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Engaging Youth to Sustain (Inter-Communal) Peace at the Tajikistan-Kyrgyzstan Border

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Jafar Usmanov is a researcher on youth development issues in Tajikistan. He has studied global governance and international relations in Germany, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. He holds an MA from Jacobs University (2008), an MA degree from the OSCE Academy in Bishkek (2005), and a BA from the Russian-Tajik Slavonic University (2003). In the past, Jafar co-taught "Introduction to Conflict Studies" at the Tajik National University and held fellowships with Jacobs University and University of Hamburg in Germany. He also advised local development partners in Tajikistan on child and youth development issues in the country. Most recently, Jafar was part of a research team looking at everyday practices of various groups in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

Inter-communal peace between residents of cross-border areas of northern Tajikistan and southern Kyrgyzstan has remained under strain over the past decade. Local communities have many unresolved issues: un-demarcated borders; limited natural resources; and restricted access to shared land, pastures, and irrigation infrastructure. Among other groups, this situation is disadvantageous to youth, who lose the chance to gain the social capital necessary to support peace, both now and in the future. Young people from both sides report occasionally being beaten up on the other side. In some cases, young people even provoke the other side by throwing stones or engaging in hate speech or petty hooliganism.

To address these difficulties, various peacebuilding initiatives have been proposed for local residents, especially youth. The priorities of these initiatives include: a) raising awareness among youth and building youth capacity; b) cross-border exchange and teambuilding; c) reducing prejudice; and d) improving inter-ethnic communication.

Yet current social dynamics among young people living on opposite sides of the border have the potential to undermine future peacebuilding efforts. Firstly, youth from both countries report negative attitudes toward their contemporaries from the other. Levels of trust between young Kyrgyzstani and Tajikistani residents of cross-border communities are low. Secondly, ethnic and nationalist feeling reportedly runs high in both groups. In conflict situations, the ethnicity of the other group becomes significant, prompting them to perceive the other group as nationalist and behave in an intolerant way toward its members. Thirdly, young people tend to accept violence as a mode of conflict resolution in their daily lives. Young people in both countries report having fought their peers; youth violence at school or in the neighborhood is no longer exceptional.

This paper looks at how local governments and donors can better engage with youth in the border communities of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan in order to sustain inter-communal peace. For answers, I explore approaches that have been applied to conflict situations elsewhere in the world

and propose solutions that may be relevant to the case in question. Following the agency approach to youth in peacebuilding, I suggest that if young people engage in activities that are based on shared interests, generate a certain product, and are lasting, it will reduce animosities and incentivize youth to fortify positive relationships, thus maximizing the likelihood of peaceful behaviors.

The paper unfolds in the following way. The first section discusses the backdrop to inter-communal tensions and conflicts along the Tajikistan-Kyrgyzstan border. The second section describes local governments' and international donors' current policies regarding youth and conflict mediation and/or peacebuilding. In the third section, drawing on recent studies of youth, I demonstrate challenges to promoting peaceful behavior among young people from opposite sides of the border. The fourth section summarizes current thinking and international youth peacebuilding practices. Thereafter, I outline approaches and concrete solutions that add value to current efforts by offering novelty and prioritizing the longevity of interactions between youth. A call for solutions that center on the positive agency of youth in peacebuilding concludes the paper, followed by relevant policy recommendations.

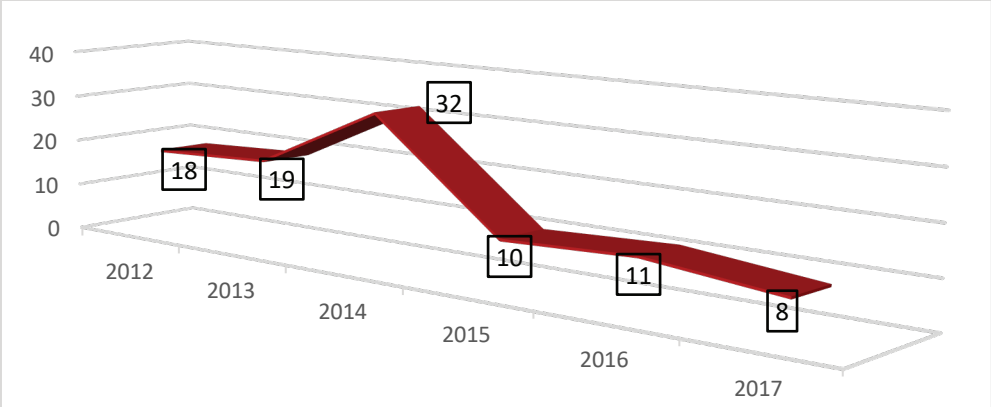
Background on the Current Situation

Over the past 25 years, cross-border tensions at the Tajikistan-Kyrgyzstan border have mounted. The number of conflicts between border communities has been on the rise. In the five years between 2012 and 2017 alone, border guards registered almost 100 incidents,[1] some of which resulted in casualties of civilians and border officers on both sides.[2] International development practitioners often describe the situation as low-intensity inter-communal tensions and conflicts with the potential to escalate to violence.[3]

These tensions are confined to certain sections of the 100-kilometer (62-mile) border between Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, which runs through the southwestern part of the Ferghana Valley.

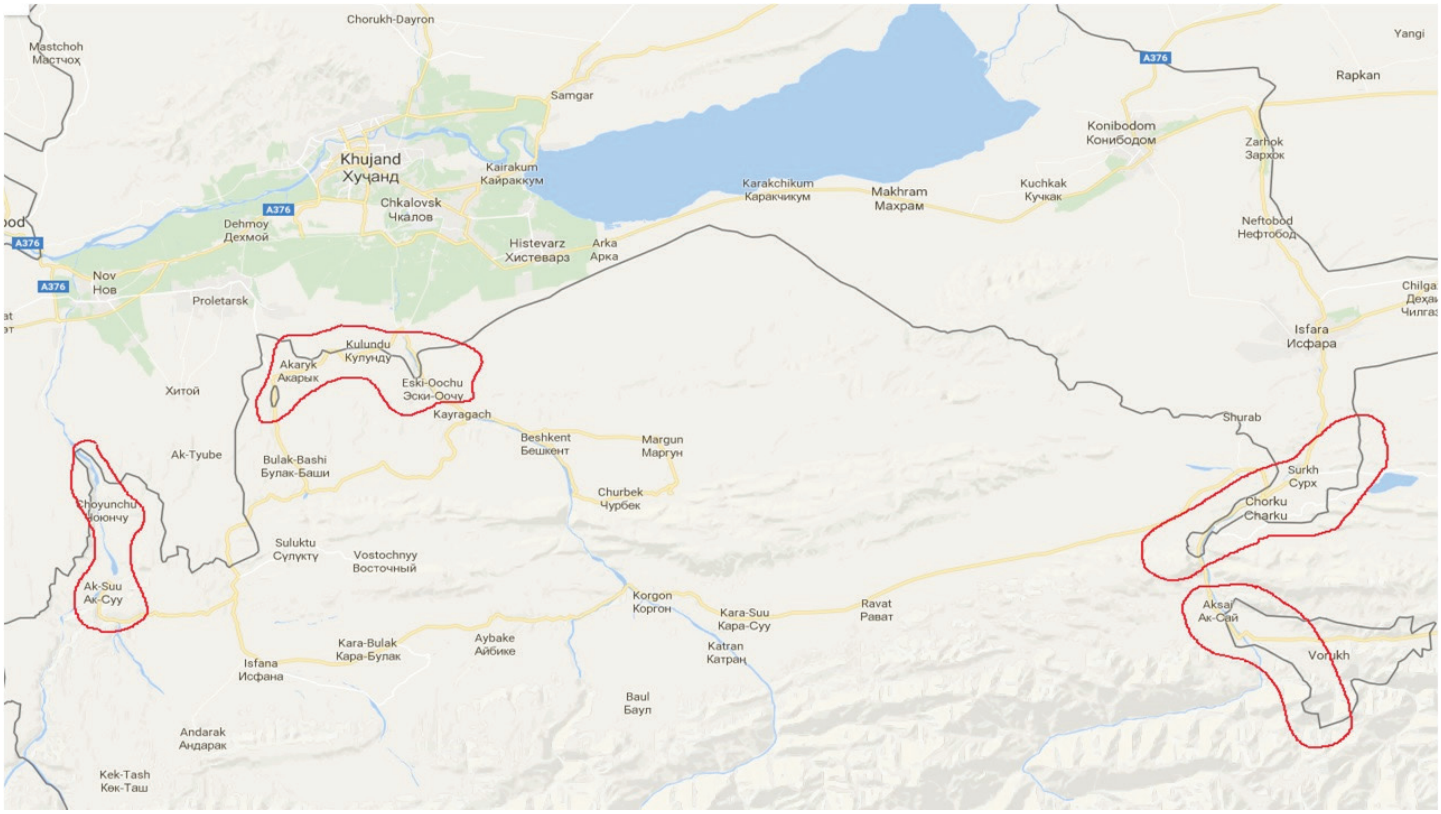
The communities along the Tajik-Kyrgyz border face a number of unresolved issues that drive tensions. Firstly, they experience the scarcity of natural resources—water, arable land and pastures—and suffer from limited access to agricultural infrastructure. Tajikistani communities have limited land resources: in the Isfara district, just 12,000 hectares of irrigated land must sustain 230,000 residents. As for pastures, they are mostly located in Kyrgyzstan and are rented out to Tajikistani communities for prices that the latter regard as "grossly unfair."[4] Communities on the Tajikistani side of the border also experience water shortages due to high demand, uncertain ability to pay for irrigation, and scarcity of water in the main water streams. In most situations, Kyrgyzstani communities live in upstream areas and have better access to water; Tajikistani communities live predominantly in downstream areas and do not receive enough water to meet their needs.

Figure 1. Registered Incidents on the Tajikistan-Kyrgyzstan Border between 2012 and September 2017



Source: Author's calculations using statistics from Kyrgyzstan's State Border Service and media reports

Figure 2. Map of "Problematic" Areas along the Tajikistan-Kyrgyzstan Border



Source: Author's compilation using a Google map of the area and review of locations of border incidents between 2012 and 2017

Secondly, in the past 25 years, these communities have had to contend with uncertain state borders. Of the 971 kilometers (603 miles) of border between Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, the two governments had agreed on the delimitation of about 520 km (323 miles) as of 2016,[5] most of which passed through mountainous and largely unpopulated areas.[6] The rest of the border goes through areas that are contested by Dushanbe and Bishkek, and there has been little progress on reaching an agreement in the past two decades. These uncertain borders in turn drive local communities' competing claims to land, water, and Soviet-built infrastructure.

Thirdly, the contested borders make communities reluctant to agree on efficient shared use of existing resources. For instance, when Tajik villagers in the Vorukh exclave try to expand irrigated lands, the Kyrgyz community in Ak-Say village responds with occasional blockages of irrigation water designed to prevent this expansion.[7] Another example is the Mastchoi water canal, which supplies water to Chorkuh in Tajikistan and Samarkandyk in Kyrgyzstan. Communities blame each other for constantly exceeding predetermined water shares, as the land around the canal is disputed.

The pasture situation is even more illustrative. To avoid encountering the so-called "environmental checkpoints" in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistani citizens hire Kyrgyzstani shepherds to either take livestock to Kyrgyzstani pastures or pass through Kyrgyzstani territory to reach Tajikistani grazing lands.[8] Livestock loss during this process is typical, but Tajikistani citizens have little leverage over Kyrgyzstani shepherds. Furthermore, while it is illegal (under the Land Code of Kyrgyzstan) to lease Kyrgyzstani pastures, Tajikistani communities often take livestock to Kyrgyzstani or contested pastures for small bribes, drawing the ire of Kyrgyzstanis.[9]

Persistent tensions and conflicts

on the Tajikistan-Kyrgyzstan border are not conducive to lasting peace between border communities. One of the most disadvantaged groups in this situation is youth, for several reasons. Firstly, youth loses the chance to gain the human capital necessary to reject violence and support peace. In conflict environments, youths are often found to be victims of violence, perpetrators of violence, or both.[10] Secondly, young people living in a context of tension and conflict are more likely to engage in violence:[11] personal experiences create frustration that may turn into aggression toward the other group. This limits opportunities for inter-group peace and increases the likelihood of conflict escalation. Thirdly, this environment of constant tension and conflict may disincentivize young people from actively engaging in peacebuilding, where they should be on the front lines, building relationships between communities.[12]

Current Youth and Peacebuilding Policies

Reportedly, inter-communal tensions in the border region have a negative impact on young people. Youth often face harassment from local police or border officers. Moreover, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) found that "at-risk" young people[13] were often the ones perpetrating or initiating conflicts.[14]

Existing tensions and conflicts are shaping Tajikistani and Kyrgyzstani youths' negative mutual perceptions. It is not uncommon to hear young people say things like "Treating them [youth from the other's territory] as an honored guest is unacceptable; they do not deserve it; they are in a constant conflict with us, why should we make friends with them?"[15] Such attitudes jeopardize the future of inter-communal peace between Tajikistani and Kyrgyzstani communities. Though they may be less likely to engage in risky and provocative behavior as adults, their attitudes toward their neighbors across the border are less likely to simply improve. Thus, the youth dimension presents a challenge to the peacebuilding initiatives currently being undertaken by the governments of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, as well as by international donors. It also challenges relations between communities and puts peace in the region under strain.

Domestically, the governments of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan support peacebuilding policies. These policies have different reference points in the two states' recent histories and are framed differently. Whereas in Kyrgyzstan, peacebuilding policy appears to have formed in 2010 in reaction to inter-ethnic violence (or at least been boosted by these events), in Tajikistan, peacebuilding was largely set in motion in 1997, following the five-year civil war. In Kyrgyzstan, peacebuilding policy focuses on improving inter-ethnic relations,[16] whereas in Tajikistan, it is primarily about securing what was restored after the civil war: the Tajikistani state, a peaceful environment, and political stability.[17] In both states, cross-border peace policy falls largely within the purview of foreign policy. In addition, due to limited financial resources in both states, cross-border peacebuilding is mainly carried out by large institutional donors, United Nations agencies chief among them.

In the following subsections I will provide a brief overview of current youth and peacebuilding policies in both countries. I will then summarize the main types of peacebuilding activities implemented by international donors that are directed toward young people. This will be followed by a discussion of youth social dynamics that undermine peacebuilding efforts: animosity, ethno-nationalism, and inclinations to risky behavior.

Youth and Peacebuilding Policies in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan

In the case of Kyrgyzstan, experts often speak of a "roadmap for peacebuilding,"[18] which consists of two strategic policy documents (the National Development Strategy 2013–2017 and the Concept on Strengthening National Unity and Interethnic Relations of Kyrgyzstan), supplemented by the government's commitments under the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, and other international treaties. Per the National Development Strategy 2013–2017 (hereafter NDS 2013–2017),

the government is committed to countering nationalism and ethnic intolerance,[19] finalizing legal settlement of the state's borders,[20] and building inter-ethnic accord and unity.[21] This last point, which is reinforced in the Concept on Strengthening National Unity and Interethnic Relations, is the guiding frame of Kyrgyzstan's peacebuilding and conflict prevention policy. Notably, an entire chapter of NDS 2013–2017 is devoted to building inter-ethnic unity, thus reinforcing its significance in government policies and making interethnic cohesion a public policy priority.

The Concept on Strengthening National Unity and Interethnic Relations (hereafter "the Concept") details the country's peacebuilding policies, which are based on three pillars: (a) building a functional conflict prevention system; (b) implementing a balanced language policy; and (c) promoting non-ethnic, citizenship-based identity. Both NDS 2013–2017 and the Concept make multiple references to youth as a beneficiary of peacebuilding policy. For instance, NDS 2013–2017 calls for engaging young people in decision-making, while the Concept emphasizes the promotion of diversity, tolerance, and a culture of peace among young people.

In Tajikistan, the youth and peacebuilding policy is framed differently; it is centered on the idea of erasing domestic social and regional divisions through nation- and state-building. Dushanbe does not have a separate policy document on peace promotion or building national unity. Instead, this policy can be elucidated in the executive statements of the President during annual National Unity Day celebrations. Youth features prominently in those statements, and is considered one of the key actors in national policy. Youth is called upon to value national unity, reject any activities that might undermine that unity (e.g. extremism and radicalism), be willing to build the state, and cherish peace.[22]

The country's National Development Strategy 2016–2030 (hereafter NDS 2016–2030) also makes references to youth and peace. Preventing potential conflicts is one of the 10 development priorities the document outlines.[23] That being said, the priority accorded to conflict prevention does not seem to be reflected in concrete actions and policies. A related priority is youth human capital development: the government seeks to improve behavior through cultural and linguistic diversity, as well as the promotion of common human values.[24] Although somewhat vague, the latter refers to tolerance and peace-promotion training programs for youth by local NGOs and international donors. Finally, the government is committed to civic education and social unity programs for youth,[25] which are used as an entrée to broader civic education initiatives in the country.

Evidently, therefore, in neither Tajikistan nor Kyrgyzstan is the intersection of youth and peace/conflict prevention in border communities articulated as a distinct policy. Due to limited financial resources in both states, youth and peacebuilding in border areas was a peripheral issue for governments in the 1990s and the first decade of the 2000s. Although this changed in Kyrgyzstan after 2010 and in Tajikistan after 2014, youth and cross-border peace remains largely the domain of international projects.[26]

Youth and Peacebuilding by International Donors

Donor-funded youth and peacebuilding activities in cross-border areas of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan have a fairly recent history. Most targeted projects began after 2010; some have already been completed, while others are ongoing. Prior to 2010, peacebuilding activities came under the umbrella of conflict prevention in the wider Ferghana Valley region.

Experts distinguish four "waves" of donors' conflict prevention programming.[27] The first extended from the early 1990s until 2001, focusing primarily on supporting democratization and the transition to a market economy. The only exception to this convention was Tajikistan, where donors' programming was heavily focused on post-conflict rehabilitation. The second wave came with the counter-terrorist operation in Afghanistan and lasted from 2001 to 2006. In this period, donors focused on trans-border security issues: terrorism, religious extremism, cross-border organized crime, and trafficking. The third wave saw a reduction in donor support for conflict prevention, a trend that reversed in 2010. That signaled the start of

the fourth wave, which made the intersection of youth and peacebuilding a focus in its own right.

Current donor initiatives on youth and peacebuilding address prejudice reduction, capacity building, and relationship building between young people from Tajikistani and Kyrgyzstani border communities that have been affected by conflict. Activities include workshops, trainings, summer camps, festivals, etc. Major donors currently working on the issue are UNDP, UNICEF, and others.

There is some evidence that these activities produce positive results: young people show more tolerance toward the other's group, tend to communicate better with peers across the border, and develop some positive relationships.[28] The declining number of border incidents also seems to suggest that these activities are making a positive impact: the number of registered border incidents fell from an average of 23 in 2012–2014 to about 10 between 2015 and 2017.[29] However, recent studies on youth in both Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan indicate that peacebuilding initiatives may be producing short-term effects that will be undermined in the longer term by several challenges.

Challenges That Threaten to Undermine Youth and Peacebuilding Efforts

Recent studies on youth in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan,[30] including those living in border communities, demonstrate in-group dynamics that may well undermine the gains of current conflict prevention and peacebuilding approaches. Firstly, studies show that young people in Tajikistani and Kyrgyzstani border communities have varying degrees of animosity toward each other.[31] Secondly, research demonstrates that ethnicity is a strong identity marker for Kyrgyzstani youth[32] and less powerful for young Tajikistanis.[33] In conflict situations, the ethnicity of the other group becomes important for youth[34] and leads them to perceive the other group as nationalist, reducing youths' tolerance toward others.[35] Thirdly, young people tend to accept violence as a mode of conflict resolution in their daily lives.[36] Young people in both countries report having experienced fighting among their peers; youth violence at school or in the neighborhood is now part of everyday life.

Animosities

The 2015 UNDP-supported baseline study of conflict prevention in border communities of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan showed that young people on both sides of the border had negative attitudes toward young people on the other. On the Kyrgyzstani side, attitudes toward Tajiks ranged from neutral to hostile, whereas on the Tajikistani side they ranged from neutral to negative, with some indication of cooperative attitudes.

Similarly, levels of trust between youth in Kyrgyzstani and Tajikistani border communities are low. The least trusted ethnic group for Kyrgyz communities is Tajiks, whereas the most trusted are Kyrgyz and Russians. Tajik communities mirror their Kyrgyz neighbors, regarding Kyrgyz as the least trusted. Yet Tajiks seem to have slightly more trust in Kyrgyz than Kyrgyz have in Tajiks.[37]

Critics may argue that it is no wonder that young people from border communities, where tensions and conflicts are part of daily life, have negative attitudes toward each other. Yet the animosity of Kyrgyz youth toward Tajiks was also reflected in a 2015 nationally representative study of Kyrgyzstani youth. Twenty-one percent of young people reported that they would not like to live next to a Tajik family (see Appendix 1). In this rating of openness to living next to various social groups, Tajiks were rated third worst, behind homosexuals and Chinese.

For their part, Tajik youth do not seem to regard having a Kyrgyz family as their neighbor as a bad idea. Only 6.1 per cent of young people surveyed in Tajikistan in 2015 did not find the idea of living next to a Kyrgyz family attractive (see Appendix 1). That put Kyrgyz seventh in the rating of openness to living with other groups, with homosexuals, non-Muslims, Chinese, and other groups far less preferred.

Neither the UNDP baseline study nor the Friedrich Ebert Foundation studies explored what drives Kyrgyz youth's negative reception of Tajiks. A

Table 1. Types of Youth and Peacebuilding Activities Implemented in the Region

Type of activity	Description
Workshops and trainings	***Primary objective:*** to raise awareness and offer knowledge. Cover various topics: tolerance, communication, conflict management, planning, team building, leadership, etc. Organized for youth in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan separately and as part of joint events. Are usually short in duration (up to five days) but are organized more often than other activities.
Camps and schools	***Primary objective:*** to enable exchange and support team building. Camps and schools combine several components: educational, exchange, and relationship building. They include trainings but place greater emphasis on young people exchanging their experiences and reflections. Less frequent than workshops but aim at longer-term team building.
Festivals and performances	***Primary objective:*** to reduce prejudice through exposure to the other group. Festivals are mostly held to introduce youth to the other group's culture, traditions, and common practices. Like camps and schools, they are less frequent, but often have high visibility effects. Festivals are mostly used to celebrate examples of positive communication and relationships between young people.
Sport events	***Primary objective:*** to reduce prejudice through team building. Sport activities are supported by both donors and local governments. The appeal is to an occupation that transcends ethnicity—sports. Sports tournaments are often organized as separate events or as part of cross-border festivals.
Peer-to-peer activities	***Primary objective:*** to multiply relationship building. These are mostly awareness-raising activities implemented by youth for their peers. Voluntary groups of pupils or other youth from both sides come together to raise awareness of peace and tolerance and showcase examples of positive communication.
Joint action plans	***Primary objective***: to improve communication through inter-ethnic teamwork. Joint action plans are used to cultivate a sense of solidarity and tolerance among Tajikistani and Kyrgyzstani youth. They also aim to build connections between youth. This approach is widely deployed by the UNDP-sponsored cross-border cooperation project.

Source: Author's compilation based on review of donor-supported projects in Batken (Kyrgyzstan) and Sughd (Tajikistan)[67]

2011 Saferworld assessment may offer some insight. Some Kyrgyz youth think that Tajiks are different, which makes it harder to come to an understanding and agree on complex issues.[38] Others believe that Tajiks think they are better than Kyrgyz.[39]

Ethnicity and Nationalism

Ethnicity plays an important role in self-identification for Kyrgyz youth. Studies show that Kyrgyz communities hold stronger ethnocentric beliefs than other ethnic groups.[40] A 2014 study on youth in Kyrgyzstan found that ethnicity was one of three key identity markers in the south of the country, along with family and gender.[41] A closer look at identity markers of youth in the south revealed that almost one-third of young people in Batken region identify themselves primarily through ethnicity (see Appendix 2). Furthermore, youth in Batken region reported higher rates of ethnocentrism. In other words, youth in Batken perceived their ethnicity to be superior to that of other ethnic groups. The latter was revealed from the distribution of youth statements on three scales of ethno-affiliation: ethnocentrism (superiority of own ethnic group), normalcy of the other group (willingness to accept other cultures), and indifference (little regard for ethnic affiliation). Rates of ethnocentrism were very high in Batken (see Appendix 2), implying that for young people in Batken ethnicity is significant and may symbolize a position of privilege.[42]

Ethnocentric sentiments among young people in Kyrgyzstan feed into youth activism that develops under nationalist slogans.[43] Voluntary groups such as "Kyrk-Choro" and "Kalys" have come to prominence in recent years as a result of their often provocative and sometimes unlawful actions against non-Kyrgyz ethnic groups, including Uyghurs and Chinese. Although these groups have not been reported to be active in communities bordering Tajikistan, their cause—the protection of Kyrgyz values and territory—finds support among youth.

Unfortunately, it is difficult to plausibly describe the identity markers of Tajik youth, both on average and in the areas bordering Kyrgyzstan. There is a lack of research studying self-identification of Tajik youth and identity hierarchies in a meaningful way. Therefore, I revert to the recent findings of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation study on youth, which addressed the identity question in a broader way. The top three identity markers of youth in Tajikistan are: friendship; patriotism and belonging to the country; and being a believer (presumably a religious believer). More than 24 percent of youth chose one of these three identity markers as their primary mode of identification.

Risky Behavior

Young people's readiness to engage in risky behavior and acts of violence is another serious challenge. The 2015 UNDP cross-border conflict prevention study revealed that border communities in Kyrgyzstan have a high preference for the following three ways of solving conflicts in border areas: participating in peaceful protests and meetings, threatening the use of violence, and blocking roads and access to local infrastructure. Willingness to protest peacefully scored highest (3.6 on a 5-point scale),[44] while the threat of the use of violence and limiting access to resources were equally important (2.1 and 2.2, respectively). On the Tajik side, preference for peaceful protests and meetings scored higher than among Kyrgyz communities (4.1 on a 5-point scale), whereas more violent modes of conflict resolution received much lower scores (1.3).

Acceptance of violence among Kyrgyz youth was also confirmed by the 2014 study on values and conflict behavior in Kyrgyzstan. It found that fights happen more often than might be expected: more than 60 percent of youth in the south reported that fights occurred either "often" or "from time to time."[45] Almost 40 percent of youth further reported that so-called "school racketeering" (situations when senior-grade school students extort money or other valuables from younger students) is either largely developed or frequently takes place.[46] These figures had increased as of 2017, when 51 percent of boys and 12 percent of girls reported having faced monetary extortion in school.[47] Perhaps as a consequence of these phenomena, the study found that young people are

willing to accept and commit acts of violence: "Youth violence is normal… It happens everywhere, every locality, every region…"[48]

Although studies on acceptance of violence among Tajik youth are not available, a 2016 study identified that about 45 percent of young people in the country had experience of physical fights against youth from other neighborhoods, whether at school, at university, or in sports. In both Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, this study indicated that a low percentage of young people fought against youth from other ethnic groups: 3.5 percent in Tajikistan and 4.1 percent in Kyrgyzstan.[49] Evidently, therefore, many young people do not accept violence and are committed to resolving conflicts peacefully. At the same time, youths' readiness to act violently appears to be high in concrete situations and contexts.[50] This fact raises doubts as to whether the trainings in tolerance and peaceful conflict resolution offered by international donors can significantly reduce young people's thresholds for accepting violence.

Language and Connections

In addition to the challenges described above, some experts mention two more issues that hamper youth and peace in the area: the absence of a language of inter-ethnic communication and limited connections between young people.

For one thing, young people seem to be losing a common language of communication. Knowledge of Russian, a common language for the older generation, is worsening among youth in border communities: unlike in Soviet times, the Russian language is no longer mandatory nor regarded as the language of inter-ethnic communication. The 2015 UNDP study found that about one-third of young people living in border communities understood some Russian, while about 13 percent did not know a single word in Russian.[51] This is, at least in part, a function of the bold state language policies promoted by both Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan after independence. Although Russian has special status in both countries[52] and is taught in schools, its function as a lingua franca of inter-ethnic communication is decreasing. At the same time, incentives to learn the other ethnic group's language are very limited, if they exist at all, with the result that Tajik youth do not learn Kyrgyz and Kyrgyz youth do not learn Tajik. Matveeva notes that "loss of common language works to increase the social gap between border communities."[53]

Moreover, connections between young people based on shared interests or activities are not developing naturally; those that form are supported by external actors, raising questions as to their sustainability. In her field research, Reeves found that even schoolchildren from border villages did not have relationships with each other.[54] Children would participate in trainings or sports organized by local civil society organizations but would not maintain relations beyond these periodic events. This situation has implications for peace between communities in the long run. The absence of lasting, interest-driven connections may produce generations of young people who resist communication with their neighbors across the border "by default." Fencing themselves off from the other group rather than interacting with it may lead to the reproduction of violence or readiness to engage in violence against the other ethnic group.

Theory and Practice on Youth and Peacebuilding

The challenges described above may undermine the current youth and peacebuilding efforts of local authorities and international donors. Yet the theory and international practice on youth and peacebuilding offer diverse approaches to engaging with youth in order to achieve sustainable peace. In this section, I turn to scholarship and practice on youth and peacebuilding, as well as looking at approaches that have demonstrated positive results in conflict-affected areas.

Discourses on Youth in Peacebuilding

Scholarship on youth engagement in peacebuilding has a fairly recent history. Until the early 2000s, there was fairly little theory about youth in peace and conflict studies. Though most theories of conflict resolution underline the importance of long-term intergenerational change in attitudes and behavior through social change, it was not

until recently that the critical international relations literature started theorizing about youth as an actor in international relations, conflict, and peace.[55]

There are three general strands of thinking about youth and conflict and peace. The first is perceiving youth as victims of conflict. This thinking is mostly informed by psychology and public health. It looks at the impact of violence on the physical and psychological maturation of children and adolescents in the post-conflict environment.[56]

The second strand is looking at youth as perpetrators of conflict and violence. On this way of thinking, youths raised in a violent environment are highly likely to use violence to deal with conflicts in the long run. One prominent approach within this perspective is the so-called "youth bulge" theory. It argues that large youth populations that experience unemployment or are not engaged in positive activities are highly likely to commit violence.

A third strand of literature looks at youth as peacebuilders. It builds on McEvoy-Levy's proposition that "youth are the primary actors in grassroots community development/relations work; they are at the frontlines of peacebuilding."[57] The "youth as peacebuilders" approach has produced other perspectives on youth and peace. Some see youth as knowledge producers and organic diplomats in everyday peacebuilding.[58] Others suggest thinking of youth as "organic globalizers," who blend local and global space by constantly moving between social media and community practices.[59]

International policy discourse on youth and peace is centered on United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security, adopted in 2015. This resolution identifies six ways to engage youth in peace activities: participation, protection, prevention, partnership, disengagement, and reintegration.[60] Youth participation in peacebuilding is further guided by nine principles that were developed by the United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development in 2014.[61]

Current international peace discourse has several points of departure with regard to youth. Firstly, it tries to refrain from taking romanticizing, demonizing, and patronizing approaches to youth.[62] Secondly, it recognizes the agency of youth in peacebuilding and calls for support for the agency and leadership of young people in peacebuilding initiatives. Thirdly, it dismisses "youth bulge" approaches, instead looking at large youth populations as "youth booms." Fourthly, instead of prevention, it promotes "positive resilience" of young people to conflicts, something that should be founded on the positive resources, capacities, and attributes of youth. Fifthly, it mainstreams "positive" security, the interpretation of security as something to which children and youth are entitled.

International Practice on Youth and Peacebuilding

Current international peacebuilding practice offers a variety of approaches to youth engagement in conflict resolution and peace, each of which has its own rationale and theory of change. Solutions are often tailored to specific conflict situations, which makes them unique and at the same time applicable to similar contexts. Below, I highlight several theories of change that have been applied to conflict contexts elsewhere. Some of these theories of change are used (to some extent) in peace initiatives for youth in communities along the Tajikistan-Kyrgyzstan border. Yet it is a real challenge to find solutions that could simply be duplicated and applied to the case in question. Existing solutions were developed in response to armed conflicts or severe inter-ethnic violence, a context far from the reality on the Tajikistan-Kyrgyzstan border. A recent evaluation of child and youth participation in peacebuilding confirmed that there is no "single solution to effectively engaging children and youth as peacebuilders."[63] Rather, it is a matter of finding the right combination of approaches.

In exploring ways to better engage with young people in Tajikistan-Kyrgyzstan border communities, I focus on theories of change[64] that may work in a low-intensity conflict environment. In addition, following the agency approach

Table 2. Selected Youth and Peace Solutions and Theories of Change That Have Proved Effective

Theory of change	Solutions applied
If there is dialogue between young people on key security concerns, then young people will develop a better understanding of and empathy toward each other	Youth Participation in the Peace Process (International Alert) in Nepal
If youth from two groups have repeated interactions, it will reduce stereotypes	Local Empowerment for Peace inter-tribal football team (Mercy Corps) in Kenya
If youth are supported to make themselves responsible global citizens, they will transcend local grievances	Global Citizenship Corps (Mercy Corps) projects in Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Pakistan and the West Bank/Gaza
If there is evidence of peaceful resolution of conflict between groups, then confidence in (and acceptance of) peacebuilding will develop	Youth Participation in the Peace Process (Ministry of Peace and Reconciliation) in Nepal
If youths are required to do community service in other communities, they will address prejudice and develop a sense of cohesion	Nigeria Youth Service Corps (Government of Nigeria)
If youth is engaged to stimulate other youth to develop economic activities, then the odds are better that young people will not return to violence	Youth-Led Livelihood Programming (Restless Development) in Uganda
If youths are employed as Sport for Development and Peace coaches, they will be more resilient to negative stereotyping and engage in peacebuilding behaviors	Youth Coaches (PeacePlayers International) in the Middle East
If youths are involved in media production and broadcasting, this will develop collaboration and promote peace	Golden Kids News (Search for Common Ground) in Sierra Leone; Young Journalists for Local Radio Networks (UNICEF) in Kyrgyzstan; Salam Shabab TV Series Peace Media for Iraqi Youth (United States Institute of Peace) in Iraq

Source: Author's compilation using the United Nations note on youth in peacebuilding,[68] USAID,[69] Mercy Corps,[70] and other resources

to youth and peace, I discuss only those solutions that put youths from both groups at the heart of peacebuilding. In other words, I look only at youth-to-youth solutions, disregarding more general youth development solutions.

Some of the theories of change listed above are used, one way or another, in peacebuilding initiatives in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. For instance, sports matches and tournaments between youths in border communities are organized on a regular basis. Similarly, dialogue between young people is promoted through joint events. Youth are also supported to develop their life skills. Citizenship capacities are conveyed to youth through civic education and leadership initiatives. Nevertheless, these solutions have room for improvement, particularly in the face of challenges such as ethno-nationalism, animosity, and risky behavior.

Experiential and Practical: Youth-Oriented Solutions for Cross-Border Peace

To counterbalance existing challenges to peacebuilding among youth, solutions need to encourage joint experiential learning, be of practical use to youth, and promote longevity. Drawing on the methodology of the global education network Communities Engaging with Difference and Religion (CEDAR),[65] I argue that peace-promoting solutions need to build shared experience and practice among young people. Learning about peace should not be the primary target. Activities where young people from cross-border communities experience things together are more likely to foster peaceful behaviors.

In addition, solutions should support youth to produce meaningful and useful things. All too often, joint activities pursue abstract objectives, such as improving understanding of the other group's culture, exploring differences and commonalities, etc. For youth to commit themselves to the activity, they need to be producing tangible things. In this way, youth will feel responsibility and develop cohesion by living the experience together. Potential results include start-up businesses, media products, or social innovations, to name a few.

It is also important to prioritize solutions that are driven by the shared interests of young people. Most conflict mitigation and peacebuilding activities for youth tend to be based on adults' agendas and perceptions of how youth should participate in peacebuilding. This may not necessarily be wrong, but young people will benefit more from solutions that grow out of their own interests and aspirations.

Lastly, the longevity of interactions should be prioritized over one-off and short-term communication. However obvious it may sound, international practice proves that the longer positive interactions between young people are supported, the stronger relationships are and the more youths restrain from violence in conflict situations. Young people from both groups need to do more than simply communicate with each other during cross-border events—they need to connect to each other. This implies that there should be stronger ties based on shared interests, concerns, and aspirations, ties youth should use to keep communication ongoing and meaningful.

I next suggest how theories of change can be adapted to the context of Tajikistan-Kyrgyzstan youth and peace. These approaches address the challenges of ethno-nationalism, animosities, and risky behavior.

Youth from Tajik and Kyrgyz communities need to engage in activities where they master practical skills. These activities may take the form of short-term apprenticeships or internships in areas where demand for skilled labor is high: farming, seed planting, harvesting, renovation works, etc. Most importantly, these activities should take place in the other group's community. In other words, youth from Tajik communities should intern in Kyrgyz communities and vice versa. This way, young people will be more likely to accept the other group, since they will look at the community as a source of knowledge and not a threat.

People develop stronger ties when these links are based on a shared cause, shared interest, or shared aspirations. Youth is particularly

Table 3. Solutions to Challenges Facing Youth and Peacebuilding on the Tajikistan-Kyrgyzstan Border

Theory of change	Challenge addressed	Solution/s
If youth from both groups learn skills from the other group's community, it will enhance young people's acceptance of the other group	Animosities	Cross-community internships and/or apprenticeships; summer "Work and Travel" programs
If youth from both groups engage in activities based on shared interests, aspirations or common cause, they will transcend their ethnicity- or locality-based identities	Ethnicity and nationalism	Youth volunteer groups (e.g. green patrols); youth task forces on shared social ills (girls' education, radicalization, etc.)
If youth from both groups engage in activities that require the production of meaningful and useful things, it will develop collaboration and trust between youth	Animosities and trust	Radio programs; photo stories; documentary TV series about youth stories of conflict and peace in the region; startup businesses; social innovations
If youth are employed as mediators for dispute arbitration among peers in the same or other locations, they will be more resilient to negative stereotyping and engage in peacebuilding behavior	Risky behavior	Young mediators/arbiters; "Bilinguals" youth corps

Source: Author's proposals using the United Nations note on "Young People's Participation in Peace-Building" produced by the Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development Working Group on Youth and Peacebuilding

sensitive to such group dynamics. If youths from both countries engage in group activities together, they will likely transcend their ethnicity- or locality-driven identities and behave peacefully toward one another. Youth task forces working on environmental pollution, waste management, girls' education, or even counter-radicalization are just a few examples of how youth can unite behind a common goal.

Communicating for the sake of communicating is rarely the best grounds for building strong relationships. We tend to make long-term friendships when we work together on meaningful projects. If we work together to produce something tangible—something useful—the experience shapes empathy. Youth from both communities could come together to work on media products: radio programs (on young artists, local news, new technologies, etc.), photo stories, or documentary TV series. Alternatively, they

could work on entrepreneurial products: microbusinesses, startups, or social innovations. These initiatives would cultivate collaboration, empathy, and trust among youth.

In view of past experience of these approaches, there are many reasons for optimism. In Iraq, children from six different ethnic groups produced a UNESCO-award winning TV series, Salam Shabab, based on true stories of children in the Iraqi conflict. In Uganda, after initial support, youth from different tribes started agricultural farming and entrepreneurship. Children from Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Pakistan and the West Bank/Gaza came together under the flag of Global Citizenship to bridge cultural divides and develop a sense of global youth solidarity.

Some may ask whether these solutions add value to existing initiatives. None of the proposed solutions have been developed from scratch. In fact, all are based on lessons learned from youth and peacebuilding policies.[73] At the same time, the proposed solutions build on the evidence of social dynamics among youth in both communities that jeopardize peacebuilding efforts. These solutions add value to current efforts, as they offer novelty and prioritize the longevity of interactions between youth. Moreover, they are in line with the current thinking and international practice of youth as peacebuilders.

Conclusion

Inter-communal tensions and conflicts on the Tajikistan-Kyrgyzstan border have a negative impact on youth. Studies of youth in both countries conducted in 2014 and 2015 found that young people living in border communities feel animosity toward one another. Furthermore, youth show readiness to resort to violence should a conflict between communities break out. These worrisome findings call into question the sustainability of peace between border communities. Although youth communicate with each other, examples of strong connections driven by shared interests are rare. Youths make one-off friendships in joint events, but lasting relationships do not seem to develop. They learn about tolerance and conflict resolution, yet are ready to react violently to conflicts.

Existing challenges to youth in peacebuilding (animosities, ethno-nationalism, low threshold for acceptance of violence, lack of connections) have to be addressed using the positive agency of youth in peacebuilding. This does not come naturally; it has to be nurtured in creative ways. In this paper, I looked at how local governments and donors can better engage with the youth of Tajikistan-Kyrgyzstan border communities in order to sustain inter-communal peace. I suggested that solutions must support young people's engagement in activities that enable experiential learning, are based on shared interests, are of practical use for young people or their communities, and are lasting. Focusing on practical and shared activities will help reduce animosities and incentivize youth to fortify positive relationships, thus maximizing the likelihood of peaceful behaviors. I put forward solutions as varied as cross-community internships and a bilingual youth corps to address the existing challenges.

The proposed solutions are based on lessons learned from past and current youth and peacebuilding initiatives and draw on the methodology of engaging with difference developed by CEDAR Educational Network. Similar solutions have already been tested in various formats in conflict contexts as complex as, for instance, Iraq and Uganda. There is general public support, donor funding, and youth will to make things better. What should be highlighted is that by investing in youth as peacebuilders, communities invest in their future peace and prosperity.

Recommendations

To Local Governments:

- *Formulate a policy on cross-border youth interactions*. At the moment, cross-border youth interactions are not supported

by any separate policy. Existing policy statements of good neighborhood need to be complemented by a more specific policy framework. This framework would detail how local governments on both sides of the border see long-term youth interactions developing. For instance, it may be a broader policy on cross-border community interactions that would include youth as a separate cluster. This does not have to be a national policy, and may be developed at provincial level.

- *Allocate air time on public TV channels for youth in peacebuilding*. Positive examples of youth peacebuilders and youth connections need to be regularly aired on provincial TV. Local authorities could instruct provincial public TV channels to allocate space during evening prime time for video reports on positive peacebuilding by youth.
- *Offer additional Tajik and Kyrgyz language classes at schools or community centers*. Youth from both communities should have an opportunity to learn the rudiments of the other group's language. Being able to understand each other's language will help youth communicate, as well as avoid hateful and insulting speech toward each other. Local authorities can mobilize local schoolteachers or community residents who speak both languages to teach courses. Classes may be offered at schools as electives or outside of schools at community centers or youth clubs.

To International Donors:

- *Shift programming to multi-year cross-border youth–in-action projects*. Youth in the region will greatly benefit from projects and initiatives that make them experience real-life things together. Workshops and trainings are good for cognitive learning, but not experiential learning. Therefore, donors need to devise a three-to-five-year program that will support youth-to-youth joint activities. Now may be a good time for Tajikistan, as the current cross-border cooperation project ended in 2017. In Kyrgyzstan, a new three-year peacebuilding project was launched in 2017, so this project could be expanded or a separate project designed.
- *Conduct regular assessments of child and youth participation in peacebuilding*. The progress of youth and peacebuilding efforts needs to be assessed every 2-3 years. These assessments need to a) trace impact of the initiatives; and b) explore in-group dynamics among youth.

To Community and Media Organizations:

- *Identify and multiply stories of cross-border youth connections*. Cross-border youth connections are often established at joint events and festivals. Stories of lasting cross-border connections between young people should be made available. To make this possible, local community organizations need to stay in touch with participants in cross-border events. They need to trace how connections evolve and follow stories of lasting ties between youth.
- *Empower youth to produce videos about positive examples of youth in peacebuilding*. Video resources on youth in cross-border peace on the Tajikistan-Kyrgyzstan border are scarce. YouTube has far more videos on border incidents between Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan than joint youth events between the two countries. There are almost no video stories about youth peacebuilders. Local media and community organizations should identify young people to train in video production. These youths would be expected to turn the available stories of

youth peacebuilders into a video documentary series.

To Conflict and Peace Researchers:

- *Study conflict and peace in low-intensity conflict environments*. The current knowledge of conflict resolution, prevention and peacebuilding focuses, by and large, on situations of large-scale violence. Low-intensity conflict environments do not receive much attention. This leaves policymakers on the ground to "borrow" peacebuilding solutions from violent conflicts. Scholars and analysts need to study low-intensity conflict environments and propose solutions tailored to these types of situations.

Notes

[1] Author's calculations using statistics on border incidents from Kyrgyzstan's State Border Service for 2015–2017 and media reports for 2012–2014. See "Itogi sluzhebno-boevoi deiatel'nosti," State Border Service of the Kyrgyz Republic, http://www.gps.gov.kg/ru/activity/results.

[2] In January 2014, a border incident saw Kyrgyzstani and Tajikistani border officers exchange gunfire using automatic rifles and mortars. Eight officers (6 from Kyrgyzstan and 2 from Tajikistan) were injured (See "Konflikt na kyrgyzsko-tadzhikskoy granites: prichiny i versii", *KNews*, January 14, 2014, http://knews.kg/2014/01/konflikt-na-kyirgyizsko-tadjikskoy-granitse-prichinyi-i-versii/). Full reference, please. The incident caused a diplomatic crisis in bilateral relations between Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, leading to the closure of the border and a temporary ban on the movement of people and goods that lasted for more than three months.

[3] Anonymous UNDP official in Tajikistan, personal interview with the author, August 2017.

[4] Matveeva, "Divided We Fall," 8.

[5] "Tadzhikistan-Kyrgyzstan: delimitirui i vlastvui (infographika)," *AsiaPlus*, January 25, 2016, https://www.news.tj/ru/news/tadzhikistan-kyrgyzstan-delimitirui-i-vlastvui-infografika.

[6] The agreed border starts at the intersection of the Chinese, Tajik and Kyrgyz borders and end in the mountain ranges of the Mastchoh district of Tajikistan (on one side) and the Leilek district of Kyrgyzstan (on the other side).

[7] Matveeva, "Divided We Fall," 7.

[8] Kemel Toktomushev, "Promoting Social Cohesion and Conflict Mitigation: Understanding Conflict in the Cross-Border Areas of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan," *Working Paper* 40, University of Central Asia, Bishkek, 2017, http://www.ucentralasia.org/, 13.

[9] Ibid.

[10] "Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding: A Practice Note," Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development Working Group on Youth and Peacebuilding, 2016, https://www.un.org/development/desa/youth/international-youth-day-2017/resources-on-youth-peace-and-security.html, 10.

[11] Ibid, 10-11.

[12] Siobhan McEvoy-Levy, "Youth as Social and Political Agents: Issues in Post-Settlement Peace Building," *Occasional Paper* 21, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, 2001.

[13] Although there is no unified profile of "at-risk" youth, young people who experience certain well-being disadvantages (income, employment, education, health, family environment, etc.) are usually considered at-risk—that is, more likely to take up risky behavior (hooliganism, crime, etc.).

[14] Anonymous UNDP official in Tajikistan, personal interview with the author, August 2017.

[15] Young male attending a Tajik/Kyrgyz youth summer camp on intercultural dialogue, personal interview with the author, August 14, 2015. The summer camp, titled "See Things as Your Neighbor Does," was supported by the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations.

[16] "The Concept on Strengthening the National Unity and Interethnic Relations of the Kyrgyz Republic," http://m.president.kg/files/docs/.

[17] See "Speeches of President Emomali Rahmon on the Occasion of National Unity Day in 2014-2017," www.president.tj.

[18] Chuck Thiessen, "Measuring Peacebuilding in Kyrgyzstan. Baseline Survey for the Kyrgyzstan Peacebuilding

Priority Plan (PPP)," 2013, http://www.academia.edu/15741883/.
[19] "National Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2013-2017," http://www.president.kg/ru/news/ukazy/, 19.
[20] Ibid., 21.
[21] Ibid., 22-27.
[22] See "Speeches of President Emomali Rahmon."
[23] "National Development Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan for 2016-2030," http://medt.tj/ru/strategiya-i-natsionalnye-programmy-razvitiya, 5.
[24] Ibid., 51, 67.
[25] "National Development Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan," 67.
[26] Matveeva, "Divided We Fall," 6.
[27] "Looking Back to Look Forward: Learning the Lessons of Conflict Prevention in the Ferghana Valley," Saferworld, May 2011, https://www.saferworld.org.uk/downloads/pubdocs/, 8.
[28] Thiessen, "Measuring Peacebuilding in Kyrgyzstan"; Iroda Babadzhanova, "Mir i sotrudnichestvo nachinayutsya s nas," *AsiaPlus*, July 12, 2017, https://news.tj/ru/news/tajikistan/society/20170712/mir-i-sotrudnichestvo-nachinayutsya-s-nas; "Molodezh Kyrgyzstana i Tajikistana postroila shkol'nuiu biblioteku v prigranichnom sele," *Kabar*, July 25, 2017, http://kabar.kg/news/molodezh-kyrgyzstana-i-tadzhikistana-postroili-shkol-nuiu-biblioteku-v-prigranichnom-sele/; Ruben Garsiya, "V ramkakh proekta po transgranichnomu sotrudnichestvu molodezhi Tajikistana i Kyrgyzstana rasskazhut o tom, kaki m sokhranit' mir na granitse," *Sputnik*, December 8, 2016, http://ru.sputnik-tj.com/asia/20161208/1021257925/sotrudnichestvo-molodegi.html.
[29] Author's calculations using statistics on border incidents from Kyrgyzstan's State Border Service for 2015–2017 and media reports for 2012–2014. See "Itogi sluzhebno-boevoi deiatel'nosti," State Border Service of the Kyrgyz Republic, http://www.gps.gov.kg/ru/activity/results.
[30] "Building Capacity for Conflict Prevention and Mitigation in Cross-Border Areas of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan," M-Vector (Kyrgyzstan) and Sharq (Tajikistan) on behalf of UNDP, 2015 (unpublished); Nina Bagdasarova, "Values, Social Moods and Conflict Behavior of Youth in Kyrgyzstan," ACTED, 2014, https://www.usaid.gov/documents/1861/; "Study on Youth in Central Asia: Kyrgyzstan," Friedrich Ebert Foundation, 2016, http://www.fes-centralasia.org/de/fes/fes-zentralasien/jugendstudie.html; "Study on Youth in Central Asia: Tajikistan," Friedrich Ebert Foundation, 2017, http://www.fes-centralasia.org/de/fes/fes-zentralasien/jugendstudie.html.
[31] In the case of Kyrgyzstan, this attitude is reported by the youth community across the country, whereas in Tajikistan it is mostly confined to youth living in border areas with a history of tensions and conflicts. See M-Vector and Sharq, "Building Capacity"; Friedrich Ebert Foundation, "Study on Youth in Central Asia: Kyrgyzstan"; Friedrich Ebert Foundation, "Study on Youth in Central Asia: Tajikistan."
[32] Thiessen, "Measuring Peacebuilding in Kyrgyzstan," 14; Bagdasarova, "Values, Social Moods and Conflict Behavior."
[33] Friedrich Ebert Foundation, "Study on Youth in Central Asia: Tajikistan."
[34] Bagdasarova, "Values, Social Moods and Conflict Behavior."
[35] Saferworld, "Looking Back to Look Forward," 13.
[36] Bagdasarova, "Values, Social Moods and Conflict Behavior."
[37] M-Vector and Sharq, "Building Capacity."
[38] Saferworld, "Looking Back to Look Forward," 12-13.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Thiessen, "Measuring Peacebuilding in Kyrgyzstan," 14; Bagdasarova, "Values, Social Moods and Conflict Behavior."
[41] Bagdasarova, "Values, Social Moods and Conflict Behavior," 20.
[42] Ibid., 22.
[43] Gulzhigit Ermatov, "Understanding Illiberal Sentiments of Kyrgyz Youth," *CAP Paper* 173., The George Washington University, Washington, DC, 2016, http://centralasiaprogram.org/archives/9958, 7.
[44] M-Vector and Sharq, "Building Capacity."
[45] Bagdasarova, "Values, Social Moods and Conflict Behavior," 30.
[46] Ibid., 31.
[47] "NISI: Molodezh schitaet, chto problemi semeinogo vospitaniya yavlyayutsya prichinami shkolnogo

reketa," National Institute for Strategic Studies of the Kyrgyz Republic, October 2017, http://nisi.kg/139-m-report/412-nisi-molodezh-schitaet-chto-problemy-semejnogo-vospitaniya-yavlyayutsya-prichinami-shkolnogo-reketa.html.

[48] Bagdasarova, "Values, Social Moods and Conflict Behavior," 33.

[49] Friedrich Ebert Foundation, "Study on Youth in Central Asia: Tajikistan," 157; Friedrich Ebert Foundation, "Study on Youth in Central Asia: Kyrgyzstan," 113.

[50] Bagdasarova, "Values, Social Moods and Conflict Behavior," 33.

[51] M-Vector and Sharq, "Building Capacity."

[52] In Kyrgyzstan, Russian is recognized as an official language (not to be confused with state language) in a separate Law On Official Language of the Kyrgyz Republic (adopted in 2000; amended in 2008 and 2013). In Tajikistan, Russian is recognized as a language of inter-ethnic communication.

[53] Matveeva, "Divided We Fall," 6.

[54] Madeleine Reeves, "In Search of *Tolerantnost'*: Preventive Development and Its Limits at the Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan Border," in *Kyrgyzstan Beyond "Democracy Island" and "Failing State"*, ed. Marlene Laruelle and Johan Engvall (New York: Lexington Books, 2015), 87.

[55] See Alison M. S. Watson, "Children in International Relations: A New Site of Knowledge," *Review of International Studies* 32, no. 2 (2006): 237–40; Alison M. S. Watson, *The Child in International Political Economy: A Place at the Table* (London: Routledge, 2009); Helen Brocklehurst, *Who's Afraid of Children? Children, Conflict and International Relations* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Publishing, 2006).

[56] Celina Del Felice and Andria Wisler, "The Unexplored Power and Potential of Youth as Peacebuilders," *Journal of Peace, Conflict and Development* 11 (2007): 1-29.

[57] McEvoy-Levy, "Youth as Social and Political Agents," 25.

[58] Helen Berents and Siobhan McEvoy-Levy, "Theorizing Youth and Everyday Peace (Building)," *Peacebuilding* 3, no.2 (2015): 115-125, 119.

[59] Ibid., 121.

[60] See Appendix 4 for details.

[61] See Appendix 5 for details.

[62] Graeme Simpson, "Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security Mandated by Security Council Resolution 2250," United Nations, 2015, https://www.youth4peace.info/.

[63] Michael McGill and Claire O'Kane, "Evaluation of Child and Youth Participation in Peacebuilding: Nepal, Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, Colombia," Global Partnership for Children and Youth in Peacebuilding, July 2015, http://www.youthpower.org/resources/evaluation-child-and-youth-participation-peacebuilding-0, 21.

[64] In the development practice sense. In other words, these are approaches and not theories in the academic sense.

[65] Adam B. Seligman, Rahel R. Wasserfall, and David W. Montgomery, *Living with Difference: How to Build Community in a Divided World* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2015).

[66] Saferworld, "Looking Back to Look Forward."

[67] For details see "Livelihoods Improvement in Tajik-Afghan Cross-Border Areas," UNDP Tajikistan, http://www.tj.undp.org/content/tajikistan/en/home/operations/projects/poverty_reduction/litaca1.html; and the UNDP Communities Program in Tajikistan's Facebook page, https://www.facebook.com/undp.cp.tj/.

[68] Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development Working Group on Youth and Peacebuilding, "Young People's Participation in Peace-Building."

[69] Susan Allen and Mary Mulvihill, "Theories of Change and Indicator Development in Conflict Management and Mitigation," USAID, June 2010, http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/Pnads460.pdf.

[70] "Youth and Conflict Best Practices and Lessons Learned," Mercy Corps, 2011, https://www.mercycorps.org/research-resources/youth-and-conflict-best-practices.

[71] Saferworld, "Looking Back to Look Forward."

[72] Ibid.

[73] Ibid.

Appendix

Appendix 1. Openness of Kyrgyz and Tajik Youth to Selected Social Groups

Openness of Kyrgyz Youth to Selected Social Groups (percent)

Social group (as a neighbor)	Very good	Good	Bad	Very bad
Homosexual couple	0	1.4	29.9	36.3
Family of Chinese	2.9	17.2	22.3	5.2
Family of Tajiks	3.4	19.0	**21.3**	1.4
Family of Uzbeks	3.5	18.9	19.0	3.5
Family of Kazakhs	6.8	21.1	6.3	1.1
Family of Russians	7.8	29.5	5.3	0.2

Source: "Study on Youth in Central Asia: Kyrgyzstan," Friedrich Ebert Foundation, 2016, http://www.fes-centralasia.org/de/fes/fes-zentralasien/jugendstudie.html, 80

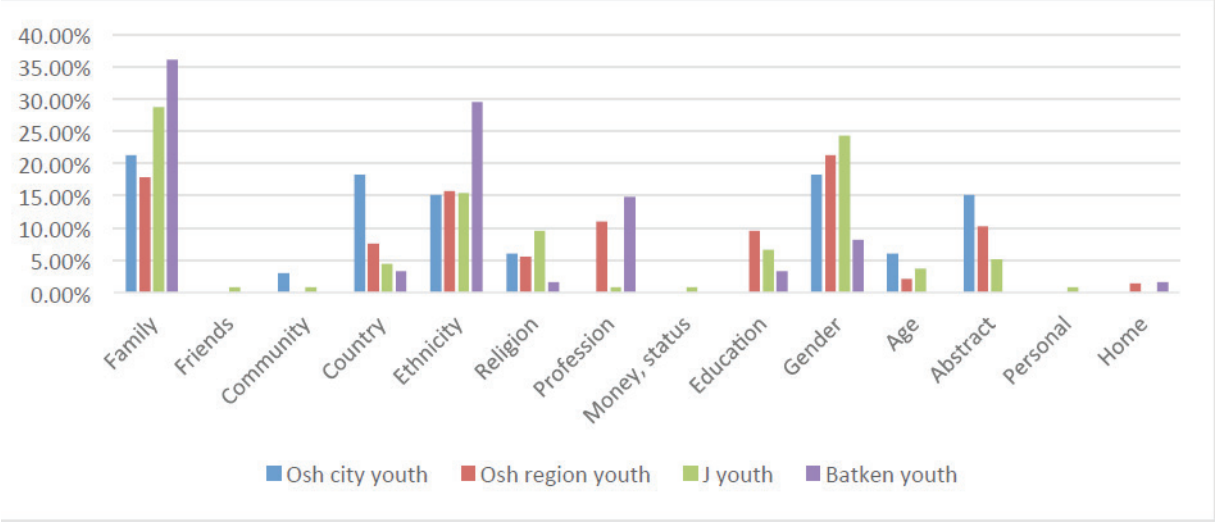
Openness of Tajik Youth to Selected Social Groups (percent)

Social group (as a neighbor)	Very good	Good	Bad	Very bad
Homosexual couple	1.7	5.2	24.6	43.4
Family of non-Muslims	6.2	20.8	16.3	7.4
Family of Chinese	6.0	24.2	11.0	3.4
Family of Uzbeks	14.3	31.7	8.1	2.4
Family of Kazakhs	13.0	27.2	6.3	1.5
Family of Kyrgyz	11.5	30.6	**6.1**	1.7

Source: "Study on Youth in Central Asia: Tajikistan," Friedrich Ebert Foundation, 2017, http://www.fes-centralasia.org/de/fes/fes-zentralasien/jugendstudie.html, 127

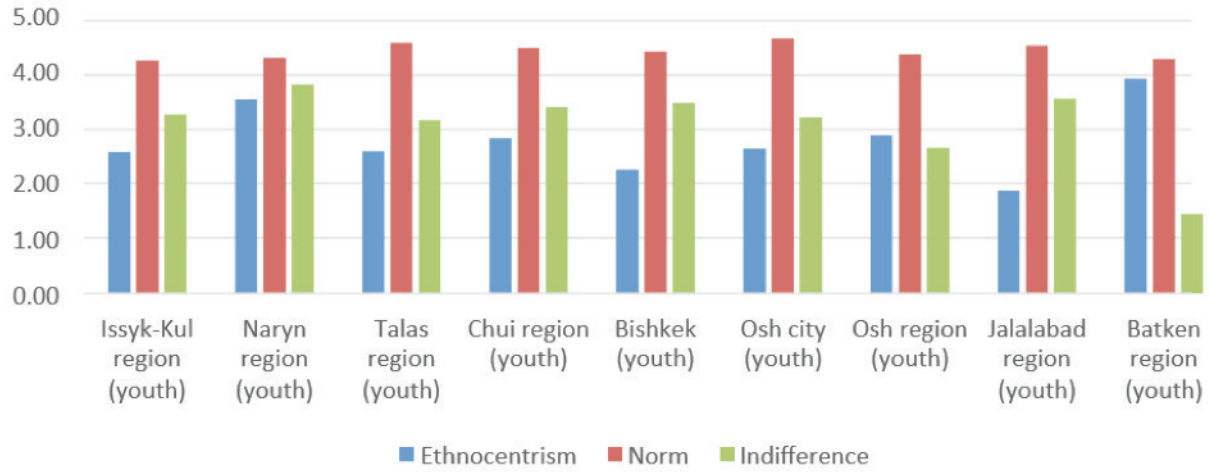
Appendix 2. Identity Markers of Kyrgyz and Tajik Youth

Identity Markers of Youth in Southern Kyrgyzstan



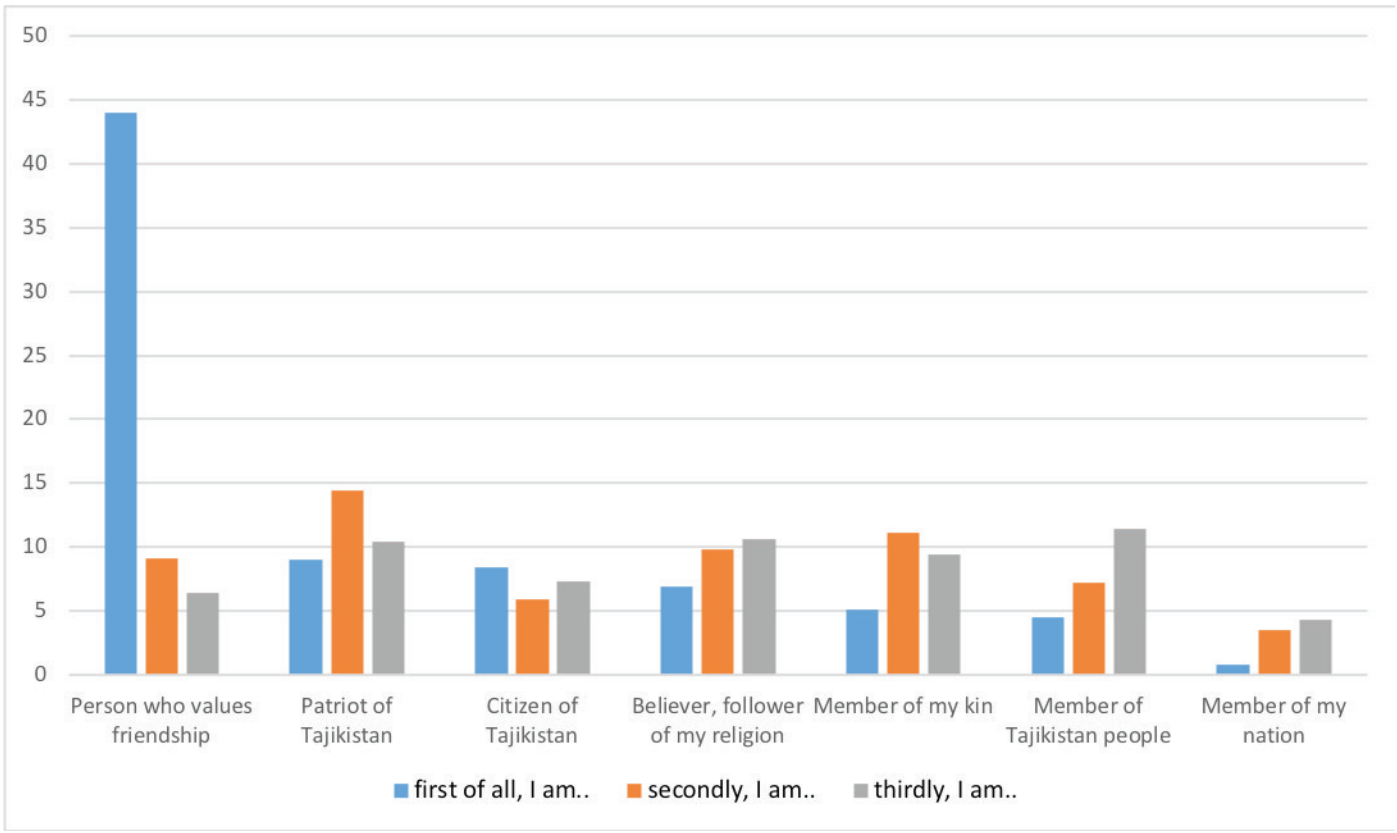
Source: Nina Bagdasarova, "Values, Social Moods and Conflict Behavior of Youth in Kyrgyzstan," ACTED, 2014, https://www.usaid.gov/documents/1861/, 20

Distribution of Youth Statements on Ethno-Affiliation Scale



Source: Nina Bagdasarova, "Values, Social Moods and Conflict Behavior of Youth in Kyrgyzstan," ACTED, 2014, https://www.usaid.gov/documents/1861/, 22

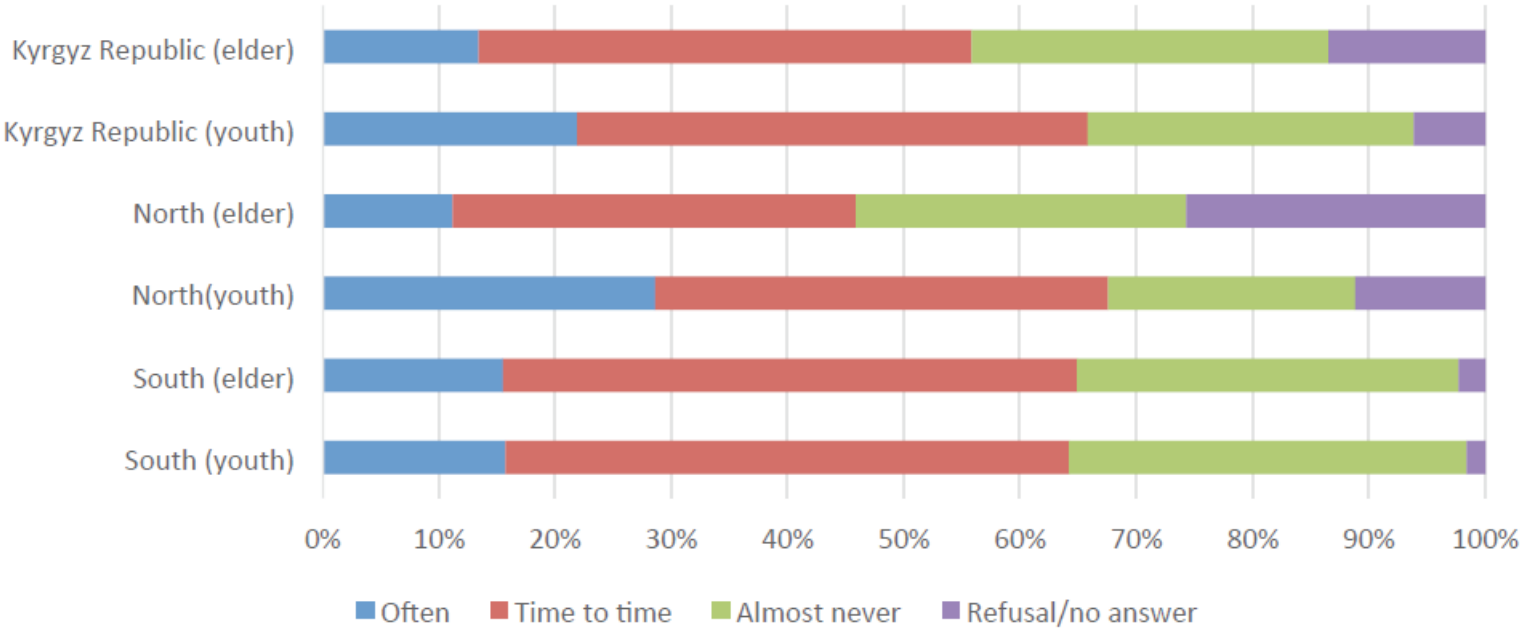
Main Identity Markers of Tajik Youth



Source: Author's calculations using "Study on Youth in Central Asia: Tajikistan," Friedrich Ebert Foundation, 2017, http://www.fes-centralasia.org/de/fes/fes-zentralasien/jugendstudie.html, 121

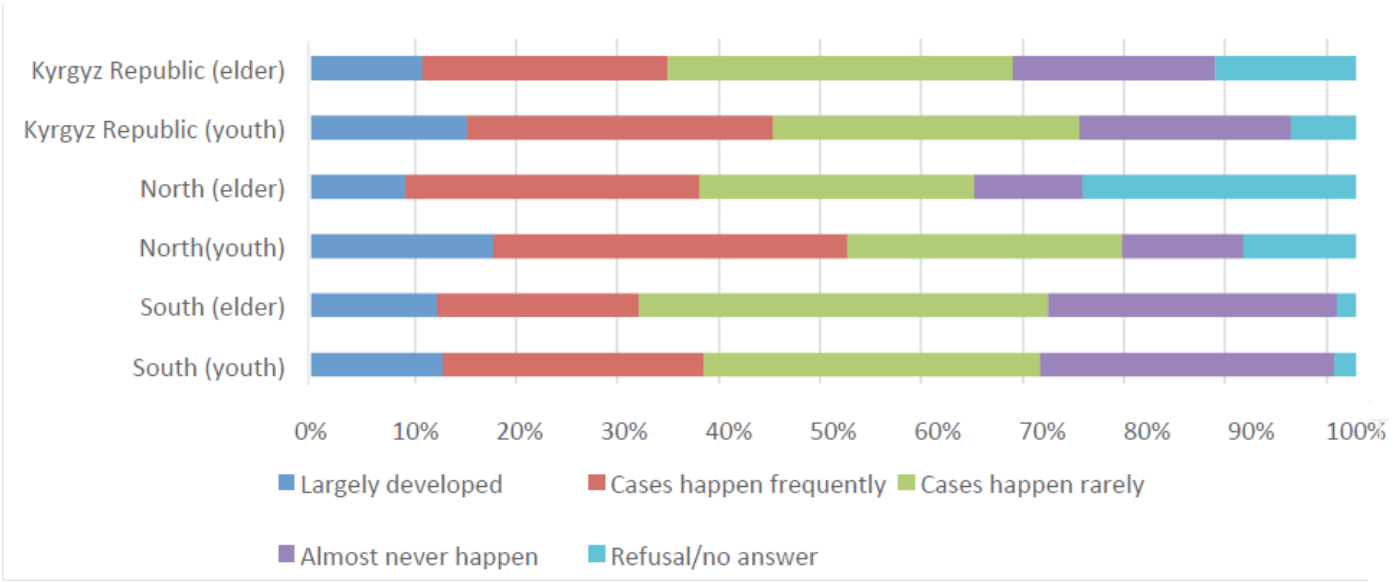
Appendix 3. Experience of Everyday Violence among Youth in Kyrgyzstan

Frequency of Fights among Youth in Local Communities in Kyrgyzstan



Source: Nina Bagdasarova, "Values, Social Moods and Conflict Behavior of Youth in Kyrgyzstan," ACTED, 2014, https://www.usaid.gov/documents/1861/, 30

Spread of "School Racket" in Local Communities in Kyrgyzstan



Source: Nina Bagdasarova, "Values, Social Moods and Conflict Behavior of Youth in Kyrgyzstan," ACTED, 2014, https://www.usaid.gov/documents/1861/, 31 <A>Appendix 4. Visualization of the UN

Appendix 4. Visualization of the UN Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security

Source: "UNSCR 225| Introduction," Youth4Peace, https://www.youth4peace.info/UNSCR2250/Introduction

Appendix 5. Guiding Principles on Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding

Source: "Guiding Principles on Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding," Youth4Peace, December 1, 2014, https://www.youth4peace.info/node/60