**ROTARY PEACE FELLOWSHIP 2022-2023**

# ❖ SOULEYMANE SOUMAHORO PEACE FELLOW\_Cohort 4



# SOCIAL CHANGE INITIATIVE IMPLEMENTATION REPORT



**30. JULY 2023**

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## SCI

**Strengthening the Youth Capacity against Radicalism and Violent Extremism.**

**Location:** Parishes Panyangara - **Kotido**, **Karamoja** Region\_**Uganda**

**Duration: Mai - June 2023**

### Summary

The initiative aimed to foster the capacity of (35) young women and men to build resilience and actively engage in preventing radicalism leading to violent extremism.

This program was implemented for one (1) month in the Karamoja region and the stakeholders were young women and men, communities and local authorities. (35) young people (including 20 women) identified were the target group of this initiative. They received training on how to prevent radicalism leading to violent extremism and applied the skills they have learned by educating/awareness in their communities on peacebuilding values. Thus, these actions achieved the following objectives:

* Improving the resilience of (35) young people (including 20 women) and train them on how to prevent radicalism leading to violent extremism.
* Empower them to be actively involved in transforming radicalism leading to violent extremism.
* Promote Peace building actions among communities in a sustainable perspective.

Last but not least, it is entirely appropriate to encourage this initiative, which aims to strengthen young people's civic commitment to peace-building. It requires young people’s involvement as peacemakers, and it is essential to make their voices and their leadership heard. To strengthen these efforts for change, the United Nations Security Council adopted unanimously, on 9 December 2015, a ground-breaking resolution on Youth, Peace and Security which recognizes that *“young people play an important and positive role in the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security”*. This landmark [UNSCR 2250 (2015)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2250(2015)&referer=/english/&Lang=E) resolution urges UN member states to give youth a greater voice in decision-making at the local, national, regional and international level and to consider setting up mechanisms that enable young people to participate meaningfully in peace processes.

**Chapter 1**

#### 1.1 Introduction and Background

The Karamoja region consists of seven districts in north-eastern Uganda (Kaabong, Kotido, Abim, Moroto, Napak, Amudat and Nakapiripirit). Karamoja is classified as one of Uganda's most vulnerable regions, with a disproportionate number (61%) of its 1.2 million inhabitants living in poverty. Food insecurity is a major and ongoing challenge and a heavy reliance on the natural resources’ base renders livelihoods sensitive to climate dynamics. Climate variability and change undermine the already limited resources and development in Karamoja through recurring droughts, flash floods and prolonged dry spells. Other factors of vulnerability hampering development in the Karamoja region stem from historical dynamics affecting current governance, including: private possession of firearms, cattle rustling, extensive environmental degradation, as well as the pernicious effects of the post-civil war period.

Despite increasing efforts to disarm and consolidate peace among communities, continuing violent cattle raids, increasingly frequent droughts and the resulting disruption of social and economic life are making efforts to reduce vulnerability and conflict in the Karamoja region extremely difficult.

Young people, who make up half the region's population and have the energy and potential to drive economic growth, are caught in a vicious circle of unemployment, underemployment and precarious employment. Eighty-six percent of young people in Karamoja have never been to school and are unemployed or in precarious employment, compared with 5% in Kampala. (UBOS 2016).

 The lack of decent work, experienced from an early age, compromises people's future employment prospects and often leads to unsuitable work patterns which last a lifetime, fostering an environment of social exclusion for young people. Unemployment has been shown to be linked to idleness among young people, posing a potential risk of radicalization leading to violent extremism. This situation of extreme precariousness generates lines of conflict, often resulting from fragilities linked to exclusion, marginalization or harmful relationships based on fear and stereotypes.

Based on these existing fundamentals, the results of my research and the findings of experts operating in the region, such as international non-profit organizations and government representatives, it is obvious that the Karamoja region remains a high-risk area. As a result, a context of extreme violence has been created and intensified in which young people remain the most targeted as perpetrators, as well as victims.

Numerous peace-building and conflict transformation initiatives have been undertaken by government authorities, development partners, civil society and other stakeholders, in order to mitigate the spectrum of extreme violence across the region. However, the overall picture remains most unsatisfactory due to the increasing radicalization of young people, leading to increased extreme violence. Therefore, it remains timely to foster initiatives that aim to build the resilience of communities to prevent radicalism leading to violent extremism.

Youth are presented both as victims and as perpetrators of violence, but also as internal observers, actors and bystanders. Rather than considering them as perpetrators or victims, they must be engaged in the implementation of peace programs, as key partners in the prevention of violence and the promotion of peace. Their engagement is now widely recognized as the best practice in peacebuilding work. Furthermore, their contribution is also applicable to the challenges communities are facing in terms of radicalism leading to violent extremism.

In this context, it is considered highly relevant to strengthen the capacity of young people to prevent radicalism leading to violent extremism in the parishes of Panyangara in the Kotido district, classified as one of the very high-risk areas in the Karamoja region.

This initiative aimed to strengthen the capacity of thirty-five (35) young people (including 20 women) to prevent radicalization leading to violent extremism through training, and to involve them as key players in transforming violence in their communities.

The implementation strategy used to achieve potential results is outlined below:

Two complementary approaches were used for this community-based social change.

1. The first approach consisted in using training as a tool to strengthen young people's ability to engage in action and resilience in response to the conditions that contribute to the transformation of violent extremism. Specifically, why do some people turn away from extremism? How can we make individuals and communities more resistant to its temptations, and enable them to prevent violent extremism within communities?

1. The second approach aimed at implementing the knowledge acquired during training through awareness-raising activities and dialogue within the community, in order to address the factors of fragility driving violent extremism within communities.

This initiative aims to build the capacity of young people, who are one of the strongest groups of partners to meet the challenges of conflict transformation in given communities and globally, as well as contributing to the UN Youth Strategy, the Nelson Mandela Decade of Peace 2019-2028 and the Sustainable Development Goal 16, targets 16.1 and 16.7

Young people are also the first victims of violent extremism, which affects their educational and employment opportunities. They also make up the largest percentage of the population.

For these reasons, this age group is the future and the driving force behind social change, prevention and the struggle against violent extremism. *„Each of you is a potential leader. To leads means to take responsibility and I set the example. As I often say, you are too young to lead or too old to act“* ***KOFI ANNAN (*** 2015)

#### 1.2 Problem Statement

**Is it hazardous to involve youth as actors in the transformation of violent extremism?** It's a serious misunderstanding that many of us in our communities, as development actors, as well as government officials, still consider young people as victims or perpetrators of crime, rather than as partners for constructive change. Indeed, in developing strategies and policies, we must avoid the conceptual trap of perceiving that young people are merely a risk factor.

Young people form the majority of the world’s population and therefore constitute the majority of those affected by acts of violent extremism because they are most likely to be present in every possible target. They are the age group most targeted by radicalization leading to violent extremism, more than any other age group.

Youth voices are essential to driving the social change needed to eradicate the root causes of violent extremism. Their proximity to local realities, systemic issues and the messages that can lead to radicalization gives them a unique insight into effectively de-radicalizing those who have opted to engage in extremist violence.

Youth policy and practices aimed at youth inclusion have been established to improve effectiveness and build trust, while youth practitioners are gradually moving out of their support and assistance role and become more empowered as partners. As young people play a greater role in the design of programs to prevent radicalism leading to violent extremism, there is an undeniable need to provide them with specific training and assistance that is as dynamic as they are.

### 1.3 GOALS AND OBJECTIVE

#### 1.3.1 Goals (Effectiveness)

❖ **Overall Goal**: Empower and involve young women and men to prevent radicalism leading to violent extremism.

#### 1.3.2 Objectives

* **Specific objective 1:**

Empower 35 young people (including 20 women) by training them on how to prevent radicalism leading to violent violent extremism.

* **Specific Objective 2:**

Involve young people in targeted actions to prevent radicalization leading to violent extremism.

Specific objective 1 aims to empower young people, through a series of training sessions, in their efforts to prevent radicalization leading to violent extremism, and the second specific objective focuses on strengthening young people's involvement in initiatives to prevent violent extremism in their communities.

This initiative makes an important contribution to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, based on its systemic and complementary approach to humanitarian action, involving in-depth work on the causes of vulnerability, and specifically contributes to Sustainable Development Goal 16 (Promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies). Furthermore, it also enables the promotion of some key pillars of positive peace, such as *High levels of human capital*, *Good relations with neighbors*, *Acceptance of the rights of others* etc.

### 1.4 CHALLENGES AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES

#### ❖ Challenges

The three communities targeted by this initiative - Napumpum, Lolieto and Potongor - were already experiencing a situation of mistrust that threatened to turn into communities’ conflicts. According to official sources, there are a number of reasons for this suspicion, including socioeconomic discrimination, cattle raids from one community to another, stereotypes and biased or hurtful jokes, acts of domination and social avoidance, and so on.

Given this context, we were faced with two major challenges: firstly, how to bring these three target communities together and make them adhere to the designed change initiative? As for the second challenge, the target groups, i.e., young people, must belong to the three communities mentioned above, and should therefore be brought together and identified as beneficiaries of this initiative.

To address these challenges, a workshop was organized during which the stakeholders were representatives of the three communities targeted by the initiative, the head of the Panyangara parish which groups the three communities together, and the peace fellow himself.

During this workshop, we applied two approaches: firstly, an awareness-raising session on peaceful coexistence to overcome the wall of mistrust between the communities, and secondly, resilience actions were identified that could be implemented to prevent the risk of violence in the communities. After exploring the risk factors of violent extremism between communities and empowering them to build their resilience in the face of all forms of community violence, we finally succeeded in obtaining the commitment and support of local committee representatives for the efforts to prevent future violence.

The final challenge was to identify and involve young people as the main beneficiaries, as well as partners, in the implementation of the activities to prevent radicalization to violent extremism. As part of this objective, advocacy actions were also carried out with local committee representatives to empower young people and enable them to get involved in efforts to overcome violent extremism. The arguments underlying this advocacy included the fact that young people continue to be more affected than any other age group by the effects of violence in given communities. Therefore, it is crucial to involve them in this process as beneficiaries and actors, in order to better understand the root causes of radicalization to violence and address them appropriately. For these reasons, they are the FUTURE and the DRIVING FORCE of social change and the combat against Violent Extremism in the communities.

**Chapter 2**

### 2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

**Definition of Key Terms**

This part of the thesis introduces necessary definitions and concepts. Unequivocal definitions are crucial for academic writing. The list contains the following key terms:

Youth, youth empowerment, radicalization, and violent extremism. Afterwards, the topic of radicalization leading to violent extremism will be elaborated.

* Youth
* Youth Empowerment
* Radicalization
* Violent extremism

**Youth**

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| --- |
| The term describes a distinct phase between childhood and adulthood, or it refers to any productive |
| age group between 15 and 29 years old.  **Youth empowerment** The Cambridge Dictionary (2023a) defines empowerment as “the process of gaining freedom and power to do what you want or to control what happens to you”. **Radicalization**  |

The process by which an individual or group comes to adopt increasingly extreme and violent political, social, or religious ideals and aspirations that reject or undermine the status quo, contemporary ideas and expressions of freedom of choice.

**Violent Extremism**

Violent extremism refers to advocating, engaging in, preparing, or otherwise supporting ideologically motivated or justified violence to further social, economic and political objectives. (sources: USAID

This chapter presents the literature review that has been extensively collected for the central topic of this report. It consists of two sub-chapters, namely the theoretical aspect and the empirical aspect. Firstly, the following theoretical concepts will be discussed: concepts of youth, youth empowerment, radicalization and violent extremism. Then, empirical approaches to youth empowerment to prevent radicalization leading to violent extremism will be outlined.

#### 2.1.a Concept of Youth

There is no universally accepted definition of the term youth. The explanation of youth is varied from organization to organization, society to society and country to country. Some define youth according to age group whereas others define it according to maturity, thought and attitudes. Some define youth according to the responsibility towards their society and community, social status with specific roles, rituals, and relationship. The UN Resolution 2250 defines “youth” as people aged 18–29 years but notes the variations that exist at national and international levels. The

General Assembly of the United Nations defines “youth” as people between the ages of 15 years and 24 years, “for statistical purposes” and “without prejudice to other definitions by Member States” (United Nations General Assembly, 1981). However, various United Nations entities use different age definitions. A wide variety of age definitions is also used at regional and national levels. The handbook “Youth, Peace and Security”, published by United Nations and Folke Bernadotte Academy (2021), uses the terms “youth” and “young people” interchangeably. Countries adopt and use various age ranges for the concept of young from the point of view of the intent which they stand for and the activities they undertake. For instance, Uganda's National Youth Policy (2018) defines youth as those aged between 18 and 30. There are 6 in contrast, the East African Community (EAC) defines youth as those between 15 and 35 years while the United Nation (UN) categorizes the term for people with the age between 18-29 years as mentioned above.

To sum up, even though there is no universally accepted definition and age limits to the word youth, it is here conceptualized as a crucial time of physical, intellectual and social maturation in which younger humans are actively forming identities and determining acceptable roles for themselves within their communities and societies.

#### 2.1.b Concept of Youth Empowerment

 In the given context of the social change initiative undertaken in Karamoja empowerment was specifically addressed to young people. As such, the initiative’s goal pointed to the “Empowerment of young people”. Young people, as understood here, referred to the age group of 18-35 years. From a legal perspective, the project’s target group were adults of legal age. The main tool to empower the young people was through education. In order to improve the social skills of the young people educational empowerment measures were proposed.

On 9 December 2015, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted [Resolution 2250](https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2250(2015)&referer=/english/&Lang=E) - its firstever resolution on „Youth, Peace and Security“ - thereby recognizing the importance of the positive contributions that young people are making for the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security. Furthermore, the resolution affirmed the important role that youth need to assume in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and called for the engagement of youth as partners and leaders at all levels of decision-making and peacebuilding processes. Since then, progress studies such as [“The Missing Peace**”**](https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/youth/youth-web-english.pdf) **(UNOY 2023)** and the two subsequent resolutions [(UNSCR 2419](https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2419%282018%29) and [UNSCR 2535)](https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2535%282020%29), have called for additional measures to increase the influence and participation of youth in peacebuilding processes. Specifically, *The Missing Peace* urges the international community to “invest in the capacities, agency and leadership of young people”. It has thus become clear that education, training and capacity building of both youth and their counterparts at local, national and regional levels are essential to translate the resolutions on „Youth, Peace and Security“ from the halls of the United Nations to policymakers, actors and change-agents at the ground level.

##### 2.1.c Radicalization

Radicalization is a non-linear process and not a systematically predictable event or static moment. Within this process, the individual may progressively and increasingly see violence as a legitimate means to advance their ideological, political or religious agenda (Mattei 2019). In the end, individuals see violence and/or terrorism as a justifiable and feasible options to affirm their ideological, religious or political views.

Models developed over the last decade incorporate a more robust understanding of the psychosocial processes at play in radicalization and the interaction among multiple influencing factors. Research by Max Taylor and John Horgan, for example, has led to the incorporation of a variety of sociological, psychological, and political forces, direct experiences, and relationships in individuallevel models. In their dynamic model, Taylor and Horgan show that radicalization can follow multiple and shifting routes or pathways and individuals can enter, follow, and exit Violent Extremist activity at any time. The model depicts how the various influences on an individual affect changes in cognition and behavior, and maps the possible pathways that individuals may take, or roles they may assume, based on various factors and the interaction between those factors.

##### 2.1.d Violent Extremism

Definitional approaches to “violent extremism” can be divided in governmental and intergovernmental ones. As much as there is no internationally agreed-upon definition of the term, the definition suggested by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO 2017) in its document “Preventing violent extremis through education: a guide for policy-makers”, is here seen as appropriate for the theoretical framework of the concrete project.

The understanding of the term violent extremism is stated as one that “refers to beliefs and actions of people who support or use violence to achieve ideological, religious or political goals”. This can include various forms of violence.

Combating the spread of violent extremism, must begin at the level of young people. As such, the project sought to discover ways for young people as peace builders to address and to prevent violent extremism. In practice, the project aimed to deprive violent extremism of its breeding ground. For combating violent extremism, a multi-sectoral strategy can be implemented. Here, educational tools were used to address violent extremism.

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| Other characteristics and distinctive features of violent extremism developed by Bak et al. (2019)  |
| as being a violent type of mobilization that aims to elevate the status of one group, while excluding  |
| or dominating its ‘others’ based on markers, such as gender, religion, culture and ethnicity. In  |
| doing so, violent extremist organizations destroy existing political and cultural institutions, and  |
| supplant them with alternative governance structures that work according to the principles of a  |
| totalitarian and intolerant ideology. **2.2 THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS** **2.2.a Relationship youth, youth empowerment and radicalization to violent extremism** ❖ **Youth as actors in preventing radicalization leading to violent extremism**  |

Considering young people as actors in preventing radicalization leading to violent extremism the central question has to be emphasized: why the role of young people is essential in preventing violent extremism?

More than half of the world’s population is under the age of 30, and while most youth are peaceful, they nevertheless form the backbone of the world’s paramilitary and terrorist groups. 44 Violent extremism is thus disproportionally impacting young people, as they more easily get lured into radical thinking. The vulnerability of youth seems to be increasing as families lose control over the education and lifestyle of their children, in particular because young people increasingly move to urban areas in search of jobs. When societies fail to integrate youth in meaningful ways, young people are more likely to engage in political violence. As an illustration, here are some examples of the impact on young people's lives, such as Displacement, for example in Somalia, Sudan, Burkina Faso, Syria, Iraq, Nigeria, Mali, Democratic Republic of Congo etc. These circumstances implicated loss of life as victims, perpetrators and actors in the fight against extremism in their communities and countries.

There is a rupture of family relationships when Violent extremism activities lead young people to separate from their families or relatives. They are presented both as victims and as perpetrators of violence, but also as internal observers, actors and bystanders. Their engagement is now widely recognized as the best practice in peacebuilding work. As stated before, youth‘s participation is also applicable to the challenges communities are facing in terms of radicalism leading to violent extremism.

Youth are already transforming their communities, countering violence and building peace. Yet their efforts remain largely invisible due to lack of adequate mechanisms for participation, and lack of opportunities to partner with decision-making bodies. UNDP’s work on youth therefore supports young men and women and their organizations as leaders and peace-builders, as promoters of social cohesion in their communities and as actors for early warning and re-integration. (UNDP 2016)

The former United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan has eloquently substantiated this theory by stating that each young person is a potential leader and as such can be a role model for peace.

Young people might think they have no power. But power is everywhere in small forms. When young people join together they can create powerful networks to fight against the drivers of Violent Extremism.

Why do Youth voices in Preventing Violent Extremism matter?

Kofi Annan was passionate about the potential of young people. “You are never too young to lead and never too old to learn. So, I call on the young generation to put its remarkable energy, insight and passion in the service of reconciliation and peace. The path is yours to construct and pursue.” In December 2015, the UN Security Council Resolution 2250 on „Youth, Peace and Security“ was adopted. It recognizes that, “young people play an important and positive role in maintenance and promotion of international Peace and Security.

This argument is also underpinned by the fact that Young people form the majority of the world’s population and therefore constitute the majority of those affected by acts of Violent Extremism. Young people are most likely to be a possible target for Violent Extremism attacks. They are the age group most targeted for extremist radicalization and recruitment more than any other age group. Engaging youthful energy and creativity can make a positive contribution in efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. With 1.8 billion people aged between 10 and 24, this generation could bring about lasting change and therefore their voices remain essential to driving the social change needed to eradicate the root causes of violent extremism.

As peace builders, how young people can be partners for constructive change?

Young people have a unique and critical perspective on violent extremism. They are positioning themselves in the process of understanding the factors that drive recruitment at the community level and the programs and policies needed to address them. Their proximity to local local realities, systemic issues and messages that can lead to radicalization provide a unique insight into how to effectively de-radicalize those who have chosen to join extremist groups.

Indeed, **UN Department** [**of Economic and Social Affairs**](https://www.un.org/en/desa) **(2023)** Action to Prevent Violent Extremism“ identifies youth empowerment as a priority area. In the Plan, the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres recommends Member States to empower youth by harnessing the idealism, creativity and energy of young people and others who feel disenfranchised. He recommends supporting and enhancing young people’s participation in Preventing Violent Extremism activities, and integrating them into decision-making processes at local and national levels. (**UN Office of Counter-Terrorism 2023)**

Youth involvement in preventing radicalization towards violent extremism requires empowerment through training/education to strengthen their resilience to violence and take an active role in reducing the risks of violence in their communities.

In order to underpin all these fundamental aspects mentioned above, the set up social change initiative aimed at building the capacity of thirty-five (35) young( including 20 women) to build their resilience and actively engage them in the prevention of radicalism leading to violent extremism. The initiative has been running for a month in the Karamoja region, and the stakeholders were young women and men, communities and local authorities. The young people, including 20 women, have been the direct beneficiaries of training on how to prevent radicalism leading to violent extremism, and will apply their acquired skills in raising awareness in their communities to reduce the risk factors of violent extremism in their communities.

Three activities were initiated as described below:

1. Improving the resilience of thirty-five (35) young people (including 20 women) and train them on how to prevent radicalism leading to violent extremism.
2. Empower thirty-five young women and men to be actively involved in transforming radicalism leading to violent extremism.
3. Promote peace building actions among communities in a sustainable perspective.

Finally, it is considered to be essential to encourage this initiative, which is to strengthen the civic engagement of young people in peacebuilding, to involve them as peacemakers by making their voices, leadership and implications heard.

**2.3 CHANGE THEORY and how it was applied**

##### 2.3.a Basic Context

In the basic context of the program, it was determined that the three target communities - Napumpum, Lolieto and Potongor - were already experiencing a situation of mistrust that threatened to turn into inter-community conflict. According to official sources, the reasons for this mistrust are numerous: socio-economic discrimination, cattle raids from one community to another, stereotypes and biased or hurtful jokes, acts of domination and social avoidance, and so on. Increasing insecurity, the risk of radicalization and violent extremism, difficult relations with the Defense and Security Forces, etc. were also features of the difficult living conditions in the communities. And especially women and young people have lack of opportunities and prospects, this is one source of great frustration for this group. It is these constraints experienced by the communities that the feeling of being abandoned, which can lead to community violence.

##### 2.3.b Change Theory

The underlying assumption is that the local population, especially young people and women, are exposed to the risk of community conflict because of their vulnerability, for the reasons set out above. In view of this situation, it is assumed that the successful combination of the following actions could make communities in the target areas more resilient to the phenomena of community conflict and violent extremism:

* The mechanism of dialogue, mediation, conflict resolution and prevention of violent extremism were used to break down the walls of mistrust between communities through the workshop organized for peaceful coexistence. Community dialogue was fostered and inclusive.

The mistrust and negative antagonisms between communities, a source of conflict, was mitigated by the workshop's aim of bringing youth together through discussions on the risk factors of violent extremism and its impact on communities. Subsequently, a dialogue and mediation mechanism were set up in order to restore trust between the neighboring communities. The stakeholders involved were the representatives of the targeted communities - Napumpum, Lolieto, Potongor - the head of the Panyangara parish and the peace fellow, who led this difficult mediation initiative which resulted in unexpected success.

* The empowerment of 35 young people, including 20 women, to build their resilience to radicalization leading to violent extremism took place. The Youth is strengthened through training and their involvement in actions to prevent the risks of violent extremism in their communities was clearly visible.

Before the initiative, the participation of young people, especially women, in a social change initiative based on the prevention of violent extremism was very weak and the gender approach almost non-existent. Advocacy was conducted in communities to support the involvement and empowerment of 35 young people including 20 women in the prevention of radicalization leading to violent extremism. During the initiative the young people were trained for 3 days on terms to strengthen their resilience to violence in order to promote peace in their communities. young people from the three communities carried out awareness-raising activities against violent extremism and promoted community dialogue.

* People's collective commitment was strengthened, and peaceful coexistence and neighborly relations were re-established between target communities as part of this social change initiative.
* Cultural and recreational (sports) activities were organized, bringing communities together.

Soccer games were organized, thus breaking down mistrust and fostering peaceful interaction.

The theory of change of this initiative argues that communities and especially young people, the main beneficiaries, will indeed be more resilient because the main vulnerability factors favoring community conflict and the expansion of extremist groups will be addressed if these three factors are combined.

### 2.4 METHODS AND DESIGN

This section outlines in succession the major stages followed in this initiative. It also reviews preliminary activities and presents the sample, while briefly describing data collection.

#### 2.4.a Preparatory phase

In order to take all project stakeholders into account, a preparatory phase was resorted. In this way, it was possible to involve all the stakeholders in the program in a participative approach. The Terms of Reference for implementation proposed jointly by stakeholders such as representatives of the target communities, the head of the Panyangara parish and the Peace Fellow were strictly adhered to.

#### 2.4.b Framing Meeting

The aim of this meeting was to define expectations for the implementation of the program and to gather technical recommendations from the field for the design.

This meeting focused on the following points:

* The analysis of the context and the implementation of the social change initiative.
* The presentation of the methodology used by the peace fellow.
* Discussions around the design of data collection tools.

##### 2.4.c Desk review

This phase consisted of exploiting all necessary documents relating to the social change initiative. This enabled a detailed analysis to be performed in order to assess the various indicators issued. This review included articles and study reports by Non-governmental Organizations and associations established in the program's target area.

##### 2.4.d Sampling

To collect primary quantitative data from targets in the three target communities, a sample was selected by applying the following formula:

𝒏′ = (N/1+n\*e2) \*1,1 with N the population per community **Chart 1: Initial sample**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Region**  | **Panyangara Parish**  |  **Sample Size**  |
| **Karamoja(North-east)** **District of Kotido**  | Napumpum  | 100  |
| Lolieto  | 100  |
| Potongor  | 100  |
| **Total**  |   | 300  |

**2.4.e Field data collection** 2.4.f **Data Collection Tools**

The following collection tools were used:

#### Qualitative component

* One (01) focus group guide;
* One (01) individual interview guide: One guide for all young people, including women.

The qualitative aspect of the project has enabled the peace fellow to determine the key elements for empowering young people in the prevention of radicalization leading to violent extremism, and involving them as partners and/or players in the target area of the initiative.

For the quantitative component, a questionnaire was used to survey the women targeted by this change initiative. It highlighted the situation of women in these communities (lack of leadership, barriers).

##### 2.4.g Ensuring data quality 2.4.h Quantitative data collection

Strategies were implemented with two field volunteers to ensure the quality of the data to be collected. Two approaches were taken to data collection, first: working sessions with volunteers for data collection in order to set up an orientation plan. Secondly, after the questionnaires had been administered to the target groups, a debriefing session was organized in order to correct any errors by discussing any difficulties and potential solutions.

######  2.4.i Qualitative data collection

A number of measures have been taken to improve interview quality. The main quality assurance provisions can be summarized as follows:

* Data backup: At the end of data collection, the data is directly saved.
* Questionnaires were checked for consistency with the questions asked.
* Checking of data collected by site, i.e., the 3 sites: Napumpum, Lolieto and Potongor for compliance with response rates and other quality indicators.

 All these tasks enabled the peace fellow to correct a number of inconsistencies, thereby guaranteeing the quality of the data collected**.**

##### 2.4.j Data processing and analysis 2.4.k Treatment and analysis of qualitative data

This task was performed with **Excel Tutorial2** for qualitative data processing using content analysis. Excel Tutorial is an application for questionnaire processing methods. After this stage, all the scripts are formatted in identical format and carefully scanned to correct any inconsistencies due to errors. This approach minimizes cognitive and cultural bias, while ensuring the objectivity of the research.

######  2.4.l Quantitative data processing and analysis

Data processing was based on triangulation (cross-referencing of information gathered from various sources), which enabled the peace fellow to extract the most relevant information from which to draw conclusions.

##### ❖ Data audit and analysis

Data collection was based on survey forms, which were then compiled. However, it should be noted that a number of corrective measures were applied to limit data entry errors, which will help to increase the quality of the data collected. The data cleansing stage was performed in Excel under the "Data management and cleansing" heading, prior to statistical analysis. This enabled the peace fellow to correct a number of inconsistencies. Prior to the actual data analysis, a tabulation of objective indicators was carried out in order to obtain an exhaustive list of all the sought indicators. **2.4.m Challenges and limits**

A number of challenges were experienced during the field data collection mission. The main difficulties can be described as follows:

1. **The unavailability of some targets:** some targets were almost unavailable due to field work or were travelling outside the survey coverage area. Consequentially, collection agents had difficulty meeting these targets. A schedule was drawn up for those who were overdue, and finally all were surveyed.
2. **Reluctance**: some targets admit they are sick and tired of surveys because it was not one of the measures that could enable them to benefit from support in terms of income-generating activities, food or pecuniary donations**.**

**Limits:** Statements and opinion were sometimes difficult to cross-check.

### Chapter3

#### 3.1 INTERVENTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

##### 3.1.a Intervention Strategy

The strategy for implementing our initiative is described below:

Empower and involve young women and men to prevent radicalism leading to violent extremism. **GOAL**

Empower 35 young people (including 20 women) by Involve 35 youth (including 20 women) in targeted

training them on how to prevent radicalism leading to  actions to prevent violent extremism. **Intermediates** violent extremism  **Objectives**

* Young women and men are empowered to be - Young women and men are actively involved in strategic agents of change.  preventing violent extremism in their communities.
* Women are increasingly actors of change, - Communities are resilient, the wall of mistrust is **Changes** therefore take their own share of leadership. reduced and peaceful coexistence is restored.

35 young people are more resilient and have the 35 young people are organized and engaged **Intermediate** necessary skills to prevent radicalization into violent in implementing local actions to raise awareness of  **outcomes**

extremism. peace-building values in their communities.

######  Assumption

* The security situation is stable in the area
* Local authorities, beneficiaries and communities support the objectives of the initiative.
* Young people are motivated, participate in training and are engaged in implementing targeted activities to prevent radicalism leading to violent extremism in their communities.

##### 3.1.b Planned Activities by Outcomes

**R1. 35 Young people are more resilient and have the necessary skills to prevent radicalization into violent extremism.**

A.1.1Individual identification of young people (including 20 women) in collaboration with community leaders:

35 young people (including 20 women) were identified, and the consultative opinion of local stakeholders were sought in this identification process. Once again, the approach was participative and based on criteria of dynamism, motivation and interest in social change.

**A.1.2** Participatory analysis of risks and vulnerabilities for a more effective resilience to Violent Extremism:

 In order to complete the contextual analyses conducted as part of this initiative, a oneday participatory and inclusive workshop was organized to measure the risks and vulnerabilities faced by communities, focusing with the most vulnerable people/youth. The objective was to better understand the structural causes of vulnerability and its causal links, and to develop an action plan to improve resilience. A methodology was developed for this purpose, known as the Vulnerability & Risk Assessment (VRA). This approach helped to strengthen the social cohesion of communities.

**A.1.3**. Strengthen the resilience of young people, including 20 women, through a 3-day training course on topics such as:

What is violent extremism? - What drives young people into violent extremism? How do we build self-resilience? - What role does gender play? - Why do youth voices in PVE matter? - Preventing violent extremism: what actions can we take?.

A Restitution Session was carried out for exercises simulating the tools acquired and their applicability to know how to anticipate the risks of radicalization, how to strengthen selfresilience in the face of violence, preserve the values of active citizenship, their roles and responsibilities as actors in the construction of a positive peace in their communities

**R2. 35 Young people are organized and engaged in implementing local actions to raise awareness of peace-building values in their communities.**

**A.2.1.** Implementation of an awareness-raising sketch on the prevention of radicalism and violence in all its forms, and the promotion of community dialogue:

 As one of the main objectives of this initiative for inclusion, equality and respect for human rights, the "theory of change in youth participation and leadership" aims to create positive and sustainable changes by groups of youth and women.

For this purpose, **a series of sketches** were performed by young people to raise awareness of violence prevention mechanisms and promote good practices for preserving peaceful coexistence between communities. The "**Peace Walk**" campaign, which consisted of walking around communities with powerful messages to raise awareness of violence and the vital need to strengthen peaceful coexistence within the communities.

**A.2.2**. Implementation of cultural and recreational activities to strengthen crosscommunity social cohesion:

Social and recreational activities were organized through the "**Sport for Peace**". From a social point of view, the practice of a sport promotes exchange, develops conviviality and breaks down barriers. It was also a powerful tool to break down the barriers between communities. This initiative was implemented through soccer games as a vehicle for conviviality and social cohesion within communities**.**

###### 3.1.c Organizational Capabilities

This initiative was led by a management team comprising the Peace Fellow (coordination) and two local volunteers recommended by the head of the Panyangara parish. Young people as beneficiaries and actors in the implementation, were selected based on their ability to engage in peacebuilding initiatives and various community actions.

###### 3.1.d Implementation Chronogram of Activities

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  **A c t i v i t i e s**  |  |  | **MAI**  |  |
| **Week1**  |  | **Week2**  | **Week3**  |  | **Week4**  |
| L  | M | M  | J  | V  | S  | D  | L  | M  | M  | J  | V  | S  | D  | L  | M |  M |  J  | V  | S  | D |  L |  M |  M | J  | V  | S  | D |
| **\* Setting up project team**  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| **Base line Studies**  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| **A1.1. Individual identification of young people (including 20 women) in collaboration with community leaders**  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| **A1.2. Participatory analysis of risks and vulnerabilities for a more effective resilience to Violent Extremism**  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| **A1.3. Strengthen the resilience of young people, including 20 women, through a 3day training course on topics such as**  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| **A.2.1. Implementation of an awarenessraising sketch on the prevention of radicalism and violence in all its forms, and the promotion of community dialogue**  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| **A.2.2. Implementation of cultural and recreational activities to strengthen crosscommunity social cohesion**  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| **End of activities - Evaluation**  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |

##### 3.1.e Partners (Synergy and Complementarity)

❖Synergies with other projects/initiatives

The project will contribute to and be conducted in synergy with other actions carried out by non-governmental organizations, foundations and probably government authorities. Some of them very active in the area such as the foundation Bruder and Schwester in Not (Brother and Sister in Need) from Austria-Innsbruck and Caritas Kärnten - Austria, have implemented a project called "Women and Youth Empowerment" in the Karamoja region, especially in the parishes of Panyangara, in the district of Kotido (the area of implementation of the social change initiative). The project aims to ensure livelihoods with a focus on gender equity and poverty reduction, equal lives free of violence, including gender-based violence and HIV/AIDS stigma, and to improve living conditions through sustainable agriculture and income generating activities.

This synergy of action and complementarity will perfectly integrate the operationalization of the Nexus "Humanitarian - Development - Peace".

**Partnerships:** This project will strongly rely on local actors in order to benefit from their knowledge of the context, transfer skills and make the action as sustainable as possible.

##### ❖ Visibility

The initiative will place particular emphasis on visibility of the Rotary Peace Centers program and the donor(s) supporting this social change initiative. Every opportunity will be taken to achieve the visibility objectives.

**3.1.f Monitoring Methods** (Management Capacity)

###### 3.1.f.1 Operational Overview of the Action: Logical Framework

|  |
| --- |
| **Overall Goal**: **Empower and involve youth women and men to prevent radicalism leading to violent extremism.**  |
| **Intervention logic**  | **Indicators (OVIs)**  | **Baseline** **Values**  | **Target** **Values**  | **Sources of verification**  | **Assumption/risks**  |
| **SO1.** Empower 35 young people (including 20 women) by training them on how to prevent radicalism leading to violent extremism  | * At least 100% of young people are resilient and strategic actors for change
* At least 100% of young people have the adequate skills to address radicalism and transform violent extremism in their communities.
 | Baseline   Baseline  | 100   100  | * Baseline studies
* Periodic surveys on the situation of radicalization and violent extremism risks - Activity reports.
* Post distribution evaluation

(**PDM**) * Final evaluation
* Capitalization and lessons learned report
 | **Assumptions** * Absence of external shocks (climatic, political, security, etc.)
* Absence of intra and intercommunity tensions.
* Mobilization and involvement of stakeholders.

   **Risks** * Insecurity in the intervention zone
* Political recuperation or other incompatible goals.
* Lack of mobilization of the communities and other actors
 |
| **SO2.** Involve 35 youth (including 20 women) in targeted actions to prevent violent extremism.  | - 90% of young women and men who are engaged as peacemakers - 90% of women and men who assert a significant reduction in the risk of radicalization and the improvement of social cohesion within the community  | Baseline  Baseline  | 90  90  |
| **R1:** **35 Young people are more resilient and have the necessary skills to prevent radicalization into violent extremism.**  | * 100% of young women and men are satisfied with their resilience building and training.
* 100% of young women are impacted by empowerment as actors change
 | Baseline   Baseline  | 100   100  | * Activity Report
* Disaggregated list of youth beneficiaries of the Project
* Training report
 |
| **R2:** **35 Young people are organized and engaged in implementing local actions to raise awareness of peace-building values in their communities.**  | * At least 95% of young beneficiaries take part in activities and are active players in peace-building.
* Number of advocacy and action taken at the community level to promote youth access to

peacebuilding activities  |  Baseline    Baseline  |  95    2  | * Report of sensitization and/or dialogue activities conducted for peacebuilding
* Disaggregated list of identified youth leaders
 |

###### 3.1.f.2 Monitoring & Evaluation Mechanisms

The monitoring and evaluation of the project will be developed in accordance with the implementation standards of the activities such as: the monitoring-evaluation (1); a baseline analysis (2) and a final evaluation that will measure the direct/indirect impacts of the initiative and the rate of satisfaction of the beneficiaries; Monitoring to ensure quality of the implementation of activities.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Risks  | Probability  | Impact  | Mitigation measure  |
| Security destabilization  | average  | High  | Coordination with local actors, security plan, travel tracking, security tracking  |
| Accessibility restriction to intervention area  | Low  | High  | Temporary shutdown of activities and analysis of the situation to make the right decisions  |
| Unwillingness of communities and authorities to adhere to the objectives of the initiative.  | Low  | High  | Active involvement of communities and authorities.  |

4.2 Key Findings/Impact

The findings of this initiative will make a significant contribution to achieving the specific objectives set. They are as follows:

* R1. 35 Young people are more resilient and have the necessary skills to prevent radicalization into violent extremism.

This initiative has contributed significantly to empowering young people in their efforts to build resilience and actively prevent violent extremism. These acquired skills will enable them to address the factors and effects of violent extremism in their communities. Young people bring unique strengths and experiences to learning and are essential partners.

* R2. 35 Young people are organized and engaged in implementing local actions to raise awareness of peace-building values in their communities.

The participation of young people, particularly women, in a social change initiative based on the prevention of violent extremism is restored and strengthened through this achieved result. Young beneficiaries in the three communities carried out awareness-raising activities against violent extremism and encouraged dialogue within the community. These activities impacted over 3,000 people immediately during the implementation period and 30,000 people over the long term.

The final evaluation focused on analyzing the impact of this social change initiative by answering the following main question: "What are the intended and unintended, direct and indirect, positive and negative, effects of the initiative in terms of resilience to radicalization towards violent extremism in the district of Kotido, specifically in Panyangara parish (Impact)?

Specifically, the evaluation focused on the impact and sustainability of the actions implemented to prevent violent extremism and promote peaceful coexistence. The evaluation was unable to address in detail the question of gender impact, which would require further study.

 At all the sites visited, the people interviewed declared that their situation is generally better today, i.e., three months after the activities. The monitoring of logical framework indicators also demonstrates this overall improvement in the situation and the positive impact of the initiative in the area.

Considering that these key findings is a transitional initiative designed to build the resilience of beneficiaries to address the risks of radicalization leading to violent extremism. Then to promote the consolidation of positive peace in their communities. Consequently, its impact is measured by its ability to enable direct and indirect beneficiaries to acquire capacity-building skills that enable them to anticipate and/or cope with conflict in a peaceful and sustainable manner. Its relevance results from the actions that have been implemented by the young beneficiaries during and after the implementation of the initiative. Young people will be organized and trained as peacebuilders in their communities, able to carry out awareness-raising activities in their communities on the need to combat violent extremism.

The establishment of a community dialogue framework aimed at overcoming dividing lines between communities, anticipating or dealing with conflicts in a sustainable way. These relevant achievements form an important basis for the project's impact.

Indeed, the implementation of this project has been inscribed in a logic of resilient development, education to create social change through coexistence, peaceful cohesion between communities.

### Chapter 4

#### 4.1 General Conclusion

The evaluation of the results was based on the criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of our initiative, as well as taking into account the higher participation of "aspect" women and human rights.

The evaluation considers that the Relevance dedicated to "Young people as drivers of prevention of radicalism leading to Violent Extremism" of socio-political and community conflicts" is satisfactory. They must be engaged in the implementation of peace programs, as key partners in the prevention of violence and the promotion of peace. Their engagement is now widely recognized as the best practice in peacebuilding work.

Regarding the effectiveness of the intervention, the levels of achievement of the results expected from the implementation of the project are satisfactory. The initiative has strengthened the capacities of targeted "youth" players through training on themes such as social cohesion, conflict prevention and management and hate speech, and the revitalization of exchange frameworks such as community dialogue.

This debate constitutes a first attempt to apply peace initiatives based on authors’ opinions to a sustainability plan. The risk of unemployment or precarious employment as well as climate change is highly impacting the future of younger generations and requires the development of a diverse set of pathways of future-orientated peace initiatives. Knowledge about sustainability will be decisive in the future. Further peace initiatives should focus on empirically testing the initiative „Strengthening the Youth Capacity against Radicalism and Violent Extremism“ in real-life settings in the communities of Karamoja later on, as the risk of unemployment or precarious employment as well as climate change continues to impact the communities and specifically young people on a severe scale.

#### 4.2 Recommendations / Implications for Policy

Peace initiatives have the potential to play a constructive role in future cooperation among the communities to tackle joint economic and environmental challenges.

* This goal can be achieved by positioning young people as a soft power that can be used by given authorities to further peaceful solutions.

* Tackling socio-economic challenges is a joint ambition and a common interest of communities that requires collective action.

* The necessary measures in the field of community governance, education and participation of young people must be organized with national policymakers. Economic investment in the Karamoja region is here essential, like the creation of small incoming projects for young people, in order to enable a peaceful and sustainable future for the communities.

For these efforts, a space for interaction among the communities must be created that conforms to certain basic rules. Furthermore, the initiative „Strengthening the Youth Capacity against Radicalism and Violent Extremism“ is suitable for setting up a followup project, which proclaims to involve socio-economic factors as well. Additional stakeholders for collaboration with the initiative are the following: the Ugandan government for investing in economic activities, like agriculture (farming, market gardening), as well as councils of municipalities, parishes, and community assemblies including young people as important stakeholders.

#### 4.3 Sustainability Plan

The starting point for the design of the sustainability plan is to look at the term of *sustainability* itself. Oxford Languages (2023) explains the meaning of sustainability firstly as "the ability to be maintained at a certain rate or level" as in "the sustainability of economic growth". "Sustainability can be described as "a societal goal that broadly relates to the ability of people to safely co-exist on Earth over a long time" (Hirsch 2022).

Most scholars understand the term *sustainability* as did the Brundtland Commission, the 1983 UN Commission on Environment and Development headed by the three-time former Prime Minister of Norway and director-general of the World Health Organization Gro Harlem Brundtland. It was aiming to unite states in pursuit of "sustainable development." In the commission's 1987 report “*Our Common Future”*, sustainable development was defined as development that "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (United Nations General Assembly 1987). As the Brundtland Commission insisted, the environment should also include social and political aspects. In most of today´s discussions, economic aspects are also part of the definition, creating a 4-pillar model of sustainability.

The history of the term *sustainability* clearly demonstrates the relevant role of young people in sustainability processes by addressing “future generations” and it also shows the connectivity of peace and sustainability. Without peace, there is no sustainability. And without sustainability, there is no peace. One common ground of peace projects and sustainability initiatives is that both have *emerged due to real world problems*. The second common point is that both deal with *transboundary challenges.* The three communities of the parish of Panyangara, in the Kotido district north-east of Karamoja, can serve as a microcosm to illustrate this central hypothesis. As such, the sustainability plan derives from these fundamental considerations.

The Social initiative change proved that youth can speak a joint language and interpersonal relations in given communities enable bridges to a sustainable and peaceful future. The overall aim of the developed initiative “Strengthening the Youth Capacity against Radicalism and Violent Extremism“ was to investigate peaceful and as such sustainable future scenarios for the communities in Karamoja in order to prevent radicalization leading to violent extremism.

A central statement of the outcome of the program is that socio-economic challenges and environmental risks characterize the communities in this region of Uganda. A continuing fight over scarce resources due to climate change as well as unemployment are here listed to be big challenges for the given communities. Furthermore, the design of the sustainability plan for the communities in Karamoja is based on the understanding that these challenges require multi-sectoral solution options, and sustainability needs cooperation among various stakeholders. Good governance in the communities is also essential to handle economic and environmental risks. The goal is to find joint sustainable solution options; the undertaken peace project was one tool to reach that aim.

In this report of “Social change initiative”, the author aimed to identify the potential pros and cons of a peace project as a tool for Youth education to address future violent risk scenarios for the communities and for a generation faced with the potential danger of radicalization leading to violent extremism. The findings demonstrate that by considering future forms of peace initiatives, a generation of educated young people could be better suited to face the human-centered and ecological risks of violent conflicts than an uneducated Youth. Following a holistic and future-orientated approach, where policies and communities’ authorities encourage young people to participate in decision-making processes, peace can be implemented at Karamoja. In light of climate change as a main risk for farming in this region, decision-makers can enable an effective policy towards future-oriented sustainability and peace training. Moreover, the sustainability plan allows for the identification of cooperation among stakeholders of different backgrounds, like authorities and young people. While the development of this sustainability plan provides a potential base for policymakers to make more informed decisions on preventions of violent conflicts, its operationalization will require a high degree of engagement between stakeholders, including local decision-makers as well as

young people. The engagement and contribution of all is essential in order to properly incorporate the sustainability plan as a modeling framework into the real world.

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