

**Newsletter Special Edition:
Outcomes of the Network Capacity
Development Project,
UNOY Peacebuilders
DECEMBER 2006**



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1. MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Dear friends,

The past months have been exciting months for UNOY Peacebuilders. In this special newsletter we would like to inform you step by step about the final outcomes of the project and implications of changing procedures and rules the coming year. We went through the final stages of our Network Capacity Development Project, which led to decisions on a new structure, membership procedure and functioning of our organisation. In cooperation with members, board and external experts a draft proposal was designed based on field-research, in-depth discussions and surveys analysing the needs of our members. We would like to THANK everyone who contributed to the process and ask you to remain involved and active to keep developing our network!

We wish you all the best for 2007 and lots of strenght and energy as dreams and challenges.

**On behalf of the UNOY Team,
Franny Parren - Editor**

**2. THE Network Capacity Development Project:
AN INTRODUCTION**

For quite some time an urgent need was articulated by UNOY- staff and members for a more clear distribution of roles, better accountability systems, more ownership and responsibility from members and a better long-term



**Maria Kooijman , founder,
explaining the history since
1989**

planning. In addition, since its founders has to face a lack of resources, which is a continuous challenge in the communication field and its members. The current Project 2006 was designed to address these challenges at the beginning of 2006 and was confirmed by the Dutch government from PSO, Capacity Building in Development Countries (www.pso.nl) in May 2006. Objectives were to identify specific needs of the members, to analyse and improve the network structure and to come up with a concrete proposal for an improved network's structure, management systems, style and organisational culture. The broader goal of the project



**Meeting in Nairobi, Kenya,
August 2006**



**Seminar in Crimea,
Ukraine, August 2006**

This mapping was followed by a more in-depth analysis of the needs and challenges faced by our member organizations in different contexts. Surveys have been conducted by phone and email and two regional meetings and visits in Nairobi, Kenya and Crimea, Ukraine were organised. In addition, a three month's field research in West Africa was conducted (visits to Ghana, Sierra Leone and Liberia). The outcomes of the research have been compiled in a report which has been presented to some of our members, UNOY staff and board and external experts in an Expert Meeting in October 2006. This meeting was the third phase of the NCDP and aimed to share the outcomes of the research and to construct a concrete proposal for a new network's structure and improvements. The final, and most important step of the project will be the implementation of the proposal and the on-line sharing of results with our members in online forums. Presently, the results of the research and of the project are being edited into a publication.

3. RESEARCH AND OUTCOMES

The research that has been conducted was two-fold. On the one hand an in-depth analysis of the organisational structure was done, focusing on existing strategies, communication and decision making within the current network and needs and challenges as defined by staff members and board members of the international secretary in The Hague. On the other hand, a research has been conducted with a broader spectrum, analysing the "lessons learned" considering the opinions on networking of members of UNOY Peacebuilders and other youth networks. Some important challenges faced by the staff and board in the secretary were the lack of financial resources and the high turnover of volunteers, a



**Fred (Liberia, member), Sahro
(Somalia/NL, board member)
Franny (NL/secretariat)**

was to strengthen the coordination among youth organizations working for peace and conflict transformation, so as to synergize their initiatives and increase their impact.

The project consisted of four different phases to come to a concrete proposal on a participatory and constructive way. In the first half of 2006 staff members of the international secretary have identified all actors that in some way are involved in the UNOY network or Youth peace work in general. Core strengths and limitations of (possible) partners and members were mapped.

ineffective division of tasks amongst different regional network coordinators and a gap between expectations as defined by the members and the real means and resources of the secretary to come up to these expectations. One of the most important advantages of networking as defined by member organisations and other youth organisations were the sharing of knowledge, solidarity, resources and contacts and the organisation of shared projects. Main challenges mentioned were a lack of financial resources, an unclear communication and decision making strategy, a lack of ownership of youth and a lack of impact of networking on the grass-roots level.

4. EXPERT MEETING: 16-20 OCTOBER



Participants of the Experts Meeting Schoorl, October 2006

On 16-20 October 2006 an Expert Meeting was organised to share the outcomes of the research among members of the network,

members of the board and former and current staff members to come to proposals for the network's improvement. The meeting took place in the Doopsgezind Broederschapshuis in Schoorl, the Netherlands during 16-20 October 2006. 30 participants attended the meeting, including members of the UNOY network, members of the board, staff members, and external experts.

By means of different participatory exercises and focus-groups discussions a dialogue was facilitated on the improvement of the UNOY network. The first two days the participants reflected on the experiences, needs and the current organizational framework of the network and the last two days they discussed new strategies and drafted a first version of a new policy

document, of which the most important conclusions are presented in this newsletter.

5. MAIN OUTCOMES AND FOLLOW UP

The presented conclusions are the outcome of the NCDP and aim to improve the work of the network on a step by step approach. The presented structure will be implemented on a pilot basis for a period of 1 year and a half and will be reviewed during the second half of 2008.

Mission and functions

The mission of UNOY Peacebuilders stays the same. We strive to link up young peoples initiatives for peace in a global network of young peacebuilders, to help empower their capacities and to help increase the effectiveness of their actions. UNOY Peacebuilders, however, will focus

on two key functions: *capacity building* and *advocacy*. In addition, UNOY engages in a range of additional activities as supporting measures, consisting of networking, sharing of information, research, fundraising and administrative support. To fulfill these functions, different teams will be set up that will be working together in coordination with the management team, the regional network coordinators, the project coordinators and the members.

Capacity building contains regional and local trainings, e-learning and on-line activities and the promotion of sharing knowledge and experiences within the network.. At least once a year a regional training seminar will be organized in cooperation with action partners, and approximately twice a year for young people in the Netherlands. [Of course, that if there is commitment in our members and funding, the network should strive to increase the number of training seminars organized] The overall objectives of the trainings are to strengthen the skills of the members to initiate or improve peacebuilding projects with youth and/or enhance advocacy skills. They will be characterized by a non formal educational approach, will build on the experience of participants and will motivate participants to organize follow up projects. The implementation of trainings is on project basis and will be done by the training team of UNOY Peacebuilders. In the case of regional and global trainings the team members will work together with the members in the region.



Stefan van Swaluw, African Child Policy Forum, external advisor

Advocacy contains projects to promote the role of youth in fostering a Culture of Peace and will aim to influence the agendas of governmental, inter-governmental institutions such as the UN and the EU, and non-governmental organisations in relation to the involvement youth as protagonists and partners. The main Advocacy projects are the a) Youth Advocacy Team Actions in New York, which aims to highlight the role of youth in the Decade for a Culture of Peace and its related programmes, and b) the Peace It Together Campaign, which aims to gather as many youth actions for peace as possible carried out during the decade. Advocacy is coordinated and implemented on project basis by an advocacy team at the office in The Hague. Members of the UNOY Peacebuilders assist on regional level.

Organisational structure UNOY Peacebuilders structure should strive to be flexible, inclusive and open, and at the same time, consider the limitations in human, financial and other resources that are inherent to a voluntary youth-led organisation. UNOY Peacebuilders functions on the principle of added value to its members. Its work supports and complements members' activities, drawing their specific expertise and joining efforts in areas that are better dealt with in cooperation. Activities are initiated by members and the secretariat, led and supported by a small international team based at the secretariat based in The Hague, The Netherlands, guided by an International Steering Group, and advised and



David Grant, NonViolent Peace Force, external advisor

supervised in issues of financial and legal nature by a Board.

International Steering Group (ISG): Consists of 7 members (individuals up to 30 years of age at the moment of application): 4 active young people within member organisations coming from different regions, 2 from the secretariat and 1 of the board. They are proposed by the members of the network and the secretariat responding to an open call and selected for a period of two years based on criteria like experience, qualifications, age, geographical and gender balance. The main function of the international steering group (ISG) is to make strategic decisions on planning of activities, finances and staff composition, and decide priorities and thematic orientation, taking into consideration members and affiliates needs, concerns and proposals. Board and secretariat make decisions during the year and consult the ISG for issues as relevant, specially if it concerns an event or project in a specific region.

Board: Is the legal body of the foundation and consists of 5 members based in the Netherlands. Its main function is to approve overall plans and budgets, overview financial administration, in consultation with the ISG. Board members are selected on the basis of criteria which includes: gender and age balance, qualifications and experience in the field of peace building, institutional development and financial management and past involvement in UNOY Peacebuilders activities.

Secretariat: Composed of interns and volunteers, young people who commit to the organisations for a longer term and are selected on the basis of merit, qualifications, experience, language proficiency, motivation, gender and cultural balance. Whenever possible, the team should strive for geographical balance and inclusion of young people who have been active in member organisations. The team is led by a management team consisting of 2-4 persons (Presently there are only two members of the management team, *International Coordinator* and a *Projects and Communications Coordinator*, which are paid internship positions. Interns receive an allowance to cover their basic living expenses equivalent to a students' allowance in The Netherlands). If fundraising efforts are successful, these internship positions should become paid positions as the professionalisation of the organisation continues. The team is further composed of project coordinators and regional network coordinators. Regional network coordinators facilitate the flow of information within a



Menno Ettema, new international coordinator and Ditta Dolejsiova, external facilitator and expert.

particular region and help organise events and projects. The main function of the secretariat is to coordinate and implement the activities of the network and provide

administrative support in cooperation with the members and in consultation with the ISG and the board.

FUTURE: It was proposed to create a **Pool of resource person**, persons with expertise in the fields of peace building, conflict transformation, youth work and related.

A data-base will indicate their field of expertise; geographical areas and time-availability. It is planned to develop this proposal from 2008 onwards.

Membership UNOY Peacebuilders adopts a socio-cultural approach to define youth. However, given the nature of our international work and for practical reasons, contact persons of member organizations, participants of activities, staff and members of the ISG should be up to 30 years of age at the moment of applications. Exceptions are possible but only if necessary and relevant. The membership criteria will contemplate the following different actors:

Members: Youth-led peace organizations, groups or youth led groups within adult peacebuilding organisations, at least a contact person should be able to work in English and selected on the basis of their thematic orientation, activities, experiences, interests and on geographical balance. Members must have the capacity to participate in and benefit from the work of UNOY Peacebuilders, complete an application form including information about their activities, their motivation to become members and letters of reference. Member organisations should appoint two contact persons under the age of 30, one female and one male and pay an annual fee in peace tokens, that is, services and activities for the network. **Action partners.** When members implement activities together with the secretariat, they become action partners for the duration of the project. Action partners are decided upon by the ISG and approved by the board, considering the project proposals in line with the strategic plan. **Affiliates:** Individuals and/or organisations who support the mission and vision of the UNOY Peacebuilders and work in related areas. Affiliates receive information electronically and may apply to participate in UNOY Peacebuilders activities.

Membership lasts for 1 year. At the end of each year an evaluation should be conducted. Renewing membership will be automatically considered, unless the organisation communicates that they do not want to continue being part of the network or they did not fulfilled their commitments. New applications for membership will be also considered.

IMPORTANT! In January 2007, a call for application will be sent by the Secretariat. In following years, the secretariat will receive applications during the whole year and will consider all applications once a year. For more information, and to request the full documents, please, contact us! Or visit our website: www.unoy.org (online February 2007)

SUPPORT UNOY PEACEBUILDERS UNOY Peacebuilders needs your help to develop and grow in outreach and strength, either in terms of finances, materials or work. Your donation of any size will be used to train and enhance the capacity of young people to engage effectively in building peace. You can financially contribute by making a deposit in our bank account: ABN-AMRO Bank; ACCOUNT: 55 40 70 294; IBAN: NL91ABNA0554070294; BIC: ABNANL2A

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