

# Urban Peace Labs: Evaluation Report





# Introduction

This paper reports on the processes and findings of the Colombia Urban Peace Labs, a pilot program created by UN Habitat in partnership with the Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje (SENA) a public institution (assigned to the Colombian Ministry of Labor) in charge of providing social and technical training, to promote youth-led entrepreneurship and innovation as drivers of peace, resocialization, and resilience in Colombia in the wake of the 2016 peace accord between the government and the rebel group FARC.

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The program also coincides with the recent adoption by United Nations Security Council of resolution 2250, committing to the importance of youth and women as essential to the peace process.

The program funded eight projects initiated by or centered on young people in and around Bogota, Cali, Pereira, Manizales, and La Dorada, areas impacted by violence, systemic displacement and normalized conflict. Its main goal was to assess whether youth-led innovations, in particular social entrepreneurship, can aid in reconciliation processes and help urban communities recover and build resilience.

The program took place over a timeline of 6-12 months, and mainly involved youth between 6 and 25 years old. Projects were tailored to the communities and to the ages of the youth involved, with older beneficiaries developing entrepreneurial projects and younger beneficiaries concentrating on workshops generally using creative modalities (theatre, dance, music, and in some cases sport) intended to lay the groundwork for a normalization of peaceful and integrated social living. Upon the mid-term review in December 2017, seven of the eight projects demonstrated youth leadership and varying degrees of impact in peace-building and entrepreneurship.

What emerged as a strength is the potential of Colombia Peace Labs as a model for a diverse portfolio of project funding. Each of the youth led projects demonstrated best practices in community development, anchored by extensive peer-to-peer role modeling, participatory processes, and entrepreneurship. Recommendations, building upon findings, are delivered in five themes: operations and replicability, framing the program on a three-year cycle; enhanced and tailored training; integrated evaluative processes; an enhanced mentorship program; and targeted research and partnerships in the public and private sectors.

The report concludes that there is a need for this programming, and that both interest and capacity are present. The best practices emerged as mobilizing partnerships and building on community assets, whether these were organization, relationships, or networks. Outcomes of the evaluative process will be incorporated into to a knowledge exchange and followed by the up-scaling of the program to broadly implement as a national intervention.





# Executive Summary

2016 began a period of transition for Colombia, marked by the signing of a historical peace accord between the Government of Colombia and the country's largest rebel group, FARC.

Decades of civil war with, more than 220,000 deaths, at least 25,000 disappeared, and over 5.7 million people displaced, have resulted in complex social challenges, including the need for reintegration, more inclusive institutional processes and changing mindsets.

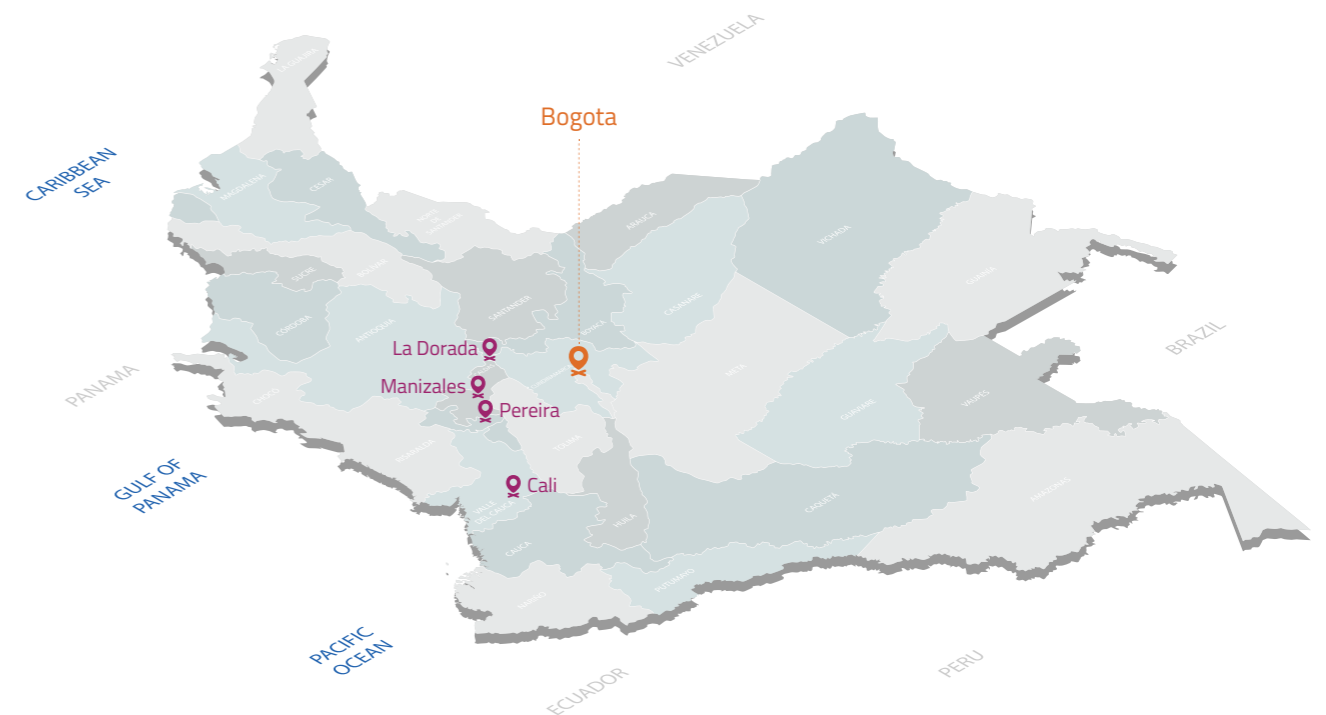
## Program Background

The Colombia Urban Peace Labs, is a pilot program, born of a unique partnership between SENA and the UN Habitat. The program was designed as a mechanism to strategically engage young people in urban areas in the realization of the signed peace accord.

The program positions youth as central agents of change while offering entrepreneurship, as a driver for sustainable social reintegration. On a global scale, the partnership juxtaposes the Colombian context against the larger trends of increased urbanization. The partnership and the program built upon the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 committing to the importance of youth and women as essential to the peace process and the New Urban Agenda to "make cities safe, inclusive, resilient and sustainable". The program is proposed as an experiment in ways of conceiving peace in urban contexts,, enhancing livelihood, inclusive governance with youth as primary agents.

## Project Selection

Ten projects were initially selected with eight projects finally selected into the first phase of the project. These projects were located in the areas of Bogota, Cali, Manizales, Pereira and La Dorada. Each project had a shared goal to foster peace, enhance livelihood and undertake activities and trainings over a timeline 6-12 months.



## Program Background

The projects selected, were designed to build upon individual and community assets in a variety of ways, incorporating art, culture, music, and in a few cases sports, to address complex social issues. For example, The Business Model Implementation project in Bogota worked with older youth to support their individual start-up businesses, while the Youth Peace Managers (LEP) project in Cali, delivered a variety of workshops that engaged children to foster peace, by connecting everyday actions to fundamental values, promote self confidence, responsibility and community. Each offers a methodology for sustainable transitions to peace that first engages and supports the individual through community connection, and develops resilience through interdependence and self-reliance.

## Review and Evaluation Process

The review and evaluation were delivered concurrently over a ten-day period between December 10-20, 2017. The focus of the review was to assure programming and financial accountability of the first installment of funds prior to the release of the second and final funding installment and to capture observational data to be included in their final project report.

## The evaluation process

The evaluation process provides an external review of the project, with a focus on identifying key messages and lessons learned. The assembly of the evaluation team began in mid-November. with the hiring of Alanna MacLennan, as the evaluation consultant to design the framework and delivery for the evaluative component. Judith Mulwa, the Project Officer for the UN Habitat and Adrianna Novoa, Program Liaison and Coordinator, based in Colombia, worked with Alanna MacLennan to assemble background materials that provided the foundation for the evaluation process.

## Evaluative Methodology

The evaluation framework was designed to gather data from multiple perspectives in order to support the up-scaling of the program as part of an integrated national intervention. Qualitative data was collected through individual stories, case studies and project descriptions, and supported by quantitative data collected through surveys completed by the project lead coordinators and mentors delivering workshops (with 12 questions) and questionnaires completed by project beneficiaries and participants (with 16 questions).

The visit and evaluation process would be delivered over a 10-day period for the 8 site visit with each of the site visit taking a day of assessment. . EEach site visit was structured in two parts: the morning sessions were essential as it introduced the evaluation team to the project coordinators, beneficiaries and stakeholders while also familiarizing with the area of impact. This was followed by interviews with the project lead coordinators; the afternoon sessions were designated for facilitated group discussions for the project beneficiaries.

There were two key questions posed to frame the evaluation: If and how do youth-led innovations influence peace and reconciliation processes? Can social entrepreneurship be a driver of peace and resilience?

## The Review and Evaluation Visit

The evaluation process was delivered as planned, with three key exceptions.

1. The evaluation process incorporated videography and evaluative processes, these two elements complemented the evaluation processes.
2. In one of the projects, the questionnaire did not apply as it was tailored for older respondents yet the project respondents were majorly children. Working closely with project coordinators, the data collection tool was revised by dertermining the set of key questions that we would bring to a group discussion. The evaluative agenda of each discussion was set and addressed the key questions outlined in the evaluation plan.
3. Originally, the evaluation plan only included the audio recording of the coordinator interviews; however, easy translation ,each group session would be recorded for later translation. This shift allowed the discussion with participants to better flow of rather than constantly breaking to translate.Over the course of the visit, 38 surveys and 15 questionnaires were delivered, along with seven project coordinator interviews, seven group interviews with project coordinators and mentors, and eight group discussions with participants, resulting in 27 hours of audio recording Translation of the he audio recordingsyielded 136 pages of transcription data, approximately 450 photos were logged on a shared drive, drawing from numerous photos taken by members of the group.

Thirty-six surveys and 15 questionnaires were received and also required translation. The majority of responses were completed during the site visits. However approximately five were received over the first few weeks of January. These yielded 108 pages of survey transcript data, and the questionnaires, 90 pages of transcript data.





# Summary of Findings

## MANAGING THE DATA

The Colombia Peace Urban Labs Program – What did it do?

## Project Selection Process

A call for proposals was released within the SENA and UN-Habitat networks. Thirty-six applications were submitted, with 30 coming through SENA's training network and six from outside. A project selection matrix was created with a score of 50, rating projects on youth engagement, organizational capacity, budget and feasibility, level of innovation, sustainability, and level of partnership. The selection committee was comprised of SENA and UN-Habitat staff and consultants. The selection process took place over a four-hour review process; each project was scored out of 10, however the scoring of each project was not recorded. Each pilot was in a position to fund up to 10 selected projects with an awarded of \$10,000 USD each. Projects requirements were a significant youth involvement, a focus on peace, livelihood and a sustainability plan. Projects were also selected for their innovation and entrepreneurial approach.

## Project Selection, Initiation and Training

Ten projects out of 36 applications were selected. As a requirement for funding each of the project coordinators from successful projects would participate in a capacity building workshop on project-management tools, business development, social innovation, entrepreneurship and social skills such as negotiation, mediation and leadership. SENA and UN Habitat, in partnership with ASHOKA and IMPACT HUB, held the training which focused on supporting the coordinators in the development of their value propositions and how to use the logical framework model.

## Revision of Project Slate

Over the course of the training period, one project did not attend the delivered capacity building workshop. As per the granting guidelines of the Colombia Urban Peace Labs and the Global Urban Youth Fund, absenteeism during delivery of the workshop automatically disqualifies the selected applicant as a beneficiary of the fund. This is because, it is essential for young people to receive training prior to receiving of grants as a risk aversion of failure of projects. A second project was withdrawn by the implementing committee (SENA, UN-HABITAT), as they did not receive timely clearance of organization's bank account by their fiduciary organization. This was after several attempts and assistance by UN-Habitat. Eight projects proceeded to implement their projects and activities, with completion dates that ranged from September, 2017 to August, 2018.

During assessment of the programs during the site visits, Funcamino Memo was discontinued from funding due to insufficient reporting, poor financial reporting that did not support expenditures, and discrepancies between the activities that were proposed and approved and those delivered.



# Project Evaluation

During the discussions and also in the surveys and questionnaires, the youth coordinators, mentors and beneficiaries identified the evaluation and review process as an important opportunity to tell the stories of the youth and the challenges they and their communities are facing, and also an opportunity to tell a positive story of Colombia. Each coordinator talked about the importance of “reframing the Colombian identity”, going beyond the “cocoa-Colombia” stereotype that exists. During some of the coordinator interviews, the evaluation process was characterized as an opportunity for the youth to build skills and project capacity. Participants took the lead in the process to some extent, making invaluable suggestions such as a simplified question process and a focus on activities led by youth. They also talked about their challenges with the timing of the process (during the Christmas holiday), and those with multiple locations expressed regret that we could not take the process to their whole team.

# Program Replication

Best practices and programming trends identified offer guideposts for future programming and operating structure, including program design, selection, and project-operation supports. Some significant best practices in peer based programming, partnership, and building on structure models of programming were modeled. For example in the LEP and Jovenes, Cultura y Paz projects, each activated significant partnerships and in the case of the LEP project, built upon established networks and a mentor driven curriculum of its organizational partner. Youth leaders tailored these structures to meet the needs of their individual projects; these in turn were replicated in multiple communities with extensive reach, together working with the greatest number of youth (750 in six communities and 114 in five communities).

# Statistical Summary

The following draw upon the numbers from totals from each funded project.



**55 youth** in leadership roles, in 7 projects.



**1147 Beneficiaries** trained



**1085 youth participants** trained



**1551 workshops delivered** by 7 projects over the course of 12 months

# Estimated Impact and Costs:



**5309 Service Hours** training and engagement



**\$64 Cost** per beneficiary within the program funding



**\$13 Cost** per hour of workshop time within the program funding

# Summary of Projects

## CPL Projects



### BOGOTÁ D.C WITH PROJECTS IN CHIA, SUPATA



#### Project

**Business-Model Implementation:** This project is helping youth working in creative fields, to formalize a business plan so they can make money, and sell their crafts. There were three initiatives: two on Woodworking and 1 on local food production. Each project had community workshop component.

**Project Lead:** Franklin Comariza 46

**Organization:** *Cooperativa-Multiactiva Escuela Taller*



#### Highlights

Hard skills are developed, building upon and combining creative practice and marketable skills (products). Safe and activated space for youth. Focus is also on cultural retention.

Training developed project business plans, two online sales tools and storefront sales platforms.

Beneficiaries delivered workshops to their community.



**Output** 2 Youth leaders | 3 Beneficiaries | 17 Youth impacted | 27 Workshops Delivered



### CALI - VALLE DEL CAUCA, workshops offered in 5 schools/locations



#### Project

**Jovenes, Cultura y Paz:** The project is designed as an innovative social intervention to address social vulnerabilities (crime, violence, addiction), through foundational lifeskills.

Workshops are building resilience through a series of 9 activities (primarily in Theatre and fine arts) delivered through a series of creative and recreational activities. Creative processes aim to foster alternative POV (for both immediate and future ways of being).

**Project Lead:** Sebastian Arcos 20

**Organization:** *Fundacion afro comunitaria el progreso: funacomprog*



#### Highlights

**Tailored curriculum:** activities as building blocks of an overall resiliency strategy. Working in 5 schools, within vulnerable neighborhoods.

Developing workshops for parents, and community partnerships. Psycho-social supports provided through partnership. Adapting to work with “Invisible barriers” specific to each local. Development of socio-demographic analysis: with partnership.



**Output** 6 Youth leaders  
114 Beneficiaries  
114 Youth impacted  
102 Workshops Delivered

## CALI- VALLE DEL CAUCA

### Project

#### **Leaders + Empowered + Participation (LEP):**

The project supports the activities of the Youth Peace Managers, who are working together, as youth representatives on 4 municipal round tables. Through a participatory process, representatives are contributing to civic action plans, while also delivering community workshops in 4 vulnerable municipalities in and around neighboring Cali. Youth led curriculum of workshops builds upon models of impact, mentorship, and resources of sponsor organization.


**Project Lead:** Lina Maria Casquete Angulo 22

**Organization:** *World Vision International – World Vision*

### Highlights

Workshops delivered by Youth Peace Managers are for children between 6-12 in 4 municipalities, in 13 locations.

Peace Leaders learning and applying significant leadership skills, employed in their engagement in municipal process.

 **Output** 37 Youth leaders  
750 Beneficiaries  
750 Youth impacted  
832 Workshops Delivered

## TULUA - VALLE DEL CAUCA, workshops offered in 2 locations

### Project

**Peace and a Better Morning:** This project seeks to build lasting peace, beginning with each person. A curriculum of creative and sport activities make peace accessible to youth. Through everyday experiences, the curriculum is linking day to day interactions to larger impacts in order to motivate children and young people.

Offering a safe space, place to develop trusting relationships, and peer support, while using time productively for activities: murals, painting, dance, and basketball. Adult literacy program is also a key component of the schedule.


**Project Lead:** Carlos Andrés Cortes 18

**Organization:** *Fundación Base Afro Unidos del Pacifico*

### Highlights

**Community partnerships:** Activities are delivered at local school during out of school times to offer a safe space, in a very vulnerable area, with limited public space and programming for youth. The adult literacy program is filling an essential gap and developing entrepreneurial opportunities for single mothers.

The literacy program is developing linkage with local educational institution to facilitate continued adult learning.

 **Output** 1 Youth leaders  
100 Beneficiaries  
75 Youth impacted  
112 Workshops Delivered

## CALI- VALLE DEL CAUCA with workshops offered in the Siloe neighborhood.

### Project

**Lomerito Laderita:** is a community place for peace. The project is building upon an organizational model of using music and art to generate learning spaces and good coexistence. Through community led activations of limited public spaces, the project is providing alternatives to drug addiction and gang violence for local youth in one of Cali's most dangerous neighborhoods. Project activities promote empowerment and a sense of belonging for young people to build a future outside the circles of violence and drugs (personal & community resilience).

**Project Lead:** Diego Armando Narváez 30 and Juan David Bueno 26


**Organization:** *Corporación Lomero's*

### HIGHLIGHTS

Individual capacity building through lifeskills curriculum.

Strengthening Community linkages and partnerships: increased access to safe public space through dance, murals, and music presentations.

Organizational capacity building through expansion for cultural activities.

 **Output** 1 Youth leaders  
100 Beneficiaries  
75 Youth impacted  
112 Workshops Delivered

## PEREIRA- RISARALDA, workshop offered in primary location

### Project


**Empowering the Goddess of Bachue:** Utilizing traditional healing modalities to support and encourage women's role as caregivers within the family and as active agents of social change. Lifeskills are integrated into various activities: art, games, story, food, hobbies, and sport.

**Project Lead:** Carolina López Barrera 26

**Organization:** *Fundación Salud Morena*

### Highlights

Workshops and activities develop essential support for women and support their families. Linking psychosocial supports through partnerships with alternative practitioners and methodologies.

 **Output** 1 Youth leaders  
41 Beneficiaries  
N/A Youth impacted  
15 Workshops Delivered



## LA DORADA- CALDAS, workshop offered in primary location

### Project


**ARTEC Paz (Art, Technology and Culture for Peace):** Promoting healthy lifestyles, reconciliation and peace through community workshops and trainings. Strategies for engagement begin with personal empowerment, use increasing awareness combined with hands on experience that builds skills through art, technology and culture, in order to foster personal development and cooperative values, in order to build individual and community resilience.

**Project Lead:** Jean Sebastian Pedraza Paez & Ruby Traslaviña

**Organization:** *Asociación Jóvenes Emprendedores-Asoje*

### Highlights

Workshops focus on fostering essential values of peace and lifeskills. Technical and creative modalities used as a vehicle as well as a means to build transferable skills, which over time, leading to education and employment. Creative capacity building and activation of community networks. Program linking psycho-social supports and demographic analysis through partnerships.

 **Output** 5 Youth leaders  
50 Beneficiaries  
50 Youth impacted  
335 Workshops Delivered





# Emerging Key Messages

The following messages emerged from the evaluation and review process. They are organized in part chronologically and then thematically, and are reflective of the course that the evaluation took during each project visit.

Each project coordinator stressed the importance of understanding the Colombian context as it underpins the story of each of the projects. The Colombian history becomes an active player, as it translates to very locally defined barriers that are part of the everyday reality of each youth in each project. Through stories and personal examples, youth leaders and beneficiaries illustrated the interconnected nature of the socioeconomic conditions of vulnerability and resilience, between the personal and political.

## 1. The Historical Context of Conflict:

a) During each introduction, project teams contextualized their work and project goals within the context of the armed conflict over the last 54 years and resulting complex social issues. Key themes were fractured social infrastructure, poverty, displacement, and lack of political representation.

b) Coordinators, mentors, and youth identified that a significant social impact of the conflict was that it has contributed to a normalization of violence, and that for a peace process to be sustained, social reintegration would rely upon a re-framing of socio-economic and cultural norms.

c) Project coordinators also identified the challenge that within the peace process, “peace” has become characterized as something that is political, removed from the realities of people’s everyday experience, and a process they have no control of or a relationship to. Connecting peace to the everyday experience of the people forms the basis of what emerges as a consistent approach to programming focusing on foundational values of peace.

2. **Mentors and youth leaders speak of the “new conflict”, which is rooted in narco-trafficking (drug- and gang-related violence), highlighting the complexity of the current conflict within the historical context of** normalized violence and trauma. “Invisible barriers” are formal and informal territorial lines that are geographically drawn. With the “new conflict,” these barriers have worsened and are now often as specific as door-to-door. Youth are significantly affected by this integrated violence, and are vulnerable

as targets for gang and drug recruitment. Youth leaders described the degree to which violence and criminal activity is normalized as a viable means of survival, even considered a mode of employment, and as something to aspire to, a means to the good life.

3. **A Context of resilience significantly contrasts the challenges.** Within the majority of the projects, youth leaders and beneficiaries consciously and unconsciously juxtapose the significant challenges they and their communities face against historical, immediate and/or localized strengths. This contributes to an emerging narrative of how each project and the program build upon individual and community assets, within four main themes:

a) **The Colombian culture, with rich and long standing cultural traditions** in music, food, art, and literature. Creative programming builds upon the cultural histories also as a way to restore and retain traditions.

b) **Entrepreneurial perspectives, goals, and skills based projects seek to build upon an entrepreneurial spirit** that exists within each community as evidence by significant informal economies.

c) **Community, networks and partnerships** played a significant role in each project, inspiring, anchoring and guiding the needs of the project. This defined an asset-based approach and best practice of each curriculum. The curriculum produced was flexible, integrated, and adaptive, while also being action-based and grounded by “real” skills (hard and soft). Projects within the program incorporated varying degrees of critical analysis of their methods, with reflection and feedback loops built into their curriculum design (for both participants and mentors/leaders).

d) **Passion**, was clearly and consistently articulated as a key element within each project. It is the motivation of the youth leaders, mentors, and youth, and perseverance are clearly stated as drivers, becoming a key message of resilience, a primary asset upon which each project relies and builds upon.



## Safety

**4. Each project coordinator and mentor groups stressed the absolute importance of recognizing the immediate conditions of vulnerability the youth face.** The need for activities and safe spaces for youth to simply “be” was the initial underpinning of each project. It was from this place that peace and social reintegration needs to begin. Each of the projects selected work within areas dominated by a climate of gang and drug activity. According to interviews with youth beneficiaries, youth and children as young as 5 and 6 are targets for recruitment, thus the projects provide a fundamental role in simply providing activities and support to keep youth “out of the streets” and occupied in productive activities. Upon this basic need for safety, other more complex tools and skills can be built.

**a) A complicating factor to the external threats that youth face is the lack of parental support and engagement. Coordinators, mentors and youth speak to the impact of absentee parents and parental abdication of responsibility as something that interconnects to and compounds the vulnerability of some youth to drug and gang activities.** In some cases, parents are not around because they have to travel long distances for work and/or work long hours to make money for the family. In other cases, the parents do not feel that they have time to pay attention to their children or that it is their responsibility to do so. The children and youth in these cases are left alone and without discipline or guidance. This situation illustrates how parental relationships have been fractured through the impact of systemic poverty, displacement, and trauma.

**b) Entrepreneurial perspectives, goals, and skills based projects seek to build upon an entrepreneurial spirit** that exists within each community as evidence by significant informal economies.

5. What also emerged from group discussions and interviews, and was then supported by qualitative data, is that with the peer-driven curriculum considering and facilitating personal safety, **a space is then made for youth to begin to consciously and unconsciously identify the impacts of trauma.** This process is introduced with a great deal of care and consideration.
6. **Within each of the project areas there is a significant absence of public space available for community.** What is available is also generally not safe, reinforcing social isolation and vulnerability (to gang involvement, maintenance of normalized norms of violence, dependence, and lack of education and possibility). Safe public space is recognized as a key indicator of community health and resilience, an essential component for convening and building and maintaining community ties.
7. **Invisible barriers are the formal and informal territories established during the conflict. These barriers play an active role in dictating the movement and availability of safe spaces for youth in low-income and under-represented communities.**
8. **Projects within the program demonstrated the power to transform neighborhoods.** This transformation was born in part of necessity: to find space, as a means to reach out to and access youth, to become a significant best practice in youth-led community development and peacebuilding. Project 4, the Lomeritos project in Siloe, transformed a previously contested space—a transportation hub at the intersection of five gang territories—became the site of a weekly dance class. The result was that the community recovered a public space that had been lost to gang ownership. Through dance, murals, music, presentations, and community exchanges, youth and the projects demonstrated alternative uses for public space.

## Youth leadership - building capacity individually and systemically

Projects were led by youth (ages 18-28) for youth (6-25 with an average age of 16 years old).

9. **Support of youth-led projects is an important funding model to build upon. The success of seven youth-led projects demonstrates the impact and value of youth leadership.** As project leaders, youth conceived of and produced initiatives with specific outcomes (outlined in the following section), proving that the curriculum that they delivered was both relevant and accessible. Best practices also included making sure that youth beneficiaries were central or at least involved in decisions relating to the design, execution, and ongoing evaluation of programming.
10. **Each project showed peer-to-peer mentoring to be a significant best practice, one that plays an integral role in making the values of peace accessible and immediately relatable to children and youth.** In addition, the peer-to-peer model contributes to the foundation for transitioning youth into future leadership roles. The success and impact of it as a method of engagement contributes to evidencing the value of youth leadership and social entrepreneurship as key methods of peacebuilding. In the spirit of the nature of the work, or in their own words captures:
11. **A key feature of youth leadership, as it is expressed within each of the projects, is that it integrates intergenerational relationships and perspectives.** Seven out of eight projects worked extensively with adults—for example, integrating them as mentors to deliver workshops and addressing their needs as parents. Four projects also recognized the need to have workshops specifically working with adults as an essential means to deepen their impact and support the sustainability of their peace-building efforts with their youth participants.

12. **Making behavioral changes in support of peace begins with social supports that focus on the individual first.** Each project demonstrated how its larger goals of peace-building are embedded within a framework that focuses on the immediate needs of the youth and the importance of **making peace accessible as part of a youth’s everyday experience through values-driven program development and execution.** In the process, programs demonstrated the value of participatory and active processes by linking values of peace to those of “good behavior” and responsibility (to self, then another and then to community).
13. **Creating a space and opportunities of exchange for youth to explore alternative points of view was a way of framing both the philosophical approach and subsequent methodologies for peace-building.** The majority of the project leads and mentors described how this was done through both the physical space and activities for exploring new things and working with other people, with reflection and discussion built into the curriculum at the end of each workshop day. It was also done through creative means, for example through theatre exercises where youth took on different roles through scenarios that explored a variety of human emotions and everyday experiences (including those related directly to the conflict).
  - a) **“Life project”— is the approach that some of the projects take.** The life project frames for each child and youth the work of being a good person, being a part of and responsible to a community, and being productive, with a sense of purpose and as something that each youth has domain over. Each project explores ways to encourage youth to assume agency over their own lives, in a manner befitting their age and circumstances.
  - b) **Ways of being – Links values of peace and basic lifeskills.** Values and lifeskills learnt within the program (through anonymous questionnaires):



**c) Ways of becoming** – builds upon behavioral shifts, relationships, and communities of support to create space for the imagination to consider alternative “ways of becoming” and ultimately the role each youth wants to play in the world.

**14. A peaceful way of “being”, in relationship to family.** In addition to peace and change as starting with the individual, the second and equally consistent message conveyed by many of the youth leaders was that it also begins at home. Project Coordinators and mentors spoke to how family ties can be both a source of strength, a place to lean into, and a source of significant challenges, something from which youth need to seek refuge and redefinition. Projects actively engaging in navigating between these two points, with youth leading the way for change, supported by their community of peers.

**15. “Being” in Community played an important part in connecting the activities and workshops to practicing values of community and personal responsibility.** Each project incorporated a variety of connections back to the communities of which the beneficiaries were part. For example, in addition to holding activities in public spaces, projects also put on performances and exhibitions, held information sessions for the community, and gave out Christmas gifts. Through these youth-led activities, invisible barriers are shifted in significant ways.

**a) Breaking down “invisible barriers” – through youth led relationship building**

**b) Breaking down “invisible barriers” – through youth led reclaiming of public space**

**16. Partnership and Asset Based Community Development (ABCD)** is a substantial element of each project. The value of partnerships is realized in a variety of ways, some consistent through each project, and some a demonstration of best practices and / or a product of project specific conditions. Overall, proving the essential nature of partnership – a means to access – resources / outreach / support on many levels.

**a) Providing operational foundations for programming** - For example in each project, the organizational partnership provided essential support, from access to space, networks, mentors, curriculum and to administrative supports and resources.

**b) Outreach** – youth and mentors both identified challenges associated with outreach. Best practices were defined by research, networking, and adaptability, with the need to generally take a multi-channel approach to communicating about the project. This proved important to respecting the various needs specific within the community—for example, levels of literacy, invisible barriers, social stigmas, and the levels of parental engagement, partnerships, and networks in place. Examples of the approaches used within the outreach process: announcements through partnering schools and organizational partners, community presentations, performances, promotional flyers, door to door and social media campaigns. The most effective outreach strategies seemed to be a combination of multiple channels combined with an opportunity to build upon pre-existing organizational networks.

**c) Psycho-social supports** were an element of programming that were essential to initiate, establish, and facilitate. However, with limited resources, these supports were provided through counseling services accessed through partnerships with local schools, academic institutions, and community networks. This was not across the board in all programs, but was identified as a needed resources and best practice. Additionally, it led to a recommendation for regional advisory or support committees to provide guidance and support for mental-health resources specific to each community. Where resources are unavailable, this committee, combined with the work being done on the ground, could serve as invaluable launch pad for advocacy and linking of needed resources.

## Tools for social innovation and social re-integration

**17. Project leaders and mentors spoke eloquently and passionately about the importance of creativity in the work, specific to each youth and each project, and its impact within the community.** In practical terms, creativity and recreation (e.g. sport) were employed as ways to introduce skills and training. In every form, the introduced the concept of processes—the idea that personal and professional development happen over time and with hard work—while satisfying the need for immediate gratification. In more poetic terms, creativity is a means of activating intangibles associated with changing mindsets and contributing each youth’s “life project”.

**a) Creative modalities** (such as theatre, dance, fine arts, and music) are employed as tools to deliver foundational lifeskills and values based curriculum that is adaptive to the needs, interests and talents (capacity) of the youth and community.

**b) The Creative Continuum:**

- Foundational social skills are established through basic tools such as listening and teamwork.
- Deeper personal development helps the youth process personal and community trauma, activate imagination, to conceive and test alternative/possible futures.
- Basic skills: with life skills fostered through making complex processes part of the everyday, the youth begin to shift toward normalizing peace over violence.
- Complex social skills of peace-building, reclaiming cultural identity, and community interconnection are internalized and foster healing in private and public spaces.

**c) Creativity aids employability** as many of the soft and hard skills associated with different creative modalities are transferable to more advanced training and /or education and the development of employable skills. Designing projects with consideration of the available resources in the community thus offers long-term implications for employability (through transferable skills and development of opportunities for education, training, and self-generated revenue).

**d) Creativity is also reflected in** the funding program overall, through the variety of projects supported. For example, within the portfolio of the pilot, projects demonstrated varied degrees of sophistication in programming, and varied levels of organizational or institutional support. Youth beneficiaries varied in their ages, levels of readiness, and access to resources. Thus, as a program, funding provided a diverse platform to meet the real, complex, and intersecting needs of the communities that the program is serving. **Further to the best practice of recognizing the “process” of social reintegration:**

**18. Youth Leadership demonstrated impact through governance and representation in their projects, communities, and municipal systems.** Each project delivered its own message regarding the impact of youth and how it is important that youth can and do impact – and influence - their communities, indirectly and directly.

**a) Youth demonstrated significant leadership and impact through the governance of their projects.** Each project was developed and presented by youth who determined the way their projects would run, with varying degrees of autonomy. The leadership skills this fostered were transmitted to the youth and adults the projects were serving. This process built upon informal and grass-roots structures of organizing and governing.



**b) Activating local partnerships, youth leaders became representatives within their communities.** Within their local contexts four of the projects identified the potential to extend this into more formal relationships and/or partnerships with institutions – so that they (the projects and youth leaders) would be in a position to serve as representatives for both their under-represented communities (of youth and low-income formal and informal settlements).

**c) Building upon significant work, youth leaders were networked into advisory roles within as youth representatives within formal governance structures.** Project 3, LEP, having established partnerships with local municipal roundtables, pre-dating this project, was able to make formal linkages with municipal processes. Their project was the most integrated of the seven projects with youth leaders sitting working together as part of a peer network, each with seats at various city advisory tables. 20. Social Innovation and entrepreneurship

**19. The projects within the Colombia Urban Peace Labs demonstrated impact and value by:**

**a) Fostering an entrepreneurial way of thinking;** fostering a self-determined approach that encouraged youth to open up to possibilities that they would not otherwise have considered; making the possibilities attainable through activities.

**b) Facilitating business development ideas** that build upon a significant informal economy, defined by home businesses and a resourceful approach to employment.

**c) Building upon existing networks,** is a significant best practice demonstrated by the project in Bogota. Each sub-project, in particular the workshop, had ties to networks of practice and extended or ancillary services within the beneficiary communities. For instance, Edwin had significant ties to the theatre community in Bogota, he was able to tie his carpentry skills the theatre community through set design and building. Thus he has an integrated system of supply and demand. The workshop he is developing gives the individual youth not only the opportunity to develop his/her creative and technical skills, but also the opportunity to apply those skills within a market where there is demand and an established pipeline to employment.

**d) The projects within the program reflect a significant range of applied entrepreneurialism, from a social perspective to the implementation of self-generated revenue and employable skills.** Together, what is forming is an interrelated suite of best practices, peer support and mentorship networks which is itself entrepreneurial.

**20. Evaluation and review process**

Feedback through discussions and interviews with the beneficiaries and youth coordinators, and anonymously through surveys and questionnaires, spoke to the significant value of having an integrated evaluation process.

## Project Challenges and Opportunities

**21. Lessons Learned applied in the field.** There were a number of key project operational themes addressed during the project visits. These emerged during interviews and group discussion and were supported by survey outcomes. Some of these challenges were illustrated by the project, directly or indirectly, and were influenced with varying degrees of impact by the demographics of the beneficiaries (for example age, level of experience, and education).

**a) Programming challenges** regarding outreach, attendance, and sustainability were identified by project youth leaders and mentors from each project. A number of the projects' key best practices emerged from these challenges. For example, outreach was a consistent challenge for each project. During the evaluation process, each project leader spoke to how they analyzed their outreach process and adapted it to reach more youth. Some projects began with a focus on word of mouth and chose to incorporate more organizational partnerships, others had launched social media campaigns, and chose to add more direct outreach.

In the process, illustrating resilient leadership as well as the resilience within their communities. Some administrative challenges (reporting, financials, and evaluation) were also identified.

**b) Sustainability plans for continued programming** for each project were generally unclear. In some cases, potential avenues for developing self-generated streams of revenue had been identified with limited testing or evidence of feasibility. Diversified funding models and expanded partnership were other key potential avenues; however, neither were solidified.

**c) Framing and Policy impact of the projects and ultimately the program, appeared to be in the early stages.** Each project was focused on delivery over the course of a short project timeline rather than actively linking its work to policy impacts. However, project leaders identified (resources and best practices for) future policy and advocacy work generally—most specifically and notably where there was an existing relationship or bridge between the project (youth leadership) and a municipal process.



# Program Implications

## The Projects

In summary of the key messages, the program demonstrated a number of key successes, emerging best practices, and areas for future learning and growth. The first and most resonant is the centrality of youth-led initiatives to the peace process. The seven successful projects, delivered with the support of the Colombia Peace Labs program, created significant engagement and training. Through direct engagement, building upon community and individual assets, projects built valuable peer networks and community ties, and initiated behavioral shifts in youth through a values-based curriculum tailored to the needs of the youth and each community.

Each project contextualized how its model and tools may be used to support the “life projects” of each of the beneficiaries, leading to social reintegration post-conflict. The project coordinators, passionate and pragmatic, generally situated their impact on a continuum of social change that takes a long-lens view. It is clear that the work being done within each of the projects is valuable, meeting a need, and building capacity, however there is some work to be done in framing and leveraging impact for policy advocacy and change.

The heart in and of each project was clearly expressed in the values of peace. The need to practice and see peace as part of the everyday experience, beginning with safe spaces for the individual and community to lean into each other was clearly identified and an essential function of each of the projects and ultimately, the program.

## The Funding Program

Thus far the evaluation of the program of the Colombia Urban Peace Labs has been primarily through the lens of the individual projects and their highlights, however a significant impact of the program is in the projects’ collective value as a functioning whole. Contextualizing the funding program through this expanded lens celebrates its flexibility for working with a full spectrum of ages and skill levels, and multiple points of entry. This gives it an expansive reach capable of addressing the real and interconnected challenges and needs of vulnerable individuals and communities—specific to Colombia and more broadly applied.

## Case Studies

Digging deeper into Projects 1 and 3 offers some important program considerations. First, a comparison of the demographics of the workshops within the two projects provide a view into two distinct “end” points of the social reintegration process. In Project 1, **Business-Model Implementation**, older youth built upon existing personal and community resources to transform their passions and talents in food, sculpture and carpentry and deliver a number of marketable services and employment opportunities. At the other end of the spectrum, Project 3, the **LEP Leaders + Empowered + Participatory** project, worked with children and youth to cultivate foundational life skills through belonging and peer-driven leadership to develop basic skills that foster connection for youth along a longer timeline. Within each, there is a recognizable growth trajectory, with pieces building upon one another and together, they illustrate a process, that requires significant time, to build relationships and networks.



Further exploration of the **LEP Leaders + Empowered + Participatory**, project itself offers its own end points in within a unique design. The primary goal of the project funded by the Colombia Urban Peace Labs was not the workshops, it was the work of the youth leaders - the Peace Managers. The Youth Peace Managers, are working together, yes to provide workshops to children in their communities. However the project funded through the Colombia Urban Peace Labs is the work that they do together acting as representatives on municipal roundtables to inform policy and the annual budgetary planning processes for their area. This incredible and entrepreneurial approach of engagement, is itself an extension of a two-year project, building upon programming, resources, and mentorship emerging from the relationships rooted in World Vision Colombia Peace Managers.

Project 6, **Empowering the Goddess of Bachue**, a project led by youth working with women and children in Pereira, offers another interesting point of reference on a spectrum of social interventions. The project coordinator, not only described but demonstrated their hands on process, incorporating massage, meditation, and a number of traditional healing modalities that relied upon great deal of trust and relationship building that would be very difficult to implement on mass but proving very effective to engage women in the community deeply impacted by violence and trauma. This project had in comparison to the other projects, the smallest number of beneficiaries. However, it was arguably incorporating the most unconventional approaches to social programming in order to engage with its beneficiaries in ways that connect (or re-connected them) to traditional practices as a way to heal from significant trauma.

The **Lomerito-Laderita** project, Project 4, through the **CORPORACIÓN LOMERO'S** operates in what is known as one of Cali's most dangerous neighborhoods. Youth in this community have extremely limited safe public space, very little public representation, and infrastructure resources for programming rely mainly on volunteers.

A lack of space - both operating and public - led to the implementation of the dance program in an area by the cable car station. The youth led dance classes transformed an intersection into a community dance space from a place that was previously dominated by gang activity and territorial fighting.

**Project 2, Jovenes, Cultura y Paz** and Project 8, ARTEC Paz, each developed important partnerships with academic institutions in their communities, as a means to do outreach, connect with psycho-social supports and get assistance in doing demographic research. **Project 2**, working with 114 youth in groups of various sizes but generally in a larger framework, with theatre and fine arts as their primary modalities. Whereas **Project 8**, works with 50 youth in smaller groups and individual youth with a focus on more technical training in creative technologies and musical instruments. Each have shared practices but demonstrate a different and yet important application.

These are just a few case studies to illustrate the value of placing the projects on a spectrum. As a whole they demonstrate how the pilot makes a case for diversified programming as a means to create and support projects which individually could be questioned for their cost-effectiveness questioned, based simply on numbers, and thus be seen as less viable. Yet, as the pilot demonstrated, each of the seven projects makes a valuable contribution to the beneficiaries it serves as well as the communities within which it is represented. What is suggested in these examples is that core to sustainability is a truly integrated approach of programming, one that is capable of addressing or proposing "solutions to" or rather meaningful approaches to the complex social problems that Colombia currently faces.

Additionally, by seeing the program as a means to link project to project resources, there is the potential to add value to each of the projects and the program overall through knowledge-sharing between projects. The result then is that the projects become a resource to each other and as a whole. By continuing to support such diversified projects, the program itself has the potential to grow exponentially through networks that if supported effectively can be self-sustaining through a variety of youth-driven projects, shared best practices, and expanded peer-support and mentorship networks.





# Program Implications: Highlights

By supporting projects that give youth tools and alternative points of view, the program is building capacity rather than creating funding dependency.

With new lived experience, transferable communications skills, and hard skills to be parlayed into educational or employment transitions, youth being affected in a significant way. This suggests that project and program sustainability rests in the networking of resources as they are developed. Peer- and mentor-based relationships can actualize leadership potential, along with advocacy for continued programming and policy change. Thus, the keys to broader implementation are partnerships and the formalization of supporting operating structures. **The net conclusion is that impacts and sustainability are rooted in the interdependent relationship between the program's projects and in the networks that are being built.**





# Applied Best Practices: Youth Leadership

Broadly speaking, the project's best practices are grounded in the following three tenets:

1. **They are grass-roots, emerging from and building community assets.** Successful projects are highly networked.
2. **They are relational programming that is peer- and values-based:** designed by youth for youth, maximizing relevance and role-modeling.
3. **They are intergenerational:** capacity-building for/with parents (through the youth), incorporating mentorship models and organizational partnerships (building upon models and existing networks), and to a lesser extent incorporating mentors through the mentorship program in partnership with the private sector.

Each of these three laying the foundations for a networked approach to social innovation through Partnership, Representation (Governance) and Entrepreneurship.





# Tools of Social Innovation

Each of the following themes is situated by complexity and as part of a process.

## Creativity

Employed as a tool as a process and as a means to develop hard and transferable skills.

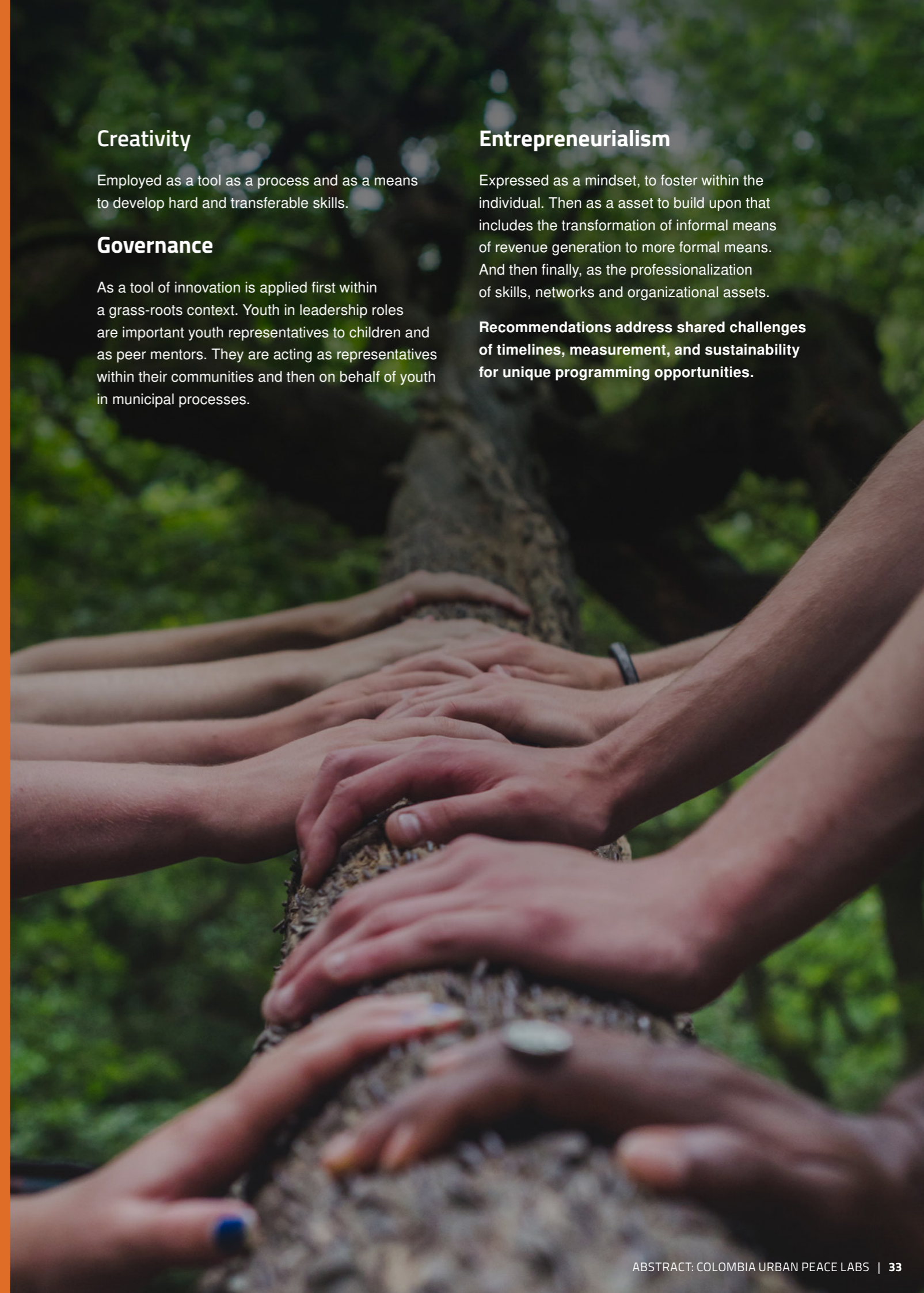
## Governance

As a tool of innovation is applied first within a grass-roots context. Youth in leadership roles are important youth representatives to children and as peer mentors. They are acting as representatives within their communities and then on behalf of youth in municipal processes.

## Entrepreneurialism

Expressed as a mindset, to foster within the individual. Then as a asset to build upon that includes the transformation of informal means of revenue generation to more formal means. And then finally, as the professionalization of skills, networks and organizational assets.

**Recommendations address shared challenges of timelines, measurement, and sustainability for unique programming opportunities.**





# Best Practices

## BEST PRACTICE

## APPLICATION

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### ASSET DRIVEN

Projects and curriculum are emergent from a combination of need and interest from each of their communities. The degree to which they are networked, determining the level of resilience and sustainability. Degree, being measured within a triple bottom line – not simply a numbered framework.

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### ENTREPRENEURIAL

Tailored skills and networks building upon the interests and capacities of youth and their communities. Contributing to the growth of local economies. Relevant to both social and economic applications.

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### PARTNERSHIP

Innovation and entrepreneurship through for both social and employability applications

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### MENTORSHIP

Intergenerational  
Sustainable – building networks –  
Innovation and entrepreneurship through for both social and employability applications

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### LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Youth Project Mentors and Leaders  
Community Representatives  
Youth participation within municipal processes



## BEST PRACTICE

## APPLICATION

### CURRICULUM

Youth led design and implementation (supported by intergenerational mentorship). Processes are iterative, supported by analysis and reflexive processes (taking youth feedback into consideration). Thus maintaining relevance to youth beneficiaries who see themselves and their needs reflected.

### ACTIVE

#### PEACE MADE ACCESSIBLE

### CREATIVE - DEVELOPING INTEREST(S) AND TALENT(S)

Foundational lifeskills: listening, communications, managing emotions, self-confidence, healthy boundaries, concentration and focus. \*

### PARTICIPATORY PROCESSES

Values: self-respect, respect, love, kindness, friendship, responsibility, tolerance, understanding, cooperation, life-long learning, and good behaviour.\*

### APPLIED

Integrating social supports

### VALUES-BASED CURRICULUM

Peer-mentorship and peer support

### INCORPORATES PURPOSE (contextualized –age appropriately)

Teamwork and relationship building – peer networks

Transfer of knowledge – to family and to community

\* Taken from the Questionnaires and Surveys

### INCORPORATES REFLECTIONS (to process experience, contextualize learning, imbed new “ways of being”)

### COMMUNITY ENGAGED- actively works with / inconsideration of the local environment

# Program Implications of the Evaluation and Review Process

The review and evaluation process, a planned component of the program, was a requirement of each project from the program's early formation.

However, the actual design and implementation of this evaluation process began midway into the program and two weeks before delivery. This both created some challenges and yielded valuable data and lessons learned for future projects.

Challenges were mainly rooted in communications and a lack of clarity regarding projects and processes, in part complicated by the positioning of the evaluation process as part of a review process and being delivered before most of the projects were finished. Generally, clarification regarding the projects was ultimately obtained in the field, and if not, in follow-up conversations with the program coordinator, Adriana Novo.

The translation of the audio and quantitative data proved invaluable as a means of capturing stories and data while also maintaining a level of engagement and participation in the evaluative process. However, as it relied upon volunteers, the process was interrupted, and required a longer timeline for the review, analysis, and reporting period. A break was required over the holidays, as the volunteer was unavailable, with audio translation completed at the end of the second week of January. The volunteer for the qualitative data was not secured until mid-January. A third volunteer was approached to distribute the surveys and questionnaires separately. However, they were unable to do the project in the end, and thus the questionnaires were completed after the surveys and received mid-February.

Distinguishing the review process from evaluation in future projects would be an asset. As it was, the review process was more interactive—an exchange of recommendations, advice, and, where necessary, critique and a realignment of project activities or goals. Thus, given that the purpose of an external evaluation is to bring in an outside voice and a view that is more observational and focused on engaging in a feedback loop, asking more than telling, distinguishing between review and evaluation would afford a greater opportunity for capacity-building through clearer roles.

Overall, I believe that what was highlighted both by the project participants and the evaluation were the opportunities of imbedding evaluative processes to support additional capacity-building for youth leaders, maximize volunteer resources, and more effectively manage the limited staffing resources of organizational partners.

Addressing this in consideration of limited time and money is addressed in the later recommendations.



# Conclusion

The evaluation process began with two key questions: if and how do youth-led innovations influence peace and reconciliation processes? And can social entrepreneurship can be a driver of peace and resilience?

I believe the answer to each of these questions is yes. Youth leadership and social entrepreneurship were demonstrated throughout each project, relative to each participant's starting point (age, level of education, and access to resources). Youth had impact through peer role-modeling, project leadership, community participation, and representation in local policy processes. Entrepreneurism was fostered through holistic approaches, reflective of the participant's need, and included the integration of hard and soft skills. Creative modalities were used to conceive of alternate futures, explore talents, identify strengths upon which to build employable skills and develop business ideas, linking appropriate tools and plans.

The challenges that run consistently through each project are sustainability, measuring, and framing impact. However, I believe that by positioning these challenges as interlinked, the program moving forward can do as projects in the pilot have done: transform a limitation into an opportunity. The pilot program has provided an excellent platform upon which to build a robust program.

The evaluation and review process captured information about the program, its successes and challenges and also served as an opportunity for the youth to present their findings, demonstrating their leadership potential directly. The evaluative process, as it was structured, became part of a skills-building experience, transforming an otherwise extractive process. Through qualitative and quantitative processes, youth coordinators, mentors and beneficiaries appreciated the value of the fact that as a team, we were bearing witness to their work "and the realities of the Colombian people", each also acknowledging the importance of the process and inclusion of their voices.

Engaging through the arts is not in and of itself a new practice. It would be insulting to suggest this, especially within a country such as Colombia, with its significant and abundant cultural traditions, representative of the many cultural intersections within its history. What is arguably unique in this program is its potential to support and sustain transitions, with the integration of activities within a longer view, with youth as central to the design process, and with the bridging of public and private-sector relationships. As a pilot, the Colombian Urban Peace Labs offers a window into

this unique opportunity along with some key points of access: building upon programming best practices; initiating relationships; developing a network of youth leaders (to potentially engage in a design process); testing a mentorship program that begins to link private sector volunteer resources with programming needs; and introducing a significant partnership between SENA and the UN Habitat.

The report concludes that there is a need for this programme and the projects that it supports, and that both interest and capacity are present within the Colombian context to execute continued project delivery. Sustainability rests in best practices implemented broadly to mobilize continued and expanded partnerships and continuing to build on community assets, whether within organizations or external community networks. An overall unique strength of the Colombia Urban Peace Lab as a programming model was in the diversity of the funding portfolio.

Replicability is central to the following recommendations, along with the importance of building upon these key findings and the best practices of mentoring, partnerships, asset-based program development, and participatory processes as expressed in each of the thematic areas of Youth Leadership and Social Entrepreneurship.

## Youth engagement

**is relationship and values based – intergenerational at its core**

## Community activation

**defined by Partnership**

## Entrepreneurial

**Asset driven - building**

Resilience is demonstrated in the transformation, emerging from addressing individual and community challenges from within, mining first for the assets, upon which to next build opportunity, tied together through relationships.



# Recommendations

The following recommendations arise from a merged analysis of observations and findings. They also draw upon resources in social impact investing, as well as emerging practices in evaluation and community engagement. In keeping with the projects and program, the recommendations build on values-driven philosophies, integrating suggestions meant to help make future programming robust enough to engage with youth and their communities consistently and dynamically within their complex environment.

From the analysis of the findings and conclusions emerged three key and overlapping areas where the program impact could benefit from further exploration and integration of best practices demonstrated within the projects. These were the areas of Mentorship, Training, Sustainability Planning and Entrepreneurship.

Taking limited program resources into consideration the following recommendations work together to suggest how the Colombia Urban Peace Labs can help contribute solutions and sustainable pathways to social reintegration and sustained program delivery with the potential of making significant impact both within the Colombian context and more broadly.

## Recommendations, aligning with key conclusions:

### 1. Expand the program as a national intervention.

- With best practices providing a launching-point and guide, expand upon an asset-based community-development approach that fosters youth leadership, community engagement, partnership, and mentorship. Incorporating evaluative tools earlier, formalize best practices, and operating processes to address the identified program and project challenges, particularly in administration, sustainability planning, and messaging around social impact to create conditions for consistency and program replicability.
- Additionally, it the recommendation of this evaluation to consider **the program on a three-year cycle** to afford the opportunity to integrate learnings deeply for the youth leaders and between projects through robust peer networks. Noting that this is not suggesting three-year terms of funding, but rather structuring supports and access to resources over three years in order to build effective and sustainable networks that can live beyond each project and serve the needs of the community.

### 2. Build operational and leadership capacity.

- Through a revised training process and integration of peer-to-peer modeling, **expand private-sector and community mentorships, integrating youth leadership.** Increasing mentorship involvement is a key recommendation. Essential to this is implementing formalized training and operating processes, clearly stating expectations, and incorporating recognized best practices in the volunteer sector to effectively mobilize private-sector partnerships.
- However, as this is currently as an underused community of resources, the recommendation is to invest in program development and management of this aspect of programming for the second phase. This could itself be conceived of as a pilot, structured with a mandate to ultimately be self-sustaining or integrated into the overall program management structure, supported by volunteer committees. The mentorship program offers the potential to provide significant operational mentorship (supporting entrepreneurial best practices), advocacy (framing impact), and mobilizing resources (to meet program needs and facilitate opportunities for youth involvement).

### 3. Formalize participatory processes and integrate them with evaluation tools.

Developing dynamic, peer-driven tools for measuring social impact will help ensure **accountability, replicability and program sustainability, while saving time and money and increasing impact.**



- This recommendation stresses the simplification of the initial training process (the inaugural training) to work with project youth leaders to focus on clarity of vision, communication, and establishing roles and responsibilities regarding reporting. Project management and support tools can then be incorporated throughout the project lifecycle, tailored to the phase and supported in part through increased mentorship, as an iterative process to support deep and applied learning. This formalized training process will facilitate better replicability, transferability of skills, and program-administration efficiencies, as well as potentially creating precedent-setting tools in measuring and reporting on social impact.

*Ex. of suggested references: Nesta Standards of Evidence \*, New Economics Forum \*\* and Measuring Social Impact \*\*\**

**4. Develop entrepreneurship as a mechanism to support resiliency and sustainable social reintegration.** This recommendation will provide the foundation for and feed directly into the expansion of mentor program, peer- and community-networking resources, and the continued diversity of granting.

- Research into emerging local markets (what are the emerging areas of need within the private sector? For ex. tourism) will help support the allocation of support resources and identifying potential new avenues for partnership. **The aim is to target and mobilize entrepreneurialism as a sustainable driver for social reintegration that builds on the capacity of the individual, vulnerable communities, and economic structures of the region.** What follows is the merging of three primary points:
- As demonstrated by best practices already identified within each of the pilot projects, it is absolutely essential that this component be asset-driven and that it emerge from the community. It is also realistically aligned with the interests, skills, and capacities of the youth/ participants, along with those of industries and employers.

*Ex. of suggested resources: online tools to connect resources and networks in support of project goals. Volunteer network: regional advisories to facilitate access to resources, references, and expand market reach.*

**5. Use community activation as a key tool peacebuilding and social innovation.**

- Expand networking for project and program partnerships (an extension of the expansion of the mentor program). **In support of continued and effective peacebuilding, activate two levels of regional volunteer supports: a mentor advisory network and a project advisory or set of advocacy committees.**
- Mentor (Advisory) Network: With the aim of achieving a mentor program that can function with some degree of self-sufficiency and sustainability, establishing an advisory or peer-to-peer network among the participating mentors would be a way to catalyze resources and serve as a single point of contact for program administration. Initially this would require support in the design process; in the long term, program administration would take on a support role.
- Project Advisory Committee: A regional advisory of mentors would serve a valuable two-tiered function, specifically building upon social and employment needs and interests and two significant messages emerging from the evaluation process: that partnerships need to be incorporated to provide necessary psycho-social supports (projects 2, 3, 6, 8), and that realistic employability and market access are rooted in connecting to existing markets and networks (project 1).
  - 1 – to provide references and advice to potential resources within the community (i.e. mental health resources).
  - 2 – act as an advocacy resource to help advance policy and macro impact of program initiatives.

- Initially, these may be conceived as one group; however with the identification of emerging markets, it is possible to imagine that specific subgroups or networks may emerge in response to needs. For example, if there are growth opportunities in the tourism industry, an advisory committee of industry professionals might be established to foster a relationship to this industry, making linkages for both mentors and employment placements.

*Ex. of suggested resources: online tools to connect peer resources and networks. Volunteer network: regional advisories to facilitate access to resources, references, and ex-pand advocacy.*



\* [https://www.nesta.org.uk/sites/default/files/standards\\_of\\_evidence.pdf](https://www.nesta.org.uk/sites/default/files/standards_of_evidence.pdf)

\*\* [http://b.3cdn.net/nefoundation/ee604b9c7787bf1b80\\_aym6ivqnu.pdf](http://b.3cdn.net/nefoundation/ee604b9c7787bf1b80_aym6ivqnu.pdf)

\*\*\* [https://ssir.org/articles/entry/how\\_impact\\_investors\\_actually\\_measure\\_impact](https://ssir.org/articles/entry/how_impact_investors_actually_measure_impact)



