reproductive health and rights of young people contributes not only to their personal well being, but is integral to their exercise of civic agency and the development of relevant skills including advocacy and networking.
▪ Successful interventions deploy context and community responsive strategies to ensure that youth, including the most marginalised groups, can access SRH provision.
▪ Particular consideration should be given to planning provision in gender-friendly environments.
▪ Interventions are most successful in enhancing youth agency when they harness the 'buy in' and support of local communities and key stakeholders.
▪ Mobilising youth peer educators in relation to health education promotion is a proven effective strategy linked to comprehensive consultation with youth about their needs and priorities, as is the creative use of social media, mobile phones, ICT, as well as music and the arts.

3.2.1.d History education

While acknowledging the highly contested nature of the history curriculum as offered in secondary schools in some conflict affected societies, studies identify how particular approaches to the teaching and learning of history are uniquely positioned to contribute to the peacebuilding agency of young people. The importance of history education has been increasingly recognised within the field of education and conflict studies as a subject within the formal curriculum which communicates conciliating values, as well as one which drives conflict and sectarian attitudes (Barton & McCully, 2005; 2010; 2012; Smith and Vaux, 2003:28). Furthermore, and as noted by Cole & Barsalou (2006), history plays an important role in the formation of individual and community identity. Young people in many conflict-affected contexts are exposed to the prevalence of historical references in "popular consciousness" and in recreation and rituals of everyday life (Barton & McCully, 2010: 148-149).

3.2.1.d1 How young people develop historical understandings in Northern Ireland

Young people develop their historical understanding by drawing "selectively from the school curriculum as well as a variety of other sources within their families and communities to support a range of developing historical identities" (Barton and McCully, 2005:86). This was concluded as part of a recent longitudinal study (Barton & McCully, 2005, 2010, 2012) of the historical understanding of 253 young people, which were sampled from a variety of demographic, religious, social and educational contexts in Northern Ireland over their first three years in secondary school. Interestingly, the researchers found that while young people were initially open to and curious about embracing a variety of possibilities that transcended the unionist-nationalist binary divisions of conflicts within their wider communities, only in the later years of secondary schooling did they adopt a more narrow identification with the sectarian perspectives of their communities (Barton & McCully, 2005:108-110). This finding highlights the huge potential of the school history curriculum to capitalise on the tolerance and openness of young people to a range of possibilities in the early years of secondary school. The authors of the study also suggest that its findings may well be relevant in other conflict-affected contexts. Another related study by the same authors (Barton & MCcully, 2010) prompts the recommendation that history teaching should address the connections between the past and the present - even if contentious and unsettling - because this is a preoccupation of young people themselves. This can support youth to come to more considered, evidence-based historical understandings through an 'internally persuasive discourse' (Barton & McCully, 2010:170-174). Finally, the emotional struggle which students reported when they tried to detach from their community identifications underscores the relevance of the affective dimension of historical engagement in helping young people to confront their attachments to particular interpretations of the past (Barton & McCully, 2012:400).

Within such environments, where highly politicised and competing historical identifications are often credited with maintaining community divisions, school history may provide an entry point through which to engage young people in a more critical and nuanced understanding of theirs and their society's past. This may predispose them to adopt less antagonistic identities and stances and the possibility of contributing to more peaceful relationships in the present. Furthermore, "approaches that emphasize students' critical thinking skills and expose them to multiple historical narratives can reinforce democratic and peaceful tendencies in transitional societies emerging from violent conflict" (Cole & Barsalou, 2006:1).

The distinctive contribution of history teaching to young people's ability to be reflective citizens of pluralist, democratic societies is widely recognised (Cole & Basalou, 2006; Levstick & Barton, 2004). This claim is linked to its particular disciplinary characteristics which encourages methods of reasoning based on evidence, the provisional nature of historical truths, the capacity to recognise and analyse different perspectives on the past and the constructed nature of historical interpretations, which are dependent on the purposes of those who create and reproduce them. Moreover, according to these readings the development of historical empathy has the capacity to challenge narrowly defined ethnic, religious or cultural sectarian attitudes and stereotypes. Our understanding of the contribution of history greatly benefits from studies which reveal young people's experiences and viewpoints (Barton & McCully, 2005, 2010, 2012; see also the textbox 4.3.2).

3.2.1.d2 Facing history and ourselves – moral agency in South Africa

The United States-based project *Facing History and ourselves* supports teacher professional development programmes in South Africa (Tibbits, 2006; Weldon, 2010) and foregrounds its ability to stimulate young people's exercise of what it terms "moral agency" (Tibbits, 2006:3). In particular it draws attention to history's role in encouraging young people to be compassionate democratic citizens aware of their ethical responsibilities to consider the rights and well-being of others. In connecting effectively with young people, the project recognises the importance of the subject's emotional, imaginative and ethical dimension and its ability to stimulate the "moral imagination" of teachers and students (Weldon, 2010:359). This requires it to engage with painful legacies and experiences of individual and collective suffering. Teachers are therefore obliged to have "difficult conversations about the past and the present with their learners" (Weldon, 2010:358). Present-minded in its approach, the programme explores universal issues relating to the exercise of ethical agency through analysis of key historical events including Nazi Germany, the Holocaust and apartheid in South Africa. These are used as lenses to stimulate young people to reflect upon the roles and responsibilities of citizens within democracies and how individuals may take action against human rights violations, racism and intolerance.

Other studies reveal the frustrations of young people who believe that their capacity to contribute to social change in conflict-affected societies is undermined by a lack of informed historical understanding and the weaknesses of the formal history teaching they experience.

Youngsters recognise the potential contribution that history teaching might make to their capacity to move beyond sectarian identities and to better interpret their social and political surroundings, yet they complain the history curriculum lacking relevance (Van Ommering, 2014). They point out a failure to address the recent history of Lebanon, including the period of the civil war, partisan textbooks which privilege sectarian narratives and rote learning rather than critical enquiry (van Ommering, 2014). Similar findings emerge from studies of the counter-productive consequences for peacebuilding of the imposition of an authoritarian official history in Rwanda (Freedman, Weinstein, Murphy & Longman, 2008; Hodgkin, 2006).

3.2.1.d3 How youth in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia are trained as agents of reconciliation

Various programmes managed by EUROCLIO, the European Association of History Educators in the countries of the former Yugoslavia (Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia), illustrate innovative attempts to use history education to promote the capacity of young people as agents of reconciliation within their divided societies. These include *History for the Future*, *Bridging Histories Project*, *History in Action* and *History that Connects – How to teach sensitive and controversial history* (EUROCLIO 2009, 2011a, 2011b), which have been developed and implemented in the last five years. Based on collaboration between teachers and historians across ethnic divides, these projects encourage young people to use a range of sources, to critique and analyse multiple perspectives, develop critical thinking and enquiry skills, and cultivate historical empathy and understanding of the experiences of groups outside of their own communities. They have also reoriented attention away from political history to the everyday lives of ordinary people from different ethnic communities in order to cultivate awareness of commonalities as well as differences. By developing these historical skills and understandings, the programmes aim to equip young people to challenge sectarian and selective historical approaches within their own outlooks and the wider culture. This will enable them to critique demeaning stereotypes, contribute to mutual understanding and ultimately contribute to achieving greater social cohesion.

Nevertheless, while there seems to be a consensus in the literature on the key role history education plays in empowering young people within processes of recognition, representation and reconciliation, there are several shortcomings in approaches to teach about the past that are in need of further attention. Paulson (2014) finds how, in the few cases when this happens, recent and on-going conflict is often approached in curriculum in rather problematic ways. She finds “a reliance on a traditional collective memory approach to disseminating national narratives, though these often occur within social studies rather than history classrooms. In many cases, these narratives are top-down and ethno-nationalist and rely on devices like mythical past unity and the exceptionalism of conflict” (Paulson, 2014: no page numbering). Based on our own review of the literature, what emerges is a need to connect teaching of the past to present-day realities of youth. Finally, and reiterating a message which has emerged

from other sections of this review, the studies point to the necessity for all interventions to recognise the particular contexts and concerns that frame young people's everyday realities.

Key Messages on history education
▪ Young people themselves recognise the key role history plays in their self-defined priorities as potential peacebuilders and it is considered crucial to engage with their views and voices.
▪ History education which links the study of the past with current and contemporary issues faced by young people enhances peacebuilding agency in a range of ways by developing values, attitudes and skills and a concern for ethical values.
▪ Engagement with the past can provide opportunities for young people to explore ethical issues they face within their daily lives, equipping them with insights and understandings they can use as potential agents of peacebuilding.
▪ The processes of teaching and learning are important in exploiting the subject's potential to enhance agency, by connecting study of the past with present realities and challenges as well as recognising the affective dimensions of the subject.

3.3. Socio-cultural approaches to understanding youth agency for peacebuilding

As stated earlier on, while for analytical reasons we now turn to discuss the more socio-political aspects of youth agency in conflict-affected situations, there is a need to bear in mind the close connections to the (earlier discussed) economic dimensions, and the (still to come) socio-cultural aspects of youth agency in peacebuilding. In doing so, this section allows us to particularly zoom in on issues of representation that are at stake for young people, while positioning them in relation to issues of redistribution, recognition and reconciliation.

In our analysis of the socio-cultural aspects of youth agency, we acknowledge the methodological implications of a Cultural Political Economy approach, meaning that underlying narratives and discourses are part of our understanding of the way interventions are shaped and enacted. In doing so, we can view education interventions (formal and non-formal) as key sites of cultural production and social reproduction (Robertson, 2013). Hence, processes of cultural recognition, in close relation to issues of redistribution, representation and reconciliation, do not only happen at the 'micro' community level, but are shaping and shaped by global agenda's, national ideologies and political discourses, local narratives and personal life histories.

There is a significant absence of attention afforded to those large numbers of young people who are existing peacefully within conflict and demonstrating resourcefulness despite the constraining and dangerous environments they are confronted with (Hilker & Fraser, 2009;

McLean-Hilker & McEvoy-Levy; UNICEF, 2014). This attention to the mundane realities of young people's lives in conflict affected settings suggests that de Certeau's notion of the 'everyday', which is increasingly informing peacebuilding literature (Roberts, 2011), is also particularly useful in understanding the agency of young people as peacebuilders. Recognising and building upon the creativity and resourcefulness quietly or not so quietly demonstrated by young people on a daily basis in challenging environments amounts to precisely that valorisation of 'every day life' and 'practices' called for by de Certeau (1984). Indeed, as Sommers has highlighted[3] [4], one of the key questions emerging from recent explorations into youth and conflict is not *why are youth so violent*, but *why are youth so peaceful*? (Izzi, 2013). That is not to deny that many young people have and continue to be engaged in violent conflict, but that these cannot be taken as illustrative of the actions of all youth.

In some contexts, as Berents highlights in Colombia (see textbox 3.2.3), young people feel they are being "collectively stigmatised" (Berents, 2014:370). This happens as a result of the violence exercised by some youths, which undermines the contributions of many youth to peaceful social transformations. This further alienates those engaged in peacebuilding practices and restricts the opportunities available for young people to participate in community reconstruction. This is the more problematic because while young people may be vulnerable due to their restricted influence over the more macro level political and economic forces that act upon them, the reduction of youth to victims of conflict undermines the ways in which young people may strategically seek to alter their circumstances and simultaneously misrepresents the experiences of the varied victims and survivors of violence in conflict of all forms.

3.3.1 Everyday peacebuilding in Colombia

Offering insights from a case study in a *barrio* [neighbourhood] in Colombia, Berents (2014) directs our attention towards youth understanding of structures. The local school and an NGO should serve as "sites of opportunity", where young people can "respond to violence and engage with constructive, contributory efforts to foster peace" (Berents, 2014: 362). However, youth face a discrepancy between the normative ideas taught to them in lessons on human rights, both in national education programmes and non-formal initiatives, and their experienced life-worlds of violence, high unemployment, domestic violence and gang recruitments. Berents (2014) further argues youth's already present engagement with notions of peace should not be ignored, and should be recognized as actual beings, and not be addressed as just "potential becomings".

The remaking of culture through the everyday practices of youth deserves greater consideration for the possibilities afforded to formulations of peace. As Pruitt clearly states,

[3] UNICEF 2014 & USIP and Mercy Corps (June 2014). Youth & Violence: Engaging the Lost Generation with Anne Richard; Maryanne Yerkes; Rebecca Wolfe; Steven Heydemann; Marc Sommers, retrievable through http://www.usip.org/events/youth-violence-engaging-the-lost-generation

[4] UNICEF (2014) "Office of Research –Innocenti: Youtube Video: The Debate: Youth, Conflict and Peacebuilding with Martin Bell accessed October 15th, 2014.

"more attention is needed to how everyday activities of people, including young people, may be utilized in peacebuilding activities" (Pruitt, 2013:xiii). Such an endeavour would also help to decipher what peacebuilding activities are in given community contexts, incorporating greater attention to indigenous understandings of conflict mitigation. For example, when given responsibility and skills training, Ensor (2013) found youth in South Sudan engaging in conflict resolution practices around diverse environmental and land management issues including cattle raiding, water and food insecurities. Secondly, writing of the remarkable peace-promoting communities of marginalised street children and youth in Luanda, Nordstrom (2006) reveals the capacity of young people not just to passively long for, but also to independently foster and enact peaceful structures as an alternative to the violence around them. Similar everyday reactions to conflicts can be observed in Palestine, where the continuation of education can be seen as defying the Israeli occupation (Khoury-Machool, 2007), or as a place where performance of a range of routines and rituals establish structure and stability (Khoury-Machool, 2007).

These multiple examples highlight the ways in which young people are already demonstrating their capacity to react to changing social circumstances and reinforces the need to recognise and engage with practices of everyday peacebuilding which "are located fundamentally in the routines and practices of the everyday that sustain interaction and participation" (Berents, 2014:371). Applying a "youth lens" (McEvoy-Levy, 2006:284) within conflict analyses, therefore, can reveal the remaking of peaceful practices and consequently the experiences and engagement of youth in creating peaceful societies.

3.3.1.a Creative, spiritual and interpersonal education interventions

In the following sections we turn to highlight a range of what we viewed as relevant educational interventions based on the outcomes of our Literature Review. We need to bear in mind that the following sections are not only connected to socio-cultural aspects of youth agency, but depending on the interventions discussed their are often close interrelations to aspects of redistributive (economic), and/or representational (political) dimensions. Furthermore, in these coming sections specific attention will be paid to how cultural recognition and enhanecement of reconciliation are (not so much) taken up.

3.3.1.b Sports

Many football-based sports programmes emphasise their contribution to developing attitudes, skills and values in young people (predominantly boys/young men) that will predispose them to involvement in peacebuilding processes of reconciliation and recognition. For instance, a number of studies feature the Football for Peace (F4P) programme in Northern Israel which, since 2001, has mobilised sport to promote peaceful co-existence and reconciliation between Arab and Israeli boys/men, aged 8-14 years old, living in separate towns and villages (Sugden 2006, 2010; Stidder & Hassner, 2007; Kidd, 2008: Rookwood, 2008; Schulenkorf & Sugden, 2011). By providing an opportunity for youngsters from socially segregated communities to meet and participate together in team sport, the programme aims to support them in developing attitudes and skills they can exercise to contribute to improved community relations. A distinctive feature of the project is the F4P education manual that presents a curriculum that blends the learning of technical football

skills with teaching the values of neutrality (a politics free zone), inclusiveness, equality, trust, responsibility and respect. Similarly spotlighting the possibilities of sport in triggering behavioural and attitudinal changes is a study of the rehabilitation of ex-combatants undergoing post-conflict Disarmament Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) programmes in two camps in Sierra Leone (Dyck, 2011). The study highlights how it aimed specifically to meet the distinct needs of this youth constituency who faced considerable reintegration challenges. These included finding a way to detach psychologically from the wartime violence, overcoming social stigma, dealing with drug abuse and coping with a lack of family and community support. The study notes that the main and overarching impact of introducing sport was a "noticeable reduction in the level of violence among male ex-combatants" (Dyck, 2011: 402) and a reduction in the tension and hostility between combatants from various fighting forces.

However, some studies warn against top-down approaches within sports programming, which ignore the proactive agency and initiative as well as the various needs of young people themselves living within particular conflict-affected contexts. For instance, a study of a parkour group in Gaza (Thorpe & Ahmad, 2013) highlights young people's own initiative in using action sports to meet, on the one hand, their psychological needs, while on the other hand to give voice to their political and economic priorities. Interviews with Gazan youth show how they associate the activities of free running over obstacles in derelict urban spaces with building a 'life-philosophy' which gives them the resilience to cope with a challenging environment. Apart from its contribution to stress relief and general well-being, involvement in action sports has motivated their participation in a transnational network of enthusiasts via digital and social media. In turn, these connections have functioned as an opportunity for youth to express their sense of powerlessness as well as frustrations about political marginalization, joblessness, lack of educational opportunities, and the harsh realities of their day-to-day experience in a conflict-affected environment, as well also to develop a sense of purpose as advocates for greater international awareness of their predicament (Thorpe & Ahmad, 2013). Cross-national dialogue has also generated a sense of solidarity with other youth, including Israelis, enhancing their sense of self-efficacy as contributors to cross-national peacebuilding. In critiquing the approach and format of many sports-related interventions, the study warns that youth should be addressed neither as 'victims, ideologues or fundamentalists' within a 'deficit model' but rather as informed and aware social and political actors who are repositories of valuable 'local knowledges' (Thorpe & Ahmad, 2013:22).

Most studies acknowledge a lack of rigorous evaluative longitudinal analysis, a theme which is true of most of the programming reviewed in this literature review. Because of this, the claims made for the impact of sports programmes on young people's peacebuilding agency are largely aspirational and depend on anecdotal accounts (Dyck, 2011:396; Lea-Howarth, 2006:22; Schulenkorf & Sugden, 2011:253; Sugden, 2010:270). Moreover, the unique challenges of tracking and measuring the attitudinal and behavioural changes they aim to effect are widely recognised. However, despite this risk of overstating the impact of sports-related interventions, carefully designed and managed physical activity programmes, do have the potential to make significant contributions to reconciliation and co-existence within deeply-divided communities and socially fractured societies (Sugden, 2006). Moreover, by acting as a hub, which brings together the extended families and communities of young

participants, sports related interventions can contribute to longer term, sustainable peacebuilding processes within wider civil society.

However, the limited effectiveness of sports programmes in engaging girls and indeed the dangers that sports like football are "heavily gendered and segregated activities which may reinforce certain hierarchical relations in a post-war society" (Dyck, 2011: 408) is a concern. Also the narrowness of the focus of sports programmes on personal and inter-personal attitudinal changes rather than engaging young people in practical action to tackle the structural social, economic and political inequalities which constrain and condition their agency has been recognised (Sugden, 2006, 238: Coalter, 2010: Sugden, 2010: Darnell, 2014). Such critiques highlight the risks of prioritising young peoples' role within one of the 4 Rs – reconciliation – at the expense of and without reference to other dimensions that impinge on their potential as peacebuilders. In other words, it runs the risk of treating youth as objects of intervention rather than recognising them as subjects in their own right, already struggling with the daily realities of existence in challenging environments (Darnell, 2014).

Key Messages on sports interventions
▪ The experience of sport related educational programming can support to build self-esteem and communication skills, including: conflict resolution capacities; trust, empathy, mutual understanding across social divisions; the creation of a common social identity and sense of belonging; trauma relief and psychological rehabilitation, as well as new friendship networks;
▪ Because of its widespread popular appeal, the inclusion of sports in educational interventions can act as an effective hook to involve young people from divided communities in peacebuilding processes;
▪ Sports interventions should avoid top-down approaches and connect with the political, social and economic aspirations as well as the initiative and creativity demonstrated by young people.
▪ The highly gendered nature of many sports interventions based around football is a particular weakness in relation to promoting inclusive peacebuilding agency.

3.3.1.c The arts and music

The literature reviewed in this section highlights the distinctive contribution of collaborative arts programmes in catalysing attitudinal and behavioural changes in young people for peacebuilding. They report on the diverse benefits of offering youth opportunities to collaborate in the production of drama, music and painting. These include the cultivation of personal qualities, including self-confidence, self-esteem, inter-personal skills for peacebuilding activism, as well as changing perceptions of themselves and others. Such changes might predispose them to the development of peaceful relationships in contexts of inter-ethnic or other (religious, economic or political) tensions. While contributing to psychological healing and mental/emotional well-being, involvement in the arts can also provide a vehicle for peaceful civic and political activism for social changes. Our discussion below illustrates how different approaches might establish processes of reconciliation that are

to a more or lesser extent connected to political representation, cultural recognition or economic redistribution. This section will consequently discuss the role of arts programmes impact, firstly, on youth identity, non-violent relations and psycho-social healing, and secondly on political agency.

Firstly, a number of the arts programmes we reviewed focus on enhancing young people's identities as peacebuilders. For instance, this is the aim of the Youth Theatre for Peace Programme run by IREX since 2010 in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan (USAID, 2012). The programme uses a participatory theatre methodology called *drama for conflict transformation* (DCT), including collaborative school based drama productions, travelling productions within different ethnic communities, and exchanges between school groups. The rationale is that the dialogue and discussion on the conflict issues raised by dramas will facilitate the development of empathetic understanding between youth of different ethnic communities/religions and nationalities. The programme thus envisages youth as significant agents – even 'leaders' – of change. Evaluation of the programme highlights the increased confidence of young people in appearing in front of government officials or community leaders.

Another example of identity or relation-based programmes, is *Breaking Barriers,* which link youth from different communities in Northern Ireland to provide workshops combining interactive music making with discussion of global social justice issues (Pruitt, 2011). By providing an opportunity for youth from separate communities – who would otherwise not have interacted (Pruitt, 2011) – to share a common interest and experience ties of commonality, music making establishes preconditions for nurturing peacebuilding behaviours and attitudes across sectarian differences. Moreover, music-making as an art form intimately connected to youth perceptions of themselves and others, provides an opportunity to engage in "identity based peacebuilding work" (Pruitt, 2011:215). Many participants reported experiencing changes in their previously negative stereotypes of others from different communities. The study also draws attention to the role of music in their experience of a more 'negative' form of peace. As non-violent and inclusive environments, collaborative music making provides youth with a socialising space that contrasts with the conflict prone sectarian public spaces with which they are familiar (Pruitt, 2011). Clarifying the long term impact of such programmes, Pruitt (2011) underlines their pivotal role in instigating changes, through the initial 'hook' or music making, which may subsequently contribute to young people's personal and on-going formation as peacebuilders.

Highlighting other affective dimensions of the exercise of peacebuilding agency, a study by Kollontai (2010) deals with art-making by youth who experienced war in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The study is tellingly entitled *Healing the heart: art, children and peacemaking*, and underlines its therapeutic relevance for mental and emotional health and recovery from trauma. It suggests how their experiences in collaborative art projects enable these youngsters to discover a "common humanity", build trust across ethnic divides and equip them with skills and emotional dispositions (empathy and understanding) to facilitate this process (Kollontai, 2010). Reiterating claims for the holistic impact of other art forms on youth identity formation, the study recognises that "involvement in the arts engages the whole person speaking from the heart and uses their creativity and emotions" (Kollontai, 2010:269).

Secondly, a different but complementary role for the arts is stressed in other studies, which focus on their unique capacity to act as a peaceful vehicle of expression of the views of youth on the socio-economic and political peacebuilding issues that matter to them. These affirm the agency of youth as informed, reflective, politicised actors, keen to contribute to peacebuilding processes and holding strong - sometimes critical - views on the conduct of high politics. The title of a study of youth deployment of art and photography *Artistic Suggestions for Peaceful Transition in Northern Uganda – what the Youth are Saying* (McClain, 2012) encapsulates its key message that the arts provided a medium for the communication of youth views. Photos showing dramatic parodies of the Juba Peace Process, songs expressing cynicism about the benefits to war-affected communities of the International Criminal Court, and music to disseminate the messages of the Uganda Amnesty Act of 2000 all show how the arts were a vehicle for these young people's peacebuilding and politicised activism (McClain, 2012). A study of youth music-making during the national elections of 2007 in Sierra Leone (Shepler, 2010) furnishes similar insights into forms of highly politicised youth activism within processes of post-conflict democratic consolidation. The content of the songs articulate youth concerns for the improvement of social services that impact on their well-being, and include comments on election issues, including corruption of the ruling party, their struggles to pay unaffordable school fees, and the poor quality food available to them. Underscoring the close connection between youth culture and music noted earlier, Shepler (2010) points out that such music-making represents an emergent politically inspired youth identity. Youth mobilisation of music in this case also signifies an attempt to exploit a creative space for the exercise of political critique and protest in the face of perceived exclusion from participation in elite political processes (Shepler, 2010).

The multi-dimensional nature of the impact of the arts, integrating the cognitive, imaginative, emotional and creative, gives them a distinctly holistic effectiveness in nurturing the potential of youth as peacebuilders. Some studies suggest that the special educational value of the arts in enhancing youth agency lies precisely in their unique capacity to connect with a range of drivers of agency – emotions, perceptions, motivations – leading to deep rooted, sustainable personal change and equipping young people to contribute to wider cultures of peace. Moreover, the programmes reviewed in this section indicate the capacity of the arts to contribute not only to processes of reconciliation but also to empower young people within democratic processes of representation. What is striking is the compelling evidence of young people's recourse to the arts as a peaceful means of political expression and commitment to social change and as a response to their marginalisation outside of programmatic interventions. This indicates the mostly unrealised potential of educational programmes to enhance young people's political and economic agency by building on their identities and initiatives forged around music-making and other art forms. So recognition of their involvement in the arts provides a salutary opportunity for "distinguishing the real world efficacy of youth agency, from that constructed within the political imaginary of international development and human rights" (Fanthorpe & Maconachie, 2010, quoted in Shepler, 2010:639).

Key Messages on Arts Interventions
▪ Arts programmes aim to enhance peacebuilding agency by triggering attitudinal and behavioural changes in people, e.g. interpersonal skills, changing perceptions of themselves and other people, as well as mental and emotional well-being and healing; they can provide a distinctively effective vehicle for the enhancement of youth self-efficacy and self-confidence
▪ The arts can act as an outlet for the expression of youth identity, in particular, for the socio-political and economic issues at stake for youth.
▪ Programme interventions that are not youth-led often fail to capitalise on the potential of the arts to enhance the political and civic as well as the economic agency of young people.
▪ Programatic responses that use arts have been shown to be effective in building bridges between different ethnic communities, religions and nationalities, and might provide strategies to resolve communal tensions peacefully.
▪ Programmes focusing on art are often not sufficiently context-specific and as such not adequately responding to youth constituencies, including young women and girls, and other marginalised groups of youth.

3.3.1.d Inter-group contact programmes

The capacity of formal and informal inter-group educational initiatives to enhance young people's ability to contribute to processes of reconciliation and peaceful co-existence is recognised in several programme studies that were included in this review. Such interventions are based on the belief that bringing young people from conflicting communities together for dialogue and interaction may help to develop mutual understanding, respect and tolerance of difference. For instance, a study of workshops between Jewish and Palestinian youth (Bargal, 2004) traces the reduction of mutual prejudices, anger and hostility and the forging of friendships through structured dialogue and group interactions. Highlighting the resulting shifts in group perceptions of each other, the study argues that transformation workshops are "an indispensable educational tool for bringing about changes in the attitudes, perceptions, feelings and behaviour of youth in an attempt to achieve reconciliation" (Bargal, 2004:597). Similar observations are made in a study on the use of dialogue between young people from conflicting communities – Greek and Turkish, Israelis and Palestinians, Iraqis and Americans, Catholic and Protestant Irish - in the Youth Peacebuilding and Leadership Programmes run by the Vermont based World Learning (Ungerleider, 2012). The report states that participants came away with "new perspectives on each other and a newfound sense of empowerment to improve their shared world" (Ungerleider, 2012:382). The longer term benefits to young people and their communities of this enhanced sense of peacebuilding agency through inter-group encounter are acknowledged by for example, Maoz (2000:729), who found that the shifts in attitudes precipitated during the workshops, led participants to spontaneous collaboration in similar activities after they ended. Also Bargal (2004) underscores the long term benefits, showing how young people acted as 'gatekeepers', disseminating messages of reconciliation within their wider communities.

However, critiques of inter-contact programmes highlight their inattention to structural socio-political contexts, which constrain and condition the agency of young people (Bekerman, 2007: Bekerman and Maoz 2005). A prioritization of "intellectual, cognitive and emotional activity" as opposed to equipping young people to take actions "in the world", might aim to "reshape the relations of power" (Bekerman: 2007:34). Rather, young people should be encouraged to "analyse and interpret what is presently wrong" and so commit to practical actions and "risk taking" (Bekerman, 2007:34). This would be linked directly to challenging the social, political and economic inequalities threatening peaceful relations within their environments. Other critiques note the missed educational opportunity to involve young people in reflection on the ethnic, cultural, and religious categories through which they have come to define their identities and how these contribute to conflict. This failure results from the underlying rationale of many inter-group contact programmes, which aim to encourage co-existence based on affirmation of a separate identity understood as a "neatly packed item carried in the heads of passive individuals" (Bekerman & Maoz, 2005:349). Such insights draw attention to the dangers of reifying group identities within inter-contact programmes, thereby reinforcing the essentialised self-understandings and loyalties which have fuelled conflict and alienation.

3.3.1.d.1 Ex-combatants as resources for peacebuilding

A contrasting application of the peacebuilding potential of inter-group encounters is reported in a study (Simić, & Milojević, 2014:) of a project called *Dialogues* initiated by the Centre for War Trauma in 2009. This project organizes interaction and dialogue between ex-combatants and secondary school youth in Serbia. On the one hand, these encounters facilitate the social reintegration and personal healing of ex combatants by providing them with a forum in which they can talk about their past experiences as well as their potential as agents of peaceful change in their communities. However, they also provide a unique opportunity for young people in secondary schools to draw on the experiences of ex-combatants in order to reflect critically on the traumatic and violent consequences of conflict. Such reflections laid the basis for further exploration of how to use such negative experiences constructively in order to take actions to contribute to peacebuilding. According to the study, an important part of the project's impact was its direct deployment of ex-combatants as a peacebuilding resource, rather than a security threat (Simić, & Milojević, 2014:8). Together with its dialogical format, this gave young people in secondary schools the opportunity to respond directly – and with their own questions and concerns - to the credible experiences of war-affected individuals rather than being 'taught at and lectured' (Simić, & Milojević, 2014:12). Starting with the experiences of different constituencies of young people, which are then deployed constructively to strengthen their potential as agents of peacebuilding, the programme offers a more context and youth-sensitive model than the earlier examples discussed in this section.

By contrast, a study of the personal narratives of individual Jewish Israeli and Palestinian youth (Hammack, 2010) highlights the complex and fluid process of identity negotiation which informs young people's responses to the intractable conflict around them. Hammack (2010)

uses the term "hyphenated" (Hammack, 2010:368,381) to capture young people's experiences of moving between affiliating with a Palestinian or an Israeli identity, experiences which do not fit easily into the binary categories of inter-contact programmes.

What unites all these critiques is their problematisation of programmes' abstraction from the concrete realities and challenges of young people's everyday lives and also their failure to engage with the broader political economy frameworks which delimit young people's agency.

Key Messages on Intergroup-Contact Interventions
▪ Inter-group contact can support young people in reconciliation processes by encouraging mutual understanding, respect and prejudice reduction.
▪ Programmes' inattention to supporting young people to take action against the structural socio-economic and political factors which constrain and condition youth agency and drive conflicts and alienation is a major weakness;
▪ Innovative approaches to inter-group contact which draw on the direct lived experiences and agency e.g. of ex-combatants as a peacebuilding resources have proven fruitful in selected contexts.
▪ There is a danger that inter-group contact programmes serve to consolidate and reify identity differences rather than encouraging young people to question and critique individual and collective identity categories to promote reconciliation.

3.3.1.e Inter-faith programming

A recent study of the role of religion in peacebuilding points to the neglect of young people within a field whose targeting of clerics and heads of religious institutions has tended to target ''older men". However, Hayward (2012) also emphasizes the enormous potential of interfaith work with children and youth in strengthening peacebuilding processes. She notes that "women and youth are important shapers of religious narratives and motivations that support violence and peace" (Hayward, 2012:7). The centrality of faith to the identity and motivations of many young people around the world, including conflict-affected contexts, makes religious peacebuilding a particularly appropriate intervention which directly connects with a key motivator in their lives. One essential way in which such engagement contributes to their capacity to support peace is by encouraging reflection on and application of religious concepts and practices relevant to peacebuilding within their communities and the wider society. Appleby (2011) notes that "religious actors build peace when they draw on the deep wells of their traditions and extract from those depths the spiritual instincts and moral imperatives for recognizing and embracing the humanity of the other" (Appleby, 2011, quoted by Hayward, 2012:6). Reports of the work of faith-based organisations with young people emphasise how interfaith reflection on the peace-related teachings within Islam, Christianity or the other world religions may provide a powerful frame of reference which helps young people to counter violence. In particular inter-faith work can draw on religious values and practices to "build personal commitments to peace and relationships across lines of difference" (Hayward, 2011:7). At the same time, drawing reflectively on faith beliefs may equip young people with values to "strengthen their resolve when being recruited on religious grounds, to perpetuate violence" (Hayward, 2011:7). A study of fifty Muslim Peacebuilding actors in Africa and the

Balkans, some of whom work with youth as well as local communities, highlights their use of Islamic values, social relations and rituals as a resource to contribute to conflict resolution and peacebuilding (Abu-Nimer & Kadayifci-Orellana, 2008). Similarly, a study by Rusyana tracks the "raising up of 100,000 peacemakers" in Islamic schools in Indonesia by disseminating the Islamic values of peace among Muslim youth (Rusyana, 2013).

Nevertheless, there seems to be little reflection in the literature on the potential tensions that might arise when working with and from people's faith through education for peacebuilding, nor is there much written about the politicised nature these programmes might have, particularly in multi-religious environments. Specifically those programmatic approaches focused on one particular faith, rather than multiple religious values, raise questions on whose religious values are recognised, and what faith-based principles are represented. Hence, careful consideration is needed in order to tackle possible unintended negative consequences, such as exclusion, segregation, "othering" or furthering stigmatisation.

Indeed, recent studies of religious extremism involving large youth constituencies such as Boko Haram (Onuoha, 2010: Rogers, 2012) testify to the capacity of faith-related ideology to fuel conflict and acts of violence. The movement's name, which literally means "western education is a sin" signals its dogmatic and exclusionary stance against educational institutions and processes for their association with "western values". Analysis of the youth involvement in this movement in Northern Nigeria points to a combination of "widespread poverty, unemployment and socio-political exclusion" (Onuoha, 2010: 64; Rogers, 2012: 2), which render young people susceptible to the appeal of radical Islam "which promises a better life for martyrs" (Rogers: 2012; 4). Such findings highlight the urgent and topical relevance of the evidence presented elsewhere in this review for the peacebuilding potential of educational interventions geared to improving the employment and livelihood prospects of young people as well as their civic and political participation and ability to self reflect and resist radicalism into violence.

Moreover, the recent publication by Davies (2014) called *Unsafe Gods: Security, Secularism and Schooling*, does argue for the need to critically question the role of religion in schooling, and how it potentially can enhance rather than mitigate conflict, through processes of segregation, narrowing of views and ring-fencing religion as something 'above critique'. Rather, according to Davies, secular and state-funded schools should encourage and allow for critical religious education across a wide range of students backgrounds. Building on her former work on *Educating Against Extremism* (2008), Davies (2014) argues how young people need to learn how to analyse religious messages, question sacred texts and be aware of rights around free speech. While these arguments are powerful and convincing, we do acknowledge that such a secular approach might not be context-appropriate in every conflict-affected location.

Key Messages on Interfaith Interventions
▪ The capacity of inter-faith programmes to enhance the agency of young people as peacebuilders is largely neglected and underestimated, as religious values can provide a resource to predispose to peacebuilding attitudes and practices.
▪ Because faith is an important part of young people's identity in many conflict-affected contexts it can provide a culturally appropriate entry point for context and youth-constituency specific engagement.
▪ Religious extremism can fuel conflict and violence and such radicalisation of youth in some conflict affected contexts is directly linked to socio-economic and political and cultural marginalisation.
▪ Schools should ideally provide opportunities for critical reflection of religious messages, rather than dogmatic and single-narrative views that could obstruct reconciliation.
▪ Hence, care needs to be taken to avoid possible (unintended) consequences of exclusion, segregation or stigmatisation.

4. Concluding reflections – pathways towards integrating the four R's

This Literature Review explored the existing and potential conceptual understandings and programmatic approaches to young people's agency through an exploration of the processes of redistribution, recognition, representation and reconciliation that are reflected in the theoretical framework of the larger research consortium. It is recognised that all too often these four dimensions of youth contributions to both conflict and peacebuilding are treated in isolation and therefore attempts are made to highlight the ways in which these dimensions intersect within varying contexts. The summary map below highlights the knowledge, skills, dispositions and attitudes that interventions targetted in working towards young people's agency.

4.1 Summary map: The contribution of (non)formal education to youth agency for/against peacebuilding

Youth Agency within the 4 R's	Knowledge	Skills	Dispositions/Attitudes	Approaches	Educational Programming
RECONCILIATION	• Of the circumstances of others across divides • Of how particular cultural (ethnic, religious, etc) identities are formed • Drawing on historical understanding to raise awareness of the experiences of others and commonalities across social divides	• Inter-personal communication • Networking • Self-awareness • Conflict resolution • Critical historical (discourse) analysis • Critical thinking to critique sectarianism/prejudice in oneself and others • Ability to critique and discuss controversial issues peacefully	• Development of values of understanding, tolerance, empathy, mutuality and trust across social divides • Development of a sense of common humanity across divides • Drawing on faith beliefs to contribute to peaceful social relationships	• Inter-group activities (art, sports, music) to contribute to psycho-social healing/mutual understanding across social divides • Inter-personal contact programmes • Youth catalysing attitudinal changes in their communities • Connecting with proactive agency of young people • Linking sports/arts/music activities to values inculcation	• Music, arts, sports • Inter-personal contact • Faith-based programmes • History education • Citizenship and participation • Work-related programmes
REPRESENTATION	• Of democratic processes and institutions, (universal and context-specific) rights and associated values • Of how to analyse youth's involvement in political decision making • Of how to take action to improve their own	• Inter-personal communication • Networking • To enter into (democratic) decision-making processes • Analyse and map socio-economic and political needs and strategise to	• Development of values of awareness of social injustices and concern to take peaceful action • Commitment to peaceful democratic processes of deliberation and discussion • Commitment to peaceful	• Connecting with young people's pre-existing proactive and context-specific (political/social/economic) activism • Connecting with youth's use of music/sport/arts as vehicles for political participation and critique	• Music, arts, sports • Inter-personal contact • Citizenship and participation • History education

	social/economic political circumstances • Historical understanding to promote empathy with others and the exercise of a 'moral imagination'	take action to meet them • Ability to advocate on behalf of youth and social justice concerns • Holding political elites accountable • Enter into constructive (inter-generational) relationships • Problem-solving tools	critique • Ethical responsibility for rights and well being of oneself and others	• Recognising and responding to young people's needs, aspirations and challenges within particular contexts • Channelling young people's sense of outrage and frustrations • Working with communities as well as different constituencies of young people	• Work-related programmes
RECOGNITION	• Affirming 'local' knowledges and awareness of young people • Recognising cultural and socio-political challenges young people face • Using historical understanding to develop empathy with the variegated experiences and identities of others as well as commonalities • Develop an understanding of the complex nature of identity formation and reflect critically on the nature of civic/ethnic/national identities	• Inter-personal communication • Critical thinking • Empathy • Collaboration skills • Leadership skills	• Recognise each other's potential as agents of peacebuilding (e.g. ex-combatants) • The ability to challenge narrow sectarian attitudes in oneself and others • Commitment to an inclusive notion of citizenship • Development of a moral imagination through which to empathise with the life circumstances of others • Respect for the validity of multiple viewpoints	• Connecting with young people as informed and aware political actors • Recognising the particular contexts, challenges and circumstances faced by youth in their daily lives • Consulting young people prior to programming • Connecting with the complex and shifting identities of young people • Approaching young people as subjects in their own right rather than objects of intervention	• Music, arts, sports • Inter-personal contact • Citizenship and participation • History education • Faith-based programmes

REDISTRIBUTION	• Of work related skills and labour market needs • Of local business and economic stakeholders vested interests • About individual as well as collective business opportunities • Of youth marginalisation and ambivalent role of cultural characteristics in securing employment • Of historical and current processes of inclusion and exclusion from and within (non) formal education and the job market for particular youth constituencies, and how to overcome those • Of (unequal) distribution of resources, funding and opportunities and how to advocate for a just redistribution	• Inter-personal communication • Advocacy • Lifeskills (behavioural and emotional) • Technical skills • Vocational skills • Work experience • Enterprise and self-employment • Ability to collect and analyse information critically	• Awareness of local business opportunities • Awareness of the added value of working with others • Development of a sense of community	• Encouraging networks between young people and public/private stakeholders • Active participation of youth in programme design • Development of inclusive opportunities for all youth constituencies • Capacity building for local partners • Planning for long term sustainability	• Citizenship and participation • History education • Work-related programmes

In line with the evaluations, reflections and critiques of the reviewed programmatic approaches, there has been a call for multi-dimensional, cross-sectoral, holistic and integrated approaches in working on enhancing youth agency (Amarasuriya et al. 2009; Batmanglich & Enria, 2014; Guerra & Olenik, 2013; Schwartz, 2010; Sommers, 2006; UNICEF, 2009; Walton, 2010). Cross-sectoral projects set out to recognize a multifaceted agency that is embedded in local communities and political, economic and social structures. They seek to be sensitive to the heterogeneous constituencies and situations of youths – with the objective to foster self-determination and to enable youths to create and make use of societal opportunities (Amarasuriya et al. 2009; Guerra & Olenik, 2013). Such a more holistic approach draws attention to and aims to integrate notions of recognition, representation, redistribution and reconciliation. Transcending the earlier discussed binary distinctions of youth as e.g. either peacemakers or – breakers (Amarasuriya et al. 2009; Walton, 2010), cross-sectoral approaches often envision youth as "key catalysts for peacebuilding efforts" (Guerra & Olenik, 2013:7). While it is sometimes difficult to establish a clear link between the impact of activities (Fischer, 2006; USAID, 2011; USAID & MercyCorps, 2012) on the mitigation of unequal circumstances, the attempts to implement an integrated approach points to the inherent links between processes of recognition, representation, redistribution and reconciliation – as set out in our theoretical understanding of the role of education in conflict-affected situations.

Concluding Key Messages

1. **Comprehensive understanding of youth** - This document argues for a comprehensive understanding of the multi-faceted nature of *youth agency for peacebuilding*. We do so by moving away from a victim-perpetrators binary to an understanding of heterogeneous youth constituencies as embedded within and reacting to processes of conflict *and* peace. In order to better understand the agency of youth as peacebuilding actors, we need to move beyond a binary approach that reduces the experiences of young people living with the effects of conflict to overly simplistic categorisations, which are liable to lead to equally simplistic programme responses. The acknowledgement of the needs and priorities of different youth constituencies should include gender-based analyses and approaches.

2. **Absence of evaluative and empirical data** - There is an urgent need to build up rigorous, longitudinal, evaluative data showing how educational interventions contribute to attitudes, behaviours and knowledges of young people linked to their (lack of) exercise of peacebuilding within specific contexts. A key challenge is that many of these (formal and non-formal) educational programmatic responses are difficult to measure and need nuanced, context-specific and youth specific indicators. Another challenge is the lack of attention and analysis of youth-related (education, labour, cultural) policies in the literature. In advocating for the role of education in peacebuilding, however, the absence of both policy-analysis and evaluative data of programmatic impact on youth agency needs to be urgently addressed.

3. **Context-specific, conflict-sensitive and youth-specific policy and programming** - There is frequently a disjunction between policy and programming aimed to enhance young people's agency as peacebuilders and the particular contexts and circumstances that condition and constrain this potential in conflict-affected contexts. In order to ensure that education policies and programmes are more context specific, conflict-sensitive, and youth-responsive, interventions should be carefully grounded in an analysis of the distinctive positioning of youth in relation to current drivers of conflict as well as peacebuilding dynamics operating in each conflict-affected situation. Connecting to our first point, a gender-specific lense should be applied to uncover specific needs, opportunties and challenges for particular youth constituencies.

4. **Engagement with youth's voices, identities and needs** - There is a need for both policies and interventions – at their planning and implementation stages - to respond to and connect with processes of youth identity formation, the everyday realities, voices, experiences and needs of young people and to build on their pre-existing initiatives. This may involve working with and through young people on conflict and peacebuilding analysis of their particular situation and their strategic positioning.

5. **Involvement of community and youth peer educators** - The promotion of the peacebuilding agency of youth through (non)formal education initiatives needs to involve key stakeholders in the communities, as well as young people themselves as peer educators, rather than operate in isolation from them, to ensure the sustainability and cultural appropriateness of interventions.

6. **Educational strategies for peacebuilding** - Although their potential is not realized at present the content and processes of teaching and learning may enhance young people's agency for peacebuilding, by: 1) connecting study of the past with present realities and challenges, 2) recognising the affective and context relevant dimensions of teaching and learning for/about peace; 3) providing opportunities for critical reflection of political/religious/ideological/media messages; 4) encouraging mutual understanding, respect and prejudice reduction; 5) triggering attitudinal and behavioural changes in people, e.g. inter-personal skills, changing perceptions of themselves and other people, as well as mental and emotional well-being and healing; and 6) working with youth in their own environment and spaces.

7. **Integrated programmatic responses -** In order to capitalize on education's potential to contribute to young people's capacity to be peacebuilders, an expansive rather than narrow framing is essential that connects educational processes to the political, economic, cultural and potential conciliatory (4 R's) dimensions of youth's exercise of agency and the peacebuilding processes in which they are located. The review of existing literature suggests an integrated approach might be best suited to enhance the agency of youth in relation to the 4 R's. While redistribution might need the most specific targeting, the dimensions of recognition, representation and especially reconciliation can either be targeted specifically or – perhaps more successfully - be embedded transversally in a wide variety of activities.

Acknowledgements

We are grateful for input received through personal communications with Marc Sommers, Lindsay McLean-Hilker, Dana Bird and Elizabeth King. We also thank our team members at the University of Sussex and the University of Ulster for their feedback, alongside UNICEF colleagues. We are also pleased to acknowledge that from the initial research to final writing, synthesis and editing stages, this review is the result of the collaborative efforts and commitment of all contributing authors, including the support of the projects' assistant Kiymet Schipper.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Word threads for searches

Youth Agency	Peacebuilding	Education	Cultural Political Economy Contexts	Conflict affected states	Gender
Youth identity	Sustainable peacebuilding	policy frameworks	Youth unemployment	Post-conflict	Girls
Youth formation	Peacebuilding processes	educational system	Political participation	Conflict-affected state	Women
Youth perceptions	Grassroots peacebuilding	citizenship education	Inter-generational relations	Fragile state	Gender norms
Youth values	Peacemaking	Formal education	Social inclusion		Gender-based violence
Youth participation	Positive peace	Non-formal	Social justice	Liberal peacebuilding	Masculinity
Youth led	Conflict-resolution	Curriculum	Human rights	Post-liberal peacebuilding	Patriarchal culture
Youth development	Liberal peacebuilding	extra-curricular activities	Social transformation		Heteronormativity
Youth contribution	Post-liberal peacebuilding	Arts	Structural violence		Gender relations
Youth vision		Drama	Poverty		Gender roles
Youth healing		Theatre			Affirmative action

Youth agents of change	Sports	Livelihood opportunities
Youth voices	educational programmes/interventions	Political marginalisation
Youth perspectives	learning opportunities	Pacification
Engagement	quality education	Gender equity
Networks	political literacy	
agents of peace		
Post-traumatic disorder		elite manipulation
Needs		democratic processes
Abilities		redistribution
Self-worth		recognition
Catalysts of peace		reconciliation
Well being		Representation
Protection		ciivil society
Empowerment		
Actions		
Faith		

Religious values
Ownership
Youth violence
Youth alienation/protest
Youth resilience
Youth coping mechanisms
Youth vulnerability
Motivation

Boolean threads used in searches:

- "youth identity" OR "youth formation" OR "youth perceptions" OR "youth values" OR "youth participation" OR "youth led" OR "youth development" OR "youth contribution" OR "youth vision" OR "youth healing" OR "youth agents of change" OR "youth voices" OR "youth perspectives" OR "agents of peace"
- "peacebuilding" OR "sustainable peacebuilding" OR "grassroots peacebuilding" OR "peacemaking" OR "positive peace" OR "conflict resolution" OR "liberal peacebuilding" OR "post-liberal peacebuilding" OR "local peacebuilding"
- "educational programmes" OR "educational activities" OR "policy frameworks" OR "educational system" OR "formal education" OR "non-formal education" OR "curriculum" OR "extra-curricular activities" OR "arts" OR "drama" OR theatre" OR "sports" OR "educational interventions" OR "learning opportunities" OR "quality education" OR "life skills" OR "peace education" OR "political literacy"
- "youth unemployment" OR "political participation" OR "inter-generational relations" OR "social inclusion" OR "social justice" OR "human rights" OR "social transformation" OR "structural violence" OR "livelihood opportunities" OR "political marginalization" OR "pacification" OR "democratic processes" OR "redistribution"

OR “recognition”

- “post-conflict” OR “conflict-affected state” OR “fragile state” OR “girls” OR “women” OR “gender norms” OR “gender based violence” OR “masculinity” OR “patriarchal culture” OR “heteronormativity” OR “women’s representation” OR “gender relations” OR “gender roles” OR “affirmative action” OR “girls’ participation” OR “womens participation”

Appendix 2: literature used for analysis of programmatic responses

Programme	Resources
Creative, inter-personal and faith-based interventions	
Sports	Coalter(2010); Darnell (2014); Dyck(2011); Kidd (2008); Lea-Howarth (2006); Rookwood (2008); Schulenkorf & Sugden (2011); Stidder & Haasner (2007); Sugden (2006; 2010); Thorpe & Ahmad (2013).
The Arts and Music	Fanthorpe & Maconachie (2010); Kollontai (2010); Pruitt (2011); McClain (2012); Shepler (2010); US AID (2012).
Inter-group contact programmes	Bargal (2004); Bekerman (2007); Bekerman & Maoz (2005); Hammack (2010); Maoz (2000); Simić, & Milojević (2014); Ungerleider(2012).
Faith-related programming	Abu-Nimer & Kadayifci-Orellana (2008); Davies (2008;2014); Hayward (2012); Rusyana (2013).
Formal and Non-Formal Citizenship Education	
Citizenship education as part of the formal curriculum	Akar (2014); Davies(2004; 2005;2011); Emerson (2012); Leonard (2007); Magill, Smith & Hamber (2009); McEvoy (2007); McEvoy, McEvoy & McConnachie (2006); Quayno (2014); Reilly & Niens (2014); Smith (2003)
Non-formal citizenship education initiatives	Barber (2009); Barry et al. (1997); Dunne et al. (2014); Harris (2009); Ndebele & Billing (2011); PILDAT (2007); Rea Prishtina (2011); Vigani (2012); Young (2009).
History Education	Barton & McCully (2005; 2010; 2012); Cole & Barsalou (2006); EUROCLIO (2009; 2011a; 2011b); van Ommering (2014); Smith and Vaux (2003); Tibbits (2006); Weldon (2010).
Work related programmatic approaches	Filmer et.al.(2014); GIZ Programme (2;3;4;5); World Bank (2010)
Cross-sectoral Programming	Amarasuriya et al.(2009); Batmanglich & Enria (2012); Fischer (2006); Guerra & Olenik (2013); Schwartz (2010); Sommers (2006); UNICEF (2009); Walton (2010); (USAID & MercyCorps (2012); USAID(2011).

Appendix 3: Country focus

Country	Example Resources
Afghanistan (2)	Giustozzi (2010); Larson & Coburn (2014).
Angola (1)	Vigani (2012).
Bosnia Herzegovina(7)	EUROCLIO (2009: 2011a; 2011b); Gillard (2001); Kollontai (2010); Magill, Smith & Hamber (2009); Helsing et al (2006)
Burundi(1)	Uvin (2007).

Columbia (1)	Berents (2014) .
Cyprus (1)	Leonard (2013).
DRC (1)	Lwambo (2013).
Indonesia (1)	Rusyana (2013).
Kosovo (1)	Rea Prishtina (2011).
Lebanon (2)	Akar (2014); van Ommering (2014).
Liberia (3)	Quaynor (2014); Batmanglich & Enria (2014); Maclay & Özerdem (2010).
Mozambique (1)	McKay & Mazurana (2004).
Multi-country (4)	Abu-Nimer & Kadayifci-Orellana (2008); Dunne et al (2014); McEvoy-Levy (2001); Porter (2013).
Myanmar (1)	Gray & Dolan (2014) .
Nigeria (1)	Blattman (2009); Harris (2009)
Northern Ireland (9)	Barton & McCully (2005)(2010)(2012); Emerson (2012); Magill & Hamber (2010); Magil, Smith & Hamber (2009); McEvoy, McEvoy & McConnachie (2006); Pruitt (2011); Smith (2003).
Pakistan (2)	PILDAT (2007); British council (2010)
Palestine & Israel (14)	Bargal (2004); Bekerman (2007); Burton, Sayrafi, & Srour (2013); Hammack (2010); Khoury-Machool (2007); Maoz (2000); Schulenkorf & Sugden (2011); Stewart (2011); Stidder & Haasner (2007); Sugden (2006); Thorpe & Ahmad (2013); USAID & Mercy Corps (2012); Zembylas & Bekerman (2008).
Rwanda (5)	Freedman et al (2008); Gervais, Ubalijoro, & Nyirabega (2009); Hodgkin, (2006); Sommers (2006, 2012);
Serbia (1)	Simić, & Milojević (2014).
Sierra Leone (12)	Batmanglilch & Enria (2014); Denov & Maclure (2006); Dyck (2011); Enria (2012); Fanthorpe & Maconachie (2010); Izzi (2013); Kline & Mone (2003); McKay & Mazurana (2004); McKay (2004); Shepler (2010); Wessells & Jonah (2006); World Bank (2013).
South Africa (1)	Weldon (2010).
South Sudan (1)	Ensor (2013)

Sri Lanka (2)	Amarasuriya, Gündüz & Mayer (2009); Gunatilaka, Mayer, & Vodopivec (2010).
Tajikstan and Kyrgyzstan 91)	USAID (2012).
Uganda (6)	Baines & Gauvin (2014); Blattman (2009); Clark-Kazak (2011); Hayhurst (2013); McClain (2012); McKay & Mazurana (2004).
Zimbabwe (1)	Ndebele & Billing (2011).

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Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research (AISSR), University of Amsterdam

The AISSR Programme Group Governance and Inclusive Development (http://aissr.uva.nl/programme-groups/item/governance-and-inclusive-development.html) consists of an interdisciplinary team of researchers focusing on issues relating to global and local issues of governance and development. The Research Cluster Governance of Education, Development and Social Justice focuses on multilevel politics of education and development, with a specific focus on processes of peacebuilding in relation to socio-economic, political and cultural (in)justices. The research group since 2006 has maintained a particular research focus on education, conflict and peacebuilding, as part of its co-funded 'IS Academie' research project with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Centre for International Education, University of Sussex

The Centre for International Education (CIE) (www.sussex.ac.uk/education/cie) was founded in 1989 on the premise that education is a basic human right that lies at the heart of development processes aimed at social justice, equity, social and civic participation, improved wellbeing, health, economic growth and poverty reduction. It is recognised as one of the premiere research centres working on education and international development in Europe. The Centre has also secured a prestigious UK ESRC/DFID grant to carry out research on the Role of Teachers in Peacebuilding in Conflict Affected Contexts, which aligns directly with the research strategy of the PBEA programme and will form part of the broader research partnership.

UNESCO Centre at Ulster University

Established in 2002 the UNESCO Centre (www.unescocentre.ulster.ac.uk) at the University of Ulster provides specialist expertise in education, conflict and international development. It builds on a strong track record of research and policy analysis related to education and conflict in Northern Ireland. Over the past ten years the UNESCO Centre has increasingly used this expertise in international development contexts, working with DFID, GiZ, Norad, Save the Children, UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank, providing research on education and social cohesion, the role of education in reconciliation and analysis of aid to education in fragile and conflict affected situations.

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