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References to Youth in Peace Agreements, 1990-2022

Introducing a new dataset

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Dataset

"A Dataset of References to Youth in Peace Agreements, 1990-2022 (YPAD)" compiles 208 peace agreements which were concluded in the period of 1990-2022 and make an express textual reference to youth, young people and similar. The dataset and the codebook can be accessed here: <https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/TZZOEX>

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Introduction

Today's youth population is the largest in history, representing 24% of the global population¹. It is estimated that a significant part of the youth population globally is affected by armed conflict². The nexus between youth and armed conflict is multifaceted. Marginalisation of youth in different avenues of life is among the root causes of some conflicts. Armed conflict also has significant adverse consequences for young people, from impeding their access to education, health, and livelihoods to leading to displacement. While some young people join the armed forces of conflict parties, many remain unarmed and play other roles in conflict situations, delivering humanitarian aid, acting as local mediators, and building peace. The complex relationship between youth and conflict point to the key role of young people in resolving conflicts and transitioning to peace.

Acknowledging that marginalisation of youth is “detrimental to building sustainable peace”, Resolution 2250 (2015) of the United Nations Security Council called “on all relevant actors including when negotiating and implementing peace agreements, to take into account, as appropriate, the participation and views of youth”³. Seven years on, in his 2022 report on “Youth and peace and security”, the Secretary-General of the United Nations stressed that: “The lack of data on young people as signatories of and participants in peace processes, and the rare provisions in peace agreements that are responsive to young people, show that the inclusion of young people remains marginal.”⁴

Although the study of peace agreements has proliferated since 1990s and several datasets document peace agreements today, there is a persistent gap in our knowledge and documentation of peace negotiations and resultant agreements through a youth lens. As a result, the “Five-Year Strategic Action Plan for Youth-Inclusive Peace Processes”, developed under the auspices of the Global Coalition on Youth, Peace and Security in 2022, emphasised the need for “[e]xisting academic and institutional databases and programs that track, monitor, and assess peace agreements and peace processes [to] integrate a youth lens and youth-focused parameters into their analysis”.⁵

Taking a significant step towards filling this gap, the aim of this report is to introduce our novel Dataset of References to Youth in Peace Agreements, 1990-2022 (YPAD)⁶. YPAD contains 208 peace agreements that refer to youth, young people, or similar, concluded between the years of 1990-2022 to bring an end to conflicts of inter-state, intra-state, or local nature. The dataset codes references to youth in peace agreements according to eight main themes and 53 sub-themes, in addition to including information on the respective agreement, conflict, and peace process, among others.

Peace agreements provide valuable insights into the relationship between youth and armed conflict. On one hand, where peace agreements reference youth, these offer a glimpse into how negotiating parties perceive the role of youth in driving, perpetrating, and/or resolving conflict. On the other hand, the absence of any reference to youth in a peace agreement may indicate their marginalisation and neglect in peace negotiations. In addition, when youth are directly or indirectly involved in peace negotiations, references to youth in the resultant peace agreements can demonstrate what difference youth inclusion in peace negotiations have, or have not, made.

Part I of this Research Report introduces the definitions and methodology that underpin YPAD, including the main themes and sub-themes according to which references to youth are categorised and coded in the dataset. The next two sections offer an analysis of the data from YPAD. Part II investigates the peace agreements that make reference to youth, with a view to exploring the number, type, stage, and location of these agreements. Part III shifts the focus from the characteristics of agreements to their content, providing a thematic analysis of the references to youth in peace agreements. Across the Report, the analyses are accompanied by sample agreement provisions and agreements in spotlight which provide examples of references to youth from selected agreements. The Conclusion includes a summary of the main findings of our analysis, some reflections on the limitations of the data, and suggestions for further research.

1. Definitions and methodology

In building YPAD, our primary source of peace agreement data was Version 7 of the PA-X Peace Agreement Database ('PA-X')⁷, from which we sourced the text of peace agreements and other key information about agreements. The temporal focus of YPAD from 1 January 1990 to 31 December 2022 is also shaped by PA-X's focus on agreements concluded since 1990⁸. We cross-checked the Language of Peace Database developed by the Lauterpacht Centre for International Law (University of Cambridge), in collaboration with the United Nations Mediation Support Unit, for any agreements missing in PA-X but found none that meets our definitions. YPAD also allows comparison of data to the Peace Accords Matrix Implementation Dataset (PAM_ID)⁹ and Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) Peace Agreement Dataset¹⁰ by including the respective agreement identifiers.

1.1. Key terms and categories

Youth: As YPAD is concerned with textual references to youth in peace agreements, we do not adopt a particular definition of youth in this study. No existing dataset includes an exclusively youth-focused variable; both PA-X and the Language of Peace include only a "child/youth" variable. Instead, we used the datasets' open text search function to search the following terms: **youth, young (people, person(s), boy, men, girl, women), adolescent**, and equivalents in other languages used in agreements (such as **jeune** and **joven**). Due to our focus on youth, we did not include child(ren) and similar in our search terms.

A small number of peace agreements that refer to our search terms were excluded from the dataset as the use of the search terms was not in essence about youth. For example, if an agreement was signed by the Minister of Youth and the institution was mentioned only to show the affiliation of the signatory and without indicating any substantive relevance to youth, the agreement was excluded. In this brief, we use "youth" as an overarching term that covers all search terms of the study. In addition, we use the term "youth-inclusive" if an agreement refers to youth, without ascribing any qualitative weight to the term 'inclusive'.

Conflict: We adopt the PA-X definition of conflict as "armed violence, causing more than 25 conflict-related deaths in one year, or a local conflict with fewer conflict-related deaths in one year, if there is evidence of a clear nexus with the national conflict that came before or after and which has seen 25 or more battle-related deaths in one year".¹¹

Peace agreement: We define peace agreements as "formal documents which were discussed and agreed by at least two opposing conflict parties and aim to bring an end to a specific conflict". This definition is based on but narrower than that of PA-X. Our definition excludes (i) formally one-sided documents such as unilateral declarations and peace proposals, (ii) documents that have been adopted only through domestic legal processes, such as legislation and constitutions, (iii) regional agreements that do not address a specific conflict, or (iv) agreements between an

international actor such as the United Nations and one or more of the conflict parties. We excluded these documents from the dataset as they are not direct outcomes of negotiation between or involving opposing conflict parties held with a view to ending a particular conflict. Due to the differences in the definition of 'peace agreement' (in addition to the few instances where the reference to youth was not in essence about youth, as explained above), YPAD excludes 33 documents that are included in PA-X and refer to youth.

Conflict nature and agreement type: We adopt the following typology of conflict nature and agreement type developed by PA-X¹²:

- i. inter-state treaty addressing inter-state conflict;
- ii. inter-state treaty addressing intra-state conflict;
- iii. intra-state agreement addressing intra-state conflict; and
- iv. intra-state local agreement addressing a local aspect of an intrastate conflict (hereafter 'local agreement').

Agreement stage: Adopting the typology developed by PA-X¹³, YPAD classifies agreements according to their stages as follows:

- i. ceasefire agreements;
- ii. pre-negotiation and process agreements;
- iii. partial or comprehensive substantive agreements;
- iv. implementation agreements; and
- v. renewal agreements.

1.2. Themes and sub-themes

YPAD categorises references to youth in peace agreements in the context of eight main themes and 53 sub-themes:

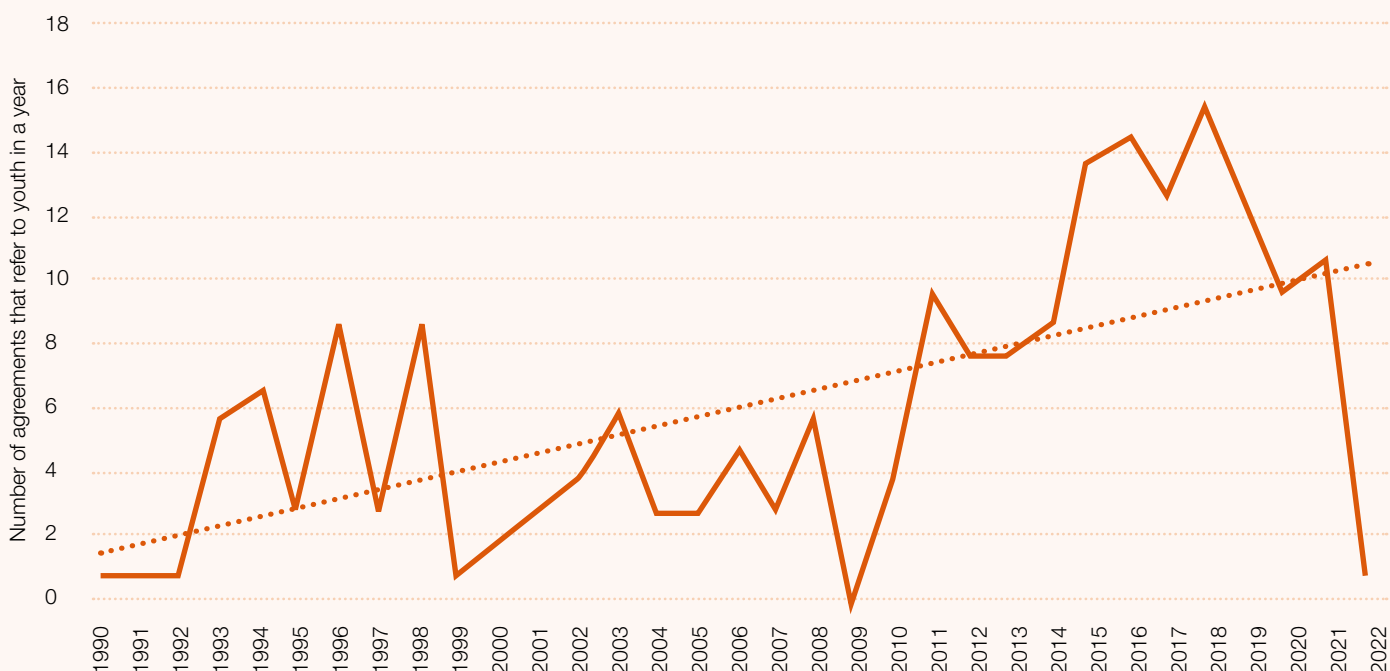
- I. Inclusion in process
 - 1. Participation in consultation
 - 2. Participation in negotiation/dialogue
 - 3. Agreement signatory as a third party (witness, stakeholder, etc.)
 - 4. Agreement signatory as a party
- II. Identity and human rights
 - 5. General inclusion
 - 6. Human rights
 - 7. Displaced youth
 - 8. Indigenous youth
 - 9. Young women
 - 10. Ethnic minority youth
 - 11. Disadvantaged youth
- III. Political participation
 - 12. General inclusion in political decision-making
 - 13. Inclusion in constitution-making
 - 14. Youth ministry
 - 15. Devolved/reserved powers
 - 16. Youth commission
 - 17. Inclusion in local governance
 - 18. Inclusion in political parties
 - 19. Inclusion in legislature
 - 20. Inclusion in executive
 - 21. Elections
 - 22. Civil service
- IV. Violence and security
 - 23. Role of youth in conflict (as fighters or perpetrators of violence)
 - 24. Youth crime
 - 25. Inclusion in security sector
 - 26. DDR (disarmament, demobilization and reintegration)
 - 27. Gender-based violence against youth
- V. Economy and development
 - 28. Employment
 - 29. Socio-economic development
 - 30. Economic support
 - 31. Land reform
 - 32. Population census
 - 33. Health
 - 34. Environment
- VI. Education, culture and society
 - 35. Education
 - 36. Vocational training
 - 37. Social programmes
 - 38. Sports
 - 39. Youth facilities
 - 40. Civil society
 - 41. Culture
 - 42. Media
- VII. Transitional justice
 - 43. Impact of conflict on youth
 - 44. Conflict root cause
 - 45. Criminal justice system
 - 46. Truth commission
 - 47. Psychosocial support
 - 48. Compensation
 - 49. Release of detainees
- VIII. Peacebuilding
 - 50. Reconciliation
 - 51. Peace education
 - 52. Peacebuilding
 - 53. Agreement implementation

The selection and categorisation of themes were informed by the variables in existing peace agreement databases but tailored to our research focus on youth. Instead of coding references to youth in peace agreements according to pre-identified thematic variables, we identified the themes through an inductive and iterative process that consisted of the following key steps: (1) reviewing the references to youth in peace agreements, (2) identifying a preliminary list of themes and key sub-themes based on step (1), informed by variables in existing peace agreement databases, and tailored to our research focus on youth, (3) discussion of the themes and key sub-themes with a group of researchers and practitioners at a workshop, (4) revising themes and developing all sub-themes, and (5) double-coding by the co-authors of the references to youth in peace agreements according to the revised list of themes and sub-themes. As a result, YPAD categorises and codes (sub)themes addressed in peace agreements with an express reference to youth, rather than investigating whether pre-identified themes are addressed in agreements.

2. Investigating the peace agreements that refer to youth

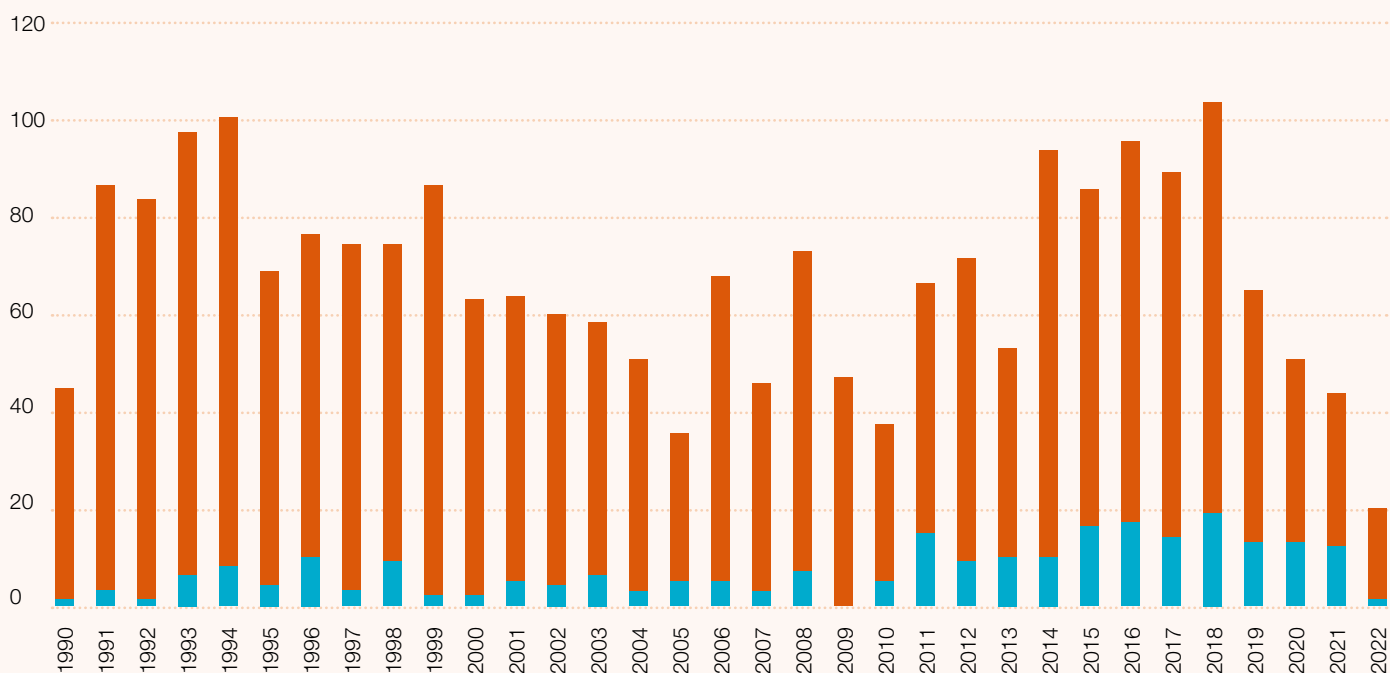
The express incorporation of a youth perspective in peace agreements remains a marginal practice, despite showing an upward trend since 2010. Peace agreements that make references to youth represent approximately 12% of all concluded agreements during the timeframe of 1990-2022.¹⁴ This figure demonstrates the marginality of youth inclusion particularly when considering that approximately 52% of these peace agreements refer to youth in relation to only one sub-theme of YPAD. This indicates that the substantive consideration of youth, as expressly reflected in the text of peace agreements, is significantly limited in scope.

1: References to youth in peace agreements during 1990-2022



The drop observed in 2022 is correlated with the small number of agreements (19) concluded that year.

2: References to youth 'in context'



■ Number of agreements that refer to youth

■ Total number of agreements concluded in that year

YPAD only codes textual references to youth in peace agreements and do not trace agreement implementation. However, limited data on agreement implementation can be drawn from PAM_ID, which records 34 comprehensive peace agreements negotiated between 1989-2012 and provides an aggregate implementation score for the ten years following the signing of each agreement¹⁵. Of these 34 agreements, only 11 refer to youth, and only six of the 11 have an implementation score of above 75 out of 100.

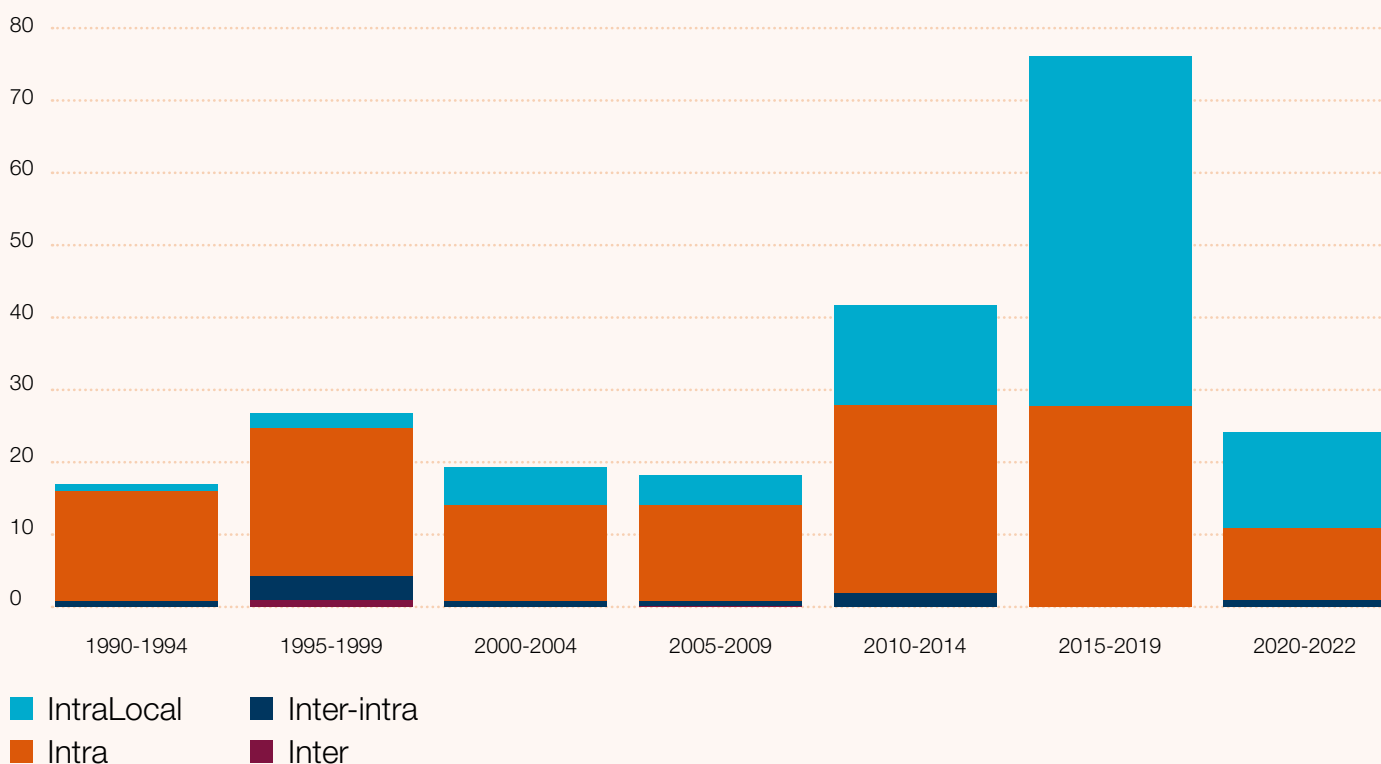
2.1. Type and stage of agreements that refer to youth

Around 57% of the peace agreements that refer to youth are intra-state agreements addressing an intra-state conflict (116), while around 39% are peace agreements that address a local conflict (82). Since 2010, there has been a slight increase in the number of intra-state and local peace agreements that refer to youth, as shown in Chart 3.

Only 10 inter-state agreements make reference to youth, and nine of these address an intra-state conflict. It is not unexpected for the number of inter-state agreements that refer to youth to be small, as such agreements are less commonly concluded since 1990: only 4% of the agreements in PA-X are inter-state agreements aiming to end an inter-state conflict. However, it is still noteworthy that even a smaller proportion, i.e., only 0.4% of the agreements in YPAD, are inter-state agreements that refer to youth. This suggests that the inter-state context has been far less receptive to youth inclusion compared to the intra-state and local contexts.

The increase in the number of local peace agreements, including of those that make reference to youth, since 2010 requires careful assessment. The upward trend can be attributed to two primary factors. Changes in the nature of armed conflicts may have led to an increased frequency of concluding local peace agreements, which in turn, have shown greater openness to youth inclusion in peace negotiations and resulting agreements. However, it is also plausible that the observed trend is influenced by a documentation bias. The reach and attention of peace agreement datasets to local peace agreements may have expanded, potentially leading to a seemingly heightened number of recorded local agreements, simply as local agreements gained more international attention and became publicly available in this period. Nonetheless, the overall data indicates a greater amenability of local peace processes to youth inclusion in process and outcomes.

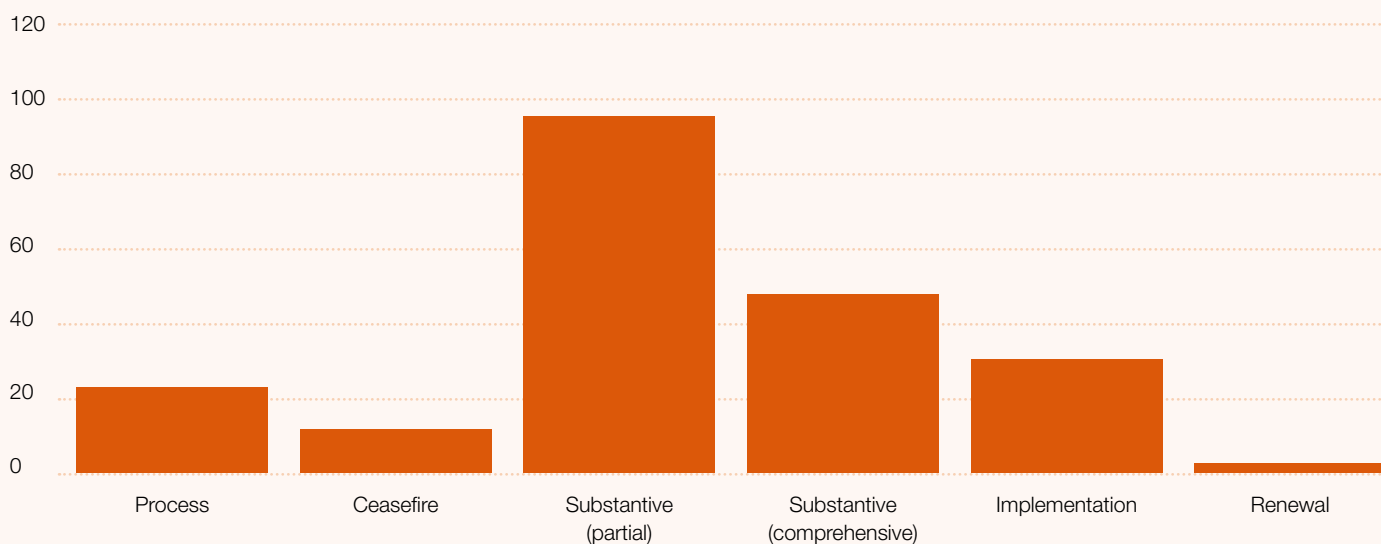
3: Agreement type in 5-year periods



References to youth are more prominent in substantive agreements of partial or comprehensive scope: around 69% of the agreements included in YPAD are substantive agreements. This is unsurprising as substantive agreements tend to be broader in scope and address a wide range of

issues as opposed to process, ceasefire, implementation and renewal agreements, the substantive coverage of which tend to be limited to their respective thematic focus.

4: References to youth according to agreement stage



2.2. Which peace processes have produced youth-inclusive peace agreements?

We observe a geographical condensation of peace agreements that refer to youth in particular countries. While intra-state agreements in YPAD relate to 39 countries in total, half of these agreements are concluded in eight countries (in alphabetical order): Central African Republic, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, India, Philippines, Somalia, South Sudan, and Sudan.

A similar trend is observed in relation to local peace agreements. Among the 14 countries that have seen the conclusion of local agreements that refer to youth, five countries are associated with 84% of these agreements (in alphabetical order): Central African Republic, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, and South Sudan.

The only inter-state conflict in the context of which youth was referenced in a peace agreement was between Ecuador and Peru, while inter-state agreements addressing an intra-state conflict related to the conflicts in Afghanistan, Bosnia, Northern Ireland/United Kingdom, Liberia, and Libya.

70 out of the 174 peace processes that are traced by PA-X have produced at least one peace agreement that refer to youth. As a result, although only around 12% of the peace agreements concluded between 1990-2022 refer to youth, these represent around 40% of all peace processes during this period. 13 of the 70 'youth inclusive' peace processes have only produced local agreements.

Agreement in spotlight: The Kafanchan Peace Declaration, Nigeria, 23 March 2016

The Kafanchan Peace Declaration was reached by the communities of the five local government areas in southern Kaduna State, Nigeria to resolve the inter-communal, electoral, farmer and grazer, and religious violence among their local communities.

Accompanied by the “Kafanchan Peace Declaration between Farmers and Grazers”, the Declaration was the culmination of the Southern Kaduna State Inter-Communal Dialogue and facilitated by the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue. The parties to the Declaration are “development/cultural associations, Traditional Councils, youth, women, religious and respected opinion leaders and elders”.

As is common in local peace agreements, the Declaration identifies the causes and consequences of violence before stipulating the obligations and recommendations of parties to bring the violence to an end. One of the root causes of the conflict identified by the parties concerns “Idle youth: Unemployed youth with easy access to drugs are easily lured into violent acts.”. In response, the parties agreed to “identify effective strategies and processes to transform youth previously involved in violent behavior”, in addition to recommending that the Kaduna State Government: *“Create employment and keep youth out of engaging in conflict by reviving the following industries; flour mills, chalk, Ginger processing, fruit processing, oil processing and Gurara dam to provide electricity and water to communities.”*

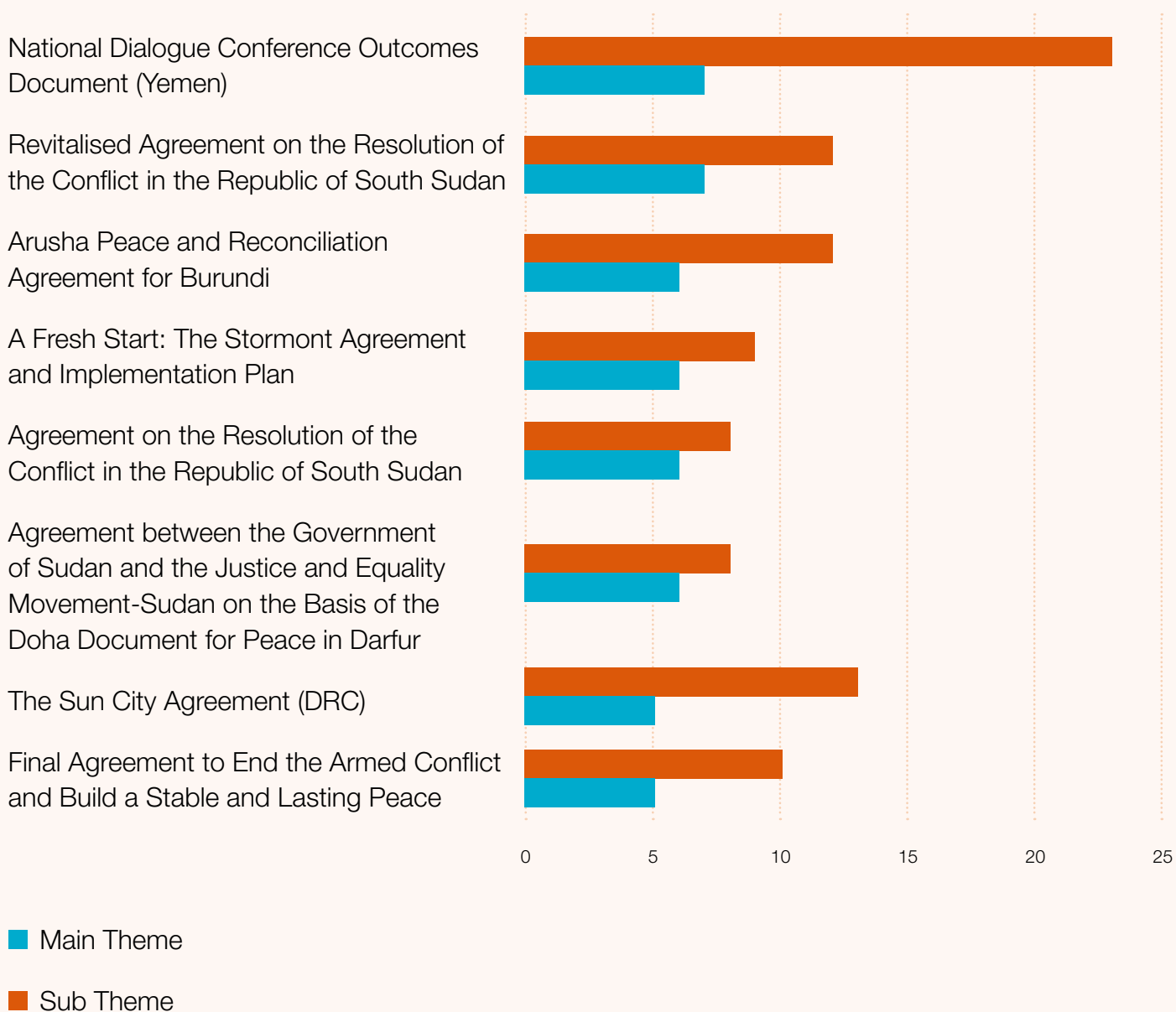
Another recommendation was addressed to “Civil Society and the International Community working in Kaduna” to: *“Mobilize massive support for micro projects to train the women, youths and persons with disability.”*

Acknowledging that “the conflicts in Kaduna have nevertheless left their mark on the whole society but specifically affect vulnerable groups including women, children, youths and persons with disability more” and that the exclusion of women and youth from reconciliation and dialogue efforts “causes disenchantment and negative perception of the outcomes”, the Parties undertook to: *“Improve the representation of women, youth and persons with disability in efforts to address inter communal conflict ...”* and *“create a body to promote peace and reconciliation amongst communities that will: ensure the inclusion and active participation of women, youths and persons with disability in all peace processes”*

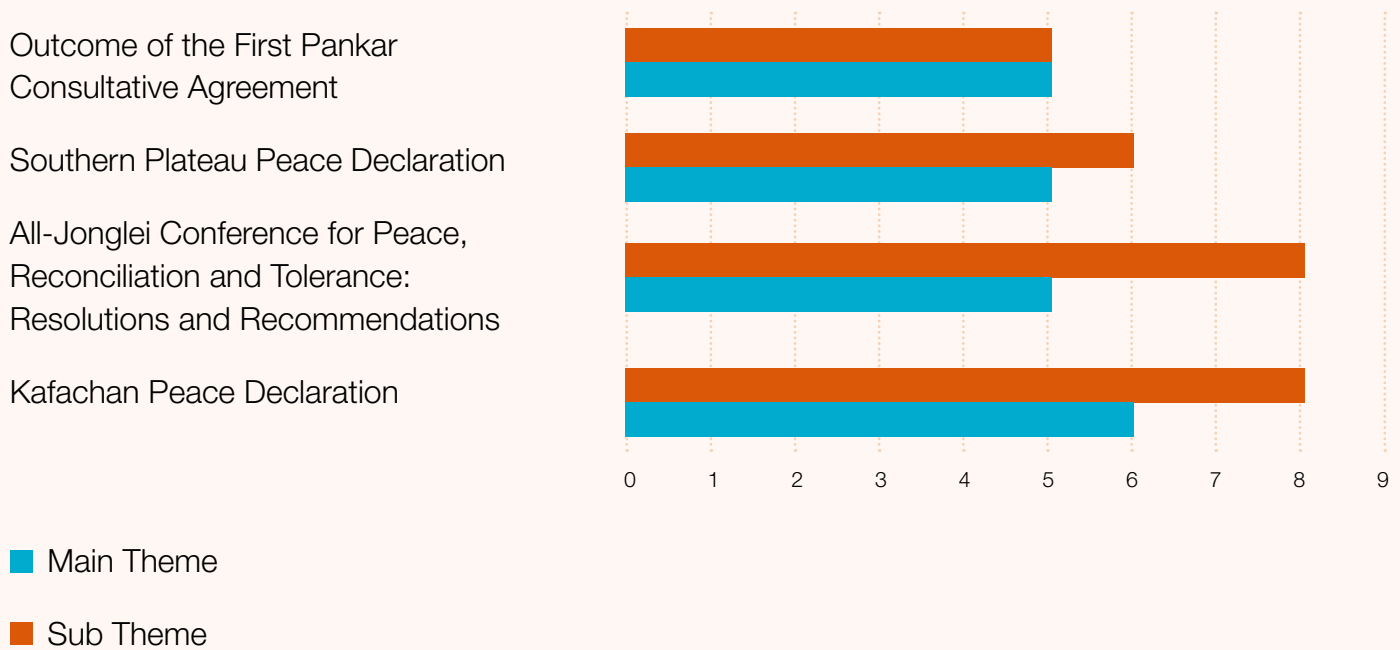
The Kafanchan Peace Declaration is emblematic of how local peace agreements typically refer to youth: youth representatives are among the negotiators and signatories of the agreement; youth-related root causes of conflict are identified; solutions to youth-related issues are developed; and youth are included in agreement implementation.

As mentioned above, around half of the agreements in YPAD refer to youth only in relation to one sub-theme. However, although a small number overall, twelve agreements in YPAD stand out with their extensive references to youth. These agreements address youth in relation to five or more main themes.

5: Intra-state peace agreements that address five or more main themes



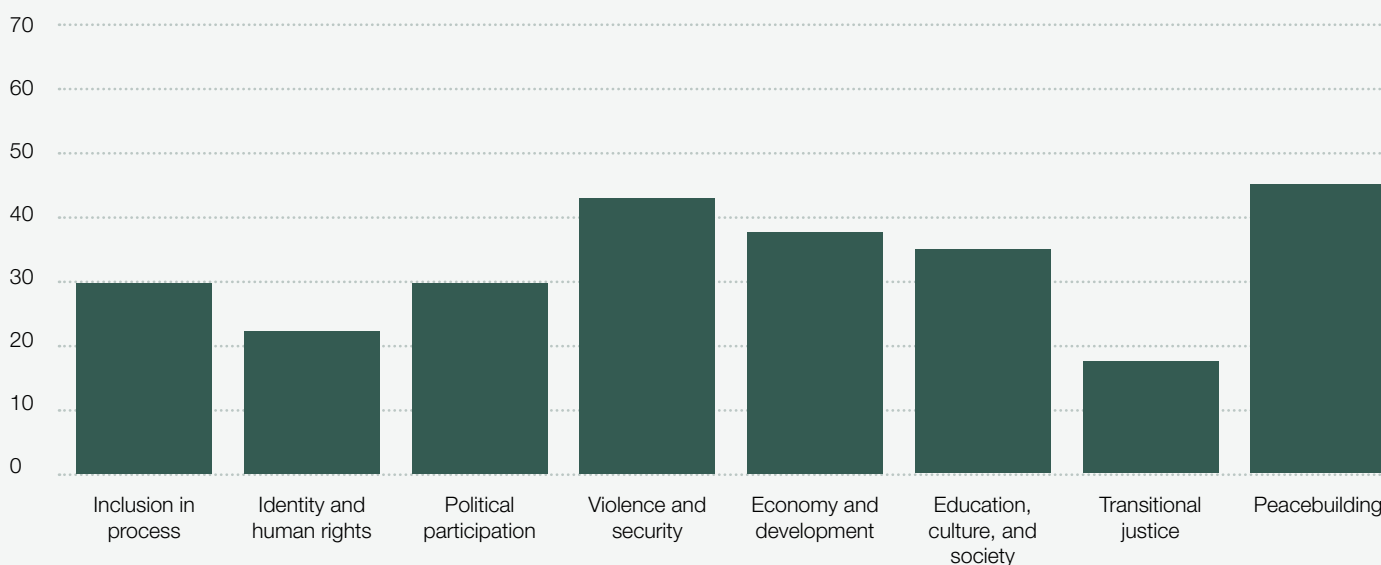
6: Local peace agreements that address five or more main themes



3. A thematic analysis of the references to youth in peace agreements

“Violence and security”, “economy and development”, and “peacebuilding” are the most commonly addressed themes in the references to youth in peace agreements (Chart 7). This pattern of thematic references aligns with the focus of peace agreements on short-term goals of ending violence and ensuring a peaceful transition in general, as well as the tendency to view ‘violence, crime and security’ and ‘employment’ (a sub-theme of “economy and development” in YPAD) as ‘youth issues’ in particular.¹⁶

7: Thematic pattern of references to youth



The prominence of the “violence and security” theme is mainly a result of the mention of youth in the context of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes in 24 agreements and the references to the role of youth in conflict, as perpetrators of violence, in 22 agreements.

Sample provisions on “violence and security”

“The Government shall provide reintegration programmes for former LRA combatants that are responsive to the particular needs and aspirations of the youth and in accordance with any relevant policies on youth in Uganda. Insofar as relevant, the guidelines on youth and DDR in the UN IDDRS shall be applied.”

–Agreement on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (Uganda), 29 February 2008, 2.13, sub-theme: Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR)

“Wrongdoers especially among young people have committed crimes to those who are not of their ethnic group, have persecuted them, looted their property and even killed.”

Contract of peaceful cohabitation (neighbourhood Teza ii of Kamenge), (Burundi), 30 June 2004, sub-theme: role of youth in conflict

“Within the framework for recruiting and training young persons in the region, develop a programme to prepare them to serve, as required by operational needs, in the special security units, units of the national guard, the gendarmerie, the police, the customs and those of water and forests.”

Algiers agreement for the restoration of peace, security and development in the region of Kidal (Mali/Azawad), 04 July 2004, 5.5, sub-theme: inclusion in security sector

“CCLS [of Local Consultative Security Committees] shall include the stakeholders in justice and security at the local level, including representatives of the new territorial police, of communities and traditional authorities, and members of civil society including associations for women and young people. CCLS shall provide advice and recommendations at the level of the local executive and to security stakeholders, and shall assist with information exchange, awareness-raising and taking greater account of the concerns of the population.”

Accord Pour la Paix et la Reconciliation au Mali – Issu du Processus d’Alger, 20 June 2015, Annex II, V. c., sub-theme: inclusion in security sector

Within the theme of “economy and development”, youth employment is the most frequently addressed sub-theme, addressed in 34 agreements.

Sample provisions on “economy and development”

“Provide job opportunities in a systematic and sustainable way for the people, especially the youth”

Peace Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone, 30 November 1996, Article 26(e), sub-theme: employment

“Young people not attending school should receive vocational and technical training that will allow them to carry out projects that will contribute to their personal development and to the economic and social development of Burundi; Income-generating activities should be organized for youth through the establishment of model agricultural and livestock farms; Young people should be employed in public service projects”

Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for Burundi, 28 August 2000, 3.7, c-e, sub-themes: employment; socio-economic development; vocational training

What is notable is the prominence of the “peacebuilding” theme, which stands out in contrast to the overall under-recognition of youth in peace processes as agents of peace. The references to youth within this theme relate to the role of youth in post-agreement peacebuilding process and initiatives such as future dialogue and national reconciliation processes in 30 agreements, participation of youth in agreement monitoring and implementation frameworks and mechanisms in 24 agreements, youth-focused or youth-sensitive reconciliation initiatives in 12 agreements, and peace education for youth in 4 agreements. These practices recognise the role youth can play in building and safeguarding peace, as well as the need to adopt a youth-sensitive lens in peacebuilding and reconciliation initiatives.

Another striking finding is that “transitional justice” is the least referenced theme despite the heavy toll of conflict on youth: only 26 agreements, concluded in the context of 16 peace processes, refer to youth in their provisions on transitional justice, despite YPAD’s broad categorisation of the theme to include any acknowledgement of youth-related root causes of a conflict or the adverse impact of a conflict on youth. Accordingly, 17 agreements address the impact of conflict on youth, predominantly in a symbolic manner, while five or fewer agreements address youth in relation to the root causes of a conflict, a truth commission, the criminal justice system, the issue of the release of detainees, psychosocial support, and compensation.

Sample provision on “transitional justice”

“Throughout its work the Commission [Truth, Coexistence and Non-Recurrence Commission] will take an appropriate approach to learn about the different ways in which the conflict affected women, children, adolescents, youths and the elderly, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, rural communities, persons on the basis of their religion, their opinions or their beliefs, the Afro-Colombian, black, palenquero and raizal communities, the Roma community, the LGBTI community, displaced and exiled persons, human rights advocates, trade unionists, journalists, farmers, ranchers, traders and businessmen and women, inter alia.”

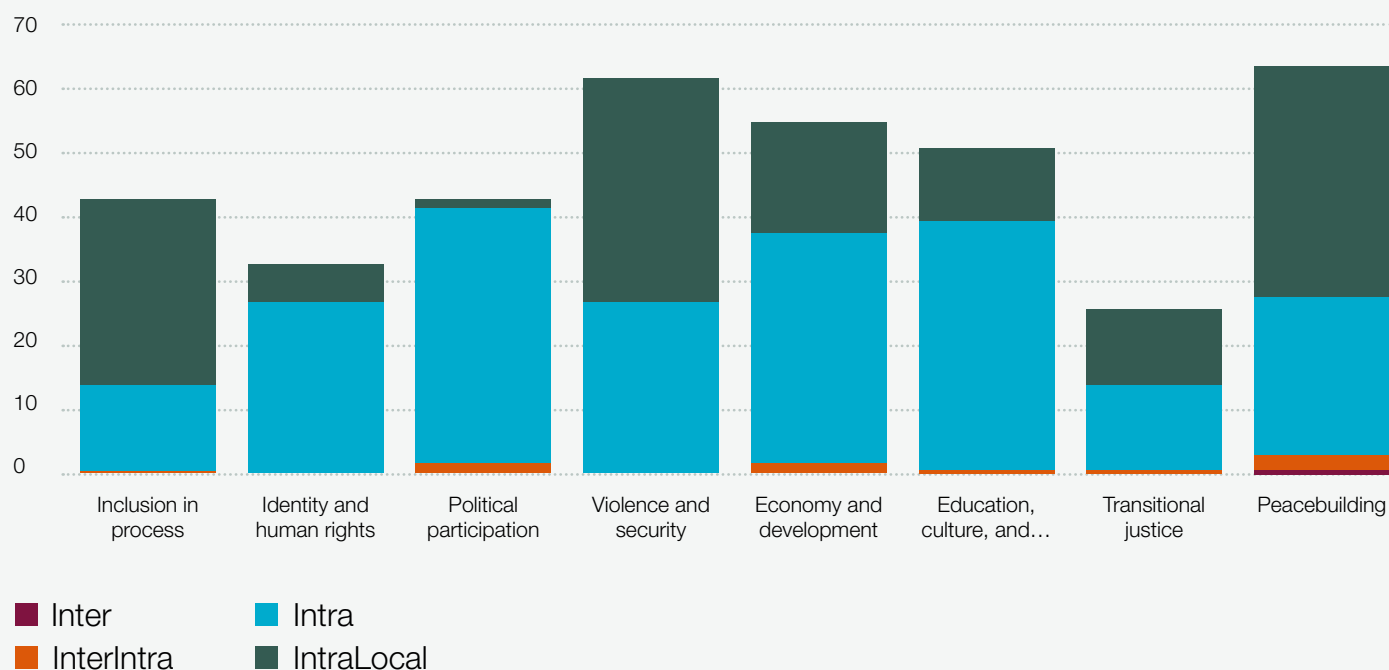
Final Agreement to End the Armed Conflict and Build a Stable and Lasting Peace (Colombia), 24 November 2016, 5.1.1.1, sub-themes: impact of conflict on youth; truth commission

3.1. Agreement/conflict type and references to youth

One of the factors that shape the references to youth in a peace agreement is the nature of the conflict. We observe important differences in the thematic pattern of references depending on whether an agreement addresses an intra-state or local conflict. Where they refer to youth, intra-state agreements are likelier to cover a greater number of sub-themes than local agreements. There is a considerable number of references to all eight main themes in intra-state agreements, while references to youth in local agreements cluster around the three main themes of “inclusion in process”, “violence and security”, and “peacebuilding”.

This can arguably be explained by the fact that local conflicts tend to be about concrete issues limited in scope, while the resolution of intra-state conflicts hinge on addressing a wide range of issues such as political participation, identity and human rights, and socio-economic issues (including education, health, and culture). In addition, the thematic pattern of references to youth in local agreements correlates with the greater involvement of youth not only in violence but also in initiating, negotiating, and cultivating peace at the local level.

8: References to main themes according to conflict/agreement type



A striking difference between intra-state and local peace agreements is that “political participation” is the most common theme in the former yet the least referenced theme in the latter. This points to the importance of political participation as a key concern in intra-state conflicts over governance (all intra-state agreements in this group address a conflict over governance or territory/governance as opposed to merely territory), while not in conflicts about local disputes over issues such as access to grazing lands or water rights. A similar finding can also be drawn in relation to the “identity and human rights” theme.

Sample provisions on “political participation”

“Having in mind that more than 70 percent of the population in the Republic of South Sudan is under the age of thirty and that youth are the most affected by the war and represent high percentage of refugees and IDPs, the Parties shall strive to include people of young age in their quotas at different levels. In particular, the Parties shall strive to ensure that the Minister of Youth and Sports in the RTGoNU shall be less than forty (40) years old.”

Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan, 12 September 2018, 1.4.5, sub-themes: youth ministry; inclusion in executive

“Membership [of the National Constituent Assembly] shall be based on the following: i. 1000 members based on the 4.5 formula; ii. At least 300 (30%) members shall be women; iii. The remaining 700 men and women shall be selected from [a cross section of society, including: youth/students, business people, the Diaspora, religious and traditional leaders, professionals, scholars and existing and emerging regional administrations.”

The Garowe II Principles on Federalism, System of Government and Ending of Transition through operationalizing Garowe I (Somalia), 7 February 2012, 3.2.b, sub-theme: inclusion in constitution-making

“Regarding the mechanism for securing the electoral process and following an overarching, in-depth diagnosis of the main issues and challenges in protecting the process, the parties recommend the following principal measures: ... 2. For CENI [Independent National Electoral Commission]: ... c) Recruit more poll workers and train them, making sure to promote representation of women and young people; ... 3. For the political parties: ... d) Ensure actual representation of women and young people on the candidate rolls.”

Global and Inclusive Political Agreement of the Inter-diocesan Center of Kinshasa (Democratic Republic of Congo), 31 December 2016, IV.7, sub-theme: elections

3.2. Substantive v. rhetorical references to youth

Some peace agreements include references to youth that are context-specific and substantive, while some contain only rhetorical references to youth. As to the latter, for example, it is common for youth to be referenced in a tokenistic manner and only along with other groups such as women, minorities, or people with disabilities.

Within substantive references to youth, the degree of precision also ranges, as the following sample provisions on education demonstrate. While the provision from the Agreement concluded in Colombia identifies clearer goal, an institution responsible for implementation, and a commitment to develop a dedicated policy based on specific criteria, the education-related provision from the Agreement concluded in Bangladesh lacks such precision and includes only a general commitment to offer youth enhanced opportunities to pursue education.

Sample provisions on “education”

“The Union government agrees to help increase the opportunities for youths of national races in Special Region (4) to pursue education with the mindset to develop their insights, to equip them with vocational education and to realize human resources development.”

National Democratic Alliance Army (NDAA), Government 6-Point Union-Level Peace Agreement (Myanmar, Bangladesh) 27 December 2011, 3

“... with the aim of providing a comprehensive service for early childhood, guaranteeing the coverage, quality and relevance of education, eradicating illiteracy in rural areas, helping the younger generation to remain part of the production sector in the countryside, and promoting involvement in rural development on the part of regional academic institutions, the National Government is to set up and implement the Special Rural Education Plan (Plan Especial de Educación Rural). Implementation of the Plan will take account of the following criteria . . .”

Final Agreement to End the Armed Conflict and Build a Stable and Lasting Peace (Colombia), 24 November 2016, 1.3.2.2

3.3. Inclusion in process

Inclusivity of process and outcomes has been a key concern in peace processes particularly since 2000s. The United Nations' Guidance for Effective Mediation refers to "inclusivity" as "the extent and manner in which the views and needs of conflict parties and other stakeholders are represented and integrated into the process and outcome of a mediation effort."¹⁷ Inclusion in process can materialise in different ways: direct inclusion through participation in formal negotiations and dialogues ("inside the room"), indirect inclusion through engagement with youth committees or consultations with youth that feed into the formal process ("around the room"), or indirect inclusion through the impact of informal youth initiatives on formal negotiations such as demonstrations and media presence ("outside the room").¹⁸ References to youth in YPAD provide examples of inclusion inside and around 'the room' such as participation of youth in consultations, negotiations, and dialogues, in addition to of youth signatories as agreement parties or third parties.

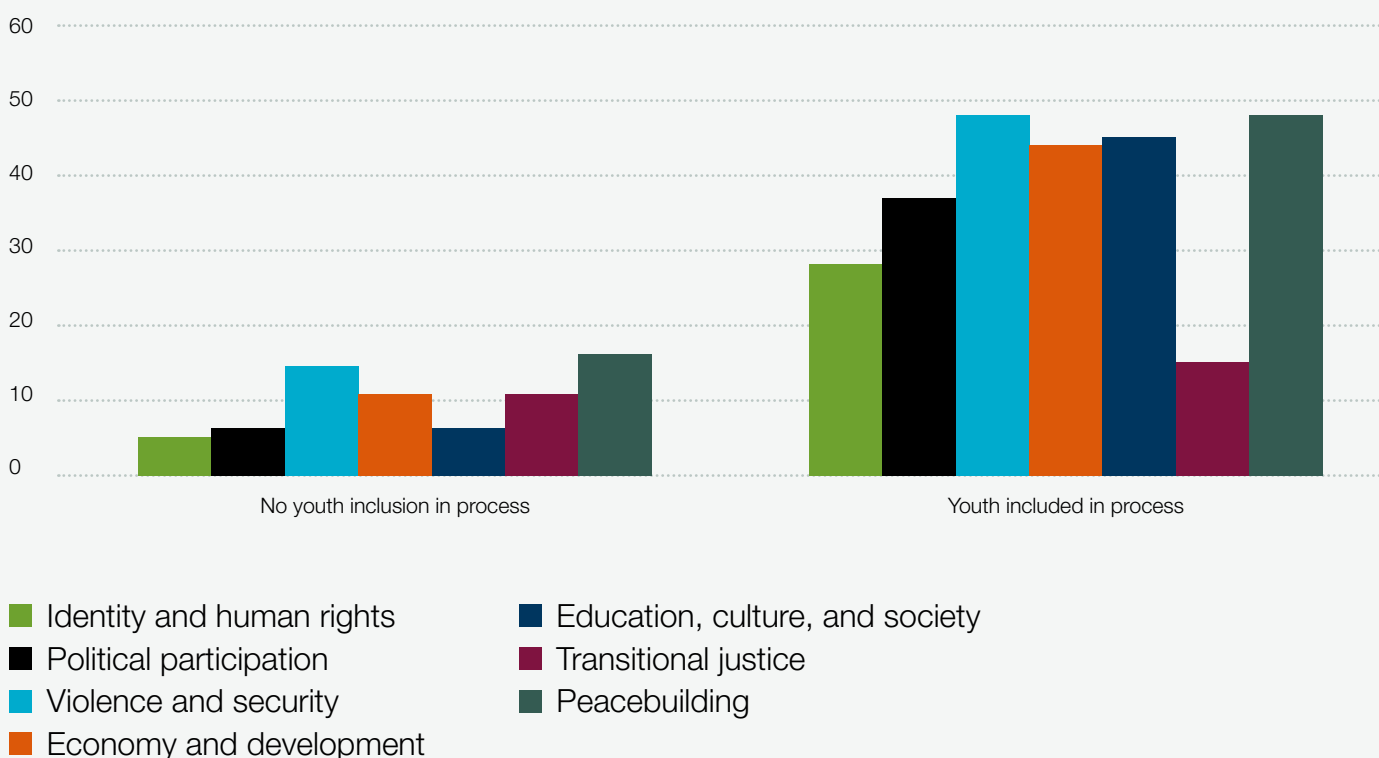
Youth inclusion in process remains a marginal practice – even more so than youth inclusive outcomes. Only 43 peace agreements in YPAD show some form of youth participation in the negotiation process of an agreement, representing 21% of the agreements in YPAD and less than 3% of the agreements concluded in the period 1990-2022. However, it must be noted that this finding does not reflect the whole picture: YPAD only codes inclusion in process where this is expressly mentioned in an agreement and, as such, cannot provide a comprehensive account of what percentage of peace agreements have been produced as a result of youth inclusive processes where this is not mentioned in an agreement or the information about signatories and similar is missing from the publicly available copy of the agreement.

9: Modality of inclusion in process according to conflict/agreement type



The majority of the agreements that mention youth inclusion in process are local peace agreements (29), while 13 are intra-state agreements and one is an inter-state agreement addressing an intra-state conflict. Youth representatives or groups are signatories as a party or a third party (such as a witness or stakeholder) in only 8 intra-state peace agreements and in 22 local peace agreements. All but one intra-state peace agreements where youth is signatory as a party are outcomes of national dialogues rather than bilateral agreements between conflict parties. All three intra-state peace agreements where youth is signatory as a third party are concluded as part of the same peace process, i.e., South Sudan post-secession peace process.

10: Inclusion in process and outcome



We observe a correlation between inclusion in process and reference to youth in outcome agreements, with a stark increase in the number of references to all main themes in agreements that have seen some form of youth inclusion in process (Chart 8). Although it is not possible to establish causation on the basis of available data, the figures clearly indicate that inclusion of youth in process is correlated with the adoption of a greater number of youth-related provisions in a peace agreement. The vignette of the Yemeni National Dialogue Conference is an example, while also demonstrating that political buy-in and effective implementation of an agreement does not necessarily follow from a seemingly inclusive process.

Agreement in spotlight: Yemen's National Dialogue Conference Outcomes Document, 25 January 2014

In Yemen, the protests that started in 2011 as part of the so-called 'Arab Spring' led to a transfer of power to a transitional government as an end to the then President Saleh's 33-year-rule. The underlying "Agreement on the implementation mechanism for the transition process in Yemen in accordance with the initiative of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)" mandated the new President-elect and the transitional government to "convene a comprehensive Conference for National Dialogue for all forces and political actors, including youth, the Southern Movement, the Houthis, other political parties, civil society representatives and women" (Article 15(g)), as reiterated by the Security Council in Resolution 2051 (2012) (para. 5).

The National Dialogue Conference (NDC) took place over ten months in 2013-2014 and led to the adoption of the NDC Outcomes Document. It was designed as an inclusive process on the basis of a 30:20:50 ratio of participation to represent the South, youth and women respectively. As a result, 40 of 565 NDC seats were allocated to independent youth, who were not formally affiliated with any political parties, in addition to a representation of 20% youth in other political factions involved in the NDC. The NDC was internationally hailed as "a model for comprehensive national dialogue, based on transparency, inclusivity, and active and meaningful participation of all political and social constituencies".

The Outcomes Document provided a comprehensive roadmap for a federal and democratic Yemen based on over 1,800 recommendations produced by the Conference's nine working groups, all of which included youth representatives, spanning the issues of territorial powersharing, constitutional reform, good governance, transitional justice, security and military, rights and freedoms, and development. Referring to youth in relation to 23 sub-themes coded in YPAD, the Outcomes Document recognises youth as a constituency with a significant role in the post-2011 transition and the future of Yemen.

Some of the notable recommendations of the NDC relate to the political participation of youth. The Outcomes Document calls for the establishment of a "High Council for Youth":

"The High Council for Youth shall be responsible for:-

1. Formulation and development of a national youth policy aiming at building a capable, effective and active Yemeni generation that participates in the building and development of society.
2. The National Council shall consult and coordinate with the Executive Authority to development and fund interim strategies and national programs for youth to achieve the development goals defined by the High Youth National Council within the framework of implementation of public policies.

3. The Council should follow-up on the role of the Executive Authority to implement related strategies and programs and report on progress periodically. It should evaluate such strategies and programmes on a timely basis at all levels.
4. The High National Youth Council shall guarantee equal representation of male and female youth on the basis of qualification.”

It also requires the continuation of the representation of youth in the NDC in the political order, such as in the Constitutional Drafting Commission and political parties:

“Representations [on the Constitutional Drafting Commission] shall be the same representation implemented in the NDC with respect to the South, women and youth.”

“The political parties and organizations law shall provide for ... the empowerment of youth below the age of 40 in governing bodies of political parties by at least 20%.”

The NDC also endeavoured to empower youth economically through various legal reform recommendations and economic tools:

“... amendments of tax and fiscal legislations to ensure that they contain temporary and regulated tax exemption for projects that aim at economically empowering women and youth”

“... provision of loan facilities to women and youth”

“... pension funds and a fund for the unemployed youth and social security”s

“... establishment of microfinance banks to provide non-interest bearing lending services to youth projects”

“... creating a fund for the development of skills, and achieving this goal in a decentralized fashion by training and preparing the youth and those who are able to work”

“... small cooperative agricultural and marine projects for the youth”

The inclusive process of the NDC led to an inclusive outcome. Yet, this was not sufficient to guarantee the Outcomes Document’s implementation and durability. Key Yemeni groups, such as the Houthi Movement and the Southern Hiraak Movement, were critical about the NDC Outcomes, particularly the proposed federal system. Combined with post-NDC developments that further marginalised these movements, including the composition and work of the Constitutional Drafting Committee, these tensions led to the ongoing internationalised civil war in Yemen that began in 2014.

3.4. Role of youth in agreement implementation

Inclusion in agreement implementation constitutes an important angle of the ‘inclusion triangle’ in the life cycle of a peace agreement that comprises the negotiation process, textual outcome, and implementation period. Agreement implementation can be conceptualised in different ways: a broad conceptualisation may include inclusion in any process, institution, and mechanism established by a peace agreement such as a constitution-making committee, powersharing government, truth and reconciliation commission, future peacebuilding dialogue, or referendum¹⁹. In YPAD, however, the “agreement implementation” sub-theme is conceptualised in a narrower sense, focusing mainly on monitoring, reporting, and implementation mechanisms and bodies, as well as concrete implementation-related obligations addressed to youth. Accordingly, 24 peace agreements, 7 of which are intra-state peace agreements and 17 of which are local peace agreements, involve youth in agreement implementation.

Agreements in spotlight: youth participation in agreement implementation bodies in South Sudan, Central African Republic, and the Democratic Republic of Congo

The non-international armed conflict in South Sudan between the government’s armed forces and the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army-in-Opposition (SPLM/A-IO) have led to the conclusion of several peace agreements, including ceasefires, since 2014. The first ceasefire reached in January 2014 provided for the establishment of a Monitoring and Verification Team (MVT) “composed of representatives drawn from IGAD [the Intergovernmental Authority on Development] Member States, the Parties and Partners which shall include a mix of civilians, and individuals with a military background”. The MVT was tasked, among others, to “collaborate with local communities in performance of their work” and to “identify the local committees from traditional and religious leaders, women and youth representatives”.

The indirect role of youth in the ceasefire’s implementation was transformed into direct participation in the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring Mechanism (CTSAMM), which included one youth representative and replaced the MVT, with the conclusion of the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan in 2015. Similarly, the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission, mandated to oversee the implementation of the Agreement, was designed to include one youth representative. The Revitalised Agreement of 2018 reconstituted these implementation mechanisms, increasing the number of youth representatives to “two (one male, one female)”.

The role of South Sudan’s youth in agreement implementation bodies has increased as youth involvement in negotiation processes became more pronounced. While youth groups were mentioned as “Adherents” to the 2015 Agreement and involved in the negotiations as part of the accredited delegations of civil society groups, youth inclusion in the negotiation process of

the Revitalised Agreement of 2018 was more substantial: a youth representative was present during the negotiations and signed the Agreement as a “Stakeholder”.

Some peace agreements envisage a role for youth in agreement implementation only at the local level. For example, the parties to the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic (Khartoum Accord), concluded on 5 February 2019, agreed to set up implementation committees at the national and local (prefectural) levels. While membership in the National Implementation Committee is reserved for representatives of the government and armed groups, the Prefectural Implementation Committees are designed to involve a broader range of societal representatives, including youth:

“A Prefectural Implementation Committee shall be established within seven (7) days of signature of the Agreement in order to ensure compliance, facilitate the sharing of information and create a peaceful environment throughout the prefecture. The Committee shall be chaired ipso jure by the Prefect and shall be composed of a representative of the Armed Forces of the Central African Republic, a representative of the internal security forces, a political leader from every signatory armed group with an active military presence in the prefecture, two representatives of every religious community (appointed by consensus by their peers or, failing that, by the Prefect) and two representatives of civil society organizations representing youth and women (appointed by consensus by the communities or, failing that, by the Prefect).”

A similar division of labour between the national and local levels, accompanied by a more inclusive design at the level of the local implementation committee, can also be seen in the peace agreements concluded in 2020 between the government of the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Front for Patriotic Resistance in Ituri.

Conclusion

Making references to youth in peace agreements remains a marginal practice despite the nexus between youth and conflict and the call for youth-inclusive peace processes. Only 12% of the peace agreements concluded during 1990-2022 refer to youth, amounting to 208 peace agreements concluded in the context of 70 peace processes across the world. Half of these agreements address youth in relation to a single issue.

Yet, YPAD reveals a wide variety of practices related to youth inclusion in the negotiation process, content, and implementation of peace agreements. As to the negotiation process of peace agreements, youth inclusion in the process appears to lead to more youth-inclusive outcomes, i.e., a greater number of themes being addressed in a peace agreement by reference to youth. Local peace agreements are more youth inclusive in this respect than others. In terms of content, youth-related provisions include a remarkably broad range of topics, differing in their depth and detail, and varying based on the type of conflict. While “political participation”, “economy and development”, and “education, culture, and society” emerge as the most addressed themes in intra-state peace agreements, local peace agreements address “violence and security” and “peacebuilding” more frequently. As to the implementation of peace agreements, YPAD reveals important practices such as youth participation in agreement implementation bodies.

The findings explained in this report are a starting point. YPAD can support many other research projects, as well as assisting practitioners and those involved in peace negotiations. It is structured in such a way as to be useful for quantitative research, for example using statistical analysis to examine whether differences in the scope and content of youth inclusion in agreements impact post-conflict outcomes. To further facilitate this the dataset is cross-referenced to the UCDP data on conflict. YPAD can also be of use to qualitative researchers and practitioners who wish to identify potential case studies and sample provisions, as it provides an easily searchable resource broken down by specific sub-themes, cross-referenced to the PA-X database where the text of an agreement can be viewed. Potential research topics arising from this data can include a greater focus on how and why youth are addressed in a peace agreement as well as the long-term impact of such inclusion.

Peace agreements provide a snapshot of what the negotiating parties have agreed on for the resolution of the conflict at a particular point of a peace process. They do not tell the ‘full story’ of a peace process, and it is not uncommon for peace agreements to fail after a certain amount of time. However, peace agreements have been the primary means of ending contemporary conflicts²⁰, and even when they fail, they carry weight as past practice. Therefore, attention to the negotiation process, content, and implementation of peace agreements has important merit. It is true that the outcome of a peace agreement depends on many factors other than its substance²¹, and post-agreement developments may chart a different direction, for better or worse. Yet, the questions of who is (not) included and what is (not) addressed in a peace agreement remain significant. YPAD takes an initial step towards answering these questions in relation to youth.

Endnotes

- 1 UNFPA (United Nations Populations Fund). (2023). World Population Dashboard. <https://www.unfpa.org/data/world-population-dashboard>
- 2 Hagerty, T. (2018). Data for Youth, Peace and Security: A summary of research findings from the Institute for Economics & Peace. Sydney: Institute for Economics & Peace.
- 3 UN Security Council. (2015). Resolution 2250 (2015). Adopted by the Security Council at its 7573rd meeting, on 9 December 2015. S/RES/2250 (2015). New York NY: United Nations Security Council. <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/2250>
- 4 UNSC. (2022) Youth and peace and security: Report of the Secretary-General. S/2022/220. 16 March 2022. New York NY: United Nations Security Council, at para 11. <https://undocs.org/S/2022/220>
- 5 Grizelj, I. & Saleem, A. (2022). We are in this Together: Operationalizing a Five-Year Strategic Action Plan for Youth-Inclusive Peace Processes. Global Coalition on Youth, Peace and Security, at p. 19. <https://www.un.org/youthenvoy/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/YPS-five-year-strategic-action-plan.pdf>
- 6 Ozcelik, A & Shaw, D. (2023). A Dataset of References to Youth in Peace Agreements (YPAD), 1990-2022. Harvard Dataverse. <https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/TZZOEX>
- 7 Bell, C., Badanjak, S., Beaujouan, J., Epple, T., Forster, R., Jamar, A., Molloy, S., McNicholl, K., Nash, K., Pospisil, J., Wilson, R. & Wise, L. (2023). PA-X Peace Agreements Database and Dataset, Version 7. www.peaceagreements.org
- 8 The Language of Peace Database contains a small number of peace agreements that were concluded before 1990 and make reference to youth, but as this database is not as systematic as PA-X in its coverage and documentation, these pre-1990 agreements are excluded from YPAD. See UN & University of Cambridge. Language of Peace. <https://www.languageofpeace.org/>
- 9 Peace Accords Matrix Implementation Dataset (PAM_ID). (Version 1.5, 2015). <https://peaceaccords.nd.edu>
- 10 Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) Peace Agreement Dataset. (Version 22.1, 2022). <https://ucdp.uu.se/downloads/>
- 11 Bell et al. (n7).
- 12 Ibid.
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 This figure refers to 243 agreements out of 2003 agreements. The agreements excluded from YPAD are included in this figure to maintain comparability to overall PA-X data. Elsewhere in this report too, where YPAD data is compared to overall PA-X data (relating to 2003 agreements), the excluded agreements are taken into account, eg, the yearly figures in Chart 2 include excluded agreements.
- 15 PAM_ID (n9). See also: Joshi, M., Quinn, J. M., & Regan, P. 2015. Annualized Implementation Data on Intrastate Comprehensive Peace Accords, 1989-2012. *Journal of Peace Research* 52(4): 551 – 562. PAM_ID consider a peace agreement as comprehensive if “(a) the major parties to the conflict were involved in the negotiations that produced the agreement; and (b) the substantive issues underlying the dispute were included in the negotiations”.
- 16 See UNFPA (United Nations Populations Fund), & PBSO (Peacebuilding Support Office). (2018). The missing peace: Independent progress study on youth, peace and security. New York NY: United Nations Populations Fund. <https://www.youth4peace.info/system/files/2018-10/youth-web-english.pdf>, at p. 13.
- 17 UN. (United Nations). (2012). United Nations guidance for effective mediation. New York NY: United Nations. https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/GuidanceEffectiveMediation_UNDPA2012%28English%29_0.pdf
- 18 For further information and examples, see Altiock, A., & Grizelj, I. (2019). We are here: An integrated approach to youth inclusive peace processes. New York NY: United Nations Envoy on Youth. <https://www.un.org/youthenvoy/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Global-Policy-Paper-Youth-Participation-in-Peace-Processes.pdf>
- 19 See eg Bramble, A. & Paffenholz, T. (2020). *Implementing Peace Agreements: From inclusive processes to inclusive outcomes?* Oslo: United Nations Development Programme.
- 20 Kreutz, J. (2010). How and when armed conflicts end: Introducing the UCDP Conflict Termination dataset. *Journal of Peace Research* 47(2): 243–250.
- 21 Edwards, L., & Worboys, J. (2021). The Interpretation and Implementation of Peace Agreements. In Weller, M., Retter, M. & Varga, A. (Eds.), *International Law and Peace Settlements*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 111-136.



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