

# **Mobile Arts for Peace (MAP)**

## **Large Grant Evaluation - Joint Report**

April 2024

# Contents

Glossary .....	3
Acknowledgements .....	6
1. Introduction and Context.....	7
2. Literature.....	9
2.1. Peace and Peacebuilding.....	9
2.2. Arts-based methods.....	9
2.3. Participatory approach with youth (YAB) .....	10
3. Methodology.....	11
3.1. Methodological Approach .....	11
3.2. Methods.....	12
3.3. Quantitative Data.....	13
3.3.1. Survey (all countries).....	13
3.4. Qualitative Data.....	14
3.4.1. Interviews (all countries) .....	14
3.4.2. Creative Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Toolbox (Rwanda, Nepal and adapted tools in Indonesia) .....	15
3.5. Social Impact Matrix®.....	17
3.6. Sample, Data Analysis and Interpretation .....	17
3.6.1. Quantitative Data .....	17
3.6.2. Qualitative Data .....	17
3.6.3. Methodological Limitations and Opportunities .....	18
3.7. Ethical Considerations .....	19
4. Findings .....	20
4.1. Research Question 1: “How can different art forms be used to co-design, deliver and evaluate peacebuilding curricular and other approaches for working with children and youth to address local conflict issues?” .....	20
4.1.1. Using the arts to explore problems .....	20
4.1.2. The arts as an aid to peacebuilding strategies and the development of political capabilities .....	21
4.2. Research Question 2: “How might cultural forms be used for dialogue with and between children and youth, educators and policymakers to advance peacebuilding through a local and indigenous approach?” .....	22
4.2.1. Effective communication and the confidence to lead discussion .....	22
4.2.2. The closing of intergenerational power distance.....	23
4.2.3. The impact of performance on empowerment .....	24
4.3. Research Question 3: “How might psychosocial support, including local healing practices, be better integrated within peacebuilding approaches by using the arts to promote the wellbeing of children and youth, especially those from marginalised groups?” .....	26
4.3.1. Children and youth grew in self-confidence and found new ways to express themselves.....	27



4.3.2. Children and youth gained a sense of connectedness to peers, family and leaders .....	29
4.3.2.1. Connectedness to peers.....	29
4.3.2.2. Connectedness to family and community .....	30
4.3.2.3. Connection with government and policymakers .....	30
4.3.3. The arts have powerful potential for mental health practice.....	32
<b>4.4. Research Question 4: “How can cultural forms be incorporated into child- and youth-led participatory action research methodologies and adapted for the purposes of the design, undertaking and delivery of interdisciplinary projects in diverse social, political and cultural contexts?” .....</b>	<b>33</b>
4.4.1. Children and youth artistic and life skills were developed through MAP.....	33
4.4.1.1. Artistic skills .....	33
4.4.1.2. Life skills .....	33
4.4.2. Arts-based methods facilitated meaningful participation of children and youth in MEL and in project activities.....	34
4.4.3. Youth and adult allies’ perspectives guided MAP MEL approaches throughout the project in an iterative way.....	35
<b>4.5. Research Question 5: “How might these cultural forms be used to create alternative spaces and communication structures for peacebuilding approaches and curricula development to inform local, national and international approaches to peacebuilding?” .....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>4.6. Findings Summary .....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>5. Role of Youth Advisory Board (YAB) in Promoting Participatory Practices in MAP .....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>6. Discussion.....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>7. Recommendations .....</b>	<b>47</b>

## Glossary

<b>Peacebuilding</b>	<p>Peacebuilding is the process of realizing sustainable peace in a way that ensures justice, equality and harmony.<sup>1</sup> Peacebuilding efforts work to address root causes of violence and to reduce structural violence, emphasizing social justice, equality, economic development and access to basic services such as healthcare, education and housing.</p> <p>While <b>direct violence</b> is defined as conflict between people that harm them (such as physical brawls, bullying and violent attacks), <b>structural violence</b> is defined as the political and economic forces that cause suffering on individuals and populations, usually the most vulnerable people in society.<sup>2</sup></p> <p>Social justice initiatives – including enhancing gender equality, youth participation, education, skill building and economic strengthening – can all be considered peacebuilding efforts.</p>
<b>Wellbeing</b>	<p>Wellbeing is when you feel good in your mind, body, spirit and heart. Everyone has different things that make them feel well. Feeling worthy, connected, hopeful, respected and safe are all important parts to feeling well (see Tracking tool 2). Some things that contribute to wellbeing are supportive relationships with friends, family and community; doing activities you enjoy; being creative; having access to natural spaces, culture, religion, health and social care; and having a role to play in your family or community.</p>
<b>Confidence</b>	<p>Confidence is a psychological characteristic that influences wellbeing, performance and overall behaviour. It can be defined as a belief in oneself, one's abilities and one's judgment. It involves having trust and assurance in one's capacity to handle situations, solve problems, achieve goals and interact effectively with others.</p>
<b>Self-Efficacy</b>	<p>Self-efficacy, a concept introduced by psychologist Albert Bandura, refers to an individual's belief in their capability to successfully accomplish a specific task or achieve a particular goal. It is linked to confidence but is task-specific and context-dependent.</p>
<b>Epistemic Injustice</b>	<p>Fricker's (2007) epistemic injustice focuses on the fair distribution of knowledge and recognition and Fricker talks about two primary forms of injustice, these being "testimonial" and "hermeneutical"</p>

<sup>1</sup> Early Childhood Peace Consortium (2023). What is Peacebuilding? Available here.

<sup>2</sup> Farmer (2003). Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights, and the New War on the Poor. Berkeley: University of California Press.

	injustices. <b>Testimonial injustice</b> occurs when an individual or a group are not given enough credit or are dismissed altogether due to the prejudices or biases of the listeners (Fricker, 2006). These prejudices and biases often stem from stereotypes and preconceived ideas about certain groups' social identity such as race, gender and class (Fricker, 2006). Therefore, any knowledge that is produced by a marginalised group and their opinion would become obsolete or illegal, and they would face systematic injustices. <b>Hermeneutical injustice</b> describes structural injustices in societies.
<b>Capabilities Approach</b>	The Capabilities Approach, which was first pioneered by Amartya Sen (1989; 1993) and then developed further by Martha Nussbaum (2003), is when a person's achieved wellbeing is evaluated by considering the level of their valued functionings, or the "beings" and "doings" that they can accomplish. Functionings can include basic things such as: being well-fed, taking part in community, being sheltered, relating to other people and being healthy (Robeyns, 2002). Capabilities are "what real opportunities you have regarding the life you may lead" (Sen, 1987, p.36) and not everyone has the same capabilities to achieve these functionings.
<b>Political Capability</b>	In this report, we specifically draw on the notion of 'political capabilities developed by Sen (1999) and Nussbaum (2000) and broadened by Cin (2017), who defined it as "the ability to express political views and participate in political activities; to protest and be shielded from governmental oppression" (44). Political capabilities is adopted to understand young people's "freedom to express" their political views and engage in political issues (Cin and Suleymanoglu-Kurum (2020). Failure to exercise this political capability (or being denied the chance to do so), can lead to epistemic injustices and political poverty (Bohman, 1996). In this research, we indicate how MAP can support overcoming young people's political poverty by increasing their political capabilities through the medium of art.
<b>Social Impact</b>	The intended and unintended social consequences, both positive and negative, of planned interventions and any social change process invoked by those interventions <sup>3</sup> .
<b>Outputs</b>	Outputs describe our project activity or are the immediate result of an activity. Sample outputs include the number of workshops conducted or the number of policy papers written.
<b>Outcomes</b>	Outcomes are the changes the project members wish to accomplish through a project. These changes can be at the individual level or

<sup>3</sup> Vanclay, F. (2003). International Principles for Social Impact Assessment. *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal*, 21(1): 5-11.

	<p>group level (families, communities or institutions). Outcomes describe the effect that the project hopes to have on individuals or groups/communities. Well-defined outcomes are SMART:</p> <p><b>S</b> – Specific: <i>What exactly do you hope to accomplish?</i></p> <p><b>M</b> – Measurable: <i>How will you measure this outcome? How much? How well?</i></p> <p><b>A</b> – Achievable: <i>Is this doable? Do we have the necessary skills and resources to accomplish this?</i></p> <p><b>R</b> – Relevant: <i>How does this outcome align with the broader MAP project? Why is the result important?</i></p> <p><b>T</b> – Time-bound: <i>What is the time frame to accomplish this? Is it realistic?</i></p>
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- The Universitas Katolik Indonesia Atma Jaya (AJCUI) who ran 'GENPEACE' and 'Beyond Tradition' in Indonesia.

Finally, and most importantly, we would like to extend our thanks to all of the MAP participants, and especially the youth on the programme (and the Youth Advisory Board), who have been a source of inspiration throughout the Large Grants evaluation.

We wish everyone involved in MAP previously, currently and in the future, all of the best and look forward to continuing our work with the partners beyond the Large Grant projects.

Thanks, and best wishes to all involved,

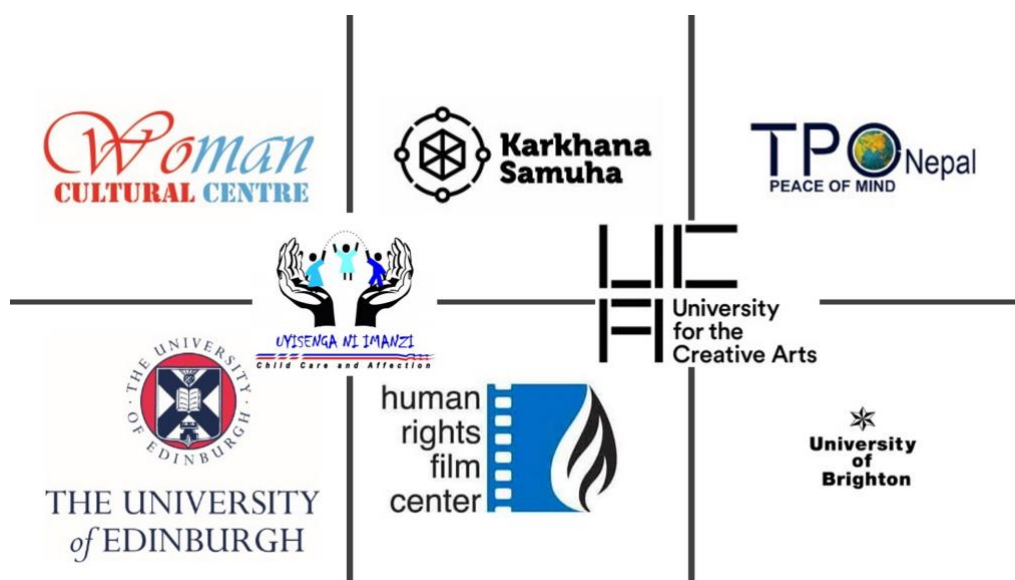
*Professor Richard Hazenberg, Dr Laura Wright, Dr Claire Paterson-Young, Dr Laura Lee, Dr Ecem Karlidag-Dennis and Dr Michael Maher.*

## 1. Introduction and Context

Mobile Arts for Peace (MAP) is an international programme that seeks to utilise the arts to build collaborative and engaging peacebuilding processes in Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal and Rwanda. This report combines the findings of two research projects, which sought to complete a cross comparative evaluation of the efficacy and impact of the MAP programme (Figures 1.1 and 1.2 show the partners involved in the evaluation).



**Figure 1.1.** Large Grant Project partners in Kyrgyzstan and Indonesia.



**Figure 1.2.** Large Grant Project partners in Rwanda and Nepal.



The overall research aim for the Large Grant Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) project was **to explore the use of interdisciplinary arts-based practices for peacebuilding in Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal and Rwanda, including political, cultural, religious and linguistic factors, as well as the crosscutting issues of gender and intersecting inequalities, environments and the exclusion of children and youth from policymaking processes.** This report combines the separate final evaluation reports from both the Institute for Social Innovation and Impact (University of Northampton) and the Children and Young People Thematic Hub, Moray House School of Education, University of Edinburgh. Its aim is to consolidate and emphasise the shared learnings and insights which bridge the separate evaluations, whilst building upon those evaluations. Hyperlinks are provided throughout the report to direct readers to specific sections of the individual reports, if they wish to explore the original evaluations contributing to this report.

The research was funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council's Global Challenges Research Fund and the MAP project was led by the University of Lincoln (see Figure 1.3).



**Figure 1.3.** MAP lead HEI and funding Partners.

## 2. Literature

### 2.1. Peace and Peacebuilding

Despite over 600 million children and youth living in conflict areas, their voices, perspectives and solutions are frequently overlooked (Ozcelik et al., 2021). Whilst some literature has portrayed children and youth as part of the 'collective of victims' following conflict, they possess valuable skills at local and national levels and unique insights which can contribute to innovative and inclusionary peacebuilding frameworks (Feinstein et al., 2010; McEvoy-Levy, 2011). This has led to a growing acknowledgement of their pivotal role in peacebuilding and drives their self-advocacy in the decisions that impact them (Pruitt, 2013).

Engaging children and youth in peacebuilding has yielded fresh insights and innovations, amplifying their role as significant contributors globally (Peacebuilding Initiative, 2008). As is evident in MAP, participatory approaches can amplify children and youth's abilities to address community issues, fostering a sense of ownership and influence in decision-making, creating space for them to contribute to peaceful societies (Montreuil et al., 2021; UNESCO, 2022). By involving children and youth, as policymakers, the children and youth gain deeper insights into community needs and priorities, safeguarding cultural heritage and promoting a collective identity (Soliman et al., 2022).

The use of arts-based methods in MAP as a medium to engage children and youth in peacebuilding aligns with Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG 16), striving for peaceful, inclusive societies with access to justice and accountable institutions (United Nations, 2024). Additionally, it aligns with Objectives 1, 3 and 4 of UNESCO's Mid-Term Strategy for 2022.

### 2.2. Arts-based methods

One of the primary aims of the MAP programme was to use arts to deepen young people's understanding of conflict and peacebuilding. Through various artistic forms such as poetry, drama, visual arts, music, film and indigenous arts, the programme encouraged collaborative exploration of social issues, focusing on identifying problems and finding solutions. By employing arts-based methods, the MAP programme aimed to improve the participants' understanding of political, social and cultural issues, thereby promoting critical awareness and long-term epistemic justice (Fricker, 2007). Utilising the arts can help encapsulate new learnings in a way that is accessible for participants who want to improve their communication skills, especially when compared to other, non-arts-based, methods, such as debate or workshops (Ware et al., 2021).

*This model (Lenong Revitalisation) is very interesting. This year, we are planning to create a model to teach Betawi cultures with Betawi Cultural Institute, and so the model that has been developed could be a reference - Policymaker 1*

This approach also contributed to children and youth by enhancing their decision-making abilities, awareness of socio-political issues, and confidence in expressing their opinions. Projects like *Gira Ingoma-One Drum Per Girl* in Rwanda tackled gender stereotypes and engaged girls in unconventional activities (see UoE Large Grant report Section 1.6). MAP provided platforms for expression through theatre, music, poetry and filmmaking, ensuring diverse perspectives were heard and respected (see UON Large Grant report Section 4.2.5). Furthermore, the arts-based methods fostered creativity and imagination among children and youth, enhancing their agency and capacity for dialogue.

Moreover, the approach undertaken in MAP aligns with UNESCO's Mid-Term Strategy for 2022, with emphasis to strengthen the right to participate freely in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits (Article 27), including access to, and enjoyment of, cultural heritage and the right to freedom of opinion and expression (Article 13; Article 19). Overall, this holistic integration of arts-based methods through MAP not only enriches understanding but also empowers young individuals to actively engage in shaping their communities and fostering a culture of peace and dialogue.

### 2.3. Participatory approach with youth (YAB)

At the core of MAP was the utilization of an arts-based participatory approach with youth (Youth Advisory Board (YAB)), which resonates with UNESCO's Mid-Term Strategy aim to integrate youth voices<sup>4</sup> in order to amplify their perspectives, priorities and involvement in shaping policies and programs affecting their lives. Recent research has increasingly recognised participatory methodologies for acknowledging children and youth's expertise and lived experiences (Percy-Smith and Thomas, 2009; Jimenez 2021), extending to affirming youths' rights to participate across all stages of research, from leading and co-conducting studies to facilitating knowledge exchange (Cuevas-Parra & Tisdall 2019; Lee et al., 2020). Heightening the involvement of children and youth in this process has sparked critical discussions, challenging traditional adult-centric research practices concerning authorship, ethics, power dynamics, scientific rigour and reciprocity (Collins et al., 2020; Wright et al., 2022). Our evaluation contributes to these ongoing discussions, enriching the growing body of literature and practice on research involving or led by children and youth. Furthermore, the YAB and the MAP initiative foster trust and solidarity among young people by creating a collaborative and inclusive environment. Through collective action towards shared objectives, children and youth can cultivate a sense of belonging, enhance their capacity for political engagement, and establish a safe platform for discussions, as well as exchange of knowledge and skills (Gilchrist et al., 2010; UN 2021).

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<sup>4</sup> Within this report 'voice' is aligned to Lundy's (2007) definition, which encompasses the right of children and youth to express their views, regardless of their capacity to do so.

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1. Methodological Approach

The methodological approach of both research projects sought to merge participatory arts-based MEL approaches, in order to capture the impact delivered through the MAP project and to do so in a way that is participatory and intergenerational. Our MEL approach is a strengths-based approach, emphasising youth as social actors with agency and the ability to influence their own lives, the lives of others, as well as the societies in which they live (Dahlberg et al 2007). The approach to youth participation in each of the four countries moved between consultative, collaborative, and youth-led (see Lansdown, 2018), depending on young people's level of confidence and the research context.

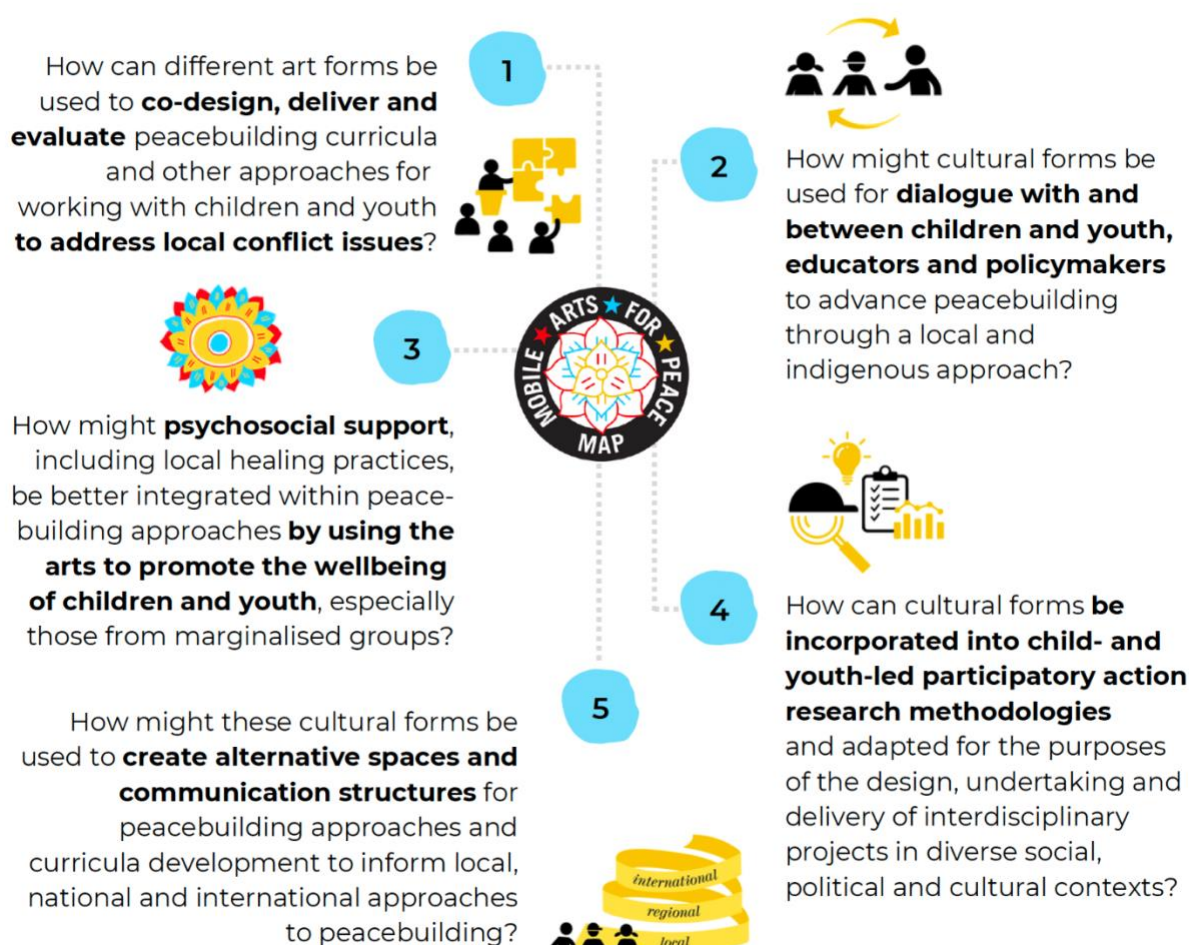
The focus of our research, as within MAP as a whole, was with children and youth aged 12-24 years. In addition, we recognise the critical role played by educators, civil society organisations, artists, parents, and policymakers in enabling these arts-based activities to drive wider change and impact in communities. Therefore, these groups also formed a key focus of interest in building understanding of the efficacy of arts-based approaches and how they can promote peace and peacebuilding in communities.

A mixed methods approach was used in the research across all four countries, including qualitative and quantitative primary research. Data sources included secondary data and demographic data. The approach provided space for youth and local MAP Large Grant and Medium Grant colleagues to lead arts-based MEL as well as for the MAP Large Grant UoE and UON team members to carry out interviews, arts-based activities and participant observation alongside team members. By ensuring that young people engaging with MAP across the four countries are engaged in the co-design, delivery and analysis of the research methods and data, through YAB activities, we sought to create an enabling environment for meaningful youth participation and intergenerational dialogue.



## 3.2. Methods

### MAP Research Questions



**Figure 3.1.** MAP Research Questions.

A mixed methods approach was used to answer the research questions outlined in Figure 3.1. Quantitative data was captured through a survey conducted in all four countries, and qualitative data included interviews, focus groups and participatory arts-based MEL activities. In addition, the research draws on secondary data analysis from within the MAP project's existing repository, partner resources and wider online academic and grey literature resources, including analysis of relevant policy documentation, MAP reports and project documentation relevant to the four delivery countries. The main methods employed are outlined below in Figure 3.2:

<b>University of Northampton Kyrgyzstan and Indonesia</b>	<b>University of Edinburgh Nepal and Rwanda</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Surveys (Kyrgyzstan, Indonesia, Nepal, Rwanda)</li> <li>2) Interviews and focus groups with adult stakeholders (Kyrgyzstan, Indonesia)</li> <li>3) Analysis of primary quantitative and qualitative data gathered within the project by the partners, including the River Journey (Toolbox activity) (Kyrgyzstan, Indonesia)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Creative MEL Toolbox: Seven creative participatory MEL tools that were co-developed with youth advisors for use with groups of children and youth and intergenerational groups (Nepal and Rwanda)</li> <li>2) Interviews and focus groups with adult stakeholders (Nepal and Rwanda)</li> <li>3) Psychosocial Wellbeing Survey for youth (Nepal)</li> </ol>

**Figure 3.2.** Methods utilised across the two Large Grant projects.

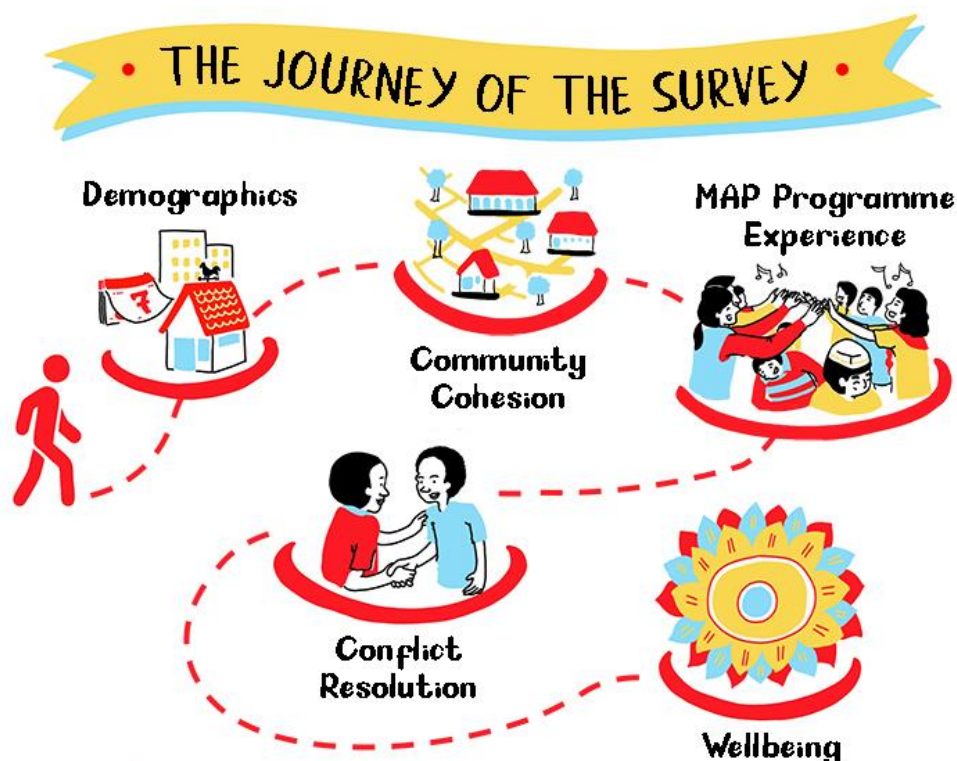
Both arts-based and traditional methods in this research are complementary, as they aim to illuminate the social world in which MAP participants live and engage. As Leavy (2015, p.29) argues, qualitative research and artistic practices have many synergies and they both can be perceived as crafts. As such, the practices rely on researchers' creative and flexible approaches in conducting the research. This means employing reflexivity throughout, with young researchers in the YAB provided with early training and skills development on traditional and arts-based methods, as well as inputs from in-country teams (Braun and Clarke, 2022). Furthermore, youth in the YAB were provided with training on conducting research, ethics and safeguarding to support their development as researchers (see UON Report Section 6.4 and UoE Report Section 1.7 p. 17 for further information).

### 3.3. Quantitative Data

#### 3.3.1. Survey (all countries)

Quantitative data was collected through longitudinal surveys to better understand the broader impacts of the MAP project in terms of longitudinal changes in participant perceptions of community cohesion, conflict resolution and wellbeing. This approach built upon the evaluation work conducted in Phase One through the adaption of the MAP survey developed for that evaluation, to ensure that longitudinal data was captured between Time 1 (when children and youth first engaged with a Medium Grant project) and Time 2 (when their engagement ceased). The survey was co-designed with youth researchers through the YAB, allowing the youth in each country to engage in the creation of a survey that could capture the impact of MAP across all countries. Each survey (Time 1 and Time 2) was translated by the research

team and verified by adult-allies in Kyrgyzstan, Rwanda, Indonesia, and Nepal. Figure 3.3 provides an overview of the participants' journey through the survey, and the areas in which data was captured:



**Figure 3.3.** MAP Survey Journey<sup>5</sup>

A Psychosocial Support (PSS) survey was carried out in Nepal, capturing responses from youth respondents (n=22) in Kathmandu and Hetauda. Designed by Transcultural Psychosocial Organisation (TPO) Nepal and reviewed by the MAP UoE Large Grant team, the final survey had 18 questions, covering participant demographics, perception of wellbeing and the impact of MAP on psychosocial wellbeing. The sample was selected to represent youth who engaged in MAP throughout the length of the Medium Grant projects. The survey gives *indicative* evidence that is further supported by the other evaluation methods.

### 3.4. Qualitative Data

#### 3.4.1. Interviews (all countries)

Semi-structured qualitative interviews were carried out to explore stakeholder experience of the MAP Medium Grants projects in all four countries. Interviewees included youth, policymakers, teachers, community leaders, caregivers, youth

<sup>5</sup> Community Cohesion: National Archive of Criminal Justice Data (NACJD) Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighbourhoods (PHDCN, 1995); Conflict Resolution: adapted version of Gaumer-Erickson and Noonan's (2018) 'Conflict Management Formative Questionnaire'; Wellbeing: Warwick-Edinburgh (2008) SWEMWBS 7-item wellbeing scale.

workers, mental health practitioners, academics and other relevant stakeholders. Interviewees were invited as key informants to capture a range of diverse stakeholder experiences. Focus groups were conducted in Kyrgyzstan and Indonesia with youth engaged in MAP, allowing for in-depth discussing around their journey through MAP. Interviews and focus groups occurred in person and online ranging from 30 to 60 minutes in duration.

### 3.4.2. Creative Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Toolbox (Rwanda, Nepal and adapted tools in Indonesia)

The Creative Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Toolbox provides an overview of the participatory arts-based MEL process, a guide for youth researchers and adult support teams and step-by-step details on how to facilitate and document tools. There are three Tracking tools (baseline – start of the project, midline – middle of the project, and endline – end of the project), and our Evaluation tools. Youth and adults across Rwanda, Nepal, Indonesia and Kyrgyzstan were engaged in visioning, reviewing and contextualising tools for their context. The combination of tools integrate diverse art forms from visual, to written, to performative and provide mixed methods and triangulation to capture different data to explore the research questions and outcome areas. They also allowed for contextualisation by the local teams who adapted them according to cultural forms (such as poetry in Rwanda and dancing in Nepal), as well as to the participant numbers and characteristics (age of children and young people, intergenerational groups, disability, etc.).

Tracking our progress along the way: Baseline and Monitoring Tools	Reflecting on our Progress: Evaluation Tools
Tracking Tool 1: Outcome Vision Murals Tracking Tool 2: Wellbeing Thermometer (carry out at baseline and endline) Tracking Tool 3: Tracking Our Journey Collage	Reflect tool 1: River Journey Reflect tool 2: Artistic Reflection Reflect tool 3: Travelling Opinion Reflect tool 4: Proverb Dramas

**Table 3.1. Creative MEL Toolbox Tools** [See the Creative MEL Toolbox [here](#)]

All tools were employed in Rwanda and Nepal. The River Journey and the Wellbeing Thermometer<sup>6</sup> were the most used tools across teams to capture the journey of MAP, including in Indonesia. The international YAB chose to use River Journey and the Wellbeing Thermometer, and were encouraged to identify at least one consistent tool across projects.

<sup>6</sup> The tools can all be found in the Creative MEL Toolbox (2022). All tools were developed or adapted specifically for MAP (references are in the Toolbox).



Other qualitative methods were co-developed in collaboration with youth co-researchers and in consultation with the wider MAP team and include:

- Use of photos, paintings, and drawings, as well as theatre/plays.
- Use of storyboard/comic strips/diaries to illustrate the participant journey.
- Use of participatory video/vlogs where young people can create videos working as co-researchers<sup>7</sup>.
- Participatory focus group discussions where young people co-create schedules/topics for discussion and lead on asking questions.

Additional tools supported teams to more deeply engage with the projects and align their methods to the focus and contextual context of their research. The MEL journey is illustrated in Figure 3.4.



**Figure 3.4.** MAP The Large Grant MEL Methods

<sup>7</sup> An example of a video create by the youth researchers can be found [here](#).

### 3.5. Social Impact Matrix©

The Social Impact Matrix© developed by the University of Northampton helped to provide a holistic social impact measurement approach that can be used for evaluating the social impact of peacebuilding activities globally. This was developed from the Theory of Change produced by the University of Northampton, itself based on the previous Theory of Change's developed by the in-country teams in MAP Phase One and used to develop a participatory Social Impact Measurement Framework (P-SIMF).

### 3.6. Sample, Data Analysis and Interpretation

#### 3.6.1. Quantitative Data

The survey data sample collected is detailed in Table 3.2.

Country	Initial (T1)	Follow up (T2)	Paired
Nepal	45	41	39
Indonesia	61	49	38
Rwanda	27	29	13
Kyrgyzstan	132	82	53
<b>Total</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>143</b>

**Table 3.2.** Details of collected surveys split by country, interval, and the total number able to be paired.

The collected quantitative data was analysed through IBM's Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS v28.0.10) and Microsoft Excel, utilising descriptive statistics, paired-sample t-tests, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVAs) and chi-square cross-tabulations (further information on these is provided at the appropriate places in Section Five). Open questions were available for participants to discuss their interpretations of peace and peacebuilding, which were subject to a thematic analysis to allow for coding, categorisation, and analysis.

#### 3.6.2. Qualitative Data

**Kyrgyzstan:** Interviews (n=18) were conducted with five stakeholder groups (educators, youth facilitators, artists, social services staff, and government officials/policymakers) and focus groups were conducted with 30 MAP school club members (children and youth) to explore their experiences of the MAP Medium Grants projects.

**Indonesia:** Interviews and focus groups were conducted with 114 young people and six facilitators, art producers and policymakers, to explore their experiences of the Beyond Tradition and GenPeace MAP Medium Grants projects.

**Rwanda:** A total number of 417 children and youth participated in the MEL activities (376 F, 41 M). See the breakdown of participants involved in the UoE report (by method)<sup>8</sup>. Interviews were carried out with 11 adult stakeholders (7F, 4M) in Rwanda.

**Nepal:** A total of 118 youth participated MEL Creative Toolbox activities in Nepal (104 F, 14 M). Interviews were conducted with two policy makers in Nepal.

In Indonesia, the transcripts from the interviews and focus groups were translated by the UON research team through TextUnited<sup>9</sup>. In Kyrgyzstan, the transcripts from interviews and focus groups were translated and analysed by the in-country research team. Analysis of translated transcripts aligned with the Coding Framework (Appendix H in the UON report). In Rwanda and Nepal, the transcripts were transcribed and translated by in-country teams and analysed by UoE using NVivo qualitative data analysis software. The codebook was co-developed with the youth advisors and data validation was done across both countries.

Qualitative data collected from the toolbox tools (documentation forms, notes), interviews and focus groups (transcripts) and photos of arts-based outputs across all countries was analysed using both pre-determined categories, derived from the literature and secondary sources, and through identification of emergent categories and themes from the interviews (Wolcott 1990). This allowed for in-country nuances to be captured and reflected in the respective analysis. Additionally, the UoE team used a thematic analysis and reflexive approach to analyse the data systematically and rigorously according to Braun and Clarke's (2022) six step process: familiarization, coding, generating themes, reviewing themes, defining themes and summarization (writing up).

### 3.6.3. Methodological Limitations and Opportunities

Differing MEL methods and approaches were taken in each country and by each team, which enabled rich mixed methods data that highlights patterns, similarities and differences across projects as well as depth of insight. The survey, which was conducted in all four countries, enabled a cross-country comparison while the qualitative tools provided rich in depth data. The arts-based tools not only provided in depth information, but facilitated an experience of arts-based transformation and healing, in line with the goals of MAP. This approach allowed flexibility for the youth advisors and in country teams to draw on the tools that worked best in their setting, and to adapt the qualitative tools to their context, as well as providing some

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<sup>8</sup> Specifically, in Figure 2.3a and in Tables 2.3a-d.

<sup>9</sup> TextUnited is a professional translation service that uses AI and human translators as appropriate (see <https://www.textunited.com>).

consistency and cross comparative methods (survey). A limitation was the time commitment required for team members conducting the methods, who shared that, at times, they were overwhelmed. A MEL planning tool, with methods, timeline and budget was created to assist with this, however, balancing involvement in a research project with other responsibilities, such as schooling, work, or family care can be difficult for youth researchers. Further to this, although the evaluation team worked with in-country teams to ensure appropriate translation of the survey, there is an inherent risk with mistranslation and misinterpretation in cross-cultural studies. The multi-method research design adopted for the evaluation is believed, by the research team, to be robust enough to support the longitudinal analysis and minimise these limitations through collaborative working between the two evaluation teams and the YAB.

### **3.7. Ethical Considerations**

All monitoring, evaluation and learning was conducted in accordance with children and youth rights (as outlined in the United Convention on the Rights of the Child) and best practices in researching with children (e.g., Ethical Research Involving Children [ERIC]) and adults. The MEL was approved and cleared by the University of Lincoln originally and then the Moray House School of Education & Sport (University of Edinburgh) Ethics Committee and the University of Northampton's Research Faculty Ethics Committee. The MEL also adhered to the Mobile Arts for Peace (MAP) Child Safeguarding Policy. The ethics addressed critical elements such as voluntary and informed ongoing consent and assent, confidentiality, anonymity, do no harm protocol (ensuring no harm to participants and prioritising their wellbeing over the research), power imbalances between researchers and participants and use of data. Informed consent was given by children and youth and adults for the use of their images in photos and other arts-based outputs, such as videos, and the limits of confidentiality for group methods was discussed.



## 4. Findings

Through the integration of the University of Northampton and University of Edinburgh Large Grant projects, a cross-comparative representation of the findings is presented here in respect to the **five key** MAP research questions.

### 4.1. Research Question 1: “How can different art forms be used to co-design, deliver and evaluate peacebuilding curricular and other approaches for working with children and youth to address local conflict issues?”

One of the primary goals of the MAP programme was to utilise the arts to develop a deeper understanding of conflict and peacebuilding in children and youth. The programme employed various visual and performative art forms, such as poetry, drama, drawing and indigenous arts and cultural forms, to enable a collaborative exploration of social problems with two key processes emerging: the exploration of existing problems and the development of pathways for resolution.

#### 4.1.1. Using the arts to explore problems

The exploration of problems involved MAP participants utilising the arts and other cultural forms to explore shared problems and hold transformative conversations with their peers (Ginwright and James, 2002). This allowed for the honest communication of values and shared experience that can lead to deeper examinations of local problems, supported by the creation of safe spaces, which build trust amongst the participants allowing for discussions on the underlying causes of conflict, or previously unseen harm. The performative aspect allowed the children and youth to share their problems with their community, amplifying opportunities for intergenerational dialogue and knowledge transfer. Although performances, such as the forum theatre, were led by the youth, adult audience members were significantly impacted, being reminded of their own experiences growing up, enabling them to better understand their children’s perspectives and encouraging emotional and intergenerational dialogue. This was particularly effective during activities where children, youth, and adults engaged in sharing their stories, such as the River Journey, where direct conversation could be had between the parties to acknowledge and support others’ perspectives.

*“My main desire was to talk about problems, to convey them to people, and I think I achieved my goal!”*  
**Kyrgyzstan Participant**

#### 4.1.2. The arts as an aid to peacebuilding strategies and the development of political capabilities

As visions aligned, children and youth were given the space to develop practical pathways and strategies for peacebuilding, such as focusing on community, rather than personal behaviours. This involved children and youth shaping their views on peace into actionable plans, empowered by their enhanced capabilities (i.e., political capability) through artistic engagement (Sen, 1989). The use of art and cultural forms and resources enabled participants to work with others, refine their ideas and build general political capabilities through role playing, discussing potential challenges and sharing ideas (Fricker, 2007; Soliman et al., 2022). This fostered a sense of ownership over peacebuilding strategies, empowering intergroup advocacy and broader social influence (Montreuil et al., 2021). This was evident in how **the expanding definitions of peace and peacebuilding processes moved beyond a focus on evidence gathering and individual behaviours, into calls for community-driven action**. An example of this was the use of the river journey MEL tool, which allowed participants to examine the role of societal stakeholders, such as teachers and ward officers, and strategize short to medium goals, and highlight potential issues.

##### **The River Journey**

The 'River Journey' serves as an artistic tool that can aid reflective conversations, with participants creating a series of panels that depict their experiences as a linear story flowing from the source to mouth of the river. Within the Intergenerational Dialogue project in Nepal, this tool was used to facilitate conversation between teachers, older students and younger students. Whilst sketching out their own river journey, the groups engaged in conversation with each other, fostering deeper relationships, the diminishing of power relations and building trust. Potentially affecting how the peacebuilding curriculum evolved, teachers began to highlight their perceptions of how students were evolving over the course of the MAP programme and how they have reflected on their approach to teaching. Quantitative data collected from the survey tool highlighted the growing feelings of trust and ability to engage between teachers and students (UON Large Grant Report Section 5.3).

The river journey was also used to help parents and their children engage with each other. In Rwanda, children and youth crafted a river journey image which parents were then invited to refine through conversation. This created a dedicated time and space for intentional conversation to be held where both parties could discuss their thoughts and feelings. These images were then displayed instilling a sense of shared pride and accomplishment over what their relationships had

MAP's integration of art forms in the peacebuilding curricula for children and youth has only allowed for the **creation of spaces that encourage the exploration of**

**concepts and knowledge exchange between peers.** The improvements in children and youth's political capabilities have allowed them to transform these visions into effective political strategies through performance, which allows them to express their views in a manner that encourages intergenerational dialogue whilst using their creativity to influence others (Nussbaum, 2003). **Involved participants in this process have benefited: children and youth have developed the cultural resources to live a life they value and engage in peacebuilding tasks, whilst adults are able to better relate to their experiences and expand their perspectives.** This aligns with the programme's Theory of Change by developing community cohesion, enhanced understandings of peace and peacebuilding and engaging children and youth in evidence-based policymaking. **The use of arts-based methods, such as forum theatre, and the creation of youth-led spaces, has facilitated the creation of policy briefs, and fostered influential engagement with political actors and policymakers, leveraging the participants' newly evolved political capabilities.**

#### 4.2. Research Question 2: "How might cultural forms be used for dialogue with and between children and youth, educators and policymakers to advance peacebuilding through a local and indigenous approach?"

The use of arts-based interventions to develop dialogue between young people and adults was shown to be effective across all country contexts and was a key feature in the development of inter-group trust. Effective scaffolding (the stage of learning where children and youth work with more experienced people to develop the skills they do not yet have), led by MAP, was critical to the development of the arts-based methods; however, once enacted this approach offered the children and youth the freedom to share and embody their thoughts in creative ways and on their own terms. These experiential dimensions of learning strengthened relationships beyond what might be expected through traditional teaching, offering space for the youth to address challenging issues within a safe environment, which prioritised youth voice, advancing epistemic justice through the use of a jointly understood cultural mechanism (Poteat et al., 2002; Paterson-Young et al., upcoming).

##### 4.2.1. Effective communication and the confidence to lead discussion

The prioritisation of children and youth voices moved beyond the freedom to express their opinions, to the means in which they shared them. Stakeholders highlighted that this was the way the arts allowed young people to communicate effectively. **This builds agency within the peer groups and allows for the emergence of youth role models who can help lead discussions and encourage less confident members to contribute.** This created stronger

*"[...] sometimes children cannot easily communicate the problem they have, but through drawing they can give detailed information about their lives" Rwandan Facilitator*

relationships, cross-cultural exchanges and the celebration of togetherness. It also promoted the self-efficacy of marginalised groups whose voices are often disregarded due to hermeneutical injustices, by uncoupling the means of communication from the dominant societal stakeholders (Fricker, 2006).

#### 4.2.2. The closing of intergenerational power distance

The arts approach was also effective in reducing the power distance between children and youth and adult stakeholders by creating spaces built on equity of voice.

**Parents and teachers, for example, were allowed into youth centric spaces; however, these engagements were built around collaborative engagement with the arts**, for example, parental engagement in the river journey or problem solving with teachers. Additionally, the arts allowed engagement between parents and facilitators that was built on home visits and performance attendance, allowing for increased unity in the social ecosystem of children and youth, which also served to reduce conflict (Mkwanzani et al., 2021). This is supported by the quantitative data, which indicated statistically significant increases in participants' belief that they could effectively engage with teachers, build effective relationships, and grow trust.

#### Performance

Both reports emphasised the importance of creating spaces for child and youth-led performances where they could tackle challenging subjects, become stakeholders in cultural resources and engage with their local community. In Rwanda, girls were taught drumming, a traditionally male pastime, and encouraged to critically analyse and deconstruct proverbs they had been previously taught. They were then asked to think of their own proverbs and poems which could be incorporated into their drumming performances, which confronted gender stereotypes and traditional activities that perpetuated social inequalities and exclusion. Importantly, it created a space where children and youth could speak without interruption, choosing the conversational topics that they believe were important and communicate it in a manner that suited them.

The Forum theatre in Kyrgyzstan provided training and hands on experience in the performing arts for children and youth. Participants emphasised how powerful theatre could be with '*seeing once is better than hearing a hundred times*'. Participatory theatre allowed scenarios to be repeated, allowing children and youth to put themselves in place of the victim or as someone trying to fix the problem, and giving all involved a change to investigate different pathways toward a solution.



#### 4.2.3. The impact of performance on empowerment

Finally, the use of both performance and arts-mediated dialogue, for example, using cultural forms as the central pillar for engagement, allowed children and youth to feel empowered with less restriction on the expression of their voice, compared to more intimate settings, where there are examples of children and youth feeling that their ideas were 'shot down'. The use of cultural forms additionally allowed for a shared 'starting point' for intergenerational conversation, developing a framework for language and engagement that both parties understood.

Performances allowed young people to become active in public life, form new ways of thinking and deliver a creative expression of local social problems. These performances could be developed into policy briefs, showing how the arts can lead a bottom-up approach to dialogue creation and the evaluation of peacebuilding strategies<sup>10</sup>.

Assessing this research question, there are three conceptual spaces: **cultivation, collaboration and performative**, created through the arts with each contributing to the evolution of local and indigenous approaches to peace and peacebuilding. The foundations of MAP's impact are the spaces of cultivation scaffolded by the programme and led by facilitators. The objective of this space is to upskill youth participants, so they can understand, control and implement the arts into a communicative discourse. **As these skills increase, young people can communicate more effectively and take ownership of youth-adult conversations.** This space begins predominantly hierarchical, with facilitators delivering training sessions to an audience of youth to effectively scaffold the program; however, the evidence suggests that children and youth can move into positions of leadership or act as role models, indicating a level of social mobility. **Spaces for cultivation contribute to collaborative spaces by creating equitability between newly skilled children and youth and adult stakeholders, whilst contributing to performative spaces by turning children and youth into new cultural stakeholders.**

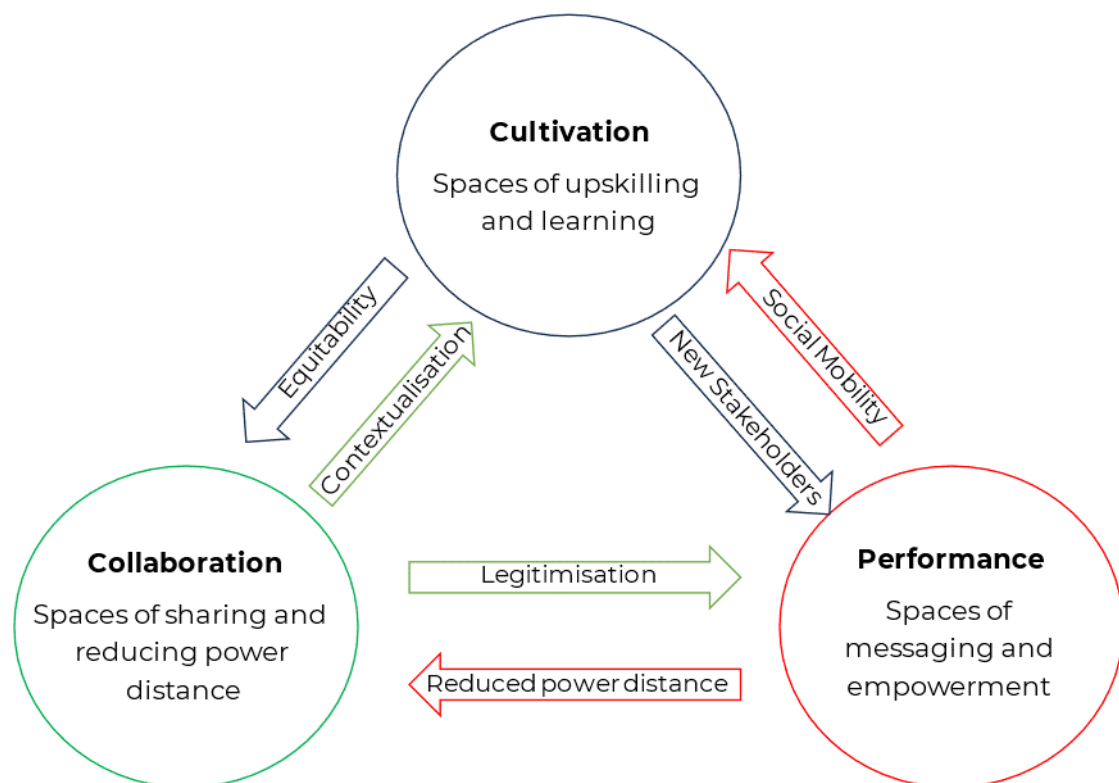
Collaborative spaces allow for children and youth to engage with not only each other, but adults within the ecosystem; for example, in Rwanda parents were able to engage with the facilitators during home visits and the children and youth on shared tools, such as the conflict tree. **These spaces flatten power dynamics and create positive impact on community unity and lessened conflict as stakeholders are helped to understand one another.** Collaborative spaces contribute to spaces for cultivation by developing contextual information which can help facilitators adjust and evolve their teaching, whilst contributing to performative spaces by legitimising messaging.

Finally, performative spaces allowed for the full expression of the children and youth experiences and allowed them to tell their stories without interruptions and on their own terms. Exhibitions, drawings, video and songs become cultural artefacts, which

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<sup>10</sup> To see these policy briefs and learn more about MAP policy impact, please go here.

can then be used to mediate dialogue, give tangibility to stories and experiences and evolve the shared social memories of specific events. **Creating both synchronous and asynchronous spaces, allows a balance between direct intergenerational dialogue (where perspectives can be actively challenged or supported) and creating new cultural artefacts. These artifacts enable individuals to visit and revisit stationary exhibits, allowing internal reflections and personal engagement.** Performative spaces contribute to spaces for cultivation by creating children and youth role models who can contribute to it sustainability, whilst contributing to collaborative spaces by reducing power distance through providing independent space for children and youth to contribute to social discourse. These dynamics are illustrated in Figure 4.1.



**Figure 4.1.** Theoretical model for how the arts can create interlocking safe spaces for new social discourse through a circular and self-reinforcing process.

Together, the spaces created through the utilisation of local and indigenous cultural forms, developed through the MAP programme, contribute significantly to peace and peacebuilding strategies. These spaces are built on trust, shared and sustainable ownership, intergenerational partnerships, and curriculum change, as detailed in the programme's Theory of Change.

### **4.3. Research Question 3: “How might psychosocial support, including local healing practices, be better integrated within peacebuilding approaches by using the arts to promote the wellbeing of children and youth, especially those from marginalised groups?”**

This theme draws on children, youth and adults’ understandings, experiences and embodiment of arts-based methods for peacebuilding and the promotion of psychosocial wellbeing of children and youth, as well as adult facilitators, teachers, families, service providers and policymakers to Nepal.

The findings from the survey suggest that the psychosocial support offered within the MAP Project effectively enhances the participants’ general wellbeing across all country contexts, though with limited statistical significance in Rwanda. The Warwick-Edinburg Wellbeing Scale indicated statistically significant increases to wellbeing overall ( $\bar{x} = +.30$ ;  $p < .001$ ). The changes were also statistically significant in Kyrgyzstan ( $\bar{x} = +.18$ ;  $p < .001$ ), Nepal ( $\bar{x} = +.64$ ;  $p < .05$ ) and Indonesia ( $\bar{x} = +.12$ ;  $p < .001$ ); however, in Rwanda the change (+.24) was not statistically significant (Figure 5.10 UON Report). While the quantitative data was not statistically significant in Rwanda, the sample size was longitudinally lower reducing the likelihood of significant findings, and the qualitative data shows positive changes for psychosocial wellbeing.

Examinations of the individual Warwick-Edinburgh wellbeing statements indicated that the project was most effective in Nepal, which saw statistically significant positive changes across all statements, and Kyrgyzstan, which saw positive change noted in all but one. The participants in these countries were more likely to feel greater confidence in their ability to manage conflict, suggesting a correlation. When considering gender, female participants had more significant improvements in overall wellbeing and conflict management compared to males, suggesting the same pattern. Conversely, we see a decline in wellbeing and also a decline in feelings of confidence in managing conflict in Indonesia. This indicates that the successful integration of conflict management strategies into the arts-based activities of the MAP Project led to improved participant wellbeing.

Theme three explores the following four sub-themes:

- Children and youth grew in self-confidence and found new ways to express themselves.
- Children and youth gained a sense of connectedness to peers, family and leaders.
- Children, youth and adults gained a sense of hope which also helps them share hope with others.
- The arts have powerful potential for mental health practice.

#### 4.3.1. Children and youth grew in self-confidence and found new ways to express themselves

Through MAP, children and youth across Medium Grant projects in Rwanda and Nepal experienced self-discovery, gained self-confidence and new arts-based and creative ways to express themselves.

The quantitative analysis demonstrates the diverse impacts of the MAP programme across all four countries. Through the creation of alternative spaces that allowed children and youth to lead conversations, positive and tangible changes have been observed, including increased self-belief in the ability to resolve conflict and improvements to wellbeing. Further analysis of the Wellbeing Scale statements unveiled variations in how the MAP Project impacted participants. In Nepal, every statement showed a statistically significant positive change, whilst in Kyrgyzstan all statements except *“I am good at solving problems”* demonstrated positive change. Changes in Rwanda and Indonesia were more limited, with only one statistically significant change in each country: *“I feel calm, I’m not worried about anything”* in Rwanda, and *“I can express my opinion about many things”* in Indonesia.

In Nepal, several youth participants spoke of how they had felt fear of being judged by their peers and wider society. By participating in the MAP project, they became more comfortable to speak and express themselves. For example, during a visual explorer activity, one youth used a lavender flower image:



**Figure 4.2.** Lavender Flower, Wellbeing Thermometer Reflection, Endline, Nepal

*“A soft and light colour that mirrors [my own] personality. I initially struggled to express myself and feared judgement. However, my time in YAAR has empowered me to express myself freely and authentically.” (Wellbeing Thermometer Visual, female youth, Kathmandu, September 2023)*

The experience from the Kyrgyzstan project shows how self-expression is closely related to the creative realisation of young people. The project's activities, which were aimed at developing artistic literacy and to enhance capacity building in the creative arts alongside researcher skills (and to explore the overlap between these two areas in relation to arts-based research methods), helped young people better communicate in relation to their surroundings and express their inner state. This has a positive psychotherapeutic effect on young people, relieves internal tension, helps emancipation and gives rise to self-confidence.

*We enhanced our knowledge; we can see the result. Now, we have a great desire and confidence in our ability to solve community problems. A leader must have a high level of self-confidence, must feel responsible to others and be a motivator. I have got these qualities now - 80% thanks to the project (MAP Club member from Osh)*

Children and youth developed improved personal skills through engagement with MAP, building confidence through performing/creating, improving wellbeing and self-efficacy through leading projects. Safe spaces, or 'owned spaces' (Paterson-Young et al., Forthcoming), created through the MAP projects, allowed children and youth to express themselves and promoted wellbeing (Mkwanzani et al., 2021; Sen, 1983). Artistic methods learned in the Medium Grants enabled young people to express ideas and perspectives through artistic mediums that would be difficult to verbalize otherwise. In the JWAS project in Nepal, young women were excited to paint their views in issues in their community through Mithila Arts.

Through Medium Grants, children and youth had the opportunity to develop strong communication skills and engage in meaningful social interactions, learning opportunities and opening dialogue to enhance their capacity to aspire and accomplish their goals (Mkwanzani and Cin, 2020; Dubois and Rousseau 2008; Hart 2013). For example, in Intergenerational Dialogue (Nepal), children shared their collective hopes for their schools and communities (such as cleaning litter, establishing a health centre, mentoring younger groups of children) and expressed a sense of hope that they could accomplish this together. For youth advisors, the ability to reflect with peers and stakeholders through arts-based research methods (e.g., River Journey) promoted healing in some countries.

The quantitative survey showed that female participants were also more likely to see increases in their wellbeing after engaging with MAP, which was further mediated by the amount of time participants spent in the programme, for example, positive and statistically significant change occurred in less than a month for participants conflict management, whereas the most significant change in wellbeing came between seven and 12 months. This indicates that the MAP project is improving the psychosocial situation of the participants.



#### 4.3.2. Children and youth gained a sense of connectedness to peers, family and leaders

Engaging young people and community members in dialogue by means of arts helped them to reveal their needs and emotions in relationship to themselves and to 'significant others,' and to the broader environment. In Kyrgyzstan tradition, children and youth have limited access to this type of support. The project methodology provided a community and peer-to-peer platform for young people to tell their story, to elicit an empathic response and to get advice. In this way, arts have been an especially useful and delicate tool for revealing participant emotions and discussing problems.

*"We have to join forces. But how do you do this? Anyway, work together. Cooperation. Therefore, apart from working together there, we have to believe because if we don't believe it when we are carried there." (BT Young Participant A – TTA) (Indonesia)*

Children and youth in Indonesia reflected on relationships created throughout the MAP process, describing these relationships as cooperative, meaningful and memorable. Not only did youth gain confidence in themselves and amongst one another, their self-confidence expanded to speaking up in their own families, schools, communities and in larger settings. Art forms were delivered dynamically and served many purposes, including psychosocial benefits (such as youth in Indonesia discussing the psychological benefits of dance movement) and centring youth in the art form.

Arts-based methods and processes can support children and youth in diverse settings to build their own confidence and comfort to engage with and feel connected with their peers, family and leaders across generations, culture, ethnicity, castes, regions, race, ability, socioeconomic experience, gender and sexual orientation. In MAP, the data shows strong connectedness to peers, particularly the youth advisors, as well as enhanced relationships with family, facilitators and community through the local arts based cultural methods.

##### 4.3.2.1. Connectedness to peers

Through MAP activities, young people could foster trust and build relationships (Collins et al., 2020; Cuevas-Parra and Tisdall, 2019) that promoted life-satisfaction and wellbeing, allowing them to feel connected and united with others. In Gira Ingoma, girls felt united together in song and drumming and dance, and expressed that this connection brought them a sense of strength.

In MAP, arts-based activities supported youth advisors to come together and feel connected. In Nepal, the YAAR felt a lack of cohesion and connectedness prior to and at the start of their engagement. Through image theatre, learned in MAP, the young women expressed their relationships prior to MAP as the *"letters Y-A-A-R scattered*

*chaotically.*” Whereas closer to the end, they showed an image of the letters together highlighting the transformation of coming together united, cohesive and as a purposeful entity.

#### 4.3.2.2. Connectedness to family and community

In addition to feeling connected to peers in the MAP programmes and as youth advisors, findings also showed a sense of connection to family and community members. One caregiver in Rwanda shared how MAP aided “family interaction” and helped them to make “decisions together about what can be done.” The experience supported unifying the family (Caregiver, Rwanda). Others who faced family challenges and/or who had lost family members felt MAP acted as their family: “I used to live with hurting and being alone but after joining I became happy, and I have got family. I got people to fill in the gap of my dead family” (Youth, Rwanda).

#### 4.3.2.3. Connection with government and policymakers

As explored in earlier themes, children and youth also expressed feelings of greater connection with government and policymakers through arts-based methods. In this section, we note how these interactions contributed to their wellbeing. For example, YAAR in Nepal presented an image theatre (a still image of before and after) to policymakers, researchers and practitioners at a UNESCO MAP event that sparked critical dialogue and ample intergenerational dialogue to support further conversation and policy change. In Rwanda, youth expressed that being connected as youth can help them deal with challenges (e.g., family conflicts), especially as they apply art forms, such as through art exhibitions, to target and engage with policymakers and community members.

In Kyrgyzstan, youth engaged with audiences during Forum Theatre performances, facilitating discussions with policymakers, parents, educators and social workers on the problems impacting communities and the impact that these problems have on the wellbeing of individuals in the community. This amplified the voices of youth in Kyrgyzstan, allowing them to express not only the problems in communities but the resolutions<sup>11</sup>.

*“This work of the project must be on an ongoing basis in the schools because it helps to solve all problems. You can at any time, if there is some problem in the school or in the community, call parents, community, policymakers, show a performance and discuss together. And we already have professional actors.”*  
(Social worker from Batken)

This can also be exemplified by the below policy impact examples from the Medium Grant projects in Kyrgyzstan and Indonesia:

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<sup>11</sup> For further information please see the Kyrgyz policy impacts here.

MAP has delivered numerous policy impacts across not just the Medium Grant work, but also the prior Phase One and Small Grants work. These impacts have included:

**Curricula:** changes to the curriculum in Kyrgyzstan, with the creation of youth groups, tens of thousands of people engaged, and influences on policy (including the implementation of forum theatre groups in the Kyrgyz government's new youth policy for 2020-2025)<sup>1</sup>. In Indonesia, work has been done with the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology in collaboration with Scholas Citizenship to develop a model for creating Diversity Spaces for Engagement in school/education settings.

**Policymaker Engagement:** The MAP projects have had significant engagement with local, regional and national policymakers. These include at a local level: mayors, police chiefs and local officials; and at the national level the Ministry of Education (Kyrgyzstan and Indonesia), the Ministry of Culture (Kyrgyzstan), and in Indonesia the Ministry of Women Empowerment and Child Protection, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology and the Ministry of Social Affairs (see Section 6.1.3 and Appendix H1 in the UON Large Grant report).

**Laws:** The MAP work in Indonesia is also informing regulations around 'Child and Adolescent Participation in Development Programs' led by the Ministry of Women Empowerment and Child Protection. This seeks to fulfil children's role to participate in development planning and meetings, and show the effectiveness of Child Forums, on the national agenda around fulfilling children's rights.

**Ongoing Policy Impacts:** It should also be noted that such policy engagement and impact is an ongoing process that will continue post MAP. Indeed, as an example, in Indonesia Atma Jaya University will be meeting with the Ministry of Child Protection on May 21<sup>st</sup> as part of a Policy Dialogue workshop between MAP children and youth and Ministries officials.

In Indonesia, the youth engaged capitalised on opportunities for intergenerational dialogue to not only explore the challenges in community, but to reinvigorate and remind policymakers of cultural traditions including Betawi culture.

*"This model (Lenong Revitalisation) is very interesting. This year, we are planning to create a model to teach Betawi cultures with Betawi Cultural Institute, and so the model that has been developed could be a reference." (Policymaker 1, conversation not recorded).*

#### 4.3.3. The arts have powerful potential for mental health practice

Throughout each section above it is evident that art has a powerful potential and impact on mental health and mental health practice. Through engaging in poems, songs, drumming, painting, drawing, theatre and other creative opportunities, children and youth engaged in processes of reflection, healing and greater connection with their peers and themselves. In the Nepal Psychosocial Support Survey 16 of youth participants strongly agreed and six somewhat agreed that MAP broadened their understanding of mental health.

These discussions and communication channels between young people and adults, especially those with power and decision-making responsibilities in communities, were identified by the MAP stakeholders. The project created platforms for dialogue between adults and youth at different levels – local, regional and national – where youth had the opportunity to talk about their problems through arts-based methods, perhaps in a way that would not be possible through other means. As one Deputy of a City Council and one national policymaker both stated:

*"I really liked the fact that there was two-way conversation at the meeting. Each side sees the problem differently. There was an opportunity to hear the opinions of both adults and youth. I hope that each side, both adults and youth, was able to convey to each other at least some part of their problem. This became food for thought. I was very glad that two generations met and talked openly. This was facilitated by the use of art methods; art helped to open up/emancipate the meeting participants. I wish more such projects and meetings in the future." (KRY National Policymaker)*

Furthermore, in Rwanda a youth advisor noted feeling *"transformation from the dark (inside) to the light (outside),"* and another shared, *"at the start of the project, [I] was in that mess, as it went forward [I] had light in [my] life and was lifted out of the cloud"* (YAB analysis session).

This section has emphasised the relationship of psychosocial wellbeing and building sustainable peace. Processes employed in the Medium Grants enabled participants to express themselves to one another and to policy and decision makers and to feel connected to others. They gained a sense of hope which translated into creating hope and peace for others. There is great potential to enhance the interlinkages when engaging children and youth in arts-based methods.

#### **4.4. Research Question 4: “How can cultural forms be incorporated into child- and youth-led participatory action research methodologies and adapted for the purposes of the design, undertaking and delivery of interdisciplinary projects in diverse social, political and cultural contexts?”**

This theme explores how MAP supported development of cultural forms with children and youth within youth-led participatory spaces. This created hope for the future, space for exercising political capability, opportunities to advocate for preserving their culture, and to engage in cultural forms and traditional practices which gave voice to young people and promoted change.

##### **4.4.1. Children and youth artistic and life skills were developed through MAP**

*“After all, it is not for nothing! They say, ‘If young people develop, then society will also be developed’, so we will try to develop”* (MAP School Club Member, Batken, Kyrgyzstan)

Cultural forms, artistic skills and life skills (e.g. problem-solving, decision-making, interpersonal relationship skills) were learned by youth (and adults) and applied in varied ways to affect change in individuals’ lives and communities. These examples are highlighted below.

###### **4.4.1.1. Artistic skills**

Youth used a wide-range of arts-based methods and described new experiences to traditional art forms - such as Mithila arts (Nepal) and Imigongo art (Rwanda) - discovering ‘hidden talents’ and ‘capacities’ (youth advisor, Hetauda, Nepal). One young person in Indonesia discussed returning to music after losing confidence in performing earlier in life.

In Rwanda, children learned *“drumming beats for them to be able to create their own beats”* and aimed to *“be able to create their own traditional poems”* and to *“practise warrior dance for the participants to become real ‘intores’ (warriors).”*

###### **4.4.1.2. Life skills**

Children, young people and adults reflected on learning varied life skills through MAP. One youth advisor depicted her journey as starting from a leaf, gradually collecting drops of water, symbolising her acquired skills and leading to personal growth (Nepal). For instance, youth developed increased agency, self-belief, confidence and responsibility. Relatedly, children and youth discussed increased productivity and how their learned life skills impacted their future aspirations, noting that learned life skills *“...are useful in my future. I will also change my future and change society”* (Nepal).



Leadership and ability to express oneself were also developed. Such skills as an increased sense of effective communication allowed children and youth to feel more capable of voicing their opinions and facilitating changes in the community. Children spoke of the increase in ability and comfort in public speaking as a result of MAP participation, including *“to overcome...fears of the audience”* (Kyrgyzstan).

*“We have not only learned about art, but we have also learned how we can lead others, how we can be led by others, how we can give direction to others and how we can receive direction from others” (BT Young Participant B – PCC, Indonesia)*

Adult stakeholders also achieved positive changes in their own teaching practice and personal lives which included: an improved understanding of others, mental health caring practices, and strengthened teaching practices in changes to pedagogy (e.g., moving away from literary and didactic methods in Rwanda and Nepal), teacher confidence, and new ways to connect with children and families. This in turn had positive impacts on the youth allowing for continuous transformation for both young people and adults.

*“MAP boosted us! It started building up our confidence... We used to define words, teach them words... Now we are giving them concrete pictures.” (Male teacher, Hetauda, Nepal).*

#### 4.4.2. Arts-based methods facilitated meaningful participation of children and youth in MEL and in project activities

*“...MAP itself teaches us to be more participative, and also how to do it...” (GP Young Participant B – N, Indonesia)*

YAB members gained valuable research skills and experience through co-creating and delivering MAP MEL activities and, in Rwanda, youth advisors expressed gratitude for increased comprehension of the project cycle. Youth also commented on how the research and communication skills help them in their studies and other projects they are involved with:

*“I was able to boost my confidence because of YAAR and also learn how to study in a new way... It was surprising how fun studies become once we add arts to it.” (Youth advisor, Nepal, endline)*

Youth advisory members spoke of the future opportunities for meaningful participation enabled by their experiences; for instance, the skills learned, the networks and connections made and the possibilities for enacting positive societal impact. Children and youth engaged in Indonesia reflected on a desire to fight for arts and culture.

Meaningful youth participation was also linked to strong relationships amongst youth, as well as between youth and adult allies. Peer relationships were described as

cooperative, meaningful and memorable (in Indonesia), and a key aspect of sustainable participation. Youth-led participatory spaces allowed children and youth to learn from each other, including learning from other children and youth from various backgrounds (e.g., children and youth with disabilities). Arts-based methods further acted as a means for creating dialogue between youth and adults. The adult staff and volunteers served as support and encouragement to youth, but gave them the space to try methods, learn from mistakes and grow their skills and experience. There was also a desire for continuity of the youth advisory role in both Rwanda and Nepal that shows that youth advisors felt they were valuable members of the team.

*“...distance between adults and children, it sometimes does not allow children to express all their opinion[s] to adults. But arts methods allow this distance to be reduced. And through the drawing, through the performance, convey your voice to adults.” (Educator from Batken, Kyrgyzstan)*

Enabling youth to lead arts-based interventions prioritised the voices of children and youth. For example, in Kyrgyzstan, one MAP School Club member noted, *“My main desire was to talk about problems, to convey them to people, and I think I achieved my goal!”* Gaining confidence through MAP experiences enabled youth to speak up and exercise their political capability, providing them with spaces to engage in discussions about community involvement. In Indonesia, an adult cultural artist noted that the participants were particularly confident as compared with other children they worked with.

Through MAP projects, *‘meaningful participation of all genders’* was realised; girls were encouraged to learn cultural forms, including those historically reserved for males. Participants expressed the desire for equality between genders, particularly around school, maintaining a clean environment, equity within households and freedom for both genders in society. While girls noted that increased training would enable their leadership in communities (Nepal), young men also acknowledged that *“[the] power of girls and women has been hidden and we are trying to [reveal] them”* (Young man, Visualising Peace, Rwanda).

#### 4.4.3. Youth and adult allies’ perspectives guided MAP MEL approaches throughout the project in an iterative way

*“The tracking tools should be taught to many people – it helps to learn if what you are doing is effective” (Youth advisor, validation workshop, Rwanda).*

Throughout the MAP MEL process, youth were engaged with adult allies in co-developing the MEL tools, carrying them out, evaluation processes and adapting approaches. Youth shared challenges they had encountered during the MEL process and made suggestions for adaptations or improvements; for instance, in Kyrgyzstan youth provided their visions for the future development of the project and in Nepal a

youth advisor noted sharing “difficulties while performing the monitoring and evaluation” and providing subsequent recommendations on the usage of these tools.

Opportunities for exchange enabled youth perspectives to guide the MAP MEL approaches. International YAB meetings were an opportunity for youth advisors from each country to contribute to tool development, share learning, offer ideas for adapting methods and share cultural art forms from their context. Collaborative planning contributed to fostering a sense of ownership of the process and tools and a sense of pride in the process and outputs.

*“...Children testified that the tracking tools enhanced them to be problem solvers, and they have got [a] chance to feel open and included with each other...” (Adult ally, Rwanda)*

In conclusion, MAP Medium Grants provided a meaningful opportunity for youth – participants and youth advisors – and adults to gain artistic and life skills through their engagement in cultural art forms and to contribute to the monitoring, evaluation and learning processes. The skills that have been gained could be creatively applied in design and implementation of participatory arts-based research in diverse contexts.

#### **4.5. Research Question 5: “How might these cultural forms be used to create alternative spaces and communication structures for peacebuilding approaches and curricula development to inform local, national and international approaches to peacebuilding?”**

Children and youth engaged with artistic methods of diverse cultural forms to explore community issues with adult stakeholders across Nepal, Rwanda, Indonesia and Kyrgyzstan to varying degrees. This enhanced their political capabilities (Fricker, 2007; Soliman et al., 2022) by supporting them to generate ideas through role-playing and discussing their challenges, supporting children and youth to be included in wider discussions of peace and peacebuilding. This has positively enhanced views of the community, improving stakeholder engagement and peacebuilding strategies. Using arts-based methods to establish alternative spaces and communication structures has enabled deeper conversations on shared problems and lived experiences. This impacted how participants see their community, both positively and negatively, and is reflected in how they engage with stakeholders.

Engagement in arts and local cultural forms through MAP impacted children, youth, families, teachers and other community members across different settings and provided some potential for alternative spaces and communication for peacebuilding at local – and in some cases, national – levels, such as the arts-based approaches to strengthening psychosocial wellbeing in health clinics in Rwanda. Through participating in MAP clubs that used arts-based processes, fostered trust and support, and had youth advisory roles, children and youth enhanced confidence and self-expression, and impacted their ability for peacebuilding more widely. Such

approaches can be scaled up to national and international levels through influencing curriculum and policy.

At the school level, training in MAP methods and activities have influenced “*thoughts, feelings, and behaviour*” of teachers in their engagement with students (teacher, interview, Rwanda). For example, one teacher in Rwanda shared her role beyond academic material, to connect with students and support them in other aspects of their lives. The MAP exercises are not only used for art education; they also are integrated into other subjects such as English and Maths to support learning. For example, arts-based methods were built into English classes to use art to represent words (teacher, interview, Rwanda). In Nepal, teachers have integrated art into teaching maths activities through craft and engagement in social issues through film. MAP has also contributed to protecting and supporting culture in schools.

Children, youth and adults at multiple levels have strengthened intergenerational relationships and fostered opportunities to transform pedagogy, implement curriculum and create greater intergenerational dialogue with policymakers. Although youth advisors are very enthusiastic, there was also concern raised about creating expectations and future sustainability (interview, Nepal). Reflecting on sustainable changes and greater work beyond MAP, if there is continued momentum to build from the arts education and arts-based programmes to shift policy and quality implementation, it will be very valuable.

The International and local Youth Advisory Boards further supported children and youth’s engagement in governance, political processes, institutions and decision-making through their individual projects. This promoted their collective political voice and imbued them with the power to speak out (Mkwanzani et al., 2021) and can be evidenced through the Indonesian YAB members leading an international event facilitated by the University of Lincoln, which focused on the art of filmmaking and Nepal YAB members leading on international webinars and presenting methods to graduate students.

In addition to the qualitative research, the quantitative analysis of the surveys illustrates the impact of the MAP programme on the development of definitions of peace and peacebuilding, as well as evidencing how arts-based approaches can involve both community relationships and the peacebuilding processes. MAP is also evidenced to encourage positive change in the individuals through their wellbeing and conflict resolution skills. While evidence exists on the two way communication and intergenerational dialogue (see full reports) an area warranting further investigation is the differing country contexts and how stakeholders are invited into the youth and child-led spaces and engage in conversations with participants. This is particularly pertinent given the lower levels of impact in particular contexts and with different stakeholder groups. Further research could explore longer term impacts of the two-way dialogue between youth and adults.

## 4.6. Findings Summary

Linked together, the research questions highlight the impact that the Mobile Arts for Peace programme has had on the participants, their communities, and policy. By placing the arts at the centre of dialogue between children and youth, the programme has enabled them to broaden their perspectives of peace and peacebuilding in a safe, youth-focused environment. The creation of new tangible cultural artefacts, such as forum theatre, the re-purposing of traditional art forms, such as drumming, and the use of arts-mediated tools, such as the river journey, each contribute to strengthening and deepening the relationship between children and youth, and adult stakeholders. These activities serve not only as a common starting point for dialogue, with all parties having a shared understanding of the underlying form, but also create opportunities for new, youth-led conversations which enable the uninterrupted expression of their perspectives on conflict, develop community unity over shared experiences, and joint growth.

The psychosocial impact on the participants was significant, with those involved seeing improvements in their wellbeing, confidence, and their skills in managing conflict. This was expressed through the participants discovering new ways to express themselves and helping them develop a sense of connectedness to their peers and other community members through the mediation of the arts. This led to them feeling hopeful for the future, support others to gain hope, and building trust with those around them.

This development and leadership of the children and youth can be further emphasised through their role in the research evaluation and future planning. The arts fostered opportunity for the children and youth to further develop their capabilities, gain confidence in themselves, and learn new skills which aided them to contribute to the monitoring, evaluation and learning processes adopted by the programme stakeholders.

These were then further expanded on as children and youth sought to create sustainable places for these activities where they could work in collaboration with their peers and engage with local stakeholders and other grassroots organisations to contribute to policy, curriculum, and practice transformation. This process was reinforced by the creation of interlocking and mutually reinforcing spaces where teaching and learning could be effectively scaffolded early in the intervention, whilst creating spaces for children and youth to then step into leadership and other influential positions.



## 5. Role of Youth Advisory Board (YAB) in Promoting Participatory Practices in MAP

The following section details the role of the Youth Advisory Panel (YAB) in promoting participatory practices, which was originally formed within the MAP project and integrated into the Large Grant projects, facilitated by the University of Northampton and University of Edinburgh. The YAB brought together youth representatives from Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal and Rwanda in monthly online meetings between January 2023 and 2024, which gave space for them to:

- **Engage** in co-production of research and programme deliverables.
- **Share** knowledge and learning with both adults and their peers in a cross-cultural setting.
- **Discuss** new activities to support the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning.
- **Lead** in new and innovative activities, both within their home countries and the YAB itself.

The YAB members contributed to all aspects of the MAP programme and the key findings from the Large Grants Evaluations at the University of Northampton ([read here](#)) and University of Edinburgh ([read here](#)) demonstrate both the importance of youth-participation in understanding the impact of the arts and the significant influence they can have on the positive development of peacebuilding strategies. This section maps the impact of the YAB and the journey of the young people across three of the UNESCO Strategic Objectives: (1) promoting lifelong learning (3); promoting the freedom of expression and right to information (4); and fostering knowledge sharing, and skill development.

UNESCO's Mid-Term Strategy for 2022 presents a comprehensive approach to addressing global challenges in education, culture, sciences, and communication. The strategy seeks to advance the United Nations SDGs, by promoting peace, intercultural dialogue and fostering innovation and inclusive knowledge societies<sup>12</sup>. The MAP programme contributes to three of the four UNESCO Mid-Term strategic objectives through the promotion of meaningful youth-led participatory practice in the design, evaluation and oversight in peacebuilding tasks.

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<sup>12</sup> The full document 'Medium-Term Strategy for 2022-2029 (41 C/4) | UNESCO (2021)' can be found online here.

## Strategic Objective 1: Promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Youth engagement is important in ensuring continued quality and equitable lifelong and life wide learning opportunities, which will foster a generation of empowered, creative and socially conscious individuals who can continually drive for positive change. This is evident in MAP through YAB members receiving transferable skills through training and skills development as part of their co-researcher role. The change created through this related to the creation of new forms of dialogue through the adoption of cultural artefacts and engagement adult community members through the creation of spaces for both intergenerational dialogue and shared engagement in the arts-based MEL tools. This was evident in the growing confidence within the YAB members as they engaged within the MAP programme, where they developed desires to lead events, workshops and reflective sessions. Importantly, the arts-based mediums helped the YAB members develop new skills, which they could embed into other aspects of their lives, as well as become role-models to their peers.



The young people envisioned a future in which the arts-based mediums introduced through MAP could be developed into a structured mode of lifelong learning, which would provide future young people the same opportunities that were afforded to them. This desire to share knowledge extended beyond the encouragement of the arts in education, but in engaging other young people in leadership opportunities, for example, collaborating with local stakeholders and grassroots organisations.

Overall, the youth led-participatory methods promoted through MAP created an environment where the creation of life-long learning opportunities became embedded in the local context, with the young people taking ownership. By empowering young people as agents of change, MAP contributes to building more just, inclusive and creative societies for future generations.

*"We had a chance to speak at local and world events, to share our learning from MAP with community people. Thinking about speaking at events can be scary for us, for me. Our chance to help share our ideas, to speak our ideas to others can be difficult. But when we use art, it frees us to share and give us hope for us to make the future better." Youth advisor, Kyrgyzstan*

### Strategic Objective 3:

Promoting freedom of expression and the right to information.



The UNESCO Mid-Term Strategy encourages the provisions of opportunities for young people that raise awareness about their right to freedom of expression and access to information. This goal is embodied within the MAP programme, which facilitates reflective and critical discussions between young people, thus enabling them to identify and discuss their rights and responsibilities. The utilisation of the

arts within the MAP programme was celebrated by members of the YAB who came to see MAP as a place for 'fulfilling the rights of people'. The YAB created and participated in this process, which nurtured information and helped them develop into active citizens by promoting intergenerational dialogue and interconnection, improving their political capabilities. The arts were at the heart of this process, forming the basis for open dialogue on issues, opportunities and shared experiences.

The MAP programme furthered this by granting the YAB access to diverse sources of information and offering opportunities to develop the skills to critically review sources. This enabled young people to contribute to the development of the evaluation tools and encourage the bi-directional transfer of knowledge and skills.

The MAP YAB encapsulates the UNESCO Mid-Term Strategic objective on promoting freedom of expression and the right to information through supporting young people to actively engage in shaping peacebuilding programmes within local contexts and contribute on their own terms. The young people engaged in the programme demonstrated increase knowledge, confidence and motivation in creating a more just and equitable world and were able to influence the wider programme.

*"[The methods] have promoted participants' emotional externalization, especially happiness and joy. Moreover, children testified that the tracking tools enhanced them to be problem solvers, and they have [a] chance to feel open and included with each other as well triggering sociability within the club participants."* **Adult Ally Rwanda**

#### Strategic Objective 4:

Fostering knowledge sharing and skills development.

Embedding youth-led participation practices in MAP promoted UNESCO's Mid-Term Strategy by amplifying youth voices and perspectives, fostering a more inclusive landscape for communication and a diverse use of media tools. The young people involved in the YAB who sought to have meaningful engagement in social change were enabled to do this through MAP. The YAB itself promoted youth-led participatory practices through facilitating interactions between young people from diverse cultural backgrounds, promoting empathy, tolerance and respect for diversity.



*"We conveyed our hope that there is a seat at every education policy table for young people, especially girls, to share their ideas and innovations concerning their future and development."*

**Nepal Member**

Through building a collaborative and open environment, the YAB cultivated trust and solidarity among young people, by having them work toward a common goal. This helped develop a sense of belonging and connection, which is essential for building cohesive and resilient communities, fostering a safe environment for sharing knowledge and skills.

Youth-led participatory practice, promoted through MAP, amplifies the voices of young people in advocating for policies and initiatives that promoted peace and reconciliation. YAB members discussed the desire to share knowledge through arts-based mediums, with policymakers, community leaders and civil society actors, to influence decision-making processes and advocate for change.



### Summary:

Youth-led participatory practice promoted through MAP



UNESCO's Mid-Term Strategy underscores the importance of collaborative partnerships, evidence-based policies, and targeted interventions to drive positive change worldwide. It aims to contribute to building resilient and equitable societies for present and future generations, and youth-led participatory practice can play a significant role in achieving this aim. By fostering an environment that prioritised youth engagement, creativity and innovation, UNESCO aims to harness the

energy and potential of young people to address pressing global challenges, promote social cohesion and build more inclusive and equitable societies. Finally, young people led by the Indonesian YAB members created a jingle to encapsulate the freedom of expression, solidarity and connection promoted through the YAB and wider MAP programme (Figure 5.1).

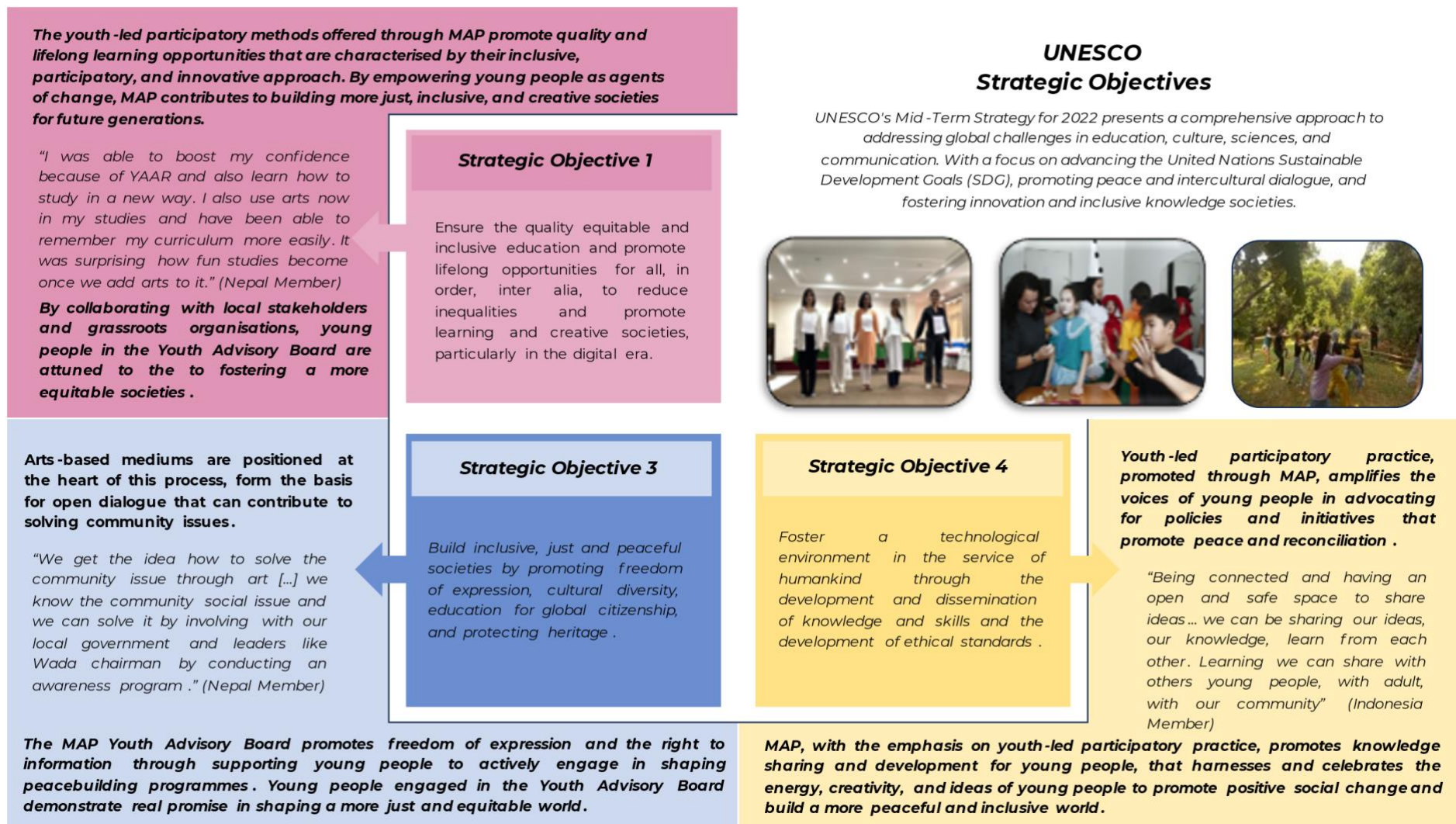
<i>Young people and adults</i>	<i>Create diversity</i>
<i>From Nepal, Indonesia,</i>	<i>To build peace</i>
<i>Kyrgyzstan and Rwanda</i>	<i>Through arts</i>
<i>(With work, ways, and artforms</i>	<i>(Join our ideals and spirits)</i>
<i>Together, Collaborate</i>	<i>Because together.</i>
<i>To build peace)</i>	
<i>No need to worry about our differences</i>	<i>We are Mobile Arts for Peace</i>
<i>Cause we don't have to be the same</i>	<b>- Indonesia YAB Team</b>
<i>To stay together</i>	
<i>Let's together</i>	



**Figure 5.1.** The YAB jingle

Figure 5.2 below presents a summary of MAP Youth-led participatory practice aligned with UNESCO's Mid-Term Strategy.





**Figure 5.2.** Summary of MAP Youth-led participatory practice aligned with UNESCO Mid-Term Strategy.

## 6. Discussion

The joint report highlights the significant impact that the Mobile Arts for Peace programme has had on the participating children and youth, as well as the communities that they are a part of. It highlights sustainable change and impact on policy and curricula alongside intergenerational transformation and enhanced gender equality. It demonstrates the enhancements to participants' understanding of both peace and peacebuilding processes that developed through the programme's collaborative art-based approach. This is evidenced through the co-design of the curricula, the evolution of teaching methods as engagement between teachers and participant evolved and increased dialogue between children, youth and adults. Through exhibitions, policy and community events, children and youth have been able to address community issues and engage in important societal discussion on difficult topics, such as discrimination, amplifying intergenerational dialogue and community knowledge building. The use of the cultural arts and resources has been key to this, helping participants envision a positive future, whilst developing their political capabilities (Sen, 1983), as well as breaking down societal divisions leading to greater peace and children and youth's social environments.

The integration of cultural forms and arts-based interventions created opportunities for trust to be fostered among children and youth and their communities. Through the arts, experiential dimensions of learning and skill development emerged, enhancing reflexivity and strengthening relationships in a manner which promoted epistemic justice by allowing children and youth to advocate for themselves, as well as wider social change (Mkwanaenzi et al., 2021). These approaches allow participants to celebrate their unity, working across children, youth, families, communities, and policymakers whilst diminishing power disparities and distances among the involved community groups (Poteat et al., 2002; Fricker, 2007).

The psychosocial support provided by the MAP programme helped children and youth build their confidence through performing and creating, whilst improving their wellbeing, general self-efficacy, and sense of purpose by offering them leadership roles within the individual projects (Mkwanaenzi et al., 2021; Sen, 1983). Furthermore, engagement in MAP and the arts supported youth to have hope for the future and intentions to contribute to others' lives.

Creating a space for participants to engage in reflective discussions with their peers promoted intergenerational and community healing by allowing them to discuss challenging topics, such as gender discrimination, in a safe environment. Moreover, these activities encouraged adults within the community to reflect on their relationships with young people and among themselves. These processes have the potential to create long-term impact on community cohesion, health and wellbeing, participants sense of belonging and general self-efficacy.

**By integrating cultural forms into youth-led participatory spaces**, the MAP programme contributed to increased self-confidence to express oneself and encouraged a sense of hope for the future through provided opportunities for participants to exercise their political capabilities, whilst engaging in participatory research. **Enabling children and youth to become cultural stakeholders** allowed them to embrace cultural forms to promote their message and safeguard their community's heritage. As children and youth stepped into this role, new avenues of dialogue emerged between themselves and community stakeholders who had a shared recognition of the significance of cultural heritage, preservation and creation.

Finally, the usage of cultural forms effectively facilitated the development of alternative spaces and communication structures, as relevant to RQ5. Through activities, such as role playing, children and youth engaged with their peers and community stakeholders in new ways, enabling them to address societal and personal challenges on their own terms, with adult engagement improving their perceptions of the community. The alternative platform of having intergenerational arts based spaces empowered often-marginalised groups to advocate for themselves and shed light on often overlooked issues within the peacebuilding context. Children and youth were then able to take ownership of these platforms, such as the YAB, to take control of conversations, influence policymakers and take leadership positions within their in-country projects, creating their own legacies which will continue to thrive post-MAP.

## 7. Recommendations

The following section lists high level recommendations of the joint report integrating salient aspects from recommendations in each Large Grant Report, country teams, and the International Advisory Board. Each recommendation is aligned to UNESCO Mid-Term Strategic Objectives.

### **1. Integrate the role of arts and cultural forms into local, national and international youth-led peacebuilding networks.** Specifically, to...

- a) Share, disseminate and support the uptake of arts-based research, and methods within networks such as the Global Coalition on Youth, Peace and Security. This can be achieved through in person or online trainings via the MAP network, sharing the resource library (manuals, policy briefs and art outputs) via the website and advocating with like-minded local, national and/or international research institutions, civil society groups, and policy makers.
- b) Continue to advocate for and develop opportunities for young peacebuilders, researchers, artists, trainers, evaluators to act as cultural stakeholders, contributing towards peace, youth and educational policy and programming in order to further skill development and leadership opportunities. This recommendation is aligned to UNESCO's Mid-Term Strategic Objective 4 (Outcome 8) and focuses on how to make youth-led peacebuilding networks more effective in collaboration with existing networks.

### **2. Pilot arts-based, youth-led approaches throughout policy cycles at local/national/international levels relating to progressive education, gender-based violence, and mental health and wellbeing.** Specifically, to work with UNESCO and other policy enablers to...

- a) Identify, collaborate and develop arts-based, youth-led inputs throughout the agenda setting, formulation, advice/support to regulatory bodies, implementation and evaluation of policies relating to MAPs core themes. MAP provides evidence of promising practice in agenda setting, by demonstrating the power of arts-based methods to remove barriers between children and youth and policymakers. Theatre performances, comic strips and the YAB have all acted to enable greater communication between the groups and allow children and youth to express themselves in meaningful ways.
- b) Consider 'blueprinting', sharing and disseminating such arts-based policy and programming approaches for other similar research/civil society networks or projects to benefit from the key learnings from MAP. This is aligned to UNESCO's Mid-Term Strategic Objective 3 (Outcome 5 and 6) and focuses on how to collaborate with wider networks, as well as Strategic Objective 2 (Outcomes 6 and 7) and Enabling Outcome 10.

### **3. Extend and sustain intergenerational community partnerships, especially with parents/caregivers and cultural artists. Specifically, to...**

- a) Include and engage parents/caregivers and cultural artists through project-based activities both within schools and beyond by building on policy briefs, and reviving/documenting living cultural heritage. MAP created alternative spaces for children and youth to engage with their communities, however maintaining these skills, as well as generating new opportunities to apply what was learned remains crucial.
- b) Create sustainable and long-term partnerships with local community organisations, schools and youth groups, and families, where children, youth, and adults can work in partnership to influence policy formulation, implementation and evaluation. This is aligned to UNESCO's Mid-Term Strategic Objective 3 (Outcome 5, 6 and 7) and requires a consideration of safe places/spaces that are appropriate for both young people and older generations.

### **4. Reduce power asymmetry and strengthen approaches towards active youth citizenship. Specifically, to...**

- a) Continue to adapt cultural forms to create alternative spaces for dialogue that disrupt power dynamics and give children and youth a sense of ownership over a shared cultural resource. Examples of this include re-framing Policy Roundtables, co-creating policy briefs and young researchers engaging in meetings and/or dialogic performances (such as in Lenong). The continued adaption and implementation of these mechanisms into other contexts may support other innovative forms of youth-led intergenerational dialogue.
- b) Conduct further research into approaches that address power asymmetries. This should consider: How is power going to be redistributed from national and local government to young people? How will the power-brokers be held to account for actions in regard to policies which affect young people? What proposals are there for projects where young people and policymakers are co-producers of research? This should include MAP youth researchers' participation and engagement with UNESCO's Youth Forum and national youth networks to align and inform agendas. This is aligned to UNESCO's Mid-Term Strategic Objective 3 (Outcome 5, 6 and 7) and focuses on innovation in active youth citizenship.

### **5. Shape and inform cultural/arts education through learner-responsive curricula and enabling environments. Specifically, to...**

- a) Advocate for youth inputs into local/national education policies, specifically on how to integrate cultural rights and arts curricula. This can be drawn from the work in Nepal on a local Mithali Arts education curriculum, as well as the pilot national



framework on Arts Education with Kathmandu University. The former worked with young artists to create session plans relating to a specific art form, and the later included secondary school children's feedback towards integrating MAPs art-based exercises into existing secondary school curricula.

b) Integrate arts-based approaches into school-community enabling environments. A big success of MAP is the integration promoted between schools, parents and the wider community, as well as with youth groups/centres. This enabled curriculum development to occur, enhanced community cohesion and demonstrated the value of education to parents/families. This type of partnership work in peacebuilding, embedding educational institutions into the delivery of programmes, demonstrates a key learning regarding how learners, teachers, parents and cultural artists can work together towards generating policy/curricula changes (as was seen in Kyrgyzstan in particular). This is aligned to UNESCO's Mid-Term Strategic Objective 1 (Outcome 1) focusing on lifelong learning across young people and adults.

## **6. Inform mental health and wellbeing approaches both within and out of school in the UK<sup>13</sup>. Specifically, to...**

a) Present, and disseminate lessons learned from the MAP Psychosocial manual, which could be applied to the position of young people in the UK. This would include working with other AHRC arts-based projects, such as Arts4Us that are working directly with secondary schools, and the Universities Policy Engagement Network (UPEN), in the UK, to contextualise resources and approaches.

b) Engage young MAP researchers/artists in contributing their suggestions to inform UK mental health in/out of school approaches, as well as share MAP findings towards the UNESCO stream of work on youth and mental health (in the UK and beyond). This is aligned with UNESCO's Mid-Term Strategic Objective 1 concerning inclusive and equitable quality education.

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<sup>13</sup> The Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning research teams did not gather data in the United Kingdom. The recommendations for the UK are based on reflections of the findings and transferability (when contextualised) of arts-based approaches and their impact to the UK context.