

# Participants' Review Projects 2013

REPORT

July 2015



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# Executive Summary

The *UNOY Participants Review - Projects 2013* is the first exercise of its kind carried out by International Secretariat of UNOY Peacebuilders. It's a tool to monitor the involvement of youth linked to UNOY members in international and national processes related to peacebuilding and conflict transformation after their participation in UNOY activities.

Capacity Development and Advocacy related activities of the United Network of Young Peacebuilders (UNOY) in 2013 were diverse and took place in various geographical regions. Participants emphasized that through their participation in UNOY activities they have deepened their knowledge about peace and peacebuilding, got to know more about intercultural dialogue and became more aware about existing cultural differences. A large part of the respondents also noted that they have gained a lot from the activities in terms of capacities for project management: writing proposals, leadership skills, fundraising skills and organising trainings themselves at their "sending" organizations. The impact on individual level is also reflected at the level of organizations, as the respondents stated that newly obtained and developed skills helped their organizations too, apart from strengthening their own profiles.

Many respondents argued that participation in the UNOY activity has brought new projects into their organization and opened more opportunities for cooperation and partnerships. The participants have also stated that their sending organizations have adopted principles and ideas gained at the UNOY activity, such as gender sensitivity in a few organizations, for example.

The main recommendations given by participants for future UNOY activities are:

- More focus on project management;
- Maintain multicultural element in the activities;
- More feedback and follow-up after UNOY activities.

# Methodology

The *UNOY Participants Review - Projects 2013* is the first exercise of its kind carried out by International Secretariat of UNOY Peacebuilders. It's a tool to monitor the involvement of youth linked to UNOY members in international and national processes related to peacebuilding and conflict transformation after their participation in UNOY activities. In addition, the review aims to evaluate short- and medium-term effects of the activities (trainings/events/mobilities) provided by UNOY on the individual youth who participated. The short-term (learning) outcomes are the changes in skills, attitudes and knowledge, gained during the activity. The medium-term (action) outcomes are changes in behaviour and demonstrate the actions which the participants take after the end of the activity (for more information on the difference between short- and medium-term outcomes see following [link](#)). There has not be sufficient time passed for evaluation of long-term outcomes of the activities, and, thus, those were not included into the scope of this review.

UNOY thanks all the participants who have filled in the questionnaire and encourages even more participants to respond to similar questionnaires in the future. The responses allow UNOY to significantly improve its activities and analyse the impact made more thoroughly.

This report is an analysis of responses to a questionnaire which was sent out to former participants of activities run by UNOY during 2013. The questionnaire was sent out in February, 2015 and included both multiple-choice and open questions. The questionnaire was sent to 121 people, out of which a total of 22 persons responded. This is a relatively small sample, and the findings should be read in that light. The entire questionnaire can be found [here](#).

Methodologically speaking, the report has a bias, as most of the respondents come from the same activities outlined below, and participants of other activities are underrepresented. Particularly, about two thirds of the participants who have participated in the questionnaire have attended activities which are part of the capacity development program run by UNOY, as opposed to advocacy-related activities. This is explained by the fact that advocacy activities generally involve a small number of participants compared to capacity development activities. Finally, as the sample is small, the conclusions of the report are only tentative.

The majority of respondents participated in two activities: "Volunteering for Peace: Share Experience and Learn Together" and "Third Regional Training Course: West Africa". Both training courses are part of the capacity development program of UNOY (see Table 1).

Table 1. UNOY activities in 2013

Capacity Development program	Advocacy program
Mainstreaming Peace Education: Methodologies, Approaches and Visions	Youth Advocacy Team
Third Regional Training Course: West Africa	
Gender and Youth in Fragile States	
Build Peace on Your Own: Civil Society for a United Caucasus	
Volunteering for Peace: Share experiences and Learn Together	
Job Shadowing 2.0	

The capacity development project “Mainstreaming Peace Education: Methodologies, Approaches and Visions” had the lowest response rate: only one participant that took part in this project has filled in the questionnaire. For more information on the activities held in 2013, please see [Annual Report 2013](#).

## Short-term learning outcomes

### Skills

The majority of respondents have reported that they have gained abilities in critical analysis and thinking; for example, one of the participants wrote: “It contributed to the change of my world view”. Most of the respondents also stated that they have developed or improved the following skills: active listening; effective and nonviolent communication; teamwork and networking. The fewest respondents (three) indicated that they have developed their entrepreneurial skills.

### Knowledge

The majority of the respondents (14 people) indicated that they went through intercultural learning through participating in UNOY Peacebuilders’ activities:

“It was important to meet with young people from Azerbaijan and different European countries and discuss different things not necessarily about the conflict and understand that we all think the same way and want the same - peace”.

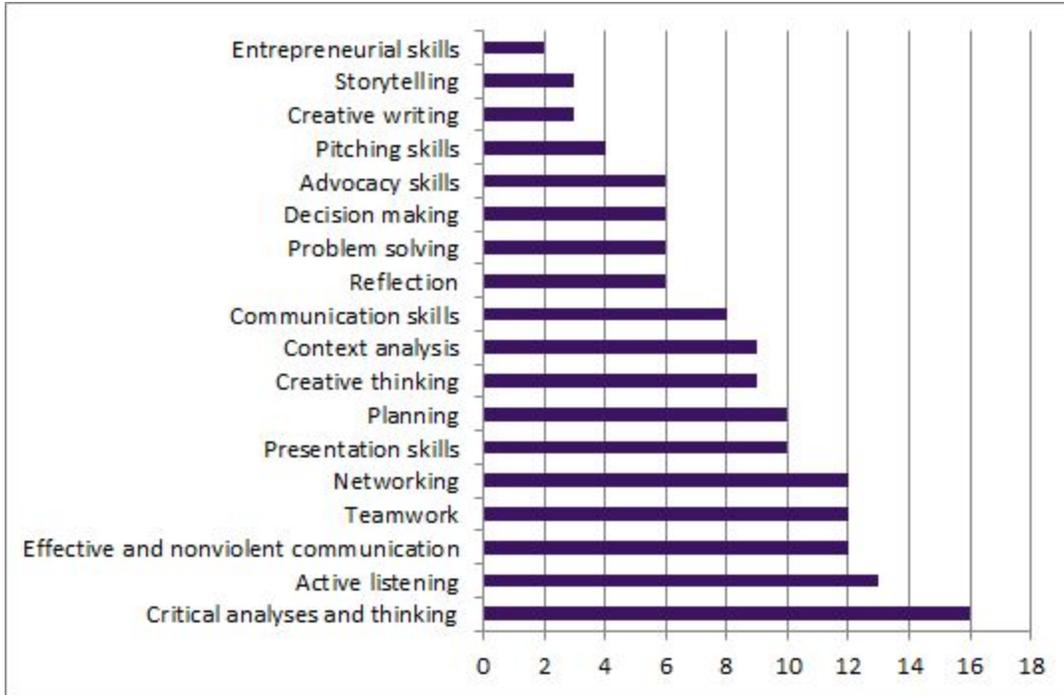


Figure 1. Skills gained by the respondents from their participation in the UNOY activity.

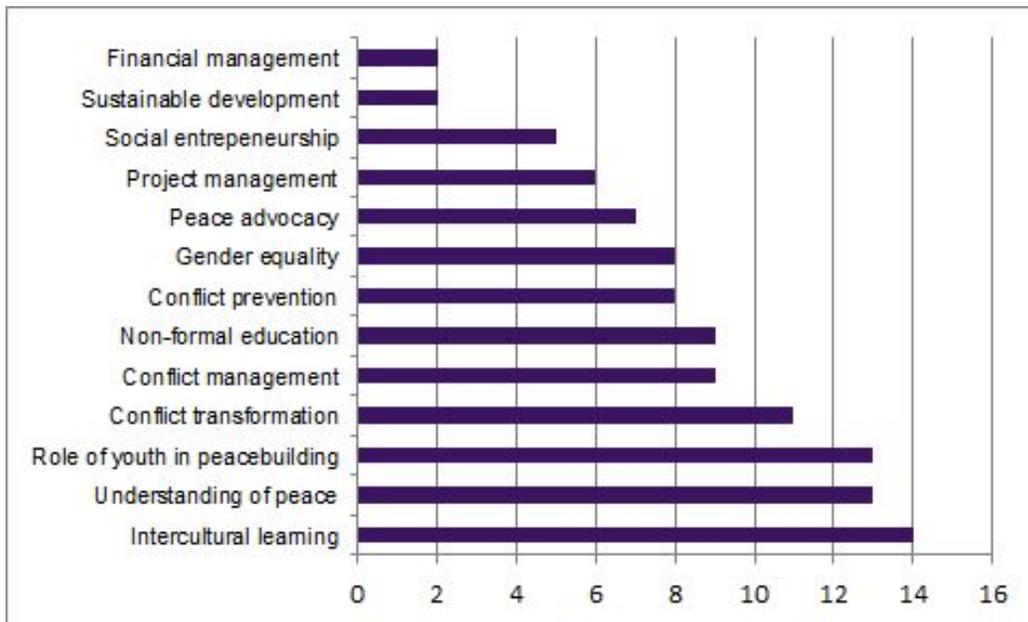


Figure 2. Knowledge gained by the respondents from their participation in the UNOY activity.

Most the respondents also reported that they have expanded their understanding of peace and learned more about the role of youth in peacebuilding. On the other hand, only two respondents stated that they have gained knowledge about financial management and sustainable development.



### **Volunteering for Peace: Share Experience and Learn Together**

Activity: Capacity Development training course

Location: Georgia

Timeframe: 1-7 July, 2013

For most of the participants of the activity the expectations have been met completely:

“It was my first international project. I learned so many new things about peace, peacebuilding and volunteering. And after the project I have many friends from different countries and we have even met after it”.

However, some respondents noted that some of their expectations were not met:

“Expectations were not completely met as I thought we would speak about how to work with or how to manage volunteers. Instead we spoke about what a volunteer was and discussed project development”.

Participants pointed out the knowledge about peacebuilding and peace education, as well as region specific knowledge, as something they have gained during the training. The activity, the respondents say, increased their cultural awareness and provided them with new tools for conflict analysis.

Figure 3. Information Box: training “Volunteering for Peace: Share Experience and Learn Together”

## **Attitudes**

UNOY activities also affected the attitudes of respondents, namely it largely developed their social responsibility and collaboration and cooperativeness. Most of the respondents indicated those as attitudes which they have developed through participation in a UNOY activity. Only a few participants stated that their participation in the activity has helped them to develop their inner peace or their sense of compassion. What may be important to take into account for the future activities is that only 7 participants indicated that they have developed their gender sensitivity. Finally, most respondents noted that the activity broadened their sense of cultural awareness and increased their cultural sensitivity:

“My participation in the project totally opened my mind and broke all prejudice we sometimes have. I got to know a little part of Burundi’s society, habits and culture”.

“It made me look at issues with a different lens. Based on the training, we have developed new approaches when implementing activities especially from a gender



### Third Regional Training Course - West Africa

Activity: Capacity Development training course

Location: Accra, Ghana

Timeframe: 25-31 August, 2013

All the respondents gave the activity a positive evaluation with regards to the extent to which the activity has met their expectations:

“UNOY is the number one source we turn to for capacity building for our volunteers through its various programmes and trainings”.

The participants of the training course underlined that the activity has helped them deepening their understanding of conflicts and peacebuilding. They have also highlighted the importance of fundraising skills which they have gained personally and disseminated in their organizations:

“It has empowered me to know how to write a proposal. In my organization we are working hard to submit one currently”.

The participants have also stated that the activity opened up opportunities for networking and collaboration with other youth organizations and the government bodies. The information and skills gained at the training have been disseminated at the community level, at schools through trainings and media:

“Through the UNOY activities last year we have been able to set up a weekly radio program at no cost and run a current affairs programme on youth and peacebuilding in the Ashanti-Region of Ghana”.

Figure 4. Information Box: training “Third Regional Training Course - West Africa”

perspective. I have since started convening young women’s platforms of gender based violence in my church, a development which was somehow inspired by the training“.

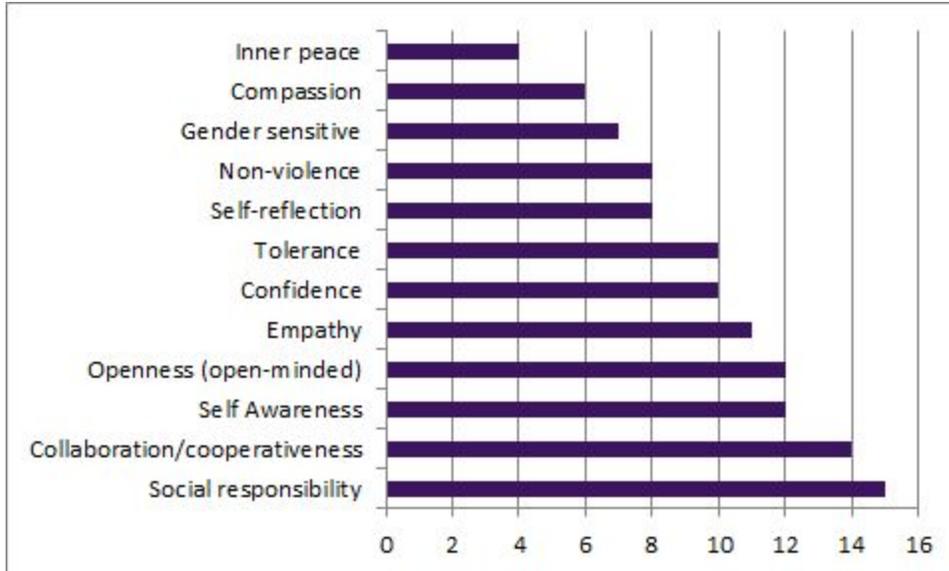


Figure 5. Attitudes gained by the respondents from their participation in the UNOY activity.

## Medium-term action outcomes

After participating in a UNOY activity, all participants remained active in the youth sector. The majority of respondents have been engaged in awareness-raising activities (for example, of youth rights) since their participation in a UNOY activity in 2013. 8 respondents have also organized trainings. These kind of dynamics are notable since most of the participants have taken part in capacity development activities organized by UNOY, thus suggesting that the skills and knowledge gained there were disseminated and multiplied through trainings and advocacy activities the respondents initiated afterwards (see Figure 1). Moreover, two respondents reported that they have set up a social enterprise and two others - a new youth organization, making the activities highly effective in terms of the impact produced.

90% of respondents have reported that the activity they participated in met their expectations to a large extent.

Participants have disseminated information about the activity after its ending. 90% of respondents have shared their experiences of participating in a UNOY activity with their friends and family. Most of the participants have shared their experience through informal discussions and briefings, however, some (27%) organized multiplier events (seminars, workshops or trainings) as a follow up to the UNOY activity.



Figure 7. Types of activities, related to youth and peacebuilding, respondents took part in since their participation in a UNOY activity in 2013.

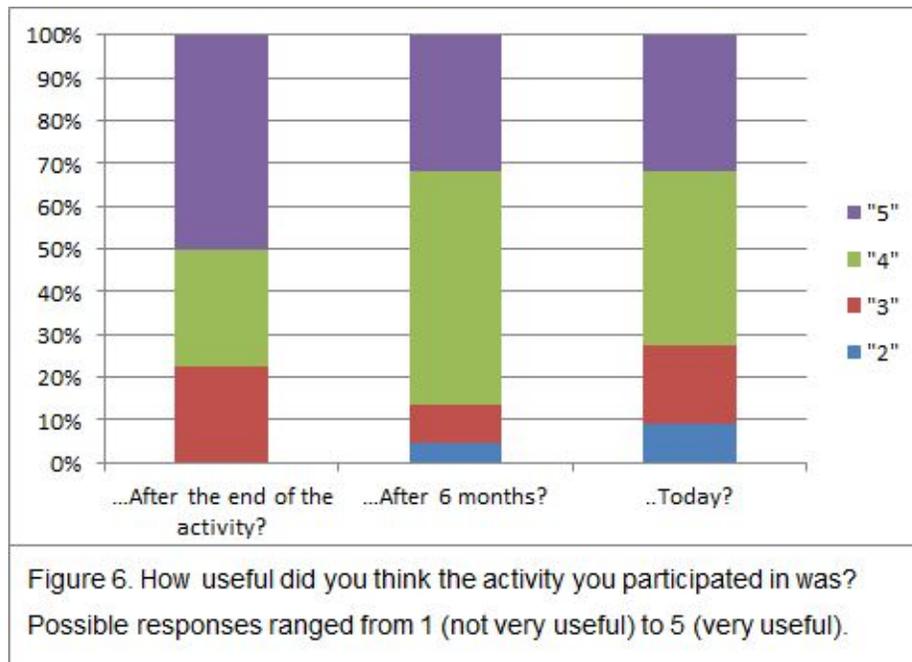
Several respondents reported that skills, knowledge and attitudes obtained during the event were integrated in their routine work:

“We integrated the learning in our peace and gender programs. The skills learnt became part of the training manuals on peace and gender”.

Only a few, 9% and 13% respectively, have shared the experience with local authorities and governments.

## Participants' evaluation of projects

Participants generally found their participation in UNOY activities useful, as shown in Figure 6. Around 75% of respondents say that the activity was “useful” and “very useful” after the end of the activity, after 6 months and at the time of filling out the questionnaire. However the proportion of the positive responses decreases as the time passes by. For example, the proportion of responses indicating 5 (“very useful”) drops from 50% right after the event to 31,8% after 6 months after the event and at the time of answering the questionnaire, which is around 1,5-2 years after the event took place. Also the proportion of respondents' answers with a value of 2 increased from 0% after the end of the event to 9% at the time of answering the survey. The numbers show that the effect of the participation in the event fades away with time. To investigate possible reasons for such a change, additional questions will be included into the next Participants Review.



Only four respondents reported that their participation in the activity did not open up any new opportunities in their personal and professional life. Most of the participants stated that the activity increased their professional and personal network and brought new partnerships with other individuals and organizations.

## Conclusions

Activities of UNOY in 2013 were diverse in both themes and geographic scope. After taking part in UNOY activities, participants were found to be working on issues related to peacebuilding and conflict transformation on all international, national and local levels. They have been involved in activities ranging from advocacy and awareness-raising events to trainings or seminars.

Overall, it is possible to highlight some positive aspects of the activities conducted by UNOY in 2013, as well as areas where there is room for improvement. Among the positive aspects are multicultural teams which are created for the activities. Those are considered to be important source of further cross-national cooperation and an environment for learning about intercultural dialogue and cultural differences. Linked to this, another major advantage of UNOY activities which was present across the participants' answers is the fact that the activities boosted participants' positive attitudes towards collaboration and cooperativeness. All together it creates a clear picture of the cultural impact of the UNOY activities on individual level, reflecting into a closer cross-national cooperation. The respondents have also emphasized possibilities for

networking and capacity development, in particular, of advocacy skills as another advantage of UNOY activities.

There are, however, several aspects which were suggested by the participants to be improved. An issue which was mentioned a couple of times in the responses of the participants is the desire to have more focus on project management. Since financial management and project management, in general, were marked as the skills which fewest participants have obtained, more focus in future trainings can be dedicated to that. More capacity development programs directed at project management, including financial aspect of the process can be suggested to be developed. Additionally, the respondents noted that there could be more feedback and follow up for UNOY activities.

UNOY also works hard on incorporating the feedback received from the participants into the future activities planned by UNOY. In order to improve how we build on and integrate feedback and input from participants in activities, UNOY is currently implementing a project with several partners from the European UNOY network, doing research into practices in Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning related to peace activities in the youth sector. To get to know more about our on-going and upcoming activities, please see the [Annual Plan 2015](#).

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