

PBF Guidance Note: Youth & Peacebuilding

1. INTRODUCTION

In 2016, about 408 million young people (aged 15-29) lived in settings affected by armed conflict or organized violence—about 1 in 4 young people worldwide.¹ This means that young people are a core demographics for peacebuilding interventions, particularly since they often represent a large proportion of the population in numerous countries affected by conflict. Recent policy development, programmatic and research efforts have also demonstrated that young people can be—and often are—active and engaged stakeholders in building and sustaining peace in their country, but that they tend to be the “missing peace” of the majority of peace and security efforts.

Empirical findings from project evaluations, as well as research studies such as [The Missing Peace: Independent Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security](#) and [Pathways for Peace](#), underline the fact that youth exclusion, real or perceived, is a critical root cause of violent conflict. Therefore, since its creation in 2006, the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) has prioritized support to peacebuilding approaches that promote inclusivity, with a specific focus on the role of women and young people. In recent years, this has translated into dedicated support to the implementation of Security Council resolutions [2250](#) (2015) and [2419](#) (2018) on youth, peace and security, as well as to the “sustaining peace” resolution [2282](#) (2016), which offer important policy frameworks for peacebuilding interventions that meaningfully involve young women and men and support their leadership in peacebuilding. This focus on youth, similarly to the focus on women under Security Council resolution [1325](#), is cross-cutting through the entire PBF portfolio, in all countries eligible to receive PBF funding.

¹ United Nations, *The Missing Peace: Independent Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security*, 2018.

Why Security Council Resolution 2250 matters

Resolution 2250 affirms the important role young women and men can play in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, as a key aspect of the sustainability, inclusiveness and success of peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts; recognizes that youth should actively be engaged in shaping lasting peace and contributing to justice and reconciliation and that a large youth population presents a unique demographic dividend that can contribute to lasting peace and economic prosperity if inclusive policies are in place. SCR 2250 specifically identifies five main pillars for action:

1) **Participation**, by calling on Member States to involve young people in conflict prevention and resolution, in violence prevention and in the promotion of social cohesion. Member States are urged to consider ways to increase representation of youth in decision-making at all levels.

2) **Protection**, recalling the obligations to protect civilians, and ensure the human rights of all, including young people, during armed conflict and in post-conflict times, and in particular to protect them from all forms of sexual and gender-based violence.

3) **Prevention**, by urging the facilitation of enabling environments, investments in socio-economic development and quality education for young women and young men, and the creation of mechanisms to promote a culture of peace, tolerance, intercultural and interreligious dialogue that involve youth.

4) **Partnership**, by highlighting the need to increase political, financial, technical and logistical support for the work with young peacebuilders by relevant UN entities as well as regional and international organizations. It also highlights the importance of partnering with youth, local communities and non-governmental actors in countering violent extremism.

5) **Disengagement and reintegration**, for young women and men directly involved in armed conflict.

In 2016, following the adoption of SCR 2250 and to support its operationalization, PBF launched its first [Youth Promotion Initiative](#), inviting UN entities and NGOs to submit peacebuilding proposals focused on young people. This exceptional initiative aimed at ensuring SCR 2250 would trigger a renewed programmatic focus on youth at country level, and bring funding to civil society organizations. The YPI has been opened every year since then, and became in 2018 a regular, annual funding window (coupled with the Gender Promotion Initiative, which is a separate but concomitant initiative).² Importantly, support to youth-inclusive peacebuilding for PBF is not limited to the YPI: PBF actively encourages a focus on youth across its entire portfolio, and through its two funding windows, the [IRF](#) and [PRF](#).

This guidance note provides concrete guidance and tips to develop a project on youth and peacebuilding. It is based on PBF's experience with the YPIs and with the inclusion of youth in its peacebuilding portfolio overall, as well as on the key findings from *The Missing Peace: Independent Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security*.

² For a list of projects approved under the YPIs, please click [here](#).

2. DESIGNING A PROJECT ON YOUTH AND PEACEBUILDING

When developing a project on youth and peacebuilding for submission to PBF, the first step should be to review PBF's existing investments in the country (Peacebuilding Priority Plan when available, portfolio of projects), so that the interventions proposed are complementary to on-going peacebuilding processes and projects.

i) Participatory development of the proposal

Any project focused on youth should be developed with the active involvement of young people and youth-led, youth-focused organizations, in order to ensure the proposed interventions reflect their priorities and preferred approaches. A good understanding of the diversity of youth groups active in the country/context will be important to ensure a diverse coalition of young people (including: from urban and rural areas, from formal and non-formal networks, vulnerable and marginalised young people, etc.) is engaged in the development process. PBF will require the proposal to demonstrate how young people/youth organizations have been consulted and engaged consistently from the initial conception phase to the validation of the project. It is however important to ensure that no false expectations are raised in the consultation phase ('do no harm' approach), especially is the PBF approval process is in its early stage. This process of involvement should be sustained and substantive, with a diverse group of youth organizations involved consistently through the project formulation, and later on, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Concretely, this can be done through: consultations, focus-group discussions, interviews, needs assessment, youth advisory group, etc. with youth in the target communities; involving youth organizations in the development of targeting criteria and the selection of participants; building the capacities of youth organizations to implement activities; engaging young people in the monitoring and evaluation of project activities, etc.

Special attention should be paid to the mechanisms used to identify and select young people, especially when working with intermediary stakeholders, in order to avoid manipulation and/or reproduction of power control paradigms from traditional power holder actors.

PBF Steering Committees should consider including at least one representative of a youth organization, as part of their engagement with civil society stakeholders.

ii) Scope

PBF's core business is peacebuilding. Any project on youth funded by PBF has to formulate a *peacebuilding* rationale and expected *peacebuilding* outcomes, based on a solid conflict analysis that is both gender- and age-sensitive. The overall objective and end goal of any

project funded by PBF should be peacebuilding and sustaining peace, including for projects focused on youth. Many youth projects, for instance, focus on capacity building of young people and their organizations, but are challenged at demonstrating how this capacity-building will contribute to building and sustaining peace. A project whose overall/sole objective is youth empowerment does not fall under PBF's scope. Examples of recently selected projects on youth and peacebuilding include:

- **“Engaging Youth to Build Peaceful Communities in Mali”**: *The overall goal of this project is to promote the implementation of the 2015 Algiers Peace accord through an inclusive, “whole-of-community” approach to conflict prevention, mitigation and management and a reduction of youth involvement in violence.*
- **“Strengthening youth participation in sustainable forest resource management in Côte d’Ivoire”**: *This initiative aims at engaging young women and men to prevent and mitigate conflicts caused by forced evacuations in illegally occupied forest areas.*
- **“Strengthening youth voices for peace through radio in Madagascar”**: *awareness raising campaigns for young women and men through local radios on topics such as governance, human rights and social cohesion in order to mitigate tensions in-between electoral cycles.*
- **“Youth as Agents of Peace and Stability in Kyrgyzstan”**: *This project aiming at reducing community-based conflicts and radicalization managed to decrease inter-ethnic tensions between Kyrgyz and Uzbek youth, by opening a dialogue between them and a space for interaction through mini-projects, workshops and tolerance roadshows.*
- **“Support to the resilience of young people to socio-political conflicts in Burundi”**: *The initiative is attempting to engage young people to help address the root causes of conflict by addressing their relationship to the past and putting them at the forefront of reshaping the narrative.*
- **“Supporting young women peacebuilders in resolving and preventing territorial conflicts in Colombia”**: *Through strengthening the leadership and capacities of adolescent and young women in territories that have been most affected by war and other conflicts that are taking place in the territories, this project will help young women and adolescents to participate actively in peacebuilding activities in the territories and develop their potential as leaders. The increase of their participation is urgent and the visibility of their work and contribution to the construction of a peaceful future for all must be a priority.*

While holistic and multi-sectoral approaches are important when working with young people, the PBF, given the relatively short timeframe (18-36 months) of its projects and the range of funding support it allocates, prioritizes projects that focus their interventions in one or two

main areas, rather than aiming to address too many issues at once. Concretely, the PBF prefers to support a project on one specific area or sector (e.g.: support young people to get engaged in governance mechanisms for natural resource management in a conflict-prone area; or support young people access the Truth and Reconciliation mechanism in a transitional justice process). This is because projects that aim to cover a magnitude of eclectic areas tend to lack a strategic focus and therefore lack a strong potential for peacebuilding outcome. For example, a 18-month project that would combine at the same time a mix of training activities for youth + income-generating activities + recreational activities + some political engagement has little probability to obtain peacebuilding results. The PBF is interested in focused projects that demonstrate catalytic peacebuilding potential and/or mechanisms to influence other areas.

Areas of intervention

Youth and peacebuilding programming spans all four PBF priority areas.

<p>Priority Area 1: Support the implementation of peace agreements and political dialogue</p> <p>1.1 Security Sector Reform 1.2 Rule of Law 1.3 Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) 1.4 Political dialogue</p>
<p>Priority Area 2: Promote coexistence and peaceful resolution of conflict</p> <p>2.1 National reconciliation 2.2 Democratic governance 2.3 Conflict prevention/ management</p>
<p>Priority Area 3: Revitalize the economy and generate immediate peace dividends</p> <p>3.1 Employment 3.2 Equitable access to social services</p>
<p>Priority Area 4: Re-establish essential administrative services</p> <p>4.1 Strengthening of essential national state capacity 4.2 Extension of state authority/ local administration 4.3 Governance of peacebuilding resources (including JSC/PBF Secretariats)</p>

Youth and peacebuilding projects that focus on political participation, social cohesion and economic integration are particularly strategic as they directly relate to priorities 1, 2 and 3 of the PBF, and because evidence from *The Missing Peace* and past PBF project reports and

evaluations have shown that they are generally directly linked to the root causes of conflict and violence:

Political participation: PBF seeks to support, first and foremost, peacebuilding interventions that prioritize young people's engagement and participation as political actors and/or engaged citizens, because building and sustaining peace is an inherently political process. Youth political participation includes the representation and participation of young people in decision-making processes at formal (local and national) institutional and political levels, but can also exist through alternative engagement mechanisms or grassroots participation where young people can influence societies and political dynamics. This also contributes to the implementation of Priority Area 4 (Youth and Human Rights) of the UN Strategy on Youth, aimed at leveraging the capacity of the UN to promote young people's right to participate in public affairs, including in political and civic processes, platforms and institutions at all levels, such as elections, constitution-making processes, political parties and parliaments.

Social cohesion: Projects focused on supporting the role of young women and men in ensuring social cohesion between or within groups, inter-generational dialogue, inter-ethnic / inter-cultural understanding and peaceful cohabitation of their communities and countries. PBF expects such projects to be particularly attuned to the diversity of the youth population and to develop tailored strategies for the engagement of diverse groups of young people. Approaches that address the consequences of violent conflict, built within peacebuilding programmes, are also important: combining peacebuilding and community-based mental health and psychosocial support can bring young people and other members of the community together to heal from conflict-related trauma, sexual violence and other stressors that need to be addressed to improve prospects for peace and recovery.

Economic integration: PBF also supports projects focused on economic integration for specific groups of at-risk young people (such as former combatants, recently demobilized militias, youth from different ethnic backgrounds in a specific zone that experienced ethnic conflict, forcefully displaced youth, etc.), based on a sound analysis of local realities and dynamics. These should also try to be catalytic with a focus on sustainability, as opposed to short-term employment opportunities. PBF also supports interventions that aim at the economic integration of young people as a way to support their broader contribution and sense of belonging to society and protect them from political and other forms of manipulation. While PBF values meaningful economic integration as a central area of support for youth and peacebuilding, it does not consider favorably proposals that develop a blanket argument around poverty and unemployment driving all young people to violence (for example proposals focused on short-term employment schemes such as cash-for-work interventions for youth as the sole way to ensure stability and address intractable conflict dynamics). Recent evidence clearly shows that

the reasons why some (always a minority) young people turn to violence, and may join violent extremist groups, are complex and multiple, and are often primarily related to a sense of exclusion and injustice.

Other sectoral areas often covered by projects on youth submitted to PBF include:

Culture and sports: Projects that focus on cultural or sports activities to engage young people, need to demonstrate how they contribute to peacebuilding related results in addition to the recreational and social benefits they might provide – for example by bringing young people from conflicting groups together, or by facilitating young people’s interaction with state authorities and complementing with other activities such as dialogue fora.

Education: PBF also can fund projects focused on education and youth, particularly interventions that ensure young people receive an education – formal or informal – promoting peacebuilding competencies, tolerance, inter-cultural and inter-ethnic understanding, and facilitating dialogue across divided groups and communities.

This list is by no means exhaustive. PBF is committed to supporting innovative approaches, i.e. interventions that test new approaches to achieve peacebuilding outcomes, as long as they articulate a sound peacebuilding objective and have a catalytic potential. For example, PBF would consider as innovative proposals that (but the list is non-exhaustive):

- support young people’s role in a wide variety of governance mechanisms, such as educational systems, police and military oversight mechanisms, electoral commissions, human rights commissions, natural resource management mechanisms, etc.;
- ensure the protection of young peacebuilders and human rights defenders, who in many contexts face harassment and intimidation and other forms of repression;
- link climate change mitigation / disaster risk reduction to peacebuilding, with a specific focus on the role of young people;
- engage and strengthen the leadership of young people in a variety of roles and positions that have important peacebuilding potential, such as: student leaders, young political leaders, young lawyers, young government officials, young journalists and bloggers, etc.
- increase access of marginalized groups of young people to social services, or bring young people together to co-manage social services. Limited access to social and other basic services is a defining characteristic of fragile and conflict affected states, serving as the underlying grievance and frustration that may be exploited by violent groups.

- promote untested, out-of-the-box approach that include young people, as long as it builds a strong peacebuilding rationale.

iii) **Conflict analysis**

As for any peacebuilding project, the conflict analysis is the foundation for the justification of the project and the focus of the proposed interventions. Please refer to the [PBF Guidance Note on Conflict Analysis](#), and keep the following points in mind:

- *What works?*
 - Prior to analyzing the role of young people in the conflict and in the peacebuilding process, it is important to identify and prioritize addressing the root causes and drivers of the conflict, as well as identifying the capacities and factors for peace and key stakeholders.
 - Review the demographic and human rights context (are youth a majority of the population? are the human rights of youth being respected?), and do a comprehensive mapping reflecting the diversity of youth groups, as well as their respective roles in peace and conflict dynamics. Identify the relevant stakeholders that interact with youth who should be involved (e.g. grassroots organizations, rural and urban groups, faith-based organizations, women's organizations, etc.) to ensure diverse perspectives and triangulate information.
 - Analyze young people's roles as part of the context, causes, dynamics and consequences of conflict; focus on their capacities for peace and potential to influence peacebuilding strategies; assess the possible shift in norms and dynamics in the post-conflict period and the opportunities that the peacebuilding period offer to trigger changes in this realm.
 - Analyze perceptions of intergenerational dynamics (how are young people treated in society? How are they viewed by their elders? How do young people see their own relationships with the rest of society?). A sound understanding of country-specific relationships between the different demographic strata of society is important to shape an appropriate strategy.
 - Adopt a gender lens as part of the conflict analysis, in particular analyze gender norms that may perpetuate exclusion or vulnerability of females: what are the specific challenges, roles, opportunities that young women face? What are the specificities of the situation of young women, which might be different from adult women? To what extent young women have had a gender-specific

experience of conflict (sexual violence?)? Are gender norms promoting toxic masculinities and submissive femininities, and how can these be challenged? Are there patriarchal and/or autocratic norms that feed social systems where young people, and young women in particular, are seen as inferior? Are there new gender dynamics in the younger generation that tend to reverse an established patriarchal order, and that could serve as a basis for insufflating a new culture of peace and equal participation in society?

- Provide concrete and specific data and resources to back up the analysis.
- Consult, collaborate and follow-up with young people / youth-led and youth-focused civil society organizations in the process of developing your conflict analysis, ideally reflecting the diversity of the context (different ethnic groups, urban/rural actors, etc.) to gather their views and perspectives on the various elements of the conflict analysis. It is critical to adopt a “do no harm” approach when carrying out consultation process, i.e. by avoiding a tokenistic process with no follow-up or collaboration in the implementation phase, as *ad hoc*, isolated consultations may raise false expectations and frustration among youth consulted.
- *What does not work?* Typical pitfalls of the conflict analysis for youth and peacebuilding proposals include: a cursory mention of young people’s role at the very end of an analysis that is otherwise blind to age and gender dynamics; generalizing statements about young people’s proclivity to violence (or peace) without reference to concrete data and information; a simplistic approach of young people as either perpetrators or victims of the conflict; treating young people as a homogenous group, without acknowledging multiple differences related to social and economic background, religious affiliation, urban/rural status, geographic location, age, gender etc.; gender-blind analysis that only discusses “young people”, implicitly young men; a gender analysis that only discusses the situation of “women” without analyzing the specific situation, needs and experiences of *young* women with regards to conflict, exclusion and inequalities; no analysis of young people’s initiatives for peace, which in any and all contexts, always exist and can provide an interesting starting point or resource for the project.

iv) Theory of change

A sound theory of change should demonstrate clearly and logically the link between the expected outcome(s) and the proposed intervention(s). A theory of change is an explanation of how and why a set of activities will bring about the changes that a project seeks to achieve. It does not reiterate the project components; rather, it states clearly the assumptions behind how

the chosen intervention is expected to positively affect conflict factors and actors identified in a conflict analysis. Make sure that the theory of change demonstrates why the proposed interventions specifically need to focus on young people.

It may be helpful in developing a theory of change to use the following formulation:

“If we do X, then we will expect Y change, because Z (with Z providing the rationale or assumptions for why X will produce Y change)”

v) Outcomes, outputs and activities

For general advice on peacebuilding programming, please refer to the PBF Project Design Guidance Note (currently being developed).

Outcomes:

- The outcomes should formulate an intended *peacebuilding* change, preferably at the socio-political level, but possibly also at the community group level (but not just individual level), in response to the conflict analysis and some of the issues it identifies.³
- Socio-political change is the dimension that PBF is most interested in supporting: projects should not be limited to outcomes entirely geared towards individual change (typically through a series of training), without a community and political / institutional dimension.
- Think about specific political processes and institutions (elections, Truth & Reconciliation Commission, National Dialogue, peace process, tribunals, local councils etc.) that the project will seek to influence. Avoid vague outcomes (such as “young people will become agents of positive change”) and be specific about the expected change.

Examples of well-formulated outcomes including a strong political dimension:

(YEMEN) The needs and priorities of young men and women and priorities for youth inclusion are articulated in the peace agreement and post-conflict stabilization, relief and recovery plans (Yemen)

³ Changes in perception *of* or *by* young people can often be used as indicators – please refer to the PBF Guidance Note on Perception Surveys.

(COTE d'IVOIRE) 5 regional youth platforms in favor of free expression and political dialogue are advocating against young people's involvement in political violence

(BURUNDI) Political parties are more open to the participation and priorities of young women and men in view of pacific and inclusive elections in 2020

(MALI) 60 communities in Timbuktu, Gao and Menaka are equipped to support the social and economic (re)integration and inclusion of at-risk youth in their communities – including demobilized combatants – and to address conflict drivers that contribute to youth engagement in violence (Mali).

Outputs and activities

Outputs are a set of concrete and measurable deliverables or necessary steps that the project will take to achieve the expected outcome. It is the result of an activity or a series of activities.

Examples:

(YEMEN) Output: Young men and women are equipped to engage and participate actively in Track II dialogues, including in online dialogues.

Activity 1: Conduct TOT training of young men and women on UNSCR 2250 building their relevant skills in advocacy and communications, consensus building and facilitation skills while applying conflict-sensitivity and gender-sensitivity approaches

Activity 2: Activate dialogue fora in existing internet cafes in targeted governorates for a monthly moderated discussion on YPS issues

(THE GAMBIA) Output: National and local leaders promote and facilitate the involvement of women and youth in ongoing national processes and reforms

Activity 1: Sensitize national leaders to promote women and youth participation in ongoing legal and transitional processes

Activity 2: Engage national leaders to secure written commitment towards political investment in youth and women.

vi) Targeting

a) Young people

Clearly identifying the young people to be targeted by the project is essential. Good targeting entails: a specific geographical scope, explicit criteria for selecting young people to be involved in the project (such as: age range, socio-economic background, specific experience such as engagement with a militia or being a young mother, etc.), and an explanation of *how* these young people will be identified and accessed (e.g.: through community leaders, snowball methodology, an open application process, etc.) Gender balance among the targeted youth is critical. Vague or unrealistic targeting is one of the main flaws of youth/peacebuilding project proposals submitted to PBF.

It is important to **analyze why the targeted young people would want to engage in the project, what can be incentives to engage them** (e.g.: a project targeting young people in conflict with the law needs to explain what the incentive is for these young people to engage with the UN/institutions that are seen as part of the status quo these youth are generally rejecting). Very importantly, all youth projects will have to demonstrate conflict sensitivity, or how they will **do no harm** and avoid triggering frustration and resentment among the young people who will not be engaged. In particular, when targeting a specific youth sub-group (e.g. young ex-combatants), the project should have mitigation measures in place to ensure that other young people from the same community do not feel neglected or even more excluded.

One of the first activities of any youth & peacebuilding project should be a process of identification and selection of the young people who will be engaged in the process. This will typically take time, resources and dedicated personnel to ensure the project does not limit itself to involving the most connected young people (the ones already known by partner organizations, or politically well connected, or living in urban centers, or not only speaking a local language, etc.) Efforts should be made to identify and reach out to non-formal networks of young people that have the potential to be strong partners for peacebuilding – in both rural and urban areas.

Projects focused on supporting young people's engagement in peacebuilding processes should always start by **mapping existing youth-led initiatives and organizations**, which exist in all contexts (including active conflict, refugee camps, etc.). These should be the starting point for the project, which should seek to support, strengthen and expand existing initiatives rather than create new structures that have little chance of outliving the project.

Example of good targeting:

(MALI) In total, 1,800 youth will be engaged in the youth groups, with a mix of youth who were previously involved in violence, those who are identified by their communities as at-risk, and the wider youth community, providing them an opportunity to connect with one another. Participants in group activities will be between of the ages of 15-30, selected through a community-based process base on pre-established criteria. The organization will carry out a competitive process with community leaders to select which youth will benefit from entrepreneurship and employment activities, with a focus on demobilized fighters and at-risk youth not eligible for the DDR provisions [...] Do No Harm considerations will be emphasized in the final selection, ensuring inclusion of youth from different ethnic communities and armed groups, based on criteria that are clearly communicated with youth and communities to avoid misunderstanding or frustration.

(LIBERIA) Many of the ex-combatants of the past civil war are still unemployed or under-employed and have been joined by an increasing number of new street-absorbed youth who engage in illicit and risky activities. These young men (referred to as Zogos in local nomenclature) and women (Zogesse) are a volatile mix of diverse groups, particularly at-risk and marginalized. They are small but significant subgroups of 25,000 to 100,000 young persons. These are the main target beneficiaries of this project. Zogos and Zogesse are commonly are seen as wayward citizens, street criminals and thugs, and can easily be misused to foment chaos, distort the social fabric and create tension that can ultimately cause political and security instability in the country. [...] The project will strategically select 200 Zogos/Zogesse in Montserrado, and enroll them into a series of vocational trainings, practical field exercises and other interventions, aimed at rehabilitating them and influencing behavioral change.

b) Other stakeholders

While young people themselves should be the core target group of any project focused on youth and peacebuilding, the involvement of other stakeholders is also key: parents, teachers, community leaders, religious leaders, other civil society stakeholders, politicians, national government decision-makers, etc. For interventions to trigger the socio-political change that PBF expects, the involvement of *other* stakeholders is always necessary, often from the conception phase, as they may need to be sensitized / trained / engaged in partnering with young people. PBF's recipients – be they UN or CSOs – are generally well placed to act as brokers between young people and decision-makers, help bring everyone around the same table and be open to engage in meaningful collaboration. For instance, a project aiming at increasing young people's involvement in elections should not only focus on training young

people about their political rights and civic duties, or train young candidates to run a campaign, but should also work with political parties to ensure they see the value in having young candidates and help them get elected, or work with the electoral commission to run a national campaign about the importance of young people voting, etc. Similarly, projects aimed at enhancing young women and men’s participation in peace processes should not only focus on strengthening the capacity of the young people to engage, but also target key conflicting parties and the body responsible for the peace process so that they recognize the need to include young people.

vii) Evaluation

The final evaluation of a youth/peacebuilding project should assess:

- The relevance of the rationale for focusing on youth (negative / positive rationale)
- The relevance of the groups targeted by the project and the selection process (“vulnerable youth”, “at risk youth”, urban/rural, ethnic groups, socio-economic groups, religious or political affiliation, etc.)
- The gender dimension of the project: were gender issues considered in project rationale, design, and implementation? Was there an effort to involve young men / young women equally? Does the project address harmful gender norms and/or facilitate the transformation of gender roles that can contribute to peacebuilding?
- The peacebuilding outcome: what was it?

viii) Do’s and don’ts

Do’s	Don’ts
Prioritize young people as positive actors and potential contributors to their societies	Refer to young people only as a negative and disruptive group of actors
Engage with youth organizations, initiatives and networks, in the capital and outside - in rural or peri-urban areas - as part of the planning and implementation process	Be tokenistic and assume that one or two youth will represent the youth population of a given setting (see the ladder of young people’s participation)
Think of young people as diverse and divided actors, like all other social groups in all societies	Think of youth as a monolithic or homogeneous group

Give priority space to young people from groups that are often excluded - whatever the reasons for the exclusion may be	Engage young people who are already connected, known by development actors, engaged with your organization
Develop specific indicators and evaluation methods looking at both qualitative and quantitative indicators focusing on youth perceptions and experiences of peacebuilding	Limit yourself to counting the number of young people trained
Create incentives for various stakeholders to be engaged	Assume any young person will want to be part of the project, or that partners will want to meaningfully engage with young people (e.g.: police, military)
Test your assumptions through consultation and shared decision making with young people	Assume you know what young people want or need, or what types of interventions young people will want to engage with
Create space for young people to have decision-making roles within your project	Be afraid of sharing decision-making power with young people
Make conscious efforts to identify the specific needs and dynamics of young men and women	Assume that young people, whether men or women, are a monolithic group with similar problems and aspirations.
When developing your budget, balance direct support to young people and their organizations and investment in institutional changes	Only support institutions and stakeholders who are not young people

5. FAQ

- *Which age range are we talking about for projects focused on youth? Do we have to respect the definition of SCR 2250, i.e. age bracket 18-29?*

The definition of who young people are is always context specific. There is no internationally agreed definition of “youth”. The UN generally defines youth as between the ages of 15-24 “for statistical purposes” and “without prejudice to other definitions by Member States”, but different definitions are also used by various UN entities. There are multiple definitions at regional and national levels. For your project, use the age bracket that makes the most sense in the specific context, and for the specific objectives, you are addressing. Remember that different approaches will be required with younger youth (eg. adolescents below 18, who are still children under the law) and older youth, as well as important differences according to gender. Also, there are usually cultural issues to

consider: in many countries there are certain socio-economic or life events (such as marriage, having children, property ownership, etc.) that symbolize 'adulthood' that may occur before the age of 18, or still remain out of reach long into the ages of adulthood.

6. RESOURCES

- PBF webinar on youth-inclusive peacebuilding: [recording](#) and [PowerPoint](#)
- The [Guiding Principles on Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding](#) (2014) outline nine guiding principles for participative, inclusive and intergenerational peacebuilding strategies and programmes that systematically promote and ensure participation and contribution of young people.
- [Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding: A Practice Note](#) (2016) complements the Guiding Principles to provide key strategic and programming considerations for supporting young people's participation to peacebuilding to enhance quality and sustainability of peacebuilding interventions.
- [The Missing Peace: Independent Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security](#) (2018) was mandated by Security Council Resolution 2250, to document young people's positive contribution to peace processes and conflict resolution, in order to recommend effective responses at local, national, regional and international levels. The Study analyzes myths and misconceptions on the role of young people in relation to peace and security, provides concrete examples of the myriad way young people contribute to peace and proposes operational recommendations to invest in young people's peacebuilding work.
- UNICEF: [Guide to Conflict Analysis](#) and [Conflict Sensitivity and Peacebuilding Programming](#)
- UN Women [Gender and Conflict Analysis Note](#).