



# A Survey of Civil Society Peace Education Programmes in South Asia

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## FOREWORD

The Educational Policy Research Series is intended to document and disseminate our research into a wider community of educators and educationists. The mission of the Education for Peace Initiative is to teach peace, but educational interventions, however perfectly planned, will not work unless they are informed by an understanding of the structure, functioning, culture, specific needs and context of a given school system. Educational policy research also ensures that our peace work is not isolated from other educational challenges and that we can engage in a sustained way with issues and debates in the field.

### **About this project**

Starting in August 2008, with grant support from the Sir Ratan Tata Trust, Prajnya commissioned three studies, preparatory to the launch of its Education for Peace Initiative. These studies were intended to prepare the ground for our cornerstone project, Teaching Peace and to form the basis for our future engagement with educational policy issues in specific contexts. Three questions formed the terms of reference for the studies:

1. Who makes educational policy and how is it implemented in Tamil Nadu?
2. Who engages with education and in particular, with peace and conflict resolution education?
3. How do we implement the peace education guidelines in the National Curriculum Framework prepared by NCERT?

The first study from this project was published in this series in April 2009, *Mapping Educational Policy Structures and Processes in Tamil Nadu*. It was envisaged as a map for EPI to navigate, as we enter this labyrinth of powers, functions and resource distribution.

### **About this study**

The objective of the study at hand, undertaken by Anupama Srinivasan, was to identify civil society organizations and individuals who are working in the area of peace and conflict resolution education and understand the work that they have been doing. We wanted to connect with and locate ourselves within a network of similar enterprises so we could learn from them and share our experiences as we grow.

The exercise acquired a life of its own, and the researcher reached out through travel, telephonic conversations and online chats to a large number of actors in the region. We are delighted and confident that we have set in motion a community-building process that will help us all move in a better-informed way towards our shared objective of building peace.

**Education for Peace @ Prajnya**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper surveys the engagement of civil society with peace education in South Asia, specifically focusing on initiatives in the classroom. The main objective of the study was to identify the key players engaged in peace education efforts and describe the nature of their interventions, thereby beginning to construct the story of peace education in the region.

In-depth interviews with peace educators and organisations were the primary source of data for this study. A limitation of this study was the reliance on the Internet to identify and connect with organisations; this was particularly unsuccessful in Nepal and Bangladesh. It is possible that there are other peace programmes that have not been documented online or lack a cyber presence.

The main findings of the study are:

- There *are* peace education programmes in the region: many in number and diverse in character. The numbers inevitably vary from one country to another, with relatively more programmes in India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, virtually none in Bhutan and the Maldives, and a paucity of information on any possible programmes in Bangladesh and Nepal.
- There are many types of peace education projects across the region: individual schools with curricula that reflect an overall ethos of peace; NGOs that either work in classrooms themselves or train teachers to apply their peace education curricula; or peace organisations that have built and support a network of schools to incorporate specific projects in their classrooms.
- Peace education programmes were initiated for several reasons but primarily in response to specific phases of violence.
- Curriculum development and teacher training are the two main activities for the majority of programmes.
- The content of peace education programmes have expanded to include issues of social security as well as traditional conflict resolution themes.
- Each country faces its own unique challenges: in Bhutan and the Maldives, the perception that peace education is not necessary; in Sri Lanka, the lack of opportunity and freedom for civil society to operate; in Pakistan, the need to find ways to introduce peace education into public schools and madrasas; and in India, making peace education accessible to young people of all ages and backgrounds and drawing together the many dimensions of peace and human rights education into a cohesive movement of sorts.
- Across the region, sustainability is a major concern, primarily because of the difficulties of finding long-term funding for peace education.

This paper is an attempt to bring together some strands of these peace education narratives; but it must be acknowledged that the story of peace education in South Asia has still not been fully told. We have much more to learn from and share with each other, of both our successes and failures. Until then, chances are that we will continue to reinvent the wheel every time a peace education programme is launched.

# I SETTING THE CONTEXT

Establishing lasting peace is the work of education;  
all politics can do is keep us out of war.

*Maria Montessori*<sup>1</sup>

In 1973, Johan Galtung wrote that there was a real demand from schools, colleges and universities around the world for developing peace curricula (Galtung 1973). Twenty seven years later, at the beginning of the new millennium, Betty Reardon observed that peace education appeared to be on the verge of public acceptance (Reardon 2000). In 2009, we can probably claim that there has rarely been a more conducive environment for educators to introduce and sustain peace education in classrooms and communities.

This paper surveys the engagement of civil society with peace education in South Asia, specifically focusing on initiatives in the classroom. The primary objective of the study was to identify the key players engaged in peace education efforts, outline their professed aims, describe the nature of their interventions and thereby begin to construct the story of peace education in the region.

## WHAT IS PEACE EDUCATION?

The study of peace was initially thought to be necessary to help prevent war, as another tool in the anti-war arsenal (Reardon 2000). It was intended to contribute to the “dismantling of structures of violence and the promotion of peace” (Bajaj, forthcoming). The first practitioners of peace began by debating the causes and repercussions of war; in Japan for instance, an early form of peace education was “anti-atomic bomb” education.

In recent times, peace education has come to be associated more closely with the concept of positive peace, which implies the presence of justice, as opposed to negative peace or the absence of war. The goals of peace education have accordingly widened to recognise and address the many manifestations of both structural and cultural violence.

In addition to the politically organized violence of war and various forms of repression, and the structural violence of neocolonial economic institutions there is, as well, social violence such as racism, sexism and religious fundamentalism, and the cultural violence of patriarchal institutions, blood sports, and the glorification of violent historical events in national holidays and the banalization of violence in the media (Reardon 2000: 8).

In the “History of Peace Education,” Harris (2008) contends that we have practiced peace education informally for centuries through the conflict resolution strategies of indigenous peoples and peaceful communities, which have been passed on from one generation to another. He identifies religion, including the teachings of Buddha, Baha’u’llah, Jesus Christ,

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<sup>1</sup> Sourced from <http://www.montessoritraining.blogspot.com/2008/05/memorial-day-peace-education-in.html>

Mohammed, Moses, and Lao Tse as one of the earliest sources of guidelines for teaching peace to others, observing that religion has contributed to both war and peace.

Harris traces the global history of peace education from Comenius in the seventeenth century to the growth of peace movements in Europe through the nineteenth century and preceding the First World War, from the rise of the School Peace League in the early twentieth century across the United States to the contribution of Jane Addams, John Dewey and Maria Montessori to the discipline.

Other scholars like Bartlett (2008) argue that the nature and methods of peace education programmes draw on several key aspects of Paulo Friere's philosophy of education. This includes the basic premise that education can be used to enhance an individual's potential and liberate her; moreover, peace education clearly adopts the problem-posing approach to education, as opposed to the banking model that encourages rote learning.

Closer home, Mahatma Gandhi was one of the first to integrate ideas of social justice with a "state of peace," by recognising the potential dangers of poverty, inequality and discrimination. Not surprisingly, peace educators from around the world have continued to draw on his philosophy of non-violence. Surya Nath Prasad (1998) draws our attention to the impact of Gandhian thought on the initial stages of the development of peace research in India, with the establishment of several organisations including Gandhi Shanti Prathishthan in 1959, the Gandhian Institute of Studies in 1961, the Centre for Gandhian Studies and Peace Research also in 1961, and the Peace Research Centre in 1971. In the decades since, several more organisations have been established, many at leading universities, all dedicated to studying and explaining the relevance of Gandhi's ideas to generations of students.<sup>2,3</sup>

Globally, there has been a similar (if more gradual) increase in the number of organisations committed to peace research and education. The University for Peace (UPeace), and its Graduate School of Peace and Conflict Studies, based at Costa Rica, and with a mandate from the United Nations offers several courses including Masters degrees in Environmental Security and Peace, Gender and Peace Building, Peace Education and Media, Peace and Conflict Studies, to name a few.<sup>4</sup>

The United Nations Children's Fund or UNICEF regularly offers support to peace education projects around the world and produces relevant literature and curriculum, including teaching manuals.<sup>5</sup> UNICEF'S research particularly draws attention to the impact of armed

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<sup>2</sup> More recently, Tint and Prasad (2008) have argued that Indian academics have been slow to pursue the obvious connections between Gandhi's work and peace studies.

<sup>3</sup> Surya Nath Prasad (1998) notes that despite this proliferation of organisations, few are dedicated to the explicit study and practice of peace education. This could well be true, even today. In subsequent chapters, I will contend that despite the large number of organisations dedicated to the study of peace, there is no concerted peace education movement that has made its presence felt in classrooms around India.

<sup>4</sup> [www.upeace.org](http://www.upeace.org)

<sup>5</sup> [www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org)

conflict on young people. Their peace education programmes inevitably incorporate the framework of the Millennium Development Goals, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Education for All Dakar Framework of Action.

Since 1981, the prestigious United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) prize for peace education has been awarded annually to recognise individuals and organisations that have made valuable contributions to peace education.<sup>6</sup> Additionally, UNESCO launched the Associated Schools Project Network (ASPnet) in 1953, espousing peace education values and ideals. ASPnet is currently a network of some 7,900 educational institutions in 176 countries (Page, 2008).

The Peace Education Center<sup>7</sup>, based at Teachers College in Columbia University is considered a pioneering organisation in research, teaching and training on peace education. The centre also coordinates the initiatives of the International Institute on Peace Education (IIPE) and Community-based Institutes on Peace Education (CIPE).<sup>8</sup>

In 1993, a group of 46 young people, including Israelis, Palestinians, Jordanians, and Egyptians, were brought together at a camp in the United States for a cultural encounter programme. That was the genesis of the Seeds of Peace programme that has continued to work globally, encouraging young citizens to confront contentious personal and political issues.<sup>9</sup>

Other key players include the International Peace Research Association<sup>10</sup> that brings together and facilitates a network of peace researchers, and publishes the Journal of Peace Education through the Peace Education Commission; and the Peace Education Network<sup>11</sup> which hosts the PEN Resource Catalogue, a repository of lessons, games, exercises and other curricula for peace educators.

## **WORKING DEFINITIONS**

### **Peace education**

Reardon (2000) notes that there has almost been a reluctance to define peace education too precisely; one reason for this is the multi-disciplinary nature of the field. Nevertheless, the various approaches have something in common: “the hope of strengthening human rights and reducing violence in the global society” (Reardon 2000: 4). In other words, peace education comprises a “variety of sub-fields loosely held together by a few common purposes” (Reardon 2000: 3).

Conceptually, peace education lends itself to a broad range of understandings in different parts of the world. Indeed, around the world, civic education, moral education, value

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<sup>6</sup> [www.unesco.org](http://www.unesco.org)

<sup>7</sup> [www.tc.edu/peaceED](http://www.tc.edu/peaceED)

<sup>8</sup> [www.i-i-p-e.org](http://www.i-i-p-e.org)

<sup>9</sup> [www.seedsofpeace.org](http://www.seedsofpeace.org)

<sup>10</sup> [www.ipraweb.org](http://www.ipraweb.org)

<sup>11</sup> [www.peaceeducation.org.uk](http://www.peaceeducation.org.uk)

education, citizenship education, education for democracy, human rights education, education for development and education for peace are all practised in different settings.<sup>12</sup> Each of these is a distinct discipline but inconsistent usage has considerably blurred the boundaries between them.<sup>13</sup> Ian Harris argues that these are actually five distinct types of peace education: human rights education, conflict resolution education, development education, international education and environmental education (Harris, no date).

...peace education brings together multiple traditions of pedagogy, theories of education and international initiatives to help teachers and students understand the complex dynamics of international affairs and the various forms of violence and its alternatives.... In the classroom, it takes a variety of forms including courses on violence prevention emphasizing peacekeeping strategies, conflict resolution programs and courses on non-violence that build in students' minds a consciousness that desires peace (Desai 2004).

In other words, peace education is the "process of teaching people about the threats of violence and strategies for peace" (Harris, no date).

*Peace education is a process whereby people learn about the dangers of violence, develop their capacities to counter violence and build sustainable peace in their communities.*

It is evident that a peace education programme is defined and even determined by its specific contexts: geographical, political, social, psychological, economic, cultural, demographic and environmental, among others. As a result, peace education also embraces a range of meanings, within the constraints of one overarching objective: usually, to achieve and sustain peace. More simply, we can argue that the process of peace education is two-fold: teaching people (adults, men, women, children) about the potential dangers of violence (in its many manifestations), helping them develop their capacities to counter violence and

thereby enabling them to build (and sustain) peaceful communities.

## Civil society

Writing about Bhutanese civil society, Galay proposes this conceptual understanding

... civil society, public space, is the arena in which the institutions of cooperation and trust among the people and the ability of communities to organise themselves for common purposes, outside the control of state or church, exist (Galay 2001: 1).

Civil society includes individuals, organisations and communities that function *outside* the purview of the state or government. In other words, civil society lies at the "intersection

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<sup>12</sup> See Betty Reardon on peace education theory at <http://en.heidi-barathieu-brun.ch/wp-archive/469>.

<sup>13</sup> It must be noted that in some countries with ongoing and escalating conflicts, NGOs have sometimes chosen to deliberately implement peace education programmes under a different label. Sri Lanka is one such example.

between the family (private sphere), the market (economic sphere) and the state (political sphere)” (Dudouet 2007).

*..civil society [is] ... a gathering of non-state players comprising of heterogeneous individuals and organisations, with a clear agenda that might either be aligned with or against that of the state.*

Civil society might comprise non-state players, but nevertheless, they need to be able to work *with* the state, particularly in the specific context of public sector education. Very often, civil society needs explicit permission from authorities to begin its activities; this can often be problematic where the goals of civil society are not aligned with that of the state. In Sri Lanka, for instance, civil society groups found it difficult to introduce peace programmes at a time when the government was pushing for a military solution.

For the purposes of this study, I have understood civil society to be a gathering of non-state players comprising of heterogeneous individuals and organisations, with a clear agenda that might either be aligned with or against that of the state.

## **SOUTH ASIA: FROM CONTEXT TO FORM AND CONTENT**

Virtually every country in South Asia has grappled with conflict and its consequences for decades, right up to and including the present moment. This is the historical and political context for the numerous peace programmes in the region.

Bangladesh has witnessed “periodic outbursts of violence or prolonged relatively low-key armed confrontations” (Peiris 1998) since its rebirth in 1971, linked to the processes of state formation and increasing poverty in the country. Despite its relatively insulated existence, Bhutan continues to grapple with issues of identity; the Bhutanese refugee population, many of them expelled by the government in the 1990s, is believed to be the highest per capita refugee population in the world today (Global Youth Connect 2009). In India, fragile relations with Pakistan and China aside, the rise and spread of communalism is a growing concern. Several peace education projects have been established in direct response to the Bombay riots of 1992-93; Godhra and its aftermath in Gujarat in 2002; and the violence in Kandhamal, Orissa in 2007-08. In Pakistan, the vulnerability of the political classes, the ambitions of the powerful military, the impact of religious forces, ethnic and sectarian clashes as well as the rise, fall and rise of the Taliban are all factors keeping the nation on tenterhooks. In addition, Pakistani civilians are increasingly caught in “a tripartite tug of war between the Taliban, Pakistani government and the US war on terror” (Rajagopalan 2009). The smallest country in South Asia, Maldives, is often said to be the only one that has remained free from any prolonged armed conflict. But the atoll-nation continues to make a slow transition to democracy, with political parties only legalised in 2005. In Nepal, over the last decade or more, the increasingly violent armed conflict between the government and security forces and the Maoist movement has extracted a heavy toll on its civilian

population.<sup>14</sup> The new government faces the immediate task of framing a new constitution for the country by 2010.<sup>15</sup>

But all of this is only part of the story: the many visible manifestations of prolonged conflicts. That *real* peace is more than the absence of war is now an accepted premise; achieving peace is therefore about more than preventing war or violence. Direct violence is only one of the three points of the triangle of violence, as conceptualised by Galtung (1973)<sup>16</sup>. That the region has borne witness to several demonstrations of direct violence is evident from the above examples. However, the other ends of the triangle, structural and cultural violence are equally potent, and can contribute to an increase in direct violence. For example, schools and hospitals – the most basic of infrastructure - have been badly damaged in the north and east of Sri Lanka by the war. This could result in poor access to schooling and health care for sections of the population. It is a vicious cycle of deprivation and violence.

...the direct violence, physical and/or verbal is visible as behaviour. But human action does not come out of nowhere; there are roots. Two roots are indicated: a culture of violence (heroic, patriotic, patriarchic, etc.), and a structure that itself is violent by being too repressive, exploitative or alienating; too tight or too loose for the comfort of people (Galtung 1973).

Structural violence encompasses several forms of inequality and discrimination in a society, resulting in an overall poor quality of life, denial of basic needs and an individual's human rights. In many parts of South Asia, caste and religion continue to divide people – the revival of religious fundamentalism in India is of particular concern. Women continue to be discriminated against, facing violence from birth, and often before it, through sex-selective abortions and female infanticide.<sup>17</sup>

A society that colludes in the unequal distribution of wealth, food, and other resources, that denies its people access to education and health care, that discriminates on the basis of race, religion, caste, gender, ethnicity, class, age or sexuality is guilty of fostering structural violence. It must be noted that South Asia is home to half the world's poor, with large numbers of people living below the poverty line.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> For a detailed analysis, see

<http://www.irinnews.org/InDepthMain.aspx?InDepthId=11&ReportId=33611>

<sup>15</sup> For a detailed backgrounder on the region, see <http://satp.org/>

<sup>16</sup> Galtung claimed that Gandhi inspired the conceptualisation of structural violence, through his (Gandhi's) approach to violence that was aimed at the system rather than individuals (from Grewal 2003).

<sup>17</sup> see

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/SOUTHASIAEXT/0,,contentMDK:21654144~pagePK:146736~piPK:146830~theSitePK:223547,00.html>

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<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/SOUTHASIAEXT/0,,pagePK:158889~piPK:146815~theSitePK:223547,00.html>

Galtung defined cultural violence as “any aspect of a culture that can be used to legitimise violence in its direct or structural form” (1990). This would include traditions that discriminate against specific communities in a region or women or children.

These many dimensions of violence interact, mutually reinforce each other, and provide the subject matter and challenge for peace education. For example, language, inside or outside the classroom, can serve as a violent weapon used to control, manipulate, humiliate, intimidate, terrorize, oppress, exploit, and dominate other human beings (Allen 2007).

These are legitimate concerns in South Asia today. Stories of corporal punishment in classrooms are far from uncommon and are believed to be very much underreported;<sup>19</sup> children are also vulnerable to other forms of violence including sexual and mental abuse. Similarly, under the guise of protecting tradition and culture, gay men, lesbians, transgender and transsexuals and many others are subjected to discrimination on a daily basis, in their homes, at their workplaces and in public spaces, thus denying them their right to lead lives of dignity.

It is for peace educators to acknowledge that their programmes must not neglect these fundamental causes of violence; the job is not done when a war ends. It is for these reasons that I argue for the introduction of peace education in every country in the region, irrespective of whether there is an ongoing war or conflict. Peace education must be in for the long haul, in even relatively peaceful societies like Bhutan.

## **ABOUT THIS STUDY**

The main objective of this study is to examine the engagement of civil society groups with peace education in South Asia. I began with these rather straightforward questions:

- Are there peace education programmes in schools and colleges in South Asia?
- If so, where are they based, and why were they launched?
- What are the issues that peace education programmes focus on (i.e., the content of peace education)?
- What are the specific processes and activities within a peace education programme (the form of peace education)?

I began the research process by surveying a selection of literature from the vast body of writing on this subject, as well as its concurrent disciplines (peace studies, conflict resolution, etc.). My next step was to identify organisations with peace education programmes and projects, primarily through desk-based research. I then conducted e-mail or telephone interviews with a select number of organisations and individuals, at least partly based on their responsiveness and willingness to share their stories. I used a questionnaire that I had developed as a starting point for these conversations. I was then

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<sup>19</sup> Corporal punishment is not as yet prohibited in most countries in the region. See <http://www.endcorporalpunishment.org/pages/pdfs/charts/Chart-SouthAsia.pdf> as well as <http://www.crin.org/docs/resources/treaties/crc.28/UNICEF-SAsia-Subm.pdf>

able to develop profiles of these organisations based on both primary and secondary data. Simultaneously, I was looking to manage the data through the development of a ready-reckoner. The final step was the production of this paper, presenting and discussing the findings of the study.

The geographical scope of the study is South Asia, including Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. While the emphasis has been on civil society organisations based in these countries, efforts have also been taken to identify global organisations working in the region.

Along the way, and not surprisingly, there have been several challenges, some that I believe I found answers to, and others that I would like to acknowledge as limitations of this study.

This study represents the first of many efforts needed to document and understand peace education programmes in South Asia. Owing to constraints of time (the entire process, right up to the submission of this monograph was completed in just over four months) and budget, I was unable to personally visit or observe peace programmes around the region. Without doubt, field work would have greatly enhanced the quality of this study.

I was largely dependent on the Internet to access literature on peace education, and I must acknowledge this limitation. It is for this reason that I have not attempted a formal literature review, knowing that merely relying on e-resources would not do justice to the vast body of writing on this subject.

This research process has also depended on the Internet to identify and contact organisations. It is likely that there are organisations with peace education programmes that do not have a cyber presence. On other occasions, I was unable to verify or update information found on the World Wide Web, and this has had an impact on the number of organisations included in the study. Often, contact details were outdated - phone numbers or e-mail addresses were no longer valid and tracking down some organisations proved challenging. For instance, I was particularly keen to tell the story of Khoj, an organisation based in Mumbai that was one of the earliest to introduce a form of peace education through its secular education programme. Unfortunately, I was unable to speak to anyone at Khoj, despite repeated attempts to contact them; moreover, updated information on the programme is not available on the Khoj website.<sup>20</sup>

To at least partly overcome this dependence on the Internet, I had hoped that snowball sampling would prove to be effective. This was based on the assumption that peace education is a relatively niche discipline and key players would therefore be familiar with one another's work. However, this approach has yielded mixed results, with organisations occasionally professing to be unaware of other similar initiatives in the region.

It must be emphasised that this study is not intended to serve as a best-practice analysis but merely to document initiatives in this area. Directly determining the success or relative impact of a programme falls outside the mandate of this study.

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<sup>20</sup> <http://www.sabrang.com/khoj/index.html>

This study recognises that there is no one single type of peace education programme. While primarily seeking to identify programmes related to, or working with young people, this study has also taken into account organisations working in the broader areas of peace research or conflict resolution, with an interest in peace education. Where there is little evidence of peace education programmes, other kinds of programmes, including human rights and value education, have been included. I recognise that each of these is distinct from the other in both form and content; nevertheless, one has often led to the other,<sup>21</sup> and it is important to particularly take note of fledgling efforts, as is the case in Bhutan and Maldives. In the case of India however, the story of human rights education in the country has been deliberately excluded. This story deserves its own space, and it is not possible to do it justice within the limits of this paper.<sup>22</sup>

In the chapters to follow, I will present the key findings of the study, addressing the primary research questions within the specific contexts of each country in Chapter II. Chapter III describes the experiences of four peace education programmes from around the region. All of these aspects are drawn together in Chapter IV, which analyses and discusses the findings of this research. The final chapter of the paper offers concluding remarks and outlines the challenges that peace education faces in South Asia.

Throughout the paper, I have provided links to website of organisations as well as other comments or references in the footnotes. Appendix 1 maps select peace education programmes from the region. Appendix 2 includes a sample of the questionnaire that formed the basis for in-depth interviews with respondents. Additionally, a ready-reckoner contains pertinent information on peace programmes identified through the study. This will eventually be converted into a web resource that can be periodically updated, ensuring that it will remain relevant beyond the life of this study.

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<sup>21</sup> As in the case of the Children's Museum for Peace and Human Rights in Pakistan.

<sup>22</sup> For example, the National Program for Human Rights Education in Schools by the Institute of Human Rights Education (Madurai) is one of the largest programmes, with a presence in ten states across the country. See [http://www.pwtn.org/hr\\_education.asp](http://www.pwtn.org/hr_education.asp)

## II PEACE EDUCATION PROGRAMMES IN SOUTH ASIA: 'WHERE', 'WHY', 'WHAT' AND 'HOW'?

There is no one type of peace education programme; the objectives, activities and nature of the vast majority are largely determined by the reasons for which they are considered necessary in the first place. Some are born in response to direct violence, others inspired by the work and philosophies of those advocating for peace. This chapter will map peace education programmes in South Asia through responses to each of the following questions:

- Are there peace education programmes in schools and colleges in South Asia?
- If so, where are they based, whom do they target and why were they launched?
- What do these peace education programmes focus on?
- What are the specific processes and activities within the different peace education programmes?

### ARE THERE PEACE EDUCATION PROGRAMMES IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES IN SOUTH ASIA?

At an overall, regional level, the answer is affirmative. There are stark imbalances though, with a proliferation of programmes in certain parts of the region. I would like to suggest three reasons for this. First of all, as discussed earlier, most programmes have sprung up in response to direct violence (rather than structural or cultural) and are therefore concentrated in those areas that have experienced conflict or war. Secondly, as is common in the development and education sectors, the uneven distribution of resources (financial, human and knowledge) is a deterrent. Thirdly, the existence of programmes has much to do with the nature and existence of civil society itself, which faces several constraints and challenges including the occasional lack of a supportive state and environment.

### Bangladesh

This study has yielded little evidence of any long-term, sustained peace education initiatives in Bangladesh. There are several NGOs that have introduced peace or human rights education programmes in different parts of the country, including Oxfam,<sup>23</sup> Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK),<sup>24</sup> Bangladesh Inter-religious Council for Peace and Justice (BICPAJ),<sup>25</sup> Working for Better Life (WBL), Bangladesh Rural Action Committee (BRAC), Madaripur Legal Aid Association (MLAA) and Mennonite Central Committee.<sup>26</sup> In the case of most organisations, peace or human rights education is a relatively smaller component of a project with broader goals. Moreover, it has not always been possible to gather very detailed information on most of these programmes—websites have disappeared or not been updated and contact information is often invalid.

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<sup>23</sup> [www.oxfam.org.uk/oxfam\\_in\\_action/where\\_we\\_work/bangladesh.html](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/oxfam_in_action/where_we_work/bangladesh.html)

<sup>24</sup> [www.askbd.org](http://www.askbd.org)

<sup>25</sup> [www.bicpaj.org](http://www.bicpaj.org)

<sup>26</sup> [mcc.org/bangladesh](http://mcc.org/bangladesh)

Promoting Human Rights and Education in Bangladesh (PHREB),<sup>27</sup> an NGO based in Chittagong in the south of the country, has incorporated human rights education into their broader programme focusing on fighting violence against women and children. PHREB works extensively with schools, colleges, religious leaders and communities to prevent early marriages, dowry harassment and sexual abuse.

## **Bhutan**

It must be remembered that Bhutan has embraced a “modern” system of education relatively recently, in the late 1950s (Phuntsho 2000). There do not appear to be any peace education programmes in Bhutan, at least not under the explicit label of peace education.

However, in 1999, value education was introduced in Bhutanese schools, with an aim to educate students mostly about the moral values of life (Wangyal 2001). More recently, the Scouting programme, under the Department of Youth and Sports (DYS) of the Ministry of Education has resolved to introduce Life Skills education for all the scout clubs.<sup>28</sup> The National Report on the Development of Education (no date) also refers to the introduction of environment and value education as well as education for sustainable development.

## **India**

There is a proliferation of programmes by civil society for young people in India, with vastly differing priorities. However, not all of these are explicitly peace education programmes, and we must resist any sweeping categorisations. Subsequent sections will elaborate on the distinctions between these different initiatives and describe them in greater detail.

It is important to recognise the efforts of the National Council of Education Research and Training (NCERT) that has actively spearheaded a campaign to introduce peace education in schools across the country.<sup>29</sup> The NCERT’s two main priorities have been teacher training, to equip teachers with the requisite skills and attitudes; and curriculum development. Additionally, the NCERT has plans to work with other SAARC countries to introduce peace education throughout the region. Several civil society groups currently work in tandem with the NCERT, and it is hoped that a mutual sharing of ideas and resources will accelerate India’s peace education ambitions.

## **Maldives**

As yet, there is little to demonstrate that there are peace education programmes in Maldives. A report dated January 2009, from the Committee on the Rights of the Child (on the involvement of children in armed conflict) “regrets that peace education is not included in the school curricula.”

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<sup>27</sup> [www.phreb.org](http://www.phreb.org)

<sup>28</sup> [www.education.gov.bt/DYS/dys.htm](http://www.education.gov.bt/DYS/dys.htm)

<sup>29</sup> [ncert.nic.in](http://ncert.nic.in)

However, another report by the Human Rights Commission of the Maldives, dated October 2006 lists several indicative activities as part of a long term programme for the Commission.<sup>30</sup> This list makes mention of plans to implement a human rights education programme for different sections of Maldivian society, and raise awareness about the Commission's own work. In addition, the Commission intended to work closely with the Ministry of Education to extend the teaching of human rights to all education institutions across the country. However, it has not been possible to verify if these plans were in fact carried out.

Maldivian scholar Farah Faizal suggests that the reason for the lack of peace education programmes could be the term itself.

Maldivians always associate peace as probably an aftermath of war and therefore since we are a relatively peaceful society, I think there is no stress on 'peace education' per se (Faizal 2009: Interview).

## **Nepal**

Nepal's story resembles that of Bangladesh, in that there are several organisations, both local and international NGOs, working on issues related to peace and conflict (Care Nepal 2007). In addition, Nepal's Ministry of Education and Sports has developed human rights education curriculum for secondary school students, with the aid of the Curriculum Development Center (CDC) (Pyakurel, no date).<sup>31</sup> However, once again, there do not appear to be any full-fledged peace education programmes in the country.

## **Pakistan**

Baela Raza Jamil, educationist and Chairperson of Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi believes that peace and citizenship projects in Pakistan are still largely donor driven and have not really been integrated into the education system.<sup>32</sup> Nevertheless, according to Jamil, the debate on peace education in Pakistan is alive and vibrant, at least amongst civil society (Jamil 2009: Interview).

Programmes in Pakistan look to address both the contents of the present school syllabi, as well as *how* this syllabus is actually taught. In the past, education for diversity and co-existence has been largely ignored, despite the presence of religious minorities within Pakistan (Ahmed 2007). Today, there are resolute efforts, fledgling and few, to bring about a change in the state of education. There is also increasing collaboration between civil society players in Pakistan and India in the form of peace education efforts, and this bodes well for the region. One example is the partnership between Sanjan Nagar Public Education Trust Girls High School<sup>33</sup> in Lahore and Bluebells International School<sup>34</sup> in New Delhi; plans are underway for students from the two schools to visit each other.

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<sup>30</sup> [www.hrcm.org.mv](http://www.hrcm.org.mv)

<sup>31</sup> [www.moe.gov.np](http://www.moe.gov.np)

<sup>32</sup> [itacec.org](http://itacec.org)

<sup>33</sup> [www.snpet.org](http://www.snpet.org)

## Sri Lanka

Human rights education in Sri Lanka dates back to the 1980s, and since then, there have been elements related to human rights in the school curriculum. In 1994, the Centre for the Study of Human Rights (CSHR) at the University of Colombo launched its own human rights programme, along with the Ministry of Education, and helped established student human rights centres as well (Chandrasiri, no date).<sup>35</sup>

However, the same is not true of peace education efforts in Sri Lanka that appear to have been severely curtailed for various reasons. Initiatives have been launched, discontinued and revived in fits and starts, depending on the political climate in the country. For example, during the ceasefire years, there was open talk of the urgent need for peace education; this was no longer easily possible once the ceasefire ended. The oscillation between a state of ceasefire and open conflict has also meant that international organisations have, every now and then, faced difficulties with the necessary legal permissions to continue their work in the country.

Moreover, the Sri Lankan education system, unlike that of India or Pakistan, is almost entirely in the public sector, with few private schools and universities. According to a 2006 report, 9,709 of the 10,455 schools are public schools (cited in Fernando, no date). This means that cooperation between government and civil society is even more crucial, but this has not always happened. Nevertheless, there are a handful of organisations and individuals have persisted with their peace efforts despite the extenuating circumstances and their work merits attention.

### **WHERE ARE THE DIFFERENT PEACE EDUCATION PROGRAMMES BASED?**

#### **WHOM DO THEY TARGET?**

#### **WHY WERE THEY ESTABLISHED?**

The “where” and the “why” of peace education are logically linked. By and large, the majority of programmes have been established in response to specific, local events. For instance, there has been renewed interest in madrasa education post-9/11 and its subsequent aftermath in Iraq, Pakistan and Afghanistan. But it cannot be denied that

...most of the conflict prevention has been reactive in nature, being initiated only after the conflict has crossed the threshold of violence. Its aim is to limit further escalation (intensity, geographic and duration). Here, too, the price is high. Once a conflict turns violent it becomes not only more difficult, but also more expensive to de-escalate it and to build peace (Reychler 2006).

We are also concerned with more than just the literal geographical location. Whom do these programmes work with—school students (if so, which age groups), young people in colleges or universities, teachers, parents and families, larger communities?

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<sup>34</sup> [bluebellsinternational.com](http://bluebellsinternational.com)

<sup>35</sup> [www.cshr.org](http://www.cshr.org)

It must be acknowledged that in the case of Bangladesh and Nepal, the “where’s” and “why’s” are still largely unanswerable at this stage. As previously mentioned, information on peace education efforts is sketchy, and in many cases, it has neither been possible to verify the information found online or obtain any more details on specific programmes.

## **Bhutan**

According to the National report on the Development of Education (no date), until recently, the main objective of education in Bhutan was to ensure literacy, numeracy and other functional life skills; there has since been a marked shift to “all-round and wholesome education,” so as to “produce citizens with spiritual and social values.” With this new curriculum, students are introduced to the basics of health, HIV and AIDS, nutrition, sanitation and reproductive health. There is however no indication of the specific age groups this curriculum is targeted at.

## **India**

Asha Hans, scholar and founder of Sansristi in Orissa believes that the violence in Gujarat in 2002 was a turning point for civil society in India.<sup>36</sup> Until then, peace education was largely linked to the conflict in Jammu and Kashmir and India-Pakistan relations. It was the aftermath of Gujarat that brought violence closer home and made it both possible and imperative for educators to step in (Hans 2009: Interview).

It can be contended that the majority of peace related programmes are concentrated in four regions—Jammu and Kashmir, the Northeastern states, Maharashtra and Gujarat. The “why” is evident. Ongoing, protracted conflicts in both Jammu and Kashmir and the Northeast have necessitated the peace programmes there while Maharashtra and Gujarat have both witnessed phases of communal violence since the 1990s, and reconciliation efforts have played a major role.

Citizens for Peace (CfP) is a volunteer group based in Mumbai that came together in response to the riots of 1992-93.<sup>37</sup> Their objective was to

...reaffirm Mumbai's cosmopolitan ethos and liberal, enlightened tradition. We believe that while there will always be differences between people — of belief, culture, values and religion — the way to settle these differences is through open dialogue and respect for the rule of law.

The various programmes and projects address different target groups. There are peace programmes for school children from the ages of 5 to 16, there are others for college and university students. Community-based programmes are also not uncommon. Increasingly, the corporate and business sectors are also opting for conflict resolution programmes. Probably India’s only professional conflict resolution consultancy, Meta-Culture Consulting in Bangalore introduces business and corporate houses to the concepts of dispute

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<sup>36</sup> [www.sansristi.org/index.htm](http://www.sansristi.org/index.htm)

<sup>37</sup> [citizensforpeace.in](http://citizensforpeace.in)

management, conflict resolution, negotiation and work place mediation.<sup>38</sup> Meta-culture Dialogics (MCD), another arm of the organisation, works with NGOs, community groups and a handful of schools and colleges.<sup>39</sup> MCD's aim is to build "peaceable and sustainable communities by changing how people address conflict" and address conflict arising out of "rapid economic, social and cultural changes in India". Most recently, MCD has set up its first Community Mediation Centre at Montfort College in Bangalore, where "trained impartial mediators will offer families and citizens of the city, who are in a dispute, an effective out-of-court alternative for improving communication, resolving differences and reaching mutually acceptable agreements."<sup>40</sup>

There are also efforts specifically targeting rural populations; these are usually smaller in scale but with well defined objectives and processes, often based in remote, poorer regions of the country. The Garden of Peace day-school in Tamil Nadu is based on the concept of a peace museum; this primary school teaches 100 students from neighbouring rural areas.<sup>41</sup> Although compelled to adhere to the mainstream curriculum, Ramu Manivannan and his team of teachers find ways to maximise outward learning. For example, students learn from an early age to take care of plants, nurture small gardens, and will eventually be equipped, Manivannan hopes, to address issues of cattle and organic farming which are particularly relevant to the local area (Manivannan 2009: Interview). Similarly, the Sita School in Silvepura outside Bangalore works with children who often drop out of the mainstream education system, for a number of reasons. The majority of students at the Sita School are "from the socially and economically underprivileged sections of the Dalit community; children of migrant workers, children of uprooted and unstable families" (Learning Network, no date). These children would normally have limited access to education, for both social and economic reasons.

In Jammu and Kashmir and the Northeast, programmes look to also assume preventive roles. By introducing young people to concepts of peace and diversity, they hope to inhibit the recruitment practices of terrorist groups based in the region. For this reason, projects working in the area also strive to improve the overall quality of education the children receive, and thereby their job prospects. This in turn could also lower the possibility of young people being conscripted into violence (Bhan 2009: Interview).

## **Pakistan**

Educational institutions in Pakistan invariably belong to one of three systems — public, private and madrasas. Ahmed (2007) contends that the relatively expensive private schooling system is beyond the reach of most families, for whom the madrasas, that offer free education, is often the only option. It is for this reason that NGOs are keen to introduce peace programmes in both English and Urdu medium public sector schools, but this remains a challenging prospect. The curriculum is relatively inflexible, and permissions are not easy to obtain; this has resulted in several organisations opting to first work with private schools.

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<sup>38</sup> [www.meta-culture.in](http://www.meta-culture.in)

<sup>39</sup> [meta-culture.org](http://meta-culture.org)

<sup>40</sup> See [www.meta-culture.org](http://www.meta-culture.org)

<sup>41</sup> [www.buddhasmiles.in](http://www.buddhasmiles.in)

They are then able to present evidence of their work in the private sector to try and leverage entry into public sector schools (Hussain 2009: Interview).

The majority of programmes appear to be based in urban areas, working with schools in the larger cities. For instance the Human Rights Education Programme (HREP) or the Children's Museum for Peace and Human Rights, as it is presently known, is one of the earliest known peace education programmes, established in 1995. HREP was launched in response to a particular phase of violence in Karachi in the 1990s.<sup>42</sup>

Dissatisfaction with the content of education has been another motivating factor. A school text book project by another NGO, Simorgh, was envisaged as "an attempt to counter the culture of intolerance and violence that was being generated by officially produced school texts" (Hussain, no date).<sup>43</sup> Similarly, Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA) or the "Centre of Education and Consciousness" Public Trust was "born out of a growing realization that the most critical of human entitlements, the right to learning, knowledge systems, citizenship skills and a 9,000 years of living heritage is being denied to the citizens of Pakistan". ITA has initiated several programmes on citizenship education, democracy, human rights and governance for young people, rural communities, and school teachers.

## **Sri Lanka**

Peace efforts in Sri Lanka are scattered across the country, although NGOs have not always been able to continue with their efforts in the affected Northern and Eastern regions. Unlike in India and Pakistan, the adult population of Sri Lanka has been the primary target for the vast majority of peace programmes. Jehan Perera of the National Peace Council (NPC)<sup>44</sup> suggests that the urgency of the situation meant that it was imperative to work at first with those who are potential decision makers in the peace process.

...we had decided that schools were too far off. Peace is so urgent that we must bring about a change among the adults, who have to vote on war or peace. Children are a long term investment (Perera 2009: Interview).

In recent times, the NPC has chosen to focus its energies on working with civil society groups including government officials, teachers, religious and community leaders, journalists and NGO workers. The Berghof Foundation for Conflict Studies<sup>45</sup> adopted a similar strategy in Sri Lanka, working primarily with key stakeholders in civil and political society (Ropers 2009: Interview).

Aside from the human rights and peace education syllabi implemented by the Sri Lankan government, there are few projects specifically targeting young people within the formal education system. There are other reasons for this. Perera contends that it is not easy to work within the public education system.

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<sup>42</sup> [www.cmphr.org](http://www.cmphr.org)

<sup>43</sup> [www.simorghpk.org](http://www.simorghpk.org)

<sup>44</sup> [www.peace-srilanka.org](http://www.peace-srilanka.org)

<sup>45</sup> [www.berghof-foundation.de](http://www.berghof-foundation.de)

...we have done some work with universities, but it is very difficult as they are highly politicised. Similarly with schools. 90% of our school system is public, and the government is very protective of that. There are few private schools (Perera 2009: Interview).

Damian Fernando of Caritas Sri Lanka endorses this view.<sup>46</sup> Although Caritas presently works with 20 schools, conducting workshops and distributing peace manuals, they face difficulties with permissions and hold most of their sessions either on weekends or outside of school hours. Says Fernando, "it is not easy to get permission to work with schools...it is very difficult to even speak about peace right now." (Fernando 2009: Interview).

Other efforts include those by the Weeramantry International Centre for Peace Education and Research that works with select schools and colleges, along with UNESCO and the Ministry of Education.<sup>47</sup> In September 2005, the University of Bradford, UK, organised a higher education course in conflict resolution and peace for adult students from Kilinochchi, situated at the heart of the conflict in Northern Sri Lanka.

The Butterfly Peace Garden is an example of a peace project that has managed to circumvent the formal education sector but nonetheless works specifically with young people affected by conflict. Based in strife-ridden Batticaloa, this programme works with young Tamils and Muslims from the immediate locality. Neighbourhood schools refer students who have faced difficulties at home or at school, and these students participate in a nine-month long process of experiential learning (Santa Barbara 2004).

#### **WHAT ARE THE ISSUES THAT PEACE EDUCATION PROGRAMMES FOCUS ON?**

Traditionally, peace programmes have a broad mandate but in order to have any impact, a programme must have a local context and be particularly relevant to its target group. Jane Sahi, a peace educator based in Karnataka in India and author of *Education for Peace*, suggests that sometimes, we must look for the simple issues that are closer to home. "Participating in a protest march against George Bush has a certain intrinsic value but it is also necessary to look around us, literally", she says (Sahi 2009: Interview).

What *should* a peace programme discuss? Is there room for politics, religion, identity, ethnicity, gender, caste? Peace educators have grappled with ways and means to address these problems. None more so than religion, which is seen as particularly contentious. There are differing points of view on this. Some peace practitioners, particularly in Pakistan, argue that there is a surfeit of talk about religion in any case. Others like Gavriel Salomon, Israeli educationist and psychologist, contend that peace education is about:

...realisation of the other side's collective narrative, including their past suffering and history. By necessity, this at times includes religion, to the extent that it is central. They believe God is on their side, so do we (Salomon 2009: Interview).

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<sup>46</sup> [www.caritaslk.org](http://www.caritaslk.org)

<sup>47</sup> [www.wicper.org](http://www.wicper.org)

S. P. Udayakumar, editor of a forthcoming publication *Teaching Peace in South Asia*, asserts that in the South Asian setting, you cannot “wish religion away.” His strategy is to discuss *all* religions, but to also accompany students on visits to temples, mosques and/or churches. Ensuing discussions extend from religion itself to architecture or the meaning of specific rituals (Udayakumar 2009: Interview).

Barbara Tint, peace and conflict resolution scholar, points out that people are invariably passionate about religion but sometimes unwilling to talk about it, and peace programmes can offer a conducive platform (Tint 2009: Interview). Asha Hans warns that educators must be wary of falling into the all too familiar trap of believing that secularism means the absence of religion, rather than the acceptance of all religions. She narrates this incident:

I had been to Kargil in Kashmir two years ago, to a small, out-of-the-way village, where women had nothing to do all day. There had been a small madrasa there but that had stopped functioning for various reasons. This left the women with such a vacuum in their lives. We cannot ignore this (Hans 2009: Interview).

Equally, peace education cannot ignore issues of social justice, and focus solely on conflict resolution. Thankfully, there has been a visible shift in the range of issues peace programmes address. Today, it is not rare for a peace education programme to incorporate issues of social justice and development *as well as* more traditional concerns of war and peace. A draft resolution at the UNESCO Regional Seminar on Curriculum Development for Peace Education held in Sri Lanka in 2001 highlighted the “interrelationship between peace and sustainable development as critical to achieving the objective of social cohesion and living together...to move away from a culture of war and violence in a world beset with strife to a culture of peace and non-violence” (UNESCO 2001).

Educators are particularly keen to include aspects of gender and environment into their programmes. In Kashmir, students hear of Lalleshwari, a saint revered by both Hindus and Muslims, who defied caste structures, left her home and husband, and became a leader of the people. Similarly, they listen to poetry on the damage rendered to the great lakes and forests of Kashmir.

In South Asia, questions of diversity, religious identity and secularism, accepting differences, rights of the child, civil and political rights, democracy, and of course the causes and consequences of conflict itself are widespread concerns. History — political, social, cultural, religious, and personal — is high on the agenda. In fact, the need for alternative narratives of history in school textbooks has often been the starting point for a programme. Nevertheless, Jamal Kidwai of Aman Panchayat based in New Delhi contends that conflict and peace programmes are in danger of becoming depoliticised and ahistorical.<sup>48</sup>

...in the current fascination for conflict resolution techniques such as icebreakers, win-win situations, etc, programmes ignore history, ignore the real political issues. (Kidwai 2009: Interview).

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<sup>48</sup> amanpanchayat.org

In India, educators address several of these issues within their own contexts. So Riverside School<sup>49</sup> in Gujarat discusses communalism; Samerth<sup>50</sup>, also in Gujarat, uses peace modules to demonstrate communal harmony; the Institute of Peace Research and Action (IPRA)'s peace education programme has for its theme the Cultural Renewal of Kashmiri Youth and the rich Sufi heritage of Kashmir; several urban initiatives like the Children's Movement for Civic Awareness<sup>51</sup> in Mumbai address responsible citizenship; the Centre for Development and Peace Studies<sup>52</sup> in Assam plans to address insurgency, ethnicity and identity, all crucial to conflict in the Northeast.

In Sri Lanka, the National Peace Council talks about plurality and its qualities; the Weeramantry Peace Education Centre focuses on cross-cultural education, using language as a tool. In Bangladesh, social equity and poverty are often addressed in human rights curricula; the Madaripur Model of Mediation (MMM), developed by the Madaripur Legal Aid Association (MLAA) aims to help disadvantaged groups "secure access to equitable justice" (MLAA, no date).

In Nepal, programmes have tended to focus on human rights issues including domestic violence, trafficking of the girl child and torture as well as issues affecting Dalits (Pyakurel, no date). Discussions on the prospects of peace education programmes in the country have revealed that the present school curriculum only addresses the rights provided for by the Nepali constitution. Educators would like to extend this to address issues of child abuse and discrimination, and work towards improving the self-esteem and self-confidence of the students (Hurights, no date).

Sometimes, there is no single explicitly articulated issue. At Sita School, Jane Sahi believes that how you do things is as crucial as what you speak about.

It begins from the admission level at schools – do you discriminate on the basis of family situation or ability to pay fees? It is how you group children, how you assess them, how you treat success and failure. This may sound idealistic, but these small details all augment building around peace (Sahi 2009: Interview).

It is evident that there can be no restrictions on what peace programmes address. They have to be willing to talk about anything, with no limitations whatsoever. Tint argues that there can be no space for political correctness if we are to learn anything; the only way to go forward is to take risks (Tint 2009: Interview). Irrespective of the actual subject or theme a peace education programme adopts, it should ideally seek to incorporate aspects related to negative (the prevention of violence), positive (creating an environment conducive to cooperation, harmony, and mutuality) and structural peace (issues of equality and independence in society) (Kupermintz & Salomon 2004).

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<sup>49</sup> [www.schoolriverside.com](http://www.schoolriverside.com)

<sup>50</sup> [www.samerth.org](http://www.samerth.org)

<sup>51</sup> [www.cmcaindia.org](http://www.cmcaindia.org)

<sup>52</sup> [cdpsindia.org](http://cdpsindia.org)

## **WHAT DO THE PEACE EDUCATION PROGRAMMES DO?**

### **WHAT ARE THE SPECIFIC PROCESSES AND ACTIVITIES WITHIN A PEACE EDUCATION PROGRAMME?**

The actual activities of a peace education programme, as well as the manner in which they are carried out can often determine a programme's relative impact. These activities follow from programme goals, access to funding and other resources and their geographical context. Another crucial factor is an organisation's ability to build and nurture partnerships with schools, colleges and universities, and other factions of civil society.

This survey of peace education initiatives has revealed that on the whole, programmes tend to focus on two main activities: teacher training and curriculum development. As discussed previously, dissatisfaction with the curricula of a particular school or schools is often the starting point; and this is particularly true in the case of history textbooks in recent times.

Once an NGO has developed its own curriculum, the next step is to get schools to use it. Here, civil society organisations work in two ways. Some choose (and are permitted) to teach in schools themselves, for X number of hours every week. Others opt to work with teachers, training them to use the curricula. The two approaches have their own set of merits and problems, but the latter's advantage is the potential it offers for sustainability and long-term capacity building. It is often the more challenging of the two options, with most organisations identifying the attitude of teachers as a major barrier to a programme's implementation.

Of course, this broad process is only relevant to organisations with peace education programmes on the ground. Several others focus their energies on research, advocacy, and lobbying with governments for the inclusion of peace education in the mainstream syllabus. Equally, there are schools that have embedded the goals of peace education into their day-to-day activities. There may not be many specific "peace projects" in these schools but the overall attitude towards schooling is geared towards helping students understand the philosophies and practice of peace. Sita School best illustrates this approach to teaching peace.

Irrespective of an organisation's actual activities, it is important to locate them within the overall process of a peace project. This section presents a brief selection of peace education processes in different South Asian contexts.

In Bangladesh, Oxfam, in association with the Bangladesh Development Partnership, has organised human security and peace building seminars for 3,600 high school and college students (Oxfam, no date), as part of their Campaign for Non-Violence and Peace Culture. Young people are considered particularly vulnerable to being co-opted into the illegal small arms trade in the Gazipur, Jessore and Satkhira Districts of Bangladesh.

The goal is the further adoption, declaration and implementation by the government of Bangladesh of a plan of action against the illegal trade, transfer and use of small arms, in the light of the UN Plan of Action against Small Arms (Oxfam, no date).

The Madaripur Model of Mediation (MMM) involves the setting up of village and district level courts and training of community workers, thereby circumventing the problems people face in accessing the formal judicial system. Additionally, in 2004, the Madaripur

Legal Aid Association initiated human rights education in secondary schools and colleges, establishing human rights cells, and conducting regular workshops. The overall aim was to help young people understand human rights conceptually, and thereby be able to identify human rights violations in their local areas.

The Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) works in the formal and informal education sector in Bangladesh through schools and peer education clubs. MCC trains peer educators in both conflict resolution and peace education. Sarah Wheaton, Peace Programme Coordinator of MCC, says that peace education is rarely formally included in the curriculum. "Sometimes where we are doing other work, and we have a good relationship with the school, they allow us to train some of their teachers or students. But mainstreaming peace education is a big challenge" (Wheaton 2009: Interview). At present, MCC works with seven schools in the country.

The only known programme in Bhutan that comes close to our understanding of peace or human rights education is the Scouting programme implemented by the Department of Youth & Sports (DYS) under the auspices of the Ministry of Education of the Royal Government of Bhutan. DYS has been ascribed a mandate

...to complement the academic part of school education by providing "Wholesome Education" through Career guidance, Counselling, Scouting, Games and Sports and School Health so that the Youth of Bhutan are physically fit and mentally equipped with moral values and skills necessary to become productive and responsible future citizens...(DYS, no date).

The reference to moral values and the emphasis on responsible citizenship is of particular relevance to this study. In order to achieve this mandate, DYS, through its many divisions, encourages sports and games in schools, organises national and regional sporting events, promotes health awareness among young people, runs a career guidance and counselling services programme in all schools, operates youth centres and forums, and promotes Scouting through youth and culture exchange programs in schools.

The Scouting programme was first introduced in 2003, and according to government records, exists in every school, with a total of over 20,000 scouts in the country. The three sub-programmes (Cub, Scout and Rover) are designed for specific age groups, from 6 to 25 years of age. The Cub programme, for instances, uses the play-way method to make 6 to 12 year olds aware of their environment. The Scout programme focuses on cultivating values of proper, disciplined citizenship. The Rover programme ensures that young people participate in community services and development programs, promoting the concept of volunteerism.

In India, NGOs and other civil society organisations operate in a multitude of ways, occasionally guided by demands of time, funding and operational constraints. As in the rest of the region, there is an emphasis on teacher training and curriculum development, and most programmes incorporate both these aspects.

Training is usually a major component. Occasionally, NGOs working in the areas of peace and conflict are called upon to train staff from other NGOs. Recalls Jamal Kidwai of Aman

Panchayat, “After the Gujarat riots, suddenly communalism became a troubling issue for everyone, even those NGOs working on issues of health, environment, gender, which don’t fall traditionally come under the conflict mandate.” (Kidwai 2009: Interview). Field workers had to address these issues, even if they were actually there to discuss malaria protection methods

Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace (WISCOMP), based in New Delhi, launched its education for peace initiative in 2007.<sup>53</sup> The emphasis is now on working with students, teachers and teacher educators. At present, students participate in workshops on conflict transformation; for teachers, the focus is on how to teach in a multicultural context.

In Mumbai, the Children’s Movement for Civic Awareness (CMCA) works with students between the ages of 12 and 14 from schools across the city, through the formation of civic clubs (45 in Mumbai to date). To begin with, class seven students are encouraged to profile and audit their school—a water or garbage audit, for example. They then move on to discussing relevant global issues such as water scarcity and management or global warming. The overall idea is that every child understands the big picture and realises what s/he can do to make even a small difference. The *process* of belonging to a civic club is also a mini-lesson in the functioning of a democracy. As active citizens, students name the clubs, elect office-bearers, and go out and campaign on locally relevant issues.

Also in Mumbai, the Avehi Abacus project works with municipal schools through the Sangati programme, training teachers through bi-annual workshop sessions.<sup>54</sup> In addition, they have developed a curriculum that is organised around several interlinked themes: knowing myself and my body, our earth and the web of life, how societies developed, the way we live today and preparing for our future.

aProCh (A protagonist in every child), based in Ahmedabad aims to blur the boundaries between school and everyday life.<sup>55</sup> They seek to get young people to do things—small or big—in their city, to question, to praise, and extend their childhoods into city spaces. aProCh works with local civic groups including the police and the city corporation to make public spaces more child-friendly.

Aman Panchayat has different goals. Aman focuses on research for advocacy (for example, a detailed investigation of small arms and narcotics) but also believes that it is important to build the capacity of communities affected by conflict. “It is not as if Aman will work there all the time; we want to develop their capacities and facilitate the creation of a transparent, democratic institution. Then, we can withdraw. We hope to do this by identifying leaders from amongst them, and working with young people,” says Kidwai, director of Aman (Kidwai 2009: Interview).

In Eastern Nepal, the Human Rights and Environment Forum (HUREF) ran a one-year programme in nine schools in three districts. Through the course of the programme, HUREF

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<sup>53</sup> [www.wiscomp.org](http://www.wiscomp.org)

<sup>54</sup> [avehiabacus.org/about.html](http://avehiabacus.org/about.html)

<sup>55</sup> [www.aproch.org](http://www.aproch.org)

set up a human rights centre in each of the participating schools; these centres organised human rights related activities inside and outside the classroom and additionally, recorded any human rights violations in their specific areas. In all, 1,500 secondary school students participated in this programme and became familiar with concepts related to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, international conventions, first informant reports, civil liberties, fundamental rights, human rights violations and conflict resolution. Additionally, HUREF also organised teacher training programmes, accompanied students on field trips to neighbourhood police stations (Pyakurel, no date).

In 2007, the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) organised a five-day symposium on peace education training for religious scholars and madrasa educators in Islamabad.<sup>56</sup> This was based on the rationale that post 9/11, madrasa leaders were experiencing isolation and criticism from other groups of society, and that there was no “appreciation of the education they are providing to Pakistani citizens” (USIP 2007). Referring to madrasa leaders, Qamar-ul Huda of USIP who led the workshop contends that, “they are still very suspicious of domestic critiques and of outsiders who are quick to propose reforming their institutions” (USIP 2007).

Through the course of the workshop, the madrasa educators worked together to develop a peace education curriculum, identifying themes, potential resources and even class lessons. It was agreed that they would continue with this process and hopefully extend this curricula to other madrasas as well. Huda points out that merely branding all madrasas as “outdated outposts for terrorism” would not solve the problem. Instead, there is a need “to recognize the tradition they are working in and build upon their knowledge as scholars and their roles as educators before forming conclusions about an entire educational institution” (USIP 2007).

The Weeramantry International Centre for Peace Education and Research in Sri Lanka is one of few organisations to introduce what have been called cultural encounter programmes, along the lines of Seeds of Peace (Nurenberg 2007). Most recently, 68 university undergraduates from all over Sri Lanka were brought together for four days to discuss diverse issues. Care was taken to ensure that all religions and ethnicities were represented and that there were students from the conflict areas. Neshan Gunasekera, Deputy Director of the centre, hopes that they will be able to repeat this exercise for 5,000 students every year (Gunasekara 2009: Interview).

Sarvodaya, a grassroots NGO with a widespread presence, organises community based discussions on local conflict issues.<sup>57</sup> Additionally young people are trained to become members of a peace corps that conducts conflict resolution and conflict prevention activities in the villages—particularly between members of different communities.

Under the aegis of its National Peace Programme, Caritas works with at least 20 schools and colleges, holding workshops, developing and distributing peace manuals for

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<sup>56</sup> [www.usip.org](http://www.usip.org)

<sup>57</sup> [www.sarvodaya.org](http://www.sarvodaya.org)

children. In addition, Caritas is planning to set up peace villages where people of different ethnicities come together to solve their own problems.

### QUICK RECAP

That there *are* peace education programmes for young people in South Asia is evident, the majority of them set up in response to particular phases of violence or crises. Increasingly, peace educators are looking to expand the content of peace education to include issues related to human and social security, looking beyond traditional state and national security concerns; this change is visible in the curricula that have been developed by different projects. The other priority area is teacher training, which can help determine the relative sustainability of a programme.

In this chapter, I have tried to share what I have learnt about, and from several peace educators and organisations, making at times difficult choices on what to exclude. Every organisation has lessons to share, questions to ask, challenges to address. In the next chapter, I will narrate the stories of four organisations, and their specific histories.

### III PEACE TALES

There are several peace education stories waiting to be told: stories that speak of starting points for a programme; stories about the personal and the political; stories about individuals, communities, organisations and countries. This chapter is but the first step, an attempt to chronicle and document four peace tales from around the region: the Children's Museum for Peace and Human Rights (CMPHR) in Karachi, Pakistan; the Centre for Dialogue and Reconciliation's (CDR) peace education programme in Jammu and Kashmir, India; Simorgh Women's Resource & Publication Centre's School Text Book Project from Lahore, Pakistan and the Riverside School in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India.

Each case study represents a different aspect of a peace education programme. CMPHR is probably the only such organisation of its kind in the region, attempting to create a unique space for children in urban Pakistan. CDR's programme demonstrates the day-to-day challenges of working in a sensitive, conflict zone. Simorgh's text book project illustrates the importance of focusing on the content of peace education. The Riverside School, although technically not a peace education programme, is simultaneously unique yet part of a small but growing number of innovative institutions that incorporate aspects of peace and human rights into everyday schooling. Together, these four stories illustrate the strikingly distinct approaches to peace that organisations have chosen to adopt.

#### THE CHILDREN'S MUSEUM FOR PEACE AND HUMAN RIGHTS (CMPHR)<sup>58</sup>

"A revolution has begun: 844,975 signatures have been collected on the disability petition by the children of Pakistan!! Join the movement and help make a difference..."

*Excerpt from the Facebook page of the Children's Museum for Peace and Human Rights.*<sup>59</sup>

Based in Karachi, the Children's Museum for Peace and Human Rights (CMPHR) is a long-term endeavour to create and sustain a stimulating space for children to interact in. Originally launched as the Human Rights Education Programme (HREP) in 1995, this project was a response to the growing violence in Karachi in the early 1990s. Every day, children were forced to live with violence, yet, as the founding members of HREP found out, none of this found its way into schools.

Recalls Zulfiqar Ali, founding member and director of CMPHR:

Every school you'd go to, nobody in any way was addressing what was happening. A group of us sat down and thought—what is the point of education, if what is happening outside the school window has no bearing on what goes on inside. How can we keep lying to children that things are great? (Ali 2009: Interview).

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<sup>58</sup> [www.cmphr.org](http://www.cmphr.org)

<sup>59</sup> <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Karachi-Pakistan/Childrens-Museum-for-Peace-and-Human-Rights/64701197418?ref=ts>

HREP was therefore born of the conviction that education had to be socially relevant. To even talk about peace, children first had to understand the world that they lived in, and acknowledge and deal with its many complexities.

The pilot project began with a handful of publications and manuals, and seven schools as partners. The biggest challenge at that stage was working in a system where the state and provincial government controlled all curriculum and textbooks, with little space for civil society. But the encouragement came from the students themselves. Ali narrates:

Soon, we found that the kids were incredibly interested. 'For the first time, someone has come and asked us what we believe and what we feel. We are always told, not asked', they said to us. Suddenly there was a space for discussion. Someone was asking them – what do *you* believe and why; can you justify what you believe? If someone disagrees, can you have a dialogue; if you still disagree, can you shake hands and walk away? We were very conscious that this was not something you could learn in theory. We couldn't just go there and say: learn these rights, once you do, you are human rights sensitive (Ali 2009: Interview).

The programme grew rapidly, with more schools showing interest. The next phase began in 2001-02, with the realisation that they could no longer work on the basis of donor-driven project cycles. An institution, representing permanence and commitment was needed, and that was how the children's museum concept, and CMPHR, was born.

The team at CMPHR envisages "a multi-dimensional educational space that will provide children with structured opportunities to explore, interact with, reflect upon and understand a wide spectrum of social issues in an enjoyable, interactive and inspiring environment" (CMPHR 2009). There will be six interactive galleries hosting exhibitions as well as regular workshops. Says Ali, "we are a city of 17 million people, and our children have few options for places to go."

This working model anticipates that schools will continue to come to CMPHR, instead of the other way around. This is the process: any interested school is added onto CMPHR's mailing list; its students must then actively participate in any or all of the current campaigns. At present, most activities take place during class hours and are structured around specific campaigns. Each school receives five mailings in an academic year, containing posters, leaflets and booklets with lesson plans for teachers. Depending on the nature of the current campaign, schools can choose to use the material in the appropriate session; art classes might be best suited for one campaign, whereas language sessions might be more appropriate for another. In addition, students can also become members of CMPHR's youth network, called Right On.

At any given point, there are at least 300 schools working with CMPHR, and often as many as 500. Previous campaigns have focused on diversity, tolerance, and rights of the child, among other issues. One main priority today is the disability campaign, with over 50 schools contributing to the process. In 2008, Pakistan became the 135th country to sign the UN Convention for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and CMPHR hopes to push for an early ratification of this convention.

The challenges have not disappeared. According to Ali, one of CMPHR's earliest obstacles was that there was no precedent. Students and teachers were all sceptical about the purpose of such a programme. "We would split them up into groups of five or six, and conversation would soon dry up. Now schools understand what we're doing and why we do it. There was also apathy from parents, who automatically taught their children to mind their own business, focus on results and get into a good college," he states. (Ali 2009: Interview)

Ali rues that despite all the talk about children being the future, we still do not take them seriously enough.

It is all just fun and games. We still have to do the real work, especially with the 18 to 25 age groups. Part of the problem is that we want to be able to see immediate impact. And that doesn't happen with children. It is serious long-term work. But it is not radical, subversive, dangerous work—it is just discussing basic citizenship (Ali 2009: Interview).

CMPHR's experience demonstrates the importance of sustainability, a challenge every peace programme faces. In this case, they chose to confront it head-on, by working to create a physical space that would represent the relative permanence of the programme.

#### **THE CENTRE FOR DIALOGUE AND RECONCILIATION'S PEACE EDUCATION PROGRAMME<sup>60</sup>**

Sushobha Barve, Executive Secretary of the New Delhi-based Centre for Dialogue and Reconciliation (CDR), recalls several conversations she had with an influential Kashmiri intellectual. One day, he observed that young people were well trained to use a gun and to nurture violence. But no one had attempted to teach them to build peace and resolve conflict. In a very real sense, that was the genesis of CDR's peace education programme.

The programme in Jammu and Kashmir had two main thrust areas—training school teachers across the state to address and cope with issues of violence, conflict, religion and identity in their classrooms; and developing an appropriate curriculum that these teachers could use. Neither process was a mutually exclusive one—the curriculum was a literal outcome of training workshops and classroom activities.

Right from the start, CDR staff were convinced that the programme would "only work if the teachers felt the need, and understood the relevance and importance" (Barve 2009: Interview). Over a five year period from 2001, CDR worked extensively with school teachers in the state. Initial workshops revealed that teachers faced some of the same obstacles as other teachers around the world – the lack of support from authorities, the inflexibility of the official syllabus, and therefore their inability to find time for anything "extra."

The chosen teachers attended a five-day training workshop, discussing every aspect of the curriculum. Subsequently, all the teachers in a district would meet once a month to share their experiences and learning. Some initial evaluation indicated that while the concepts in

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<sup>60</sup> [www.cdr-india.org](http://www.cdr-india.org)

the curriculum were well-received, there were not enough practical exercises that teachers could apply in class. Subsequent versions of the curriculum have focused on developing this aspect, incorporating stories, narratives and games.

Barve is encouraged by the innovation and courage some teachers have shown. One teacher took her class, made up mainly of young Muslims, for a walk to an area where there had been a large population of Hindu Pandits. As they walked along the river, they passed by broken, destroyed houses, remnants of violence. She then casually began a conversation:

Teacher: What are these houses? Why are they like this?

Students: Some bad people used to live there. Now they're gone.

Teacher: How do you know they are bad people? What happened to them? Why don't they live here anymore?

Barve believes that the teacher in question showed exceptional courage in even bringing up the subject, knowing all along that her students would return home and inevitably discuss it with their families.

If we can trigger that kind of initiative in teachers, even a handful of teachers across the valley. If they can find ways to use their own methods to pass on things to their students, without always waiting for official sanction (Barve 2009: Interview).

The five themes of the peace education curriculum were carefully chosen—communication, differing view points, diversity & discrimination, understanding conflict, and individuals can make a difference. For every theme, CDR created 4 to 6 lessons, each of which was taught in a half-hour session. Three concepts were deemed central to the philosophy of the programme:

- Conflict is an irrefutable part of life; the goal of conflict resolution must be to use conflict for its constructive and positive aspects and not destructive ones;
- Conflict is not a contest where there are winners and losers;
- There is no one right way to handle situations of conflict.

Barve regrets that the majority of peace education programmes get bogged down in religion-speak, and don't help young people come to terms with difference.

They all teach the students: the Gita talks about this, the Koran says this. But peace education is not just that, it is much more. It is appreciating the difference in one other, and respecting that difference. If Hinduism and Islam are different in theology, that is alright. We don't have to constantly seek commonalities (Barve 2009: Interview).

She extends this thought to the conflict between India and Pakistan.

What links Indians and Pakistanis? I'm not saying we shouldn't seek commonalities. But after 60 years, we have grown differently as two nation states. We are

neighbours; our imperative today is to learn to live with that difference (Barve 2009: Interview).

For the CDR team, the most difficult aspect of the project was coping with the demands of the government system. The operational side of the programme was not easy. The teachers who would receive training from CDR were chosen by the District Education Officer, under an order from the Director of Education for the state. As a result, Barve admits the programme worked very well in some districts, and not so much in others. "Next time," she says, she would prefer to work through the government's teacher training colleges.

Between 2004 and 2006, CDR worked with 58 schools, training 114 teachers, who in turn taught 3420 students. Barve hopes to resume the training process shortly and extend it to other districts in the state; in the meantime, she believes that the curriculum remains a work in progress.

### **SIMORGH WOMEN'S RESOURCE & PUBLICATION CENTRE'S SCHOOL TEXT BOOK PROJECT<sup>61</sup>**

In some classrooms in private schools in Pakistan, children hear the story of Ali Baba who shares his toys generously; in others, students learn about the Mughal princess Zebunnisa. The first story seeks to inculcate values of sharing and teamwork and builds sensitivity towards "special" children, while the story of Zebunnisa defies the stereotype of the traditional woman in society – the princess is a poet, plans her own garden and adjudicates between scholars on religious matters.

These and other such stories can be found in the Kaleidoscope primers, produced by the Simorgh Women's Resource & Publication Centre's School Text Book Project. Simorgh's project was envisaged as "an attempt to counter the culture of intolerance and violence that was being generated by officially produced school texts" (Hussain, no date).

The Kaleidoscope primers address human rights issues linked to life, safety, education, food, and health; these primers can be used through inventive participatory methods in the classroom. Children are also taught to use logic as a problem solving tool. For teachers, there is an accompanying guide, to motivate them to use the material effectively.

The long-term aim is to encourage children to develop:

- a spirit of caring for others;
- the ability to understand points of view other than their own;
- the capacity to accept the right of others to think differently;
- the ability to see that as members of the human family we all have the same rights and responsibilities.

The work at Simorgh's education department is based on the premise that "values learnt in childhood play a crucial role in forming the adult mind." Says Neelam Hussain, Founder Member of Simorgh:

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<sup>61</sup> [www.simorghpk.org](http://www.simorghpk.org)

Some of the standard texts were so boring, so badly produced, also very biased, in terms of promoting nationalism and jingoism. As a feminist, a human rights person, the heavy focus on Muslim identity also bothered me. Even more troubling was the complete stranglehold the education system had over the minds of students, effectively closing any possibility for student-led debate (Hussain 2009: Interview).

What Simorgh wanted to do was produce different types of books to engage the students' imagination, help them conceptualise new ideas, and go beyond rote learning. Initially, Simorgh hoped to work with public sector schools, particularly those that taught in Urdu. However, schools were hesitant to get involved; they needed permission from the Education Department to introduce any new material.

Other than this they had their own list of grievances regarding low salaries, inhabitable classrooms, lack of furniture, fans, etc. and were inclined to be offended at the idea that they should be asked to undertake extra work. After much consideration, it was decided not to include government schools at this stage in the project, especially as the process of getting permission from the concerned authorities would involve miles of red tape and unnecessary bureaucratic interference in textual content. What we did not realize at that point was the resistance from the Textbook Board, which is a jealous guardian of its privileges (Hussain, no date).

Next, Simorgh approached Urdu medium schools in the private sector. Hussain recalls how they openly pointed out that they catered to the lower income groups, classes were jam packed and they weren't interested in anything "extra," particularly when it was not directly connected to a potential job or the job market.

Private, English-medium schools were the only other option. Here, Simorgh finally discovered possibilities. The programme began at the Lahore Grammar School (and three others) with Hussain and her colleagues sitting in on classes, casually chatting with kids.

Initially they gave us very "correct" answers. Once they realized they didn't have to, they relaxed. We threw the teachers out, and talked about what they liked, what bored them, what they didn't like. The entire project was conceptualised during these classroom sessions (Hussain 2009: Interview).

Soon, the first primer was ready; it was sent out to the schools; students responded, approving of the bright colours and artwork; teachers gave their own feedback, and thus the process evolved. Simorgh left it to the schools to decide how best to use the primer—as an English reader, for Social Sciences or anything else.

Simorgh has been wary of overloading the primers with religious-talk. Instead, they have adopted more subtle techniques. For instance, one story uses non-Muslim names in a setting familiar to the children—the magic carpet travelling through the city of Lahore. The purpose is to show that people have been living together for a long time without conflict. Other stories obliquely refer to inequality, development, child labour, gender disparities. A brother and sister sit down for a meal, and the brother gets the lion share. The Kaleidoscope primers

are peopled with characters named Anjana, Lee, Pappu, Jojo and Marjana – names largely unfamiliar to young students in Pakistan’s schools.

As other organisations had experienced, Simorgh also discovered that the primers were a work in progress, incorporating suggestions from students and teachers – changing fonts, adding stories and poems, moving exercises to primers for different age groups and revising illustrations.

Today, schools are willing and ready to use primers in both English and Urdu, but funding is a constant constraint. Simorgh hopes to overcome this, and extend the project beyond the 28 English medium private sector schools presently using the primers.

## THE RIVERSIDE SCHOOL<sup>62</sup>

### *This month at Riverside*

*June 1 - Core team from Bhutan - Royal Education Council - to visit Riverside for further collaboration.*

*June 2 - Training of fellows from Aakansha and “Teach for India” at Pune by Kiran and Radha*

*June 4 - Joanne White from Portman Early Childhood Centre to collaborate with Riverside on documenting the Pre School programme*

*June 5 – In-house Professional Development Sessions from 29th May to 10th June*

*June 21 - Visitors from Relief Foundation (Chennai ) to understand Riverside Citizenship Curriculum.*

*June 29 - Tom Alter and Abhishek will be the Artist in Residence from 29th June onwards.*

*- Extract from the website of The Riverside School*

The selection of activities scheduled for the month of June 2009 at the Riverside School in Ahmedabad are as clear an indication as can be of the school’s determination to introduce new methods of schooling. Says Kiran Sethi, Founder of Riverside:

Our aim is to put common sense into common practice. Whatever the practice of learning may be, it calls for a lot of intuition, backed up of course by research (Sethi 2009: Interview).

As in other cases, the school itself is continually evolving. “The work is never complete; every year, there are new processes, curriculums, choices. We are a lab of learning, constantly prototyping,” says Sethi. Riverside’s philosophy is now called “Roots-froots.”

The key elements of Riverside’s approach to education are the citizenship programme and the key stage centres and clubs, the latter based on the theory of Multiple Intelligences. This theory draws on the premise that while most education systems inculcate verbal/linguistic and logical/mathematical skills, they ignore

other kinds of intelligence including visual/spatial, bodily/kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, naturalist and intrapersonal.

All students go through the key stages – from kindergarten to grade 2 for key stage 1, grades 3 to 7 during key stage 2, and grades 8 to 12 for key stage 3. Younger students are therefore

<sup>62</sup> www.schoolriverside.com

slowly introduced to the different intelligences and participate in processes designed to enhance these, through key stage interest clubs. Older students, well into key stage 2, can opt to become members of clubs (media, drama, sports, nature, science etc), to hone their specific skills and interests.

Through Riverside's citizenship programme, students partner with different NGOs and civil society organisations to experience and explore new terrains. Riverside's students have worked in sweat shops, making agarbathis – to experience for themselves what child labour means. Sethi recalls that one hour into the exercise, they had headaches, and were exhausted. But she regards such activities as integral to their personal journeys of awareness and engagement.

During the current academic year, Riverside debates the question: are political borders a result of our mental borders? Thus far, it has been a conscious decision to be completely non-religious and non-political, and the school has not celebrated any festivals. However, Sethi plans to initiate discussions with her new batch of class nine students.

I would like them to venture into controversial issues, I want them to discuss it. Start talking about genocide, maybe start at Darfur. It is so distant, we can make all the right noises. But then we come back to Ahmedabad and link it with events here (Sethi 2009: Interview).

Sethi points out that most of these themes feed into larger contexts of prejudice or discrimination. "At the end they will realise that they aren't learning 27 different topics, just one big one," she hopes.

Riverside has been judicious in documenting all its activities and processes, with one objective in mind.

The whole idea of documentation is that it is replicable. Of course, it isn't a prescriptive document. The framework is, how can I be changed, and how can I be the change? (Sethi 2009: Interview).

This also ensures that their processes are transparent and visible, particularly to parents. Sethi observes:

We don't even have to convince the parents. Once you make the relevance so visible to the child, the parents can see it for themselves. Since we document all the time, they see their children at work. It is tangible evidence, and a win-win deal because after all, getting their buy-in is our responsibility (Sethi 2009: Interview).

In addition, Riverside hosts a professional developing centre, training teachers, offering certificate courses and documenting best practices. Today, the Government of Bhutan is keen to introduce the Riverside Model in Bhutanese schools.

Sethi is proud of how Riverside has been able to build the competencies of every individual—students, teachers, parents, her own.

The one thing we need in India is the power of partnerships. We have so many children, we need several models. We cannot stop, we must network, and not reinvent the wheel constantly. We need to get that happening, after all everyone wants to do good work (Sethi 2009: Interview).

## IV THE BIG(GER) PICTURE

In June 2000, Hurights Osaka organised a South Asia training workshop in Bangkok, on Human Rights Education in schools. During the workshop, participants from Bangladesh, Nepal, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka identified the primary supporting and inhibiting factors specific to each country. In most cases, the inhibiting factors were related to the education system, including the role of examinations, the problems of curriculum development and the attitude of teachers. Other restraining factors included the attitude of religious leaders (Bangladesh), cultural and traditional values (India and Pakistan) and the lack of resources. Government policies, the role of intellectuals and NGOs, international pressure from the west and in some cases, the eagerness of teachers to adopt a human rights approach were identified as encouraging factors.

Nine years on, several of these continue to be relevant. The commonalities apart, each country in the regions faces its own set of challenges specific to its contexts. This section of the paper will draw upon the findings outlined in previous sections and present a summary analysis of peace education programmes in each of the seven countries.

### **BANGLADESH**

This study has been unable to uncover any evidence of sustained peace education programmes in Bangladesh. There have been a few short-term projects by both local and international NGOs, addressing different human rights issues and occasionally targeted at young people.

At the 2000 Hurights workshop, participants from Bangladesh acknowledged the slow and long drawn out bureaucratic processes embedded in the education system as a primary constraint to the introduction of human rights education. They also referred to the resistance of fundamentalists and religious leaders to “western” ideas of education. The lack of institutional capacity for NGOs and economic restraints were other factors (Hurights, no date).

As it stands, there does appear to be a *need* for peace education, for more reasons than to acknowledge the presence of conflict. Bangladesh is one of the poorest countries in South Asia, with a surfeit of social and economic development problems. According to researchers, school textbooks do not recognise or help students to understand poverty and the vast inequalities within the country. NGOs such as Working for Better Life contend that there are no creative outlets for students in Bangladeshi schools, and the curriculum fails in being either imaginative or interesting. Moreover, there is little engagement with current affairs or social problems that Bangladesh faces.

...students are not encouraged to think about the future of their country, to analyze the issues that affect Bangladesh as a developing nation, or to question government policies. ...to add to these problems, the culture has lost the traditions that develop listening skills and rational discourse. The ensuing frustration makes youth easy prey for the sparring political parties which have relied upon passionate and volatile

supporters throughout the first three decades since Bangladesh's independence in 1971 from the then West Pakistan (Working For Better Life, no date)

It is a classic case of the chicken and egg syndrome. On the one hand, it can be argued that peace organisations and NGOs lack the supportive environment that is needed to introduce peace or human rights into the education system's curriculum. However, it is also possible that the introduction of peace education can actually help galvanise the system, and make learning more interesting for young Bangladeshi students. After all, peace education, with its emphasis on student participation and interactive methods has the potential to revolutionise the mode of teaching.

To address the misconception that peace and human rights education are primarily western concepts, NGOs must aim to evolve curricula of particular relevance to their culture and language, by drawing on stories and narratives from Bangladeshi literature or folktales. This in turn requires the active participation of local organisations. On their part, international NGOs can train local teachers, thereby developing local capacity for the education sector.

It is necessary to acknowledge the several challenges that this research process has faced in trying to gather information on projects in Bangladesh. It is possible that field research and directly meeting educators and NGO workers in Bangladesh might reveal more on peace and human rights programmes in the country.

## **BHUTAN**

This study has found no explicit peace education programmes in Bhutan. However, the government has introduced value education into the curricula and there is an increasing focus on issues related to sustainable development and the environment. There are few civil society organisations in the traditional sense in Bhutan working in the area of human rights or peace education.

Within Bhutan, there is growing debate on the changing nature of the education system. Karma Phuntsho argues that there is a widening rift between "traditional" and "modern" education systems in Bhutan (Phuntsho 2000). The modern system of education, introduced in the late 1950s, has made steady progress over the last fifty years, with increased budgetary allocation and a steady rise in enrolment. Phuntsho laments that this rift has forced parents and young people into an "either-or" situation—to choose either the traditional system of schooling in religious centres or enrol in a "modern" school.

He notes that traditional systems of learning were geared towards "achieving the omniscience of the Buddha" for the benefit of all beings. In contrast, the modern system is perceived as more selfish, with choices and decisions made to benefit the self primarily. On the other hand, the traditional mode of education has encouraged students to remain passive recipients of knowledge, in contrast to the modern schools where, at least on paper, students are prodded to demonstrate a sense of curiosity and enquiry, and become active participants in the process of education.

The real question is: does a country like Bhutan need peace education programmes? In January 2009, the results of Bhutan's National Values Assessment survey which focused on three sets of values were released (Evans 2008). This survey was based on *The Seven Levels of Personal Consciousness* and *The Seven Levels of National Consciousness*, as developed by the Barrett Values Centre.<sup>63</sup> The seven levels in each set move from survival, relationships, self-esteem, to transformation, internal cohesion, making a difference and finally, to service. It must be noted that level two of both sets, Relationships, focuses on the peaceful resolution of conflict, primarily at the intrapersonal level. Any possible "dysfunction" at this level has the potential to lead to "inter-ethnic or inter-religious violence, and the victimization or unfair treatment of minorities or subgroups based on gender, sexual preference, race, etc" (Evans 2008).

The survey focused on three key areas: Bhutanese personal values, the values and issues perceived to drive the current national culture, and the values that Bhutanese want their society to embrace in the future. According to the results of the survey, friendship is the most crucial personal value for the Bhutanese people. The top-ranked cultural value is continuous improvement, followed by environmental protection. Education, followed by continuous improvement, was the most desired value for the future.

From this survey it is evident that the Bhutanese people value peace highly. If we accept that peace education also holds the potential to *prevent* violence and conflict, then surely there is a case to be made for introducing peace and human rights education into the curriculum. However, social structures in Bhutan are such that this appears to be more in the hands of state authorities than civil society groups.

The long-term goals and aspirations of the several thousands of Bhutanese refugees must also not be ignored. It was not possible to investigate the many refugee organisations in Nepal and India for reasons of time and access. It seems natural to assume that human rights will be a matter of concern and relevance to these organisations; but more research is needed to assess if there are any specific programmes for younger generations of refugees.

## INDIA

There is a strong history of peace education in India, going back to the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi. Peace education programmes in the country are numerous, scattered, intermittent and often highly dissimilar from one another. Moreover, little is known about the impact of these programmes on students and teachers. On paper, there is a supportive environment in place, with the active involvement of the education ministry, and various other institutes. However, organisations frequently face logistical issues, particularly in regions like Jammu and Kashmir.

A single model of peace education cannot work across the country. Educational institutions like the Krishnamurthy Foundation, Gandhian organisations, academics researching peace and conflict, human rights groups, newer citizen organisations, a multitude of NGOs—the

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<sup>63</sup> [www.valuescentre.com](http://www.valuescentre.com)

diversity of individuals and organisations working in the area of peace education is probably India's biggest strength.

The sustainability of peace education is a major challenge. There is much to be gained from long-term partnerships between similar and dissimilar organisations. However, as of now, the majority of these different groups of people are relatively insular, and there is a need for greater debate and sharing. The efforts of networks like the Learning Network, that bring together organisations working on similar issues can, and must be emulated.<sup>64</sup> This is particularly necessary since few organisations have the resources to sustain peace education programmes in several schools for a long duration. To build on its good beginnings, India needs concerted efforts to sustain the momentum, and create a ripple effect. For example, Citizens for Peace worked with a core group of students in a college in Mumbai and are hoping these students will in turn facilitate more workshops in their college. The Bluebells International School in New Delhi has recently established the Active Citizenship Resource Centre, open to teachers across the city.

Peace education does appear to be concentrated at two ends of the education spectrum—private schools that have introduced their own programmes or government schools where NGOs have intervened. There are several schools that fall somewhere between the two categories and appear to be left out of the picture, and these inevitably have the largest number of students.

It is also somewhat baffling that despite the *number* of peace programmes across the country, actual classroom presence remains limited. Unsurprisingly, it has been impossible to enumerate the number of hours devoted to peace or human rights education over a specific duration. It is also not clear if organisations have chosen where they stand on the question of incorporating peace education into the syllabus or choosing to address it as a stand-alone subject.

## MALDIVES

There is little to indicate that there are any peace education programmes in the Maldives. Peace education is not included in the official syllabus that is taught in schools.

The potential impact of climate change on the islands is the Maldives' biggest challenge and scholars predict that future conflicts will be over resources. It can be argued that the introduction of peace or human rights education can help create awareness about these dangers, and even give an impetus to the overall quality of the education system, by emphasising enhanced student participation and involvement. However, once again, this appears to be largely in the hands of the administration and not civil society. The political system of the Maldives is still in transition, and it remains to be seen how smoothly the atoll-nation makes a transition to full-fledged democracy.

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<sup>64</sup> [www.learningnet-india.org](http://www.learningnet-india.org)

## NEPAL

In a paper on peace movements in Nepal, Dev Raj Dahal notes that

...communities for peace in Nepal are too diverse lacking any coordinating mechanism for sustained collective action. Similarly, the multiplicity of actors pursues their interests irrationally. This is preventing the non-violent resolution of conflict (Dahal 2008).

There *are* peace organisations and programmes in Nepal but this study has found little evidence of sustained peace education efforts in the country. Moreover, solely relying on online resources and networking has been made it difficult to ascertain any detailed information on peace programmes in the country.

In a National Peace Education conference on “Consolidating Peace Education in Nepal” held in 2007, the organisers noted that it was necessary “to attract Nepali public, pedagogues and media's attention to the various initiatives for the culture of peace and non-violence for children.” This prompts me to speculate that there *are* initiatives but the lack of documentation means that little information is available in the public domain. For instance, I was unable to obtain contact information for many of the 14 organisations that are listed to have participated in this conference (Bikalpa 2007).

There is no doubt that the last ten years of ongoing conflict in Nepal has had a direct impact on education, with students and teachers often too fearful to attend school, especially in remote areas. Nepali participants at the Hurights conference in 2000 referred to the damage to school infrastructure, as well as frequent physical threats to students and teachers. They called for all schools to be made “zones of peace,” thereby preventing an escalation in the drop out rate (Hurights, no date).

## PAKISTAN

There are an increasing number of peace education initiatives in Pakistan that primarily address the issues of curriculum development and teacher training. However, many organisations face considerable difficulties in working with public sector schools. To a large extent, that is the biggest challenge peace education faces in Pakistan today. On the one hand, there are a growing number of civil society groups and private sector schools that are eager to experiment with new curricula, and innovative methods of teaching. But that is merely the first step. Extending this process or a version of it, to both public sector and madrasa schools is the real necessity, and bigger challenge. This also requires the active support of the Education Ministry.

While actually entering the classrooms is one priority, another must be to innovate in circumstances where infrastructure has been disabled or even destroyed. For instance, the ongoing conflict in the Swat valley has already had an impact on schools and attendance rates. As the number of those displaced increases, this problem will only be further aggravated.

In a sense, the real emphasis in Pakistan is not so much on peace education but on democracy and citizenship education, which are, given the current political climate, likely to be high on the priority of donors. However, educators in Pakistan must seek ways to circumvent and look beyond donor demands (Jamil 2009: Interview). The Children's Museum for Peace and Human Rights demonstrates the possibilities for sustainability and building partnerships. Indeed, the call for partnerships must find echoes across Pakistan, particularly to ensure that private sector initiatives can expand into the public sector and address the majority of students. Equally, peace educators must focus, as Simorgh has, on the content and language of peace education.

## SRI LANKA

There are several peace organisations in Sri Lanka, with programmes focussing on peace advocacy, activism, research and education. Both human rights and peace education have been introduced into the school curricula by the Sri Lankan education ministry. However, in recent years, the space for civil society has shrunk, and organisations have found it difficult to introduce peace education programmes.

...earlier, during the ceasefire, it was easy to launch different activities with regard to the peace programme. Now the whole country is on a war footing.<sup>65</sup> One thing is, they are also thinking there will be an end to this war. A war mentality is being exhibited. Yes, it is very difficult for civil society organisations to implement anything (Fernando 2009: Interview).

Peace education is more vital than ever for Sri Lanka. Officially, the civil war has ended but as many would attest, the real work is only now beginning. The humanitarian cost of the government's military victory is as yet by and large unknown. Given this, the time is right to usher in a period of concentrated peacebuilding. This requires the active participation of the youth. But equally, it requires open, free spaces, where young people can express themselves fearlessly. As yet, civil society does not appear to have the power to create these without repercussions.

At present, all energies are focused on the immediate rehabilitation and resettlement of the large number of refugees. Once this has been initiated, and the process of rebuilding communities is underway, the focus will and must shift to encompass the rejuvenation of the education system. While it would make sense to continue to introduce peace education into the mainstream syllabus as part of this process, attention must be paid to both the content and tone of these modules. Ideally, these modules must be developed through a collaborative process involving different communities. For such a process to have any impact, the recreation of favourable spaces for civil society is crucial and must be the first step.

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<sup>65</sup> In the two months since I did these interviews, much has changed. Sri Lanka is officially in a post-war situation and the focus has shifted to rehabilitation of the large number of internally displaced persons (IDPs).

## **BOTTOMLINE**

In this chapter, I have attempted to set the many commonalities aside, and acknowledge the unique challenges each country faces in introducing, expanding and sustaining peace education programmes for its student population: in Bhutan and the Maldives, the perception that peace education is not necessary; in Sri Lanka, the lack of space and freedom for civil society to operate; in Pakistan, the need to find ways to introduce peace education into public schools and madrasas that provide education to the majority of young people; and in India, bringing together the many strands of peace and human rights education into a cohesive movement of sorts, while retaining the individuality of every programme. Additionally, the lack of information about any peace programmes, in contrast to many other development initiatives that are well documented, in Bangladesh and Nepal is puzzling.

The bottomline then: a peace education programme is not, and cannot be an independent, stand-alone entity that a well-meaning organisation can introduce to a community. In each case, peace educators have had to and will continue to fight for space both within the mainstream education system that educates the vast majority of young people in the region, and outside these classrooms, which many others do not have access to. In the next and final chapter, I offer some observations and concluding remarks on peace education in the region.

## V CONCLUSION

We are not naive enough to think that we will eradicate violence overnight, or by next year, or ever. But it's the striving to get there that pays dividends. Certainly there's a long road to peace. But the road is the point.

- Citizens for Peace<sup>66</sup>

We know this: there are many peace education projects in South Asia, particularly in India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka; those who initiated them were motivated by many different factors that inevitably intersect between the personal and the political and include both their individual and collective histories; peace education programmes are as much about and for the trainers as they are for the trainees or students; there are several qualified, good-intentioned educators eager to constantly expand the boundaries of learning in their classrooms; there are schools that genuinely want to offer their students education that incorporates ideas of peace and non-violence; in these schools, young people are encouraged to develop their individual capacities to acknowledge and address any violence in their lives.

Yet, there is a lot we do not know: are there other peace education programmes in Nepal and Bangladesh that have not been chronicled or documented? What has been the impact of peace education programmes across the region, for students and teachers? Why have some programmes disappeared or been abruptly discontinued? Is it only a question of inadequate funding or are there other reasons? Why do we know so little about what some of these programmes achieved in the months and years of their existence?

I do not have answers to many of these, and can only suggest possible reasons, largely drawing on the stories I have heard while doing this research. Across South Asia, education systems have remained relatively inflexible, and unwilling to experiment with new ideas. This has begun to change but bureaucratic obstacles still remain, as the experiences of several organisations in Pakistan tell us. Moreover, in many cases, teachers are invariably poorly paid, overburdened and seldom commended, and therefore can hardly be expected to welcome any additions to the curricula. Indeed, the perceived “extra-ness” of peace education is a dilemma; educators differ over whether peace, human rights or citizenship should be taught as a separate, distinct curriculum or woven into the fabric of the school’s attitudes and philosophy. It must be emphasised that while the latter is an option in privately owned schools where individuals can make decisions, it is much harder to implement in the public sector. Organisations like the Children’s Museum of Peace and Human Rights and Simorgh appear to have found a compromise situation, by leaving it to schools to decide how best to use the peace curricula.

Outside of the system, teachers and parents have also been resistant to some of these ideas—of their children discussing communalism or genocide in class, for instance. One way to overcome this is to involve parents in the peace education process, allowing them to witness

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<sup>66</sup> See

[http://citizensforpeace.in/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=55:vision&Itemid=66](http://citizensforpeace.in/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=55:vision&Itemid=66)

for themselves the impact of such discussions on their children. Unsurprisingly, teacher training is a priority with many organisations; this has the additional benefit of ensuring that teachers can (if they are so inclined) continue their work even after a particular project has ended. This is one way to address the big challenge of sustainability.

On the positive side, we see that there are educators who have integrated human and social security concerns into the content of peace education. This means, for example, that a peace curriculum is as likely to address the issue of unequal access to water and other resources, as it is to attempt to retell history, contentious everywhere.

Organisations need to chronicle their efforts—on their websites, through newsletters, emails and publications<sup>67</sup>. The Riverside model demonstrate the value of documentation: both Riverside and other organisations have greatly benefited from this process. It is also vital for organisations to evaluate their peace education programmes, to ensure that they continue to be relevant to people. <sup>68</sup>There is little data on both the immediate and long-term impact of peace education. This lack of evaluation is often no doubt linked to the inadequate duration of the programme. How can we expect the impact of a three day workshop to “survive the onslaught” of a violent conflict? (Salomon 2002).

There are other factors, common to South Asia:

- Universities need to play a greater role, particularly in research. Peace education is not a static field of study and continued research on peace is necessary to enhance the quality of programmes.
- There is inadequate sharing and networking between peace organisations. For “fingers to become a fist” (Salomon 2009: Interview), civil society needs to come together more regularly, and be open to sharing research, as well as other resources.
- Developing human resource to work on peace education programmes is critical. For instance, there are a growing number of South Asian alumni from the University of Peace at Costa Rica in South America,<sup>69</sup> but there also needs to be more accessible, local training options for NGO staff implementing programmes.
- There is a growing call for the inclusion of a gender component into peace programmes. This has assumed even greater importance following attempts by communal forces to indoctrinate women (Hans 2009: Interview). In fact, gender sensitivity is one of five transitional capacities Reardon (2000) proposes be initiated

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<sup>67</sup> While there is some writing on peace education projects, their aims and activities, much of this is highly subjective, and often takes the form of personal narratives. This is no doubt immensely valuable but makes any analysis of programmes rather difficult, as these narratives are often the only source of information.

<sup>68</sup> The Centre for Research on Peace Education at the University of Haifa in Israel is one of few organisations to carry out empirical research on the impact of peace education programmes. A study of Israeli and Palestinian youth who participated in a peace education programme – and a comparative analysis with a control group – is one of the best documented peace education programmes. The authors offer the beginnings of “proof” of the impact of peace education programmes, but stress that considerable work remains to be done. See Biton & Salomon 2006.

<sup>69</sup> See [http://network.upeace.org/g\\_region.cfm](http://network.upeace.org/g_region.cfm)

into peace education; the others are ecological awareness, cultural proficiency, global agency and conflict competency.

- For peace education to have any genuine impact, programmes must speak a familiar language, both literally and in terms of content. Merely adapting curricula to local contexts is no longer sufficient; this paper proposes that all peace education modules must be developed in a collaborative manner, involving students and teachers in as democratic a process as possible.

Finally, irrefutably, money matters! On the one hand, there is the question of organisations facing a constant resource crunch and having to depend on external funding. This means that programmes are inevitably interrupted just as they are gathering momentum or worse, forced to shut down at least temporarily. One possible way to circumvent this problem is to continue to focus on teacher training, thereby initiating a process of transferring ownership of peace education to the teaching community.

On the other hand, there is also the question of affordability and access to peace education. There *are* projects that work with public sector schools, but these are rarer, for reasons highlighted in the study. This means that a large number of NGOs are forced to or choose to implement peace education programmes in private schools that remain out of reach of the average South Asian family. Equally, private schools that have greater access to new resources and ideas and are sometimes more willing to innovate, like Riverside or Bluebells International, are therefore more likely to incorporate ideas of peace and citizenship. We need to find ways to address this issue of access, so as to ensure that students from less-privileged backgrounds are not deprived of engaging with such ideas and activities. It would be unforgivably ironic if we allowed peace education to, however unwittingly, become discriminatory in nature.

The story of peace education in South Asia has still not been fully told. While this study represents an attempt to bring together some of the many peace education narratives, there are still many missing elements. It is only by recording and sharing our experience and learning, that we can stop reinventing the wheel every time a peace education programme is launched.

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**APPENDIX 1**  
**MAPPING SELECT PEACE EDUCATION INITIATIVES IN SOUTH ASIA**

No	Name of Organisation	Type of Organisation (NGO/School/ academic institution/ research centre)	Based in	Engaged in peace/ human rights/ citizenship education	Engaged in other peace/ conflict resolution activities	Works directly with schools	Has developed curriculum for peace or human rights education	Trains teachers in peace education	Engages in research activities
1	Ain O Salish Kendra	NGO	Bangladesh		•				•
2	Bangladesh Inter-religious Council for Peace and Justice (BICPAJ)	NGO	Bangladesh	•	•	•			
3	Mennonite Central Committee	NGO	Bangladesh		•				•
4	Promoting Human Rights and Education in Bangladesh (PHREB)	NGO	Bangladesh	•	•	•			•
5	Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution Studies, University of Madras	Academic Institute/Research Centre	India		•				•
6	The Centre for Dialogue and Reconciliation	NGO	India	•	•		•	•	
7	Pravah	Not-for-profit	India	•		•		•	
8	Citizens for Peace	NGO	India	•	•				•

9	Meta Culture	NGO/Consultants	India		•	•	•		•
10	Aman Panchayat	NGO	India		•				•
11	aProCh	NGO	India	•		•			
12	Avehi Abacus	NGO	India	•		•	•		
13	The Aseema Trust	Not-for-profit	India		•				
14	Bluebells School International	Educational Institute	India	•		•	•	•	
15	Centre for Development and Peace Studies (CDPS)	Research Centre	India	•	•		•		•
16	Children's Movement for Civic Awareness	Not-for-profit	India	•		•	•		
17	Sita School	Educational Institute	India	•			•	•	
18	Samerth	NGO	India		•				
19	City Montessori School	Educational Institute	India	•		•	•	•	
20	Riverside School	Educational Institute	India	•		•	•	•	•
21	Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace	Research Centre	India	•	•	•			•
22	Children's Museum for Peace and Human Rights	NGO	Pakistan	•		•	•	•	

23	Grammar School Rawalpindi	Educational Institute	Pakistan	•		•	•	•	
24	Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi	NGO	Pakistan	•		•			•
25	Simorgh	NGO	Pakistan	•	•	•	•	•	•
26	The Weeramantry International Centre for Peace Education and Research	Research centre	Sri Lanka	•		•	•		•
27	National Peace Council	NGO	Sri Lanka	•	•				•
28	The Berghof Foundation for Conflict Studies	Research Institute	Germany/ Sri Lanka (until 2008)		•				•
29	Sarvodaya	NGO/Network	Sri Lanka	•	•	•	•		
30	Caritas Sri Lanka/SEED	NGO/Network	Sri Lanka		•	•			

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **QUESTIONNAIRE**

It must be made clear that this questionnaire was not “administered” to every interviewee. Owing to the open ended nature of the majority of questions, respondents were not asked to fill out the questionnaire. Instead, these questions were used to guide the course of free wheeling conversations and interviews, whether on the phone, in person or via email. Also, it must be emphasised that not every question was asked of every interviewee.

The questions were broadly divided into three categories – on peace education itself, on peace education efforts in a particular country and on a specific programme or organisation.

#### **ABOUT PEACE EDUCATION**

1. What are your earliest memories of discussing peace and peace education? How did you get involved with peace education?
2. Where do you think the origins of peace education really lie?
3. Someone I recently spoke to said, “Peace education cannot be seen as a solution to all conflict, it isn’t a magic cure. What it does is teach people how to cope”. Do you agree with this? What do you think peace education can really hope to achieve?
4. What would you define as the key elements of an effective peace education program?
5. What role can civil society play in peace education?

#### **ABOUT PEACE EDUCATION IN PAKISTAN (FOR EXAMPLE)**

1. If you had to map the realm of peace education in Pakistan, how would you? Who are the different kinds of people who work in this area? What are the different labels under which peace education is known?
2. Have you come across any peace education programs in Pakistan that you found very powerful or effective?
3. Peace education programs must have a local context in order to be relevant to students. How do you make your peace education programs relevant to the region you work in?

#### **ABOUT SIMORGH (FOR EXAMPLE)**

1. Why was Simorgh established – why did you and others involved feel the need for it?

2. What do you believe is the philosophical basis of the organisation?
3. Which of the following groups do you work with?
  - a. Young boys in schools /colleges
  - b. Young girls in schools /colleges
  - c. Young boys and girls in schools /colleges
  - d. Out-of-school youth
  - e. Adults/men/women
  - f. Villages/communities/families (including young people)
  - g. Teachers
  - h. Others (please describe)
4. Which of these settings do you work in?
  - a. In schools
  - b. In colleges
  - c. Informal settings (please describe)
5. Geographically, where do you work?
6. Can you explain briefly how this program actually works on the ground – what are the main processes?
7. Have you developed a specific curriculum(s) for this program? Can you describe this?
8. What obstacles or challenges have you faced? How have you overcome them?
9. What are the key lessons you've learnt from your experiences over the years?
10. What do you consider your key achievement(s) to date?
11. What do you intend to focus on in the future?
12. Have you had any difficulties with funding for a program like this? We would appreciate any advice or suggestions on this.
13. Would you recommend any other organisation(s) working in this area? If so, for what reasons?
14. Finally, what else should I have asked you?

## READY-RECKONER OF SOUTH ASIAN PEACE EDUCATION INITIATIVES

August 1, 2009

### BANGLADESH

#### **Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK)**

<http://www.askbd.org>

ASK is a legal aid and human rights organisation that provides free legal aid. Its activities have expanded to include investigation, advocacy, media campaigning, documentation, training and action research.

Address	7/17, Block - B, Lalmatia, Dhaka-1207, Bangladesh.
Phone	0088-02-8126137, 8126047
Fax	0088-02-8126045
Email	ask@citechco.net

#### **Bangladesh Inter-religious Council for Peace and Justice (BICPAJ)**

<http://www.bicpaj.org/>

BICPAJ is a religious non-profit NGO, which runs projects for young people, children, ethnic tribal communities and women. BICPAJ's activities include monthly discussion meetings on justice and peace issues.

Address	14/20 Iqbal Road, Mohammedpur, Dhaka-1207, Bangladesh
Phone	0088-02-9141410
Fax	0088-02-8122010
Email	bicpaj@bijoy.net
Contact person	Brother Jarlath D'Souza (Secretary)

#### **Mennonite Central Committee**

<http://mcc.org/bangladesh/>

MCC supports several projects in Bangladesh, including those focusing on agriculture, job creation, peacebuilding, education, material aid, the provision of safe water, and HIV and AIDS, among others.

Email	Through the website
Contact person	Sarah Wheaton (Peace Programme Coordinator)

#### **Promoting Human Rights and Education in Bangladesh (PHREB)**

<http://www.phreb.org/>

Established in 2004, PHREB is a not-for-profit dedicated to fighting violence against women and girls in Bangladesh. Human rights education is a strong component of PHREB's work.

Address	House A/13, 3rd floor, Road 1, Block A, Chandgaon R/A, Chittagong 4212, Bangladesh.
Phone	0088-031-2571170, 0088-01714117
Email	phreb@phreb.org

## INDIA

### **Aman Panchayat**

<http://www.amanpanchayat.org>

Aman's projects focus on the social and psychological rehabilitation of people made invisible by conflict, especially orphans, refugees and widows. Aman offers services for the displaced, organises programmes to enhance awareness on conflict and creates partnerships with other organisations to ensure the sustainability of its work.

Address	O - 63, IInd Floor Lajpat Nagar Part II, New Delhi -110024.
Email	<a href="mailto:rahul@amanpanchayat.org">rahul@amanpanchayat.org</a>
Contact person	Jamal Kidwai (Director)

### **aProCh**

<http://www.aproch.org/>

Through its many initiatives in Ahmedabad, aProCh seeks to make the city more child-friendly and thereby encourage younger citizens to make good use of its spaces for collective activities.

Email | Through the website

### **Avehi Abacus**

<http://avehiabacus.org/about.html>

Avehi Abacus focuses on both what is taught in school and how it is taught. Through its Sangati programme, Avehi Abacus has developed an interactive curriculum to make education more vibrant and relevant for school students in Mumbai.

Address	Third floor, K.K. Marg Municipal School, Saat Rasta, Mahalaxmi, Mumbai- 400 011
Phone	0091-22-23075231, 0091-022-23052790
Email	<a href="mailto:avcab@vsnl.com">avcab@vsnl.com</a>

### **The Aseema Trust**

<http://www.aseematrust.org/>

<http://www.theaseematrust.blogspot.com/>

The Trust aims to introduce students and schools to the practice of traditional art and performance, thereby bridging the gap between rural and urban schools, arts and education.

Address	#3 Mangala Murthy, 65 1st Main Road, Shastri Nagar Chennai - 600 020.
Phone	0091-44-24464763
Fax	0091-44-42018906
Email	<a href="mailto:aseema123@yahoo.com">aseema123@yahoo.com</a>
Contact person	V. R.Devika (Managing Trustee)

### **Bluebells School International**

<http://bluebellsinternational.com/home.html>

This school in New Delhi has set up an Active Citizenship Resource Centre, primarily for school teachers from the city to debate and share ideas related to education for peace.

Bluebells has also initiated a partnership with Sanjan Nagar Public Education Trust Girls High School in Pakistan.

Address	Kailash (Opp.) Lady Shriram College, New Delhi-110048
Email	bluebels@rediffmail.com

### **Centre for Development and Peace Studies (CDPS)**

<http://cdpsindia.org/>

CDPS is an independent research organisation, focussing on issues related to peace and development in Northeast India. CDPS has plans to introduce a peace education programme in the near future.

Address	Annada Apartments, 77, KK Bhatta Road, Chenikuthi, Guwahati 781 003, Assam
Phone	00-91-361-2663458
Email	info@cdpsindia.org, director@cdpsindia.org
Contact person	Wasbir Hussain (Director)

### **Centre for Dialogue and Reconciliation (CDR)**

<http://cdr-india.org>

Established in 2000, CDR hopes to serve as a catalyst for internal and external peace in South Asia, through its programmes that encourage the use of dialogue to counter violence. At present, CDR works in Jammu and Kashmir, Maharashtra and Gujarat.

Address	J - 1346, Palam Vihar, Gurgaon, Haryana 122017, India
Phone	0091-124-2460602
Email	info@cdr-India.org
Contact person	Sushobha Barve (Executive Secretary)

### **Centre for Peace Education Manipur (CFPEM)**

<http://cfpem.webs.io/>

CFPEM was established to provide peace and human rights education to teachers, students and communities in Northeast India.

Address	C/o Prof. Ksh Bimola Devi, HOD, Political Science Dept., Manipur University, Canchipur, Imphal -795003, Manipur, India.
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### **Children’s Movement for Civic Awareness (CMCA)**

<http://www.cmcaindia.org/>

CMCA’s programmes are based on the premise that children are powerful messengers of change. CMCA works through the creation of civic clubs in several schools in India, and encourages students to engage with issues of active citizenship.

Address	#346, 3rd Cross, 8th ‘A’ Main, 4th Block, Koramangala, Bangalore - 560 034, India
Phone	0091-80-25538584
Fax	0091-80-41105161
Email	cmcablr@gmail.com, cmcamumbai@gmail.com
Contact person	Vinodini Lulla (Trustee and Coordinator of CMCA Mumbai)

### **Citizens for Peace (CfP)**

<http://citizensforpeace.in/>

Citizens for Peace (CfP) is a non-political organisation that was formed in response to the violence and anarchy that ravaged Mumbai in 1992-93. CfP’s many programmes work with different sections of society, addressing issues of security, terrorism, peace and human rights.

Address	703 B Bakhtavar, Shahid Bhagat Singh Road, Opposite Colaba Post Office, Mumbai – 400023.
Email	info@citizensforpeace.in

### **City Montessori School (CMS)**

<http://www.cmseducation.org/>

CMS hosts the Department of World Unity and World Peace Education as well as Aao Dosti Karein, an India-Pakistan peace initiative for children. In 2002, this school in Lucknow was awarded the ‘UNESCO Prize for Peace Education, in recognition of its long-standing peace education programme.

Address	Jai Jagat House, 12 Station Road, Lucknow, India
Email	info@cmseducation.org, wuped@cmseducation.org

### **The Learning Network**

<http://www.learningnet-india.org>

Established in 2003, Learning Network is a resource group for those with an interest in “meaningful approaches to education”. Learning Network organises conferences and workshops and disseminates information on new efforts, perspectives and themes of interest to educators.

Address	A 1007, Marvel Apoorva Apts, Kalasathamman Koil St, Ramavaram, Chennai 600089
Email	info@learningnet-india.org
Contact person	Jayashree Janardhan (Member, Volunteer Coordinating Team)

### **Meta-Culture Consulting/ Meta-culture Dialogics**

<http://www.meta-culture.in/>

<http://meta-culture.org/>

Billed as South Asia's first relationship and conflict management consulting firm, Meta-Culture was set up in 2005 and works with organisations to help them understand and negotiate conflict. The not-for-profit arm, Meta-Culture Dialogics, looks to build peaceable and sustainable communities by changing how people address conflict.

Address	No.12, 2nd Floor, First Main, Lazar Layout, Frazer Town, Bangalore 560005, India.
Phone	0091-80-41524784
Email	dialogics@meta-culture.org, info@meta-culture.in
Contact person	Ashok Pannikar (Executive Director)

### **Pravah**

<http://pravah.org/content/>

Pravah works with adolescents, youth organizations and institutions working with young people to impact issues of social justice through youth citizenship programmes and action. Pravah has set up the Active Citizenship Resource Centre, in partnership with Bluebells School International.

Address	C-24 B, Second Floor, Kalkaji, New Delhi 110019, India
Phone	0091-11-26440619
Email	mail@pravah.org

### **Riverside School**

<http://www.schoolriverside.com/>

The Riverside model and the school's approach to education incorporates a comprehensive citizenship programme as well as key stage centres and clubs that guide students through the different stages of learning. Riverside also hosts a teacher training institute.

Address	307 Next to Army CSD Depot, Airport Road, Ahmedabad 380003, India.
Phone	0091-79-22861321
Email	inquiry@schoolriverside.com
Contact person	Kiran Sethi (Founder)

### **Samerth**

<http://www.samerth.org/>

Samerth is a not-for-profit organisation that works closely with marginalised communities in Gujarat, focusing on gender justice, developing institutions and individual capacity, and promoting indigenous knowledge and skills.

Address	Q-402, Shrinand Nagar, Part - II, Vejalpur, Ahmedabad – 380051, Gujarat, India
Phone	0091-79-26829004
Email	samerthtrust1992@gmail.com
Contact person	Gazala Paul (Trustee)

### **Sita School**

<http://www.learningnet-india.org/lni/data/groups/karnataka/JaneSahi/index.php>

Set up in 1975 by Gandhian and peace educator Jane Sahi, the Sita School in Karnataka offers alternative education to children from socially and economically underprivileged sections of the Dalit community as well as children of migrant workers.

Address	Sita School 'Vishram', Silvepura, Turbanahalli P.O. Bangalore, Karnataka 560090, India
Contact person	Jane Sahi (Founder)

### **Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace (WISCOMP)**

<http://wiscomp.org/>

WISCOMP is a research and training initiative, which facilitates the leadership of women in the areas of peace, security and international affairs. In 2007, WISCOMP launched its Education for Peace initiative.

Address	Core 4A, Upper Ground Floor, India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi – 110003, India
Phone	0091-11-24648450
Fax	0091-11-24648451
Email	wiscomp2006@gmail.com
Contact person	Seema Kakran (Program Officer)

## **PAKISTAN**

### **Children's Museum for Peace and Human Rights (CMPHR)**

<http://www.cmphr.org/>

Originally known as the Human Rights Education Programme, this organisation has adopted the museum model to create a stimulating space for children in urban Pakistan. Their aim is to provide schools with socially relevant material and encourage them to develop an understanding of human rights and citizenship.

Address	9-C/1, 8th East Street, Phase 1, D.H.A Karachi-75500, Pakistan
Phone	0092-21-5800245, 0092-21-5886481
Email	info@cmphr.org
Contact person	Zulfiqar Ali (Director)

### **Grammar School Rawalpindi (GSR)**

<http://www.gsr.edu.pk/>

GSR's mission is to encourage students to become productive, humane responsible citizens of Pakistan and the world. Since 1996, Grammar School has been a member of UNESCO's Associated Schools Project, a network for international cooperation and peace. In 2002, GSR received the Peace Pillar Award from UNESCO for its human rights and peace education programme.

Address	438-B, Tulsa Road, Lalazar, Rawalpindi, Pakistan.
Phone	0092-51-5519903
Email	grammar6@hotmail.com
Contact person	Nasreen Iqbal (Director)

### **Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA)**

<http://itacec.org/>

ITA or the Centre for Education and Consciousness works to promote education as a process for human and social transformation. ITA's several projects focus on both formal and non-formal education, for adults and young people. In addition, there is a strong human rights/democracy/citizenship education component for schools and communities.

Address	67-A, Abid Majeed Road Near Old Airport, Lahore Cantt, Pakistan
Phone	0092-42-6689831/2
Fax	0092-42-6689833
Email	info@itacec.org, itacec@gmail.com
Contact person	Baela Raza Jamil (Chairperson)

### **Sanjan Nagar Public Education Trust Girls High School (SNPETGHS)**

<http://www.snpet.org/>

(SNPETGHS) was set up in 1995 by the Sanjan Nagar Public Education Trust (SNPET). The school provides free education to girls belonging to lower income groups. Recently, the school has entered into a partnership with Bluebells International School in New Delhi in India and plans to organise exchange visits in the future.

Address	67-A, Abid Majeed Road Near Old Airport, Lahore Cantt, Pakistan
Phone	0092-42-6689833, 5275646-49
Email	info@snpet.org, snpetcoordinator@yahoo.com

### **Simorgh Women's Resource & Publication Centre**

<http://simorghpk.org>

Simorgh works with students, teachers, media professionals, NGOs and CBOs to address its agenda of change, which primarily focuses on women's rights. Through its School Text Book Project, Simorgh has produced the Kaleidoscope Primers, a series of textbooks that address issues of our right to life, safety, food, health, and education.

Address	P.O. Box 3328 Gulberg II Lahore 54660, Pakistan
Phone	0092-42-5750879
Fax	0092-42-5757195
Email	simorgh@simorghpk.org
Contact person	Neelam Hussain (Founder Member)

### **Society for the Advancement of Education (SAHE)**

<http://www.sahe.org.pk>

SAHE works to improve the quality of the mainstream education system in Pakistan, address challenges, review curricula, train teachers, assists with institution building in education and hosts a Citizenship and Democracy Programme that offers citizenship and human rights education.

Address	65-C, Garden Block, New Garden Town, Lahore, Pakistan
Phone	00-92-42-5868115-6
Fax	00-92-42-5839816
Email	sahe@sahe.org.pk

### **SRI LANKA**

#### **The Weeramantry International Centre for Peace Education and Research (WICPER)**

<http://www.wicper.org>

Established in 2001, WICPER works with schools and colleges in Sri Lanka, to promote peace through its three main focus areas: peace studies, cross-cultural understanding and international law. Its founder His Excellency Judge Christopher Gregory Weeramantry is the recipient of the 2007 Right Livelihood Prize and the 2006 UNESCO Peace Education Prize.

Address	No 5/1, Roland Tower, Dharmaraja Mawatha, Colombo 3.
Phone	00-94-11-2555028, 00-94- 11-2500229
Fax	00-94-11-4720480
Email	wicper1@sltnet.lk, wicper1@gmail.com
Contact person	Neshan Gunsekera (Deputy Director)

#### **The National Peace Council of Sri Lanka (NPC)**

<http://www.peace-srilanka.org/>

The NPC's mandate includes research, advocacy, training, mobilisation and dialogue, all intended to garner public support for a political solution to the Sri Lankan civil war. Given the current context, NPC plans to redefine its strategy to meet the changing political, social and cultural demands.

Contact person	Jehan Perera (Executive Director)	
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### **Sarvodaya**

<http://www.sarvodaya.org/>

Billed as Sri Lanka's largest people's organisation, the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement was launched 47 years ago, and has since grown to become a network of 15000 villages. Sarvodaya's work now includes peace building, conflict resolution and programmes for children at risk, elders and the disabled. Their approach continues to prioritise self-reliance, community participation and an holistic approach to community awakening.

Address	No 98, Rawatawatta Road, Moratuwa , Sri Lanka
Phone	0094-11-264-7159, 0094 -11- 555-0756
Fax	0094-11-2656-512
Email	edo@sarvodaya.lk
Contact person	Vinya Ariyaratne (Executive Director)

### **Caritas Sri Lanka/ Social and Economic Development Centre (SEDEC)**

<http://www.caritaslk.org/>

Caritas Sri Lanka is the social arm of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Sri Lanka. The organisation's programmes focus on women's development, legal aid and human rights research, national peace, and relief and rehabilitation.

Address	133, Kynsey Road, P.O. Box: 1681, Colombo 0800800
Phone	0094-11-269-1885
Fax	00 94-11-2695136
Email	sedec@slt.lk

### **The Berghof Foundation for Conflict Studies**

<http://www.berghof-center.org>

[http://www.berghof-peacesupport.org/sri\\_lanka.htm](http://www.berghof-peacesupport.org/sri_lanka.htm)

Between 2001 and 2008, through the Resource Network for Conflict Studies and Transformation (RNCST), the Berghof Foundation and The Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management worked to enhance conflict transformation in Sri Lanka, through research and dialogue with stakeholders.

Address	oliver.wils@berghof-peacesupport.org
Contact person	Oliver Wils

### **The Butterfly Peace Garden**

The Butterfly Peace Garden seeks to be a retreat and oasis of hope for children affected by the civil war in Sri Lanka. Through a process of experiential learning, children learn to cope with the impact that violence, and its aftermath, have had upon them.

Contact person	Paul Hogan
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## About Prajnya

Prajnya is a non-profit think-tank in Chennai that works in areas related to peace, justice and security. Prajnya's work embraces scholarship, advocacy, networking and educational outreach and is organized into thematic Initiatives.



## About Education for Peace

The Education for Peace Initiative (EPI) hosts Prajnya's pedagogically oriented projects. Its vision is to teach peace by fostering the learning of skills conducive to communication, healing, reconciliation and interaction between people with divergent interests and creating capacity for the resolution of conflict and the creation of a sustainable peace. A citizenry accepting of diversity and difference is a citizenry capable of building and sustaining peace.

Crafting the perfect pedagogical intervention is futile without a clear understanding of the structure, functioning, culture and specific needs of a given system. Educational policy research is also Prajnya's way of nurturing a sustained engagement with educational issues and debates, so that our peace work is not isolated from other educational challenges.

The Educational Policy Research Series is intended to document and disseminate our research into a wider community of educators and educationists.

<i>Visit our website</i>	<a href="http://www.prajnya.in/peace.htm">http://www.prajnya.in/peace.htm</a>
<i>Read our blog</i>	<a href="http://prajnyaforpeace.wordpress.com">http://prajnyaforpeace.wordpress.com</a>
<i>Follow us on Twitter</i>	prajnya
<i>Email us</i>	prajnyatrust@gmail.com peace.prajnya@gmail.com
<i>Join our Facebook group</i>	Friends of Prajnya

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## About this study

This paper surveys the engagement of civil society with peace education in South Asia, specifically focusing on initiatives in the classroom. It describes the key players engaged in peace education efforts and seeks to understand their motivations. It discusses the nature of these interventions, focusing on the specific activities and processes involved in a particular project. Finally it highlights some of the key challenges each country faces in implementing and sustaining peace education in classrooms.