



Peace & Security: Building Justice, Trust, and Human Dignity

Learning Guide: Ages 14+



Purpose: Peace and security are the foundation for human dignity and sustainable development. Without safety, justice, and trust in institutions, societies cannot thrive, and global challenges cannot be solved. **This module invites learners to explore the urgent challenge of sustaining peace and human security, understand root causes of violence and insecurity, and identify their role in building fair, inclusive, and resilient communities.** It includes a three-part learning journey with relevant **background information, video-based contents, interactive visuals, guided research, and systems thinking activities designed to inspire reflection and action.**



Learners will

- Understand key concepts of peace and security, including positive peace, human security, justice, and inclusion.
- Explore systems, institutions, and stakeholders that prevent violence and sustain peace.
- Reflect on global and local drivers of conflict and insecurity, including inequality and disinformation.
- Develop ideas for youth-led action that strengthen social cohesion and trust.



The Non-Violence sculpture, Sweden's gift to the UN, transforms a weapon into a symbol of peace. The knotted gun reminds us that violence is not inevitable, it can be reshaped into dialogue, justice, and hope. For youth working together in their communities, it is a call to action: peace is possible when we choose creativity and collaboration over conflict.

Acknowledgements

This learning module was co-created by the [UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network's](#) [Ages of Globalization](#) and [Global Schools Program](#) ([Katja Anger-Delimi](#), [Zlata Paslon](#) and [Amanda Abrom](#)) & [Compass Education](#) ([Kate O'Connell](#), [Elaine Reimann](#) and [Kate Doré](#)).



How to Use This Module

This module is a flexible learning journey through three phases:



Each component can be done in class or as homework. Time estimates are suggestions only, adaptable to diverse contexts and students' needs.

Table of Contents

DISCOVER	<u>See What's at Stake</u>	Step into the topic and explore the global challenge	Reading + visual + short videos	30 min
	<u>Explore Key Concepts</u>	Build shared understanding of key terms	Reading	30 min
	<u>Understand the Stakeholders & Systems</u>	Identify who's involved, how they're connected, and see country examples	Reading + visual	30 min
	<u>Dive into the Research</u>	Investigate your country, community, school, and youth action networks	3 Worksheets	60–90 min
	<u>Go Further</u>	Optional resources for deeper learning	Extension links	Flexible
CONNECT	<u>Meet the Speakers</u>	Learn about the speakers and the organizations they serve	Speaker bios Live session (Zoom)	15 min
	<u>Join the Dialogue</u>	Register your participation, submit and upvote questions, and engage with world leaders and peers worldwide	Worksheet + discussion	60 min
	<u>Reflect on the Dialogue</u>	Use the See-Think-Wonder routine to think, deepen, and challenge assumptions	Worksheet + discussion	30 min
TRANSFORM	<u>Trace the Patterns</u>	Use the Sustainability Compass to reflect on interconnected impacts	Worksheet + discussion	45 min
	<u>Go Below the Surface</u>	Analyze root causes with the Iceberg Model	Worksheet + discussion	45 min
	<u>Take Action</u>	Discover action ideas, engage in a social media challenge and youth-led initiatives	Action menu + challenge prompts	30 min
	<u>Reflect & Review</u>	Share takeaways and assess learning	Self/peer reflection + showcase	30 min

DISCOVER

See What's at Stake

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CONNECT

See What's At Stake

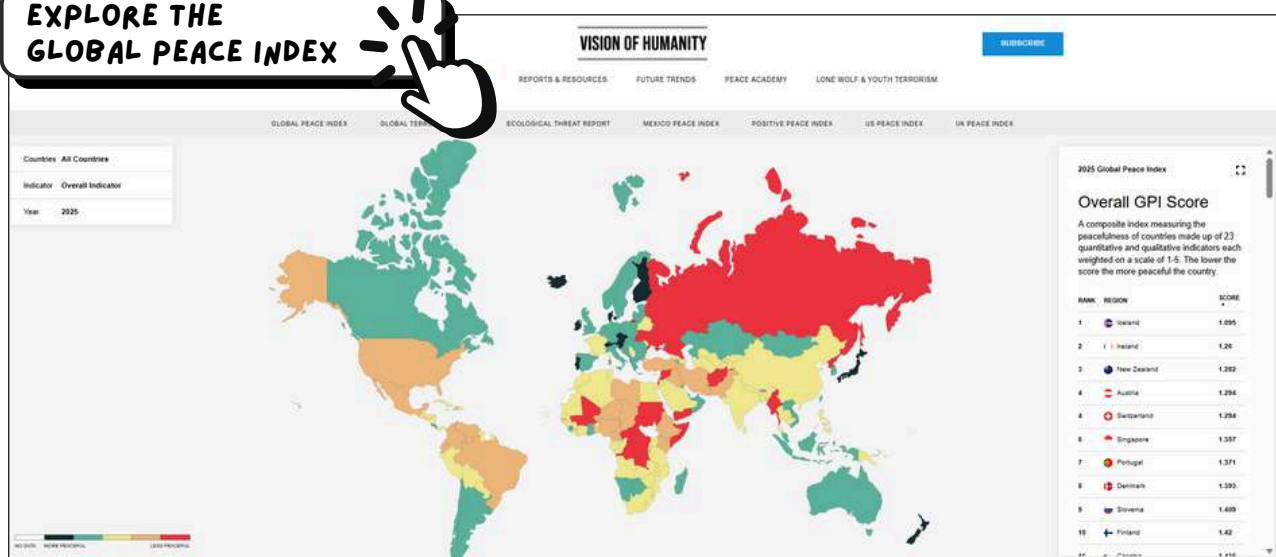
Peace and security affect everyone, shaping how people live, learn, and connect. They determine whether you feel safe walking to school, whether your voice is heard online, whether your community is treated fairly, and whether your future feels secure. When trust erodes, when violence becomes normal, or when people feel powerless to shape decisions, peace weakens everywhere.

But how peaceful is our world today — and why do some societies remain more stable than others? The 2025 **Global Peace Index** offers a snapshot of this reality, revealing that conflict deaths, geopolitical tensions, and military build-ups have reached their highest levels since World War II. In 2024 alone, wars and political violence forced more than 110 million people to their homes ([UNHCR](#)) and one in four children now grows up in areas affected by conflict ([UNICEF](#)). At the same time, polarization, disinformation, and mistrust in institutions are eroding the sense of safety and belonging — even in societies not at war.

Truly peaceful societies are not only free from war, they have institutions, values, and norms that allow people to resolve problems fairly and without violence. They build trust, protect rights, and recover from crises by adapting and transforming together.

In this module, you'll explore what peace means in your own context, connect global patterns to local realities, and consider how you can help build fairer, more resilient communities. Sustaining peace isn't the task of diplomats alone, it starts with the choices we make, the words we use, and the trust we build every day.

EXPLORE THE GLOBAL PEACE INDEX



Global Voices for Peace & Security



In this video message for the International Day of Peace, UN Secretary-General António Guterres delivers a **powerful call to action, urging people everywhere to silence the guns, reject hatred and misinformation, and choose respect, unity, and hope** in a world torn by rising conflict and division.



Peacebuilding is a tried and true model for saving funds and lives. Right now, **violence costs the world nearly \$20 trillion, or about \$2,380 per person. At the same time, every dollar invested in prevention saves \$16 down the line.** Elizabeth Spehar, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support, breaks down the value for money as well as the immeasurable benefits of saving lives and securing the future.



How does peace and peacebuilding relate to young people? In this video, young people in Jamaica share how they are becoming peacebuilders in their schools and communities. Through real stories of courage and collaboration, they reveal the human side of peacebuilding — how small acts of understanding and solidarity can strengthen resilience and inspire hope even in the face of adversity.

The **United Nations** (UN) was founded in 1945 to “save succeeding generations from the scourge of war.” That mission remains as vital today as it was in the aftermath of World War II. Through peacekeeping, diplomacy, human rights advocacy, and development cooperation, the UN works to prevent conflict and foster stability across the globe. Yet the world has changed profoundly since 1945. New forms of warfare, digital threats, and global inequalities demand renewed cooperation and stronger institutions. To remain effective, the UN must continue to evolve, ensuring that decisions on peace and security reflect the realities, voices, and aspirations of all nations.

Challenges & Drivers

Peace is fragile because many forces push societies toward division and violence. These drivers do not act alone, they overlap and reinforce one another. Understanding them helps us see where change is needed.

Racism & Discrimination

Prejudice based on race, ethnicity, gender, religion, or identity excludes entire groups from opportunities and rights. This exclusion fuels frustration and a sense of injustice, which can easily escalate into conflict. Discrimination undermines social trust, divides communities, and normalizes inequality. Over time, these divisions create fertile ground for violence and instability.

Power & Governance

When power is concentrated in the hands of a few, trust in institutions breaks down. Corruption, abuse of authority, and lack of accountability weaken democracy and people's confidence in leadership. Political exclusion often sparks protests, unrest, or even violent resistance. Strong, transparent, and inclusive governance is key to preventing these conflicts.

Inequality & Resources

Competition over land, water, energy, or minerals has historically fueled wars. When these resources are distributed unfairly, marginalized groups often feel exploited and excluded. Climate change makes tensions worse by threatening food, water, and livelihoods in vulnerable regions. Unless resources are shared equitably, resentment can lead to instability and conflict.

Disinformation & Polarization

False information spreads rapidly online, deepening mistrust and fear. Social media algorithms often amplify divisive "us vs. them" narratives, making cooperation harder. Today, AI-generated content can produce convincing fake news, images, and even voices, creating new threats to truth and trust. Without strong media literacy and responsible regulation, polarization can undermine peace.

Violence & Cycles of Trauma

Communities that have endured colonization, war, or repression often carry deep wounds. Trauma, if left unhealed, passes between generations and shapes how groups see each other. This cycle of pain and mistrust can trigger renewed violence when tensions rise. Reconciliation, dialogue, and healing are essential to breaking these patterns and building lasting peace.



Discussion

- Which of these drivers have you seen in your own community or country?
- How do they connect with each other (discrimination and inequality, or power and disinformation)?
- What role can young people play in breaking these cycles?

Building Blocks for Peace

The **Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs) offer a shared blueprint for peaceful, just, and resilient societies. Each goal addresses part of the peace and security puzzle, and together they show that lasting peace depends on dignity, opportunity, and a healthy planet.

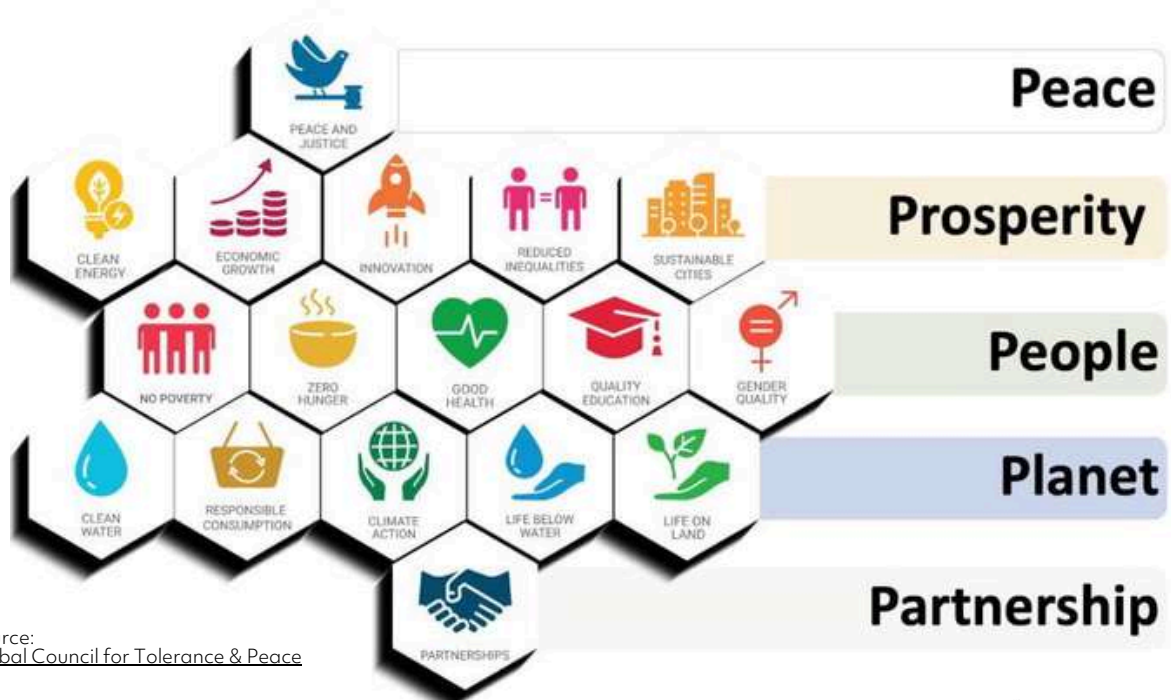
Eliminating poverty (Goal 1) **and hunger** (Goal 2) tackles root drivers of instability. **Access to health** (Goal 3) **and education** (Goal 4) builds trust, resilience, and the skills to resolve conflict without violence. **Gender equality** (Goal 5) strengthens inclusive decision-making and reduces systemic violence. **Equitable access to water** (Goal 6) **and energy** (Goal 7) prevents resource tensions and supports stable livelihoods.

Decent work and economic growth (Goal 8), **industry, innovation and infrastructure** (Goal 9), **and reduced inequalities** (Goal 10) go hand-in-hand: fair jobs, reliable infrastructure, and equal opportunities lower grievances, connect regions, and foster social cohesion. **Sustainable cities** (Goal 11) make urban spaces safer and more inclusive.

Protecting our environment — responsible consumption and production (Goal 12), **climate action** (Goal 13), **life below water** (Goal 14), **and life on land** (Goal 15) — reduces the ecological pressures that fuel displacement and conflict.

Peace, justice and strong institutions (Goal 16) anchor these efforts through rule of law, accountability, and human rights. And **partnerships** (Goal 17) ensure countries, communities, and youth collaborate across borders to prevent conflict and sustain peace.

Peace isn't a single target, it's the outcome of progress across all the SDGs.



Source:
Global Council for Tolerance & Peace

Global Frameworks

Peace and security are built on international agreements that set shared rules, protect human rights, and promote cooperation among nations. These frameworks set **legal limits to violence, guide responses to conflict, and create a common foundation for lasting peace**, reminding us that **peace is not just an ideal, but a shared global responsibility**.

The **United Nations Charter** (1945): The founding document of the UN, created after World War II to “save succeeding generations from the scourge of war.” It establishes the UN Security Council’s role in maintaining international peace and security; affirms that disputes should be resolved through dialogue, not force; upholds the sovereign equality of all nations and bans the use of violence except in self-defense or with UN approval.

The **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** (1948): Adopted by the UN General Assembly, it sets out 30 fundamental rights and freedoms belonging to every person: equality before the law, freedom of expression, and protection from torture or arbitrary detention.

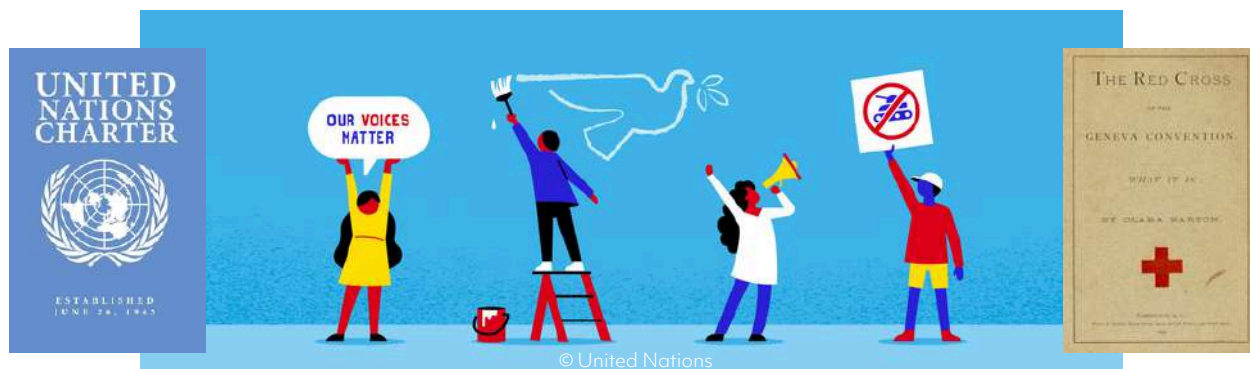
The **Geneva Conventions** (1949) and Additional Protocols: Four treaties that define international humanitarian law — the “rules of war.” They protect civilians, prisoners of war, and the wounded during armed conflict.

The **Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs, 2015–2030): Adopted by all UN Member States, the SDGs link peace, justice, and development.

Women, Peace and Security Agenda (UN Security Council Resolution 1325, 2000): Recognizes women’s crucial role in conflict prevention, peacebuilding, and recovery; calls for women’s participation at all decision-making levels; and protects women and girls from gender-based violence in conflict zones.

Youth, Peace and Security Agenda (UN Security Council Resolution 2250, 2015): Highlights the positive contributions of young people to peace and security; encourages youth participation in governance, peace processes, and community resilience; and promotes education, dialogue, and employment as tools for peace.

Arms Control and Disarmament Treaties: A group of international agreements aimed at reducing weapons and preventing escalation, such as the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (1968) to limit the spread of nuclear weapons; the Arms Trade Treaty (2013), which regulates international arms sales; or the Ottawa Treaty (1997), which bans landmines that harm civilians long after wars end.



Key Distinctions



NEGATIVE PEACE VS. POSITIVE PEACE

Negative Peace refers to the absence of violence or fear of violence, while Positive Peace goes further — it is the presence of conditions that allow societies to thrive, including well-being, inclusion, justice, and more sustainable relationships with the environment.

THE 8 PILLARS OF POSITIVE PEACE



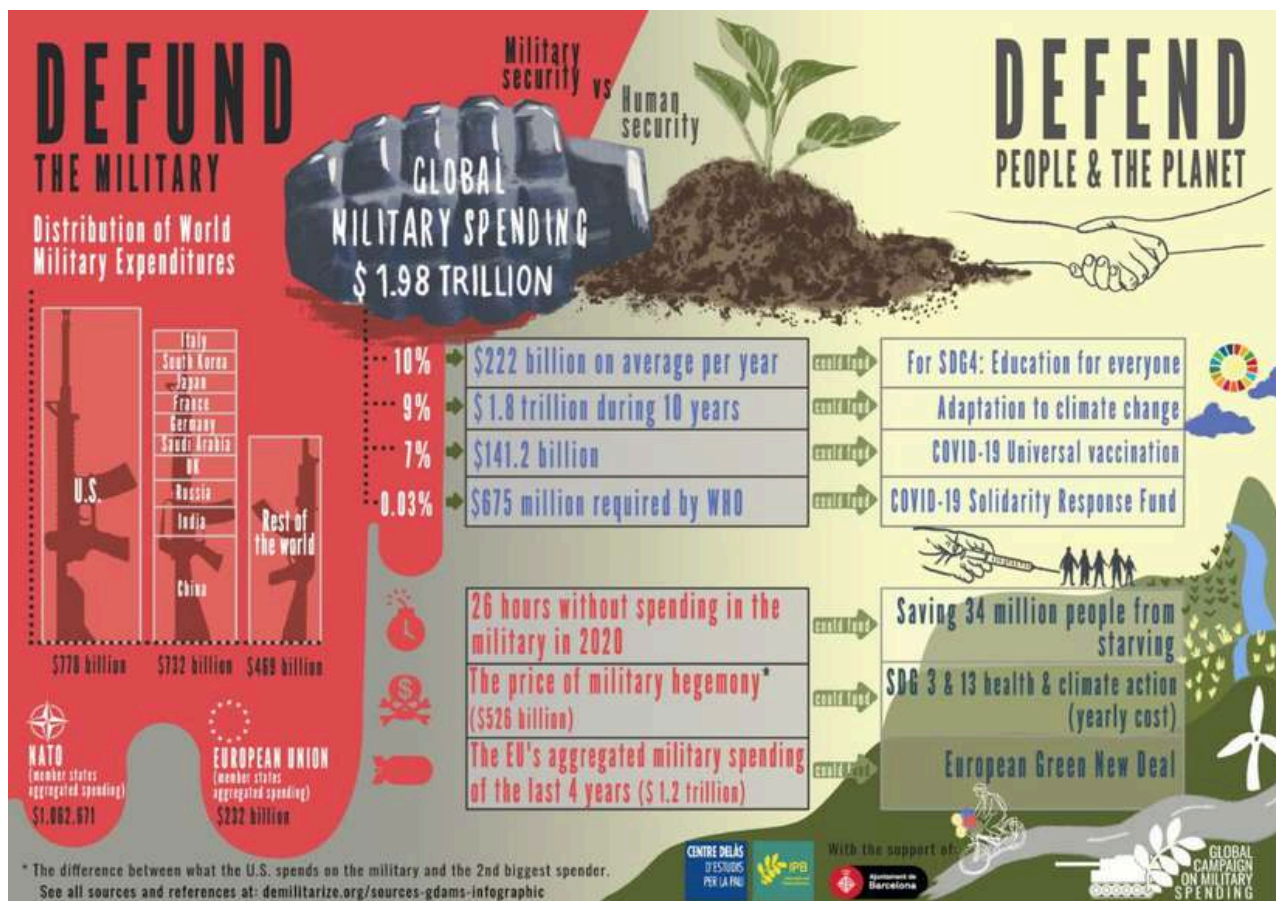
Source:
[Institute for Economics & Peace](#)

SECURITY VS. MILITARIZATION

Understanding the difference between security and militarization is essential for analyzing how societies respond to threats (real or perceived) and how those choices shape peace, justice, and human rights.

Security refers to the condition in which people and communities feel safe, not only from violence, but also from threats to their dignity, rights, and basic needs. It includes human security: access to food, clean water, healthcare, education, and freedom from fear and oppression. True security addresses the root causes of conflict (inequality, injustice, environmental degradation, and exclusion) through diplomacy, social investment, and inclusive governance. In this sense, peacebuilding and development are powerful security strategies.

Militarization, on the other hand, occurs when societies increasingly rely on military force or logic to handle problems, even those that are social, economic, or political in nature. It often involves rising defense budgets, a stronger military presence in civilian life, and seeing “the other” (whether protestors or foreign nations) as threats to be contained. Global military spending reached \$2.7 trillion in 2024 — the steepest annual increase since the end of the Cold War (SIPRI).



How might the world look if even a fraction of global military spending were redirected toward education, healthcare, or climate action?

JUSTICE VS. PUNISHMENT

Understanding the difference between justice and punishment is essential to how societies uphold peace, repair harm, and prevent violence. Both deal with wrongdoing — but they differ in purpose, process, and outcomes.

Justice seeks to restore balance. It focuses on fairness, accountability, and healing ensuring that rights are protected, that everyone is treated equally before the law, and that those harmed are heard and supported. True justice goes beyond retribution; it addresses the root causes of harm, helps rebuild trust, and strengthens the social fabric that prevents future conflict.

Punishment, by contrast, focuses on retribution, imposing penalties for wrongdoing, often through incarceration or exclusion. While it can deter harmful acts, excessive or unequal punishment can deepen resentment and inequality, especially when justice systems discriminate or fail to offer pathways for rehabilitation and reintegration.

As communities and nations strive to build peace, they face a difficult question: **How can we hold people accountable while still allowing for forgiveness, learning, and transformation? What does justice look like when the goal is not revenge but rebuilding relationships and restoring dignity?**




Source: [Alberta Court of Justice](#)


Common Myths and Misconceptions – Debunked

After exploring Key Distinctions, this activity invites you to test and challenge common assumptions about what peace and security really mean in practice. Below are a few statements often heard in public debate or everyday conversation — some partly true, others oversimplified. In small groups, decide whether you agree or disagree with each one before reading the explanations. Then, reflect on how these ideas influence public opinion, policymaking, or everyday life in your own context.


 **MYTH** **"If there's no war, there's peace."**

 **FACT** The absence of open conflict doesn't necessarily mean a society is peaceful. Many countries without war still face inequality, corruption, or repression that undermine trust and stability. Positive peace means more than quiet borders, it depends on fairness, inclusion, and strong, accountable institutions.


 **MYTH** **"National security depends mainly on military strength."**

 **FACT** Military defense can deter attacks, but lasting security comes from addressing what makes people feel unsafe in the first place, such as poverty, exclusion, misinformation, or weak governance. Human security focuses on protecting people's lives and dignity through education, healthcare, and equal opportunity, not only through armies or weapons.

 **MYTH** **"Justice is achieved when wrongdoers are punished."**

 **FACT** Punishment can stop harmful acts, but it doesn't always heal harm or prevent future violence. Justice also means repairing relationships, ensuring fairness, and addressing root causes. Restorative approaches can rebuild trust and reduce cycles of resentment or exclusion.

 **MYTH** **"Building peace is the job of diplomats and world leaders."**

 **FACT** Governments and the UN have vital roles, but peace grows from everyday actions — how communities resolve conflict, how schools teach respect, and how people treat one another online and offline. Young people are not just observers; they are central to shaping more just and secure societies.



Discussion

- Which of these ideas do you hear most often in your community or the media?
- Why do these myths persist, and how might they shape people's views of peace and security?
- What real-world examples — local or global — show individuals and youth challenging these assumptions through action or dialogue?

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Explore Key Concepts

Peace is not only the absence of war, but the presence of justice, inclusion, dignity, and trust. It means people can live free from fear and want, with equal opportunities to thrive and participate in society

Security means feeling safe — physically, socially, and economically. True security protects people from hunger, violence, disease, and discrimination, not just military threats. It includes human security, which focuses on protecting lives, rights, and livelihoods.

Positive Peace is the combination of attitudes, institutions, and social system, such as good governance, education, and respect for human rights, that make societies fair, resilient, and able to thrive.

Negative Peace is the absence of direct violence or war; it may bring temporary calm, but without addressing inequality or injustice, it often remains fragile.

Resilience is the ability of people, communities, and institutions to adapt, recover, and grow stronger after crises such as violence, natural disasters, or political instability, helping societies resist cycles of conflict and rebuild hope.

Inclusion is the condition in which everyone, regardless of gender, race, religion, ability, or background, can participate equally in society, building trust and making peace more durable.

Justice ensures that everyone is treated fairly and that harms are repaired. It is not only about laws and punishment but about restoring dignity and balance in relationships and institutions.

Restorative Justice is a process that focuses on healing rather than revenge. It brings together those who caused harm and those affected to discuss what happened, take responsibility, and find ways to repair relationships and rebuild trust.

Transitional Justice begins when societies emerge from conflict or dictatorship, they use mechanisms like truth commissions, reparations, and institutional reform to address past abuses and promote reconciliation. Transitional justice helps societies move forward while acknowledging past harm.

Rule of Law is the principle that everyone, including governments, is accountable to the same fair and transparent laws. Rule of law prevents abuse of power and protects basic rights.



Reflection Questions

- Which of these ideas feels most relevant in your community?
- How do these concepts connect? For example, how might inclusion strengthen justice or resilience to support peace?
- Where do you see positive or negative peace in action around you?

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Understand the Stakeholders & Systems

Who Shapes Peace & Security?

Building peace is a collective effort. It depends on cooperation across all levels of society and on understanding how diverse actors work together to create inclusive, resilient, and lasting peace.

JUSTICE SYSTEMS

Justice systems and security institutions, including courts, police, and security forces, maintain safety and uphold the rule of law. Their legitimacy depends on fairness, accountability, and the prevention of abuse of power.

GOVERNMENTS AND POLICY MAKERS

Set laws and policies that protect rights, promote inclusion, and reduce corruption. Through effective leadership, they ensure accountable institutions and a fair distribution of resources.

FAITH LEADERS & COMMUNITIES

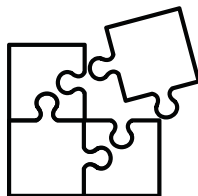
Local communities and faith leaders play a vital role in mediating disputes, fostering reconciliation, and building everyday peace at the grassroots level.

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

International organisations and multilateral bodies such as the United Nations, the African Union, and the European Union coordinate peacekeeping, diplomacy, and humanitarian aid. They also uphold global frameworks like SDG 16 and the Women and Youth, Peace & Security agendas.

PRIVATE SECTOR

The private sector and industry contribute to stability by creating jobs and economic opportunities. When guided by ethical practices, they reduce inequality and support peace, but exploitation and corruption can deepen tensions.



CIVIL SOCIETY & NGOS

Civil society and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) give voice to communities, advocate for human rights, support marginalised groups, and provide essential services during crises.

YOUTH & THE GENERAL PUBLIC

The general public and youth sustain peace through civic engagement, tolerance, and accountability. Young people, in particular, are powerful agents of change, bringing new ideas, bridging divides, and shaping more just and secure societies.

DONORS & PHILANTHROPY

Donors and philanthropic actors, including int. agencies, foundations, and local benefactors, provide critical funding for peacebuilding, education, and community resilience initiatives.

MEDIA & TECHNOLOGY

Media and technology platforms shape public opinion, raise awareness, and amplify peace initiatives. At the same time, they can spread misinformation and polarising narratives that undermine trust and fuel conflict.

Examples from Different Regions

Ukraine: Youth-led Education Amid Conflict

Challenge: The war in Ukraine disrupted education for millions of students, with over 1,600 schools damaged or destroyed and many displaced families facing uncertainty.

Response: Initiatives like UNICEF's UPSHIFT program and learning recovery centers provide displaced youth with skills training, social projects, and in-person education support. These programs aim to rebuild resilience and community ties.

Lesson Learned: Youth-driven education programs not only address immediate learning gaps but also foster long-term peace by empowering young people to contribute positively to their communities.

Sudan: Youth Mobilization for Peace

Challenge: Sudan has faced prolonged conflict, with youth often bearing the brunt of violence and instability.

Response: Youth in Sudan have initiated peacebuilding efforts through cultural programs, emergency response initiatives, and campaigns like 'Voices of Peace' launched from abroad, aiming to promote social cohesion and combat hate speech.

Lesson Learned: Despite facing significant challenges, youth can be powerful agents of peace, contributing to conflict resolution and fostering unity even in the most difficult circumstances.

Nepal: Youth-led Protests and Political Change

Challenge: In September 2025, widespread youth-led protests erupted in Nepal over government censorship and corruption, leading to significant unrest and loss of life.

Response: The protests, organized through platforms like Discord, led to the resignation of Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli. Subsequently, the youth movement utilized AI tools like ChatGPT to identify potential candidates for an interim government, resulting in the appointment of Sushila Karki as interim Prime Minister.

Lesson Learned: Youth activism, when channeled effectively, can lead to significant political change. The use of technology and social media has become a crucial tool for organizing and advocating for democratic reforms.

DISCOVER

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TRANSFORM

Dive into the Research

Learners are encouraged to partake in guided research and activities to explore the topic. Research can be completed independently in a computer lab, as a homework assignment, by talking to community members, visiting a library, or as a classroom, club or community activity.

This research worksheet will help you explore the topic in your country and community by analyzing policies, trends, and challenges. Answer each question using reliable data and sources. Reflect on the findings and connect them to global challenges. Be ready to discuss or present your research.



Learner Research Worksheet: Investigate Your COUNTRY and Community

Name:	
1. Local Safety and Wellbeing: What are the main safety concerns in your community. Who is most affected?	
2. Institutions and Justice: How do local justice or complaint mechanisms work? Is legal help accessible?	
3. Drivers of Insecurity: Which factors contribute to tension or harm: such as inequality, discrimination, hate speech, corruption, or disinformation?	
4. Current Actions: Which programs exist for violence prevention, restorative practices, youth engagement, or community policing? Who leads them?	
5. Gaps and Opportunities: What is missing? How could youth, schools, or clubs contribute?	
6. Partnerships: Who are the key stakeholders? How are partnerships helping or hindering progress?	



This worksheet will help you assess how your school or community is promoting peace and security and identify areas for improvement. Use this as a guide to observe, ask questions, and take notes on peacebuilding practices in your school or neighbourhood.

Learner Research Worksheet: Investigate Your SCHOOL or Community		
Investigate	Yes, No, Unsure	Notes and Observations
Does your school or community have clear codes of conduct or policies that promote respect, nonviolence, and inclusion?		
Are there safe, trusted channels for reporting bullying, harassment, or discrimination, and are they accessible to all students and staff?		
Are restorative practices (e.g., mediation, conflict circles) used to resolve conflicts and repair relationships?		
Does your school or community run awareness activities or campaigns about peace, justice, rights, or anti-bullying?		
Are students, staff, or community members trained in peer mediation, nonviolent communication, or digital/media literacy?		

Are different groups (e.g., across gender, ethnicity, religion, abilities, or socio-economic backgrounds) included and represented in leadership, councils, or decision-making?		
Are human rights, peace, or social justice topics integrated into classroom discussions, curricula, or community projects?		
Are there partnerships with local NGOs, youth networks, or civic organisations that work on peace, justice, or violence prevention?		
Are there student- or youth-led initiatives (e.g., clubs, campaigns, social media projects) focused on building inclusion, justice, or trust?		
Does your school or community commemorate or participate in international peace-related days (e.g., International Day of Peace, Human Rights Day)?		
Has your school or community experienced conflict, tension, or insecurity (e.g., bullying incidents, discrimination, mistrust)? How was it addressed?		
Taking Action: What can you and your peers do to strengthen peace and security in your school or neighborhood? List 3 steps.		



In this activity, learners explore how young people around the world are taking the lead in promoting peace, justice, climate action, and inclusion. They will investigate a youth-led movement or organization, consider its impact, and reflect on how similar strategies could be applied in their own communities.

Examples of Youth-Led Movements:

- **United Network of Young Peacebuilders (UNOY) (Global):** An international network connecting youth organizations working on peacebuilding, conflict resolution, and youth-led initiatives worldwide.
- **UNAOC Young Peacebuilders (Global):** This initiative by the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations supports youth across regions to build skills, networks, and projects fostering dialogue, intercultural understanding, and conflict prevention.
- **Amandla.mobi / Youth Digital Activism (Africa-wide):** A digital platform where young people mobilize for justice, equality, and accountability. Through online petitions, campaigns, and social media advocacy, they amplify marginalized voices and promote peaceful social change.
- **Gen Z Uprisings (Regional/National):** While not a single organization, the wave of youth activism under the "Gen Z" banner in countries such as Morocco, Nepal, Madagascar, etc., demonstrates how young people are mobilizing for political change, transparency, accountability, and social justice.
- **Add a local youth movement or initiative or choose one that resonates with you.**



Research / Discussion Questions

- What is the mission or goal of the youth-led movement you chose?
- What strategies or actions do the youth use to create change (e.g., protests, social media campaigns, community projects)?
- Who are the key actors or partners involved in supporting the movement?
- What impact has the movement had locally, nationally, or globally?
- How could similar actions be applied in your own community to address local issues?



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Go Further



Courses & Publications

- [Youth & Peacebuilding](#) (free online course for young people, UNITAR)
- [Teaching and Learning for Transformative Action](#) (UNESCO, 2019)
- [Empowering students for just societies: a handbook for secondary school teachers](#) (UNESCO, 2019)

CONNECT

Go Further

TRANSFORM

You can find additional reading and useful resources to further build on the ideas and contents provided in this guide and to engage in a process of transformation and empowerment.

Websites & Multimedia

- [UN Peace & Security Guide](#)
- [Navigating the Digital World: Essential Tips for Online Safety](#)
- [UNICEF's new social media group for Young People](#)
- [World's Largest Lesson](#)
- [TED-Ed: Video bank for teachers and students](#)
- [The UN's Lazy Person's Guide to Saving the World](#)
- [Games4Sustainability. Sustainability Gamepedia](#)

Documentaries & Films

Films by [Yann Arthus-Bertrand](#) about humanity and the planet, [freely available](#).

(in 6 languages)

[LINK TO FILM](#)



[LINK TO FILM](#)



[LINK TO FILM](#)



DISCOVER

Meet the Speakers

Join the Dialogue

Reflect on the Dialogue

CONNECT

Meet the Speakers

TRANSFORM

Speakers to be announced



DISCOVER

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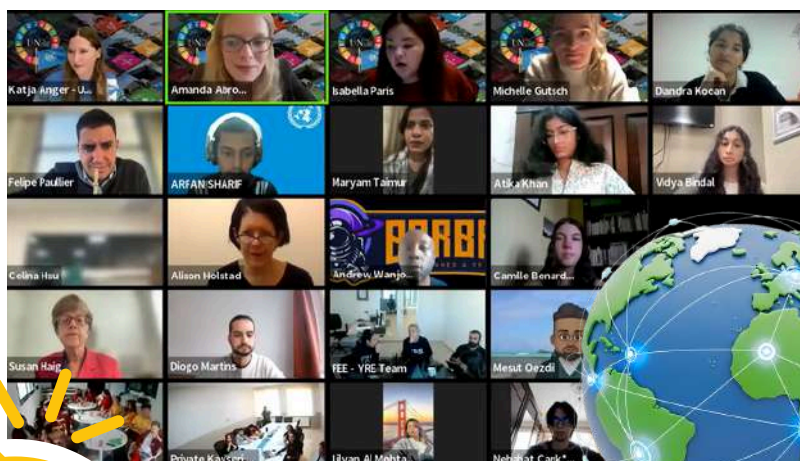
CONNECT

Join the Dialogue

TRANSFORM



In this activity, learners connect directly with global leaders and youth changemakers in a live, online dialogue — gaining new perspectives, inspiration, and a deeper understanding of how peace and security issues play out around the world.



28 January 2025

9am ET + optional 20min peer exchange

Submit your Questions to the Speakers

Ahead of the session, learners are invited to submit and upvote questions for the speakers to answer during the live session. Students may submit individually or in groups via Slido, directing questions to a specific speaker or to all (e.g., "Speaker First Name: [question]"). Learners can include their name(s) and country.

Deadline: Questions should be submitted at least 3 days before the session.

Selection: The most relevant and upvoted questions will be chosen by the youth moderators and put to the speakers during the dialogue.



SUBMIT NOW



TRANSFORM

DISCOVER

Meet the Speakers

Join the Dialogue

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TRANSFORM

Reflect on the Dialogue



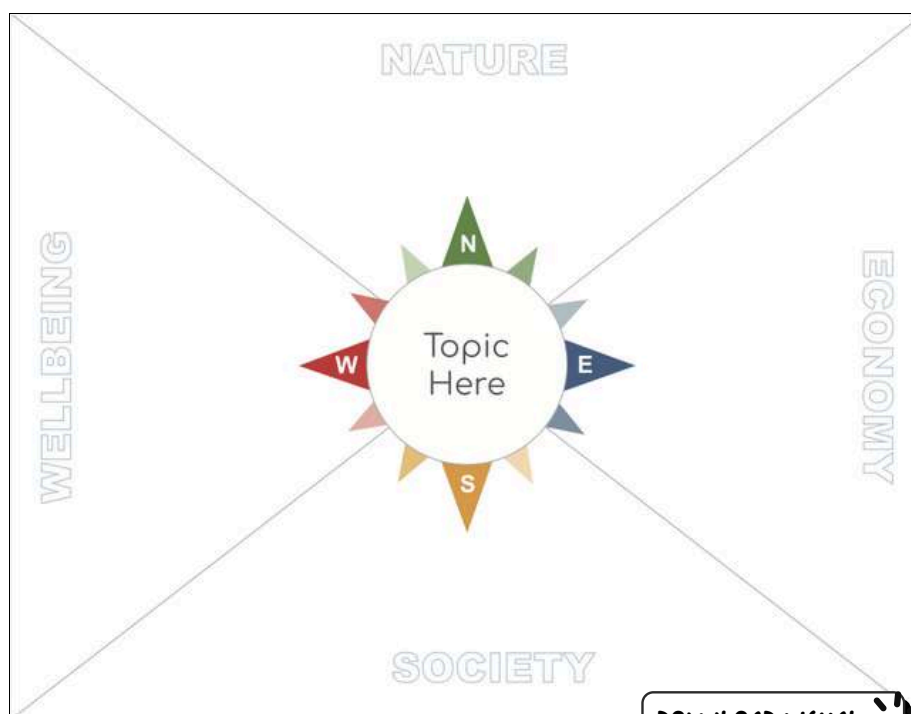
In this activity, learners use the Compass as a reflection and conversation tool to examine interconnected aspects, diverse perspectives, and cause and effect relationships.

Goal: To help learners reflect critically on the shared dialogue.

Tool: Using the Sustainability Compass, students reflect on information gathered from four perspectives — Nature, Economy, Society, and Wellbeing — to think analytically and explore complexity. This can be used to create a shared understanding or definition of a concept or topic.

Example Cards:

Opportunity	Prosperity
Dignity	Agency
Success	Job & Wages
Rights	Rules & Laws
Progress	Belonging
Scarcity	Abundance
Security	Justice
Safety	Action
Traditions	Natural Resources



DOWNLOAD VISUAL

Classroom Process

- Gather important information, concepts, quotes, observations, questions, and/or thoughts. Write each idea on it's own card or sticky note.
- Sort the cards on the compass. If this is collaborative work, it might be helpful to place one card at a time and discuss. Using the Compass as a conversation tool to support visible thinking.
- Discuss relationships that you notice between elements. Draw arrows to show the connections between ideas.
- Have a look at the systems map you created. What do you notice?

DISCOVER

Trace the Patterns

Go Below the Surface

Take Action

Reflect & Review

ACTIVITY

Tool: Use the Compass as a research tool to analyze a current event, news story, image, short story, or news clip focused on a peace issue that you care about.

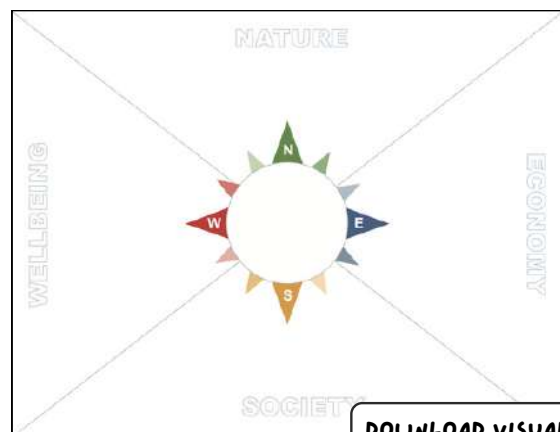
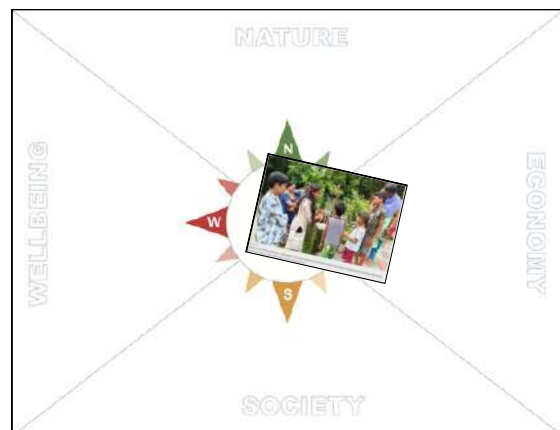
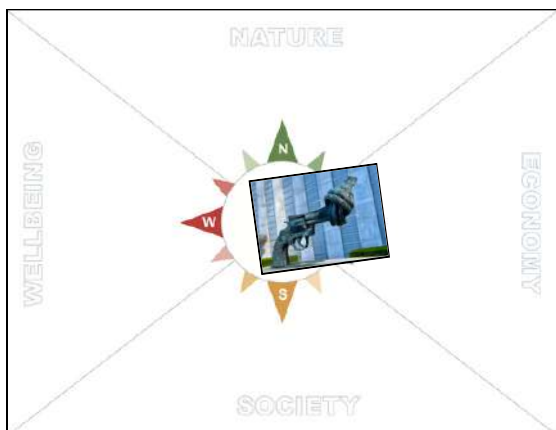
CONNECT

TRANSFORM

Trace the Patterns

In this activity, learners use the Compass as a tool to research, investigate, and analyze current issues and events.

Goal: To support learners research issues and events.



DOWNLOAD VISUAL



Classroom Process

- Decide on an article, story, image, or event that you'd like to research.
- Each small group or individual take the perspective of one Compass point.
- Dig deeper: Brainstorm research questions from your unique Compass point. Fill your own Compass point with information gathered.
- Think Big Picture: Have a look at the information gathered. Draw arrows to show the cause & effect connections between ideas. Feel free to draw arrows within and between Compass points.
- Have a look at the systems map you created. What do you notice?

DISCOVER

Trace the Patterns

Go Below the Surface

Take Action

Reflect & Review

CONNECT

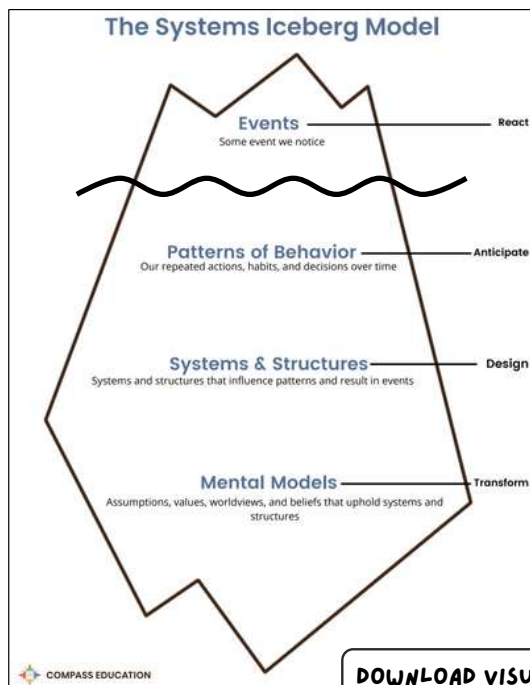
TRANSFORM

Go Below the Surface

In this activity, learners use the **Systems Iceberg** as a tool to discover what's happening below what's visible - helping us surface deeper levels of understanding, and identify where meaningful change can happen.

Goal: Learners will analyse a scenario to explore negative & positive peace within a school context and visualize systems that drive behavior from different levels.

Tool: The Systems Iceberg helps us evaluate an issue or event by examining the root causes, underlying structures, and mental models that can trigger it. Supporting learners in developing new perspectives and effective solutions.



DOWNLOAD VISUAL

Negative Peace Scenario Iceberg Sort!

Two students have been fighting and saying hurtful things to each other in class. Over the past week, this has escalated and gotten out of control. This continued conflict is impacting their studies and the people around them. A mutual friend of theirs steps in and tells them to stop. They agree to avoid each other, but the tension is still there. They haven't forgiven or understood each other. They are able to share space at school without fighting, but do not feel like anything has been resolved.

Instructions: Sort the cards on the iceberg. This is a conversation tool. There are no right or wrong answers. If you are engaging in this collaboratively, it might be helpful to place one word at a time and discuss. Feel free to add your own!

Friend Intervenes	Impacts learning	Impact on others
Fighting	Mean words	Hurt feelings
Forgiveness	Avoidance	Trust
Understand other perspectives	Peace = absence of fighting	This friendship is worth it
Feeling of resolution	Escalation	

Positive Peace Scenario Iceberg Sort!

Two students have been fighting and saying hurtful things to each other in class. Over the past week, this has escalated and gotten out of control. This continued conflict is impacting their studies and the people around them. A mutual friend of theirs steps in and tells them to stop. They agree to avoid each other, but the tension is still there. They haven't forgiven or understood each other. They are able to share space at school without fighting, but do not feel like anything has been resolved.

After a cooling off period they go to a teacher to explain their situation. They share that they do not feel the impact this is having on their friendship group. With the teacher they agree to talk it over respectfully. They each share the impact this incident has on themselves and others, and work together to decide what needs to happen to make things right and commit to action together. They follow these steps that their teacher helped them develop:

- Tell the other person how you feel. Let them know you don't like what's happening and what your goal for resolution (moving forward) is.
- Listen to what the other person says about how they feel, what they don't like, and what they are willing to do.

DOWNLOAD SCENARIO

There are no right or wrong answers. If you are engaging in this collaboratively, it might be helpful to place one word at a time and discuss. Feel free to add your own!

Cooling Off Period	Impacts learning	Sharing Perspectives
Ask for Help	Reflect on Impact	Impact on Wellbeing
Forgiveness	Commitment to Relationships	Trust
Understand other perspectives	Peace = more than just the absence of fighting	This friendship is worth rebuilding
Feeling of resolution	Reaching Agreement	Committing to Agreements
		Value of Friendship

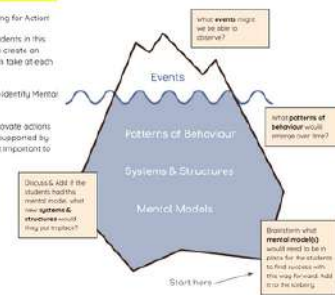
Up the Iceberg for Positive Peace!

Goal: Move from analysis to innovating for Action!

Instructions: Pretend you are the students in this scenario. Use the Systems Iceberg to create an action plan based on actions you can take at each level.

Start at the bottom of the iceberg to identify Mental Models you will focus on.

Work your way up the iceberg to innovate actions they can take at each level that are supported by the mental models you feel are most important to positive peace.



Classroom Process

- Read the Case Studies & place the sorting cards within the levels of the Iceberg where you feel they best belong. Take time to discuss and share perspectives. Feel free to create your own cards to add.
- Have a look at your Iceberg analysis. Where do you feel the students might have the most leverage to create sustainable (long-lasting) change? Why?
- What actions and habits might help them sustain positive change?

DISCOVER

CONNECT

TRANSFORM

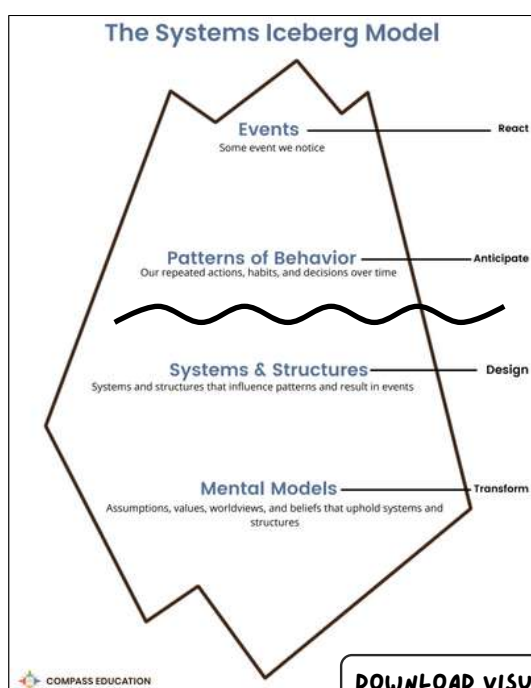


In this activity, learners use the **Systems Iceberg** as a tool to discover what's happening below what's visible. This helps us surface deeper levels of understanding and identify where we can create meaningful change.

Goal: Support learners to visualize systems that drive events from different levels.

Tool: The Systems Iceberg helps us evaluate an issue or event by examining the root causes, underlying structures, and mental models that can trigger it, supporting learners in developing new perspectives and effective solutions.

- **Events** → What's visible. Symptoms we see. (e.g., a peaceful protest).
- **Patterns** → Trends over time (e.g. increasing youth engagement in issues, use of social media).
- **Systems & Structures** → Systems that reinforce patterns (e.g. access to justice).
- **Mental Models** → Ways of thinking, beliefs, or assumptions (e.g., "It's my responsibility to speak out and take action" or "We are all in this together").



Examples to Try:



Restorative Justice

Rise of Gen Z Protests



Classroom Process

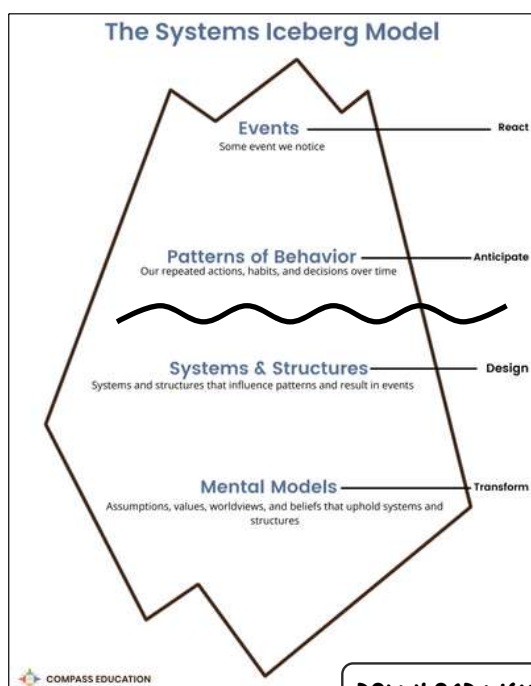
- Identify an event or issue you'd like to investigate, and/or might like to take action for positive change within your own context.
- Using the resources gathered, place identified drivers within the levels of the Iceberg where you feel they best belong. Take time to discuss and share perspectives.
- Have a look at your Iceberg analysis. Where do you feel you have leverage to create change within your own relationships, groups, schools, and/or communities? Influencing change at any level below the "water" can have an important impact. What actions could you take to create change at multiple levels?



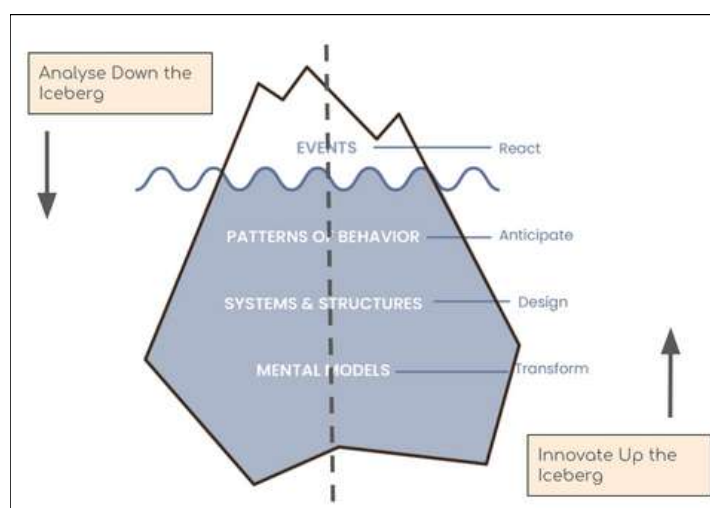
"Peace is not the absence of conflict, but the presence of understanding." In this activity, learners use the **Systems Iceberg** as a tool to thoughtfully and intentionally create meaningful change and maximize positive impact.

Goal: Support learners to identify areas in which they can take meaningful action to create positive change.

Tool: The Systems Iceberg supports learners in investigating the depth of an issue and identifying meaningful and actionable solutions.



Down the Iceberg to Analyze an Issue or Event, Up the Iceberg to Innovate for Positive Change



DOWNLOAD VISUAL

Classroom Process

- Identify an event or issue you'd like to investigate, and/or might like to take action for positive change within your own context.
- Analyze the issue/event by going down the Iceberg.
- Consider: As we deepen our understanding we can work our way up the iceberg to innovate new ideas, sustainable solutions, and identify opportunities & actions we can take ourselves to create & influence positive change.
- Discuss: If mental models or structures changed, how would patterns and events shift?
- Reflect: Which level(s) of the iceberg do you think you have the greatest power to impact? How does that change across different contexts?
- Share: "Peace is not the absence of conflict, but the presence of understanding." - What is something you think all youth should know about taking action for peace?

DISCOVER

Trace the Patterns

Go Below the Surface

Take Action

Reflect & Review

CONNECT

TRANSFORM

Take Action

This section includes ideas for action and a global social media challenge you can participate in.

Pathways for Action

Building peaceful, just, and inclusive societies requires action at every level. Young people, in particular, have the energy, creativity, and commitment to drive meaningful change. By promoting dialogue, standing against injustice, and connecting with global youth movements, learners can take practical steps toward advancing peace in their own communities and beyond.



Foster Dialogue and Inclusion

Peace begins with understanding. Creating opportunities for dialogue helps reduce prejudice, strengthen relationships, and prevent conflict.

Ideas for action:

- Organize intercultural and/or interfaith dialogues in your school or community.
- Launch peer-led workshops on tolerance, non-discrimination, and inclusion.
- Use digital platforms to share stories of peacebuilding and solidarity.



Advocate for Peace and Justice

Systemic change depends on youth voices being heard by decision-makers.

Ideas for action:

- Write letters or petitions to local representatives on youth priorities.
- Participate in Model UN or youth councils to practice diplomacy and advocacy.
- Campaign online for SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.



Promote Nonviolence & Anti-Bullying

Everyday acts of kindness and fairness can reduce violence and create safer environments.

Ideas for action:

- Lead anti-bullying campaigns in schools.
- Develop awareness materials on equality and human rights.
- Encourage peers to practice nonviolent conflict resolution.



Use Arts, Media, and Sports for Peacebuilding

Creative expression and sports are powerful tools to connect diverse groups and promote cooperation.

Ideas for action:

- Create peace murals, performances, or exhibitions.
- Host sports tournaments that bring together youth from different backgrounds.
- Produce short videos, podcasts, or social media campaigns about peace and justice.

DISCOVER

CONNECT

TRANSFORM



**THE MOST-LIKED POSTS
WILL BE AMPLIFIED**

Ages of Globalization:



Global Schools Program:



Social Media Challenge #OurVoiceOurPower

Task: In small groups, create a simple social media campaign on a global issue linked to the SDGs.

Goal: Decide what your post aims to do, e.g. raise awareness, share a solution, or showcase an action.

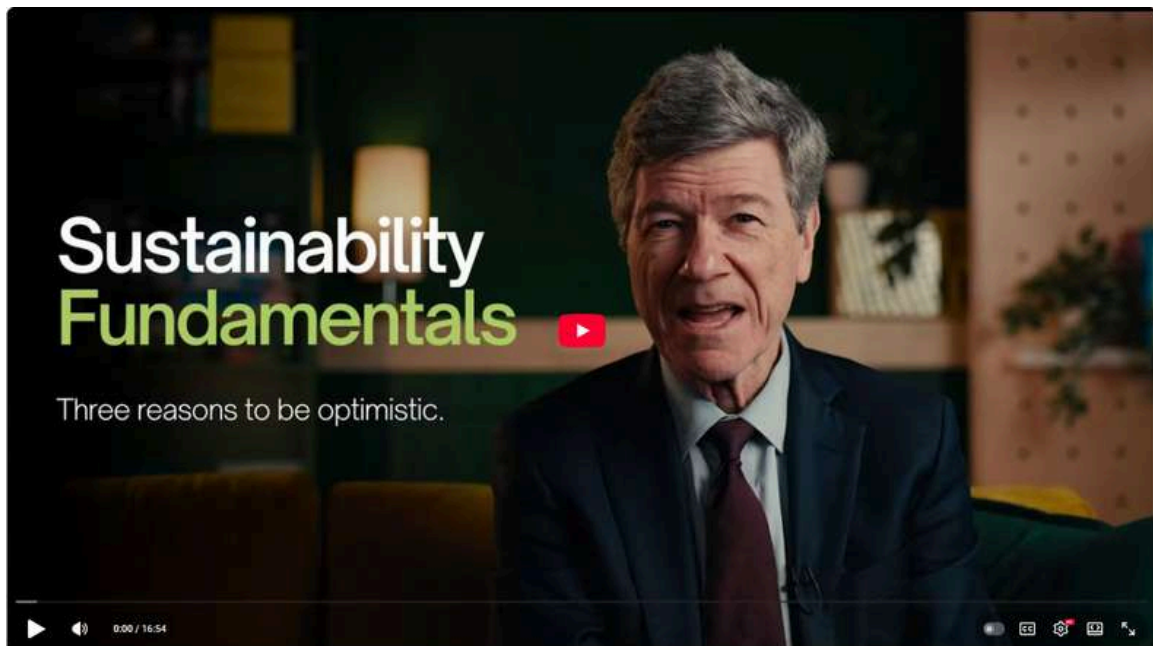
Platform & Permissions: Post from a school/club/NGO account if possible (or a dedicated class account). Choose an age-appropriate platform and follow school/parent consent rules.

Tagging: Tag "Ages of Globalization" and "Global Schools Program". Use #UNatYourDoorstep and #OurVoiceOurPower.

Quality & Safety: Be respectful, fact-based, and visually clear.

Timeline: The campaign runs until February 2026.

No social media? Share internally via your class blog, posters, video reels shown in class, or exchange with a partner classroom.



Watch this video by Professor Jeffrey Sachs to understand the importance of the SDGs, why they offer hope for the future, and how we can all take action to achieve them.





Social Media Challenge Planning Template

DOWNLOAD THE TEMPLATE!

Form a Team & Choose Your Topic

Working in small groups is ideal for brainstorming and building on each other's ideas. Take a look at the [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs), pick an issue/SDG(s) you are passionate about, propose a solution or share information, solutions and actions. Research and discuss it with your peers, educator(s), and families. Understand different perspectives and think about what message(s) you want to share using research, facts, and statistics.

Set Your Goals

Think about what you want to accomplish with your post(s). Do you aim to:

- Raise awareness about an issue?
- Share your thoughts or solutions?
- Encourage others to take action or share their own perspectives?

Choose Your Platform

Ask your instructor if you can use your school's/club/community/NGO social media account(s) or if you can create a dedicated account for your post(s). Will you be using Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, or Facebook? Make sure you know how to navigate the platforms effectively and safely.

Creating Your Content

Length & Format: What type of content are you creating (e.g., a short video, a photo series, a written post)? Keep your message positive, respectful, and impactful. Aim to inspire and connect with others.

Visuals: Create eye-catching visuals, e.g. by creating a free <https://www.canva.com/> account. Whether it's a photo, a graphic, or a video, make sure it supports your message.

Hashtags & Tags: Use the campaign's official hashtags: #OurVoiceOurPower for the #SDGs and your unique hashtag(s). Don't forget to tag the official accounts @Ages of Globalisation ([LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)) and @Global Schools Program ([LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [X/Twitter](#)).

Posting Your Content

Are you posting from your school/club/community/NGO account or your personal account? Make sure your post's privacy settings are appropriate. Discuss with your teacher or parents if you're unsure.

Engage with Others

Engage with other posts in the campaign by liking, commenting, or re-sharing them. Show support, ask questions, and start conversations!

Keep track of how your post is doing. Respond to comments and thank people for their support.

Reflect on Your Experience

After posting, think about the impact of your contribution. How did it make you feel? What did you learn? Share your experience with others. What worked well? What could you improve next time?

DISCOVER

Trace the Patterns

Go Below the Surface

Take Action

Reflect & Review

CONNECT

TRANSFORM

Reflect & Review

In this section, we offer suggestions to review and assess learners' understanding and engagement with the topic and the activities in this module. The focus is on evaluating grasp of background information, participation in activities, and the ability to propose actionable, youth-led solutions. We also encourage educators to celebrate learners' accomplishments and growth.



Guiding Questions

- **Background Understanding:** Did learners demonstrate a clear understanding of key peace and security concepts (e.g., positive vs. negative peace, human security, security vs. militarization, justice vs. punishment/restorative justice, rule of law, inclusion, links to SDG 16)?
- **Research Accuracy:** Are the responses in the Learner Research Worksheet accurate and reflective of local and global peace-and-security issues? Did students use credible sources (e.g., UN agencies, national statistics, reputable NGOs/research institutes)?
- **Community Insight:** Did learners effectively investigate how their school or community fosters (or undermines) safety, trust, inclusion, and access to justice? Assess the quality of observations and the feasibility of proposed improvements (e.g., restorative practices, anti-bullying, media literacy).
- **Discussion Participation:** How actively did students participate in dialogue and debate on peace and security? Look for engagement, critical thinking, respectful listening, and the ability to connect root causes (inequality, discrimination, disinformation, trauma, climate stress) to real contexts.
- **Activity Engagement:** Did learners effectively use systems tools (e.g., stakeholder mapping, Compass, Iceberg) to analyze drivers of insecurity and identify leverage points (policy change, partnerships, youth initiatives)? Evaluate how well they linked actions to SDG 16 and human rights.
- **Social Media Challenge / Action Outputs:** Evaluate the creativity, relevance, and impact of students' peace-and-security posts or action concepts. Did they raise awareness, propose practical steps, cite evidence, and use campaign tags appropriately?

Ideas for Assessment Methods

Quizzes

- Define positive peace and give one local example of how it can be strengthened.
- What is human security and how does it differ from traditional (state-centered) security?
- Give one example of militarizing a social problem, and describe a human-security alternative.
- How does restorative justice differ from punishment? Name one benefit and one limitation.
- List two indicators associated with SDG 16.
- Identify two drivers of insecurity in your context and one potential leverage point for each.

Presentations & Group Discussion

- Have learners present findings from their Country or School/Community research and facilitate discussion:
 - "Why negative peace is not enough in our community."
 - "From control to care: replacing punitive responses with restorative approaches in schools."
 - "Beyond borders: what human security would look like here, and who must act?"
 - "How collaboration among stakeholders (government, justice systems, civil society, media/ tech, youth) can rebuild trust."

Activity Reports on Systems Tools

- Review learners' Compass/Iceberg mapping. Assess clarity of cause-effect pathways, quality of evidence, identification of leverage points.

Reflection Essays

- Identify three root causes of insecurity in your community and propose solutions aligned with positive peace.
- Explain how disinformation and polarization damage trust, and outline a youth-led media literacy response.
- Compare justice vs. punishment using a real or hypothetical school/community case; propose a restorative plan.
- Map the stakeholders for one issue (e.g., bullying, hate speech, community-police relations) and describe a partnership strategy.

Self-Assessment & Peer Feedback

Invite short reflections and pair with a simple peer rubric focusing on accuracy, empathy, systems thinking, and feasibility of actions.

- One belief I changed about peace and security is...
- One practice our school could adopt to build positive peace is...
- One partnership we need (and why) is...

Social Media Campaign Impact

- Track engagement. Consider clarity of message, ethical framing, accuracy, constructive tone, and clear call to action.

