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Religions for Peace
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Religions for Peace
Interreligious Council of Thailand

Full Narrative Report

ACRP's Flagship Project of 2022/2023

"Promoting Ethnoreligious and Intergenerational Harmony for Peace in the Digital Age"

(Youth Digital Harmony Project)

(Phase 1 Partnership Building and Youth Training Curriculum Development)

(April 2022 – March 2023)

By

Religions for Peace-Interreligious Council of Thailand
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Executive Summary

Religions for Peace Thailand, together with 3 other Religions for Peace's National Chapters namely Religions for Peace Myanmar, Religions for Peace Indonesia, and Religions for Peace the Philippines and **3** reputable peacebuilding NGOs of Thailand, Myanmar and Sri Lanka, namely Thailand- International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB), Myanmar - Kalayana Mitta Development Foundation (KMF) and Sri Lanka – International Youth Alliance for Peace (IYAP) have collaborated for a project called **"Promoting Ethnoreligious and Intergenerational Harmony for Peace in the Digital Age"**, known also as the **"Youth Digital Harmony Project"**. The project is designed to 1) strengthen peacebuilding and relevant digital media knowledge and skills of youths in the **5** conflict and violence affected South and Southeast Asian countries namely Sri Lanka, Thailand, Myanmar, Indonesia, and the Philippines and 2) provide platforms for meaningful interreligious and intergenerational interaction between the youths and other actors in *RfP* national and regional networks.

For the first phase of the project (April 2022-March 2023) with the 10,000 USD financial support from the Asia Conference of Religions for Peace (ACRP) or Religions for Peace Asia, there are three types of activities namely 1) meeting among 7 project partners, 2) focus group discussion with experts, and 2) a face-to-face meeting for 7 project partners. The first two types of activities were done via Zoom online from July until October 2022 while the last activity was organized onsite at a hotel in Nakhon Pathom, Thailand between 12-15 March 2023. The goal of having these activities is for the 7 organizations to get to know one another, to build partnership and to develop an outline for a training curriculum together.

For a period of 1 full year, the 7 project partners have successfully build relationship, enhanced their knowledge on digital media and its roles in conflict transformation and peacebuilding in their regions and beyond as well as developed an outline of curriculum aimed for youth training workshop. They learned that youth peacebuilders/activists in the region still lack knowledge and skills in 1) creating appealing contents, 2) in choosing the right and most effective platform for their content, and in designing a communication strategic plan that can amplify the positive narratives, counter hate speech, and strengthen their existing networks. Taking into consideration all those needs and the trends and trajectories of digital media in South and Southeast Asia, the 7 project partners designed an outline for a training curriculum aimed for a 7-day interactive training workshop. The curriculum encompasses 3 modules namely module 1 self-empowerment, critical thinking and leadership, module 2 conflict transformation and its related skills, and module 3 digital media literacy and a field-visit and individual/group exercise on the production of media content and the planning of communication strategies. This training is meant for youth peacebuilders aged between 18-35 years old in 5 countries namely Indonesia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand. As this curriculum is to be used as a guideline for the training at the national level, it will be further developed by the project partners to fit even better with the local context.

1. Rational and Background of the Project:

South and Southeast Asia encompass one of the most anthropologically diverse regions on Earth. Within this diverse repository of humanity there are over a dozen deeply established religions, numerous vibrant ethnic traditions, and an untold multiplicity of local languages. In fact, every facet of this dynamic region, both its strengths and earnest challenges, have found ample online expression in the digital age. Rising ethnoreligious tensions and conflicts in **5 South and Southeast Asian countries namely Myanmar, Indonesia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Thailand**, have all witnessed the weaponization of digital media by nationalist and extremist groups seeking to utilize the high degree of connectivity which this medium provides to propagate hate speech and drive a violent reactionary discourse. Unfortunately, collaboration and networking between these once isolated groups is easily facilitated online where discriminatory narratives generated in one national context create a ripple effect on discourses in neighboring countries, and on the larger regional scale.

The 21st century is the digital era in the sense that, according GWI reports, 69% of the population in South and Southeast Asia are connected to the internet with the average youth user spending between 8-10 hours a day online.[1] The coronavirus pandemic has also dramatically increased this rate of engagement as a spectrum of communities have been forced to migrate into digital spaces. While the potential of expansive interconnective harmony between groups and individuals online remains strong, persistent problems inimical to this development, such as extremist and violent nationalist ideologies are similarly amplified in the digital space.

In this 21st century we also witness the roles of **youths** in the so-called online construction of both positive and negative narratives contributing to the escalation and de-escalation of protracted ethno-religious conflict in South and Southeast Asia. Positive narratives could bring about constructive changes and support inter-group understanding and conflict transformation and peacebuilding efforts while negative narratives can do the opposite, raising inter-group tensions and becoming counterproductive for peacebuilding and reconciliation processes.

Moreover, youths in Thailand as well as their counterpart in the other 4 aforementioned South and Southeast Asian countries with a similar degree of ethno-religious tension tend to lack an in-depth knowledge on conflict transformation/peacebuilding and skills to 1) digest information from the internet and social media platforms; 2) create digitally good content that can be used to promote interethnic-religious understanding leading to social harmony and sustainable peace and; 3) use digital media more effectively. Hence, these shortcomings prevent them from playing positive roles in peacebuilding processes and in creating ethno-religious harmony for their own contexts in this digital media era.
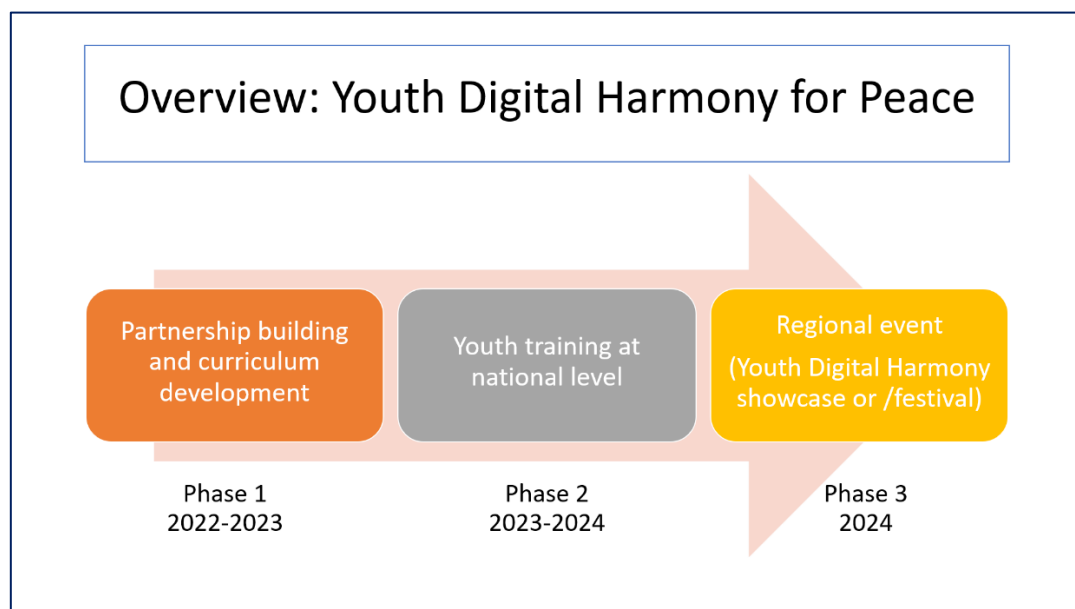
It is learned from Religions for Peace Thailand's experience, throughout our 12 years working in the conflict and violence ridden southern region, that youths, along with other key actors in our networks namely religious and women leaders, have great potentials to serve as agents for change and peacebuilders, particularly as positive narrative creators for both on and offline platforms. However, these three groups, due to their different temperaments and attitudes, often view the world from different angles and possess different narratives about the conflict as well as styles of conflict transformation and peacebuilding. The lack of frequent and meaningful interaction

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[1] https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-youth-in-south-east-asia-2021

between the three groups also makes bridging the diverse perceptions/narratives as well as transferring of wisdom on peace and peacebuilding from one group to another group difficult.

2. Project Overview:

In addressing the aforementioned regional issues regarding interethnic/religious tensions in this digital media era and youth's capability as change agent, this project is designed to be a **3-year project** with **3 phases of activity**. It targets **2** flagship project's themes outlined by the Tokyo Secretariat under the leadership of Rev. Dr. Yoshinori Shinohara, the Secretary-General: **Theme 3) Peacebuilding and Reconciliation and theme 5) Youth Leadership Development.** With the collaboration between Religions for Peace Thailand, other 3 *RfP* National Chapters and 3 reputable peacebuilding NGOs in the regions, the project also addresses **the multi-stakeholders/partnership approach for action** stressed by Religions for Peace International at the 10th World Assembly in Lindau, Germany in 2019. There are altogether **7** peacebuilding organizations collaborating for this project.

Overview: Youth Digital Harmony for Peace

| Partnership building and curriculum development | Youth training at national level | Regional event (Youth Digital Harmony showcase or /festival) |
| Phase 1 2022-2023 | Phase 2 2023-2024 | Phase 3 2024 |

The 3-year projects will cover a range of activities that will primarily strengthen peacebuilding and relevant digital media knowledge and skills of youths in the **5** conflict and violence affected South and Southeast Asian countries with *RfP* secretariat offices and provide platforms for meaningful interreligious and intergenerational interaction between the youths and other actors in *RfP* national and regional networks. The overall **7** activities of the project and the phase/years of their implementation are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Project Overview (as guided by its prospective activities)

No. of Activity	Type of Activity	Description	Phase/Year of Implementation
Phase 1	**Partnership Building and Training Curriculum Development**		
1.	Partnership Building Platform	• To create a learning and sharing online and off-line platforms for **4** *RfP* National Chapters (namely Thailand, Myanmar, Indonesia, and The Philippines) and **3** reputable peacebuilding NGOs of Thailand, Myanmar and Sri Lanka[2]	April 2022 - March 2023
2.	Peacebuilding and Digital Literacy Training Curriculum Development	• To hold collective meetings between partners (**4** *RfP* National Chapters and **3** peacebuilding NGOs) to develop core building blocks of peacebuilding and digital media skills for national and regional training curriculums.	April 2022-March 2023
3.	Planning for Phase 2	• To collaboratively develop a process with criteria for selecting participants related to their specific national contexts.	January-March 2023
Phase 2	**Youth-Training Workshop and Mini Media Producing Projects (National Level)**		
4.	5-7-day youth training workshop for Thailand *Ideally, this activity should also be implemented in other 4 countries that participate in the process of curriculum development*	• To train 10-15 youths of the south and elsewhere in Thailand on key peacebuilding theories, peace journalism and digital media skills • To create platforms for meaningful interaction between older generations peacebuilders and our youth participants	April 2023 - March 2024
5.	Mini media projects on narratives about conflict transformation/peacebuilding by the trainees *Ideally this activity should also be implemented in other 4 countries that participate in the process of curriculum development*	• To allow the trainees to design their own media products (short documentary, video clips or vlog/blog) • To have the trainees produce their media products with on-the-ground information	April 2023 - March 2024

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[2] Please see their profiles in Annex 1

No. of Activity	Type of Activity	Description	Phase/Year of Implementation
		received by interviewing local peacebuilders/stakeholders of conflict and etc	
Phase 3	**Regional Youth Sharing/Networking and Regional Advocacy Projects**		
6.	5 country regional sharing platforms and networking for youth participants	• To create both online and offline for interaction and networking platforms for youth participants from 5 countries as well as connect them with the already existing *RfP*'s Youth of Faith for Peace • To connect the participants with the already existing *RfP*'s, Asia Pacific Women of Faith for Peace (AFWoFN) and Religious leader networks for greater intergenerational exchange on peacebuilding wisdom and knowledge	It can be implemented on the same year as phase 2 or from April 2024 – March 2025
7.	5 Regional Youth-led Digital Harmony Advocacy Projects	• To have our youth participants from 5 countries working on 5 advocacy projects for ethnoreligious and intergenerational harmony for peace	It can be implemented on the same year as phase 2 or from April 2024 – March 2025

For the first year of the project (April 2022-March 2023), the project will focus **only on phase 1 activities namely** 1) **partnership building** among **4** *RfP* National Chapters as well as between the **4** *RfP* National Chapters and other **3** reputable peacebuilding NGOs in South and Southeast Asia; 2) **peacebuilding and digital literacy youth training curriculum development** which will be used for the phase 2 of the project and 3) **planning for phase 2**.

3. Goals of the Project (Phase 1 only)

- To build strong partnership for future conflict transformation/peacebuilding advocacy with the focus on youths among **4** *RfP* National Chapters (namely Thailand, Myanmar, Indonesia, and the Philippines) and **3** reputable peacebuilding NGOs of Thailand, Myanmar and Sri Lanka, namely Thailand- International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB), Myanmar - Kalayana Mitta Development Foundation (KMF) and Sri Lanka – International Youth Alliance for Peace (IYAP)
- To gain a better understanding on roles and impact of digital media on social harmony in South and Southeast Asia region
- To design a youth training curriculum that is relevant to the context-specific region and to the need of South and Southeast Asian youth peacebuilders.

4. Objectives of the project (for Phase 1): To achieve the stated phase 1's goals, the project outlines **3** objectives for such mission. They are as follows:

4.1 To engage 7 organizations (4 *RfP* National Chapters and 3 reputable peacebuilding NGOs) into 6 online meetings and 1 face-to-face meeting in Thailand for meaningful exchange regarding the rising ethnoreligious tension in South and Southeast Asia and roles of digital media;

4.2 To have the **7** organizations discuss the situation of youths as agents of change in their respective countries, how to equip them with knowledge and skills as agents for change/peacebuilder in the digital media era as well as the intergenerational gaps and how to bridge such gaps;

4.3 To engage the **7** organizations into the drafting of a youth training curriculum packed with lessons on key knowledge and skills for peacebuilders and activities promoting the exchange and sharing between youths and older generation peacebuilders

5. Activities of the Project- Phase 1 (April 2022- March 2023)

In order to achieve goals and objectives of the project, *RfP* Thailand and 6 other project partners came up with a series of activities.[3] They are as follows:

| No.	Activity	Participant	Venue/time
1.	**1st Online meeting among partner organizations** (to discuss the overall project activity, roles of each partner, output and outcome and etc)	12 representatives of 7 partner organizations	Online via Zoom for 2 hours July 14th, 2022 At 10.00-11.45 hrs. (BKK time)
2.	**2nd Online meeting among partner organizations** (to discuss the rising ethnoreligious tension in South and Southeast Asia and roles of digital media)	8 representatives of 7 partner organizations	Online via Zoom for 2 hours August 4th, 2022 At 15.30-17.30 hrs. (BKK time)
3.	**1st Focus group discussion/webinar between partner organization and others** (topic: the rising ethnoreligious tension and religious nationalism in South and Southeast Asia, digital media and roles of youth) This is to seek experts' opinion on the ethnoreligious tension, roles of youth as change agent and what types of knowledge and skills	7 representatives from 7 project partners and 3 experts The experts are: **From Indonesia**: Prof. Dr. Arifah Rahmawati, post-graduate school of	Online via Zoom for 2 hours October 5th, 2022 at 16.00-17.30 hrs. (BKK time)

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[3] It should be noted that the number of activities presented here in the report of activity is different from the one written in the project proposal submitted before the approval of the project by ACRP. This is because *RfP* Thailand, the project leader, had adjusted number of activities to go in line with the need and availability of the other 6 project partners. Internet issue in Myanmar posed as an obstacle for online meeting via Zoom. Also, when social media platform-Youth Harmony Whatsapp group was created right after the first meeting ended, all project partners have since communicated via that channel. Hence, the need to have 2 hour online meetings was reduced. However, there was also the addition of the 2nd Focus Group Discussion (FDG) with experts. In the original plan, there was only 1 FDG with experts. After a deliberation among project partners, we decided to have another FDG as to allow more time for our exchange, sharing and discussion with them.

No.	Activity	Participant	Venue/time
	youths need to be better change agent in this digital media era	Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM) Yogyakarta Indonesia **From Thailand**: Lect. Anwar Koma, Faculty of Political Sciences, Prince of Songkhla University, Pattani Campus **From India and South Asia region**: Mr. Shameer Rishad, Secretary-General, *RfP* APIYN	
4.	**2nd Focus group discussion/webinar between partner organization and others** (topic: the rising ethnoreligious tension and religious nationalism in South and Southeast Asia, digital media and roles of youth) This is to seek experts' opinion on the ethnoreligious tension, roles of youth as change agent and what types of knowledge and skills youths need to be better change agent in this digital media era	9 representatives from 7 project partners and 3 experts The experts are **From India**: Keshav Saini, Secretary-General, the Africa-Asia Youth Foundation **From Sri Lanka**: Ms. Nadee Gunaratne, a Human Rights lawyer and activist **From Myanmar**: Mr. Phyo Win Latt, a Myanmar researcher	Online via Zoom for 2 hours October 14th, 2022
5.	**Face-to-face meeting among partner organizations in Thailand** (to finalize the drafted training curriculum and to plan for next step/phase 2)	9 representatives of the 7 partner organizations namely (3 from INEB, 1 From KMF, 1 from IYAP, 1 each from 4 *RfP* National Chapters	12th-15th March, at Neera Retreat Hotel, Nakhon Pathom, Thailand

6. Brief Summary and Outcomes of Activities:

6.1   <u>Brief summary of our 2 online meetings</u>:

The first online meeting
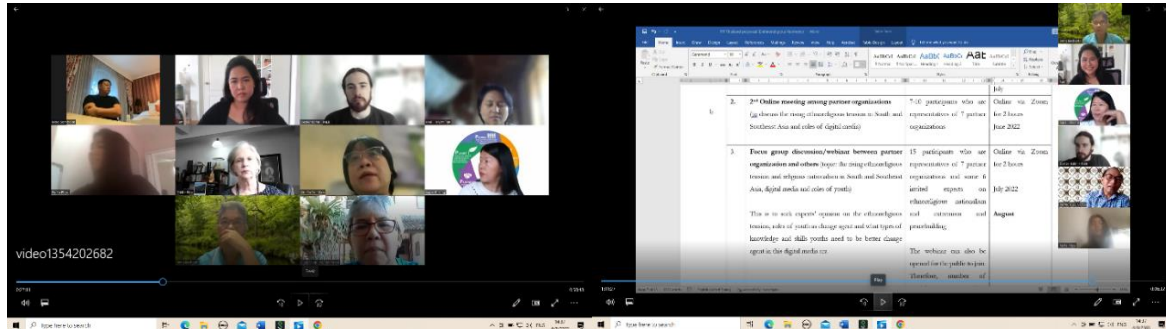
- In this meeting 12 representatives from 7 organizations introduced themselves and said briefly about their current works and whether they have engaged with youth and have done any youth initiatives before. Each has strong interfaith work/experience that is not only about youth. Most have several other target groups too such as religious leaders (INEB, KMF, *RfP* Thailand, *RfP* Phil, *RfP* Indonesia, *RfP* Myanmar) and women (*RfP* Thailand and *RfP* Myanmar supporting and building capacity for women to participate meaningfully in the peace process). The partner organizations also collaborate for peacebuilding initiatives with national, regional and international bodies for humanitarian works and other issues.

- Project's rationale, objective and tentative activities and timeframe were presented by Dr. Yunyasit, Secretary-General of Religions for Peace Thailand. For the first phase of the project, partnership building (between 4 *RfP* national chapters and 3 peacebuilding Ngos) and curriculum design are set as the main goals.

- *RfP* Thailand will take the leading role for the project and will be responsible for executing most of the tasks as well as reporting to ACRP on the progress of the project and financial managing.

- The rest of the partners (*RfP* Myanmar, *RfP* Indonesia, *RfP* Philippines, International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB), Kalayana Mitta Development Foundation (KMF) and International Youth Alliance for Peace (IYAP) will participate in activities listed in the project's plan, give input on issues of concern/request via email and whatsapp and be responsible in the drafting of training curriculum. Each organization will design and provide content for a minimum of 2-3 training sessions based on its expertise and experience.

- It is agreed that a *Whatsapp* group will be created for the 7 partner organizations to communicate and keep in touch. Dr. Yunyasit set up the whatsapp group called *'Youth Harmony for Peace'* later that day.

The second online meeting

- In this meeting the 8 representatives of 7 project partners discussed 4 agendas namely 1) ethno-religious situation in each country and in regions (South and Southeast Asia; 2) roles of digital media in the aforementioned situation; 3) youth and their role(s) in the situation and 4) the organization of 3rd activity in the plan which is the Focus Group Discussion with experts.

- All agree that the current state of ethno-religious interaction/coexistence at national and regional levels is quite worrisome. In Myanmar the increase in power of the military after the 2021 coup worsens the already bad ethnic relationship (especially in Rakhine and Karenni states) and there are reports of members of ethnic and religious minority groups receiving bad treatment or being discriminated or violated by the state authorities. The military also monitor closely the use of social media and it becomes increasingly difficult for peacebuilders to work even for humanitarian assistance tasks. Some express that religion has increasingly intermingled in politics (MaBaTha and 969 movements) and religious actors sometimes create misunderstanding between religious groups or misinformed the members of their own communities. This becomes one of the factors hindering Buddhist-Christian (or other religions) relationship in Myanmar. In Thailand although the situation is not asthe ethno-nationalist movement seems to be on the rise.

- All agreed that content appearing in digital media can be both positive and negative. The term digital media also signals the high speed in which the content travels to reach the mass (a great number of recipients) at one time. Examples on how digital media can create social cohesion or tricker tension: *Black Lives Matter* and *Me Too* movements, Trump's and his supporters' attempt coup, Thai youth using social and digital media for political movement before and after the recent Thai Election, Chadchart (Bangkok gubernatorial election 2022), Anti-Coup movements in Myanmar and how a group of artists in Myanmar use digital media to create social cohesion during the Covid-19 pandemic.

- Youths in South and Southeast Asia have increasingly played a key role as peacebuilders. Skills and knowledge youth peacebuilders in South and Southeast Asia need are as follows: types and usage of digital media, digital media *hygiene*/well-beings, conflict analysis, actor-mapping, leadership skills, facilitation, peace process, critical thinking, inner peace, peace education, peace journalism (related to how to create good content that can promote peaceful coexistence), trends and trajectories of ethno-religious interaction (Buddhist-Muslim one in particular). One of the ways to enhance their peacebuilding skills is to have some role-models (youths who are successful peacebuilders) come to share their stories and experience with our youth trainees.

- Regarding the FGD with experts, all agree that the activity should be organized with in August. This is for us to use the outcome of the exchange with the experts for the

curriculum design (outline) which has to, according to the original plan, come out within August or early September. The date for this activity would be discussed further and concluded in Whatsapp group as soon as possible.

- For the session design of FGD, all partners thought that breaking the expert meeting into 2 sessions, each with 3 experts would be the best way to encourage in-depth discussion. Hence, the project would have now not 1 FDG with experts, but 2 instead. The meeting participants also proposed experts' names: 1 speaker from Digital Reach, Anwar Koma from Pattani Forum, 4 speakers/experts more from Indonesia, Myanmar, the Philippines and Sri Lanka. They agreed that the finalized list of experts to join FGD should come out before 15 August

6.2   <u>Brief summary of our 2 FDG with experts:</u>

FDG format and guiding questions

What did we discuss with them?

The state of ethno-religious interaction in South and Southeast Asia

Positive and negative roles digital media can play in the situation

Youth's role and engagement in the situation

How to enhance youth's capacity to be better agents for change

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- In each FGD, 3 experts were asked with these following guiding questions which were sent to them via email before the date of FGD. Those questions were as follows:

No.	Topic	Guiding questions
1.	Ethno-religious situation in their respective country and in South and Southeast Asia	1) what is the current state of ethno-religious interaction/coexistence in your country? 2) what are factors contributing to that (whether it is peaceful coexistence, not so good-so bad relationship, or rising tension)?
2.	Roles of digital media in the aforementioned situation	1) What does digital media mean in our usage? 2) What kind of roles have those digital media played in your country? 3) any concrete example (s) on how digital media can create social cohesion or tricker tension between ethno-religious groups?
3.	Youths and their role(s) in conflict transformation and peacebuilding as well as how to enhance their capacity	1) what is the current state of youth's participation in conflict transformation and peacebuilding in South and Southeast Asia? Are they playing major or peripheral roles and why? 2) what do youths need (knowledge, skills, and etc) if they wish to play more active role as agents of change/peacebuilders or conflict transformers in your country? 3) If we wish to teach such knowledge and skills to them, what will be the most effective method?

Key take-way points from the two FGD

- Youth in South and Southeast Asia are increasingly engaging in civil society works (peacebuilding, human rights advocacy, democratization, climate and environmental issues and more).
- The increase in youth's participation can be considered as the outcome of the positive tone set by international and regional actors to include youth in the decision-making and planning process/mechanism, the Youth Peace Security (YPS) agenda set by the UN Security Council in particular.
- However, youth need to enhance their capacity in many areas in order to perform better as agents for change.
- The knowledge and skills they need are, for instance, digital and social media literacy, cultural literacy, conflict analysis, peace journalism, critical thinking, mindfulness (inner peace) training.

- Peer-to-Peer and interactive method of instruction should be the best approach for youth training at the present time.

6.3   <u>Brief Summary of our Partnership Building and Youth Training Curriculum Development Meeting, 12th-15th March at Neera Retreat Hotel, Nakhom Pathom, Thailand:</u>

The meeting is 3-day long. It comprises of indoor meetings, panel discussion, and excursion to learn about religious and cultural diversity in Nakhon Pathom and nearby Mahidol University (Salaya Campus) area.

The pre-meeting day (12th March): participants arrived at Neera Retreat Hotel, Nakhom Pathom. Welcome dinner was held at the hotel at 6 pm.

The first day (13th March): the first day of the meeting is dedicated to the presentation on youth and digital media-related activities of each partner organization, the presentation of youth training curriculum draft, the presentation of digital media and its positive and negative impact on the society, and the panel discussion in which 6 representatives from Thailand's leading NGOs working with youths and social change namely Asia Center, WeWatch, Thai Volunteer Service and Salayanion, participateed. In the evening the participants made a trip to Phra Pathom Chedi temple to learn about Theravada Buddhism beliefs and practices.

The second day (14th March): the second day of the program consisted of two sessions: the revision of the draft curriculum and the planning of the project's next phase (April 2023-March 2024)

The last day (15th March): the last day of the program is for the boat trip to various religious and cultural sites located along Nakhon Chaisri river. After the trip, all participants had farewell lunch at Don Wai market, Nakhom Pathom, and then depart for the airport.


Outcome of the meeting

The representatives of 7 organizations had a look at the outline of the curriculum presented by Dr. Yunyasit and later after listening to the presentation regarding digital media and its roles in conflict transformation and peacebuilding in South and Southeast Asia and the panel discussion by 4 Thai youth activists from 3 NGOs, they edited the outline curriculum to better match the need of youth peacebuilders and the current situation in the region. Key points of agreement from the meeting are as follows:

- Digital media can be used as tool either to promote peaceful coexistence and social harmony or to create hatred, distrust, and social fragmentation. **The prominent negative role of digital media seen in South and Southeast Asia is that it often amplifies hate speech** against 1) ethnic and religious groups, 2) foreign nationals, migrant workers and refugees, 3) political ideology and values, and 4) sexual minorities.

- Youth peacebuilders/activists in the region who are advancing for peace, human rights, equality and social harmony still lack knowledge and skills in **1) creating appealing contents, 2) in choosing the right and most effective platform for their content, and in designing a communication strategic plan that can amplify the positive narratives, counter hate speech, and strengthen their existing networks**. The youths also need to enhance their perspectives on social context and different views on situations. Hence, interaction between youths and other generations of peacebuilder/activist is also crucial for their learning process.

- Training is one of the ways to equip these South and Southeast Asian youth peacebuilder/activists with the missing knowledge and skills and to help them to perform better as peacebuilder. The core principle/approach of a good training for Asian youths and youths elsewhere is the **Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)**. GESI is the approach widely adopted by both the public and private sectors across the globe.

- To set GESI as the foundation for the training, it is crucial that **all the modules of the curriculum incorporate GESI in most, if not all, of their sessions**. The first part of the curriculum should be about GESI and the best way for youths to learn about GESI is to reflect on their own identity (identities) and to see whether by having such identity they have been included or excluded in the socio-political or any other spheres of their society. They will be asked later to reflect on their feelings, reactions, and approaches in dealing with those situations.

- The curriculum shall consist of **3 modules** and each module will cover a **2-day period**. The finalized curriculum outline after the second day of exchange and discussion is shown in the table below (please see Annex 1 for more details).

Module No.	Title	Key topics	Method of instruction
1.	Self-empowerment, critical thinking and leadership	Identity, the construction and consolidation of our identities, socialization process, agents for socialization, concept and types of power, gender equality and social inclusion (GESI), concept and notion of inner peace, the interrelatedness between inner peace, interpersonal peace and outer peace, self-esteem and self-worth, critical thinking and its skills, leadership and its skills	-2 days (4 sessions with presentation by trainer (s), class exercise, case studies and plenary discussion
2.	Conflict transformation and its related skills	Concepts of peace and conflicts with emphases on conflicts in	-2 days (4 sessions with presentation by

| Module No.	Title	Key topics	Method of instruction
		regional, national and sub-national context, between state and non-state actors, between conservative and emancipatory political movements, over social development, over resources for public use at community and national level. International and domestic dimensions of conflicts. Mediation, Narrative mediation and Facilitation. Intra and interfaith works. Dialogue and interreligious dialogue. Deep and active listening techniques.	trainer (s), class exercise, case studies and plenary discussion
3.	Digital media literacy	Digital and social media, media timeline past/legacy and future, emerging forms of media, roles and impacts of digital media towards social cohesion, inter-group relation and co-existence in South and Southeast Asia, methods for online information evaluation, fake news identification, content or narrative construction for digital media, key principles of citizen and peace journalism, engagement techniques	-2 days (3 sessions with presentation by trainer (s), class exercise, case studies and plenary discussion and 1 session of field visit to local community to collect materials for individual or group work

- According to Bloom taxonomy, our curriculum will tackle all stages of learning presented

Photo source: https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/blooms-taxonomy/
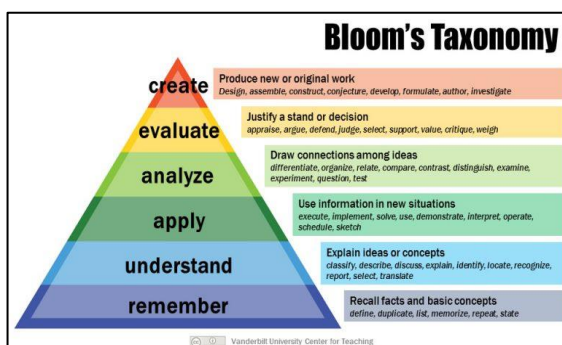
in the picture. However, it will put an emphasis on the top three stages which are **analyze, evaluate, and create**. Case studies will be picked to discussed in class. Trainees will have opportunities to analyze the case and figure out the best solutions for the case. In the third session of Module 3, they will be assigned to create content based on the principle of peace journalism.

- The curriculum will be further developed during the beginning of phase 2 to suit the country context (5 countries). But it will still retain the core idea and topics.
- The 7 project partners discussed and laid out activities for phase 2 and 3 and their timeline. They are as shown in the diagram below.

Youth Digital Harmony for Peace
(Phase 2 and 3)
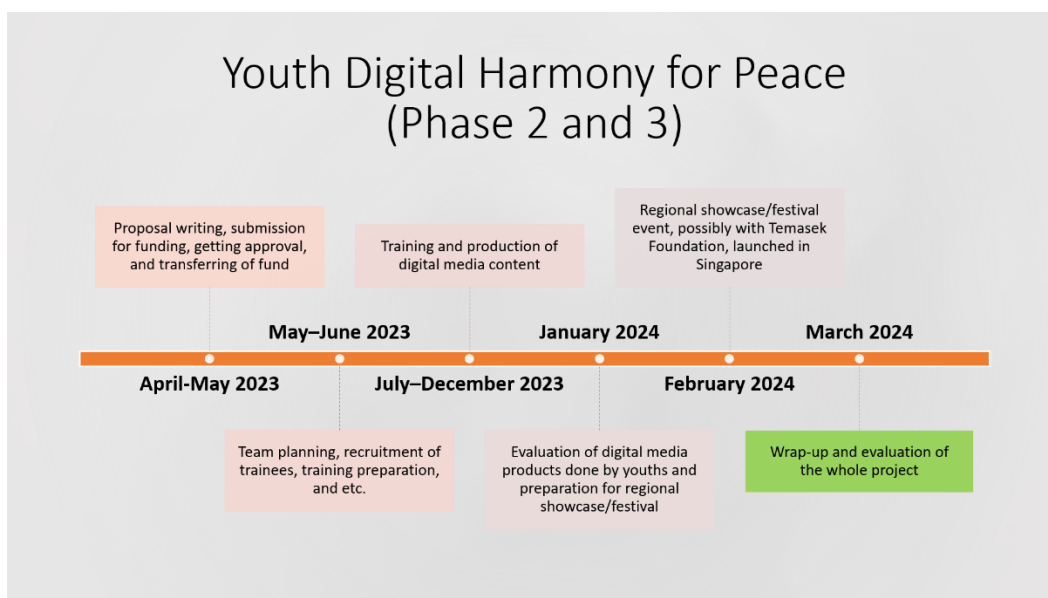
- <u>Issue of funding</u>: to secure fund for phase 2 and 3 of the project is also a challenge. It is still a matter for the project partners to discuss and for *RfP* Thailand to bring the initial proposal for phase 2 and 3 to consult with and seek advice from ACRP. It should also be noted that Temasek Foundation based in Singapore had earlier expressed its interest to fund our regional activities of the youth harmony project. It also wishes to have Singaporean youths joining our platform and learn from their peers in the 5 countries.

7. Conclusion

This 1-year project is one of the first projects in which we have seen 4 *RfP* National Chapters working alongside 3 reputable NGOs with track records in the advancement for peace and social harmony in South and Southeast Asia. This partnership and collaboration address **the multi-stakeholders/partnership approach for action** stressed by Religions for Peace International at the 10th World Assembly in Lindau, Germany in 2019 and also answer directly to the goal **no. 17 Partnership for the Goals** in the Sustainable Development Goals widely adopted by the international community. Throughout the whole 12-month period, the 7 organizations have walked through a journey to foster the knowledge and relationship conducive for their future collaboration in the areas of youth empowerment and peacebuilding/conflict transformation with multi-stakeholder and social inclusion approach, taking into consideration challenges brought by the rapid change in technology of our digital age. The curriculum outline comprised of 3 modules serves as a solid proof of their successful partnership and collaboration. In the next phases of this Youth Digital Harmony for Peace project, with range of activities both at national and regional levels, the 7 organizations will bring their partnership and collaboration to another level, translating them into concrete actions to enhance youths' roles as agent of change, foster social harmony between youths and other generations as well as to highlight positive roles digital media can play towards a just and peaceful society.

Annex 1

Youth Digital Harmony for Peace

A Training Curriculum Outline

March 2023

Module 1

Self-empowerment, critical thinking, and leadership

1. Description (only key words): identity, the construction and consolidation of our identities, socialization process, agents for socialization, concept and types of power, gender equality and social inclusion, concept and notion of inner peace, the interrelatedness between inner peace, interpersonal peace and outer peace, self-esteem and self-worth, critical thinking and its skills, leadership and its skills

2. Objectives: This module is designed to 1) help learners understand better their roots and sense of self, identity of the others, challenges they are facing in performing their roles as youth peacebuilders as well as power dynamics in the context of their works, power structure as existing in the society; 2) boost their self-esteem, self-confidence and inner peace; 3) enhance their critical thinking and leadership skills

3. Module's expected learning outcomes: After completing this module, learners will be able to

1) understand how identity is constructed, types of power, definition of inner peace, critical thinking and leadership
2) Effectively and systematically analyze their current situation, challenges and capacity to deal with those challenges
3) Apply inner peace approaches and critical thinking and leadership skills in both their personal and working realms.

4. Course Schedule: 2 days

Day	Morning	Afternoon
Day 1	Identity- its formation and GESI approach	Power, self-esteem, and inner peace
Day 2	Critical thinking	Leadership

5. Class details:

Class	Title	Content and guiding questions	Class Expected Learning Outcome (CLO)	Instruction Format
1.	Identity-its formation and GESI approach (Gender equality and social inclusion)	• Identity and its formation/construction • Socialization process and its agents • Clash of identities • Challenges tied with an identity *Questions for reflection/discussion:* 1. among your multiple identities, which one does matter the most for you? 2. have you experienced the clash of identities/ or of roles tied with those identities? 3. what is your approach in overcoming those challenges?	After completing this class, learners will be able to: 1) understand better their sense of self, layers of identity, the socialization process and the principles of GESI; 2) identify challenges that come with our identities; 3) understand their own approach in tackling those challenges	-Presentation by trainer (s) -individual exercise -class exercise (small groups and back to a plenary for discussion)
2.	Power, self-esteem and inner peace	• Types of power (power-to, power-over, power-within and power-with) and sources of power • Power analysis • Self-esteem • Spirituality, inner peace as related to interpersonal peace and outer peace *Questions for reflection/ discussion:*	After completing this class, learners will be able to: 1) describe, compare and contrast types of power as well as identify types of power they possess; 2) create power mapping for power dynamics analysis for their context 3) understand ways/approach to create inner peace and boost self-esteem;	-case studies presentation by trainer (s) -class exercise (small groups and back to a plenary for discussion)

Class	Title	Content and guiding questions	Class Expected Learning Outcome (CLO)	Instruction Format
		1. How do you understand and define power in a multi-cultural and religious context? 2. What are your experiences on power dynamics in your own context? 3. How do you express your value/ethics through your work?		
3.	Critical thinking	• components and types of critical thinking and logical thinking • differences between opinion, belief, truth, and knowledge • self-reflexivity • collective view and perspectives _Questions for discussion:_ 1. what does critical thinking mean to you? 2. what are the benefits of critical thinking?	After completing this class, learners will be able to: 1) identify key components and application of critical thinking; 2) apply critical thinking skills to assigned cases	-presentation by trainer (s) -class exercise (small groups and back to a plenary for discussion)
4.	Leadership	• components and types of leadership • decision-making process, consensus building and participation • trust and team building • transparency communication and power dynamics _Questions for discussion:_ 1. what constitute an effective leadership?	After completing this class, learners will be able to: 1) identify key traits and types of leadership; 2) analyze their working situation and identify areas where leadership skills could be applied/utilized	-presentation by trainer (s) -class exercise (small groups and back to a plenary for discussion)

Class	Title	Content and guiding questions	Class Expected Learning Outcome (CLO)	Instruction Format
		2. Of all types of leadership, which one is useful for agent of change identity and work? 3. how do you define your own leadership style?		

6. Class material:

For 1. Identity and its formation

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For 2. Power, self-esteem, and inner peace

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For 3. Critical thinking

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For 4. Leadership

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Module 2

Conflict Transformation and its related skills

1. Description (only key words): Concepts of peace and conflicts with emphases on conflicts in regional, national and sub-national context, between state and non-state actors, between conservative and emancipatory political movements, over social development, over resources for public use at community and national level. International and domestic dimensions of conflicts. Mediation, Narrative mediation and Facilitation. Intra and interfaith works. Dialogue and interreligious dialogue. Deep and active listening techniques.

2. Objectives: This module is designed 1) to introduce learners to the basic perspectives and approaches to conflict transformation; 2) to acquaint learners with the knowledge and trends on current conflicts and violence found in our contemporary societies; 3) to foster learners' skills in conflict analysis, actor-mapping, basic and narrative mediation, facilitation and some skills necessary for a dialogue's organizer and facilitator.

3. Module's expected learning outcomes: After completing this module, learners will be able to

1) Describe approaches, theories and mechanisms used in managing and transforming national, regional, and international conflicts;
2) Effectively and systematically analyze conflicts, contexts as well as challenges in transforming national, regional and international conflicts;
3) Apply conflict transformation perspective and tools to some conflict case studies with creativity and design a conflict transformation plan for such conflict

4. Course Schedule: 2 days

Day	Morning	Afternoon
Day 1	Conflict analysis, understanding key principles in conflict transformation	Conflict transformation for social change: case studies from South and Southeast Asia
Day 2	Mediation and narrative mediation	Communication, deep and active listening skills

5. Class details:

Class	Title	Content and guiding questions	Class Expected Learning Outcome (CLO)	Instruction Format
1.	Conflict analysis, understanding key principles in conflict transformation	• Components of conflict • conflict analysis frameworks • relationship between conflict, peace and violence • conflict transformation approach *Questions for discussion:* 1. what are components/drivers of conflict? 2. How do we perceive conflict and how is conflict related to peace and violence? 3. What are key traits of conflict transformation? 4. How can some crucial components of conflict—such as history, perception, and identity—contribute to conflict formation as well as to conflict transformation and building peace?	After completing this class, learners will be able to: 1) describe components of conflict, function of conflicts, and factors contributing to the escalation and de-escalation of conflict; 2) discuss aspects of peacebuilding; 3) analyze socio-political conflicts and ethno-religious tension and the roles of media in the region based on conflict transformation framework/lens	-Presentation by trainer (s) -class exercise (small groups and back to a plenary for discussion)
2.	Conflict transformation for social change: case studies from South and Southeast Asia	• case study analysis (Aceh-Indonesia, Mindanao-the Philippines, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand) • drivers of conflict and drivers of peace	After completing this class, learners will be able to: 1) identify drivers of conflict and of peace for each ethno-religious case study; 2) analyze approaches to conflict used by state and non-state actors;	-case studies presentation by trainer (s) -class exercise (small groups and

Class	Title	Content and guiding questions	Class Expected Learning Outcome (CLO)	Instruction Format
		• state actor's and civil society's roles, including the media and religious actor, in conflict transformation _Questions for discussion:_ 1. who or what is strong driver of conflict and of peace for those cases? Is there any connection between them? 2. what are roles of state and non-state actors in the situation? How can they work together for conflict transformation and peace? 3. what are key challenges in their collaboration for social change?	3) design strategic plan to achieve conflict transformation for each case	back to a plenary for discussion)
3.	Mediation and narrative mediation	• key characteristics of mediation • roles of mediator • types of narratives and their application to mediation work _Questions for discussion:_ 1. when can we use mediation and narrative mediation for conflict transformation? 2. why do various type of narratives matter in conflict transformation? 3. How does bias impact the mediation process? what are the roles/benefits of bias of the mediator?	After completing this class, learners will be able to: 1) identify key principles and types of mediation as a means for conflict transformation; 2) understand mediation process; 3)apply narrative mediation strategy to assigned case studies	-presentation by trainer (s) -class exercise (small groups and back to a plenary for discussion)
4.	Communication, deep and active listening	• understanding communication • deep and active listening	After completing this class, learners will be able to: 1) understand how the narratives can be effectively communicated through social media	-presentation by trainer (s) -dialogue design class exercise (small

Class	Title	Content and guiding questions	Class Expected Learning Outcome (CLO)	Instruction Format
		• modes of communication, digital media communication *Questions for discussion:* 1. how the narratives can be effectively communicated through digital media? 2. what are the roles of digital media to prevent or to deescalate violence?	2) analyze the roles of digital media to prevent or to deescalate violence; 3) apply communication techniques as tools for mitigating violent narratives online	groups and back to a plenary for discussion)

6. Class material:

For 1. Conflict analysis, understanding key principles in conflict transformation

Required readings:

-Galtung, Johan. 1996. Peace by peaceful means. Oslo: International Peace Research Institute. (Introduction, pp. 1-8)

-Lederach, J.P. 2003. *The little book of conflict transformation*. Intercourse, PA: Good Books.

-Lederach, J.P. and Maises, M. Conflict transformation: a circular journey with a purpose. New Routes. Vol. 14 . Issue 2/2009. Uppsala: the Life and Peace Institute., pp. 7-11. Online: https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/ConfictTransformation_NewRoutes2009.pdf

- Ho-Won Jeong. 2008. Understanding conflict and conflict analysis. London: Sage Publications Ltd. (Chapter 2 Conflict analysis framework, pp. 20-39)

Recommended readings:

-Bartos, O. J. & Wehr, P. 2002. Using Conflict Theory. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

-Corwin, A. Chapter 7 Conflict and critical theories. Online: https://us.corwin.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/13636_Chapter7.pdf

-Lederach, J. P. 2005. The Moral Imagination: the Art and Soul of Building Peace Oxford: Oxford University Press.

-Paffenholz, T. Understanding peacebuilding theory: management, resolution and transformation. New Routes. Vol. 14 . Issue 2/2009. Uppsala: the Life and Peace Institute., pp. 3-7. Online:
https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/ConfictTransformation_NewRoutes2009.pdf
-Deutsch, M. et al. 2006. The handbook of conflict resolution. San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass Inc.
-Wallensteen, P. 2012. Understanding conflict resolution. London: SAGE.
-Galtung, Johan. 2004. Transcend and transform: an introduction to conflict work. London: Pluto Press.

For 2. Conflict transformation for social change: case studies from South and Southeast Asia

Required readings:

-Rupprecht, Kathrin. Separatist conflicts in the ASEAN region: comparing Southern Thailand and Mindanao. In: ASEAS - Österreichische Zeitschrift
-Clement, K. Towards conflict transformation and a just peace. In Austin, A., Fischer, M., and Ropers, N (Eds). Transforming ethno-political conflict: the Berghof handbook. Berlin: VS Verlag Fur Sozialwissenschaften, pp. 241-62.
-Ramsbotham, O, Woodhouse, T., & Miall, H. (Eds.). 2016. Contemporary conflict resolution. (4th ed.). Malden, MA: Polity Press. (Chapter 7 Ending violent conflict: peacemaking. Culture, religion, and conflict resolution, pp. 199-235)
-Ramsbotham, O, Woodhouse, T., & Miall, H. (Eds.). 2016. Contemporary conflict resolution. (4th ed.). Malden, MA: Polity Press. (Chapter 13 Gender and conflict resolution, pp. 360-374)

Recommended readings:

-Amartya Sen. 2006. *Identity and Violence*. London: Penguin Group
-Eller, Jack David. 2006. *Violence and culture: a cross-cultural and interdisciplinary approach*. United States: Thomson Wadsworth
-Parlevliet, M. 2010. Rethinking conflict transformation from a human rights perspective. In Dudouet, V. and Schmelzle, B. (Eds.) *Human rights and conflict transformation: the challenge of just peace.* Berghof Handbook for Conflict Transformation Dialogue Series Issue no. 9. Berlin: Berghof Conflict Research. pp.15-46
- International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank. *Pathways for Peace: inclusive approaches to preventing violent conflict*, 2018, https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/28337

- The Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD). *Guidance on Evaluating Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Activities*: Working Draft for Application Period, 2008, https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/dcdndep/39774573.pdf

-Carter, A. 2012. People power and political change: Key issues and concepts. Abingdon: Routledge.

-Ashe, F. 2010. Gender, nationalism, and conflict transformation. London: Routledge.

-Galtung, J.2008. Globalizing God: Religion, Spirituality and Peace. Kolofon Press: Copenhagen. (Chapter 6 p. 113-133)

-Yeh, Theresa D. 2006. The Way to Peace: A Buddhist Perspective. International Journal of Peace Studies, 11(1) Spring/Summer 2006. pp. 91-112

-Fry, D.P. 2006. The human potential for peace: an anthropological challenge to assumptions about war and violence. New York: Oxford University Press. (Chapter 6 Peace Stories, pp. 71-82)

For 3. Mediation and Narrative mediation

Required readings:

-Moore, C.W. 2014. 4th Edition. The mediation process: practical strategies for resolving conflict. California: Jossey-bass.

-Winslade, J., & Monk, G. 2008. Practicing Narrative Mediation (2nd ed.). Wiley. Retrieved from https://www.perlego.com/book/1010156/practicing-narrative-mediation-loosening-the-grip-of-conflict-pdf (Original work published 2008)

-Lederach, John Paul and Lederach Angela Jill. 2010. *When blood and bones cry out: journeys through the soundscape of healing and reconciliation*. Queensland: University of Queensland Press.

Recommended readings:

- St. John, A. W. 1997. Third Party Mediation over Kashmir: A Modest Proposal. International Peacekeeping 4(4). Winter 1997, pp. 1-30

- Takeshi ODAIRA.2009. The Effectiveness of Third-Party Mediation in Internal Armed Conflicts: Cases of Mindanao and Aceh. The journal of social science 68 [2009], pp. 31-52.

- Whatling. T. 2012. Mediation skills and strategies: A practical guide. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

-Melin, M. M. 2013. When states mediate. Penn State Journal of Law and International Affair V.2 (1) April 2013. Pp. 78-90.

For 4. Dialogue, facilitation and related skills (deep and active listening)

Required readings:

-Ropers, N. 2004. From resolution to transformation: the role of dialogue projects. In Austin, A., Fischer, M., and Ropers, N (Eds). *Transforming ethno-political conflict: the Berghof handbook*. Berlin: VS Verlag Fur Sozialwissenschaften, pp. 256-269.
-Schirch, L.& Campt, D. 2007. *The little book of dialogue for difficult subjects: a practical, hands-on guide*. Intercourse, PA: Good Books. (Chapter 1-5, pp. 5-57)

Recommended readings:

- Swidler, L. 1983. The dialogue decalogue: Ground rules for interreligious dialogue', Journal of Ecumenical Studies, (20:1, Winter 1983.), p.1-3
- Bohm, D. 1996. On Dialogue. Oxon: Routledge (Chapter 2)
- Connor, Jane Marantz and Killian, Dian. 2012. Connecting across differences: finding common ground with anyone, anywhere and anytime. United States: PuddleDancer Press.
-Sintang, S. et al. 2012. Dialogue of life and its significance in inter-religious relation in Malaysia. International Journal of Islamic Thought, vol.2 (Dec), pp. 69-79
-Swidler, L. (n.d.). The dialogue decalogue: Ground rules for interreligious, interideological dialogue. https://www.gvsu.edu/cms4/asset/843249C9-B1E5-BD47-A25EDBC68363B726/dialoguedecalogue.pdf

Module 3

Digital Media Literacy

1. Description (only key words): digital and social media, media timeline past/legacy and future, emerging forms of media, roles and impacts of digital media towards social cohesion, inter-group relation and co-existence in South and Southeast Asia, methods for online information evaluation, fake news identification, content or narrative construction for digital media, key principles of citizen and peace journalism, engagement techniques

2. Objectives: This module is designed to 1) extend and refine learners' ability to use digital technology and communication tools creatively, critically, reflectively, and safely, in support of their roles as agent for change; 2) enhance learners' skills in creating peace-based content; 3) serve as a platform for young peace journalists

3. Module's expected learning outcomes: After completing this module, learners will be able to

1) Develop their digital media literacy skills and use digital technology and communication tools to engage in peacebuilding processes;
2) Learn to distinguish between the multiple sources of information available online and to challenge the views they find there;
3) Create, collaborate and communicate effectively and to understand how and when digital technologies can best be used to support their works for social change

4. Course Schedule: 2 days

Day	Morning	Afternoon
Day 1	Evolution of media and the modern digital media landscape	Content creation/story telling-writing skills/communication strategies
Day 2	Field visit, individual/group work (production of digital media content)	Presentation and critique on individual/group work

5. Class details:

Class	Title	Content and guiding questions	Class Expected Learning Outcome (CLO)	Instruction Format
1.	Evolution of media and the modern digital media landscape	• types of digital media • historical perspective on peacebuilding with media • modern examples of peacebuilding with media and negative examples that escalated violence • economic dimension of digital media (attention economy) *Questions for discussion:* 1. what are the examples of media that create impact on you? 2. what are the challenges and opportunities of media freedom in your experience? 3. how can we cultivate critical thinking/awareness in using social media?	After completing this class, learners will be able to: 1) understand the context of digital media landscape; 2) analyze digital media and engage with digital media for effective peacebuilding; 3) share the skills of critical awareness with their peers, followers, organizations	-Presentation by trainer (s) -class exercise (small groups and back to a plenary for discussion)
2.	Content creation/story telling-writing skills/communication strategies	• digital media techniques for citizen and peace journalism • story-boarding/narrative styles • communication strategies for social media, e-newsletter *Questions for discussion:*	After completing this class, learners will be able to: 1) understand digital media techniques and use them effectively; 2) apply communication strategies in creating content	-case studies presentation by trainer (s) -class exercise (small groups and back to a plenary for discussion)

Class	Title	Content and guiding questions	Class Expected Learning Outcome (CLO)	Instruction Format
		1. what media traps your attention the most? 2. what is the most important story for you to tell? 3. is the content inclusive e.g. represent ethno-religious or other marginalized group? 4. what organization do you think has the best communication strategy?		
3.	Field visit, individual/group work (production of digital media content)		After completing this class, learners will be able to create new content/narratives for digital media usage with principles from peace journalism	-presentation by trainer (s) -class exercise (small groups and back to a plenary for discussion)
4.	Presentation and critique on individual/group work		After completing this class, learners will be able to critique content/narratives for digital media usage with principles from peace journalism	-presentation by trainer (s) -class exercise (small groups and back to a plenary for discussion)

6. Class material:

For 1. Types and roles of digital media as driver of conflict and of peace

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For 2. Evaluating online information

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For 3. Content creation/story telling-writing skills

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For 4. Digital media techniques

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