

INTERNATIONAL NETWORK ON PEACE BUILDING WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

STRATEGIC PLAN 2019-2024



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WHO WE ARE

The International Network on Peace Building with Young Children is a global initiative led by early childhood programme developers, children's rights advocates, researchers and civil society organisations working to promote a peaceful and safe life for young children, their families and communities. The Network comprises organisational and individual membership from countries living in, emerging from or under the threat of conflict.

OUR MISSION

The key objective of the Network is to make visible the role of early childhood development as a space for reconciliation and peace building in regions experiencing or emerging from armed conflict.

The Network will raise the voices of young children and families affected by armed conflict and will use evidence-informed programmes and strategies to enable them and their communities to reconcile and achieve social justice and live in sustainable harmony and peace.

HISTORY OF THE NETWORK

The Network was formed in 2009 having evolved from the work initiated by the World Forum Foundation, Early Years – the organisation for young children (formerly known as NIPPA) and CINDE, through the International Working Group on Peace Building, a Working Group of the World Forum. A significant output of the early work of the group was the publication of the book 'From Conflict to Peace Building: The Power of Early Childhood Initiatives, Lessons from Around the World' (2007, ed Connolly, Hayden and Levin).

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

The International Network on Peace Building Project has created an important sustainable international network on peace building with young children, which has made visible the impact of conflict on young children and the power of early childhood services to be an important medium for peace building initiatives in regions of conflict and those emerging from conflict.

SOME OF THE SIGNIFICANT RESULTS AND IMPACTS OF THE NETWORK ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- The development of a Master's Programme in Applied Peace Building with Young Children in partnership with INCORE, Ulster University. This innovative development was piloted for three years (2009-2012) and is now mainstreamed within the University.
- The development of an International Programmatic Toolkit Manual for work with young children, parents and teachers in regions experiencing or emerging from conflict. The toolkit has been adapted for implementation in the Balkans, Palestine, Israel, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and the ARNEC (Asia-Pacific Regional Network for Early Childhood) region.
- The Network is recognised as a major source of expert advice on peace building with young children activities internationally with members of the network supporting UNICEF in a number of regions in Eastern Europe, Asia and Africa (Tajikistan, Krgyzstan, Mali, Egypt, East Timor and Vietnam).
- An advocacy strategy aimed at developing a UN Resolution on Peace Building with Young Children has been developed which has made visible the importance of work with young children in the countries involved in the Network. Critical country, regional and international partnerships have been formed to drive the peace building agenda within the UN Sustainable Development Goals with a particular focus on highlighting and linking the importance of Goals 4 and 16.
- The Network is a founder member of the Early Childhood Peace Consortium with UNICEF, Yale, Sesame and ACEV, which has as a key aim the production of a UN Resolution on Peace Building.
- The Network participated in the Contributions of Early Childhood Development Programming to Sustainable Peace and Development.
- The research and evaluation activities carried out by Network members have contributed to the development of new knowledge in peace building with young children. Early childhood programme development on peace building with young children has led to programme adaptation, development and evaluation in the Balkans, Israel, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan.
- The Network has been involved in the development of a new social emotional programme on resilience and peace building with two year old children, which is currently being piloted and evaluated in Northern Ireland (2018-19).



PHOTO ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:
ECPC/Yale and UNICEF

- The Network was a leading partner in the Una Global Learning Initiative on Children and Ethnic Diversity Peace Building Learning Group and produced two research papers available on http://www.unaglobal.org/en/page/peacebuilding_learning_group

International Network – Publications and Resources

<http://www.early-years.org/international/publications.php>

- The Network is represented on the LINKS Initiative led by Queen’s University Belfast and is supporting programmatic implementation in Timor Leste, Vietnam, Tajikistan, Krgyzstan, Egypt, Mali, Palestine and Colombia.

OUR FOCUS

The focus of the International Network on Peace Building with Young Children is on young children (from conception to eight years of age), their families and communities in societies experiencing or emerging from a situation where one or more groups are in armed conflict with each other. The Network draws on the conceptual framework of the child in the context of their family and community as has been informed by Bronfenbrenner.

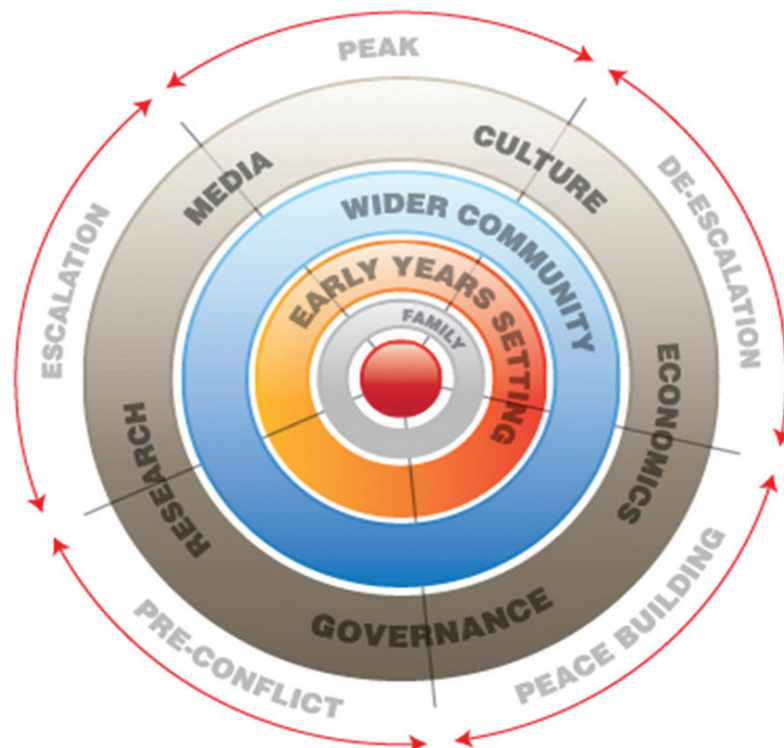
The focus of the Network is underpinned by a Children’s Rights Socio-Ecological Model, which demonstrates how the child contributes to his or her social environment while simultaneously being affected and served by it, thus highlighting the inter-connectivity of child development and environmental well-being. Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory developed this theoretical framework to explain how everything in the child’s social environment impacts on their growth and development. Importantly from a child’s rights perspective, the child is not passive but active within these systems. The relationships are what Bronfenbrenner refers to as bidirectional.



CHILD'S RIGHTS SOCIO-ECOLOGICAL MODEL



THE PROGRAMMATIC FRAMEWORK FOR
EARLY YEARS PRACTITIONERS WORKING
IN CONFLICT REGIONS (RESEARCH PAPER,
JUNE 2010)



UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



The International Network on Peace Building with young children advocated with other key networks and organisations in ensuring Goal 16 was introduced and linked to Goal 4 of the Sustainable Development Goals (2015-2030). Goal 4 and Goal 16, in particular, will underpin the work of the Network within this strategic planning period.

OUR VALUES AND APPROACH

- A children's rights and social justice approach acknowledging the interdependence between adults' and children's rights and always considering the best interest of children.
- Children are recognised as complete human beings, as subjects of rights, and the need to exercise their rights in ways different from adults' rights and according to their development processes. Children require that their languages and forms of expression be recognised, as well as their participation and their agency capabilities evolving in the interaction with adults and peers.
- A child-centred, socio-ecological approach which promotes partnership with parents, families, local communities and service providers, paying attention to power relations.
- A learning approach which attends to power and other relations, processes and outcomes necessary for building peaceful and sustainable futures.
- We recognise and celebrate the richness of the diversity of ways to be young children according to their culture, ethnicity, gender, age, faith, socio-economic conditions, and political preferences of their families. However, the Network does not engage directly in political party partisanship.

- The Network advocates to support and improve the capacity of parents, educators and other relational agents and relevant service providers to promote the integral development of children, families and communities, using information, scientific knowledge, people's experiences and wisdom in the design and development of programmes and projects.
- The Network attends to power relations in building institutional capacity for good governance of social services and educational design and delivery.
- The Network promotes the links between scientific knowledge, people's wisdom and practical experiences to advocate for public

policies and programmes which address the issue of the impact of armed conflict and violence on young children, their families and communities, and the way in which societies can benefit from those policies and programmes for the general purposes of building peaceful societies, social justice and sustainability.

- The Network advocates and works to help countries to articulate their early childhood development and peace building policies with general policies to promote political, cultural, social, economic and environmental progress which ensures a good life and social justice for their citizens in sustainable ways.

Network members will use these interlinked perspectives, approaches and strategies in the interests of social justice, building peace, undoing silences and supporting reconciliation and healing.

OUR AIM

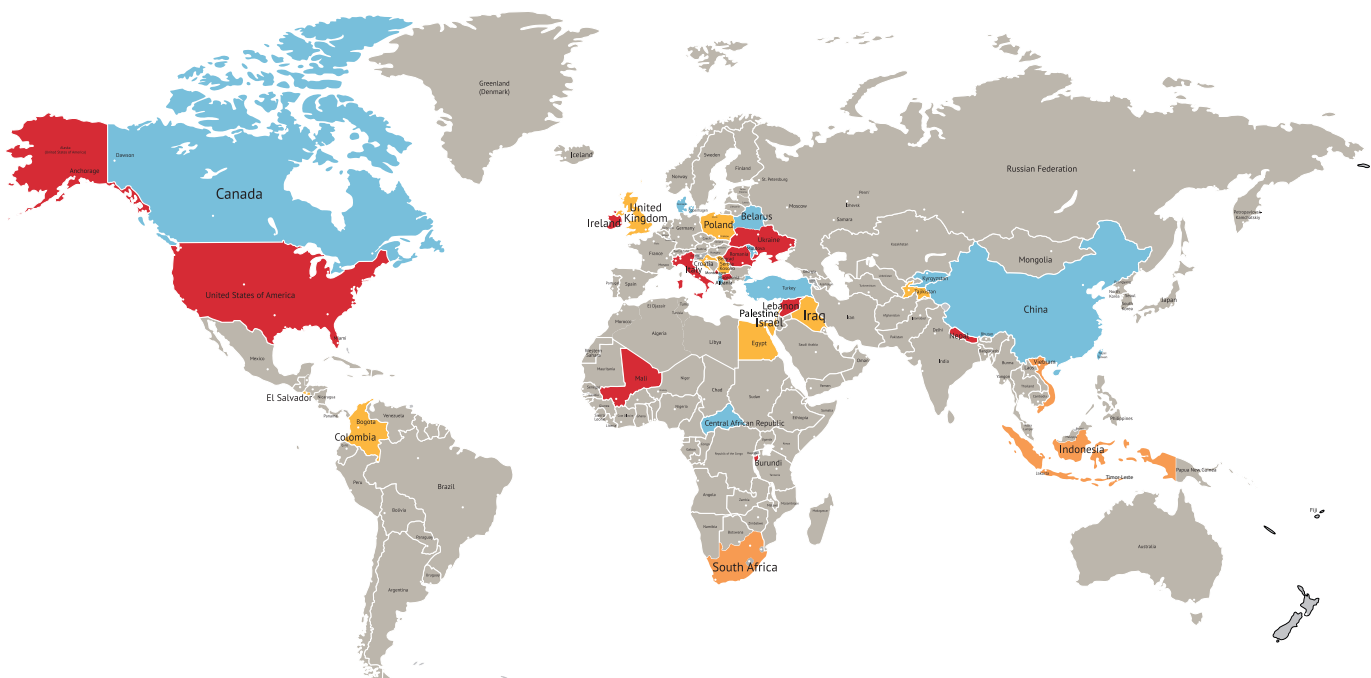
The aim of the Network is to be a facilitating agent and a leading voice for the creation and strengthening of international programmes and strategies which recognise the importance of early childhood to build integrated and peaceful societies.

OUR OBJECTIVES

1. To ensure integrated early childhood development is present in policies and programmes as a key part of the reconciliation processes in conflict and post conflict situations.
2. To ensure policies recognise and support children, families and communities affected by conflict.
3. To promote, support and expand institutional and international alliances which position the issue of early childhood development and peace building on a range of networks and global and regional forums, and promote regional and international exchange of knowledge, practice and experience.
4. To collaborate with early childhood development practitioners, families, communities and academia to build, communicate and use knowledge effectively to inform the activities of the Network, including advocacy and lobbying.
5. To develop new knowledge on the impact of conflict on young children, families and communities and to use this knowledge for action to bring about positive changes for children, families and communities in a culturally appropriate manner.
6. To support evidence-based programmatic interventions supporting reconciliation, peace building and child well-being and to facilitate the exchange of evidence-based practice.
7. To strengthen institutional capacity especially in areas of early childhood practice, governance, research, teaching and in areas related to peace building, to respect diversity and promote inclusion leading to positive long-term outcomes for young children.

THE ORGANISATION OF OUR NETWORK

- 1.** Early Years – the organisation for young children acts as the secretariat to the International \ Network on Peace Building with Young Children. In that capacity it convenes, organises and facilitates all activities and meetings related to the work of the Network, including identifying potential sources of funding.
- 2.** General Membership of the International Network on Peace Building with Young Children is open to anyone with an interest in the role of early childhood education as a force for reconciliation and peace building in regions experiencing or emerging from armed conflict. Members receive regular updates and are encouraged to participate in activities and events organised by the Network.
- 3.** An Executive Committee provides overall strategic and programme support to the Network. Membership of the Executive Committee reflects the regional make-up of the Network. This includes representation from the following regions: Latin America; Africa; Europe; the Balkans; the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) region; the ARNEC region.
- 4.** Thematic Working Groups comprising members of the Network will take forward priority work areas identified by the Network. These will include: Advocacy; Master's Programme Development; Programmatic Tool Development; and Research. Thematic Working Groups will report to the Executive Committee and are guided by the Terms of Reference identified in Appendix One. A dedicated lead will be appointed to each Working Group who will report on behalf of the Group.
- 5.** Regional Networks or sub-groups of existing regional networks will support regional initiatives in co-ordination with the Executive Committee. Members of the Networks will be drawn from early childhood practitioners and academics with experience of working in or supporting early childhood programmes in regions experiencing or emerging from armed conflict.



STRATEGIC GOALS AND ACTIONS 2019-2024

During the period 2019-2024 the International Network on Peace Building with Young Children will focus on the following key areas:

ADVOCACY

To raise awareness and support the early childhood development sector in regions experiencing or emerging from conflict to engage in advocacy campaigns within the sector and seek out and become involved in campaigns collaboratively with other sectors by:

- engaging in regional advocacy campaigns by the early childhood development sector to highlight the nature and impact of conflict on families and children;
- engaging in regional advocacy campaigns for greater participation of civil society organisations in the early childhood development sector in conflict prevention and resolution;
- engaging in international advocacy campaigns by the early childhood development sector to highlight the global issues related to conflict and to affect change;
- engaging with the Early Childhood Peace Consortium to develop a UN Resolution on Peace Building for Young Children.

MOBILISATION

To take visible and timely action during intense conflict periods to highlight the effects of conflict on children and young families in regions experiencing armed conflict by:

- mobilising support of all kinds for children and young families in regions experiencing armed conflict;
- undertaking regional media and public policy strategies to raise awareness of the effects of conflict on children and families.

PROGRAMMATIC DEVELOPMENT

To design new programmes which support innovation and build on evidence in the field of peace building in early childhood care and education in regions experiencing or emerging from armed conflict by:

- contributing to training, advice and mentoring programmes for adults (parents, teachers, health and social service professionals and community activists) who support young children in regions experiencing or emerging from armed conflict;
- developing curriculum and related resources for young children in regions experiencing or emerging from armed conflict;
- contributing to the development of appropriate accredited programmes of training at graduate and postgraduate levels.

RESEARCH

The main purposes of the research of the International Network on Peace Building with Young Children is identifying, creating, disseminating and applying high quality knowledge which can support countries, communities and families to build peaceful societies. It aims to create new possibilities for conceptual, methodological and practical developments. The Children's Rights Socio-Ecological Model was selected as the basis for research, practice and policy alike.

A central principle of the Network's research strategy is creating shared understanding, from the multiple perspectives of academic scientific knowledge and the knowledges and wisdom of varied participants and beneficiaries in different communities, regions and countries. It advocates for transdisciplinary research approaches and dialectical thinking, in which multiple perspectives and research methods are used to support the goals of the Network. In line with this approach, participants in the Network include researchers, practitioners, policy makers, NGOs, universities and research and development centres.

Recognising the complexity of conflicts and of change processes, the Network regards these multiple participants and diverse kinds of knowledge as important and valuable resources. Dialogue which includes a wide range of role players, especially families and communities, is central in our research to identify deep understanding of causes of conflicts, ways of enhancing positive and protective aspects and addressing negative impacts and harming environments. Based on these understandings, new directions can emerge for designing policies and programmes which support the well-being of children, families and communities in armed and post-conflict conditions.

GOAL ONE: STRENGTHENING GOVERNANCE

OBJECTIVE ONE

Ensure that there is appropriate representation and accountability as the International Network and sub-regional networks grow.

OBJECTIVE TWO

Develop processes for strengthening membership, ownership and participation.

OBJECTIVE THREE

Develop a Code of Conduct/Ethics/Conflict of Interest to underpin child protection, participation and respect for diversity.

OBJECTIVE FOUR

Develop sustained linkages between international and sub-regional networks.

OBJECTIVE FIVE

Develop a financial and human sustainability plan for the Network.

OBJECTIVE SIX

Develop a communication and promotional plan for the Network so as to publicise the work of the Network to a range of audiences.

OBJECTIVE SEVEN

Develop appropriate procedures to safeguard intellectual property rights/open source, fidelity and responsibility to funders.

GOAL TWO: STRENGTHENING THE NETWORK

OBJECTIVE ONE

Increase the membership of the Network with a particular focus on countries/regions/sectors which are under-represented.

OBJECTIVE TWO

Improve the visibility of the Network by providing opportunities for members of the Network to actively participate through exchange, discussion and collaboration.

OBJECTIVE THREE

Support the development of sub-regional networks which facilitate members to link to and organise activities with networks/organisations in their region and to provide visibility for these.

GOAL THREE: PROGRAMMATIC DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING

OBJECTIVE ONE

Pilot, evaluate and adapt the rollout of the programmatic toolkit in a range of countries and contexts.

OBJECTIVE TWO

Pilot and evaluate the new social and emotional resilience programme for younger children.

OBJECTIVE THREE

Roll out the Master's Programme both as a full programme or using appropriate modules of the Master's Programme.

GOAL FOUR: THE INTERNATIONAL NETWORK ON PEACE BUILDING WITH YOUNG CHILDREN AS A LEARNING COMMUNITY

OBJECTIVE ONE

Facilitate and promote ongoing dialogue about theoretical, methodological and technical aspects of research, within the Network, starting in the Executive Committee and extending to the broader network, regional networks and beyond. The main focus of the dialogue and research is about young children, families, communities and institutions in armed conflict situations and peace building.

OBJECTIVE TWO

Maintain an online library of relevant literature accessible to Network members and those who support the goals of the Network.

OBJECTIVE THREE

Maintain an online platform (or Facebook page) for ongoing discussion and posting of relevant links and ideas.

GOAL FIVE: THE INTERNATIONAL NETWORK ON PEACE BUILDING WITH YOUNG CHILDREN LINKS THEORY, PRACTICE AND RESEARCH

OBJECTIVE ONE

The Network Executive Committee with the support of the research interest group facilitates communications between all Network interest groups to ensure that theory, practice and research are integrated and each of the interest groups complements the work of the other groups in line with the values and goals of the Network.

OBJECTIVE TWO

Strengthen the theoretical, methodological and technical capacity in the Network to undertake research on armed conflict and peacebuilding with young children, families, communities and institutions. This would include facilitating the study of different paradigms and their related epistemologies and ontologies in order to identify approaches and methods which support the goals of the Network. Make the knowledge emerging from study of relevant different paradigms accessible to members of the Network and others who support the goals of the Network.

OBJECTIVE THREE

Link the implementation of the Master's Programme and the work of other interest groups.

GOAL SIX: INITIATE AND/OR SUPPORT RESEARCH IN PARTNERSHIP WITH COMMUNITIES IN THE REGIONAL NETWORKS

OBJECTIVE ONE

Through the technical secretariat, identify sources of and access to funding to implement promising research designs which support the goals of the Network and all other aspects of the work of the research interest group.

OBJECTIVE TWO

Identify research partners who have strong relationships with local communities in conflict and post-conflict contexts. This can be done primarily through the regional networks.

OBJECTIVE THREE

Facilitate processes and meetings to design research which can support the goals of the Network. This should prioritise attention to power relations and research ethics.

OBJECTIVE FOUR

Hold regular workshops to bring Network supported research teams together to learn from each other.

GOAL SEVEN: DISSEMINATE RESEARCH FINDINGS WHICH SUPPORT THE GOALS OF THE NETWORK

OBJECTIVE ONE

Support research teams (within the Network and research partners) to disseminate their learning through a variety of accessible media for different target audiences, such as practitioners, service providers and research briefs for advocacy.

OBJECTIVE TWO

Support research teams to publish their research in peer-reviewed academic journals.

OBJECTIVE THREE

Support Network research teams to present their research in relevant conferences and events.

GOAL EIGHT: DOCUMENT ALL ASPECTS OF THE RESEARCH INTEREST GROUP ACTIVITIES

OBJECTIVE ONE

Provide resources for documentation and knowledge management.

OBJECTIVE TWO

Make information available by prioritising open source platforms.

GOAL NINE: FACILITATE ONGOING CYCLES OF ACTION AND REFLECTION

OBJECTIVE ONE

Facilitate ongoing cycles of action and reflection at all levels and on all aspects of the work of the research interest group.

OBJECTIVE TWO

Include families and communities in the design/implementation/reflection/ evaluation of local research initiatives.

GOAL TEN: ADVOCACY

OBJECTIVE ONE

Advocacy – promote an ecological approach (children, family, national government and community/ neighbourhoods, institutions) and promote evidence-based policy-making to inform advocacy activities at all levels.

OBJECTIVE TWO

The Network has the necessary local, national and international relationships to mediate dialogue within and across levels.

OBJECTIVE THREE

Strengthen collaboration and build strategic partnerships to influence policy at national, regional and global levels.

OBJECTIVE FOUR

Identify and outline co-operation with national partner organisations and the formation of five sub-regional networks in Europe, the Balkans, MENA region, the rest of Africa and ARNEC region.

OBJECTIVE FIVE

Collaborate with the World Forum Foundation and Early Child Peace Consortium.

OBJECTIVE SIX

Collaborate with the Early Childhood Peace Consortium to draft a UN Resolution on Early Childhood Development and Peace Building and for EU investment.

APPENDIX ONE – TERMS OF REFERENCE

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee will be led by Early Years – the organisation for young children and CINDE, and is composed of one member from each region.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- To develop and implement a three year strategy to achieve the objectives set out in the position paper and to co-ordinate the activities of the Thematic Working Groups.
- To manage the membership process in an open, fair and transparent way to ensure regional and geographic expertise.
- To maintain the linkage and manage the relationship with the World Forum Foundation and other international networks and organisations.
- To maintain and develop external linkages, eg Early Childhood Peace Consortium, Save the Children Fund, UNICEF, Early Childhood Development Action Network, Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies.
- To disseminate information about events and products.

The Executive Committee will be selected from among the members of the Network and will serve for three years, with the option to be eligible to serve for a second term.

MEMBERSHIP

The Executive Committee will comprise no fewer than five and no more than seven members who will serve for a period of at least three years after which membership will be reviewed on the basis of regional representation. Founder members will serve until such time as there is membership in place which is robust, transparent and reflective of the region.

The Executive Committee will meet virtually on a quarterly basis and face to face at least once per year.

INTERNATIONAL NETWORK ON PEACE BUILDING WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- The Network reports to the Executive Committee on progress in relation to the delivery of the Strategic Plan.
- Network members will form Thematic Working Groups on advocacy, programmatic development, and Master's Development to deliver specific elements of the Strategic Plan.
- Network members are willing to serve from January 2020 to 2023 after which membership will be reviewed on the basis of representation of institutions, networks and regional representation.
- It is the individual responsibility of Network members to secure visa and documentation for travel, but it is the Executive Committee's responsibility to support this by developing strategies and mechanisms.

MEMBERSHIP

The Network is made up of early childhood practitioners, academics, civil society organisations with experience of working in or supporting early childhood programmes in regions experiencing or emerging from armed conflict. Specifically they should:

- Represent countries in or emerging from conflict.
- Be experts in conflict regions and in the field of early childhood.

- Represent recognised stages in armed conflict, for example engaged in conflict, peace keeping, peace making and peace building need to be represented.
- Be willing and able to act as positive role models for this work within their own institutions, networks and regions.
- Report regularly on the work of the Network within regional networks.

The Network will meet once per annum and will communicate regularly between meetings.

THEMATIC WORKING GROUPS

The work of the Network will be organised into Thematic Working Groups which draw upon the specific expertise within the Network membership in relation to programmatic development, professional development, research and advocacy. As well as creating a space for exchange and learning, the Thematic Working Groups are tasked with delivering key outputs in line with the Strategic Plan.

Thematic Working Group 1 – Programmatic Implementation

Thematic Working Group 2 – Building capacity to apply evidence from research and practice in the field of early childhood development and peace building

Thematic Working Group 3 – Research

Thematic Working Group 4 – Advocacy

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- To share knowledge, expertise and knowledge in relation to each theme.
- To actively participate and contribute to activities and discussions.
- To work collaboratively to develop a range of accessible tools, programmes, training and professional development opportunities which

MEMBERSHIP

- Membership of the Thematic Working Groups is open to all members and is drawn from the Network. Members should have a specific interest and expertise in relation to each Thematic Working Group which they are able and willing to share.
- Where possible, it is desirable that membership of a Thematic Working Group reflects a distribution on a geographic basis with a mix of backgrounds in practice and research.
- Members should commit to two meetings of the Thematic Working Group per year as well as activities outside of meetings. Dates of meeting will be set at least six months in advance.

GENERAL MEMBERS

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Advocate for the work in their own settings and countries.
- Participate in all mobilisation activities.
- Implement lessons and training strategies in general training programmes.
- Be informed of activities, actions and developments.
- Identify resources to support the Network.

Members will include anyone who is interested in the role of early childhood education as a force for reconciliation and peace building in regions experiencing or emerging from conflict.

APPENDIX TWO – MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL NETWORK ON PEACEBUILDING WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

LATIN AMERICA

Mr Alejandro Acosta

International Center for Education and Human
Development, CINDE

IRAQ

Dr Hassan Alwan Hussein Baiee

University of Babylon

ISRAEL

Professor Margalit Ziv

Kaye Academic College of Education

INDIVIDUAL

Dr Joshua D Feder

Fielding Graduate University

NORTHERN IRELAND

Ms Pauline Walmsley

Early Years - the organisation for young children

NORTHERN IRELAND

Dr Siobhan Fitzpatrick CBE

Early Years - the organisation for young children

LEBANON

Ms Lina Hamaoui

ITASC

ALBANIA

Mrs Ingrid Jones

Partnere per Femijet

INDIVIDUAL SOUTH AFRICA

Mrs Norma Rudolph

PALESTINE

Dr Ali Shaar

Palestinian Child Institute

NEPAL

Professor Kishor Shrestha

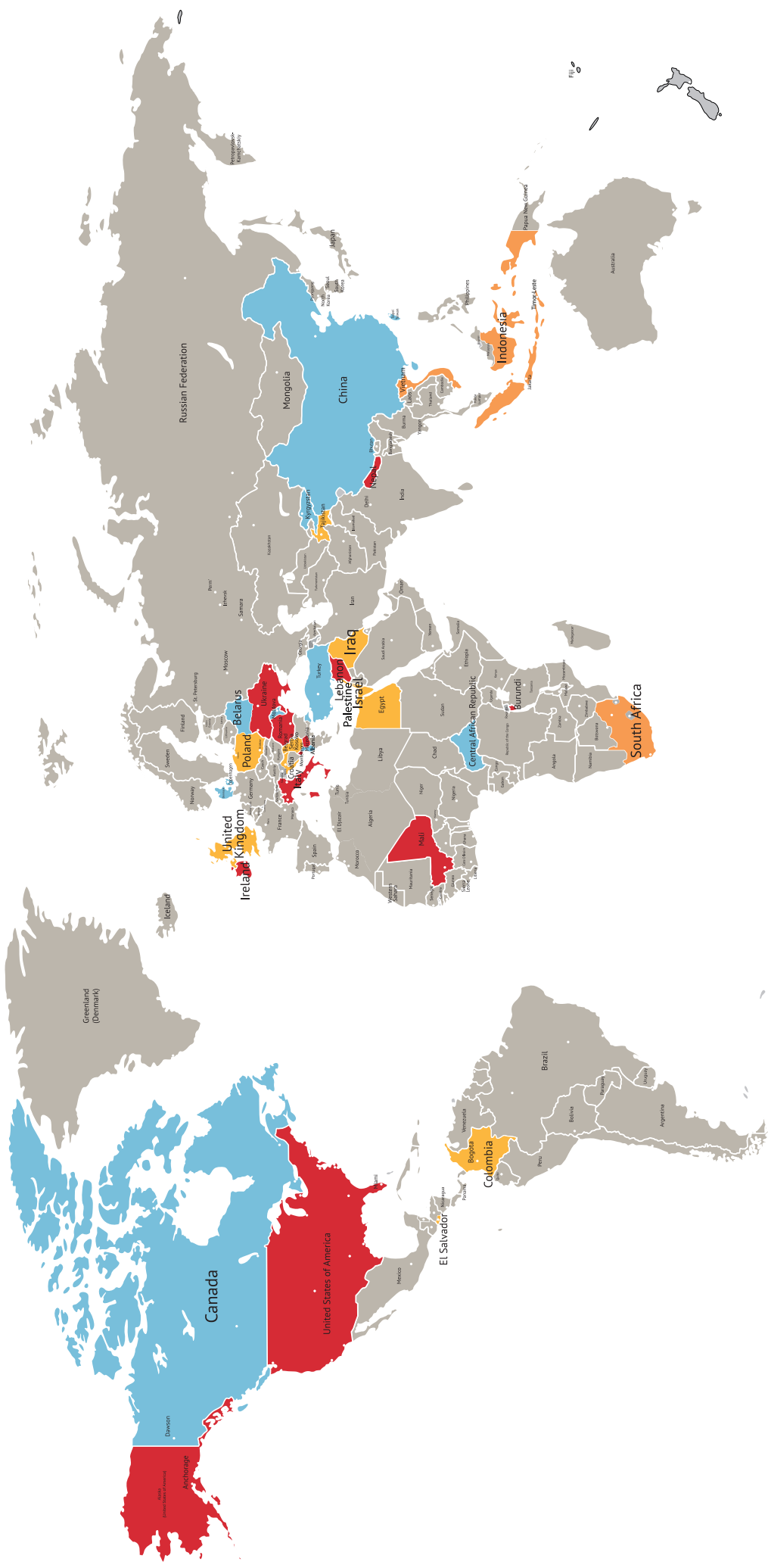
CERID

SERBIA

Ms Ljiljana Vasic

Pomoc Deci

APPENDIX THREE - INTERNATIONAL NETWORKING GROUP ON PEACE BUILDING - A GLOBAL PRESENCE



early years

the organisation for young children

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