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SESSION REPORT

549

SECOND EDITION

Youth, Economics, and Violence: Implications for Future Conflict



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Salzburg Global Seminar is grateful to our program partners:
The Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation and
The Carnegie Corporation of New York
for their generous support of Session 549

Additional support, for which we are also very grateful, was provided by:
Arab Human Rights Fund
HDH Wills 1965 Charitable Trust
KAICIID Dialogue Centre

Salzburg Global Seminar would like to thank all the Speakers, Discussion Group Facilitators and Resource Specialists for donating their time and expertise to this session and to all the participants that contributed their intellectual capital and superior ideas.

Session 549

Salzburg, April 26 to May 1, 2015

Youth, Economics, and Violence: Implications for Future Conflict

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Executive Summary

The program *Youth, Economics, and Violence: Implications for Future Conflict* was convened by Salzburg Global Seminar, with support from the Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation of New York, at Schloss Leopoldskron, Austria, April 26 to May 1, 2015.

All youth are vulnerable to the effects of violence: Social systems need to be geared toward helping youth on both sides of violent or potentially violent conflict situations (both “perpetrators” and “victims”).

Providing positive direction through the following avenues is necessary:

- Challenging and well-paid employment options;
- Education targeted toward available jobs; and
- Programs which support and strengthen families so they can nurture the potential of the next generation.

Economic inequality does not respect borders: Global economies are highly interconnected, as are the effects of inequality, both among countries and among segments of society within countries. Economic inequality with regard to the youth demographic is a problem in both developed and developing nations. Often, unintended or unexpected results emerge from the tweaking of one aspect of an economy.

The value of creating “safe spaces” for youth in vulnerable regions, so that they can reach their full potential, should not be downplayed: Only in true safety, from both physical violence as well as from the intellectual and emotional violation caused by surveillance and repression, will young people be able to innovate and solve the problems that are facing our increasingly globalized society.

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure: Radical and violent groups such as IS may be effective in recruitment of young people due to an absence of positive alternatives where they can find a sense of inclusion and belonging to a group, as well as access to economic opportunity.

We do ourselves a great disservice if we forget about the inter-connectedness of generations, as well as nations and economies: We all were young once and we all will be old, probably sooner than we’d like to be. The youth of today are the leaders, and the teachers, of tomorrow. How they are treated will determine how they are able to treat others.

Background

The effects of industrialized globalization are more visible than ever before, and the corresponding challenges facing future generations are legion. Due to the interconnected nature of economies driven by multi-national entities, and structured through international partnerships and trade agreements, youth populations in one region may be dramatically affected by changes in a region literally on the other side of the planet.



Border areas of neighboring regions often become sites of violent conflict as well as of migration. Migration driven by economic factors or war also occurs across great distances, forcing people with very different histories and cultures to find immediate ways of relating to each other. Economic colonization through resource-mining may leave local populations impoverished in spite of the wealth of resources actually present in an area. Increased violence is a risk in all such contexts. It may be perpetrated by, or directed at, local youth populations. Although violence in many regions often appears to be fueled by cultural, religious, or political differences, the root of all these conflicts is likely to be economic in nature.

Young people just starting out in their lives and careers, whether in an underdeveloped or a developed region, are the segment of society most dramatically affected by these global structural weaknesses, due to the intrinsic vulnerability of this stage in their lives. This vulnerability extends back to the education, family, and cultural or religious and socio-political systems in which youth either are, or are not, adequately prepared for the challenges they will face in the future. If youth do not receive adequate support or opportunity from the environment in which they mature, they become doubly susceptible to the stressors that an increasingly competitive global economic structure places on them.

This susceptibility, far from being limited to one segment of the population, affects people of all ages, and in all areas of our world. Increasing chaos, societal instability, and conflict or violence could ensue, if this vulnerable population is not properly nurtured during their formative years.

The program *Youth, Economics, and Violence: Implications for Future Conflict* was convened by Salzburg Global Seminar, with support from the Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation of New York, to examine these challenges, with a view to gaining understanding, thereby leading to more informed policy-making. Session participants focused on critical elements of the interface between research and policy formation. An additional focus was the way in which principles developed in research and policy are carried out in practical ways.

The specific aim of the workshops, panel discussions, and small group meetings was to evaluate which actions should be prioritized in order to effectively address gaps between research and policy-making, as well as gaps between intended outcomes of policies and their actual outcomes. Cost-effectiveness and the role of regional and cultural variance were also examined during the program.



The process of finding solutions is an ongoing one. It requires close cooperation between donors that are looking to alleviate problems for young people and the “boots on the ground” of people who work in regions that may be sites of conflict. Solution-building correspondingly requires cooperation and integrity of communication between funding entities and local advocates, in order to direct funding to the most effective, solution-oriented policy organizations and research projects.

In response to this need for information and cooperation between varied partners, Salzburg Global brought together 60 participants of all ages from 28 different countries on six continents. A main focus was placed on small-group meetings and panel discussions, with the aim to support policy-making based on experience rather than statistics, on dialogue rather than debate, and in ways that give individuals and youth groups opportunities for agency.

Participants from a wide range of different backgrounds were invited to take part in the program in order to provide a robust sample of viewpoints and expertise to the knowledge base in development at Salzburg Global Seminar, as part of its multi-year program *Designing A Social Compact For The 21st Century*. The multi-year program is designed to examine the roles of states and families in meeting 21st century social investment needs, focusing on intergenerational and gender justice and inclusion of marginalized populations as a critical aspect for social cohesion.

Present at this session were foundation program officers, university professors, and experts in fields including anthropology, political science, youth violence, bullying, education, psychology, media, culture, economics, and law enforcement. Representatives of non-governmental organizations also took part. Participants made the journey to Salzburg from the following countries: Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Columbia, Egypt, France, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Kenya, Mexico, Pakistan, Palestine, South Africa, Sweden, Syria, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, UK, USA, Yemen and Zimbabwe.

Presentations and Plenary Discussions

Opening Remarks

PARTICIPANTS AT THE SESSION WERE WELCOMED ON THE FIRST DAY BY:

Alfred Blumstein	<i>(SESSION CO-CHAIR) Professor of Urban Systems and Operations Research, Carnegie Mellon University, USA</i>
Karen J. Colvard	<i>Program Director, Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation, USA</i>
Stephen L. Salyer	<i>President and Chief Executive Officer, Salzburg Global Seminar</i>
Clare Shine	<i>Vice President and Chief Program Officer, Salzburg Global Seminar</i>
Diasmer Panna Bloe	<i>Program Director, Salzburg Global Seminar</i>

In his opening remarks, Stephen Salyer defined the goals of the program with regard to identifying and solving the complex and varied problems facing coming generations.

Limiting opportunities for young people to participate in the development and corresponding benefits of an increasingly interconnected world carries with it a risk of radicalization and associated violence. Therefore, providing opportunities such as retooling education; reducing high unemployment; providing ways to deal with expectations of continuous learning that youth face in a rapidly changing environment; and reducing marginalization, is vital so that young people can engage with and participate in the development occurring so quickly around them. Their participation and engagement is ultimately critical to maintaining peace and democracy.



Alfred Blumstein



Karen J. Colvard





Stephen L. Salyer



Clare Shine



Diasmer Panna Bloe

Youth Futures

SPEAKER:

Ahmed Alhendawi (SESSION CO-CHAIR) *United Nations Envoy for Youth, USA*

In his presentation, Ahmed Alhendawi pointed out that although it is always challenging to predict the future, there are clear trends.

This generation of youth is the largest generation in history – approximately 1.8 billion people. Of these, it is estimated that 87% are growing up in developing countries. They are often described in negative terms, as a liability or a potential threat to security, rather than in positive terms. Often they are defined as either the perpetrators or the victims of violence, rather than being seen as potential peace-builders and innovators.

Alhendawi noted that an often overlooked fact is that, while young people will determine the future we all will live in, they can only respond to the opportunities they are given. One primary problem they face is access to resources, and this often results in a loss of interest in active participation in the political process.

This, in turn, poses severe challenges to maintaining functioning democracies. In a worst-case scenario, economically disadvantaged youth may turn to violence by default, due to a lack of other opportunity. Youth are often more easily able to access the economic resources of a society through jobs as soldiers, than through education, training or private-sector employment. One current example, and one that exemplifies the problem is that in Syria, the average salary of an IS fighter is 4 to 5 times higher than the salary for a government job.

Alhendawi also pointed out that the data collected are too often biased toward negative markers, providing an insufficient diagnosis of the problem. There is not enough focus, in data collection and research, on finding out what elements are necessary for future generations to thrive and reach their full potential and organize a sustainable future in an increasingly globalized context. Historical research that looks at what factors have effectively brought about positive social change in the past is a potentially under-utilized source of information for policy-makers.



Ahmed Alhendawi, the session co-chair and United Nations Envoy for Youth, with Salzburg Global President Stephen Salyer

Youth Progress and Challenges with the EU

SPEAKER:

Antonio Silva-Mendes *Director for Youth and Sport, European Commission, Belgium*

Following the introductory presentations, Antonio Silva-Mendes examined the situation of youth populations in the European Union.

The policy focus in the EU region is on creating opportunities for young people in education and in the labor market. Promoting active citizenship and social inclusion of young people through dialogue with youth advocacy organizations is expected to lead to empowerment.

A particular focus on migration is also a theme in the EU. Specific EU projects include Erasmus, the European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students; the European Youth Portal, a multi-lingual website addressing young people in Europe and providing access to youth-related European Union and national information; and the European Voluntary Service, which offers people between 17-30 years of age volunteer opportunities in other countries.

Discussion topics in the question-and-answer period focused on the role of the private sector. Encouraging engagement by the private sector, in terms of improving employment opportunities for young people, is attempted through the creation of apprenticeships and other similar initiatives in the EU. Increasingly active partnership with the private sector is deemed necessary, but there are questions about how to most effectively accomplish this.



Antonio Silva-Mendes



Edward Mulvey (center) takes part in a working group discussion

Science of Youth

SPEAKER:

Edward Mulvey

Professor of psychiatry, University of Pittsburg School of Medicine, USA

Opening the first full day of the program, Edward Mulvey spoke about the effects of a heavily institutionalized system in the United States, particularly with regard to high rates of youth incarceration.

One often hidden aspect of the societal effect of incarceration on adolescents is the potential effect on their neurological development. As Mulvey explained, there are three notable differences between the psychological functioning of youth and of adults: adolescents are less able to self-regulate in emotionally charged situations; they have a heightened sensitivity to peer pressure and immediate incentives or disincentives; and they show less ability to make judgments and decisions based on long term goals or benefit. As shown through fMRI brain imaging scans, gray matter tissue change that is associated with adolescent development up through the twenties has led to development of the theory of “pruning.” Starting in early adolescence, efficient neurological connections stay and are reinforced, whereas pruning occurs with connections in the brain that are less efficient or valuable to the person. Positive adolescent development is related to community interactions with those closest to them such as parenting/parent figures and positive peer experiences. At all ages, social deprivation is considered more harmful than physical deprivation, but the negative effects are exacerbated by isolation of young people from positive social interaction at this critical developmental juncture.

Increasingly therefore, both institutional care and the incarceration of youth are being seen as not only costly to the US system, but also to the adolescents themselves, who lose valuable time while their brains are undergoing this pruning process, time in which they instead need opportunities to develop in a context of more positive human interaction.

Solutions to violent or criminal behavior need to focus on the certainty of punishment rather than the severity, if punishment is to be effective in deterring violence. Accepting, defining, and supporting family engagement is necessary, because institutions and services cannot take the place of family and peer interaction provided in a positive setting.

In the question and answer session following the presentation, questions about the impact of negative media images targeting youth were raised. The effect is known but not quantifiable at this point. A question about the development of pharmaceuticals to speed up maturity was also raised: Are pharmaceutical companies exploring drugs that can help stimulate the brain to enhance maturity? As with the issue of media influence, a similar inability to quantify the efficacy of results and unknown side effects would be problematic. Questions about the role of socioeconomic class with regard to physical development of the brain were raised, as well as about the development of empathy: Are there people without guilt or remorse? There are, but the main issue is how large a portion of the population is affected, and whether one can in some way educate them through role-play and other “empathy-developing” programs. The conclusion reached was that these programs are really the only tool we currently have to deal with this segment of the population.





Tsz Hin Shirry Heung



Samah Krichah



Srinjoy Bose

Youth Experiences

PANELISTS:

Srinjoy Bose

Researcher, Australian National University, Australia

Tsz Hin Shirry Heung

Organizer, Occupy Central; Researcher, University of Hong Kong, China

Samah Krichah

Activist; Board member, The Democratic Lab, Tunisia

The first panel dealt with economic inequality as an issue in both developing and developed countries.

Srinjoy Bose stated that struggles with the rising cost of home ownership, for example, are similar across economic systems, whether in developing countries like India, or fully industrialized countries like Australia. Often signs of social instability are similarly viewed in isolation from other factors. He noted that privatizing public services must be seen beyond the system that is being privatized. The example of higher school fees leading to higher debt load as students leave school and enter the work force, preventing them from accessing the housing market or taking out mortgages was given.

Panelists also noted the need to create safe spaces for youth, so that they can reach their full potential. Only in true safety, from both physical violence as well as from the intellectual and emotional violation of surveillance and repression, will young people be able to innovate and solve their problems. It was observed that groups such as IS may be able to attract people due to an absence of positive alternatives where people can find a sense of inclusion and belonging to a group. **Tsz Hin Shirry Heung** spoke about her efforts as an organizer at Occupy Central, which seeks to improve involvement of young people in local politics and constitutional debate in Hong Kong. Primary methods they use are deliberative democracy and education through academic and local debating conferences and workshops.

The question and answer session following the panel dealt with the process involved in making mistakes and learning from them, particularly in terms of learning how to be strategic and effective. Each movement that fails provides information on how to optimize the process of agitation for change. The discussion also dealt with issues of corruption or co-option of youth leaders by more established and sophisticated political forces.

Youth and Society

MODERATOR:

Svetlana Stephenson *Reader in sociology, London Metropolitan University, UK*

PANELISTS:

Erum Aziz *Program Associate, Pakistan Alliance for Girls Education, Pakistan*

Simranpreet Singh Oberoi *Project Officer, Shoshi Samadhan Kendra School, India*

Paul Sixpence *Project Coordinator, Centre Stage Media Arts Foundation, Zimbabwe*

Jana Vobecka *Researcher in social demography, KAICIID, Austria*

Roles, Promises, and Realities of Social Systems

MODERATOR:

Aaron Schachter *Journalist, Public Radio International, USA*

PANELISTS:

Markus Gottsbacher *Senior Program Specialist, International Development Research Centre, Canada*

Krijn Peters *Associate Professor in armed conflict and post-war reconstruction, Department of Political and Cultural Studies, Swansea University, UK*

Magaly Sanchez *Senior Researcher, Office of Population Research, Princeton University, USA*

Sarah Sladen *Director, Alliance for International Youth Development; InterAction, USA*

These two panels discussed a broad range of regional problems, as well as general observations that came up in the subsequent question and answer sessions. The main points of the vast array of ideas are collected below, while region- and country-specific issues raised are listed at the end of this report.

Frustration from many sides was expressed in the discussions. Funding entities feel that there is not enough evidence of what works and what does not, and are not sure what policies are most likely to be successful. Some regional organizers noted that sometimes success is not visible using the same markers used in developed and stable economies. The theoretical example of a small business was given: What if this business ultimately fails to compete after two or three years, but before it does,



Erum Aziz



Simranpreet Singh Oberoi



Jana Vobecka



Markus Gottsbacher



Sarah Sladen



Krijn Peters

provides a young entrepreneur with much-needed business experience, and keeps him or her positively employed during that time? Is this success, or failure, or something in between? The fact that the game is taking place on an uneven playing field, if small businesses are expected to compete with multinationals, was raised.

Participants also noted that, often, too high a burden is placed on individual beneficiaries of development programs, without corresponding changes in the systems that contribute to the problems youth face. Adolescents may be helped through educational or vocational programs, but the benefit is limited if they are sent back into societal structures that created their problems in the first place. Additionally, if there are no jobs available to young people, they may face an even more discouraging situation, having worked hard to gain an education that does not provide the corresponding access to economic systems that was expected.

Another assumption that participants questioned in these panel discussions was that more money equals a better solution. It was observed that in some cases, if large amounts of money are given to an organization, there is corresponding pressure to show grand results. Yet rather than motivate toward success, this pressure may skew the data that is collected or presented – obscuring the true nature of a particular problem, as well as narrowing the frame through which possible solutions can be viewed. There are no one-size-fits-all solutions. Complex regional problems require specifically-tailored programs, but the challenge becomes how these solutions can be developed on a micro level, when the funding structures are administered at a macro level.

A disparity between job training programs and the state of the labor market was noted. A recurrent theme across many discussions was the high rate of unemployment in developing countries as well as in many developed countries. The main problem then becomes whether the burden of the solution lies with the public sector or with the private sector. This debate is complicated by globalization, in which non-governmental, inter-governmental, and charity organizations are expected to operate at a global, public-sector level, while problems like unemployment have traditionally been dealt with at a local, private-sector level.



Leena Al Olaimy

Activism for Social Change

MODERATOR:

Jonathan Kuttab *Co-founder, Non-violence International, Palestine*

PANELISTS:

Nicholas Carlisle *Founder, No Bully, USA*

Leena Al Olaimy *Co-founder and Managing Director, Triple Bottom Line Associates, Bahrain*

Hany Hanna *Director, Supreme Council of Antiquities, Egypt*

Tsz Hin Shirry Hueng *Organizer, Occupy Central; Researcher, University of Hong Kong, China SAR*

This panel raised issues about how those affected by violence can themselves become agents for change – solving some of their own problems – and how organizations can help them achieve this.

The primary focus was on how disadvantaged populations need avenues to express themselves and to become a part of the solution-finding process rather than being forced into a reactive corner.

Leena Al Olaimy and **Tsz Hin Shirry Hueng** shared their experiences in training and encouraging young people, and some strategies they have found successful for youth empowerment, for example Hueng organizes conferences and meetings where young people can practice debating skills in order to improve their ability to communicate effectively with people who hold political power in Hong Kong. Although these efforts are not



Hany Hanna



Jonathan Kuttab



1. Eduardo Moncada

2. Nicholas Carlisle and Warren Nebe

3. Daniel Egel and Urbain Thierry Yogo

4. Katindi Sivi Njonjo

always successful in terms of gaining access or effecting immediate policy change, the process of learning that the youth are guided through should not be under-estimated. The overarching theme of the discussion was on how to use non-violent, innovative, and grassroots strategies to resist violent or dominant power structures.

Nicholas Carlisle presented local and individualized solutions to address the problem of bullying in schools that he has developing in his work with 187 schools in the USA. Solving the problem of school bullying is a way to prevent future violence, by stopping the cycle at a root cause. In his work with schools, Carlisle convenes meetings in the affected schools and brainstorms with the youth to activate student empathy to achieve a more inclusive atmosphere.

Economic Systems: Roles, Promises, and Realities

MODERATOR:

Eduardo Moncada *Assistant Professor of political science, Rutgers University, USA*

PANELISTS:

Daniel Egel *Economist, RAND Corporation; Professor, Pardee RAND Graduate School, USA*

Urban Thierry Yogo *Researcher, Center for studies and Research on International Development (CERDI), Université d'Auvergne, USA*

Innovation for and by Youth

MODERATOR:

Diasmer Bloe *Program Director, Salzburg Global Seminar*

PANELISTS:

Katindi Sivi Njonjo *Lead Consultant, LongView Consult, Kenya*

Janet Jobson *Director of Programs, DG Murray Trust, South Africa*

Nemanja Zekic *President, Srebrenica Youth Council, Bosnia and Herzegovina*

The third day included discussions with panelists from large donor organizations, smaller recipient organizations, and independent researchers, consultants, and educators.

The main focus of the panel and floor discussions was on how to best channel funding toward the most effective solutions. Small discussion groups were convened to further discuss this issue (country-specific innovations and insights are listed in the **Group Dialogue** chapter).

In working with large donor organizations to decide where and how to fund effective development projects, the main challenge is knowing how to most efficiently manage large budgets. A primary policy goal of US government-affiliated funding organizations is to identify regions that are most at risk for outbreaks of political violence and extremism, and to fund peace rather than war in those regions. These organizations are hampered by their lack of access to reliable data or trust in the sources and methods of data analysis.



Janet Jobson



Nemanja Zekic

Unemployment is the economic factor currently shown by available data to impact youth the most. Inequality is known to play an important role in motivating protests, revolts and political violence, but funding institutions currently do not have enough youth-specific research to draw their conclusions.

Participants noted the need to source data directly from the communities that are targeted for aid, to ask them directly what they need. The value of this option, some participants noted, is offset by lack of trust from all sides with regard to data collection as well as policy development and timeliness of funding and implementation.

In participant discussions, it was also noted that labor market volatility can be worse for youth than simple unemployment, because it causes disruption when people have to adapt to constant change, or revolving cycles of being employed, then unemployed. At this stage in their lives when they are just starting out, such cycles deny youth populations the possibility to progress, or to plan a future. Similar issues were raised with regard to mis-employment and under-employment, as well as to the role that underpaid or volunteer employment plays in undermining economic progress for youth populations.

The viewpoint was also expressed that experiences of injustice, rather than merely unemployment, may be the primary drivers of violent political outbreaks, and that assistance money often does not “trickle down” to the youth for whom it is intended, because agencies do not want to work directly with youth but with established power-holders. A contrasting viewpoint that was expressed was that aid agencies are often not responsive because they are not flexible enough and are mired in bureaucracy, or because governments in the countries they work in are plagued by the problems of inflexibility, bureaucracy, and corruption.

A main concern that emerged, particularly in the small group meetings, is how to identify small-scale projects that are effective and scale them up, rather than investing larger sums up front. A participant noted that if the programs under investigation have not shown the hoped-for success, it is because we are studying the wrong programs. This participant noted that the local, grass-roots programs that insurgents implement, often for a fraction of the cost, do seem to work. Other participants questioned how success is defined. If a program fails to become self-sufficient and closes after funding runs out or cannot compete in a global market, but did provide positive deterrence from turning to violence (perpetrator role) as well as protection from vulnerability (victim role) for some time, is it



necessarily a failure? A book on the role of social networks, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* by Robert D. Putnam was cited. It postulates that social cohesion within group, and class, and culture paradigms, is an invisible or underrated marker of success. One can go bowling alone. But who does?

Fireside Chat: Lessons from America’s War on Drugs

PANELISTS:

Alfred Blumstein	<i>Professor of Urban Systems and Operations Research, Carnegie Mellon University, USA</i>
Mark Edberg	<i>Department Director, Milkin Institute School of Public Health, USA</i>
Teresita Escotto-Quesada	<i>Independent Consultant, Mexico</i>
Burkhard Hasenpusch	<i>Crime Prevention Council, Ministry of Justice, Germany</i>

On Tuesday evening, participants reconvened for a fireside chat on the subject of the rise of criminality and its connection with drug laws in the US in the 1980s and 1990s.

The fireside chat took the example of the havoc that the “war on drugs” created in the 1980s, as something we can learn from. It placed intensive demand on the criminal justice system in the United States, and had widespread effects on supplier countries as well. It is an example of unintended consequences that can come from the intensive criminalization of behavior that is widespread, a stigmatization that is out of proportion to the danger that drug use actually poses to society. The criminalization, in this case of a large youth demographic, generated

1. Mark Edberg
2. Burkhard Hasenpusch
3. Teresita Escotto-Quesada



Muhammad Zaman, Sarah Meyer, Katherine Aguirre Tobon

a response that had consequences for both individuals and society that went far beyond the severity of the problem or the risk the problem posed to stable civil society.

Youth populations who become involved in the drug trade in the United States often take this route due to marginalization and a desire to access or to share in the benefits of the dominant culture in which they establish illicit drug trade routes. This leads to the development of “sub-cultures” that are actually a response to more deep-rooted economic exclusion, both locally and globally. There are corresponding problems on the other side of the border, both in Mexico and South America, where violence and criminalization of whole segments of society, particularly affecting young people, are increasing due to illicit economies that sprung up around the drug trade. These illicit economies further entrap youth populations, because once recruited, people have difficulty turning back to the legal framework of law enforcement or conventional vocational training and employment.

A segment of the fireside chat also examined the mechanism of legalization. This would potentially reduce the violence surrounding what is currently an illicit market, and expose it to government regulation. In an illicit economy, participants must turn to violence to resolve their problems because they cannot go through established rule-of-law procedures due to the illegal nature of their economic activity. This aspect of the problem would be ameliorated if the drug business were exposed to government regulation. Burkhard Hasenpusch noted that drug addiction itself is not a criminal, but rather a social problem, which requires much different types of intervention, and remarked: “A soul full of hope needs no dope.”

Youth and Violence in Different Contexts

MODERATOR:

Emma LeBlanc

*Researcher in cultural and social anthropology,
University of Oxford, UK*

PANELISTS:

Sarah Meyer

*Assistant Professor of clinical population and family
health, Columbia University; Associate Director, The
AfriChild Centre, Uganda*

Muhammad Zaman

*Head of Department of Sociology, Quaid-i-Azam
University, Pakistan*

Katherine Aguirre Tobon

Associate Researcher, Igarape, Colombia

This panel discussion postulated that there is increasing symbiosis between global and local actors. The disparity between job training programs and the state of the labor market was discussed in-depth as a practical example of this.

Often young people are provided vocational training in areas in which there are not enough jobs. The disparity is occurring at local levels and requires specifically tailored solutions. At the same time, it causes instability that is of concern to global actors, both multinational corporations who want qualified employees, and globalized governance structures who worry that idle and economically excluded youth populations could engage in violence. Some region- and country-specific themes that were covered in the panel discussion and ensuing question and answer period are covered in the **Group Dialogue** chapter.



Emma LeBlanc

Alfred Blumstein (center) leads a working group discussion





Abdul Raziq Fahim, Alexander Goldberg and Ekraj Sabur

Inclusion, Exclusion, and Reconciliation

MODERATOR:

Patrice Brodeur *Director of Research, KAICIID, Austria*

PANELISTS:

Kiran Bali *Chair, United Religions Initiative, UK*

Abdul Raziq Fahim *Executive Director, College of Youth Activism and Development, Pakistan*

Alexander Goldberg *Jewish Chaplain, University of Surrey; Chair, Faith Taskforce, English Football Association, UK*

Ekraj Sabur *Director, International Institute of Peace Studies, Thailand*

This panel discussion focused on the role of narrative in engineering solutions to problems such as violence.

It is hypothesized that the narratives that people are told, as well as the ones they tell themselves or others, have a profound effect on the way they see the world. Correspondingly, the way they perceive the world may play an integral role in how they construct their future, how they resolve disputes, how they solve problems, and whether they are able to gain access to the resources they need to lead successful and fulfilling lives.

A speaker mentioned a story about a 17-year-old youth who was trained as a suicide bomber and had committed himself to go to Afghanistan. Through the process of reflection and education, and through emotional support from a mentor figure, he changed his mind.

This theme was expanded upon by presentations on the topic of interfaith dialogue. Sometimes interfaith dialogue and partnerships have the power to overcome international violent conflict as well as economic conflict and marginalization. Not all examples of interfaith dialogue are successful, however, and such dialogues may be more difficult to maintain. The example of a project in Northern Ireland was mentioned: Protestants and Catholics were brought together for meetings with the goal of reconciliation, however, when they returned to their communities, violent attacks increased because members had revealed their anonymity and each side knew where the other lived, so this project had unintended negative side effects. However, in spite of such failures, it was pointed out that groups like ISIS do not lose their funding when they lose a particular battle, and therefore the global community must stay focused on the long-term goals.

The confluence of ethnic identity with religious identity was recognized in the interfaith panel discussions. It was proposed that notions of identity and ethnicity can best be examined through workshops in which individuals are trained to reflect on their own identities as a starting point for developing empathy toward others with different identities.

Even so, as one panelist pointed out, consensus is not easy to reach, even when democratic debates and exchanges of ideas take place in a “halal, kosher, vegetarian café with a confessional and Starbucks-style furniture.” There are no easy or quick solutions. Governments have three- to five- year cycles, but it takes many generations to change entrenched mindsets. The metaphor applied here was of a carob fruit tree planted by someone who will not live long enough to eat the fruit, but who is able to eat the fruit of the trees planted by his or her ancestors.



Patrice Brodeur



Kiran Bali



Ekraj Sabur



Akile Gürsoy



Ahmed Hadji



Ekraj Sabur



Manish Sharma

Generational Justice and Equity

MODERATOR:

Akile Gürsoy *Chair of Anthropology Department, Yeditepe University, Turkey*

PANELISTS:

Ahmed Hadji *Co-founder, Uganda Muslim Youth Development Forum, Uganda*

Aml El-Houderi *International Advocacy Program Coordinator, Lawyers for Justice in Libya (LFJL), UK*

Sana Sbouai *Co-founder and Editor-in-chief, inkyfada.com, Tunisia*

Manish Sharma *Chair and Professor of Gandhian and peace studies, Punjab University, India*

On the final day of the program, a panel on how to achieve equity between generations was convened.

Panelists had their work cut out for them, as the title of this panel encapsulated the goal of the entire program, and achieving generational justice will certainly be no easy task. However, the panelists accurately summed up many of the issues that had been discussed over the course of the week, with a general consensus that the road ahead will be difficult, but with a proper focus on strengthening individual contributions – as well as the aspects in which all people are essentially similar in their desire to live in peaceful, stable societies – a better world is indeed possible.

The concerns of panelists and what they saw as the primary methods for effective action could be summed up into three basic types of action. The first is based on the importance of programs that help develop self-respect and empowerment in vulnerable youth populations. Such projects, which can help young people gain inner strength, provide the foundation of youth assistance. If designed effectively, they are the emotional equivalent of teaching someone to fish in order to nourish that person for a lifetime, rather than giving someone one or two meals or handouts. Secondly, projects that help youth interact in an empowered way, such as the continuation of programs that can promote positive political engagement, strengthen democratic processes, and help youth access and engage with prevailing economic structures, was advocated. Thirdly, transformation must occur in systems that have been traditionally seen as the method through which change is effected in societies. Continuing reform of prisons, schools, vocational training and employment programs, and other structures of society needs to be undertaken, based on accurate and applicable research.



1. Markus Gottsbacher, Katherine Aguirre Tobon and Alexander Goldberg

2. Session Co-Chair Al Blumstein with Fellows in the Haaga Courtyard

3. US Ambassador Alexa Wesner

4. Aaron Schachter

5. Fellow Beatrice Lamwaka brought jewelry handmade by women in Uganda for Fellows to buy

6. Svetlana Stephenson and Magaly Sanchez

Fellow Op-eds

A bulging youth population: Infinite possibility or definite disaster for Kenya?

Katindi Sivi Njonjo

Lead Consultant, LongView Consult, Nairobi, Kenya

Kenya is at a crossroads on the issue of its young people. With a bulging youth population, the country has a window of opportunity to expand its labor force and increase its economic growth, savings and investments while decreasing its dependency. A big youth population can also be a source of unprecedented challenges, if the numbers are not anticipated and well managed.

In cases where these young people have been well educated and where their energy and ingenuity have been sought, young people have been great assets. Segments of youth in Kenya have been able to come up with incredible innovations. Some of these include:

- Inserting an ultra-thin chip in the sole of a shoe and subjecting the shoe to motion to generate energy that can be used for charging mobile phones in rural areas;
- Attaching flashing lights around a perimeter fence to scare lions and thus reducing human-wildlife conflict;
- Producing solar-powered LED lanterns that are distributed in rural households while teaching poor youth how to reproduce them in order to create employment and a source of livelihood;
- Designing a crowdsourcing app that enables people in disaster situations to submit reports by calling, texting or e-mailing, with information then placed on a Google map to connect the need and the help required;
- Putting youth facts together in a fact book that enables youth concerns to be collated in one place in order to conspicuously

bring out trends and policy gaps that can immediately be identified; and

- Using cartoons, pictures, songs and graffiti to mobilize youth for social change.

However, in cases where these large youth populations are relatively well educated but unemployed, they have become a social challenge and a political hazard.

The continued exclusion of youth from a productive role in the economy has exacerbated crime, drug abuse and vandalism, and escalated the vicious cycle of poverty. An elusive search for status and livelihood has driven many, particularly young men, to religious radicalization and involvement in terror activities. These youth are also ready fodder for political manipulation and expediency. The recent discovery of commercially viable oil and gas in the country is the latest addition to the pot of violence triggers and political contestations.

Whereas many efforts have been put in place to try and create opportunities for young people – such as providing loan facilities to start small enterprises or youth work programs – these efforts have been short-term and tokenistic in nature and have therefore not led to the meaningful change that is required to turn the large youth population into a great asset. In a country where these two realities of advantaged and disadvantaged youth co-exist side-by-side, a systemic approach to provide long term solutions is urgently needed.

Understanding the country's population growth, structure and distribution will provide

insights that help minimize the challenges of a growing youth population. Adequately investing in the enrollment and completion rates of young people in secondary, tertiary and university education as well as improving the quality and relevance of education would

sufficiently prepare students for work and life. Additional investment in youth reproductive health, urbanization, innovation, and meaningful employment would certainly help to maximize on the opportunities that youth bulges present.

From Non-Violent Resistance to Non-Violent Resilience

Leena Al Olaimy

Social Entrepreneur; Cofounder, 3BL Associates, Manama, Bahrain

“What happens after *isqat al netham* – the downfall of the regime? What would you do?” I asked a 20-something youth activist, shortly after Bahrain’s uprising in 2011. He stared, assessing me and the question I had just asked him. I don’t think it had ever occurred to him. After a very long pause he replied triumphantly, “I would run for parliament.” He folded his arms and leaned back.

“What would you change if you were in parliament?” I prodded. Another uncomfortable but shorter silence: “I don’t know...” he shrugged, his arms still folded. “Education?” he said hesitantly, almost seeking my approval. “What would you change about education?” I continued.

During periods of social upheaval – and amidst the Arab awakening – a lot of energy is invested into violent and non-violent resistance. How to go from dictatorship to democracy; deposing leaders and dismantling regimes. Comparatively less energy and thought is given to the necessary development that must take place thereafter – and preferably in tandem.

My intention is not to discredit non-violent resistance, but is this the (only) type of activism we need in the (Arab) world? In some cases it has been successful in achieving a

political transition and greater accountability. But in all cases it has been unsuccessful in achieving other desired social outcomes. What are we revolutionizing? Education? Healthcare? Housing? Or has revolution become both the means and the end? In fact, some of the same youth activists have begun to intimidate the villages in which they live. Threatening with punitive measures such as Molotovs should someone dare violate a “work strike” to try to earn an already meagre living; or keeping the door to their home locked at night – incidentally preventing the activists from rotating their hiding places from the security forces. The irony is that in fighting oppression, marginalization, and economic inequality, they have perpetuated and deepened this very injustice.

During the session in Salzburg we debated whether or not violence is a necessary tool for youth to employ in creating peace. I believe that in everything that we do, the process and intentions must mirror the outcome. We must “be the change” and have the patience and fortitude to go through the inner transformation required to create the external change we seek.

Seeds of violence, mistrust, fragmentation and exclusion are unlikely to provide a fertile soil

for peace, equality and social cohesion. Indeed it is a long road to Damascus...

At the 2011 Skoll World Forum on Social Entrepreneurship at Oxford University – the “Davos” of social innovation – my cofounder and I had an insightful conversation with those working with the Archbishop Desmond Tutu. They said that one of their biggest regrets was waiting for so long to focus on development while fighting for freedom. It meant that even post-Apartheid, generations of South Africans still went through broken systems – a sentiment that was echoed on my recent trip to South Africa, a country ranked among the highest on the Gini index for income inequality.

US inventor and visionary Buckminster Fuller said, “You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.” I love this quote. This is very much how the natural world operates.

Resilience requires diversity and inclusion of all parts of a system – not only to weather a storm or disturbance, but also to cultivate and build new solutions. So how can we go from violent or even non-violent resistance to non-violent resilience?

When I look at the way youth activists in Bahrain perfectly synchronize a tire burning operation to disrupt roads; or strategically place old bathtubs and giant teddy bears as blockades to prevent entry into their villages; or shoot cut up metal rods out of fire extinguishers, I am both impressed and optimistic. I am impressed because I see innovation and bootstrapping. I see risk-taking and courage; teamwork and brotherhood; commitment and conviction. I am optimistic because I see a yearning for a life of purpose and meaning.

All of these qualities and competencies are valuable in any entrepreneurial venture, but especially in social entrepreneurship. Embedded with a different set of values, there is an unsurpassable opportunity to mobilize this energy into a new kind of activism: one that builds new models.

Having developed various youth trainings on social entrepreneurship and values-based leadership through my own social enterprise, I have seen first-hand the power that just two days can make: stimulating cognitive empathy; empowering and inspiring; and fostering more collaborative relationships between youth on opposite sides of political, religious and socio-economic spectrums, as they rethink and reclaim the future they will jointly inherit.

No government in the world can or should be expected to solve all of society’s problems. And while social entrepreneurship is not a panacea, it should be an integral component of resilient activism.

After winning a small grant from UNESCO, we are now developing a beneficiary-led fellows program and toolkit that is specific to the issues facing the Arab world. We have high hopes that this program – How to Reimagine the Middle East – will mobilize an activism of the heart: An activism that is for, not against; one that is inclusive and collaborative; one that engineers hope and dignity, as youth confront the most pressing challenges ever facing a human generation.

This article was originally published in the “Arab Awakening” section of openDemocracy: www.opendemocracy.net/arab-awakening/leena-al-olaimy/from-non-violent-resistance-to-non-violent-resilience

Wheels of Change: Youth, jobs and the role of the public sector in developing countries

Krijn Peters

Associate Professor in armed conflict and post-war reconstruction in the Department of Political & Cultural Studies at Swansea University, Wales, UK

We all know the challenge ahead: the current youth bulge, as is manifesting itself in the global South, will require the creation of hundreds of millions of additional jobs. If we fail to do so, it will result in socioeconomic marginalization and misery for young people at an individual level, and social unrest or even violent conflict on a national level across large regions of the world. The key question is: Who should create these jobs, the public or the private sector? A major problem with the first – particularly true for development countries – is that it often has limited means at its disposal. This may not be such a problem for the private sector, where the revenues of the largest multinational corporations (MNCs) outdo the Gross National Product (GNP) of some of the smaller developing countries, but its focus on profit does not automatically generate more jobs for young people, let alone decent jobs with a living wage. That said, the private sector is more than MNCs, and in developing countries in particular includes the large informal sector populated by traders, farmers, small-scale miners and day laborers among others. But the question remains, who should we turn to for job creation?

In search of an answer, it may be instructive to look at the post-war reconstruction process that follows the end of contemporary armed conflicts. Here the challenge is to rebuild the war-ravaged country – war has sometimes been labelled as “development in reverse” – with limited financial means (with most of those means provided by overseas donors) at a time when most foreign private investors find it yet

too risky to invest in the country. A particular challenge is to provide an alternative and more peaceful livelihood for the tens- or hundreds of thousands ex-combatants, often young and poorly educated or trained. Six or 12 month skills training courses tend to be the preferred option of the international donors. Tens of thousands of ex-combatants are trained in skills such as carpentry, masonry, tailoring or car-mechanics, with soap-making or hairdressing on offer for female ex-combatants. After completion of the training, the ex-combatant is given a toolbox, in the expectation that he or she will be able to set up shop and make a living from his or her newly acquired skill. In both Sierra Leone and Liberia, two war-affected countries in West Africa, the majority of these newly trained ex-combatants failed to secure a job, finding themselves competing with much better trained craftsmen in an economy with low demand. Hence, they ended up selling their toolkit and involving themselves in underpaid manual labor in the agricultural or mining sector, or left for the urban centers trying to make a living on a day-by-day basis. So much for the concerted efforts of the donor-funded public sector.

But there is one success story coming out of both countries, and interestingly, it became successful despite (or thanks to) not being part of any of the donor-funded skills training programs on offer. In both Liberia and Sierra Leone the post-conflict period has seen a spontaneous explosion of motorcycle taxis, many ridden by ex-combatants. This development first affected the towns – offering

an effective means to ensure ex-combatants' social re-incorporation along the way – and then fanned out into the remotest rural areas. Not only are hundreds of thousands young people employed as bike riders (often one bike has several riders taking shifts to keep the machine on the road all the time and maximize profits) but thousands of bike repair shops have been created in addition to hundreds of little road side restaurants. The bike revolution has connected remote communities, offering better access to education and health services while simultaneously enabling subsistence farmers to start producing for local markets, breaking the deadlock of rural poverty.

So what did the governments of both countries do to further support and build on this success story? Hardly anything. In fact, it allowed its police force to continuously harass the bike-riders, extracting money from them for whatever fabricated or minor offence; it frustrated the registration of new bikes via endless red-tape procedures; it actually forbid bikes to operate in the capital of Liberia and has spent hundreds of millions of dollars to rehabilitate and build new and expensive multi-

lane feeder roads and bridges in rural areas which may serve the sporadic car or truck, neglecting the opportunity to invest in the construction of two-wheel navigable tracks to connect rural communities. Such tracks are not only about 40 times cheaper per kilometer compared to the conventional roads but can be easily maintained by local communities as well.

So what is the general lesson here? To speak with the renowned American development economist William Easterly, the “planners” – here the government, the international donor community and its implementing partners – have failed, while the “searchers” – the young ex-combatants – have succeeded in finding a significant economic niche. So is there no role for the “planners” for job creation? Or in other words, can we leave it all to the informal or private sector? Clearly not, but the government’s and donor community’s focus should be on removing barriers and facilitating initiatives originating and taking place in the informal sector which do create jobs and livelihoods for young people, rather than creating more of what is already not working.

“Fanaticism must be confronted by greater freedom, pluralism and openness”

Jonathan Kuttab

Human Rights Lawyer, Israel and Palestine

Much of the world is concentrating on the military threat posed by ISIS (*D’aash*) which uses barbaric methods and hides behind the veil of Islam. Alliances are formed, and new technologies are employed to destroy and bomb their forces, from the air. Their frightening rapid advances are barely stopped by massive military forces being marshaled to fight them.

Many in the West assume that, in the end, the military forces of ISIS in Iraq and Syria will be defeated. However, the far more difficult task is addressing the real problems that allowed ISIS to arise and expand so rapidly, and its ability to attract so many young Muslims in the Arab world and beyond to its poisonous ideology.

What would entice so many young people to leave their homes and join the fighters of ISIS? Muslim youth face a bewildering array of challenges and problems, and have every right to be dissatisfied by their circumstances. Most live under undemocratic repressive regimes, which fail to address the real social and economic needs of its population. They have few opportunities for employment or hopes to escape their economic miseries. The early promise of the Arab Spring has descended into even greater entrenchment of the power of oppressive elites. They see corruption, as well as the obscene wealth of a few at the top of their societies, in sharp contrast to the crippling poverty they experience. Jobs are given on the basis of ethnic and tribal identity as well as loyalty rather than merit. They are ashamed at the weakness and backwardness of their societies in the face of Western power and domination. Most of all they are outraged at injustice and are often tempted to seek to scapegoat minorities.

To such youth, the promise of a righteous and powerful Islamic Caliphate that unites all Muslims and courageously fights the West, as it sets to build a new society built on the justice of the Qur'an can be very appealing. ISIS successfully presents itself as the alternative to an evil and corrupt status quo that is supported by Western powers and local despots.

To counter this appeal, we need to present young Muslims with a new vision of a better society, not based on religious intolerance, or outmoded ideas, but on progressive, humane, tolerant, and just principles that address their needs and provides methods to deal with current realities. The values that would attract them are not slavish copying of Western styles, music, and methods, but genuine human values that are truly universal, and in reality common to all religions.

At the Salzburg Global program on *Youth, Economics, and Violence*, youth from around the world met and discussed the problems of youth and methods for reaching them with a new message. Examples from the around the world were discussed: programs that worked, and many that failed as well. The consensus was that unless the legitimate concerns of youth are met, violence and conflict will certainly define their future. Yet the response cannot be to ignore the problems or simply to urge youth to reject violence and fanaticism and support the different regimes under which they live. New programs must be initiated and the creative energy of youth must be harnessed in positive ways that benefit their societies. Mechanisms must be found to empower them and enable them to participate in decision-making in their respective societies. Social media must be used to help organize communities, as well as to circumvent censorship, and to provide outlets for different, non-traditional views. Fanaticism must be confronted by greater freedom, pluralism and openness, rather than suppression, control and even tighter prohibition on the free flow of ideas. Effective avenues for change must be advocated.

Billions are being spent on military equipment and in fighting militant Islamic movements, with an exaggerated emphasis on aerial bombardment. Yet the evidence is that such tactics are not only unsuccessful, but could well be counterproductive. The true battle, for the hearts and minds of people, especially the youth is worthy of a much more concerted effort and the harnessing of resources for change. Failing to make that effort will ensure that the enemy may be defeated, and his organization dismantled, only to return in different, and far more deadly forms under other names. The people of the world – including the Muslim youth of the Arab world – deserve far better.

Fellow Proposals

The program *Youth, Economics, and Violence: Implications for Future Conflict* closed with an open brainstorming session in which participants stated their own goals for implementation in their communities after returning home.

Some of the specific actions that participants proposed taking, and details of the framework of ideas they envisioned included:

- Start an online portal to share innovative ideas from across countries and regions, collaborate on documenting best practices, stay connected and support the global network established in Salzburg, and connect Salzburg Global Fellows to “thinkers, darers, doers”;
- Maintain dialogue between the Salzburg Global Fellows and government actors and policymakers;
- Continue working to make schools bully-free;
- Focus on future-oriented conversations with youth, and look to youth to shape conversations about the future, recognizing their right to self-determination;
- Strive to overcome intellectual arrogance and insular thinking, and integrate youth voices;
- Link research to practice by establishing “peace centers”;
- Make democratic systems more youth-friendly and regularly seek out youth voices;
- Make corruption reporting possible online, and anonymously, rather than requiring whistleblowers to identify themselves;
- Create spaces for open debate on issues related to justice and democracy, and offer courses on democracy and non-violent action;
- Use technology to create new media platforms connecting youths;
- Combine case studies with theory to make social sciences more useful for broader audiences;
- Bring new hopefulness to the situation in Hong Kong and continue to work with referenda;
- Take lessons on innovation and international issues (e.g. on child migration) to inform country-specific work;
- Change thinking on prisons, and ensure that they address trauma;
- Change perception of youth.

At the close of the brainstorming session, **Karen Colvard**, program director at the Henry Frank Guggenheim Foundation, a key funder of the Salzburg Global program, invited the Fellows to submit research grant applications to the Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation.

Group Dialogue

Issues at the Global Level

A recurrent theme across many discussions during the program *Youth, Economics, and Violence: Implications for Future Conflict* was the high rate of unemployment in developing countries as well as in many developed countries (including misemployment and underemployment). The main discrepancy in viewpoints that emerged was whether the burden of the solution should fall on the public sector or the private sector.

This debate is complicated by globalization, in which non-governmental, inter-governmental, and charity organizations are expected to operate at a global, public-sector level, while problems like unemployment have traditionally been dealt with at a regional, country or city level. At this more “micro” or regional level, there is then conflict between public sector social systems, expected to provide tools for solutions like vocational training and unemployment benefits, and private sector companies, expected to provide jobs, often in return for tax or infrastructure incentives and subsidies.

To deal with the incredibly disparate nature of the many issues raised, and the variety of ways that the same issues can pose very different challenges to youth in different regions, participants met in smaller groups to evaluate some of the primary questions as they apply to specific youth populations. Group workshops met each day over the course of the session and reported back on what they had discussed. They covered a wide variety of very specific contexts in which violence is perpetrated upon people, particularly those in the vulnerable demographic designated as youth. Different kinds of violence were identified in the group meetings as a way to provide a structural framework for understanding the problems facing future generations. Categories of violence included: bullying; ethnic conflict; marginalization (social as well as economic); social unrest; violence targeting specific gender identities; family violence; violence against our natural environment, the Earth.

Globally applicable observations that came out of the group discussions included the following:



Assem Abouhatab



Mohammad Khier Al Tinawi



Motahar Amiri



Prince Guma



Siyka Kovacheva



Beatrice Lamwaka

- Community norms and community responses to abuse and violence play a decisive role in how violence that is targeted toward youth is addressed. Research continues on implications for the future, particularly on how traumatic or violent events in childhood lead to biological and physiological changes that contribute to continuation of violence and victimization in adulthood.
- In order to find solutions that address problems facing youth, advocacy groups also have to define how they measure success. What is good parenting, good community support, and successful mentoring? How does one measure the fostering of youth experiences that strengthen them to live non-violent lives effectively?
- Often too high a burden is placed on individual beneficiaries of development programs, without corresponding changes in the systems that contribute to the problems youth face. Adolescents may be reached through educational or vocational programs, but the benefit is limited if they are sent back into societal structures that created the problems in the first place.
- Militarization of police forces is being seen in multiple regions around the world. These forces are not adequately equipped to deal with social unrest and usually escalate the violence instead of preserving the security and safety of society. Including non-violence in training for police and military units was suggested.
- Ethnic as well as national struggles may intensify, as people feel the pinch of fewer and fewer resources spread among an expanding population in most countries. The gap between rich and poor needs to be addressed.

Issues at the Regional Level

The main points of some of the vast array of region- and country-specific problems that were presented in small group discussions, are collected below:

- In **Egypt**, the needs of youth populations with regard to the labor market is the primary challenge. Scholarships and entrepreneurial funding are needed to provide opportunities at home. A high percentage of young people see no opportunities for themselves at home and wish to emigrate. This causes a high “brain-drain” of

young people re-settling in developed countries that did not need to bear the cost of raising and educating the generation, yet are getting a highly motivated work force, one that is also easily manipulable due to their precarious position with regard to work and residency permits in the new country.

- In **Kenya**, and across several other countries, innovation, particularly technological innovation, is a positive driver of social change and a source of much optimism, such as cell phone charging technology that works through energy generated by a chip on the sole of a shoe, and the increased availability of “mobile money” –banking and payment for goods and services by cell-phone. A website which will showcase these efforts is in progress.
- In **South Africa**, there are increasing incidents of violence perpetrated against foreign nationals. These are young people perpetrating violence against each other. Foreigners are seen as a threat, because they are seen as taking the few opportunities available to South African youth. Educational exclusion is also a problem. Many of the public universities do not have sufficient funding and are turning into sites of struggle, yet governments are not able or willing to resolve the crisis. African intellectuals are seen as the ones to address these problems of nationalism, as well as determine what economic policies are best in the local context.
- In **Tunisia**, the protests in 2011 were primarily driven by youth protesting living conditions and stating a need for both political freedom from the secret police and access to the country’s commerce systems. The issue of reducing repression has been easier to solve than the issue of economic access. One example of successful reform is that prison penalties for cannabis offences have been changed to community service, as a result of youth-led protests.
- In **Uganda**, the perception is that the government expects the private sector to create jobs, and yet the government itself is plagued by corruption. This has the result that young people are subjected to the pressures of a free market economy, without receiving any social security and/or protection.
- In **Zimbabwe** and **Madagascar**, economic and state failures have been very influential in driving conflict among youth populations. The economic collapse in Zimbabwe in 2009 led to high unemployment that primarily affected people between 15 and 35 years of age. This



Patricia Moore Nicholas



Warren Nebe



Khaled Abdelrahman Shamaa



Paolo Singer



Nilgün Ulu

led not only to political violence and organized crime but also to random acts of violence within communities, induced by lack of opportunity for positive action. When people have nothing to do, no source of income, and no hope for the future, they may turn to violence by default.

- In **India**, the Musahar community (4 to 5 million people) live in extreme poverty, with 80% suffering from malnutrition. The literacy rate is 1%, and 95% are landless agricultural workers. Violence levels are high in all areas: domestic; school violence; gang warfare; and government corruption. Many feel forced into crime due to their economic circumstances. Youth migration is high. There have been radical welfare programs but statistically the benefits have not trickled down to the population. Shoshit Samadhan Kendra (SSK) is a free residential school for Musahar boys which aims to improve individuals' lives and through them spread positive role models and educational benefits throughout the communities from which the young boys come. SSK hope that this "ripple effect" may be more successful than the traditional, trickle-down welfare. Questions were raised, however, whether the community attachment of these youths may be weakened by their participation in such a program.



Nilgün Ulu, Sana Sbouai, Mark Edberg, Namanja Zekic, Prince Guma, Emma LeBlanc and Samah Krichah in a working group discussion in the McGowan Room

- In **Pakistan**, the main societal shift affecting youth populations has been from extended or “joint” families to nuclear families, which causes more isolation for children. A “village” system allows children to experience a wide range of modelling and to be influenced by aunts, uncles, neighbors, in contrast with a “latchkey” system where they may be raised by two working parents, a single parent or a nanny. Human desire for love, belonging, and justice are intrinsic to all people. Generations are not adversaries, but complement each other. The role of the Imam in Pakistan is purely religious and has not kept pace with needs of youth for advice on practical matters like employment. The military has a very strong influence. Solutions are sought through educational channels allowing for increased possibilities for self-emancipation.
- In **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, some very successful projects have been started in the field of agriculture. There is a high market demand for organic produce. Growing this produce, particularly berries, which have a high mark-up value, has provided many young people with the opportunity to run successful micro-businesses. It was also noted that this population has recovered relatively quickly from internal strife or resentments from the Bosnian War that concluded only 20 years ago. It was posited that this is because young people of all creeds and ethnicities have been able to access these economic opportunities.
- **Mexico and Central America** are key sites of increasing violence against youth populations. In Mexico, students are seen as a threat and are routinely handed over to organized crime forces by the police. Honduras is the country with the highest homicide rate right now, but many other Latin American countries are facing extremely high levels of violence. One Fellow noted that this violence could even be called “institutionalized violence” since the police are so often involved, sometimes in publicly killing students.
- In the **USA**, protests are an example of how entrenched injustice leads to civil disobedience, which, in-turn may lead to true systems change. It is also an example of the need to evaluate how public servants who interact with vulnerable communities form their narratives. Although overwhelmingly mainstream media communicated the protests as “riots”. Our work is not only about empowering youth to action but also advocating for truthful reporting.



Joel Wallman



Alexa Wesner



Genevieve Sandberg-Diment

1



1. Carol Langstaff

2



2. Nilgün Ulu and Prince Guma

3. Jana Vobecka and Ahmed Hadji

4. Samah Krichah

5. Fellows continue discussions during the coffee breaks

4



5



3



Emma LeBlanc: “We are inundated with photographs – it’s hard to take a picture that actually makes anyone feel anything anymore”

Austrian broadcaster FM4’s Chris Cummins interviews photographer and Rhodes Scholar, Emma LeBlanc for the radio show Reality Check: <http://fm4.orf.at/realitycheck>

We are all too used to seeing the pictures of death and destruction. Pictures that are just so numerous they sometimes eventually lose their impact. Emma LeBlanc is an American photographer who lives close to Damascus, and she considers Syria her home, and when civil war broke out there she decided to stay and record another side to this conflict. She told Chris Cummins about her perspective on the early days of the uprising against President Assad and how the situation then developed.

Emma LeBlanc: The first days of the revolution were really exciting and inspiring and confusing. It didn’t look like a war; I think Syrians didn’t expect it was going to be a war. For the most part it was brave young people, old people in the streets protesting peacefully. They’d seen what had happened elsewhere in the Arab Spring and there was a real sense of hope then.

They were already there, these signs that dark times were coming; many people, probably me, would have left immediately, and you stayed and you took photographs. Why?

I felt some sense of responsibility, I suppose, I had the ability to take photos and get them into the West, get them into Western publications in the media in the way that a lot of Syrians didn’t at the time. I mean, eventually a lot of people did figure out how to use social media to their advantage, but there was still a credibility that came [with

being a Westerner]... A Western newspaper was more likely to take an account written by a Westerner who they know, who they trusted, than a Syrian who they couldn’t place in the conflict.

What is interesting about the photos, they weren’t only the aftermath of attacks, they weren’t only rubble and bloodshed, [there were] also a lot of pictures of everyday life. Why?

Well, I’d been in Iraq during the war and taken photos there and I was very dissatisfied with the photos I produced. I could see just how superficial they were. Today in Syria there is a huge amount of violence and people doing really banal things trying to survive, right? People are still trying to go to work if they can, trying to get their kids to school, trying to get gas to heat their houses, and I was really struck by how wrong the photos I was seeing seemed. There would be pictures from a block away from where I was and I’m thinking, “Yeah, but you’ve missed so much, you framed this all wrong,” and it seemed important that people reading about Syria, far away, saw Syrians as human beings.

That’s what I thought. I was looking at pictures, it was some girls in a valley school, actually, and I thought these are real human beings.

Absolutely, and if all you see is a small Syrian girl covered in blood, screaming in the rubble, it almost feels inevitable, this is the Middle East we’ve come to see all the time, and so it

becomes the Middle East we come to expect. I think it feels really different if you are a middle-class American who has dropped her kid off at ballet class, and you are suddenly seeing a picture that doesn't look that dissimilar – the kids are goofy, some of them

are serious, and there are mismatched tutus. We are pretty inundated with photographs – it's hard to take a picture that actually makes anyone feel anything anymore, so we have to figure out how to get around that, how to still develop some sort of human connection.



Emma LeBlanc

Sana Sbouai: "It's all about freedom and justice"

Austrian broadcaster FM4's Chris Cummins interviews co-founder of the Tunisian NGO for innovative media, Al Khatt, Sana Sbouai for the radio show Reality Check:
<http://fm4.orf.at/realitycheck>

Of all the Arab Spring countries, the only real success story is Tunisia, the place where it all started. Tunisia's "Jasmine Revolution" was relatively quick and peaceful, and the dictatorship of President Ben Ali was replaced by a government that was reasonably freely and fairly elected. However, the struggle isn't over. Sana Sbouai is a co-founder of the Tunisian NGO for innovative media, Al Khatt, and she told Chris Cummins about the main focus of her work as the country moves on from that revolution.

Sana Sbouai: It's all about freedom and having a fair justice, having equality between people. These topics are still open. Everybody is watching from outside saying, "Yes, it's cool, Tunisia made it, there is not that much violence over there, they had democratic transparent election," but we are not sure about that... We have a government who is pretending to be democratic, so if you are pretending to be democratic I am going to play with you. And I am going to say, you are democratic, so I am going to ask you things and you have to answer back. It's

difficult because you have these habits of the administration and the system was trying to hold on [to] – not giving info, and not being accurate.

So basically the mainstream media, you think, at the moment in Tunisia, hasn't reformed, and is still too much a voice piece for authority?

So there's two things, there are the media and you have the journalists. We have the journalists who are trying to change, who are trying to do their work but at the same time we have the media business, because it's enterprise. So obviously you have the boss who wants some more clicks, or more people watching the TV. It's the same question everywhere, so you have journalists who are trying to tackle the challenges and you have this new society who are all about money. And then you have some other layers outside: you have the citizens who don't rely all the time on the journalist and on the news because they are used to propaganda, and then you have the

government and the system who don't want the news to be spread.

The image from outside is that Tunisia is a place with strong female voices. Is that true? Is it easy to be a strong voice and a woman in Tunisia?

Compared to the rest of the Arab World, yes it is easy – but then there are some things that we are tackling. But it's quite easy to be a woman and to spread your voice, and when you are not happy you can say it, so it's quite safe to be a woman in Tunisia.

Do you feel, because Tunisia was the birthplace of the democratic upheavals in the region, most places have felt that it's a special responsibility as Tunisians to keep up the spirit of what became known as the Arab Spring?

Sana Sbouai: I don't think we can put it that way, it's more about trying to help each other, you know, because we know that it's important that everyone finds a place to live in a peaceful way.



Sana Sbouai



Wagdy Al-Kadasi

Wagdy Al-Kadasi: “Yemenis are very resilient”

Austrian broadcaster FM4’s Chris Cummins interviews co-founder and vice president of the Yemeni Youth Development Center Wagdy Al-Kadasi for the radio show Reality Check: <http://fm4.orf.at/realitycheck>

Troops from a coalition led by Saudi Arabia landed in Yemen yesterday on what’s being called a reconnaissance mission. Saudi Arabia has been leading an air campaign against Houthi rebels, but this is believed to be the first time that ground troops have actually been sent in. Saudi Arabia is Sunni, and the Houthi rebels and their backers, Iran, are Shia, and commentators often talk in terms of a proxy war and sectarianism but, is that accurate? Chris Cummins asked Wagdy Al-Kadasi – the co-founder of the Yemeni Youth Development Center in Sana’a – how the people of Yemen actually see things.

Wagdy Al-Kadasi: I don’t recall during my life – and if you ask any Yemeni he would say the same thing – that there was a difference between a Sunni and a Shia, and we didn’t think of ourselves as being Sunni or being Shia. But the problem now with the political version, it tries to divide the people into Sunni and

Shia, and they are using this Sunni-Shia divide because faith is the most important thing that makes a person fight.

How much of a battle is going on between modernity and tradition?

The problem is, when you have the traditional system that tries to be modernized and leaves out the cultural and social aspect, it becomes very difficult and this creates a lot of problems. In our societies, many of the problems are solved by cultural and social law, so going towards a modernized system without having a good policy of state can be very devastating.

Al-Qaeda has found a great breeding ground in Yemen. How can mainstream Yemeni society then reach out to these potential recruits so that they don’t turn to Al-Qaeda?

This is where interrelation between the society, the family and the community plays a major role; many of the persons returning from

Guantanamo were put in groups of dialogue with local religious leaders and sheikhs, and some of them actually changed their ideas and concepts. The young Yemeni, he would stay in the household until he gets married and probably would stay there with his family, so the elder always plays an important role in directing the man or woman within the community.

Because a lot of it was done on Twitter and Facebook, I think in the West we kind of expected a new society that mirrored ours to emerge. Was that a strange dream?

What is interesting is that Yemenis have strong roots in their culture. Last year I got a message from WhatsApp from my aunt in the village and I was surprised that she actually uses WhatsApp! But it's just a part of using electronic devices – it's not like changing the life of the people into a European society.

Yemenis it seems are, if anything very resilient. Yes, very resilient because they don't depend on the things that a European guy would depend on in life. A Yemeni person is very simple, you know, a bit of flour and water and he would eat for the whole month.

Aml El-Houderi: “Law and human rights are heavy topics to understand”

International advocacy program coordinator at Lawyers for Justice in Libya speaks to Salzburg Global about the impact of marginalizing the Libyan youth

To tackle societal issues in Libya, from women's political participation and youth involvement in civil society, there are cultural and legal foundations to consider. Aml El-Houderi, an international advocacy program coordinator at Lawyers for Justice in Libya (LFJL), talked to Salzburg Global Seminar about the youth's marginalisation in Libya, and how this may lead to larger social shifts.

El-Houderi's work with LFJL, an independent NGO promoting human rights in Libya from a legal framework, was originally founded by six Libyan lawyers who lived in the diaspora and used their international law expertise during the 2011 uprising. It now has a network of 60 Libyan lawyers across the country.

One of these key issues in Libyan society is the marginalization of the youth, a topic quite

relevant for the session *Youth, Economics & Violence: Implications for Future Conflict*, held in partnership with the Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation of New York. The youth, said El-Houderi, are left out from decision-making roles in civil society, political participation, and under the law.

“In legal terms, youth are not protected in law. They are marginalized in the decision-making process, [in] their political participation they are marginalized [as well]. So they were called for in the revolution, their voice was heard, but then when it came to the next steps of rebuilding the country, they were completely marginalized and thought of as irritants.”

This kind of marginalization does not exist in a vacuum; the lack of decision-making power,

said El-Houderi, can lead to issues inside of the home. Finding this new space to be assertive can lead to larger issues, such as domestic violence.

“This is nurtured by Libyan law,” said El-Houderi, “since there is a provision that a man can discipline his wife. The legal and cultural aspects are interrelated and they perpetuate the culture of discrimination of women.”

El-Houderi’s work with LFJL focuses on international advocacy, where she engages with the UN Human Rights Council sessions, the EU, the African Commission, and other Libyan NGOs to discuss resolutions for Libya as well as meet key stakeholders to discuss human rights violations.

She is also coordinator of the Coalition of Libyan Human Rights NGOs, which was created by LFJL. It includes six Libyan human rights organisations working around Libya’s Universal Periodic Review. Recently, LFJL put out a joint statement with Article 19 welcoming Libya’s acceptance of all recommendations related to free expression, association, and assembly.

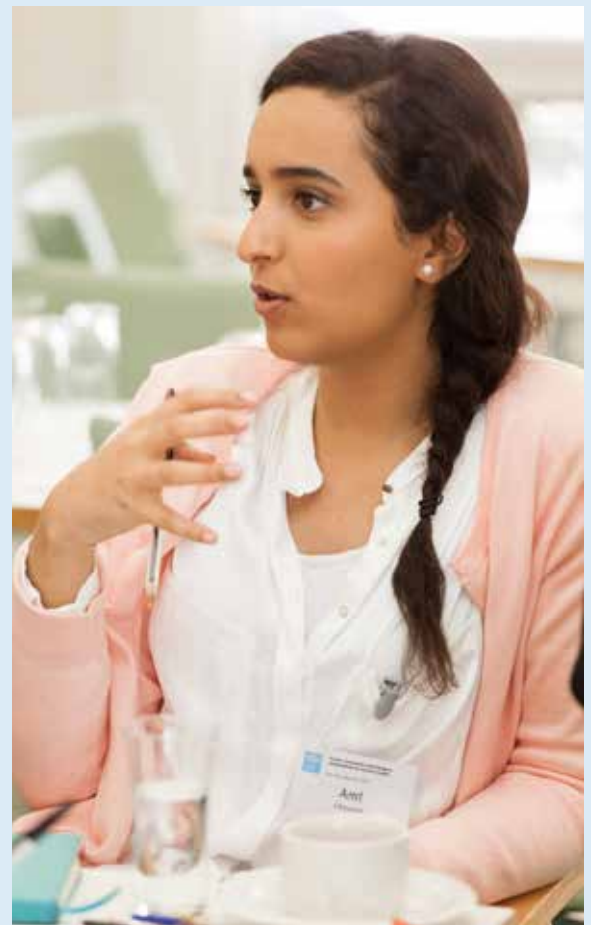
El-Houderi also highlighted the significance of the session, and the impact of discussing different case studies from around the world. “It was just so great to have different stakeholders come together, youth, older people, experts from around the world in different fields.”

As a Libyan, El-Houderi found it especially important to share her perspective. “The first day you’re very intimidated, and then you realize that everyone is there to learn and that no one is intellectually arrogant... it’s also its a really nice feeling to be a Libyan

here, especially since Libya is not on the international scenes or forums.”

To combat the issues that Libya is facing, whether internally or on an international level, El-Houderi stressed that focusing on positive behavior is key. LFJL’s work on a freedom of expression program called Express is an example of this, as it encouraged artistic expression of human rights.

“The general remark is that law and human rights are heavy topics to understand for everyone, so we have to bring those terms in such a creative and simple way,” she said. “I think creativity is key here.”



Aml El-Houderi



Paul Sixpence

Paul Sixpence: Zimbabwe needs alternative spaces of communication for the youth

HIV/AIDS and human rights advocate speaks to Salzburg Global about issues facing the youth in Zimbabwe and Southern Africa

With pressing issues facing the youth in Southern Africa and Zimbabwe, Paul Sixpence, coordinator of HIV/AIDS and human rights advocacy projects at Centre Stage Media Arts Foundation in Bulawayo, discussed the importance of providing a platform for the youth to voice their concerns.

Sixpence, a participant at *Youth, Economics, and Violence: Implications for Future Conflict*, discussed the work that must be done in the way of media freedom, gender issues, and corruption, with Salzburg Global while at the session. “Probably over the past four to five years, there has been a decline in terms of state repression as well as political violence,” said Sixpence, although these are not necessarily the result of the new constitution. “We still have gaps that need to be filled.”

At Centre Stage Media Arts Foundation, a communication for development initiative, Sixpence works on issues of human rights advocacy, HIV/AIDS, and youth development initiatives. He mainly focuses on youth issues in Zimbabwe and Southern Africa, such as unemployment, marginalization, conflict, and HIV/AIDS. Currently, he is working on how media usage can be used for policy advocacy of HIV prevention science.

Intrinsic to these issues is communication between young people and their government.

“It becomes therefore critical that [we] as civil society organizations working with all other partners create these alternative spaces for discussion, and also allow young people themselves to discuss among themselves and

articulate the challenges...and solutions to some of the challenges they have.”

During the session, participants discussed barriers to communication for young people in different contexts. Sixpence touched on why having a platform to communicate is vital to the youth, especially in terms of having their concerns met by the government.

“It becomes, therefore, critical that [we] as civil society organisations working with all other partners, create these alternative spaces for discussion, and also allow young people themselves to discuss...and articulate the challenges...and probably solutions to some of the challenges they have.”

“The Salzburg Global Seminar program has been quite useful,” he said, “especially if I reflect on the kind of work that I do at home.

There are new insights that I have gained, in terms of looking at youth opportunities for addressing issues around unemployment, the idea of looking at the local level – that could be at city level, that could be at regional level, within a country – the economic solutions that we can come up with to address the solutions on the ground.”

Particularly, said Sixpence, the session gave him new insight on how to tackle problems like the migration issues that stem from violence in countries like South Africa. “I’m also motivated...as a practitioner and a researcher to try and develop solutions and communications across the border, not [to] work only nationally, but with organizations, [and] stakeholders in South Africa to share our ideas on how best we can solve this particular challenge.”

Nemanja Zekic: Messages of togetherness are more powerful than messages of misery

President of the Srebrenica Youth Council speaks to Salzburg Global about social cohesion in a community dealing with the heavy burden of a violent past

In Srebrenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina, communities are living in a post-conflict society, 20 years after the violent break-up of Yugoslavia and the massacre of 8,000 Bosniaks by Bosnian Serbs. Here, the burden of a youth unemployment rate of around 60% makes tackling nepotism, youth violence, and apathy all the more difficult. Nemanja Zekic, a participant of the session *Youth, Economics, and Violence: Implications for Future Conflict*, spoke to Salzburg Global Seminar of his experience working with youth initiatives in Srebrenica and other areas in the country.

Zekic is the president of the Srebrenica Youth Council, which started in 2002 to create more activities for the youth in town. Eventually, it grew into an umbrella organization for other youth initiatives in the area.

“At the beginning,” said Zekic, “the prime goal was, ‘lets have some activities, change something, lets do some youth activism,’ but during that time people in our post-conflict society realized that youth activism is a really important and strong tool in reconciliation.”



Nemanja Zekic

In the spirit of reconciliation and rebuilding, one of the organization’s core values is social cohesion. A popular initiative stemming from this was the Silvertown Shine music festival, which annually brings musicians to Srebrenica.

“That festival brings young people together, young artists, to send a message of togetherness, to send a message of activism, and to send a different kind of message from the town that is known only for sad messages of genocide, of terrible crimes, and of sadness and misery.” Zekic now works with The Complete Freedom of Truth, an initiative which uses the arts to encourage creativity among the youth. Practitioners and artists from dozens of youth centers participate in these workshops and activities, including many socially disadvantaged members of the youth. The initiative recently accepted the European Citizens Prize from the European Parliament.

Zekic highlighted some initiatives to focus on after the session, including encouraging the political participation of young people,

who have the potential to sway the results of elections in their favor.

While he uses his background in economics to analyze the political, economic, and cultural climate, he also spoke about invaluable knowledge on youth violence that he gained from the session.

“They gave us really valuable lessons about how to divide different kinds of violence, how to recognize it, what motivates violence, and how to tackle it. So now with all this information, I can go to the bigger youth councils in Bosnia...I can go there and advocate, fight against hooliganism — that is the biggest issue of violence that we have in Bosnia, and no one seems to know how to approach it.”

While he may not have all of the clearcut answers, he spoke of being able to use the experience to build a path towards a solution to a problem that is a threat to the entire region. “I don’t have a clear idea,” he said, “but I have the knowledge that can help in building the strategy of how we’re going to address [it].”



Srinjoy Bose

Srinjoy Bose: “Youth haven’t really been taken care of by anyone, whether it is the Afghan government or the international community”

Australian National University PhD scholar on the role of social media in empowering youth of Afghanistan

As urbanization accelerates around the world, the percentage of under-25s is crossing 50% in several developing countries. Almost 70% of Afghanistan’s population is below the age of 25 years. Providing this young population with the resources for a new generation of healthy, productive, and empowered young women and men is one of Afghanistan’s core challenges.

At the session *Youth, Economics, and Violence: Implications for Future Conflict*, Srinjoy Bose, a PhD scholar from the Australian National University, spoke of the importance of youth movements in the social and political landscape of Afghanistan and social media as a tool in mobilizing the youth, especially during the recent elections.

“Youth haven’t really been taken care of by anyone, whether it is the Afghan government or the international community.” He spoke of the lack of youth policy until 2013, which was more than a decade into the intervention.

The irresponsibility for this, according to Bose, lies with both the Afghanistan government and the international community. But in past few years, the Afghan youth have started organizing to make a significant difference. Most of the youth in youth groups, he said, come from a wide variety of backgrounds and sectors and are newly active. Typically, they work independent of parties or formal alliances due to general distrust of the party system.

“Political parties have tended to be looked down upon in Afghanistan’s recent history, possibly because they contributed to violence and instability, particularly during the civil war years.” This created a lack of youth wings or parties, and this vacuum led to recent civil society movements.

He acknowledged that most of this change is being led by the urban youth, but also emphasized the fact that these change makers have reached out to their peers in different cities and rural areas throughout the country. Despite the progress, Bose drew attention to the complexity of the Afghan youth. They still have to contend with the urban and rural unemployed young Afghans who are often manipulated and susceptible to community pressures and political actors.

Bose also spoke of social media in the lives of Afghan youth, which he said has happened largely due to a good telecommunication industry in the country which has boomed since the invasion.

“The substance of Facebook discussions is phenomenal and so sophisticated. Sometimes there is banter, and sometimes it degenerates into name calling. But so far, it has been very sophisticated. Afghan youth are very educated and aware of political concepts, concepts that

we treasure in the West.” He spoke of Facebook as an important tool for for interaction and mobilization, especially for those facing constant violence and unrest.

Still, many factions of political parties and parliamentarians have raised concern over the growing tension and unrest between minorities due to the use of mobile phones and Facebook.

“Some politicians and parliamentarians have complained about Facebook, that it has heightened ethnic tension. There is this feeling amongst some Afghans that Facebook has facilitated ethnic divides during the election campaigns.”

On a global level, Bose said that Salzburg Global has been a good platform to understand the limitations of working with a diverse group of people helping youth live their lives at the margins of economy and violence in different parts of the world.

Sharing the personal experiences of working in their individual fields allowed the participants to have tough conversation about the definition of violence, limitations of the scope of their work, and the lessons they could learn from each other. Bose credited this as the biggest achievement of the session.



Conclusion and Next Steps

Diasmer Panna Bloe

Program Director, Salzburg Global Seminar

Most societies have economic, social and/or generational barriers to adolescents and young adults exercising their full agency. This is understandable as adolescence is a time of high risk-preference, low impulse control, thrill seeking, peer influences, and limited foresight. Yet, it is also a transitory time to gain capacities and set development pathways. Environment – parents, networks, social systems, and opportunities for critical thinking and decision-making – mold adolescents and young adults (and the adults they will become).

Problems arise when youth are faced with unequal and/or unfair barriers to their development and must build their capacities in environments bereft of support. These youth may experience cultural and spatial isolation, economic inequality, un- and under-employment, discrimination, interpersonal violence, and punitive culture. Their life chances – and their caregivers' livelihoods – may also be adversely affected by globalization, climate disruption, structural violence, and conflict. In many cases, informal means are the most accessible way to gain access, capital, and identity, and to “overturn systems that are holding them back.” However, this also makes youth susceptible to illegal



activities and systems in which violence is legitimized. One example highlighted during the program came from the Americas, where systemic marginalization has led some youth to the illegal drug trade. In other parts of the world, like northwest Pakistan, these “illegal” or informal systems (e.g. Pakistani Taliban) have become the local norm.

Essentially, there are few authentic outlets that youth feel they can use to bring about fundamental shifts in the laws, policies, services, and institutions that affect their lives. Although very few youth become violent, these are the cases that receive the most attention. However, apart from sub-culture violence (such as the American drug trade), a significant percentage of young perpetrators go against the common narrative of disenfranchised youth and are in fact educated, well-off, socially mobile, and/or well integrated within the dominant culture. In this context, program Fellows pointed to intangibilities, stressing the importance of identity and perception of one’s ability to change his/her future.

Inequalities in access, capital, identity, and agency are most often at the root of current violent conflicts. Despite continuous efforts to reach youth in conflict environments, implementation often illustrates the blind spots in and between research, policy, practice, and partnerships. Documented outcomes are seldom significant. Many programs supported by public, private, and development aid are not planned or directed by affected youth. As a result, these programs rarely work towards resolving the issues that trouble youth most – breaking down formal structural barriers towards youth progress, closing the gap between youth and influences of power, learning to mentally cope with violence and trauma, integrating support networks, using (research) evidence of what works, quickly adapting to changing dynamics, sharing learning with other youth, and inspiring and equipping young people to make a social, economic, environmental and/or spiritual difference within their communities.

Salzburg Global Seminar’s program on *Youth, Economics, and Violence: Implications for Future Conflict* seeks to illuminate these blind spots and foster dialogue, analysis, and solutions on how to inform stakeholders and motivate constructive, quality action, especially within the context of violence – be it state-based, civil, and/or interpersonal.

In their discussions, Salzburg Global Fellows highlighted diverse, complex, and inter-sectional issues affecting youth around the world: from micro issues such as adolescent development, school bullying, family violence,

identity, and hope; to macro issues such as employment, demography, social, economic, and development systems, conflict, and innovation; and cross cutting issues such as activism, religion, gender, and ethnicity. The program also recognized hard truths – that many radical or terrorist programs, by championing systems overhaul, are getting it right. Reconciliation was also a key theme, recognizing the need to use awareness of difference as a bridge for empathy, understanding, trust, and progress.

Building on our mission to challenge present and future leaders to solve issues of global concern, Salzburg Global Seminar seeks to sustain and accelerate regional dialogue and project hubs to generate solutions that are locally sourced, target system change, and inspire youth to action. Our Fellows' proposals [page 34] provide a critical framework for next steps on international and regional engagement and investment, which will guide our future work with partners and change-makers. Looking forward, we hope to catalyze and support efforts that not only transform perceptions of youth but also help change those systems that suppress youth voice, agency, and hope.



Salzburg Global Fellows of the session *Youth, Economics, and Violence: Implications for Future Conflict*

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Fellows enjoy the traditional session concert, on this occasion given by the youth orchestra Bella Musica



Appendix – List of Participants

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Salzburg Global Seminar

Salzburg Global Seminar is an independent non-profit institution founded in 1947 with a distinguished track record of convening emerging and established leaders to address global challenges and drive progress based on **Imagination, Sustainability** and **Justice**. It convenes imaginative thinkers from different cultures and institutions, implements problem-solving programming, supports leadership development, and engages opinion-makers through active communication networks, all in partnership with leading international institutions.

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A Social Compact for the 21st Century

Salzburg Global Seminar, in partnership with specialist international institutions, has developed a multi-year program on the roles of states and families in meeting 21st century social investment needs.

Intergenerational and gender justice and inclusion of marginalized populations are critical for social cohesion but come under particular strain where economic systems are confronting a “double squeeze” – how to improve start of life opportunities for all while also caring and paying for aging societies. In many countries, the greatest burden falls on the family unit; government support, where provided, is inconsistently managed between various organizations and seldom reflects forward-thinking best practices. We believe that states’ and families’ abilities to confront these challenges will shape 21st century economic systems, societal norms and individual wellbeing.

Designing a social compact’s added value is its capacity to rapidly address critical bottlenecks to progress – as identified by leading researchers, practitioners and policymakers – and link results to strategic decision points within each sector.

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