

# Youth-led Peace and Reconciliation in Colombia: a transformational Approach

Management Response

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C2019.TARPT049.DEUMFA

**December 2020**

**Geneva, Switzerland**

<b>Name of programme/office/unit:</b>	UNITAR Division for Peace, Peacekeeping Training Programme		
<b>Name of programme manager</b>	Evariste KARAMBIZI		
<b>Name of project undertaking</b>	Youth-led Peace and Reconciliation in Colombia: A Transformational Approach	Project Reference	C2019.TARPT049.DEUMFA
<b>Name of evaluation</b>	Independent Evaluation of 2019-2020 Phase		
<b>Date:</b>	22.12.2020		

<b>SECTION I – Comments on Findings &amp; Conclusions</b>
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SECTION II - RECOMMENDATIONS						
Recommendation		Management Response and Planned Action				Update on status in 2021 (planned, under implementation, implemented)
		Accepted Partially Accepted Rejected	Planned action	Budget allocated (if necessary)	Status (planned, under implementation, implemented)	
1.	<p><b>On gender R1.</b> Further develop the project's <b>gender transformative perspective</b> based on a context-sensitive gender-analysis, and make the approach visible and measurable within the scope of capacities transferred to master trainers and TOT. This connects as well with recommendation 4.</p>	Partially Accepted	Evaluation comments will be taken into consideration in the design of future projects in the region.	The project was closed by the end of 2020 therefore no budget will be allocated for this.	The project was closed by the end of 2020.	
		<p><b>Management Comments:</b></p> <p>The recommendation is well noted. Although, specific gender elements have been integrated in all the components following a transversal strategy, trainers might not be aware of been working on specific gender issues, since the contents and material include those elements along the way in a more subtle manner. Gender is a concept that has not yet been naturally assimilated by the Colombian society.</p> <p>We acknowledge gender elements could be made more visible. In order to improve this aspect UNITAR's Division for Peace has hired a gender advisor in early 2020 to provide the necessary support on the topic.</p>				

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2.	<p><b>On strengthening MEL frameworks</b>  <b>R2.</b> Revise and conduct a participatory validation of the <a href="#">theory of change</a>, aiming at a stronger correlation between the pathways as interlinked for the achievement of the overall goal. Identify the cross-cutting issues and strategies and consider transferring all three components to the master organizations. <a href="#">Also, strengthen the monitoring system and monitoring and evaluation capacities of the implementing partners and local project team.</a> Adjust instruments to purposively identify and measure participation by age groups, and better assess the effects of the trainings in youth participants. Finally, create a learning plan that promotes a feedback loop throughout the project cycle and internal evaluation with implementing partners and beneficiaries.</p>	Partially accepted	Evaluation comments will be taken into consideration in the design of future projects.	The project was closed by the end of 2020 therefore no budget will be allocated for this.	The project was closed by the end of 2020.	
		<p><b>Management Comments:</b></p> <p>We acknowledge this constructive criticism, however, with regards to the Theory of Change, the project has been developed according to the standards set for the UNITAR results-based programming framework. This is the guiding document under which the logical framework of the project has been presented. The logical approach of each of the three project's components had been tested through a pilot project (financed by ifa zivik). The evidence gathered from the pilot projects showed that the project measures were reaching the envisioned objectives and stimulated the change processes as formulated by the project team.</p> <p>With regards of the strengthening of monitoring and evaluation capacities of the implementing partners, this is well noted and will be taken into consideration for the design of future projects.</p>				

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<p>3. <b>On institutional capacity</b>  <b>R3.</b> Identify avenues for direct coordination and institutional capacity building activities with local and national government institutions in the education system, such as Secretaries of Education and local schools. This will leverage the strategic focus in the work with schools and teachers by advancing coordination efforts with institutions within the educational system and promoting systemic changes in peace education. To increase the potential impact to peace building and reconciliation efforts in Colombia, UNITAR should also consider 1) extended coordination with local institutions, particularly those in the education system; and 2) revising the geographical scope to widen support in areas most affected by conflict targeted as PDET territories, thus contributing to the Pillar 8: Reconciliation, Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding of the PDET policy.</p>	<p>Rejected</p>	<p><b>Management Comments:</b></p> <p>The recommendation is well noted and will be taken into consideration in the design of future projects. However, this project has explicitly been developed and structured to work with CSOs and not public local or national entities. The approach and methodologies are tailored to match the needs and requirements of informal education. Local schools (mostly private ones and in the Salesian network) have decided to join the initiative and to include the methodologies in their extra-curricular activities or in the so called Catedra de la Paz because they did not receive guidance from the Secretaries of Education on such aspects. Within the UN system it is mainly UNESCO who has a mandate connected with formal education.</p> <p>However, CBD as well as the members of the network underly the guidance and regulation by the Ministries of Education as well as the Colombian Institute for Family Welfare (ICBF). Therefore, the adherence to/ with educational quality standards is not just guranteed through UNITAR quality standards, but equally through the participating institutions.</p> <p>In a few specific contexts, through the involvement of members of the network, the team has worked with public entities in the educational sectors. This includes the following examples:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Collaboration with the Secretary of Education from Belen de los Andaquies (Caquetá), through the alliance with FEP. Thanks to this agreement, we reached La Mono Educational Institution with component III; besides, FEP plans to implement components I and II in the coming months.</li> <li>2. We work with the Secretary of Social Welfare of the Municipality of Pasto, through which we trained 23 facilitators and impacted 425 victims of the armed conflict.</li> </ol>			

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<p>4. <b>On the do no harm approach capacity and protocols</b>  <b>R4.</b> Evaluate the need for a separate guide for facilitators that further develops the conceptual frameworks within each component and provides <b>do no harm guidelines</b> in core aspects such as conflict-sensitive facilitation, PFA, and security protocols or content adaptations in case of potential security risks for participants in vulnerable territories.                      With regards to PFA, <a href="#">the World Health Organization has developed a framework</a> which has been widely applied and is adaptable to different social settings. A “caring for the career” approach that helps facilitators deal with their own emotional distress possibly produced by the emotional exchanges during the workshops and, as part of their day-to-day work in conflict afflicted communities, could also be considered. Consider the critical importance as well of adding to the project team professionals with knowledge of PFA, such as social workers or psychologists.</p>	Partially accepted	Evaluation comments will be taken into consideration in the design of future projects.	The project was closed by the end of 2020 therefore no budget will be allocated for this.	The project was closed by the end of 2020.	
	<p><b>Management Comments:</b></p> <p>We welcome this constructive criticism as this is a key consideration for the project team and we believe that there is always room for improvement with regards to specific psychological attention when dealing with trauma and matters of conflict sensitivity. The project team anticipated as much as possible potential challenges in this area and has taken the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A) All our training materials and activities have been validated by psychologists.</li> <li>B) All the training manuals contain a specific section on how to identify and deal with trauma. Activities that are considered specifically sensitive in their implementation have been flagged in the manuals and we have recommended that those are only conducted if and when trained psychologists or social workers can accompany the process.</li> <li>C) The UNITAR team held specific sessions on trauma sensitive training delivery in all master trainings;</li> <li>D) When developing virtual training tools and adapted training materials for distance delivery, all activities have been evaluated as to whether it is psychologically safe for people to go through them on their own. Any activity that did not meet this requirement was modified or taken out of the curriculum.</li> </ul> <p>Lastly, UNITAR colleagues in Colombia provided individual guidance and feedback to trainers and master trainers involved in the implementation of the project when points of concern were brought to them. A direct whatsapp line of communication was given at any moment</p>				

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<p>5. <b>On strengthening synergies and collaboration</b>  <b>R5.</b> Identify ex ante the potential synergies with other donors, such as UN organizations, the European Union and bilateral donors, especially those working in PDET areas, Zonas Futuro, and former ETCR territories, such as the Verification Mission, to increase potential beneficiary outreach and avoid duplication of efforts. In doing this, ensure that there are mechanisms to trace outcomes from these partnerships, including those directly established by implementing partners.</p>	<p>Rejected</p>	<p><b>Management Comments:</b></p> <p>UNITAR has been coordinating its efforts with UNDP and UNICEF since 2016. UNICEF has actively participated in the revision and finalization of the comics and materials of project component 1.</p> <p>UNDP and the RC Office have been kept informed about the project activities on a constant basis. UNITAR also liaised with UNODC but the two agencies agreed that their work had a different focus so concrete cooperation was not envisaged.</p> <p>What is more, through coordination with the RC's office, UNITAR has built strong ties with the UN Verification Mission in Colombia. Indeed, as described in the report, five youth focal points from the UN Mission have been involved in the project component three. This collaboration has also been acknowledged in the SG's report on Colombia in 2019.</p>			

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<p>6. On considering post-COVID learning scenarios  <b>R6. Develop and deliver an online webinar to explain the contents and use of the virtual materials for trainings to master trainers.</b>                      Consider the design of a mixed approach implementing strategy that allows for virtualizations and small-scale gatherings to maintain the experiential and interactive components of the methodology. For the in-person trainings, the operational capacity of UNITAR in Colombia requires additional human capital to provide more on-site support to MT in their first multiplications and overall guidance post-training.</p>	Partially accepted	Evaluation comments will be taken into consideration in the design of future projects.	The project was closed by the end of 2020 therefore no budget will be allocated for this.	The project was closed by the end of 2020.	
	<p><b>Management Comments:</b></p> <p>UNITAR team developed an online workshop in order to support project participants navigate psychosocial challenges emerged from Covid-19 pandemic. The workshop aimed at reconnecting people with their internal emotions, environment and new contextual challenges.</p> <p>In a second stage, the online workshop was transformed into an educational tool that would serve the facilitators and their communities as psycho-emotional support during the Covid-19 period. The methodology of this educational tool was presented to participants in a webinar. The tool was also shared virtually through a pdf file.</p> <p>In addition, the team adapted all methodologies and instructional material of the three project components for a virtual teaching context. Through emails and Whatsapp working groups, the links that would allow the facilitators to access the new tools were released. Participants were provided with the opportunity of sharing doubts and receive feedback from UNITAR's field team. No questions were shared at the time.</p> <p>UNITAR team tracked all the organizations and facilitators who implemented the project in virtual settings during the Covid-19 pandemic. All of them received ongoing support. Some organizations even combined the use of virtual materials with short face-to-face meetings and phone calls.</p> <p>Without a doubt, this was a learning period for both UNITAR and the implementing partners. 2021 will be a year in which the lessons learned will allow us to consolidate the combined work of virtuality and face-to-face meetings, according to the dynamics of the pandemic in each territory.</p>				





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<p>7. <b>On leveraging organizational capacity</b>  <b>R7.</b> Conduct a <b>SWOT assessment of the performance of master organizations</b> and evaluate the need for complementary capacity strengthening that further enables the organizations to advance their community work in their areas of influence using the trainings and toolboxes. Capacity strengthening could also include a form of coaching of the leadership of these organizations based on the SWOT analysis, and to the master trainers during multiplication, so that they can receive feedback in situ at least for the first multiplication and as the subsequent trainings develop. Furthermore, UNITAR should revise possible adjustments to the criteria for the selection of participant MT organizations, ensuring that there is not only expressed willingness to adopt and multiply these concepts, but a verifiable evidence of community work experience and established intra-communal networks that boosts the impact of multiplications. As part of these efforts to strengthen MT</p>	Partially Accepted	Evaluation comments will be taken into consideration in the design of future projects.	The project was closed by the end of 2020 therefore no budget will be allocated for this.	The project was closed by the end of 2020.	
<p><b>Management Comments:</b></p> <p>While UNITAR has not specifically conducted SWOT assessments with participating organizations, it does assess the specific needs of the environments in which some organizations operate and the specific needs of the working teams. Based on those assessments, learning tools are designed and trainings are delivered.</p> <p>During the implementation of the project UNITAR and its main partner, Ciudad Don Bosco, were able to identify committed participant organizations and thus create a network of organizations with the operational capacity and motivation to embrace the methodologies and singularity of the social work being carried out. It is with this network that UNITAR could complement the assessment and carry out a SWOT analysis.</p>					

	organizations, introduce certification as part of the MT and possibly TOT designs.					
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8.	<p><b>R8.</b> To increase the impact of the project in the empowerment of youth as peace agents, <a href="#">identify the existing local networks, organizations, programmes or platforms (such as the Youth Platforms) that catalyse collective action for this age group.</a></p> <p>Whenever possible, coalesce with these groups to identify and select participants in the trainings, and outline actions in the project design that reflect the exit strategies or post-training follow up.</p> <p>Looking forward, the three-component strategy along with the multiplication approach to capacity building should continue with adaptations that help UNITAR and implementing partners to: a) increase traceability of effects and impacts at the community level, with enhanced mechanisms for monitoring, evaluation and institutional learning at this level; b) build on the current model to create a more cohesive and integrative approach that connects results across all three</p>	Accepted	Evaluation comments will be taken into consideration in the design of future projects.	The project was closed by the end of 2020 therefore no budget will be allocated for this.	The project was closed by the end of 2020.	
		<p><b>Management Comments:</b></p> <p>We acknowledge this recommendation, with the support of local partners and the network of local organizations, youth platforms could be identified and collective actions could be promoted in future initiatives.</p> <p>With regards to a longer term traceability of effects and impact of the project, is worth mentioning that the San Luis Beltrán inspectorate – entity who oversees our main partner Ciudad Don Bosco -has agree to adopt UNITAR's methodologies and implement all 3 project components in Salesian educational institutions in western Colombia.</p> <p>The implementation of UNITAR's methodologies in all these institutions will not only contribute to ensure the continuity of the project within the Salesian network but also, will allow the inspectorate to monitor and evaluate the project impact throughout the years producing long-term evaluation data.</p>				

	components; and c) increase the post-training support given not only to master trainers, but also to their organizations, adding a clear gender perspective and providing additional emphasis in the do no harm approach as referred to in a previous section.		
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