BUILDING SUSTAINABLE PEACE AND STABILITY THROUGH EDUCATION: UNICEF EVIDENCE BUILDING ON EDUCATION AND PEACEBUILDING THROUGH LEARNING FOR PEACE PROGRAMME

SYMPOSIUM RATIONALE

More than 230 million children live in fragile and conflict-affected settings. Crises in Syria, Mali, Nigeria, South Sudan and other countries have resulted in the destabilization of social systems unprecedented in complexity, scale and scope. Many countries emerging from violence remain at risk of relapsing into conflict, threatening progress towards sustainable development and jeopardizing prospects for the future generations. The equitable delivery of social services, like education, can mitigate such risks of return to violence, and help address the root causes and consequences of violent conflict. As the world envisions a stronger focus on peaceful and inclusive societies in the post-2015 sustainable development agenda, the stakes are high for governments to invest in addressing underlying causes to break cycles of violence and build sustainable peace.

Acknowledging that business as usual will not address the needs of communities in crisis, UNICEF has sharpened its programmatic approach in conflict-affected and fragile contexts and invested in building evidence on the role of social services in peacebuilding through multi-sector research. Learning for Peace programme tackles root causes of conflict through education in 14 countries. Accompanying research seeks to uncover dimensions of the complex relationship between education and peacebuilding including issues of equity, sector governance and planning, values and curricula, transitional justice, the role of teachers, and relevancy of education for sustainable employment and civic engagement of youth. This symposium presents findings of this research closely linked to the programmatic and policy work of UNICEF and national partners.
SYMPOSIUM PAPERS

Paper 1 – Does horizontal inequality lead to violent conflict?
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Paper 2 – Education and Transitional Justice: Responding to past human rights violations for building sustainable peace
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Paper 3 – Methodological & ethical challenges of studying youth: the role of education for youth agency in relation to building sustainable peaceful futures in Pakistan/Myanmar
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Paper 1 - Does horizontal inequality lead to violent conflict?

ABSTRACT

This study examines the relationship between the level of ethnic or religious inequality in education, measured in years of educational attainment, and the likelihood of violent conflict. Using data from nearly 200 survey and census sources over the course of a 50-year time span and over 90 countries, we find that since the year 2000, countries with high horizontal education inequalities have been approximately twice as likely to experience conflict - however, this effect does not manifest itself in any other period covered by our time series. We suggest that this may indicate a change in meaning for education inequality, however more research is needed to understand this relationship.

1 INTRODUCTION

This research project examines the relationship between horizontal inequalities in education and the likelihood of violent conflict, with the focus on horizontal inequalities in educational attainment of youth ages 15-24. In this section, we employ a global time series dataset covering 95 countries and 66 years. Our unit of observation is the country-year, with additional disaggregation by dimension of inequality and gender. The predictor variable is the level of horizontal educational inequality in a country in a given year—including inequality between ethnic groups, religious denominations, or primary subnational units. The outcome variable is a new conflict onset in a country at any point in the next five years, meaning the five years following the year in which the value of educational inequality is measured. Control variables include measures found to be associated with the likelihood of conflict in the literature, including democracy, anocracy, GDP per capita and prior conflict, also in country-year format. Regression analysis accounts for the binary nature of the outcome variable, as well as for the clustered nature of the panel dataset.

This study examines three major research questions:

1. Does education inequality between ethnic and religious groups increase the likelihood of violent conflict?

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1 Stewart (2000) defines horizontal inequality as inequality between identity-based groups (e.g., ethnic, religious, and subnational), which is distinct from vertical inequality, which is inequality between all individuals in a given country.
2. Does education inequality between subnational regions within a country increase the likelihood of violent conflict in that country?
3. Does the relative disadvantage of a subnational region compared to the country as a whole increase the risk of violent conflict in that subnational region?

To answer these questions, the analysis draws on a newly created dataset – the Education Inequality and Conflict (EIC) Dataset, which spans five decades and includes data from nearly 100 countries. The EIC dataset contains measures of inequality in the average educational attainment of young people (ages 15-24) from different ethnic and religious groups, as well as subnational regions, disaggregated by gender. It also includes information on the onset and incidence of civil conflict in country-year format.

The construction of the datasets is described in detail in the EIC Dataset Documentation, available upon request to epdc@fhi360.org.

2 DATA

The data for this analysis are drawn from the Education Inequality and Conflict (EIC) Dataset, which was constructed as part of this project. For detailed description of the dataset construction process, please email the authors or epdc@fhi360.org. Measures of horizontal educational inequality were constructed as follows:

1. **Mapping identity groups.** Identity groups comprising 5% or more of the population were identified in source data (groups must have a common identity to be included, those falling in the “other” category are excluded);
2. **Data Extraction.** Group means of school attainment were extracted from surveys and censuses for each identity group, disaggregated by gender, in 10-year age increments, starting with the 15-24 age cohort;
3. **Back projection.** Back projections were applied to the extracted data from older age cohorts, in 10-year increments, to estimate educational attainment in previous decades. *This is done solely for data on ethnic and religious groups; no back projection is applied to subnational data.*
4. **Interpolation.** Education attainment values were interpolated in years without data or back projections; when interpolation created duplicate values due to overlapping time series, duplications were removed, keeping only the values from the most recent datasets;
5. **Calculation of inequality measures.** Group means and population weights were used to calculate country-level horizontal inequality measures, including the Group Gini coefficient, the Group Theil Index, a group-based coefficient of variance, and other measures;
6. **Merging with conflict data.** Education inequality data were merged with conflict data for analysis.

As noted above, we carry out back projections to estimate the educational attainment of each ethnic and religious group in previous decades. Using this method, the mean educational attainment of 15-24 year olds of a given ethnicity in the year 1975, for example, may be derived from the mean educational attainment of 35-44 year olds extracted in the year 1995, with an adjustment for differential mortality. The back projections rely on International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) methodology (Lutz et al. 2007) and use gender-specific information on life expectancy and survival ratios based on data from the UN general model life tables. We expand the application of the methodology to the social groups of interest to this study (ethnic, religious, and subnational) and to a greater number of developing countries. Ethnic and religious groups are assumed to be stable over the years. By contrast, no back projection is performed on subnational units, as their populations cannot be assumed to be the same over the course of several decades due to naturally occurring internal migration and changes in subnational boundaries.

Table 1. **Number of observations by gender and dimension of inequality** shows the number of observations by gender and identity dimension in the EIC dataset. In total, the dataset contains more than 16,000 observations (the
exact number varies by gender and dimension of inequality); however, Table 1 also indicates that only 548 observations are available for measuring the effects of subnational inequality on conflict (Table 1). It is clear that additional data are needed when examining subnational inequality, which we address in an extended version of this paper (available upon request from the authors). In this section, we focus on the country-year as the unit of analysis.

**Table 1. Number of observations by gender and dimension of inequality**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Both</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic</td>
<td>2,483</td>
<td>2,466</td>
<td>2,539</td>
<td>7,488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>2,803</td>
<td>2,778</td>
<td>2,812</td>
<td>8,393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subnational</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>5,467</td>
<td>5,425</td>
<td>5,537</td>
<td>16,429</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

In this section, we describe the measure of horizontal inequality in education and the dependent variable, conflict onset, used in the analysis. The properties of the key variables used in our analysis are described below.

**Horizontal Inequality in Education**

For our global analysis, we use the *Group Gini (GGini) index* as our primary measure of horizontal educational inequality at the country level, following a suggested practice in the literature (Stewart, Brown and Mancini 2010). The index is based on the size of the differences between group averages within a given country, year, and type of inequality (i.e., ethnic, religious, and subnational) and the group’s relative size as a proportion of the country’s population. While a separate GGini index was estimated for each level of education, we found that the distributional properties of *mean years of schooling* provide the optimal metric for examining education inequality. The GGini based on mean years of schooling can be interpreted as a measure of how concentrated the total stock of education is in any one ethnic or religious group. A GGINI of zero would mean that all ethnic and religious groups have the same mean years of schooling, while a GGINI of one can be understood loosely to correspond to a situation where one minority ethnic group has essentially exclusive access to all the education in the country, to the detriment of all other ethnic groups. Because it is a measure of concentration that accounts for the relative weight of each group in the population, it is inherently more sensitive to situations in which a minority has higher attainment than the majority.

**Dimensions of horizontal inequality.** Our analysis examines three types, or dimensions of horizontal inequality – ethnic, religious and subnational, with separate GGini values estimates for each dimension. In measuring ethnic and religious inequality, we limit our analysis to countries with more than one ethnic and religious group, and establish a minimum cutoff, requiring groups to be at least 5% of the population. Horizontal inequality, unlike vertical inequality, by definition requires that a society be composed of more than one identity group. In our dataset, the GGini ranges from 0-0.965. However, the distribution is generally much tighter than the vertical educational GGini used by Bartucevicius (2014) and Ostby (2008), and has a substantial positive skew, with a particularly high outlier in ethnic inequality. Table 2. *Summary statistics for Group GINI by group* provides summary statistics of the GGini by identity group. Most of the values fall between zero and 0.3 and a relatively small number outlier observations at the upper end of the

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2 The construction of the index follows the formula below, where $\bar{y}_r = \frac{1}{n_r} \sum_{i} y_{ir}$ is group $r$ mean value, $R$ is the group $r$’s population size, $p_r$ is group $r$’s population share, $y_{ir}$ is the quantity of the variable of interest (e.g., income or years of education) of the $i^{th}$ member of group $r$, $Y_r$ is the value of $y$ for group $r$, and $Y$ is the grand total of variable $y$ in the sample.

$$GGINI = \frac{1}{2Y} \sum_{r} \sum_{s} p_r p_s |\bar{y}_r - \bar{y}_s|$$
This tighter distribution is expected, as our measure captures the differences between group mean values in the years of schooling, rather than the disparity between individuals.

Table 2. Summary statistics for Group GINI by group type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic</td>
<td>0.076</td>
<td>0.074</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>0.064</td>
<td>0.076</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.528</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subnational</td>
<td>0.098</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.578</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nonetheless, because we are measuring inequality using mean years of schooling for identity groups and regions as a whole, even a small difference in horizontal inequality can mean real differences in the life opportunities of members of different groups. A one year difference in mean years may translate into the difference between graduating high school, and receiving the concomitant benefits, and not graduating.

Figure 1 shows the distribution of the GGini for mean years of schooling by identity group type. As the graph indicates, inequality is generally higher between geographic subnational units than it is for the identity-based groups, religion and ethnicity. This is generally true in all world regions, as shown in Figure 2, with the exception of Eastern Europe where ethnic inequality is highest.

Gender. Our measure of inequality differentiates inequality by gender, separately measuring educational disparities between males of different identity groups and females of different groups. Across the board, inequalities between women are larger than those between men, with somewhat wider gaps along the ethnic dimension (Figure 3). However, the gender-disaggregated GGini indices are highly correlated, which indicates that where inequality is high in one gender, it tends to also be high in the other. This is an important finding that has implications for our regression analysis, as it suggests that results are unlikely to be different for males and females.

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3 This is in contrast to the commonly used Gini index of wealth, which is considered “low” at 0.3 and below, and “high” at 0.6 and above.

4 We had hypothesized that inequality between males will be a stronger predictor of violent conflict than inequality between females.
Downward trend of inequality in education. Around the world, access to education has increased dramatically over the last five decades. As enrollments in education systems grew, the stock of human capital, measured in years of schooling, became more equitably distributed. This is because unlike income, which has no ceiling, there is a natural maximum number of years of schooling one can attain in every educational system (i.e., the total duration of schooling). Therefore, as more individuals gain access to the mass education system, education becomes less concentrated in any one subgroup. As a result, we find that over time, horizontal inequalities in education have declined in every region of the world (Figure 4, Figure 5).

The most dramatic declines in horizontal inequalities occurred in countries with the highest horizontal inequalities in the 1960s, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. The regional mean in sub-Saharan Africa decreased by roughly half, from above 0.17 in 1960 to 0.08 in the 2000s. Horizontal inequalities across religious groups has also declined in the Middle East and North Africa region. For the other world regions, horizontal inequalities in religion have always been relatively small, and remain so. The presence of a time trend in horizontal inequality suggests the importance of controlling for time in our subsequent regression analysis.
Conflict Onset

Our measure of violent conflict, *conflict onset*, is borrowed from the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) datasets. Specifically, for our global analysis we use the onset variable from the UCDP Onset of Intrastate Armed Conflict, which spans 66 years (1946-2011), and includes annual observations on conflict onset in over 180 nations (Themnér and Wallensteen 2012). In the UCDP Onset dataset where conflict is defined precisely as at least 25 battle-related deaths in one calendar year and onset means a new outbreak after a period of peace. To supplement the dataset with the most recent available data, we coded conflict onsets for 2011-2013 using UCDP definitions.

4 REGRESSION ANALYSIS: HORIZONTAL INEQUALITY AND CONFLICT

Prior to fitting regression models predicting conflict onset, we modify our key variables as follows:

- Conflict onset is transformed into a continuous time series where for each country-year observation, 1 denotes the presence of new conflict onset in the following five-year period, and 0 denotes continuous peace, if no conflict was experienced. Years of continuing conflict, if spanning the entire five-year period, are set to missing.
- Consequently, the time series for horizontal education inequality measures, as well as other covariates, are truncated at 2008 or earlier, to allow for the five-year lag between the measurement of inequality and the measurement of conflict onset.

Covariates

In addition to the outcome variable, conflict onset, and key predictor, horizontal education inequality, we include a number of relevant covariates in our regression analysis. These variables have been shown in prior research to be strongly associated with conflict occurrence, and may therefore improve the precision of our models by parsing out the variance related to educational inequality from the variance related to other factors. It is important to remember that we do not seek to explain the variation in conflict onset itself, but rather to identify whether a link exists between horizontal education inequality and the likelihood of violent conflict breaking out in the immediate future. Important control variables include the level of economic development (GDP per capita), past history of conflict, political regime (Polity IV data), population size, geographic terrain (% mountainous), ethnic or religious fractionalization (# of identified groups over 5% of population, where such data are available), as well as a basic measure of economic inequality (income Gini). Table 4 shows the basic statistics for each of the covariates included in the model.

Table 4. Descriptive statistics for variables included in regression models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Covariate</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>Observations</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group GINI</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>-0.96</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>3427</td>
<td>EPDC EIC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>1984.67</td>
<td>12.72</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>3427</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP per capita (logged)</td>
<td>6.95</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>10.82</td>
<td>2892</td>
<td>Penn World Tables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace Years</td>
<td>15.53</td>
<td>14.78</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>3123</td>
<td>UCDP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population (logged)</td>
<td>15.89</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>11.44</td>
<td>20.75</td>
<td>3403</td>
<td>WDI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Population (% Total)</td>
<td>26.20</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>18.28</td>
<td>33.27</td>
<td>3427</td>
<td>UNPD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2986</td>
<td>Polity IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anocracy</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2986</td>
<td>Polity IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Groups</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3427</td>
<td>EPDC EIC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5 UCDP defines armed conflict as follows: “an armed conflict is a contested incompatibility that concerns government and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths in one calendar year” (UCDP 2014). Because it does not capture instances of conflict between two non-state actors, the measure of conflict may underestimate the extent of ethnic or religiously motivated conflict around the world.
Results

Given that our dataset for this part of the analysis is clustered by country, we fit a series of models that account for the grouped nature of the data and the inter-dependence of error terms within each country panel. Initially, we fit models for ethnic and religious inequality only, since they have a substantially larger number of observations. We then follow these models with examination of the effects of subnational inequality, which has different country and year coverage, given that no back projection was performed on educational attainment data for subnational regions.

Ethnic and Religious Inequality

The EIC dataset includes separate indicators of horizontal inequalities for ethnic and religious groups. However, in many countries, we have only one value – either ethnic or religious. Therefore, for the purpose of the regression analyses, we create a combined dataset that draws on either ethnic or religious horizontal inequality, whichever is available. We prioritize ethnic inequalities because the descriptive analysis above suggests that they are larger worldwide than are religious inequalities. As such, the combined dataset includes an indicator of ethnic horizontal inequality if present, and if not present, an indicator of horizontal inequalities across religious groups. This allows us to capitalize on the breadth of our dataset and ensure as many countries as possible are included in the analysis. We subsequently disaggregate by type of inequality and by gender; however, we do not find statistically significant differences in the likelihood of conflict than with the combined model.

Table 6 presents the results from the analysis of the relationship between ethnic and/or religious inequality on violent conflict. In Models 1-4 conflict onset is regressed on the combined dataset, which is ethnic OR religious inequality. Model 4 is the most inclusive model, as it accounts for the most important covariates while also drawing on the full dataset. Models 5-6 then distinguish between ethnic and religious inequality, and Models 7-8 disaggregate by gender. Table 5 provides brief model descriptions.

Table 5. Model specifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model #</th>
<th>Specification</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1G\text{GiniER} + \beta_2T_i + \beta_3X_i + \epsilon_j$</td>
<td>Logistic regression with clustered standard errors and controls, time T in years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$Y = \beta_{0j} + \beta_1G\text{GiniER} + \beta_2T_i + \beta_3X_i + \epsilon_j$</td>
<td>Random intercept model with basic controls, time in years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + R_{0j}$</td>
<td>(In notation to the left, the intercept $\beta_{0j}$ consists of a fixed portion $\gamma_{00}$ and random portion $R_{0j}$, set at country level)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$Y = \beta_{0j} + \beta_1G\text{GiniER} + \beta_2D_i + \beta_3G\text{Gini}_i \times D_i$</td>
<td>Random intercept model with basic controls, time $D_i$ in decades (2000’s is reference category), time interaction effect $G\text{Gini}_i \times D_i$, and basic controls (random part of the intercept shown as above)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + R_{0j}$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>$Y = \beta_{0j} + \beta_1G\text{GiniER} + \beta_2D_i + \beta_3G\text{Gini}_i \times D_i$</td>
<td>Random intercept model, time $D_i$ in decades (2000’s is reference category), time interaction effect $G\text{Gini}_i \times D_i$, basic controls and additional covariates $Z_i$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + R_{0j}$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6</td>
<td>$Y = \beta_{0j} + \beta_1G\text{GiniER} + \beta_2D_i + \beta_3G\text{Gini}_i \times D_i$</td>
<td>Same as Model 4, but specified separately for ethnic and religious inequality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + R_{0j}$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-8</td>
<td>$Y = \beta_{0j} + \beta_1G\text{GiniER} + \beta_2D_i + \beta_3G\text{Gini}_i \times D_i$</td>
<td>Same as Model 4, but specified separately for male and female inequality (ethnic and religious combined)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + R_{0j}$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1G\text{GiniS} + \beta_2T_i + \beta_3X_i + \epsilon_j$</td>
<td>Logistic regression with clustered standard errors and controls, time T in years (Same as # 1, but for Subnational)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As Table 6 shows, in Model 1 we begin by fitting conflict onset on horizontal inequality with simple controls for GDP per capita, peace years and the year of observation, which is centered at 1985, with robust standard errors clustered at the country level. We include a control for historical year, because we know that horizontal inequalities have been decreasing over time, as access to schooling has increased, and that the likelihood of conflict onset has changed over time in response to larger macro-political changes. This simple model suggests that overall, horizontal inequality has had little to no effect on the likelihood of conflict onset.

However, we anticipate that countries will have varying propensities to experience conflict based on unobserved factors, which are not controlled for in basic logistic regression models. To control for unobserved country differences that remain stable over time, in Model 2, we fit a random intercepts model. In Model 2, we find support for previous findings in the literature – countries with higher GDP per capita are less likely to experience a new conflict onset. A comparison of model fit between Models 1 and 2, examining the Bayes Information Criteria (BIC) show that Model 2 is a significantly better fit, suggesting these covariates improve the model. Model 2, however, also shows no statistically significant relationship between horizontal inequality and conflict onset.

Although Model 2 is a better fit than Model 1, the descriptive analyses above suggest that the relationship between time and conflict is not linear, but rather, that countries’ propensity for conflict is different in every decade. Therefore, in Model 3, we include binary variables for each decade, and interact our measure of horizontal inequality with each of these decades. The reference decade is the 2000s, which is the most recent decade and also the one for which we do not have to conduct back projections, meaning it requires the fewest assumptions about change over time. As with prior models, we include basic controls for GDP per capita, and years since last conflict (i.e., peace years). As Model 3 shows, horizontal inequality is strongly, positively associated with conflict onset in the 2000s, and generally less correlated with conflict onset in preceding decades.

In Model 4, we include additional covariates suggested by the literature on conflict, namely population size (logged), democracy, anocracy and a proxy for ethnolinguistic fractionalization. Our findings are consistent with those in prior studies – both democracy and anocracy are consistently positively associated with onset and both are statistically significant. Similarly, the association between anocracy and conflict is higher than is the association between democracy and conflict. Population is positively correlated with onset and is consistently statistically significant. Our measure of ethnic and religious fractionalization is not statistically different from zero, suggesting it has little effect on conflict onset.

Importantly, even after controlling for these important covariates, we still find that in the 2000s, higher horizontal inequality is positively associated with conflict onset. Model 4 shows that in the 2000s, a one standard deviation increase in horizontal inequality in educational attainment more than doubles the odds that a country will experience a conflict in the next five years. The relationship between inequality and conflict is significantly lower in earlier decades – again suggesting the effect is most pronounced in the most recent era.

Model 4 is our preferred model. This model ensures the strongest level of statistical power by pooling ethnic and religious inequality measures, and captures inequality for the entire population, irrespective of gender. It also allows for separate fixed effects on the different time periods, making the model more
informative as to the likely changes in the relationship between our measure of education inequality and conflict onset depending on the time period in question. We find the strongest effects during 2000s, which coincides with the greatest access to education and the lowest levels of inequality. This may suggest horizontal inequality is more consequential in recent years, where access to basic education is available to all but the most marginalized populations. We examined our dataset carefully and were able to verify that observations from the year 2000 are not substantially different from the rest of the dataset in terms of country coverage and the types of countries that were included. Additionally, we also ran a series sensitivity checks (below) that show that this finding is robust to alternative specifications.

Models 5-8 expand on Model 4, by disaggregating our predictor variable by inequality type (ethnic and religious, Models 6-7) and gender (Models 8-9). The results from Models 5-8 are similar to Model 4. The estimate on ethnic inequality is stronger than on religious inequality; however, this may have to do with country coverage in each of these models, as indicators of religious and ethnic identity was not available for all countries in our dataset. The estimate for horizontal inequality among females is higher than that among males, suggesting that it is inequality between females that is likely driving up the effect associated with horizontal inequality in general.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6. Regression estimates: Ethnic and Religious Inequality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GGINI: Horizontal Inequality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970s</td>
</tr>
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<td>1960s</td>
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<td>1990s #</td>
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<td>Group GINI</td>
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<td>1960s #</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group GINI</td>
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<tr>
<td>GDP per capita (logged)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace Years Squared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace Years Squared</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

UKFIET 2015 Conference Symposium
Population (logged) 2.145* 2.182* 2.026* 2.091* 1.976* 0.65 0.79 0.65 0.63 0.58
Democracy (0/1) 2.324** 2.209* 2.246* 2.094* 2.038* 0.73 0.82 0.89 0.65 0.63
Anocracy (0/1) 2.853*** 2.205** 3.521*** 2.989*** 2.905*** 0.7 0.63 1 0.74 0.71
Ethnic Groups 1.152 1.117 0.721+ 0.869 0.955 0.19 0.21 0.14 0.14 0.1
Wealth Inequality (GINI) 1.024 1.014 1.032+ 1.021+ 1.033+ 0.02 0.02 0.02 0.02 0.02
Constant 0.003 1.939 0.083*** 0.002*** 0.012** 0.009*** 0.008*** 0.002** 0.07 35.04 0.04 0.02 0.01 0.01 0.0

Random Effects Parameters
S.D. of Constant 3.327*** 2.762*** 3.319*** 3.044*** 3.132*** 3.264*** 3.356***
S.E. 0.5 0.43 0.59 0.62 0.64 0.59 0.6
N. 2648 2789 2789 1928 1339 1516 1894 1922
N. Countries 2412.12 2137.097 2142.496 1466.585 1218.648 1431.665 1479.137
BIC 0.889 1.127 3.092*** 2.751** 2.805* 3.291** 2.413* 3.220***

Notation: *p<0.05, **p<.01; ***p<.001

Interpretation of Results

These results suggest that ethnic and religious inequality in education (as measured by mean years of schooling) is indeed predictive of violent conflict, and this is true for both ethnic and religiously-based inequalities. We find that differences of one standard deviation on the inequality variable, which in the 2000s translates roughly into an increase in the GGINI from 0.054 to 0.101, would more than triple the odds of violent conflict taking place. Table 7 shows the marginal probabilities of conflict in each decade, calculated from our preferred model (Model 4), which uses ethnic and religious inequality as the predictor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decade</th>
<th>Probability of Conflict at 1 SD Below Mean</th>
<th>Probability of Conflict at Mean Inequality</th>
<th>Probability of Conflict at 1 SD Above Mean</th>
<th>Probability of Conflict at 2 SD Above Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>0.124</td>
<td>0.150</td>
<td>0.179</td>
<td>0.213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>0.195</td>
<td>0.154</td>
<td>0.120</td>
<td>0.093</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>0.291</td>
<td>0.161</td>
<td>0.082</td>
<td>0.039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>0.140</td>
<td>0.105</td>
<td>0.077</td>
<td>0.056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>0.034</td>
<td>0.066</td>
<td>0.123</td>
<td>0.213</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5 DISCUSSION

Our findings show that there is a robust and consistent statistical relationship between higher levels of inequality in educational attainment between ethnic and religious groups and the likelihood that a country will experience violent conflict at the global level. Our interaction effects with time show that this relationship is large and robust in the most recent decade, while in earlier decades there seems to be little statistically significant relationship between educational inequality and the likelihood of conflict. It is important to emphasize that our findings are not necessarily pointing to a direct and causal relationship, i.e. that education inequality between groups is the cause of violent conflict. Further, education inequality may serve as a proxy of inequality in access to other services or political and economic privileges (beyond...
the basic income Gini for which we control). However, to the extent that a strong theoretical linkage can be made between educational inequality, on the one hand, and economic and political disempowerment on the other, one can argue that there may be an indirect yet causal relationship whereby systematic inequality in education experienced by some subgroups and the formation of group-based grievances eventually lead to conflict.

It is, however, noteworthy that the relationship between ethnic and religious educational inequality and violent conflict, as it is observed in our study, has changed over time. Although we cannot be certain why this interaction effect is present, it is possible that the social consequences and meanings associated with inequality have changed over time, such that the same magnitude in our inequality measure denotes much deeper levels of exclusion. In the early decades of our time series, horizontal inequalities in education were objectively much higher than they were in the 2000s. Over the past two decades, important changes have taken place in countries around the world—mass schooling has expanded, access to education has been accepted as a basic right for all children, and higher levels of schooling have become increasingly important for entry into the labor market. Consequently, high levels of inter-group inequality in educational attainment may signal greater levels of disempowerment and systematic exclusion of some groups from future economic opportunities. It may also be perceived as one way that the nation-state is failing to meet its basic responsibilities to provide social services. All of these factors mean that one ethnic or religious group could perceive educational inequality as an injustice, or a reason for discontent.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS: A RESEARCH AGENDA

This study points to a number of areas for future research. First is the need for greater data availability. Our analysis, while drawing on the most comprehensive dataset on horizontal inequalities available to-date, lacks sufficient representation from a number of regions, particularly Western and developed nations and nations in the Middle East and North Africa.

In addition, future research is needed to replicate findings using different definitions and specifications of key variables for both conflict and educational inequality. First, it is important to remember that in the global analysis (Part I), the dependent variable is defined somewhat narrowly as the onset of intrastate conflict in which the state is one party to the conflict. As such, it fails to capture other types of civil conflict that may be fueled by intergroup inequality or grievances among various non-state actors. Hence, future studies must replicate results using other definitions of conflict in order to investigate whether the relationship between horizontal inequality and the likelihood of conflict differs by the type of civil conflict.

Secondly, our dataset measures educational inequality using a single measure: educational attainment. While it is a strong measure of the stock of human capital accumulated in a group and has been used extensively in the literature, attainment captures only one side of potential educational inequality. It leaves out other important dimensions, including levels of resources and the quality of educational inputs, which have implications for future economic productivity and civic participation. More research on the relationship between these aspects of education and violent conflict is also needed.

In addition, the time trend found in our analysis also deserves greater attention. More research is needed to understand why educational inequality in the most recent decade is associated with conflict when this does not seem to be the case in the preceding historical period. In particular, further research could investigate whether the differential effect seems to lie primarily in the changing nature and significance of horizontal inequality and if educational inequalities are increasingly linked to grievances.
Paper 2 - Education and Transitional Justice: Responding to past human rights violations for building peace

ABSTRACT

In the aftermath of armed conflict, education can play an important role in peacebuilding. The reconstruction of a country’s education system can help prevent a return to violence and boost the legitimacy of democratic institutions. The sustainability of these efforts depends not only on rebuilding schools, bringing children and youth back into the system, and promoting values of tolerance and peace through curricula. It also depends on the sensitivity of these efforts to the legacies of past human rights abuses. Transitional justice can make investments in education and other social services more sustainable and prevent relapse into conflict. The research conducted by ICTJ and UNICEF examined synergies between transitional justice and education in responding to past human rights violations. It looked at how a transitional justice framework can play a role in identifying educational deficits related to past conflict and repression and informing the reconstruction of the education sector, as well as how both formal and informal education can facilitate and sustain the work of transitional justice measures within a peacebuilding context. The research explored how to incorporate lessons from transitional justice processes into the educational curriculum; how to increase access to education through reparations or redress measures; and how to shape school governance, pedagogy and teaching methods, didactic tools, and teacher capacity and training with the aim of promoting a culture of human rights and democracy. The research also considered how transitional justice practitioners, educators, civil society actors, communities, and government authorities can strategically work together to address the past through education, focusing on innovative methodologies and entry points for leveraging long-term sustainable change. This paper presents the main findings of the research and highlights key implications for policy, planning and action.
1 INTRODUCTION

In the past two decades, the relationship between education and conflict has received increased attention from researchers, policymakers, and practitioners working in the fields of education, child protection, and peacebuilding. This relationship has been considered in two directions: first, the impact of conflict on education; and second, the ways in which education can both trigger conflict and contribute to establishing peace. Most work on education reconstruction after periods of conflict and authoritarianism has primarily adopted a development or peacebuilding perspective, which is understandable given the clear role that education can play in promoting socioeconomic development and preventing a return to armed violence. Missing from this analysis has been a connection to the specific legacies of repressive policies and human rights violations in the political and social culture of a country—legacies that are particularly relevant in contexts where education was used to divide, discriminate against, and serve ideological purposes or where conflict resulted in significant lost educational opportunities for children. From this perspective, the contribution that education can make to peace depends not only on the physical reconstruction of schools, the reincorporation of young people into the education system, and the promotion of universal values of tolerance and peace through school curricula. It also depends on the sensitivity of reforms and programs to the legacies of past injustices in both the education sector itself and the public culture of a country.

Transitional justice, understood as judicial and non-judicial measures that seek to promote accountability and redress for massive violations of human rights, is increasingly recognized as a fundamental part of peacebuilding efforts. Combined with other sets of policies, and to the extent that it provides recognition to victims of human rights abuses and help to restore civic trust in state institutions and among citizens, transitional justice can contribute to strengthening the democratic rule of law and help to address grievances and prevent the recurrence of violations. In the context of coming to terms with an abusive past, and in addition to being something that should be valued for its own sake and not only its instrumental benefits, education for its part has at least two important goals. As in any other society, education should contribute to developing children’s abilities and skills for participating in a country’s productive and sociopolitical realms. But in addition, “in a post-war society, education is charged with the task of enhancing the capacity of citizens, especially—but not only—adolescents and children, to think critically about the present and the past, so they can foresee and construct a better future.”

While some in both fields have called attention to the need for a more systematic consideration of the relationship between education and transitional justice, to date neither education reform nor the teaching of

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7 See, for example, 2008 OECD-DAC Guidance on Evaluating Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Activities, which expanded the “Utstein Palette” to include transitional justice under its pillar of building a “Culture of Truth, Justice and Reconciliation”; United Nations, Guidance Note of the Secretary General: United Nations Approach to Transitional Justice, 3, which states that by “striving to address the spectrum of violations in an integrated and interdependent manner, transitional justice can contribute to...prevention of further conflict, peacebuilding and reconciliation”; and Camino Kavanagh and Bruce Jones, Shaky Foundations: An Assessment of the UN’s Rule of Law Support Agenda (New York: New York University - Center on International Cooperation, 2011), 13, which considers transitional justice to be one of the relevant cross-cutting issues in post-conflict settings, asserting that such “mechanisms can serve as important confidence building measures and have an important impact on the legitimacy of a political settlement and the degree to which aspects of the political settlement and sustained or eroded.”

the recent past have been treated with the seriousness they deserve within the scope of transitional justice.

In response to this knowledge gap, ICTJ and UNICEF collaborated on a research project that involved the commissioning of 17 papers, including case and thematic studies, and the organization of a two-day workshop in New York in October 2014, in which the findings of the research were discussed with a group of experts on education, transitional justice, child protection and peacebuilding. Additionally, background research and interviews with education specialists and transitional justice practitioners were conducted. The project sought to answer two main questions:

- How can transitional justice contribute to peacebuilding goals by shaping the reform of education systems and by facilitating the reintegration of children and youth into those systems?
- How can education serve to promote the goals of transitional justice by expanding its outreach agenda and helping to change a culture of impunity into one of human rights and democracy?

This paper summarizes the key findings of the project. Drawing from a comparative approach that examined different experiences throughout the world, this report does not offer a blueprint for addressing past injustices through education, but rather highlights a series of considerations that the relevant actors should take into account depending on the particularities of each context.

The paper looks at how a transitional justice framework can play an important role in identifying educational deficits related to the logic of past conflict and repression and informing the reconstruction of the education sector, as well as how formal and informal education can facilitate and sustain the work of transitional justice measures. Section 2 maps out the different components of education reconstruction in which a transitional justice framework can be expected to make a difference: incorporating lessons from transitional justice processes into the educational curriculum; increasing access to education through reparations or redress measures; and shaping school culture and governance, pedagogy and teaching methods, didactic tools, and teacher capacity and training. Section 3 highlights roles that different actors can play in linking transitional justice and education, including transitional justice bodies, civil society groups, school communities, and government, each of which can be an agent of and/or an obstacle to change. Section 4 examines the more capacity- and resource-based constraints that efforts to address the past through education are likely to face, and Section 5 emphasizes the importance of identifying opportunities for change but at the same time maintaining realistic expectations.

In offering guidance about the kind of change being proposed and potential steps to bring such change about, however, it is important to remember that policies aimed at addressing past injustice through education are very likely to be contested. Context will influence the extent of this contestation as well as the usefulness of any recommendations, and so contextual analysis will be a critical first step. It cannot be assumed, for example, that all communities will desire full integration of schools or support incorporating a justice agenda into classroom learning. Some types of opposition to such efforts, we argue, should be challenged, but some may be legitimate and/or unlikely to be overcome. These kinds of tensions between the principles of justice being advocated and the reality in which measures based on those principles are proposed, designed, and potentially implemented must be kept in mind. That said, the research conducted for this project suggests that a context-specific approach to addressing the past through education can make a valuable contribution to peacebuilding.
2 TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE AND THE RECONSTRUCTION OF EDUCATION AFTER CONFLICT AND REPRESSION

Adopting a transitional justice lens, this section will explore some of the areas within the education system that should be examined in the aftermath of conflict and repression in order to ensure that the goals of education system are aligned with the promotion peace and democracy.

2.1 Norms and Institutions

In the aftermath of conflict and repression, normative changes in education laws affirm the values and principles that will inform how schools will operate, and establish the framework within which later reforms and policies will be developed. Given the legacies of past injustice, a first step towards changing the education system should be to undertake a comprehensive review of the existing norms and policies with the aim of removing from the system all harmful remnants of the previous repressive logic. This process importantly will be contextual, assessing exactly how the previous logic impacted education in a manner that is also relevant from a transitional justice perspective in each particular case. A revision of the system in place can lead to, among other outcomes, the reform of education institutions or the creation of new ones; the adoption of centralization or decentralization process; the revisions of laws that guarantee the right to education for all (including those previously discriminated against for ethnic, religious, cultural, or gender motives) and the rights of teachers and educators; the removal of personnel in key positions; and the restitution of teachers and administrators who were unfairly dismissed by the previous regime.9

2.2 Access to Education

While access to free primary education is an established human right,10 during conflict and under repressive regimes it is common for children and youth to have limited if any access to education or to be denied quality education. If during transitions the provision of education as a state social policy should return to more normal levels, using reparative justice policies as a mechanism to foster access to education for individuals previously excluded or to facilitate the completion of studies for those whose education was interrupted can be a way of acknowledging the educational impact of repressive policies and human rights violations in the lives of individuals and communities.

Administrative reparations programs, which provide material and symbolic benefits to victims, individually and/or collectively, have been proposed or implemented in numerous countries to provide benefits in the form of education to victims of various rights violations. Reparations or assistance programs (both proposed or implemented)—in Peru, Sierra Leone, Timor-Leste, Rwanda, and Colombia—commonly have included education as an individual, material benefit, or as part of a social service package. These benefits can include scholarships, reduced fees, tuition and accommodation assistance, stipends, accelerated or fast track programs, psychosocial support, and childcare facilities for students with their own children. Such benefits can facilitate access to education at the primary, secondary, tertiary, vocational/technical, and adult levels, but, as already

9 For more discussion about vetting of educational institutions, see Julia Paulson, “(Re)Creating Education in Postconflict Contexts: Transitional Justice, Education, and Human Development,” New York: ICTJ, November 2009, 22-23. For the most comprehensive example of vetting of educational professionals in schools and at the university level, see also: Christiane Wilke, “The Shield, the Sword and the Party: Vetting the East German Public Sector,” in Justice as Prevention: Vetting Public Employees in Transitional Societies, ed. Alexander Mayer-Rieckh and Pablo de Greiff (New York: Social Science Research Council, 2009), 348-399.
10 See Art 13.2 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, General Assembly Res. 2200A (XXI), 16 December 1966. As with other socioeconomic rights, however, it should be read in conjunction with Art. 2 of the Covenant, which recognizes the progressive attainment for the full realization of rights of this sort. See also Art. 24 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, General Assembly resolution 44/25, 20 November 1989.
noted, free primary education alone cannot qualify as reparations because it is included in the right to education that states are already obliged to provide. In addition to children who have suffered violations directly, in some cases, such as Brazil, Peru, Argentina, and Nepal, the children of victims of violations have received educational benefits.

2.3 School Environment, Culture, and Governance

Either as a direct legacy of the previous regime’s educational system or because levels of violence during conflict infiltrated schools, the reform of school culture and governance presents critical dimension of education reform in a transitional context. The legacies of authoritarian or violent educational cultures among the interpersonal relationships within educational institutions, families, communities, and students themselves can include despotism of school authorities, corporal punishment and other forms of teacher or student violence, discrimination, and sexual harassment. Acknowledging this aspect of the educative culture after conflict, the truth commission in Peru, for example, considered that eliminating violence in schools and reforming the authoritarian pedagogy were both important in fostering a culture of human rights.

Changing school cultures, however, is not easy. Educational policies of the post-apartheid South Africa, for example, “tried to reframe the authoritarian relations of the past around an equality of rights and mutual responsibilities. Student identities were to be reconstructed around the notion of the student as a citizen where each has the rights and voice within the democratic structure of the reformed schools. However, teachers felt that the policy which gave students a legal basis to claim entitlements within schools had at the same time reduced teacher’s owns rights, threatening their traditional identities. Rights were in competition. There was a particular opposition to banning corporal punishment, which they saw as a breakdown in discipline. These complexities did not seem to have been considered by the policymakers.”

Importantly, in post-conflict contexts, creating safe schools and, more broadly, safe spaces for students and teachers to have discussions about the violent past should include mental health and psychosocial considerations. In this respect, before teaching the past in the classroom, it may be necessary to put in place measures to promote well-being and build resilience among both students and educators. Moreover, on a case-by-case basis, it may be necessary to deal with trauma, and hence to provide specific forms of psychosocial support and to help identify children with additional or special needs for referral to specialists and community case management.

2.4 Curriculum Reform

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11 Dyan Mazurana and Khristopher Carlson, “Reparations as a Means for Recognizing and Addressing Crimes and Grave Rights Violations against Girls and Boys during Situations of Armed Conflict and under Authoritarian and Dictatorial Regimes,” in The Gender of Reparations: Unsettling Sexual Hierarchies while Redressing Human Rights Violations, ed. Ruth Rubio-Marín (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 193-194. Depending upon the countries, high school education might also be included in the right to educations that states have to provide freely. Indeed, the period of “mandatory and free education” has been increasing during the past decades: today, in many countries, it comprises both the high school and the preschool levels.


2.5 Pedagogy and Teaching Methods

When devising methods to teach the violent past from a transitional justice angle in post-conflict and post-authoritarian contexts, it is necessary not only to take into account issues such as children’s developmental capacities, security, and psychological wellbeing (especially among children who still may endure trauma), but also to put in place pedagogical approaches that promote their capacity for critical thinking and democratic citizenship in a manner relevant to their immediate lives. Importantly, these methods need to be adapted to the particular challenges of different contexts, based on an understanding of how broader conceptions of human rights can be linked to the real experiences of children in post-conflict societies, including children belonging to the different sides and with different experiences of the previous conflict, and promote their social and political empowerment in a way that is realistic within the environment in which they live.\footnote{In this respect, the proximity of the relationship of the students to the conflict in terms of time, interest, and personal investment will be fundamental contextual factors to take into account. Also to be considered is how the current reality (violent or not, unjust or less just) relates to the narrative one is trying to portray—for in situations in which the immediate context of children continues to be violent, it will be probably more difficult to convey certain messages.}

To begin with, there is often a need to switch from teacher-centered and authoritarian ways of teaching to those that favor more democratic and participatory methods that encourage students’ critical, independent, and creative thinking; appeal to their emotional imagination and capacity to feel empathy; and foster their disposition for active citizenship. Overall, the pedagogical methods employed should aim to strengthen the culture of democracy among students, reinforcing the idea that disagreement and deliberation are part of the rules of society, while contributing to the development of students’ attitudes and skills to learn to listen to others and solve conflicts in a peaceful manner. This approach may be challenging for teachers, especially when dealing with conflictive issues that are so recent and may trigger emotional responses among students. It will therefore be necessary to help teachers create safe spaces to foster discussion and tools to manage conflict in case it is necessary, such as the introduction of mutual respect rules or having groups of students rather than the teachers prepare different topics to be later discussed in the classroom. Teacher capacity and training, as will be later discussed in more length, will be fundamental in most cases in order to help teachers develop specific skills.

2.6 Tools for Teaching

The design of specific tools is fundamental when considering the teaching of the past in post-conflict and post-authoritarian contexts. As Ana Maria Rodino argues, more than just being useful to the educator in implementing a pedagogic methodology, didactic tools in themselves when adequately crafted can provide the educator with a methodology to implement. For this to happen, however, they should include guidance that teachers can follow. A wide range of teaching tools can be designed to support teachers and help students to learn about the recent contested past. These can include more traditional resources, both printed materials (such as textbooks, study guides, and lesson plans) and audiovisual materials (video clips, documentaries, and audio segments), but also materials that serve to directly portray memory, such as would-be memory sites, artifacts, celebrations, testimonies, and journals.\footnote{Because of the range of possibilities, it needs to be asked in each situation what is the most appropriate tool to be created and used in each different context. Teachers and students should be involved in this decision-making process.} Because of the range of possibilities, it needs to be asked in each situation what is the most appropriate tool to be created and used in each different context. Teachers and students should be involved in this decision-making process.

2.7 Teacher Capacity and Training
The ability, confidence, and willingness of teachers to teach the past are critical to the effectiveness of all the education reforms discussed so far in this report. As Lynn Davies suggests, teachers are a central part of this work: their role is not just purveyors of a transitional justice curriculum, but they are influential actors who can actively promote (as well as undermine) transitional justice goals. Moreover, in transitional contexts, given the political, personnel, and material constraints, “working with teachers and teacher educators to shift the way that they teach can be quicker and more effective than creating, approving, producing and distributing new materials.” Indeed, as Elizabeth Cole has pointed out, “even the best curricular materials may be wasted in the hands of teachers unprepared to use them well in the classroom.” Training and supporting educators therefore must be a priority. In order to prepare teachers to effectively teach the injustices of the past, “teacher development programs (both pre and in service) need to provide the space and support for teachers to confront their own identities, legacies and biases and to begin the process of self-reflection.” Such programs should also provide teachers the knowledge and ethical and technical means necessary, and empower them to use democratic methods in the classroom. Changing the way teachers teach, however, is difficult to implement, especially in contexts in which there are limited resources and teachers tend to be inadequately prepared. As Laura Quaynor points out, changing the nature and culture of education methodology “requires structural change in the ways school function and that teachers are trained and supported in the classroom. In addition, appropriate ways for students to engage in citizenship education may differ across contexts. Teacher training and support should reflect these nuances.”

3 AGENTS OF AND OBSTACLES TO CHANGE: TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE MEASURES, CIVIL SOCIETY, SCHOOL COMMUNITIES, AND GOVERNMENT

This section highlights the roles that different actors can play in linking transitional justice and education, including transitional justice bodies, civil society groups, school communities, and local and national government. Each of these actors can be an agent and/or an obstacle to change.

3.1 Transitional Justice Measures

As direct responses to the injustices of the past, transitional justice measures can be designed with an eye to establishing links with and catalyzing change within the field of education. Truth commissions, for example, often make recommendations related to education, both about education reform and about reparations programs that include the provision of education assistance to victims. In South Africa, Peru, Timor-Leste, Morocco, and Sierra Leone, commissions have identified structural injustices and education-related needs, and subsequent efforts have been made to improve the provision of education to marginalized and discriminated against populations. In some cases, truth commissions and criminal courts and tribunals, such as the Special Court for Sierra Leone and the ICTY, have used education as part of their outreach

21 Ibid.
23 For more about this, see the recent report: “Where It’s Needed Most: Quality Professional Development for All Teachers,” Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) and the International Rescue Committee (IRC), New York, 2015.
strategies. Education tools have been fundamental in this respect when trying to engage children and youth in a transitional justice process, but also as means of building a legacy and ensuring the sustainability of justice-related initiatives.

The absence of a legitimate transitional justice framework, however, can undermine efforts to repair society and achieve reconciliation through education. In addition, parents and communities in such contexts may object to measures that promote aims such as the integration of schools because they view integration as a step towards the potential loss of ethnic identity. In cases where the absence of a legitimate national transitional justice framework suggests that a society has not taken broader steps to address the divisions of its past (and present), or where a transitional justice policy has been officially endorsed but is overly politicized or unsupported, it may still be possible to try to address the past in education settings at more local and informal levels.

3.2 Civil Society

Transitional justice measures may help to integrate education as part of a country’s response to the violent past, but without engaging with other actors they are unlikely to lead to real change in the education system or curriculum. Implementation and long-term sustainability of reform will depend on the support and participation of civil society. For the implementation of truth commission recommendations and reparations programs that provide educational assistance, for example, the strength of civil society and victims’ movements is crucial. Furthermore, given the important role that the community plays as part of the children’s immediate and natural support and protection systems as well as the number of children and youth who may not be enrolled in the school in transitional contexts, education strategies should not be limited to the formal schooling system. They should also look to build linkages to other forms of education, including non-formal initiatives and informal structures that operate at the community level. Non-formal and informal educational forums can serve as important vehicles to trigger, reinforce, and sustain changes made in the formal system, and may be especially relevant in contexts where the institutional structures of the state remain weak after conflict.

Transitional justice outreach initiatives aimed at the education system can also prompt civil society efforts to address the past through education after those justice measures have ceased to function, by promoting collaboration between schools and other social actors in education activities. Civil society actors, including youth networks, can initiate and catalyze efforts to address the past, particularly when transitional justice measures and the formal school system are unable to do so. There are many examples of civil society groups that have developed educational materials and activities—in parallel to the work of a transitional justice measure—that have been later incorporated in the formal curricula for history education in countries such as Canada, Northern Ireland, South Africa, and Cambodia. Actors such as museums, public libraries, community houses, and community or religious groups can play an important role in initiating efforts that can be leveraged to help rebuild the broader educational network.

3.3 School Communities

Critical actors in attempts to address the past through education, school communities can be involved in the process in different ways. While ensuring the consultation and participation of school

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communities takes time and resources, in the long term taking into account the views of the direct recipients of the policies and programs contributes to maximizing their relevance, legitimacy, and sustainability. Within schools communities, however, students, teachers, and administrators may present obstacles. Prevailing agendas and cultures or newly opened schisms between group identities may undermine a transitional justice approach to education reform. Multiple agendas for curriculum reform, for example, may conflict with each other, such as those emphasizing human rights and democracy and those with a more technical focus emphasizing economic empowerment and future employment, especially in post-conflict societies that are often in great need of economic development. In a somewhat different way, discrimination between groups in schools and universities can create difficult environments for students who receive assistance through reparations programs, potentially increasing their dropout rates.

Teachers may object to the use of a human rights or transitional justice discourse or approach or they may simply be unwilling to confront the past within classrooms. Teachers may not believe in such an approach, they may not have the necessary skills or confidence to teach the past, they may be reluctant to admit their own bias or their role in past injustice, they may be frustrated at seemingly being made responsible for reconciliation, or they may react out of a real fear of physical threats from those who oppose such efforts. Finally, school administrators may similarly present obstacles to a transitional justice approach. In the experiences of Argentina and Chile, for example, attempts to deal with the past in schools has been met with opposition, inconformity, and conflict; while this has in part to do with the opinions and limitations of teachers, the school system itself is often reluctant to deal with conflictive or controversial issues.

3.4 Government

Educational efforts to address the past often originate with transitional justice measures or civil society actors, but effecting change throughout the education system as a whole requires the involvement of the government. It is important, ultimately, to work to establish bodies within the public education system to plan and implement teaching and memory of past. It is the “horizontal and vertical structures” of the education system that make it such a strong partner for transitional justice processes that seek some degree of sustainability. For initiatives seeking to link transitional justice with the formal education system, however, national and local governments may critically withhold their approval or support. In the countries of the former Yugoslavia, the majority of governments “were not positively inclined towards the ICTY and were skeptical about extending their support” to the court’s youth outreach project aimed at schools. Negotiations with local authorities could be lengthy, bureaucratic, difficult, and not always successful. Reluctance of government can also manifest itself in the discourse in which educational programs are framed. For example, the nature of education makes it possible to conflate education assistance to victims in the form of individual and collective reparations with the provision of social services such as education to the entire population as an obligation of economic and social rights. In order for

transitional justice efforts to have their intended effect, policymakers need to distinguish—but may often resist doing so—reparations from general reconstruction, development and social policies.33

4 CAPACITY AND RESOURCE CONSTRAINTS

Challenges to the implementation of education reform linked to transitional justice arise in the form of capacity, resource, and other constraints. Perhaps most importantly, damaged and weak education systems in post-conflict countries can significantly hinder progress. For truth commissions, for example, the implementation of recommendations for reform may be undermined by an education system without enough institutional capacity or coordination. Similarly, reparations in the form of education assistance may succeed in increasing the access that victims have to schools, but the impact of the program may be undermined by the quality of education provided by those schools and the psychosocial difficulties faced beneficiaries, as illustrated by the high levels of dropout rates.34 Given the frequent weakness of education systems, civil society actors are often important drivers of the implementation of education reform from a justice perspective, but they too suffer from their own resource and capacity constraints. Some capacity constraints may be inherent to the complex and massive scale of the programs themselves. At the broadest level, the wider structural context can present challenges in the power and economic differences that remain after conflict, with school choice and resources not equally distributed throughout the country, as in South Africa and Peru.35 Opposition from specific actors or groups is often in part about the use of a discourse that involves an acknowledgment of wrongdoing, but linking justice and education can also lead to the prioritization of certain communities or groups of people over others in the allocation of resources and provision of services, which can provoke social tensions within and between communities and groups.36

5 OPPORTUNITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

A strategic approach to linking transitional justice and education should involve identifying opportunities but also remaining realistic about the kind and degree of change that is feasible. It will be necessary to remember that changes in the formal education system are necessarily part of a mid- or long-term process. Efforts to link transitional justice and education should, therefore, manage expectations about their impact. The education system is a large and complex system that is difficult to change, which means that time, scale, and feasibility are factors that must be considered. Entry points may nevertheless be identified through which change may be initiated on a small scale and then potentially leveraged for greater reform in the future. Given various forms of opposition and constraints, this may be difficult, but usually some kind of opportunity will exist. Different levels of education, for example, may offer different opportunities: if activities are too sensitive for students in basic education, it may be possible to implement them within universities, where students are often granted more political space.37

Timing will also be an important factor. In ideal circumstances, educational reform with a transitional justice aim should be developed in contexts in which the conflict is over and some institutional and social willingness allows for a discussion of the past. In this way, the passage of

33 Correa, “Education for Overcoming the Consequences and Legacies,” 2.
time may create the space for action. Limited capacity and resources often make it difficult to scale up projects to reach as many students or teachers as the formal education system, but a limited scope does not mean that high-quality initiatives cannot influence societal debate and policy on education. With reparations programs that provide education assistance, it is important to have concrete, achievable goals, such as helping victims overcome the obstacles they face in accessing education that are the result of previous human rights abuses; there is a danger in promising too much in terms of fully addressing historical injustice and ensuring the right to education to citizens.38

38 Correa, “Education for Overcoming the Consequences and Legacies,” 27.
1 ABSTRACT

The world faces a series of concerns that provide a backdrop to the emerging post-2015 ideals of more inclusiveness and peaceful societies for young and old, including, e.g. a growing youth population, rising social inequalities and (specifically youth) unemployment, increasing rates of violence and various expressions of conflict. In our research we aim to uncover the relevance and influence of educational processes in relation to the various dimensions of youth’s agency in processes of peacebuilding with social justice. This paper discusses the application of our methodological framework developed in the context of the Research Consortium on Education and Peacebuilding, a partnership between the Universities of Amsterdam, Sussex, Ulster and UNICEF. The paper outlines the consortium’s ‘sustainable peacebuilding with social justice’ theoretical framework, which covers the 4R’s of redistribution, recognition, representation and reconciliation, and explains how this relates to the methodological framework that focuses on analysing one of the thematic areas under study: the role of education for youth (political, social and economic) agency in conflict-affected settings. We discuss how this methodological framework has guided the fieldwork in two of the case studies, Pakistan and Myanmar. We focus on two aspects: a) the data collection process with, for and about ‘young people’s formal and non-formal education experiences’ living in these conflict-affected areas, and b) the challenges, ethical considerations and lessons learned when researching the role of education in establishing a sustainable peaceful future.
2 INTRODUCTION

A growing youth population - sometimes called a youth bulge - rising social inequalities combined with specifically youth unemployment and increasing rates of (lethal) violence and various expressions of conflict are only some of the pressing issues we are faced with today, specifically in the global South. These concerns provide a backdrop to the emerging post-2015 ideals of more inclusiveness and peaceful societies for young and old. In order to capitalize on education’s positive potential in challenging conflict-affected contexts, an expansive rather than narrow methodological framing is essential to uncover the relevance and influence of educational processes in relation to the political (e.g. civic engagement), economic (e.g. sustainable income opportunities), cultural (e.g. sustainable societal engagement) and potential conciliatory dimensions of youth’s agency in processes of peacebuilding with social justice.

This paper discusses the application of such a methodological framework that was developed in the context 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. While the consortium carries out research in Myanmar, Pakistan, South Africa, and Uganda, this paper explores the application of the methodological framework and its challenges in the conflict-affected contexts of Myanmar and Pakistan. The consortium works on three key thematic areas: 1) The integration of education in peacebuilding 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 youth agency for (or against) peacebuilding in conflict contexts (led by the University of Amsterdam). While data was collected in Myanmar and Pakistan for each of the three thematic areas mentioned above, in this paper we emphasise the specific framework applied and challenges encountered for research area 3 on ‘youth agency’.

There is a general lack of consensus within the international community over the precise chronological definition of what youth means (see 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. We also recognize that due to ethical and practical limitations, in some of the research contexts we were only partly able to include youth respondents under the age of 18.

The paper first outlines the broader consortium’s ‘sustainable peacebuilding with social justice’ theoretical framework and continues to explain how this relates to our methodological framework that focuses specifically on how to analyse the role of education for youth (political, social and economic) agency in conflict-affected settings. Secondly, we turn to discuss how this methodological framework has guided the recent fieldwork conducted in Pakistan and Myanmar. We focus on two aspects: a) the specifics of the data collection process with, for and about ‘young people’s formal and non-formal education experiences’ living in these conflict-affected areas, and b) the methodological and ethical challenges and lessons learned. We conclude with some final reflections on how to address the methodological and ethical challenges discussed.

3 THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL SECTION

This section outlines our specific methodology to study education’s role for youth agency for peacebuilding. We start by presenting some definitions of what we mean by ‘peacebuilding’ and ‘youth agency’. Subsequently, we share the research questions and methods that guided the data collection and analysis. Finally, we illustrate the selection criteria for the choice of micro-cases that guided each country team.41

3.1 4R’s Framework – sustainable peacebuilding

In moving beyond the dominant ‘security-first’ and ‘Liberal Peacebuilding’ model, our theoretical framework offers a normative, but non-prescriptive vision of the broad components of a peaceful and just society and applies these to the education sector (Novelli, Lopes Cardozo & Smith, 2015). 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. These transformations are directly connected to a range of root causes of conflict in three spheres: the economic (misdistribution of resources and opportunities), the socio-cultural (misrecognition of marginalised identities and knowledges) and the political (misrepresentation of marginalised voices). 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. This is what we have termed our ‘4Rs’ framework for sustainable peacebuilding, or, peacebuilding with social justice (Novelli, Lopes Cardozo & Smith, 2015).42

For this research project youth 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 (Lopes Cardozo et al, 2015). In order to analyse education’s potential to influence (+/-) the agency of youth situated in conflict-affected contexts, this framework argues for the relevance of two main areas of inspiration:

(1) A Critical Realist meta-theoretical view, embracing the Strategic Relational Approach (SRA), as introduced by Jessop (2005) and Hay (2002), and adapted to the field of education (Lopes Cardozo, 2009, 2011; Lopes Cardozo & Hoeks, 2014; Shah & Lopes Cardozo, 2014);

(2) and adding to this specific conceptualisations of youth agency in conflict-affected settings as framed by relevant literature (for a review of this literature, see Lopes Cardozo et al, 2015).

Drawing on our earlier work in this area, we argue that a critical realist ontological lens is best suited within the broad field of critical theory to doing so, as it enables us to identify visible and invisible structures and mechanisms that lead to that which we empirically observe (Shah & Lopes Cardozo, 2014).

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41 It is important to note that the operationalization and choice of methods was adapted to suit the local context and research needs/possibilities.
42 See the webpage of the Research Consortium on Education and Peacebuilding, for Research Briefing 2: Theoretical and Analytical Framework, the full Working paper and shorter executive summaries. Available at http://learningforpeace.unicef.org/partners/research-consortium/research-outputs/
3.2 SRA

The space for manoeuvre that is available - or the agency - of young people living in situations of conflict in many cases is often restricted, and sometimes enabled, in a myriad of ways. Drawing from the SRA (Hay, 2002; Jessop, 2005), structures and agents are treated analytically as separate entities, but are seen to simultaneously have a contingent and dialectal relationship. Specifically, structures are seen as strategically selective. They can reinforce the motivations, actions or strategies of particular individuals/groups, and work against others—thus creating both opportunities and constraints for specific courses of action for specific (youth) constituencies.

Within the confines of particular temporal periods and spaces, specific structures and structural configurations can selectively reinforce the action, tactics, activities and strategies of actors (also defined as their agency) and discourage others. SRA acknowledges that different actors - individuals and groups - may have varying opportunities and constraints due to their levels of access to particular strategic (social, political, cultural, economic) resources. Actors may be differentially motivated in their desire to alter existing structures, acting in ways that consciously and unconsciously serve to reproduce/transform a status quo. Even if driven by a desire for transformation, actors often lack perfect information of their context, leading to false assumptions and actions that may appear unintentional, but are responding to a set of perceived structural constraints (Hay, 2002: 381–383).

A noteworthy argument of SRA is that in any moment the way in which actors - in our case young people - understand and respond to their environment can greatly vary, as can their motivations and intentions for action, leading to an assortment of potential outcomes. Thus, both the structured context within which action occurs, and the types of agency which young people exhibit, have a bearing on what role and function they might play in constructing a positive and sustainable peace. Hence, the SRA can help us is our understandings of how and why possibilities and limitations to young people’s agency as peacebuilders are shaped, and are both time and place-bound. A review of the relevant literature (Lopes Cardozo et al, 2015) illustrates how all too often the multiple (cultural, political and economic) dimensions of youth contributions to both conflict and peacebuilding are treated in isolation, either discursively, or through programmatic responses. Hence, 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 is this helpful to understand (and support) their potential contribution to peacebuilding.

On a critical note, we see a need to move away from a somewhat functionalist tendency of the SRA model. As such, we are keen to translate the - in our view - all too rationalist idea of “strategic calculations” (Hay, 2002) into other, more semiotic and post-structuralist notions of identities, mindsets and motivations – which we find are crucial to fully understand agency of youth, who are positioned in highly complex and often rapidly changing (strategic selective) environments. Therefore, in seeking to understand the complex dynamics of youth agency in relation to peacebuilding, our methodology can fruitfully draw on the orientation to the cultural within recent formulations of cultural political economy (Jessop, 2004; Robertson, 2012:). Motivated by a recognition that “orthodox political economy tends to offer impoverished accounts of how subjects and subjectivities are formed” (Jessop, 2004: 3), we support the idea to bring the role of culture into equal footing with political and economic structures and institutions, resulting in a Cultural Political
Economy (CPE) approach. A CPE analysis allows for an exploration of the identities, motivations and actions of young people in conflict-affected situations.\(^{43}\)

### 3.3 Research questions

The research questions developed for this study were inspired by the above presented 4R’s, the SRA as well as insights from a literature review on youth agency, peacebuilding and education (Lopes Cardozo et al, 2015). While our sub-questions focus on 1) *youth-related policies and framing*, 2) *formal and non-formal education initiatives*, and 3) *youth voice and agency*, in the end we aim to respond to our main question:

To what extent do the data highlight opportunities and challenges for the support of youth agency for transformations, through addressing:

1. political agency (representation);
2. economic/sustainable livelihoods (redistribution);
3. socio-cultural relations/identity formation (recognition);
4. non-violence conflict-resolution skills/attitudes for youth, meaning to deal with the past and build trust (reconciliation)?

Hence, engaging with a critical theoretical approach, as set out above, we aim to explore why (certain groups of) youth are/aren’t behaving in certain ways in relation to reproducing or transforming inequalities in their respective contexts, and how they see their beliefs and strategies in relation to the education initiatives that are (not) available to them.

### 3.4 Research methods and key respondents

While recognizing the relatively short time frame we had available for the fieldwork, we aimed to draw from, but not do fully justice to critical ethnographic research approaches and critical discourse analysis of ‘raw’ collected data/texts/photographic material as well as transcriptions. Following from this rationale, the research methods proposed for this research area are qualitative in nature. Ungar and Liebenberg (2009), from a children’s and youth psychological perspective, present a range of useful and important methodological orientations for studying agency among youth – including: 1) the need to deal with unequal power relations between researcher and young respondents; 2) avoiding oppressive methods that fail to enhance trust; 3) cultural sensitivity rather than voyeuristically studying indigenous societies; 4) and genuine participation and inclusion of youth voices in (action) research. In addition, we are inspired by the insights from the work of Dunne et al (2015) on *Youth researching Youth*, that shows how there is a need to consider and address power relations in research teams that engage with young people as research-colleagues or otherwise involved in the research process. This means that acknowledging age-difference is not enough, as other identity categories (gender, language, class, religion, ‘local’ or ‘foreign’) play an important role in process of accessing, collecting and interpreting data.\(^{44}\) Bringing these suggestions together with the key messages from our literature review (Lopes Cardozo et al, 2015), the following methods were applied:

\(^{43}\) Jessop (2004) originally interpreted culture in his proposition of *cultural political economy* as semiosis defined as the intersubjective production of meaning, including narrativity, rhetoric, hermeneutics, identity, reflexivity, historicity and discourse. Robertson (2014) takes the notion of culture a step further by adding the materiality of social relations, and the constraints agents face to such analysis. According to her, in order to fully comprehend the complexities of the field of educational governance and practice, critical examination of meaning-making processes are vital for our understanding (Robertson 2012: 3).

\(^{44}\) The Myanmar-team included a number of ‘youth researchers’, in the role of full researchers or as research assistants.

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participatory methods including Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with youth by engaging in reflective group discussions and group activities. The FGDs served as a primary source of data, which were;

- complimented with data from semi-structured interviews (individual and small group);
- document analysis (of youth-related policy and programmatic material);
- and relational stakeholder mapping (including a mapping of youth-related education/creative learning initiatives by research teams consisting of international and local researchers, and participatory mapping with youth).

The studies conducted in both Myanmar and Pakistan included a range of key respondents, including: the youth themselves (including representatives from different youth constituencies, as well as ‘elite’ and ‘marginalised’ youth groups), providers of youth educational initiatives (staff, teachers, facilitators etc.), development partners and NGOs supporting youth programming, and government officials (covering context-specific range of youth-related policies). In the selection of what we called ‘micro-cases’ (non-formal and formal education initiatives focusing on youth), we used the following selection criteria:

- Micro-cases are reflecting a context-relevant and balanced selections of identified themes in the literature review on youth (including work related interventions/TVET; (non)formal citizenship/civics or history education; Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights education; music/arts/sports or intergroup/interfaith related education).
- Representing a balance between formal and non-formal education initiatives, as well as youth-led, government led and NGO, CSO or IO initiated initiatives;
- Based on and reflecting a balanced range of identified themes in the country context/conflict analysis;
- Representing a balance and rationale for choice of geographical (urban/rural) location(s);
- Representing various youth constituencies (including both elites and marginalized groups of youth).

The study has been conducted in accordance with the ethical standards produced by the AISSR. Three sets of ethical issues are addressed in this project: 1) obtaining informed consent and official approval from relevant institutions (e.g. governments, school management); 2) protecting the identity of the participants and ensuring that their views are accurately reflected in any write up of the project; 3) dealing with vulnerable communities who have experienced trauma as a consequence of conflict, we paid particular attention to principles of ‘Do No Harm’. The sections below share in more detail how the research teams adapted these issues in each specific context, and what challenged we faced in doing so.

4 THE CHALLENGES AND DILEMMAS OF RESEARCHING YOUTH IN PAKISTAN

Our findings draw on data collected from 99 youth, accessed in two provincial capital cities, Karachi in Sindh (N=71) and Peshawar in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province (N=28). Although the conflict drivers are different, both cities have seen protracted conflict. In Karachi, ethno-political, sectarian, militant, and criminal violence continues to claim thousands of lives. Peshawar, being a front-line city, first after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and currently in the US-led ‘War on Terror’, continues to experience violence, militancy and terrorism.

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45 AISSR: Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research: http://aissr.uva.nl/research/ethical-review/ethical-review.html
46 We will stick to the use of ‘province’ to refer to states within Pakistan, as is done in the context itself, and ‘states’ when referring to Myanmar.
Youth were accessed in the context of four micro-cases, listed in ascending order in terms of reach, with the smallest in scale listed first.

i. **Youth Parliament**: Founded in 2005, the youth parliament focuses on the political agency of youth in Sindh. Each year, 100 parliamentarians with an 11 member cabinet, take oath to work on issues affecting the community locally. The parliamentarians mainly comprise privileged well-educated youth from middle- or upper-middle class.

ii. **Sports Intervention**: Funded by UNICEF, the recreational, sports, and play-based peacebuilding intervention is implemented in conflict-affected areas of three provinces—Sindh, Balochistan, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa—and caters to mainly marginalized and out-of-school youth.

iii. **Social Entrepreneurship Training**: This intervention, focusing on economic agency, is offered across all provinces. It aims to empower socio-economically disadvantaged youth by giving them skills and resources to start their own business and raise their social consciousness.

iv. **Pakistan Studies curriculum texts**: Focusing on the cultural and civic agency of youth, this intervention constitutes the formal curriculum texts in Pakistan Studies, mandated by the Government of Pakistan. Being a compulsory subject, this intervention has the widest reach and caters to all secondary school students irrespective of socio-economic demographics.

The strategic selection of interventions enabled accessing youth from a range of constituencies. The participants included slightly more females (N=58) than males (N=41) and covered an age spectrum between 14 and 29 years, although two-thirds were 17 year-old or under. The sample included all of Pakistan’s five major ethnic groups, though Urdu speaking **Mohajirs** (N=29) and **Pakhtuns** (N=36) were dominant, mirroring the ethnic composition of the two cities. In terms of socio-economic status, a slightly greater number (N=56) were accessed in disadvantaged neighbourhoods compared to wealthier locations (N=43). The representation of religious minorities was small (N=3) because of their low numbers in the general population and the intervention sites. It would have been useful to amplify their voice by using targeted strategies outside the selected intervention. However, the limited time and resources did not allow this.

The diversity of our youth participants inevitably compounded the methodological and ethical challenges we experienced during the field and the ways we negotiated these dilemmas, as discussed below.

**4.1 Informed consent**

Informed consent requires that ‘participation in research should be the result of an active and informed choice made by participants’ and that where consent is appropriate, it is sought in contextually sensitive manner (Te Riele, 2013: 8). The Pakistan Studies intervention engaged youth under-18 years and therefore according to ethical standards in the Global North, required us to take written consent from both parents and the participating youth. In a context of oral culture, written consent was considered inappropriate, as individuals and communities in Southern contexts are often ‘wary’ of ‘consent forms’ as they are seen as carrying ‘legal risks’ (Bhutta, 2004: 775). It was also deemed impractical to send information sheets to parents most of whom were illiterate given that several of the participating schools were serving disadvantaged communities. In all cases, the head teacher, in consultation with the Pakistan Studies teacher, made the gate-keeping decision to participate. Having secured adult gate-keepers’ consent, we approached students within school
premises to help them understand the research and their participation in it. While in disadvantaged schools, the teachers acted *in loco parentis* and consented for their students’ participation, in the private schools, the parents of students who had already consented to participate were informed through students’ diary, a communication channel routinely used for informing parents regarding school activities. Oral consent from students was sought both at the time of selection and before data collection and was audio recorded. Thus we followed a more situated approach to ‘informed consent’, locating our judgments in the specifics of our contexts.

4.2 Selecting participants

Another challenge faced was the presence of more youth willing to participate than we had intended to select. We could accommodate all eager youth by either repeating the data collection procedures with groups of students over two or three days or include all of them within one group. The time-intensive nature of our methods made it less likely for schools to make students accessible to us for more than a day. At the same time, we also found that any increase in the number of students beyond eight would adversely affect the quality of the interaction and discussions generated. We, therefore, decided to select the required number of students on a first come first serve basis. This decision may open us to criticism for not being inclusive in our approach. Although non-verbal communication indicated that those who could not be chosen felt somewhat disappointed, they appreciated the constraints on the number of participants.

In two instances, it was the (head) teacher who selected the students. In one case, the students were on end of term break to prepare for their forthcoming external examination. The headmaster had to send for six students residing in the vicinity of the school. In the second instance, the headmistress preferred to select a group of students for us to save teaching time and the limited time available for the data collection on the very same day. The idea of consent in this situation can be problematic. It might be possible that the teachers’ selection was made on the basis of students’ academic ability or their confidence and competence in speaking. We addressed this issue of top-down selection by giving them the choice to drop out of the study without any explanation and sought their verbal consent. Although we were mindful that in Southern contexts young participants may find it difficult to decline an invitation to participate because of age-related hierarchies (Tetteh, 2013), the enthusiastic and vocal participation of students during data collection indicated that they were not unwilling actors. Based on the lessons learned in Karachi, we visited schools over two days in Peshawar. The first day was solely dedicated to introducing the study to potential participants and seeking informed consent from them, and where appropriate from their parents.

4.3 Researcher – participant positioning

Another challenge encountered relates to the multiple ways the researchers were positioned by the participants, both youth and adult, and the ways these shifting positions were shaped by institutional spaces and pre-existing discursive norms (Ringer, 2013). We were positioned as donor/funder, evaluator and trainer. For example, the more privileged youth parliamentarians positioned the researcher affiliated with a Northern academy as a ‘marketing agent’ and knowledge-broker for showcasing and disseminating their ‘democratic’ and ‘active citizenship’ identities within elite discourses in Pakistan and the West. The positionings offered to us by adults, e.g. evaluator, had ethical implication, as some gatekeepers insisted on accompanying the youth during data collection. The researchers had to assert their researcher identity by resorting to the discourse of research ethics and the imperative of confidentiality in order to ensure the confidentiality and
anonymity of the participating youth. In addition, we sought to position the gatekeepers as facilitators of research and contributor to knowledge generation on youth agency for peacebuilding.

4.4 Trust-building

Suspicion of researchers and research motives is a challenge in conflict-affected contexts (Boyden, 2004). This was strongly felt in Pakistan where the alleged involvement of NGOs in the US search for bin Laden has resulted in a trust deficit and misunderstanding of foreigners. We sought to build trust first through ‘cultural matching’ (Achinstein and Aguirre 2008: 678) that is establishing trust by tapping into shared cultural resources in ourselves and our youth participants in research activities. We used cultural artifacts such as speaking in shared local languages—Urdu, Sindhi, and Pashto, wearing local attire suitable to the particular socio-economic and ethnic context, and using local cultural references in conversations. This enabled the blending in of the researcher as ‘one of them’, resulting in narrowing the distance with youth participants. The second strategy deployed was ‘trust by association’, that is accessing research sites through local NGOs and individuals who had developed ‘trust capital’ with the local communities over the years. We invested much time in gaining the trust of local NGOs in the first place. This often meant spending time with key NGO workers within professional and private spaces as the distinction between the personal and the professional was often blurred in the research contexts in Pakistan.

Moreover, the multiple identities of the main researcher—female, Indian, Muslim and associated with a Northern university—were strategically deployed to negotiate power disparities and gain meaningful access. While her identity as a woman researcher was helpful in making female participants more open to share their concerns, given the gender segregated nature of Pakistani, her association with a Northern academy made male stakeholders much more accommodating of her requests, which was further supported by deep-rooted local norms of hospitality.

5 METHODOLOGICAL AND ETHICAL CHALLENGES IN ENGAGING YOUTH IN MYANMAR

The Myanmar team draws their findings from data collected over 80 respondents, including youth as well as staff (sometimes youth, sometimes adult) connected to the micro cases introduced below. In addition, over 20 interviews were conducted with various international and government institutions, which covered relevant issues concerning the role of education for youth agency. Respondents were accessed in two research sites, namely Mon state and the broader Yangon area, yet for this paper we draw mostly from our engagement with respondents in Mon state. FGDs were held with youth respondents on Youth and staff were accessed in the context of five micro-cases, which for reasons of anonymity are listed below only containing rather general descriptions: 1) a locally based youth movement focused on the preservation of local languages; 2) a local youth non-formal education organisation providing IT, literacy and political awareness raising; 3) an international UN funded project on youth agency for peacebuilding; 4) a socio-cultural youth-led performance group that focuses on health awareness, vocational skills training and artefacts; and 5) a non-formal education initiative focused on technical and vocational skills training. In addition, and as part of our broader study, we organised 10 FGDs and 9 interviews with a range of respondents, including students and teachers, to discuss the formal education of history and the language of instruction in schools.

In reflecting on the methodological and ethical dilemmas raised by engaging youth in Myanmar, this section builds on recent thinking which has drawn attention to the ‘unique challenges Burma presents for researchers seeking to behave ethically with their informants, their institutions, each
other and the public sphere’ (Brooten & Metro, 2014: 1). As the writers point out, conducting research in a country at a time of rapid flux, undergoing ethnic and religious conflict and uncertain processes of political liberalisation after decades of military rule certainly ‘raises the stakes of scholar’s decisions’ (Brooten & Metro, 2014: 2). The research team in Myanmar were faced with the challenge of operationalising, within such a politicised and unpredictable environment, the consortium’s far from neutral commitment to investigate the links between education and peacebuilding using a normative framework of peacebuilding with social justice. From a global, macro-level perspective, Duffield (2008) has drawn attention to the ethical implications for international engagement of the geopolitics of aid to Myanmar. This has created the perception that powerful donors and actors are collusive with a repressive state by appearing to grant it legitimacy, thus creating a deficit of trust with many local and non-state actors. While such concerns were voiced to the research team by local NGOs, including those working with youth, the following discussion draws on our more micro-level interactions with youth participants in a range of formal and non-formal educational micro-cases. In reflecting on how the research team drew on ethical principles and practices to navigate methodological challenges attention is given not only to logistical and procedural decisions but also to their underlying ontological rationales.

5.1 Gaining meaningful informed consent and the relevance of inter-subjective ethical models

Influenced in part by the advice of our local researchers, the research team decided that consent to youth participation in the research could be more meaningfully negotiated orally rather than through the use of written forms as required by many academic ethical boards. Building consent in this way involved a dialogic process conducted in local languages in which various aspects of the research were carefully explained, sometimes using images as well as words. These included its aims and purposes, the reasons for the focus on youth agency, the process of dissemination of research findings, data security and respect for the anonymity of participants. Continuing communication with participants at the completion of the research was also discussed. Questions and comments were invited from the youth to ensure comprehension. This approach was repeated when young people were met more than once within an iterative and on-going process of exchange between researchers and participants.

Several ethical considerations underpinned this relational and experiential approach, which align with Metro’s justifications for avoiding signed consent forms with Burmese teachers (Metro, 2014). Firstly, and in line with the approach taken by the Pakistan team, a verbal rather than a written approach was deemed culturally appropriate, given the strong tradition of orality in Burma (Brooten & Metro, 2014, 18). Moreover, given the rather abstract and complex nature of the research aims which needed to be properly communicated, as well as their use of culturally specific concepts (e.g. agency, the 4Rs), oral discussion had the advantage of opening up issues for youth’s spontaneous and open-ended reflection. It was felt that this process rendered their consent in a more participatory and genuinely informed way than would have been possible from signing a consent form. In other words, giving youth a chance to deliberate on the meaning of the research and the implications of their involvement dramatized that respect for their autonomy frequently associated with achieving informed consent (Hammersley & Traianou, 2012: 75-76). This was particularly appropriate in a research project which after all was about the exercise of young people’s agency.

5.2 Avoiding extractive research: and the value of reciprocity

An unavoidable challenge for all researchers was their instrumentalisation within the constraints of short term fieldwork which was likely to leave the impression on participants and others that the
project was essentially extractive, superficial and of little long term benefit to participants. Within this conundrum, the research team was particularly mindful of the ethical value of reciprocity (Hammersley & Traianou, 2012: 15). As Brooten and Metro have noted, ‘it is unrealistic to expect participants to give time and energy to researchers and in some cases to go through considerable inconvenience, expecting nothing in return but the abstract satisfaction of having contribute to the advancement of knowledge’ (Brooten & Metro, 2014: 14). In this spirit, the research team, whenever feasible, drew on the academic resources of the broader Research Consortium or their own professional expertise and energy to reciprocate the good will of our participants. For instance, following a focus group discussion with one youth group, a separate meeting was arranged in which they were able to have a long informal chat with the researchers in which they took charge of the ‘agenda’. This event met with a very positive response and underlined the genuine concern and care which motivated researchers.

Some youth organisations were keen to receive copies of the project’s theoretical framework and perceived their involvement in the research process as a learning opportunity. Communicating the longer-term implications of the research project was an important dimension of such reciprocity. Most of our participants were keen to read the results of our findings and asked for them to be translated into local languages. Most also welcomed the opportunity to be included in the Consortium mailing list and appreciated their chance to have an on-going connection with an international research team. The invitation of youth groups to the research team’s initial feedback meetings at the end of the fieldwork period also integrated them into longer-term process of knowledge generation. While needing careful management to avoid creating expectations that could not be fulfilled, exercising reciprocity in these diverse ways was an important feature of our ethical practice that acted as a corrective to potentially negative responses to the project’s structural limitations.

5.3 Addressing controversial or painful issues and attention to the affective, relational and context dependent framing of the research

In seeking to understand young people’s perceptions of their agency, especially in relation to political issues, the research team was frequently faced with the reluctance of some youth, especially those from rural areas, to offer their opinions. Local researchers and some youth leaders pointed out that such responses were symptomatic of a fear and uncertainty about the meaning of the ‘political’ or of political engagement which was in part a result of the legacy of and continued monopoly on such forms of expression by the military dominated state. In this way, youth responses corroborated Prasse-Freeman’s perception that Burmese ‘citizens understand explicit politics as dangerous’ (Prasse-Freeman, 2012: 371). Indeed, these anxieties had a traumatic reality during the period of our fieldwork when the vulnerability of outspoken youth to state violence was continually evident in instances of police brutality against students protesting against the dominance of the military in Parliament as well as the Education Law. Some of our participants talked about their fears for their lives as a result of earlier political activism. Local researchers also interpreted youth reticence as the product of the failure of the education system to encourage open-ended critical thinking. In such interactions with youth, the priorities of the research agenda were truncated and trumped by concern for an ethical duty of care to participants, which recognised the emotional cost of their communications with us. Recognising and respecting the level of engagement preferred by youth themselves, the team was thrown back on ethical fundamentals, in particular the Kantian principle that human beings should never be treated as a means to achieving our goals but always as ends in themselves (Caygill, 1995: 99-102; Hammersley & Traianou, 2012: 22). Avoiding such
instrumentalisation also meant recognising the ‘situated rationality of the context within which people’s actions make sense’ (Brooten & Metro, 2014: 8; Parker, 2007: 2249).

6 CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

Reflecting back on the research experience of the teams working in Myanmar and Pakistan, we consider the participatory methods as having been extremely useful in breaking linguistic barriers, power dynamics and accessing youth voice in a creative way. At the same time, FGDs are time-intensive, which has a bearing on how many youth can be included in micro-cases. It also needs considerable financial resources. For example, a snack break was offered mid-way with lunch boxes arranged and offered by the project. In one case, a group of marginalized young women revealed they and their families had not eaten anything for more than a day. It was good that by chance the researcher had ordered quite a rich meal for the lunch boxes that day which saved us from unethical practice that day. So she interrupted the FDG, offered the participants the lunch boxes and resumed the activities later. Other financial aspects include the hiring of researchers or assistants who speak the local language, and transportation to sometimes hard to reach and difficult destinations.

Limited time frames were a shared concern across the teams in the different countries under study. Accessing young people, particularly in conflict-affected context where there exists a trust deficit, additional time is required to build trust with key gate-keepers first who can then facilitate meaningful access. In addition, considerable time investment and an ethics of care was deemed necessary to overcome mistrust and to obtain data in a meaningful and reciprocal manner.

Finally, in addition to the challenges we encountered during the “fieldwork”, an ethical challenge that is to be encountered in the write-up and dissemination relates to how we portray our youth participants and the purposes served by our depictions. Hence, here we want to reflect on our (future) communication of research findings, while protecting respondents from harm and being mindful of an ethics of responsible representation. The range of youth constituencies we spoke to included members of a range of youth movements, and others who were working under the radar within organisations whose legal status was uncertain. This poses a particular challenge when reporting on our findings as even with anonymity such groups may be identifiable and therefore liable to reprisal. The option discussed within the communications team of the Consortium of preparing several reports for different audiences may be a useful strategy for managing this challenge. Nevertheless, this is an instance where representation through the publication and dissemination of academic research findings about youth may be harmful to their context-specific and highly contingent well-being. We would need to maintain a fine balance between the ‘desire to advocate for youth agency’ for peacebuilding and the need to reveal ‘nuances, barriers and full complexities of youth experience’ (Walsh et al 2014: 52) so that we can shift understanding of their positioning beyond ‘a victim-perpetrator binary’ to an understanding of ‘heterogeneous youth constituencies as embedded within and reacting to processes of conflict and peace’ (Lopes Cardozo et al. 2015: 6).

7 REFERENCES


UNICEF. (2009) *Young people in West and Central Africa: Trends, priorities, investments and partners*. UNICEF West and Central Africa Regional Office