



Youth Dealing with the Past

Handbook





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This handbook is prepared for young people, youth leaders, youth workers, NGOs staff , and other professionals who work with young people in the issues of dealing with the past, media literacy, prejudice in the region, hate speech online and offline etc.

Handbook

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Introduction

Dealing with the past typically refers to the process of acknowledging, processing, and often coming to terms with past experiences, events, or traumas. This can involve reflecting on memories, understanding their impact on one's current life, and finding ways to heal or move forward. Dealing with the past (further referred to as DwP) is a complex, long term process faced by every culture. Historically, the problems of the past have been combated in a multitude of ways, with varying degrees of efficacy. Our task in this guide is to introduce the topic of DwP to new readers.

Co-creating with the activists, youth leaders, journalists and non-governmental civil society members is a new way of collaborating in policy making and creating new pathways to deal with the past. Instead of top-down approaches of either NGO-s or state institutions agenda implementation without a truly democratic debate, co-creation includes not only consultations and empirical data gathering from the grass route, activists, journalists and media, citizens and other groups of society, but invites for collective action of writing, creating and collaborating. In the subject of dealing with the past, most of challenges are shared amongst participants in the way solutions are perceptive and understood. Issues of forgiveness, commemoration, reconciliation and conflict resolution come up in debates and discussions amongst peers in workshops and seminars in a very similar ways only to change when geographical spaces are in question.

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Furthermore, the handbook is organized into four flows, allowing us to efficiently address the issue of DwP: understanding the past, dealing with the past, moving forward, and as well as the fourth part focused on some practical games based on non formal learning which could be useful to be used during the activities with young people. The steps are separated based on their chronological order.

- **Understanding the past** – The first step of DwP is analysing the historical and geopolitical context of the issue, as well as taking into account the various factors relevant to resolving the conflict at hand. These can range from the time period in question, to the states of international spheres of influence, etc. Furthermore, to properly understand the past, extensive documentation and initiation of open discussion between the conflicting sides is crucial. Due to the ever-degrading nature of sources of information, it is important to begin the process of DwP as soon as possible, lest we risk the loss of vital information and further development of intolerance and contempt.

- **Dealing with the past** – Dealing with the past is to address historical and collective traumas. This is quite an important step that requires acknowledging past mistakes and finding ways for reconciliation and healing the wounds. This is a process that involves social, emotional and political dimensions. Being that the political dimension is not something in our account, we will be focusing on the social and emotional dimension.



Suggestions:

- *Acknowledgment* – Storytelling that offers connection and empathy as everyone shares their own personal experience related to the problematic past. It creates a safe space with dialogue and reflects on each person's truth.
- *Reconciliation* – Conflict resolution workshops that provide practical tools for addressing this issue and promote reconciliation. Teaching communication and empathy that is essential for resolving intergenerational conflicts.
- *Memory and Commemoration* – Visiting memorials or museums that will allow participants to confront historical traumas and give them the chance to pay tribute. This also provides tangible reminders of the past and encourages reflection.
- *Legal recognition/steps* – This will provide a formal acknowledgement of the past traumas and will start the groundwork for healing and reconciliation efforts. It includes steps such as: Reforms in education by curriculum revision, using other relevant resources, beginning a process with both entities included in the conflict, such as economical and political support via joint fund.

- **Moving forward** – Moving forward involves implementing activities based on the understanding and reconciliation achieved in the first two steps. This might include policy changes, education initiatives, and ongoing dialogue to prevent future conflicts. Also, community engagement and international cooperation could be the ways.

The handbook is co-prepared by expats of PVN and participants of the international training organized by PVN in Durres, Albania on March 2024. The first draft is prepared by experts, and then co-worked with the participant who made a valuable contribution.



I. Understanding the past



Comparison between understanding the past and dealing with the past

Understanding the past and dealing with the past are closely related concepts, but they refer to different aspects of addressing historical injustices and conflicts

Understanding the past involves studying, analyzing, and gaining insight into historical events, their causes, and their impacts. It focuses on comprehending what happened, why it happened, and the consequences for individuals and societies.

Dealing with the past refers to the actions and processes undertaken to address, rectify, and resolve the issues arising from historical injustices and conflicts. It focuses on addressing the consequences of the past and working towards justice, reconciliation, and prevention of future conflicts.

Some key elements on understanding the past are as below:

Focus: Understanding the past is primarily about gaining knowledge and insight, while dealing with the past is about taking concrete actions to address and rectify the consequences of historical injustices.

Processes: Understanding involves research, education, and documentation, while dealing with the past involves truth-telling, legal proceedings, reparations, and reconciliation efforts

Objectives: Understanding aims to build a comprehensive view of historical events and their impacts, whereas dealing with the past aims to achieve justice, reconciliation, and institutional change to prevent future conflicts.



Before dealing with the past we have to understand the past, here are some key aspects and examples:

Steps on Understanding the Past

Acknowledgment

Recognizing and accepting that injustices or atrocities occurred. This involves admitting the facts of what happened and understanding the impact on individuals and communities.

Truth-Telling

Uncovering and documenting the truth about past abuses or conflicts. This often involves truth commissions, historical research, and public disclosures.

Justice and Accountability

Holding perpetrators of injustices accountable through legal or other means. This can include trials, reparations, and other forms of justice to address grievances and ensure responsibility.

Reconciliation

Facilitating dialogue and understanding between conflicting parties or affected communities. This involves efforts to rebuild relationships and foster mutual respect and cooperation.

Reparation

Providing compensation or restitution to victims and their families. This may include financial reparations, support services, or symbolic gestures of acknowledgment.

Memory and Education:

Preserving the memory of past events through education, memorials, and public discourse to ensure that future generations learn from history and that the suffering of victims is remembered

In the context of the Western Balkans, dealing with the past is particularly significant due to the region's history of conflict and human rights abuses during the 1990s. Efforts in this area aim to address the legacy of these conflicts, promote healing, and support the development of a more just and peaceful society.

By engaging with these processes, societies can work towards healing, justice, and a more cohesive future.

Social and Political context in the Western Balkans

The social and political context in the Western Balkans is complex and multifaceted, shaped by a variety of historical, ethnic, and geopolitical factors. There are some key aspects:

- **Historical Legacy:** The conflicts arising from the breakup of Yugoslavia in the 1990s significantly impact current social and political dynamics. Ethnic tensions, territorial disputes, and war crimes from that period remain sensitive issues.
- **Ethnic Diversity and Tensions:** The Western Balkans is home to numerous ethnic groups, including Albanians, Serbs, Bosniaks, Croats, and others. Ethnic identities play a crucial role in politics, leading to both cooperative efforts and significant tensions, particularly in countries like Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, and Montenegro.
- **Political Fragmentation:** Many countries in the region have fragmented political landscapes, with numerous parties often based on ethnic, nationalist, or regional lines. This fragmentation can hinder effective governance and foster political instability.
- **European Union Integration:** The prospect of EU membership has been a significant political goal for many Western Balkan countries. However, progress towards integration has been slow and often contentious, with challenges related to governance, rule of law, and human rights reflecting the need for reforms.
- **Corruption and Governance Issues:** Corruption remains a significant issue in many Western Balkan countries, undermining public trust in institutions and impeding economic development. Efforts to combat corruption are often met with resistance and challenges to political will.
- **Geopolitical Influences:** The Western Balkans is a region of interest for various external powers, including the EU, the United States, Russia, and China. These influences can shape local politics, with different countries aligning more closely with certain powers based on historical and economic ties.

- **Socioeconomic Challenges:** The region faces various socioeconomic issues, including high unemployment rates, particularly among youth, economic disparity, and inadequate infrastructure. These challenges can fuel social unrest and emigration.
- **Regional Cooperation Efforts:** There are ongoing initiatives aimed at improving regional cooperation to address common challenges, such as the Berlin Process and the CEFTA agreement. These efforts seek to enhance economic integration and foster a sense of unity among the countries.

Overall, the social and political context in the Western Balkans is characterized by its complexity and a mixture of hope for integration into Europe and the persistence of historical grievances and modern challenges.

II. Dealing with the past



"Dealing with the past" is a term that refers to the processes societies undertake to address and come to terms with historical injustices, conflicts, and human rights violations. It involves a range of actions aimed at acknowledging the wrongs of the past, seeking justice, promoting reconciliation, and ensuring that such injustices do not recur.

Dealing with the past in the Balkan region involves a multifaceted approach that addresses the complex legacies of conflict, human rights abuses, and political turmoil that have affected the area.



How to Deal with the Past in the Balkans

Establish Truth-Telling Mechanisms

- Truth Commissions: Create or support commissions that investigate and document human rights violations and conflict-related crimes. These commissions can gather testimonies, conduct research, and produce reports that provide a comprehensive account of past abuses.

Promote Accountability and Justice

- International and Local Courts: Support the work of international courts like the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and local judicial systems to prosecute individuals responsible for war crimes and other serious violations.
- Legal Reforms: Strengthen legal frameworks to ensure fair trials and accountability.

Facilitate Reconciliation

- Dialogue Initiatives: Encourage dialogue between different ethnic and political groups to foster mutual understanding and resolve conflicts. This can include inter-community meetings, reconciliation workshops, and collaborative projects.
- Public Acknowledgment: Promote public acknowledgment of past atrocities and suffering through commemoration events, memorials, and educational programs.

Support Victims and Provide Reparations

- Compensation: Offer financial and social support to victims and their families, including health care, education, and psychological support.
- Community Support: Develop community-based programs that address the needs of survivors and promote healing.

Integrate Memory and Education


- Curriculum Development: Incorporate historical education about past conflicts and human rights abuses into school curricula to ensure future generations understand and learn from history.
- Public Awareness Campaigns: Run campaigns to raise awareness about the past, promote historical accuracy, and combat denialism.

Implement Institutional Reforms

- Governance and Policy Changes: Reform institutions to ensure they promote justice, equality, and non-discrimination. This includes changes in political representation, law enforcement, and public administration to reflect a commitment to preventing future conflicts.

Why is important dealing with the past for young people ?

Dealing with the past is particularly important for young people for several reasons:

-  **Identity Formation:** Adolescence and early adulthood are critical periods for developing a sense of self. Understanding past experiences helps young people form their identities and beliefs.
-  **Emotional Healing:** Many young people face challenges like bullying, family issues, or trauma. Addressing these experiences can help prevent emotional problems and promote mental well-being.
-  **Learning and Growth:** Reflecting on past decisions can help young people learn valuable lessons. This reflection can guide future behavior and decision-making, fostering personal growth.
-  **Building Resilience:** Confronting and processing past experiences can enhance resilience, enabling young people to cope better with future challenges.
-  **Healthy Relationships:** Understanding past experiences, especially negative ones, helps young people develop healthier relationships with themselves and others by recognizing patterns and triggers.
-  **Preventing Issues Later in Life:** Addressing unresolved issues early on can prevent them from becoming more significant problems in adulthood, such as anxiety, depression, or relationship difficulties.
-  **Cultural and Historical Awareness:** For some, dealing with the past includes understanding their cultural or familial history, which fosters a sense of belonging and connectedness.

Overall, dealing with the past empowers young people to build a healthier and more fulfilling future.

III. Moving Forward



Moving forward involves implementing activities based on the understanding and reconciliation achieved in the first two steps. This might include policy changes, education initiatives, and ongoing dialogue to prevent future conflicts. Also, community engagement and international cooperation could be the ways.

Moving forward in the Western Balkans involves both understanding the past and actively addressing its legacies. By educating yourself, participating in dialogue, supporting justice and reconciliation, and advocating for reform, you can contribute to building a more just and peaceful future. Your involvement is crucial in ensuring that the lessons of the past lead to positive changes for all.

This part of the guide will be focused on a youth perspective, considering role of youth themselves, youth stakeholders and civil society and media

Steps for Moving Forward

Educate Yourself and Others



- Learn about the history of your region through various sources, including books, documentaries, and discussions.
- Share your knowledge with peers and community members to raise awareness and understanding.

Support Truth-Telling Initiatives

- *Advocate for or get involved with truth-telling projects that seek to document and acknowledge past abuses.*
- *Support efforts to preserve oral histories and historical records.*



Engage in Dialogue



- Participate in or organize discussions and forums that bring together different community groups to talk about historical events and their impacts.
- Encourage open and respectful conversations that promote mutual understanding.

Promote Justice and Accountability



- Support legal processes and institutions that seek justice for victims of past conflicts.
- Advocate for fair trials and accountability measures for those responsible for human rights abuses.

Encourage Reconciliation Efforts



- Participate in community activities that aim to bridge divides and build trust between different ethnic or political groups.
- Support projects that foster peace and mutual respect.

Support Victims and Promote Reparation

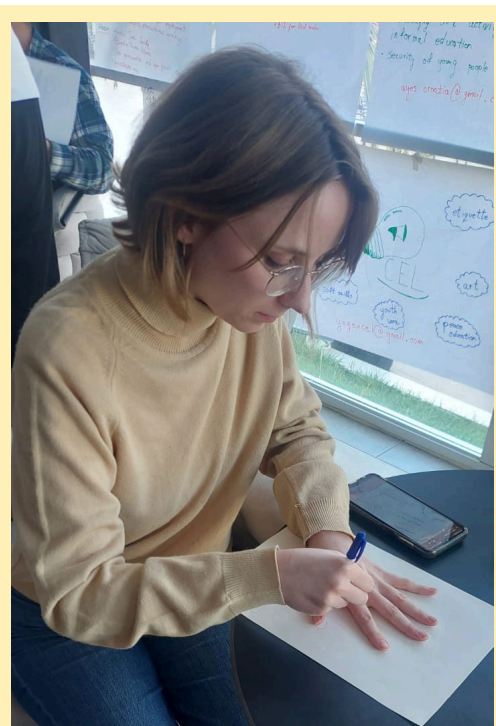
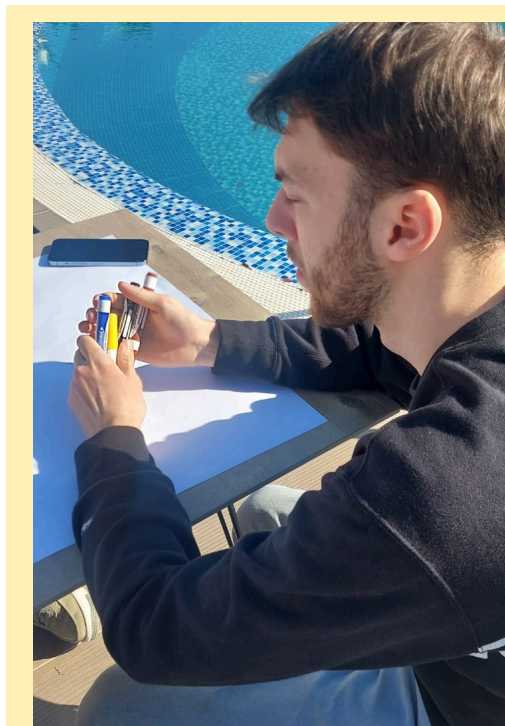


- Advocate for policies and programs that provide assistance and compensation to victims of past conflicts.
- Volunteer or support organizations that offer support services to survivors and affected communities.



Push for Institutional Reform

- Engage in advocacy for changes in laws and policies that promote justice, equality, and prevent future conflicts.
- Support initiatives that aim to reform institutions to ensure they serve all communities fairly and effectively.



Role of youth and various stakeholders

Young people and Youth approaches



Youth play a crucial role in addressing the legacies of conflict and fostering a more peaceful and inclusive future. Their involvement is vital in overcoming past divisions and ensuring that the region moves towards lasting peace. Here's an overview of the role of youth and youth approaches in dealing with the past:

Agents of Change and Dialogue

- **Challenging Historical Narratives:** Youth have the capacity to question and challenge entrenched historical narratives that may perpetuate division. They can bring fresh perspectives to discussions about the past, encouraging a more nuanced and balanced understanding.
- **Facilitating Dialogue:** Young people can act as bridge-builders between different communities, fostering dialogue and understanding across ethnic, religious, and national lines. They are often more open to engaging with "the other" and can facilitate conversations that might be difficult for older generations.
- **Promoting Tolerance and Understanding:** Through their active participation in peacebuilding initiatives, youth can promote values of tolerance, empathy, and mutual respect. By engaging with the past, they can help prevent the re-emergence of conflict and support the healing process.



Education and Awareness

- **Learning from the Past:** Youth approaches in dealing with the past often emphasize the importance of education. By learning about the causes and consequences of past conflicts, young people are better equipped to understand the significance of reconciliation and to contribute to peacebuilding.
- **Critical Thinking and Media Literacy:** Youth can be encouraged to critically analyze historical sources and media narratives. This helps them discern biased or incomplete portrayals of history, empowering them to form their own informed opinions and resist manipulative narratives.
- **Heritage and Memory Preservation:** Youth can play a role in preserving and honoring the memories of past events. Through projects that document personal stories, create memorials, or engage in public history initiatives, they help ensure that the lessons of the past are not forgotten



Advocacy and Activism

- **Advocating for Justice and Accountability:** Youth can be powerful advocates for justice, pushing for accountability for past atrocities and supporting initiatives that seek to redress historical wrongs. Their activism can be a driving force behind legal and social reforms aimed at reconciliation.
- **Youth-Led Peacebuilding Initiatives:** Through involvement in civil society organizations, volunteer programs, and grassroots movements, young people can lead efforts to promote peace and reconciliation. They can organize events, campaigns, and projects that bring communities together and address the legacies of conflict.



Innovation and Creativity

- **Using Art and Culture for Reconciliation:** Youth often bring creativity and innovation to reconciliation efforts, using art, music, theater, and digital media to explore and express complex emotions related to the past. These creative approaches can open up new avenues for dialogue and understanding.
- **Harnessing Technology and Social Media:** Young people are adept at using technology and social media to connect across divides, share stories, and mobilize for peace. Digital platforms can be used to create virtual spaces for dialogue, to educate others about the past, and to promote messages of reconciliation.



Building a Shared Future

- **Cross-Border Collaboration:** Youth initiatives often involve cross-border collaboration, bringing together young people from different Balkan countries to work on common projects. These initiatives foster regional cooperation and help break down stereotypes and prejudices.
- **Empowerment and Leadership Development:** By taking on leadership roles in reconciliation efforts, young people gain the skills and confidence needed to drive change. Youth leadership in peacebuilding ensures that the next generation is prepared to continue the work of reconciliation.
- **Long-Term Commitment to Peace:** Youth are key to ensuring that reconciliation is not just a temporary effort but a sustained commitment. Their ongoing involvement in peacebuilding activities, education, and advocacy helps to create a culture of peace that can endure across generations.



Youth Approaches in Reconciliation

- **Non Formal Education:** Youth approaches often include nonformal education methods, which emphasize experiential learning, peer-to-peer education, and participatory activities. These methods are effective in engaging young people and making complex historical issues more accessible.
- **Intercultural Exchange Programs:** Youth exchanges and intercultural programs enable young people from different backgrounds to learn from each other, build friendships, and develop a deeper understanding of each other's histories and cultures.
- **Dialogue and Mediation Training:** Training in dialogue and mediation equips young people with the skills needed to facilitate conversations about the past, manage conflicts, and foster understanding between different groups.

In conclusion, the role of youth in dealing with the past in the context of Balkan reconciliation is multifaceted and vital. Young people bring energy, creativity, and a forward-looking perspective to the process of reconciliation. By engaging with history, advocating for justice, and building bridges between communities, they help to ensure that the lessons of the past lead to a more peaceful and inclusive future.

Civil Society Organisations



Youth NGOs play a crucial role in dealing with the past and fostering reconciliation in the Balkans. They serve as platforms for young people to engage with historical narratives, promote understanding, and contribute to peacebuilding efforts. Here's a detailed overview of their role:

Facilitating Dialogue and Understanding

- **Creating Safe Spaces for Discussion:** Youth NGOs often organize workshops, seminars, and forums that provide young people with a safe space to discuss sensitive topics related to the past. These dialogues help bridge generational and ethnic divides, allowing for the exchange of perspectives and experiences.
- **Promoting Intercultural Dialogue:** By bringing together youth from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, youth NGOs foster intercultural understanding and reconciliation. They create opportunities for young people to learn about each other's histories and build relationships across divides.

Educational Initiatives

- **Implementing Educational Programs:** Youth NGOs develop and implement educational programs that focus on history, human rights, and reconciliation. These programs aim to educate young people about the historical causes and consequences of conflicts, and the importance of peacebuilding.
- **Utilizing Nonformal Education:** Many youth NGOs use nonformal education methods, such as experiential learning, creative arts, and interactive workshops, to engage young people in exploring and understanding the past. These methods can be more effective in reaching youth and making complex topics accessible.

Advocacy and Policy Influence

- **Advocating for Justice and Reconciliation:** Youth NGOs advocate for policies and practices that address past injustices and support reconciliation efforts. They work to ensure that the voices of young people are heard in discussions about historical memory and peacebuilding.
- **Supporting Legal and Social Reforms:** By engaging in advocacy and policy work, youth NGOs contribute to efforts aimed at achieving justice for victims and implementing social reforms that promote reconciliation and prevent future conflicts.



Building Networks and Alliances

- **Creating Regional Networks:** Youth NGOs often collaborate with other organizations, both within the Balkans and internationally, to strengthen their impact. These networks allow for the sharing of best practices, resources, and strategies for reconciliation.
- **Facilitating Cross-Border Cooperation:** Many youth NGOs organize cross-border projects and exchanges that bring together young people from different Balkan countries. These initiatives help build regional solidarity and promote a collective approach to reconciliation.



Empowering Youth Leadership

- **Developing Leadership Skills:** Youth NGOs provide training and mentorship programs that help young people develop leadership skills and take on active roles in peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts. This empowerment ensures that youth are not only participants but also leaders in these processes.
- **Supporting Youth-Led Initiatives:** Youth NGOs often support and facilitate youth-led initiatives that address issues related to the past. By providing resources and guidance, they help young people design and implement their own projects focused on reconciliation and understanding.



Promoting Social Cohesion and Community Engagement

- **Organizing Community Projects:** Youth NGOs engage young people in community projects that aim to address local issues related to the past. These projects might include activities such as memorialization efforts, cultural exchange programs, and community dialogues.
- **Fostering Social Cohesion:** By involving youth in activities that promote social cohesion and collective action, youth NGOs contribute to building stronger, more resilient communities that are better equipped to handle the challenges of the past and work towards a peaceful future.



Raising Awareness and Mobilizing Action

- **Running Awareness Campaigns:** Youth NGOs conduct campaigns to raise awareness about the importance of reconciliation and the role of young people in this process. These campaigns can help shift public attitudes and mobilize broader community support for reconciliation efforts.
- **Using Media and Technology:** Many youth NGOs leverage media and technology to amplify their message and reach a wider audience. They use social media, blogs, and other digital platforms to share stories, facilitate discussions, and mobilize action for reconciliation.



Providing Support and Resources

- **Offering Counseling and Support Services:** Some youth NGOs provide counseling and support services for young people affected by the legacies of conflict. These services help individuals cope with trauma and engage in the healing process.
- **Creating Resource Centers:** Youth NGOs often establish resource centers that offer information, training, and tools related to reconciliation, human rights, and conflict resolution. These centers serve as hubs for learning and action.



Media



- **Reporting and Analysis:** Report on historical injustices, ongoing reconciliation efforts, and the impact of past conflicts. Ensure accurate and balanced coverage to foster public understanding.
- **Public Engagement:** Facilitate public dialogue through documentaries, interviews, and articles that address past events and promote healing.
- **Accountability:** Investigate and expose any ongoing injustices or denialism related to historical events.

Academia



- **Research and Documentation:** Conduct research to document historical events, analyze their causes and impacts, and contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the past.
- **Education and Training:** Develop and deliver educational programs on history, human rights, and conflict resolution. Train future leaders and professionals in these areas.
- **Public Education:** Disseminate research findings and promote historical education through public lectures, publications, and media appearances.

Governments



- **Legislation and Policy:** Enact and enforce laws that support truth-telling, accountability, and reparations. Implement policies that address historical grievances and promote social cohesion.
- **Funding and Support:** Allocate resources for truth commissions, legal processes, victim support programs, and educational initiatives.
- **Institutional Reform:** Implement reforms to prevent future conflicts, ensure fair governance, and build trust in public institutions.

International Organizations



- **Monitoring and Assistance:** Provide oversight and technical assistance to ensure that justice and reconciliation processes adhere to international standards. Support local initiatives with expertise and funding.
- **Advocacy and Diplomacy:** Advocate for justice, human rights, and reconciliation efforts on the international stage. Facilitate dialogue and negotiations between conflicting parties.
- **Humanitarian Support:** Offer humanitarian aid and support to victims of past conflicts, including financial assistance and psychological support.

IV. Practical non-formal education tools



For young people, understanding and dealing with this past is essential in fostering a peaceful and inclusive society. However, addressing the historical wounds and the narratives that have shaped their identities requires careful, thoughtful approaches that resonate with the youth.

The games and activities presented in this manual are designed to provide youth workers with practical tools to engage young people in discussions and reflections about the past. These activities are more than just games; they are structured experiences that encourage participants to explore history, understand different perspectives, and express their emotions in a safe and supportive environment.

By participating in these activities, young people will:

Develop Critical Thinking: They will analyze historical events and their impact, considering multiple perspectives and questioning established narratives.

Build Empathy: Through role-playing and storytelling, participants will step into the shoes of others, understanding the emotions and decisions faced by people in different historical contexts.

Foster Dialogue: These activities create spaces for open conversations about the past, helping participants to express their thoughts and listen to others, even when opinions differ.

Strengthen Identity and Community: By reflecting on personal and collective memories, young people will connect their own experiences with the broader history of the region, fostering a sense of belonging and shared identity.

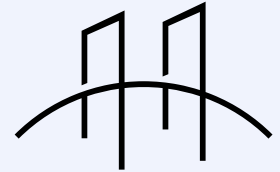
Each game is tailored to address specific aspects of dealing with the past, from exploring personal memories to engaging in conflict resolution simulations. As a youth worker, you can adapt these activities to suit the needs and backgrounds of your participants, ensuring that the experiences are relevant and meaningful.

It is important to approach these games with sensitivity, recognizing that discussions about the past can evoke strong emotions. Facilitators should be prepared to provide support and create an environment where all participants feel respected and heard.

In the following section, you will find detailed instructions for each game, along with guidance on how to facilitate discussions and reflections. These activities are meant to empower young people, helping them to navigate their history with a sense of understanding, empathy, and hope for the future.

Building Bridges

Objective: To symbolically and practically demonstrate the importance of collaboration in reconciliation.



How to Play:

- Divide participants into small groups and provide each group with materials (e.g., straws, tape, string) to build a bridge.
- The task is to build a bridge that can connect two sides of a "river" (marked by tape on the floor), symbolizing divided communities or conflicting perspectives.
- Once the bridges are built, discuss the process: How did the groups collaborate? What challenges did they face? What does the bridge represent in the context of reconciliation?
- Combine all the bridges together to form one continuous structure, symbolizing collective efforts in reconciliation.

Reflection: Discuss the symbolic meaning of building bridges in the context of reconciliation. Explore the importance of collaboration in overcoming division.

The Peace Line

Objective: To simulate the complexity of building peace and understanding different perspectives on reconciliation.



How to Play:

- Divide participants into small groups, each representing different stakeholders in a peace process (e.g., youth, victims, former combatants, politicians, international community).
- Draw a "Peace Line" on the floor, marking the beginning as "Conflict" and the end as "Peace."
- Each group must discuss and decide on the steps they believe are necessary to move from conflict to peace, writing each step on a card.
- Groups then place their steps along the Peace Line and explain their reasoning to the others.
- Discuss the differences and similarities between the groups' approaches.

Reflection: Explore how different perspectives influence the approach to peacebuilding. Discuss the importance of understanding all stakeholders in reconciliation efforts.

Conflict Tree

Objective: To analyze the root causes, effects, and possible solutions to conflicts in the Balkans.



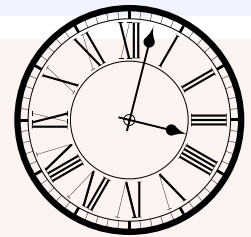
How to Play:

- Draw a large tree on a flipchart or board, with the roots, trunk, and branches labeled.
- Ask participants to brainstorm and write down the root causes of conflicts in the region, placing them on the roots.
- Next, identify the effects of these conflicts and place them on the trunk.
- Finally, discuss possible solutions or strategies for reconciliation and place these on the branches.
- This exercise can be done individually or in small groups, followed by a group discussion.

Reflection: Discuss how understanding the root causes of conflict can lead to more effective reconciliation efforts. Reflect on the role of youth in addressing these causes and promoting peace.

Time Capsule Creation

Objective: Explore collective memory and envision a positive future.



Materials Needed:

- A box or container (to serve as the time capsule)
- Paper, pens, markers, and other craft supplies
- A digital camera or smartphone (optional)

Activity:

1. Introduction: Discuss the concept of a time capsule and its purpose. Explain that the time capsule will contain items or messages reflecting the current thoughts and hopes of the participants for the future.
2. Creating Content: Ask participants to create drawings, write letters, or include small objects that represent their views on peace and reconciliation. Encourage them to think about what they hope future generations will learn from their experiences and aspirations.
3. Sealing the Capsule: Have participants place their contributions into the time capsule. Optionally, they can take a group photo to include in the capsule.
4. Future Opening: Decide on a future date when the time capsule will be opened again. This can be a symbolic way to reflect on progress and continuity.

Debrief: Discuss the significance of the items chosen and how they reflect the participants' views on reconciliation and peace.

Peaceful Future Vision Board

Objective: Foster positive thinking and collective visioning for the future.



Materials Needed:

- Magazines, newspapers, and printed images
- Scissors, glue sticks, and large sheets of paper or cardboard

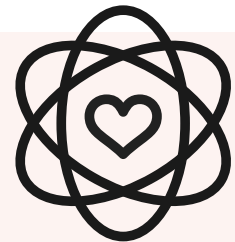
Activity:

1. Introduction: Introduce the concept of a vision board as a tool for visualizing hopes and goals.
2. Creating Vision Boards: Ask participants to find and cut out images or words from magazines that represent their vision for a peaceful future and reconciliation in the Balkans. They can create individual or group boards.
3. Sharing and Reflection: Have participants present their vision boards to the group and explain the choices they made.

Debrief: Discuss common themes and how different images and words reflect collective aspirations for the future.

Values and Principles Workshop

Objective: Identify and discuss core values that support reconciliation and peacebuilding.



Materials Needed:

- Index cards or sticky notes
- Markers and pens
- Large sheets of paper or poster boards

Activity:

1. Introduction: Discuss the importance of shared values and principles in the reconciliation process.
2. Identifying Values: Provide participants with index cards or sticky notes. Ask them to write down values or principles they believe are important for reconciliation (e.g., respect, empathy, fairness).
3. Creating a Values Wall: Have participants place their cards or notes on a large sheet of paper or poster board to create a "Values Wall." Group similar values together.
4. Discussion: Discuss the values on the wall and why they are important for reconciliation.

Debrief: Reflect on how these shared values can guide actions and behaviors in the reconciliation process.

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