**Makerere University**

**Rotary Peace Centre**

**Empowering Children as peace builders**

**“A Social Change Initiative with special region to Nuba Mountains”**

**Social Change Initiative Implementation Report as a course requirement for the award of**

**P.G Diploma in Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation**

**2022- 2023**

**Submitted by:**

**Rehab Salah Fadlallah Katik**

**ABSTRACT**

In the aftermath of its violent and bloody history, today’s Nuba Mountains about to be accomplish significant political, social, and economic progress to prevent another atrocity like the 2011 genocide against the Nuba people. The Nubians of the 2011war work hard to move on from the traumas of conflict, it is sole responsibility of Nuba youth to break the cycle of victimization and build a stable foundation from the aftershock of its violent history. Many children suffer from psychological distresses and difficult life conditions that prevent them from obtaining an appropriate education and maximizing their potential.

Through observations of the Nuba Mountains region visits and interviews with children, I highlight the potential that peace has for establishing a sense of closeness in children understanding of conflict resolution and spread the culture of nonviolence among their communities to transmit a sense of responsibility toward peace building.

The project used several combined methods to address and solve the main problem statement and used to a achieve the project’s objectives, the project activities were effective in promoting peace and nonviolence culture among children and reducing the risk of violence on them.

The project provided strong evidence that peace can build the knowledge, skill, attitude, and value that can enable children to observe violence and resolve conflict peacefully to make positive impact on their communities. The report ends with significant recommendations intended to inform the development of better designed interventions which can limit the long-term consequences of conflict and violations.

Table of Contents

Summary………………………………………………………………………………….2

**Chapter one:**

Introduction and Background…………………………………………………….3

Problem Statement……………………………………………………………………5

Goals and Objectives………………………………………………………………….6

Challenges and Mitigation Strategies………………………………………….8

**Chapter two:**

Literature Review…………………………………………………………………….10

Theoretical Underpinnings……………………………………………………….13

Change Theory and How it was Applied…………………………………….16

Methods and Design………………………………………………………………….18

**Chapter Three:**

Interventions and Activities………………………………………………………20

Key Findings/ Impacts………………………………………………………………23

**Chapter Four:**

General Conclusion…………………………………………………………………….25

Recommendations/ Implications for Policy…………………………………26

Sustainability plan……………………………………………………………………...28

**Chapter (1)**

**Introduction and Background:**

The people of the Nuba Mountains, long time victims of discrimination from Sudan’s government, have been subjected to a campaign of aerial bombardment since June 2011 after fighting broke out between Khartoum and Nuba Mountains rebels in Sudan’s South Kordofan state centering on the Nuba Mountains region.

The fighting pits the Nuba Mountains section of Sudan Armed Forces “SAF” and aligned militias. The conflict has drawn international attention over allegations that the Sudanese forces are engaged in grave human rights abuses, conflict, and violence such as mass killings of civilians particularly women and children, additionally the massacres and ethnic liquidation of the people of the Nuba Mountains, targeting children who are the promising and bright future of this great region” Nuba Mountains’’.

The Social Change Initiative (SCI) which called” Empowering children as peace builders” in Nuba Mountains region in South Kordofan state in West Sudan is a six month project which aimed at support peace and assist displaced children through spread peace knowledge and the culture of nonviolence through them and help them to cultivate peace and bring them back to education, those who experienced the bitterness of war, conflict, and violations since the softness of their nails, they have never heard of peace or lived it. They are the real oppressed in this stricken country Sudan whose governments know nothing except war, blood, and destructions.

The citizens of Nuba Mountains are currently experiencing in discriminate killing by armed groups affiliated with the government, displacing them from their land without right or legal justification, closing schools and depriving children of the right to education and the right to live a decent life as other children of Sudan.

The Social Change Initiative (SCI) worked on targeting children between age of 10- 17 years and work with them to create a peaceful environment in order to live their lives normally in a way that suits their age as children and their aspirations in the future.

****

**Nuba Mountains region, South Kordofan state- West Sudan**

[[1]](#footnote-1)

The Nuba Mountains also referred to as the Nuba Hills, is an area located in South Kordofan state in West Sudan. The area is home to a group of indigenous ethnic groups known collectively as the Nuba people. In the Middle Ages, the Nuba Mountains has been part of the Nubian kingdom of Aladia. In the 18th century, they became home to the kingdom of Taqali that controlled the hills of the mountains until the British colonialism in Sudan.

The Nuba Mountains is an area of about 30,000 square miles, situated in the Southern part of the state of Kordofan, and home to Christians, Muslims and traditional believers. The Nuba people were decimated when the Sudanese government conducted systematic assault against them, a policy that reached a destructive peak in 1992- 1993 but continued for years thereafter.

War and conflict in Nuba Mountains began in 1985 but intensified significantly after the current government took power in 1989. As the main North-South came closer to the area, the government began attacking villages regularly, decommissioned Nuba in the armed forces and” disappeared” many Nubian leaders. Villages were emptied of their former inhabitants; their land were confiscated for large. Scale agriculture ventures or local design and all this is cause of the ethnic difference and the black African blood which the government seeks to exterminate, so that it can declare Sudan an Arab and Muslim country free from the black African race that has no other languages such as those spoken by the Nuba” African local languages”, and this was done by arming the government to the Arab tribes ” giving them weapons and other equipment of war” and providing them what is necessary to attack the Nuba people, and at other times the government uses the national army to do so.

In the past, the conflict among the tribes were due to the disputes of agricultural lands, pastures and entry of Arab tribe’s cattle into the agricultural land of and crops of the Nuba tribes and damage them.

Later, the government intervened to rob and exploit the rights of the Nuba citizens in their lands, this began before the coming of the current regime, following the exit of the colonizer, it has clear policies in dealing with the citizens of the region.

The conflict in Nuba Mountains area took a religious nature only after the advent of the current government in 1989, in 2002 the people of the Nuba Mountains demanded autonomy for six years under the administration of the Popular Army who suffered from conflict and human rights violations for along which resulted in rape, displacement, torture and mass killing of them.

The United Nations describes the war and conflict in the Nuba Mountains which resulted human rights abuses and violence as an ethnic cleaning has carried out massacres against Nuba Mountains.

According to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), nearly 250,000 Sudanese refugees have fled to South Sudan, mostly to Unity and Upper Nile, since the start of the war in the Nuba Mountains in 2011.

“A solution to the conflict and an end to the suffering are needed more than ever, as South Sudan is itself home to some 1.69 million internally displaced people,” UNHCR spokesperson Adrian Edwards told reporters in Geneva.[[2]](#footnote-2)

**Problem Statement:**

In 1992 alone, the Bashir regime mass murdered over 70,000 Nuba people. The regime’s Popular Defense Forces (PDF) seized surrounding farmland from unarmed Nuba civilians. The PDF offensive was only halted when they encountered Nuba fighters, who had entrenched themselves in perimeter foothill communities.

By 1993, hundreds of thousands of Nuba civilians had fled deep into the Nuba Mountains. Those who did not escape were forced into "peace camps" set up by the Bashir regime. To be clear, there was nothing peaceful about these camps. Nuba civilians were enslaved, tortured, raped, and starved by regime soldiers and paramilitaries. Survivors have since compared their experiences in the “peace camps” to the death and concentration camps of Nazi Germany.

By 1994, the situation in the Nuba Mountains had reached a truly desperate state. As Nuba fighters fought off ground offensive after ground offensive, the Bashir regime began aerial bombing places where Nuba civilians were hiding. Survivors have reported that conventional chemical weapons were dropped on Nuba communities in the mountains. The Sudanese military violently enforced a humanitarian blockade on the Nuba Mountains.

Entire Nuba communities were facing living conditions that went well beyond emergency humanitarian thresholds. Thousands were starving to death. Preventable disease outbreaks had become more deadly than the daily aerial bombing. The PDF and other regime paramilitaries prevented civilians from farming by repelling Nuba attempts to retake critical farming areas. These early years of the regime’s genocide against the Nuba people represent one of the darkest chapters of Sudanese history.

The war and genocide that began in the Nuba Mountains since 1989 until today has roots in historical grievance and Sudan’s previous North-South civil war. The area sits directly on the religious ethnic and political Faultline that is central border area of present-day Sudan and South Sudan. Children growing up with the constant threat of bombing and terror of their houses, and the schools being destroyed, and their families killed. Before the war, there were more than 255 schools in the Nuba Mountains region, now there are less than 100 schools. None can provide the same level of education as they did before the war, there are not enough teachers to provide instruction for all primary and high schools grades, books are rare and there are few resources to help with lessons.

Before the war, hundreds of members of a community volunteered their time, money and even crops to build and fund the community schools and their students and push the educational process forward. Now, parents and in addition to volunteers lead classrooms from caves even thought there were no textbooks and chalkboards.

The most significant issue, most of the children lost their identification documents during the war and due to displacement, while others were not issued documents at all, no birth certificates and identification would qualify them even to enroll in schools or back to it.

Eventually, conflict in Nuba Mountains led to toxic stress and mental health issues on the children and they experienced rates of disorders including depression, anxiety, behavioral problems as well as refusal to attend school’s classes. Therefore, without early intervention, these mental health problems and war trauma are likely to continue into adulthood and to predict adverse outcomes.

**[[3]](#footnote-3)**

**Goals and Objectives:**

Peace education is an essential component of quality basic education that promotes the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values needed to bring behavior changes that enable children and young people to prevent overt and structural conflict and violence, to resolve conflict peacefully and to create the conditions conductive to peace at intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, national and international levels.

The one of the most significant objectives of the Social Change Initiative (SCI) is to understand the concept of peace and nonviolence in general and especially in the context in the Nuba Mountains region.

To examine the conflict and violence in Nuba Mountains and how to solve this problem to suggest suitable measures to overcome these obstacles and abuses through educate children.

More importantly, the one of the most important objectives of the **SCI** is to promote and strengthen the idea of social justice, strengthen the linkages among the individuals and the state to strengthen feeling of solidarity with others and promote ways to allow children to participate in small peace activities in the region. To spread and raise the awareness of community of the signification and knowledge of their rights in case of these rights have been violated by any party.

Furthermore, the **SCI** focused on psychological rehabilitation by providing psychologists volunteers, providing free legal aid and issuing identification documents for displaced and war children and their families who had lost them during conflict and displacement by providing volunteer lawyers, and bring the children back to education through volunteer teachers to give them literacy classes and help them catch up. Addressed the needs of the children differently in which most children are more vulnerable to insecurity due to the conflict and attacks, and this intervention helped reduce violence and conflict among children themselves and the members of region at large to create peaceful community which can be able to live together and respect their differences and diversity.

In the concluded, the **SCI** developed the skills of understanding conflict problem in the region and resolved the clouds of conflict regarding children and made them a bit aware not to discriminate in gender, fundamental rights particularly the right to education and fundamental duties as well. In addition to helped in modifying the behavior of the children regarding conflict and violence which important for cultural diversity and developed the will of tolerance, acceptance of others and respect for differences.

**Challenges and Mitigation Strategies:**

The Social Change Initiative (SCI) had several challenges and mitigation responses during implementation, while peace education all over the world faces numerous challenges in general such as conflicting collective narrative, historical memories, contradictory beliefs and more. There are at least three additional major challenges that transcend challenges of content and mental. Four such major challenges that pertain to the very core of the social change initiative” Empowering children as peace builders”.

Finding, this is not surprised it is one of the real and serious obstacles is finding not just the lack of funding, but the nature of finding, the requirements of getting funding and sustaining funding particularly the Rotary Peace Foundation, Makerere University Rotary Peace Centre, and Rotary International Clubs around the world do not provide or allocate fund to the peace scholar to implement the social change projects. I have at this point tried two ways to provide the fund to the project were the national organization in Sudan (NGOs) and donations from the community in which the project was implemented cause the funders generally do not fund long- term projects, I do think one of the most common obstacles is how funding is structured right now.

The most important challenge was the insecure situation in Sudan generally and the project implementation region” Nuba Mountains” as you might know the security situation in Sudan is a serious concern and further complicating the situation are the inter- tribal conflict that continue to plague the region” Nuba Mountains” and have led to many civilians casualties and killing, mass displacement and attendant humanitarian tragedy.

Another challenge was children themselves, one of the biggest concerns the trust of children parents, how can-do parents trust us as teamwork of the project to give their children the supervision, care, attention, and learning opportunities they do need? While the safety of children was the top of our priority in a region situation” Nuba Mountains”. Additionally, the difficult communication with children and instructions it was tough challenge, my team and I have played critical role in observing and shaping their development progress.

In the conclusion, the mitigation strategies helped greatly in completing the project successfully which were represented by through communicate with the local government of South Kardofan state” the project implementation region”, and influential community leaders, made linkages and created partnerships with two local NGOs to provide support and guidelines.

**Chapter (2)**

**Literature Review:**

Violent conflict is the one of the biggest barriers to development in many of the world’s poorest countries. Education is perhaps the most important tool for human development and the eradication of poverty. It is the means by which successive generations develop the values, knowledge and skills for their personal health and safety and for future political, economic, social and cultural developments. This is one reason why the Social Change Initiative “Empowering Children as Peace Builders” so much emphasis on achieving empowering children through peace education and peace building.

In this regard, I provided a brief summary of some ways in which I can think about the role of education in conflict-affected situation such Nuba Mountains region, there are different perspective from a common concern about the way that violent conflict affects the lives of the children and their rights to education. The first way a concern for the protection of children and a response to the negative impacts of conflict on their education to some extent this is primary a humanitarian motivation. The second way a concern that education is provided in a way that” does not harm”, and the third ones a concern that education can” do some good” for example, by contributing to transformations within conflict-affected societies that might make peace possible and more likely to endure that is education that contributes to peace building.

Education is a fundamental right as articulated in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (1948), and the convention on the Rights of the Child (1981). Children should not lose this fundamental right to education simply because they live during a conflict and war zone. Education is an important element in the physical, psychol-social, and cognitive protection of children during conflict by providing a sense of normalcy and stability education may ease the psycho-social impact of a conflict, a safe learning environment may shield children from the everyday physical violence of a conflict, while also conveying lifesaving information on how to protect oneself from danger, nut there are a number of extremely problematic issues in reviewing literature in peace building firstly, the lack of a precise definition of peace building means that it is extremely difficult to set boundaries, secondly, all of the literature refers to a weak evidence base for linkages among education, conflict, and peace building but the project commissioned a review to help determine how to promote peace and nonviolence culture through education for conflict-affected children.

In reviewing the literature, it identified several roles for promoting peace education through education in supporting recovery for conflict-affected children, it can provide protection from violence particularly for girls, that schools can help to protect them from recruitment and exploitation. In terms of survival skills by providing opportunities for psychological and cognitive development and some evidence that education can protect from frustration, boredom and risk of conflict.

Education for psychological support and healing, the literature identified that education could provide children with chances to rebuild trusting relationships and regain confidence. Education for peace, the literature identified evidence on the impact of peace education is weak, there is still a strong commitment to its inclusion in conflict-affected situation and this is reflected in the literature review.

Before the separation of South Sudan in 2011, the Nuba Mountains region, which represents the greater portion of southern Kordofan, was in the geographical center of the former undivided Sudan and covered an area of approximately 88 000 km² within the savannah summer belt (see Map 1). Following the separation of South Sudan, the relative location of the Nuba Mountains changed from central to borderland. This “new” relative location has situated the region in a unique and significant geopolitical position along the north–south divide. As an emerging borderland, it shares an international border with South Sudan. The entire international boundary between the two Sudans is some 2 010 km (1 250 miles) long, and the longest part of this north–south international boundary runs along the South Kordofan territory. Moreover, the region hosts most of the contentious, yet unresolved, issues between the two Sudans; namely, Abyei, oil, pastoral grazing zones and several disputed boundary points (Komey 2013a). At present, Abyei remains a highly disputed border area between Sudan and South Sudan associated with recurring different levels of clashes. As a result, the case was taken to Arbitration by a panel under the Permanent Court of Arbitration in Hague in 2008. At later stage, a hybrid AU-UN peacekeeping force was deployed which remains to present day awaiting final solution to be determined by a Referendum.

The Nuba people represent most of the population of South Kordofan, estimated to be around 2 508 000 persons. Nubas are a sedentary group of African origins. They embrace Islam, Christianity and some indigenous beliefs. The nomadic Baggara Arabs are the next largest group of people in South Kordofan. Of significant size are also the Jellaba traders from northern Sudan, who have strong links to state power and wealth, and the Fellata, originally migrants from West Africa.

Precolonial, colonial and postcolonial histories indicate that the current human tragedy facing the Nuba people is not something new. Rather, it is a continuation of episodes of institutionalized insecurity and perpetual violence driven by more powerful forces, including the state. The current war represents a violent phase of a situation that has always characterized the region’s history with territory and identity standing as two key drivers for their constant struggle (Manger 2007, 72). The crux of the matter here is that the fundamental problem in the Nuba Mountains/South Kordofan is political. As such, it will be resolved only by a political agreement that acknowledges the rights of the currently socio-politically excluded and economically marginalized.

The overall analysis reveals that the ongoing violent conflict in the Nuba Mountains in southern Kordofan is one of the biggest human tragedies not only in postcolonial Sudan but also in contemporary Africa and the world at large, worsened by the lack of humanitarian help allowed in the area. Because of how pervasive the conflict is and based on the scarcity of outside intervention, civilians resorted to different types of self-protection and survival mechanisms and strategies. However, despite these survival mechanisms, deaths, injuries, and displacements are still very high.

Moreover, the analysis concurs with other contributions that point to the importance of the fundamental role of threatened communities in protecting themselves from violence. It also highlights that, however remarkable such self-protection, there will be death and suffering on a terrible scale if state-sponsored violence against civilians is not prevented by other actors.

The self-protection strategy is necessary but not sufficient as it still results in high levels of mortality and suffering. The plight of the Nuba and other war-affected communities in the Blue Nile and Darfur, associated with state-driven institutionalized insecurity and excessive violence against the civilians, poses a serious question as to whether there is a tradeoff between state sovereignty and maintaining basic human rights and needs. Keeping civilians in such tragic circumstances is a real test for the fundamental principles of the “responsibility to protect” that goes with humanitarianism and humanitarian international laws and practices. The case at hand would suggest that state and international systems and regulations failed at that.

 [[4]](#footnote-4)

**Theoretical underpinning:**

Underpinning as a technique that needs to be done with much care and careful supervision of the work, therefore, incorrect approach procedures, methods, vision, etc. could lead to failures of the structure and it serves as a roadmap for developing the argument I have used in my own work on the social change project. When I have created the theoretical underpinnings, I have followed some steps such identifying my key concept from problem statement and project questions. The negative impact of war and conflict on the children in terms of education and their mental health “war trauma”, this is a big issue and problem. The objectives of project to reduce conflict and violence impacts on the children and give them chance to back school and create peaceful environment for them. To investigate this problem, I have identified and planned to focus on the following problem statement, objectives and project questions.

The problem is many children are currently out the education system and displaced, they have lost their identification documents, in addition to the terrible psychological state they suffer from cause of conflict and unhumanitarian situation. The objective is to bring them back schools, psychological rehabilitation, and provide them free legal aid.

The social change initiative question is how can provide the children assistance and promote peace and nonviolence in their local communities and build their capacities as a future peace makers and leaders? So, the concepts of promoting peace and nonviolence culture are clearly central to this social change project. The theoretical underpinning must define these concepts and discuss theories about the relationship between these concepts.

Peace building has left some confusion as to what the concept really means, peace building is a peace operation undertaken where a comprehensive peace agreement has been negotiated with provisions for addressing the root causes of conflict. This view sees peacebuilding as involving wide array of actors and activities. Others tend to see peace building as relevant only to post-conflict situation, according to this thought peace building is a process that occurs at the end of a conflict’s “life cycle” when the fighting has stopped, a negotiated agreement is in force, this is the position of peace building that seems to have dominated the United Nations until recently. Peace building should not be limited to post conflict situation, nor should it be confined to averting a relapse into conflict, such a restrictive conceptualization may, in theory, undermine the prospects for sustainable peace.

Nonviolence and peace building are simple concepts, but they highlight the significance of remaining nonviolence and peace by using peaceful principles, nonviolent activities and so on.

The social change initiative methods included qualitative approach and data to describe the problem statement and project details. Therefore, it is descriptive, expressed in terms of feeling rather than numerical values, and this type of data answers the (why) or (how) behind the analysis, qualitative approach not only helps to collect data, but it also gives a chance to understand the trends and meaning of natural actions. And this type of data research focuses on the qualities of user and the action behind the numbers, it is descriptive and subjective method which helps bring context to quantitative data. In addition to other data such online library databases and academic journals.

Results, in this regard, learning about peace was a wonderful opportunity for children to build peaceful perspective of the communities surrounding them, the project equipped children with the skills that they needed to be human beings who build healthy relationships and solve problems in ways that value the inherent dignity of others, our community and the country at large will benefit currently and in the foreseeable future. Promote peace and nonviolence are important for everyone particularly for children who are still building their identity and the values they hold, when we teach children to be peaceful, we are allowing them to be a positive role model for adults around them, when this happens the impact creates a ripple effect in their communities and the beauty of the relational nature of peace education is exposed. For me, the idea of a ripple effect is what drives the passion behind teaching conflict resolution skills to children through peace education.

In conclusion, I have observed first-hand experience that peace can be an essential part of education cause of the immense impact it has on the children in their classrooms and in the communities which they live in, when we teach children the value of peace along with the skills, they need to be healthy conflict resolvers, we equip the next generation with the tools they need to be a society that values relationship over competition and well-being over accomplishment. When these values are shared, some voice concern that society is becoming soft and unmotivated to succeed, but when we work with those around us to collaborate, we can achieve greater things while still maintain our individual and collective health.

Peace can give children concrete skills to use in group work and in conversation with those around them so that they are collaborators instead of competitors in school, society, and beyond.

**Change Theory and How It Was Applied:**

The Theory of Change (ToC) is a method for planning the implementation strategies, identifying the key participants and developing methods of evaluation. Additionally transform the specific goals into actionable activities.

In the Social Change Initiative (SCI) I have used the theory of change tool to understand how the actionable activities can be used strategically to best achieve the desire outcomes of the project.

I have followed the theory of change process, and applied it in the project, as a result, it highlighted the way my project activities will have a positive impact and the chosen activities will result in a desired change, it shown how a group of early and intermediate actions will start the process of reaching long-term goals, it focuses on the gap between what a program does “ its activities and interventions” and how these lead to the desired goals being achieved, and transforming the social change project into a series of actionable tasks.

The theory of change created a serious of “outcomes pathway” in which one activity leaded to one small change, and then another change, and then another, ultimately leading to the achievement of the desired long-term change. The theory of change helped to create a step-by-step series of outcomes that will each individually move closer towards achieving the long-term change. The theory of change allowed me to look at the interventions visually, translating the thinking into diagram that provided an overview of the activities I needed to implement, and after completing the theory of change I was able to see a serious of clearly defined and practically achievable steps needed to reach my goals.

There were steps to developing the theory of change. Firstly, I needed to identify the long term change I was seeking which included some questions such what is the problem I have identified in the project implementation area “Nuba Mountains”, who are the people I am trying to help, what impact do I want to have on their lives? And so on.

Next, I needed to establish the pre-conditions necessary so that the long-term change can occur which represented in the following questions, what individual actions are required to achieve the long- term change I identified in step one, and I started with over-arching long-term goals, then worked through the intermediate and medium-term changes and then, finally, detail the immediate, short-term activities I needed to put in place.

Now, that I have a serious of “changes” I was able to see the outcomes pathway, there were the causal linkages between the various “change”, and I was used to map the identified changes and shown each outcome in both a logical relationship to all the others as well as in a chronological flew. Now, that I have a serious of specific goals, it is time to turn them into intervention strategies, because I have now turned the complex, long-term change into a series of smaller, more easily achievable goals, the process of developing specific, manageable interventions as part of a broader strategy should be much easier.

In the end, I needed to develop indicators to assess the performance of the project interventions, indictors do not need to be exact at this stage. At this stage, it is okay to identify ideas for indictors and rough targets.

I explored monitoring and evaluation strategies in more details, including identifying specific indicators, so each outcome must have its own specific set of indicators, I was able to highlight immediate results and outcomes which enabled me show other how the work is making a positive impact in the project implementation region.

Currently, I have a series of small, achievable project arranged in chronological order by intervention type, so I have identified my interventions and how they worked together to lead to the long-term change, it is time to develop a through monitoring and evaluation strategy to make sure I stayed on the track.

**Methods and Design:**

The social change initiative “Empowering children as peace builders” was designed in a way which will leave lasting positive impact and knowledge on the participants and the region of implementation “Nuba Mountains” and the initiative used several combined methods to address and solve the main problem of the project, and it included the tools, processes, roles and responsibilities that the teamwork and I used to achieve the project’s objectives. It is about the culture I created the decisions I have made, and how I handled conflict and violence in the area of implementation in Nuba Mountains among the children and their communities, and each of methods and styles that I have designed and used to manage the project has its strengths and weaknesses.

The Social Change Initiative (SCI) applied methods to train 50 children between age of 10-17 years, the participants were selected from the project implementation area “ Nuba Mountains” and the selection processes depended on how the participants will benefit and use the information, the method of selecting participants for project focused on those members of the community who I thought provided me with the best information and knowledge, it was not a random selection, indeed a random samples perhaps foolish.

The social change initiative included the formulation of goals that were created and upgraded to implement technological methods, the implementation of organizational documentation, the use of the project site, material and other resources this structure included the following elements such as problem(design), methods of project implementation (ways of solving the problem) and effects obtained in the process of implementation.

The project methodology involved mainly the use of qualitative approaches of collecting relevant data such as primary data collection and secondary data collection while the primary collection is associated with the first-hand information, the secondary presupposed an analysis of the existing facts and I did these through surveys and questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, and direct observation. Data in and of itself is not valuable, the most valuable thing is making data actionable is the key to true data transformation.

Regarding design, the project design is a major first step towards a successful project and it is a way for the purpose of achieving goals of project. Therefore, it is an early phase of the project lifecycle where the ideas, processes, resources, and deliverable are planned out in following points later, and the design came before a project plan as it is a broad overview whereas a project plan includes more detailed information, there are several steps involved when I have created the project design, including defining goals and using a visual aid to communicate objectives. In the first step, I defined the project goals such as what I was trying to solve? I have written a short description of the project and who is involved, then after outlined the basic goals of the project I determined the more concrete objectives in detail.

Next step, the outcomes of the project, and this step was more detailed than the initial goal planning phase and included the specific tasks I completed during the project. After I have identified the outcomes, I considered the project risks and constraints and in order to identify risks and constraints I determined the resource management tools, funds, and timeframe needed and worked to resolve the constraints before the project began.

More importantly, I have estimated the project budget to begin resource allocation. Once finalized the budget, I began assigning participants, design documents and tasks for the project. After began assigning tasks, I created a contingency plan to be backup plan for the risks and outsprints outlined earlier in the process, cause if I have an organized plan when issues arise help to resolve them in real time and streamline efficiency.

Eventually, having an evaluation plan will help to figure out whether the project moves towards the right direction, I used such indicators as impacts and outcomes to evaluate the project. A good project is always designed in a way that ensure right understanding of the stated vision and identifies the problems that prevent from achievement of the vision. Thus, I needed to perform a needs assessment to figure out what problem the project environment encounters and what needs the project addressed and it helped me ensure that the problems do not block success of the envisioned scenario.

**Chapter (3)**

**Interventions and Activities:**

Initially, it is an important way that youth and particularly children can be both reintegrated and empowered through peace projects to build their capacities and knowledge as future peace makers and builders, and I do believe that the more the capacities of children are strengthened in human rights and peace building we will have less conflict, less attraction to violence extremism, less brutality in our communities and consequently peaceful cities. This is one of the reasons for the social change project and why I have been working in peace building. Compared to adults, all children are vulnerable by nature, but some children are more critically vulnerable than others. Many children find themselves in a downward spiral where each shock leads to a new level of vulnerability, and each new level opens for a host of new risk.

Over the recent decades, the issue of protection children in conflict zone has attracted growing importance on the international and national stage and the social change initiative goes hand by hand with international attention to protect the rights of children, give them justice, and provide them with the support they need in terms of psych-social and legal recovery, and undoubtedly all these needed intensive project and useful activities.

The project activities pertain to the skill building, create peaceful environment for children which are the ultimate goals of this project. Skill building is established when children utilize nonviolent approaches to conflict such as listening, recognizing and accommodating everyone’s needs, and negotiating resolution based on the identified needs. Strengthening these skills at a young age will help children be effective in conflict prevention and resolution as adults, allowing them to identify a problem as it escalates and applying their skills to develop methods to subdue it.

By asking children during activities how they feel during a conflict that produces an unfair outcome, they become more emotionally intelligent, children who can express their feelings and understand why they feel upset or content during a conflict may find it easier to be aware of why others are feeling the way they are and how they can better accommodate each aspiration, including their own, during problem solving. Children with a firm emotional intelligence may also be able to better control negative feelings that provoke violence and conflict. This serves as a gateway for them to integrate their problem-solving skills into the situation.

 The Social Change Initiative (SCI) included several activities, first of all are positive impact workshops for children which included two basic and two advance workshops, the basic ones to understand the culture of peace and nonviolence, knowledge and simple basic skills through peaceful activities because teaching children about peace is not just talking about war and violations but it is a practical actions about fairness, justice, inner peace, respect for environment and much more. Additionally, one fake News workshop which was aimed at the spread of misinformation and fake News can cause or aggravate crisis situations. Critical thinking and the ability to evaluate the truthfulness of fast-flowing information has become an essential skill for navigating the modern world.

Sharing reliable information can help promote peace and an accurate understanding of crisis situations and the people affected, in this workshop, I developed critical thinking skills and taught them to avoid fake News and look for reliable sources of information.

Advance workshops were two workshops in one month in conflict resolution and mediation training for children in their schools and addressed basic conflict resolution on theory and explored the building blocks of conflict, communication and cooperation through games and cooperative games workshops is the most popular training and children learned how to use cooperative games to build both the social skills needed to sustain relationships and lay the foundation for successful resolution.

 The most significant activity was a community events, community is key, events that bring communities together are more important than ever “which included several activities such as organized an arts and crafts of peace, DIY peace posters, and painted peace shapes which reflected the children’s creativity and the extent of their knowledge about peace and the concept of nonviolence from their point of view in order to build their self-esteem by giving them the autonomy to express themselves. As a group activity, children working together provides them the opportunity to give each other feedback which aids in learning how to receive criticism and praise from others and build the creative side of the brain and this asserted that children learn through play and created multidimensional individuals who are creative and innovative, additionally Arts in early childhood has many benefits and children’s involvement in Arts peace activities will develop their cognitive, creative, social and emotional skills, playing a large part in their optional development.

Moreover, peace games such dialogue game, dialogue for peace and the game of the oppressed theater and other games which related to peace and nonviolence to enrich their knowledge and skills and help them to better understand the concept of peace and conflict resolution.

Another thing worth mentioning is that I created an online platform to enable volunteers and project team deliver inspirational talks concerning the significance of peace and promoting nonviolence culture by holding virtual open days to encourage the children. In addition to celebrated International Day of Peace September 21 in the society as outreach workshop. Moreover, an open day was organized every month, and it included open clinics to provide psychological support and legal assistance in obtaining identity documents and birth certificates.

**Key Findings and Impacts:**

The evaluation results shown that the project activities were effective in promoting peace among children, and that the project activities contributed to a greater extent, to achieving the goals and objectives. The activities succeed in reducing the risk of violence based on sex, language, religious and so on which founded in Nuba Mountains region through intensive and collaborative hard work processes. The project also contributed to the mitigation of the risks of future conflict among children by spreading the culture of peace and nonviolence among children and helping them create a peaceful environment in simple ways and renouncing violence.

The project established mechanisms and instruments that allow for the replication of positive changes within target community” Nuba Mountains” region, thus increasing the community’s resilience to violence and conflict.

The efficiency of the social change initiative is clearly reflected in its activities, measures, strategic approach, and the apt use of its resources.

Planning, small budgeting, monitoring, and management of financial, participants, and other resources were generally good and all appropriate management tools were used. The use of resources and instruments was largely adequate.

Due to the security situation in the” Nuba Mountains” region the physical implementation of field activities was outsourced to local government, school managers, and other institutions which took the initiative to aid and a helping hand to ensure the success of the project which had demonstrated experience in successful outreach in the target area” Nuba Mountains”.

The project has also largely contributed to building the capacities of children between age of 10-17 years who will be better able to organize and facilitate peace building processes in their schools in order to resolve conflict and violence issues that may arise in the foreseeable future based on the current deteriorating situation in Sudan particularly Nuba Mountains region.

The one of the main positive impacts of the social change initiative has been its ability to promote a culture of nonviolence and peace among participants which is necessary to addressing conflict in a peaceful manner and has ultimately succeeded in decreasing the number of conflicts among children were born and lived in constant conflict even they have not seen or heard anything about peace and security. Moreover, the project’s activities helped return displaced children to school with the help of the volunteer teachers who” through the project” have committed themselves to teaching those children war victims an evening school so they can catch up with their peers.

The most significant impact was rehabilitation of the children of the region and the displaced from the trauma of war and conflict, and they were integrated into the local community and recovery from the negative effects that led to the creation of s kind of hatred among members of the community particularly those causing the conflict and violence which created an unhealthy and safe environment for the upbringing of these children.

The most direct positive impact of this peace building project was replacing lost documents for displaced and war children through the legal aid volunteers because a war and conflict often hits without warning and important documents can be lost during armed conflict and this can make it difficult to prove who you are or to obtain benefits such as access education, health, and so on, so many children in Nuba Mountains lost their identification documents during the armed conflict and systematic acts of violence.

**Chapter (4)**

**General Conclusion:**

The social change project design and implementation process was appropriate, the project was effective, had the desired results, was relevant to both the main participants and local community, and it is sustainable.

The project was effective in promoting peace and nonviolence culture among society members at the local level, the workshops and community events were effective in reducing the risk of violence at the local level and efforts were made at create local conflict management which will serve to mitigate the risk of the future conflicts and violations.

The evaluation shows that all project interventions were highly relevant, appropriate, and useful. However, further support is needed in the implementation of community initiatives from the conflict work.

By improving and promoting peace and culture of nonviolence, the project directly contributed to improving local participation in discussing and resolving conflict, as well as building the capacities of children. Involving local community and children in the implementation of the project activities was equally effective, as these actors are currently able to lead similar conflict transformation and peace processes within their communities.

In this conclusion chapter, this project provided strong evidence that peace building can be significantly impactful when children learn alternative to bullying and violence by being empowered to express their conceptualizations of peace with strong mentorship from their local communities. This project has profound implications for practice and research in conflict resolution as the findings in this project supported the effectiveness of this peace building based on the positive impacts in the form of various learning outcomes. Children along with their mentors perceived that children can successfully tackle bullying and violence and perceived that they can be active peace makers and agents of change in their local societies, this project illustrates that peace can grow with children and it may permeate throughout society and aid in creating a more peaceful world.

**Recommendations and Implications for Policy:**

One background information has been collected; peace building project can be developed to address the various needs of post conflict societies. Throughout my analysis of the issues surrounding peace building in conflict divided communities, several themes have emerged that be considered. The first of these is the need for interventions to consider the specific context of the conflict and any social realities that have contributed to it and its aftermath. Although political and religious violence like that seen in “Nuba Mountains” region proves to be most visible and easily recognizable, less visible forms, such as structural and social violence.

Next social change projects should focus upon the needs of local communities, in addition to national reconstruction so that local actors, their voices and initiative should collaborate with local professionals and civil society organizations which understand local needs and have access to and credibility within the target communities, to ensure that they are relevant to and respect local customs and beliefs in “Nuba Mountains” area.

Peace building must focus upon long-term results in order to achieve a truly sustainable peace. Although short-term projects prove easier to evaluate, they have not been successful in establish an enduring peace.

In case of Nuba Mountains region, multiple tracks are needed to address the ongoing reconstruction, healing and reconciliation needs of this divided country. As I have demonstrated, traditional peace initiatives often fail to create sustainable solution for community healing which proves to be problematic because of the considerable damage done to communities and interpersonal relationships by violent conflict.

In conclude, children can no longer stay away in society regard peace processes and social work, they are mostly the future peace makers and leaders and working with them would help them appreciate the negative consequences of certain conflict and war in their communities, using schools as a platforms to disseminate concept of co-existence and peace rather than tension and fanaticism, training teachers and supervisors on resolving conflict among children particularly in schools and communities by peaceful means, conducting lectures and workshops on conflict resolution, tolerance, nonviolence and peace building in schools, and supporting and funding school’s programs that aim at peace building awareness.

I also believe that, national and international development policy do not operate in isolation of domestic policy, so that I encourage the local government in South Kordofan state to support sustainable and inclusive development in the region” Nuba Mountains” is the intelligent and right thing to do and think imaginatively about means for
 prevention violent conflict, and strengthen peace building through community events and conferences, and take a proactive and positive role in the negotiation and implementation of our common Agenda to ensure one of the most sustainable development goals ”peace” at Nuba Mountains region.

**Sustainability Plan:**

The project’s main factors for sustainability are the knowledge and skills acquired by trained participants and other members of society of Nuba mountains region alongside local authorities and local communities in order to provide peaceful means to resolving conflict.

The revival of basic services and awareness, as a result of project interventions would also ensure that the results of the program continue to benefit local communities beyond the life of the project. Most of the conflicts that were identified through project were social change activities or positive impact. By actively resolving these conflicts and its impacts, the project provided target community with tangible services, thus ensuring the sustainability of its action.

The results show that many of the project’s peace promotion activities are being difficult particularly with limited resources such time, fund, and expertise, as a project manager of the social change initiative I have felt passionate about making sure the role I played not only protected the participants from future conflict and violence and how they will deal with them, but also enhanced the local community awareness and encouraged biodiversity.

The sustainability plan developed how I was going to achieve this and explained how I helped to deliver key initiative including the six-month peace plan. The sustainability plan showed both how the work directly delivered social benefits and how I challenged myself to undertake the work as sustainably as I can, which shown how the project contributed to sustainability by attracting, supporting, and developing the community to deliver for the society members and participants as large.

As part of this challenge, I was setting myself ambitious targets to play my role in tackling local sustainability issues, these included reducing violence among society members, empowered the next generation and linked them with peace and conflict resolution issues, created peaceful environment through spreading awareness, the project enhanced local community in Nuba Mountains region and contributed to better quality of life for future generations.

Social sustainability is the project core purpose, the objectives of the project were to resolve the impacts of conflict and war on the children in Nuba Mountains zone such as returning them back to education, treating and rehabilitating them from trauma of war and tribal conflict in their community, and providing legal and humanitarian aid and assisting them in obtaining their lost certificates and documents. I committed to doing this sustainability by considering the lack of funding and time constraints, in addition to the modest experience in this field.

To achieve the project sustainability goals I have set myself of core sustainability objectives to focus on over the past six months and these were aligned with the project strategic sustainability goals, I already have targets for continually improving performance in the project core delivery functions, and ensuring I was compliant with all relevant objectives for instance to protect the displaced children from involvement in violence, educate them to overcome their current difficult circumstances, and become active in their community and a tool for positive impact to be next leaders in foreseeable future.

I continually reviewed the project sustainability performance and reported monthly to volunteers and teamwork, I have recently redefined the key performance indicators that enabled us to measure and report progress on identified priority area” Nuba Mountains”. I also communicate regularly with my team sustainability and encourage them to share their ideas and views together so we can act and make improvement to bring new and innovative sustainability ideas to the work we deliver for Nuba Mountains community.

Lastly, it is important to set a system or design that measures the performance towards each goal. Defining key performance indicators to meet the identified goals which will allow to detect area for improvement and will gather relevant data to track process. Metrics and indicators are also central for the reporting and communicating activities for the project. The availability of data contributes to the prioritization of issues and initiative and to promote participants involvement around sustainability.

1. https://operationbrokensilence.org/blog/nuba-mountains-war#:~:text=The%20Nuba%20Genocide%20By%20Attrition,away%20from%20their%20Nuba%20allies. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. "UN News (2016). Story: UN chief calls for renewed commitment to end violence against women. Retrieved from <https://news.un.org/en/story/2016/06/531122>" [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. https://operationbrokensilence.org/blog/nuba-mountains-war#:~:text=The%20Nuba%20Genocide%20By%20Attrition,away%20from%20their%20Nuba%20allies. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Guma Kunda Komey (2016)

Bergen: Chr. Michelsen Institute (Sudan Working Paper SWP 2016:4) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)