



WHITAKER
PEACE & DEVELOPMENT
INITIATIVE



SOUTH SUDAN

ANNUAL REPORT



2021

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2021, the Youth Peacemaker Network (YPN)'s engagement in South Sudan intervened and implemented projects in the Equatoria Region, comprising of Western Equatoria State (WES), Central Equatoria State (CES) and Eastern Equatoria State (EES). Many noteworthy achievements were attained in 2021, as a result of concerted efforts and collaborations with youths (e.g., youth peacemakers, payam youths, volunteers and other community-level stakeholders) to whom WPDl provided training. Government counterparts in different line ministries and departments played a crucial part as well to ensure activities were implemented without hindrance in the different localities.

Development partners, who participated in and helped implement the numerous projects undertaken by WPDl South Sudan in 2021, contributed greatly to the attainment of 2021 milestones.

However, even more could have been achieved had it not been for the COVID-19 pandemic, which hampered such efforts through related restrictions and lockdowns that either delayed the implementation of certain activities or halted operations as a result of lockdowns and curtailment of social gathering.

By refocusing the YPN program to address the COVID-19 situation, WPDl was able to build a strong knowledge base among the communities that enabled it to quickly return back and embark on its core activities of peacebuilding and rolling out of Income-Generating Projects through its Business Bootcamp initiative when the infection rates went down from the second quarter of 2021.

Community dialogues have been one of our initiatives with the biggest impacts. Given our expertise in this area, communities send requests to WPDl to help address conflicts. WPDl then organizes and convenes dialogues. The dialogues normally bring on board the conflicting parties and many stakeholders.

With regards to Peace Education in schools, peace clubs expanded exponentially in 2021 and the number of participating schools in the program tripled from 12 schools in 2020 to 38 schools in 2021 across the three states.

From April 2021, after a prolonged suspension of activities in 2020 due to the COVID-19 outbreak, we were able to resume our activities in support of our beneficiaries across all of our Community Learning Centers.



KEY FACTS & FIGURES

20,000

beneficiaries reached by our activities and support



46%

of our beneficiaries are women



Youth Peacemakers



70

active Youth Peacemakers

Community Dialogues



30

community dialogues conducted with

2,429

participants

405

community leaders trained in Conflict Resolution Education

40

radio shows with an estimated audience of **360,000** listeners

Peace Education in Schools



4,267

pupils students trained in Peace Education in

38

Primary and Secondary schools

Cinema for Peace



491

participants reached through **8** screenings

574

youths graduated as Local Youth Peacemakers

3,750

facemasks distributed to vulnerable communities

Community Learning Centers



96 %

of our trainees would recommend the program to other community members

272

graduates in Business & Entrepreneurship

1,244

graduates in Information and Communications Technology

544

graduates in Conflict Resolution Education

22

graduates in Arts & Crafts

Business Bootcamp



26

new businesses emerged from **6** Business Plan Competitions directly providing employment to **160** youths and business owners

52

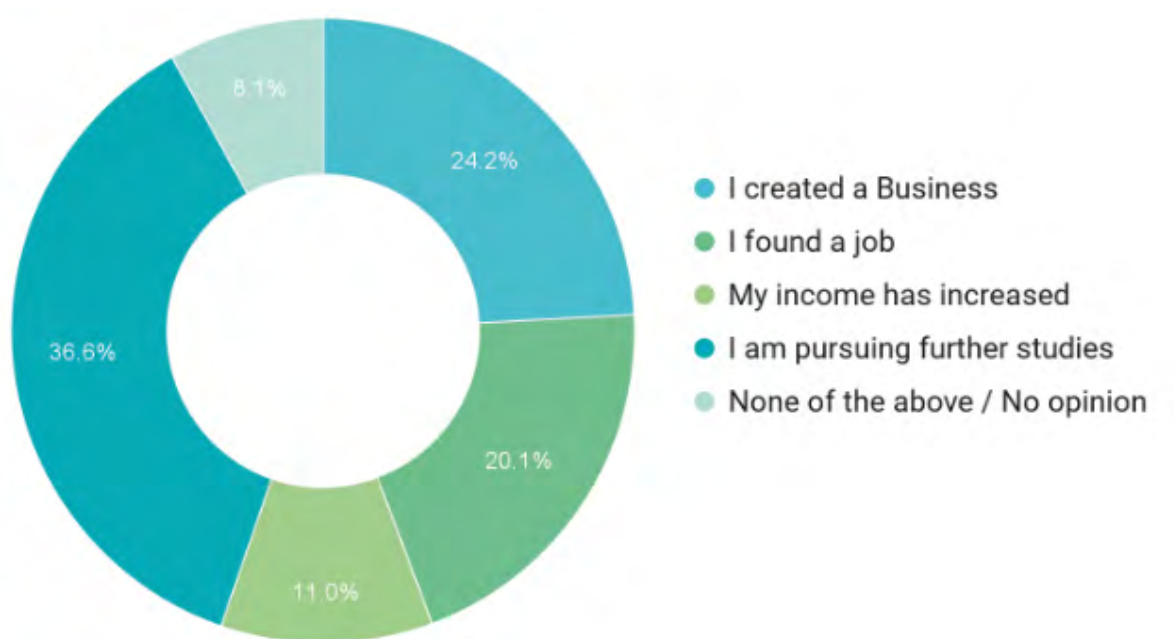
businesses, including 26 businesses launched through previous cohorts are operational and still benefit from WPDI support

SURVEY RESULTS

Feedback from Former Trainees

Throughout the year, WPDI undertook a post-training survey to learn about the impact our vocational training courses have on former trainees, six months after they graduate. Of the 352 former trainees who responded, **92% reported that they experienced positive career outcomes** as 24% created a business, 20% found a job, 11% increased their income, and 37% pursued studies outside of WPDI.

Over **96% of respondents said that they recommend this program.**



Feedback from Local & National Stakeholders

“ WPDI is doing a very commendable work and is impacting positively on the lives of the communities, especially the youth.

— Body Michael,
Commissioner of Maridi County Local
Government (Western Equatoria State)

“ WPDI is a pro-youth organization that we happily work closely with as the line ministry.

— Emmanuel Zingbondo,
Director General, State Ministry of Culture,
Youth and Sports (Eastern Equatoria State)

“ WPDI has been doing a lot, specially empowering and educating Youth in Eastern Equatoria State. They introduced Peace Education in schools which have been very good as it addresses peace education at grassroots level. The youth will become creative, innovative, and peaceful citizens, after the completion of the peace trainings.

— Mr. David Urupi Uywek,
Chairperson of Equatoria State Youth Union

YOUTH PEACEMAKER NETWORK

Payam youth training

The Payam youth or otherwise known as Local Youths are a backbone of the YPN program. They were trained by Youth Peacemakers through five sessions on Conflict Resolution, Business and Entrepreneurship, and Information and Communications Technology (ICT). In addition to this training, they also had special sessions on COVID-19 preventative measures this year. These newly acquired skills help them bring positive and transformative change to their communities.



It is important to note that our Youth Peacemakers delivered this training in the payams across each of the three states of Equatoria region where we implement activities. Once trained, these Local Youths are able to deliver training in schools, conduct peace dialogues, become business owners, and campaign effectively against COVID-19.

**Our 70 Youth Peacemakers trained 574
payam youths as Local Youth Peacemakers.**



Testimonials from Payam Youth trainees

“ I have benefitted a lot from the peacebuilding and conflict resolution education training. I am going to use the knowledge and skills I gained to mediate conflicts among youths in my community, who have been fighting for the past three months.

— Pitia,
Terekeka County

“ I used to think that my tea business's competitors were my enemy, but now, I have learned that they can help me be more creative and improve my business. Now, I'm able to write a business plan, which I know will make my tea business better.

— Mary,
Terekeka County

“ My knowledge on the prevention and spread of COVID-19 has increased as a result of the door to door awareness raising exercise we conducted. I am committed to continue raising awareness on the prevention of this virus to my family, friends, relatives and neighbors. I appreciate WPDJ for this timely awareness to educate those who know very little about COVID-19 in my community.

— Bojo James Muni,
Payam youth from Luri, Juba County, CES



Youth Peacemakers campaign against COVID-19

In 2021, COVID-19 continued to be a hurdle our teams had to work around. The pandemic and related measures made it difficult to plan and implement activities of our Youth Peacemaker Network (YPN) program. However, we have been able to remain flexible and to quickly adapt to the evolution of the virus and related policies, just as we had in 2020.

For the youths to deliver accurate COVID-19 information during the awareness campaign in the communities, WPDI developed and delivered factsheets. They were distributed as part of an awareness campaign process. This material was in simple English aided by visuals (pictures). The factsheets were then translated in the local languages by the youths as they campaigned within the different communities. **WPDI distributed factsheets in 28 counties** across Eastern Equatoria State (EES), Central Equatoria State (CES) and Western Equatoria State (WES), with verified COVID-19 information from WHO and the South Sudan National Ministry of Health. In addition, Youth Peacemakers managed to reach an even larger audience through awareness campaigns across five counties in EES, four counties in CES, and nine counties in WES.

To facilitate and ease the movement of our youth leaders across the different communities, WPDI procured a total of **16 bicycles** for them to campaign in some of the remote counties in which we deliver programs.

To keep up with the recommended sanitary measures during the awareness campaign on COVID-19, WPDI ensured all rules and recommendations from WHO and the National Ministry of health were followed. To reinforce the awareness campaign of the youths and to mitigate the risks linked to COVID-19, WPDI developed, produced and sourced material, such as reusable masks, to distribute widely.

Most of the reusable face masks were made by the WPDI trained participants of the Arts & Crafts program, in the process enabling them to put their skills into practice and being useful to the communities. Altogether during the COVID-19 awareness campaign from April 2020 to April 2021, **the youths were able to distribute a total of 6,550 facemasks** (3,750 in 2021), **1,478 washing basins/buckets and 1,478 washing soaps, benefiting 1,478 households**. On top of that, a total of **486 tippy taps for hand washing** were constructed in strategic community centers in 19 counties across the Equatoria region.

Our **Youth Peacemakers** and **Local Youths** spread awareness and distributed **3,750 facemasks** against COVID-19.

Radio Talk Shows

A central element of our programs is to expand our reach to a wide audience, beyond our direct beneficiaries. Therefore we have incorporated the diffusion of recorded messages or participating in radio talk shows in our peacebuilding and livelihood activities to sensitize people on our message of peace. **In 2021, we participated in 40 radio shows and reached an estimated audience of 360,000 combined listeners.** These were mostly local radio stations but we also spoke on some national radio programs.



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Most notably, WPDI, UN Women, and the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands joined forces to create and produce a series of radio spots designed to promote – and protect – the rights of women and girls in South Sudan.

The campaign, entitled **"Know Your Rights! Know Your Power!"**, featured six radio spots, all of which were featured on national radio stations to specifically target distinct audiences of men, women, and youths in key media markets throughout the country. The campaign is part of a wider effort to improve gender equality and women's empowerment in a country where decades

of conflict and certain traditional norms have created many challenges in this regard. Building on the wide reach of radio in South Sudan, our objective is to raise awareness of South Sudanese citizens on the situations of women with respect to the future of peace and security in the country.



[Click here to listen](#)

To develop the spots and ensure their effectiveness, WPDI worked closely with several of our Youth Peacemakers as well as other youths during the production process. James, a talented local sound engineer and founding member of the Ana Taban young artists peacebuilding group, helped produce the six pieces and provided the main male voice for the campaign. Magdalena, a peacemaker in Torit who has been working with WPDI since 2014, provided the voice of the adult female. Additionally, WPDI asked children from the Confident Children out of Conflict Center in Juba to participate, and they lent their voices – and enthusiasm – to several spots as well.

Testimonials from radio talk show stakeholders

“ I feel very satisfied as you have been able to use the local languages to communicate your messages and answer questions of the callers. The engagement has been appreciated given the context here in Torit where not many people can speak English. You are also able to keep your messages short and to the point more so easy to be remembered.

— Ms. Achiro Joseph,
Radio Presenter of Grace Radio, Torit

“ We the women, young or old, should know our rights and know our power as humans. We shouldn't allow ourselves to be oppressed by men because of our biological differences – as long as we live, we are equal. Let's fight for our rights – the right for good education, the right to make our own decisions, the right to own property and assets, and the right to life. We stand to fight for our rights and power.

— Magdalena,
a youth peacemaker who took part in the “Know Your Rights! Know Your Power!” campaign



COMMUNITY DIALOGUES TO PROMOTE PEACE AND RECONCILIATION

The high prevalence of land grabbing, gender-based violence, inter-communal and farmer-pastoralist conflicts in South Sudan is a matter of concern. In order to help address these issues, we deliver community dialogues, which are a platform for communities to come together and discuss issues to either resolve them or forward them to relevant entities in an open and transparent manner. This initiative is a key component of the YPN program designed to strengthen our organization's support to community peacebuilding and conflict mediation activities. The community dialogues contribute to the high impact of the YPN program in South Sudan.

In 2021, we faced challenges ranging from resource mobilization to meet the demands for our program and security impediments to access some areas. **However, we delivered 30 community dialogues in which 2,429 people participated.** Thousands more were reached indirectly.







In Eastern Equatoria State (EES), five community dialogues were conducted in the counties of Lafon, Ikwoto, Nimule and Budi.

In Central Equatoria State (CES), WPDJ convened and facilitated 21 community dialogues in 2021. The majority of the community dialogues were held under the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda, in collaboration with UN Women and convened by 60 young women graduate trainees in Juba. The young women convened over 12 community dialogues in six localities and neighborhoods around Juba.

In Western Equatoria State (WES), the year was marked by deadly conflicts engulfing the whole of the greater Tombura region, which includes Ezo, Tombura and Nagero counties. Few projects were delivered in this area due to the dangerous context. However, WPDJ kept regular contact with key stakeholders and continued to consult with partners to help address the situation. Despite the Tombura crisis, WPDJ managed to convene four community dialogues with great impact in the communities that were targeted.

The following timeline highlights community dialogues that provide a good understanding of this program and how it impacts communities positively.

Semester One Highlights

**16-17
March**

Mundri East county (Western Equatoria)

The dialogue was organized to address forced marriage and the high rate of early pregnancies among young girls. There were 40 participants (24 females and 16 males) from different ethnic groups. Members of the County Authority, Religious Leaders, Traditional Leaders also took part in the dialogue.

**17-18
March**

Lafon County (Eastern Equatoria)

This was an intra-community peace engagement for the members of the Pari community. The dialogue was facilitated with emphasis on reconciliation, unity and the need to foster peaceful coexistence among different social groups. The two-days dialogue was attended by 50 participants.

**21-22
March**

Mundri West (Western Equatoria)

The issue addressed during this dialogue was on land ownership disputes as multiple buyers of the same land, or claims to land without proper documentation had become common practice. As a result, recommendations to improve the situation were shared with the county of Mundri West.

**29
March**

Mugwo payam, Yei River county (Central Equatoria)

This dialogue was to resolve a long standing conflict between the inhabitants of Mugwo payam and nomadic pastoralists accused of letting cattles in droves which destroys crops and farmlands. The presence of soldiers and roadblocks limiting free movement was also addressed. There were 100 participants including cattle camp chiefs and local chiefs.

**8
May**

Gorom village Community Dialogue (Central Equatoria)

The Bari ethnic group of Juba relies on agriculture. In the last two years, the presence of cattle in the area has affected their livelihood. They also reported destruction of crops, looting, plundering of properties and harassment. The commissioner of Juba County requested that we conduct a peace dialogue between the host community and the cattle herders. There were 56 participants.

**3-5
June**

Ikwoto County (Eastern Equatoria)

The three-days dialogue was convened as means of promoting unity, peace and reconciliation among the people of Imotong payam. They were a response to the deadly inter-communal conflict. Local leaders requested that WPDI create a space for the different actors to dialogue. There were 98 participants.

**12
June**

Terekeka County (Central Equatoria)

This dialogue followed a series of violent actions that resulted in the killing of ten people, 500 houses being burned and 1,000 cattle being raided. The dialogue was a success and the two communities agreed for cattle to be returned, reparations paid and end hateful speech. 92 people participated.

Semester Two Highlights

**21-22
October**

Yei River County (Central Equatoria)

The dialogue was conducted by WPDI and UNMISS-CAD under the theme: "Rebuilding the Fractured Social Cohesion, Trust and Confidence". There were 153 participants including: the Hon. Commissioner of Yei River County (Aggrey Curus Kanikwa), Police Commissioner of Yei River County, Bishop of ECS Diocese of Yei, Army commander of Yei River County, Director of National Security service in Yei, and other government dignitaries from Central Equatoria State Government.

**25
October**

Nzara county (Western Equatoria)

This is a county that is generally peaceful. However, conflict has arose recently between cattle owners and pastoralists. Indeed the latter blamed cattle for destroying their crops and killed a number of livestock. The conclusion of the dialogue was that cattle should be kept inside especially during planting season. There were 15 participants.

**22-24
November**

Yambio County (Western Equatoria)

A three-days community dialogue was convened by WPDI on request by the local chiefs and the Inter-Faith Council in Yambio and drew 70 participants. The violent tribal conflict were propagating to traditionally peaceful counties. As a result o the dialogue a committee comprised of 13 members was elaborated to oversee the dissemination of the resolutions in their respective communities.

**1st
December**

Yei River County (Central Equatoria)

The one-day dialogue resolved to establish councils in the payams and bomas comprising of payam and boma directors, army area commanders, chiefs and other key stakeholders to be meeting monthly to discuss security issues and address complaints coming from civilians. Furthermore, the dialogue has strongly called for an end to bloodshed.



Selected testimonials from community dialogues participants across the three states:

“ WPDl is doing wonderful work by addressing early signs of potential conflicts through community dialogues. This one is especially timely as it brought key stakeholders to address the issue of cattle herders in Mugwo and beyond. WPDl is unique in that it is very much committed to addressing real issues in hard-to-reach communities. WPDl and all their partners should know that we, the communities of Yei River County, are feeling the positive impact of the organization's work through the community dialogue initiatives, training of our youths in the payams, peace education programs in schools and awareness campaigns on various issues facing the County.

— Bishop Emeritus of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan, Yei Diocese, Hillary Luete Adeba

“ I am very happy that we are able to freely speak our hearts on the challenges we face in this dialogue and with the speeches given by the army commander and the commissioner and others, I strongly believe that the situation will not be the same for us as women. We can no longer accept cases of rape, looting, displacement and violence here in the villages. Before the dialogue the situation was very difficult for us women but as we heard people speaking, we sensed there was a positive gesture for peace. Even the soldiers are also tired of fighting in the bushes of Yei River County.

— Celina Tumalu Charles,
chairlady of Otego Payam Women Association

“ The community dialogue was successful and wonderful. We are able to openly discuss issues affecting us to increase trust and confidence building. I commend WPDl for the great effort and urge the organization and their donors to continue supporting the remaining initiatives aimed at disseminating the resolutions and conducting dialogues between civilians and the military to help returnees to resettle and rebuild their lives.

— Hon, Aggrey Cyrus Kanyikwa,
Commissioner of Yei River County

“ Thanks for this community dialogue. It is the first of its kind in Nzara County. No one would even think one day the two conflicting parties would see eye to eye and amicably resolve their differences. I believe in the power of dialogues—thanks WPDl for this initiative. Please extend it to other payams and counties.

— Ms. Suzy Siama, 34 Acting Chairperson,
General Women Union, Nzara County

“ Many thanks to our county's Youth Peacemakers and WPDl team for thinking of bringing us together so that we can have a dialogue. In fact, this issue of farmers and livestock keepers nearly brought violence in Nzara County, hence this community dialogue has come timely. I am quite sure both the communities have understood everything that has been discussed and should comply with the resolutions that we have come up with ourselves.

— Mr. John Matir,
42 Cattle-Keeper, Nzara County

Training Community Leaders in Conflict Resolution

Across the Equatoria States, we trained community leaders on peace and conflict resolution. In WES notably, security conditions imposed that we postpone community dialogues during the second quarter. We were however able to resume this activity in quarter three. The training was so popular that attendance far exceeded targets and many local leaders asked to attend the future training sessions. In CES, one training included a special session on COVID-19 awareness and prevention. Participants were drawn from Members of Parliament, religious leaders, chiefs, women and youth leaders as well as some members from the private sector.

In 2021, our Youth Peacemakers trained **405 Community Leaders** in Conflict Resolution Education





“ Thank you WPDl for supporting grassroots peace initiatives in Yei River County and Central Equatoria State. As a government, we shall continue to collaborate towards the promotion of peaceful coexistence and development of our communities. This dialogue has greatly contributed to the prevention of violent conflicts between cattle herders and farming communities. I recommend that the organization conducts more dialogues and training of community leaders in all the counties of Central Equatoria State.

— Joseph Mawa,
Hon. Commissioner of Morobo county

CONFLICT RESOLUTION EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

The Youth Peacemakers through support and guidance from WPDJ have been conducting mentorship and training sessions for pupils and students in schools through the 'CRE in schools' program. This initiative has strengthened the extra-curricular activities that these pupils and students can engage in outside their normal classroom learning and in the process continue to develop and increase their knowledge base and skills in negotiation, public speaking and conflict resolution. It should be noted that, **in 2021, WPDJ's reach to these pupils and students increased three-fold compared to 2020, with 12 schools being engaged in WES, 12 in EES and 14 in CES.**

The Conflict Resolution Education (CRE) in schools is a branch project of the Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution component of the YPN in South Sudan. In 2021, WPDJ expanded the project to considerably more schools, across all three states of the Equatoria Region where WPDJ operates. Indeed, we now deliver this program in **38 schools, both primary and secondary**. Implementing this in schools allows for the concepts around peacebuilding to be introduced to future generations of leaders and changemakers equipping them with tools to help in the resolution of conflicts or disputes in a peaceful manner. South Sudan is a war-torn country so we believe the skills acquired through our training are essential for children.



CRE in schools in EES

In the Eastern Equatoria State, we held our “Peace Clubs” in 12 schools across Magwi County, Torit county, Ikwoto County, and Lafon county. **This year, we counted 1,279 students and pupils who received training for the program.** The picture below shows an inter-school peace club in Torit from September.



CRE in schools in CES

In Central Equatoria State, WPDI is implementing the CRE program in 8 primary schools and 6 secondary schools. The numbers of pupils and students reached 1,083 pupils and 800 students. **Altogether, 1,883 pupils and students were trained in 4 counties in CES across 14 schools.**



End-of-year evaluation on the outcome of the training in relation to change of behavior on the beneficiaries of the CRE in schools training in CES has been highly positive¹:

- The CRE engagements in schools have directly resulted in the reduction of cases of suspension for students fighting by 50% in the schools reached.
- Cases of bullying and conflicts amongst pupils and students being referred to school administrations reduced by 40% due to the positive impact of the CRE program.
- There is a noticeable increase in knowledge and skills of CRE Peace Club members in peacebuilding and conflict resolution.
- The success rates of attaining knowledge due to the methodology used in the CRE training in the schools in CRE stand high at **98% of students and pupils who sat for the CRE exams and passed**. This result indicates a high level of satisfaction with the CRE training.
- Forgiveness, reconciliation and peaceful coexistence are now part of relationships between students and pupils as witnessed by teachers.

CRE in schools in WES

Meanwhile, in WES, the CRE in schools is fully operational. 12 schools (6 primary schools and 6 secondary schools) are on board and participating in three counties, namely Yambio, Maridi and Mundri West. **Altogether, 1,105 pupils and students registered and got trained in CRE in WES in 2021.**

The CRE in schools has witnessed tremendous interest, growth and success in all the counties and schools where it's been conducted. The trickle down effects through the YPN program's strategy of cascading learning until the lowest levels of the grassroots has seen widespread positive impact on the beneficiaries and by extension to their communities. **This clearly is exemplified by the huge number of beneficiaries directly reached in 2021, which stands at 4,267, exceeding targets and expectation for the year.** This success is achieved despite the challenges witnessed in 2021 with the COVID-19 and insecurity in some parts of our program activities.

Our local team trained
4,267 students and pupils from 38 schools
in peacebuilding and
conflict resolution



¹The results are from surveys conducted at the end of each semester

Testimonials from CRE in schools beneficiaries

“ I would like to extend my thanks to WPDI for implementing the CRE program in our school. Since the program started, we have seen a lot of positive change. Children have improved the way they communicate disagreement and they are living in peace. This program should be extended to all the schools within and outside the municipality. The sports competition keeps children busy and develops their team spirit. The program has really helped the school. Thank you!

— Kuli Agnes, Head Teacher – Torit East Primary school (Eastern Equatoria)

“ The CRE program has changed the narrative of our school. We now have students who are responsible and capable of resolving conflicts in the school and in their communities. I encourage WPDI to extend this program to schools in rural areas which are the most disadvantaged areas.

— Lasuba James, peace club member, Yei (Central Equatoria)

“ Peace! Peace! Peace!

*You are nowhere to be seen,
Our leaders and parties are looking for you
to be signed,*

Oh Peace! Oh Peace!

*Church leaders, NGOs, regional leaders and
united leaders are trusting to find you.*

Peace! Peace! Peace!

*Some parties and some communities are
enjoying your fruits day and night, but our
nation is still looking to taste your fruits.*

Oh Peace! Oh Peace!

*Pour your seeds in our hearts, brains so that
elders, youth, orphans, heroes and heroines
will enjoy your fruits.*

— A poem recited by Yasmine Ramadan and Ojinga Dario during a graduation event of CRE pupils and students in Torit county (EES)

“ I have learned to say sorry and to forgive those who have wronged me. I tell my friends and family members that fighting is not the solution. Thanks to WPDI for changing my life through this valuable conflict resolution education program.

— Josephine John, 13-year old pupil from Christ the King primary school in Yei (Central Equatoria)

The Youth Peace Bridges program

WPDI South Sudan initiated in 2021 a very interesting and innovative project called **"Building Youth Peace Bridges between South Sudan and the United States"** (hereinafter **"Youth Peace Bridges"**) in cooperation with WPDI's Los Angeles-based Domestic Harmonizer Program (DHP). A virtual exchange was set up between a total of about 120 middle school-aged students representing 14 schools in the South Sudanese towns of Juba, Torit and Yambio and a similar number of American students, representing two schools in Southern California.

The pictures below show students in South Sudan writing to their American penpals. They used Google Sheets to communicate, which was also the opportunity for them to acquire digital skills.



Youth Peace Bridges has proven to be a highly popular initiative, starting with the U.S. Embassy but including all the participating South Sudanese and American children and the associated adult teachers and administrators. Students in both countries have had the opportunity to discuss with their counterparts in the other country similarities and differences in their two experiences, including the theme of conflict, how they experience it in their country and how they deal with the same issues.

Youth Peace Bridges has seen unintended benefits in both South Sudan and the United States – South Sudanese students have gained considerable confidence in working with laptops, while the American administrators have observed that children with learning disabilities have been among the most enthusiastic participants.



Awareness campaigns in schools

This year, we only were able to deliver this activity in Central Equatoria State where, in quarter three, five advocacy **campaigns were conducted including 240 beneficiaries**. Campaigns centered around promoting peaceful coexistence and development. County Government Officials, Women, Youth, students and pupils participated in the advocacy campaigns in schools.



One advocacy campaign was conducted in the Juba Community Learning Center in July to promote tree planting and sustainable development. A total of 10 mango and guava trees had been planted to symbolize hope for the 10-year old South Sudan as well as the planting of 100 flowers. A panel discussion bringing together ministers from the state government, civil society activists and youth was also conducted to discuss the vision and aspirations of youth on the South Sudan they all want to see in the next ten years.

DISSEMINATING KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS THROUGH OUR COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS

The objective of WPDI establishing the Community Learning Centers (CLCs) is to empower young women and men living in vulnerable and remote places that are almost cut-off from mainstream services, to become peacemakers, leaders and entrepreneurs in their communities. **At present, WPDI has 8 fully functioning CLCs** with five CLCs in EES in Torit, Lafon, Nimule, Budi and Ikwotos counties, two CLCs in WES in Yambio and Maridi, and one CLC in CES in Juba.



WPDI CLC in Juba



WPDI CLC in Torit



WPDI CLC in Ikwoto



WPDI CLC in Yambio



WPDI CLC in Nimule

The CLCs have rapidly become educational hubs and centers for inter-cultural interactions where different people from across the country find spaces to engage and learn. The CLCs are going a long way to realize one of WPDI's missions of imparting knowledge and tangible skills to as many community members as possible in order to harness their abilities to help their communities and impact positive changes on the ground.

At the CLCs, WPDI is providing free certified vocational training courses in subjects such as Peacebuilding & Conflict Resolution, Information & Communications Technology, Business & Entrepreneurship, Arts & Crafts and under normal circumstances, the CLCs also host events for the public under the Cinema for Peace and Peace through Sports programs as well as other cultural activities. CLCs also host the Business Plan Competitions that we organize to support promising small businesses through the flagship Business Bootcamp (BBC) initiative.

With UNESCO, we also inaugurated a **Digital Library at the WPDI Community Learning Center** in Juba. Designed to help bridge the digital divide in South Sudan in areas of the country that don't have consistent access to electricity or the Internet, the platform will offer users access to a vast array of offline resources, including thousands of books, lessons, photos, and other content.



Conflict Resolution Education course

The Conflict Resolution aspect of training forms the core of WPDI's philosophy of mitigating conflict through young people and harnessing their powers to be forces of positive change and development in their communities. WPDI uses a multi-pronged approach to achieve its objectives in that regard through engaging the Youth Peacemakers, payam youth and community leaders and by delivering training in the CLCs to spread such knowledge and skills.

Therefore, peacebuilding and conflict resolution continue to remain an important aspect of WPDI's mission to disseminate values conducive to peace and reconciliation at the community level. In all the CLCs where WPDI operate in the Equatoria region, components of Human Rights are incorporated fully in the course outcome of the Peace building and conflict resolution.

These trainings are always conducted on a needs basis and as demanded by people especially stakeholders such as the local Government officials. The course proved useful for people working in the local government councils as well as the traditional authority members. **This is seen by the increase of enrollment of local council leaders to attend the course.**

In 2021, there were **544 graduates in Conflict Resolution Education** across all three states



Training in Women, Peace and Security

Among the 544 people who graduated from a CRE training course in 2021, **120 people were part of a partnership between WPDI and UN Women South Sudan**. Building upon prior work conducted by WPDI and UN Women relating to Women, Peace, and Security (WPS), the six-week course – which was held at WPDI's Community Learning Centers in Juba and Yambio – focused on empowering participants with the tools and skills they need to advocate for the rights and roles of women in South Sudan.

Trainees included youths involved in peacebuilding activities with local as well as international non-governmental organizations and other key stakeholders active in gender-related work. In addition to basic core training about women, peace, and security principles taught by WPDI South Sudan staff, participants also benefited from topical sessions led by UN Women and prominent civil society leaders including the Community Empowerment for Progress Organization (CEPO) and the Center for Inclusive Governance, Peace, and Justice (CIGPJ). Thematic sessions included discussions about leadership, human rights, gender, lobbying, advocacy, and the role of women in peacebuilding and decision-making processes.



Testimonials from CRE beneficiaries

“ The WPDI training program has helped me acquire skills in conflict resolution and management. Since I joined the training, it has turned me into a new me. I am now able to resolve conflicts in my community. I now live an exemplary life that has made other youth desist from violence and embrace peace. I am grateful to WPDI and partners for this initiative. They truly have the youth at heart. Together, we will continue to strive towards attaining long lasting peace in the community and the country.

— James Bech,
CRE trainee (Western Equatoria State)

“ As a woman, I really enjoyed the opportunity to learn about peacebuilding, conflict resolution, mediation, and human rights. I'll use the skills and knowledge I gained to help my community – and particularly women – learn about their rights and fight violence committed against women and girls.

— Dorothy, participant in the WPS training with UN Women

Business & Entrepreneurship course

The Business & Entrepreneurship component is designed to provide employability skills to our beneficiaries, hereby improving their livelihoods. Participants use their knowledge to create Income Generating Projects that create employment for the youths and the communities at large thereby mitigating conflict. With the support of and collaborations with our partners, WPDI was able to roll-out a record total of 26 new businesses in 2021 alone (see more details in the Business Bootcamp section [page 40](#)). These are all youth-led businesses that are being implemented across all the three states of the Equatoria region.

In 2021, **272 people** graduated in Business & Entrepreneurship

Information & Communications Technology course

ICT training is one of the key components of WPDI's objectives to create a nexus between technology and peacebuilding given how technology influences everything nowadays. ICT training is enabling the beneficiaries to access information, conduct research, learn about the world, and develop employability skills. Indeed, it equips trainees with computer skills, which some of them are learning for the first time. Through their new knowledge, the trainees are able to fully engage in online communication and search for jobs. The picture below shows an ICT training delivered at one of our CLCs this year.





In 2021, WPDl counted **1,244 graduates** in ICT across all three states

Testimonials from ICT trainees

“ I have completed computer training at the WPDl CLC in Torit. I have learned a lot from this course, specifically on data entries, calculation, PowerPoint, and internet navigation. This is very important and interesting. Because without computer knowledge you will not be able to work in an office. Now the skills I gained from the training help me in my work. I do more research hence I have increased my effectiveness and performance.

— Taban Peter Bashir,
ICT graduate

“ I am a trainee of ICT at the WPDl CLC. I live in Torit Town. So, I have learnt a lot about ICT. We learn Spreadsheet, Microsoft Word, and we are still going ahead with Excel and others. My encouragement to other youths - let them come, let them not be idle. Let them come and join and get some more knowledge. I have some knowledge in computers, I can do something with computers. So thank you and also let this organization take more chance to go and train others in other counties. Thank you.

— Ihobo Saferio James,
ICT graduate

Arts & Crafts course

In addition to the Peacebuilding, Conflict Resolution, ICT, and Business & Entrepreneurship courses being offered at the CLCs, WPDI also offers Arts & Crafts training, specifically in the Juba CLC. In 2021, due to COVID-19 restrictions and resource constraints, the Arts & Crafts training was halted until the fourth quarter, when registration for a new cohort resumed. The number of regular students registered for a 6-months training which was still running in 2022, was 22 trainees.

During the advocacy campaign on **"16 days of activism"** between November and December, the Arts & Crafts students were instrumental in making the events colorful by drawing depictions of the various struggles in a 'South Sudanese life'.

As a result, most of the students who completed the training were then able to partner with arts studios within Juba or find employment as Arts & Crafts teachers in schools.

In 2021, this activity was halted and slowly resumed in the fourth quarter with **22 trainees**





Cinema for Peace Program

The Cinema for Peace program is designed to create a platform for youths to interact, share ideas and experiences, and make new friends. More importantly, it is a space to forge ways of peaceful co-existence and influence positive behavioral change. With the cinema for peace initiative, educational films are screened for youths and Group Discussions (GDs) are organized to discuss the main themes of the movies. Participants are encouraged to express their feelings on the issues addressed and how these resonate with their personal experiences. These discussions are an opportunity for everyone to reflect on how to improve their communities by changing the way each individual responds to an issue.

In 2021, the program counted 491 beneficiaries. **Participants shared that this has improved their communication skills, most notably while engaging with someone with a different background and/or opinion.** It promotes a positive outlook on others.

The numbers registered in 2021 are quite below the targets for the year but it is also understandable given the prolonged restrictions and lockdowns as a result of the COVID-19 relentless spread. And even the restrictions were lifted, people are still to maintain social distancing and participant numbers watching the films are reduced in numbers in line with the strict need to adhere to set sanitary rules and regulations.

Therefore, although the year saw a lot of challenges with regards to health and safety of people that hampered some of the YPN activities, a lot still were able to be achieved given the prevailing circumstances and difficulty in some situations where access to project locations were either restricted or health grounds due to COVID-19 or insecurity could not allow movements. Cumulatively and across all the screenings undertaken, 491 people participated directly.

In 2021, WPDH held 8 sessions of Cinema for Peace, and 491 beneficiaries attended



Cultural Awareness Days

On July 15, we held, at the Juba CLC, an **event targeting youths and students** to sensitize them on issues related to peace, reconciliation and sustainable development in South Sudan. The event received the support of the State authorities, namely the CES Minister of local government and acting minister of youth, culture and sports as well as representative of the Ministry of education, and the Chairperson of South Sudan Youth Union. The event was covered by the media, including SSBC (National TV) and SSBC Radio as well as the press. We counted 77 direct participants and reached thousands of people. Also, 159 persons participated in the **advocacy campaigns** conducted in Yei and Juba CLC to raise awareness on the importance of peaceful coexistence and forgiveness.



SPURRING ENTREPRENEURSHIP WITH THE BUSINESS BOOTCAMP INITIATIVE

WPDI's model of promoting peace through youth engagement in income generating activities has been well received by the youths of South Sudan as peace cannot be achieved without meeting basic human needs. And our partners who have been supporting the initiative played an important role in funding the activities of youths for the past four years. The partners have supported a number of youth-led businesses across the Equatoria region through **fair competitive Business Bootcamps** organized at WPDI Community Learning Centers.

The competitions usually take place after youth undergo a six-month training in business management skills and entrepreneurship. After this they go through an **intensive business plan development training** over the course of three days. It is organized and conducted by our experienced trainers to help beneficiaries gain adequate knowledge in business ideas identification and business plan development.

Business Plan Competitions

In 2021, **WPDI and partners conducted six Business Plan Competitions** in the three states of the Equatoria region. During the business plan development revision sessions, 127 participants attended in the five locations of Yambio, Torit, Budi, Ikwotos and Juba. The number comprised 96 males and 31 females. The participants had the opportunity to be coached on developing viable business plans to be presented during the competition. Their business plans were carefully studied and they were guided by business experts in WPDI to rework on their plans to **turn their business ideas into smart business plans**.

This process benefited all the applicants regardless of whether they won or not. Indeed, those who won secured funds but those who were not selected had their ideas thoroughly scrutinized by the business experts which will help them to implement their project successfully. Those who won were also supported in drawing work plans which will enable them to spend the fund wisely for the development of their ideas into real business ventures.

WPDI is currently supporting **53 businesses** across Central, Western, and Eastern Equatoria States. 26 of them emerged from the **6 business competitions** we held in 2021



Testimonials from Business Plan Competition Participants

“ The competition has been wonderful and transparent. It has given our entire team a boost. We’re incredibly proud of the determination and dedication of our team and to be recognized for our business idea about beekeeping and honey production. This announcement has given us a boost to work hard and take the business to another level.

— James,
a WPDJ youth peacemaker from Yei River

“ I am delighted that we have emerged winners of the Business boot camp competition. We’ll be producing groundnuts and producing peanut butter to be distributed in local restaurants and residential areas. This project will absorb many young people who have been involved in cattle raiding to work and improve their economic status.

— Nora,
a local youth from Terekeka County

“ I am so grateful for being part of the Whitaker Business and Entrepreneurship Training. It’s also remarkable that a program like this exists and helps graduated trainees realize their Business journey. Our cohort all came from such diverse backgrounds some had training in business, and others just instinct. The knowledge I got is helping me. I started a farm in April, 2020. Little did I know that a chance would come for me to compete in the BPC. I am so pleased I had the opportunity to participate in this year’s competition in Yambio.

— Sinoyo Jackcilia Agbiamamu (BPC winner)



CONCLUSION

The work of our Youth Peacemakers in the field is increasingly recognized as delivering innovative programmes for youth empowerment. Their impact is regularly showcased in various media outlets hereby placing our program as one of the key peacebuilding initiatives. As a consequence, we have been able to develop strategic partnerships with other established organizations and renew pre-existing ones.

Overall, **2021 presented itself as one of the most successful years for WPDI in South Sudan** where significant progress across all the planned activities in Business & Entrepreneurship, Peacebuilding & Conflict Resolution and creation of new partnerships were attained. Thousands of people were reached both directly and indirectly across all the project activities initiated under the core project areas of WPDI in South Sudan.

Another signal achievement of WPDI South Sudan during 2021 has been its success in raising its profile, both professionally (most notably its standing and perception as one of the leading and most successful peacebuilding actors in South Sudan) but also in terms of its media presence (on radio, television and in print media).

Noteworthy in the latter regard was the great success of WPDI South Sudan's media campaign (mostly radio-based) with UN Women, the success of which may lead to future media-linked programming opportunities with UN Women in 2022.

WPDI South Sudan's success in 2021 in large part derives from having a clear and well-understood strategy, as a result of which WPDI has been able to focus on doing better what it already does well (and not fall into the trap of trying to do everything). This continued strategic focus, building on (i) similarly strategic partnership/networking efforts and (ii) the strengths of the local WPDI South Sudan team and reliably solid support from Europe- and U.S.-based WPDI office, stand WPDI South Sudan in good stead for further strong growth in calendar year 2022.



OUR PARTNERS



GEMINI ENTERPRISES AFRICA



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
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Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC



التعليم | education
فوق | above
الجميع | all





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