UNIVERSITAT JAUME·I

# Master's degree final project

# Learn to play and play to learn: building resilience of local communities in South Sudan's conflict through games

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## Abstract:

In many ways, games of many different sorts have a strong potential for education. Through their different characteristics, they allow the players to prepare themselves for challenges that they can be forced to face in their day-to-day life. By imitating daily life gestures or by developing essential skills for social interactions or specific complex situations, they are a powerful tool of people's inner development. Following that remark, the idea presented in this text is that games can support international humanitarian organizations in their project activities, specifically when conducting trainings or awareness sessions, as they allow the humanitarian workers to approach sensitive topics in a light way and thus make the communication process easier to grasp for beneficiaries.

Keywords: games, conflict, peace building, local communities

# Index

## Acronyms used in this text

| | |
|---|---|
| EWER | Early Warning Early Response. It is a session content that NP uses in order to open a discussion with participants on the positive ways to quickly respond to a threat. |
| GBV | Gender-based violence |
| IDP | Internally Displaced People |
| IGAD | Intergovernmental Authority on Development. It is a joint council of various neighbouring countries encouraging and monitoring the peace process in South Sudan. |
| IG | in government. Refers to the forces that stayed with the government side at the moment of the main separation between the president Salva Kiir and the former vice president Riek Machar. S.Kiir and R.Machar. |
| IO | in opposition. Refers to the main warring party that is opposed to S.Kiir and is led by the former vice president Riek Machar. |
| IOM | International Office for Migrations |
| INGO | International Nongovernmental Organisation |
| NGO | Nongovernmental Organisation |
| NP | Nonviolent Peaceforce |
| R-ARCSS | *Revitalized – Agreement for the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan*. It is an agreement that the main warring parties (although not all of them) have signed in September 2018. |
| UCP | Unarmed Civilian Protection: the methodology on which Nonviolent Peaceforce bases its programs. The main pillars are: nonviolence; nonpartisanship; primacy of local actors; civilian to civilian action; independence |
| UNOCHA | United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs |
| WPT | Women Protection Teams |
| YPT | Youth Protection Teams |

# 1. Context overview

## 1.1 -In South Sudan:

South Sudan broke into civil war in December 2013, two years after the creation of the country by the obtaining of the independence. After the firing of the vice president Riek Machar by the president Salva Kiir, fighting started and killed around 380'000 people between that period and April 2018. More than 4 million have been displaced or are now refugees in neighboring countries and hunger threatens the whole population as several food shortages have been observed by humanitarian agencies throughout the country (RTS, 2018).

In 2016, a peace deal has been signed by the main belligerents but collapsed shortly after. A new peace deal, called the Revitalized – Agreement for the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS) has been signed in September 2018 (Francis, 2019). After this signing, the fighting lessened. But many observers inside and outside the country feared that it might not last, as many aspects of the peace agreement were sources of potential disputes (ICG, 2019).

Among these were the formation of a transitional government with the rebel leader Riek Machar, the conditions on which the rebel soldiers should be integrated into a united national army, the funding of security arrangements and various disputes over the boundaries of the different states composing South Sudan (Francis, 2019). A "lack of political will, financing and time constraints" were also identified by the parties as part of the challenges that have delayed the implementation of the transitional agreement, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) said in a statement (Dumo, 2019).

In this context, the two main actors of this conflict, Salva Kiir and Riek Machar, agreed to extend the peace agreement for a supplementary period of 6 months, supposed to end mid-November. Qualified of "noteworthy achievement", observers also notice that little has been made on the key elements that could help progressing towards a resolution of the conflict (ICG, May 2019)

Finally, the first eight months of 2019 saw the conflict in South Sudan walking on a tightrope: the main warring parties in the youngest country of the world are in balance between a fragile peace that gives meager hopes for peace, since no internal actor shows a clear will to support it, and an assumed preparation for a potential resumption of the hostilities (ICG, May 2019).

## 1.2 - In Wau town and surrounding regions

The population in Wau town and in the regions surrounding the second city of the country in terms of habitants have had to face many challenges since the breakout of the civil war and many of the hardships that affected the population at the moment of the last high-intensity crisis in 2016 are similar to the ones experienced in 2019 – most of them being consequences of these horrors.

The extreme violence, the high insecurity, the ethnic component adding to the civil conflict as well as the quickly changing context pushed a very high number of people to leave their places of origin to seek shelter in any other location in the region that would provide basic services (IOM, 2018; Oxfam, 2017:65).

Even though the recent trends tend to show a will from the internally displaced people (IDPs) to return to their places of origins (UNOCHA, 2019; FEWS, 2019), the consequences of long-term or repeated displacement have been and are disastrous in

many aspects: impossibility of cultivating the fields, abandonment of livestock (Oxfam, 2017:12) that results in a dependence on food aid for their survival (Oxfam, 2017:34). This phenomenon intensifies each year during rainy season (FEWS, 2019). The deterioration of incomes that results is also caused by the violence and looting perpetrated by armed groups on some roads of the region (or their perceived presence brought by rumors) which strongly restricts the movement of civilians (Oxfam, 2017: 18). This significant reduction of income

The lack of households or shelters has consequences on various levels: exposure to gender-based violence (GBV) especially for women and girls (Oxfam, 2017: 24) and, in many places around Wau town, the host community has to make space for the IDPs (Oxfam, 2017: 23).

The lack of resources related to the displacement situation has also various negative consequences: some children can not attend school because of a lack of school material and because some teachers are not getting paid (Oxfam, 2017: 28), domestic violence is a recurrent phenomenon (Oxfam, 2017: 42) or lack of proper health facilities (Oxfam, 2017: 33).

On the political side, Wau town is controlled by the government forces. But in many areas around the town, the opposition controls important parts of the territory. Although the two sides are now regularly meeting in Wau to discuss small-scale, local issues and even though there is a trend from the opposition troops to join the cantonment areas as planned by the peace agreement, tension and mistrust runs deep between the two sides. These latter make certain aspects of the humanitarian work complex, as every action is closely followed and questioned by each side.

## 2. Introduction about Nonviolent Peaceforce and general overview of its intervention in South Sudan

The organization was founded in 2002 by a team headed by David Hartsough and Mel Duncan. Both of them being long-time nonviolent militants and promoters of peaceful solutions to conflicts and both of them benefitting from a significant international experience in the humanitarian field and in conflict-affected settings (NP website).

As of today, NP is an international protection agency implementing its programs through two nonprofit incorporations. It is registered as an NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (NP website).

Nonviolent Peaceforce started intervening in South Sudan in 2010, as the different internal conflicts in Sudan had caused harm in the region that was about to become South Sudan. Since the start of its activities, NP could support 33'806 individuals. It managed to do it through the active work of nearly 200 national and international staff members (NP website).

One of the main ways that NP resort to to address the different protection concerns and humanitarian challenges is through the establishment and support of Women Protection Teams (WPT) coming from the very communities that have been affected by the conflict. In 2018, figures indicate that NP could establish and support 16 new WPTs that are composed of 508 active and decisive women (NP website).

### 2.1 - A few words about UCP, the methodology applied by NP

In South Sudan, NP provides various programs of protection through the Unarmed Civilian Protection (UCP) methodology. This approach aims at preventing, reducing and

stopping violence by nonviolent means. These means are numerous and differ much from each other in the way they are implemented. Dialogue is at the center of any initiative set up by the NGO and its partners (NP website).

The usual definition referred to of UCP is the following: "the organized, strategic use of various nonviolent tactics - by civilians themselves - to deter violence, influence important actors in their community, and create safe political space where people feel encouraged to transform their own conflicts constructively" (NP website).

UCP is composed of four main areas: first, proactive engagement (among which is protective presence and accompaniment through patrolling, for example), second is confidence building (through multi track dialogue and advocacy actions), third is capacity development and capacity building and fourth is called monitoring (among which is the providing of trainings to community members or the supervision of ceasefires) (NP website).

The approach that NP follows in its daily work is based on the communities it is aimed at serving. Each national mission that NP started (Philippines, Iraq, Myanmar and South Sudan for the current ones[1]) has been put in place after a request expressed by the local community of a given country. In the same sense, the methodology called primacy of local actors means that the local community is at the center of programming and of the decision making in the daily activities that each team conducts. In the same sense, within the field teams, most of the daily decisions rely on the national staff's experience, knowledge and advice regarding the context, the actuality, the locations where the activities are to be conducted, etc.

Another essential trait typical from NP is its nonpartisanship: taking the side of civilians, NP teams in South Sudan work with any person interested by working towards peace in the same sense than the NGO. A last aspect important mentioning is that this organization does not give any type of material aid. NP considers that the skills and activities it brings as well as the discussions it fosters through its programs are long-lasting elements that will leave a deeper mark than any material aid. It also thought that it allows the teams to count on the motivation of the beneficiaries who chose to follow a training with NP because it ensures that they are interested by the session content.

## 2.3 - Data about Nonviolent Peaceforce

Regarding the 2018 year finances, Nonviolent Peaceforce spent 13'974'832 USD, from which 87% was dedicated to the execution of the NGO's projects and programming, 11% went to overhead expenses such as the renting of the places for NP offices and compounds. 2% of this amount has been used for fundraising (NP website).

In terms of repartition and in order to have an idea of the size of the different missions, the 55% of the amount displayed in the previous paragraph is destined to NP program in South Sudan. Philippines and Middle East operations come after it with 13% of the expenses. Follow the European office and the US office with respectively 9% and 7% of this amount. The mission in Myanmar receives 3% of this amount. In terms of the origins of the financing, 78% of the funding comes from government grants ((NP website). More information on the repartition of the expenses and the origin of the funding can be found in the annex 1.

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[1] NP closed its mission in Sri Lanka when it estimated that its presence was no longer necessary given the evolution of the crisis there

## 2.4 - NP's activities in Wau town and surrounding region

In Wau field site, Nonviolent Peaceforce implements two projects. One focusing on the capacity building and development of women's groups and youth groups active in promoting nonviolent strategies to address conflicts within their communities (called Women Protection Teams, WPTs, and Youth Protection Teams, YPTs). This project is implemented through trainings, coordination meetings and patrols.

The other project focuses on an area located South-East of Wau, controlled for the main part by opposition forces. It is nicknamed Beyond Wau and will be referred as such in the following pages. This projects aims at providing trainings and awareness sessions on topics such as gender-based violence, child protection and the ways to reduce the negative consequences on the community when a threat is identified (called early warning-early response, EWER, and explained further). This project also includes the elaboration of assessments to be shared with other humanitarian partners and the conduction of regular patrols in order to monitor the security situation, hear about the habitants' concerns and monitor protection issues.

## 2.5 - Short presentation of the thesis' writer's previous experiences

In 2016, after two 3-months internships in Lebanon focused on communication (one with Caritas Lebanon and then one with Greenpeace Mediterranean), I could join Seed, a local Lebanese NGO situated in Tripoli (North Lebanon), as a project officer. This NGO's program was focused on the capacity building of youths in two impoverished neighborhoods of Tripoli, with educational classes and vocational trainings destined to Lebanese and Syrian habitants of the two neighborhoods.

Then, in early 2018, I left Lebanon for two months to support a local NGO in Irbid (North of Jordan). This NGO was proposing various trainings for youth on communication, conflict resolution and life skills. After this experience I joined Seed again in Tripoli for 7 other months. In 2018, after two semesters of Master on peace, conflict and development in Spain, I came back to Lebanon in order to do a 4-month internship with Seed. For various reasons, I had to change of NGO quite early in the month of September 2018 and that is when I joined RET Liban, the Lebanese section of an international NGO that focuses on the protection and on building resilience of vulnerable populations in conflicts through education programs. At the end of this internship, I joined NAVTSS, a local NGO located in Beirut and that operates in the capacity building of Palestinian women. It is in February 2019 that I left Lebanon to join Nonviolent Peaceforce in South Sudan.

The common points of these professional experiences were the humanitarian assistance, with a focus on projects that aim at supporting populations suffering from direct conflict or from the consequences of it; the centrality of protection; the capacity building and the resilience building of vulnerable populations through the empowerment of central community members.

# 3. Justification

## 3.1 - State of the art about the use of games to address conflicts

Using games to address conflict within a working team, inside of an office or in a school environment is a common and established practice that employees, trainers or teachers in many parts of the world, seem to have resorted to for a long time. The number or studies about this aspect is a proof of that known technique.

In the same sense, governments, ministries, universities or think tanks have for long resorted to simulations in order, among others, to train staff members on the complexity of a crisis (actual or fictional one), to train on warring strategies, to practice negotiation skills, to enhance analyzing skills in a complex and intertwined situation (Brynen, 2013 and Perla, 1990), to study the situations that require humanitarian interventions (Brynen, 2019), to train World Bank staff members to assess, plan and prioritize programs in fragile states or to study the possible transition from a war-affected country to a more peaceful environment (Brynen and Milante, 2012).

It is important mentioning here that, looking into the games that are inspired from conflicts, one could find oneself on the negative side of playing games around this topic, as some of these many and various possibilities are sometimes on the edge between games that can teach a path towards conflict resolution and games that fuel from and participate to reinforce the cultural violence (Matthews and Gupta, 2019).

Many of these games, and more specifically the ones that are destined to mass consumption, tend to reflect the way in which the society where the game is developed sees a given conflict, context or more broadly international politics (Brynen, 2013).

Games inspired by, reproducing or studying conflicts can also be seen as a powerful political tool. Some are developed by political parties deeply involved into open or latent conflicts. For some of them, it is not rare that the game industries hire former military officers, intelligence agents or government consultants (Brynen, 2013). This aspect has developed to such an extent that the scholar Philip Sabin even stated that studying the different existing war games would offer an insightful perspective into the military strategy and history (Sabin, 2012).

As Rex Brynen puts it, one important aspect of board games compared to computer or video games is that the rules can be modified by the players, who can add different components to the game they are playing (Brynen, 2019). It is thus a space where the creativity of the players can produce a game almost unique, and at the least more adapted to the situation that they know or the scenario that they would like to see being developed.

That is maybe why some games inspired by conflicts have gone beyond the reproduction of a war setting and have for example studied contexts that would require humanitarian intervention (as mentioned above in this text) or have approached the topic of peace making and/or peace building, such as the game *PeaceMaker* that aims to put the players in the situation of proposing a resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Brynen, 2013).

Whether used to play with the components of a destructive conflict or to manipulate the different aspects of a constructive action developed towards a peaceful environment, it seems that the powerful educational potential of games is recognized by almost all game designers (Sabin, 2012). As Brynen and Milante put it:

> Through serious games, participants can gain a better sense of the dynamic relationships at work in complex environments, explore good fits and practical solutions, and understand how mistakes occur (often, by making them themselves). These are real skills needed in the real world: In recent decades, policy makers working on peacekeeping and peacebuilding have certainly been faced with the prospects of failure and have been forced to choose between "reinforcing success and salvaging failure." When games engage multiple participants, the games reproduce some of the political,

coordination, communication, and coalition- building challenges that often accompany peace and stabilization operations, especially if a simulation is designed to reproduce some of the organizational silos and bureaucratic politics that exist in the real world. (Brynen and Milante, 2012).

To nuance that perspective, it is important to mention that real life does impose challenges and complications that simply can not be reduced into board game or video game components (Rittel & Webber, 1973).

Taking that aspect into consideration, game developers have thought of resorting to to electronics. Through the use of simulators and software, some game designers managed to propose game versions that are very much adaptable to the different peacebuilding scenarios that real life proposes: the phenomena that they are reproducing, the choices that one has to make, the influence on deterrence or escalation of violence or the possible evolutions. These are all elements that are taken into consideration through the resorting to different tools such as Massive Multiplayer Online platforms (MMO), reproduction of real-life conflicts, imagined conflict environment or more immersive scenarios. For the majority of them, the developers are said to be interested into exploring the different possibilities that would feed the reflections on current and actual peacebuilding exercises (Brynen and Milante, 2012).

In this sense, both on the side of the advanced creativity space that the games offer to the designers and to the players and on the side of the many different channels that can be resorted to (software, board games, platforms) in order to adapt to the scenario that one developer wants to model, it seems like games are a powerful tool to approach the topic of conflict resolution.

Perla and McGrady classified the types of games that approach peace building into three main categories: the *analyst* games, the *artist* games and the *architect* games. The first ones are games that study what kind of effect a given action would have on a real life scenario. The modeling of the game in that sense must be the closest possible to the reality. The second kind presented by the two scholars favors the emotional and intellectual immersion into a context suggested by the game. The last type of game, the *architect* ones, imposes choices to players and plunge them into an environment where decisions are at the core of the action (Perla and McGrady 2007).

Although this typology is said to be possible to apply in many cases to the different peacebuilding games, there is another dual category that can be used to classify the existing games on this topic: referred to as *sages* or *seers*, it divides the games between the ones that propose an immersive dive into a particular context and those who aim at nurturing the reflection on certain situations and generate greater analysis of some specific conflict settings (Milante, 2010).

Even though Brynen and Milante (2012) argue that these games can have very different audiences, this affirmation seems to be true if one audience is limited to a scope going from graduate- and undergraduate students to policy makers passing by university students.

In my opinion, it is a rather narrow angle on the potential audiences of a given game, and it suffers from a certain higher, more privileged social class-centered perspective. In addition, the games that are created on the ground, by people situated at the first rank of the incidents of a war-torn country are unfortunately not numerous.

Regarding the universality of the audience as well as the local perspective, some bottom-up initiatives still exist, such as the one proposed by Lual Mayen, a 24-year-old software designer from South Sudan. With the help of his team (grouped under the name of Junub Games) he invented three different games (two board games and one mobile application) to stress the importance for the South Sudanese people to unite and to spread a message of peace while having fun at the same time (Ritzen, 2017).

In his opinion, the simplifying aspect that game pass through when trying to give account of a situation have not only a negative side, as mentioned earlier in this text, but can also provide a powerful reproduction tool: "These games could work everywhere. It would work in refugee camps across the world as well, in Syria for example.", as Lual Mayen puts it in the text written by Ritzen (2017).

This more universal aspect and the possibility, depending on the game, to be reproduced in different settings shows how efficient it can be to use games in order to address a conflict situation, whether on a small or on a bigger scale. In the words of Mayen,

> "building peace is a long process, not something that can be achieved with one decision. Decisions have to be made at different levels and it takes a lot of different processes, people, and approaches." (Lual Mayen in Ritzen, 2017)

So, the question that seems to remain is: why one of these approaches could not be through games developed on the ground?

## 3.2 - Origin of the proposition

The proposition presented within this thesis finds its source in the elements mentioned above – the complex, ever-changing and highly political context of Wau and surrounding region – as well as in the parts that will be presented in the continuation of this text – team dynamics, past experiences of NP team in this region and challenges met by NP team when implementing certain activities.

## 3.3 - Team dynamics within Nonviolent Peaceforce

Regarding the way that the trainings and awareness sessions are to be given to the beneficiaries, the NGO Nonviolent Peaceforce leaves to its employees some room for manoeuver. A guide always exists for each session topic with the essential aspects to be approached during the session and it is to the staff's discretion to come up with the adapted, adequate and efficient ways to transmit the content of a session.

It is very often the result of a mix between the staff members' experience, a list of a few good practices recommendations, the respect for local particularities and sensitivities and challenges or constraints of any sort. One of NP's ideal approach is to associate, on one side, employees coming from outside the country where the project is implemented and, on the other side, national employee. Both types of employee bringing their qualities and experiences to contribute to the implementation and find the best way to carry out the activities.

## 3.4 - Project developed for the thesis

This thesis will focus on an early warning-early response (EWER) session given within the framework of the Beyond Wau project.

In a few words and with the purpose of clarifying the rest of this proposition, the early warning-early response is a training topic delivered to some communities in South Sudan and focuses on how a community can be better prepared in case of the first elements that can lead to an escalation of violence within a community or between two populations. The different elements of this training are, for the most important ones:

the importance of verifying an information and the ways to do it when it is heard in the community, the ways to communicate about it, the important aspects to think of when one is willing to protect the community, the identification of the protection tools that exist within the community (network of relations, presence, accompaniment, observation, collaboration, etc.), how to conduct the mapping of the services available and the mapping of the potential risks and how to consider the most vulnerable ones when adopting a protective response.

This particular topic has been identified as a potential breeding ground for a new work proposition for various reasons:

## 3.5 - Challenges and constraints

First of all, in the past year, some major and influential actors in the region expressed concerns regarding the content of the session itself. It was believed to be preparing the people attending the session for a major conflict or displacement, and potentially creating panic and with a purpose to make certain parts of the population to leave their place of residence.

Therefore, it was interpreted by these influential actors as too sensitive and was thought to be manipulated by one side of the conflict against another. Facing those criticisms and running the risk to see its access to the field hindered, NP team took the decision to show a low profile regarding these particular sessions and to wait for the context to be more favorable before restarting to give these sessions.

Another challenge met by NP team in Wau was the attendance of younger people and their participation to the project's activities. That being said, it is important to mention here that this involvement issue has also been observed within a few of the other groups NP team works with in Wau. Although it is far from being the majority of it, some WPT members expressed some criticisms on the way the activities are approached and carried out.

So if the relationship, trust and working collaboration is, for the most part, well established with older members of the community NP team works in, mobilizing youths in some parts of the town has been challenging. Even though the groups NP team has started working with have expressed their interest at the first meeting, it has been challenging to maintain their level of involvement as the project was developing: less and less of them took part to coordination meetings and only few proposed ideas for activities or identified areas where an intervention could be benefiting the community. When asked about their opinions about NP team's approach, some youths mentioned the lack of a common activity that would unite them during a certain time and that would create a pleasant moment, distracting for a while from the current context they live in every day. As well as in other parts of the country, the idleness and the lack of job opportunities for the younger population has been highlighted as working as a push factor towards small gang groups providing a feeling of belongingness, an escape from the daily difficulties and, for some of them, a certain source of income as some these gangs are engaged in looting or other illegal activities.

## 3.6 - The new proposition

Taking these difficulties into consideration and thinking of an idea that would allow NP team to restart giving the EWER sessions in a lighter, funnier (and thus more engaging) way and in a way that would not let any room for misinterpretation from the authorities, I imagined that it could be efficient to develop a game in order to transmit the essence of the content of the EWER session.

### 3.7 - Why a game?

It is believed that transmitting the content of a training or of an awareness session through a game would have various advantages besides the ones presented above.

As Rebecca Bayeck (2018) puts it, communicating a certain topic through playing a game favors the acquisition of many cognitive skills such as critical thinking and problem-solving.

In addition, according to this researcher, there is a long history of board games in the African continent: used to teach values, cognitive and motor skills for example, they have been part of the learning landscape of many countries of the continent for hundreds of years, showing a strong link between playing and learning.

## 4. Implementation – How is it going to be implemented?

### 4.1.1 - Program planned

The different steps that consist of the implementation of the game are the following: first of all, the idea of the game will be presented to the colleagues working in the same field team in order to receive their feedback and obtain their green light (as explained below, it is part of NP's team dynamics). After this first step, the game will be tested every time an EWER session or a session talking about rumor control will be conducted within the activities of the project. After each attempt, the game will be the subject of an evaluation and modifications will be applied in order to, hopefully, propose an improved version at each attempt.

### 4.1.2 - Material required

As the team often has to travel a few hours by car in order to reach the location where the activity is planned to be given, it is necessary to propose a game that does not require a lot of material. In addition, since the locations where the activity takes place are always different, it is important to have a game whose set-up is flexible and easy to install in many different places. These elements will have to be considered throughout the development of the game. The best would be to rely only on a few papers or flipcharts.

Finally, a notebook and a pen will always be carried by the responsible of the implementation of this game, in order to write down any comment or idea of improvement for the future versions of the game.

### 4.1.3 - Challenges

The expected challenges are the following ones: it is important for this game to fit into the project implemented by the NP team on the ground. The game should be able to only help the team transmitting the session content and not drift away from the main purpose of each session. In that sense, and as explained earlier in those pages and later in the following section, the field team has to agree on the content of the game before being added to the training content.

Another challenge is the respect for the different local cultural differences when developing the elements of the game. For example, it is important to know what are the elements that one can mention in certain areas and not in others. Therefore, either the elements developed for the game must be transversal in that sense – they must be usable in any context – or different elements will be developed individually for each context in which the game is thought to be implemented.

## 4.1.4 - Time table for development of the game versions

In this section will be presented a presentation of a timetable of the hours that have been required and the way that they have been used in order to approach the idea of a game, to study the different factors that a game development implies, to hold the numerous discussions prior to establishing the first version, to dedicate time to hear and analyze the feedback from colleagues and then participants. The presentation of this timetable follows the same mindset than the one that inspired the presentation of the budget presented under the point 4.7.4. Namely that this timetable is here as an approximate indication of the time spent in the reflection, elaboration, development and modification of the different versions of the games. The development of all the versions have been displayed in this timetable, as it is estimated that it is the work on all these versions that participated in shaping the reflection that led to the 5th and 6th versions, particularly all the discussions, feedback and advice received.

It was impossible to display in this timetable more than an estimation of the hours spent for the elaboration of these versions since the thesis' writer was working in parallel to the elaboration of these games and no precise record of the hours spent for this thesis has been registered. Most of the time, the reflection and development work was done in the hours after office hours but some informal discussions, advice received and feedback from the colleagues were done and obtained during work hours and usually lasted a few minutes here and there, which makes it even more difficult to record.

This timetable mentions June 6th as the starting date of the idea of this thesis since it is the date on which the thesis' writer arrived in Wau and started working in this context. However, the reflections on how best to support the work of a team implementing a protection program in the field has started with the thesis' writer's arrival in the country, in March 2019.

Hence, the time period going from June 6th to July 8th was dedicated to the development of the idea, the first gathering of information and opinions, the redaction of the parts about the context as well as most of the parts regarding the NGO and its work.

| Version of the game | Time required to elaborate, develop and design the game version | Time required to evaluate and modify accordingly | Total number of hours |
|---|---|---|---|
| Version # 1 | 18h | 10h | 28h |
| Version # 2 | 4h | 1h | 5h |
| Version # 3 | 16h | 7h | 23h |
| Version # 4 | 18h | 2h | 20h |
| Version # 5 | 5h | 11h | 16h |
| Version # 6 | 3h | 7h | 10h |

## 4.1.5 - Ways to receive a feedback on the game by participants

In the framework of an activity given by Nonviolent Peaceforce, the team usually asks the participants to the session for a feedback regarding the content of the session at the end of the activity. Questions are about the content itself as well as about the way it was transmitted to the participants or about the logistical aspects of the activity. Therefore, regarding the sessions in which the game was proposed to the participants, a feedback was asked to the participants in this way.

It is at the end of only the two last attempts (28th August and 11th September) that participants specifically referred to the game and to the discussions that followed it during the general feedback at the end of the whole session.

On the 28th August, one participant said that now that this game had been proposed to them, they would know the different steps to follow in order to control rumors. On the 11th September, a participant referred to an incident that had happened within the community after the disappearance of one community member and highlighted that now the habitants of this location would now have more tools to react differently in case such situation happens again. She also reminded how negative could be the impact of false information on a group of people living together.

That being said, the following form is a proposition of evaluation document that could be submitted to the participants in order to evaluate how much they acquired of the aimed content but also to hear about their satisfaction regarding the game itself and the way it was brought to them, explained, facilitated, etc.

NOTE: i) this evaluation form is a written one and, therefore, the language aspect as well as the literacy factor have to be taken into consideration at the moment of using it directly with participants. Regarding the translation aspect and as for a precision, South Sudan gathers 66 different tribes, most of each with their own dialect. Therefore, adaptations could be

    a.  to use the same questions as displayed below but placing on the ground, following a straight line, 6 pieces of papers indicating scores (0-10, 10-30, 30-50, 50-70, 70-90, 90-100) on which and between which participants can stand to show what their answer to the question would be;

    b.  another possibility is to read these questions out loud and to ask participants to raise their hands depending on the answer they would like to give.

ii) previous experience of this kind of feedback (after trainings or awareness sessions conducted in the PoC in Juba) have shown that it is necessary to limit the number of questions to ten given the fact that often times, the session lasts longer than planned; participants express tiredness and concentration level consequently reduces; in addition, participants almost always have personal occupations to attend after the end of the training. Therefore, asking the participants to answer more than 10 questions is thought to be more of a negative strategy.

Evaluation form
1. Controlling rumors can have a beneficial aspect on the communities

| 0-10 | 10-30 | 30-50 | 50-70 | 70-90 | 90-100 |
|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| Strongly disagree | disagree | partly disagree | partly agree | agree | Strongly agree |

2. When hearing about an information that seems completely impossible to me, I don't need to control the information.

| 0-10 | 10-30 | 30-50 | 50-70 | 70-90 | 90-100 |
|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| Strongly disagree | disagree | partly disagree | partly agree | agree | Strongly agree |

3. When hearing an information, the first thing to do is to spread it among the community.

| 0-10 | 10-30 | 30-50 | 50-70 | 70-90 | 90-100 |
|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| Strongly disagree | disagree | partly disagree | partly agree | agree | Strongly agree |

4. Looking for the source of an information, going back to it is one of the ways to control an information that I have heard.

| 0-10 | 10-30 | 30-50 | 50-70 | 70-90 | 90-100 |
|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| Strongly disagree | disagree | partly disagree | partly agree | agree | Strongly agree |

5. It is easier and faster to control a rumor by myself.

| 0-10 | 10-30 | 30-50 | 50-70 | 70-90 | 90-100 |
|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| Strongly disagree | disagree | partly disagree | partly agree | agree | Strongly agree |

6. When I could confirm that an information is actually a rumor, I should not tell anyone of what I could confirm.

| 0-10 | 10-30 | 30-50 | 50-70 | 70-90 | 90-100 |
|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| Strongly disagree | disagree | partly disagree | partly agree | agree | Strongly agree |

7. The game helped me understand important aspects about rumor controlling.

| 0-10 | 10-30 | 30-50 | 50-70 | 70-90 | 90-100 |
|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| Strongly disagree | disagree | partly disagree | partly agree | agree | Strongly agree |

8. The rules of the game were clearly explained and done and I understood them well.

| 0-10 | 10-30 | 30-50 | 50-70 | 70-90 | 90-100 |
|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| Strongly disagree | disagree | partly disagree | partly agree | agree | Strongly agree |

9. I enjoyed the way the game was conducted.

| 0-10 | 10-30 | 30-50 | 50-70 | 70-90 | 90-100 |
|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| Strongly disagree | disagree | partly disagree | partly agree | agree | Strongly agree |

10. The tea and snacks were of quality and well prepared.

| 0-10 | 10-30 | 30-50 | 50-70 | 70-90 | 90-100 |
|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| Strongly disagree | disagree | partly disagree | partly agree | agree | Strongly agree |

## 4.2 - Proceedings of the implementation

## 4.2.1 - Development of the first version of the game
<u>First exchange about the idea (with colleagues)</u>

The idea of a game to transmit the EWER session content was first proposed to the members of the team I have been assigned to. Indeed, the way the project is implemented within this NGO makes it necessary to hear one's colleagues' feedback

and obtain their green light if one wants to implement a new idea, propose a new way of giving a training.

The two issues mentioned by the colleagues were the ones presented in the previous part: the challenge of mobilization and the issue of approaching topics that are considered politically sensitive. The proposition of disseminating the session content through a game was welcomed. One colleague also mentioned a role play. Another suggestion was to refer to natural disaster in order to avoid mentioning elements that could remind to some incidents that happened in the past – and the potential trauma linked to it – or that could suggest to others that the NGO team is trying to influence population movements in one way or another.

Two colleagues also mentioned the importance to set up a game to support the awareness sessions on GBV and on conflict resolution. At the moment of this discussion, these ideas have been put on the side, as the situation was estimated to be more urgent on the side of the EWER training content than on the side of these two other topics.

An advice received was to think of a game that should be "straight to the point", as expressed by a colleague, easy to understand and relevant to the context.

### 4.2.2 - Second discussion with colleagues
During a second discussion, considered to be similar to a data collection in order to orientate the research and the conception of the game, the following advice was received: youths that NP team in Wau exchanged with often mentioned a sport activity (like football or volleyball) in order to foster unity and to propose an entertainment. Understood that it is not part of NP's mandate to entertain the youth NP is working with, the idea of a game in the shape of a physical activity remained and appeared to be a good one, since it is part of the community's request and would thus potentially already benefit from the community's acceptation. The proposition of creating a game in the shape of a quiz or of a riddle was also suggested, as these two are part of East African countries' cultural background and habits in terms of youth education.

### 4.2.3 - Additional research
In Rebecca Bayeck's understanding of the role of games in the African continent (Bayeck, 2018), some of them who are widely spread have in common an imitation, in the actual gestures necessary to play the game, of daily gestures or attitudes that are estimated to be necessary for growing in the society in which the game is being played. By studying five board games present in various African countries (oware in Ghana, bao in Tanzania, moruba and morabara in South Africa and omweso in Uganda), Bayeck noticed that, through a reduction of the reality, the entertainment trained the players in various estimated necessary skills such as cattle herding strategies, war strategies, patience, spatial thinking, communication, decision making, negotiation skills, etc. The game of bao, for instance, reproduces the action of sowing. Finally, the more the game proposed looks like games that the participants already know and play, the more the understanding and learning experience is enhanced. These remarks also guided the development of the first version of the game.

Another source that would feed the conception of the first version was to be found in the observation of children and youth playing in the streets of Wau town. Many were seen playing arika (hopscotch) and others were seen playing a game in which two players would throw a plastic ball at a third one situated between them and having to avoid it.

<u>4.2.4 - Version of the game #1</u>
Some of the elements presented here above led to the elaboration of the following first version.

Set up: a group of participants (6-7 people) are standing on a wide plastic sheet. A group of other participants (6-7) placed around the plastic sheets (some closer, some further) will throw balls of different sizes (football, balloons, volleyball, tennis balls, etc.) towards the plastic sheet.

The throwing team will hold the balls in their hands behind their backs until the moment of throwing them (in such a way that the team on the plastic sheet will not be able to see who has a ball and who has none). For the fluidity of the game, the throwers cannot move from where they are placed at the beginning of the game.

Various phases (throwing moments) can be carried out so that a discussion and feedback can take place between each of them.

Goal of the game: if one of the thrown balls lands on the plastic sheet, the team standing on the plastic sheet loses the game.

Purpose of the activity: the idea behind this game is that each ball thrown imitates a danger threatening the community. The community will have to observe the potential threats (size of the balls and how best to respond to each of them), analyze them and their likeliness to affect the community, and propose a way to protect the community (i.e. to avoid the balls to land on the plastic sheet). Will they response in panic? Individually or collectively, using a network, communicating? Taking into consideration the strengths and weaknesses of at the same time each individuals and of the whole community? Will they gather family/community members before proposing a response? Will they consult any counselling person? Will they divide the responsibilities? What kind of preparation can the community think of?

The idea of this game is also to introduce the continuation of the discussion about EWER such as the importance of conducting a mapping of the potential risks and ways to response to those: is there one or more than one danger? is the type of question suggested by this exercise.

In addition: among the throwing team, 2 or 3 will put their hands behind their backs but will actually be given none. The idea behind this element is to simulate the presence of rumors, see how it can impact the community and observe how the community can react to it.

Upon discussion with the players placed on the plastic sheet, two players from this team – selected before the throwing step – will be allowed to play the role of controllers of rumors. Through their role, all the players can examine and later discuss the steps to verify and control the spreading of rumors.

Potential variation #1: in a second time, the standing on the plastic sheet will receive a bed sheet and a string and, if they want, they can use these two items in order to avoid the balls to land on the plastic sheet. This element is thought to highlight the importance of working collectively in order to face a threat and to use the available resources in order to propose a response to the threat.

Potential variation #2: in a third step, some participants will be blindfolded, others will receive the instruction to walk on only one leg in order to simulate the vulnerability of

some community members and see how the other member of the community would include them in their response.

<u>4.2.5 - Feedback and way forward</u>
Presented to the team, the main criticism of this version of a game was the following: it is too oriented towards the action of defending, which can have highly risky effects on the minds of the players if misinterpreted and on their way to react to threats in the future. An important component of all the trainings given by NP is to not giving steps to follow or concrete solutions to participants but only to open a space for discussion and reflection and, potentially, the creation by the participants of a solution or a way forward which would be their own.

A second criticism is its apparent complexity. Proposing a whole new game to the participants and, at the same time, introducing new concepts to discuss (the EWER content) results in making the session relatively heavy in terms of learning experience. The suggestion of having a game that would be straight to the point, easy to understand and relevant to the context is to be kept in mind.


## 4.3 - Development of the second version of the game

<u>4.3.1 - Version of the game #2</u>
Taking this feedback into consideration, the first idea was brought to a broader level towards the topic of conflict resolution.

Goal of the game: basing on the game of hopscotch, the participants have to jump from one rectangle to another in order to reach peace or make sufficient progress towards the resolution a conflict situation.

Set up: each rectangle represents conflict stages or (in the more developed version, see annexes) events that can happen in a conflict. So, in order to work on the conflict resolution, participants have to implement the different potential actions or tools for resolution (negotiation, facilitating dialogue, problem solving, confidence building, effective listening, etc.) or to discuss the concepts regarding conflict resolution (definition of conflict, empathy, conflict as an opportunity, importance of supporting network, effective listening, etc.).

In the more developed version, various possibilities to react to a conflict or to a situation are proposed at each steps (each rectangle). Every time a participant shows a positive attitude towards the tools or the concepts used for conflict resolution (depending what action they chose to follow), they win the right to progress towards the next step or rectangle. In this version, some kind of role play can be put into practice through the addition of as many rectangles as needed in order to show different events occurring in a conflict.

Each conflict evolution (each step) will be told to the participant as they reach them and depending on their reaction in the previous steps. Facilitators then have to prepare various scenarios for each step. This aspect is believed to allow the facilitator to tailor scenarios that would be relevant to the different local contexts that they are in.

Purpose of the activity: to approach the conflict resolution tools and concepts and to discuss them in the framework of a game and in a light and positive way.

<u>4.3.2 - Feedback and way forward</u>

for this second version, the first criticism received was that it is too far from the EWER session content. Although some competencies used for conflict resolution are transversal and can apply for an EWER session, this conflict resolution session requires to be approached by itself.

Another criticism was that, because of the way this second game is designed, too few people can play at the same time. The training sessions usually gathers a minimum of 20 people.

Something also pointed out was its linearity. A conflict is by essence unpredictable and can evolve in many different ways and peace-builders have to show flexibility and adaptability to take the best decisions. This game set-up was criticized to present a conflict as a sequence of linear choices giving a flawed idea of the work of conflict resolution.

Finally, the dynamism of this second version was put into question, pointing out that there was too much discussion time at each steps of the game and that there is a risk that the participants lose sight of the resemblance with hopscotch and that it results more simply into a long discussion whereas participants were promised an amusing moment.

## 4.4 - Development of the third version of the game

### 4.4.1 - Version of the game #3

In this version, the priority was given to improve the different aspects commented in the feedback about the second version.

Goal of the game: a team of peace-builders has to approach, analyze and understand a conflict between two people.

By meeting the two people in conflict in specific places, the peace-builders will talk with them in order to understand the conflict and the position in the conflict of both characters. They will also do with them individual activities first and then the same activities but together. Through these activities they will have to build confidence and trust with the persons in conflict, to talk about empathy and to practice effective listening. All those elements estimated to be essential tools for conflict resolution.

Set up: three circles are designed on the ground. The two people in conflict will walk along two of them. Person A will walk along the smallest, closest circle and Person B will walk along the longest, furthest circle. Thus, in this beginning phase, they will not meet each other. On each circle, there are 4 spots where A and B will stop for a break from their walk. It is where the peace-builders can meet with them to talk, understand the problem and start analyzing the conflict. It is on these spots as well that the peace-builders will be able to propose A or B the different activities.

The activities are the following: the Trust Walk, the Effective Listening and the Riddle.

The Trust Walk: some rectangles of paper are placed in a random way on the ground. The one doing the activity (A or B) has to cross this field of rectangle without stepping on one of them. A/B is blindfolded and one of the peace-builders will lead A/B with oral indications. This exercise is thought to build trust with the one blindfolded and reinforce the relationship.

The Effective Listening: this activity requires 2 peace-builders and one A/B. One by one, the three participants to this activity will tell about anything that happened to them recently. They have to speak without interruption during 30 seconds. Then one of the two who were listening has to tell again the story she/he heard in his own words. This exercise is thought to practice the effective listening.

The Riddle: one peace-builder proposes the following riddle to A/B:

*"A man is very tall*
*His head as high as a mountain pass*
*Another one is very small*
*His eyes not higher than the grass*
*One of them is blue, like all the ones of his kin*
*Red is the color of the other one's skin*
*Yet they can talk to each other.*
*How can that happen?"*

The answer being: because they are equals. The idea behind this riddle is to approach the topic of equality. Once the riddle is solved, the peace-builder and A/B can discuss more about equality. It is thought that recognizing the equality of everyone involved in a conflict is a major step towards understanding the opponent's position.

Roles of the two people in conflict (the pattern used for designing this part is a tool called the conflict onion that proposes, in a simplified way, to go deeper in the different causes of a conflict in order to find one layer in which both opponents would potentially have elements in common):

| A – position: the water of this well is mine. My religion says so. | B – position: the water of this well is mine. It belongs to my family. |
|---|---|
| A – interest: I want it to give water to my vegetables. | B – interest: I want it to give water to my donkey. |
| A – need: I need to do this in order to my breadwinning activity. | B – need: I need my donkey to drink water so that I can maintain my breadwinning activity (B is selling fish on a cart pulled by a donkey) |

Note: only A and B know about these three layers of the conflict causes. And naturally A does not know about B's position, interest and need and vice versa. The peace-builders will have to discover these layers by building trust with A/B, analyze, listen to A/B, etc. Only when A/B feels confident enough with one or the other peace-builders, they can share one more layer of the conflict causes. Knowing more and more about the conflict causes will help the peace-builders to progress into a proposition for solving the conflict.

Evolution of the game: once A or B has done the three activities, and once each of them has recognized – in a discussion with one peace-builders – at least one common point with the opponent, the peace-builders can invite A/B to walk on the circle that is situated in the middle. It has to be explained to A/B that on this circle they might meet with the opponent. The idea behind it is that at this moment they are more equipped to meet with the other since they have acquired new skills or developed the skills presented in

the three activities and they have realized that they have at least one common point with the other.

The role of the peace-builders once both A and B will be walking on the middle circle will be to lead the same three activities but this time with both A and B at the same time. For example: A will lead B through the Trust Walk. That is to develop those skills not individually but with the other person with whom one has a conflict. In addition, peace-builders can use the 4 stopping spots to propose discussions between A and B in order for them to know the other's situation better and understand her/his position.

The game is won by everyone when A and B did the three activities and when they have talked about the deep reasons behind the conflict.

### 4.4.2 - Feedback and way forward
The team members who tried the game themselves (taking the role of beneficiaries during a session) shared the following comments: the course of this game is too complex. The roles of both the peacebuilding team and the people in the conflict are too complicated to be understood and then played in one single session. Plus, related to these roles, there are a lot of details that are part of each role and it is challenging to remember all of them.

Regarding the activities, the team members said that they were a good choice, two of them having even been used by a colleague during some other session. The negative point is that they should be used differently. Added to this whole game, it adds complexity. By themselves, these activities already can bring something to the participant without having to be put into a bigger, more complex game.

The details about the conflict are not clear either for a person who would not have any prior knowledge about the conflict itself.

Considering these comments, one of the conclusions brought by the ones who tried this game was whether this game as it has been presented was actually useful for the beneficiaries. The complexity aspect and the level of details (with the different roles, or the spatial set up, for example) would require a significant amount of time to get a grasp of the game before even playing it, enjoying it and eventually learning from it.

Two general comments were the proposition to add a role of a mediator, in addition to the peacebuilding team, and the fact that, here too, the game was too far from the EWER session content.


## 4.5 - Development of the fourth version of the game
### 4.5.1 - Version of the game #4
For this version, it has been decided to focus only on EWER and to start with a set up inspired by the chess game, which is quite popular in South Sudan according to one discussion with some colleagues. It was thought that by using a board that many youths are familiar with in the region, this would reduce the complexity of the first contact with the rules of this fourth version.

Set up: on a chess board game, a landscape drawn on a paper is placed flat, keeping the chess squares for the movement of the pieces (see annexes).

Goal of the game: the two players have the role of new arrivals in a village. Their children want to play in the area but they have to gather information in order to know which

areas are safe and which ones are not. In a second phase of the game, a sandstorm is coming and the players have to move on the board in order to reach a safe place. What will be their first actions? (see rules of the game in the annexes)

Purpose of the activity: train the players in verifying information (crucial in the EWER training), mapping the risks, analyzing the roles of the ones giving the information, building a network with reliable actors, think collectively, be enough prepared in the case there is a threat such as a natural catastrophe, seek counselling from people that are both from the community and outside it.

### 4.5.2 - Feedback and way forward

for this version as well, the complexity of the starting set up was criticized. There are a lot of details to remember for each character of the game. It was shared that it is necessary to propose a game that would be easy to transmit to the participants so that not much time is dedicated to the understanding of the game itself and participants can focus on playing it, enjoying the moment and then more time can be given to a discussion with the participants. Also, if the starting set up is too complex, participants might get confused when playing it and in the end the goal of the game might not be reached because of this aspect.

Another criticism about this fourth version was that only two players (or 4, at most) can play at the same time. And although NP possesses various chess board games destined to trainings and that can be used and transformed for this game, it is still not enough to be used in a training with 20 to 30 participants. Therefore, the impact of the game would be clearly reduced.

The issue of translation was also brought by the team members. If the guide (see annexes) is to be distributed with information on it for the participants, it will require a translation. Given the fact that there are 4 different tribes in Wau town and around and that each of them have their own language (Arabic is the common language but not everyone in each community speaks it) it will greatly complicate the task, without mentioning on the top of that that not everyone in these four communities can read.

## 4.6 - Development of the fifth version of the game

### 4.6.1 - Version of the game #5

The idea behind that fifth version was to design a way simpler activity that would support the ones giving the awareness session. It has been decided to focus on creating a game that would support one part of the EWER session content and from there, if the team estimates that it is applicable during the session, to develop the game little by little based on the way the participants reacted to it. Given the numerous feedback about the complexity of certain previous versions, it was thought that this reversed approach would build more surely a version more adequate and adapted to the beneficiaries' needs.

The EWER content part that has been chosen for the development of this version regards the controlling of rumors, a topic that has already been approached through previous versions.

Goal of the game: 2 participants have to find pieces of information among a crowd, analyze these pieces of information, verify these pieces of information and analyze again what they are communicating.

Set up: 2 participants have to find 5 pieces of information (drawings, see annexes) distributed among a group of 10-15 participants. Once the drawings are found, the 2 participants have to place them on a landscape and then analyze, interpret them and what information these drawings are communicating.

Some of these 5 drawings represent wrong pieces of information, impossible ones or rumors. In a second step, the same 2 participants have to go back to the same crowd (to whom the facilitator would have distributed 5 new drawings) and find 5 other pieces of information which are the sources[2] of the first 5 pieces of information. The 2 searchers then have to compare the information and the source and find out what the scenario will be according to these verified information, which ones are the wrong ones or rumors and start thinking of and discussing a way to prepare for the scenario displayed by the gathered information.

The information that is to be gathered regards the situation of a village threatened by natural disaster: heavy rains and the potential flood that would follow. Here below is the description of each drawing created for this fifth version:

| Unverified information (first step) | Verified information or source of the first drawings (second step) |
| --- | --- |
| A – a house during floods | AA – a house during floods |
| B – heavy rains | BB – heavy rains |
| C – a person and a village being protected from heavy rains thanks to a giant umbrella | CC – a cloudy sky where both clouds and sun can be seen |
| D – an elephant with wings | DD – a bird |
| E – the floods threatening the population (with a wave represented). Two people run away, one (younger than the second one) is ahead | EE – the floods threatening the population (with a wave represented). Two people run away, one (younger than the second one) is ahead |

Note: some of the pieces of information that have to be gathered are exaggeratedly impossible. The idea is to make the activity as simple and obvious as possible in order to give more room to the discussion and to potential development about other examples.

4.6.2 - Feedback and way forward
accepted during a meeting with the team members, this fifth version has been used on the 21st August 2019 during an EWER awareness session.

Team members who participated to this awareness session estimated that this game was very useful and practical. One advantage mentioned was the easy understanding of the rules and the short duration of the game (around 20 minutes, with the time for explanations included). Another advantage being mentioned was its adequate format that made it easy to include into the training session: firstly, it was estimated to be an adequate continuation of the Chinese whisper activity. Secondly, team members

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[2] The first drawing has a letter (B for example) written on the paper, its source has the same letter doubled (BB)

mentioned the possibility that it offers to open the discussion to the rest of the EWER session content at the end of the game (about the preparation in case of an identified threat).

An inconvenient noticed was that, instead of searching into a moving crowd for information, the 2 searchers faced a crowd that stayed in line, making it easier to find out the information. It can appear as a detail but it is thought that the more dynamic this game is, the funnier it is, the better it simulates the research for information and, thus, the more efficient it is.

<u>4.6.3 - Areas possible to develop:</u>
- for further uses in the future, the number of drawings between the first one and the source can be increased in order to make the search for the source – and the action of verifying an information – longer and more interesting.
- a time limit can be imposed in order to add some stress to the step of gathering information and especially in order to foster cooperation from the 2 searchers.
- other sets of drawings can be used in order to work with different scenarios.
- The game could be developed in order to better include and approach the rest of the recommended steps when controlling rumors such as:
    - communicating the verified pieces of information to the adequate people within the community
    - taking decisions in order to protect the community in a positive way
    - having the reflex to not share information if it has not been verified or, even more so, if it has been denied
    - identifying the different observers/people possessing pieces of information and clarifying their roles

<u>4.6.4 - Further implementation of the fifth version</u>
Following this first attempt within the beneficiary community, a second opportunity to use this game to support the session was possible. On the 28th August, during an EWER session, the game was proposed to the participants.

The game was conducted in the same way than during the first attempt on the 21st August. The difference is that this time, instead of selecting 10 participants from the audience who would play the crowd, the drawings/pieces of information have been distributed randomly to the crowd attending the training. This way, the two searchers had to actually walk through the crowd and look into everyone's hands, asking everyone if they have been given a piece of paper. Since the rest of the crowd knew who had received them, it created a fun and dynamic atmosphere in which the action of gathering information could happen.

Challenges: because of a lack of time, the other areas identified as important to be developed during the previous implementation (21st August), could not be applied. Thus, the propositions for improvement remain as displayed in the previous section, under "areas possible to develop" sub title.

## 4.7 - Development of the sixth version of the game
<u>4.7.1 - Discussion with colleagues</u>
On Wednesday 11th September, another opportunity to support the team presented itself. An awareness session on rumor control was planned to be given to the IDP community living in Agok, a village in the suburbs of Wau town. When preparing the session, the team members were open to the idea of proposing the game to the participants and reacted positively. They shared that through informal discussions with

some beneficiaries, they had received the feedback that more images used during the sessions along with the presentation of the session content would have the advantage of making the sessions more interesting for them. According to the team members' analysis of the beneficiary population, the participants would also increase their level of understanding if more pictures were used throughout the session; it is believed that in locations around Wau town, the literacy rate is relatively lower than in Wau town and, thus, finding other ways to transmit the session content would be beneficial for the overall goal of the project.

### 4.7.2 - Version of the game #6

The ways to improve the game were identified as the following:

   a. proposing new scenarios that the ones already existing
   b. for each scenario, proposing various drawings in order to create a common thread believed to be easier and clearer to follow

Concretely, each existing scenario (images A to E) was increased from two images to four (see annexes). The two new scenarios (each having four steps) were the following:

F:

      Community members cannot find another member
      Where is he? Some community members think that he is dead
      He actually left the village on his motorcycle
      He reached Wau for some personal business

G:

      A woman has different hair than the other women in the community
      What happened to her? Did her hair set on fire? Did she have an accident?
      Has she been sick?
      She simply went to the hairdresser and cut her hair

Both scenarios were each believed to be doors that might open to a further discussion with participants as these suggest, in a reduced and more inoffensive way, two events that unfortunately are part of IDPs' potential threats in South Sudan. For the scenario F, the discussion could end up at talking about abductions, killings, disappearances after a lack of news, etc. The phenomenon of rumors can appear quickly in such situations. For the scenario G, the images could lead up to a discussion on rumors that spread about daily tensions within a community (such as suspected cases of adultery, victim-blaming after a rape or any other sexual violence, etc.) and that might appear as small-scale tensions but can have equally serious consequences as in the scenario F for the ones suffering from it.

Implementation on the field of the sixth version of the game

When conducting the rumor control activity, the team left the space for this game to take place. Four scenarios were used (B, D, F and G). The B was chosen in order to show two essential elements: first that even for random, appear-to-be-inoffensive information such as the weather, it is necessary to go up until to the source of the information. Second is that even when one thinks one has found the source of the information (the last two images are the same), it is necessary to conduct this controlling until the very end.

The scenario D was chosen because it was believed to show that a false information could simply be a skewed information and not necessarily an information with the intention of harming other people in the community. It is believed that presenting this

scenario this way would allow to open the discussion on the negative consequences of rumors for the community and especially for the ones that have been identified as giving (voluntarily or not) false information.

The scenarios F and G were chosen for two reasons: first because they were believed to mention struggles that this community had had to face in the more or less recent past. Second because as a new adding to the game, it was necessary to test them in real conditions in order to see if they could be used in the future to support the team's activities. Because of time constraints, the facilitator could not use the scenario G.

The scenarios B and D were estimated to have brought interesting discussions and helped approaching some important topics regarding rumor control. The challenge was to bring some dynamism into the course of the game: the images were spread into the crowd of participants and two searchers were selected to find them. The order of the information was believed to be unclear for the participants: the idea was that the first information has four letters written on it, the second one three, the third one two and the last one (the source) only has one letter written on it. That is one way for the players to know that they have reached the source. This element of the game rules was estimated to be unclear for the participants and, thus, needs to be improved for the next time. Nevertheless, and although the part of gathering the information took place in a slightly confused way, the rest of the rumor control steps could be approached through discussions with the participants based on the images.

Given the confusion in the first steps of the game and taking into consideration the necessary improvements on that aspect, the scenario F took place in a different way. The story of the scenario F was told to the participants step by step and as the searchers were handing the images to the facilitator. This temporary change of facilitation gave the opportunity to realize what this new scenario could bring in the discussion: a participant said that a similar story had happened during the crisis in 2016. One community member had disappeared and everyone thought that he was dead, as the occurrence of it was likely at that time. No one conducted any of the steps of the controlling of rumor. The participant shared that the community even organized his funeral. Eventually, participants said that he came back a month ago, he simply had fled to Khartoum to relatives of his. Participants could share all the challenges that made it impossible for them to control this rumor at that time and also said that after this session and if such a situation would occur again, they would know what steps to follow if they want to control the information.

### 4.7.3 - Feedback and way forward
The following elements of the game have to be improved:

- the dynamism of the moment of the search/information gathering
- the landscape on which to place the scenarios is not guiding the participants enough. For the next one, it should be more engaging and included into the general course of the game
- the timing of the whole session that did not allow the facilitator to use all the planned scenarios

This last aspect is also believed to be an advantage of this sixth version, as it allows the facilitator to adapt to the time that is available during the session. The numerous scenarios (there are seven, from A to G) allow the facilitator to adapt to the situation and the past experiences of the participants he/she is giving the session to.

### 4.7.4 Budget required for the development of the last two versions of the game

The budget presented in this section has been added for purely informative purpose and also in order to provide a numeric representation of what this activity could represent. It was thought that such information and representation would help potential reproducers of the same game or developers of other games to inspire from and have a broad idea of what such initiative implies.

It is important to mention here that it is impossible for the thesis' writer to provide an exact figure of the amount spent during each session in which the game was proposed to the participants, and this for various reasons.

First of all, since this game has been experienced first (and, for now, only) in the framework of a humanitarian project implemented by Nonviolent Peaceforce, there are some programmatic aspects to which the thesis' writer is required to keep confidential – for no other reason that what the contract rules ask each NP employee – and the budget aspect of actual expenses made on the ground for the activities is part of it[3].

Second of all, one of the ideas that guided the reflection in the elaboration of this game was to allow potential reproducers to implement this game (or an improved version, or a modified version of it) in their own field site, their own crisis context but also their own professional and cultural environment. In that sense, it was thought that the simplest game framework and set up would foster this potential reproduction, through highlighting the reflection behind it – rather than giving a kind of a guide to follow word by word – and through making the elaboration of the game as accessible as possible.

However, that being said, and in order to give an idea of the different steps of the development of the game, the following table can be established, taking into consideration all the elements mentioned above[4].

| Item to purchase | Price for 1 unit (in SSP) | Recurrence of purchase | Total price |
|---|---|---|---|
| Fuel to reach the destination | 200 | 6 | 600 |
| Purchase of 1 flipchart papers (1 pack of 42 pages) | 2500 | 1 | 2500 |
| Purchase of 1 flipchart stand | 18000 | 1 | 18000 |
| Purchase of 1 box of 8 marker pens | 1500 | 1 | 1500 |
| Purchase of 1 transparent tape roll | 250 | 1 | 250 |
| Purchase of 1 plastic sheet (for participants to sit during the session) | 30000 | 1 | 30000 |
| Providing 1 cup of tea and 1 snack to each participants (ideally, 30 participants are required for each session and 3 sessions were used | 100/participant | 90 | 9000 |

---

[3] For example, in the context of Wau and its surrounding regions, a snack is usually distributed to the participants at the end of of each session that NP team gives. But this aspect is thought to be related more to the project aspect rather than to the conducting of the game by itself and therefore, is thought to fall under the confidentiality aspect.

[4] It is thought that these elements can be displayed in details since they are not revealing any part of NP budget regarding this project and are only here to give an idea of the amount required for the conducting of the game.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| to attempt the final version of the game) | | | |
| TOTAL PRICE | | | 61'850 SSP |

Notes: i) at the time of the writing of this thesis, the rate USD/SSP is the following: 1 USD = 300 SSP. So the total indicated above is equivalent to, approximately: 206.20 USD

ii) In addition, it is important to mention that the most important elements used for the development of this game (the marker pens and the flipchart papers) are the cheapest, they are equivalent to 13.33 USD.

iii) lastly, it is also important to mention the fact that the prices indicated here are the ones in course at Jo Market in Wau (the most important market in this town) at the moment of the writing of this thesis. They are likely to vary, depending on various factors such as: whether it is rainy season or dry season, the state of the roads between Wau and other major cities, availability of the petrol, level of insecurity in the region, etc.

# 5. Conclusion

Producing efficient humanitarian work in an ever-changing and complex environment affected by a long-run violent conflict is a task that has been proven times and again to be far form being easy. It seems that it requires many different components that would each play a particular and crucial role at a certain moment of the implementation of a project and it seems plausible to propose that no initiative has ever fulfilled the planned goal entirely.

It seems that in the field of protection work, and particularly in the activity of suggesting new ways to beneficiaries to behave towards each other or when facing a danger, some of the results can simply not be measured the week after an activity is conducted. Thus, because of the nature of the work itself – talking about behaviors and mental reactions – it is expected that one has to show patience before seeing a potential concrete result of discussions on topics such as how to react when facing a rumor or the information about a danger. That challenge can be seen as a source of frustration for some, but it is also inherent to this type of work and has to be considered as such.

Nevertheless, this does not mean that it is normal to expect no result at all, but simply that it is difficult to measure it with precision in the short-term. In order to have an idea about how the content of a session (or of a game during the session) has been received, one has to analyze the small elements provided by the participants such as the feedback given at the end of the session, the way the participants behaved or reacted during the game itself and the informal discussions at the end of the session.

All of the components mentioned in the first paragraph of this conclusion (welcoming by the beneficiaries, relationships with the authorities and the communities, decision with the team members at the moment of the implementation, coordination with other humanitarian actors, beneficiaries' needs and actuality that constantly changes, and many others) have to be considered at the moment of evaluating the success or the challenges faced when proposing a new way to address an issue or to approach a topic.

In this context, proposing this new way through the development of a game seems to add an even more of a complicated challenge. Indeed, creating a game for sheer amusement is already a complex task for an unexperienced game developer. But when this game is supposed to, at the same time, address protection concerns and attempts to generate discussions that can potentially be life-saving, it represents even more challenges than thought. On the other hand, it is important mentioning that proposing an activity in such shape also provides a relatively flexible tool and permits a certain research through the modification of the different game components.

This aspect, if estimated to be true for the development and improvement of one game is also estimated to be fitting more generally for an initiative aimed at supporting the content of a session: such a proposition is composed of enough flexible elements that permits its constant improvement and re-adaptation to, for example but not limited to, the context, the different audiences and the past experiences.

An important point of this game in all its simple presentation and shape as it is as of now is an easy access for its reproduction. In this sense, it is believed that the more often it is reproduced, the more facilitators can learn from the experience and the more improvements can be brought to the shape of the game, its rules or the way it is conducted. What has been identified as a major default in the framework of this thesis – namely the short time given to its actual implementation, its implementation in real

context, with the participants – can also be considered to be a strong base on which a potentially efficient tool can be developed in the future.

In other words, it is believed that, if given enough time and if dedicated constant re-thinking, re-analysis and re-shaping work, these first steps have the possibility to bring significant support to the work of a field team in the implementation of a humanitarian project.

## A few acknowledgments…

Entirely aware of the limits of this work and of its modest scope, but taking into consideration the importance that this step represents in my academic, professional and personal career – should it be accepted – I found it necessary to mention a few important people that supported me in the realisation of this work… and beyond.

First of all, I would like to warmly thank all the personnel of the UJI, from the first email sent to Adela before even being registered, passing by all the teachers – and especially a certain discussion held in La Vall d'Uxo – to the last passionate discussion with my fellow peace master students. A special thanks also to this thesis tutor Leonor Hernandez Lopez and supervisor Alberto Cabedo Mas for their kind guidance, availability and support.

On the same note, I would like to highlight the valuable support received from Nonviolent Peaceforce managers and from the members of Wau team as well as the trust that they have placed in me.

Thirdly, a special thanks to my friends – who accept my numerous absences and very little answering rate – to all my family – who supports me and encourages me in anything I do – and to mon amoureuse, whose support is difficult to express in words.

To conclude, I would like to send a lot of thoughts to those to whom this picture means something:
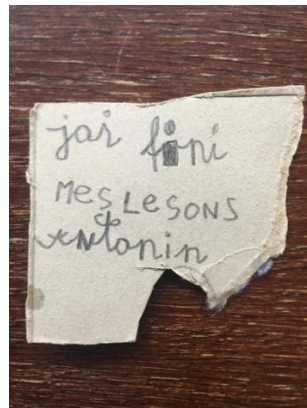
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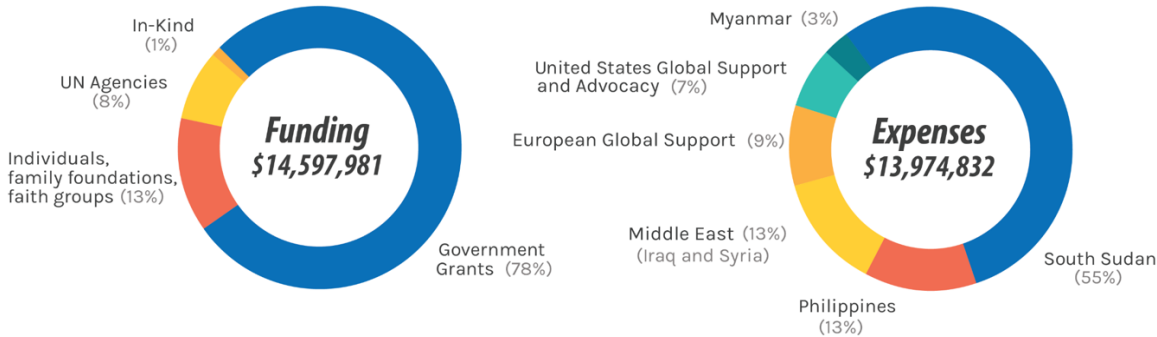
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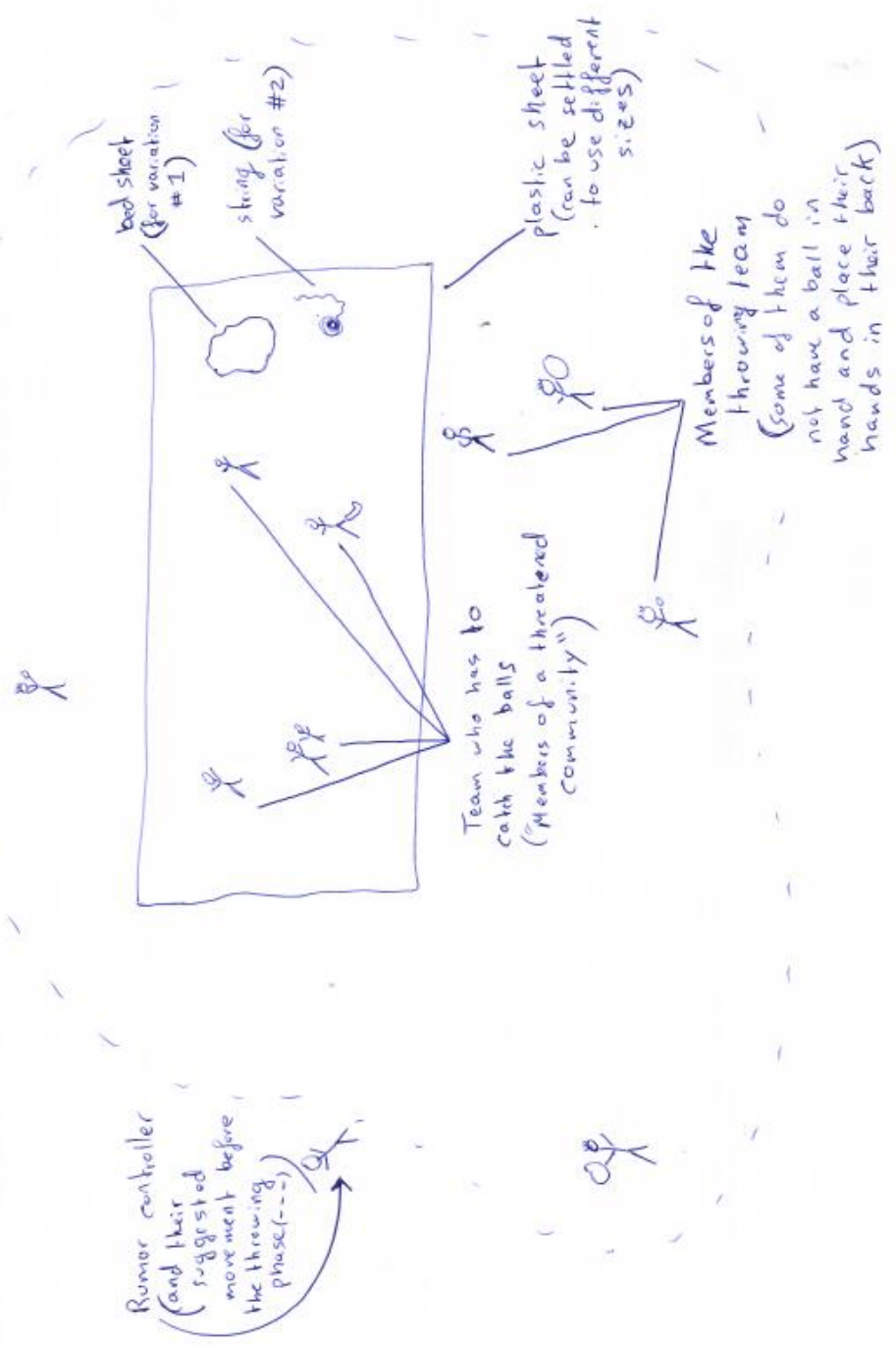
# Annexes

## Annex 1: graphic details on NP's funding



**Funding $14,597,981**
- In-Kind (1%)
- UN Agencies (8%)
- Individuals, family foundations, faith groups (13%)
- Government Grants (78%)

**Expenses $13,974,832**
- Myanmar (3%)
- United States Global Support and Advocacy (7%)
- European Global Support (9%)
- Middle East (13%) (Iraq and Syria)
- Philippines (13%)
- South Sudan (55%)

(source of the graph: https://www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org/about/financials)

Annex 2: game version #1



Version #1

Runner controller
(and their
suggested
movement before
the throwing
phase (--))

bed sheet
(for variation
#1)

string (for
variation #2)

plastic sheet
(can be settled
to use different
sizes)

Members of the
throwing team
(some of them do
not have a ball in
hand and place their
hands in their back)

Team who has to
catch the balls
("Members of a threatened
Community")

Annex 3: versions for game #2



VERSION #2

Meanings of the representation | Representations of the steps on the hopscotch

Peaceful environment = Tree blossoming

Potential for further conflict = charcoal step

Crisis = fire step

Confrontation = matches step

Potential for conflict = firewood step

Actions to implement to jump to next conflict stage or to use in each conflict stage

confidence building ⇧

facilitation of dialogue + problem solving ⇧

Negotiation

VERSION 2 - more developed possibility



conflict evolution 1

conflict evolution 2

conflict evolution 3

peaceful environment

conflict evolution 5

conflict evolution 4

[☹] = negative reactions to a given situation (violence, rupture of dialogue, negative coping mechanism, etc.)

[☺] = positive reactions to a given situation (showing empathy, peaceful communication, negotiation, dialogue, etc.)
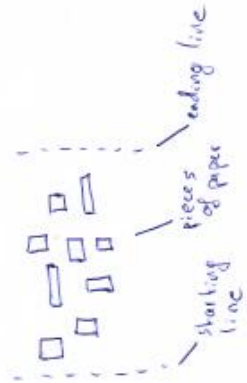
⟹ = progression of the jumps

Annex 4: game version #3



VERSION 3

Legend

■ starting point for B
▲ starting point for A
◯ meeting points
⊙ meeting points and places where peace-builders can propose the Trust Walk activity.
◉ meeting points and places where peace-builders can propose the Effective Listening activity.
◎ meeting points and places where peace-builders can propose the Riddle quality.

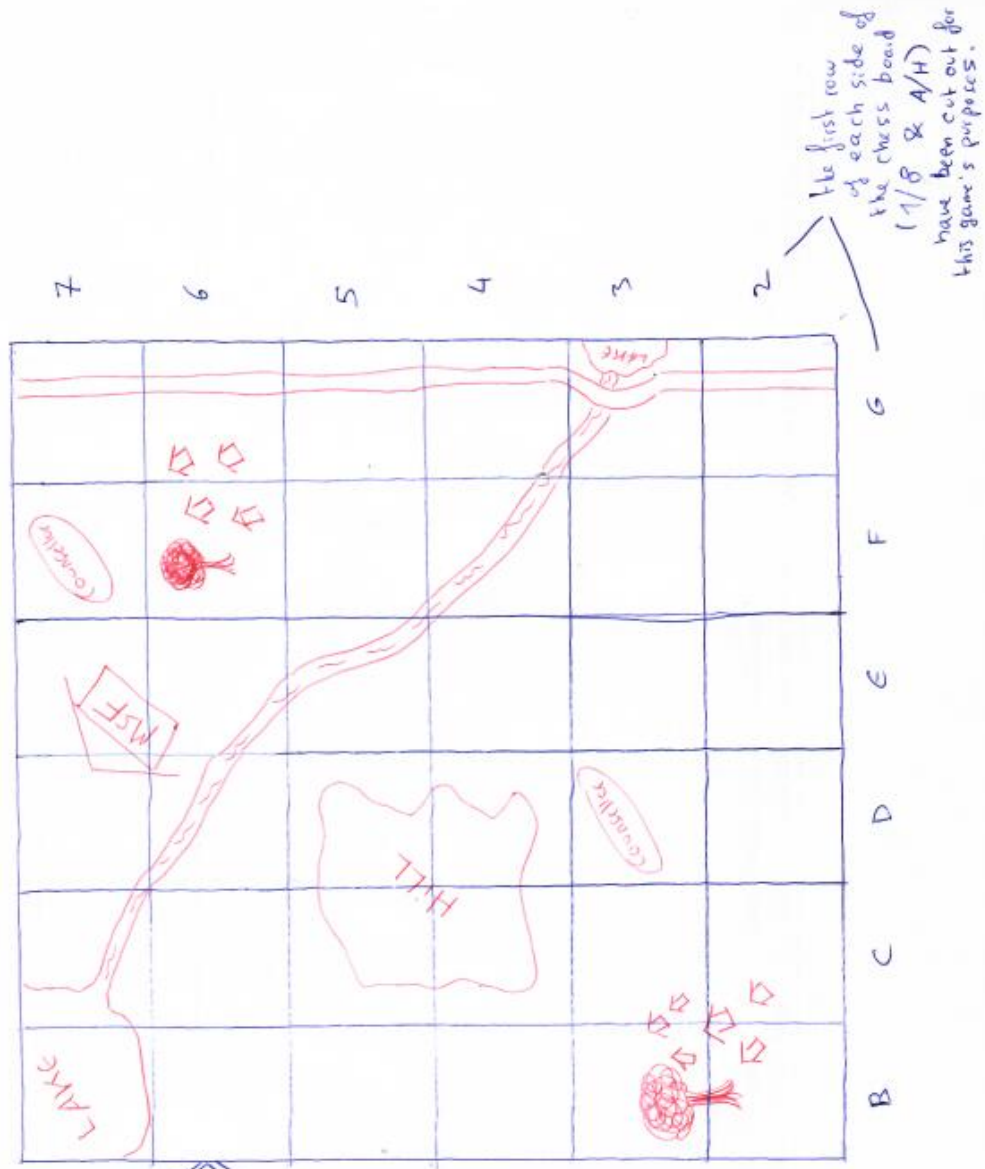The Trust Walk

starting line
pieces of paper
ending line
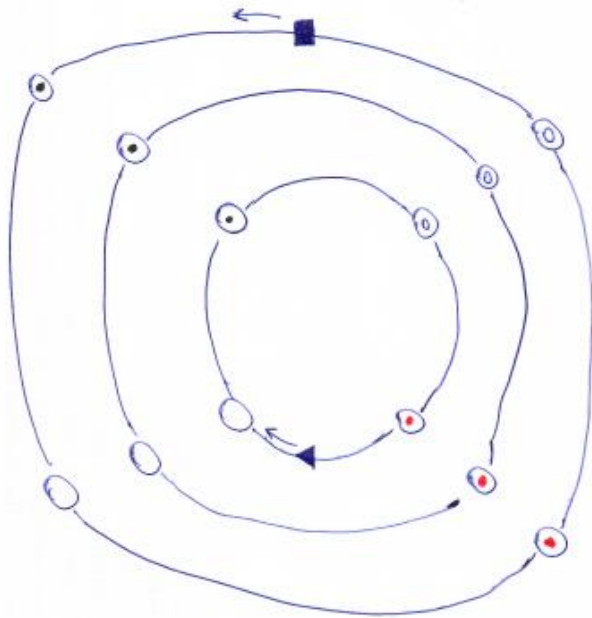
Annex 5: board for game version #4



VERSION #4

The first row of each side of the chess board (1/8 & A/H) have been cut out for this game's purposes.

this board is to be cut and taped on one of the chess games NP has in its Wau office (see picture)

## Annex 6: picture of the set up for game version #4



## Annex 7: game rules for version #4

1st phase of the game, instructions to participants:

**A)** you are two habitants of one region. You are from the same community, and arrived in the same village after displacement. Your children would like to play in the area **but** since you recently arrived, you do not know about the safety of the place. So you have to gather information as fast as possible, since the children want to play as soon as possible (they're almost already running everywhere!).

**B)** To check an information, you have to <u>triangulate</u> it. All contact people (the castles) in this game are trustworthy. But to make sure that the info is correct, you have to find it/hear about it at least from two different sources and to go back as far as possible to the source of the information. Finally, as careful parents, every time you go see one informant, you should get his/her number (this is thought to help building of the network).

**C)** Also, when you arrived in the village, you receive the following information from the woman leader:

Pawn 1 – **Level of river in F4 is low, you can cross**

Pawn 2 – **There is an old well in G3, it is dangerous hole for children**

→ can you trust this info? Yes, but it is better to check it. In the same way that was already explained.

| Castle b 1 | *Elder living there* | Snake in river D6 | **Armed group living in D6** | **Mines in C4-C5** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Castle b 2 | *Farmer* | **Old well, dangerous hole for children in G3** | No one is living in F6 | **Mines in C4-C5** | |
| Castle w 1 | *Cattle keeper* | Fire in the bush (B4) | **Level of river in F4 is low, you can cross** | **Broken bridge in G3** | |
| Castle w 2 | *Elder* | **Old well, dangerous hole for children in G3** | **Level of river in F4 is low, you can cross** | **Broken bridge in G3** | |

| Bishop b | *Medical counsellor (clinic staff)* | Take enough water for a few days if you have to run in the bush | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bishop w | *Psychological counsellor* | You can get psychological support in the MSF clinic of (fictional name) | |

<u>Second phase of the game:</u> how will participant react when in presence of a natural disaster?

The idea behind the irruption of the natural disaster is that it interrupts the gathering of information carried out by the players. Therefore, they have to find a way to complete the information they have. It is when the idea of uniting, of sharing information, of thinking collectively can be suggested.

<u>Instructions to participants:</u> a SANDSTORM is coming! You need to flee to the next village. And by the shortest road. → how will you know which road is the best to take?

<u>Questions they should ask themselves (facilitator can help them/suggest some of them):</u> Which way to take? How can we gather info? Who can we call? Should we work together?

If they call their network, the pawns will discover that:

- Castle b2 and w2: in C7, D7, and D6, the stream is very strong due to heavy rains
- Castle b1: there is a checkpoint in G5 where they have totally closed the road for investigation.
- Castle w1 There is a truck accident that blocks the whole road in G2.
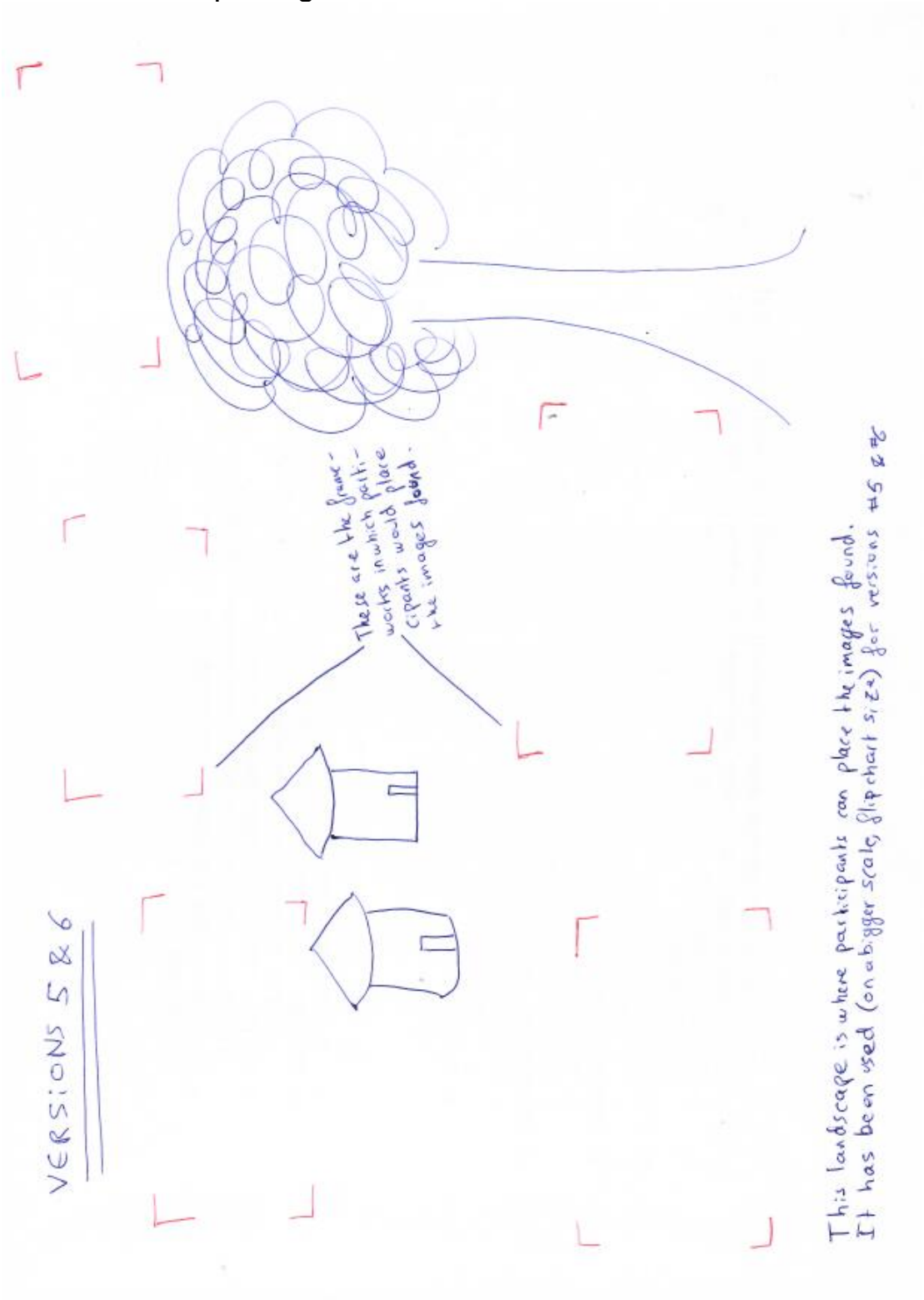
PHASE 1 – Table for facilitator: what info did I give and to whom?

| Actor | *"name of the actor"* | Info 1 | Info 2 | Info 3 | Which participant knows? |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Castle b 1 | *Elder living there* | Snake in river D6 | **Armed group living in D6** | **Mines in C4-C5** | |
| Castle b 2 | *Farmer* | **Old well, dangerous hole for children in G3** | No one is living in F6 | **Mines in C4-C5** | |
| Castle w 1 | *Cattle keeper* | Fire in the bush (B4) | **Level of river in F4 is low, you can cross** | **Broken bridge in G3** | |
| Castle w 2 | *Elder* | **Old well, dangerous hole for children in G3** | **Level of river in F4 is low, you can cross** | **Broken bridge in G3** | |

Phase 2 – AT THE MOMENT OF THE SANDSTORM

| Actor | *"name of the actor"* | Info 1 | To whom did I give it to? |
|---|---|---|---|
| Castle b1 | *Elder living there* | there is a checkpoint in G5 where they have totally closed the road for investigation | |
| Castle b2 | *Farmer* | in C7, D7, and D6, the stream is very strong due to heavy rains | |
| Castle w1 | *Cattle keeper* | There is a truck accident that blocks the whole road in G2. | |
| Castle w2 | *Elder living there* | in C7, D7, and D6, the stream is very strong due to heavy rains | |

Annex 8: landscape for game versions #5 and #6



VERSIONS 5 & 6

These are the frameworks in which participants would place the images found.

This landscape is where participants can place the images found.
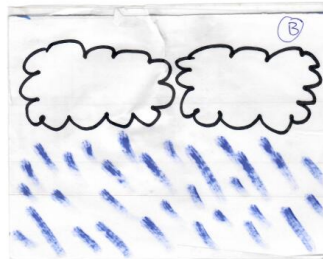It has been used (on a bigger scale, flipchart size) for versions #5 & #6

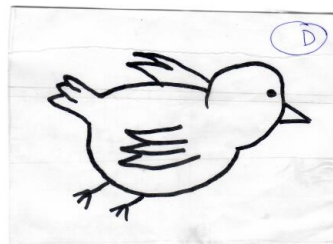# Annex 9: drawings for game version #5

Scenario A (two drawings)
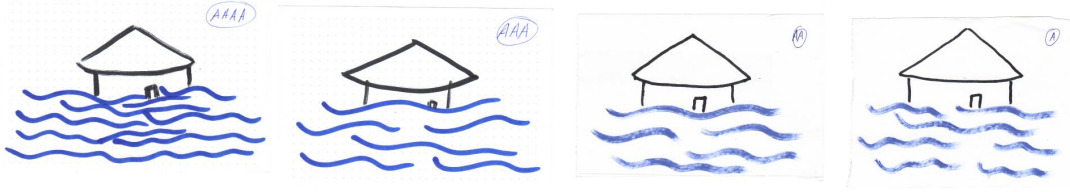
Scenario B (two drawings)



Scenario C (two drawings)



Scenario D (two drawings)
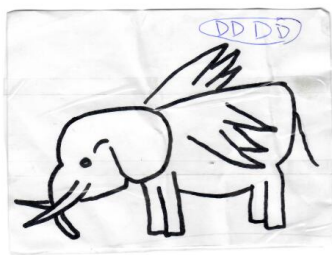
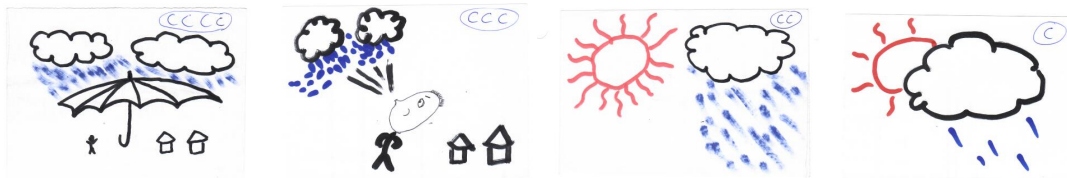# Annex 10: drawings for game versions #6

## Scenario A (four drawings)



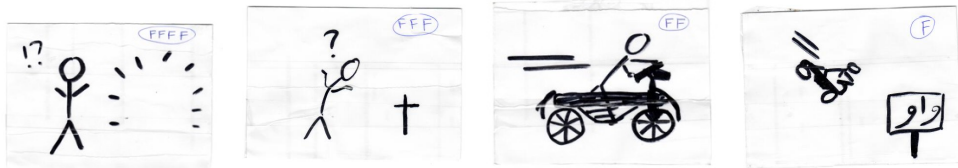## Scenario B (four drawings)



## Scenario C (four drawings)



## Scenario D (four drawings)



## Scenario E (four drawings)



## Scenario F (four drawings)



## Scenario G (four drawings)