



# PEACEPLAYERS INTERNATIONAL-MIDDLE EAST PROGRAM EVALUATION

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NOVEMBER 2017



**PEACEPLAYERS**  
MIDDLE EAST

# Table of Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Methodology</b> .....	<b>3</b>
Evaluation Framework .....	3
Data Collection .....	3
Focus group discussions .....	3
Participatory focus groups .....	4
Key informant interviews .....	4
Surveys .....	5
Analysis .....	5
Evaluation Team .....	5
Limitations .....	5
<b>Findings &amp; Recommendations</b> .....	<b>6</b>
Evaluation Question 1: What is the most effective strategy and format for delivering peace education to participants? .....	6
Key Finding .....	6
Recommendations .....	8
Evaluation Question 2: What, if any, effect does PPI-Middle East have on parents of participants? What can the program do to better engage this group? .....	9
Key Finding .....	9
Recommendations .....	10
Evaluation Question 3: What are the results of PPI-Middle East’s partnerships with key actors and community organizations? .....	11
Key Finding .....	11
Recommendations .....	12
<b>Annexes</b> .....	<b>13</b>
Annex 1: PPI-Middle East Program Model .....	13
Annex 2: Participatory Focus Group Tools .....	14



# Executive Summary

This evaluation of PeacePlayers International-Middle East (PPI-Middle East) examines **the outcomes achieved in specific program areas (e.g., peace education)** and explores key issues such as **delivery of activities and the engagement of parents and key actors**. The evaluation used a mixed-methods approach, including focus groups, participatory focus group activities, key informant interviews and survey and monitoring data. Program participants, specifically youth enrolled in the All-Star activity, parents, staff and key actors were consulted for the evaluation. PPI's Director of Monitoring and Evaluation and Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist conducted the evaluation, with the PPI-Middle East Managing Director serving as evaluation manager.

Outlined below are the key questions examined by the evaluation, along with findings and recommendations for each:

## 1. What is the most effective strategy and format for delivering peace education to participants?

**Findings:** Peace education is most successful when participants have long-term, repeated involvement with the concepts, particularly at special events, camps or retreats. It is a key component of PPI-Middle East programming and is valued by both coaches and participants. However, some participants have difficulty connecting concepts learned in the program to their everyday lives.

**Recommendations:** Focus camps, retreats and special events on peace education, while reinforcing the concepts learned at these events during basketball trainings; work to increase involvement and "buy-in" of coaches to the peace education curriculum; and develop a more structured pathway for participants to engage with curriculum material.

## 2. What, if any, effect does PPI-Middle East have on parents of participants? What can the program do to better engage this group?

**Findings:** Parents experience several positive outcomes, though these changes take multiple years and are dependent on their children's as well as their own level of engagement in PPI-Middle East. During the evaluation, many parents expressed a desire to be more connected to and involved in the program.

**Recommendations:** Organize annual and/or semi-annual parent events and distribute program information to parents through a leaflet or newsletter; these strategies will help better connect parents to PPI-Middle East without requiring too much of their time and resources.

## 3. What are the results of PPI-Middle East's partnerships with key actors and community organizations, as measured by:

- a. # of Palestinian and Israeli sports and community organizations citing examples of increased engagement in peacebuilding work
- b. # of key Israeli and Palestinian actors indicating that PPI programs increased their support for peacebuilding

**Findings:** PPI-Middle East has contributed to both increased support for and engagement in peacebuilding work among key actors. Key actors also expressed a desire to see the program broaden its reach.

**Recommendations:** Expand current engagement efforts with key actors and organizations and, when feasible, seek out new partnerships; connect with more schools and the Ministry of Education when it is safe and appropriate to do so in order to increase PPI-Middle East's reach and sustainability.

# Introduction

In Israel and the West Bank, deep social divides continue to undermine generations of peacemaking efforts. Palestinians and Israelis are segregated in almost every aspect of life, with exposure to the “other side” largely limited to the media, myths and stereotypes. The separation barrier between the West Bank and Israel has exacerbated the lack of contact, making it nearly impossible for both groups to meet. This separation has caused hatred and prejudice to thrive, and prompted violence and aggression with alarming frequency. Since 2016 in particular, there has been a marked escalation of tensions between the two sides, characterized by violent demonstrations, a wave of stabbings and military retaliations.<sup>1</sup>

Established in 2005, PeacePlayers International-Middle East (PPI-Middle East) engages Israeli and Palestinian children, youth, coaches and key actors in a variety of sport and peacebuilding activities, providing a framework for developing intergroup friendships, transforming negative attitudes and acquiring the skills necessary to be community leaders. The program’s theory of change states that:

If:	Then:
Intergroup contact is facilitated under favorable conditions (meaningful, frequent, long-term and symmetric) and gives participants a common goal	Negative stereotypes can be mitigated, and young Palestinians and Israelis can become advocates for peace; <b>and IF</b> Palestinian and Israeli key people are engaged in this process, individual change can stimulate broader socio-political change favoring a negotiated settlement

To accomplish its intended outcomes, PPI-Middle East provides integrated, year-round sport programming, peace education, leadership development and professional training activities, specifically:<sup>2</sup>

- **Peace Education Sessions:** Staff facilitators lead workshops in PPI-Middle East’s “Anatomy of Peace” conflict resolution curriculum, covering topics such as diversity, respect and communication.
- **Basketball Training:** Twice-weekly basketball and peacebuilding sessions in Palestinian and Israeli communities with a local coach, with the goal of preparing youth for joint activities.
- **Joint Activities (Twinning/Field Trips/Retreats/Tournaments):** At least once per month, Israeli and Palestinian youth meet for joint activities featuring sports drills, games and teambuilding. Several integrated retreats, tournaments and field trips are also held each program year.
- **All-Star Teams:** Fully integrated basketball teams that compete in the Israeli Basketball Association’s elite youth league, traveling around the country to play against unaffiliated teams.
- **Leadership Development:** Veteran PPI-Middle East participants are invited to join the Leadership Development Program (LDP), where they engage in integrated basketball and leadership sessions, retreats and social action projects, and regularly serve as assistant coaches for younger children.
- **Youth Social Entrepreneurs:** Palestinian and Israeli emerging leaders receive training and support to launch their own peacebuilding initiatives in their local communities.
- **Sports Diplomats for Peace:** Elite coaches and players lead a variety of clinics for youth and key Israeli and Palestinian community actors.

This report presents the key findings and recommendations from an evaluation of PPI-Middle East. The evaluation examines the outcomes achieved in specific program areas (e.g., peace education), and explores key issues such as delivery of activities, and engagement of parents and key actors.

<sup>1</sup>Human Rights Watch, “Israel/Palestine, Events of 2016.” [www.hrw.org/world-report/2017/country-chapters/israel/palestine](http://www.hrw.org/world-report/2017/country-chapters/israel/palestine)

<sup>2</sup>For further details, please see Annex 1: PPI – Middle East Program Model

# Methodology

## Evaluation Framework

This evaluation of PPI-Middle East was conducted with the **goal of learning how effectively the organization designs and delivers peace education, and understanding the effects of programming on the greater community—namely, the parents of participants, as well as key actors and community organizations.** The results of the evaluation will be used to improve the design and delivery of future PPI-Middle East activities, as well as enhance engagement with parents and partner organizations.

A Utilization-Focused Evaluation (UFE) approach was used for the evaluation. In keeping with the principles of UFE, the findings are targeted towards a very specific audience—PPI-Middle East staff—and are intended to inform decision-making about the program. The evaluation focused on two major criteria, with corresponding evaluation questions for each:

1. **Relevance:** The extent to which the design and delivery of PPI-Middle East’s peace education curriculum is responsive to the needs of participants
  - What is the most effective strategy and format for delivering peace education to participants?
2. **Effectiveness:** The extent to which PPI-Middle East has achieved its intended outcomes related to the engagement of parents, key actors and community organizations
  - What, if any, effect does PPI-Middle East have on parents of participants? What can the program do to better engage this group?
  - What are the results of PPI-Middle East’s partnerships with key actors and community organizations, as measured by:
    - a. # of Palestinian and Israeli sports and community organizations citing examples of increased engagement in peacebuilding work
    - b. # of key Israeli and Palestinian actors indicating that PPI programs increased their support for peacebuilding

## Data Collection

The evaluation used a mixed-methods approach, including focus groups, participatory focus group activities, key informant interviews and survey and monitoring data. Data collection took place in the major areas of PPI-Middle East program operation, specifically Jerusalem and the surrounding areas (e.g. Tal Shahar, Ein Karem, etc.), as well as Tamra and Nahariya in the north of Israel. Data collection was also conducted at the PPI-Middle East office in Jaffa and in Sdot Yam, the site of a participant camp.

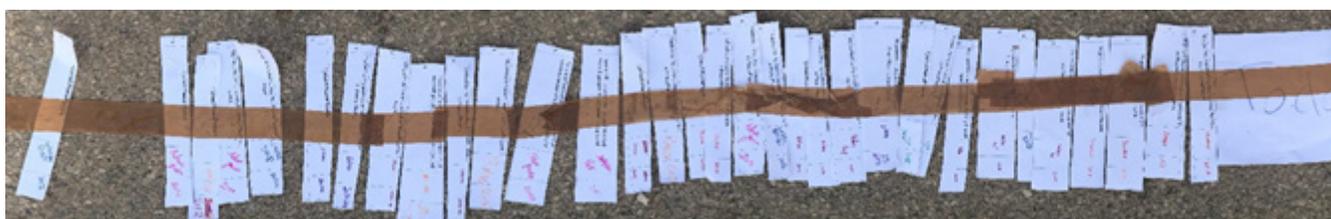
**Focus group discussions (FGDs):** Four FGDs were conducted with a total of 35 participants, including parents and PPI-Middle East staff. Parent FGDs were held in Jerusalem, Tamra and Nahariya, while the staff FGD took place in Jaffa. All parents of LDP and All-Star youth were invited to participate; those who attended the FGDs did so voluntarily. Staff FGD participants took part based on availability.

**Participatory focus groups (PFGs):** PFGs were conducted with 45 youth participants ages 12-18 and included two distinct exercises: 1) “Line Game” and 2) “Timeline” (please see Annex 2: Participatory Focus Group Tools). Three PFGs were conducted at a retreat in Sdot Yam for All-Star Team participants from Jerusalem, Tamra and Nahariya; a fourth PFG was held during an All-Star practice in Nahariya. Thus, youth were selected for PFGs based on their participation in the All-Star program activity.

<sup>1</sup>This evaluation used the criteria of relevance and effectiveness as defined by the OECD – DAC. For further information, please see: [DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance](#)

- **Line Game:** The key objective of the Line Game was to gather feedback on PPI-Middle East peace education sessions. To complete this exercise, the facilitator established a line by placing two large pieces of paper on the ground, one at the left end of the floor labeled “disagree very much,” and the other at the right end labeled “agree very much.” The facilitator then read aloud a series of statements; after each one, participants moved to the point on the line that best corresponded to their opinion on that statement. The facilitator concluded the exercise with a debrief discussion.

- **Timeline:** The key objective of the Timeline activity was to gather information on how effectively PPI-Middle East engages parents. To complete this exercise, the facilitator provided a pre-made timeline and list of “experiences” related to parent engagement. Youth participants then selected the “experiences” that they have personally seen, and placed them on the timeline in chronological order (see image below). The facilitator concluded the exercise with a debrief discussion.



**Key Informant Interviews:** Ten key informant interviews were conducted for the evaluation, including four with peace education facilitators and six with key actors from PPI-Middle East partner organizations. Key informants were selected based on their availability to interview, as well as their affiliation and engagement with the program; the evaluator aimed to interview those from across PPI-Middle East’s various programs and geographic locations. Interviews were conducted both over the phone and in-person in Jerusalem, Tal Shahar, Sdot Yam, Jaffa, Nahariya and Tamra.

**Surveys:** Surveys were administered to youth as part of an ongoing randomized control trial (RCT) study being conducted by independent researchers from New York University. 144 youth took the survey, including 57 males and 84 females. Ages of respondents ranged from 9-25 years.

FGDs, PFGs and key informant interview questions were developed by the lead evaluator in consultation with the evaluation manager (see evaluation team description below), and were conducted by the lead evaluator over a period of two weeks in May 2017. Discussions took place in English, with translation to Arabic and Hebrew as needed by PPI-Middle East staff. Monitoring data from the 2016 and 2017 program cycles were used for the evaluation; PPI-Middle East coaches and staff collected this data. Participant surveys were administered over a four-week period in May and June 2016 by the external researcher and PPI-Middle East staff.

The table below summarizes identity group and sex of respondents for all tools administered:

Table 1: Data Collection by Sex and Identity Group of Respondents

Data Collection Tool	Respondent Sex		Respondent Identity Group			Total
	Male	Female	Israeli	Palestinian	Other	
FGD	10	25	16	16	3	35
PFG	0	45	23	22	0	45
Key Informant Interview	5	5	6	3	1	10
Survey	57	84	70	71	0	141
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>231</b>

## Analysis

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FGDs and key informant interviews were recorded, transcribed and entered into NVivo, a qualitative data analysis software. PFG results were recorded by hand and entered into Excel after the data collection period, along with the monitoring and survey data. These data were analyzed, and report tables and charts created, using Excel.

## Evaluation Team

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The evaluation team included the PPI Director of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) (lead evaluator), as well as the PPI Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist. The PPI-Middle East Managing Director served as the evaluation manager. See below for evaluation team biographies:

- **Julie Younes** joined PPI in 2015 as the Director of M&E after serving as a Fellow in the Middle East from 2008-2010. Previously, she worked as a Design, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist for Search for Common Ground, a peacebuilding nonprofit organization. She received her master's degree in 2012 from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, where her studies focused on conflict resolution and monitoring and evaluation in international development.
- **Nora Summerville** joined PPI in July 2017 as the M&E Specialist. She holds an M.A. in International Affairs with a double concentration in development and global gender policy from The George Washington University's Elliott School of International Affairs.
- **Karen Doubilet** has served as the PPI-Middle East Managing Director for over 10 years. An expert in inter-group relations, Doubilet has experience in the areas of cross-cultural facilitation, Arab-Jewish relations, and the development and evaluation of integration programs. She is currently a doctoral candidate at Bar-Ilan University's Interdisciplinary Program on Conflict Management.

## Limitations

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As with all social science research and program evaluations, there were certain methodological limitations for this evaluation of PPI-Middle East:

- For logistical reasons, data was collected from youth participants in one specific program activity, All-Star Teams. Although many All-Star youth have taken part in other activities, the fact that the evaluation did not include a wider sample of children and youth limits the possibility of generalizing results to the entire program. Instead, PFG results in particular should be considered as reflective of the "All-Star" experience, which includes a higher number of contact hours with the "other" group and more competitive basketball.
- Participation in the FGDs and key informant interviews was voluntary. Thus, the parents and key actors who elected to take part in data collection are likely more engaged in the PPI-Middle East program, which could be reflected in their responses. In addition, during the May 2017 data collection period, the tense political situation made it more difficult to recruit Palestinian key actors for key informant interviews; as a result, there were more Israeli than Palestinian key actors interviewed for the evaluation.
- The evaluation was conducted internally by PPI's Director of M&E (who worked with the program in Jerusalem from 2008-2010) with the support of PPI-Middle East staff. However, the evaluation team aimed to mitigate bias by training all participating PPI-Middle East staff on proper data collection techniques. All PFGs were administered away from team coaches, who interact most frequently with youth participants.

# Findings & Recommendations

## Question 1: What is the most effective strategy and format for delivering peace education to participants?

**Key Finding: Peace education is most successful when participants have long-term, repeated involvement with the concepts, particularly at special events, camps or retreats. Peace education is a key component of PPI-Middle East programming, and is valued by both coaches and participants. However, some participants have difficulty connecting concepts learned in the program to their everyday lives.**

### Peace Education Delivery

From 2016-2017, peace education programming expanded due to the addition of peace camps. These camps and retreats are highly effective formats for delivering peace education, as they **bring participants together in a new environment and give them the time and space to delve into curriculum concepts**. Furthermore, this format allows facilitators to get to know participants better, forming trust between them; participants also come to camps and retreats ready to engage in peace education because they know it is the focus of the activity.

Outside of retreats and camps—which present time and resource constraints—the larger pieces of the peace education curriculum can be effectively facilitated as special events that take place outside of or separate from hour-long basketball trainings. PPI-Middle East staff, peace education facilitators and youth participants all supported the separation of peace education from basketball trainings, largely due to time constraints. Staff focus group participants remarked that when peace education is delivered at trainings, it can feel rushed and participants are less engaged because they are waiting to play basketball.

Figure 1: The total # of participants in peace education sessions, camps and retreats increased from 2016-2017



Figure 2: Youth prefer peace education at retreats or special events versus basketball practices.

**38%** of youth PFG participants agree: "I like it when we do peace education drills on the court **at practice**"

**96%** of youth PFG participants agree: "I like it when we do peace education **at special retreats or workshops**"

At the same time, the **importance of reinforcing peace education concepts through basketball** was raised during both FGDs and interviews. While the more time-intensive curriculum pieces should be reserved for retreats, camps and special events, coaches can take better advantage of basketball trainings to link peace education to basketball performance and issues outside of the program. Coaches currently have differing levels of engagement with the peace education curriculum; some coaches view peace education as unrelated to basketball, and accordingly focus practices on basketball skill acquisition only. Indeed, 67% of staff FGD participants remarked that **coaches should be more involved in the delivery of peace education**.

## Peace Education Outcomes

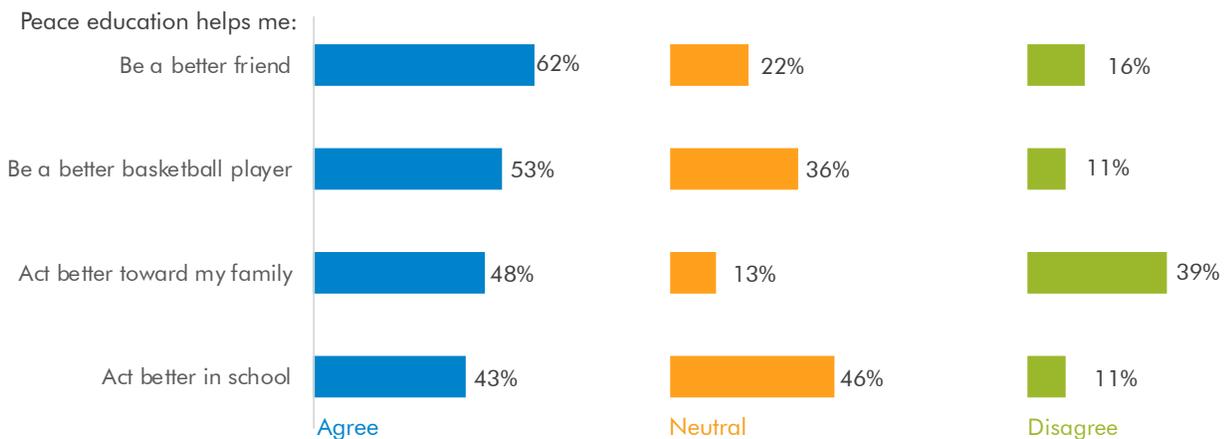
Participants, coaches and staff expressed **positive opinions about peace education overall, saying that it is intrinsic to PPI-Middle East and sets the organization apart from other programs.** Significantly, 82% of youth PFG participants expressed wanting to take part in peace education activities.

“[Peace education] is a really important thing to deliver to the kids. And I think that it’s a precious thing to do with those kids...because [otherwise] they would just play basketball. And the purpose of PeacePlayers... is to meet the other person, and to start a kind of communication. To start seeing them as people, not just an object. [It’s important], especially with the everyday political things that are happening in this land.”

—Peace education facilitator

Yet while **youth are generally able to apply peace education concepts within the context of PPI-Middle East activities, they have more difficulty doing so outside of the program.** A common theme among youth PFG respondents was that peace education teaches them to be kinder and more respectful towards others, which helps them be better friends. Additionally, the majority of youth agreed that peace education makes them better basketball players because it improves their teamwork on the court. In contrast, youth were more divided over whether peace education helps them in school or in their relationships with parents and siblings. Figure 3 below details PFG responses to a series of statements on the effects of peace education:

Figure 3: Youth understand the application of peace education to basketball and their friendships, but less so for school and family relationships



Similarly, 64% of youth PFG participants reported being better at solving problems since joining PPI-Middle East, though only 27% indicated applying peace education concepts when they have a problem to solve. This apparent contradiction is likely due to difficulty among participants in recognizing when they are drawing on peace education concepts, and how these are relevant outside of the PPI-Middle East program context.

As highlighted by both staff and peace education facilitators, the ultimate aims of peace education are for youth to work together well with their teammates, to transform how they see the “other side” and for youth to use the conflict resolution skills they acquire at PPI-Middle East in their everyday lives. While much of this is currently being achieved, many youth need further engagement with the peace education curriculum in order to fully understand and apply curriculum concepts—particularly outside of the program.

## Recommendations:

The following are recommended to strengthen PPI-Middle East peace education programming:

**1. Focus camps, retreats and special events on peace education; reinforce concepts learned at these events during basketball trainings.** Setting aside time and space for peace education outside of basketball trainings will ensure that participants are engaged with the content. However, peace education concepts can be reinforced during basketball trainings, particularly if they are messaged as “team-building” exercises.

To effectively deliver the peace education curriculum, PPI-Middle East can:

- Continue to budget for camps and retreats when feasible
- Review the peace education curriculum exercises and, where possible, adjust to allow for better integration into basketball practices (e.g., identify drills or terminology that coaches can use during practices to complement concepts learned at retreats, camps, etc.)
- Engage youth, particularly LDP or those who have been exposed to the curriculum for several years, in the development of new peace education exercises. Retreats or camps provide a good opportunity for this engagement

**2. Increase coach “buy-in” and involvement in the delivery of peace education.** Coaches know participants best, and can act as role models for applying peace education to everyday life; in addition, coaches can use peace education to improve teamwork and collaboration on the basketball court.

To better engage coaches, PPI-Middle East can:

- Identify a “lead trainer” who helps build coach capacity to deliver the curriculum
- Create an online platform that allows coaches to access the peace education curriculum and best practices around facilitation and delivery

**3. Develop a structure or “pathway” for youth participants to engage with curriculum material.**

Delivery of the peace education curriculum is currently tailored to each PPI-Middle East team and community, which facilitates implementation but also causes participants to have differing levels of familiarity with curriculum concepts. Teams do not need to cover the same material on the same day or week, but every participant should be exposed to a defined set of concepts.

To standardize peace education, PPI-Middle East can:

- Develop written guidelines that lay out which peace education concepts should be covered in the first six months, first year, second year, etc., of participation in PPI-Middle East



## Question 2: What, if any, effect does PPI-Middle East have on parents of participants? What can the program do to better engage this group?

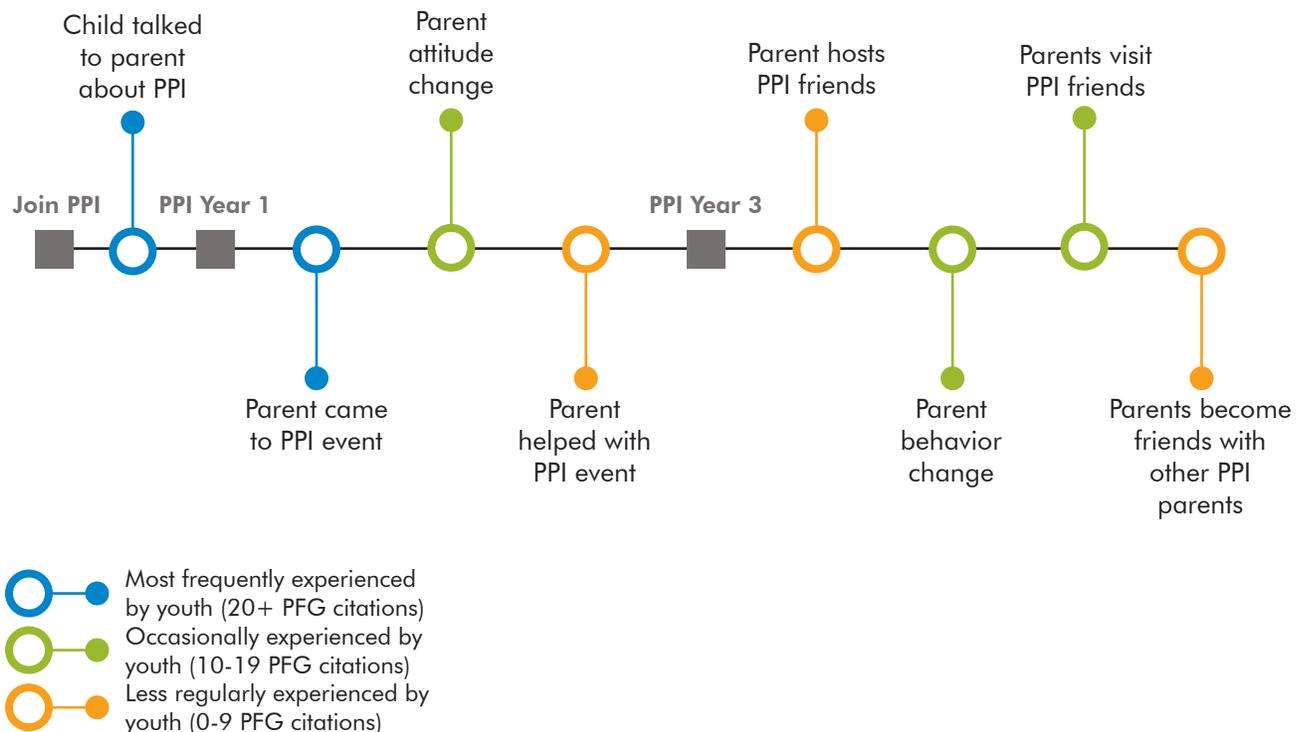
**Key Finding: Parents experience several positive outcomes, though these changes take multiple years and are dependent on their children’s as well as their own level of engagement in PPI-Middle East. During the evaluation, many parents expressed a desire to be more connected to and involved in the program.**

### Effects of Programming on Parents

When children join PPI-Middle East, it provides an opportunity for their parents to gain exposure to the “other side;” for many, this experience has resulted in reduced stereotypes. During FGDs, parents expressed that PPI-Middle East is not just a basketball program to them—it has become part of their families. 40% reported becoming friends with the parents of their children’s teammates, and many are openly proud to support an integrated program. **Several parents expressed that being involved in an organization like PPI-Middle East is “a special thing to have.”**

These changes take time, however, and generally occur over multiple years of program involvement. During PFGs, youth participants described the sequence of actions that leads to parents personally experiencing positive outcomes. As detailed in Figure 4 below, most parents first talk to their children about the program, which shifts their initial perceptions of the “other side.” Later, parents may attend a PPI-Middle East event, meet and befriend other parents and become more involved by helping or hosting an activity. Lastly, some parents experience behavior and relationship change.

Figure 4: Detailed below are the parent engagement actions put in chronological order by PFG youth participants. As reflected in the figure, parents generally become more involved and experience positive change only after several years of youth engagement in PPI-Middle East.

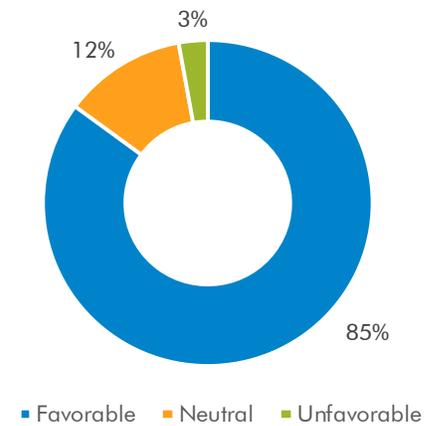


## Increasing Parent Engagement

PPI-Middle East parents are influenced through their children's change. As parents see their children have positive experiences and grow—for example, developing friendships, increased confidence and leadership skills—they understand the benefits of the program and are more likely to actively participate. Thus, parents of LDP members tend to be the most engaged, as their children have been in the program for several years and generally spend more time at PPI-Middle East activities.

Despite several obstacles—e.g. a tense political situation, time constraints, a tendency in some communities for parents not to be involved in their children's extracurricular activities, etc.—parents of participants in programs other than LDP can also be strategically engaged by PPI-Middle East. During FGDs, many parents expressed a desire to be more involved in the program and would like more regular program updates. Both parents and staff strongly supported organizing parent events, which would allow them to experience the program and meet other parents. Staff also suggested coordinating these engagement efforts through coaches, who children and parents are more likely to know and trust.

Figure 5: 85% of youth report their parents feel “favorable” towards them playing basketball with the “other side”



“[LDP] are going on overnight trips... they’re doing things three or four nights a week with us. It’s a much bigger part of their lives, and they care much more. So there’s definitely more [parent] engagement, and it’s directly related to how engaged the kids are.”

—PPI-Middle East staff member

## Recommendations:

The following are recommended to increase parent engagement in PPI-Middle East, which will in turn help ensure that they experience positive outcomes from the program:

- 1. Organize annual and/or semi-annual parent events.** This can include a pre-season meeting, parent basketball day or twinnings, group dinner, etc. Parents would like to be more involved in their children's activities and occasional structured events will help them experience PPI-Middle East programming, connect with their children through basketball, and meet coaches and other parents without requiring too much time commitment.
- 2. Formally communicate program information to parents.** To better share information about PPI-Middle East with parents, staff can distribute a quarterly or semi-annual newsletter; alternatively, regular in-person updates by staff would also provide a means of communication about the program that is not time or resource-intensive for parents.

### Question 3: What are the results of PPI-Middle East’s partnerships with key actors and community organizations, as measured by:

- a. # of Palestinian and Israeli sports and community organizations citing examples of increased engagement in peacebuilding work
- b. # of key Israeli and Palestinian actors indicating that PPI programs increased their support for peacebuilding

**Key Finding: PPI-Middle East has contributed to both increased support for and engagement in peacebuilding work among key actors. Key actors also expressed a desire to see the program expand its reach within their communities.**

#### Support for and Engagement in Peacebuilding

Four out of six key actors interviewed for the evaluation described their involvement in PPI-Middle East programming as **directly contributing to increased support for peacebuilding**. For most key actors, their partnership with PPI-Middle East represented the first engagement in peacebuilding or coexistence work by them or their organizations. Several characterized the program as helping them see that “coexistence is possible.”

Additionally, of the six key actors interviewed, three indicated that they had **engaged in additional peacebuilding work since partnering with PPI-Middle East**; of these three, two indicated that these additional activities were a direct result of their partnership with PPI-Middle East.

Figure 6: The number of key actors engaged by PPI-Middle East has increased significantly year-over year; the gender ratio and geographic distribution of events have improved significantly as well.

**89%** Increase in the number of key actors engaged from 2016-2017.

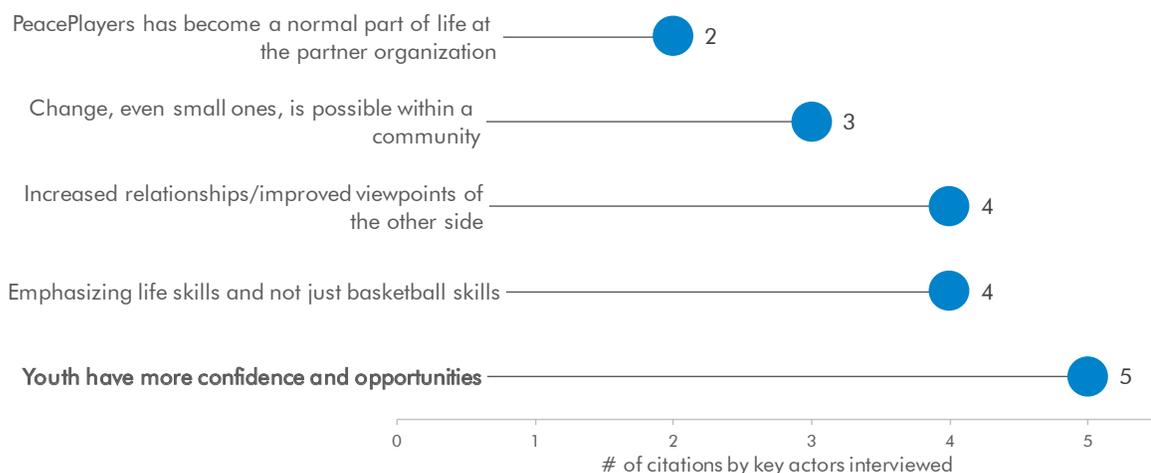
**45%** Of key actor events were held in the North in 2017, up from 25% in 2016.

**1.4:1** Gender ratio among key actors in 2017 (21 women, 15 men). **In 2016, the ratio was 8.5**, with 17 men and only two women.

“Before [PPI-Middle East], no. But now, I think that [peacebuilding] can be successful. There is always room for improvement, but now I know that it works.”

—PPI-Middle East key actor

Figure 7: The most frequently cited key actor takeaway from partnering with PPI-Middle East is that youth have more confidence and opportunities from their participation in the program.



## Expanding Partnerships

PPI-Middle East should continue to seek partnerships across various organizations, as exposure to successful peacebuilding efforts is key to changing attitudes for the better. Key actors overwhelmingly expressed a desire to see PPI-Middle East grow, suggesting the organization focus on increasing participation and expanding operations within its current partnerships. To this end, key actors emphasized the importance of directly engaging decision-makers within partner organizations (e.g., contacting and inviting them to attend events, sending them photos and program updates, etc.) and further marketing activities to potential participants (e.g., youth within a school or club where PPI-Middle East currently works) when it is feasible and safe to do so.

Key actors also suggested that, where possible, PPI-Middle East should pursue **additional partnerships through the formal education system, whether through individual schools or the Ministry of Education**. Expanding the program to include more schools and engaging with the Ministry of Education, whether on a high-level or locally, will increase the reach and sustainability of programming.

As with parents, the tense political situation was cited by key actors as an obstacle to further engagement in peacebuilding generally, and with PPI-Middle East specifically. A lack of resources, including gym time or event spaces, was also frequently highlighted as an issue when engaging key actors and partner organizations. Even if potential partners agree with and support the PPI-Middle East's mission, they may not be willing or able to dedicate resources to support the program. An ideal partner for PPI-Middle East will not only align with its mission, but also prioritize program participants and activities.

## Recommendations:

The following are recommended to strengthen key actor and partner organization involvement in PPI-Middle East:

1. **Expand current engagement efforts with key actors and organizations and, when feasible, seek out new partnerships.** The evaluation found that PPI-Middle East's work with key actors and organizations has positively affected their support for and engagement in peacebuilding. Given this result, the program should continue to broaden its reach, engaging more key actors and organizations when financially, logistically and politically possible.

To increase engagement with current partners, PPI-Middle East can:

- **Contact decision-makers within partner organizations directly** and keep them updated on activities; invite them to attend special events
- **Market the program within schools and partner organizations to increase participation.** When feasible and safe, reach out directly to youth at schools or community organizations—for example, put on a demonstration or special event so youth can see the program first-hand

2. **Connect with more schools and the Ministry of Education when it is safe and appropriate to do so in order to increase the program's reach and sustainability.** This type of institutional support will allow PPI-Middle East better access to physical resources and potential funding; it can also provide a channel for exposing a greater number of key actors to effective peacebuilding programming.

# Annexes

## Annex 1: PPI-Middle East Program Model

<p><b>Goal:</b> To develop mutual trust and cross-community cooperation between Palestinians and Israeli young people, key people and their communities, cultivating grassroots and wider community support for a just and lasting peace.</p>			
<p><b>Specific Objective 1:</b> Positive relationships developed between Israeli and Palestinian program participants</p>		<p><b>Specific Objective 2:</b> Increased capacity in leadership and conflict transformation among Palestinian and Israeli youth leaders, key people, and sports and community organizations</p>	
<p><b>Activity 1:</b> Children and Youth Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Peace education sessions</li> <li>•Basketball trainings</li> <li>•Joint activities</li> <li>•All-Star teams</li> </ul>	<p><b>Activity 2:</b> Leadership Development Program</p>	<p><b>Activity 3:</b> Youth Social Entrepreneurs</p>	<p><b>Activity 4:</b> Sports Diplomats for Peace</p>

## Annex 2: Participatory Focus Group Tools

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### Overview

This toolkit is intended for use by facilitators who will conduct participatory focus group discussions (FGDs) as part of the May 2017 evaluation of the PeacePlayers International-Middle East (PPI-Middle East) program. Two distinct participatory FGD exercises are included in the toolkit; these should be delivered jointly. Detailed instructions on how to administer each FGD exercise is provided in this document, as well as information on the aim of the exercise and the evaluation question it is designed to measure. Below is a summary of each of the two FGD exercises, as well as guidance on the facilitator introduction.

### Tool 1: Line Game

**Key objective:** To gather feedback on PPI-Middle East peace education sessions, including major participant learnings and the most effective format for these sessions. This information will be used to strengthen peace education delivery. This tool measures the following evaluation question:

**What is the most effective strategy and format for delivering peace education to participants?**

**Activity Description:** To complete this exercise, the facilitator establishes a line by placing two large pieces of paper on the ground, one at the left end of the floor labeled “disagree very much,” and the other at the right end labeled “agree very much.” The facilitator then reads aloud a series of statements; after each one, participants move to the point on the line that best corresponded to their opinion on that statement. The closer participants move to the “agree very much” sign, the more strongly they agree with the statement; the closer they move to the “disagree very much” sign, the more strongly they disagree. The facilitator concludes the exercise by leading a debrief discussion with participants.

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### Tool 2: Timeline

**Key objective:** To gather information on whether and how PPI-Middle East engages parents of program participants. The information collected through this tool will be used to inform program activities, particularly a parent engagement strategy. The tool corresponds to the following evaluation question:

**What, if any, effect does PPI-Middle East have on parents of participants? What can the program do to better engage this group?**

**Activity Description:** The facilitator provides a pre-made timeline and list of “experiences” related to parent engagement in the PPI-Middle East program. Participants select those which they have personally experienced, and place them on the timeline in chronological order. The facilitator concludes the exercise by leading a debrief discussion with participants.

## Tool 1: Line Game

**Time Needed:** 15 - 20 minutes

**Materials:** Pre-labeled signs; tape (as needed)

**Preparation:** Tape pre-labeled signs on a wall; alternatively, place paper on the ground

### Methodology:

- Bring out two pieces of paper labeled “agree very much” and “disagree very much.” Place the “disagree” paper on the floor to the left of the “agree” paper, allowing significant space in between; the idea is to establish a line, with the two papers serving as the end points of that line.
- Explain to participants that you will read a series of statements, and they should move to the point along the line that best corresponds to their opinion on the statement read. The closer they move to the “agree very much” sign, the more strongly they agree; the closer they move to the “disagree very much” sign, the more strongly they disagree. Standing in the middle indicates a more “neutral” opinion.
- Begin the exercise by reading aloud 2-3 example warm-up statements, to make sure that the participants understand the exercise. Following the warm-up, the facilitator should read the rest of the statements aloud, pausing after each one to allow time for participants to choose where to stand. Once participants have selected where to stand, the facilitator should ask a few of them to describe why they chose to stand in a particular area, and ask the follow-up questions listed below each statement. The facilitator should make sure to ask both those who express majority opinions, and those who demonstrate different views.

### Line Game Statements:

- Warm-up: Hummus tastes better than pizza
  - Warm-up: Barcelona is a better football team than Real Madrid
  - Warm-up: Math is the best subject in school
- 1) I wish we didn't have peace education and only played basketball
    - o Why do you not want/want to do peace education?
  - 2) I like it when we do peace education drills on the court at practice
    - o What do you like about this?; What is your favorite peace education drill?
  - 3) I like it when we do peace education at special retreats or workshops
    - o What do you like about this? ; Is this more fun or less fun than doing peace education at practice?
  - 4) Since joining PeacePlayers, I am better at solving conflicts or problems
    - o How did you get better?; Was there something at PeacePlayers besides peace education that helped you?
  - 5) My coach has helped me learn how to solve conflicts or problems
    - o What did you learn from your coach?; How did your coach teach you this?
  - 6) Sometimes when I have a conflict or problem, I use peace education to help solve it
    - o Can you give an example of when this happened?
  - 7) Learning about peace education makes me a better basketball player
  - 8) Learning about peace education makes me a better friend
  - 9) Learning about peace education makes me act better in school
  - 10) Learning about peace education makes me act better towards my parents and brothers/sisters
- After the last statement has been read aloud, the facilitator should debrief with participants by asking their opinions of the activity:
    - Was it difficult to decide where to stand?; Did you ever change your mind and want to move positions? If so, why?

## Tool 2: Timeline

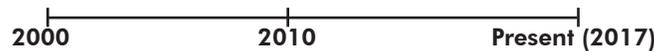
**Time Needed:** 15 - 20 minutes

**Materials:** Pre-prepared timeline paper; markers; tape; scissors; timeline list (1 per participant)

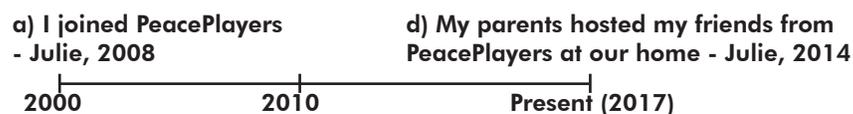
**Preparation:** Prepare “timelines” on flipchart paper. Draw a line across the sheet of paper; write “2000” on the left side of the timeline and “present day” on the right side. Also mark off “2010,” though this doesn’t need to be exactly in the middle. Most participants will be marking off events between 2010 and the present, so make sure to leave plenty of space for this. You will need one timeline paper for each data collection session you will conduct.

### Methodology:

- Bring out the prepared timeline paper and explain to participants that this is a timeline for the PPI-Middle East program.



- Distribute a “timeline list” to each participant:
  - Which of the following have you experienced?
    - 1) I joined PeacePlayers
    - 2) I talked to my parents about friends I made in PeacePlayers
    - 3) My parents came to watch a PeacePlayers event
    - 4) My parents helped or contributed to a PeacePlayers event
    - 5) My parents came with me to visit my friends from PeacePlayers
    - 6) My parents hosted my friends from PeacePlayers at our home
    - 7) My parents became friends with parents of my PeacePlayers teammates
    - 8) I saw a difference in how my parents feel towards people of a different background
    - 9) I saw a difference in how my parents acted towards people of a different background
    - 10) Other
- Ask participants to individually read each statement and think about whether they have personally experienced it since joining the program. If so, ask them to indicate this by writing their name and the year on it, and placing it on the timeline. Participants should mark experiences in chronological order. For example, if they “talked to their parents about friends they made in PeacePlayers” before their “parents hosted friends from PeacePlayers at our home,” they should place “b” to the left of “c.”
- If participants had a related experience other than what is marked on the paper, tell them to mark j for “other” and write in the experience.
- The facilitator should have 1-2 personal examples in mind to mark on the timeline as needed.



- Allow 5-10 minutes for participants to mark the timeline. Once all participants are finished, spend 10-15 minutes debriefing the exercise by asking participants to describe in detail some of their experiences marked on the timeline, providing specific stories when possible. Once this is finished, conclude the exercise with the following questions:
  - Do you think that joining PeacePlayers has effected your parents in any way? Why or why not?
  - What do you think PeacePlayers can do to get parents more involved with the program? positions? If so, why?