

## UNPBF – PERCEPTION SURVEY: SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

Saferworld Kyrgyzstan together with its partners Foundation for Tolerance International, (FTI) IDEA CA, and Interbilim are implementing the “*Jash Araket*”<sup>1</sup> project supported by the UNPBF. This project aims at empowering young women and men of Kyrgyzstan to act as positive agents of changes within and beyond their communities. The project facilitates safe dialogue spaces for young women and young men in Kyrgyzstan to collectively identify and articulate their peace and security concerns, empower youth to advocate for action and accountability from their authorities, and create opportunities for meaningful youth participation in decision-making processes around peace and security. The project is piloting an innovative WhatsApp peacebuilding course, will launch youth-led community peace initiatives and advocacy campaigns, and will facilitate the first-ever youth-led report in Kyrgyzstan on youth perceptions of the Government’s progress on the commitments made to the Agenda 2030 global goals related to youth, gender, peace and security. This unique project will amplify the voices of youth and promote inclusive processes in a context where youth have been largely excluded from local, sub-national, and national-level decision-making.

The project aspires to achieve the following three outcomes:

- Young women and men from different geographic, ethnic, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds are empowered within their communities, and pro-actively and collectively contribute to peacebuilding solutions addressing youth concerns at local, sub-national, and national levels.
- Youth Leaders (YLS) (comprising 80 IG members and 20 semi-formal Youth Committee representatives) facilitate inclusive peacebuilding processes at local, sub-national and national levels, advocate for youth peace and security needs to be addressed by authorities, and ensure meaningful participation of youth in relevant policy processes
- Local and national authorities recognise young women and young men as key actors, participate in youth-led activities, include them in dialogue and decision-making processes around peace and security, and take steps, including through the provision of funding, to address their specific concerns and needs

In order to understand the perceptions of the project’s participants and to assess to what extent the planned outcomes were achieved, a perception survey is required. To this end, from March 2019 to July 2019, Saferworld and our local CSO partners (Foundation for Tolerance International and Interbilim) conducted 10 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) during the project’s youth camps<sup>2</sup>. On average, 9-12 young participants from each camp (approximately 10% of the total number of camp participants) participated in the FGDs, and 25 interviews were carried out with participants from the camps for schoolchildren. We facilitated the FGDs during the Day one of the camps. FGD and interview participants were selected to represent different ages (from 13 to 26), ethnicities, gender and youth from marginalized backgrounds. As part of perception survey, we also conducted three interviews with local stakeholders (local authorities) and three members of the Youth Committees during the Community Security Assessments and individual meeting to track progress towards achieving Outcomes 2 and 3.

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<sup>1</sup> The project partners came up with short title. The original title is *Strengthening capacity of young women and men in Kyrgyzstan to promote peace and security*

<sup>2</sup> One camp was held in March in Osh, and 10 more camps for schoolchildren in June and July in other target locations (Chui, Batken, Jalal-Abad and Osh provinces).

This helped us to understand youth perceptions on relationships and trust between young people and the authorities, Youth Committees and local authorities, and to better understand young people’s perceptions about their current abilities and spaces to articulate their peace and security needs. We have identified the following key questions for each indicator under Outcomes 1, 2 and 3:

<b>Table 1: Indicators and questions</b>	
<b>Outcome 1</b>	<b>Key questions for youth camp participants</b>
<b>Indicator</b>	
Number and percentage of young women and men who feel that access to trainings, safe spaces and engagement with peers enabled them to collectively articulate their peace and security needs and priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you ever participated in the camps/trainings/workshops like this one? If yes, how many, focused on what issues?</li> <li>• In your daily life do you feel you can share your concerns with anyone and that your concerns will be addressed? If yes, with whom do you share? If not, why?</li> <li>• What are the obstacles/challenges for your meaningful participation in the processes related to youth? Are any specific to you be a man/woman? And what are the opportunities? What would enable you? As a man/woman?</li> </ul>
Number and percentage of youth participants who feel able to discuss sensitive peace and security related issues with their peers and wider communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you feel you can share security issues with your friends, peers, families or communities? Why? Why not?</li> <li>• Could you please give us examples of the issues you could discuss with your peers/friends and etc? What issues relate specifically to young men/women?</li> <li>• How often do you discuss them and with whom?</li> <li>• Who do you think should be involved in security and peace processes/issues? Why?</li> </ul>
Number and percentage of all trained youth participants (at least 50% young women) who reported their identified peace and security concerns have been successfully addressed at community and sub-national levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What issues do you raise and to whom? What issues were specific to women/men?</li> <li>• What youth-related cases were successfully addressed by authorities?</li> <li>• What was the response? Were men/women affected differently by the response?</li> <li>• What youth-related cases were not successfully addressed? Why not? What should have been done differently?</li> </ul>
<b>Outcome 2</b>	<b>Key questions for members of Youth Committees</b>
<b>Indicator</b>	
Number and percentage of Young Leaders who report that local, sub-national and/or national level authorities have invited/engaged them in decision-making processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you ever interacted with local authorities?</li> <li>• Could you please share examples?</li> <li>• Was the interaction positive (if yes, what made it so) or negative (why was that)?</li> </ul>
<b>Outcome 3</b>	<b>Key questions for local authorities</b>
<b>Indicator</b>	
Number and percentage of trained local, sub-national and national authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you think are young people’s security needs? How do these needs differ amongst young men and young women?</li> </ul>

representatives who understand that young women and men have specific peace and security concerns and needs and recognise them as key actors in peacebuilding solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have you ever interacted with local youth in your work? Could you please share some examples of your interaction with them? How were your interactions with men and women different?</li> </ul>
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The qualitative component of the research consists of **31 in-depth interviews**, and **10 FGDs** with a total of **132 participants**. The total breakdown of respondents is as follows:

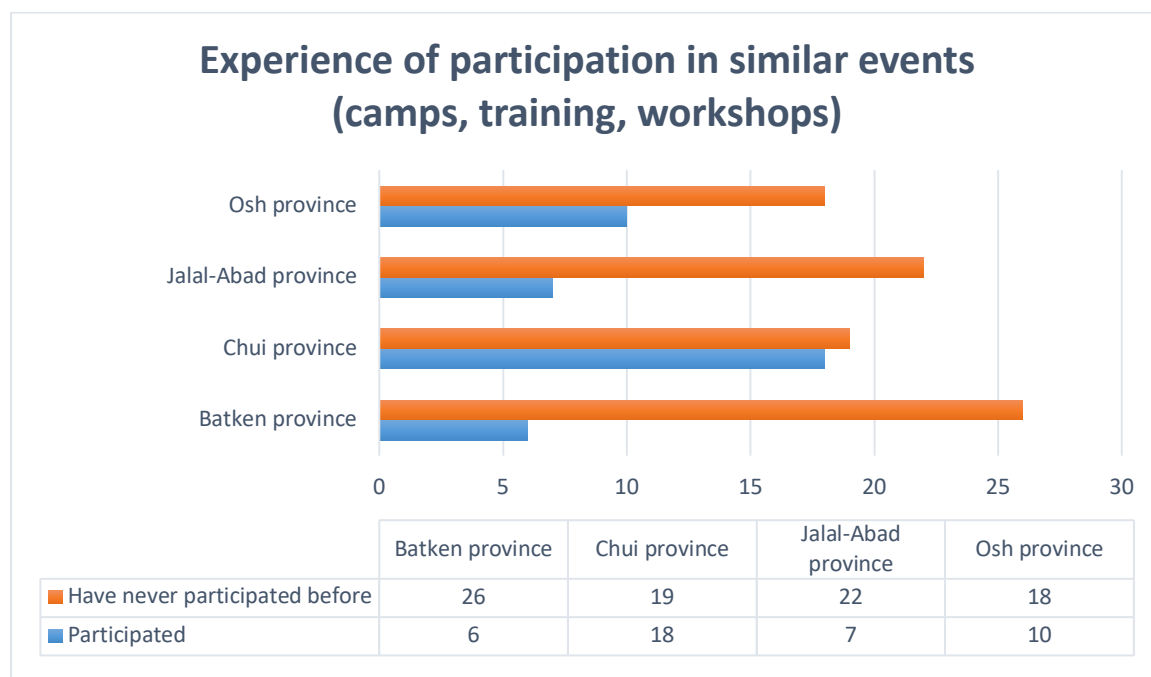
Respondent Category	Number of KIIs	Number of FGDs (Respondents)
Authorities from local administrations	3	
Youth Committees	2	
State Agency for Youth and Sport Affairs	1	
Youth camps' participants		10
Participants of camps for schoolchildren	25	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>10 FGDs with 101 participants</b>

	Number	Percentage		Number	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>			<b>Location</b>		
Male	64	48.5	Uzgen	10	8%
Female	68	51.5	Ak-Tash	9	7%
<b>Ethnicity</b>			Kotormo	10	8%
Kyrgyz	100	75.7	Kyzyl-Kiya	10	8%
Uzbek	14	10.6	Sovetskoe	1	1%
Tajik	3	2.3	Kashkar-Kyshtak	1	1%
Tatar	3	2.3	Kulundu	1	1%
Russian	7	5.3	Osh	10	7%

Lezhgian	1	0.8	Jalal-Abad	10	7%
Turk	2	1.5	Bazar-Korgon	10	7%
Kazakh	2	1.5	Taigaraev	10	7%
Age of the participants (youth camps)			Batken	13	10%
13-17 years old	84	63.6	Kant	9	7%
17-26 years old	42	31.8	Chui	19	14%
Older than 26	6	4.6	Belovodskoe	7	5%
			Tokmok	2	2%
				132	100.00%

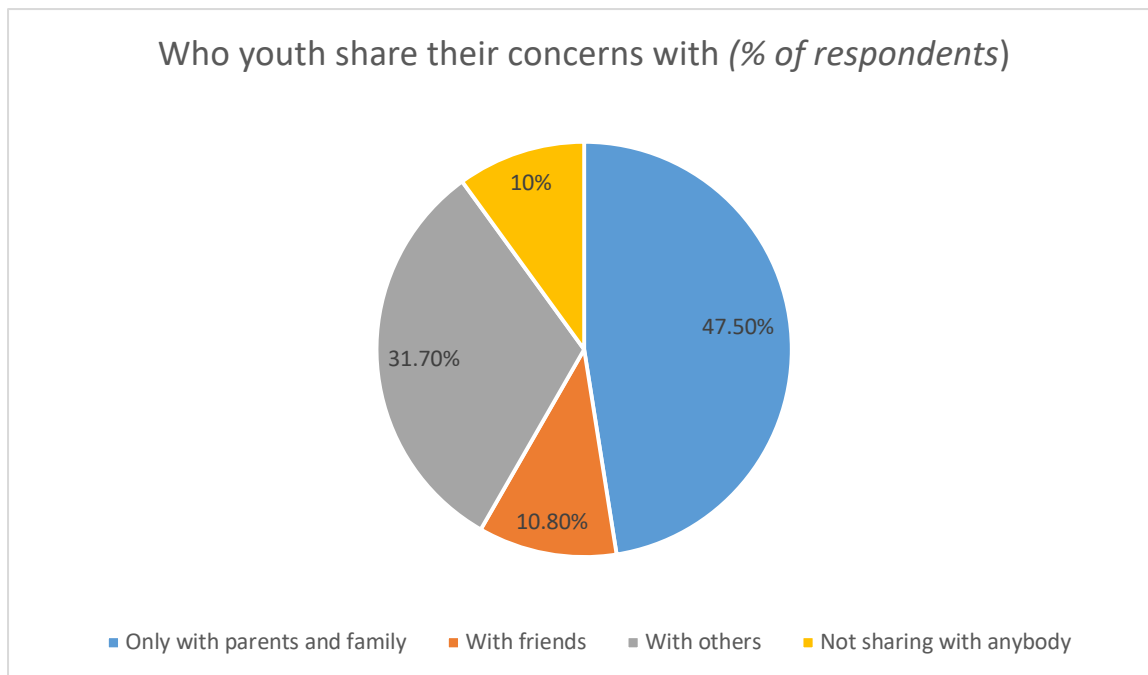
**OUTCOME INDICATOR 1A: YOUNG WOMEN AND MEN WHO FEEL THAT ACCESS TO TRAININGS, SAFE SPACES AND ENGAGEMENT WITH PEERS ENABLED THEM TO COLLECTIVELY ARTICULATE THEIR PEACE AND SECURITY NEEDS AND PRIORITIES**

In total we asked 126 young participants of youth camps (101 by means of FGDs, and 25 in-depth interviews) about *their previous experience of participation in the youth training, workshops or camps*. 69 of 126 camp participants reported that they have never participated in any activity of this type. Below is the detailed chart that shows the proportion of youth who have experience in participation in the strengthening capacity activities. 47 out of 69 respondents who have never participated in any training, workshops and camps are schoolchildren.



We also asked our young respondents *with whom they feel able to share their concerns*. The majority of participants noted that they usually share personal problems with their mothers or with family members in the hope that their family will support them in solving of their problems. As noted by one FGD participant, he can share his concerns only with parents and no one else, as his peers may laugh at him, older young people may ask for money to find solutions, and teachers seem not to care. 47,5% of our respondents share their concerns only with their family (see the graph below). However, some young people stated that they share problems with peers, close friends, or girl-friends (about 11%). Some mentioned that they share concerns about security issues only with classmates, because their parents tell them to solve street issues in the street.

On youth interaction with authorities in general since our participants were very young they could not bring many examples of interaction with authorities. However, from what we have we can conclude youth have varying experiences of interaction with local authorities, from very negative to positive. For instance, one of the participants stressed that he would never share his concerns with anyone or would go to authorities for help. As he pointed out, in the state structures issues of money extortion, abuse of power and corruption exist. One of the FGD participants brought his personal experience of interaction with authorities. He described how his family had raised the issue of land scarce and unfair land distribution/sharing with the authorities several times but the issue was never resolved, and authorities even did not take them seriously. Another participant highlighted that she had never shared her concerns with authorities because she did not trust them at all. She and her close friends believed that authorities would never listen to young people. However, one young participant from Batken province shared an example of positive interaction with authorities; finding a solution to the issue of a limited access to water in their community. He said local parliamentarians added some funds to solve the issue, and in short period of time they solved the problem.



As highlighted above, some of our respondents had positive experiences when interacting with authorities and participated in finding solutions to local community concerns. However in most of the cases, young people faced numerous obstacles in meaningful participation. As one of the young respondents highlighted *“in general, we are trying to be a part of decision making, but there are questions, where youth cannot be involved.”* Some young female participants stressed that they do not even have the right to participate in planning their own future. For instance, parents usually decide where their daughters will, what profession they will choose, and when and whom to marry.

*“Youth (especially young girls) is not aware of their rights, and about ways to share concerns with local authorities. Girls in Kyrgyzstan usually are not allowed to participate in public life. Our parents think that “good” girls need to stay at home, and do home-related activities. By this they limit our opportunities for development.”* – noted by a 19-year old girl from Osh.

Many respondents reported that youth are inactive because young people do not believe they have power, and this is the main obstacle. Some of respondents from Batken brought an example when their concerns were addressed, when the Mayor’s office learnt about the issue from youth. They said that the Mayor supported them and that support and encouragement motivated them very much to continue being active. However, some participants were reluctant to agree with these statements stressing that incompetency, nepotism and corruption is rampant among authorities. *“Authorities pretend to care only before elections, they will never pay attention to the issues of youth”* – said one of the FGD participants.

Participants emphasized there is the large gap between the generations as not many young people work for the authorities, even at the local level.

*“At the present time, youth use social networks such as Facebook and Instagram, but authorities say that social networks are to be blamed for all negative issues. By this, authorities discredit*

*themselves and are being perceived almost as people living in 20<sup>th</sup> century, instead of 21<sup>st</sup> century.”*  
– noted by one young participant.

Young people reported that they always cautiously decide what to do and what to say, especially in relation to security issues. They reported that no one cares about their issues, even if they raise them. In most cases, no one would even thank a person if he/she solved the issue and this demotivates youth. Moreover, youth being the mirror of the society is divided/diffused based on places of origin, social background, ethnicity, gender “and unless they unite their capacities and efforts their issues will stay without proper attention.” – stressed participants of the FGDs.

*“The mentality and culture of Kyrgyzstani people does not allow young people to speak up. Anytime youth try to raise their voices it would be taken negatively by the elder population. Therefore youth prefer not to speak, especially young girls, they would never share their concerns with anyone. This is all about our context and mentality.”* – highlighted by a young female participant of the FGD.

Kyrgyz legislation allows young people to nominate other young people as candidates for the members of local parliament, but the population will rarely elect young people. Young respondents noted that this is because of the local culture, because they do not have any experience in public life, and because most of their peers need to work as labor migrants in Russia. And, young people who participate in this kind of camps are considered as idlers/lazy people.

#### **OUTPUT INDICATOR 1.2.1: NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF YOUTH PARTICIPANTS WHO FEEL ABLE TO DISCUSS SENSITIVE PEACE AND SECURITY RELATED ISSUES WITH THEIR PEERS AND WIDER COMMUNITIES**

The majority of the respondents are eager to raise issues such as garbage, but not peace and security concerns with their peers. They prefer not to raise and discuss these issues with anyone. Notably, the respondents of the older group from 17 to 26 were comparatively open with the facilitators when discussing their peace and security concerns. However, even they noted that they rarely share these sensitive concerns with their peers because they were cautious of being mocked, and not with the wider community because they would not be perceived as acknowledged actors.

- “I share my security issues with my friends and my elder brother. For example, I would never tell issues related to racketeering to my parents, because I can address them on my own or together with my brother”, commented a young man Salim
- “Many young men/boys don’t want to share their security issues with parents. I think security issues as racketeering can be resolved without engagement of parents. If I share this kind of issues with my parents, they would not be able to understand me, and I don’t want problems with my parents. I don’t even feel comfortable to share this kind of issues with the school administration,” responded a young man Azat.
- “I have never faced any serious security issues before. If I face such kind of problems I will share with my parents and friends. Only even my parents and friends are not able to understand me I will go to the school administration,” told Nazina.

It is worth noting that participants from the camps for schoolchildren faced some challenges in understanding what “security issues” are. Among participants of the youth camps Saferworld organized in March there was no an issue of misunderstanding the term of “security issues.” This might be because of the age – the participants of youth camps were from 18 to 26 years old, whereas at the camps for schoolchildren from 13 to 17 years old.

Among the respondents representing older youth, the security issues they raised were very different depending on their gender. Girls, for instance, were stressing the issues of early marriages, limited choice in their future lives, and limited access to education, street harassment etc. Whereas male respondents were sharing the issues of school bullying, and racketeering. Interestingly, neither girls nor boys were eager to share their security issues with anyone. Most of the respondents were afraid of rumours that would spread around their security issues. In addition, they felt their own families would disapprove of them sharing security needs/concerns with peers because they could view this as they ‘washing their dirty linen in public’.

Interestingly, young people stressed a lot on gender related issues. For instance, one young man from Jalal-Abad stated: *“I know that this might sound shocking to most of men, but I am really interested in gender equality issues. I think that women in our society suffer a lot and not only from being bride-kidnapped but in all aspect of life. I honestly cannot discuss these issues with anyone.”* Another young man added that *“girls are future mothers, who are responsible for raising young people. I think we need to strengthen the capacity of girls, and empower them. But being a man and raising this issue I risk becoming a target for mocking.”*

The respondents also said that because of gender related issues young men are also experiencing some issues. For instance, they are expected to earn money, *“and therefore most of us leave to Russia to work as labor migrants. I discuss this issue with my friends, because many of them probably would also leave to Russia.”*

On involvement of different actors in peace and security processes, participants of camps for schoolchildren responded that their parents, police, teachers and president should be involved. *“Mainly the law-enforcement bodies. Then parents and community leaders like head of AO. Law-enforcement bodies, because this is their direct responsibility, and getting money for this service. The head of AO, because he is responsible for everything in the neighborhood, including safety and security.”* – noted a young respondent from Kotormo.

Participants of youth camps for elder groups noted that everyone should be involved, and everyone should contribute to peacebuilding. *“More than half of our country's population is youth. Young people are proactive, energetic, they can offer effective, innovative methods of solving problems, so you need to draw more on their self-development.”*- noted a young female from Osh.

## OUTCOME INDICATOR 2a: NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF ALL TRAINED YOUTH PARTICIPANTS (AT LEAST 50% YOUNG WOMEN) WHO REPORTED THEIR IDENTIFIED PEACE AND SECURITY CONCERNS HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFULLY ADDRESSED AT COMMUNITY AND SUB-NATIONAL LEVELS

To have comprehensive information for this indicator we asked young project participants if they have already tried prior to this project to raise and even address some of the issues they are facing. In this section of the perception survey report we are identifying the youth issues and highlighting their past attempts to raise and address youth issues.

The type of issues raised by youth is very dependent from the location of their origin. For instance, in the remote Batken province young people tried to raise issues of limited access to education, absence of clean drinking water, border skirmishes with neighbouring Tajikistan. In Uzgen young participants of camps for schoolchildren have not tried raise the issues, but overall they noted the need of raising the issues of early underage marriages, religious issues – like parents making their daughters to wear burkas. Youth from Chui province noted their attempts to raise the issues of garbage in the towns and



villages they were from. In Osh young people were trying to raise and address the issues of people living with disabilities. FGD participants of the older youth group from Jalal-Abad have not yet raised any issues to anyone, while girls from the villages of Jalal-Abad province noted that they usually face problems with wearing hijabs to schools. For instance, the young female FGD participant from Jalal-Abad noted that *“the school administration scornfully refers to schoolgirls who wear headscarves at school, and as a result prohibits any initiatives initiated by girls at school.”* To resolve the issue schoolgirls who wear headscarves together with their parents, repeatedly appealed to the Regional Department of Education and Kaziyat to help with obtaining permission to wear a headscarf at school. But, as our female respondents from Jalal-Abad noted *“no result was achieved.”*

In every local administration there is the special department that works on addressing the youth-related issues. And our participants shared and discussed what kind of issues were successfully addressed by the local authorities. Most of our respondents from Chui province highlighted the construction and renovation of kindergartens and playgrounds as significant youth-related issues that were successfully addressed. In 5 out of 11 communities youth participants noted the installation of trash bins as one of the significant solutions introduced by local authorities. In Kotormo youth participants noted the issue of racketeering that was solved by the local authorities. Generally, it is worth noting that most of the participants have never interacted with authorities or know about any of authorities’ initiatives. Moreover, respondents from southern provinces of Kyrgyzstan noted that:

*“We don’t think that the local authority is competent to solve the problems, and that’s why the people do not trust the mayor’s office and other officials. We didn’t see that the mayor decided any issues related with youth. But, the racketeering was mainly solved by the school children, because they started to report concrete cases. Also, the local religious leaders had a great impact to resolve issues among schools, because they organized meetings at schools with youth”- one of the respondents from Kyzyl-Kiya.*

Hence, the majority of young respondents do not think authorities are addressing youth-related issues. They stressed that there are many grievances, security concerns, and threats towards young people that are left without any attention from the authorities. One of the FGD participants from Batken stated that:

*“Youth-related issues are left without any solution, this is because of the limited resources of our authorities to solve the issues. We suffer a lot from severe unemployment, and poverty. How do you think authorities could solve these issues? Local authorities need to prioritize the issues and allocate funds for that issues. If you were the responsible authority would you choose support for youth through capacity building trainings or allocation of funds for people/families where there are 8 children, and parents are working in Russia. We do understand that this is complex issue, and that youth is present and future of our country, and we need to unite and to advocate jointly for changes. But most of our peers need to work to survive and support their families, and they do not have time for all these things.” – young respondent from Batken.*

## **OUTCOME INDICATOR 2b: NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF YOUNG LEADERS WHO REPORT THAT LOCAL, SUB-NATIONAL AND/OR NATIONAL LEVEL AUTHORITIES HAVE INVITED/ENGAGED THEM IN DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES**

We asked the members of Youth Committees and representatives of State Agency of Youth and Sport Affairs on their interaction with authorities. It should be noted that we only asked members of the

two Youth Committees in Sovetskoye and Kulundu, and both are very different. Sovetskoye municipality have began their active work with youth in 2018, when they established the Youth Committee. They started with only one member but this has now increased to 5. However, in Kulundu where the Youth Committee was established in 2013, the youth activists members of the Youth Committee are very active and they successfully work and address youth issues for the last 6 years.

Interviewees gave several examples of their interaction with local authorities. For example, in Sovetskoye municipality the Youth Committee initiated and implemented days of cleaning the village's streets, and sport events. In Kulundu, local authorities are very supportive. The Kulundu administration even allocates funds for salaries of the Youth Committee's members, for equipment of the Youth Committee's premises, and construction of playgrounds in the village on the request of the Youth Committee's members. In Kulundu, youth activists together with authorities, imams, and police organise many of PVE related activities. Their successful advocacy also allowed them to establish Youth Centers in every village under their municipality. As mentioned above the interaction in both municipalities is quite positive. However, it had not been like this from the beginning. In both cases the members of the Youth Committees faced many obstacles and misunderstanding of authorities and even local communities. In Sovetskoye the members of the Youth Committee thought that authorities had changed their attitude because of the changed national-level policy on youth, and of course because local NGOs and INGOs provided some support for them "to bring positive results and to demonstrate the true power of youth" – said our interlocutor. In Kulundu, the interaction was not so positive at the very beginning. As our interlocutor highlighted "at the beginning there was not any support from the local authorities. They did not believe we could bring a positive contribution. Therefore, we wrote proposals and submitted them to the INGOs, and succeeded in getting funds for the work of Youth Center. When authorities saw the impact we made, they recognized the capacity we have." However, youth activists from Kulundu wished authorities could be more supportive. They stress that even with the recognition by the local authorities, not many things have changed. "They used to promise to support but kept ignoring us. Therefore, we decided that members of the Youth Committee needed to become members of the local parliament, and challenge the system. We nominated some members of the Youth Committee as candidates to the local parliament." – shared their experience youth activists from Kulundu Youth Committee. At the present time 3 of their members have become the members of the local parliament "because people knew us and felt the positive impact we had made, they voted for us" – noted one of the Kulundu Youth Committee members. This gave them the opportunity to participate at the sessions, and advocate for youth issues solution.

As for the State Agency of Youth and Sport Affairs they are the main implementers of the youth policy in Osh province therefore they need to interact with authorities on a daily basis. The State Agency of Youth and Sport Affairs work in the framework of the nationally approved 2017-2020 Youth Development Programme. Moreover, according to other national legislation local authorities have to cooperate with the Agency. The Agency's mandate require them to work in all municipalities of Osh province. Therefore they need to work closely with district administrations, because district administrations lead on local activities aiming at youth development since the Agency does not have representatives in every district. Our interlocutor noted that in general, most of youth live in the villages, since Kyrgyzstan is a rural country and therefore, local authorities do pay their attention to the work with youth. As an example of interaction with authorities our respondent shared his experience of joint PVE and prevention of recruitment of youth by violent groups' activities. He thought that there was positive impact in terms of increased knowledge and skills. At the moment, the Agency they work on improvement of youth participation in decision-making processes. In this

regard, they face a challenge of low interest of youth to participate, because in most the cases active youth leave to the cities, and those who stay in the villages often are too busy with their home staff.

### OUTCOME INDICATOR 3a: NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF TRAINED LOCAL, SUB-NATIONAL AND NATIONAL AUTHORITY REPRESENTATIVES WHO UNDERSTAND THAT YOUNG WOMEN AND MEN HAVE SPECIFIC PEACE AND SECURITY CONCERNS AND NEEDS AND RECOGNISE THEM AS KEY ACTORS IN PEACEBUILDING SOLUTIONS

Although this indicator is focused on training authorities, we decided to understand their perceptions before attending the training. To this end we interviewed three employees of local self-governance agencies in Batken town, Jalal-Abad town and Kashkar-Kyshtak municipality of Kara-Suu district in Osh province. The officials representing Batken and Kashkar-Kyshtak were male, and the official from Jalal-Abad female. Interestingly, both male respondents did not see any differences between security concerns of women and men, whereas the female respondent recognized the difference between challenges and security concerns faced by women and men. For instance, the official from Kashkar-Kyshtak noted that he did not see any difference between concerns and issues among young men and women. Whereas, our interlocutor from Jalal-Abad stressed that young women face more barriers for further development even within their own families. Reportedly, the security concerns in towns and villages are also different, but mostly they were related to social-economic issues. All respondents highlighted the high rate of labor migration and its consequences for the local communities. Two out of three respondents discussed youth as a source of troubles and problems.

When asked about the security needs of young women and men, the Vice mayor of **Batken town** highlighted that at the present time, one of the biggest security problems of young people is joining different illegal groups by them. As he stressed many young people do not have their own way of thinking and do not know how to make critical analysis; and in terms of security these young people are greatly influenced. Nowadays critical thinking of youth should be related to the following factors: they should be very careful not to be engaged in extremist network.

One more condition that influences the security of youth is that fake information is spread through different internet sources. According to our interlocutor from Batken because of the fake news many of young people got involved in different conflicts. Therefore he thought that all actors need to be involved in prevention of spreading fake news among youth.

The interviewee from Batken did not see any difference between issues of young women and men. He believed that in their district security needs for boys and girls are the same. Though he acknowledged that there is limitation of access of girls in participation in public activities just because of their gender.

The authority representing **the Jalal-Abad town** administration noted that young people were very gullible, tempting offers with high offered wages attract everyone. Generally, her responses echoed the responses of authority representing the Batken regarding the spread and influence of fake news among young people. However, she acknowledged the huge difference between security needs of girls and boys, and various challenges girls and boys face in the local context.

Authorities **at the village level** thought that young people in their community feel safe, and they did not face any particular security issues. “In our municipality young people are busy with their daily responsibilities of supporting their families with cattle and other household and they do not have any

security concerns,” – reported one of the local authority respondents from Kashkar-Kyshtak. The most significant issue to be solved in regards to youth is the perspectives of labour migrants’ children. He noted that “the abandonment of migrants’ children is currently a pressing issue. They are left without parental attendance, in the care of relatives. Migrants’ children do not receive proper upbringing, attention from parents, and the most important needs are not met.” To solve the issue they closely cooperate with school administration, keep record of migrants’ children, and financially help vulnerable families. He gave an example of the cooperation with INGO Search for Common Ground on addressing the issues of labour migrants’ children in the framework of their Jashstan Project.<sup>3</sup>

When asked about the examples of interaction with youth the Vice- Mayor of **Batken** noted that they carry out a lot of work related to youth. The Youth Committee under the Mayor’s office considered many issues related to youth. As an example he brought sport activities to prevent smoking, drug addiction alcohol abuse and other. He also noted that together with local leaders they carry out public awareness raising activities on prevention of youth involvement into extremist groups.

The representative of **Jalal-Abad town** administration brought one example, when in 2013, being the chairperson of the city women’s council, she organized a meeting with schoolchildren, especially girls of school age, where they raised the issues of early marriage and suicide among minors.

**As the Kashkar-Kyshtak** administration representative stated there is no separate staff members to work with young people in their municipality. He noted that they work to solve youth issues in the framework of the Search for Common Ground Jashstan Project. Last year, the municipality provided some financial support for the implementation of the community youth’s initiative to install benches in the park near the House of Culture under the Jashstan Project. He also added that they organized sports events to strengthen friendship among young people. In addition to that the local administration initiated and implemented the campaign “on countering terrorism and radicalization with the participation of young people together with law enforcement agencies and District Education Department under the Koopsuz Ordo Project.” As another example of authorities’ attempts to solve youth issues he shared their experience of a clean-up campaign with the participation of young people.

To conclude the interviewed authorities in all three provinces keep doing the same activities of CVE campaigns, clean-up activities and sport events claiming that all of them are youth related activities aiming at addressing the youth issues. All of aforementioned allow us to conclude that in general authorities do not tend to differentiate specific peace and security concerns of young people. Furthermore, none of them told us they involve young people in decision-making or identifying youth issues and the ways of youth issues’ solution.

## CONCLUSION

Since March 2019 to July 2019 Saferworld together with our local CSO partners FTI, IDEA and Interbilim jointly collected data to measure the ability of youth to share their concerns, and their level of access to development trainings/workshops and other spaces; we also asked the local authorities to understand if they see youth as positive actors in peacebuilding and differentiate the peace and security concerns of young women and men. Below is the brief description of findings demonstrating the present data:

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<sup>3</sup> The UNPBF funded youth project of the Search for Common Ground

**Outcome indicator 1a:** young women and men who feel that access to trainings, safe spaces and engagement with peers enabled them to collectively articulate their peace and security needs and priorities

85 respondents out of 126 young interlocutors have never participated in any strengthening capacity youth activities. Most of those who have never participated are from Batken province (26 of 86 respondents that never participated).

**Outcome indicator 1.2.1:** Number and percentage of youth participants who feel able to discuss sensitive peace and security related issues with their peers and wider communities

It should be noted that most of our respondents representing the age category from 14 to 17 years felt difficulties in understanding what “security concerns” mean. In order to have open discussion we facilitated separate FGDs with girls and boys. Hence, the peace and security concerns were very different in FGDs with boys from issues raised by FGDs with girls. However, participants in both types of FGDs noted that they are not ready or willing to share their sensitive peace and security concerns with anyone. About 45% of our young respondents noted that they are not ready to articulate their peace and security or any concerns with anyone but their families and close relatives. Especially, youth are not ready to discuss their concerns with authorities. For young people authorities seem to be isolated or difficult to be reached to solve any of the youth concerns.

**Outcome indicator 2a:** Number and percentage of trained youth who reported their identified peace and security concerns has been successfully addressed at community and sub-national levels.

To measure the current perceptions we tried to identify the youth issues and highlight some of the past attempts by young people to raise and address their own issues. In remote areas like border communities of Batken province, the young respondents had tried to raise issues of shortage of drinking water and scarce of land for pastures; and border conflicts with neighbouring Tajikistan. In urban areas like Osh, Uzgen and Jalal-Abad young people highlighted issues of drop-out from schools of young girls, in particular those wearing hijabs/headscarves. Majority of young interviewees noted that authorities were not able to address their concerns.

**Outcome indicator 2b:** Number and percentage of young leaders who report that local, sub-national and/or national level authorities have invited/engaged them in decision-making.

We asked the representatives of existing Youth Committees to see if they have experience of engagement in decision-making processes at the local level. None of our respondents explicitly highlighted any examples of their participation in decision-making processes. Usually authorities engages with youth when the latter organize sport events or other events like clean-up campaigns.

**Outcome indicator 3a:** Number and percentage of trained local, sub-national and national authority representatives who understand that young women and men have specific peace and security concerns and needs and recognize them as key actors in peacebuilding solutions.

To understand the perception of youth for this indicator we tried to identify the current level of understanding among local and sub-national authorities. It is interesting to note that all three respondents we interviewed noted that there were not so many of peace and security concerns of young people. Moreover, male respondents do not see any difference between peace and security concerns of young women and men.