PEACEFUL LIVING IN THE WORKPLACE OF NGOS IN EGYPT

SOCIAL CHANGE INITIATIVE REPORT

by

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ABSTRACT / SUMMARY

This report is about the "Peaceful Living in the Workplace of NGOs in Egypt", a social change initiative (SCI) that I implemented in Cairo, Egypt, in partnership with Makouk for games & Sanad organisation for alternative parental care. This SCI explores strategies for promoting positive peace within organisations in local and international non-government organisations (NGOs) and private sector organisations in the development sector. The problem this SCI set out to address is the need to support the creation of a peaceful atmosphere in the workplace. It is about addressing workplace challenges, especially conflict resolution to resource distribution and employee well-being. It also suggests interventions to enhance a peaceful work environment in accordance with the pillars of positive peace.

This report provides an overview of general literature and theoretical support for this social change initiative. The theory of change I have used explains that combining top-down directions and bottom-up participation ensures strategic alignment and responsiveness of the organisation to its employees' needs when it comes to organisational change.

This SCI is informed by research that used mixed-methods approach, with a survey and a focus group discussion to collect data from different types of organisations. Some of the key findings show that conflict resolution mechanisms need improvement, resource allocations should be enhanced, and mental health support needs to be increased. The research underlines the pivotal values of Justice and Fairness, Transparency, and Collaboration. The conclusions point to successfully implementing these strategies through a dual leadership and employee engagement approach.

It recommends the need to improve effective communication, promotion of equal opportunities, and professional development. Open communication, prioritising mental health, and setting clear policies for conflict resolution are crucial for a peaceful workplace environment . A sustainability plan would be a community of practice in support of continuous learning and collaboration. Overall, these findings and recommendations strive to enhance organisational effectiveness, contributing to attaining developmental objectives through a supportive and productive work environment.

1. CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction and Background

Fostering a culture of peace and effectively managing conflicts is crucial for the success and well-being of organisations in development work environments (Rahim, 2023). Conflict affects organisations' ability to fulfil their development mission without interruptions due to internal conflicts and high turnover levels, which affect projects' sustainability and efficiency (Radu, 2023).

The "Peaceful Living at Workplace" aimed to promote the importance of not only living at a surface level of peace, called negative peace, where direct forms of violence are absent. At the same time, there might still be other forms of structural and cultural violence (Galtung & Fischer 2013). Still, they also apply the eight (8) pillars of positive peace practices (IEP) within organisations in the development sector. Using these practices, the initiative aimed to achieve a more comprehensive and sustainable form of peace within organisations in the development sector.

This initiative is designed to create and sustain harmonious work environments, develop workplace conflict management strategies based on the peaceful leadership pillars, and enhance organisational effectiveness through innovative practices and collaborative learning. It is based in Cairo, Egypt. The capital's dynamic setting provides a diverse environment for implementing and testing peacebuilding practices within organisations in the development and civil society sector, including non-profit and for-profit organisations.

With over ten years of professional experience in peacebuilding projects and interventions with communities and individuals, I developed a deep interest in strengthening individual and organisational capacities toward creating a culture of peace "within" organisations. This is informed by the realisation that unresolved conflicts underline reduced productivity, mental health, and undermine developmental and professional goals. Through this SCI, I have been encouraged to study further how the eight pillars of positive peace can be embedded in organisations' culture and daily interactions. As such, the data I collected was relatively

comprehensive to enable the understanding of the present realities within a sample of organisations. I used a triangulation of tools and methods that would identify practices cutting across organisations.

To understand the sector's landscape, this study examined the experiences of seventy-six (76) individuals across various organisations in Egypt. Participants represented various organisational types, a diverse range of roles, and geographical locations, as the electronic survey was accessible to development professionals without location restrictions. The geographical regions included Cairo, Giza, El-Minya, Beheira, Luxor, Aswan and Sohag.

The organisations included local, governmental, regional and international NGOs, private sector (social enterprise or social purpose organisations), and academic institutions. These institutions had varying numbers of employees: 1-2 employees, 3-5 employees, less that ten (10) employees, 11-50 employees, 51-100 employees, and more than hundred (100) employees. These classifications were designed to explore if such factors affect the peacefulness of the organisational culture.

There were also varying categories of job positions of the participants. These included executives, senior level managers, mid-career staff, and junior and entry-level staff. The functions they played in their organisations included the following examples: people and culture manager, project manager, partnerships and business development manager, senior monitoring and evaluation, projects operations coordinator, team leader, program specialist, academic researcher, learning and development coordinator, protection system advisor, curriculum designer, and interns. As for their leadership position responsibilities, some did not supervise other people, others supervised 1-5 people, while others supervised more than ten (10) people, and others supervised 6-10 people. These classifications were designed to explore if such factors affect their perspectives towards positive peace and employees' needs.

1.2. Problem Statement

A peaceful culture and organisation conflict management are critical to both success and sustainability in development. Conflicts within organisations, especially those with a high turnover rate (Palancı, Mengenci, Bayraktaroğlu, & Emhan, 2020), destabilise the operations

and the developmental goals organisations try to pursue. Peace has traditionally been defined as an absence of direct violence, which is what is called negative peace (Galtung, 2005). This view, however, remains silent about deeper structural and cultural forms of violence that might be perpetrated against workers in the workplace and affect overall harmony and effectiveness.

This SCI addresses these issues, moving beyond negative peace to implement the eight pillars of positive peace (check [theoretical underpinnings](#)). Positive peace seeks to deal holistically with the real roots of conflicts and foster sustainable and harmonious work environments. Having Cairo, Egypt, as such a dynamic urban centre—home to a wide range of development and civil society organisations—I found an opportunity to test and implement innovative peace-building practices to transform workplace cultures into more peaceful ones.

The challenge lies in integrating such practices into the daily operations of organisations in the development field. Although this realm of effective conflict management is more clearly recognised today than ever by many organisations (Rahim, 2023), few of them successfully adopt and sustain a comprehensive peacebuilding strategy. This gap points to the requirement for a structured initiative that deals not only with immediate negative peace-building issues but also builds long-term positive peace through collaborative learning and practical application of peacebuilding principles.

This SCI seeks to fill this gap by building and maintaining a culture of peace in diverse organisations concerned with social impact, whether for-profit or non-profit. The reason behind including for-profit organisations with social development missions is that the initiative tries to build on their vision and aspirations for the communities they work with and include their workers as one of those communities using positive peace practices. The initiative envisions improving the organisation's effectiveness and internal relationships to achieve development missions more efficiently and effectively. There is a need for a different approach when addressing for-profits only, where specific values might not be the priority compared to revenue and business sustainability.

1.3. Goals and Objectives

The Social change initiative "Peaceful Living at Workplace" is dedicated to fostering positive peace within the workplaces of diverse NGOs to create a sustainable impact on organisational culture and community interactions. The initiative focuses on several key goals and objectives, each supported by specific indicators and targets to ensure effective implementation and measurable outcomes.

1.3.1. General Objective

The general objective of implementing this initiative is to foster positive peace, conflict transformation, and transformative practices within the workplaces of diverse NGOs through motivating multipliers & advocates for positive peace in the workplace and knowledge generations. Several indicators will measure success in achieving this goal. One key indicator is the number of prototyped positive peace mechanisms. Another key indicator is the number of team members and multipliers interested and willing to promote positive peace practices in their organisations. Further, the initiative aims to gather and archive at least five (5) local practices, tools and approaches for dissemination to civil society.

The expected impact is to improve the employees' satisfaction level of the peaceful environment at the workplace, increase the number of reported incidents of escalated conflicts, enhance the time taken to solve them and increase satisfaction with the solutions. In addition to the change in management practices and to show the NGOs' positive effect on the society.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

The initiative's first specific objective was to collect data and assess needs. This includes conducting an assessment to determine the present dynamics in the workplace. The key activities were to distribute fifty (50) surveys, carry out five (5) focus group discussions, and have twenty-five (25) participants in these activities. The expected result is the enhanced

perception of the current patterns of interaction at work, including the focus on critical challenges and strengths that affect the level of positive peace in the workplace.

The second specific objective focuses on learning, prototyping, and experimentation. This includes the creation of a community of practice to have four (4) active members from at least one organisation. The Lab was expected to have five (5) meetings to encourage cross-organisational learning and knowledge sharing, where Lab members prototype by defining five (5) best practices, gathering five (5) new ideas, and designing three (3) prototype interventions in their organisations. The evaluation of these interventions with the help of peer coaching was based on the number of interventions conducted, the number of people involved, and the number of peer coaching sessions conducted among the lab community to assist and mentor each other. Then, documentation of feedback and lessons learned will be provided to support the development of enhanced organisational capacity for positive peace, and the knowledge will be shared afterwards with other organisations.

This leads to the third specific objective, documentation and knowledge dissemination. This involves preparing a report that systematically synthesises the research and lab outcomes. The detailed report aims to improve knowledge utilisation and offer practical recommendations for the NGOs to build peace. The report/handbook will be officially presented at an event with ten (10) organisations involved and fifty (50) participants to increase strategic interest and involvement in the civil society and social development community.

1.4. Challenges and Mitigation Strategies

I faced some challenges in researching and implementing this SCI, for which I had to create mitigation strategies. These challenges include 1) Readiness for the project, 2) Following the Original Timeline, 3) Shifts in the SCI plan, and 4) financial challenges.

1.4.1. Readiness for the Project

After the on-site program, I was overwhelmed and exhausted from the intense content, which was accompanied by the devastating events happening in my region (1. the Sudanese crisis; the power struggles between the Sudanese armed forces and rapid support forces that escalated in 2023 leading to widespread violence, displacement of civilians, and humanitarian crisis, with millions of refugees and displaced Sudaneses seeking refuge in Egypt. 2. the war on Gaza; the escalated violence from the Israeli forces against civilians in its war with Hamas, which led to the killing of thousands of civilians targeting children and women, bombing schools and hospitals, and a humanitarian crisis.). Being surrounded by these events affected my productivity and motivation to work on the SCI.

To mitigate this challenge, I sought professional help from a psychologist, and worked on boosting my mental health through participating in some social activities and being around friends and family, in addition to doing some reflections & meditation exercises, which took me almost three months. In order to force myself to start and commit to a timeline, I invited the first team member to the project to design together and divide tasks for implementation. Duaa El-Shafey (an Anthropologist and research consultant), whose initial role in the SCI was to support the design and analysis of the data collection, she also had a significant role in enforcing accountability and mobilising the initiative.

1.4.2   Challenges in Following the Original Timeline

Following the original time plan was challenging for the previous reason. Further, the team members who joined along the journey were not always available at the same time to collaborate or attend all meetings together, which resulted in 1) conducting only one (1) focus group discussion instead of five (5) planned activities of FGDs or 1-1 interviews, and 2) not issuing the public report/handbook on time to be disseminated within the development field in Egypt and internationally.

To mitigate this challenge, the focus group discussion was designed with a third team member and a consultant who's an expert in gamification and non-formal education, so we invested time in developing a creative and interactive focus group discussion and agreed to

document the experience for future attempts or repeating the activity. Also, as the lab was implemented in cooperation with the "Sanad for Alternative Parental Care" NGO, the organisation's staff volunteered to contribute to issuing the document, which was agreed to happen after the peace fellowship graduation.

For accountability, a closure event will be held with the presence of partner organisations, participants, and representatives from other organisations to present the SCI's achievements so far, find new supporters and sponsors for future activities, and grow the community of practice that would contribute to the issuance of the public report in addition to developing further practices for positive peace.

1.4.3   Shifts in the SCI Plan

The SCI implementation plan changed many times because of the diverse input from team members joining the project, coming from different experiences. For instance, the Lab was initially supposed to reflect a community of practice formed of four (4) members -at least- representing various organisations, where they work together on documenting their best practices, co-designing new tools, testing them with their teams, and coming back with feedback. The SCI turned into building a community of practice from different organisations working together as facilitators of the process, starting with data collection (3 team members including myself), then preparations and implementations of the lab with an organised team (Sanad Organisation) where the team grew into five (5) team members (2 additional members).

To mitigate this challenge, the lab was conducted with an existing team of a non-governmental organisation, "Sanad for Alternative Parental Care," but designed and facilitated by the team members. The Sanad team was also included in the design, and they were the primary source of all practices documented and prototyped. This was a much better format for that phase as it included many more participants in the same room and provided a more focused case study instead of the possibility of a biassed perception of organisations' representatives in the initial format.

1.4.4 Financial Challenges

Multiple currency devaluations in Egypt since October 2023 have raised the prices of all products and services, while I converted the money to the local currency at different times and at different rates.

To mitigate this challenge, some expenses were covered by changing one's spending attitude, finding alternatives, contributing personal money, and partnering. That also means the handbook is agreed to be issued in digital format only, which is not a bad result since PDFs are more practical and easier to distribute locally and internationally.

2. CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter addresses the related literature on this SCI. The following themes will inform this literature review: 1) Challenge in the Development Sector, 2) Global Perspectives on Peacebuilding in Organisations, 3) Peacebuilding in the Development Sector, and 4) Contextualizing Peacebuilding in Egypt-based Organisations.

2.2. Challenges in the Development Sector

The development sector, particularly within NGOs, faces challenges such as internal conflicts, high turnover rates, and structural violence. Conflicts usually develop due to autocratic management styles, communication problems, and emotional exhaustion, thus aggravating relationship conflicts substantially hurting employee performance and increasing turnover intention (Riaz & Jamal, 2022; Shaukat, Yousaf, & Sanders, 2017). Unrealistic expectations, low job control, and limited resources create dissatisfaction and burnout in employees. This is furthered by a high rate of staff turnover (Navajas-Romero, Lopez del Rio, & Ceular-Villamandos, 2020; Aloush, 2016). Additionally, structural violence related to inequalities in the distribution of resources and the organisational structures of authority limit the empowerment of the employee, which, again, lowers morale and makes it easy for the staff to quit looking for a better opportunity (Arslan, Dermirel, & Kokaraslan, 2021).

organisational internal conflicts may be related to role ambiguities, problems in communication, or inefficient distribution of resources, which would have multiple negative consequences on employees, including emotional exhaustion and low levels of psychological well-being (Riaz & Jamal, 2022; Navajas-Romero, Lopez del Rio, & Ceular-Villamandos, 2020). These conflicts generate complex and nonlinear contexts in which unresolved issues escalate, affecting inadequate task performance and increasing willingness to turnover (Shaukat & Sanders, 2017). Workers in the development sector also have unique motivations, usually intrinsic in value, more than then extrinsic in reward, thereby creating heightened tensions when their psychological needs about self-determination, for instance, are not met (Navajas-Romero, Lopez del Rio, & Ceular-Villamandos, 2020). These findings reflect the

reality I experienced and observed among professionals around me, which motivated me to explore the topic of peaceful living in workplaces and how the application of positive peace can enhance conflict dynamics within organisations, and employees' well-being.

2.3.   Global Perspectives on Peacebuilding in organisations

From a global perspective, peacebuilding in organisations focuses on integrating a culture of peace into the organisational structures to address interpersonal conflicts and structural violence. A culture of peace is defined as a set of values that promote non-violence and respect for human rights and can ameliorate workplace dynamics through enhanced interactions while reducing workplace distress (Spreitzer, 2007). Using a positive peace framework supports promoting the mentioned culture of peace, where developmental projects are transformed into "peacebuilding initiatives" that focus on strengths and systemic thinking rather than only addressing conflicts (Shaukat, Yousaf, & Sanders, 2017).   However, inadequate attention has been accorded to the concept of "peace culture" within organisations by business literature; thus, there is a significant gap in understanding how the establishment of peace is effective in addressing workplace conflicts (Arslan, Demirel, & Kokaraslan, 2021).

Peacebuilding practices are essential for fostering a healthy work environment and enhancing employee well-being. Effective workplace health and safety management encompasses employees' mental, emotional, and physical well-being, significantly reducing job stress and interpersonal conflicts (Palancı, Mengenci, Bayraktaroğlu, & Emhan, 2020). Furthermore, the International Labor organisation emphasises the significant repercussions associated with workplace injuries and fatalities, thereby stressing the necessity of prioritising health and safety to alleviate risks and enhance productivity (Eurofound & International Labour organisation, 2019). Addressing occupational hazards and promoting supportive management practices in high-stress environments like healthcare can reduce job-related stressors, creating a more peaceful and productive workplace (Palancı, Mengenci, Bayraktaroğlu, & Emhan, 2020).

The relationship between peace and participation in business organisations goes both ways; the most peaceful societies can develop participative organisations, and inversely,

participative organisations could eventually lead to peace in the general environment (Spreitzer, 2007). However, the study of peace culture in the workplace has become urgent in light of recent global events, like COVID-19, which completely changed and reshaped organisational dynamics (Arslan, Demirel, & Kokaraslan, 2021).

In summary, incorporating peacebuilding methodologies into organisational frameworks is essential for fostering a secure and supportive workplace culture, which promotes employee welfare and strengthens organisational resilience to pursue its organisational and developmental mission. Therefore the SCI documents the best practices of "Sanad" to learn how they incorporated positive peace into their culture, and also the reason we implemented the Lab in order to design new interventions and to question the feasibility of adopting such practices into organisations.

2.4. Peacebuilding in the Development Sector

The development sector, particularly within NGOs, faces unique challenges impacting employee well-being and organisational effectiveness. The complex social dynamics, organisational structures, lack of clear communication, and insufficient employee empowerment within NGOs contribute to workplace conflicts, high turnover rates, and diminished job satisfaction (Riaz & Jamal, 2022; Palancı, Mengenci, Bayraktaroğlu, & Emhan, 2020). These factors collectively hinder the ability of NGOs to retain talent and achieve their mission effectively, necessitating a reevaluation of workplace practices and support systems (Navajas-Romero, Lopez del Rio, & Ceular-Villamandos, 2020; Riaz & Jamal, 2022).

By integrating Positive Peace principles, organisations can shift developmental projects into peace-building initiatives and empowerment among and between the staff, enhancing their productivity and engagement (IEP, 2021). This integration naturally leads to promoting inclusive institutions and community participation in decision-making is an effective way of maintaining peace, besides ensuring the efficient distribution of available resources, primarily to support long-term development objectives (Simangan, Sharifi, & Kaneko, 2021; IEP, 2022).This is the aim of the SCI, to integrate positive peace principles into organisational culture in order to achieve the organisations' developmental goals and to embody values of peace in their work.

## 2.5.   Contextualizing Peacebuilding in Egypt-based organisations

Peacebuilding within Egyptian organisations faces several challenges and opportunities. One significant challenge is the dynamic nature of the nonprofit sector, where organisations must adapt to evolving socio-political contexts while maintaining employee motivation and engagement. Factors such as leadership style, equitable pay, and organisational climate are crucial for enhancing employee motivation, directly impacting organisational effectiveness in peacebuilding efforts (Miry, 2021). Additionally, many NGOs' lack of structured human resources (HR) practices can lead to high employee turnover, undermining stability and continuity in peace initiatives (Mohamed & Aboul-Ela, 2023). However, there are opportunities for fostering peace through participative leadership and empowerment practices, which can create a more collaborative environment conducive to peacebuilding (Spreitzer, 2007). Furthermore, organisations can leverage their unique positions to address social issues, thereby contributing positively to societal peace (Aloush, 2016). While challenges exist, the potential for impactful peacebuilding initiatives remains significant within the Egyptian organisational landscape.

These contextual factors provide the grounding for designing and delivering the "Peaceful Living at Workplace" SCI. Since the development sector is dynamic, it was important that the intervention be adaptable to ensure relevance through a participant-centred methodology. Such a participant-centred methodology entailed data collection through survey and focus group discussion so that subsequent steps in the intervention could be designed in response to participants' needs and preferences. One of the central components in its development was the "Peaceful Living at Workplace Lab," which had to be designed according to the inputs and specific needs of the participants. Leadership style and organisational climate were also important factors, where participative leadership would be stressed to encourage collaboration and improve the motivation of development professionals. Empowerment opportunities and appreciation of unique roles organisations might play in resolving social issues were to become a part of the enabling environment that advances workplace peace and a more significant social cause.

2.6. Theoretical Underpinnings

Johan Galtung's framework encompasses various forms of violence, including direct, structural, and cultural violence, while also highlighting the importance of different types of peace; negative and positive peace. By integrating these concepts with the principles of Peaceful Leadership and the Eight Pillars of Positive Peace as defined by the Institute of Economics and Peace (IEP), organisations can develop comprehensive strategies that enhance workplace harmony and promote a culture of safety, trust, and collaboration.

2.6.1 Johan Galtung's Definition of Violence
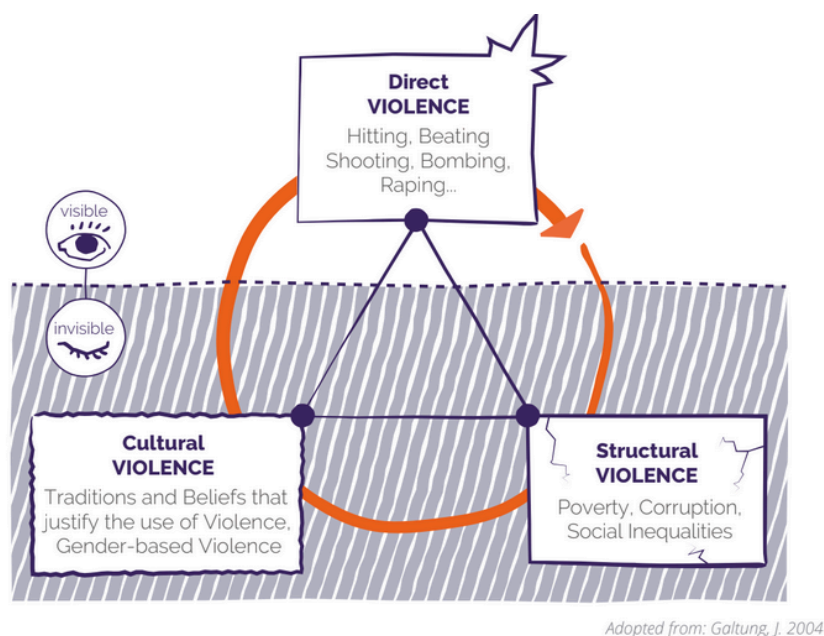
(Source: Youth4Peace training toolkit manual, December 2008)

Direct violence refers to physical acts of aggression, harm, or coercion inflicted by an individual or group on another. It is the most visible form of violence, manifesting through physical or verbal abuse, assault, and warfare. This form of violence directly targets the body, mind, or well-being of individuals or communities (Galtung & Fischer, 2013).

Structural violence, on the other hand, is more insidious and embedded within the social, economic, and political systems. It refers to the systematic ways social structures or institutions harm or disadvantage individuals or groups. Structural violence manifests through

inequalities in access to resources, opportunities, and rights, leading to disparities in wealth, education, healthcare, and justice. Unlike direct violence, it is often invisible, normalised, and accepted within society, making it more challenging to address and dismantle (Galtung & Fischer, 2013).

Cultural violence serves as the underlying justification for both direct and structural violence. It comprises societal norms, beliefs, ideologies, and symbols that legitimise and perpetuate violence. Cultural violence is reflected in religion, language, art, science, and the media, shaping the collective mindset and often rendering structural and direct violence acceptable or even honourable (Galtung & Fischer, 2013).

Relevance: In this social change initiative, I am taking this classification as a solid ground for "what is not considered a peaceful workplace" based on what sorts of violence exist. In addition to behavioural and interpersonal dynamics, which might reflect direct forms of violence, also considering policies and regulations, and organisational culture, reflected in organisational values, how they are reflected in their practices and rituals, tools used to reflect those values .. and more.

2.6.2 Johan Galtung's Definition of Positive Peace

As Galtung defined different forms of violence, he also differentiated between 2 different forms of peace achieved when facing those forms of violence: Negative and Positive peace.

Negative peace is the absence of direct forms of violence only, such as physical conflicts and wars. It is considered a superficial form of peace, as the underlying tensions and reasons behind the occurrence of direct violence remain unchanged. However, it's the first step towards building sustainable and positive peace (Galtung & Fischer, 2013).

Positive peace is the absence of all three forms of violence: the visible form (direct violence) and the root causes (structural & cultural violence). Positive peace is the presence of justice, equality, and harmonious relationships (Galtung & Fischer, 2013).

Relevance: This SCI considers positive peace the primary way to picture a peaceful workplace. That's why it doesn't focus much on conflict management tools and skills in NGOs and other organisations in the development field. Instead, it pays more attention to the

root causes that might lead to direct violence. These causes appear in organisational culture, regulations, in-laws, and overall setup. The SCI pushes social development professionals to learn about different concepts leading to positive peace. It also stresses how important it is to invest in making the workplace culture better and to use practices that reflect a culture of peace.

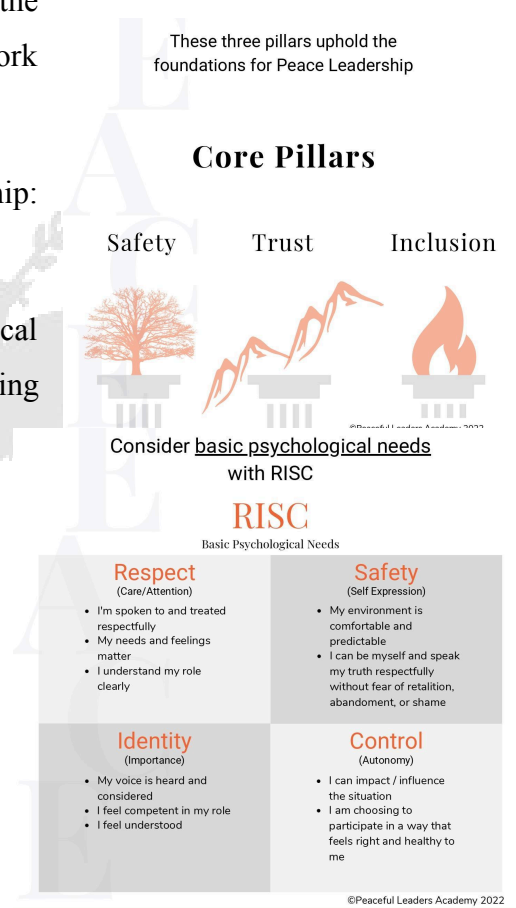### 2.6.3   Peaceful leadership (The Peaceful Leadership Institute)

In their book "Peaceful Leadership: Tools and Techniques for Fostering Psychological Safety, Trust, and Inclusion in Your Organisation" issued by the Peaceful Leadership Institute, Wiesner, Jeckovich, and Pollack (2024) discuss the different dimensions of peaceful leadership framework and practices.

They state three (3) core pillars for peaceful leadership: safety, trust, and inclusion.

These pillars aim to respond to four basic psychological needs. Based on their practical experience coaching teams and individuals and providing conflict transformation and peacebuilding services to organisations, they agreed that these are the primary needs of workers in the workplace. Those basic needs are Respect (care or attention), Safety (self-expression), Identity (importance), and Control (autonomy). (Wiesner, Jeckovich, & Pollack, 2024).

Relevance: The SCI data collection phase considered workers' psychological needs and one-third of the survey was designed based on those psychological needs & core pillars of positive leadership. The survey asked participants to prioritise their most important pillars and needs. Building on workers' needs is a perfect tool to guide the next steps towards creating positive peace in the workplace, which can be detected through "leadership" style and practices. Unsurprisingly, participants' responses regarding their priorities towards those

These three pillars uphold the foundations for Peace Leadership

Core Pillars

Safety   Trust   Inclusion

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Consider <u>basic psychological needs</u> with RISC

RISC
Basic Psychological Needs

Respect (Care/Attention)	Safety (Self Expression)
• I'm spoken to and treated respectfully • My needs and feelings matter • I understand my role clearly	• My environment is comfortable and predictable • I can be myself and speak my truth respectfully without fear of retaliation, abandonment, or shame
Identity (Importance)	**Control** (Autonomy)
• My voice is heard and considered • I feel competent in my role • I feel understood	• I can impact / influence the situation • I am choosing to participate in a way that feels right and healthy to me

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needs varied, influenced by factors such as their position, responsibilities, and whether they were in senior or junior roles (More detailed results are provided in the activities section).

2.6.4 The Eight Pillars of Positive Peace (IEP)

The Institute of Economics and Peace defines positive peace as the attitudes, institutions, and structures that create and sustain peaceful societies. It is transformational because it is a cross-cutting facilitator for progress (Institute of Economics & Peace, 2021).

The IEP stated eight different pillars that need to be met/measured to achieve/assess positive peace: Well-functioning Government, Equitable Distribution of Resources, Sound Business Environment, Free Flow of Information, Good Relations with Neighbors, High Levels of Human Capital, Acceptance of the Rights of Others, and Low Levels of Corruption. These pillars reinforce actions directed toward strengthening one of them, complementing each other, and laying the groundwork for a comprehensive approach to peacebuilding.

Well-functioning Government

A well-functioning government delivers high-quality public and civil services, engenders trust and participation, demonstrates political stability and upholds the rule of law.

Sound Business Environment

The strength of economic conditions as well as the formal institutions that support the operation of the private sector. Business competitiveness and economic productivity are both associated with the most peaceful countries.

Equitable Distribution of Resources

Peaceful countries tend to ensure equity in access to resources such as education, health, and to a lesser extent, equity in income distribution.

Low Levels of Corruption

In societies with high levels of corruption, resources are inefficiently allocated, often leading to a lack of funding for essential services and civil unrest. Low corruption can enhance confidence and trust in institutions.

Free Flow of Information

Free and independent media disseminates information in a way that leads to greater knowledge and helps individuals, businesses and civil society make better decisions. This leads to better outcomes and more rational responses in times of crisis.

Acceptance of the Rights of Others

Peaceful countries often have formal laws that guarantee basic human rights and freedoms, and the informal social and cultural norms that relate to behaviours of citizens.

High Levels of Human Capital

A skilled human capital base reflects the extent to which societies educate citizens and promote the development of knowledge, thereby improving economic productivity, care for the young, political participation and social capital.

Good Relations with Neighbours

Peaceful relations with other countries are as important as good relations between groups within a country. Countries with positive external relations are more peaceful and tend to be more politically stable, have better functioning governments, are regionally integrated and have lower levels of organised internal conflict.

(Source: Vision for Humanity website, 2024)

Relevance: In this SCI, the eight pillars of positive peace were the primary framework for assessing, discussing, documenting, and prototyping specific methods & tools for building positive peace in the workplaces, especially in the development field. The fostering of a positive culture in the workplace, one that underlines the psychological safety of the person, recognition of the employees, and open communication among them, will correspond to the aspects of Positive Peace in the betterment of the individual well-being and collaboration in relations between individuals. Consequently, the Positive Peace framework guides social development entities in achieving sustainable development outcomes.

2.7. Change Theory and How It Was Applied

The "Peaceful Living at Workplace" initiative is founded on the belief that fostering a culture of positive peace within organisations has the potential to engender tremendous organisational success, sustainability, and well-being. In this regard, the initiative works to respond to the challenges organisations face within this development sector, which often suffer from internal conflicts, high rates of staff turnover, and structural violence that disturbs progress and undercuts efforts to achieve development goals. I will discuss the inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impact.

2.7.1. Inputs

The initiative began with an in-depth research and assessment phase to identify the context of participating professionals, their organisations, and their needs. At this stage, there was a desk review of existing literature and regulations on peacebuilding and organisational culture. A questionnaire was designed and administered to obtain primary data from a representative sample of respondents, capturing information about organisational cultures, leadership styles, and the challenges the participants faced. This was followed up with a focus group discussion to elicit qualitative responses and contextualise the questionnaire findings.

The inputs also included a core team that was crucial in designing and facilitating the "Peaceful Living at Workplace" and co-learning activities and documenting and sharing the knowledge produced through the initiative.

2.7.2. Activities

The initiative's activities were centred around three (3) main components: data collection, creating a community of practice, and the "Peaceful Living at Workplace Lab".

The data collection phase consisted of a literature and desk review of the frameworks on peacebuilding and organisational culture in Egypt and identifying the main challenges and practices. To acquire primary data about organisational culture, leadership styles, and workplace challenges, a survey was designed with various responses digitally gathered.

Further, creative focus groups, moderated by an anthropologist and game designer, deepened understanding of participant experiences with peaceful living through open discussion and sharing of organisational practices.

The "Peaceful Living at Workplace Lab" component involved testing and experimenting with tools and methods to support organisational peaceful living. Twenty-one (2) participants were members of the Sanad for Alternative Parental Care organisation members. In this lab, participants jointly stated the existing practices while developing new tools and interventions that fit into the eight pillars of positive peace. We provided space within the lab to practise, coach each other, and get feedback about the effectiveness of these practices.

This leads to one main objective of the initiative: to build a community of practice among the participating professionals. This community consisted of a core team, the "Peaceful Living at Workplace" team, which performed collaborative learning and exchanged knowledge. This team played a vital role in the design and facilitation of the Lab and in documenting and disseminating the initiative's outcomes. Twenty-one (21) more professionals joined the community during the Lab. This constituted a continuous means through which participants in the community of practice kept up advocacy in organisations for positive peace practices.

2.7.3. Outputs

Outputs of the initiative included:

1. An in-depth understanding of the current landscape and specific needs of the participating organisations, drawing from the desk review, survey, and focus group discussions.

2. Documentation of the current tools and practices that lead to peaceful living within one organisation.

3. Design of new tools, practices, and recommendations and their prototyping according to the eight pillars of positive peace.

4. Establishment of a community of practice among the participating professionals, offering a continued collaborative environment and knowledge exchange.

2.7.4.   Outcomes

The short-term outcome is the increased awareness and understanding of concepts related to positive peace among the participating professionals and their organisations. Participants acquired practical tools and skills for developing a culture of peace at work through the process. This community of practice created an environment that supported continual learning and experimentation with these practices.

In the medium term, the initiative wants to integrate these eight pillars of positive peace into participants' organisational cultures. This would lead to more harmonious working environments, reduced internal conflicts, and improved organisational effectiveness. The initiative also wants to influence other organisations in the development sector by sharing tools, practices, and recommendations from the lab.

2.7.5.   Impact

The long-term vision for the initiative is that positive peace practices are widespread across organisations in the development sector, hence, more sustainable and effective development outcomes. By growing a culture of peace inside organisations, the initiative hopes to cultivate well-being among all professionals in the sector and to lower turnover rates, increasing the sustainability and efficiency of projects in development. Ultimately, the initiative will trigger a domino effect whereby a positive change in participating organisations takes the lead to inspire and influence others to do so similarly, thus extending a culture of peace further within the development sector.

The theory of change involved in the "Peaceful Living at Workplace" initiative was systemic attention to the needs of organisations in the development sector through research, prototyping, and building a community of practice. The proposed activities and outputs would foster positive peace within organisations and lead to sustainable organisational culture and conflict management improvement.

2.8. Methods and Design

In this section, I present the methods and design of this SCI. Particularly, I present the research and assessment, prototyping and experimentation, co-learning, and documentation and knowledge-sharing.

2.8.1. Research and Assessment

The SCI initiates a research and assessment phase to comprehensively understand the current landscape and the specific needs of participating professionals and their organisations. This phase consisted of various activities that were the following::

a) Desk Review: The desk review involved an in-depth review of the available and existing relevant literature, reports, and documents on peacebuilding, organisational culture, and the legal rules & regulations of civil work in Egypt. The literature review helped to get current challenges and practices in the field (from different countries) as secondary information.

b) Survey Development and Distribution: After the desk review, a survey was designed to source primary data directly from a sample of the target group. The result was a questionnaire developed to capture information on critical areas of interest emerging from the desk review (mainly based on the theoretical underpinning). It had questions that shed light on their assessments of their organisations and leadership styles and indicated professionals' specific workplace needs and challenges. The survey was then digitally distributed to a representative sample of participants, ensuring various responses from people of different organisational roles and contexts.

c) Focus Group Discussions: In addition to the survey, a creative focus group discussion was conducted to gain deeper insights into the experiences and perspectives of the participants. The event was designed in collaboration with an experienced anthropologist and an expert in game design & non-formal education services. This resulted in an interactive, dynamic FGD where creative tools & means were used to facilitate the process (check Activities). The FGD discussions were facilitated to encourage open dialogue and sharing personal and organisational experiences related to peace living. The qualitative data collected from these discussions helped to

contextualise and enrich the findings from the survey, providing a more detailed understanding of the issues at hand.

2.8.2. Prototyping and Experimentation

The "Peaceful Living at Workplace Lab" focused on the collective development and documentation of instruments and practices that enable peaceful living within the Sanad for Alternative Parental Care team, in alignment with the eight pillars of positive peace.

The "Peaceful Living at Workplace Lab" aimed to:

a) Document the tools and practices currently used within the "Sanad for Alternative Parental Care" team and their workplace that contribute to fostering peaceful living in the work environment.

b) Develop new tools, practices, and recommendations to enhance peaceful living in the workplace in alignment with the eight pillars of positive peace.

Twenty-one (21) team members of the Sanad organisation collaboratively designed and prototyped interventions, received peer coaching from the core team during the process and provided feedback on the effectiveness of the practices.

2.8.3. Co-Learning

A community of practice, known as the core team of "Peaceful Living at Workplace", was formed. The team comprises an anthropologist and researcher, a game designer, two (2) development professionals from nonprofit and for-profit organisations, and myself, a peacebuilding, community development, and capacity-building specialist. The core team engaged in collaborative learning and knowledge exchange through the design of the survey, review of responses and initial analysis, intense design of the FGD and co-facilitation, then design, preparations, and facilitation of the "Peaceful Living at Workplace Lab", which was conducted with [Sanad for Alternative Parental Care](#) organisation. In that phase, we took the co-learning approach to the next level, where twenty-one (21) team members participated in shaping their understanding of the eight (8) pillars of positive peace. They designed three (3)

different methods and interventions to be adopted by their organisation and other organisations to enhance and reinforce the positive peace pillars in the organisational culture.

2.8.4.   Documentation and Knowledge Sharing

The entire process was documented using various means: voice recording, a spreadsheet with all data and analysis, separate working files for each activity, photos, and videos. This documentation will be compiled into an open-source document to be shared with the broader development community.

3.   CHAPTER THREE: INTERVENTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

3.1.   Introduction

This chapter focuses on the practical steps in describing "Peaceful Living at Workplaces of NGOs in Egypt". It emphasises the interventions applied to implement the project, such as data collection, the Peaceful Living at Workplace Lab, and a community event; all together combining into an intervention which may serve to investigate and promote peaceful work environments within the development sector. Further sections detail the methodologies and insights derived from those specific interventions.

3.2.   Data Collection

The first intervention was to measure the reality of professionals in the development sector, identify their basic needs in terms of Peaceful Living at Workplace, determine their definitions of terms and concepts such as peace living and peaceful leadership, and estimate the extent to which they have achieved the eight (8) pillars of positive peace. The data was collected through two (2) main tools: a survey and a focus group discussion.

3.2.1.   Survey

To design the survey, an anthropologist and social researcher (Doaa El-Shafey) was invited to join the initiative and support me in the design process. We had several meetings to discuss and reflect on the project's objectives. I presented the theoretical framework, and we brainstormed different question formats and response measuring methods; then, we agreed to use multiple-choice questions with very few open-ended ones, which should make it much more straightforward in analysis and for more detailed and descriptive responses. We decided to use Focus Group Discussions later. I designed an initial survey that covered all the theoretical framework for positive peace at work (as mentioned in the theoretical underpinning section), then sent it to two professors from Makerere University for review: my mentor, Professor Sylvia Antonia Nakimera Nannyonga-Tamusuza and Dr. Charlotte Mafumbo.

The survey was designed and distributed in Arabic, targeting professionals residing in Egypt. The English version of the survey: Peace Living at work_Survey_English_Final.pdf.

The survey was first sent to a few acquaintances for testing, then officially published and distributed online via linkedin personal profiles, Facebook groups for development professionals and researchers, and Egyptian career groups. Fifty-five (55) responses were collected from professionals in nonprofit and for-profit entities in the development sector. More details about reactions and insights are explained in the key findings section (see Appendix A, Figures 1 and 2 for reference).

3.2.2.   Focus Group Discussion

A new team member (Ali Azmy) joined the project. Ali is a game design expert, non-formal education facilitator, and managing director of Makouk, a company for games. The three of us (Ali, Doaa, and myself) had many meetings to analyse the survey responses, design the FGD questions, and gamify the FGD (see Appendix B, Figures 1 and 2 for reference).

Professionals who participated in the survey and showed interest in joining the next steps of the research were invited to the FGD; twelve (12) of them confirmed their attendance (the target number), but only seven (7) showed up that day. We found that the interactions between this number were much better and more accessible than with larger groups; this way, we could listen to more people and cover more questions. The FGD was designed and conducted in Egyptian/Arabic, targeting professionals residing in Egypt. The English version of the questions are attached here: FGD question_English.pdf

The final format of the FGD was to imagine a backstory that was read to them upon arrival:

"*We come to you from the city of "Peace", where we all live in peace, safety, and joy. We have all the food, drink, and everything we need. No one is upset because there's nothing to disagree on; we've always had what we need since birth.*

With the changing climate, our resources have depleted, and we must work to survive. But we're afraid that our work might affect the peace we're accustomed to. We're unsure what will happen when we're placed in new situations and have to collaborate with each other and how the differences we've avoided confronting might play out.

That's why we considered visiting other cities where people have been working together for a long time to see how they work together despite their differences and how they can manage within the same workplace.

We've heard about you and your great work, so we decided to meet with you to learn whether you manage to live in peace within your workplace.

What will we do today?"

After this backstory, the rules & regulations were presented as follows:

"We've thought of many questions and want your opinions on them. What do you already do in your organisations? How would you like to improve?

Since there are a lot of questions, we'll have to choose the top 3 questions from your perspective at each station. These will be the ones we discuss.

At each station, we'll introduce our questions, and everyone will choose the three (3) most important from their perspective. The questions with the most votes will be the ones we will discuss.

You have a board where you can collect all your answers and share what you like when it's your turn.

To ensure everyone participates effectively and is organised, each person will receive three (3) tokens to use when they want to speak. So, carefully choose the most critical questions on which you wish to use your tokens.

Let's get started…"

Participants were given a list of 50+ questions on the discussed theme, though instead of answering them all, the group voted for those they felt most relevant or interesting. The participants then took turns at each station with the top-voted questions, and they were given a limited amount of time-that is, by the sand clock-to provide their insight and suggestions.

At each station, participants were given a set number of tokens to 'spend' on verbal contributions, but all were required to engage with the methods at the station, whether it's sketching, selecting cards, choosing keywords, performing drama, or scaling. The token

system encouraged prioritisation and thoughtful contributions, ensuring each participant used their limited resources wisely (see Appendix B, Figures 3 to 8).

3.2.3. Peaceful Living at Workplace Lab

In the lab, a methodology was used to create a collective learning environment in which all members become learners and facilitators at the same time, responsibilities are distributed among everyone and everyone becomes a source of knowledge, provided that the facilitation team is responsible for ensuring that the lab's objectives are met and for managing the learning space. The lab is based on the principles of "participation" and "experimentation," using tools that allow for individual, pair, and group work, and encourage creativity and experimentation. The Peaceful Living at Workplace Lab represented the implementation of a workshop held in the form of an experimental laboratory, conducted with a team belonging to the same entity, Sanad for Alternative Parental Care. The workshop outputs were documented and will be added to an open source file or handbook to publish the recommendations and tools derived from the study and the workshop.

The Objectives of the Lab were: monitoring and documenting current tools and practices of Sanad organisation that contribute to promoting peaceful living in the workplace, producing new tools, practices and recommendations to promote peaceful living in the workplace, in line with the eight pillars of positive peace.

The main frameworks that were used in measuring peaceful living at Sanad are:

a) Peace values in the workplace; justice and fairness, transparency, cooperation, effective governance, comfort, communication, consideration of personal life, trust, safety, and inclusion.

b) Peaceful Leadership; taking into account the basic needs of employees in order to live in peace with the team:

    i) Respect (I am spoken to and treated with respect / My needs and feelings are important / I clearly understand my role)

    ii) Safety (a comfortable and predictable work environment / I can be myself and be truthful without fear of retaliation, shame or exclusion)

    iii) Identity (My voice is heard and taken into account / I feel qualified for my role / I am easily understood)

iv) Control (I can impact, influence, the situation / I am choosing to participate in a way that feels right and healthy to me)

c) The 8 Pillars of Positive Peace: well-functioning government, healthy work environment, fair distribution of resources, acceptance of the rights of others, good relations with neighbours, Free flow of information, high levels of human capital, low levels of corruption.

3.2.3.1.   Implementation steps

Two participants from the FGD requested to volunteer and join the project team. Together, we all planned and designed the next step: choose an organisation as a case study to document the existing tools and interventions they use to enhance the pillars of positive peace and develop new tools to strengthen other pillars of positive peace. The selected organisation is "Sanad for Alternative Parental Care" as a result of the participation of their People & Culture Manager in the survey, where she recommended that her organisation joins future activities with the project. The team chose "Sanad" among other organisations as they have previous experience in building the capacities of Orphanages, developing policies in the best interest of the beneficiaries, and have made some notable progress in organisational culture development. "Sanad" is identified as an Egyptian NGO with international working standards. This portfolio seemed to match our goals in documenting practices that could be useful for other organisations when published in an open-source manual.

Twenty-one workers residing in Cairo participated in the lab: eleven (11) were from a senior level, seven (7) from a mid-career level, and three (3) from a junior level. The departments and functions they represented included the following examples: people and culture, project management, partnerships and business development, protection system, monitoring and evaluation, team leadership, learning and development, and curriculum design (see Appendix C, Figures 1 to 8).

3.2.4.   Community Event

As a wrap up for the six-months journey, I organised a closure event to present the Initiative's objectives, research findings, and SCI outcomes. The event was aimed at team members,

participants of the initiative, and professionals in the development sector who might be interested in participating in future activities, and supporting the initiative's sustainability in its next phases. The event concept was presented to John D. Gerhart Center at the American University of Cairo, as they share a common interest in promoting a culture of peace among youth and social development professionals. They graciously offered to host & organise the event at the premises of the American University's Tahrir campus.

An open invitation was sent by email to everyone who participated in either the survey, FGD, or the lab. It was also posted on social media channels, including my personal linkedin, facebook profile, and groups for development professionals & NGOs. Eighty-one professionals registered through the application form, and an additional ten requested to attend in person. A photographer was hired to document the event, and catering for drinks was arranged in accordance with university health & safety standards.

Over thirty attendees showed up to the event and actively engaged with the presentation, which included an introduction to the Rotary peace fellowship at Makerere university, an overview of the SCI, the research steps and findings, and activities presented by the team members.

There was also an interactive session led by Ali Azmy & Sanad team members where they showcased the methods used and prototyped in the FGD and the lab. The room was divided into four corners, and participants rotated through each, interacting with the presenter(s).

At the end of the event, certificates of appreciation were distributed to the SCI participants, and a group photo was taken. Attendees were also asked in an electronic form to commit to future contributions. These included joining a reading club focused on organisational culture, contributing to the design and testing tools and standards for peaceful living in workplaces, participating in focus group discussions, or hosting relevant activities and labs at their organisations. Exactly thirty participants completed the commitments form, covering all four aspects of participation and establishing a solid foundation for the next phases of community efforts for building peaceful workplaces (See Appendix D, figures 1 to 9).

3.3. Key Findings/Impact

In this section, I present the findings from the data collection process and the outcomes of the outcomes of Peaceful Living at Workplace Lab.

3.3.1. Findings on Data Collection

The survey and focus group discussion collected some remarkable data on the reality of entities working in the development sector, whether they are for/nonprofit organisations. I list some of the findings:
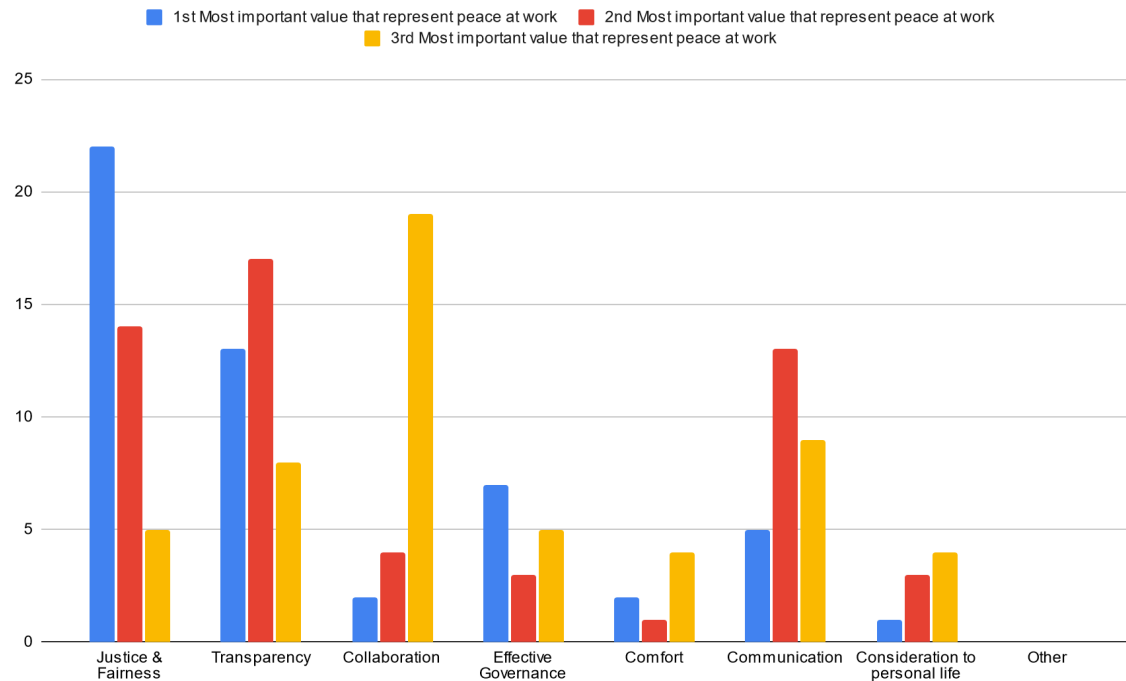
Defining "peace at work"

When participants were asked to define "peaceful living at work" their responses included the following key words and definitions as presented in the table below:

| Participants' Sector or Organisational Category	Key Words Summarising Participants' Definitions of 'Peaceful Living at Work
Private sector	
Local NGOs	

International & Regional NGOs	
Other forms of workplaces as governmental, international governmental, academic, or freelance (consultancy based)	

The research team chose the following values as a list of values of peace at work, based on experience and informal reconnaissance among colleagues: Justice and Fairness, Transparency, Collaboration, Effective Governance, Comfort, Communication, and Consideration of personal life. The sample had to prioritise the top three critical values they'd like to live at work. *Justice and fairness* were the top values for most participants, *transparency* was the second value, and *collaboration* was the third most significant value.

Legend: 1st Most important value that represent peace at work (blue), 2nd Most important value that represent peace at work (red), 3rd Most important value that represent peace at work (yellow)

These responses were interesting, as justice, fairness, and transparency imply expectations from the leadership and organisational structure. Collaboration can be based on individual and group attitudes and then supported by the leadership and organisational culture.

Then, they were asked to arrange the peaceful leadership pillars: Inclusion, Trust, and Safety (based on the peaceful leadership framework). Safety came in the first place, Trust in the second, and Inclusion in the third place.

1st, 2nd and 3rd
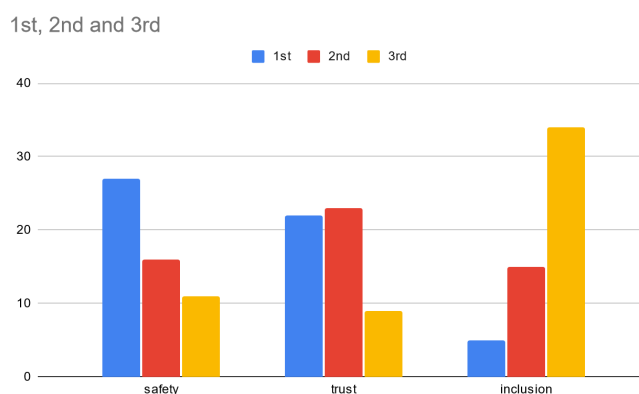
The participants elaborated more in the focus group discussion, where the main concepts were identified as characteristics for Peace Living at work:

1. *Calm and Comfort,* described that with peace, there is a feeling of calm and comfort in the mind, a feeling that one can easily breathe and feel safe, even in dangerous situations.
2. *Open Environment,* where a peaceful work environment means openness to learn, taking initiative, and being more productive. It enables clear thinking and less distraction.
3. *Contemplation and prevention,* as peace invites quiet reflection that can prevent conflicts from blowing out of proportion.

On the other hand, they defined <u>Conflicts</u> in the workplace as:

1. *Greed and selfishness*: Many times, this is experienced between individuals or managers who would like to have more than their share of the available resources or space. In short, conflicts come as a result of greed and selfishness.
2. *Conflict of interests:* Conflicts are created by the interaction of different people and teams, especially when groups have clash of interests..
3. *Internal suppression:* Conflict can lead to internal suppression, where individuals keep their conflicts to themselves until they explode. This can also involve feelings of repression and self-blame.

<u>The Eight Pillars of Positive Peace</u>

The research indicates a significant need for further development in the "<u>High Levels of Human Capital</u>" pillar of positive peace. Participants from various organisational types, including Local NGOs, INGOs, governmental, for-profit, and academic sectors, highlighted that their organisations often do not prioritise employee well-being. When asked about professional development, responses varied by sector. Local NGOs reported a higher proportion of "No" responses compared to "Yes," while international organisations had more positive responses. This disparity may be attributed to factors such as available resources and organisational investment. It is recommended that organisations enhance support for professional development by increasing resources and opportunities, and ensuring equitable access for all employees.

A notable concern emerged regarding mental health support within organisations. The majority of participants, mainly from non-international organisations, reported insufficient mental health activities. International NGOs generally had more favourable responses. organisations should implement comprehensive mental health programs to address this gap and regularly review their effectiveness. Providing dedicated mental health resources and activities will improve overall employee well-being.

Moreover, when we tried to measure the "Equitable Distribution of Resources," the majority of participants chose "to some extent" and "no" when asked whether the organisation's resources were distributed fairly among different departments or projects. The majority also agreed that they perceive disparities in access to opportunities for career advancement or training within the organisation.

When asked if there are straightforward methods and procedures for addressing complaints and disputes within the organisation as one of the questions measuring the "Well Functioning Government" pillar, the majority chose "to some extent", except for international organisations where the majority chose "yes". Further, when asked about decision-making, the focus group discussion showed significant dissatisfaction; they explained that while top-down decision-making can be efficient, it often lacks team engagement; on the other inclusive decision-making hand, aims to involve more voices but may face challenges in ensuring all team members feel comfortable and empowered to participate. They recommended improving communication channels and creating a more supportive environment for team input that can enhance the decision-making process, encouraging active participation and addressing barriers to expression, leading to more effective and satisfying outcomes for the team.

Regarding the "Acceptance of the Rights of Others" pillar, the majority stated that their organisations promote a culture of diversity, inclusion, and respect for all individuals. They also confirmed that most of them find organisational mechanisms addressing different types of discrimination and sexual harassment. They elaborated on how their organisations promote such a culture of diversity, inclusion, and respect for all individuals through hiring candidates from diverse backgrounds, encouraging active participation both within and outside the workplace, maintaining cultural sensitivity by avoiding religious polarisation while

celebrating cultural events, creating a nurturing environment by promoting initiatives, conducting monthly evaluations, and celebrating the diversity of the team.

Regarding the "Good Relations with The Neighbors", the majority were satisfied. They evaluated the organisation's collaboration with other organisations or stakeholders in their communities as "Good" to "Excellent"; they described the level of trust and mutual respect between their organisation and neighbouring individuals or entities as "Good" to "Excellent". Similarly, the level of trust and mutual respect among the team members in their organisation. Their recommendations to improve relations with actual neighbours (in the building or neighbourhood) is to initiate regular communication by hosting monthly or quarterly meetings and creating a dedicated communication channel like a WhatsApp group or email list. To foster community by organising events and collaborating on shared projects. Promote transparency and trust through open dialogue and regular updates about their organisation's activities. Small goodwill gestures, such as distributing treats and sending thank-you notes, can also enhance interactions. To address specific issues promptly, like elevator maintenance, and establish a transparent process for conflict resolution. Encourage employee participation in community activities and provide effective communication and collaboration training. Additionally, respecting cultural differences should be respected by avoiding religious symbols and ensuring inclusive practices in all interactions and events (that specific recommendation came from a member of a community-based organisation working in a small community with a history of sectarian conflicts).

Regarding the "Free Flow of Information" pillar, the majority believed they were adequately informed about the organisation's goals, activities, and decision-making processes in their organisations, and that they find spaces and channels for open communication and providing feedback within their organisations,

The final pillar, "Low levels of Corruption," was also a pillar of satisfaction, as the majority haven't noticed any corruption or unethical behaviour within their organisations. The majority find measures and procedures in place to prevent and address corruption within their organisations.

3.3.2.   Findings of the Peaceful Living at Workplace Lab

Participants from *Sanad for Alternative Parental Care*, after two working days over two weeks, discovering and discussing pillars of positive peace at work, grouped into three work groups and prototyped multiple interventions to enhance the pillars as follows:

1) Well-functioning Government and Low Levels of Corruption

Group 1 developed a feedback mechanism and tool for addressing complaints about discrimination, corruption, and other forms of abuse within the organisation. This tool allows employees to confidentially raise their concerns, which aligns with the organisation's protection policy. The process includes a one-on-one meeting with HR to assess the need for escalation. If escalation is required, the reporter is guided to submit a formal complaint form, after which an investigation is conducted. Throughout the investigation, updates are provided to the reporter to ensure accountability and foster trust in the system.

2) Sound Business Environment

Group 2 created a survey distributed by the Human Resources Department (people and culture) to assess how team members evaluate organisational values. The survey focuses on the dynamics between colleagues, supervisors, and the worker-organisation relationship. It measures effective communication, respect and appreciation, professional growth, work-life balance, and accountability and fairness. It was recommended that this tool be distributed quarterly and might be applied to both full-time employees and consultants.

3) High Levels of Human Capital and Good Relations with the Neighbors

Group 3 designed several interventions to enhance the two pillars, starting with a survey to assess team needs for specific professional skills and to identify top performers in areas such as communication, teamwork, encouragement of others, and innovation. Top performers are to be recognised biannually and given a platform to share their tips and

tricks. The plan also includes competitions and fun activities across departments and teams to foster engagement and generate new ideas collectively. Sanad's team expressed enthusiasm for these interventions and highlighted a significant need for retreats that involve the entire team rather than just specific functions or departments. Additionally, incorporating capacity-building activities into these interventions was recommended.

4. CHAPTER FOUR: CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND SUSTAINABILITY

4.1. Conclusion

The study deals with variant-level interventions and necessary steps to build, assess, and support positive peace in development organisations based on certain factors such as the type of organisation, size of the team, and the resources available. organisations on a local scale, whether NGOs, international NGOs, or private sector entities, have to deal with problems peculiar to them, hence the tailored approaches. A possible plan for positive peace involves several related strategies: creating a positive organisational culture, establishing tools and mechanisms for inter-group and interpersonal relations, and promoting individual wellness and attitudes.

Organisations must implement changes to build a culture of positive peace while ensuring inclusive, bottom-up participation and decision-making processes. Through this dual approach, the alignment of changes to strategy is assured, and the responsiveness of the changes to all members is provided. The main pillars of positive peace are intersectional. That is, they interrelate. The shared framework consists of each pillar strengthening the others, and thus, it is indispensable for organisational success and achieving developmental objectives.

Interventions should be designed according to the needs of an organisation and its respective members. For instance, large organisations in a resource-full position might implement extensive feedback systems and professional development programs, w. At the same time, all entities focus on increasing open lines of communication and facilitating targeted wellness resources. The investment in these areas, regardless of the size or type, insinuates a peaceful work environment that encompasses general organisational effectiveness towards successfully attaining development goals.

4.2. Recommendations / Implications for Policy

Tailored strategies are essential to foster positive peace within development organisations. organisations, whether local NGOs, international NGOs, or private sector entities, face

unique challenges that necessitate customised approaches. At the core of these strategies is the need to build a supportive organisational culture, create effective tools for managing relationships, and invest in employee wellness.

Creating a positive organisational culture requires a strong emphasis on core values such as Justice, Fairness, and Transparency. These values should be reflected in all organisational operations and decision-making processes. Establishing mechanisms for conflict resolution, clear procedures for addressing complaints, and ensuring equitable resource distribution are fundamental. These tools enable organisations to handle grievances efficiently, maintain fairness, and promote transparency. Furthermore, prioritising mental health and wellness is crucial. organisations should implement comprehensive mental health support programs and regularly review their effectiveness to ensure they meet the needs of all employees.

For professionals, active participation in fostering a positive work environment is crucial. This includes engaging in decision-making processes and offering constructive feedback. Employees can contribute to their growth and success by taking advantage of professional development opportunities. Open communication within teams is also vital for building trust and collaboration, supporting a more harmonious work atmosphere.

Senior management is pivotal in leading by example and implementing policies that nurture positive peace. Management should adopt a dual approach that combines top-down directives with bottom-up participation. This approach ensures that organisational changes are aligned with strategic goals while remaining responsive to the needs and input of all employees. Developing robust systems for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of interventions is essential. This includes creating transparent procedures for addressing complaints and ensuring all employees have equal opportunities for advancement and professional growth.

The development community has a significant role to play in supporting these initiatives. Sharing best practices and successful interventions across organisations can provide valuable insights and foster a collaborative approach to addressing everyday challenges. The community should also focus on providing resources and training, emphasising the importance of creating positive work environments. This includes addressing mental health issues, improving conflict resolution mechanisms, and promoting ongoing professional development.

Integrating these recommendations into organisational policies and practices will significantly contribute to achieving positive peace. organisations that effectively implement these strategies will likely see improvements in overall effectiveness and success in reaching their developmental objectives. Tailoring interventions to each organisation's needs and resources, whether large or small, ensures that all members benefit from a supportive and productive work environment. By fostering a culture of openness, equity, and continuous improvement, organisations can enhance their operational effectiveness and achieve their goals more effectively.

4.3.   Sustainability Plan

Establishing a community of practice is essential to ensure the long-term success and continuous development of positive peace in organisations. This community will include participants from the research and lab phases and future stakeholders, who will convene regularly to discuss, network, and develop new tools and practices. The primary goal is to create a resilient and enduring community dedicated to advancing and applying positive peace practices within various organisations.

The first step involves identifying and formalising partnerships with key stakeholders, such as Makouk and Sanad, who will serve as foundational partners. Clearly defining each partner's roles and responsibilities is essential. Clarity will help align contributions and set expectations, fostering a cooperative environment.

To maintain momentum and engagement, the community will hold regular gatherings. These gatherings will be designed to share progress, address challenges, and plan future activities. The meetings will serve as a platform for open dialogue, allowing members to exchange ideas and updates. A reading club can be established within the community of practice to encourage continuous learning. The selection of materials will include relevant literature and case studies on positive peace and conflict management. Monthly discussion sessions will be organised to delve into these materials, exploring insights and practical applications.

To foster innovation, mini labs will be created to experiment with and develop new tools and practices. These labs will host workshops and brainstorming sessions to refine and create
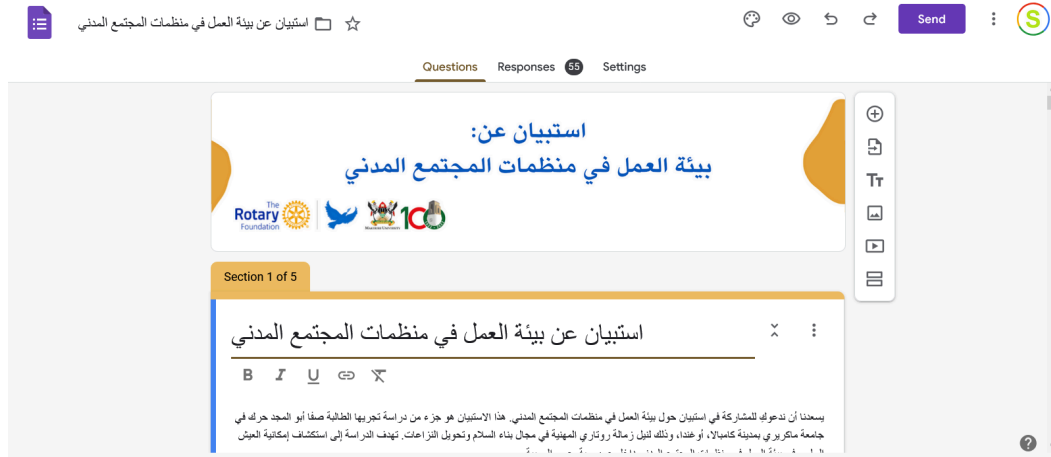
practical tools. Regular evaluations will be conducted to assess the impact of new tools and incorporate feedback for improvement.

Achievements were celebrated to increase the initiative's visibility, as in the closure event. The event aimed to highlight the initiative's impact, strengthen existing relationships, and attract new collaborators. Scheduled at a central location that is easily accessible to all stakeholders, the event involved invitations extended to key stakeholders, partners, and representatives from relevant organisations, including NGOs. The program for the event featured presentations showcasing the initiative's achievements, lessons learned, and plans. Panel discussions with prominent speakers addressed the impact of positive peace practices. Networking was facilitated to allow attendees to connect and explore potential collaborations. The event increased the initiative's visibility and recognition, strengthened relationships with existing partners, and established connections with new collaborators.

To provide a comprehensive resource for organisations interested in implementing positive peace practices. The handbook aims to offer a valuable resource that documents the processes, tools, and practices developed during the initiative. It will include detailed documentation of the methodologies, tools, and practices used in the project and case studies highlighting real-life examples and lessons learned to provide practical insights. The handbook will be structured into clear sections: introduction, methodology, case studies, and tools. Professional design and formatting will ensure the handbook is user-friendly and visually appealing. Distribution will be carried out virtually. The handbook is anticipated to serve as a valuable resource for organisations aiming to build and sustain positive peace practices, with its widespread adoption expected to enhance the integration of positive peace principles across the development sector.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix A, Figure 1: Screenshot of participants of the electronic survey about Peaceful Living at Workplace among organisations working in the development sector.

Appendix 1, Figure 2: Screenshot of participants of the electronic survey about Peaceful Living at Workplace among organisations working in the development sector.

Appendix B, Photo 1: Co-design of the focus group discussion: In the photos, Duaa El Shafey and Ali Azmy appear in one of the design meetings, where we clustered questions and developed a gamified structure.

Appendix B, Photo 2: Co-design of the focus group discussion: questions clustering and development of a gamified structure.

Appendix B: Focus group discussion using games at Makouk space. The photos show different stations with introductions and backstories. A few stations use creative tools for interaction, such as cards with illustrations and otherles.

Photo 3

Photo 4

Photo 5

Photo 6

Photo 7

Photo 8

Appendix C: Peaceful Living at Workplace Lab. Photos show Sanad for Alternative Parenting Care team members participating at the lab activities, and designing new interventions for peaceful living.

Photo 1

Photo 2

Photo 3

Photo 4

Photo 5

Photo 6

Photo 7

Photo 8: shows a group photo for some of Sanad team members, at the end of Day 2 of the lab. The photo includes SCI team members: Safa Harak (Peace fellow), Khedr Wanas, and Doaa El Shafey.

Appendix D: Community event, closure meeting for the SCI initiative. Photos taken on September 21st at the American University in Cairo. The images feature SCI team members and participants of the event.

Photo 1: Safa Harak presents the SCI to the audience, while Ali Azmy appears behind her. The slide displays the discussion question, "Why peace at work?.

Photo 2: Attendees interacting with the main presentation during the community event.

Photo 3: Attendees interacting with the main presentation during the community event.

Photo 4: Safa Harak presenting the eight pillars of positive peace.

Photos 5 and 6: Scenes from a short film documenting the SCI.

Photo 7: Doaa El Shafey presenting the analysis of survey responses

Photo 8:Attendees participating in multiple corners for direct interactions with team members.

Photo 9: Distributing certificates of appreciation to participants of the SCI.

Photo 10: Group photo with the attendees from the community event.

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