



— #ISSUE 01 —

WHITAKER PEACE & DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

## WPDI STRENGTHENS ITS ACTIONS IN 2018



## SOUTH SUDAN

### *The Youth Peacemaker Network Expands into the Former Central Equatoria State*

In June 2018, WPDI's Country Office in South Sudan, where we now mentor more than 300 youth peacemakers, began its efforts to establish a Youth Peacemaker Network in the country's former Central Equatoria State in partnership with Education Above All Foundation to fulfill our larger strategic objective of covering the entire Equatorias region. With the former Eastern and Western Equatoria States already covered under the Youth Peacemaker Network program, the former Central Equatoria State remained the last and final frontier for our expansion plans in the Equatorias region.

After completing an assessment mission, WPDI staff moved on to the recruitment of Trainers of Trainees (ToTs), high-level youth leaders who for a year, will receive comprehensive training from expert WPDI staff in peacebuilding, mediation, information and communications technology, life skills, and business and entrepreneurship skills. Upon successful completion of their training, they will replicate their trainings with other youths in their respective communities. By September 2018, 40 ToTs had been re-

cruited and began their first series of intensive trainings. Elsewhere in South Sudan, already-trained ToTs have been hard at work achieving their objectives. Those include teaching conflict resolution education training at local primary and secondary schools as well as instilling values of peace and mutual respect within their communities.

Throughout the year, the ToTs have mobilized hundreds of local community members to address longstanding conflicts and spread messages pertaining to peaceful coexistence. In Torit County, for example, three ToTs managed to gather 240 community members from the Omorowo and Bari clans. These groups whom had suffered from a longstanding conflict focused upon fueled by a lethal cycle of revenge killings and livestock raidings. The conflict had resulted in some 42 killings and 360 lost goats and cows in recent years. However, by bringing together key stakeholders and other actors, the ToTs were able to persuade both clans to agree to an immediate ceasefire and a resolution of their disputes.

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WPDI launched its first Business Plan Competition at our Community Learning Center in Juba this summer. To ensure that participants in the program possess a minimum of knowledge and skills, the competition, run in cooperation with our partner, Gemini Enterprises Africa, was open to the graduates of the business skills training we conduct for community members there. It attracted 16 business proposals from our program's graduates and, after submission, the programs faced a rigorous review process from the competition's selection committee. The original plan was to select 3 projects; but the quality of the submissions was so high that we eventually retained five finalists, all of which will receive financial and backstop support from WPDI, as well as from Gemini, in the months ahead – all part of our effort to help foster sustainable development in South Sudan.

WPDI is proud to support social entrepreneurs and small businesses in partnership with Gemini Enterprises Africa.

Meanwhile, at the Protection of Civilians III site in Juba, WPDI's programs continue to have a significant impact. Our Peace Through Sports initiative mobilized 4,000 children and young people in daily sporting activities in combination with sessions on peace-building and trauma healing. WPDI is also building the capacity of the youth through professional certified trainings conducted by South Sudan Football Association for referees and coaching. We have certified 20 youth as referees and 20 youth as coaches. In addition to the 720 hours of sports trainings that the 40 soccer teams received, they also benefited from 360 hours of workshop in peacebuilding. Peace through Sports also featured a series of 9 Peace Engagement Days that we organize throughout the year to hold games in conjunction with community dialogues and cultural events, including traditional performances and sports. More than 6288 people participated in these events in 2018.

Our Cinema for Peace program has also brought entertainment to thousands of camp residents; constructive conversations about key film themes, too. Starting in July, WPDI initiated a new partnership with UNESCO to conduct an educational program con-



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cerning sexual and reproductive health at the camp. The program has been widely successful: since its origination, it has reached about 11,000 people in the camp. Its outreach efforts concerning HIV/AIDS – in a country where 200,000 have HIV and 13,000 alone died last year for AIDS-related reasons – are especially of note, as more than 2,000 people at the camp have voluntarily visited a camp facility and are currently undergoing treatment.

We are also very proud to now have 11 Community Learning Centers distributed across the whole Equatorias region. They provide to some 20,000 children, youth and citizens at large living in remote areas, a free access to connected computers, library services as well as courses in conflict resolution, ICT, entrepreneurship, etc. These CLCs are an important part of the YPN as they disseminate within the communities skills and knowledge with the power to transform daily life even when our intervention is long past.



# EDUCATION IS AT THE HEART OF OUR WORK



## UGANDA

### Acholi Sub-Region

WPDI's programs in the Acholi sub-region of northern Uganda, yielded strong results in 2018, a testament to the dedication of our teams based at our country office in Gulu and the talent of ToTs there.

One of our main achievements was the recruitment and deployment of the local youth who are going to work with the 29 young leaders we prepared in 2017. As by the model of the YPN, these 277 youth have started being trained by the ToT's, to provide them the skills they will need to mediate conflict among communities. The training of 44 secondary school teachers in peacebuilding and conflict resolution has also been a very big achievement, since they interface with children in the classroom and the school environment at large. Equipping them with these skills made it possible to positively solve conflicts within schools. This is in line with our mandate of fostering peaceful coexistence through the mobilization of local stakeholders. What we believe to be notable is the growing appropriation by local stakeholders of these tools that, they realize, they can put to use in their daily

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“I used the certificate to apply for the job. I was able to make it in the interview and obtain the job thanks to the knowledge and skills I had acquired and the confidence I gained through my training with WPDI.”

***Former Conflict Resolution Education Trainee***

activities. In this perspective, we were very proud that 42 local community leaders came to us to be trained in peace-building and conflict resolution. That leaders who are mandated to address conflicts within the community would request our assistance is a clear sign that WPDI is becoming a recognized presence in Gulu and around. This has translated into a steep growth in the number of people using our Community Learning Center, which reached 14,803 compared to 3,318 in 2017, more than a four-fold. However, the success of the CLC goes much deeper than the number of visits.

It is expressed in the direct impact it is making in the lives of our trainees: the post-training surveys we conducted in Acholi revealed that, of the 159 former WPDI trainees polled, 79% experienced a positive change in their careers, either finding a job (36%), increasing their income (6%), creating their own business (20%) or using their certificate to pursue studies (17%). 57 of these youths trained at the CLC found jobs in different Organizations like Inspire Africa, Surface Uganda, Cynebell, Fuel stations, SOS children village, Amazon, The Chibogo Group or the Bureau of the Gulu Municipal Council.







## TESTIMONY

In October, Mary Valentino – a talented WPDI youth peacemaker from the Kiryandongo Refugee Settlement in northern Uganda – was invited by our partner, the Western Union Foundation, to attend the One Young World Summit in The Hague as a member of their delegation. One Young World is an international NGO that gathers talented young leaders from around the world and empowers them to make lasting connections to create positive change. They stage an annual summit to gather these promising youths and, there, Mary shared her energy and experiences as a refugee-come-leader and learned from other.

For 24-year-old Mary, attending such an event was an incredible opportunity, especially since it was her first time traveling out of Africa or even on an airplane. With her 1,800 peers, she contributed to a unique exercise in collective intelligence, leading to the adoption of the groundbreaking Hague Youth Declaration on Human Rights in Action. This document was notable because it did not just call upon other parties to act but commit to action. This is indicative of Mary's attitude and approach: since early in her adolescence, she has taken initiative to help other girls and young women access education.

The importance of accessing education was one of her core messages for her peers at the conference: *“As a young woman, I am very sensitive to the situation of women and girls where I come from. We do not value them enough. As I gain experience, I want to continue to support out-of-school and drop out girls. Education can be the key for them.”*

Mary Valentino, a talented WPDI youth peacemaker, attends the One Young World Summit

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## UGANDA

### Kiryandongo Refugee Settlement

The deployment of the YPN at Kiryandongo Refugee Settlement and the surrounding host communities in the Kiryandongo District has been one of our most impressive successes in 2018. The 40 youth leaders who had been trained throughout 2017 have proved to be promise keepers and exceeded our expectations. This is the case in particular for the 56 community dialogues they organized in their communities, which reached nearly 3,000 people. They also took the initiative to hold four radio talk shows that reached an audience of around 20,000, which contributed to disseminate our message and advertise our program, thereby increasing our credibility and local appropriation. Besides these activities, the ToTs have also started training 368 local youths, marking a turning point in the deployment of a YPN branch, as the groups that will conduct peace work and business activities are now fully active. 2018 was also marked by the launch of our latest programmatic platform, the Business Boot Camp, a program we created to better ensure the sustainability and profitability of the income-generating projects we support

through the YPN. The first beneficiaries of this incubator are the 285 vulnerable women that we started supporting in 2017 and who launched 19 small businesses to improve life for themselves, their families and their communities.

In total, our combined activities, ranging from certified courses to attendance at sports events and radio audiences, have made an impact that has been felt throughout and beyond the settlement. The Community Learning Center we established a year and a half ago received 71,000 visits. It has become a community hub; a place where residents will find Internet access, learning resources, job opportunities, and perhaps simply peace and solace. We have been very impressed with some of the information we gathered from our monitoring efforts. We conducted our first series of post training surveys, which revealed that of the 392 former WPDI trainees polled, 45% experienced a positive change in their careers, either finding a job (15%), increasing their income (11%), creating their own business (13%) or using their certificate to pursue studies (1%).

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We should also stress the very positive feedback we received from such partners as the Office of the Prime Minister of Uganda (OPM), the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), and other local stakeholders of influence, who all stressed the positive role our program has had on the settlement as a whole. OPM, in particular, has reported to us that the record of incidents of violence among tribes was dramatically reduced thanks to the YPN in general, dwindling from 3 to 5 incidents in 2017, before the ToTs started working, to only three incidents since January 2018, after they started their activities. This is amazing news for the communities living within and around the settlement. This means that a foundation is being laid for peace and sustainable development.



With nearly 72,000 visits over the course of 2018, the CLC continues to demonstrate its relevance for the local communities within and around the settlement.

## MEXICO

### WPDI Continues to Expand its Presence in the City of Tijuana and the State of Chiapas

March marked a tipping point for WPDI in Mexico with the launch of the new branches of the YPN that we are now deploying in Tijuana, Baja California, and San Cristobal de las Casas in Chiapas State, in partnership with Telmex and Western Union Foundation with the recruitment of a new group of 60 young leaders. In November, we opened two new Community Learning Centers, one serving each branch of the YPN.

These two centers – the 14th and 15th we open in the world – will empower young people from these areas by mentoring 200 of them as peacemakers and entrepreneurs and to mobilize our community learning centers, thereby equipping another 7,000 with skills in ICTs and entrepreneurship. Increasing the capacity of young people to find jobs and make a difference in their communities in general

is essential, in our view, to foster resilience and sustainability that local youth can engineer by themselves.

After six years of implementing the Harmonizer Program, which mainly consisted in training and supporting cohorts of young community leaders, we opted for implementing full-fledged YPNs, following the model we applied in Africa, which included the training of local youth by the youth leaders and the establishment of Community Learning Center, where neighboring residents can freely access connected computers, library services as well as a host of courses in conflict resolution, ICTs, entrepreneurship, sexual and reproductive health, etc.

Also as part of the YPN, WPDI staff began training 315 students in conflict resolution education in four

“Being a part of WPDI has changed my perspective about the world. I used to think everything was perfect and it would be given to us. I now know that if we want changes in our community, we have to work for them. We have to strive and do our part so we can create change.”

***Aída Zurita, Tijuana Youth Peacemaker 17 years old***

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middle schools across Tijuana. By doing so, we plan to help them become active citizens who can also address tension and conflict in their communities.

In addition to the new cohorts of future youth peacemakers, existing community projects led by past Youth Peacemaker Networks continue to make significant impact. In Chiapas, one such project, the Healthy Food Production initiative, has even expanded and now spans across six communities to teach local families how to develop biofertilizers and bioinsecticides for use in their personal vegetable gardens.

Through the initiative's partnership with a local collective in San Cristobal de las Casas, the project has put on workshops for local children on topical issues for the community, including on seed selection, germination, solid waste management, and what constitutes healthy and nutritious food.



## UNITED STATES

### The Domestic Harmonizer Program

### Graduates a New Cohort of Peer Mediators

At the beginning of the 2018-19 school year, WPDI staff started the second year of a three-year conflict resolution education-based program at Andrew Carnegie Middle School in Carson, California. There, 21 middle school students undertook a 12-hour peer mediation training course designed by WPDI and our partnering organization, California State University, Dominguez Hills. In October WPDI was delighted to hold the graduation ceremony for fully-fledged peer mediators on their school's campus.

During their training, this new cohort of in-school peacemakers learned about the essential elements of peer mediation and covered topics such as the sources of conflict, underlying needs, and the fundamentals of the mediation process. They joined an initial cohort of 17 seventh and eighth grade students as peer mediators at Carnegie. These

two cohorts will now form a unified group that will progress and operate together to serve the school community. In that perspective, Carnegie's counselors will regularly call upon them to resolve eligible conflicts that arise among their peers.

The students themselves are feeling enthusiastic about their future responsibilities. One noted that she "learned a lot from this peer mediation training and feel comfortable using what I've learned to calm serious situations." Another stated that she feels "ready to become a peer mediator and make my school a better place."

The Domestic Harmonizer Program (DHP) has just been heralded for its impact by an independent evaluator from California State University, Dominguez Hills. The evaluation found that "many students shared that they noticed how CRE provided skills, strategies, and scenarios to temper how they





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engage with others when a conflict arises. This points to the continued teaching and learning for the Peer Mediators at Carnegie as well as the need for a more visible DHP presence at Carnegie.” Another notable finding highlighted that “students that participated in DHP gained important skills and practices to utilize CRE and offer a much-needed space for students to shift how they would have otherwise reacted to conflict with peers.” As the report concludes, “CRE can have a profound impact on students as well as teachers, and schools have a wonderful opportunity to transform the ways students connect, respond, and engage with each other and their world.” The DHP is now a try-and-test-ed program for which we have high expectations.





# FOREST WHITAKER

Founder & CEO of WPDI

*Mr. Whitaker Participates in Substantial High-Level Events in 2018*

In 2018, Forest participated in a number of high-level events as WPDI's CEO as well as in his capacity as the UNESCO Special Envoy for Peace and Reconciliation and a UN Advocate for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). At the World Government Summit in Dubai in February, he urged government and business leaders to create conditions for youth movements as a strategic move to address global challenges. Lending his support to Global Citizen in their efforts to globally engage citizens and political leaders to help achieve the SDGs, Forest Whitaker participated in the CEO Leadership Summit they held in South Carolina in April to help them raise awareness and funding for the Mandela #100 campaign, including a concert in Johannesburg in December, in the host committee of which he also sat. Forest also delivered a short

address on education at the Global Citizen Festival they held in Central Park. In June, he was in Singapore to deliver a keynote speech at the Ecosperity and UNLEASH summits in Singapore, held in conjunction with United Nations World Environment Day, and to connect 1,000 young people from more than 100 countries, whom were invited to brainstorm together through a "global innovation lab" experience designed to help achieve the SDGs. In September, during UN Week, he joined forces with the Secretary-General on two occasions, the celebration of the late Mandela's hundredth birthday, as well as a round-table with his fellow SDG Advocates to explore new approaches to promote the SDGs among the public.



# OUR PLANS FOR 2019

WPDI has ambitious plans for 2019. With six years of operations now behind us, we are very proud to have been able to help so many youth accomplished so much for their communities. Those years have been a period of piloting and experimenting. With 250,000 people reached across Mexico, South Sudan, Uganda and the United States, we are now about to increase the scope of our action having taken home one key lesson, namely that we will keep learning from the youth we work for as well as our partners.

This is a lesson that we will apply as we move into our next county of operation, South Africa, where we are about to establish a new Youth Peacemaker Network in the Cape Flats area of Cape Town in partnership with BNP Paribas. As part of this program, 360 young people from Cape Town's districts will be trained to become peacemakers and entrepreneurs equipped and committed to serving their community and to developing revenue-generating projects that will create jobs and services for the city's inhabitants. Aimed at encouraging leadership among young people, the Youth Peacemaker Network will facilitate their social and professional inclusion. The program will also feature a Community Learning Centre where children, youth and residents at large will have access to connected computers, library services and a host of courses in ICT, entrepreneurship, conflict resolution, literacy, etc. Through this programme, BNP Paribas and WPDI will contribute, in particular, to the UN's fourth SDG "To ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all".

Our Youth Peacemaker Network expansion is not only limited to Cape Flats. In 2019, we additionally plan to officially launch new networks in Karamoja, Northern Uganda, in partnership with the Islamic Development Bank. These coming Youth Peacemaker Networks indicate a great achievement for WPDI, that being that our work is increasingly recognized for exactly how groundbreaking it truly is. What was once viewed as an uncertain goal – to mobilize and empower young people to positively transform their communities – is now known to be a successful endeavor.



# PARTNERS IN PEACE



GEMINI ENTERPRISES AFRICA  
S.A.R.L.



# 2018 YEAR IN REVIEW



**78%**

of former WPDI trainees surveyed in three locations in Africa experienced a positive career change within six months of completing their training, such as finding a job, increasing their income, creating their own business or pursuing education.



**1,175**

young peacemakers trained and certified as Trainer of Trainees in South Sudan, Uganda and Mexico are deployed as peace forces in their communities.



**68,000 +**

refugees and host communities benefit from our peacebuilding and educational programs at the Kiryandongo Refugee Settlement in Uganda



**35,000 +**

community members benefitted from WPDI's certified training programs at our Community Learning Centers.



**20,000 +**

Internally Displaced Persons at the Protection of Civilians site in Juba, South Sudan, engaged with WPDI's Peace Through Sports, Community Dialogues and Cinema for Peace programs.



**900**

children and 50 teachers from schools in low-income neighborhoods in California have received trainings in conflict resolution.



**40**

income-generating social businesses launched and supported in South Sudan, Uganda and Mexico that employ thousands of vulnerable youth.



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YouTube