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Beyond Heard: Young Adults in North Kivu, Eastern Democratic Republic Of Congo, Their Resilience and Role in Peacebuilding.

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**Beyond heard:
Young adults in North Kivu, eastern Democratic Republic of Congo,
their resilience and role in peacebuilding.**

Cynthia Tarter
PIM 69

A Capstone Paper submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master of Intercultural Service, Leadership and Management at the SIT Graduate Institute in Brattleboro, Vermont, USA.

November 2011

Advisor: Tatsushi Arai

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Abbreviations

BCPR	Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery
BNH	Basic Human Needs
CNDP	Congrès National pour la Défense de la Peuple
CYRM	Child and Youth Resilience Measure
EU	European Union
FARDC	Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo
FDLR	Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda
GBV	Gender-based Violence
HEAL Africa	Health, Education, Action, & Leadership
IDP	Internally displaced persons
INGO	International non-governmental organization
IRC	International Rescue Committee
ICTJ	International Center for Transitional Justice
Mayi Mayi	Water Water
MONUSCO	United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs – UN
PEREX-CV	Training and Socio-Economic Reinsertion programme for Ex-Combatants and Other Vulnerable Sectors
PTSD	Post-traumatic stress disorder
SFCG	Search for Common Ground
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations International Children’s Education Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
WC	World Concern

Abstract

People in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo) have faced decades of direct and structural impacts from conflict and war. Of the many key actors in the peace process of DR Congo, the voice and capacity of young adults is generally left unheard. This study examines the role of Congolese young adults in peacebuilding in conjunction with identifying contextual protective factors of resilience. The role foreign aid workers have in development and conflict interventions is an included backdrop of focus.

Primary research data was gathered from rural communities in North Kivu from July 2010 – February 2011, and centers on a group of Congolese young adult participants in a conflict mitigation project implemented by a regional non-governmental organization. The total sample included 105 young adults, from 18 – 33 years of age. All participants completed a resilience survey which sought to measure contextual factors of resilience. Of the total sample, 24 were interviewed by the principal investigator to examine their perceived role in peacebuilding.

Results indicate the important protective factors of resilience for these young adults include the a capacity to envision a future different from their caregivers, a strong support network of peers, peer communal activities, and the presence of caregivers who are able to provide security. Inquiry also suggests a need for aid workers to refocus interventions on supporting local youth associations and work to surmount detached understandings of peace, by embracing development and conflict sensitive work that sees sameness amid genuine collaboration with Congolese people. The relationship between resilience and peace is furthered through a transformative model to learn why and how young adults have a peacebuilding role in eastern DR Congo and elsewhere. Resilience is seen as cyclically tied to conflict analysis and therefore, resolution – it is strengthened by community activities which in turn, enhance peace.

Introduction

To start first with a history of war and conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo) replays a central narrative, supports an already established perception and easy implication of a place seemingly forever mired in a gaping wound of conflict, rape, death and poverty. A humanitarian crisis prefers to take hold of center stage as the foreground focus, reasoned as necessary by many to garner action. A fuller picture is sometimes muted – one that allows for the existence of culture, community and relationships – 71 million human beings whose lives go far beyond international non-governmental organization (INGO) classifications of poverty, and western definitions of conflict and development (OCHA, 2011). Though many of the roots of the DR Congo conflict will be uncovered within its tumultuous colonialism, dictatorship and war, history is not the beginning, nor the middle or end.

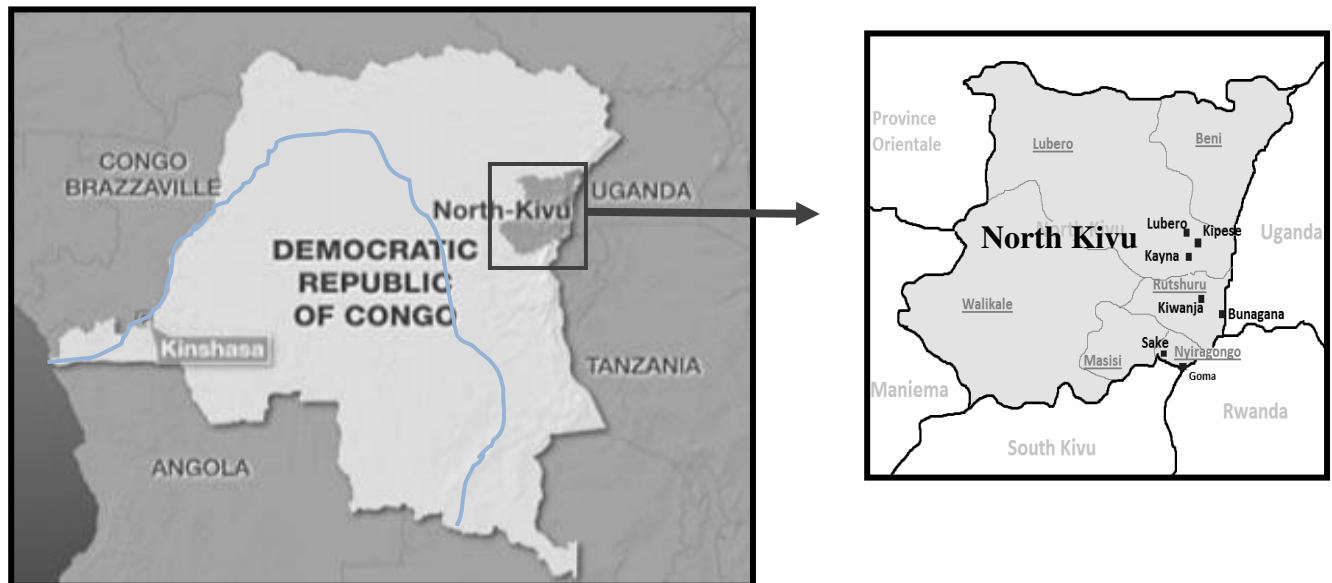
The ability of western scholars, humanitarian aid workers, governments, and other actors interested in the DR Congo to adequately know every part and see the whole all at once, is neither possible, nor apt, and yet there is a capacity to listen and create space for connective relationships to grow within the complexity of the societal, economic and political impacts of war. Peace practitioner John Paul Lederach (2005) remarks on such capacity further through his working definition of constructive social change: “The pursuit of moving relationships from those defined by fear, mutual recrimination, and violence toward those characterized by love, mutual respect, and proactive engagement” (p. 42). The semblance that authentic ‘help’ in terms of conflict and peace work by outsiders may ultimately reside in a pursuit of creating openings with the seemingly obvious act of listening and facilitating relationship-building - both outside and inside the heavier shroud of project funding and results - is by nature still a radical position, as it partners with social justice. It challenges the transcript of another narrative, the one defined

and redefined by outsiders as the primary appropriate multi-level response to the depth and consequences of DR Congo's conflict.

Often we have learned to want to see change by quantifying it, expunging it in tight technical sentences off our tongues in a language we believe can alone denote shifts. Instead, the research here attempts to make space for an important and understudied part of the whole - an investigation of young adult perspectives and opinions on peace and conflict in relationship to their strengths in adversity. Lederach writes, "I have come to know that if you want to learn something of what genuine change means you must listen carefully to the voices of people who have suffered greatly..." (p. 43). In this pursuit, it is *this* part of the whole taken and put into clearer focus, a part that remains necessarily interwoven among the many critical actors with the ability to influence the peace processes in DR Congo.

And so the beginning starts first, not with a historical synopsis of conflict, but rather a map, in a province called home by 5.7 million people, in an immense central African country the

Figure 1. The Democratic Republic of Congo and the eastern province of North Kivu: DRC image retrieved from: <http://www.france24.com/en/20071010-DRC-Congo-Kunda-rebels-north-kivu>



size of Western Europe (Figure 1). Heading east past the massive flowing Congo River and over and among rolling green mountains is a landscape of forests, farms, communities, families, cattle pastures, roads that are hardly roads, and an earth pregnant with an abundance of natural resources. DR Congo contains eleven provinces and is bordered by nine countries, with four large provinces in the east. Research arises out of rural communities in the province of North Kivu, where to the east and on the border lies Rwanda and to the northeast, Uganda and Sudan.

There are hundreds of international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), regional NGOs and agencies in North Kivu, such as United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and the European Union (EU), all with several ongoing activities. DR Congo contains the largest and most expensive UN peacekeeping mission in the world, called the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the DR Congo (MONUSCO), which began in 1999 and currently consists of 18,997 peacekeeping soldiers (2011). Although not a verified number, it is thought there are over 30,000 foreigners living and working at any given time in eastern DR Congo. Organizations have varying foci depending on specialization, while larger INGOs often have a conflict sensitivity framework such as 'Do No Harm', which they attempt to operate in ways that mitigate and lessen any possible influence on conflicts that might be increased by program interventions (Anderson, 1999). There are numerous and varied interventions specifically under the umbrella of peace and conflict work. Youth-focused activities include participatory street theatre and dance, media and youth radio broadcasting, peace education training, and the development of youth peace councils, to name a few (SFCG; IRC; HEAL Africa; Save the Children, UNICEF; WC; PEREX-CV).

Despite youth-focused interventions and continual reports that state the importance of placing young adults at the forefront as actors in building peace, almost no published research exists which seeks to hear from Congolese young adults themselves, unless it is the countless reports and papers emphasizing the presence of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), trauma, and vulnerability, particularly of those youth under 18 years (Mels et al., 2009; Ursano & Shaw, 2007; Guy, 2009; Stott, 2009; Makwala, 2007). Arguments for a mandate on how to actually involve young adults in peacebuilding continues to be defined globally and regionally and yet, as author and researcher on youth and conflict Siobhan McEnvoy-Levy describes, "...the youth perspective, how and what they think about peace processes and the task of reconstructing their societies after war, remains almost completely unstudied" (2001). This paper, enveloped with examinations of social change and the role of outsiders in DR Congo, seeks this youth perspective through two questions with the anticipation of correlations between both:

1) How do Congolese young adults perceive their role in peacebuilding?

2) What are the important contextual factors of resilience for Congolese young adults?

In the context of this inquiry, the core of peacebuilding is understood through the lens Lederach provides; "...this is the capacity to imagine and generate constructive responses and initiatives that, while rooted in the day-to-day challenges of violence, transcend and ultimately break the grips of those destructive patterns and cycles" (2005, p. 29). He describes this capacity as the moral imagination which is rendered through four disciplines of peacebuilding: relationships, curiosity, creativity and risk (Ibid.). Yet beyond this definition and more importantly, this study was rooted in young adult understandings at a community level; rather than a strict adherence to any specific definition.

Through eight months of field research, this inquiry was both qualitative and quantitative from a sample of 105 young adults in North Kivu who were training participants in a conflict management project implemented by HEAL Africa (Health, Education, Action, Leadership), a health focused NGO based in Goma with multiple community rural programs. It included administration of a survey to measure levels and factors of resilience. Out of the 105 young adults, 24 youth were interviewed.

This study is a step forward, an exploration of listening and learning from young adults in eastern DR Congo. But action must go much farther. In DR Congo, young adults have intrinsic links between the past, present, and future – a knowing of new cultural shifts and conflict in a post-accord time. Young adults are mine laborers, parents, teachers, students, militia soldiers, and farmers. They have experienced and been exposed to different types of violence, are orphaned, living with high health risks and food insecurity, while many others take on the role of family decision-maker, and primary caregivers to siblings. Their grievances and trauma, knowledge and strengths speak to a capacity that moves beyond being heard: “We must be prepared to listen to and be led by young people – to hear the unexpected and most importantly, act on what we find” (Zwi et al., 2006, p. 188). To act must take into account the complexity of group identity and experiences, one not resting in a limiting view of young adults as only vulnerable, perpetrators or peacebuilders (McEnvoy-Levy, 2006; UNDP-BCPR, 2005). It is ultimately an endeavor to make space for Congolese young adults, to explore their contextual and cultural resilience, and see how and why they have genuine roles as peacebuilders - not for the reason they are often key actors of conflict, but because they are key constructors of peace.

Literature Review

a. A past narrative

The literature on DR Congo is dense and its history has been extensively researched (Hochschild, 1999; Turner, 2007; Prunier, 2009). At the end 19th century, as colonial powers were widely laying claim to regions and countries in Africa, the DR Congo was colonized in a uniquely exploitive manner. In 1885 after decades of plundering its resources, and with the approval of the US, France and Germany, King Leopold II of Belgium successfully laid claim to the region of DR Congo as a personal colony until 1908. Leopold's rule of the DR Congo, which he named the Congo Free State, was paternalistic and managed through forced labor and well-documented horrific violence such as the severing of hands for unmet quotas, all in order to profit from rubber production (Hochschild, 1999). It is estimated that over 10 million were killed during his ten year rule (Vlassenroot, 2004). Always painting himself as a humanitarian concerned with the plight of 'the African', he himself never set foot in DR Congo. A year before his death, he sold DR Congo to Belgium at a considerable profit (Hochschild, 1999). The varying ethnicities and cultures of the eastern region were introduced to gross inhumane treatment and a massive plundering that served to lay a foundation of how outsiders with power viewed them. From 1909 to independence in 1960, it remained a colony of Belgium.

The colonial control of DR Congo until 1960, then known as the Belgium Congo, laid continuing groundwork for conflict and war through the manipulation of ethnic groups and immigrant tension, all again, for the purpose of managing a labor force in order to take advantage of DR Congo's natural wealth in cobalt, copper, diamonds, gold, timber and more (Vlassenroot 2004). There has been a systematic development of conflict between who is "local" versus who is an "outsider" in DR Congo within group identity rooted in language and/or tribe, and

especially in North Kivu, which cuts along the even deeper root around land tenure and control. In 1937, Belgium authorities implemented a program to encourage migration of workers from neighboring Rwanda into North Kivu. Primarily Hutu and Tutsi's migrated, which strengthened the Kinyarwanda speaking population but exacerbated conflict for the Bahunde and Banyanga tribes who already felt marginalized by the Banande, the largest ethnic group in North Kivu. It was perceived that the Belgium colonial powers usurped the traditional means of land occupation using local chiefs. Banyarwandans, a name used to define Rwandan speaking Congolese, both those who have been settled in North Kivu and those who have migrated, were seen as taking advantage of a colonial system that allowed permanent ownership of tribal lands through monetary exchanges (Prunier, 2009). This was just a tip of decades of migratory waves into eastern DR Congo, and state favoritism for those with means to acquire, who could serve as special friends to those in power - corrupted governance hand in hand with impunity, which defines the state of DR Congo today.

In 1960, DR Congo gained its independence with its first prime minister, Patrice Lumumba. He served for only 10 weeks until his assassination in 1961, widely documented as having been encouraged and directly supported by the US and Belgium, with implementation by militia leader, Mobuto Sese Seko. It cannot be understated the importance of Lumumba as hero to youth, and a leader and martyr in the collective consciousness of the Congolese people. His ideological revolutionary beliefs, strong anti-colonialism, and his unarguably incredible oratory and written words stirred the hearts of Congolese people and continue to do so. His assassination was directly connected to fears during the Cold War that he would completely align DR Congo with the Soviet Union (Turner, 2007). He did accept aid from the Soviet Union. The UN refused to intervene in uprisings against Lumumba's administration, and the CIA endorsed a

coup d'état led by Mobutu, who was thought to be a more reliable ally against communism. He took control of the government in 1960 after Lumumba's death and ruled as dictatorial leader for the next 40 years, from 1965 – 1997.

Mobutu's new reign was devastating, and "...inaugurated decades of oppression, kleptocracy, and state collapse" (ITCJ, 2009, p. 8). With an anti-communist stance, he amassed a personal wealth from foreign aid for himself. He also invested in manipulating politics in North Kivu through supporting Banyarwandans, as many newly migrated, fleeing massacres of Tutsi in Rwanda. From 1967-1977 elite Tutsis went into successful business and acquired land, which was viewed by other groups as land grabs. Banyarwandans as a group were stigmatized, even though it was a small proportion benefiting. Pockets of violence erupted in 1992 as war in Rwanda was ongoing. By 1993 war in eastern DR Congo was in a full-blown with over 20,000 casualties and 250,000 IDPs in the span of 6 months (Prunier 2009). Very soon the situation would worsen dramatically, with the influx of 850,000 Hutu refugees from Rwanda in 1994 during the Rwandan genocide. Manipulation of aid funds by Hutu militia groups inside refugee camps, facilitated control and continuing massacres of Tutsis (Ibid.).

The war ended with the signing of the Lusaka ceasefire agreement in 1999 and involved eight countries, with inundation of violence in the east. However violence and conflict continued at a similar level of intensity through 2003. The migratory flow of refugees and IDPs over several decades added to insecurity, as well as ethnic and land conflict (Ibid.). By then, with a withering lack of international support since the end of the Cold War in 1989, and intense rising opposition, Mobutu's grip on power began to fall away. In 1997, Laurent-Desiree Kabila, rebellion leader of Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Liberation du Congo (AFDL) ousted President Mobutu and took control. Four years later he was assassinated and his son,

Joseph Kabila took power. Kabila received direct support from Uganda, Zimbabwe, Rwanda, Chad, Libya, Sudan and Angola – who provided troops, planes and funding. Western mining and diamond companies supported Kabila in exchange for business deals. Foreign and domestic state militias and the national army battled in the east while both committed horrific human rights abuses and left North Kivu communities in utter devastation (Ibid.).

The war reached its more official end in 2003 with the Sun City Accord signing and a transitional government in place, four years after the signing of the Lusaka Accord in 1999 (Prunier, 2009). It is often described as ‘Africa’s World War’ and the deadliest since World War II (Bartels et al., 2010). The country’s weak state control, fight for control over its rich mineral profit (mined and carried, then removed from the hands of its people), and porous borders all impacted the involvement of so many actors. The role of so many countries in Congo’s conflict history must be remembered, particularly the involvement of those in the developed world.

It is estimated the war caused 5.4 million deaths country-wide since 1998 through personal and structural violence, half of which were children 15 years and younger (IRC, 2007). In this context, we define personal and structural violence through Johan Galtung’s understanding, wherein it is described as the following: “Violence with a clear subject-object relation is manifest because it is visible as action...it is personal because there are persons committing the violence. Violence without this relation is structural, built into structure...we shall sometimes refer to the condition of structural violence as social injustice.” (1969, p. 114). This definition lends to an inquiry which works to comprehend violence at such an immense level, without a reduction of people to corpses and victims. Rather, that they be seen as human beings with capacity, in communities facing deep social injustice.

The depth of DR Congo's history and its' conflict presents a formidable challenge in how to bring sustainable peace and security. This summary is just that, a summary, yet it touches upon the most critical roots of conflict that impact people in North Kivu, DR Congo. It is a history of human and resource exploitation, direct and structural violence, state corruption and impunity, external and internal migration, and the control of land access and resources for profit, furthering divisions among ethnic identity groups. The unjust yield of these still-watered roots can be seen everywhere in eastern DR Congo.

b. A present narrative

The consequences of conflict have been a long-term disruption and breakage of culture and relationships in communities. In a 2008 population-based survey in eastern DR Congo, peace (50.5%) and security (34.1%) were the two highest priorities stated by respondents, followed by livelihood issues of money, food/water, and health (Vinck et al). The IRC estimates up to 45,000 people die every month in connection to conflict (2007). The majority of people in North Kivu face the crux of this conflict and a dysfunctional state on community levels. 62% of survey participants had experienced the violent death of a family member or friend, and 56% had a death in the family due to malnutrition or disease (Vinck et al, 2008). A recent report suggests that sexual violence, usually associated with militia groups, has increased dramatically among the civilian population, becoming 'normal' (Bartels et al., 2010). When asked about sexual violence, 22% of survey respondents said they had witnessed sexual violence, and 16% had been victims themselves (Vinck et al, 2008). Overall concrete statistics on levels of rape do not exist due to the stigmatization of rape, but it is rampant. The IRC reports to have assisted 40,000 victims of sexual violence since 2003 and the UN recorded 27,000 victims in 2006 (Ibid.).

The non-governmental presence in North Kivu is substantial; from 2000 – 2005 North Kivu received 39.2 billion USD in outside aid. International program sustainability is insecure and development organizations remain aware that periods of less conflict are periods of time that usually shift, an up and down flow of turbulence and calmness with tension. And yet a myriad of questions remain about the role of outsiders, while donors tend to favor known INGOs over regional NGOs (Schwartz, 2008). When asked who could bring a ‘durable peace’ to DR Congo, the top three mentioned by respondents were government (82%), community/population (32%), and the international community (23%) (Vinck et al, 2008). For these realities, the continual advancement and theoretical defining of development and conflict sensitive work is necessary in eastern DR Congo and a stance from which to approach this inquiry. Peace practitioner and conflict transformation professor Tatsushi Arai (2010), defines development and conflict sensitive work as, “Focusing conflict work on the structural and cultural roots of underdevelopment in general... that perpetuate deep-seated structural and cultural patterns of conflict-generating relationships.” Enhancing this approach is appropriate as this papers’ research took place within the execution of an INGO conflict mitigation project. Considering the immense presence of organizations in North Kivu and how aid workers (particularly cultural outsiders) practice development and peacebuilding interventions, particularly those youth-focused, furthering an understanding of development and conflict sensitivity work is clear.

Also very active in eastern DR Congo are a multitude of armed groups, including the national army, Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo (FARDC) operating in North Kivu regularly terrorize communities for resources, raping and killing as well. Though there are multiple armed groups, most notable in context now is the FARDC, MONUCSO, Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda (FDLR), the Congrès National pour la Défense

de la Peuple (CNDP), and the regional group Mayi Mayi (Rouw & Willems, 2010). The FDLR are a militia who are remnants of the Hutu Rwandan rebel group and military command operating before and during the 1994 genocide. The CNDP, created in 2006, primarily is made up of Tutsi who now battle the FDLR. The Mayi Mayi refers to a large array of different groups who were first active during the war to protect their property from militia groups. The lack of central leadership or cohesion of the Mayi Mayi groups means they take on different structures (Ibid.). Armed groups continue to forcefully recruit young men and women to fight, or they are drawn in with promises of status and money, and a power identity. In particular the Mayi Mayi and CNDP are largely made up of young men (Schwartz, 2008).

The presence of 557,000 internally displaced peoples (IDPs) and 436,000 returnees (those refugees attempting to return and resettle) places pressure on land and resources in North Kivu (OCHA 2011). Attempts at repatriation are often seen as threats to security, land ownership and identity, reinforcing fears of local versus foreigner (Huggins 2010). Displacement due to conflict is incredibly common; between 2004 – 2006 in North Kivu, 288,000 people fled their homes because of varying militia and military attacks (Watchlist, 2006). The concept of terming DR Congo as post-conflict or post-war remains a far-fetched conjecture in the absence of security. The conflict continues to be fueled through control of rich resources, a question of how many multi-national businesses and outside countries can mine and profit from cobalt, copper, timber, gold, diamonds and other resources. Further, the immense system and political corruption of favoring elites and impunity has become a standard function of the state, local administrators and local chiefs (Vlassenroot 2010).

The country of Rwanda continues to play a prominent role in the conflict, beyond the influx of refugees in 1994 following the genocide, but with attacks into the east in 1998, and an

unabated investment in keeping a hand in the resource pot. Uganda is also involved in broad exploitative mining and the illegal transfer of DRC's minerals and wealth over the border (HRW 2005). With a centralized government in the western capital of Kinshasa, there is a sense of mostly illegitimate and corrupt action in the east by the state, and understandable distrust of a massive FARDC national army struggling, largely unsuccessfully, alongside MONUSCO to carry out Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) programs, while soldiers are regularly unpaid and guilty of human rights abuses (Rouw & Willems, 2010). More recently in 2007, the CNDP, headed by prominent militia leader Laurent Nkunda began to march troops through North Kivu to Goma, stirring intense fears of a resurgence of war. Fevered diplomatic negotiations were carried out. Nkunda was eventually given safe haven in Rwanda and the escalation was drawn down by a conference and the signing of the Goma Accord (ITCJ, 2009).

In 2011, the country is preparing for its second presidential elections since independence, the first being in 2006. In 2010, Kabila changed the constitution to all but ensure his re-election, and it is widely assumed he will be president again. However, the elections have again raised tensions and insecurity, as multiple candidates challenging Kabila stir feelings of frustration and triggers for violence (CS Monitor, 2011). He also seeks to end the UN peacekeeping mission in DR Congo permanently, regularly pressuring MONUSCO to exit before November 2011 elections. In September 2011, Kabila spoke at the UN General Assembly, saying: "The elections are proof of the return to peace that all Congolese have wanted and have now realized. Today, peace and security prevail throughout the national territory. All state institutions are in place and functioning normally. Because peace and security have returned to the country, the UN presence must be reassessed" (Congo Planet website, 2011). This incredibly contradictory statement to the reality of North Kivu and other provinces in the east, presents a recent example of an

inoperative state that remains incapable of meeting the material and non-material human needs of its people. That inability, rooted in history, creates a level of scarcity in North Kivu, where need satisfiers are out of reach for the majority of the population. And so, in line with contemplating the role of INGOs practicing in conflict regions and peacebuilding by young adults, Galtung's query of whether material needs must be met before other non-material needs is kept in mind.¹

c. Young adults & conflict

In the DR Congo conflict has defined and redefined the lives of Congolese children for several decades. We begin with a short discussion of children, as opposed to young adulthood for two reasons: first, their ability to thrive and progress into young adulthood rests hugely in the experiences of childhood which includes individual, relationship, and contextual resources and impacts; and secondly, the majority of research into youth in conflict regions focuses on childhood and not on young adulthood.

Children in the DR Congo face life events that shape their remembered history as a deep knowing of insecurity, violence and loss. In 2011, it is estimated that 44.4% of the population are less than 15 years of age (CIA World Factbook, 2011). For many Congolese children life has been to see your parents as vulnerable, to feel hunger, sickness, and flee home amid fear and insecurity. In North Kivu, 28% of Congolese 15 years and older have never attended school, while 32% have attended primary school and 37% have attended secondary school (UNDP, 2009). With the education system in tatters, teachers (many untrained) often go unpaid, while

¹ Johan Galtung's investigation of understanding of basic human needs in relation to international development, challenges the view of them as hierarchical amid problematic western conceptions: *International Development in Human Perspective*, (1990).

resources are scarce. 42% of North Kivu youth discontinue schooling because their caretakers are unable to pay school fees (Ibid.). In terms of health UNICEF research found that 70% of Congolese children do not have access to adequate health care, and the primary causes of death for children were from preventable health conditions (Watchlist, 2006). There is large use of youth in armed militias; Amnesty International estimated that in 2003, of 150,000 government and militia groups members, 30,000 were under the age of 18, while now it is believed 40% of those were female (Schwartz, 2008).

Graca Machel, well known for her advocacy voice on war-affected children, authored an influential 1996 UN report on children and conflict, which is often credited with drawing substantial interest and new research from all directions. Most notable, it helped to create an agenda within the UN for addressing war-affected children. The 2000 Winnipeg Conference further established a more global response along with massive participation by INGOs and state agencies (Machel, 2000). And while Machel's report focused on how to protect children and also planted seeds to grow youth participation in reconstruction and rebuilding, it remained absent of more specific ways to involve them (Ibid.). Understanding the experience of childhood plays a vital role, and the research into the possible role of youth is ample, yet gaps persist.

The impact of direct and indirect violence on youth in terms of trauma is often directly drawn from the cues of family, peers and community, or a child's discernment of their own ascribed role in conflict situations (Ressler et al., 1993). Indeed, the very meanings of suffering and grief are different depending on the context. The idea that youth are inherently or irreparably damaged by conflict, and therefore must be protected has been repeatedly challenged, particularly by social anthropologist Jo Boyden. She writes on how researchers have discounted childhood experiences in conflict:

...seldom have they been considered in their roles as carers of younger siblings or incapacitated adults, educators of peers, freedom fighters, community advocates or volunteers, workers or political activists. The young are portrayed...as the receivers of – rather than contributors to – adult culture. The idea that they might play a transformative role in the production and reproduction of cultures is altogether foreign (2004, p. 255).

In the discounting of the multiple roles children take on, often more emphasized is a trauma discourse. The existence of trauma is irrefutable and the intergenerational transmission of trauma to youth and by youth is real (Volkan 2004). However, any approach to youth that rests entirely upon vulnerability or views them as a group causing only instability, risks removing their other capacities and contributions. By the same token, youth strength and levels of possible participation in peacebuilding should not be romanticized when taking into account cultural perceptions and documented activity (McEnvoy-Levy, 2006). Thousands of Congolese youth and children, female and male, have joined or been forcefully recruited into armed groups, and yet millions more have *not* and never will – it is this majority of youth who remain understudied, their resilience and potential blurred, their connections to other youth and key actors abridged.

Eyber and Ager, in their research on young people's experience of trauma in Angola, write that, "...assumptions are made about the impact of 'trauma' on people who are represented as passive and helpless victims... Youth in this study did not fit [that] stereotype... they were functioning well on social and occupational levels by maintaining active social lives with peers, engaging in community activities and involving themselves in income-generating tasks" (2004, p. 203). Focus on such stereotypes works moves research in narrower and limiting directions – creates lists of the huge structural reasons for youth resignation and despondency, instead of first learning about their contributions (UNDP-BCPR, 2005). Despite the transmission of trauma, particular dialogues about the past initiated by young adults to siblings and even older

generations can itself have healing impacts (Bar-On, 2006). This paper's inquiry sought to explore beyond a discourse on trauma, and instead on strengths. Turning towards defining young adulthood, it becomes clearly challenging and with good reason.

While the UN defines youth as being between the ages of 15 – 24 years old, defining the period of older adolescence or young adulthood is varied and contextual; it is diverse globally and locally, often more driven by events and cultural factors than age. If young adulthood is thought to be a space of transition from childhood to adulthood, certainly war and conflict adds further to the murkiness of an encompassing definition. Cultural markers such as traditional rites of passage, marriage, children, and/or employment sometimes define a transition to adulthood. Yet in the absence or destruction of these, youth can be in a space drawn out that is no longer a transition, but an enduring status. With little education or employment opportunities, the negotiation of transition to adulthood may be blocked (UNDP-BCPR, 2005). Arguably in eastern DR Congo a possible lengthened transition to adulthood, impacted by war and conflict, would correspond to a blockage of BHNs through immense structural violence. The experience and participation of direct violence also often provide youth with an earlier sense of maturity and awareness, despite a continued classification as a youth by members of their communities.

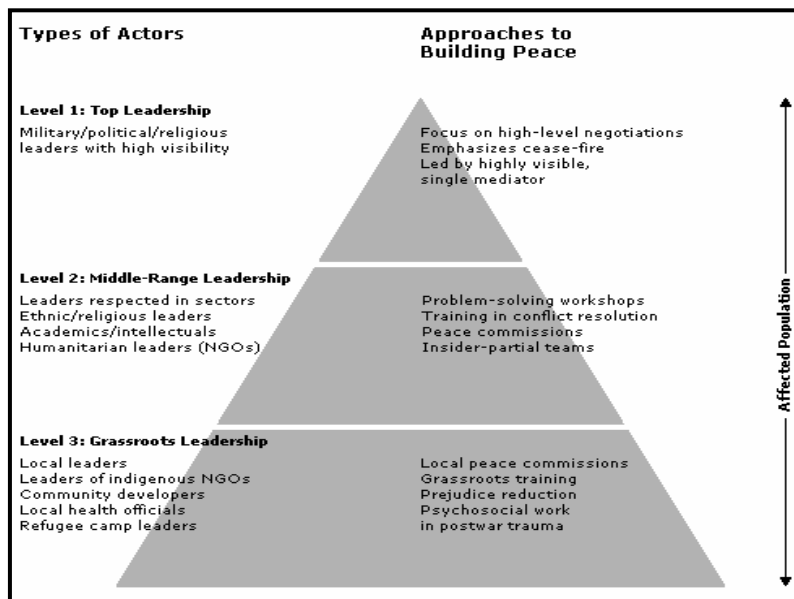
As researchers recognize and adopt the fluidity of defining youth and incredible diversity within youth regionally and globally, some propose new categories for analysis. McEnvoy-Levy chooses to focus on a wider category, including youth from age 12 – 30 years for three reasons: first, many cultures define youth just as broadly; secondly, due to the roles youth take on, impacted by war and globalization; and thirdly, because it allows for a larger cohort of youth analysis of those who may play significant roles in the outcome of peace processes (2006). It is

with these careful considerations of youth impacted by war and conflict, one not easily boxed, which carried this inquiry forward.

d. Young adults: peacebuilding & resilience

We return to the question of why young adults are key actors in building and peace and reasons to involve them. At a community level, the large population of young adults are directly facing the structural impacts of war – they see their own progressions blocked in inequality, poverty, unemployment and a failed education system (McEnvoy-Levy, 2001). It is their voices and actions garnered and manipulated by political leaders and others, and yet in the same instance, it is their influence that may have the capacity to deeply shape peace processes. There is an openness of young adults which sometimes is used to define vulnerability, though plays a remarkable role as a tool in dialogue on topics and conflicts that may carry fearful trepidation for other generations to discuss. A potential of a more open dialogue that permits participation of

Figure 2. Approaches to building peace: Derived from John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997



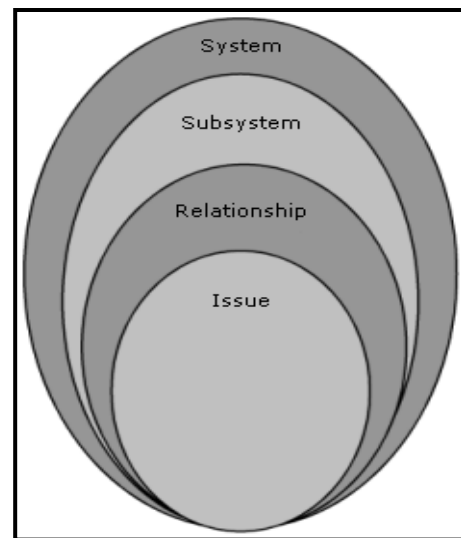
youth leaders with negotiation and mediation skills has, as of yet, remained underutilized in DR Congo. Congolese youth have been exposed to the traumas of war alongside a globalized world of riches they see, but exist outside their reach (Schwartz, 2008). It ultimately their approval or rejection of how peace progresses which will determine the failure or success of social change, and sustainable peace.

Reckoning the role of Congolese young adults as key actors in peacebuilding requires a look at the influence of youth. The pyramid model in Figure 2 developed by John Paul Lederach (2007) can be used as a means of identifying and placing key actors to build peace at three levels: the grassroots, mid-level, and top leadership. It provides one way of viewing where young adults are generally placed, the importance of their placement, and how it might change given fluid conditions for their involvement and power. Young adults in North Kivu are primarily receivers of peacebuilding initiatives through different activities, such as conflict resolution training at the grassroots level provided by mid-level or grassroots leaders. However, McEnvoy-Levy points out in her analysis that, “[Lederach’s] framework does not specifically preclude youth leadership in any of these areas” (2006, p. 10). There is no conception that young adults must remain only beneficiaries of peace approaches, as opposed to also becoming significant actors in building peace at a mid-level and grassroots leadership levels.

The nested paradigm of conflict foci in Figure 3 was developed by Maire Dugan and furthered by Lederach, and views conflict in layers working outwards from issue, relationship, subsystem and system, permitting not only for conflict analysis, but a means to identify and address structural roots and social injustice (1996; 1997). Exploring the roles young adults play in peacebuilding in their own community within North Kivu necessitates knowledge of the

internal and interpersonal conflicts they face. Such conflicts, viewed first at the issue level, appear as conflicts between peers, amongst family members or partners, or for example, cases of personal violence. Stepping outwards to the fractured relationships possibly at play, analysis may find the presence of tribalism (the term used by Congolese which encompasses ethnic identity conflict), or power and unequal land access. The young adults and communities in North Kivu face land, intergenerational, interethnic, gender and governance conflicts, which often arise or are tied to damaged institutions such as schools, local government, and farms, defined as such at a subsystem level. Then seeing these conflicts as rooted in the identification of structural issues and corruption at the political, economic and war systemic levels, the consideration of resolutions may enter the interior of discussions in ways where young adults not only see their conflicts in depth, but link the resolution of them to their roles in peacebuilding.

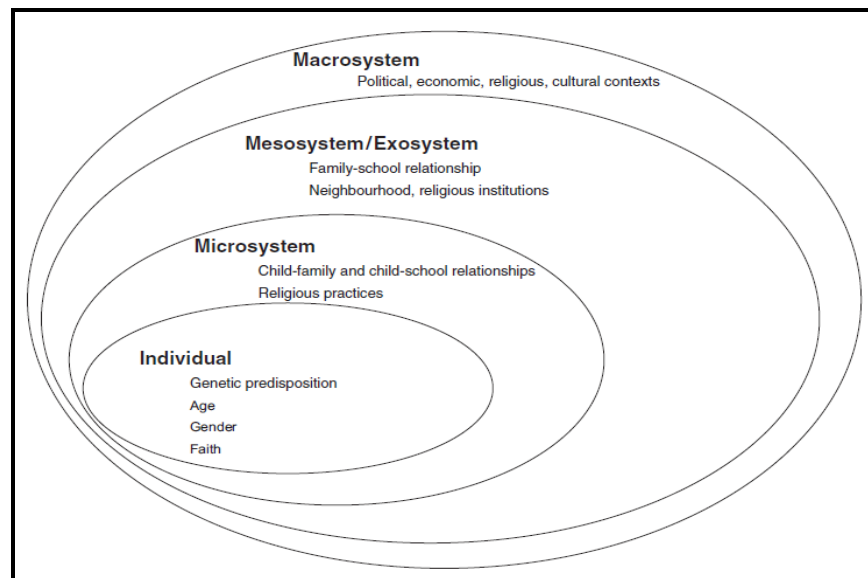
Figure 3. The nested paradigm of conflict foci (developed by Dugan and furthered by Lederach), 1997.



Further insight into the capacity of young adults to contribute to peacebuilding is enhanced by Bronfenbrenner's (1979) social ecological model of risk and protection in Figure 4, adapted by Betancourt and Khan in their research on resilience and war-affected youth (2008). His classic theoretical model defines four contexts that encompass a broad perspective of resilience: the individual, microsystem, mesosystem/exosystem, and macrosystem. Its observable connection to the nested paradigm discussed above is seen in analyzing a more complete picture of conflict and youth resilience. It is the relationship, actions and interventions

between layers that impact risk and protective factors of resilience. Lederach pinpoints this interaction in the subsystem level of the nested paradigm (1997). The social ecology of a child, like conflict, functions at all layers. Rather than interventions and research solely based on psychopathology, risks, and individual levels of resilience, Betancourt & Khan argue for a refocus on identifying protective factors (2008).

Figure 4. The social ecological model of risk and protection for youth affected by armed conflict (adapted from Bronfenbrenner, 1979).



Yet cultures and contexts define what is a protection or risk differently, and therefore the contextual difference in defining resilience is crucially important. Boyden & Mann argue we must be willing to see resilience as a construct developed by western social science as a tool to understand, “Multiple developmental pathways exist throughout the world” (2005). In their construction of the Child and Youth Resilience Measure (CYRM) utilized in this research, Ungar and Liebenberg sought to create a measure that was culturally sensitive and contextually adaptable (2011). Embracing a social ecological perspective, it is Ungar’s definition of resilience recognized in this study:

In the context of exposure to significant adversity, resilience is both the capacity of individuals to *navigate* their way to the psychological, social, cultural, and physical resources that sustain their well-being, and their capacity individually and collectively to *negotiate* for these resources to be provided and experienced in culturally meaningful ways (2008, p. 225).

Resilience has generally been defined without taking into account culture, history and differing basic human needs in regions and countries. It has more often been used to measure risks, those negative factors and outcomes, rather than build upon what youth individually contain and what/who gives them strength to ‘navigate’ and ‘negotiate’. It begins to become clearer that identifying protective factors of resilience connects intrinsically to how young adults believe they can build peace – to know where and why resilience factors reside at what level, we can learn ways they are sustained and bolstered to facilitate roles for young adults in building peace within nested layers of different conflicts.

Methodology

a. Research design

The method of research design sought to embrace the principles of Merten’s transformative-emancipatory paradigm, and the use of mixed methods. This research paradigm contends,

...that knowledge is not neutral but is influenced by human interests, that all knowledge reflects the power and social relationships within society, and that an important purpose of knowledge construction is to help people improve society. The transformative paradigm is characterized as placing central importance on the lives and experiences of marginalized groups... The researcher who works within this paradigm consciously analyzes asymmetric power relations, seeks ways to link results of social inquiry to action, and links the results of the inquiry to wider questions of social inequity and social justice (2003, p. 139-140).

The connection inquiry to action ties concretely with structural violence as synonymous with social injustice, the role of outsiders, and furthering a development and conflict sensitivity

definition juxtaposed to BNHs. Dugan's nested theory of conflict in relation to the ecological resilience framework of war-affected youth, as discussed and applied to young adults in eastern DR Congo, links to a transformative-emancipatory paradigm to put youth at the center of research (Lederach, 1997; Betancourt & Khan, 2008; Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Galtung; 1990).

Research made efforts to work from a participatory approach, with values of this methodology underlining research design. Participatory research has been widely defined, but can be understood as design that involves local people before and during interventions or data collection, wherein their opinions influence and shape research, that their contributions are critical. It strives towards shifting power dynamics, where ownership of research inquiry is shared, rather than controlled by researchers (Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995). It ultimately asks the question of, "...who defines research problems and who generates, analyses, represents, owns, and acts on the information which is sought" (Ibid., p. 1668). Using participatory research in a study on youth experiences of war, Eyber and Ager found it, "...allowed the voices of the youths to be heard, as they themselves identified the issues that concerned them without the predetermined agendas of adult researchers interfering in the process" (2004, p. 205). In this paper's practice, the design and procedure before implementing the resilience survey centered first on the participation of community members and young adults, as will be discussed later in this section. The primary sample in this inquiry rested with young adults who contributed to conflict resolution training that employed a participatory approach by facilitators.

The research questions raised are, again: (1) How do Congolese young adults perceive their role in peacebuilding, and (2) what are the important contextual factors of resilience for Congolese young adults? Research was conducted during eight months of field research (July 2010 – February 2011) in North Kivu, eastern DR Congo undertaking a mixed-method approach

which consisted of a total nonprobability² sample of 105 Congolese young adults between the ages of 18 – 33 years old (51 young women = 49%, 54 young men = 51%; mean age = 24, SD = 3.9; see Table 1). This age range was appropriate for many reasons: later transitions to adulthood, a greater cohort of youth diversity, and direct inquiry by the principal researcher into factors wherein Congolese are considered adults, confirmed this as an appropriate range. Finally, it represented the age range of training participants, who were defined as young adults by Congolese program staff and community members. In this paper the terms ‘youth’ and ‘young adult’ are used interchangeably to describe this sample.

b. Qualitative methods

Data was collected through direct and participant observation, and group and individual semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews were conducted from a purposive sample³ of 24 young adults from November 2010 – January 2011. Although month and year are included, the date of each interview is omitted in citation to protect the anonymity of participants. All interviewees were participants in a regional NGO conflict mitigation project focused on training young adults in conflict identification and analysis. Semi-structured interviews contained a series of project evaluation-related questions, and open questions focused on this paper’s inquiry (See Appendix A). Interviews were conducted on site visits during project monitoring and evaluation. Interviews were audio-recorded upon consent, later transcribed from Swahili into English and manually coded to reveal emerging themes.

² Nonprobability sampling has no known probability of error. It is not random nor unbiased, yet necessary for this inquiry because of research methodology limitations further discussed. Source: Bernard & Ryan, (2010) *Analyzing qualitative data: Systematic Approaches*. Sage Publications: CA.

³ Purposive sample, a type of nonprobability sampling, is used to study a subset or specific group within a wider population, particularly those difficult to access (Ibid.).

c. Quantitative methods: Child and Youth Resilience Measure (CYRM)

Quantitative data collection occurred with a purposive sample of 105 young adult training participants. Within six field trainings in three territories of North Kivu (Masisi, Rutshuru & Lubero), a survey tool called the Child and Youth Resilience Measure (CYRM) was administered in Swahili. The Resilience Research Centre of Dalhousie University⁴ conducted an international pilot study that strived to incorporate contextual and culture understandings of resilience. Through this research in 14 countries with youth facing adversity, the CYRM was developed (Ungar & Liebenberg, 2011). The researchers, having tested the CYRM and published their findings, provide a user's manual for implantation for other researchers to further test the CYRM. Appendix B contains the English version of the CYRM used in this study.

As advised by CYRM researchers, it was through participatory community input from Congolese community members, project staff, and young adults, and three months of exploratory research in Goma, that 14 site-specific questions were developed for *Section Two*. The survey used in this study was slightly adapted. In *Section One* a question asking respondents to identify their racial group was omitted because of its cultural irrelevance. The next question, which asked about ethnicity was simplified, and asked, "What is your tribal group?" Instead of using a suggested 10 site specific questions, 14 were included. The survey was translated to Kiswahili and back-translated to English. It was administered over a 3 month period (November 2010 – January 2011) in Swahili to youth training participants in a group format by the principal researcher, alongside a Congolese training facilitator and HA staff member.

⁴ Resilience Research Centre. Halifax, NS: Dalhousie University. www.resilienceproject.com

The CYRM contains three sections; *Section One* consists of eight questions gathering basic data such as gender, age and ethnicity; *Section Two* contains 14 site-specific questions more contextual to youth in eastern DR Congo; and the *Section Three* contains 28 questions established by the pilot study. Questions in *Section Two* and *Three* were worded in the positive and answered using a Likert-style scale (1 = Not at all, 2 = A little, 3 = Somewhat, 4 = Quite a bit, 5 = A lot). Questions in *Section Three* were defined within three subscales of resilience: individual, relationships with primary caregiver, and contextual factors. In each subscale were ‘clusters of questions’ providing specific views into resilience. The *individual* subscale included questions about personal skills, peer support and social skills. The *relationship w/primary caregiver* subscale included physical care giving and psychological care giving clusters. The *context* subscale included spiritual, education and cultural clusters (Appendix C). CYRM surveys were entered into SPSS and *Section Three* was scored using given syntax instructions. Questions in *Section One* and *Two* of the CYRM provide basic descriptive data, greater contextual understanding of resilience and insight into peacebuilding and conflict, but were not part of the resiliency scores. Data analysis includes CYRM syntax scoring, descriptive, frequency, and crosstabs statistics.

Table 1. Young adult participation by n, territory, gender and age

Territory	Qualitative Participants	Quantitative Participants		Female		Male		Age	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	Mean	SD
Masisi	3	23	22	9	17.6	14	26	23	3.8
Rutshuru	8	35	33.3	19	37.2	16	29.6	24	4
Lubero	13	47	44.7	23	45	24	44.4	24	3.9
Total (n = 105)	24	105	100	51	100	54	100	24	3.9

The entire sample of young adults, both qualitative and quantitative participants, represented young women and men from three territories in North Kivu encompassing over 50

different rural communities. Out of the 105 young adults who completed the survey, 24 were interviewed. Results from 105 CYRM respondents were scored and analyzed for overarching themes, while primary qualitative findings come from 24 young adults: those who completed the survey *and* were interviewed. This focus on 24 cases in correlation to the results of the total sample of 105 cases, allowed for identification of resilience factors, correlations to peacebuilding, with emphasis given to interview themes.

d. Limitations

Data collection was from a nonprobability sample, not a random sample, and therefore no conclusions can be drawn beyond this particular group of Congolese young adults. The sample does not necessarily include the full diversity of youth in North Kivu. Difficult and insecure travel conditions in North Kivu posed real constraints to accessibility and safety. Tremendously rough roads prescribe that the vast majority of travel into rural areas is done via land cruisers owned by INGOs, NGOs, and other agencies. The challenge of research in a conflict region often translates to a need for time flexibility and compromise in terms of research design; without adequate research funding, a substantial researcher team, and the challenges to reaching this specific subset of the population, use of a nonprobability sample was most appropriate.

In terms of sample participants, there are areas of potential limitations. Young adult interviewee answers and comments, and survey results were likely influenced by the presence of a white western female researcher. Because the sample were young adults who were participants in conflict resolution training, answers and comments in interviews and to survey questions may be impacted by the training and other possible reasons; for example, to impress positive outcomes for the NGO implementing the project, to influence individual needs, and/or with the hopes of continued training and funding.

Though every effort was made to ensure comprehension of the CYRM, due to the structure of the survey, translation, cultural and language anomalies, education level, and interpretation, in some cases the literal intentions of certain questions were misinterpreted. Five site specific survey questions were rendered invalid for this reason, and are not included in final results. There remains the possibility that other questions were also misconstrued, despite careful analysis of each survey. Even with thorough explanation, respondent unfamiliarity with a Likert-type scale may have posed challenges to answering questions, and impacted validity of some results. With these limitations in mind, and absent of a known margin of error, results from the survey should be taken somewhat cautiously.

It is possible that the sample, who were youth training participants chosen by local peace committees in each village based on a criteria that they were youth leaders, were picked by community members who instead chose based on nepotism, favored ethnicity, or power. However if the majority of the sample participants in fact, possess characteristics of youth leadership, these young adults may have higher levels of resilience. If this is the case it gives support to inquiry, as CYRM principal researchers Ungar and Liebenberg recommend the need to test further validity in separate groups; “those who are doing well and not doing well,” (2011, p. 143) and because study is focused on resilience protective factors and youth contributions.

Researcher subjectivity was recognized and research design took into account the knowledge that a power imbalance impacted all research, interviews and relationships. Despite the acknowledged and potential limitations, findings still break new ground.

Findings

a. CYRM: Section One and Two

The following shares results and themes from the CYRM survey and interview analysis together. Table 1 above provided some basic attributes such as gender and age from *Section One* of the CYRM, but looking briefly further into attributes, Table 2 shows in accord with the population demographics, that 78.1% of the sample identified as Nande, Hutu, or Hunde, the three largest ethnic groups in North Kivu, with Nande the majority (36.%).

Table 2. Young adult tribal group/ethnicity by n and %

Tribe/Ethnicity	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Nande	38	36.2	36.2	36.2
Hutu	28	26.7	26.7	62.9
Hunde	16	15.2	15.2	78.1
Other	23	19	19	97.1
No Response	3	2.9	2.9	100.0
Total (n = 105)	105	100.0	100.0	

In terms of education, 63% of the sample had completed 12 years of school or more, meaning they at least completed secondary school, while 37% completed 11 years or less. 13.6% of the sample had not studied beyond primary school, six years of schooling. In response to a question asking whom young adults currently lived with, 74.3% of youth stated they lived with their parent(s), 13.3% with their own spouse and family, while 10.5% lived with extended family. When asked how many times the participant had moved homes since 2005, 50.5% responded they had moved 0 times since 2005, while 33.3% had moved 1-2 times, and 16.2% had moved between 3-7 times.

Section Two results are made up of 14 site specific questions included in Appendix B. In Table 3, results are shown for nine site specific questions, arranged in descending order with

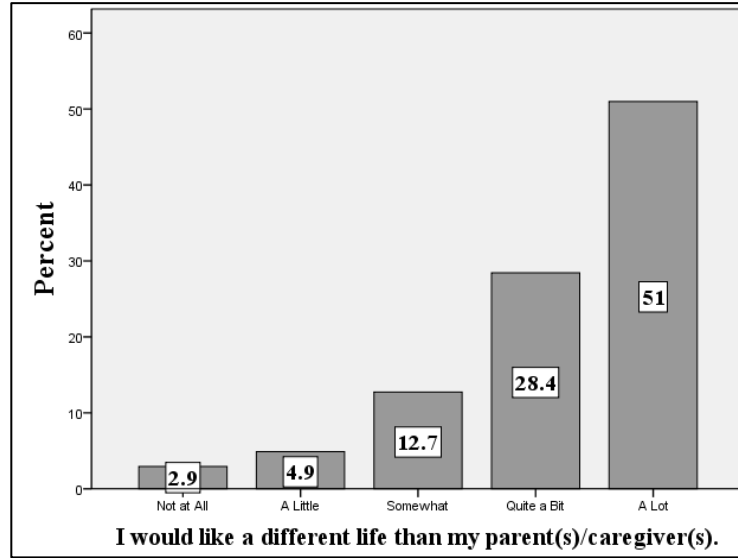
lowest to highest mean. As a reminder, the mean for answers was found based on a Likert-style scale (1 = Not at all, 2 = A little, 3 = Somewhat, 4 = Quite a bit, 5 = A lot), with respondents rating from 1 - 5 for each answer. The highest mean was in answer to the statements, “I am able to help build peace in my community and country,” ($M = 4.21$) and “I would like a different life than my parent(s)/caregiver(s)” ($M = 4.20$). The lowest mean by respondents was in answer to, “When I am sick I am able to receive healthcare,” ($M = 2.30$) and “It is possible to overcome the memory/trauma of war” ($M = 2.61$).

Table 3. CYRM Section Two: site specific questions (M and SD)

Section Two: Site Specific Questions (n = 105)	Mean	SD
When I am sick I am able to receive healthcare	2.30	1.192
It is possible to overcome the memory/trauma of war and conflict	2.61	1.522
I have opportunities to find employment	2.75	1.161
I agree with the definitions of right and wrong, according to my culture	2.81	1.207
I think conflict and war in my country will end in my lifetime	2.85	1.207
It is easy for me to avoid involvement in conflict related to war/violence	3.18	1.770
I have ambitions that I believe can be fulfilled in the future	3.71	1.158
Leisure activities (such as sports, singing, listening to music, TV) are important to me	3.98	1.160
I would like a different life than my parent(s)/caregiver(s)	4.20	1.034
I am able to help build peace in my community and country	4.21	.948

Taking a further look at the response to, “I would like a different life than my parent(s)/caregiver(s),” the bar graph below in Figure 5 shows that nearly 80% of sample circled “Quite a bit” (4) and “A lot” (5) in response to the statement.

Figure 5. Response by %: "I would like a different life than my parent(s)/caregiver(s) (N = 105)



When the same question is cross-tabbed with, “I am able to help build peace in my community and country,” results below in Table 4 show that 25.5% of the sample who responded with “A lot” when asked about wanting a different life, also circled 5 when asked about whether they are able to build peace.

Table 4. Crosstab of two site specific questions by %

		I would like a different life than my parent(s)/caregiver(s).					Total
		Not at All (1)	A Little (2)	Somewhat (3)	Quite a Bit (4)	A Lot (5)	
I am able to help build peace in my community and country	A Little (2)				1.0%	3.9%	4.9%
	Somewhat (3)			2.9%	8.8%	10.8%	22.5%
	Quite a Bit (4)	1.0%		2.9%	6.9%	10.8%	21.6%
	A Lot (5)	2.0%	4.9%	6.9%	11.8%	25.5%	51.0%
Total (n = 105)		2.9%	4.9%	12.7%	28.4%	51.0%	100.0%

A young man from Rutshuru territory who circled 5 for both statements said in response to an interview question about maintaining peace, “If you come at your home and meet your

parents who are drunkards, and they beat you and ill-treat you, you will find out that you don't have peace. Thus in order to have peace, your parents should have good behavior, so you would want to model them" (Male, age 24, December 2010). The statement points to how questions were possibly interpreted according to an individual's experience and one example why a youth might seek a different life.

In response to the question, "I think conflict and war in my country will end in my lifetime," categorized by North Kivu territory, Table 5 results show 44.8% of respondents circled

Table 5. Crosstab: "I think conflict and war in my country will end in my lifetime by territory and %

		North Kivu Territory			Total
		Masisi	Lubero	Rutshuru	
I think conflict and war in my country will end in my lifetime	Not at All (1)	1.9%	7.6%	6.7%	16.2%
	A Little (2)	1.0%	11.4%	5.7%	18.1%
	Somewhat (3)	6.7%	21.9%	16.2%	44.8%
	Quite a Bit (4)	2.9%	1.9%	1.9%	6.7%
	A Lot (5)	9.5%	1.9%	2.9%	14.3%
Total (n = 105)		21.9%	44.8%	33.3%	100.0%

"Somewhat" ($M = 2.85$). 34.3% answered "Not at all" (1) or "A little" (2). Together, 79.1% of respondents gave a 3 or below to this statement. Only in Masisi did a higher percentage of young adults rate the question with a 5 (9.5%).

Two respondents, a young woman and man, who both circled a low response of 2 to whether conflict and war would end in their lifetimes, shared in a group interview about their futures amid conflict:

The hardest challenge for one here is poverty first – that brings with it the war and war gives birth to wandering; we leave our village and go to a place that is not our home. From that children can come to get involved in evil activities searching food... For example being a girl when you are living as a refugee, you will learn to open yourself to boys so you may get HIV/AIDS from that activity (F, age 22, December 2010).

No job, no plans... where can that job come from in this country of war and disorder?
(M, age 28, December 2010)

They expressed not only concern about the future, but concern about BNHs and livelihood around health and disease, displacement, unemployment and poverty.

Table 6 looks at the association between two questions: how young adults rate if they are able to help build peace and whether conflict and war will end in their lifetime. Of respondents, 39% who answered 3 or less on whether conflict would end in their lifetime, also gave the highest rating of 5 to whether they are able to help build peace. The significance here is while the total sample of cases responded at a high rate in their capacity to help build peace, most rated the possibility of war and conflict ending at a much lower rate.

Table 6. Crosstab by % of two site specific questions: “I think conflict and war in my country will end in my lifetime”, and “I am able to help build peace in my community and country” (N = 105)

		I think conflict and war in my country will end in my lifetime					Total
		Not at All (1)	A Little (2)	Somewhat (3)	Quite a Bit (4)	A Lot (5)	
I am able to help build peace in my community and country	A Little (2)	1.9%		2.9%			4.8%
	Somewhat (3)	4.8%	9.5%	5.7%		1.9%	21.9%
	Quite a Bit (4)	5.7%	1.0%	8.6%	1.0%	4.8%	21.0%
	A Lot (5)	3.8%	7.6%	27.6%	5.7%	7.6%	52.4%
Total (n = 105)		16.2%	18.1%	44.8%	6.7%	14.3%	100.0%

In Table 7, the frequency results to the question, “It is possible to overcome the memory/trauma of war and conflict,” (M = 2.61) show 57% of respondents answered with “Not at All” or “A Little.” 20% of young adults circled 5 (A lot) in response to overcoming the memory and trauma of war and conflict. Although there remains a high percentage of youth giving a lower scale response to this question, there is a noticeable split between those who circled 1 and those who circled 5. Further analyzing by territory reveals that of Masisi

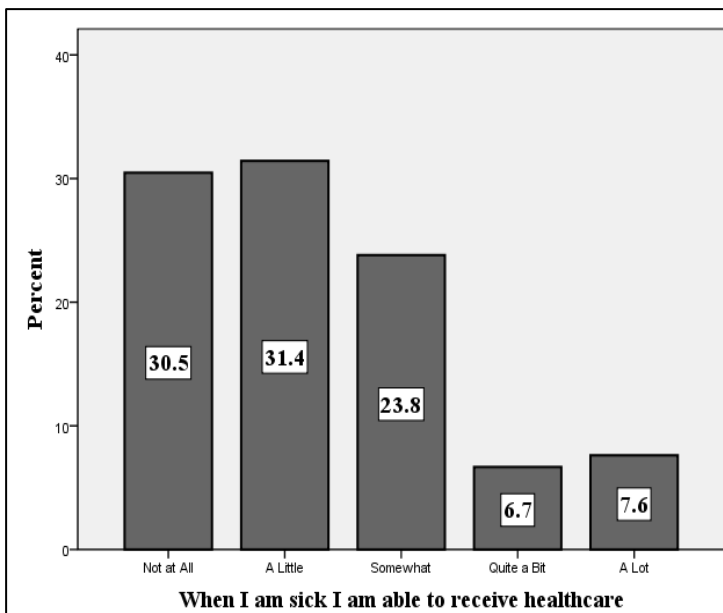
respondents, 47% circled 5, whereas less respondents from Lubero (8%) and Rutshuru (11%) circled 5, accounting for the split.

Table 7. Frequency table by %: “It is possible to overcome the memory/trauma of war and conflict”(N = 105)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
It is possible to overcome the memory/trauma of war and conflict	Not at All (1)	34	32.4	32.4	32.4
	A Little (2)	26	24.8	24.8	57.1
	Somewhat (3)	13	12.4	12.4	69.5
	Quite a Bit (4)	11	10.5	10.5	80.0
	A Lot (5)	21	20.0	20.0	100.0
	Total (n = 105)	105	100.0	100.0	

A young man who responded “Quite a Bit” to the question of trauma, answered the following when asked what it meant to him and his family when ‘bad things happen’: “In our families, when bad things happen we think tribalism started, we think it is the end of our lives;

Figure 6. Response by %: “When I am sick I am able to receive healthcare” (n = 105)



for hunger will slip in, war will break out, and too much fear and poverty will prevail” (M, age 25, November 2010). His reaction to ‘bad things’ was tied to conflict, fear and poverty.

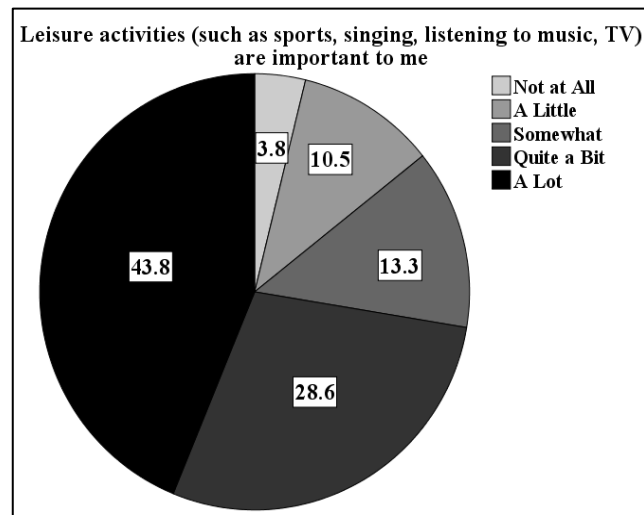
The lowest mean result for site specific questions was in response to, “When I am sick I am able to receive healthcare.” The bar

chart in Figure 6 looks at response by percent by North Kivu territory. 85.7% of respondents circled a 3 or less in response to this question. A youth who responded “Somewhat,” was asked

how to have peace said, “I will have peace if I can go to the hospital and get the treatment I need. If I don’t get it, I will not say I have peace” (M, age 24, November 2010).

On a question about whether leisure activities, such as sports, were important, 72.4% young adults answered circling 4 or 5 (Figure 7). The difference between men and women was slight; in fact, 72% of young women responded with “Quite a lot” or “A lot” in terms of leisure activity importance, compared to 70% of young men. In response to what an individual can do when they experience problems in life, one youth responded, “For people who have some games and sports, they get in these activities and forget through that way” (M, age 24, December 2010). The idea of sports and other recreation was a common theme, particularly in activities by youth associations.

Figure 7. “Leisure activities are important to me” by % (n = 105)



b. CYRM survey results: Section Three – resilience measure

Now turning focus to the CYRM *Section Three*, the 28 questions scored for resilience, Table 8 shows the mean resiliency scores for each of the three subscales: *individual* (M = 37.68), *relationship with primary caregiver* (M = 24.19) and *context* (M = 39.97), including the minimum and maximum scores, and standard deviation.

Table 8. CYRM resilience subscale scoring by min, max, M and SD

CYRM scoring (n = 105)	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Individual: Personal Skills	11	25	18.14	3.161
Individual: Peer Support	4	10	7.46	1.532
Individual: Social Skills	4	18	12.14	2.687
Individual Subscale Score	21	50	37.68	5.374
Relationships w/Primary Caregiver: Physical	1	10	6.40	1.768
Relationships w/Primary Caregiver: Psychological	9	25	17.79	3.263
Relationships w/Primary Caregiver Subscale Score	15	34	24.19	4.256
Context: Spiritual	5	15	12.34	2.079
Context: Education	4	10	8.68	1.458
Context: Cultural	12	24	18.95	2.733
Context Subscale Score	21	49	39.97	4.546

Also in this table are the mean scores for each ‘cluster of questions,’ which allowed for further inquiry under subscales; for example, personal, peer and social skills under individual score. Analysis here is focused on the mean scores of each subscale and the additional categories alongside interview data.

i. Individual: Personal skills, peer support and social skills

The individual subscale mean score for the total sample was 37.68, with a min score of 21 and a max score of 50. A young man in Rutshuru (Individual score: 41), when asked what helped him feel okay mentally, responded, “I think in order to feel okay mentally I need to have a schedule. For example: planning if at 4 am I will exercise, at 7 am I will go to school, then the time that you planned for study, you use it for studying and nothing else” (M, age 28, December 2010). Having a personal schedule was important to him.

In regards to peer support, friendship was often discussed as an important part of life in dealing with problems. A 22 year old young woman (Individual score: 41) said:

When I get a problem I go to the best friend of mine, I tell him the problem I have, so he advises me. You know all the pieces of advice are not good; there are some good and some bad pieces of advice (personal communication, December 2010).

Here she is mentioning turning to a friend for advice, alongside recognition of discretion in following advice. A young man in Rutshuru (Individual score: 50) discussed one part of how he addresses personal problems: “When a problem occurs, we talk about it with friends and it passes” (M, age 24, December 2010). The same young man, a youth leader in his church, when asked if friendship was important, replied, “When you live in a group with good friends they lead and teach you, when we get in the church and in the church-meetings for the youth, we get teachings there so we grow up well, having a motivation” (Ibid.).

Finally, looking at individual social skills, a young man (Individual score: 41) when asked about how to bring peace in his life replied, “When you stay in yourself with conceit, there will not be peace. But when you go to people in the community, they will share with you the experience they passed through and that will help in your life” (M, age 28, December 2010). He expresses the importance of knowing where and how to get help in his community.

ii. Relationship w/primary caregiver: Physical care giving, psychological care giving

The mean score for the relationship w/primary caregiver subscale was 24.19, with a min score of 15 and a max of 34. Cluster questions pertained to physical and psychological care giving. In regards to psychological care giving, one young man (Relationship score: 25) simply said, “You can grow up well here when you have someone caring about you” (M, age 30, November 2010). A young woman who was an orphan (Relationship score: 31) said:

Though we were in war, at times we could flee but in the flight it could happen that you miss your parents and get to live with some people you only met during the flight. Despite this trouble, if you get someone to advise you; you will grow up well knowing to treat other people well (F, age 22, November 2010).

She is addressing displacement and the loss of a parent, but the resilience piece here is her statement that seems to reflect that with primary caregiver support, even if it is not your parents, an individual can still ‘grow up well’. Though the absence of a caregiver certainly has a lasting impact, as this young man (Relationship score: 32) addressed:

I have grown up without knowing my mother, which worries me. But through the work I was taught, I come to forget. But at certain occasions when I meet people who ill-treat me, I come to remember. Generally, when I am involved in my job, I forget. But every time I face problems, I remember my parent (M, age 24, December 2010).

Two psychological care giving questions asked were, “My caregiver knows a lot about me,” and “I talk to my caregiver about how I feel”. In response to who can best support him, a young man (Relationship score: 15) said:

Though they cannot solve all my problems, but considered that they are the ones who gave birth to me, I believe they know all my life, so I go and tell them my problem. They help me with guide lines so that I may lead my life on the right path (M, age 28, December 2010).

Finally, in regards to physical care giving and the ability of caregivers to meet contextual BNHs, a young man quoted above, when asked what resources make a person healthy said:

There are families that have never built a house for them, and they are having hard time getting food to eat. They don’t have any house; they are only renting a house, so they don’t have any address. In that life of not having any address, even the lives of their children are unhappy, their education fails (M, age 30, November 2010).

It is in the absence of physical care giving, when parents are not able to provide food and a secure home, creates a risk factor.

iii. Context: Spiritual, Education, Cultural

The mean score for the context subscale was 39.97, with min score of 21 and a max score of 49 in the sample. Categories in clustered questions were spiritual, education and cultural.

Spirituality is very important in eastern DR Congo; 83% of respondents circled 5 in response to, “Spiritual beliefs are a source of strength for me.” It was referenced in interviews throughout different lines of questioning. When asked how youth can overcome trauma (the words overcome and heal often translate into Swahili as the verb ‘to forget’), a young woman (Context score: 46) replied, “Young people can forget the hard time they passed through by being taught in school, in the church, or in the street... helping each other without any segregation of the tongue, the race, or tribe (F, age 22, December 2010). Spirituality also came up in a question asking how young men and women can work together to build peace. A young woman replied (Context score: 44), “First, what helps us girls and boys to grow up together is the church. In the church, we are like sisters and brothers (F, age 18, December 2010).

Education rated extremely high, with 99% of the sample circling 5 on the scale to the question, “Getting an education is important to me”. This is unsurprising, as education generally receives a high rating in resilience research. In eastern DR Congo, the opportunity to attend school is the first and greatest challenge to getting an education. “All people are not studying here. When you start going to school, a few times later there is no one to pay for you, then you stop,” explained a 22 year old young woman (Context score: 46). As a young man explained (Context score: 40), “Also there are so many people who lost their parents during war, and after war they will not be able keep going to school. They will start then robbing and getting involved in other bad activities” (M, 28, December 2010). There is a perceived link that access to education protects youth from involvement in other illegal or harmful activities. As one young said, “Those who don’t attend training or don’t attend school are the ones who become bandits with armed guns and stop in the evening when you are pulling your goat and take it. But

someone who receives training takes out these thoughts about being in people's houses at night (M, 33, November 2010)

Cultural components of resilience in the survey focused on feelings of country and ethnic pride, community equality and having people to look up to. In response to the question, "I am proud to be a citizen of DR Congo," and "I am proud of my ethnicity," 71% of youth circled 5 (A lot). When asked if they were treated 'fairly in my community,' results were more varied – 52% of respondents circled between 3 or less (Somewhat – Not at all), while 48% circled 4 or 5 (Quite a bit – A lot). This variance may be linked to interpretation of 'fairly' as 'equally' and whether it connects to tribalism and/or social injustice. A 25 year old young man (Context score: 34) discussed his own community:

Even in the village where we live, you find people who have fought because of their tribal groups and say I can't share anything with you because you are Hutu, and I am Hunde. So you will wonder how it happened that you tell to your neighbor that he is Hutu, yet we are all one blood; we should not be discriminating each other (M, 25, December 2010).

The cultural context in identifying resilience factors and the connection to peacebuilding is a critical piece, one further addressed in the following section on interviews. Looking at survey results alone, and mean scores for each subscale (individual, relationship and context) the most important contributions to resilience are as follows (Please see Appendix D): For individual skills it is peer support, the knowledge of personal strengths, the ability to start and complete endeavors, and social credence. Within relationships w/primary caregiver it is a confidence that caregivers can support them, know them deeply, and provide security that contribute to resilience. Physical care giving rates lowest as the majority of the sample responded they do not always get enough to eat. Finally, looking at context it is pride in

citizenship and ethnicity, the desire to help others within the community, and a view of receiving education and following spiritual beliefs as vital resilience factors.

c. A deeper look at interviews

i. Young adult views on resolving conflicts & peacebuilding

Group and individual semi-structured interviews were conducted with 24 young adults, making up 23% of the total sample (n = 105). Table 9 shows basic attributes for these 24 cases.

Table 9. Qualitative sample of those interviewed by number, territory, gender and age.

Territory	Qualitative Participants	Female		Male		Age
		N	%	N	%	Mean
Masisi	3	1	10	2	14.3	23.6
Rutshuru	8	4	40	4	28.6	23.6
Lubero	13	5	50	8	57.1	24.8
Total (n = 105)	24	10	100	14	100	24

Young adults shared different views on understanding conflict and building peace, and several overarching themes arose. First we look at some broader reflections on peace and conflict. One man shared the proverb, “The rain should be watched at while it is still far away. It means that we should think about a potential problem before it explodes” (M, age 33, December 2010). Another said in response to how young people can build peace, “The young people are the first people upon whom is the responsibility of bringing peace. But how? That is the question” (M, age 24, November 2010). He followed this with, “In order to get peace we should try to know why there isn’t peace now” (Ibid.). Youth recognized throughout interviews the presence of conflict everywhere. As young man noted, “Even in the family, it happens that the elder never say hello to his younger brother. The conflicts are the root of the destruction of the nation (M, age 27, December 2010).

At a macro level on how peace can be built in their country two youths gave the following responses, “Our government has to fight against corruption and bribery in order for the country to go well. But all the time they will be bribing, peace will not come” (M, 21, December 2010). A young woman responded, “I thank God for he is the one who stops all these, but not a human being. Also we should pray so that something of the kind may not restart” (F, age 23, November 2010).

ii. Tribalism/Interethnic conflict

In eastern DR Congo there are roots behind tribalism that nurture its continuation. Young adults faced with this conflict in North Kivu expressed ideas of how to resolve it. “It is something hard to do, because hatred between the tribes is something that prevails seriously. But if we believe God, the one who created us into his likeness, if we remember that, tribalism may end; in fact we are all children of God” (F, age 28, December 2010). The depth of tribalism in relation to resolving it is expressed in this quote: “We can do so, if we are taught that all human beings are one. The hatred we have, we have been taught like this since very long time ago. The conflict has been sown in our hearts” (M, age 30, January 2011). Another young man shared thoughts on resolving interethnic conflict:

I cannot know it precisely but I presume that it can be solved when the different tribes will meet: they will order to know what you need and what your opponent needs. An interethnic conflict doesn't involve a handful of individuals, because a tribe is huge and the antagonist tribe is huge hatred in their subjects. When the chief takes a position, his subjects support him in it. Consequently, these pillars of the tribal communities are the ones to be called out to in order to unite the tribal groups (M, age 21, December 2010).

The young man is referring to training content here during project evaluation – the understanding of the roots of the conflict and needs of the parties in conflict. He branches it out

further to another level when he discusses the magnitude of tribes, that it much more than a conflict between two individuals.

A young woman when asked how young people can contribute to resolving conflict between tribes said, “In order to help, the young people need to sit together and talk about it, young people from different tribes. For example, in the choirs in the church, we should allow people from all tribes to join freely the choir - not asking to someone to leave the choir just because he is Mnande or Munyarwanda” (F, age 20, November 2010). I asked her if adults of different tribes could sit together and discuss tribalism. She replied, “Young people can, but for the adults, it’s impossible” (Ibid.).

iii. Gender Conflict

Gender is a wide-ranging and critical issue in DR Congo, particularly around sexual violence. Though sexual violence was not discussed, the role of young women in home, their access to education, and societal consequences of pregnancy were central. A 23 year old woman expressed all these, with visible frustration;

In our time, people believe that it is no use to send a girl to school. So when you will be a great girl, a boy will only want to have sex with you, but they will not want to marry you, for you are useless. When you will get pregnant, it will be the end for you: for you don’t have resources and your parents don’t have resources either. This lack of resources is even the reason why they decide to send only the boy to school and not the girl. After all, the girl will only be a prostitute; and the child that she got unwillingly will not grow well, because he doesn’t have any father (F, age 23, January 2011).

The role in household is profoundly different for girls and this ties directly to education, their ability to succeed and attend school; “When I come from school, I would like to rest a little bit, take a bath and take back my book in order to read. But girls come from school and go straight to the farm or to wash dishes, or carry cassava to the mill; they don’t have time to revise

their notes - and the boy is sitting still” (F, age 18, December 2010). A young man mentions the same issue; “When a boy and a girl go to school, and they come back home, mum will say to the girl go to get us water, but the boy will still have time to do his school works” (M, age 20, December 2010). Another role in the household is a young woman’s role should a parent die:

The boy has his problems and the girl has hers. For example, when a parent dies while I have my younger brothers, I will feel them much more on my shoulders than the boy. Each time the child will need something or will cry, I will be the first person regarded, but the boy cannot take the child and put him on his back to comfort him (F, age 31, December 2010).

Taking on a primary caregiver role is common for young women. One respondent, when asked how young men and women could work together to build peace, replied;

Boys and girls in order to work together, they need to forget all the discrimination about sex that thinks that a girl shouldn’t speak in front a man and work as equals. So that everyone can say a word that will be listened to. For example, in the group of singers in the church, a girl may say: we don’t have instruments; we don’t have guitars or anything. They shouldn’t say: you are just a girl that is not your business (F, age 24, December 2010).

iv. Intergenerational Conflict

The significance of parents and elders was another constant theme during interviews, possibly connected to the training, as simultaneously training occurred, though in different rooms, for adults and elders from established community committees. What emerged was a tension between respecting the older generation yet wanting respect from them. A young man gave an example of why adults should listen to the ideas of young men and women:

I excuse myself and ask them to allow me to speak because even a young can tell something true. Consider that an adult suggests that we create a gang of thieves to be looting cars on the road. I am young, though he is more aged than I am, I may tell him oh sir the idea you are trying to make is very bad and is going to endanger all of us. I think you heard that the MONUC was attacked at RWINDI, the idea was given by adults: “let’s go and take over weapons there and you will be receiving a salary of \$150”. Those who were not wise went there and they died. They died, some of them sank in the water, and

today their leader is caught into prison. If these adults listened to the voice of someone, though young, this would never happen (M, age 25, January 2011).

Another young man, discussing how adults can see the value in ideas from youth said, “We may need to go to them and tell that though someone is older, there can be realities he doesn’t understand. Also, wisdom isn’t proportional to the age (M, age 21, January 2011). Expressing this discounting of the youth perspective, another young man said, “You need to meet these older people and call on their conscience so that they should start at least analyzing the ideas of young persons, instead of rejecting them inside the envelope” (M, age 20, January 2011). Youth in the sample repeatedly mentioned that the ability to contribute sound ideas was not always linked to the age of a person;

An adult is really adult only when he is sensible. In our language here, you may have the same in your language too, we usually say: “Even the chick can advise its mother”. The adults should consider the idea the young person is giving, not his age, because you get considered according to your words (M, age 27, January 2011).

Expressing frustration towards elders in his community, those often slated to resolve conflicts but who are also thought to be corrupt and influenced by bribes, a young man said, “We should tell to elders to tell us the truth that they have truly lived, not the lies they only create (M, age 30, January 2011). One interviewee, asked how to resolve intergenerational conflict said:

We should gather old and young people and show them that even a young can suggest something that can save an adult. Above all, we should put them together: when you assign people for work, you should choose someone who is 30 years old with someone 15 or 20 years old associated to him (F, age 26, January 2011).

Her perspective was that if older and younger people work alongside one another, this would serve as an avenue to resolving intergenerational conflict.

v. Armed conflict

Discussion of direct violence, i.e. the impact of armed conflict and ways to resolve it was, in general, not a primary topic in interviews, though its impact from observation is felt and seen constantly. It is raised as a theme for this reason, and because young adult involvement in armed conflict is an ongoing concern in DR Congo. In response to a question of whether youth want peace, a young man said, “Yes, the youth need peace. When the CNDP came in here, young people straightway created Mayi Mayi groups” (M, age 20, January 2010). Mayi Mayi armed groups are often organized and led by young men. These groups sometimes present themselves as community and land protectors, yet target specific ethnic groups seen as threats.

A young man and woman from a community in Lubero where Mayi Mayi were very active discussed in the following segment of a group interview their viewpoint on reasons why youth join the Mayi Mayi:

Female: It’s due to the lack of jobs, people don’t have jobs here. Considered that Mayi Mayi get things without working for it, they join it.

Male: They want it because they don’t work but can get money, food, power...

F: With their weapon, they get things freely.

Interviewer: What does the youth from [village] think about the Mayi Mayi movement?

F: They have been enlightened already. They know already that there is nothing in that movement, apart from endangering your life for no reason.

I: Do you know a friend or anyone who has joined the Mayi Mayi movement?

F & M: No.

I: What do you think about the decision to join?

F: I regret on their behalf (age 20, January 2011).

M: He loses his life for nothing (age 20, January 2011).

Conflict from armed groups can also arise that is not direct but based on association, “My family is related to the FDLR [Hutu]. Then the FDLR comes in and kill a member of your family, a conflict will explode between us” (F, age 26, January 2011).

vi. Building peace individually

The following exploration of youth interviews came from questions about how, as an individual, he/she can respond to interpersonal conflict and/or build peace. In regard others who support or are involved in armed conflict, a 30 year old respondent said;

When you see him, consider that he is not doing it from his own consciousness, for if you react to what he does, war shall never end. So you should make him a brother and show him that what he did is not good. There are people who don't have this kind of attitude, so we should help them understand that it is not good fighting for the ground, backing the war" (M, age 30, November 2010).

In terms of responding interpersonal conflict, two youth shared the following:

"Sometimes I can hurt you without knowing it or I can say a word that hurts a person. So first thing is to recognize if I hurt him and in which way? Then I can see how to solve the problem" (M, age 24, December 2010). Also, one youth acknowledged, "But if you don't reveal your problems, the conflict will not end" (M, age 20, January 2011). On the individual capacity to build peace at a community level, youth has this to say:

First, I need material and financial means to help me reach the aim. The second tool is collaboration with others who can help me with good suggestions (M, age 21, January 2011).

I condemn all the speeches encouraging war in our territory, or the meeting that plans a conflict (M, age 30, November 2010).

In order to build peace in the area, I need to be uniting people. For example, the mum of this family may get into conflict with her neighbor, I go and unite them. While walking in the village, I may meet a boy attacking a woman and I separate them, in that way I will have built peace (M, age 25, January 2011).

A want to speak out against war, a need for resources, and unity with others are all raised here.

vii. Building peace collectively

Answers to how and why young adults can work collectively to help build peace in their communities centered often around general ideas of unity; "We can do it if we unite and share

thoughts,” (M, age 20, January 2011) and, “Yes youth can build peace. If they work together hand in hand, helping widows; digging toilets for them for example, it is good; if we are united and try to solve all the quarrels among us, we will build the country (M, age 28, December 2010). A young woman in the same interview further commented:

I can add is that at our age we have so many temptations, but if we unite and are taught about all the conduct that is deleterious for the building of the country we can build the country. For example, if there is a school that is brought here to [village name], all of us will stand up like one person and bring the stones to the building of that school. That will help us, and all the children will get education there (F, age 22, December 2010).

The sense of uniting to literally build infrastructure of the country was one common general interpretation to the meaning of building peace, perhaps influenced by the verb ‘to build.’ In regards to how young women can build peace, a 31 year old female respondent said:

You know, it is not all the women who got the opportunity to go to school. So if they are involved in some activities of sewing or a small business, that can help them in their lives and prevent the woman from getting involved in some ‘impossible’ activities (F, age 31, December 2010).

viii. Youth associations

The most prevalent theme arising, mentioned by 46% of those interviewed, were the presence of local youth associations as having a role in building peace:

What I can add to what she said is that we need peace; each time we will be seeing the same scenes we will remember the horrors of the past. Now that we have something comparable to peace, we need to have groups of young people. In these groups we will have young people watching TV, some other playing football or other kinds of games (M, age 24, December 2010).

The same youth, when asked if young people discuss conflict in groups said, “Yes, in the clubs of young people we talk about it too” (Ibid.).

In observation, youth associations existed in every rural community visited – many are church youth groups, while some focused on music, sports and theatre, and/or provide

community volunteer work such as supporting widows and fundraising. The following quotes from four young adults further describe different activities in youth associations:

If it happens that there is mourning in the quarter, we all gather to go to the place. Or if there is wedding, we will go there. We always try to collect a modest sum of money to bring to the place. When the society sees that it will be influenced by what the youth is doing (M, age 22, January 2011).

Or any group of girls that play football (F, age 18, January 2011).

Why is [football] a connector? Because it gathers...I think you can't play football alone, you need other people. The associations that are here very often contribute to the development. And we all know that development is good. Sometimes they contribute in repairing the roads. About peace, I think [youth] need to avoid plotting with the rebel groups or joining these militias (M, age 20, January 2011).

When we work, we can decide to buy kitchen utensils or any other tools in order to supply every time people will be afflicted by death. We go there, all the members of the association. That is also a way to build peace (M, age 20, January 2011).

The importance of youth associations in building peace, based on youth interpretation of the term, was principal to community cohesion and connections; "It's not good being isolated; everyone should be member of an association. When you are a member of a group, you will be helped if you are sick - the members of the group will help you" (F, age 26, January 2011). The importance of involvement in associations held precedence. The following young adult described this involvement and development using an expansive view of community:

There are many associations of development. And we have found out that there can never be development without the joint participation of the young people, of women and aged men. There should be the presence of all the layers of the population. So the aged man shouldn't ask the young to keep quiet, you should patiently bear through childish suggestions he is giving, because he needs to be prepared for the important role he will play in the future life. It's something we are organizing here in [village name], and I usually participate with elder people on the behalf of the youth. And just as you have told, they give me the word and give the strategies of the young people. When they have a better idea, they suggest us to embrace it (M, age 30, January 2011).

The about quote was a particular cross-cutting perspective that suggests a need for gender and intergenerational collaboration.

Discussion

This inquiry into Congolese young adult protective resiliency factors and their perceived roles in peacebuilding is a step to create a space for new movements, a different stride with less posture. The important factors of resilience rest upon the capacity of ‘navigating’ to what ensures well-being, and ‘negotiating’ for resources to be provided in meaningful ways (Ungar, 2008). Results have shown that a strong belief in their future ambitions, an individual ability to believe they can seek a life different than their caregiver(s) (presumably better and absent of direct violence), and a sense they have something to contribute to their country are all resilience factors. This coincides to the existence of a strong support network of friendships, and primary caregiver(s) who not only provide a sense of security (a contextually important factor), but know about the life of their child. The protective resilience factors such as leisure and recreation, youth associations, education and the church are contextually significant as protective resilience factors. It was a research disappointment that survey results alongside interview data did not always match up in terms of individual cases – an individual’s score in relation to what they said in interviews. This was a result also found in pilot study of the CYRM as an area of concern (Ungar & Leibenberg, 2011). However, this inquiry’s survey results and interviews provide a Congolese youth perspective by and large unheard.

We continue with a return to theory and frameworks identified as significant to this study’s inquiry. Furthering an understanding of development and conflict sensitivity work in a conflict region where a heavy presence of foreign aid resources and people exist is more than incorporating frameworks to lessen harm and using intervention checklists to mitigate potential conflicts. It also goes beyond knowing that neither local nor foreign aid workers are objective. Regarding the concepts of bias or neutrality in peace work, peace practitioner Tatsushi Arai

wrote, “The position I advocate is to go beyond – or do away with – neutrality and instead strive for a carefully negotiated sense of multi-partiality, monitored and evaluated continuously. Incidentally, equally challenging is the ‘peacebuilders’ bias – that is, those who join a peace organization tend to have their own non-negotiable values that frame ways to write proposals and evaluation reports” (email communication, 4/28/10). The engagement in development and conflict sensitive work also must look past reports, to the human beings carrying out activities.

Are foreign practitioners and aid workers perpetrators of discrimination and colonial imbedded ideas about the capacity of Congolese people? Who here holds the power to continue the ‘self’ and the ‘other’ distinction of actors, rooted partially in western individualism and capitalism, and who does that ultimately serve? Certainly, it serves the continuation of funding and a transfer of outside resources. Yet it concretely withholds an element in the emergence of peace: that the unblocking of incompatible goals in conflict must converge with seeing each other as one part of the same, seeing our deep self comprised of the other (Galtung, 2006). If aid workers and practitioners are not working to see this resemblance, if we are in conflict with those already entrenched in conflict, what is our capacity to do genuine peace work in eastern DR Congo, or elsewhere?

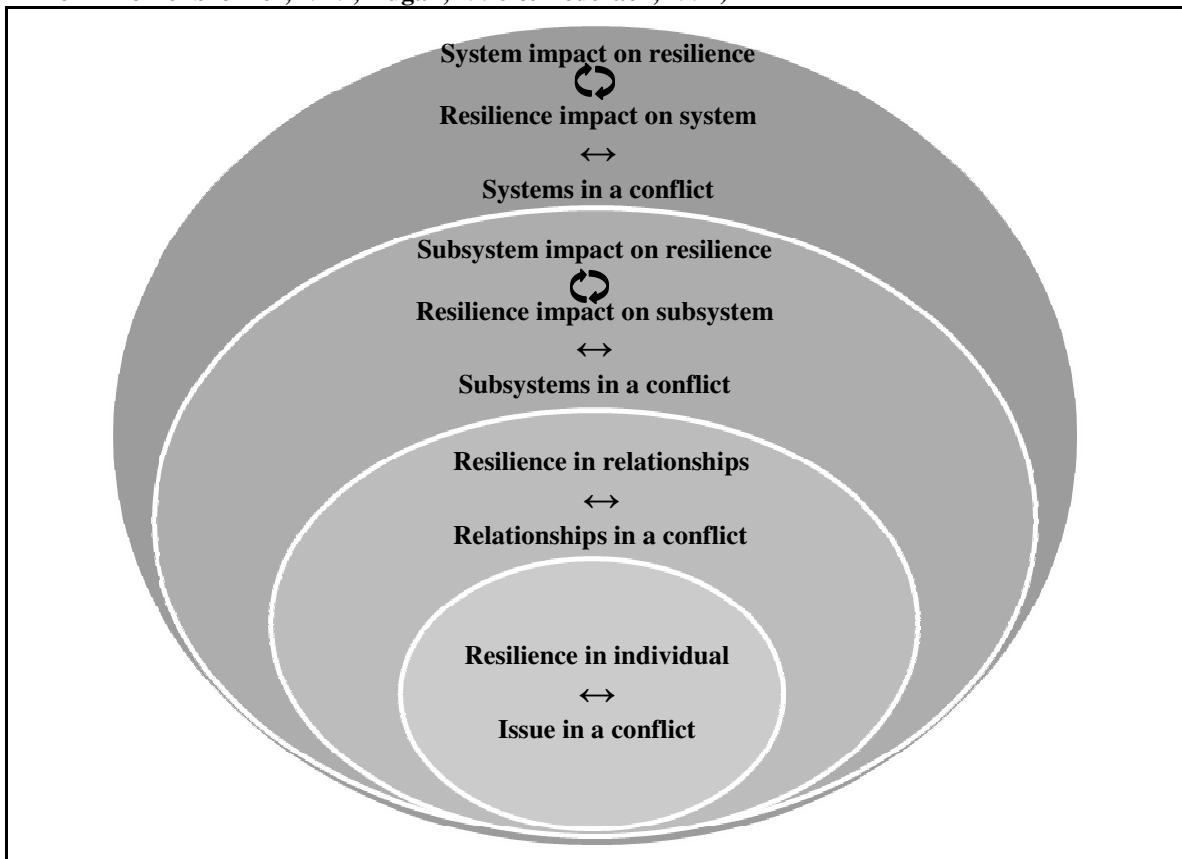
A primary dependence on outside resources, such as funding and training, is not genuine transference without these other elements present. Such resources alone are not intrinsic or natural to cultural places where conflict is transformed and a way of peace is known; it is more often the theory and practice of the other. Absent of genuine flows of creativity between actors, and open moments of merging ideas for social change, we risk shifts towards the opposite of the humanization that Galtung calls for as a needed component (2006). The argument for the beauty of ‘empowerment,’ or local people taking ‘ownership’ begs a redress – a collective check in the

mirror by those of us claiming to provide such change, an acknowledgement of our disheveled reflection, when often what we claimed to show and teach others, we also chose not to see or understand what was already present, because we could afford not to.

While we could afford not to, our material BNHs were almost always being met, as so often in a western mindset we remember to forget that not every need must be met monetarily, and so we pass this forgetfulness on. The immensity of BNHs blocked because of structural violence in eastern DR Congo is staggering; unemployment, lack of access to education, poverty, disease and health, not to mention insecurity, and yet young adults in this sample portrayed a desire to seek ways to meet their non-material BNHs as well, such as identity, meaning and security. The further capacity in young adults to look for new ways towards peace plays a continuous loop in partnership with resilience at its different levels, where resilience impacts the layers of conflict and the potential for transformation. Figure 8 provides an illustrative model of these connections, adapted from Bronfenbrenner's social ecological model of risk and protection for war-affected children (1969), and Lederach's nested theory of conflict (1997, adapted from Dugan, 1996). Seen at the inner level are individual resilience and its relevance and impact to the issues of a particular conflict. At the relationship level it is the resilience of relationships and its relevance and the impact on the relationships existing within a conflict. For the remaining two levels, subsystem and system, there exists a reciprocal relationship with resilience – how the presence of resilience impacts the subsystem or system, and in turn, how the condition of these levels impact resilience. This reciprocal relationship is further understood through identification of the subsystems and systems at play in a conflict. One conclusion is that identified protective resilience factors may not only be strengthened through activities young adults believe positively

contribute to peace building, but that existing resilience contributes to young adult capacity to build peace and resolve conflicts.

Figure 8. Transformative model of resilience and conflict analysis for war-affected youth. (Adapted from Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Dugan, 1996 & Lederach, 1997)



Strengthening resilience can occur through thoughtful interventions that view young adults as encompassing more than vulnerability or specific age ranges, but chooses to see them as key actors and partners; interventions that seek out internal cultural mechanisms for peacebuilding. As McEnvoy-Levy states, "...a further challenge for researchers is to find the nooks and enclaves where conflict is transformed unexpectedly – or perhaps more precisely, to find the places where peace forms without being named – and begin to devise means to support these organic processes" (2006, p. 288). Support for these processes can lead to the expansion of programs which focus on youth leadership, peace education, and training in conflict analysis and

resolution. There exist opportunities to define and build upon resilience, to increase the capacity of young adults to resolve local conflicts in their areas: “A number of interventions, particularly when delivered in groups, may also serve to invigorate exogenous protective processes by bolstering social supports and connectedness among war-affected youths and their caregivers, peers and larger community” (McEnvoy-Levy, 2001, p. 287). However, the question of who defines young adult resilience and peacebuilding in eastern DR Congo must remain at the forefront, always directly connected back to those who live it. The focus should not rest only on reinforcing strengths, but enlist an encircling approach to all youth with different experiences and resilience. It should be with care that such steps forward are taken, as often natural processes of peace and community connectivity, have been damaged, disrupted or manipulated because of war and conflict.

This links back to a key reason for involving Congolese young adults. There is an argument that youth contain openness, an unrestricted agency towards life. This was one of my greatest repeated observations in my time with this group of youth. Like the young woman who said adults could never discuss tribalism openly, but that youth were able, it this stream of creativity sought. As Galtung says, “To be young is to have less past and more future...youth crave something new and different and see change as feasible, steered less by reality and more by ideals. The longer the remaining life span – life expectancy – the more vested one’s interest in creative and nonviolent ways of handling conflict at all levels...” (2006, p. 262-65).

So where do the roles of these young Congolese women and men ultimately fall? As the last young person quoted said, it cannot be done “... without the joint participation of the young people, of women and aged men. There should be the presence of all the layers of the population” (M, age 30). And as many youth mentioned, it is youth associations and group

activities through which these young adults find motivation and see possibilities. It is here that interventions should place interest, in ways that collaborate and build upon what exists, on what eastern Congolese young adults already know about the needed relationships with other key actors and community members. Practitioners and aid workers should shift themselves to assume that if they are aiming to define development and conflict sensitive work, so too can youth define those terms themselves in their country – and it may not be through the vagueness of titles such as ‘peace groups’ (McEnvoy-Levy, 2001).

It is relationships, creativity, curiosity, and risk that John Paul Lederach points to as pieces to building peace. He writes this of creativity and imagination: “...in those turning points and moments where something moves beyond the grip of violence, is the vision and belief that the future is not the slave of the past and the birth of something new is possible” (2005, p.39). It is this piece of the whole taken and put into clearer focus, this group of young adults in eastern DR Congo, living with resilience and acts of building peace, who give emergence to the possibility of something new.

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Appendix A: Semi-structured Interview Questions

- What do I need to know to grow up well here?
- How do you describe people who grow up well here despite the many problems they face?
- What does it mean to you, to your family, and to your community, when bad things happen?
- What kinds of things are most challenging for you growing up here?
- What do you do when you face difficulties in your life?
- What does being healthy mean to you and others in your family and community?
- What do you do and others you know do, to keep healthy, mentally, physically, emotionally, spiritually?
- Do you think young people can work together to help bring peace? In what ways?
- Can young men and women work together to build peace? If yes, how?
- In what ways can you bring/build peace?
- How can adults and older people understand the ideas of young adults?

Appendix B: CYRM survey tool

Child and Youth Resilience Measure (CYRM)-28

DIRECTIONS

Listed below are a number of questions about you, your family, your community, and your relationships with people. These questions are designed to better understand how you cope with daily life and what role the people around you play in how you deal with daily challenges.

Please complete the questions in Section One.

For each question in Sections Two and Three, please circle the number to the right that describes you best. There are no right or wrong answers.

SECTION ONE

What is your date of birth? _____

What is your sex? _____

What is the highest level of education you have completed? _____

Who do you live with? _____

How long have you lived with these people? _____

How many times have you moved homes in the past 5 years? _____

Appendix B (continued)

Please describe who you consider to be your family (For example, 1 or 2 biological parents, siblings, friends on the street, a foster family, an adopted family, etc.)

What ethnic group are you from? _____

Appendix B (continued)

SECTION TWO

To what extent do the statements below DESCRIBE YOU? Circle one answer for each statement.

	Not at all	A little	Some what	Quite a bit	A lot
1. I am able to help build peace in my community and country.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I think conflict and war in my country will end in my lifetime.	1	2	3	4	5
3. It is possible to overcome the memory/trauma of war and conflict.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I am easily able to avoid involvement in conflict related to war/violence.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I think it is necessary to accept my own condition in life.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I seek a different life than my parent(s)/caregiver(s).	1	2	3	4	5
7. I feel safe in my community.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I feel safe outside my community.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I have opportunities to find employment.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I have ambitions that I believe can be fulfilled in the future.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I agree with the definitions of right and wrong, according to my culture.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I feel young women in my community should be encouraged to study.	1	2	3	4	5
13. When I am sick I am able to receive healthcare.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Leisure activities (such as sports, games, conversations, singing, listening to music, TV, etc.) are important to me.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix B (continued)

SECTION THREE

To what extent do the statements below DESCRIBE YOU? Circle one answer for each statement.

	Not at All	A Little	Some-what	Quite a Bit	A Lot
1. I have people I look up to	1	2	3	4	5
2. I cooperate with people around me	1	2	3	4	5
3. Getting an education is important to me	1	2	3	4	5
4. I know how to behave in different social situations	1	2	3	4	5
5. My parent(s)/caregiver(s) watch me closely	1	2	3	4	5
6. My parent(s)/caregiver(s) know a lot about me	1	2	3	4	5
7. If I am hungry, there is enough to eat	1	2	3	4	5
8. I try to finish what I start	1	2	3	4	5
9. Spiritual beliefs are a source of strength for me	1	2	3	4	5
10. I am proud of my ethnic background	1	2	3	4	5
11. People think that I am fun to be with	1	2	3	4	5
12. I talk to my family/caregiver(s) about how I feel	1	2	3	4	5
13. I am able to solve problems without harming myself or others (for example by using drugs and/or being violent)	1	2	3	4	5
14. I feel supported by my friends	1	2	3	4	5
15. I know where to go in my community to get help	1	2	3	4	5
16. I feel I belong at my school	1	2	3	4	5
17. My family stands by me during difficult times	1	2	3	4	5
18. My friends stand by me during difficult times	1	2	3	4	5
19. I am treated fairly in my community	1	2	3	4	5
20. I have opportunities to show others that I am becoming an adult and can act responsibly	1	2	3	4	5
21. I am aware of my own strengths	1	2	3	4	5
22. I participate in organized religious activities	1	2	3	4	5
23. I think it is important to help out in my community	1	2	3	4	5
24. I feel safe when I am with my family/caregiver(s)	1	2	3	4	5
25. I have opportunities to develop skills that will be useful later in life (like job skills and skills to care for others)	1	2	3	4	5
26. I enjoy my family's/caregiver's cultural and family traditions	1	2	3	4	5
27. I enjoy my community's traditions	1	2	3	4	5
28. I am proud to be (Nationality: _____)?	1	2	3	4	5

Citation: Resilience Research Centre (2009). *The Child and Youth Resilience Measure-28*. Halifax, NS: Resilience Research Centre, Dalhousie University. Retrieved [date], from <http://www.resilienceproject.org>.

Appendix C: Clusters of Questions from CYRM User's Manual (2011)

Individual

Individual: Individual personal skills

2. I cooperate with people around me
8. I try to finish what I start
11. People think that I am fun to be with
13. I am able to solve problems without harming myself or others (for example by using drugs and/or being violent)
21. I am aware of my own strengths

Individual: Individual peer support

14. I feel supported by my friends
18. My friends stand by me during difficult times

Individual: Individual social skills

4. I know how to behave in different social situations
20. I am given opportunities to show others that I am becoming an adult and can act responsibly
15. I know where to go in my community to get help
25. I have opportunities to develop skills that will be useful later in life (like job skills and skills to care for others)

Relationship with Primary Caregiver

Caregiver: Physical Care giving

5. My caregiver(s) watch me closely
7. If I am hungry, there is enough to eat

Caregiver: Psychological Care giving

6. My caregiver(s) know a lot about me
12. I talk to my caregiver(s) about how I feel
17. My caregiver(s) stand(s) by me during difficult times
24. I feel safe when I am with my caregiver(s)
26. I enjoy my caregiver's cultural and family traditions

Appendix C (continued)

Context

Context: Spiritual

9. Spiritual beliefs are a source of strength for me
22. I participate in organized religious activities
23. I think it is important to help out in my community

Context: Education

3. Getting an education is important to me
16. I feel I belong at my school

Context: Cultural

1. I have people I look up to
10. I am proud of my ethnic background
19. I am treated fairly in my community
27. I enjoy my community's traditions
28. I am proud to be a citizen of _____

Appendix D: CYRM question scores (by subscale, N, Mean, and SD)

Individual subscale mean rates by question

Questions	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I know where to go in my community to get help	104	2.37	1.192
I have opportunities to develop skills that will be useful later in life (like job skills and skills to care for others)	104	2.83	1.318
I am able to solve problems without harming myself or others	105	3.19	1.501
I cooperate with people around me	105	3.44	1.028
I have opportunities to show others that I am becoming an adult and can act responsibly	103	3.56	1.082
I know how to behave in different social situations	103	3.56	1.100
People think I am fun to be with	105	3.58	.886
My friends stand by me during difficult times	104	3.67	.950
I feel support by my friends	104	3.79	.921
I try to finish what I start	104	3.87	1.015
I am aware of my own strengths	105	4.10	1.091

Relationship w/primary caregiver subscale mean rates by question

Questions	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
If I am hungry, there is enough to eat	103	2.93	1.050
I talk to my family/caregiver(s) about how I feel	105	3.30	1.048
I enjoy my family's/caregiver(s) cultural and family traditions	105	3.35	1.019
My parent(s)/caregiver(s) watch me closely	104	3.56	1.105
I feel safe when I am with my family/caregiver(s)	104	3.58	.992
My family stands by me during difficult times	104	3.79	1.076
My parent(s)/caregiver(s) know a lot about me	105	3.84	1.186

Appendix D (continued)

Context subscale mean rates by question

Questions	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I am treated fairly in my community	101	3.26	1.361
I enjoy my community's traditions	105	3.47	1.066
I have people I look up to	102	3.52	1.192
I participate in religious activities	104	3.83	1.110
I feel I belong at my school	102	3.89	1.193
I think it is important to help out in my community	103	4.24	.902
Spiritual beliefs are a source of strength for me	104	4.43	.833
I am proud to be Congolese	105	4.48	1.001
I am proud of my ethnic background	104	4.50	1.014
Getting an Education is important to me	105	4.90	.338