Youth Capacity Building Workshop on Peacebuilding & Inter-Faith

The Peace Project – Local Actions, Lasting Peace



Organized by: Centre for Youth Development & Engagement (CYDE)

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1-INTRODUCTION:

The Centre for Youth Development & Engagement (CYDE) is a youth-led organization dedicated to empowering young people through capacity building, disaster response, employability initiatives, and community development programs. Following that sustainable community development is closely linked to social cohesion, CYDE implemented the Safeer e Amn initiative under the Peace Project to promote youth-led peacebuilding, interfaith dialogue and proactive civic engagement. In Sukkur and surrounding districts, religious intolerance, polarization, and misinformation have increasingly limited opportunities for meaningful dialogue. In this context, the Safeer e Amn was designed to provide structured, inclusive spaces for reflection, discussion, and experiential learning, enabling participants to develop skills and confidence to act as youth peace leaders in their communities.

2-*Summary of Youth Capacity Building Workshop on Peacebuilding & Interfaith:*



The capacity-building workshop attended by thirty-five youth leaders from diverse social, religious, and professional backgrounds. The program was structured to combine interactive dialogue, creative expression and scenario-based exercises to deepen **understanding of peacebuilding and conflict resolution.** Throughout the day, participants engaged in energizer activities, collaborative brainstorming, reflective exercises and discussions that explored personal definitions of peace, experiences of coexistence, and strategies for addressing social tensions. Key exercises, including the Music ball chair and balloon writing activities, encouraged participants to articulate their ideas, process emotions, and actively practice teamwork and empathy. The workshop concluded with structured reflection and action planning, where participants expressed commitments to applying the concepts learned within their institutions and communities, effectively translating awareness into practical leadership.

2.1- Facilitators' Profile:

The Workshop was facilitated by a team of experienced trainers and youth development professionals.

Ali Aqsam is a youth activist, educator, and facilitator with extensive experience in peacebuilding, climate action, youth empowerment, governance, and education. He has designed and led training programs on Human Rights, Educational Emergencies, Climate Awareness, and Peace Entrepreneurship, empowering youth and communities with practical skills and action-oriented solutions. He has collaborated with organizations such as the School of Leadership, Chanan Development Association, Beydaar Society, Group Development Pakistan, School of Leadership Foundation & United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Prime Minister's Youth Programme, Right To Play, and State of Youth, and is currently part of The Learning Network under Group Development Pakistan, National Youth Coalition for Peace, and the National Alliance of Youth Associations.

Mir Hassan is a dedicated trainer with nearly two years of experience in management and curriculum development. He has worked with institutions such as People's School (managed by Ziauddin University, Sukkur), MISAALI Public High School, and IBA Education Network schools, delivering interactive and student-centered instruction. His expertise spans Mathematics Education, STEM Integration, Youth Empowerment, and Critical Thinking, with a focus on logical reasoning, discovery learning, and project-based approaches. He is committed to empowering youth through engaging, practical, and evidence-based training programs.

Ubaidullah Abbasi is a professional educator and trainer with extensive experience in teacher capacity building, curriculum implementation, and classroom management. He has worked with organizations such as Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA) on the Malala Fund project, IRIS Education and Training Services Pvt. (Ltd.), and schools under the Sukkur IBA University Education Network, delivering interactive training sessions and multi-subject instruction. His expertise spans Gender Equality, Peacebuilding, and Youth Empowerment, and he specializes in methodologies like Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) to improve learning outcomes. He is committed to empowering educators, young people, and communities through practical, evidence-based, and engaging training programs.

2.2- Participants' Profile:

A total of thirty-five participants attended the Workshop, including twenty male and fifteen female youth leaders. The participants represented diverse social and religious backgrounds and were selected for their demonstrated interest in community engagement and peacebuilding. This diversity facilitated rich discussions and exchange of perspectives, fostering cross-cultural understanding and collaborative problem-solving. Participants were primarily young adults, many of whom are active in local institutions or youth organizations, ensuring that the skills and knowledge acquired could be applied in ongoing community initiatives.

Sr#	Female	Male	Transgender	Others	Total
1.	15	20			35

3-SESSION WISE PROCEEDINGS:

The workshop commenced with the welcoming and registration of participants at Royal Taj, Hotel One, Sukkur. Participants were guided to their seats in a way that encouraged interaction and inclusivity. The program began with a spiritual opening through the recitation of the Holy Quran, followed by the national anthem, establishing a reflective and respectful atmosphere for the day's activities.

Session-1:

The first session, facilitated by Ali Aqsam, began with a brainstorming exercise on the concept of peace. Participants shared their thoughts and reflections, setting the stage for deeper discussions throughout the workshop. This was followed by a detailed introduction to CYDE, Chanan Development, and Amn Rang III, including their missions and initiatives. facilitator contextualized the workshop within broader youth development and peacebuilding efforts, helping participants understand how their learning and engagement connected to larger community and organizational objectives.






Session-2:

In this session Mir Hassan presented The Peace Project framework, explaining the objectives and expected outcomes and highlighting the role of youth in promoting sustainable social cohesion. Creative and experiential activities were conducted throughout the day to maintain energy levels and reinforce learning.

The framework addresses growing social divisions, absence of social cohesion, religious hatred, exclusion of rural youth and women, and the lack of dialogue platforms, while leveraging young people's potential as peace ambassadors.

It proposes three one-day events: Safeer-e-Amn**,** building youth leadership and empathy; Amn Kachehri**,** training youth to design Social Action Projects for inclusion and coexistence; and Rang-e-Amn**,** a multi-stakeholder dialogue fostering collaboration among faith leaders, civil society, and academia. The framework emphasizes participatory learning, creative engagement, and structured monitoring to ensure tangible, lasting community impact.



Activity-3: Balloon & Fun Learn

The Balloon & Fun Learn activity enabled participants to articulate their ideas related to peace and collaboration in a playful yet meaningful manner. This activity commenced with participants reflecting on their current emotional state and writing their feelings on balloons. This approach provided a visual representation of emotions, enabling participants to externalize and acknowledge their inner experiences.

Further, this activity guided participants to consider the question, **"What happens when you are at peace?"** Participants shared various coping mechanisms for anxiety and stress, including

mindful breathing, meditation, spending time in nature, journaling, creative expression such as drawing or music, and practicing positive self-talk. Emphasis was also placed on social support, with participants noting the importance of connecting with friends or family, engaging in acts of service, and focusing on gratitude and small joys.

Observations indicated that participants recognized peace as both an internal state and a practice nurtured through self-awareness, positive actions and supportive relationships. The activity highlighted the significance of **intentional strategies for stress management** and the value of shared learning in fostering empathy and resilience.



Activity-4: Music Ball Pass

The Musical Ball Pass activity was designed as an interactive and engaging exercise to enhance critical thinking, problem-solving, and peer learning. Participants were seated or standing in a circle and music was played while they passed a ball around. Each participant was instructed to reflect on the dynamics of the activity and stay attentive as the exercise integrated an added layer of challenge.

At specific intervals, the music was stopped randomly. The participant holding the ball at that moment was presented with a **case scenario representing critical situations, including fights, conflicts, war, or misunderstandings.** They were required to respond by analyzing the situation and proposing practical strategies or solutions. This encouraged participants to think on their feet, apply reasoning skills, and explore different perspectives while managing complex social or conflict-related situations.

The activity not only exhibit participants' decision-making and analytical abilities but also promoted communication, empathy and collaboration as others in the group could contribute suggestions or reflections after the initial response. By turning abstract conflict situations into a hands-on problem-solving exercise, participants gained insight into constructive ways to address challenges within their communities.

Facilitators observed that the activity maintained high energy and engagement levels throughout the session. Participants actively participated, demonstrated creativity in their solutions, and reflected thoughtfully on both personal and collective approaches to conflict resolution. The Musical Ball Pass thus served as an effective tool to combine learning, reflection, and active participation in a dynamic and memorable format.



Session-3:

This core session on Peace and Interfaith Dialogue, facilitated by Mr. Ubedullah Abbasi, combined structured discussions, real-life examples, and scenario-based exercises. Participants explored various triggers of conflict, including misinformation, stereotypes, miscommunication, historical grievances, and emotional triggers. Through guided exercises, they practiced empathy and engaged in collaborative problem-solving, developing both analytical and emotional skills necessary for navigating complex social interactions.

The session incorporated scenario-based role plays, where participants applied these insights to real-life situations. They devised practical strategies such as pausing and verifying online content through peer factchecking, responding rather than reacting in incidents like accidents, using role reversals to strengthen empathy, reflecting on potential triggers before taking action, and discussing solutions collaboratively. **These exercises emphasized the importance of slowing down, verifying information, empathizing with others, and working collectively to transform everyday situations into opportunities for evidence-based peacebuilding.**

To sum up, facilitators observed that participants actively engaged with the exercises, demonstrated creativity in their problem-solving approaches, and reflected thoughtfully on personal and collective strategies for conflict prevention and resolution. The workshop effectively combined knowledge, skills, and reflective practice, equipping participants with actionable strategies to foster peace within their communities.

4-PARTICIAPNTS QUOTES:

"Fun learning activities made the sessions engaging and creative. Through the interactive exercises, I was able to understand peace and coexistence in a much deeper and practical way" ***(Ammara Shaikh, Rohri, Participant Sukkur).***

"The professionalism and smooth management of the Workshop truly impressed me. The simulation-based activities were thoughtfully designed and helped us reflect, collaborate, and build practical skills" ***(Salman Ahmed Deho, Participant, Sukkur).***

"I really valued being part of the dialogue circle where sensitive yet essential issues like religious freedom were discussed openly. It is encouraging to see the Centre for Youth Development & Engagement creating space for real stakeholders and meaningful youth engagement" ***(Ayesha Siddiqui, Participant, Sukkur).***

5-Challenges:

During the planning and implementation of the workshop, a few challenges emerged.

- Some participants were initially hesitant to discuss sensitive topics related to religion and identity, which was mitigated by establishing safe-space principles and emphasizing confidentiality.
- Operational challenges arose when two core team members withdrew from the project just two days prior to the event. These roles were promptly reassigned to thoroughly briefed replacement team members, ensuring smooth facilitation.
- On the event day, spatial limitations at the venue required minor adjustments to furniture arrangements to maintain interactive group activities. Additionally, the sudden personal loss of the project lead the night before the event necessitated distributed leadership and remote coordination to ensure continuity.

All challenges were effectively managed without disruption to the workshop, providing important lessons for future risk mitigation.

6-Lesson Learnt:

The workshop reinforced the importance of creating structured, respectful spaces for youth engagement in peacebuilding. Experiential activities and creative exercises were highly effective in promoting empathy, critical thinking, and collaborative problem-solving. Participants' engagement highlighted that peace is a lived, actionable concept rather than an abstract ideal. The importance of contingency planning, distributed leadership, and adaptive problem-solving became evident in managing operational risks, ensuring program resilience and success.

7-Conclusions & Recommendations:

This workshop successfully empowered youth to act as proactive peace leaders in their communities. Key takeaways include the need **to integrate experiential learning, storytelling, and scenario-based simulations in future interventions to deepen impact.** Informal networks established during the workshop provide a foundation for long-term collaboration and peer-led initiatives.

Future programming should also prioritize continuous monitoring, follow-up, and robust documentation to reinforce learning, sustain engagement, and enhance institutional productivity. Overall, the initiative demonstrated that structured dialogue, creative engagement, and youth leadership are critical for promoting sustainable social cohesion and community-level peacebuilding.

Annexures:

- Agenda
- Attendance sheet (in Excel and scanned PDF)
- Link of Google Drive with pictures and videos
- Media coverage, if any
- Feedback/evaluation form