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YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN PREVENTING AND COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM: A Case Study of Cameroon's North West and South West Regions

Report No. 1

Nyadi Francios Ndzi

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A Case Study of Cameroon's North West and South West Regions

Nyadi Francios Ndzi, (Ph.D)



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About the Author

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Disclaimer

The analysis presented in this report reflects the perspectives of the contributors and does not necessarily represent the official position of One Peace as an organisation. The findings of this study are limited to youth engagement in peacebuilding, preventing and countering violent extremism in the North West and South West regions of Cameroon and cannot be generalised for the entire population or the whole country.

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Cover Photo: A rural settlement in Donga Mantung Division, North West Region of Cameroon (Photo Credit: Nyadi Francios Ndzi)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report captures youth perspectives on peacebuilding, preventing and countering violent extremism in the conflict-affected North West and South West regions of Cameroon. In the last eight years, these regions have experienced protracted socio-political unrest. The ongoing unrest originated from protests of lawyers and teachers over perceived systemic marginalisation. The escalation into armed conflict has led to increased youth radicalisation, cycles of violence, and widespread insecurity. In response, there has been multi-sectoral collaboration across state institutions, civil society organisations (CSOs), faith-based groups, and traditional authorities to de-escalate the conflict and stabilise the two regions.

Since August 2018, One Peace has been part of the multi-stakeholder ecosystem, contributing to peacebuilding efforts with a focus on youth engagement, preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE), and participatory community-based initiatives. Against this backdrop, this study was undertaken to capture youth voices in peacebuilding and P/CVE, serving as data to inform responsive organisational peacebuilding programme design –not just for One Peace, but also for other key stakeholders involved in peacebuilding activities in the conflict-affected North West and South West regions of Cameroon. Findings from the study will shape policy advocacy efforts to support grassroots youth engagement in peacebuilding and P/CVE. Given the demographic significance of youth, their inclusion in conflict transformation is critical. Primary data was collected through an online survey using KoboToolbox.

Key findings reveal that only 5.7% of youths in the two regions feel safe, with 83.5% of them directly or indirectly affected by the conflict. The negative impacts are multi-dimensional, cutting across eleven critical domains, with economic hardship emerging as the most prevalent consequence, recording 19.5% of the identified impacts. Data indicate that 63.2% of young people often or very often discuss issues of peace and security among their peers, with tangible actions missing due to the mounting barriers they face. Six barriers were identified, with fear of violence recording 19.4%, while personal safety concerns recorded 18.1%. Equally, limited awareness about peacebuilding programmes stood at 17.5%, while insufficient training to participate meaningfully accounted for 16.2%. Limited resources recorded 15.3%, and limited support from community and government authorities stood at 13.5%.

In assessing youth contributions to peacebuilding, 93.2% of young people strongly or very strongly see themselves as pivotal actors in promoting peace and countering violent extremism. However, only 15.5% participated in any peacebuilding activity in the last 12 months, between August 2024 and July 2025, with 48.9% reporting being uninformed about peacebuilding activities in their communities. This distribution suggests a scarcity of peacebuilding activities, particularly those that are significant in scope, targeted in focus, and broad in reach. Consequently, opportunities for youth to engage meaningfully in peacebuilding, as well as in P/CVE initiatives, remain limited.

In terms of the prospects for peace in the North West and South West regions of Cameroon, 88.4% of youths are optimistic or very optimistic. The respondents identified seven peacebuilding activities they believe would most effectively engage youth. The most popular choice was capacity-building, which recorded 18.6%, followed by community service projects at 16.2%, and economic empowerment at 15.4%. Sports and cultural events closely followed with 15.2%. Agriculture and food production garnered 12.9%, while ICT and tech-based skills recorded 12.2%. Online campaigns were the least favoured, with 9.5% out of the seven identified entry points. This demonstrates their potential as critical stakeholders in inclusive peacebuilding and P/CVE programming. Based on the findings of this report, there is need to scale up targeted youth-focused peacebuilding initiatives and address safety concerns, as well as information gaps, to make peacebuilding and P/CVE more attractive to youth.

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ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS

AU CFYPS	African Union Continental Framework on Youth, Peace and Security
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
INGOs	International Non-Governmental Organisations
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NSAG	Non-State Armed Group
NW/SW	North West/South West
P/CVE	Preventing/ Countering Violent Extremism
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UN OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
YPS	Youth, Peace and Security

INTRODUCTION

Since the last quarter of 2016, the North West and South West (NW/SW) regions of Cameroon have seen increased youth participation in conflict-related dynamics, particularly in the context of the ongoing separatist conflict. This period has been marked by rising insecurity and social fragmentation. Many young people have been either involved in non-state armed groups (NSAGs), or affected by their activities. This shows broader patterns of vulnerability and exposure to violence. The NSAGs are predominantly youth-led and largely composed of youths, especially young men.

In 2023, the NW/SW regions experienced a 69% increase in reported violent incidents, marking the most substantial annual escalation since 2020 (Serwat, & Beevor, 2024). Many young people, caught in the crossfire of this unrest, lack exposure to peaceful forms of civic engagement and are unaware of how to express their frustrations without violence. Economic hardship intensifies the problem. Brun (2022) identified "socially constructed gender norms, equating manhood with fighting" as a significant factor in direct involvement of boys and men in violence, amplified by their lack of economic progress which affects their traditional role as providers. With 80% of education facilities no longer operating, one displaced youth explained: "Without education, we don't have job prospects any longer" (Brun, 2022).

A major gap to effective peacebuilding has been the limited availability of reliable, disaggregated data that captures the lived experiences of youth and evaluates the impact of existing interventions.

Many peacebuilding initiatives have relied on anecdotal evidence or generalised assumptions that fail to reflect the complex realities on the ground. This stems from difficulty gathering evidence and incorporating it into programme design to struggles in implementing and evaluating the programmes and programmatic learning (Allen, Iyer & Ris, 2023).

This scarcity of empirical data has hindered the development of responsive policies and programmes, leaving critical gaps in understanding what works, for whom, and under what conditions. This study addresses this often-overlooked data gap. The research provides a robust evidence base to support more nuanced, youth-centred peacebuilding strategies and promote accountability in the design and implementation of future interventions. It examines the intersection of youth, violent extremism, and peacebuilding in the North West and South West regions of Cameroon. The study aims to amplify youth voices, uncover the drivers of radicalisation, evaluate the barriers to meaningful participation in peace efforts, and identify strategies that empower young people as equal peacebuilding partners. This report presents the findings of the study across several themes.

METHODOLOGY

This study relied on an extensive desk review of secondary literature and a quantitative approach to primary data collection. The secondary data comprised publicly available reports from non-governmental organisations, official government policy documents, policy briefs, publications from

think tank institutions, and peer-reviewed academic literature. Primary data was gathered through a structured online survey consisting of twenty questions, administered through KoboToolbox. Data collection was conducted by trained One Peace personnel, who received orientation on the survey instrument and its objectives to ensure methodological consistency.

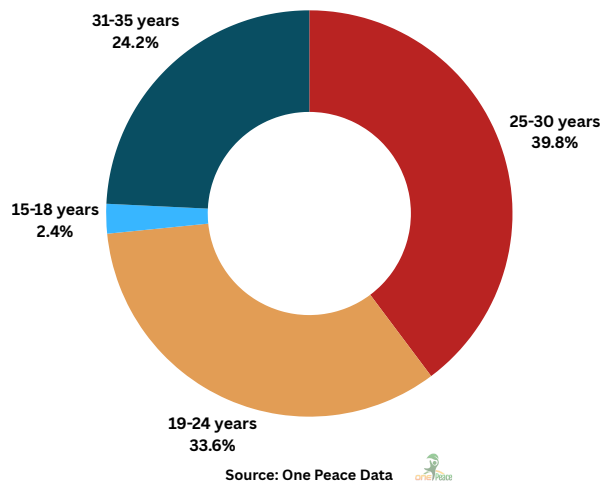
The target population included youth aged 15 to 35 years. These young people were targeted from diverse ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds, based in communities within the NW/SW regions of Cameroon during the survey period in July 2025. The survey tool was pre-tested to assess reliability, and data integrity was systematically monitored throughout the collection process. A total of 425 valid responses were obtained, exceeding the minimum sample size threshold for an unknown population, as determined using Cochran's formula. To uphold ethical standards and safeguard respondent confidentiality, no personally identifiable information was collected.

Demographics

This study focused on youths in the conflict-affected NW/SW regions of Cameroon. For the purpose of this study, "youth" or "young people" refers to everyone between the ages of 15 and 35, in alignment with the definitions provided by both the Government of Cameroon and the African Union. Within the sample, individuals aged 15-18 years accounted for 2.4%, those aged 19-24 years made up 33.6%, ages 25-30 represented 39.8%, and those aged 31-35 comprised 24.2%, as illustrated in Figure 1.

This shows that there was a high response rate among youth in their twenties than those above or below.

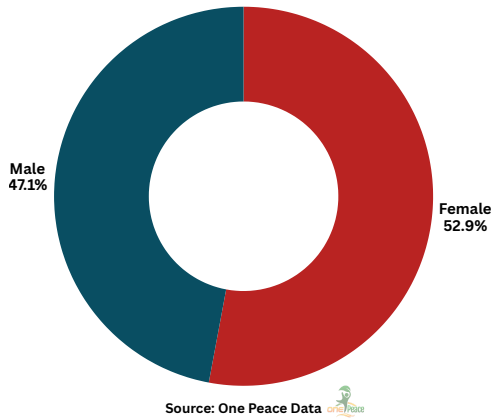
Figure 1: Age Range of Respondents



In terms of gender representation, deliberate efforts were made to ensure balance among participants in order to capture diverse perspectives on the intersection of youth, violent extremism, and peacebuilding. A minimum threshold of 200 responses per gender was established. Female respondents accounted for 52.9% of the sample, exceeding male respondents by 25 surveys. Male participants represented 47.1% of the sample, corresponding to exactly 200 responses, as illustrated in Figure 2.

This gender-balanced sampling enhanced the analytical validity of the study. It incorporated gendered experiences of conflict, and supports inclusive peacebuilding discourse that recognizes the differentiated roles and vulnerabilities of young men and women. As argued by Banfield, et al. (2023), gender is an essential element of conflict and violence and thus an integral aspect of building sustainable peace.

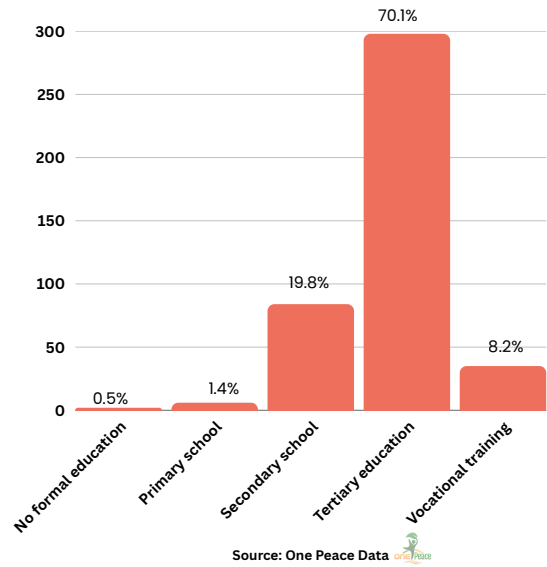
Figure 2: Gender Representation



As concerns educational attainment, 70.1% of respondents had pursued post-secondary education. Meanwhile, 19.8% completed their education at the secondary school level, and 8.2% had attended vocational training. In addition, 1.4% ended their education at the primary level, while 0.5% had no formal education. These findings are presented in Figure 3. The predominance of post-secondary educated youths suggests a relatively high level of cognitive preparedness and potential for civic engagement.

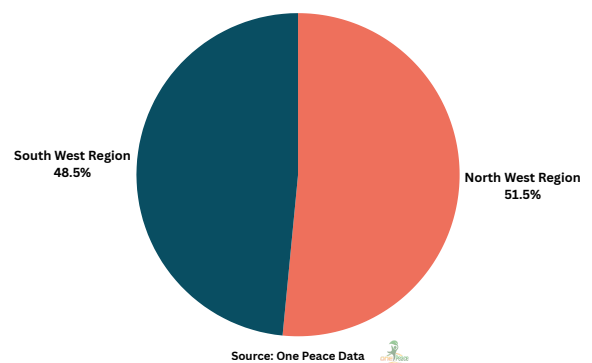
However, it also underscores the frustration that many young people face when educational achievement does not translate into economic opportunity. Cherney, et al. (2020) explore how factors like poor educational outcomes, institutional fragility, and personal grievances contribute to youth radicalisation, which aligns with this analysis. This disconnect contribute to grievances that fuel youth vulnerability to radicalisation, particularly in contexts of prolonged insecurity and institutional fragility.

Figure 3: Level of Education of Respondents



In terms of geographical distribution, 48.5% of respondents were based in the North West region, while 51.5% resided in the South West region, as illustrated in Figure 4. Deliberate efforts were made to ensure that data was collected in a manner that achieved near-equal representation from the two regions.

Figure 4: Geographical Distribution

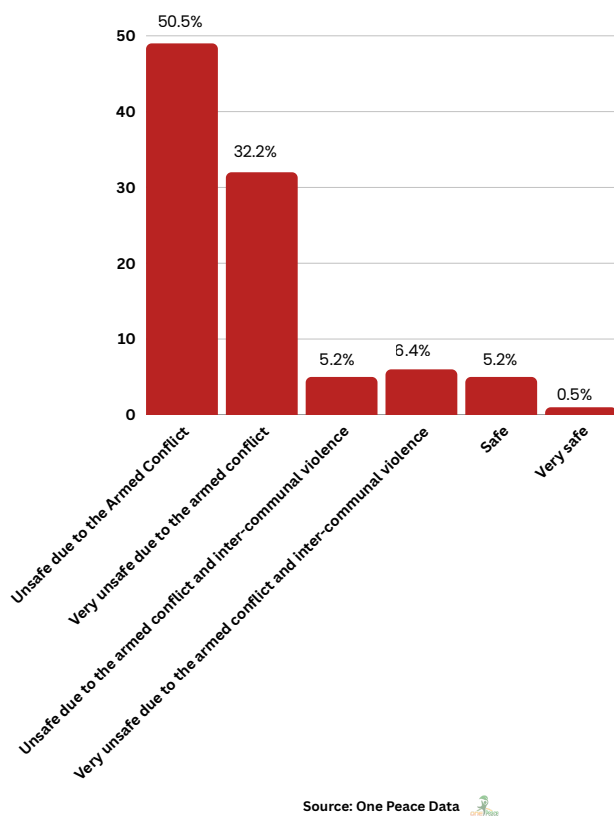


PERCEPTION OF SECURITY

A large majority of youth, 94.3%, do not feel safe in the NW/SW regions. According to the data presented in Figure 5, 50.5% of respondents report feeling unsafe as a result of the ongoing separatist conflict. Among them, 32.2% indicate feeling very unsafe specifically due to this conflict, while 6.4% report heightened insecurity stemming from both separatist violence and localized intercommunal tensions. Equally, 5.2% express feeling unsafe due to the combined impact of these conflict types.

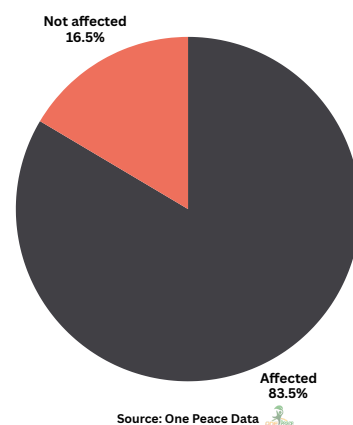
In contrast, only 5.2% of respondents feel safe, and a mere 0.5% describe themselves as feeling very safe. This data shows that there is widespread insecurity among youth in the two regions, driven by separatist and inter-communal conflicts. This vulnerability heightens the risk of radicalisation and undermines peace efforts.

Figure 5: Perception of Security



As illustrated in Figure 6, 83.5% of respondents in the two regions have been either directly or indirectly affected by the conflict, while the remaining 16.5% report no such impact. This high exposure rate reflects the pervasive nature of the conflict. This indicates that violence has penetrated deeply into everyday life. Such widespread impact contributes to collective trauma, erodes social cohesion, and increases susceptibility to radicalisation, especially among youth lacking access to protective structures.

Figure 6: Young People Directly or Indirectly Affected the Conflict

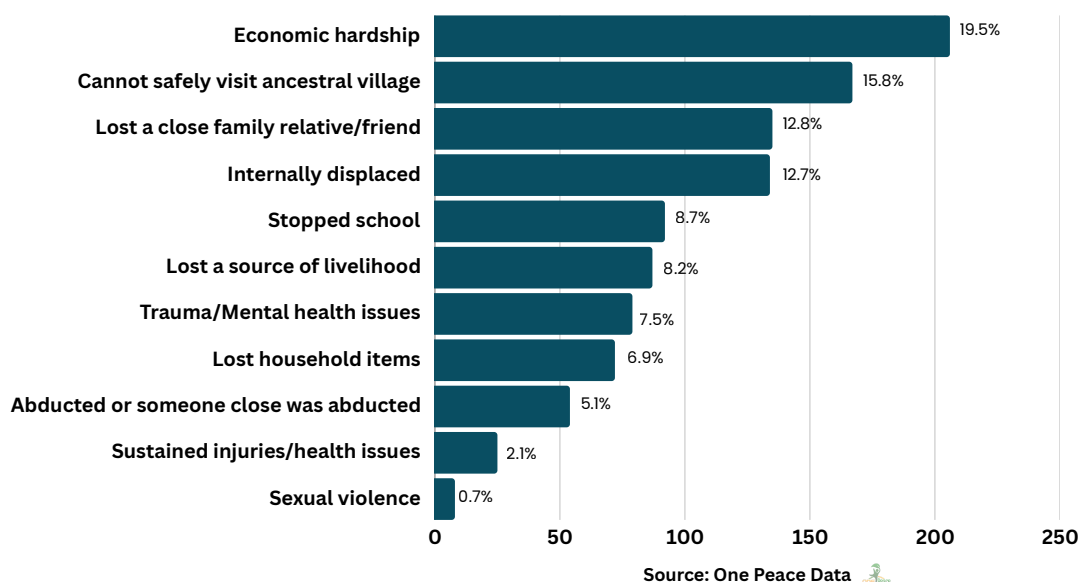


The data presented in Figure 7 shows the multi-dimensional impact of the conflict on young people across 11 critical domains, with economic hardship emerging as the most prevalent consequence, affecting 19.5% of respondents. The inability of 15.8% to safely access their ancestral villages reflects spatial insecurity and the erosion of cultural continuity. A significant share of the respondents, 12.8%, lost someone to the conflict in the two regions. Generally, the International Crisis Group reported that 6,500 people have died as a result of the conflict in the two regions. In addition, 583,112 are internally displaced, 459,605 returnees and 76,356 Cameroonian refugees in Nigeria (OCHA, 2025).

In this study, 12.7% of respondents reported being displaced since the conflict began, while 8.7% experienced educational disruption. A 2021 study by ACAPS indicated that 700,000 people were affected by school closures in Cameroon’s NW/SW regions, and at least 41% of schools remained nonfunctional as of 2023 (ACAPS, 2021; OCHA, 2023). Livelihood loss was reported by 8.2% of respondents, psychological distress by 7.5%, and material loss by 6.9%.

In addition, 5.1% indicated that they or someone close to them had been abducted. Corroborating this, the NW/SW Protection Cluster reported that, in April 2025, 42 people were abducted for ransom and 18 were physically tortured. Physical injury was cited by 2.1% of respondents, while 0.7% reported incidents of sexual violence. These findings reveal a landscape of compounded vulnerabilities that demand integrated, trauma-informed, and youth-centred interventions.

Figure 7: Effects of the Conflict on Youth

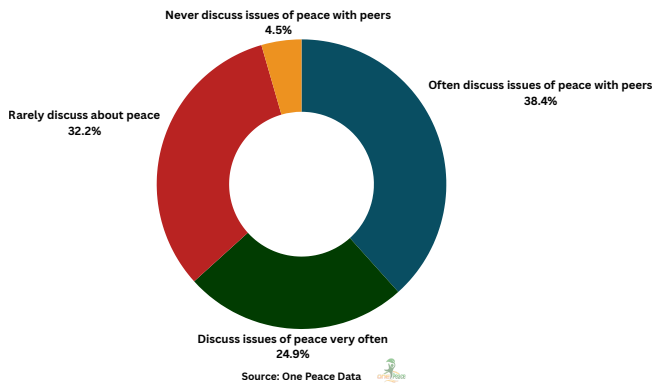


FROM PASSIVE TO ACTIVE PEACEBUILDERS

Data from the two regions indicates that 4.8% of young people never discuss peace with peers, 32.2% rarely do, while 38.4% often engage in such discussions, and 24.9% very often do so. This suggests a promising trend as presented in figure 8. Despite a notable degree of peer-to-peer dialogue on peace among youth, the nature of these conversations predominantly embodies a passive yearning for peace rather than substantive involvement in peacebuilding.

This reveals a critical disjunction between aspirational sentiment and engagement. Young people are not very actively in peacebuilding practice; participating in peacebuilding processes (Ballo & Achaleke, 2023). To transform this latent potential into constructive agency, it is imperative to fortify youth-led initiatives that foster participatory frameworks, amplify local voices, and cultivate ownership of peace efforts.

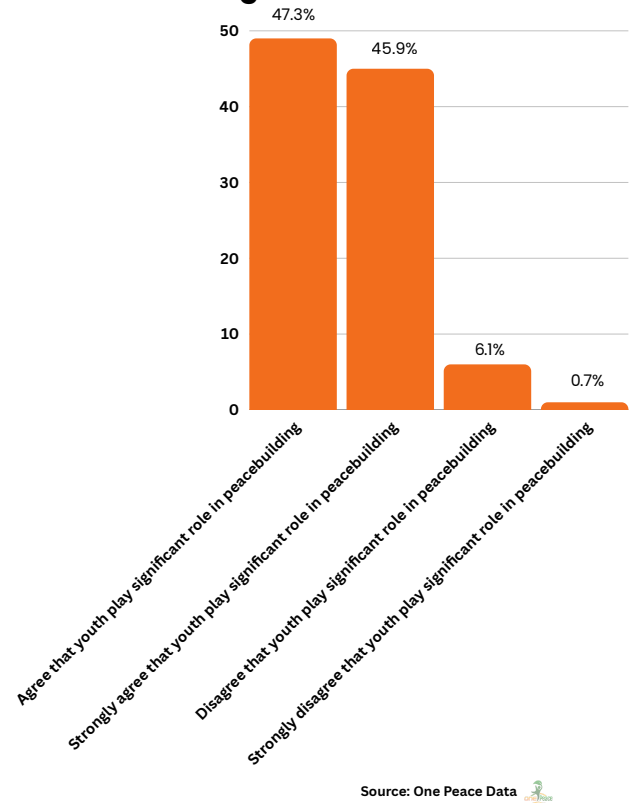
Figure 8: Frequency of Peace Conversations



In assessing youth contributions to peacebuilding, 47.3% of respondents agreed that young people are pivotal actors in promoting peace and countering violent extremism, with an additional 45.9% strongly affirming this view. Conversely, 6.1% disagreed, attributing peacebuilding responsibilities to the state, NGOs, and other institutional stakeholders, while 0.7% strongly rejected youth efficacy in this domain as seen on figure 9.

These findings reflect a dominant perception of youth as agents of change, affirming their potential to drive grassroots peace initiatives. However, the minority dissent points out persistent structural barriers and skepticism regarding youth capacity. Young people still fear that their voices will not be heard or considered (Achaleke, & Ballo, 2024). Bridging this divide requires institutional investment in youth-led platforms, capacity-building, and inclusive governance frameworks that validate and amplify youth agency in conflict transformation across the North West and South West regions.

Figure 9: Perception of Youth Contribution to Peacebuilding

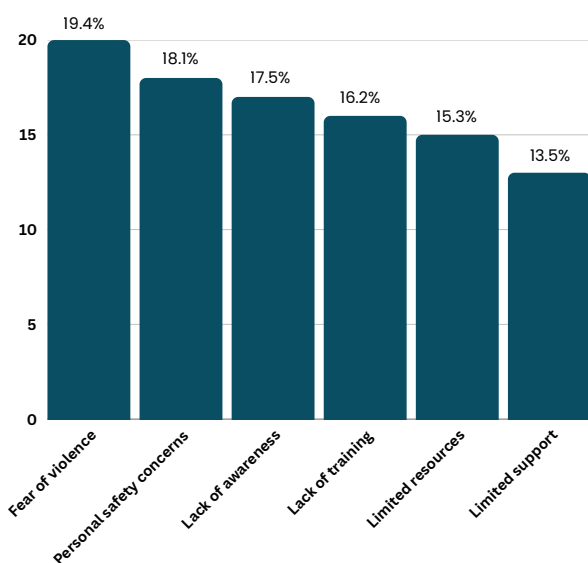


BARRIERS TO ACTIVE YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN PEACEBUILDING

A substantial majority (96.5%) of youth identified fears related to violence and personal safety as significant barriers to their participation in peacebuilding initiatives, with 54.6% of these respondents residing in the NW region and 45.4% in the SW region. Among the six key barriers identified, fear of violence recorded 19.4%. Personal safety concerns of being attacked by armed groups due to their involvement in peace efforts was at 18.1%. Equally, 17.5% was recorded for lack of awareness about peacebuilding programmes, while insufficient training to participate meaningfully had 16.2%. Limited resources recorded 15.3%, and limited support from community and government recorded 13.5% as shown on figure 10.

This data reveals a complex interplay of structural, informational, and psychological barriers that limits youth participation in peacebuilding. To this end, multi-sectoral strategy is needed to address these constraints. Without such strategy, youth potential remains underutilised. This weakens local resilience and undermines peacebuilding efforts.

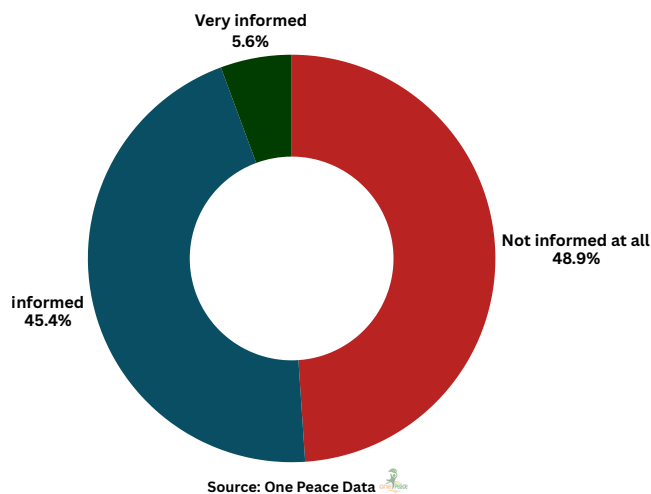
Figure 10: Barriers to Youth Engagement in Peacebuilding



Source: One Peace Data

Nearly half of the respondents, 48.9%, reported being uninformed about peacebuilding activities in the NW/SW regions of Cameroon. Meanwhile, 45.4% indicated that they were informed, and only 5.6% described themselves as very well informed. This distribution suggests a scarcity of peacebuilding activities, particularly those that are significant in scope, targeted in focus, and broad in reach. Consequently, opportunities for youth to engage meaningfully in peacebuilding, preventing and countering violent extremism initiatives, remain limited (see Figure 11).

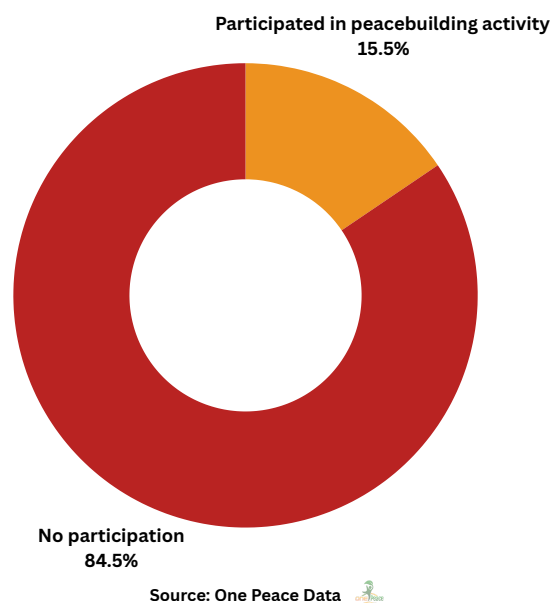
Figure 11: Knowledge on Peacebuilding Initiatives



Source: One Peace Data

Between August 2024 and July 2025, only 15.5% of youths in the North West and South West regions participated in peacebuilding activities, while a significant majority, 84.5%, did not engage in any such initiatives. This low participation rate reveals a critical gap in youth engagement in peacebuilding, preventing and countering violent extremism as presented on figure 12.

Figure 12: Peacebuilding Participation in the last 12 Months



Source: One Peace Data

Among the minority who were involved, 44.6% engaged in community service, reflecting a preference for localised, tangible interventions. Meanwhile, 23% participated in youth engagement activities, which often serve as platforms for dialogue, capacity-building, and fostering civic responsibility.

In addition, 18.9% were active in social media-based peace advocacy, leveraging digital tools to amplify messages of nonviolence and social cohesion. Lastly, 13.5% took part in peace campaigns, to increase public awareness and behavioural change towards a culture of peace as on figure 13. These finding suggest that while youth-led peacebuilding is occurring, it remains fragmented and under-resourced. Strengthening institutional support, enhancing strategic communication, and integrating youth into formal peace processes are essential to harness their potential as agents of sustainable peace.

Figure 13: Peacebuilding Activities Implemented

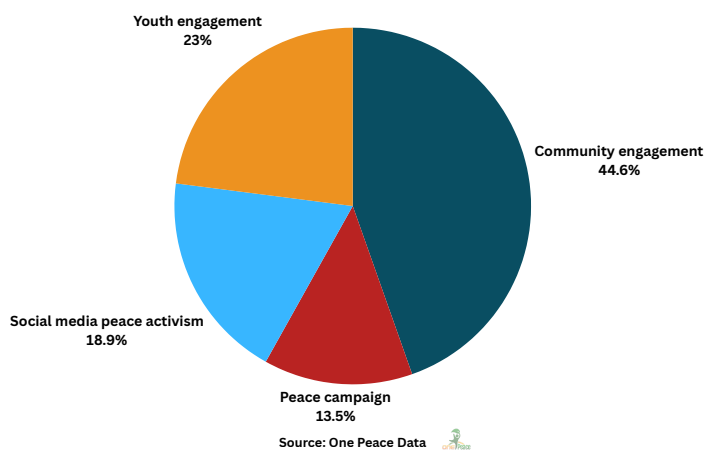


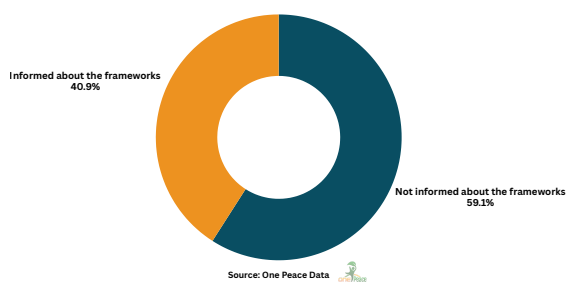
Figure 14 data reveal a significant awareness gap among respondents concerning key international frameworks on youth, peace, and security (YPS). With 59.1% indicating they had never heard of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2250 or the African Union Continental Framework on Youth, Peace and Security (AU CFYPS).

The findings suggest that these globally endorsed instruments have limited visibility or resonance at the local level. This lack of awareness reflects broader challenges in translating international policy into grassroots understanding, particularly in two regions under study.

The fact that 40.9% of respondents reported being aware of these frameworks is notable, indicating that a substantial minority has some level of exposure to global discourse on youth, peacebuilding and P/CVE. However, the disparity between those informed and those uninformed points to uneven access to information, possibly shaped by factors such as education level, geographic location, digital connectivity, or engagement with civil society networks.

This disjunction between international policy frameworks and local awareness shows a disconnect in the policy-to-practice continuum. It raises questions about the mechanisms through which global norms are disseminated and localised within communities most affected by conflict. The data also suggests that while international frameworks exist to support youth inclusion in peace processes, their relevance and applicability may be diminished if they are not widely understood or contextualised within local realities.

Figure 14: Knowledge of International Youth Peace and Security Frameworks



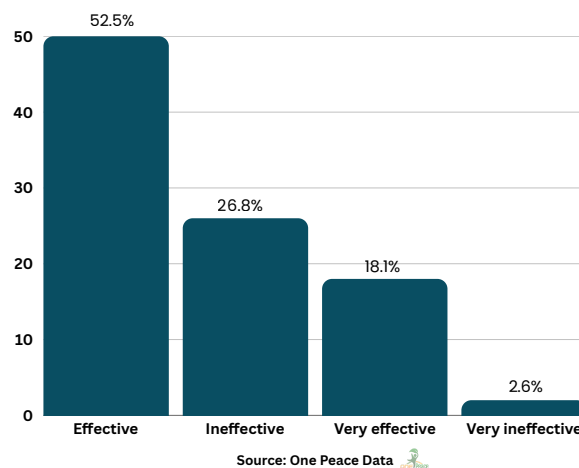
In assessing how informed young people are about Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 52.7% of youths in the NW/SW regions of Cameroon indicated that they had heard of SDGs but lacked understanding or awareness of how to contribute. Meanwhile, 26.3% reported active engagement, and 20.1% had never encountered the term. This distribution shows a significant gap in comprehension and participation. The data suggests that while general awareness exists, meaningful involvement remains limited. The disparity between recognition and action may reflect broader challenges in communication, education, or accessibility surrounding the SDGs and their relevance to everyday life.

SOCIAL MEDIA PEACE ACTIVISM

Regarding perception of social media as a tool for promoting peace and countering violent extremism, 52.5% of respondents consider it effective, while 18.1% view it as very effective as presented on figure 15. Conversely, 26.8% perceive social media as ineffective, and 2.6% regard it as very ineffective. These divergent views can be attributed to the persistent digital divide, which disproportionately affects youth in rural areas, limiting their access to digital

platforms and online peacebuilding initiatives. This technological disparity restricts participation and reinforces exclusion from critical discourses on nonviolence, civic engagement, and counter-extremism efforts.

Figure 15: Effectiveness of Social Media in Peace Activism



ENTRY POINTS FOR YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

The respondents identified seven peacebuilding activities they believe would most effectively engage youth. The most popular choice was workshops and training, with a percentage share of 18.6% out of the seven listed activities. This was followed by community service projects, and then economic empowerment initiatives, which received 15.4%.

Sports and cultural events closely followed with 15.2%. Agriculture and food production garnered 12.9%, while information and communication technology (ICT) and tech-based skills recorded 12.2%. Online campaigns were the least favoured, with 9.5% share. These are some activities identified to actively engage youth.

YOUTH VOICES IN DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES

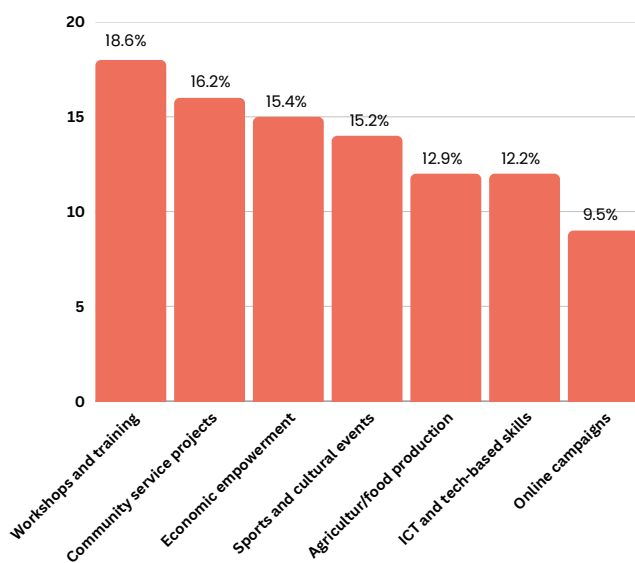
Figure 16 data reveal a strong preference among youth for interactive and skill-building peacebuilding activities, with workshops and training emerging as the most favoured. This shows that capacity-building must be prioritised strengthen the operational capacity of young people as peacebuilders and expand their knowledge base, which will shape their behaviours in the medium to long term. It also suggests a desire for capacity development and structured learning environments that foster agency and civic competence.

Community service and economic empowerment initiatives also rank highly. This indicate that youth value tangible contributions to their communities and pathways to financial independence, which is critical for resilience in conflict-affected settings. The interest in sports, cultural events, and ICT-based skills reflects the importance of creative and digital platforms for fostering social cohesion and innovation. The relatively low preference for online campaigns may point to scepticism about their impact or accessibility.

Findings reveal a significant perception gap among young people regarding their inclusion in community decision-making processes related to peace and security. A combined 70.4% of respondents, those who feel their voices are rarely (46.6%) or never heard (23.8%), express a sense of exclusion from these critical discussions. Achaleke and Ballo (2024) observe that many young people continue to fear that their perspectives will be overlooked or dismissed. This sentiment reflects a broader concern among youth about their limited influence in shaping policies and initiatives that directly impact their communities. This suggests that a majority of youth perceive limited influence or recognition in shaping policies and initiatives that affect their communities.

On the other hand, 29.6% of respondents, those who feel their voices are often (25.4%) or very often (4.2%) heard, indicate a more positive experience of engagement. However, the relatively low percentage (4.2%) of those who feel very often heard suggests that deep, consistent inclusion remains uncommon. This distribution points to a fragmented landscape of youth participation, where some experience meaningful involvement, while many others remain on the margins. The disparity reflect differences in geographic location, access to platforms for expression, and the responsiveness of local leadership structures. This is illustrated in figure 17.

Figure 16: Activities that Would Engage Youths



Source: One Peace Data 

Figure 17: Youth Voices in Decision-Making

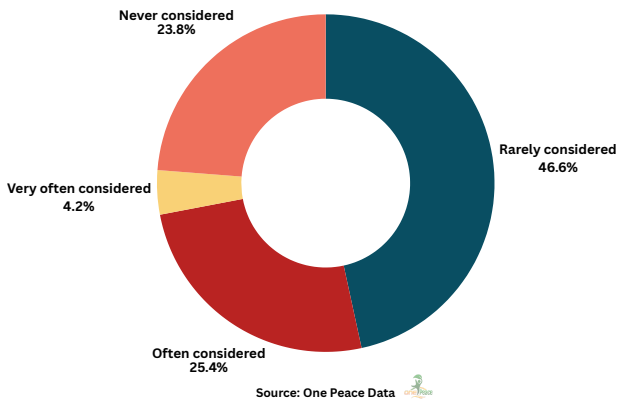
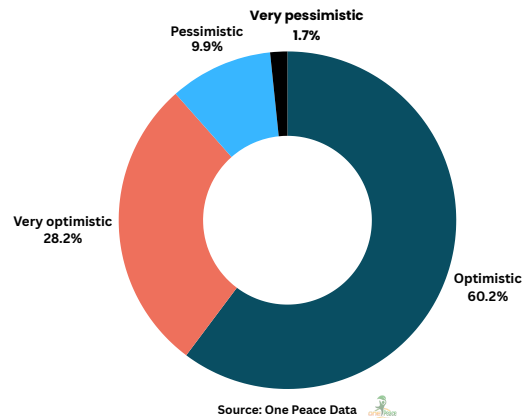


Figure 18: Optimism about Peace



LOOKING FOWARD

In terms of the prospects for peace in the NW/SW regions, 60.2% of youths are optimistic, 28.2% are very optimistic, while 9.9% are pessimistic and 1.7% are very pessimistic, as presented in Figure 18. The data reveals a predominantly hopeful outlook among youths regarding peace in the affected regions. A combined 88.4% express optimism to varying degrees, suggesting a strong belief in the possibility of resolution and stability. This sentiment reflect desire for change. On the other hand, the 11.6% who express pessimism, though a minority, show that scepticism and concern still persist. This could be tied to lived experiences, perceived stagnation in peace efforts.

CONCLUSION

This study has provided an appraisal of youth experiences within the conflict-affected NW/SW regions of Cameroon. As findings show, enduring violence in these two regions has precipitated complex protection concerns and developmental disruptions. The empirical evidence delineates the multidimensional consequences of armed conflict, while also revealing the adaptive capacities and resilience strategies employed by youth in navigating volatile environments. Although young people often talk about peace among their peers, their meaningful engagement peacebuilding remains significantly constrained. Challenges such as limited access to decision-making spaces, inadequate institutional support, and persistent security threats continue to undermine their agency and obstruct their integration into formal conflict transformation processes.



"Can't wait for global peace and stability and a return to normalcy in my region."

The findings affirm the necessity of designing conflict-sensitive and youth-inclusive interventions that transcend symbolic participation and foster co-ownership of peacebuilding agendas. Youth-identified modalities such as digital advocacy, agro-entrepreneurship, sports and cultural activities, and ICT-based skill development, offer contextually grounded entry points for enhancing social cohesion and countering violent extremism.

Based on the findings of this report, there is need to scale up targeted youth-focused peacebuilding initiatives and address safety concerns, as well as information gaps, to make peacebuilding and preventing/countering violent extremism more attractive to youth.



“Let’s focus on understanding each other’s perspectives, recognizing that our differences make us unique, yet our shared humanity unites us; empathy is key to building bridges, and we can disagree without being disagreeable.”

“We desperately need peace to be restored in our Region.”

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Unedited Quotes from Some Respondents



“Our government should bring measures that will actively include youths to participate in peacebuilding.”

“Religious leaders should be engaged to promote peace, as they can reach nearly every part of the two regions.”

“What I can say about peacebuilding in the Anglophones regions is that; we still need more effort because it’s never an easy task.”

“In order to promote and establish peace in the two regions, I suggest youth leaders avoid discussing topics that have to do with anglophones and francophones. This topic, at all stages, intensifies certain existing issues. For example, in the English-speaking regions of Cameroon, debating on anglophone/francophone matters cannot solve the crisis and the socio-economic situation of the region. Instead, discuss economic growth, agricultural activities, and cultural events to foster youth economic, social, and cultural thinking.”



Unedited Quotes from Some Respondents

"Please help to rebuild our society so we can live in peace."

"I think the main reason we are still far from peace is because youths/people in general are looking for a solo way out of the chaos."

"I believe peace is very important to humanity for developing good human resources and for maintaining love among citizens. Therefore, it is good to maintain peace."

"The role of youths in peacebuilding in the North West and South West regions of Cameroon is highly significant, as they play a crucial role owing to their youthfulness."

I believe engaging the youth in peacebuilding projects is a great initiative. Letting 'leaders of tomorrow' take control of their future especially in war torn regions is a great strategy to give hope to the youths despite fear of the unknown. Peace truly can be built when the youths are empowered. Empowering the youths either through skills-based or vocational trainings is a big step towards eliminating idleness which is one of the reasons why viable youths have taken on arms in the North West and South West regions.

There is a technology gap between rural and urban youths, and poor network coverage requires a combination of online and community sensitization initiatives to mobilize them. A whole generation has been uprooted from the natural pattern of education and skills training, leading some to disengage from constructive activities. This shift has reduced their sensitivity to discussions about peace, making it more challenging to involve them meaningfully in peacebuilding efforts.

Unedited Quotes from Some Respondents

"This survey is an awakening call for youths to take up the challenge in striving for change especially in the North West and South West regions relating to issues of peace."

"The youths especially in the Northwest where there is an ongoing crisis don't really have a voice to talk about peace building due to insecurity and personal safety concerns."

"we need peace in the North West and South West Regions of Cameroon. This crisis has been going on for so long."

"Something the youths are scared to involve in any peacebuilding as they are scared to be attacked in an attempt to do so."

"I just wish these regions would return to normalcy, because the rate of inflation on the prices of basic commodities"

"The only way to bring about peace and security is by engaging in workshops and training to develop peace-makers and activists, who can then go and preach the importance of peace and security in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)."

"We need our peace back!"

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About One Peace

One Peace is an apolitical, interfaith, and non-profit peacebuilding organisation registered in the Republic of Cameroon. The organisation was founded in August 2018 by Dr. Nyadi Francios Ndzi. One Peace's primary objective is to build resilient communities by empowering community members with the skills necessary to effectively participate in peacebuilding, conflict prevention, preventing/countering violent extremism and decision-making processes, particularly on issues that affect them. Our work aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and support the localisation of UNSCR 2250 as well as the African Union's Continental Framework for Youth, Peace and Security. Our strategy is to build peace through research, community-driven solutions and policy advocacy.

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Photo: Sabongida, Cameroon
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