STATE OF THE ART PAPER – SUMMARY
UNDERSTANDINGS, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

PEACEBUILDING AND YOUNG PEOPLE

War Child Holland is an independent international non-governmental organization. The organization invests in a peaceful future of children affected by armed conflict. War Child Holland is part of War Child International, a network of independent organizations.

War Child Holland programmes strengthen psychosocial development, contribute to peacebuilding processes and advocate for the rights of children and youth, applying the power of creative arts and sports.

War Child Holland has programmes in Afghanistan, Chechnya, Colombia, DR Congo, Israel and Palestinian Territories, the Netherlands, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Sudan and Uganda.

STATE OF THE ART SUMMARY
PEACEBUILDING AND YOUNG PEOPLE

1. INTRODUCTION

This management summary provides an overview of main understandings and findings from the State of the Art Paper on Peacebuilding and Young People[1]. The text suggests how these findings relate to War Child policy and practice. It ends with a list of recommendations. The Annexes provide additional detail on two models used and relevant principles and competencies for working with young people on peace. It serves as a basis for discussion and decision making on future 'peacebuilding' directions by War Child management.

2. SUMMARY

Key understandings and findings

1. **IMPACT**: A definition of peacebuilding is provided, but a key understanding regarding peacebuilding is that it is not primarily about finding a definite answer to the question what it is, but recognizing the potential of what it can be. In addition to being a wide variety of (a process of) activities, it is also the description of an impact of an intervention on its operational context.

2. **YOUTH**: A key understanding regarding young people and violent conflict is the phenomenon of youth crisis. Youth is a very heterogeneous (often an ill-described) group of young people that has great, largely untapped, peacebuilding potential. They should be seen as active agents in transforming their societies. Increasing their resilience and enhancing their socio-political engagement should be the main focus points of peacebuilding interventions involving young people.

3. **VISION AND MISSION**: A key finding related to War Child's overall strategic focus, and assessment, planning and implementing capacity for effective peacebuilding is that attention is needed for clarification of core values & principles, and mission and vision statements. This relates to the importance of becoming more conflict sensitive throughout the organization, regardless of what War Child considers to be its core business. The current state of affairs warrants humble claims on being a peacebuilding organization.

4. **EFFECTIVENESS**: A key finding related to War Child's peacebuilding efforts is that current interventions at the individual and community level are very relevant for those directly involved and their direct environment. Effective contributions to building peace beyond programme results however, require strategic cross-sectoral interventions and the involvement of key stakeholders and interventions at the socio-political level.

5. **FOCUS**: In summary, based on the experience of exploring the vast amount of approaches, interventions, programmes and activities referred to as peacebuilding, it is proposed that **War Child should focus its peacebuilding efforts on consolidating its current interventions using a conflict transformation approach and increasing its conflict sensitive programming capacity**. **War Child should be humble in its claim to be a peacebuilding organization.** An elaboration on this and more detailed recommendations follow at the end of the document.

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[1] The State of the Art Paper on Peacebuilding and Young People was presented in 2007 and served as a basis for debate within War Child. It offers an overview of concepts and approaches, good peacebuilding practices, and identifies criteria for effective peacebuilding; and suggests specific recommendations in relation to peacebuilding and the development of relevant (tools for) programming involving young people. It is available from the Programmes Support Department at head office upon request.

3. GLOBAL OVERVIEW

Concepts and approaches

6. **CONFLICT**: Conflict is a disagreement through which people involved perceive a threat to their positions, interests or needs. Conflicts are part of human life and nature. Not all conflicts become violent; they should be seen as potentially contributing to positive change. Conflicts within and between societies are complex social, political, cultural, economic phenomena. Their complexity warrant in-depth and continuous analysis and reflection. Numerous models exist to assess the different dynamics at play in conflicts.

   One perspective that is often used to understand conflict is the 'deficit' approach. This approach identifies (post-) conflict 'deficits' linked to major sectors in society in which root causes of a conflict could be identified (military/ security, political/ institutional, economic/ social, and psychological/ social). **Identifying and analyzing these root causes of a particular conflict is a widely recommended step for any intervention. Done properly, it continuously shapes the approach, methods and tools employed.**

7. **PEACEBUILDING**: Peace may be described as: 1) the absence of violence and destructive conflict – negative peace; and 2) the capacity to deal with conflict in a just and sustainable manner – positive peace. **Peacebuilding is the effort to transform contexts, attitudes and behaviour in a direction conducive to the reduction of root causes of violent conflicts, enhancing the capacity of individuals, groups and institutions to deal with emerging conflicts non-violently and constructively**. It covers the practice of carrying out distinct peace activities or implementing a process of peace activities dealing with conflict directly. Peacebuilding is also the description of impact on the context in which programming takes place. This impact on 'the big peace' can realized by peace practice but also by non-peace practice (development and humanitarian assistance programmes), indirectly dealing with issues of conflict and peace.

   Peacebuilding interventions in the psychological/social sector of society highlight the need to engage mechanisms to restore inter-personal and inter-communal relations to complement processes of reconstruction and rehabilitation in other sectors. This should take place at all levels of society, from overall leadership (Track 1) to sectoral leadership (Track 2) to grassroots levels (Track 3). **Interventions in the psychological / social sector are seen as key to the internalization of the wider peacebuilding process by affected populations.**

8. **CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION**: Although peacebuilding as a concept was initially developed in terms of a policy framework for conflict management involving civil society that would complement peacemaking and peacekeeping interventions, it is more and more seen as a practical journey towards conflict transformation. **The most appropriate way to deal with conflict directly is not to prevent or solve it, but to transform it.** The conflict transformation approach engages with conflict in a process of transforming relationships, interests, discourses and other factors that support the continuation of violent conflict. The emphasis is put on the empowerment of local change agents to gradually transform the conflicting society to a more just society, through a series of small and large changes, in which all the actors have an important role to play.

9. **YOUTH**: Understanding the involvement of youth in violent conflict requires a framework that reflects the complexities of the transition to adulthood in societies under pressure. **The issue of 'youth and violent conflict' concerns more than youth: it is a reflection – and at the**

same time a further aggravation – of a broader societal crisis. Trying to understand the intersection between youth and violent conflict is a way of re-examining societies and development processes. Research provides three lines of reasoning behind the involvement of young people in violent conflict. Demography – They fight because there are too many of them; Coercion – They fight because they are forced to; and Youth crisis – They fight because they are alienated and disenfranchised.

'Youth' is considered as the stage between childhood and adulthood. There are several approaches to understanding 'youth', such as biological definitions – taking age as main determinant for development; and sociological definitions – defining 'youth' as a period of diverse and complex transitions towards autonomy. 'Youth' should be seen as a heterogeneous group of people with widely differing needs, interests and ambitions, not as a monolithic, homogenous group. Three different approaches of involving young people in peacebuilding were introduced: service-based (working for young people), participative (working with young people) and youth-led (work done by young people themselves). **Young people have great, largely untapped peacebuilding resources. They should be regarded as active agents in their own lives and capable participants in their communities.**

10. **PEACE PRACTICE – EFFECTIVENESS**: The main consideration for peacebuilding as an impact of peace practice (interventions carried out to explicitly deal with conflict) is whether programmes are effective in contributing to 'the big peace'.

    Peace work is carried out on two basic levels, some concentrating on individual, personal change and others concentrating on socio-political change (Personal versus Socio-political). Strategies for peace range from those that are based on the belief that peace is built through the engagement of many people to those based on the belief that peace is possible only if certain people holding key positions are engaged (More people versus Key people). Studies show that work that stays only at the individual level without translation into institutional impacts at the socio political level has no discernable impact on peace. Such work becomes effective only if it is linked to, and engaged with, work also at the socio-political level. In addition, work that focuses on more people cannot, by itself, achieve sufficient momentum to end conflict or build peace; nor can work concentrated on key people. **For effectiveness, efforts to engage more people in peace practice must also link efforts to involving key people and vice versa. Thus, separate, well-intended programmes aimed at contributing to peace do not automatically add up to 'the big peace'.**

11. **(NON-)PEACE PRACTICE – CONFLICT SENSITIVITY**: The main consideration for peacebuilding as an impact of other interventions than peace practice (interventions not aimed primarily at dealing with conflict but carried out in conflict prone areas – development and humanitarian assistance programmes) is whether programmes are increasing their positive and minimize their negative effects on the context of operation.

    Studies show that development and humanitarian assistance becomes part of conflict. Assistance is not neutral, but becomes a part of the context. There are two realities in any conflict situation: dividers and connectors. Dividers are those factors that people are fighting about or cause tension. Connectors bring people together and/or tend to reduce tension. Assistance has an impact on both dividers and connectors. It can increase or reduce dividers or increase or reduce connectors. Resource transfers (what aid agencies bring in and how they distribute it) and implicit ethical messages (what is communicated by how agencies work) are the mechanisms through which assistance produces impact. Finally, the details of

assistance programmes are crucial: what, why, who, by whom, when, where, and how are programmes implemented. Studies prove that there are always options for changing assistance programs to eliminate negative impacts (increased conflict) or to improve positive contributions to peace, highlighting the need for conflict sensitive programming. **A conflict sensitive organization carries out in-depth analysis of the conflict environment (actors, profile, causes and dynamics) informed by the perspectives of the communities themselves; undertakes ongoing mapping and (re)analysis of the conflict as the programme unfolds, and; ensures that knowledge gained from this analysis informs the different steps of the programme, from planning to implementation, monitoring and evaluation.**

12. **PEACEBUILDING AND YOUNG PEOPLE**: Apart from the compelling argument of the sheer number of young people living in conflict affected areas, other reasons for identifying young people as distinct actors in peacebuilding are that – they are active participants in armed struggle; they are primary producers of violence in post-violent conflict stages; they are victims of (post-) conflict violence; they are active in community development, and; they have the right to participation.

In addition, five threshold conditions of promoting young people as actors of peaceful change were presented: young people engage in socio-political participation and decision-making; young people forge connections between themselves and their communities; young people build constituencies for peace; youth people enjoy education and training for the workplace; and young people have confidence and self-esteem. **Ultimately, increasing resilience and enhancing socio-political engagement should be the main focus points of peacebuilding interventions involving young people.**

Programmes and interventions

13. **THREE PROGRAMMING CATEGORIES**: Based on extensive mapping of relevant programmes and activities of organizations working in the area of peacebuilding and youth, the following programming categories are identified.

a) Community Activities and Creative Youth Work
The programmes and activities presented highlight a variety of ways in which young people are involved in peacebuilding efforts. Either through community based programmes or by specific creative and sports programmes for young people.

Many activities fall under this substantial category of activities at the community level. Activities such as socio-drama, cultural activities and sports, are very appropriate in dealing with communal issues of conflict and peace, as well as bring different divided groups together. Over time some of these activities have further developed into co-facilitated Peace Clubs, Youth and Children Clubs, Child Community Centres, Community Working Groups and Community Action Groups where issues of peace and conflict are dealt with.

b) Education and Training
The programmes and activities presented show the relevance of formal and non-formal educational practice for peacebuilding. Capacity building projects on issues of peace and conflict and training of young people and various stakeholders involved in working with youth such as NGO staff, social and community workers, teachers and policy makers. While most

of capacity building is being undertaken by recognized institutions, there is an increasing capacity developed among youth-led organizations to provide these capacities.

Development and implementation of appropriate education and teacher training programmes in conflict affected areas represent a major challenge. Inserting elements of peace education, non-violence, conflict transformation, citizenship and human rights into educational curricula, may be instrumental for changing the predominant social and cultural paradigms, transforming causes of conflict.

c) Advocacy, Awareness Raising and Youth Research

Involving young people in the representation, consultation and decision making on issues that concern them, enables recognition of young people's role and participation in the re-building of post-war societies. Advocacy and awareness raising have value in and of themselves and are needed to ensure support for the above mentioned programmes and activities. Research contributing to evidence based programming on conflict- and target group specific issues, contributes to larger scale impact of interventions.

Youth and child advocacy related to peacebuilding is a relative new area of attention. Access to relevant and unbiased information in war affected areas is generally not easy to get by. Awareness raising on the role of young people in peacebuilding is nevertheless gradually taking off and the majority of youth-led organisations are somehow engaged in these efforts. Participative youth research in peacebuilding is still in its infancy.

4. POSITIONING WAR CHILD

This chapter places War Child in the wider community of organizations working towards peace. Please refer to ANNEXES I and II for a graphic representation of the positioning of War Child. It is not meant to give an accurate picture of what each individual organization is doing, but it does shed light on where War Child approximately fits in this community.

14. War Child works towards 'positive' peace, aiming to transform contexts, behaviour and attitudes in a direction conducive to a reduction of root causes of social conflicts, and enhancing the capacity of individuals, groups and institutions to manage emerging conflicts non-violently and constructively.

15. War Child works mainly in the realm of the psychological/social 'deficit' of societies. Programmes focus primarily at audiences in communities on the individual / personal level. Activities targeting key stakeholders on the socio / political level are increasingly included. All activities War Child implements could therefore be seen as potentially contributing towards peace, but the necessary interplay between 'strategies' and 'levels of intervention' for effective peacebuilding highlights the complexity of peace work, and warrants a 'humble' claim for War Child's peacebuilding impact.

16. War Child implements programmes to enhance the resilience of children and youth by strengthening protective factors and lessening risk factors. Any programme targeting youth for positive peacebuilding impact, should aim at increasing their resilience and their socio-political engagement. War Child explicitly aims to impact on the former, its work on the latter is less evident. In combination with the lack of an integrated, holistic approach to the peacebuilding process, the impact of War Child programming from a peacebuilding perspective is therefore likely to be limited.

17. War Child aims – among other things – to re-establish social structures, rituals and traditions in community life, increase support for peace and reconciliation and increase life skills and livelihood skills, of young people. The focus is mainly on grassroots levels, less so on sectoral and top leadership levels. In relation to the categorization used in the State of the Art, it can be concluded that most interventions fit the *community and creative youth work* category. *Education and training* interventions are gaining importance and *Advocacy, awareness raising and youth research* interventions focus mostly on ad hoc awareness raising events. Increasingly, child rights, education and media activities are becoming part of War Child interventions.

5. CONCLUSIONS

1. War Child is a humanitarian organization with a strong and long term (development-oriented) commitment to children and youth in complex emergencies and conflict-prone areas. Peacebuilding elements are firmly embedded in War Child's mission statement and to a lesser extent in its various policies and programmes. The mission of the organization is to contribute to 'positive peace', to peaceful societies that are just and sustainable.

2. Effective peacebuilding – that is: creating just and sustainable peace – takes more than well intended stand-alone peace programmes. It requires strategic cross-sectoral partnerships and integrated interventions, a focus on political and institutional levels and on strategies to reach key people in society. Complex emergencies call for holistic approaches in the fields of humanitarian and development assistance and peace work. War Child currently has weak organizational capacity to deal with these issues.

3. War Child's programmes are very valuable to those directly participating and otherwise involved. Based on the assessment of current interventions however, the impact of War Child's programmes from a peacebuilding perspective is likely to be limited. Moreover, the reality of War Child's programmatic decisions is that it has recently pulled out of areas where there may have been considerable potential for effective peacebuilding programmes.

4. The claims and realities do not match. This mismatch creates a blurred image and focus for both insiders and outsiders to the organization. The current Mission Statement adds to the confusion. Being a peacebuilding organisation or not is not an issue of semantics, but determines focus and strategic choices.

5. The State of the Art Paper outlines the argumentation for the position that War Child should consolidate its current activities, taking a conflict transformation approach. It should increase the learning from its current interventions. In addition, from the understanding of the potential impact of its work on the context it operates in, War Child should mainstream conflict sensitivity throughout its programmes and policies. In this process, cross-cutting issues such as Participation, Gender, Partnerships, Coordination and Good practice sharing should be given due attention.

6. Young people have agency over their own lives and their communities. They are agents in processes of conflict transformation, catalysts for positive peace. War Child has a proven track record of involving younger children in programming. Understanding the varying roles of older youth in conflict-prone contexts and explicit involvement of youth in relevant peacebuilding efforts remains a challenge. War Child should seize the opportunity to firmly connect its current programming experiences to the potential contribution of young people for just and sustainable change in conflict torn societies.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

General Recommendations

1. War Child should reassess its Mission Statement and clarify whether it considers itself a humanitarian, development or peacebuilding organisation.
2. War Child should become more conflict sensitive throughout the organization and its programme cycle.

Specific recommendations

3. War Child should consolidate its current activities, taking a conflict transformation approach and looking for innovative and effective interventions.
4. War Child should collect, document and disseminate its current activities and practices aimed at conflict transformation.
5. War Child should focus more explicitly on the potential contribution of young people for just and sustainable change.
6. War Child should develop a context typology to analyse the current programme portfolio and contribute to well-informed strategic decision making.
7. War Child should assess the relevance of various Development, Peace & Security policy agenda's and platforms.
8. War Child should develop a glossary with definitions of relevant concepts. This glossary should serve the needs of all potential users in the organization.

ANNEX I

Conflict analysis

A perspective that is often used for analyzing conflict is the 'deficit' approach. This approach identifies post-conflict 'deficits' linked to major sectors in society in which root causes of a conflict could be identified (military/ security, political/ institutional, economic/ social, and psychological/ social). Identifying the root causes of a particular conflict is a widely recommended first step for any intervention. It shapes the approach, methods and tools employed.

Activities according to the 'deficit' approach:

Military/security	Disarmament and demobilization, national army and police, demilitarization of politics, peace enforcement
Political/institutional	Transitional governing measures, election processes, good governance, constitutional reform
Socio/economic	Humanitarian relief, rehabilitation of infrastructure, long term economic policies, agricultural programmes
Psychological/social	Address mistrust, balance peace and justice, psychosocial support, reconciliation

Peacebuilding interventions in the psychological/social sector of society highlight the need to engage mechanisms to restore inter-personal and inter-communal relations to complement existing processes of reconstruction. This should take place at all levels of the intervention from leadership to grassroots. Interventions in this sector are seen as key to the internalization of the wider peacebuilding process by affected populations.

⇒ **War Child works in the realm of the psychological/social 'deficit', providing psychosocial programmes. Increasingly, programmes in the socio / economic deficit are becoming part of War Child interventions. Other dimensions are considered in assessments and analyses, but not in programme activities.**

Levels of intervention

Another issue revolves around ownership and participation. It is important to identify which levels of society are involved in the peacebuilding effort. Who are considered to be the change agents in the society? Who should be targeted by the peacebuilding intervention? Some highlight that third party intervention is crucial for successful peacebuilding; others claim that focus should be on the involvement of local constituencies in the peace process. Obviously, there is no one-size-fits-all solution and specific situations ask for tailor-made solutions. Nevertheless, three levels of intervention can be identified. Track 1 favours a top-down approach to peacebuilding where official diplomacy leads the peace process. Track 2 takes an approach where middle range leadership links top leaders with the population. Track 3 emphasizes the role of grassroots leadership in nurturing peace constituencies necessary to sustain the process.

Peacebuilding in War Child Holland

Activities according to the 'level of intervention' approach:

Track 1: Top military, political and/or religious leadership	High level negotiations, peace conferences, cease-fire agreements, highly visible mediations
Track 2: Sector, professional, ethnic or INGO leadership	Problem-solving workshops, conflict resolution trainings, national peace and truth commissions
Track 3: Grassroots, NGO, CBO, local government leadership	Local peace commissions, grassroots training, prejudice reduction activities, psychosocial support.

⇒ **War Child focuses on the Track 3 level of intervention, being mainly at grassroots and community level, occasionally including activities targeting stakeholders on the national level.**

The above discussion on dimensions of conflict, type of activities and levels of intervention lead to the following positioning of War Child in the wide spectrum of peacebuilding efforts:

Peacebuilding in War Child Holland
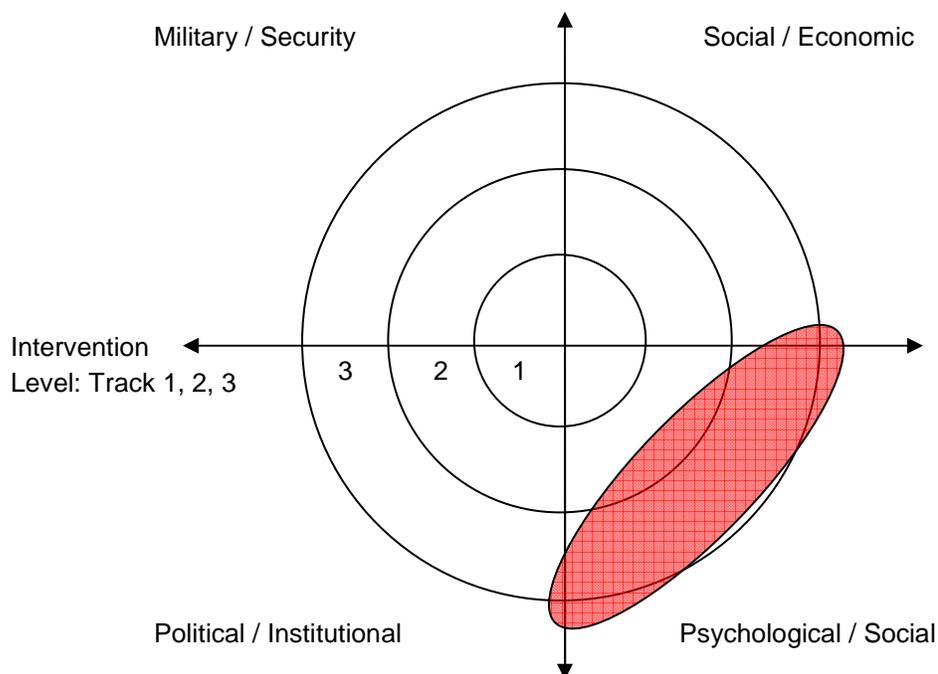
The following is an overview of organizations mentioned in the State of the Art on the two variables of sectors of intervention and the track on which the organization is primarily focused

Organizations identified with * are not mentioned in the State of the Art. These organizations received Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs funding (2004 and onwards) from the Peacebuilding and Peace & Security co-finance scheme. They are taken up in this chart for the sake of easy reference.

The grey areas roughly indicate the scope of intervention sector of the respective organization. The chart is not meant to provide an accurate picture, but rather to shed light on the wide variety of interventions. It is an oversimplification of the reality where many organizations operate in several sectors on various 'tracks'.

| SECTOR / 'TRACK'	Military / Security	Political / Institutional	Socio / Economic	Psycho / Social
I – Top military / political / religious leadership	UN		UNDP	
			UNESCO	
		World Vision		
	WANEP			
	Int'l Alert*	Cordaid*		
	Saferworld*			
II – Sector / ethnic / INGO leadership	IKV/Pax Christi*			
	UNOY Peacebuilders			
		ICCO		
		Save the Children		
		Search for Common Ground		
		Catholic Relief Services		
	ECCP			
		ZOA*		
III – Grass roots / CBO / local government			**War Child**	
		Press Now*		
		YMCA		
	Stichting Vluchteling*			
		Peace Links / Play for Peace / Youth Action for Peace		

ANNEX II

Making Peacebuilding more effective

The Reflecting on Peace Practice (RPP) project has identified a simple peacebuilding matrix with two variables to identify the effectiveness of peace work: 'strategy' and 'level of intervention'.[2] According to this matrix, strategies for peace range from those that are based on the belief that peace is built through the engagement of many people to those based on the belief that peace is possible only if certain people holding key positions are engaged (More people versus Key people). Peace work is carried out on two basic levels, some concentrating on individual, personal change and others concentrating on socio-political change (Personal versus Socio-political).

RPP found that work that stays only at the individual level without translation into institutional impacts at the socio political level has no discernable impact on peace. It may be good and useful work (participants may gain from it individually) but its effectiveness in either reducing conflict or in contributing to a sustainable peace is not traceable. A change in people's attitude has no effect on peace unless they also act differently in the public sphere. Such work becomes effective only if it is linked to, and engaged with, work also at the socio-political level.

In addition, RPP found that work that focuses on more people cannot, by itself, achieve sufficient momentum to end conflict or build peace; nor can work concentrated on key people. For effectiveness, efforts to engage more people in peace practice must also link efforts to involving key people and vice versa. If leaders make treaties, for which people are not ready, these agreements will not hold; if many people want peace but they cannot affect the decisions of their leaders or the perpetuators of war, peace will not come.

These two findings – that individual / personal level work must be linked to social-political level developments and that more people strategies and key people strategies must be linked – are shown in the figure below, including a positioning of War Child interventions within this matrix of effectiveness of peacebuilding strategies.
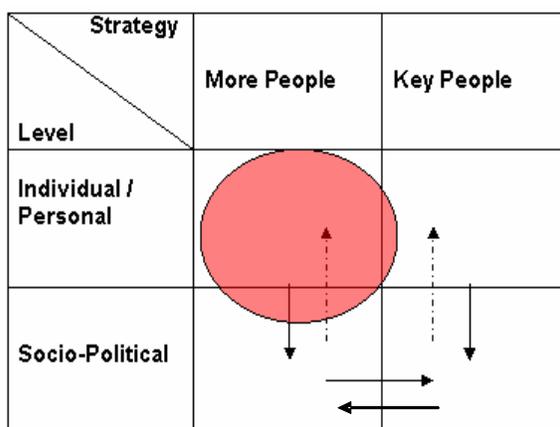
⇒ **War Child works towards 'positive' peace, aiming to transform social relationships, structures and culture in a direction conducive to reduction of root causes of social conflicts, and enhancing the capacity of individuals, groups and institutions to manage emerging conflicts non-violently and constructively.**

⇒ **War Child focuses activities mostly on the individual / personal level. The necessary interplay between 'strategy' and 'level of intervention' identified in the RPP project highlights the complexity of peace work. It is important to maintain this wider, 'humbling' perspective.**

[2] More on the experiences with peacebuilding and impact assessments, see:
http://www.cdainc.com/rpp/docs/ReflectingOnPeacePracticeHandbook.pdf

ANNEX III

Programming Principles and Staff Competencies

1. **PEACEBUILDING**: The paper provides a reflection on the pre-requisites for effective and coherent peacebuilding interventions. The following principles make interventions and work methods consistent and successful.

   - Opportunity principle – Understand conflict as an opportunity, as an integral part of social and political life leading to development and progress. See conflict as fuel for peaceful transformation.
   - Positive peace principle – Respond to the roots of the violent conflicts to contribute to sustainable peace. Prevent structural violence on grounds of differences of religion, language, culture, ethnicity, nationality, gender, class and age.
   - Effectiveness principle – Make peace practice more effective. Be honest and realistic when assessing the complex dynamics of conflict.
   - 'Do No Harm' principle – Reduce the negative impacts of interventions on peace and conflict and strengthen positive impacts.
   - All-partisanship principle – Ensure that all sides are taken into account, including the government and the non-state actors.

2. **YOUNG PEOPLE**: The paper provides a number of guidelines when involving young people in peacebuilding.

   - Youth Definition – Adopt a working definition of youth that accounts for their diversity and does not treat them as one homogenous group. Programmes and activities need to specify who they mean by youth and which youth they are trying to reach. Understand that youth is a fluid category marking the transition from childhood to adulthood, where identities multiply and shift, and contradictions are intrinsic to the process. Programmes need to be context-specific, and they should be continually evaluated to ensure they remain pertinent to the evolving needs of young people, the challenges they face and the mechanisms they adopt to cope with their environment.
   - Youth Participation – Place youth at the centre of the process, from the assessment of the problem, through programme design and implementation to monitoring and evaluation. Youth participation needs to move beyond the focus on youth activists and youth organizations towards involving the most marginalized young people.
   - Holistic and Gender-sensitive Approaches – Do not treat youth as an isolated category. Targeting programmes to young people does not mean identifying them as something disconnected from their societies. Holistic and crosscutting approaches offer the most useful framework. Ensure that girls and young women do not 'disappear' by recognizing that youth includes young men and young women, boys and girls. In some contexts, girls and young women may be harder to reach, but this obstacle should not be an excuse for overlooking them. The crisis of society concerns young women as much as young men, with gender-specific consequences. A gender-sensitive approach involves more than just inviting more girls to participate; it requires a better understanding of the gender dimension of youth.

- <u>Realistic objectives</u> – Above all, ensure a 'do no harm' approach that does not create false expectations among young people with promises of projects and funding that will suddenly and visibly improve their lives. The challenge is immense; success will be limited and partial. Programming to improve the situation of young people will not be easy and there are many risks of failure. Programmes should adopt realistic objectives: ambitious wish lists of activities that are unlikely to materialize suggest naivety and are misleading to young people.

3. **STAFF COMPETENCIES**: The following key competencies are identified for those engaged in peacebuilding interventions:
   - <u>Creativity</u> – is a pre-requisite for developing spaces for transformations. It requires openness to new approaches, capacity to go beyond what is commonly accepted, widening the perspectives and diversifying the possibility of choices.
   - <u>Empathy and curiosity</u> – involves the ability to understand the perceptions, points of view, interpretations, anxieties and needs of different parties to a conflict and identify ways of overcoming them. Curiosity goes without judgments; it is a capacity to listen with open mind and heart.
   - <u>Non-violence</u> – refers to verbal and non-verbal non-violent behaviour, which implies good listening skills, patience and a certain coolness in dealing with difficult issues.
   - <u>Relationships</u> – requires the capacity to relate to others. It requires sensitivity and sense of humour that brings connectedness and inter-dependence. It also requires humility bringing recognition that all not only suffered in a conflict but were also involved in it.
   - <u>Tension, ambiguity and risk</u> – involves recognition that there are various right models of perception and behaviour. It involves the competence to function in an environment where situations can't be foreseen and meanings can be contested, which may bring additional tension due to doubt of one's own views and convictions, frustration and insecurity.