

END OF PROJECT EVALUATION

# PARTICIPATION OF YOUTH AND WOMEN IN THE PEACEBUILDING PROCESS

EVALUATION REPORT  
APRIL 2021





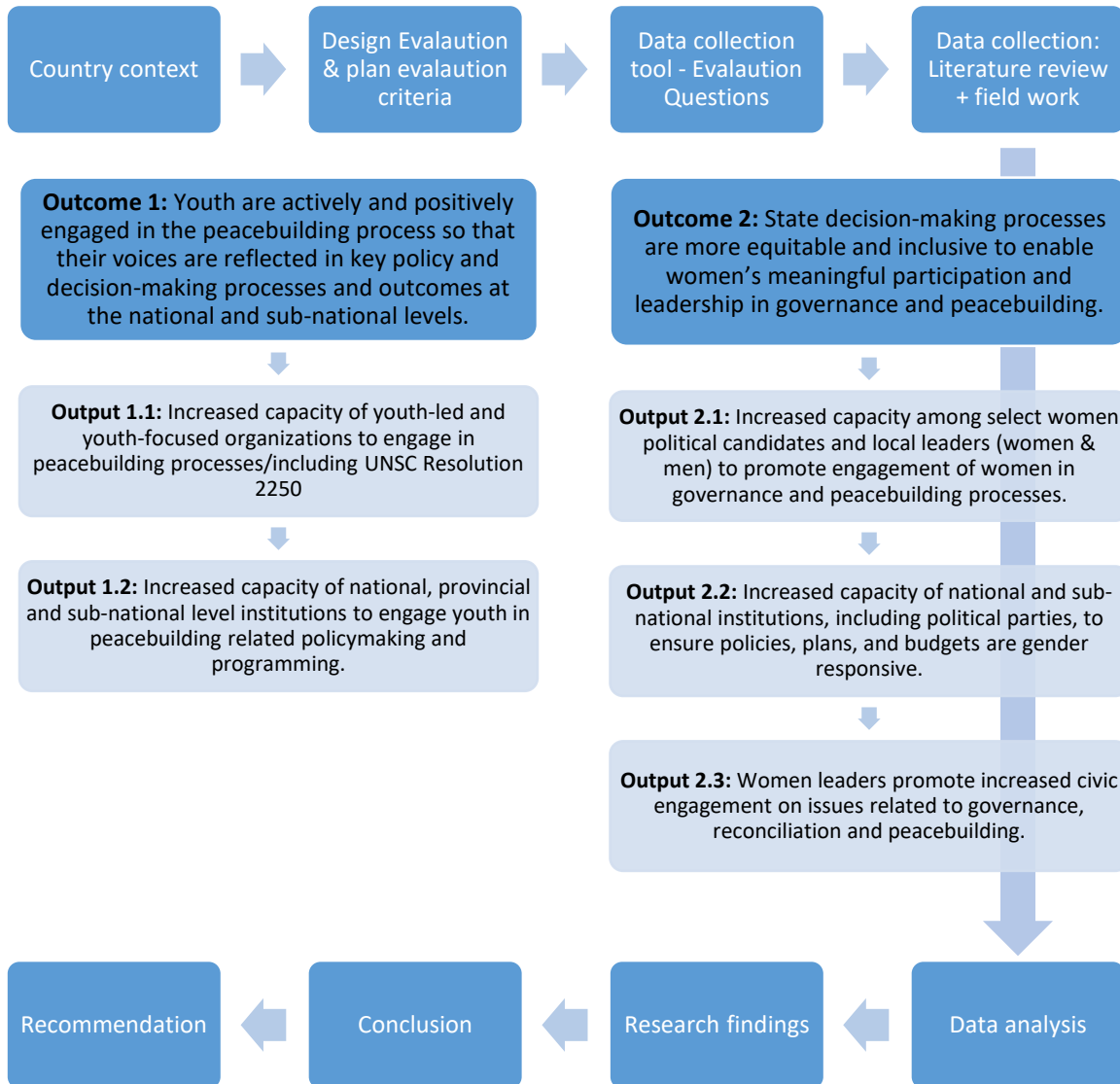
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# Abbreviations

AWP	Annual Work Plans
BPfA	Beijing Platform for Action
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CEPA	Centre for Poverty Analysis
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CTPB	Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
EC	Election Commission
EMG	Evaluation Management Group
ERG	Evaluation Reference Group
EU	European Union
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FHH	Female Headed Household
GOSL	Government of Sri Lanka
ICES	International Centre for Ethnic Studies
IP	Implementing Partners
IRF	Immediate Response Facility
JVP	Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna or People's Liberation Front
KPI	Key Person Interview
LG	Local Government
LLRC	Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
MPD	Multi-Party Dialogue
MWDF	Mannar Women's Development Federation
NAP	National Action Plan
NYSC	National Youth Services Council
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PBF	Peace Building Fund
PBSO	Peacebuilding Support Office
PHI	Public Health Inspector
PPP	Peacebuilding Priority Plan
PRF	Peacebuilding Recovery Facility
PVE	Prevention of Violent Extremism
RCSS	Regional Centre for Strategic Studies
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SSR	Security Sector Reform
SWDC	Suriya Women's Development Centre
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
UNSDF	United Nations Sustainable Development Framework
UNSG	United Nations Secretary-General
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
WMC	Women and Media Collective
WPS	Women, Peace and Security
WRC	Women's Resource Centre
YPP	Youth Peace Panel
YPS	Youth, Peace and Security

# Structure of The Evaluation Report



# Executive Summary

*“We come from different ethnic groups and for the first time recognise the heartbeat of each other. This is what I understand as social cohesion that we (...) need to take to our community.”*

– quote from a beneficiary of the project –

Sri Lanka has come out of a three-decade long ethno-political conflict inflicting enormous damage to the economy and also the multi-cultural and fragile social fabric. There had been numerous well-meaning interventions in peace building and conflict transformation following the end of the war. This report presents the findings of the evaluation exercise commissioned by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Volunteers (UNV) and United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) of the project titled, “Participation of Youth and Women in the Peacebuilding Process” (the project). The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the achievement of the project and identify lessons learned to support evidence-based decision making. It also provides recommendations for future peacebuilding programming.

The project was supported by the UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) and implemented by UNFPA, UNV and UN Women in the Northern, Eastern, Southern, Central, and North Western provinces of Sri Lanka from 26 May 2017 to 30 September 2020, with a total budget of USD 1,626,699. The project aimed to empower women and youth with a greater understanding of peacebuilding issues and catalyse their participation and engagement in governance and decision-making processes and responses related to sustaining peace. This is the first time that these three UN entities implemented a joint project in Sri Lanka supported by the PBF and focused on a multi-stakeholder approach. This assistance was enabled when Sri Lanka became one of the PBF eligible countries and the project was funded through the UN Peacebuilding Recovery Facility (PRF) modality.

The methodology used by the evaluation team was led by the theory of change envisaged in this project in an environment conducive to peacebuilding at that time, set against a backdrop of the discourse of liberal internationalism, and warranted a discourse analysis. Given that this is essentially a peacebuilding project, it was necessary for the tool adopted for the evaluation to introduce a ‘peacebuilding’ lens to the evaluation method. Hence, a discourse analysis with the assistance of the ‘Aid for Peace’ framework<sup>1</sup> (which inherently includes the recommended OECD-DAC criteria) was adopted for the evaluation purpose. A qualitative evaluation tool for primary data collection and secondary data review was utilised to help capture the full paradigm of the project in accordance with the assumptions to be assessed as mentioned in the evaluation matrix (Annex 4) (Please see Chapter 1 for details).

It was imperative to engage in an unerring emphasis on the country context when conducting this evaluation. The evaluation team took due note of how the lifecycle of the project commenced in 2017 under one political administration (interspersed with a few national-level violent outbreaks) and completed in September 2020 under a successor administration. The two administrations held and applied differing approaches in their governance and doctrinal commitment to the principles and ideological underpinnings of the concept of conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Hence, the evaluation contended with mainly two differing contexts that impacted the outputs and the operations of the project.

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<sup>1</sup> The eight criteria under ‘Aid for Peace’ are peacebuilding relevance; peacebuilding effectiveness; impact on macro peacebuilding; sustainability for long-term peacebuilding; efficiency of management and governance; participation and ownership of national local stakeholders; coordination and coherence with other initiatives; and gender equality and human rights.

The findings of the evaluation presented in this report correspond to the outcomes, their respective outputs, and activities of the project, guided by the evaluation criteria.

## Summary of Key Findings

Overall, outcome 1<sup>2</sup> of the project has been successful in increasing the capacity of youth-led and youth-focused organisations engaged in peacebuilding processes by placing emphasis on localising UNSCR 2250.<sup>3</sup> The project has empowered youth to contribute as key players in peacebuilding-related policy making and programming. On the other hand, outcome 2<sup>4</sup> was also a success given its novelty in including many diverse groups of women political actors and institutions to develop capacities on governance, peacebuilding, and gender-responsive policy plans. It is evident that female councillors are increasingly engaged within their councils, having strengthened relationships across parties and across councils – including with male councillors, public officials, and civil society, with whom they have had little to no engagement previously.

### Relevance

In the Sri Lankan context, youth participation in peacebuilding and policy influencing is not very visible in national, provincial, and sub-national level institutions. Therefore, targeting the capacity building of youth-led and youth-focused organisations and national, provincial, and sub-national level institutions, through outcome 1 was extremely relevant in localising UNSCR 2250, and necessary for the durability of peace in Sri Lanka.

Through outcome 2, the project strategically responded to the needs of the stakeholders by identifying drivers of conflict and helping create space for voluntary entry points for regional women leaders and their corresponding institutions to identify issues of concern in their localities. The peacebuilding component in the project is essentially relevant as it has helped access women leaders in key geographical regions inclusive of awareness raising and information dissemination events in accordance with project strategies and priorities.

### Effectiveness

Overall, the project characterised inclusive practices by including marginalised youth and women from different communities, such as ex-combatants, war-disabled youth, war widows, plantation workers, school children from poverty-stricken backgrounds, and marginalised castes from different ethnic groups, who are crucial for a long-lasting peacebuilding process. Some of the instrumental activities carried out under outcome 1 include:

- Placing UN Volunteers in five CSOs to support, strengthen and implement peace-related programs, which strengthened the outreach of these CSOs by linking them with UNV resources.
- Organizing V-Awards, which recognised and honoured, at a national level, volunteers who made significant contributions to uplift communities, and awarded volunteers engaged in the peace-building process of the country.
- Building capacities of youth-led and youth-focused organisations who received a number of relevant trainings that helped expand and strengthen their pool of trainers. Similarly, the

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<sup>2</sup> Outcome 1 - Youth are actively and positively engaged in the peacebuilding process so that their voices are reflected in key policy and decision-making processes and outcomes at the national and sub-national levels.

<sup>3</sup> UNSCR 2250 (2015) identifies five key pillars for action: participation, protection, prevention, partnerships and disengagement and reintegration. This landmark resolution urges Member States to give youth a greater voice in decision-making at the local, national, regional and international levels and to consider setting up mechanisms that would enable young people to participate meaningfully in peace processes (<https://www.youth4peace.info/UNSCR2250/Introduction>)

<sup>4</sup> Outcome 2 - State decision-making processes are more equitable and inclusive to enable women's meaningful participation and leadership in governance and peacebuilding.

University of Ruhuna also acquired training for a group of lecturers on peace-related themes that were applied at the orientation of first-year students.

- Addressing three vital national-level problems of social media for peace building, a national school curriculum to address ethnic bias and stereotypes and a youth quota for national-level politics, through the projects to be conducted by the Youth Peace Panel (YPP)
- Commissioning the Regional Centre for Strategic Studies (RCSS) to conduct research on the 'Potential Role of Young Leaders and Volunteers in Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE)', which discussed youth's role in PVE and volunteerism.
- Drafting provincial youth policies, which has acted as a catalyst for general youth empowerment related interventions.

Through outcome 2, the project has achieved a transformational and edifying experience influencing local women leaders and local councillors in an effective way. Thereby, women leaders have had the opportunity to engage in governance at local-level social issues, prioritising and responding to them effectively. Example of activities carried out are:

- The Multi-Party Dialogues (MPDs) that have enabled women leaders, through discussions, to strategically prioritise development needs and wellbeing with a conflict-sensitive lens and has created a peaceful environment within their councils and in their local nexus. Across all MPDs there had been a strong sense of understanding/kinship, irrespective of party lines, given the common problems affecting districts and the common challenges female councillors faced.
- Gender-sensitive policy making trainings, media briefings and a 7-day workshop on social change, which engaged women on issues of political representation and environmental work.
- The 30-Day campaign on 'Women's Peace Activism', created the opportunity to learn about women's peace activism in Sri Lanka and engage in the discourse.
- #OurLivedRealities, the video series produced by Hashtag Generation, has sustained the discourse on the importance of an ethical political culture in Sri Lanka, addressing public opinions such as that women are not capable of or are not interested in governance, decision-making and peacebuilding.

### **Efficiency**

Overall, the project had efficient and adequate human resources and capacity to implement its activities in a timely manner, despite the setbacks caused by political instability, Easter Sunday bombings, and COVID-19 mobility restrictions. Moreover, through outcome 2 the partners and the regional counterparts achieved the intended outcome owing to the availability of adequate financial support that enabled the implementing partners to reach out to the community on peace education and gender-sensitive policy and trainings. The investment made on the MPDs is particularly notable, as forums such as the *Forum on Reforms within Political Institutions*, *Trade Union Forum*, and the *Forum on Peace and Coexistence* have not only been helpful in building the capacity of the councillors but in also creating space for meeting various groups, bringing various issues to the table, building relationships with groups from different sectors as well as opportunity for women leaders to create networks.

### **Impact**

It is evident, through outcome 1, that the project had a positive impact on youth's ideological predilections, which transformed from extremism to moderatism in specific processes initiated by this project. Moreover, the role of the UN Volunteers in this project was exceptionally commended by all local implementing partners (IPs), including government personnel who saw potential in learning from the UN Volunteers' experiences. From an inductive point of view, these changes will have a long-term impact on national-level peacebuilding process because the UN Volunteers are involved in community-level peacebuilding activities from a very young age and have the potential to become national-level leaders. Similarly, training the V-Award finalists has enabled them to incorporate elements of youth engagement in peacebuilding within their existing community initiatives, and the recognition from being a V-Award winner has opened up more avenues to fund their community



projects. The impact of the YPP projects cannot be evaluated fully because they were still ongoing at the time of the evaluation. However, it is recognised that the provincial youth policies have been drafted and there is a strong possibility that these will be implemented once the provincial councils start functioning. This acted as a catalyst for general youth empowerment related interventions.

The impact of the project, through outcome 2, is experienced as a bottom-to-top incremental process with much enthusiasm among women leaders. For example, the MPDs have enabled the councillors to build cross-party consensus to facilitate peacebuilding at the local level. It has focused on addressing conflict drivers and fostering reconciliation by developing shared solutions. A stronger sense of understanding/kinship, irrespective of party lines, was evident among all MPD participants given their link established through discussions based on the common problems affecting the districts and the common challenges female councillors faced. Local activities including intervention of Women's Committees within local councils; initiating programmes on women's employment, waste management, substance abuse, housing, and securing funds has created the opportunity for frank discussion and focus on collaboration. Given the general lack of cooperation between political parties at the national level, the dialogues are a critical element to galvanise local engagement and serve as an example of how parties can come together beyond the local level.

### **Sustainability**

The profound positive influence the project has had, through outcome 1, is evident from youth creating agency and their own space. This is a promising characteristic of long-term peacebuilding and sustainability beyond donor support. It was evident that youth proactively participated in national- and provincial-level peacebuilding policy implementations. For example, through YPP and provincial youth policies; and the creation of a pool of trainers through Youth4Peace to ensure sustainability of efforts and benefits. However, a limitation in this project is the absence of a mechanism to monitor the activities beyond the end of the project period.

Outcome 2 has demonstrated adequate potential for sustaining systems to support long-term peacebuilding. The MPD as a mechanism has ensured basic knowledge on the administrative process, judicial system, and mandates of councils for the local councillors and empowered them with good understanding to serve their communities confidently. Space and opportunity have been created for coordinating with the other political party members and various other bodies and stakeholders to build positive affiliations and improve their political career. A majority of female councillors have increasingly engaged especially on active participation, engaging in decision making, sharing their views and opinion at meetings, supporting the members with their work within their councils and have strengthened relationships across parties and across councils – including with male councillors, public officials, and civil society, with whom they previously had little to no engagement. This not only has given them self-confidence and trust, but also acceptance and recognition that could lead them to sustain their leadership. Additionally, based on the success of the MPDs, UN Women is scaling-up the MPD programmes to cover other provinces in Sri Lanka, which will be followed by a national-level forum for participants across all MPDs.

### **Participation and Ownership**

Through outcome 1, a number of national and international stakeholders were involved in keeping to the underpinning conviction of UNSCR 2250, to integrate youth participation for leadership and empowerment. While interaction and partnership between the two UN entities is commended, synergies among other diverse partners could have been improved. However, strengthening of local youth leadership in itself is indicative of national ownership through this aspect of the project.

Through outcome 2, the project contributed towards creating a pathway for partnership that was already paved by local women's initiatives with diverse groups. Both IP and CBOs wish to continue the work in their own localities in their own way, although not with the same vigour and reach owing to a combination of reasons such as the lack of funds and expertise for guidance and security and lack of authority to include diverse political groups in the current context.

### **Coordination and Coherence**

Many peacebuilding initiatives have been rolled out by UN entities with the support of the PBF and other development partners towards the same goals to sustain and strengthen the national-level peace process with local youth organisations in Sri Lanka. In this light, outcome 1 contributed towards the attainment of the larger common peacebuilding goals chartered by the PPP to localise UNSCR 2250. Similarly, in relation to outcome 2, state, and non-state actors (to some extent) have recognised and accepted that women are integral to peacebuilding and they have implemented various peacebuilding programmes for women that are unique to the contexts and local issues at stake. All these initiatives have worked towards strengthening the democratic process and inclusive leadership; non-heteronormative and patriarchal legal and policy frameworks; and sought to build and strengthen women's activism and movements. However, overall, there has been no evidence to suggest the project's coherence between other agencies and organisations (both international and local) that were carrying out peacebuilding initiatives while working in the same regions and under similar themes.

### **Gender Equality and Human Rights**

Outcome 1 has attempted to achieve gender equality and to include human rights perspectives towards decreasing gender biases and gender discrimination, to a great extent, by increasing appreciation of diversity, and providing spaces for economically, politically, and socially marginalised youth to participate in peacebuilding activities. Although achieving gender balance in the participation of projects has been quite challenging due to prevailing gender norms and difficulties in reaching out to communities that are excluded from the macro-level peacebuilding process, the project had endeavoured to address them to a great extent and emerged positive. Similarly, the project has successfully attempted to include marginalised groups including ex-combatants, war-disabled youth and war widows from the North, school children from poverty-stricken Kurunegala District and marginalised castes from Mullaitivu District into the activities.

Outcome 2 proves that there was a great level of success achieved despite little participation by men as change agents. The findings suggested that consensus from men was an absolute imperative for the successful enactment of policies supporting women to overcome discrimination and gender equality in this project. The MPDs are notable here, as they have identified the strategies, built consensus, and increased collaboration across parties and have strengthened partnership between female and male councillors in order to promote peacebuilding and collective leadership. Moreover, the knowledge female councillors gained from the training has empowered them with self-confidence, and respect, acceptance, and recognition from the male council members.

## **Conclusions**

Based on the findings the following conclusions are drawn.

**Youth** are actively and positively engaged in the peacebuilding process so that their voices are reflected in key policy and decision-making processes and outcomes at the national and sub-national levels. The evidence from this project provides an insight of the possibilities to be achieved if similar efforts are made elsewhere. The fruitfulness of peacebuilding efforts that can be implemented across the country is evident. These interventions can be up scaled and replicated with necessary modifications depending on the local context. It was a worthy strategic initiative to launch YPP, implemented by UNFPA, as it inherently possesses much potential for expansion and furthering of activities under its rubric in the future. It has assisted the youth who have no special entitlements to engage in the macro-level peacebuilding process by bringing the youth perspective to the main peacebuilding discourse. Similarly, one of the main striking features of this project is the integration of volunteerism, implemented by UNV. The strategic placement of UN Volunteers in CSOs was a useful means to enhance local capacities in a discrete way in a variety of peacebuilding-related issues and as a low-cost intervention.

Through this project, supporting **women's** efforts in engendering peacebuilding and governance processes is noteworthy. The evidence gathered validates the call for strong processes to improve their role and engagement in the governance processes as elected representatives as well as leaders in organisations. This conclusion adds further support to the call for strengthening women's participation in local and national governance structures and processes. Therefore, this aspect of the project implemented by UN Women has achieved a transformational and edifying experience influencing local women leaders and local councillors in an effective way. The forums and the MPDs are powerful ways of engaging and empowering women towards participation in peacebuilding processes. Thereby, women leaders have had the opportunity to engage in governance at local-level social issues, prioritising and responding to them effectively. For example, the MPDs have transformed and empowered female councillors by equipping them with knowledge on policies and capability of making their voices heard amidst existing challenging patriarchal constellations. Moreover, the MPDs have enabled the female councillors to build cross-party consensus to facilitate peacebuilding at the local level.

Overall, the project has achieved its objectives, although there is room for improvement at operational levels (see recommendations below and explained further in the report). Moreover, the efficacy of the multi-agency approach at national as well as local level is recognised for possible replication.

Apart from these conclusions, specific programmatic conclusions have been detailed in Chapter 5 of this report.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study the several recommendations have been detailed in Chapter 6 of this report. Below are some of the key recommendations for replicating positive lessons learnt and for taking measures to prevent possible obstacles in future endeavours. The recommendations mostly centre on the need for effective coordination, coherence and meaningful participation with more focus warranted in the future to jointly analyse results and adopt imminent/new projects, and continue the valuable initiatives undertaken in this phase accordingly.

### Overall Recommendations:

- For the global Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) community to emulate the overall intrepid process of carrying out this project to a successful completion, despite the political turbulences and the violent events in the county during the project period.
- For more robust and continued engagement by UNFPA, UNV and UN Women towards taking these initiatives forward, which would help fully achieve the structural changes envisaged.
- To create an opportunity to link all participants of different fora to come together to build synergies at a national-level peace forum.
- For future project designs to consider inter-agency links at all levels, including coordination of activities, to enable a 'truly' successful joint effort of agencies.
- To improve the coherence with other peacebuilding initiatives carried out by other UN agencies specifically, it is recommended to have quarterly meetings with all agencies, so that updates can be given about ongoing and upcoming projects and create the space for the agencies to learn from each other and find opportunities to collaborate.

### Specific to Outcome 1:

- For further action to be taken to provide YPP members with the recognition that they seek from IPs, government institutions and government officers to ensure strategic longevity and make interventions less challenging for the YPP.

- To continue the practice of strategic placement of UN Volunteers in CSOs to enhance a range of local capacities for peacebuilding.
- To revisit the blueprint of the V-Award process and design a mechanism to include the candidates in the ranking process where they are able to rank their work amongst others, and for a system of funding to be considered for volunteers to carry out their initiatives.
- For wider dissemination and publicising of research such as the research on the potential role of young leaders and volunteers in PVE, and to encourage IPs and youth leaders to engage with such research when designing activities.

**Specific to Outcome 2:**

- To conduct more training/peace education and capacity-building in mediation and negotiation for female local councillors and women leaders.
- To conduct more gender-sensitive training and awareness for male councillors, as it is a prerequisite for meaningful women's empowerment.
- For efforts to be made to promote responsibility and ownership to sustain the project among women leaders, the IPs and the beneficiaries, beyond donor assistance.
- For future projects to focus on specific skills and abilities especially in conflict mitigation/resolution to strengthen women's emerging new roles for local-level peacebuilding interventions.

Apart from these recommendations, specific programmatic recommendations have been detailed in Chapter 6 of this report.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose and Objectives of the Joint Project Evaluation

The overall purposes of the evaluation were to assess the achievement of the project objectives including the theory of change, demonstrate accountability to donors and stakeholders, provide useful learning to support evidence-based decision-making and inform and guide future peacebuilding programming. It is especially aimed at helping recipients of the UN PBF as well as other UN entities and governments focusing on youth and women in the context of peacebuilding.

The specific objectives of the evaluation were to assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and sustainability of the PBF project and its support and progress towards the expected outputs and outcomes set forth in the project results framework; to assess the adequacy and quality of the joint project partnerships, cooperation and coordination mechanism to maximise the effectiveness and sustainability of interventions; to evaluate replicability in other districts; to assess the overall level of integration of human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment; and to identify lessons learned, capture the good practices, provide a set of clear, forward-looking, actionable recommendations and generate knowledge to inform and guide future peacebuilding (joint) programming among UN entities and stakeholders.

The users of the evaluation include UNFPA, UNV and UN Women staff; implementing partners such as Chrysalis, Sarvodaya, and Women and Media Collective (WMC); Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO); government organisations (National Youth Services Council, Ministry of Youth Affairs, Provincial Councils, District Secretariats, etc.); and all partnering Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) as well as the women and youth themselves.

## 1.2 Scope of the Evaluation

The scope of the evaluation is limited to the implementation and results of the project during the period of May 2017 – September 2020. This evaluation commissioned by UNFPA, UNV and UN Women covered project interventions in the project locations (the Northern, Eastern, Central, Southern and North-Western provinces) co-financed by the PBF and RUNOs, implemented by UNFPA, UNV, UN Women through local partner organisations.

## 1.3 Methodology and Process

The evaluation was conducted from August 2020 to February March 2021 and comprised three phases:



All project interventions have exclusive contexts in which they operate. This peacebuilding project intervention has borne the additional complexity of remaining intensely vulnerable to changing political dynamics on the ground throughout its project cycle.

The theory of change<sup>5</sup> envisaged in the project in an environment conducive to peace at that time, set against a backdrop of the discourse of liberal internationalism, warranted a discourse analysis. The evaluation question guide was developed in accordance with the assumptions to be assessed as mentioned in the evaluation matrix presented in the Inception Report (See Annex 4 for the full evaluation matrix). Given that this is essentially a peacebuilding project, it was necessary for the tool adopted for the evaluation of this project to introduce a ‘peacebuilding’ lens to the evaluation method. Hence, the ‘Aid for Peace’ framework (Paffenholz and Reyhler 2007), in addition to the recommended OECD-DAC approach was adopted and was found to be extremely beneficial. The gender dimension and human rights were integrated into the evaluation and analysis as an evaluation criterion under the ‘Aid for Peace’ model. The gender dimensions within development projects have different analytical and political importance and foci in contrast to peacebuilding projects such as this one. For example, in this project, the evaluators appraised how sharpening the sensitivities, awareness and capacity development of youth and women have made them alert to the value and consequences of defending and asserting gender, youth and human rights. Evaluators assessed how these activities helped address unequal access to decision-making and peacebuilding. The research instrument and guide were thus developed.

<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	<b>Evaluation questions</b>
<b>Peacebuilding Relevance</b>	EQ1: To what extent did the project’s strategies respond to the country, beneficiary and partner needs, policies and priorities and drivers of conflict, and adapt to changes in the context?
<b>Peacebuilding Effectiveness</b>	EQ2: a. To what extent did the project achieve or is expected to achieve its planned and unintended results and contribute to peacebuilding outcomes in Sri Lanka? b. To what extent did the project actively identify and include the most marginalised in Sri Lanka ensuring that no one is left behind?
<b>Efficiency of Management and Governance</b>	EQ 3: To what extent does the project deliver or is likely to deliver results in an economic and timely manner?
<b>Impact on Macro Peacebuilding</b>	EQ 4: To what extent has this project impacted upon youth in the national-level peacebuilding process?
<b>Sustainability of Long-Term Peacebuilding</b>	EQ 5: To what extent has the project been able to support implementing partners and beneficiaries in developing capacities and establishing mechanisms to ensure sustainability of efforts and benefits?
<b>Participation and Ownership of National Stakeholders</b>	EQ 6: a. How efficient was the project coordination between UNFPA, UNV and UN Women including clarity of roles and accountabilities, avoiding duplication of efforts in implementation of activities, use of data/evidence for decision-making, monitoring and reporting, and potential added value? b. To what extent have partnerships with government institutions, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), etc. been sought/established and synergies created in delivery of assistance?
<b>Coordination and Coherence with Other Initiatives</b>	EQ 7: To what extent is the project compatible with other peacebuilding interventions carried out in the country by implementing agencies and other stakeholders working towards the same objective(s) with youth/women?
<b>Gender Equality &amp; Human Rights</b>	EQ 8: To what extent did the project address and respond to existing power dynamics and gender relations?

<sup>5</sup> Reflected in Results Framework in TOR in Annex 4. Also spelt out in Chapter 3.

Mainly, a qualitative evaluation tool for primary data collection and an almost negligible component of PPP-related quantitative secondary data review were deployed to capture the full paradigm of the project. The evaluators carried out a review/analysis that combined a desk review with the available project documents, Annual Work Plans (AWPs), and bi-annual reports. Additionally, 29 Key Person Interviews (KPIs) and 12 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted with implementing partners (IPs), their regional counterparts, and beneficiaries. Moreover, interviews with personnel from the three UN entities and four meetings with the Evaluation Management Group (EMG), that comprised of members of UNFPA, UNV and UN Women were conducted. Please see Annex 2 for a detailed list. The table below presents disaggregated data of the respondents of both KPIs and FGDs.

Stakeholders	Male	Female	Total
Project Staff	01	06	07
Implementing Partners and Regional Counterparts	12	10	22
Beneficiaries (youth and women mainly from FGDs)	21	52	73

The sampling strategy determined by the team included some qualifying criteria that each participant had to meet. The criteria deployed in selecting respondents were as follows:

- i. Key participants from the youth and women’s activities.
- ii. Active/knowledgeable/articulate participants with the correct gender mix in relevant activities,
- iii. Participants from mixed sectors of government, non- government, CSO/CBOs as per requirement.
- iv. Those willing to be interviewed or take part in an FGDs.
- v. Those engaged in related work.
- vi. Those available at a given time in a given district, able to meet travel time.
- vii. Logistics and convenient/acceptable venue for all (especially for the women who were hesitant to meet in hotels).
- viii. Participants that satisfy geographical spread and language balance of (Sinhala and Tamil) participants’ segregation to match availability of Sinhala/Tamil evaluators/note takers.

(Please see Annex 2 for details).

Drawing information from the KPIs and the FGDs (especially on the evaluation criteria such as ‘relevance’, ‘effectiveness’ and ‘sustainability’) meant that they inevitably warranted the purposes of triangulation and validation, especially, the differing viewpoints from the ground. Key findings were shared with the EMG and Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) (Heads of the UN entities concerned) in subsequent meetings following the KPIs and the FGDs carried out with stakeholder involvement in the evaluation process to obtain their views. An objective middle ground was achieved this way, when evaluators were well informed of different viewpoints of a variety of stakeholders in understanding their perceptions/perspectives.

As one-to-one interviews and the FGDs provide a variety of viewpoints (i.e., personal, conflicting, sensitive), a combination of physical and online meetings (KPIs and FGDS) took place due to the following reasons: the availability of participants at a given location at prescribed times; the lurking COVID-19 threat; and the availability of the team and their distribution along language lines. This decision especially considered the convenience of the stakeholders as many have dispersed at the end of the project to different parts of the country, and a considerable amount of time was spent in attempting to trace some of these stakeholders. Hence, the team deployed a combination of snowballing and purposive sampling methods to select the sample stakeholders for interviews and FGDs. The former sampling method was used initially given that the team did not have in its possession a comprehensive list of beneficiaries who were contactable/available or qualified to be participants of the evaluation as indicated in the Inception Report. The field phase occurred at a most opportune time between the first (island-wide curfew) and the second wave of COVID-19 curfews and lockdown in Colombo and parts of the Western Province. The physical meetings were held in instances where beneficiaries were readily available as per their meeting preferences. Online interviews (via Zoom)

were held with some beneficiaries without compromising on the quality of the output.<sup>6</sup> Observations and discursive perspectives of stakeholders was possible only in physical meetings and were not based on online interviews. A ratio of 60:40 (physical to online) was maintained in the meetings held (with a gender disaggregation of 29% male and 71% female). The only time the team made a deliberate choice to avoid travelling was in the instance of the FGDs in Jaffna and Kilinochchi because of a heightened threat of the spread of COVID-19 in some parts of the Northern region.

While lists of beneficiaries were provided by the three UN entities, there were challenges in reaching qualified respondents; some were not contactable or available (no response) and hence this involved a period of trial-and-error in reaching respondents. This was also impacted by time constraints, as indicated in the Inception Report. The sudden second wave of the spread of COVID-19 outbreak, the subsequent curfew and lockdowns of some districts, the closure of CEPA since the first week of October 2020, and the inability of holding physical/frequent meetings of the evaluation team prevailed during the final stages of the evaluation.

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<sup>6</sup> There were many limitations when conducting KPIs and FGDs on online platforms. This was a first experience doing so for the evaluators during the COVID-19 period. Despite the success rate of gathered information, the evaluators could not avail of the synergy/trust and confidence that builds between the interviewer and interviewee in a regular onsite meeting. This is generally the case with online FGDs and interviews globally. Gathering people at one venue with necessary online data/mobile facilities/technology was challenging. On the recipients' part, they were not obliged/committed to keeping Zoom appointments as this was a new culture they were not attuned to. Hence, meetings got postponed. Their body language, facial expressions were lost, and eye-contact could not be maintained. Such nuanced information that are important in data gathering apart from the verbal information they shared was lost. Unreliable network connections also interrupted the flow of communication on both sides, from time to time. As it was a project evaluation and not a research study one could concede with these realities. They, however, did not adversely impact upon the findings in the report.



## 2. Country Context

### 2.1 Development Challenges and National Strategies

The thirty-year long war in Sri Lanka that ended in 2009 affected the entire population, especially the younger generation and women in the country. Although the youth account for around 23% of the entire population of Sri Lanka, the negative narratives that frame young men as ‘perpetrators and young women as ‘victims of violence’ result in excluding youth from the peacebuilding and development processes of the nation. Compared to other development indicators, Sri Lanka has the widest gender gap in political participation. As an effort to ensure gender equality in political participation, the Government amended the Local Authorities Election (Amendment) Act, No. 1 of 2016, on 17th February 2016 to include a provision that mandates a 25% quota for women’s representation at the Local Government level. However, public awareness about this provision is yet quite low, despite its implementation in 2018 (given the various challenges encountered despite what is available on paper in the Amendment).

Gender and women’s issues emerge as cross-cutting concerns among conflict drivers in sectors including security, politics, governance, economy, and reconciliation (UNDP 2018). They experience their own share of insecurities and vulnerabilities in such contexts. Women are the most vulnerable in all these areas facing multifaceted challenges, although they constitute 51.6% of the population in Sri Lanka and contribute substantially to the Sri Lankan economy generating income from tea, textiles, manufacturing, and remittances from abroad. Despite high levels of education amongst women in Sri Lanka (some of the highest in the region) women find it even more challenging than men to translate their educational attainment to highly skilled and high-paying jobs (O’Donnell, Razaak et al., 2018). Also, despite the higher educational level and the predominant and growing economic contribution made by women at macroeconomic levels such as foreign employment and the garment industry, the female labour force participation rate is very low. The structural and social inequality based on gender leads to women rarely having equal access to resources, political rights, or authority to control their environment as men do and they are disproportionately affected by the consequences of war, natural disasters, and other external shocks. To this end, the quota system was introduced by the government in 2016 setting aside 25% of positions in local governmental councils. Further, 26 senior female professionals were invited to comment on and present women’s priorities ahead of the 2019 Budget, an effort to recognise the importance of women in the socio-economic development of Sri Lanka, as well as promote the need for greater participation by women in policy formulation for women. However, much more needs to be done to address public attitudes towards gender equality and women’s empowerment. Post-civil war reconstruction processes were directed at the family unit and not necessarily with a gender-focused approach understanding that women’s needs are different to those of men.

In the post-civil war context in Sri Lanka, a range of issues such as the ones mentioned above affect women in general across the country. In the Northern and Eastern Provinces in particular (in the two majority Tamil-speaking provinces emerging from the 30 years of war), women are directly affected by the war and subjected to numerous hardships. However, women living in North Central, Central and Southern parts were direct or indirect victims of the civil war either due to the violence and massacres that took the lives of their loved ones, the loss of the son, husband or brother, or the breadwinner of the family in the civil war.

In the Northern Province, some post-civil war challenges persist, especially for women. The presence of a disproportionate number of armed forces personnel amidst the civilian population is a serious impediment faced by women who need free unhindered mobility and access to a range of recovery services to ensure gainful employment and livelihood activities. Rehabilitated “female combatants

and single/divorced/widowed woman-headed households are particularly vulnerable to sexual harassment, abuse and rape by the members of the local community as well as by the security forces personnel” (Sarvananthan 2015). There are also other drivers of insecurity for women stemming from the fact that effective law and order have yet to be instituted in the conflict-affected areas. This has an important bearing on safety and security of women in particular; the lack of personal security at home and in public places remains a primary area of concern among women and the communities to which they belong (Coomaraswamy 2015). Policy-level transformations are long overdue to provide particular incentives for women that can be offered by private and public sectors to encourage female participation in the labour market. Female-headed households (FHHs) are particularly burdened by unstable livelihoods that provide little financial security and socio-cultural barriers that limit the scope of their engagement with the labour market. “Identifying possible means for job growth will also involve consideration of the specific constraints faced by women and youth in the Northern and Eastern provinces, many of whom will not favour the agriculture sector for decent work conditions” (O’Donnell, Razaak et al: 2018).

When considering Youth as a key player in the national development and peacebuilding processes, uneven development, general lack of access to opportunities, access to power and self-determination were some of the common grievances that led youth in both the Sinhala and Tamil communities to take arms in the insurgencies that the country faced (twice in the South and a long-protracted war in the North). Thus, Sri Lankan youth figured prominently in the country’s political and socio-economic landscape since the early 70s. A number of factors such as the expansion of education to rural areas since the 1940s; the state’s inability to secure opportunities for youth with higher-level education in the subsequent decades; the exclusion of minorities from exercising state power; and caste oppression have forced youth to take violent measures to achieve their political, social and economic goals. Youth unemployment remains a major challenge with many young people unable to find employment opportunities that match with their aspirations. The Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP or People’s Liberation Front) and its large-scale social mobilisation of youth and its failed attempts to capture state power are all a large part of Sri Lankan history in the three decades of 1960, 1970 and late 1980s. The sub-narrative of the rise and fall of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) too provides an untold story of aggrieved youth mostly from marginalised caste communities who comprised a formidable number of the fighting cadres of the guerrilla movement. Despite the brutal wars between the youth and the state from 1971 to 2009 resulting in many deaths, many lessons remain unlearnt from our past youth insurgencies.

The Easter Sunday attack on churches and hotels involving the Muslim youth is a new dimension that warrants a study. “The ethnic problem gradually stemming from 2009 is one transferred from the Tamil society to the Muslim society”, according to Uyangoda (2019). It can be also seen as transferring from ethnicity to religion. Now the danger of radicalisation of the Muslim society as predicted during the Aluthgama riots in 2014 is even more apparent (Jayatilleke 2018). We have another component of upcountry Tamil youth who have been demanding a voice in the struggle in our noisy firmament for democratic space (ICES 2018). The two components offer many lessons to be learnt. As much as they were negatively affected by the conflict and cleavages in our communities, youth have also been accused of contributing towards conflict and violence. At the same time, youth have made positive contributions towards conflict resolution. It is equally important that we recognise and encourage their potential to reverse cycles of violence and hatred with timely initiatives jointly implemented by UNFPA, UNV and UN Women with the support of the PBF.

In this milieu, the most vulnerable were the minorities and the marginalised groups divided along caste, class and gender lines creating complex intersectionalities. Among these groups, it is universally known that women and youth are affected more in conflict settings and as a result, it is essential to include them in the peacebuilding process. However, the post-civil war reality of Sri Lanka suggests otherwise. In post-civil war Sri Lanka, “patriarchal-based structural inequalities predicate that women rarely have the same resources and access, political rights or authority to control their lives and contribute to state-building” (UN 2016). Acknowledging the UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace, and

Security (UNSCR 2000), UNSCR 2250 on Youth, Peace, and Security (UNSCR 2015) and 2419 (2018), the PPP has incorporated a component on youth and women's participation, especially strengthening them to be actors in prevention of violence outbreaks (UN 2016).

For the purpose of this project, 'peacebuilding' is understood as the mobilisation of women and youth of diverse backgrounds, ethnic groups, age and geographic regions and their engagement as actors and stakeholders in governance and decision-making, and peacebuilding. It also means building trust amongst the diverse population and state institutions to sustain peacebuilding efforts. In this process, women and youth become meaningful and empowered agents of transformative change, contributing towards a culture of peace.

The project implementation process has traversed across several historical/landmark incidents during the years 2018, 2019 and 2020. In 2018, Local Government elections were held in February and the Digana anti-Muslim riots took place in March followed by the constitutional crisis that unfolded in October. The terrorist attacks the following year Easter Sunday terrorist attacks in April 2019 preceded the Presidential election in November, subsequently followed by 2019 and the Parliamentary elections this year in August 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic that hit the Sri Lankan shores in March 2020 is one of the most serious public health hazards in modern times causing lasting effects to date. As studies have proven, the pandemic is not age or gender-neutral, as it has differential impacts on men and women (the target group of this project) owing to a number of factors in terms of their biology and physiology and, most importantly, because of their social, economic and cultural roles in the different societies. Women are disproportionately impacted as they are predominantly engaged in the informal employment sector which is hardest hit. These types of jobs do not come with fringe benefits of social protection, health insurance and unemployment compensation. This not only means higher unemployment for women, but also lack of income and ability to cope making them fall prey to debt traps. Most of all, they lack political representation and a voice.

## **2.2 The Role of External Assistance (PBF and Other)**

Peacebuilding projects in general are informed by these conflict dynamics and attempt to address them accordingly by engaging the youth and women, in partnership with the government. As such the PPP, with the assistance of the PBF (UN, 2016), suggests integrating gender perspectives in all PPP thematic and strategic engagements. Specific areas for gender equality in the PPP include: "Participation in reconciliation and accountability/transitional justice processes and prevention; post-conflict governance and leadership (i.e. linked to the 25% quota); rule of law; integration of gender equality within SSR; economic empowerment; women's recovery processes and protection strategies (including for FHH); engage men and boys in strategic ways: advocate actively for dedicated technical expertise on gender equality and peacebuilding" (UN, 2016). Investments by donors or development partners in these areas of social infrastructure development (as opposed to economic infrastructure development) have been significant.

The PBF recognises eight priorities in the area of Governance. Its primary priority area is to support the reforms made possible since the 2015 political transition. This includes strengthening the independent commissions reactivated through the 19th Amendment to the Constitution (e.g., the National Human Rights Commission and National Police Commission) and providing technical support to the constitutional reform process. It was also committed to working on the 13th amendment to the Constitution pertaining to devolution of political authority, and the effective functioning of Provincial Councils. The strategic focus of the PPP will also include support for the effective functioning of Provincial Administrations. The initial focus was on the most lagging provinces, although there is scope to widen the assistance (United Nations 2016).

As the government of the time showed commitment towards increasing the inclusion of women in decision-making and on noting its potential in terms of promoting women's participation in politics,

the PBF also prioritised its support for greater political participation of women at all levels. PBF support was also provided for Sri Lanka to kick-start implementation of the recommendations linked to the participation of youth in reconciliation and accountability processes, in line with the Security Council Resolution on Youth, Peace and Security (United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250). As such, the project contributes to the peacebuilding and transition phase of the country following the end of the civil war. It is also focused on contributing to structural and institutional or societal change integral for overall peacebuilding.

In this context, the evaluation exercise looks forward to bringing critical insights into the participation of youth and women in peacebuilding and helping to assess the level of successes and challenges the project has had by assessing the overall performance of the projects and its results. It also helps to identify lessons learned to inform decision-making and guide future peacebuilding programming. This project is supported by the UN Peacebuilding Recovery Facility (PRF). This became possible once Sri Lanka became eligible to be a recipient of the PBF, at the request of the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) in 2015.

## 3. UNFPA, UNV and UN Women Joint Project

It is for the first time that these three specific entities implemented a joint project in relation to the PPP portfolio in the country. The theory of change the project foresaw was that “if women and youth of diverse backgrounds, ethnic groups, age, sexual orientations, gender identities, political affiliations, faiths, religions and geographic regions are mobilised and engaged as actors and stakeholders in governance, decision-making, and peacebuilding, then trust is built amongst the diverse population and state institutions thus sustaining peacebuilding efforts. This is because women and youth become meaningful and empowered agents of transformative change, contributing towards a culture of peace.”<sup>7</sup> Based on that, UNFPA and UNV have taken charge of Outcome 1 with 2 outputs with local IPs and UN Women has taken charge of deliverables related to Outcome 2 with three outputs with one main IP. In order to capture the different dimensions of the theory of change, this evaluation will take into consideration an appraisal of the results with the activities and results under eight criteria (mentioned above in section 1.3).

### 3.1 UNFPA, UNV and UN Women Strategic Response

UNFPA, UNV and UN Women have carried out youth and women-related projects (identified through a range of consultations) based on their strategic priorities and comparative advantages. UNFPA, for example, has committed “to advance equity, accountability and quality in all spheres of decision-making” (UNFPA 2016: 2). With the understanding of youth as a driving force for the country’s economic, social and cultural development as well as peacebuilding, UNFPA and UNV have focused on localising the UNSCR 2250 by leading discussions with multiple partners and stakeholders, developing digital mechanisms for youth and adolescents to access information on reproductive health and rights easily, and advocating for evidence-based policies to ensure that “young people achieve their fullest potential through comprehensive understanding of their health and rights” (UNFPA 2016: 6). In this regard, they have worked closely with government ministries, provincial councils, National Youth Services Council (NYSC) and universities.

As part of a main strategic pillar UNV focuses on peace in Sri Lanka, the PPP (2016) primarily identified support strategies and approaches for increased youth participation in peacebuilding with special focus on helping youth shape lasting peace and contribute to justice and reconciliation, inclusive policies and approaches. The strategic framework employed by UNV has secondarily been to facilitate achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2030 through volunteerism. Therefore, UN seeks “to leverage the power of volunteerism and volunteers as a means of: (a) implementation; and (b) people’s engagement for attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals” (UN 2017: 1).

UN Women in Sri Lanka focuses on three main outcomes of its Strategic Plan (2018 – 2022): expanding women’s participation in leadership and decision-making, with a particular emphasis on gender-responsive planning and budgeting (GRB) at all levels of governance; promoting women’s engagement in peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts in a post-conflict Sri Lanka; and strengthening and implementing normative frameworks on gender equality and women’s empowerment, with a focus on women’s economic empowerment and ending violence against women. Globally, UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality and works with the governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes, and services needed to ensure that the standards are effectively implemented and truly benefit women and girls worldwide,

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<sup>7</sup>See Results Framework in TOR in Annex 4

including in Sri Lanka. It works to make the vision of the Sustainable Development Goals a reality for women and girls and stands behind women's equal participation in all aspects of life.

An informed strategic response taking into consideration specific country contexts (as reflected in the literature review of the project docs) seems to be aimed at the rolling out of this PBF project under evaluation.

### **3.2 UNFPA, UNV and UN Women Strategic Response through the PBF Project**

In the post-civil war Sri Lankan context, this project 'Participation of Youth and Women in the Peacebuilding Process' contests the perception that women and youth do not have a role to play in the peacebuilding and development of the nation. Globally, the UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security (2000) was adopted based on evidence that the inclusion of women in peacebuilding processes positively contributes to building a more durable and sustainable peace. Similarly, the UNSCR 2250 on Youth, Peace, and Security (2015), 2419 (2018) and 2535 (2020) underscore the role of youth in building and sustaining peace and security.

This project fully supports the idea of investing in youth and women and promoting their participation in the peacebuilding processes. It enabled youth-focused organisations to better engage young people in peacebuilding initiatives through the localisation of the UNSCR 2250 on youth, peace, and security. The project builds the capacity of youth-led and youth-focused organisations to engage in peacebuilding processes, provides platforms for youth to discuss social issues and implement solutions to address issues within their communities, and engages with government stakeholders at the provincial level in policymaking and programming. This was achieved through the establishment of the steering committees and consultations at the Provincial Level, to contribute to development of youth policies. The project also works with women political leaders and political parties to support the implementation of the quota for women's representation in local government elections, encouraging women's engagement and participation in governance and decision-making and supporting women community leaders in community peacebuilding activities.

At the sub-national level, the project is implemented in the Northern, Eastern, Central, Southern, and North- Western provinces (Outcome 2) over the period from 26 May 2017 to 30 September 2020, with a total budget of USD 1,626,699 (UNFPA/LKA/PSC/2020/04). The project directly contributes to the Governance outcome under the PPP of the Government of Sri Lanka. The strategic priorities under PPP relevant to this project are to 'identify and support strategies and approaches for increased youth participation in peacebuilding activities' and 'support to women's empowerment and participation in peacebuilding, including politics. The project also complements the UNSG Seven-Point Action Plan on Gender-Responsive Peacebuilding.

#### **Challenges and Opportunities**

Since 2016, the PBF has purposefully engaged in peacebuilding programs in Sri Lanka. Due to its eligibility the PBF has been able to approve projects through the PRF modality, which meant limited funds. Furthermore, Sri Lanka was able to participate in the Fund's Gender & Youth Promotion Initiative (GYPI). In addition to long-term projects that spanned five years, the PBF engagement included several relatively small-scale endeavours that contributed to the overall objective while ensuring a resource flow over a long period. These endeavours were also subject to varied spells of uncertainty and adversity due to eruptions of social turmoil. The most striking occurrence was the Easter Sunday massacre that precipitated widespread communal riots. Once violent methods creep into society, the fire can be doused but the embers take long to fade away in full. Also, once violent methods creep into society in dealing with conflict, there is a high risk that the conflict lines will remain violence prone. The youth were on the vanguard of most events in Sri Lanka in the past. The project in this context makes well-informed entry points through its interventions carried out by the UNFPA and the UNV following anti-minority riots to seize windows of opportunities for peacebuilding.

Opportunities to carry out project activities (i.e., inter-ethnic youth interactions) despite violent ethnic riots that took place time to time in Sri Lanka (i.e., Digana, Easter Sunday terror attacks and Hettipola riots) were seized remarkably well and held in different parts of the country. Evaluators make special note of such opportunities seized to continue the work involving the youth, unfazed by the challenges on the ground. Such opportunities seized may not be adequately captured when appraising project implementation within set frameworks.

# 4. Findings

This chapter reflects the final findings of the independent end-of-project evaluation. The overall findings of the chapter establish that the two outcomes of the joint project are largely successful, based on inferences derived from an evidence-based analysis, with information acquired by sifting through data from a diverse range of sources gathered during the field work phase of the evaluation to substantiate the findings presented here. In this process, the evidence presented demonstrates how to optimise project successes, helps discover the story behind the results and paves the path to improvements.

The structure of this chapter on findings follows the logic of hierarchies and assumptions adopted in the design of the results framework of the project. The outcome level findings are provided first and followed by the outputs level logical connections, moving from a socio-political general assessment to the outputs at an individual level.

**Outcome 1: Youth are actively and positively engaged in the peacebuilding process so that their voices are reflected in key policy and decision-making processes and outcomes at the national and sub-national levels.**

This outcome has been successful in increasing the capacity of youth-led/focused organisations engaged in peacebuilding processes. In this outcome, more emphasis was placed on localising UNSCR 2250. The outcome also has the potential to empower the youth to contribute as key players in peacebuilding-related policy making and programming.

## Peacebuilding Relevance

**EQ 1: To what extent did the project’s strategies respond to the country, beneficiary and partner needs, policies and priorities and drivers of conflict, and adapt to changes in the context?**

The project strategy and interventions giving attention to youth as peacebuilders were timely amidst the rising polarisation among different ethno-religious communities that reached a high level of tension with intermittent violence unleashed on minority communities. In keeping with the UNSCR 2250, it was extremely relevant to make youth voices heard and incorporated in decision making and policymaking for durable peace and reconciliation in Sri Lanka. The two outputs under outcome 1 that targeted the capacity building of youth-led and youth-focused organisations and national, provincial, and sub-national level institutions (among others) were extremely relevant. Activities under output 1.2 such as ‘Multi-Stakeholder Meetings’ and ‘Steering Committees’ involved youth stakeholders and could have been improved in output 1.1 as explained below. Generally, outcome 1 has recognised the IPs’ work on youth and has enhanced them by including them in output-level activities as presented below.

**Output 1.1: Increased capacity of youth-led and youth-focused organisations to engage in peacebuilding processes/including UNSC Resolution 2250.**

Considering the post-civil war context, increasing the capacity of youth-led and youth-focused organisations under this output was extremely vital for peacebuilding in Sri Lanka. Also, localising UNSCR 2250 that emphasises the inclusivity of youth participation in peacebuilding was necessary for the durability of peace in Sri Lanka. All interviewed local stakeholders including IPs, CSOs and beneficiaries agreed upon the relevance of this output in incorporating the voices of youth in the



peacebuilding discourse. Placing UN Volunteers in five CSOs to support, strengthen and implement peace-related programs was a novel practice that strengthened the outreach of these CSOs by linking them with UNV resources. These five UN Volunteers received capacity-building training to improve their knowledge and application of peace and reconciliation. They were also given micro-grants to conduct activities to mainstream UNSCR 2250. The activities were related to building peace among different regions, ethnicities, and classes with the support of the CSO that they were based at. For example, the UN Volunteer placed in Samutthana in the Northern province worked on the role of youth in preventing domestic violence and gender-based violence, and the UN Volunteer placed at Music Project helped compose a trilingual song and worked with young students to create murals. In this regard, capacities of youth-led and youth-focused organisations such as Sarvodaya Shanthi Sena and NYSC were recipients of a number of trainings that helped expand and strengthen their pool of trainers. The University of Ruhuna also acquired training for a group of lecturers on peace-related themes that were applied at the orientation of first-year students. The 20 resource persons (8 women and 12 men) who were trained replicated the training programme to 975 undergraduates and included a module in the orientation programme. The trainees emphasised that the methods they learned (such as games to convey their messages) were highly effective because they were able to understand and convey the importance of peace. Also, their knowledge on peace, conflict, violence, and mitigation has improved through a facilitator training program. For instance, one participant stated that she learned how to work mindful of sensitivities and how to be a peacebuilder in her work environment.

Continuing V-Awards was a good initiative that recognized and honoured, at a national level, volunteers who made significant contributions to uplift communities, and under the thematic award volunteers engaged in the peace-building process in the country. V-Awards is a joint initiative between UNV, and the Government supported by the National Steering Committee on Volunteering as the Advisory Panel. This initiative has been replicated by UNV in a number of other countries. Also, capacity building sessions for past and present V-Award winners gave their volunteerism a peace dimension. Moreover, collaborating with Yowunpuraya camp organised by the NYSC was a good initiative since Yowunpuraya was the country's largest youth camp, and, due to that, the project was able to reach approximately 8350 youths (NYSC, 2018) to promote peace and coexistence. Additionally, strengthening the Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) coalition was a good initiative since it provided a space as a knowledge sharing platform for the youth-led and youth-focused organisations working on peacebuilding projects to share experiences and conduct discussions. The three Youth Peace Panel (YPP) projects target addressing three vital national-level problems of social media for peace building, a national school curriculum to address ethnic bias and stereotypes and a youth quota for national-level politics. Moreover, the research conducted by Regional Centre for Strategic Studies (RCSS) on the 'Potential Role of Young Leaders and Volunteers in Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE)' was a relevant intervention, given the country context. Such a study that discussed youth's role in PVE and volunteerism was pertinent to delve deeper into this prevalent development in the Sri Lankan context.

Also, the project has successfully attempted to reach a number of marginalised or 'hard-to-reach' youth groups including war victims, school children from economically and socially deprived backgrounds, university students and media professionals who are extremely important for a long-lasting peacebuilding process as they provide different layers to the peacebuilding process. For instance, war victims are living examples of the civil war, while the youth including school children and university students are some of the most vulnerable groups of a conflict who could be perpetrators (who could trigger violence) and/or victims in a future conflict. Hence, including these groups to the peacebuilding process becomes invaluable for lasting peace in building resilient communities in the Sri Lankan multi-cultural society, since they represent the past, present and the future.

Output 1.2: Increased capacity of national, provincial and sub-national level institutions to engage youth in peacebuilding related policy making and programming.

As highlighted in the UNSCR 2250, youth participation in peacebuilding-related policymaking and programming activities is imperative for the longevity of peace. In the Sri Lankan context, youth participation is not very visible in national, provincial, and sub-national level institutions. Hence, this output was a relevant and timely intervention. The establishment of YPP as a national-level platform for youth to raise awareness on youth issues is a relevant peacebuilding initiative since no such platform exists for youth who hardly have any access to the national/macro-level peacebuilding initiatives. However, the establishment of YPP was delayed due to the Easter Sunday attacks followed by communal violence that occurred in early 2019. Nevertheless, capacities of YPP members have been developed through capacity building programmes and they continue to implement the three projects as described in output 1.1. Through these three projects, the capacities of the local staff/organisations (who are working on removing hate speech and fake news-related content from social media), youth in the NYSC as political representatives, and school students from grades 6 to 9 are expected to be improved, as the youth carrying out the projects appeared to be committed and confident about achieving the objectives.<sup>8</sup>

Similarly, the preparation of provincial youth policies and action plans for four provinces, namely the Northern, Eastern, Southern, and the Central Provinces, was highly relevant. For instance, a serving officer of the local council acknowledged that this initiative was important due to Kandy being a hotspot for violent extremism in recent years. The interviewee expressed that they have been incorporating youth perspectives to their provincial activities because of this initiative. In both these activities, youth voices have been incorporated from the initial stages and the role of different stakeholders was appreciated by having multi-stakeholder meetings to design activities.

## Peacebuilding Effectiveness

EQ 2: (a) To what extent did the project achieve or is expected to achieve its planned and unintended results and contribute to peacebuilding outcomes in Sri Lanka? (b) To what extent did the project actively identify and include the most marginalised in Sri Lanka ensuring that no one is left behind?

UNFPA and UNV, along with the IPs, have been able to achieve most of the peacebuilding objectives planned especially in output 1.1 (Youth4Peace and placement of UN Volunteers in CSOs) and in output 1.2 (establishment of YPP and provincial youth policies and action plans) under outcome 1, despite encountering unforeseen events, such as political instability in late 2018, Easter Sunday Attacks in 2019, and the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. The youth interviewed (33 out of 40 - 23 male and 17 female) had a positive change in their attitude on peacebuilding. That has led them to work towards national-, provincial- and community-level peacebuilding activities. This outcome characterised inclusive practices by including marginalised youth from different communities, such as ex-combatants, war-disabled youth, war widows, plantation workers, school children from poverty-stricken backgrounds, and marginalised castes from different ethnic groups in peacebuilding activities.

Output 1.1: Increased capacity of youth-led and youth-focused organisations to engage in peacebuilding processes/including UNSC Resolution 2250.

The majority of the proposed activities under output 1.1 have been completed while the rest are in the process of being completed. Among the completed activities, initiatives such as placement of five

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<sup>8</sup> This conclusion has been derived from the FGD conducted with YPP members.

UN Volunteers and Youth4Peace among others have achieved their objectives by changing the attitude of the youth. For example, the interviewed youths from Youth4Peace appreciated the commitment, friendliness and innovativeness of the UN Volunteer who was placed at the Sarvodaya Shanthi Sena and credited their attitudinal changes to UN Volunteers and the Sarvodaya Shanthi Sena. They also expressed how their attitudes towards minorities changed due to the training workshops that they participated in. Among them, a Sinhala youth who previously held extremely negative attitudes towards the Muslim community transformed to the extent of being willing to work with Muslim youth during and after the Youth4Peace training. After these trainings, they have been involved as mediators in some conflict mitigation activities in their communities. Through various activities, output 1.1 has been able to reach marginalised youth from different communities in peacebuilding activities. For instance, the activities have included ex-combatants, war-disabled youth and war widows from the North, and school children from poverty-stricken Kurunegala District and marginalised castes from Mullaitivu District. Due to the unavoidable delays in establishing the YPP, the three YPP projects are still underway. The objectives of these three YPP projects were broad and ambitious. UNFPA has acknowledged the depth and veracity involved in this measure that could not be achieved within the PBF project period and it has calibrated the course of work accordingly. For example, a project such as an advocacy strategy to integrate peace sensitivities into the national school curriculum is an arduous goal given the structure of the education system in the Sri Lankan context. Previous governments too have tried to change the national school curriculum with a similar intention yet had to withdraw due to pressure from the ultra-nationalist politicians and political groups who were opposed to it.

According to the document titled 'Review and assessment V-Awards 2018 Finalists', 11 finalists<sup>9</sup> have stated that the credibility and recognition as a result of being announced as 'V Award Finalists' have helped them secure funds from different government and non-government entities to carry out their voluntary activities. However, a V Award winner and a V Award finalist interviewed felt that, the effectiveness of the V-Awards had been limited for the following reasons: firstly, they observed that the nominees who were eliminated in the preliminary rounds felt discouraged; secondly given that they were struggling to raise funds for their activities, they suggested a mechanism that could fund their voluntary activities apart from the recognition and training they received. This was reiterated in a need's assessment conducted by UNV where 3 out of 12 volunteers requested financial or other in-kind support from UNV. Although this indicates that most finalists were satisfied with the current support, they were receiving from UNV through the V-Awards, there is also indication that a mechanism that could also fund activities alongside awarding volunteerism should be looked into further.

The RCSS was commissioned to conduct a research project titled 'Potential Role of Young Leaders and Volunteers in PVE'. Although it was meant to be conducted at the beginning of the project in order to inform the design of activities, there were delays. Thus, it was launched on the same day as that of the launch of YPP. Only one YPP member interviewed said that they referred to the report when planning activities. While it was easy to access the report online, no participant from other activities showed knowledge of it, this could be due to the lack of wide dissemination of the report or the general lack of interest in reading it. Moreover, by the time the report was published, most of the activities of outcome 1 had already been completed, which can be another reason for the lack of awareness of this research. Therefore, further consideration should be given to disseminating such reports in the future.

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<sup>9</sup> This review includes the responses of 11 out of 14 finalists.

Output 1.2: Increased capacity of national, provincial and sub-national level institutions to engage youth in peacebuilding related policy making and programming.

Activities that led to establishing the YPP and regional and national symposiums have been carried out successfully. Approximately, 400 youth participated in four regional symposiums from which selected participants attended the national symposium. The rationale behind these symposiums was to target youth in the respective regions to provide them with basic knowledge on conflict mitigation. The call for applications were publicised on social media and the national newspapers (including the vernacular press) and a 30-member YPP was established out of 126 applications submitted by youth. Personnel from youth-led and youth-focused organisations participated in selecting the 30 members and youth organisations and youth leaders were involved in finalising the YPP Terms of Reference (ToR). However, the fact that one third of members are currently inactive reflects negatively on the effectiveness of the YPP.

A steering committee, including youth-led and youth-focused organisations and youth and community leaders was formed to draft the youth policy and action plan. Although the provincial youth policies and action plans have been drafted, the approval and implementation of these plans by the provincial councils have been delayed due to the dissolving of the provincial councils. However, the interviewed officer is positive of its implementation once the provincial councils begin functioning.

Output 1.2 attempted to bring different ethnicities and economically deprived groups such as youth from the plantation sector in the Central Province to the peacebuilding process. In the North, the engagement of the youth volunteers was effective, but it requires continued involvement of more youth, especially young male members of the community. A remarkable absence of male youth members was noted in activities. The activities in general had a 30:70 ratio of male-female participation. This is understandably the case with the disproportionate gender issues faced by the population in the Northern part of the country after the end of the civil war. The absence is owing to many factors i.e., deaths, legal and illegal vast-scale migrations as economic migrants or refugees/asylum seekers across the border, and internal displacements.

## Efficiency of Management and Governance

**EQ 3: To what extent does the project deliver or is likely to deliver results in an economic and timely manner?**

The IPs, including Sarvodaya Shanthi Sena, The Music Project, Mannar Women's Development Federation (MWDF) and former Samuththana (currently functioning as 'Vallamai,' Jaffna), have stated that they received adequate funding in a timely manner to carry out the desired outcome of improving capacity of youth-led and youth-focused initiatives. Outcome 1 had efficient and adequate human resources and capacity to implement its activities in a timely manner. Moreover, participants of Youth4Peace were satisfied about the facilities they received such as accommodation, food, and lecture rooms.

Based on the combined information gathered from 'Review and Assessment V-Awards 2018 Finalists' document and two interviews, 8 finalists have perceived the event positively as a platform that provides recognition to their volunteer work. However, both the V-Award winner and the V-Award finalist interviewed expressed that it would have been appreciated if the event was at a smaller scale so that some of the funds could be diverted to supporting the activities carried out by the volunteers. However, it is also noted that V-Awards is a national event, with international recognition, that has been occurring since 2011 as a joint venture between the National Steering Committee on Volunteerism, UNV and NewsFirst (Daily FT, 2019), therefore there are standards that needed to be upheld in conducting the event.

## Impact on Macro Peacebuilding

EQ 4: To what extent has this project impacted upon youth in the national-level peacebuilding process?

Based on the observations done by the evaluation team in their face-to-face KPIs and FGDs, it is evident that the project had a positive impact on 80% interviewed youth's ideological predilections, which transformed from extremism to moderatism in specific processes initiated by this project. For example, the evaluators observed that compared to the beginning of the project, the respondents' attitude towards minorities have positively changed. This was also emphasised through self-reflection during the FGDs and KPIs. Placing UN Volunteers in CSOs, multi-stakeholder meetings and steering committee meetings was a good practice that involved youth in designing activities. This acknowledges youth's capacity to contribute to the decision-making level and reflect upon a bottom-to-top approach. However, the overall impact of youth empowerment needs to be attributed also to similar interventions carried out in the regions over a long period of time by like-minded stakeholders, IPs, and other CSOs. As a novel practice, provincial youth policies have been drafted and there is a strong possibility that these will be implemented once the provincial councils start functioning. This acted as a catalyst for general youth empowerment related interventions.

Output 1.1: Increased capacity of youth-led and youth-focused organisations to engage in peacebuilding processes/including UNSC Resolution 2250.

Activities conducted by UN Volunteers at Sarvodaya Shanthi Sena, the Music Project and former Samuththana (Jaffna) had a strong impact on their beneficiaries. For instance, the youth and the UN Volunteer who worked in Kandy with Sarvodaya expressed how they experienced their own attitudinal changes with the trainings and interactions they had. For example, one participant expressed how he transformed from being an extremist nationalist who "hated" Muslims to a moderate nationalist who is now having constant interactions with Muslim friends he met from these trainings, and he directly discusses contentious issues with them. Moreover, in one such activity, when school children were asked to write about someone who inspired them, a child wrote about one of the UN Volunteers who was working with them and how he was inspired by the UN Volunteer. As evident in the field work phase, UNV has made endeavours to find the most suitable candidates for the UN Volunteer positions. The role of UN Volunteers in this project was exceptionally commended by all local IPs alike, including government personnel who saw potential in learning from these UN Volunteers' experiences. The local IPs/CSOs and beneficiaries also equally commended the value addition they brought to such projects that helps adopt novel techniques and tools in peace work. Some of the positive narratives are compellingly indicative of the inspiring roles and capacities that are a prerequisite for youth capacity development. From an inductive point of view, these changes will have a long-term impact on national-level peacebuilding process because the aforementioned individuals (particularly Sarvodaya trainees) are involved in community-level peacebuilding activities from a very young age and as observed by the evaluation team, they have the potential to become national-level leaders. Moreover, the beneficiaries of Youth4Peace stated that they learned immensely from these programmes compared to other initiatives they have attended due to the innovative methods employed by the UN Volunteers.

It is noted that activities such as Youth4Peace, the orientation programme at University of Ruhuna and Yowunpuraya<sup>10</sup> were a continuation of the activities conducted by Sarvodaya Shanthi Sena, University of Ruhuna and NYSC, respectively. This project linked up with these existing projects so as to utilise its large national scale platforms to capture a wider audience and disseminate the intended peacebuilding related messages.

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<sup>10</sup> Yowunpuraya is a Government programme; UNV collaborated with the government (through NYSC) to conduct the peacebuilding awareness programme and provided the Yowunpuraya Toolkit.

It was difficult to assess the full impact of the Yowunpuraya Camp as there have been no follow-up activities for the Yowunpuraya participants. Nevertheless, in assessing project documentation (i.e., the Yowunpuraya Toolkit) it was evident that limitations of resources have been identified by UNV in its assessment prior to the event, vis-à-vis its role in designing and planning the event alongside NYSC and the Yowunpuraya Organising Team. However, although an ongoing event organised by the government, the conceptual challenges in working with polarised groups could have been considered in designing this element of the project, to have a stronger impact on the macro-peacebuilding environment.

The V-Award finalist interviewed was disappointed regarding not winning despite the hard work he has put in for years. This in turn has made him less enthusiastic and committed to volunteer activities. However, the sentiment is not fully representative and should not undermine the positive impact this initiative has had since its inception in 2011. For example, the training the finalists received has enabled them to incorporate elements of youth engagement in peacebuilding within their existing community initiatives, and the recognition from being a V-Award winner has opened up more avenues to fund their community projects.

Finally, the impact of the YPP projects cannot be evaluated fully because they were still ongoing at the time of the evaluation.

Output 1.2: Increased capacity of national, provincial and sub-national level institutions to engage youth in peacebuilding related policy making and programming.

In output 1.2, drafting provincial youth policies and action plans have been evidently well pursued by the IPs, although not adopted yet by the respective councils. As stated by the interviewed officer at the Central Province Ministry of Youth Affairs, youth have never been a priority for the provincial council prior to initiating this activity. However, due to this initiative, they have included youth policies in the provincial action plan for the first time. From the perspective of increasing the youth participation in peacebuilding at the provincial level, this is a strong and meaningful step forward. The impact of the YPP work at the national policy-making level is hard to evaluate since the activities are still ongoing due to unavoidable delays in project activities that occurred as a result of the Easter Sunday Attack followed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, as expressed in the FGD, YPP members are confident of finalising the three planned projects.

The evaluation team met six of the National Symposium participants, but, based on their feedback and the observations, the evaluation team is not able to comment outright on the success or failure of the impact of the national symposium sans a deeper, nuanced understanding of the context and youth's mindset at the given time. The beneficiaries mentioned a tense debate about removing army camps from the North that occurred on the second day of the symposium. Based on the information of the exchange of viewpoints among the youth at the event (and relayed at the FGD), the evaluation team observed that they were unable to develop empathy towards minority ethnic communities.<sup>11</sup> They also expressed that they were unhappy about how the issue was handled by the facilitators who were unable to diffuse this tense situation because of their own biases and being unaware of the country context.

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<sup>11</sup> Information based on FGD with youth for the purpose of this evaluation. It was gathered that when this question was brought up, the youth from the North spoke in support of the removal of army camps and supported it from a 'daily issue' point of view. But the aforementioned beneficiaries (from the majority community) opposed it from a 'nationalistic' point of view and are still asserting their "righteous" stand for the need to maintain the army camps, when reflecting on their narratives (especially on the debate and their present stance on the issue).

## Sustainability of Long-Term Peacebuilding

EQ 5: To what extent has the project been able to support implementing partners and beneficiaries in developing capacities and establishing mechanisms to ensure sustainability of efforts and benefits?

The profound positive influence the project has had is evident from youth creating agency and their own space. This is a promising characteristic of long-term peacebuilding and sustainability beyond donor support. Establishing the capacities of IPs and beneficiaries for long-term peacebuilding has been achieved. It was evident that youth proactively participated in national- and provincial-level peacebuilding policy implementations; YPP and provincial youth policies; and the creation of a pool of trainers through Youth4Peace to ensure sustainability of efforts and benefits. However, a limitation in this project is the absence of a mechanism to monitor the activities after the end of the project period.

Output 1.1: Increased capacity of youth-led and youth-focused organisations to engage in peacebuilding processes/including UNSC Resolution 2250.

The project has vested considerable effort on the sustainability of its activities, and, as a result, it can be stated that the activities will be continued even after the project timeframe. The youth involved in Youth4Peace who had negative perspectives towards other ethnic and religious groups had a positive transformation and have since been acting independently in community peacebuilding activities. Also, Sarvodaya Shanthi Sena is continuing these activities with the support of their UN Volunteer. Lecturers who were trained in peacebuilding at University of Ruhuna will continue their orientation programme for first year students in the future. Continuing V-Awards was a good concept that recognised and acknowledged the volunteerism of individuals who had the potential to be community leaders. Also, the workshop for the V-Award nominees facilitated bringing a peacebuilding perspective/sensitivity to their volunteerism. For instance, the 'Youth Volunteer of 2018' of V-Awards stated that he, who initially worked in Sinhala-speaking communities, has since started working with other ethnic communities. Moreover, YPP youth are planning to carry out their activities and hoping to complete their projects in the next year. As mentioned before, this output has produced a pool of trainers who are committed to continuing their work even after the project period. Although IPs such as Sarvodaya Shanthi Sena are willing to monitor their work, a serious limitation is that there is no mechanism to monitor all the activities of this output.

Output 1.2: Increased capacity of national, provincial and sub-national level institutions to engage youth in peacebuilding related policy making and programming.

As explained by the Central Provincial officer, the youth policy will be implemented once the provincial council's restart. Since the provincial stakeholders including provincial politicians, youth organisations and community leaders have consented that youth grievances should be addressed after the Digana riots, the officer sees no obstacle in implementing the youth policy in a future provincial council. Moreover, the IP, Chrysalis, regularly followed up on the implementation of the activities, which took the pressure off the government officers, and their ability to reach out to different stakeholders was appreciated by the government officer. Therefore, due to this positive interaction they had with Chrysalis, they are willing to work with them in the future too.

The evaluation team is positive about the future of YPP because they are working hard to complete the three projects that will continue in the future and have shown ownership in carrying out the national-level projects. Also, Chrysalis has shown immense interest in following up on the Central Province Youth Policy and YPP. Youth who participated in the National Symposium are also working in peacebuilding through the NYSC. Since almost all the activities were conducted under Chrysalis, it is willing to monitor the activities in this output. However, as mentioned in output 1.1, it is better to have a mechanism in place to monitor the continuation of the activities implemented by the project, even beyond the project cycle.

## Participation and Ownership of National Stakeholders

EQ 6: (a) How efficient was the project coordination between UNFPA, UNV and UN Women including clarity of roles and accountabilities, avoiding duplication of efforts in implementation of activities, use of data/evidence for decision-making, monitoring and reporting, and potential added value? (b) To what extent have partnerships with government institutions, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), etc. been sought/established and synergies created in delivery of assistance?

A number of national and international stakeholders were involved in keeping to the underpinning conviction of UNSCR 2250 to integrate youth participation for leadership and empowerment. Interaction and partnership between the two UN entities in this light could be commended. However, synergies among other diverse partners could have been improved, especially in output 1.1.

The project, to a significant extent, has been able to extend support to the youth in developing capacities and launching platforms such as YPP and YPS. Strengthening of local youth leadership in itself is indicative of national ownership in some aspects of the project like YPP sustainability at national level with a formidable IP in the likes of Chrysalis. Similarly, youth who were part of Youth4Peace under Sarvodaya Shanthi Sena demonstrated the ability to work at a community level independently. With more impetus provided from the UN entities, their activities can be further sustained.

Output 1.1: Increased capacity of youth-led and youth-focused organisations to engage in peacebuilding processes/including UNSC Resolution 2250.

UNFPA and UNV positively coordinated with each other when executing activities. However, it is essential to involve all relevant stakeholders in the mainstreaming process at the beginning and at the end at least once, if not at intervals. Although this had no adverse implication on the project, beneficiaries of different youth projects (under the same larger project) felt that they could have been invited for a common activity under one umbrella at some point, as they were working under the same project (Data gathered from FGDs). For instance, similar activities such as Youth4Peace and Youth4Youth could have been brought together making inter-agency activities coordinated for better partnership and networking for local ownership, rather than carrying out dispersed activities of a similar nature with different names and titles.

It was pointed out by the IPs and the geographical representatives that either local government or the partnering CSOs/CBOs should be part of the process. The different components under the same activity seem to have been carried out in isolation from each other, except for Youth4Peace and placement of UN Volunteers in CSOs (the five UN volunteers have had regular interactions with each other although they were placed in five different local organisations, so their activities were effectively coordinated). However, as observed by the evaluation team, lack of networking among youth beneficiaries of the different components did result in a lack of ownership to mainstream the peace and reconciliation efforts initiated by this project. This has garnered less emphasis in output 1.1. Although a number of peacebuilding activities were conducted by different stakeholders in this project, a lack of coordination among IPs was evident. For instance, three of the largest local partners on peacebuilding (NYSC, Sarvodaya Shanthi Sena, and Samuththana) did not coordinate with each other, therefore the evaluation team has observed that in some instances the same youths have participated in activities organised by Sarvodaya Shanthi Sena, NYSC and Chrysalis (in output 1.2). However, since there was no duplication in activities<sup>12</sup> this could be beneficial in (1) creating a sense of belonging and ownership by having multiple interactions with each other through similar other opportunities, and (2) ensuring that participants receive a rounded training regarding different aspects

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<sup>12</sup> Sarvodaya's programme was mainly focused on peacebuilding, whereas NYSC brought in the youth engagement element to peacebuilding, and Chrysalis focused on women and gender in peacebuilding.



of peacebuilding. However, ideally this could have been a conscious effort made at the designing stage and replicated across the board to make it consistent for all beneficiaries.

Significant efforts have been made through a number of activities such as UN Volunteers and YPP projects to incorporate youth participation when designing activities. However, the involvement of youth in the designing phase of the project activities conducted by the University of Ruhuna and Yowunpuraya organised by NYSC with the involvement of UNV could be improved in future initiatives. Based on FGDs with the University of Ruhuna the inclusion of students in the designing/planning stages of the activities would have added value to the initiatives carried out by the lecturers at the university to make it a 'bottom-to-top approach'. Interviews with NYSC officials indicated that there could have been more youth inclusion in the designing phase of Yowunpuraya too, rather than operationalising the conventional top-down approach in government-initiated projects.

Output 1.2: Increased capacity of national, provincial and sub-national level institutions to engage youth in peacebuilding related policy making and programming.

A number of government stakeholders (such as NYSC and provincial councils), officers from Chrysalis and individuals (such as entrepreneurs and community and youth leaders) participated in output 1.2. The aforementioned stakeholders engaged in different stages of the establishment of YPP and in drafting the provincial youth policies. For instance, they were engaged in reviewing the YPP ToR and selecting the YPP members. As a result of this partnership YPP inherently possesses a larger pool of resources, such as skill and knowledge of personnel and the institutions, which could possibly help in conducting their activities effectively. Also, provincial steering committees (including these stakeholders) were created to draft the provincial youth policies. Since these provincial steering committees were widely representative of provincial stakeholders and because they also emerged from local communities, the youth policies designed by steering committees remain well-grounded and sound to be carried forward as an apolitical initiative with confidence.

## Coordination and Coherence with Other Initiatives

EQ 7: To what extent is the project compatible with other peacebuilding interventions carried out in the country by implementing agencies and other stakeholders working towards the same objective(s) with youth?

Many peacebuilding initiatives have been rolled out by UN entities with the support of the PBF (as mentioned above) and other development partners towards the same goals to sustain and strengthen the national-level peace process with local youth organisations in Sri Lanka. In this light, this project's outcome contributed towards the attainment of the larger common peacebuilding goals chartered by the PPP in coherence with other initiatives to localise UNSCR 2250. However, this aspect of youth participation in peacebuilding could have been fulfilled with robust coordination between and among local and international initiatives, which are lacking in proactive engagement, i.e., placement of five UN Volunteers in CSOs and efforts enlivening the YPS coalition.

Output 1.1: Increased capacity of youth-led and youth-focused organisations to engage in peacebuilding processes/including UNSC Resolution 2250.

It was evident at many levels that there was UN-level inter-agency coordination. Placement of UN Volunteers in CSOs was a good practice from UNV to coordinate with local CSOs. As stated above, these UN Volunteers have contributed positively and are working with the assigned CSOs after their initial project period. Strengthening the YPS coalition was another that coordinated with other initiatives. The coalition consisted of leading national and international level organisations and it functioned as a knowledge-sharing platform. Apart from these, no evidence exists to suggest

coordination between other agencies and organisations (both international and local) that were carrying out peacebuilding initiatives in the same regions and under similar themes.

Output 1.2: Increased capacity of national, provincial and sub-national level institutions to engage youth in peacebuilding related policy making and programming.

The provincial youth policies and action plans were good examples for coordination and coherence with provincial councils' initiative to incorporate youth perspectives to the activities of provincial councils. As discussed in under 'Peacebuilding Relevance' (output 1.2), the Central Provincial Council was in the process of addressing the grievances of youth in the aftermath of Digana riots and the youth policy and action plans were aligned with the council's initiative. Apart from that, evaluators did not find evidence of coherence with other peacebuilding initiatives carried out by organisations and agencies (both international and local) working in the same regions and themes.

## Gender Equality and Human Rights

EQ 8: To what extent did the project address and respond to existing power dynamics and gender relations?

Outcome 1 has attempted to achieve gender equality and to include human rights perspectives to a great extent (as revealed in evidence gathered at the output level) towards decreasing gender biases and gender discrimination, increasing appreciation of diversity, and providing spaces for economically, politically, and socially marginalised youth to participate in peacebuilding activities. Gender and human rights perspectives have been incorporated from the project designing phases and have been carried out in the implementing stages. Although achieving gender balance in the participation of projects has been quite challenging due to prevailing gender norms and difficulties in reaching out to 'hard-to-reach communities,' who are excluded from the macro-level peacebuilding process, the project had endeavoured to address them to a great extent and emerged positive. The details of the activities that respond to existing power dynamics, gender relations and related progress are discussed below.

Output 1.1: Increased capacity of youth-led and youth-focused organisations to engage in peacebuilding processes/including UNSC Resolution 2250.

Project reports, interviews and FGDs revealed that a significant effort has been made to work towards gender equality by giving voices to women and encouraging their active participation/contribution from the project designing stage. For example, the PRF – Project Document has portrayed the conscious effort to include women in the activities, through focusing on the thematic content related to 'gender' but also by selecting partners who work with women and that are sensitised to gender dynamics.

However, in some activities such as media training, they have been unable to reach gender parity in participation and are aware of the operational gaps and the importance of gender parity.<sup>13</sup> As stated in the Annual Report 2019, Youth4Peace activities attempted to have a gender balance not only in participation but also among trainers and experts. The IPs have ensured that no person is excluded from the project activities due to his/her sexual orientation. Also, the UN Volunteer placed in Samutthana worked on the role of youth in preventing domestic violence and gender-based violence. The UN Volunteer placed in The Music Project brought artists and musicians from the LGBTIQ community to conduct activities with school children to break gender barriers and embrace the gender

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<sup>13</sup> Chrysalis conducted three Media Workshops in 2019, held in the districts of Batticaloa, Galle and Kandy with 126 media professionals participating. 94% of the participants were men and 6% were women.

diversity of society. Moreover, activities in this output have successfully attempted to include marginalised groups including ex-combatants, war-disabled youth and war widows from the North, school children from poverty-stricken Kurunegala District and marginalised castes from Mullaitivu District into the activities.

Output 1.2: Increased capacity of national, provincial and sub-national level institutions to engage youth in peacebuilding related policy making and programming.

As was the case in output 1.1, gender equality has been included from the project designing phase. For instance, as stated in the Annual Report 2019, gender equality to ensure women and LGBTIQ representation<sup>14</sup> has been a key priority for selecting participation for YPP. Although the activities have been unable to secure gender balance in active involvement (apart from mere participation), the IPs have been able to provide a voice for individuals regardless of their gender. For instance, none of the female participants felt that they were side-lined or prevented from engaging in any activity. Moreover, the participants of the FGD representing the national symposium spoke admiringly of one female participant who strongly argued for the removal of army camps in the North. Her courageous act was admired and is an inspiration. This example further emphasises the fact that women were given the space and opportunity to express themselves even about highly sensitive and politicised topics. Moreover, as mentioned under the criterion 'Peacebuilding Effectiveness', youth from economically deprived sections of the community such as those from the upcountry plantation sectors and ethnic and religious minorities have been incorporated to the activities of output 1.2.

**Outcome 2: State decision-making processes are more equitable and inclusive to enable women's meaningful participation and leadership in governance and peacebuilding.**

All data derived from the FGDs, KPIs and literature/document analysis establishes to a great extent that outcome 2 was essentially a success given its novelty in including many diverse groups of women political actors and institutions to develop capacities on governance and peacebuilding gender-responsive policy plans. It is evident that female councillors are increasingly engaged within their councils, having strengthened relationships across parties and across councils – including with male councillors, public officials, and civil society, with whom they have had little to no engagement previously.

## Peacebuilding Relevance

**EQ 1: To what extent did the project's strategies respond to the country, beneficiary and partner needs, policies and priorities and drivers of conflict, and adapt to changes in the context?**

The project strategies respond to the needs of the stakeholders by identifying drivers of conflict and helping create space for voluntary entry points for regional women leaders and their corresponding institutions to identify issues of concern in their localities. The peacebuilding component in the project is relevant as it has helped access women leaders in key geographical regions inclusive of awareness raising and information dissemination events in accordance with project strategies and priorities. The years 2018 and 2019 have been significantly challenging with changes within the political context. The local councils in the selected provinces have creatively adapted to the changes while facing the challenges. "UN Women convenes a diverse mix of elected male and female officials (representing

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<sup>14</sup> YPP was able to secure representation from 10 women and 1 LGBTIQ.

each local government authority in a district), public officials and civil society representatives, to build cross-party and multi-stakeholder consensus on facilitating peacebuilding and improved governance at the local level” (MPD Brief).

For example, after the Digana riots (March 2018) – this was following the MPD in Kandy (October 2018) – the Kandy council members have visited a mosque to express their solidarity with the Muslim community as there was tension in the area between Muslims and the majority Sinhalese. The MPD enabled women leaders to strategically prioritise development needs and wellbeing with a conflict-sensitive lens and has created a peaceful environment within their councils and in their local nexus. The FGDs, reports and feedback forms show that the opportunities for building the capacities through trainings, forums and MPDs have been a success resulting in consequential enhancement of knowledge for adoptions and implementation of relevant policies. For example, the Annual Report 2019 stated that councillors have been able to analyse problems from a gender perspective, develop gender-sensitive policies during the trainings and have increased confidence to engage within local council debate and submit council proposals. During the FGD the women said that the capacity building programmes have helped them acquire knowledge and build confidence, which has led to active participation at council meetings.

Output 2.1: Increased capacity among select women political candidates and local leaders (women and men) to promote engagement of women in governance peacebuilding processes.

Output 2.1 had two capacity building activities: the first activity involved three residential training workshops – a gender-sensitive and policymaking training for women in local governance. It has helped further the knowledge of 60 female local councillors from the Southern, Central, North-Western, Northern and Eastern provinces on gender, women’s representation, and policymaking with a special focus on gender-sensitive environmental policy. It also engaged their interest in the area and has encouraged them to turn their professional focus to these issues. The Final Report by the implementing partner states that the trainings on gender sensitive policy making for women in local governance furthered the knowledge of 60 female local council women from the Southern, Central, North-Western, Northern and Eastern provinces about gender, women’s representation, policy making and the special focus on gender-sensitive environmental policy interested them in the subject and encouraged them to turn their professional focus to these issues. Seventy-seven percent (77%) of participants of the gender-sensitive policy-making training from the Southern Province<sup>15</sup> have expressed that the learnings received from the training were useful in their work as councillors. Overall, from all the above-mentioned provinces, participants from the gender-sensitive policymaking trainings have found that the learnings from the training was helpful both for their political and personal lives. One former councillor stated,

*“at present I am not in the Council, but I will not stop the social service that I have been doing. I must mention that the training I received gave me good knowledge on local elections, I regret it took me until now to learn these. Also value the information such as the function of a municipal council and what a woman can contribute.”*

Some mentioned that the topic ‘gender’ was relevant and useful for their work since it helped them learn about their personal values, passions, strengths, and life goals. Those affected in natural disasters found the discussions on climate change and environmental degradation to be a useful topic. Twenty-three (23) councillors participated in the discussion at the trade union forum. However, the number affected was not specifically mentioned. Hence, the training has helped both their political and personal lives. The second capacity building activity was the 7-day social change training that was carried out in two steps. This training consisted of female councillors from different ethnic groups

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<sup>15</sup> Please refer to p21 of the implementing partner final report for further details of the provinces.

from the North-Western and Eastern provinces. The training empowered women to engage more in inclusive governance processes.

Furthermore, during the FGD at the Women's Resource Centre (WRC), the local council members spoke about the training they attended. They said that apart from the capacity they gained from this training, they felt a natural strong bond being created among the female councillors despite their ethnicity, religion or even the political party they represented. They have been able to collectively identify common issues they faced and discuss solutions. Some said that the training has inspired them to be impartial in their service to people. Therefore, the different strategies used by implementing partners to build the capacity of the council members in different provinces were relevant in building unity among councillors from different political parties. They also helped build unity among their constituency. During the FGD with council members at Kurunegala one of the council members shared how she and councillors from opposition parties present at that meeting discussed and selected roads to be renovated. This village was considered as majority of the inhabitants were from the opposition party. This action has not only been appreciated but has helped create better understanding and friendship among the people from different parties.

Output 2.2: Increased capacity of national and sub-national institutions, including political parties, to ensure policies, plans and budgets are gender response.

With the activities of output 2.2 (the MPDs and forums conducted by implementing partners) the councillors have not only gained knowledge but have become empowered with self-confidence to conduct cross-party initiatives such as lobbying against the increase of substance abuse in their localities; finding solutions to garbage problems; and constructing roads for rural communities. MPD as an activity has developed the personal and social capacity of the female councillors to build self-confidence and helped them gain recognition and respect from their male council members, as well as from the society. This has also created space for synergistic conversations where the councillors shared issues particular to them and, as women, they creatively and collectively looked for or suggested solutions. According to the Annual report 2019, the MPDs organically led to a series of action points going beyond the dialogue, as it focused on what participants can do for themselves or each other, collaboratively, as opposed to what UN Women or donors could do for them. The capacity-building activities carried out for the MPD have helped the councillors become change agents in three different areas:

1. Personal change - *"I was able to build relations with different ethnicities and get insights into their thinking and problems thanks to the dialogue"* (feedback after the 3-day programme by a councillor from Ampara).
2. A change within the group (among the councillors) - *"We were able to build relationships with each other irrespective of party politics"* (statement from a councillor from Kurunegala).
3. An urge for social change - *"I had a major concern: how do I help solve conflicts within my constituency? After attending the MPD, I created a village-level committee with community leaders. All joint work is now done via the committee. It is the villagers who now identify, prioritise and resolve issues by themselves"* (Female Councillor – Galle).

The forums have brought together important combinations of people to engage in ways that were often unprecedented. Trade unionists amongst the 24 female local councillors, elected to local governance from the Central and Southern Provinces, created synergistic conversations on many important issues about women's roles in the unions. Moreover, according to the final report by the implementing partner, during this forum the female local councillors have expressed certain issues that they are unable to share outside the council. A female councillor from Ampara has reported one such issue of how the fund their council received for the welfare of women and children had been apportioned amongst councillors without prioritising needs. Moreover, each female council member has received an equal, yet too small, amount that was insufficient for any meaningful work. This

indicates that for the first time female councillors may have been given the opportunity to speak about their grievances, but they need to find ways to advocate to the local council on issues such as overcoming sexual exploitation (even as councillors), finding financial support for the welfare of women and children, getting updated knowledge and empowerment on their leadership through training, how to bring ethno-social harmony and institutional bilingualism within and outside the council. It is also mentioned in the implementing partners' final report that this project that engaged participants from the Southern, Northern, Eastern, North Western and Central provinces proved to be a novel opportunity for party members to hear their female counterparts' ideas and demands in their roles as female local women councillors. From five selected provinces, 110 women local councillors and men representing different parties participated in fruitful and challenging cross-party discussion in the 'Forum on Reforms within Political Institutions'. These forums have initiated five action plans, strategising on how to increase women's participation.

Output 2.3: Women leaders promote increased civic engagement on issues related to governance, reconciliation and peacebuilding.

Under input 2.3 in order to increase civic engagement, the IP implemented a social media educational campaign highlighting stories that are rarely told in histories of peace. It was carried out on social media (Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook) and was based on the '30-Day campaign on Women's Peace Activism', which highlighted a moment, person or movement that marked the importance of Sri Lanka's history of women in peace activism. It provided various people the opportunity to learn about women's peace activism in Sri Lanka and its history as well as to engage with, make comments on, share ideas about or join in the discussion.

Apart from that, three video discussion series on women and co-existence, titled #OurLivedRealities (produced by Hashtag Generation) had reached 360,615 people and had 27,710 online engagements (as at Feb 2020) according to the Semi-Annual Narrative Report. These videos have sustained the discourse on the importance of an ethical political culture in Sri Lanka, challenging public opinions such as that women are not capable of or are not interested in governance, decision-making and peacebuilding. The videos presented Sri Lankan women from all walks of life and highlighted the importance of digital engagement to centre women's voices.

## Peacebuilding Effectiveness

EQ 2: (a) To what extent did the project achieve or is expected to achieve its planned and unintended results, and contribute to peacebuilding outcomes in Sri Lanka? (b) To what extent did the project actively identify and include the most marginalised in Sri Lanka, ensuring no one is left behind?

The interviews with one of the partners and with the UN Women Focal Point revealed that local peacebuilding was their aim and that it was given priority in their outputs. Accordingly, this outcome has achieved a transformational and edifying experience influencing local women leaders and local councillors in an effective way. Thereby, women leaders have had the opportunity to engage in governance at local-level social issues, prioritising and responding to them effectively, i.e., the training programmes, discussion forums and MPDs have transformed them as effective and empowered female councillors with knowledge on policies and capability of making their voices heard amidst existing challenging patriarchal constellations. Recognising the importance of the knowledge and experience, a participant from Nuwara Eliya has given the following feedback after a training:

*"I expect to form a committee of all female members of local authorities in the district and educate them on the services provided by the government."*

Another participant from Ampara mentioned,

*“I am determined to introduce the collective leadership concept to my local authority and discuss how best to apply it with my colleagues”.*

The Semi-Annual Report stated that in 2019, MPDs generated actions beyond the scope of the project. It has facilitated identification of potential triggers for conflict and community solutions. For example, in Nuwara Eliya, the Governor has convened a meeting to discuss district-related issues including drug abuse and environmental issues specifically related to waste management – that had been identified in most MPDs – to work collaboratively across communities and parties. Participants from Kurunegala have focused on creating a Mother's Front to combat substance abuse among youth; replicating good practices like village Town Halls; and capacity building for female local councillors by public officials. The FGD with the MPDs from Kurunegala revealed that they became active in their councils only after attending the MPD sessions. However, they also acknowledged their limitations with regard to governance and making big changes due to the existing political situation. Two examples for changes are demanding equal representation for women councillors in decision making in the council and adding a criterion for women getting selected into parliament to at least have experience serving in a council for one or two terms.

With regard to EQ 2b, given that ‘women’ overall, despite social class, ethnicity and religion are considered a marginalised group (OHCHR, 2014) the project served as a platform for many new female councillors to engage in governance and peacebuilding issues. Moreover, the MPDs ensured that minority parties were included and that they were inclusive of those from different ethno-religious backgrounds, from different political party affiliation, from differing levels of political experience etc. Furthermore, the projects activities also included women leaders from the plantation sector, further emphasising that the project actively identified and included marginalised women in Sri Lanka.

Output 2.1: Increased capacity among select women political candidates and local leaders (women and men) to promote engagement of women in governance peacebuilding processes.

Under output 2.1, efforts have been made through gender-sensitive policy-making and social change trainings to increase the capacity of women political leaders and other leaders in the community by engaging them on issues of political representation and environmental work. The capacity building of female local councillors included three gender-sensitive policy making trainings, media briefings and a 7-day workshop on social change. Of 27 participants at the 7-day training (step 2), 20 local council women leaders from North Western and Eastern Provinces stated that the training has helped them build a strong bond and rapport despite the diversity among women leaders in the group. Further, they acknowledged their increased capacity for better performance in the community due to the training with skills such as problem analysis, problem solving and communication skills on how to communicate with authorities. Following is evidence given in the WMC of a participant's response,

*“I did not go to school and I was ashamed of not being educated once I started work as a local council woman. But, after being a part of the 7-Day programme, I felt very much empowered. I was able to participate and also be on the same level with other women who are educated, and we can learn together. I learnt a lot and I use what I learnt very often. I am now taken as a resource person by an organisation in Batticaloa and I go and speak with women's groups and use what I learnt in the training.*

In the Central and North-Western Province media briefings, the participants presented information to the media about the environmentally sensitive development project implemented by 20 newly elected female councillors from these provinces in their local authority areas based on the knowledge gained through the training programmes and activities. At the Southern Province workshop, five female local government representatives, from the larger group of 20, have addressed the need for more attention on environmental issues and the impact environmental issues, such as waste management challenges, has on women. In this way, the capacity building has helped the female

councillors reach expectations by making efforts to address some of the timely needs and important issues.

However, an IP expressed that if the activities had started in early 2017, it would have been more effective as 2017 was an important and vibrant year with many opportunities for reconciliation work, constitutional reforms and bringing solutions to the conflicts. Reconciliation, constitutional reforms, scaling up capacities of democratic institutions for good governance and peacebuilding (i.e., with the multiple TJ and reconciliation processes that the country faced during the beginning of 2016) that UN PPP facilitated is an incontrovertible overarching backdrop for this project. This was the initial country context in which PBF support was sought, and the PPP-led projects became operationalised. Nevertheless, it is noted that the date of project commencement was dependent on donor approval, and in the case of PBSO it required a request from the Government to first consider Sri Lanka as a country eligible for PBF funding and subsequently the development and approval of the joint UN-Government PPP prior to the development and approval of projects for PBF funding. Given these prerequisites, this process took considerable time, and was beyond the control of this project.

Output 2.2: Increased capacity of national and sub-national institutions, including political parties, to ensue policies, plans and budgets are gender response.

The literature review and the interviews showed that MPDs have achieved consensus across political parties on governance and peacebuilding issues at the local level. According to the Annual Report 2019, given the general lack of cooperation between political parties, MPDs could be a good example of how parties can work together for a common cause in spite of 'party politics'. The MPDs have helped councillors build cross-party consensus to facilitate peacebuilding at the local level. It covered 16 districts convening 300+ representatives from 208 (of 341) local councils and 29 political parties. According to the registration lists 98% of participants are women. It had focused on addressing conflict drivers such as religious and ethnic extremism, gender discrimination, inequality and fostering reconciliation by developing shared solutions. Both the reports and FGD reveal that across all MPDs there had been a strong sense of understanding/kinship, irrespective of party lines, given the common problems affecting districts and the common challenges female councillors faced.

During the KPI with the partner, it was mentioned that the 'Trade Union Forum' was an opportunity for women to bring up burning issues in their localities. Thereby, they have been able to create synergistic conversations. Also, this platform has helped support former trade unionists who were in local councils and newly elected female councillors with their political work. This forum includes women from the plantation sector and a participant representing the plantation sector has commented that she is a councillor and tea plucker who has never been to Colombo. Thus, the forum has enhanced her opportunity for gaining knowledge and made her realise the importance of her role as councillor as well as how much knowledge was to be gained. She has requested this knowledge and opportunity to be extended to other women leaders from the plantation sector. Overall, the women have gained a clear understanding of the role of female councillors and an awareness of the importance of participation in decision-making and involvement in bringing positive changes.

Output 2.3: Women leaders promote increased civic engagement on issues related to governance, reconciliation and peacebuilding.

Realising the importance of using modern technology to promote increased civic engagement, the female councillors were provided training on using social media tools, such as how to use a computer, introduction to using internet, how to open an email account, and how to collect information from official websites etc. Four sessions were conducted at Kandy, Samanthurai and Colombo to this effect, which has convinced them about using better and easier methods of mass communication. Thereby, their capacities on how to use social media for civic engagement were increased through training on digital literacy and advocacy, in order to enable their access to information and resources. Some have



created personal email addresses and use WhatsApp for communicating; some councillors have started a group chat via WhatsApp. The councillors who participated from Matara were highly appreciative of the digital literacy and social media training they received. Most of those who participated at the FGD and received this training said that this was first time they had a chance to use a computer. Almost all of them acknowledged the importance of the skills they received through this training. Some said that as councillors, this knowledge they received would help them share information with a wider community and that it is an easy way of receiving and sending messages. Some said that they realised it is an effective mode to use for advocacy purposes. One participant from Batticaloa said that she used it for election campaigns but due to the cultural issues she had to limit it to her friend's circle. However, the majority at the FGDs who participated in those training said that they are still at initial level and would appreciate it if they can have follow-up trainings.

Another effective way used by implementing partners, to reach the community and educate them on peace, was through a series of mass media messaging campaigns that included two large-scale billboard campaigns, a dynamic trilingual social media campaign on women's peace activism, two videos on peace activism and ethical-political culture, and a video series on women, coexistence, and peace.

According to the final report of the IP, the social media campaigns promoting women's peace activism has successfully reached over 208,000 people, creating awareness of pioneering women and their achievements that were unknown to most and calling for further promotion of women's engagement in governance and peacebuilding. The billboard campaigns disseminated messaging on community coexistence, women standing together for peace and the importance of making use of the right to vote. The campaign was done in Jaffna, Kurunegala, Galle and Matara.

## **Efficiency of Management and Governance**

**EQ 3: To what extent does the project deliver or is likely to deliver results in an economic and timely manner?**

The partners and the regional counterparts achieved the intended outcome owing to the availability of adequate financial support that enabled the implementing partners to reach out to the community on peace education, gender-sensitive policy and trainings. This was carried out through a series of mass media messaging campaigns that included two large-scale billboard campaigns, a dynamic trilingual social media campaign on women's peace activism, two videos on peace activism and ethical-political culture, and a video series on women, coexistence, and peace.

Dedicated budgets have been efficiently expended up to 2020 March to achieve the intended outcomes and related outputs vis-à-vis training and human resources for capacity development viz. provision of experts, training, awareness for peacebuilding and electoral participation, MPDs, capacity development, and policy enactments. However, about five follow-up assessments planned to be conducted in March 2020 were delayed due to the COVID-19 lockdown. Therefore, those were conducted via teleconferencing in August 2020 during the time the evaluation was taking place. As mentioned in the Annual Report 2019, UN Women has mobilised USD 140,000 from its core funds to support the MPDs. Additionally, UN Women has obtained approx. USD 120,000 from the Government of Japan towards conducting the MPDs in the remaining four provinces and an overall national-level MPD, which will bring together all those who have participated.

The investment made on the MPDs and various forums such as the Forum on Reforms within Political Institutions, Trade Union Forum, Forum on Peace and Coexistence have not only been helpful in building the capacity of the councillors but in also creating space for meeting various groups, bringing various issues to the table, building relationships with groups from different sectors as well as opportunity for women to create networks.

The investment made on campaigns has helped reach 28,181 impressions on Twitter and had reached 23,091 people on Facebook and the video discussion series on Women and Co-existence, titled #OurLivedRealities has reached 360,615 people and had 27,710 online engagements.

## Impact on Macro Peacebuilding

EQ 4: To what extent has this project impacted upon women on the national-level peacebuilding process?

The impact of the project outcome is experienced as a bottom-to-top incremental process with much enthusiasm among women leaders. The annual report 2019 says that the MPDs have enabled the councillors to build cross-party consensus to facilitate peacebuilding at the local level. It has focused on addressing conflict drivers and fostering reconciliation by developing shared solutions. According to the Annual Narrative Report (2020), a stronger sense of understanding/kinship, irrespective of party lines, was evident among all MPD participants given their link established through discussions based on the common problems affecting the districts and the common challenges female councillors faced. Local activities including intervention of Women's Committees within local councils; initiating programmes on women's employment, waste management, substance abuse, housing, securing funds has created the opportunity for frank discussion and focus on collaboration. Given the general lack of cooperation between political parties at the national level, the dialogues are a critical element to galvanise local engagement and serve as an example of how parties can come together beyond the local level (MPD Brief).

On the other hand, it enabled them to carefully calibrate gender-sensitive national/local policies. However, as in the case of the youth interventions, the overall impact of women's empowerment ought to be attributed to interventions by all national- and local-level peacebuilding projects working towards this common goal. IPs and regional counterparts were impressed by the transformation in the attitude and the behaviour of beneficiaries. During the FGD with both MPD participants and the beneficiaries of other activities, the beneficiaries themselves shared how their attitudes, perceptions and perspective morphed into aspiring to enact policies for social change, i.e., for some women leaders, this project was a novel/unique experience. For others, it was an invitation to act for social change and a call for change of their own attitudes towards ethno-religious and marginalised groups. The implementing partners and the regional counterparts believe that the local-level peacebuilding would pave the way to national-level, gender-responsive peacebuilding policy planning. Hence, the activities of the training programmes were designed accordingly and that has empowered the participants to be cooperative, creative, and spontaneous. For instance, female local councillors attending the 7-day training developed a list of demands to be included in their manifestos, regardless of party differences, when they contested elections. Two of the demands in that list are as follows:

- *All budgets and action plans prepared by the local government authorities should ensure gender equality in all sections and should allocate a separate budget line for women's empowerment.*
- *We demand that political parties and independent groups do not have manifestoes that hatreds of insight ethnic, religious and avoid all hate speech and misogynistic language.*

Output 2.1: Increased capacity among select women political candidates and local leaders (women and men) to promote engagement of women in governance peacebuilding processes.

A new module on social change has been designed for the 7-day training in collaboration with feminist activists, lawyers, and human rights activists. This module explicitly foregrounds the fact that the training was for women with a certain amount of power – however limited – be it through local governance or non-governmental institutional affiliation, to enact change for the community at large.

Since the activities were designed in a way to promote peace at the local level, there is a strong need for personal change due to the existing ethnic, political, and religious divisions in the community. Possibly due to that, stories of personal change that impacted social change were shared during the FGDs and was also mentioned in reports. A Sinhalese participant at the 7-day training mentioned in her evaluation form,

*“We come from different ethnic groups and for the first time recognise the heartbeat of each other. This is what I understand as social cohesion that we women need to take to our community.”*

The training on gender-sensitive policy making for elected female local councillors has increased the capacity among them on governance and peacebuilding, which has enabled them to be capable of analysing problems from a gender perspective, developing gender-sensitive policies and having increased confidence to not only engage within local council debates but also to submit council proposals. The capacity building of local officials on gender-sensitive policy making has led to identifying priorities at the local level and developing plans to address them. Participants from the North and East have identified issues in addressing discrimination regarding land laws and gender equality policies while the participants from the South have identified issues related to current environmental destruction due to natural disasters and global warming.

Output 2.2: Increased capacity of national and sub-national institutions, including political parties, to ensure policies, plans and budgets are gender responsive.

Under 2.2, all the forums have brought together important combinations of people to engage in ways that were often unprecedented. Seventy (70) female local women councillors from varying backgrounds and different parties from the Southern, Central, and Eastern provinces took part in the ‘Forums on Coexistence and Peace’ to discuss peace and how they initiate coexistence in their communities. These forums have facilitated discussions between women from different ethnic and religious groups and allowed them to learn about each other’s communities. Following is what a participant from the east expressed:

*“We should eliminate the negative thoughts of politicians who divide this country with hatred. If all the Sri Lankans are united, we can achieve proper development in the country as well as a good lifestyle. All three communities in this country should work together to lead our children towards a better future”.*

Similar viewpoints were shared during the FGD as well. The Trade Union Forum has created a platform of dialogue for 24 such local council women from the Central and Southern Provinces and three union leaders present as well as two active women unionists. The ‘Forum on Reforms within Political Institutions’ that engaged local council women and men from the Southern, Northern, Eastern, North-Western, and Central provinces across party lines proved to be a novel opportunity for male party members to hear their female counterparts’ ideas and demands in their roles as female local councillors. Drug abuse and environmental issues specifically related to waste management were identified in most MPDs as areas for collaboration across communities and parties.

Members of MPDs had many positive experiences. One such example was given by the Kandy MPD members. Kandy is a place known for religious tension between the Sinhalese and Muslims in the recent past, hence, several Sinhalese members have visited mosques as a step towards a peacebuilding process. This has created a better understanding of each other and their religion and ethnicity.

*"After the reconciliation discussion at the MPD, I visited the Kahatapitiya Mosque to understand more about the Islam religion and its practices. It was a great way to strengthen reconciliation efforts" (Sinhalese Female Councillor, Kandy).*

During the FGD, MPD members from Kurunegala also shared their attitudinal change. One said,

*"I was serving in the Army before I came into politics, but it was the first time I had the opportunity to hear a Tamil woman who has also been going through the same problem as me."*

During the KPIs and FGDs, both the CBOs that initiated the programme and the beneficiaries explained the importance of micro peacebuilding that could lead to macro peacebuilding at the national level. One MPD member who was from the governing party stated,

*"This programme taught me that whatever party we belong to, we as women can do a better service to our society. Therefore, I am open to join hands with my sisters from the other parties and expect to do better service to the people".*

These show that unlike other women-focused programmes in the country, working with local-level female councillors who are involved in governance, supporting them to increase their capacity in order to build their self-confidence, giving opportunities to them to learn by experience, changing their attitudes and creating awareness to serve their community as a 'change agent' are not only novel and unique to this project, but also worth the investment.

One of the male councillors stated that prior to participating in the MPDs, he never thought of engaging or including female councillors in his work for two reasons. One reason was that he believed that men do things better and the second was that it has been a custom that men do their own work without seeking women's help in governance. However, the MPD transformed such traditional attitudes, and he began engaging with and including female councillors in his work. As a result, it has not only helped them to collectively move forward and tackle existing issues systematically, but it has also contributed towards better collective service to the community.

Output 2.3: Women leaders promote increased civic engagement on issues related to governance, reconciliation and peacebuilding.

The '30-days of Sri Lankan Feminism' campaign succeeded in engaging a diverse local and international audience across social media platforms. By November 2019, the campaign had gained 28,181 impressions on Twitter and had reached 23,091 people on Facebook.

Local councillors have strengthened capacities and understanding on the negative impacts of stereotypes/ derogatory ethnic references and this has led to the development of strategies to promote coexistence through council-specific and policy-level interventions. In the aftermath of the Easter attacks, positive narratives on communal harmony and coexistence were promoted through public campaigns. The estimated outreach for each billboard per day was 25,000 passengers traveling in vehicles and 12,000-15,000 viewers on foot. The viewership was calculated based on the average number of people that inhabit the billboard locations, which were generally either busy junctions, town centres or commuter centres such as bus or train stations. The 30-day campaign succeeded in engaging a diverse local and international audience across social media platforms.

Moreover, several women's committees have been formed within local councils. Also, other MPDs have submitted proposals and have initiated programmes on women's employment, waste management, substance abuse, and housing, even securing funding.

## Sustainability of Long-Term Peacebuilding

EQ 5: To what extent has the project been able to support implementing partners and beneficiaries in developing capacities and establishing mechanisms to ensure sustainability of efforts and benefits?

The outcome has demonstrated adequate potential for sustaining systems to support long-term peacebuilding. The MPD as a mechanism has ensured basic knowledge on the administrative process, judicial system, and mandates of councils for the local councillors and empowered them with good understanding to serve their community confidently. Space and opportunity have been created for coordinating with the other party members and various other bodies and stakeholders to build positive affiliations and improve their political career. They were able to sustain their activities that will persist even after the end of this project. For example, the MPDs have facilitated identification of potential triggers for conflict and community solutions to address them. This includes establishment of women's committees within councils, collaboration across parties and communities on various issues such as drug abuse, waste management, etc. On the other hand, the MPD has received other funding to continue further.

However, they require guidance from UN Women as it has national and international recognition and acceptance among all women groups, with the inherent ability to bring diverse groups together. The IP stated that they would continue the relationship with the local councillors through the network in a small way and continue the capacity building using the available resources and opportunities. What they expected was to work with female councillors on advocacy and in bringing policy level changes and support to hold a national-level forum.

Output 2.1: Increased capacity among select women political candidates and local leaders (women and men) to promote engagement of women in governance peacebuilding processes.

The 2019 Annual Report mentions that capacity development of IPs through activities such as 7-day social change trainings have strengthened women's networks to engage in governance and peacebuilding. The experience they had during that training has changed their own attitudes and they are now change agents within their councils and within their communities especially on issues related to ethnicity or religion.

The training on gender-sensitive policymaking for 60 women from the local government from the five selected provinces have shown their interest on various topics such as gender, women's representation, policymaking, and gender-sensitive environmental policy. They have been encouraged to select their area of interest and turn their professional focus to that issue. On the other hand, those were recognised as emerging key concerns in the country.

Most of the participants at the FGDs spoke about their personal changes due to the capacity and experience they gained from the project and how that helped them to influence the other council members: Some female councillors mentioned they have begun to get recognition, acceptance, respect, and support from the male council members. A majority of female councillors have increasingly engaged especially on active participation, engaging in decision making, sharing their views and opinion at meetings, supporting the members with their work within their councils and have strengthened relationships across parties and across councils – including with male councillors, public officials, and civil society, with whom they previously had little to no engagement. This not only has given them self-confidence and trust, but also acceptance and recognition that could lead them to sustain their leadership.

Output 2.2: Increased capacity of national and sub-national institutions, including political parties, to ensure policies, plans and budgets are gender responsive.

According to the final report by the IP, 'networks' (social capital) are the strength of their organisation. Hence this project has provided a further opportunity to establish a wide and important network of local council women in the five provinces. The IP plans to continue working with them by expanding the work on social change. They also expect conducting further follow-ups taking forward the manifesto that was developed during the training with the female councillors involved and to continue field visits to see their progress.

Ten MPDs were conducted in five provinces, in 16 districts for the total number of 318 participants. Out of this given total number, 204 are local councillors, 81 are from CSOs/CBO representatives and 33 are District Secretarial officials. These dialogues have created a better understanding among the female council members across parties; on laws and policies or local government mandates; they address local development issues and conflict drivers and look for shared and collective solutions. The WhatsApp group which they use to communicate on issues will prove useful even after the project comes to an end. The MPDs organically have led to a series of action points going beyond the dialogue as it focused on what participants can do for themselves or each other, collaboratively, as opposed to what UN Women or donors could do for them. The response from the MPD participants' feedback forms from all the districts spoke of how the knowledge they gained is the foundation to their political life. Below is an example from a participant from Matara:

*"I am questioning myself, what I have done, as a Pradeshiya Sabha Member so far and intend to play a more active role from tomorrow itself. I also learned that even without political power we can still do some work using the existing resources."*

Through the MPDs, UN Women have facilitated identification of potential triggers for conflict and community solutions to address them. The members of the MPDs have established women committees within the councils, and they have collaborated across parties and communities on various issues such as drug abuse, waste management, environment issues, violence against women and children, ethnic and religious harmony, drug, and substance abuse, etc., and have replicated good practices such as strengthening collaboration between councillors and public officials. As a result of the MPD in Puttalam and Mannar, UN Women mobilised additional funding from the UN Peacebuilding Fund to strengthen social cohesion within the districts using the issue of solid waste management as a common problem on which different communities could coalesce to solve collectively. The project is currently ongoing but is notably working in a space which has seen heightened tensions amongst communities following the Easter Sunday attacks in 2019.

Several women's committees have been formed within local councils. Also, other MPDs have submitted proposals and have initiated programmes on women's employment, waste management, substance abuse, and housing, even securing funding. Additionally, based on the success of the MPDs, UN Women is scaling-up the MPD programmes to cover the remaining four provinces in Sri Lanka, which will be followed by a national-level forum for participants across all MPDs. This will be conducted with resources mobilised via a separate project.

The Annual Report 2019 mentions that the capacity development of female councillors would have a cascading effect beyond the project duration as they would apply their learning to provide more sustainable and inclusive community-level solutions. Those who participated at the FGD too mentioned this with regard to the capacity building that they received.

During the FGD, the council members stated that they would continue the relationship they have started with the members they met through this project. At the FGD with MPDs, cordial relationships among the female councillors despite the different parties was also observed; they have a common

understanding of working together as women towards the betterment of women's need and their rights. They appeared more confident in their individual initiatives and were cooperating with others for their work. However, there is still some uncertainty as to who will take initiative or prime responsibility with regard to taking initiatives on a larger scale.

Output 2.3: Women leaders promote increased civic engagement on issues related to governance, reconciliation and peacebuilding.

The councillors recognised the importance of having a working knowledge of modern technology. For some, such capacity-building opportunities have provoked their interest in studying further subjects such as human rights and gender. One council member from Kurunegala said that she is attending a gender course at the Peradeniya University to improve knowledge in digital literacy, which has not only helped her work but been a great support with her studies.

According to the councillors who participated at the FGD, they valued the basic computer literacy and use of social media training. They recognise how having such knowledge could benefit their service to people. The IP mentioned that the trilingual month-long advocacy campaign, "30 Days of Sri Lankan Feminism" was an opportunity to reach the masses and they would further continue by encouraging those interested in continuing the discussions.

The activity evaluation report summary indicates the trainings on social media, advocacy, and digital and computer literacy. The responses were demonstrated using a chart, and showed, in general, that all the participants have acknowledged that they have gained basic knowledge on the subjects while for some participants it had been a gain from zero knowledge. Hence, all have requested further trainings too.

## Participation and Ownership of National Stakeholders

**EQ 6: (a) How efficient was the project coordination between UNFPA, UNV and UN Women including clarity of roles and accountabilities, avoiding duplication of efforts in implementation of activities, use of data/evidence for decision making, monitoring, and reporting, and potential added value? (b) To what extent have partnerships with government institutions, NGOs, etc. been sought/established and synergies created in delivery of assistance?**

In analysing project coordination between UNFPA, UNV and UN Women in the outcome level, it appears that UN Women worked independently under outcome 2. Outcome 1 and outcome 2 have been conceptualized as two distinct projects that were merged for administrative reasons. However, UN Women played an active role in an activity conducted under outcome 1, by facilitating training titled 'Young Women, Peace and Security' for young people in the Eastern and Central Provinces. Similarly, there has been quarterly project coordination among UN entities to discuss concerns and project strategy. It served as a mechanism by which these entities would keep PBSO updated and received updates in turn. Annual and Semi-Annual Reports were submitted to UNFPA, as the main coordinating partner. Since outcome 1 and 2 both worked with women, this could have been a great opportunity and it would have added value if the three entities made use of this opportunity to bring their partners together in more activities.

As stated in the reports and during the FGDs, synergies have been created at the local level among the IP, the regional counterparts and local government authorities. However, there are no follow-up reports or records to say how far efforts have been made to sustain them. The project contributed towards creating a pathway for partnership that was already paved by local women's initiatives with diverse groups. Furthermore, female councillors have increasingly engaged within their councils, and have strengthened relationships across parties, across councils – including male councillors, public officials, and civil society – compared to little-to-no engagement previously.

Both IP and CBOs wish to continue the work in their own localities in their own way, although not with the same vigour and reach owing to a combination of reasons. One being that, although the IPs had been involved in consultations during the design phase of the project, one IP expressed that their ideas have not been adequately incorporated into the initial framing of the project. However, according to UN Women, the IP was provided with flexibility to propose and implement catalytic interventions they considered innovative, particularly under output 2.1 prior to being contracted. The IP was also provided with the flexibility to propose changes, which were accepted, in light of the political context at the time and other external shocks experienced during the project period. A lack of funds and expertise for guidance and security (personal political rivalry-related issues) and lack of authority (as that of a UN entity) to bring together diverse political groups for a discussion in the current context, were other reasons noted by the IP and CBOs.

Output 2.1: Increased capacity among select women political candidates and local leaders (women and men) to promote engagement of women in governance peacebuilding processes.

The implementing partner IP considers their wider network to be their strength as well as that of their organisation. It appears that this project has given the opportunity to further strengthen their relationships with WRC Kurunegala, Sooriya Women Batticaloa, RWF Galle and Ruhunu Sisila, Matara, and others. In addition, a new partnership has been forged with HDO, Kandy, due to their help with coordinating with the Kandy local councillors. The final report of the implementing partners says that over the project period, they have reached 204 female councillors, who would continue to engage in their work.

Synergies have been created among the female councillors from different political parties who attended the social change training and also between the IP and the regional counterparts since they have been working together long before this project started. For example, female local councillors from different parties have started working collaboratively. During the Kurunegala FGD, a participant stated that,

*“for me as a councillor my priority is serving the people whom I represent. In that service, colour, symbol, or the party become secondary. Therefore, I look for opportunities to work collaboratively with other council members in my council”.*

Output 2.2: Increased capacity of national and sub-national institutions, including political parties, to ensure policies, plans and budgets are gender responsive.

Both the IP and the CBOs see the importance of this initiative and expressed the need for continuing the relationship and the work with the council members. This might not be with the same vigour and reach but with the given capacity, resources and depending on future projects they would continue the work. Regarding the future, there is still a sense of absence of ownership of the gender responsive process; lack of funds and expertise for guidance and security; and lack of authority to include diverse political groups in the current context.

The local councillors at both the FGDs held in Kurunegala spoke about the uncertainty of their role with the current political system, which made them reluctant to claim ownership of the process. The local councillors require financial support for the right women to contest in order to stop parties using the quota system to pick women with no leadership background. Further, the trainings they received have helped them realise the amount of knowledge and skills they require to be a leader and the challenges in the traditional society they live in. Therefore, the local councillors look forward to more expertise, guidance, and security to be stable that would lead them to be independent.



According to the Annual Report 2019, the project has worked in close partnership with 300+ representatives from 208 (of 341) local councils and 29 political parties. Many political parties have sent their party-nominated senior representatives to the MPDs. Apart from that, the government officers, the Assistant District Secretary him/herself or a nominated staff member representing the District Secretaries, and representatives of the Governor attended the MPDs. They have committed to supporting and capacitating newly elected female councillors on government programmes, schemes, and regulations at the local level.

Output 2.3: Women leaders promote increased civic engagement on issues related to governance, reconciliation and peacebuilding.

The digital literacy and the campaigns under this output have helped to reach a wider community and share the message. This included partnerships with Roar Media (video on peace activism), a Collective of Feminist Conversations (30 Days of Feminism), and Hashtag Generation (#OurLivedRealities). For example, according to the Annual Report 2019, the trilingual video disseminated on women's peace activism had been viewed 140,096 times and has reached 190,478 people. The trilingual month-long advocacy campaign "30 Days of Sri Lankan Feminism" conducted had 28,181 Twitter impressions and reached 23,091 people on Facebook (at Nov 2019) the video discussion series on women and co-existence, titled #OurLivedRealities has reached 360,615 people and had 27,710 online engagements (as at Feb 2020).

## Coordination and Coherence with Other Initiatives

EQ 7: To what extent is the project compatible with other peacebuilding interventions carried out in the country by implementing agencies and other stakeholders? (Working towards the same objective/s with women?)

State and non-state actors (to some extent) have recognised and accepted that women are integral to peacebuilding and they have implemented various peacebuilding programmes for women that are unique to the contexts and local issues at stake. Although the project was novel and the initiative was carried out for the first time (i.e., MPDs, working with local councillors, inter-district deliberations etc.), coherence with other peacebuilding initiatives relating to women's empowerment were not visible. Similarly, some FGD respondents<sup>16</sup> could not recall which organisations conducted particular activities, thus the evaluators could not assess the project's coherence with other existing initiatives (i.e., other peacebuilding interventions implemented by UNDP, GIZ, and NPC) further. Moreover, MPDs are a novel initiative in Sri Lanka that was implemented over the past two years, therefore there are no other initiatives of this nature to assess it against.

Output 2.1: Increased capacity among select women political candidates and local leaders (women and men) to promote engagement of women in governance peacebuilding processes.

Even though a mapping was conducted at the initial stage of the project to understand the experiences of women in governance and their engagement with peacebuilding by the IP, it is not visible whether this project intentionally made an effort to work with other peacebuilding interventions. It is possible that there are hardly any other groups implementing similar interventions with local female councillors. According to the ProDocs (also ProDoc Annex C) the design was influenced by a mapping of various interventions by CSOs on women's political participation (conducted in Dec 2016). However, a good opportunity, that could have been initiated simultaneously to bring together the stakeholders and the CBOs they work with to conduct a common activity, was missed. Such opportunities would

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<sup>16</sup> Cannot quantify the exact number of respondents who stated this.

have given more space for organic collaborations to emerge among them. The IP involved Kamala Chandrakirana (a prominent feminist activist from Indonesia who is also part of Global Women's Movement) to conduct the 7-day training certifying 30 women in the course in collaboration with Asia Justice and Rights (AJAR). This has created an opportunity for the beneficiaries to learn matters outside their province and country about this movement and about women leaders from other countries.

Output 2.2: Increased capacity of national and sub-national institutions, including political parties, to ensure policies, plans and budgets are gender response.

Under this output there had been two main components. One is the MPD and the other is provincial-level forums. While the component of MPDs was mainly to bring about cross-party, multi-stakeholder consensus on common problems, by developing shared solutions and it worked on building the capacity of the female councillors to affect peace and reconciliation. The MPD coordination and networks have been created at the local/district level, including inter-district in some cases by this project. For example, composition of the MPDs itself makes synergistic collaborations possible. Each MPD is composed of a political party member nominated by each party secretary, a sitting member from every local government body covering the district, two local government officials nominated by the District Secretary, a representative from Divisional Women's Society, and representatives from CBOs, CSOs and NGOs. Moreover, the MPDs have aimed to foster collaboration between the women's wings of different political parties and to convene party nominated senior officials for cross-party and cross-district interventions.

The components of this outcome, i.e., the 'Cross Party Forum', 'Trade Union Forum' and 'Forum on Coexistence and Peace', have brought together critical masses of people to engage in ways that were often unprecedented towards peacebuilding. These have created discussions between women from different ethnic and religious groups and allowed them to be frank and open and learn about each other's communities in the backdrop of the current culture of ethno-religious stereotypes and stratification of communities along ethno-religious lines. All these have worked towards strengthening the democratic process and inclusive leadership; non-heteronormative and patriarchal legal and policy frameworks; and sought to build and strengthen women's activism and movements. However, each of these components were carried out in isolation with no effort to coordinate or network. An effort to coordinate or network could have further strengthened the process and provided opportunities for a national-level event to occur.

Output 2.3: Women leaders promote increased civic engagement on issues related to governance, reconciliation and peacebuilding.

Under this output, activities have been carried out under two different strategies. Firstly, capacity building on digital literacy for female local councillors and secondly various campaigns, such as the campaigns on women's peace activism.

Training in digital literacy emphasised the importance of having such knowledge for the public representatives and how it can be useful for their local council work. According to the evaluation report, 23 participants from Matara who attended such trainings who have responded to the following question show how much they are capable of linking with other groups.

*Q. Knowledge and skill developed after the training to build link with international and local level social media groups and networks which is functioning related to political representation and peace building.*

*Response by the participants: Excellent - 4, Very good - 7, Good - 9, Alright - 2, Very poor - 1.*

However, there was no follow-up data available to say how practically this has been continuing.

Recognising the need to perpetuate the discourse on the importance of women, coexistence and peace and an ethical political culture in Sri Lanka, three videos, one on women, coexistence, and peace; and two on peace activism and ethical political culture have been produced by Hashtag Generation. For these campaigns, WMC had been successful in securing Sri Lankan women designers and original campaign creators for all of the content.

The 30-day campaign has documented important people, moments, and movements in Sri Lanka's rich history of women's activism, particularly pertaining to women's fights for political representation and women's peace activism. The campaign succeeded in engaging a diverse local and international audience across social media platforms.

The billboard campaigns have disseminated messages on community coexistence, women standing together for peace, and the importance of making use of the right to vote.

## Gender Equality and Human Rights

EQ 8: (a) To what extent was gender equality, women's empowerment and human rights integrated into the design, implementation, and monitoring of the project? (b) To what extent did the project address and respond to existing power dynamics and gender relations?

The project focused on supporting female councillors appointed via the quota. Hence, men's full participation was not necessarily considered. The new female councillors did not have the same access to opportunities. However, a small percentage of men were included in the MPDs as their role is well understood. Similarly, forums with political parties included men. This was based on a deliberate choice made. However, the project outcome shows that there was a level of success achieved despite little participation by men as change agents. The finding was that consensus from men was an absolute imperative for successful enactment of policies supporting women to overcome discrimination and gender equality in this project as voiced by many during all the FGDs. Discrimination of women in the local councils persists unabated to a great level; criteria of selection of women candidates remains ambiguous; often times decision-making is left at the whims of the male party-hierarchy; and a lack of opportunities for women to voice their concerns and an overall lack of recognition in general.

Monitoring and evaluation tools such as pre-and post-training evaluation forms, questionnaire surveys, reflection sheet with mood meter methodology, group thought survey, scoring method survey, and pre- and post- questionnaire survey have been developed to measure impact of different activities.

Output 2.1: Increased capacity among select women political candidates and local leaders (women and men) to promote engagement of women in governance peacebuilding processes.

This output is focused on women's active and meaningful participation in governance and peacebuilding processes. Subsequent to the Local Councils, the project has carried out a mapping of the needs/capacity gaps of elected officials and female community leaders and has trained them on gender-sensitive policy making for local councillors in the five selected provinces with a limited number of males. The 7-day course on women's leadership and social change fully focused on the local female councillors. However, in general, the perception of women who participated at the FGDs was that the male councillors who participated in their training had exhibited a change for the better from their traditional attitudes and have started not only cooperating in their work but also showing acceptance and respect towards women. Male council members have started listening to women councillors or inviting them to share their opinions unlike in the past. This support from the male councillors has made the female councillors gain more confidence. Therefore, they believe that the change they expect within the council is possible if male councillors are given the opportunity to

participate in such trainings, which also could be a way of breaking the existing stereotype and power dynamics in Local Councils.

Output 2.2: Increased capacity of national and sub-national institutions, including political parties, to ensue policies, plans and budgets are gender response.

This output is also focused on women's meaningful participation in governance and peacebuilding processes. However, a small percentage of men's participation could be noted in the MPDs and Forums. The MPDs have identified the strategies, built consensus, and increased collaboration across parties and have strengthened partnership between female and male councillors in order to promote peacebuilding and collective leadership. Pre- and post-dialogue evaluations have been conducted in all MPDs and have been analysed. However, the final summary report by the IP is still under preparation at the time of evaluation.

Regarding the power dynamic in the council, men continue to hold the decision-making power. Narratives from the female councillors (from both MPDs and from other activities) ascertain the fact that in general female council members are not given due recognition by the male councillors. However, the knowledge they gained from the training has empowered them with self-confidence, and respect, acceptance, and recognition from the male council members.

The forums with political parties have focused on increasing women's representation in political parties at all project locations. There have also been dialogues on coexistence in the five selected provinces.

Output 2.3: Women leaders promote increased civic engagement on issues related to governance, reconciliation and peacebuilding.

This output dealt with women's empowerment and human rights through various campaigns and digital literacy. The activities consisted of a series of mass media messaging campaigns. These included two large-scale billboard campaigns, a dynamic trilingual social media campaign on women's peace activism, two videos on peace activism and ethical political culture, and a video series on women, coexistence, and peace. The billboard campaign has been used to disseminate messaging on community coexistence, women standing together for peace, and the importance of making use of the right to vote. According to the assessments given in the Annual Report 2019, the trilingual video disseminated on women's peace activism, which was viewed 140,096 times and reached 190,478 people. The trilingual month-long advocacy campaign "30 Days of Sri Lankan Feminism" has reached 28,181 Twitter impressions and 23,091 people on Facebook (at Nov 2019). The video discussion series on women and co-existence, titled #OurLivedRealities has reached 360,615 people and had 27,710 online engagements (as at Feb 2020).

This specific output has increased the interest in digital literacy among the local female councillors. They were able to overcome various social conditioning issues such as reaching the mass, sharing information, and getting updated information on time hitherto faced by them due to this digital gap. They wish to avail further capacity enhancement in digital literacy to update their leadership skills and knowledge.

## Assessment of Theory of Change

The theory of change this project is founded on is that “if women and youth of diverse backgrounds are mobilised and engaged as actors and stakeholders in governance and decision making and peace building, then trust is built among the diverse population and state institutions thus sustaining peace building efforts, because women and youth become meaningful and empowered agents of transformative change contributing towards a culture of peace” (PRF – Project Document). The evidence suggests that youth and women beneficiaries of the project were positive about peace building. The experiences although limited to a small sample of beneficiaries, is indicative of the positive role that women and youth play in peace building and governance.

For the theory to be acceptable the prevalence needs to be tested in other regions of Sri Lanka too. The demographic, ethno-political dimensions, status of development, histories and past experiences of conflicts etc. vary in the different areas that peace-building projects are implemented. The theory of change may thus be context specific. A base line of each area must be compared to ensure cross regional applicability of the theory of change. When facilitated through discussions, partnerships and training, political leaders including women leaders and political parties, support structural reforms conducive to increase women’s representation. Thus, continuous engagements and dialogue will increase women’s continued participation. Measuring lasting internalised change should be undertaken in the long term that goes beyond the projects limited time of 3-4 years. Having different interventions with different target groups may not yield similar outcomes at the end of the relatively short period of a project. Attitudinal changes among youth and adults may be possible with intense facilitated transformative learning processes. The context of the pandemic has created a unique and challenging situation and the nature of vertical linkages between agencies and the ground level could be different to non-COVID situations, limiting the generalisability.

Projects of this nature are not the best to test theory. If at all must be designed at the outset as action research with proper control groups with pre- and post-intervention measures. Implementing such a design in a complex project of this nature will be very labour intensive hence expensive. What may be possible is to take small components and design them as action research with proper measurements and test hypothesis. Furthermore, causation takes time and must be built into the research/action research process. The actual outcomes of trust building can be tested only in situations where the attitude is tested in real life events and situations that go beyond the scope of the project or the evaluation. Any effort to upscale experiences of national level organisations working on macro peace building to local grass roots agencies experiences should be done with caution due to the limited links and activities between macro efforts and the grassroots.

There had been a major shift in the way the government gave priority to conflict-transformation and peace building work in the country since the political changes of 2019. Such fragile contexts make the theory of change less reliable, less generalisable and hence less applicable. Although some results are observed in the envisaged final outcomes, to be considered valid, the evidence of results may be stronger if more concerted and multiple interventions are undertaken over time. In order for the theory of change of the project to be valid, the expected outcomes must be observed and found to be consistent and valid over a longer period of time.

# 5. Conclusions

This chapter provides concluding remarks and lessons learnt in a two-cluster sequencing, which are at strategic and programmatic levels. The strategic-level cluster includes conclusions related to the national level affecting structural aspects and sustainability. The programmatic-level cluster presents conclusions correlated to programmatic interventions.

## 5.1 Strategic Level

### General to All Entities

At the outset, it is stated that the strategic priorities under the PPP relevant to this project, stated as follows, have been met: 'Identify and support strategies and approaches for increased youth participation in peacebuilding activities', and 'Support women's empowerment and participation in peacebuilding, including politics.' The conclusions in light of the project are:

1. At a national level, the ethno-religious fissures violating rights of communities, caste, class, and gender prejudices have all created a complex web of structural violence that seem normal and natural on the surface, instigating violent episodes among the main communities (Sinhala, Tamil, and Muslim). Hence, the strategic entry points made through this project intervention carried out by UNFPA, UNV and UN Women to pursue and sustain social cohesion and peacebuilding among communities, especially involving youth and women in the growing suburbs and regions outside the Western Province, is commendable.
2. Women and youth of Sri Lanka have had a defining role in contemporary politics. The role of women and youth, through decades of brutal violence and remorseless war, is deeply embedded in the socio-political awareness of 'living memory'. This subconscious recognition of the role of women and youth in torturous times precipitates a laser-focus attention on those left behind in post-war rehabilitation, reconciliation, and reconstruction. This project has achieved much strategically in terms of sharpening women and youth capacities along with augmenting institutional capacities.

### Specific to Each Entity

#### UNFPA (Outcome 1)

3. It was a worthy strategic initiative to launch YPP as it inherently possesses much potential for expansion and furthering of activities under its rubric in the future. It has assisted the youth who have no special entitlements to engage in the macro-level peacebuilding process by bringing the youth perspective to the main peacebuilding discourse.

#### UNV (Outcome 1)

4. One of the main striking features of this project is the integration of volunteerism. The strategic placement of UN Volunteers in CSOs was a useful means to enhance local capacities in a discrete way in a variety of peacebuilding-related issues and as a low-cost intervention. The reviews and feedback received on the work of these UN Volunteers too were praiseworthy.

#### UN Women (Outcome 2)

5. The aspect of the project implemented by UN Women has achieved a transformational and edifying experience influencing local women leaders and local councillors in an effective way. The forums such as the Trade Union Forum, forums on reforms within political institutions,

forums on Coexistence and Women's Role in Peacebuilding and the MPD are powerful ways of engaging and empowering women towards participation in peacebuilding processes. Thereby, women leaders have had the opportunity to engage in governance at local-level social issues, prioritising and responding to them effectively. For example, the MPDs have transformed and empowered female councillors by equipping them with knowledge on policies and capability of making their voices heard amidst existing challenging patriarchal constellations. Moreover, the MPDs have enabled the female councillors to build cross-party consensus to facilitate peacebuilding at the local level.

## 5.2. Programmatic Level

### General to All Entities

6. The two outcomes of the project were implemented as a joint venture for the first time by three specific UN entities in relation to the PPP portfolio of the PBF. The training to actively and positively engage youth and women in the peacebuilding process and make their voices heard in policy/decision-making in an inclusive manner; awareness and capacity development of youth and women such as the integration of volunteerism through the mobilisation of UN Volunteers; the establishment of the YPP by the UNFPA, , a national-level platform for youth; UN Women Multi-Party Dialogues and women's leadership training (among others) are novel, key accomplishments of the joint interventions by UNV, UNFPA and UN Women. They enabled the creation of sound women and youth multi-stakeholder platforms with positive impacts and successes worthy of the investment. Although enactment of provincial policies was attainable for women leaders to some extent, the youth policy at the provincial level could not take place given the operational context changing too rapidly, i.e., the absence of provincial council elections.
7. The internal coordination in the joint venture, at the level of the three UN entities (with quarterly meetings and feedback among the key agencies on the progress of the project) was achieved although it was evident that the three UN entities ran the two outcome-related activities of the project independent of each other (i.e. UNV and UNFPA ran outcome 1 while UN Women ran outcome 2) with no linking of common activities or common beneficiaries at many levels except for being brought together for administrative reasons, perhaps owing to the overall manner in which the project has been designed.
8. All initiatives carried out under this project have worked towards strengthening the democratic process and inclusive leadership; non-heteronormative and patriarchal legal and policy frameworks; and sought to build and strengthen women's activism and movements. However, overall, there has been no evidence to suggest the project's coherence between other agencies and organisations (both international and local) that were carrying out peacebuilding initiatives while working in the same regions and under similar themes.
9. A limitation in this project is the absence of a mechanism to monitor the activities after the end of the project cycle. As discussed under the criteria 'Sustainability for Long-Term Peacebuilding' in outcome 1 and outcome 2, only a few activities will be monitored by certain IPs beyond the end point of the project period. However, this is not adequate for the sustainability of the project.

## Specific to Each Entity

### UNV & UNFPA (Outcome 1)

10. Providing recognition and acknowledgement for volunteers through initiatives such as V-Awards is essential for the sustainability of peacebuilding in order to ensure local ownership/leadership and commitment. It confers international recognition for volunteers who are working in marginalised communities. It also equips the present V-Award nominees as well as previous nominees with a peacebuilding perspective through a workshop and expands the horizon of their volunteer activities. V-Awards is commendable in this regard.
11. Since it has one of the largest youth pools in Sri Lanka, collaborating with the NYSC was a timely initiative. However, being subject to the political changes of the country, the continuous circulation of high-level officers during the project has had a negative impact. Hence, the nature of collaboration with NYSC ought to be revisited and thought through in future youth and peacebuilding work. Moreover, the conceptual challenges in working with polarised groups should have been considered in designing the input given to Yowunpuraya through this project, to have a stronger impact on the macro-peacebuilding environment.
12. As stated in output 1.1 under the criteria 'Coordination and Coherence with Other Initiatives', strengthening the YPS coalition was a needed initiative as it has allowed leading international and local stakeholders to come together to coordinate their peacebuilding activities. In the present state, it acts as a knowledge-sharing platform for the youth-led and youth-focused organisations working on peacebuilding projects to share experiences and conduct discussions.
13. Provincial youth policies are extremely beneficial in provincial-level engagements that give them much recognition and exposure to governance mechanisms. Due to the recent violent outbreaks in the country, this activity has brought youth perspectives to the centre of provincial-level activities.
14. The regional and national symposiums have been carried out successfully and approximately, 400 youth participated in four regional symposiums from which selected participants attended the national symposium. The regional symposiums were able to provide participants with basic knowledge on conflict mitigation and from the national symposiums the YPP was established.
15. The research conducted by RCSS on the 'Potential Role of Young Leaders and Volunteers in PVE' discusses important aspects of youth's role in PVE and youth volunteerism in the Sri Lankan context and can be a good starting point for future peacebuilding preparations. It has not reached the beneficiaries and the IPs, perhaps because the report came after the activities were completed and was not disseminated widely.

### UN Women (Outcome 2)

16. The successful efforts to build the capacity of women female councillors was commended under the findings of output 2.1 (under the criterion on "effectiveness") which specifically referred to the residential trainings on gender sensitive policy making and seven-day social change workshop. The gender sensitive policy making for women in local governance furthered the knowledge of 60 female local council women from the Southern, Central, North-Western, Northern and Eastern provinces about gender, women's representation, policy making and the special focus on gender-sensitive environmental policy interested them in the subject and encouraged them to turn their professional focus to these issues. Seventy-seven



percent (77%) of participants of gender-sensitive and policy-making training from the Southern Province have expressed that the learnings received from the training were useful in their work as councillors. The 7-day social change training consisted of female councillors from different ethnic groups from the North-Western and Eastern provinces. The training empowered women to engage more in inclusive governance processes.

17. The finding for Output 2.1 under gender equality states that the engagement of male councillors in training and awareness building activities (even though small in number) seemed to transform them into change agents supporting the voice of the women female councillors for their rights and equal opportunities within the councils. Hence, the awareness building helped to guide the male councillors towards an important role where they have advocated and supported policies that address inequalities and gender discriminations within the council.
18. The findings on sustainability of long-term peacebuilding, under output 2.2, was that the political participation of women leaders has to reach beyond party politics. For example, the local female councillors are individually involved in certain aspects of their electoral process through independent actions, particularly at the local level, by joining civil society organisations, women's groups, trade unions, and NGOs; gaining recognition; and making an effort to strengthen women's political participation. Moreover, this project has provided a further opportunity to gain social capital by establishing a wide and important network of local council women in the five provinces. The IP plans to continue working with them by expanding the work on social change. They also expect conducting further follow-ups taking forward the manifesto that was developed during the training with the female councillors involved and to continue field visits to see their progress.
19. The findings of each output on its own looks successful. However, the criterion 'impact of macro peacebuilding' shows that both the IPs and beneficiaries limited their focus to their output alone rather than viewing the larger outcome or going beyond it. However, this does not weaken the positive impact the activities carried out have had; the beneficiaries themselves shared how their attitudes, perceptions and perspective morphed into aspiring to enact policies for social change. A notable achievement of outcome 2 is the MPDs, which have enabled the councillors to build cross-party consensus to facilitate peacebuilding at the local level. It has focused on addressing conflict drivers and fostering reconciliation by developing shared solutions and enabled them to carefully calibrate gender-sensitive national/local policies. Similarly, the '30-days of Sri Lankan Feminism' campaign succeeded in engaging a diverse local and international audience across social media platforms, and in the aftermath of the Easter attacks, positive narratives on communal harmony and coexistence were promoted through public campaigns.
20. The three decades of violent conflict that had already left deep chasms among ethno-religious communities by intensely damaging interpersonal connections not only between conflicting groups but also within these groups needed emotional healing to happen through forgiveness and empathy in the post-civil war phase. Hence, it was important to meaningfully address negative emotions such as resentment as explained under the finding 'Peacebuilding Relevance' under output 2.1. The seven-day social change training carried out in two steps seemed a good opportunity to be invested upon as a foundation for such healing. The two steps of training remain the best exposure the women female councillors received, and it would also be etched in their collective memory as a sincerely unforgettable experience. With the involvement of formidable women leaders/participants, it has the potential to go beyond the training phase to sustain peace through their own initiatives.
21. The findings under the criterion 'Gender Equality and Human Rights' shows that the space and opportunity gained by female councillors to make their voices heard and become involved in

decision-making or having equal opportunities are still very limited and they lack support in specific skills and abilities especially in conflict mitigation/resolution for enabling local-level formidable leadership initiatives. However, it should be noted that female councillors have observed a positive change in attitude of male councillors as a result of being included in some of the trainings. Therefore, the change the women expect within the council is possible if male councillors are given the opportunity to participate in such trainings, which also could be a way of breaking the existing stereotype and power dynamics in Local Councils.

The conclusions provided above are derived from pivotal issues of interest witnessed during the evaluation. Recommendations are provided in the next chapter following the same serial numbers consecutively to correspond with each item mentioned in the concluding remarks above.

# 6. Recommendations

Following are recommendations that logically flow from the findings of the two main interventions and in correlation to their corresponding conclusions, for upscaling positive lessons learnt and for taking measures to prevent possible obstacles in future endeavours. The recommendations mostly centre on the need for effective coordination, coherence and meaningful participation with more focus warranted in the future to jointly analyse results and adopt imminent/new projects/continue the good initiatives undertaken in this phase accordingly. The recommendations are targeted at the country offices of UNFPA, UNV and UN Women, their stakeholders, headquarters, and regional offices.

The order of the presentation of the following recommendations links directly to the same corresponding serial number provided for the items in the previous chapter with conclusions.

## 6.1 Strategic Level

### General to All Entities

1. The overall intrepid process of carrying out this project to a successful completion despite the political turbulences and the violent events in the county during the project period is recommended for the global PBSO community to emulate.
2. It is recommended that more robust and continued engagement by UNFPA, UNV and UN Women towards taking these initiatives forward would help fully achieve the structural changes envisaged.

### Specific to each entity

#### UNFPA (Outcome1)

3. With a strategic longevity in mind, for YPP members, it is recommended that further action be taken to provide them with the recognition that they seek from IPs, government institutions and government officers, which otherwise makes their YPP-related interventions challenging.

#### UNV (Outcome 1)

4. It is recommended to continue the practice of strategic placement of UN Volunteers in CSOs to enhance a range of local capacities for peacebuilding.

#### UN Women (Outcome 2)

5. Create an opportunity to link all participants of different fora to come together to build synergies at a national-level peace forum. This would give an opportunity to further strengthen the collaboration of all beneficiaries from outcome 2 and the synergies between the IPs and their partnering CBOs to reach the project goal collectively.

## 6.2. Programmatic Level

### General to All Entities

6. It is recommended that such novel and outstanding initiatives brought about by this project in capacity development, promotion of gender sensitivity and human rights and their activities/interest be further sustained as they are imperative for the common wellbeing of all communities.
7. Since it was the first time that these three specific UN entities implemented a joint project, it is recommended to document success stories of their coordinated efforts through the project for the wider audience to learn from such initiatives. It is recommended that future project designs consider inter-agency links at all levels of the activities too, to enable a 'truly' successful joint effort of agencies.
8. To improve the coherence with other peacebuilding initiatives carried out by other UN agencies specifically, it is recommended to have quarterly meetings with all agencies, so that updates can be given about ongoing and upcoming projects and create the space for the agencies to learn from each other and find opportunities to collaborate.
9. A mechanism to monitor the activities beyond the end of the project to be included in the design of the project is recommended as it is essential for the sustainability and learning of lessons for the future of the project.

### Specific to Each Entity

#### UNV & UNFPA (Outcome 1)

10. It is recommended to revisit the blueprint of the V-Award process and design a mechanism to include the candidates in the ranking process, where they are given the space to rank their work amongst others, and for a system of funding to be considered for volunteers to carry out their initiatives.
11. It is recommended to make strong links with key stakeholders such as the NYSC lower to mid-level officers who do not change frequently with the change of government or due to other political reasons. This way, institutional memory could be preserved, and activities can continue even if higher-level officers/directors change.<sup>17</sup> Similarly, in planning and designing conceptual input to events such as the Yowunpuraya camp, the inherently political nature of such platforms should be considered, and the conceptual challenges in working with polarised groups should be factored in.
12. Considering the capacity of its members and its vast potential, it would be beneficial if YPS coalition could be transformed from a knowledge-sharing platform to a more action-oriented network in the future, i.e., to also implement more projects.
13. Since provincial youth policies are in the last stage of implementation (and were delayed owing to local elections), it is recommended that they should be assisted through the process, up to the end of the project, although the project term has ended. It is also recommended to extend these useful initiatives to other provinces.

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<sup>17</sup>An MoU signed with NYSC in order to support a more sustainable partnership in this light was brought to the attention of the evaluation team.

14. To be able to sustain active participation of platforms such as YPP it is recommended to maintain constant engagement and nurturing until such platforms are stabilised.
15. UN agencies could invest more effort in publicising their research such as the RCSS research and encourage their IPs and youth leaders to engage with them when designing activities. In order to avoid such an issue i.e. the RCSS report not been referred to in planning activities, in the future, it is recommended that: (1) such research to be published before activities are commenced so it can be used as a reference point for planning activities (2) for the report to have interactive elements such as embedded videos, infographics, comic strips etc. to make it more appealing to youth (3) that the report is disseminated widely through an email database, and a teaser video to be published so that a hype can be created before the report is launched.

### **UN Women (Outcome 2)**

16. There are cultural and traditional roles that women wish to overcome where it is generally accepted that men have fought the war and that the onus is only on the men to address peace-related issues, whereas it need not be so, according to most of these women who wish to defy these established gender roles. Therefore, it is recommended to give opportunity or provide more training/peace education and capacity-building for female local councillors in order for them to become capable of building peace and engaging in mediation and negotiation. This would not only invoke UNSCR 1325 but also allow women to be empowered as leaders in the community and engage in good governance.
17. More gender-sensitive training and awareness for men is a prerequisite for meaningful women's empowerment. While the female councillors acknowledged that the capacity, they gained from the trainings has empowered them and increased their confidence as a leader, there are still significant obstacles faced by women that stymie their full and equal participation in the economic and political process. Therefore, one of the recommendations by female councillors themselves was to give more training and awareness on gender sensitivity to male councillors. Moreover, given the stark reality that these women leaders face back in the society such as existing traditions, social norms, gender discrimination and other challenges in the patriarchal society, there is a need for consistent monitoring and follow-up training for the women leaders to bolster self-confidence and knowledge to engage in politics and involve in peace processes was felt.
18. It is recommended that in future, promotion of women's engagement in governance and peacebuilding processes takes place beyond their electorate in collaboration with other initiatives, vertical and horizontal, when addressing women's rights, gender equality and policy making. Thus, including women from all sectors both at the national and local level is important as the policies that they enact will certainly have a direct or indirect impact on all women across the country.
19. Beneficiaries ought to be encouraged to work independently towards the overarching larger picture and understand their role/contribution towards reaching the common goal. Efforts ought to be made to promote responsibility and ownership to sustain the project among women leaders, the IPs, and the beneficiaries beyond donor assistance. It is also good to encourage IPs and beneficiaries to look beyond inherent project-limitations (i.e., donor support, time limits, spatial and gender barriers) by helping them to optimise opportunities for networking in like-minded forums, groups and organisations that may help continue the initiatives even after the end of the project.
20. It is recommended that these women leaders be provided with professional skills to engage in resolving local conflicts and psycho-social issues that they are constantly confronted with as local leaders, according to them. For this, a step-by-step process is also recommended including close monitoring and well-designed follow ups to address psycho-social issues and

sustain the ability of the women/beneficiaries to be able to function as a group towards healing and empowering. This monitoring and follow up could be carried out using the action research methods in each step of the output through reflection after each action to see whether the output responds to the outcome and justifies the indicators. If not, take the lessons learned and apply it to the next step. Continue the same process.

21. It is recommended that future projects related to women's capacity development among others could also focus on specific skills and abilities especially in conflict mitigation/resolution to strengthen their emerging new roles for local-level peacebuilding interventions. The demand for such skills and training was revealed during the appraisal of this project. Such training would help strengthen their traditional and emerging new roles to enable local peace intervention.

The recommendations provided above are correlated to some weaknesses and areas for improvement of the project evaluated. They are also linked to positive aspects of the project and are intended to help scale-up future endeavours, provide value additions, or replicate successful good practices/activities for tangible gains.

# Annexures

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## Annex 2 - List of Persons/Institutions Interviewed

List of Interviews Conducted (KPI) – Outcome 1 and 2

	Name	Designation	Date of Interview	Organisation
1.	Mr. Chandralal, Gamunu	Journalist	10/10/2020	
2.	Mr. Chathuranga, Dileep	V Award Winner 2018	09/10/2020	
3.	Mr. de Silva, Rajeewa	District Youth Officer	07/09/2020	National Youth Services Council
4.	Ms. Emmanuel, Sarala	Former Executive Director of Suriya Women	09/09/2020	
5.	Mr. Gunarathne, S.	Assistant Director (planning)	04/09/2020	Provincial Council Central Province
6.	Mr. Herath, Dilshara	Student	08/09/2020	University of Ruhuna, Matara.
7.	Mr. Jegarthan, Joy Ferdinand	UN Volunteer	07/09/2020	Music Project in Kurunegala and Mullaitivu
8.	Ms. Kariyawasam, Jeewani	National Consultant/Lead Facilitator for the MPDs	31/08/2020	UN Women
9.	Mr. Karunaratne, Sunil	Deputy Director (Training)	16/09/2020	National Youth Services Council
10.	Ms. Kumarasiri, Madhawi	Student	08/09/2020	University of Ruhuna, Matara.
11.	Ms. Kuruchandran, Mahalakshmi	District Coordinator	10/09/2020	Mannar Women's Development Federation
12.	Ms. Nugaliyadda, Anusha	Area Manager	03/09/2020	Chrysalis
13.	Ms. Pathirage, Sriyani	Chairperson, Rural Women's Front	16/09/2020	Rural Women's Front
14.	Mr. Pathirana, Chamila	V Award Finalist	10/10/2020	
15.	Ms. Perera, Sumika	Coordinator	15/09/2020	Women's Resource Centre, Kurunegala Partner with WMC project
16.	Mr. Rislana, Ahamed	Head of Development Services	26/08/2020	Chrysalis
17.	Mr. Sampayo, Dhammika	Assistant Director	07/09/2020	National Youth Services Council
18.	Ms. Samuel, Kumudini	Director of Programmes, Women and Media Collective	26/08/2020	Women and Media Collective
19.	Mr. Shihan, Remo	Founder	28/08/2020	CREATE
20.	Mr. Vinopavan, K.	Manager - Programme Quality	28/08/2020	Youth Peace Network, Chrysalis
21.	Ms. Weerakoon, Thilaka	Assisted in coordinating a workshop in South	10/09/2020	Ruhunu Sisila Social Services Organisation
22.	Ms. Wickramasuriya, Shalini	Coordinator	15/09/2020	The Music Project

## List of Interviews (KPI) with Heads/Country Reps/ERG

	Name	Designation	Date of Interview	Organisation
1.	Ms. Fernando, Dushanthi	PBSO	9/10/2020	UN Country Office
2.	Ms. Jayasinghe, Sharmalee	Country Coordinator	9/10/2020	UNV
3.	Ms. Nacken, Ritsu	Country Representative	8/10/2020	UNFPA
4.	Ms. Salgado, Ramaaya	Country focal point	21/09/2020	UN Women

## List of Interviews with Evaluation Management Group Members

	Name/Designation	Designation	Date of Interview	Organisation
1.	Ms. Dias, Prashani	Project Officer of Peacebuilding and GRB	11/09/2020	UN Women
2.	Ms. Radhakrishnan, Poorani	Programme Analyst – Population Data and Ageing	09/09/2020	UNFPA
3.	Mr. Stembo, Sam	Project Manager	27/08/2020	UNV

## List of Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) – Outcome 1

<b>FGD 1</b>	<b>Sarvodaya, Shanthi Sena</b>
<b>Date</b>	27/08/2020
<b>Location</b>	Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement, 55, De Soysa Road, Rawatawatte, Moratuwa.
<b>Participants</b>	Ms. Cooray, Nilukshi UN Volunteer Mr. Kandage, Ravindra, Vice President/ Executive Director Mr. Rasika, Programme Manager
<b>FGD 2</b>	<b>Sarvodaya</b>
<b>Date</b>	03/09/2020
<b>Location</b>	Shanthi Sena, 12 Anagarika Dharmapala Mawatha, Kandy
<b>Participants</b>	Ms. Kumari, J.M. Hansini Nethmi Ms. Samarawansa, M.G. Lakmal Nayana Kumara Mr. Senavirathen, P.R. Dilshan Sandakelum Mr. Ranasinghe, R.A. Pradeep Dilshan
<b>FGD 3</b>	<b>University of Ruhuna</b>
<b>Date</b>	08/09/2020
<b>Location</b>	University of Ruhuna, Wellamadama, Matara.
<b>Participants</b>	Dr. Ambawatta, Chithral Dr. Kodikara, Sunanda Prof. Yapa, Kanthi
<b>FGD 4</b>	<b>Youth Peace Panel</b>
<b>Date</b>	11/09/2020
<b>Location</b>	Wonder Hotel, Colombo
<b>Participants</b>	Mr. Ahamed, Shaheer - YPP member from Ampara Mr. Farjees, H.B.F. - YPP member from Colombo Mr. Iliyas, M.N.M. - YPP member from Jaffna Mr. Perera, Janith - YPP member from Anuradhapura Ms. Rushikk, M. Angel - YPP member from Kandy Mr. Sameera, Dilshan - YPP member from Matale

	Ms. Senaratne, Dishani - YPP member from Gampaha Mr. Shabeer, K.A.M. - YPP member from Gampaha Mr. Suraj, N. B. Adhil - YPP member from Jaffna Mr. Thadshajay, K. - YPP member from Colombo Mr. Usama, L. - YPP member from Kagalle
<b>FGD 5</b>	<b>Youth4Peace, Capacity Building for Youth on 2250</b>
<b>Date</b>	16/09/2020
<b>Location</b>	Kilinochchi
<b>Participants</b>	Ms. Chandrasegaram, Rajany - Freelance Activist, Jaffna Ms. Kalaichelvi, K. - Korakkan Kattu, Paranthan, Kilinochchi. Ms. Krishnaveni, T. - WRDS Members, 161 Post, Paranthan, Kilinochchi. Ms. Ithayarani, S - Vallamai Member, Anandapuram Kilinochchi. Ms. Thanuya, M. - Vallamai Member, Anuradapuram, Kilinochchi. Ms. Vijayarani, E - Korakkan Kattu, Paranthan, Kilinochchi.
<b>FGD 6</b>	<b>Youth4Peace, Capacity Building for Youth on 2250</b>
<b>Date</b>	16/09/2020
<b>Location</b>	Jaffna
<b>Participants</b>	Ms. Chandrasegaram, Rajany - Freelance Activist, Jaffna Ms. Hemalatha, K. - Vallamai, Mavattapuram, Thellipalai. Ms. Manthina, K. - Representative of EPDP, Nayanmark Street, Nallur, Jaffna. Ms. Nirmala, M. - Vallamai, Kaithadi West, Jaffna. Ms. Niththika, S. - Member, Pradeshiya Sabha, Neerveli West, Jaffna Ms. Suganthini, S - Member, Vallamai, Urumbirai, Jaffna. Ms. Theepa, S. - Leader, Women's Association, Vallamai, Vannarpannai, Jaffna.
<b>FGD 7</b>	<b>Symposium, Devon</b>
<b>Date</b>	24/09/2020
<b>Location</b>	National Youth Services Council
<b>Participants</b>	Mr. Jayatissa, M.P.M.K., Kandy Mr. Kumara, A.M.T. Navin, Hambantota. Ms. Priyasarani, K.M.S.C., Kandy. Mr. Ratnayake, M.G.W.S., Nuwara Eliya. Mr. Senarathna, M.G.L.C., Nuwara Eliya. Mr. Wijeyawardena, P.V.M., Matale.

## List of Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) – Outcome 2

<b>FGD 1</b>	<b>Suriya women, Batticaloa</b>
<b>Date</b>	09/09/2020
<b>Location</b>	Batticaloa
<b>Participants</b>	Ms. Aysha, F. Ms. Kalaivani, K. Ms. Komala, E. Ms. Komaleshwary, S. Ms. Rajaratnam, Anuratha Mrs. Rakeeba, H. Ms. Rasitha, J.
<b>FGD 2</b>	<b>Ruhunu Sisila Social Services Organisation</b>
<b>Date</b>	10/09/2020
<b>Location</b>	Ruhunu Sisila Social Services Organisation, Matara
<b>Participants</b>	Ms. Kulavathi, Liyanage Ms. Shashikala, Vidanagamachchige Erandi Ms. Thotagamuwa, Sujika

	Ms. Weerakoon, Thilaka
<b>FGD 3</b>	<b>Kurunegala</b>
<b>Date</b>	15/09/2020
<b>Location</b>	Kurunegala
<b>Participants</b>	Ms. Anoma, K.D. Ms. Aruni, W.H. – Kurunegala Ms. Dingiri, B.M. – ISE Ms. Niroshani, M.K.I. – Kurunegala Ms. Padmini, Mallika - P.S. Illagamuwa Ms. Ranatunga, R.J.K.S. Ms. Samarakoon, S.H. Dhammika - Pradeshiya S.H. Wariyapola Ms. Wijesinghe, W.M. Indrani
<b>FGD 4</b>	<b>Galle</b>
<b>Date</b>	16/09/2020
<b>Location</b>	Galle
<b>Participants</b>	Ms. Dharmasuriya, W. Mallika - Hikkaduwa Urban Council Ms. Irangani, E.M. Indra - Ambalangoda Urban Council Ms. Kumari, K.L.L. Rangani - Bope-Poddala Pradeshiya Sabha
<b>FGD 5</b>	<b>Multiparty Dialogue in Kurunegala</b>
<b>Date</b>	29/09/2020
<b>Location</b>	
<b>Participants</b>	Ms. Balasooriya, Samudra - Municipal Council, Kurunegala Ms. Dasanayake, D.M.N.A.K. - Polpithigama Pradeshiya Saba Mr. Godigamuwa, Chandradasa - Pradeshiya Saba Member Dr. Mrs. Herath, Menike - Pradeshiya Saba Narammala Ms. K.A. Kumari, Ajantha – Mawathagama Ms. Lakshika, Dilani - Galgamuwa Pradeshiya Saba Ms. Samarakoon, S.H. Dhammika - Pradeshiya Saba Member Ms. Samarathunga, Rathmal - Ibbagamuwa Pradeshiya Saba Ms. Selvanayagi, M. - Municipal Council, Kurunegala Ms. Weerasekara, Kumari - Ibbagamuwa Pradeshiya Saba

## Annex 3 - List of Documents Consulted

	Documents	Availability	Notes/Comments
<b>1</b>	<b>Project documents</b>		
1.1	Results framework	Y	
1.2	Mid-term evaluations	N/A	
1.3	Annual Work Plan	Incomplete	UNV annual plan (N/A)
1.4	Strategic Plans	Y	
1.5	Reports/studies/documents drawn up by the project as part of the implementation process	N/A	
1.6	Reports submitted by partner agencies/ stakeholders to the UNFPA	Y	
1.7	Reports submitted by partner agencies/ stakeholders to the UN Women	Y	
1.8	All reports submitted by partner agencies/ stakeholders to the UNV	Y	
1.9	UN country team documents	Y	
1.10	Progress Report	Y	
1.11	Annual Reports	Y	
1.12	Bi-Annual Reports	Y	
1.13	Field Reports	Y	
1.14	Project Results Framework	Y	
1.15	M & E Reports	Y	
1.16	Media Reports	Y	
1.17	PBF Coordination Meeting Documents	Y	
<b>2</b>	<b>All Original Design Documents</b>		
2.1	Project Document May 2017 (Proposal)	Y	
2.2	PBF Women and Youth concept note (16-Jan-2017)	Y	
2.3	Need Assessments	Y	
<b>3</b>	<b>Activity Related Documents</b>		
3.1	<b>Outcome 1</b>		
3.1.1	Activity 1.1.1 Documents	Y	
3.1.2	Activity 1.1.2 Documents	Incomplete	IYD (Jaffna)/ SDG Activation documents (N/A)
3.1.3	Activity 1.1.3 Documents	Y	
3.1.4	Activity 1.1.4 Documents	Y	
3.1.5	Activity 1.1.5 Documents	Incomplete	
3.1.6	Activity 1.2.1 Documents	Y	
3.1.7	Activity 1.2.2 Documents	Y	
3.2	<b>Outcome 2</b>		
3.2.1	Activity 2.1.1 Documents	Y	
3.2.2	Activity 2.1.2 Documents	Y	
3.2.3	Activity 2.1.3 Documents	Y	
3.2.4	Activity 2.1.4 Documents	Y	
3.2.5	Activity 2.1.5 Documents	Y	
3.2.6	Activity 2.2.1 Documents	Y	
3.2.7	Activity 2.2.2 Documents	Y	
3.2.8	Activity 2.2.3 Documents	Y	
3.2.9	Activity 2.2.4 Documents	Y	Reports

3.2.10	Activity 2.2.5 Documents	Y	Videos/ Reports
3.2.11	Activity 2.2.6 Documents	Y	Reports
3.2.12	Activity 2.2.7 Documents	Y	
3.2.13	Activity 2.3.1 Documents	Y	
3.2.14	Activity 2.3.2 Documents	Y	
<b>4</b>	<b>All Partnership Agreements/MOU with Any Stakeholder/Partner Agency/Organisation</b>		
4.1	Ministry of Youth Affairs	N/A	
4.2	Ministry of Women's Affairs	N/A	
4.3	National Youth Services Council	N/A	
4.4	Northern Provincial Council	N/A	
4.5	Eastern Provincial Council	N/A	
4.6	Central Provincial Council	N/A	
4.7	Southern Provincial Council	N/A	
4.8	North Western Provincial Council	N/A	
4.9	District Secretariats (5)	N/A	
4.10	Chrysalis	Y	
4.11	Women and Media Collective	Y	
4.12	Women's Resource Centre	Y	
4.13	Suriya Women's Development Centre	Y	
4.14	Mannar Women's Development Federation	Y	
<b>5</b>	<b>Financial Documents and Statements</b>		
5.1	Financial Reports (Annexes in every progress reports)	Y	
5.2	Financial Budgets	Y	
5.3	Progress Reports (quarterly or biannual) with corresponding financial/expense reports from UNFPA/UNV/ UN Women	Y	
5.4	Annual reports comprising of detailed financial report	Y	
5.5	PBF Funding Approval	Y	
5.6	Letter of Clearance from the UNFPA (for the evaluation team)	Y	
5.7	List of all other Stakeholders	Y	
5.8	List of Other Partners	Y	
5.9	PPP country programme document	Y	
5.10	PPP Agreement	Y	

## Annex 4 - Evaluation Matrix

Outcome 1: Youth are actively and positively engaged in the peacebuilding process so that their voices are reflected in key policy and decision-making processes and outcomes at the national and sub-national levels.			
PEACEBUILDING RELEVANCE			
EQ 1: To what extent did the project’s strategies respond to the country, beneficiary and partner needs, policies and priorities and drivers of conflict, and adapt to changes in the context?			
Assumptions to be assessed	Indicators	Sources of information	Methods and tools for the data collection
1.1. Youth are consulted on designing national and sub-national policies and strategies pertaining to local issues of peace and reconciliation.	# of national and sub-national policies and recommendations on peace and reconciliation that consulted with young people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pro docs</li> <li>• Projects reports</li> <li>• YPP/YPS Documents</li> <li>• Strategic and policy papers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document reviews</li> <li>• Qualitative interviews with UN entities, IPs, government, and non-governmental stakeholders.</li> </ul>
1.2. Partners’ role and recognition enhanced to engage with youth.	# of multi-stakeholder engagement at provincial level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews with UNFPA, UNV personnel, stakeholders, and beneficiaries (online and field visits)</li> <li>• FGDs with beneficiaries (online and field visits)</li> </ul>	
PEACEBUILDING EFFECTIVENESS			
EQ 2: (a). To what extent did the project achieve or is expected to achieve its planned and unintended results and contribute to peacebuilding outcomes in Sri Lanka? (b). To what extent did the project actively identify and include the most marginalised in Sri Lanka ensuring that no one is left behind?			
Assumptions to be assessed	Indicators	Sources of information	Methods and tools for the data collection
2a. Youth contribute towards positive intended and unintended peacebuilding outcomes and are interested in participating in peacebuilding among all communities.	# of youth recognised and awarded for their engagement and contribution towards community-level peacebuilding activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pro docs</li> <li>• Projects reports</li> <li>• YPP/YPS Documents</li> <li>• Strategic and policy papers</li> <li>• Interviews (online and field visits)</li> <li>• FGDs (online and field visits)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document reviews</li> <li>• Qualitative interviews and FGDs with UN entities, IPs, government and non-governmental stakeholders and beneficiaries</li> </ul>



2b. Marginalised youth from different groups i.e., ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identities and disabilities are included in the peacebuilding activities.	# of representatives of marginalised youth groups who get opportunities to take part.		
<b>EFFICIENCY OF MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE</b>			
EQ 3: To what extent does the project deliver or is likely to deliver results in an economic and timely manner?			
Assumptions to be assessed	Indicators	Sources of information	Methods and tools for the data collection
<p>3.1. Dedicated budgets available at the national- and local-level institutions for peacebuilding activities for youth in a timely manner.</p> <p>3.2. Efficient and adequate human resources and capacity available to implement timely peacebuilding interventions.</p>	<p>Amount of budget secured within key institutions (specify which institutions) at central-, provincial- and district-level in targeted locations dedicated to youth.</p> <p># of professionals involved in the peacebuilding initiatives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pro docs</li> <li>• Budgets and financial reports</li> <li>• Projects reports</li> <li>• Documents</li> <li>• Strategic and policy papers</li> <li>• Interviews (online and field visits)</li> <li>• FGDs (online and field visits)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document reviews</li> <li>• Qualitative interviews and FGDs with UN entities, IPs, government and non-governmental stakeholders and beneficiaries</li> </ul>
<b>IMPACT OF MACRO PEACEBUILDING</b>			
EQ 4: To what extent has this project impacted upon youth in the national-level peacebuilding process?			
Assumptions to be assessed	Indicators	Sources of information	Methods and tools for the data collection
4.1. Youth proactively engage in national-level peacebuilding.	<p>Indicator 1.1.4 % of youth that perceives or reports volunteering having a positive contribution on peacebuilding</p> <p># of youth policies planned at provincial level for adoption for future implementation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pro docs</li> <li>• Projects reports</li> <li>• YPP Documents</li> <li>• Interviews (online and field visits)</li> <li>• FGDs (online and field visits)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document reviews</li> <li>• Qualitative interviews and FGDs with UN entities, IPs, government and non-governmental stakeholders and beneficiaries</li> </ul>

### SUSTAINABILITY OF LONG-TERM PEACEBUILDING

EQ 5: To what extent has the project been able to support implementing partners and beneficiaries in developing capacities and establishing mechanisms to ensure sustainability of efforts and benefits?

Assumptions to be assessed	Indicators	Sources of information	Methods and tools for the data collection
5.1. A mechanism established to ensure the sustainability of the efforts and benefits.	National Youth Peace Panel established and operational.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projects reports</li> <li>• YPP/YPS Documents</li> <li>• Strategic and policy papers</li> <li>• Interviews (online and field visits)</li> <li>• FGDs (online and field visits)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document reviews</li> <li>• Qualitative interviews and FGDs with UN entities, IPs, government and non-governmental stakeholders and beneficiaries</li> </ul>
5.2. Availability of a pool of trainers for capacity building.	# of staff trained in the institutions (i.e., implementing organisations/ universities) for Training of Trainers.		
5.3. Attitude of youth transformed from extremism to moderatism.	# of youth networks (informal) formed.		

### PARTICIPATION AND OWNERSHIP OF NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS

EQ 6: (a). How efficient was the project coordination between UNFPA, UNV and UN Women including clarity of roles and accountabilities, avoiding duplication of efforts in implementation of activities, use of data/evidence for decision-making, monitoring and reporting and potential added value? (b). To what extent have partnerships with government institutions, NGOs, etc. been sought/established and synergies created in delivery of assistance?

Assumptions to be assessed	Indicators	Sources of information	Methods and tools for the data collection
6a. Well-established roles, synergy, accountability mechanism created between UN entities (i.e., UNFPA, UNV and UN Women), Government and NGOs, and IPs.	# of progress review coordination meetings and networking within stakeholders of entities and among partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pro docs</li> <li>• Project reports</li> <li>• Project progress reports documenting changes.</li> <li>• Meeting minutes</li> <li>• Interviews (online and field visits)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document reviews</li> <li>• Qualitative interviews with UN entities and IPs</li> </ul>
6b1. All main stakeholders (within and among organisations) come together to create space for youth's expressions.	# of follow-up activities initiated and carried out.		
6b2. Assistance available from national, provincial, and sub-national level institutions for establishing National Youth Peace Panel.	# of policies that are formally considered by the National Youth Peace Panel.		

	<p># of interest-group hubs assisted towards carrying forward policies.</p> <p>Organic social cohesion among number of assisting groups.</p> <p># of networks established.</p> <p># of continuing networks established.</p>		
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### COORDINATION AND COHERENCE WITH OTHER INITIATIVES

EQ 7: To what extent is the project compatible with other peacebuilding interventions carried out in the country by implementing agencies and other stakeholders working towards the same objective(s) with youth?

Assumptions to be assessed	Indicators	Sources of information	Methods and tools for the data collection
7.1. National and sub-national level coordination of youth organisations and institutions working towards the same objectives established.	# of national and sub-national groups working towards the same objectives coordinated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pro docs</li> <li>• Projects reports</li> <li>• YPP/YPS Documents</li> <li>• Strategic and policy papers</li> <li>• Interviews (online and field visits)</li> <li>• FGDs (online and field visits)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document reviews</li> <li>• Qualitative interviews and FGDs with UN entities, IPs, government and non-governmental stakeholders and beneficiaries</li> </ul>
7.2. A strong national-level platform to sustain and strengthen the national-level peace process.	# of national-level platforms created.		

### GENDER EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

EQ 8: To what extent did the project address and respond to existing power dynamics and gender relations?

Assumptions to be assessed	Indicators	Sources of information	Methods and tools for the data collection
8.1. Judicious balance exists disaggregated by gender, geographical location, and population group.	# of local youth consulted for policy priority setting disaggregated by gender, geographical location, disabilities, and population group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pro docs</li> <li>• Projects reports</li> <li>• Documents</li> <li>• Strategic and policy papers</li> <li>• Interviews (online and field visits)</li> <li>• FGDs (online and field visits)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document reviews</li> <li>• Qualitative interviews and FGDs with UN entities, IPs, government and non-governmental stakeholders and beneficiaries</li> </ul>
8.2. Youth involved in the project work towards decreasing gender biases, gender discrimination and increasing	# of testimonies from youth participants.		

appreciation of diversity (i.e., ethnicity, religion, class, and caste).			
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**Outcome 2: State decision-making processes are more equitable and inclusive to enable women’s meaningful participation and leadership in governance and peacebuilding.**

**PEACEBUILDING RELEVANCE**

EQ 1: To what extent did the project’s strategies respond to the country, beneficiary and partner needs, policies and priorities and drivers of conflict, and adapt to changes in the context?

<b>Assumptions to be assessed</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Sources of information</b>	<b>Methods and tools for the data collection</b>
1.1. Project’s strategies, policies and priorities addressing drivers of conflict are in place to support women’s leadership.	<p># of local-level project strategies initiated by women.</p> <p># of cross-party initiatives conducted by local authorities to enhance women's leadership and governance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pro docs</li> <li>• Projects reports</li> <li>• Documents</li> <li>• Strategic and policy papers</li> <li>• Interviews (online and field visits)</li> <li>• FGDs (online and field visits)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document reviews</li> <li>• Qualitative interviews and FGDs with UN entities, IPs, government and non-governmental stakeholders and beneficiaries</li> </ul>

**PEACEBUILDING EFFECTIVENESS**

EQ 2: (a). To what extent did the project achieve or is expected to achieve its planned and unintended results and contribute to peacebuilding outcomes in Sri Lanka? (b). To what extent did the project actively identify and include the most marginalised in Sri Lanka ensuring that no one is left behind?

<b>Assumptions to be assessed</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Sources of information</b>	<b>Methods and tools for the data collection</b>
<p>2a. Increased space and platform available for women to voice their rights and needs.</p> <p>2b1. Local women in politics possess better recognition and understanding/knowledge of policy making for better governance.</p>	<p># of initiatives taken by women to voice their rights and needs.</p> <p># of initiatives taken by female local councillors that helped the formulation of policies with regards to women.</p> <p># of peace initiatives undertaken at all levels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pro docs</li> <li>• Projects reports</li> <li>• Documents</li> <li>• Parliamentary Gender Committee meeting minutes</li> <li>• MPD meeting minutes</li> <li>• Strategic and policy papers</li> <li>• Interviews (online and field visits)</li> <li>• FGDs (online and field visits)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document reviews</li> <li>• Qualitative interviews and FGDs with UN entities, IPs, government and non-governmental stakeholders and beneficiaries</li> </ul>

2b2. Women from diverse groups come together towards peace initiatives.			
<b>EFFICIENCY OF MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE</b>			
EQ 3: To what extent does the project deliver or is likely to deliver results in an economic and timely manner?			
<b>Assumptions to be assessed</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Sources of information</b>	<b>Methods and tools for the data collection</b>
3.1. Dedicated budgets available at the national and local level for peacebuilding activities and local government initiatives for women in a timely manner.  3.2. Efficient and adequate human resources and capacity available to implement timely peacebuilding interventions.	Amount of financial support secured for implementing activities by individuals and institutions in targeted locations dedicated to women’s activities.  # of professionals involved in the peacebuilding initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pro docs</li> <li>• Projects reports</li> <li>• Budgets and Financial reports</li> <li>• Documents</li> <li>• Strategic and policy papers</li> <li>• Interviews (online and field visits)</li> <li>• FGDs (online and field visits)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document reviews</li> <li>• Qualitative interviews and FGDs with UN entities, IPs, government and non-governmental stakeholders and beneficiaries</li> </ul>
<b>IMPACT OF MACRO PEACEBUILDING</b>			
EQ 4: To what extent has this project impacted upon women in the national-level peacebuilding process?			
<b>Assumptions to be assessed</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Sources of information</b>	<b>Methods and tools for the data collection</b>
4.1. Local governance institutions carry out gender-responsive peacebuilding policy planning at a national level.	Evidence of gender-responsive local plans developed.  # of initiatives taken by female local councillors towards peacebuilding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pro docs</li> <li>• Projects reports</li> <li>• Strategic and policy documents</li> <li>• Interviews (online and field visits)</li> <li>• FGDs (online and field visits)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document reviews</li> <li>• Qualitative interviews and FGDs with UN entities, IPs, government and non-governmental stakeholders and beneficiaries</li> </ul>
<b>SUSTAINABILITY OF LONG-TERM PEACEBUILDING</b>			
EQ 5: To what extent has the project been able to support implementing partners and beneficiaries in developing capacities and establishing mechanisms to ensure sustainability of efforts and benefits?			
<b>Assumptions to be assessed</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Sources of information</b>	<b>Methods and tools for the data collection</b>
5.1. Women are able to independently disseminate knowledge gained and	# of those trained who are able to cite at least one example of applying the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pro docs</li> <li>• Projects reports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document reviews</li> </ul>

empower their community through training received.	training in their work by three months after training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training modules</li> <li>• Strategic and policy papers</li> <li>• Interviews (online and field visits)</li> <li>• FGDs (online and field visits)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualitative interviews and FGDs with UN entities, IPs, government and non-governmental stakeholders and beneficiaries</li> </ul>
5.2. Beneficiaries carry out independent peace initiatives with enhanced knowledge/capacities and mechanisms received from IPs.	Evidence of local-level initiatives independently carried out by beneficiaries.		

### **PARTICIPATION AND OWNERSHIP OF NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS**

EQ 6: (a). How efficient was the project coordination between UNFPA, UNV and UN Women including clarity of roles and accountabilities, avoiding duplication of efforts in implementation of activities, use of data/evidence for decision-making, monitoring and reporting and potential added value? (b). To what extent have partnerships with government institutions, NGOs, etc. been sought/established and synergies created in delivery of assistance?

<b>Assumptions to be assessed</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Sources of information</b>	<b>Methods and tools for the data collection</b>
6a. Well-established roles, synergy and an accountability mechanism created between UN entities (i.e., UNFPA, UNV and UN Women) and government organisations, NGOs and IPs.	# of progress review coordination meetings and networking among stakeholders of entities and among partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pro docs</li> <li>• Project reports</li> <li>• Project progress reports documenting changes.</li> <li>• Meeting minutes</li> <li>• Interviews (online and field visits)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document reviews</li> <li>• Qualitative interviews with UN entities and IPs</li> </ul>
6b. All main stakeholders (within and among organisations) come together to create space for women's expressions.	# of follow-up activities initiated and carried out.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projects reports</li> <li>• Documents</li> <li>• Strategic and policy papers</li> <li>• Interviews (online and field visits)</li> <li>• FGDs (online and field visits)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document reviews</li> <li>• Qualitative interviews and FGDs with UN entities, IPs, government and non-governmental stakeholders and beneficiaries</li> </ul>

### **COORDINATION AND COHERENCE WITH OTHER INITIATIVES**

EQ 7: To what extent is the project compatible with other peacebuilding interventions carried out in the country by implementing agencies and other stakeholders working towards the same objective(s) with women?

<b>Assumptions to be assessed</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Sources of information</b>	<b>Methods and tools for the data collection</b>
7.1. Women's leadership in all municipalities (local government bodies) coordinated for collective	# of municipalities (local government bodies) capacitated on collective leadership at the local level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pro docs</li> <li>• Projects reports</li> <li>• Parliamentary Gender Committee meeting minutes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document reviews</li> <li>• Qualitative interviews and FGDs with UN entities, IPs, government</li> </ul>

leadership in implementing peacebuilding interventions.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MPD meeting minutes</li> <li>• Strategic and policy papers</li> <li>• Interviews (online and field visits)</li> <li>• FGDs (online and field visits)</li> </ul>	and non-governmental stakeholders and beneficiaries
7.2. A national-level mechanism exists to sustain and strengthen women's rights-based initiatives.	# of groups/institutions participated to influence national-level mechanism.		

### GENDER EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

EQ 8: (a). To what extent was gender equality, women's empowerment and human rights integrated into design, implementation and monitoring of the project? (b). To what extent did the project address and respond to existing power dynamics and gender relations?

Assumptions to be assessed	Indicators	Sources of information	Methods and tools for the data collection
8a. A gender-sensitive project informed of equality, women's empowerment and human rights.	# Evidence of empowered, women's groups and networks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pro docs</li> <li>• Projects reports</li> <li>• Documents</li> <li>• Strategic and policy papers</li> <li>• Interviews (online and field visits)</li> <li>• FGDs (online and field visits)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document reviews</li> <li>• Qualitative interviews and FGDs with UN entities, IPs, government and non-governmental stakeholders and beneficiaries</li> </ul>
8b. Women possess knowledge and are trained to execute effective decision-making, and balance existing power dynamics and gender relations.	% of people who believe that presence of women in leadership positions leads to improved policymaking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pro docs</li> <li>• Projects reports</li> <li>• Documents</li> <li>• Strategic and policy papers</li> <li>• Interviews (online and field visits)</li> <li>• FGDs (online and field visits)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document reviews</li> <li>• Qualitative interviews and FGDs with UN entities, IPs, government and non-governmental stakeholders and beneficiaries</li> </ul>

## Annex 5 - Methodological Instruments

### 1. Draft Interview Guide for UN bodies (UNFPA, UNV, UN Women)

#### A. Peacebuilding Relevance:

- Q1. Please brief us on the context in which the project was designed and the process of the project?
- Q2. Why was it important to involve youth and women?
- Q3. Please explain the process of designing the project. (Who were consulted/involved (i.e., stakeholders) and need assessments carried out if any?)
- Q4. What activities were planned and what were implemented?
  - 1.1. Can you explain how they were carried out?
- Q5. In your experience, how relevant is the UNSCR 2250 to the Sri Lankan context?
- Q6. Could you share with us the reports and research outputs/ knowledge products produced through the research? (Youth and women-related)

#### B. Peacebuilding Effectiveness:

- Q1. What was the expectation and experience of the joint project and was the expectation fulfilled?
- Q2. How effective was this inter-agency, combined approach?
- Q3. What were the lessons learnt and the recognised good practices?
- Q4. What were the intended and unintended results achieved?
- Q5. What is your observation on the engagement of UN Volunteers and youth through volunteering in the peacebuilding process?

#### C. Impact on Macro Peacebuilding:

- Q1. What was the effect of these activities at macro-level peacebuilding on the youth and women?
- Q2. How would you assess this with youth and women separately?
- Q3. How did this project contribute towards the larger peace and conflict-context in the country?
- Q4. Was there any strategy you employed to guide them to continue this initiative independently towards sustainable peace in the society?

#### D. Sustainability for Long-Term Peacebuilding:

- Q1. What steps have you taken to sustain the process, structure and institutions for peacebuilding?
- Q2. In what ways do you believe the implemented structure and institutions for peacebuilding will be effective after the project?

#### E. Efficiency of Management and Governance:

- Q1. How did you allocate resources to local stakeholders?
- Q2. What principles and logic did you follow when allocating resources?
- Q3. Were the outputs achieved in a cost-efficient manner by the local stakeholders?
- Q4. (Youth) Did you have enough financial and technical support to carry out innovative initiatives? Were fund flows timely for the activities?

#### F. Participation and Ownership of National Local Stakeholders:

- Q1. How did you map the local stakeholders and estimate their importance to the project?
- Q2. Who were identified as your stakeholders?
  - 2.1. How were stakeholders selected for the process? Did you follow any selection criteria/guidelines or principles when selecting/rejecting a particular stakeholder?
  - 2.2. Did you give special consideration for inclusion of youth from different social categories, i.e., ex-militants, disabled and other marginalised groups?
  - 2.3 What sorts of challenges did you face?
- Q3. Have the selected stakeholders fulfilled the project objectives?



#### **G. Coordination and Coherence with Other Initiatives:**

- Q1. What was the relationship you had with other actors in the project areas working towards the same objectives?
- Q2. Have you worked/networked with other stakeholders in parallel with youth and women?
- Q3. How do you assess the engagement and contribution of UN Volunteers with the partners?

#### **H. Gender Equality, Human Rights:**

- Q1. Were women and youth included in the consultation process?
- Q2. Were women and youth issues built into the project, its design, planning and implementation?
- Q3. What were some of their outstanding needs this project tries to fulfil?

## **2. Draft Interview Guide for Implementing Partners<sup>18</sup> (Government Ministries, Local Government Bodies, District Secretariats and CSOs)**

#### **A. Peacebuilding Relevance:**

- Q1. What interested you to be an implementing partner of this project?
- Q2. Why do you think it is important to involve youth and women in the peacebuilding process?
- Q3. To what extent did this intervention contribute towards a comprehensive peace process?
- Q4. What is your experience of localising the UNSCR 2250 in your activities?
- Q5. How do you understand your role as a UN Volunteer in the post-2009 peacebuilding context?

#### **B. Peacebuilding Effectiveness:**

- Q1. To what extent were the objectives achieved from your side?
- Q2. What were the unintended results achieved?
- Q3. What process of desired change has the intervention initiated in its immediate peacebuilding environment through your interventions?
- Q4. What were the lessons learnt and the recognised good practices?
- Q5. How effective was it to engage with the joint partnership of 3 UN bodies?
- Q6. What is your experience of the engagement and contribution of UN volunteers?
- Q7. What could be the challenges that may hinder effective peacebuilding for women and youth in our cultural context?
- Q8. (LG Women) How effective was social media in promoting women's political participation? What were the responses you received?
- Q9. (LG Women) How effective was the use of social media to engage with the public on the contribution and benefits of women's participation in the post-conflict governance structures and peacebuilding processes?

#### **C. Impact on Macro Peacebuilding:**

- Q1. What was the effect of these activities at a local level?
- Q2. How did they impact upon youth and women?
- Q3. How did these youth and gender sensitive programs/planning and budgeting impact at a national level with LG bodies?
- Q4. How did they impact on South/Central/ Northern and Eastern Provinces?
- Q5. (LG Women) How helpful was the training in using social media to promote women's political participation?
- Q6. What was the impact of engaging the youth through volunteering in the peacebuilding process?

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<sup>18</sup> UN Volunteers too fall under this category.

#### **D. Sustainability for Long-Term Peacebuilding:**

- Q1. What steps have you taken to have long-term processes to sustain peacebuilding activities?
- Q2. What are the structural and institutional changes recognised that would help sustain peace in the country?

#### **E. Efficiency of Management and Governance:**

- Q1. How did you allocate resources to peacebuilding activities?
- Q2. What principles and logic did you follow when allocating resources?
- Q3. Did you receive funds (also sufficient funds) in a timely manner from the UN bodies?
- Q4. What were the Local-, Divisional-, District- and National-level peacebuilding initiatives beneficiaries have carried out based on the skills and capacity built?
- Q5. Was this project able to achieve the outputs in a cost-efficient manner?

#### **F. Participation and Ownership of National Local Stakeholders:**

- Q1. How did you map the participants and estimate their importance to the project?
- Q2. What guidelines and principles were followed when selecting/rejecting a particular individual to be a participant?
- Q3. Have the selected participants fulfilled the project objectives?

#### **G. Coordination and Coherence with Other Initiatives:**

- Q1. What kind of a relationship did you have with other actors in the project-related areas working towards the same objectives?
- Q2. Have you worked with other parallel stakeholders with youth and women?
- Q3. What measure did you take to cooperate with the UN bodies or other local government peacebuilding initiatives taking place in parallel?

#### **H. Gender Equality, Human Rights:**

- Q1. Were women and youth included and empowered as equal voices in the consultation process?
- Q2. Were women and youth issues built into the project, its design, planning and implementation stages?
- Q3. Are there any specific factors that seek to empower them?
- Q4. How gender-sensitive was the training to handle social media to promote women's political participation?
- Q5. How gender-sensitive was the training to handle social media to promote women's participation in post-conflict governance structure and peacebuilding processes?

### **3. Draft Guide for Focus Group Discussions for Implementing Partner Organisations - CSOs/ CBOs and Participants**

#### **A. Peacebuilding Relevance:**

- Q1. Can you tell us about the context in which you got involved in the project?
- Q2. How did you get involved as an implementing partner of this project?
- Q3. (Women) Can you explain the mapping process of the women leaders to assess their capacity?
- Q4. (Women) What was the women leaders' role in the post-2009 peacebuilding context?
- Q5. What was your role as a youth volunteer in the post-2009 peacebuilding context?
- Q6. (Youth) Is the Youth Peace Panel in operation in all 9 provinces? What are their primary tasks/job descriptions? Who are the members of the YPP? Can you provide a list?
- Q7. (Youth) What peacebuilding aspects/work did these projects have?
- Q8. (Youth) What made you get involved in this project?
- Q9. Did this contribute to peace in your community in any way?
- Q10. (Women) What made you get involved in this project?
- Q11. (Youth) What was your role as youth in the advocacy plan?
- Q12. (Youth) Could you tell us about the provincial-level action plan for the youth?
- Q13. (Youth) Who are the multi-stakeholders involved in the dialogues?
- Q14. (Women) What was the expectations behind forming session facilitators?
- Q15. How many women have participated in this training?

Q16. (Women) What forums among political parties were supported? How are they selected? What kind of policies were developed in these forums?

Q17. (Youth) In what way did the youth participants respond to the major violent outbreaks in 2018 and 2019? What are the initiatives taken?

#### **B. Peacebuilding Effectiveness:**

Q1. To what extent were you able to reach goals of this project from your side?

Q2. What were the unintended results achieved?

Q3. (Y&W) Were you able to make the desired change through this intervention?

Q4. (Y&W) What challenges did you encounter to achieve the objectives?

Q5. (Youth) How effective was it to engage with the joint partnership with 3 UN bodies?

Q6. (Youth) Can you explain the functions of your advocacy plan for the Youth Peace Panel?

Q7. (Youth) How helpful is the advocacy plan that you developed?

Q8. (Youth) What criteria do you employ when selecting youth participants in your programme?

Q9. (Youth) Explain to us the process of how the three steering committees were established? How were the provincial youth policies drafted?

Q10. (Youth) At which point of the progress of the project were you affected by the COVID-19?

Q11. (Youth) Can you explain the process and the consultation carried out for the multi-stakeholders for the Youth Peace Panel?

Q12. What is your understanding of the UNSCR 2250? Was it helpful when initiating peacebuilding planning?

Q13. (Youth) Can you explain how the youth were linked to the government institutions (Ministry of National Policies and Economic Affairs) and how recruitments to the government positions happened?

Q14. (Youth) How do you feel about the process of this project and the outcome?

Q15. Are the pool of trained youth and women effective in their functions and how many follow-up training sessions were they able to conduct?

Q16. (Women) Was the certificate program established and who gave the accreditation? What is the nature of the training? How effective was it in helping to recognise their leadership?

Q17. What was the support given to the EC electoral officers? How effective was the gender-sensitive support for their programs?

Q18. What were the civic education and advocacy initiatives taken? What tools were used for this purpose?

Q19. (Youth) What initiatives did you take to address the national-level violent incidents with youth as agents of change agents?

Q20. What were the lessons learnt and the recognised good practices?

#### **C. Impact on Macro Peacebuilding:**

Q1. What was the effect of these activities at a local level on the youth and women?

Q2. Can you share a success story/stories from this project?

Q3. (Women) What were the catalytic interventions you undertook to prepare women for local government elections? What impact did you have?

Q4. (Women) How does the accreditation of women's leadership impact macro-level peacebuilding?

Q5. (Youth) Tell us three ways in which you have benefitted from the training dialogue?

#### **D. Sustainability for Long-Term Peacebuilding:**

Q1. What steps have you taken to sustain these peacebuilding activities?

Q2. Are these new initiatives being followed by the institutions/government structures to date?

Q3. Do you see these initiatives evolving for the better with changing times?

Q4. How do you feel about the training and capacity building at a personal level?

Q5. (Youth) How is it helpful for your future work as a peacebuilder?

Q6. What was the outcome of their training and were they able to conduct further training in their localities?

Q7. (Women) What are the political institutions that reforms were carried out in? What are these reforms? Were they effective? What were the outcomes?

#### **E. Efficiency of Management and Governance:**

Q1. How did you allocate resources to peacebuilding activities?

- Q2. What distribution policies (e.g., social security) principles and logic did you follow when allocating resources?
- Q3. Did you receive funds (also sufficient funds) in a timely manner from the UN bodies?
- Q4. Were you able to achieve the outputs in a cost-efficient manner?
- Q5. Do you think the project was cost-effective overall?
- Q6. How efficiently were the advocacy and education/gender responsive planning-related support given? Did the financial support come in time?
- Q7. What is the support given to national and local governments to introduce and implement gender-responsive planning and budgeting and how effective was this process?
- Q8. (Women) How much were spent on these forums?

#### **F. Participation and Ownership of National Local Stakeholders:**

- Q1. Who are your local stakeholders relevant for this project?
- Q2. Have all of them been included in this project? Who was excluded? Why? On what basis?
- Q3. Were there ex-militant youth and women and other marginalised groups i.e., gender, caste and class included in the project? (Applies for the Northern Province)
- Q4. What were the challenges you encountered in your selection process of being inclusive? (i.e., gender balance and ethno religious groups)
- Q5. What was your observation with regards to active participation of women and youth from the initial stage? In the process how many dropped out and was there any specific reason for them to leave?
- Q6. (Youth) How effective is the youth age category 15-35 in the remote regions of Sri Lanka? How many youths between 15 and 35 participated in this project?
- Q7. (CSOs & NYPP/ Women) How do you see pre and post participation of the changes in promoting engagement of women in governance and peacebuilding process?

#### **G. Coordination and Coherence with Other Initiatives:**

- Q1. Are you aware of other similar activities that happened during this process in the local government and civil society sphere in your region that complemented your work?
- Q2. What kind of a link did you have with other actors doing similar work towards achieving the same objectives?
- Q3. Have you worked with other parallel stakeholders with youth and women?
- Q4. What measure did you take to cooperate or coordinate with the other parallel initiatives by UN agencies or other local government bodies?
- Q5. (Youth) What is your experience with understanding the dynamics of violent extremism in Sri Lanka?
- Q6. (Women) What parties were involved in the cross-party network forums that were engaged for the support mentioned in the project? What was the support given? Can you give a gender segregation of participation?
- Q7. (Youth) Was there representation at the Ministry of National Policies and Economic Affairs? What was the role that person(s) played in coordination with the ministry?

#### **H. Gender Equality, Human Rights:**

- Q1. Were women and youth included in the consultation process? How were they included? Were they given special leadership roles?
- Q2. Were women and youth issues built into the project, its design, planning and implementation?
- Q3. What are the specific initiatives that empowered them through this project?
- Q4. Could you share a success story of youth or women's empowerment under these initiatives?
- Q5. (Women/Electoral Officers) How sensitive/effective were the awareness programs for the electoral officers?

## Annex 6 - Minutes of the EMG Meeting with UNFPA, UNV and UN Women

Date: September 9, 2020

Minutes prepared by Dilshani Ranawaka

Attendees:

UNFPA: Poorani Radhakrishnan

UNV: Sam Stembo

CEPA: Minna Thaheer, Monica Alfred

Agenda:

- UN entities to discuss about their issues
- CEPA to clarify any other matters

UNV:

- Clarifying outstanding issues
- Checking the process of data collection
- Clarification and sorting out with key sub projects and stakeholders

CEPA:

- Conveyed challenges of meeting stakeholders as follows;
  - Cancellation of three interviews of UNV
  - Challenges of meeting UN WOMEN stakeholders
  - Challenges in finding dispersed beneficiaries after the project

UNV:

- Resolved to check with the Northern non-responding stakeholders and update information
- Update CEPA on accessible or alternative partners
- Stressed on the importance of global UNV work

UNFPA

- Informed the team about the clarified activities and their roles (i.e. psycho-social support)
- Informed to update the work plan according to the activities

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Minutes of the EMG meeting with UN Women

Date: September 11, 2020

Minutes prepared by Dilshani Ranawaka

Attendees:

UN Women: Prashani Dias

CEPA: Minna Thaheer, Monica Alfred, Dilshani Ranawaka  
(Zoom meeting)

CEPA:

- Projects conducted by the UN Women
- Reasons for delay in commencing the project conducted by the UN Women
- Reasons why the election commission faded out in the project
- Information about multi-party dialogues
- Information about liquidating funds
- Informed about the missing reports
- Meeting with Ramaaya Salgado

UN Women's response:

- Projects conducted by the UN Women

UN WOMEN conducted mainly the multi-party dialogues and gender-responsive budgeting, which was unsuccessful due to lack of response from the government.

- Reasons for delay in commencing the project

Local government elections, mapping needs assessment and start-up issues delayed the project from commencing in 2017.

- Reasons why the election commission faded out

Mainly the country context changed. Elections postponed progress and later the Easter Sunday attacks contributed to the delay. Owing to these reasons, the election commission backed out from the project.

- Information about the multi-party dialogues

Multi-party dialogues were conducted mainly by two consultants, Jeewani and Murali. Can be identified as the most effective of the projects conducted in the peacebuilding process. There was no component to bring the communities together as the objective was to focus on building coexistence and cooperation within the community levels. There is a need to speak to multi-party groups and the challenges were discussed. Bringing communities together was touched on through social change workshops. There will be follow-up workshops for this component.

- Information about liquidating funds

There is \$3000 remaining. However, there are pending commitments that have not been liquidated. Allocated funds for multi-party dialogues were from UN WOMEN account.

- Missing reports

Prashani asked to email detailing the missing reports.

- Meeting with Ramaaya Salgado

Ramaaya will be out on a mission and was told to seek an appointment before leaving by end of September.

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Minutes of the EMG meeting with UN Women, UNV and UNFPA

Date: September 23, 2020

Minutes prepared by Shannon Razack

Attendees:

UN Women: Prashani Dias

UNV: Sam Stembo

UNFPA: Poorani Radhakrishnan, Nayela Naviz

CEPA: Minna Thaheer, Monica Alfred, Samal Hemachandra and Shannon Razack

CEPA:

- Followed up on the rapporteur's report requested from UN Women.
- Requested information on financial reports related to the projects.
- Requested for pending documents from UNV.
- Requested financial reports for outcome 1.
- Briefed UNFPA on the meeting with the MPD groups, requested assistance in organising future FGDs.

Response from the EMG:

Followed up on the rapporteur's report requested from UN Women.

- UN WOMEN briefed CEPA on all the documents uploaded on Google.

Requested information on financial reports related to the projects.

- Informed that financial files cannot be scanned but the physical copies will be given. Yet to be confirmed when files can be collected.

Requested for multiple documents from UNV.

- UNV requests CEPA to send a list of the specific documentation needed. The date for collection of documents to be decided.

Requested financial reports for Outcome 1.

- UNFPA agreed to provide financial reports at output level.

Briefed UNFPA on the nature of multi-party groups conducted and requested assistance in organising future FGDs as the meetings held earlier were not sufficient and some could not be traced.

- UN WOMEN agreed to revert on a possible date for conducting FGDs with an MPD group with multi-party representatives in Kurunegala.

#### Next Steps

- Next step regarding acceptance of track changes to the final draft report to be confirmed.
- A few more FGDs to be conducted.
- PowerPoint presentation to be finalised on October 2, 2020 and will be presented on October 6, 2020.
- It was decided that the first draft of the evaluation report is to be finalised by October 12, 2020 and the review will be sent back to CEPA on October 26, 2020.

## Annex 7 - Work Plan

Activities/ milestones/ deliverables	Jul	Aug				Sep				Oct				Nov		
	W 1	W 2	W 3	W 4	W 5	W 6	W 7	W 8	W 9	W 10	W 11	W 12	W 13	W 14	W 15	W 16
<b>Start date</b>	27	3	10	17	24	31	7	14	21	28	5	12	19	26	2	9
<b>End date</b>	31	7	14	21	28	4	11	18	25	2	9	16	23	30	6	13
<b>Preparatory phase</b>																
Contract awarded																
<b>Design phase</b>																
Desk study & discussions																
Submission of draft inception report																
Review and feedback by EMG/ERG																
Submission of final inception report																
Approval of inception report																
<b>Field phase</b>																
Preparations for field visits																
Data collection and analysis																
Submission of debriefing note + PP																
Presentation of preliminary results to country offices/EMG/ERG																
<b>Reporting phase</b>																
Submission of first draft of evaluation report																
Comments from country offices/EMG/ERG																
Submission of second draft of evaluation report																
Comments from country offices/EMG/ERG																
Submission of final evaluation report																
Approval of final evaluation report																
Management response																
<b>Dissemination phase</b>																
Submit draft Executive summary and Evaluation briefs in English, Sinhalese, and Tamil																
Comments from country offices/EMG/ERG																
Submit final Executive summary and evaluation briefs in English, Sinhalese, and Tamil																
PowerPoint presentation of evaluation results																



-END OF REPORT-