Children and reconciliation in post conflict societies

Master’s Thesis in Peace and Development Work, 4FU41E

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Abstract

On a daily basis we hear or read about new atrocious and violent conflicts that are emerging in countless countries around the world. At the same time, some of the previous conflicts are winding down and leading to negotiations and peaceful resolutions. In either of the cases, peacebuilding initiatives are put into place to establish relationships between the divided population which is and/or was at war. There are countless reconciliation methods which are used to reconcile the adult population which is and/or was in conflict with each other. Nonetheless, how and which reconciliation approaches are used when it comes to reconciling the children that have been directly or indirectly affected by the conflict in their country is not discussed to the same extend.

Thus the objective of this study is to analyse the available literature in order to gain a greater understanding of the methods which children partake in in order to foster reconciliation in a post-conflict environment. In total, 18 cases which pertain to children and reconciliation were analysed in order to find patterns, gaps and commonalities in the texts through the textual content analysis method. Furthermore, the findings were analysed in accordance to Galtung’s 12 reconciliation approaches.

Based on the analysis, it became clear how limited and scarce the literature is on reporting on the ways in which children reconcile. Furthermore, all of the texts present children as innocent victims who are not to blame for what had occurred. Despite the fact that children were victims as well as perpetrators in the conflict. Additionally, there is a clear distinction in the methods which are used to reconcile child soldiers versus children that were not directly involved in the conflict. In other words, many of the findings can aid in branching out the research to explore further the differences between child soldiers and non-child soldiers, as well as the general perception of children as victims. In addition, the concept of childhood and when one is considered a child should be explored, especially in non-western cultures, where an individual is considered a child under the age of 18, yet in other cultures “children” under 18 are married, have their own children, are responsible for their parents and very much live “adult” lives.

Keywords: post-conflict, peacebuilding, reconciliation, children, child soldiers
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<tr>
<td>CCF</td>
<td>Christian Children’s Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>CVR</td>
<td>Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliacion (Peru’s TRC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECHO</td>
<td>European Community Humanitarian Aid &amp; Civil Protection</td>
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<td>F4P</td>
<td>Football for Peace</td>
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<tr>
<td>GCO</td>
<td>Global Children’s Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>IICRD</td>
<td>International Institute for Child Rights and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>LRA</td>
<td>Lord’s Resistance Army (Uganda)</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organization</td>
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<td>OFFS</td>
<td>Open Fun Football Schools</td>
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<td>RUF</td>
<td>Revolutionary United Front (Sierra Leone)</td>
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<tr>
<td>TRC</td>
<td>Truth and Reconciliation Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>UCDP</td>
<td>Uppsala Conflict Data Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>UEFA</td>
<td>Union of European Football Associations</td>
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<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees</td>
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<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund</td>
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1. Introduction

1.1 Research problem and relevance

Whenever we turn on the news, read the morning paper, or check out the current events online, we are bombarded with all the images from across the globe of the numerous, unresolved, as well as, additional violent conflicts that seem to develop overnight. Horrific images from various countries, all the way from Ukraine to Syria to South Sudan are accompanied by countless stories of human suffrage. According to Uppsala’s Conflict Data Program (UCDP), there were 27 countries which were in conflict in 2013 (Uppsala Conflict Data Program, 2013). In addition Ronal Fisher adds that most of the conflicts are intrastate and they often occur between the many ethnic, cultural, racial, and/or religious groups in society. Furthermore, the cost of these conflicts is massive when looking at the human and the economic loss, “especially when compared to the potential benefits of cooperative and peaceful relationships.” (Fisher, 2001: 25)

When countries emerge from conflict that does not mean that the hostility, hatred, destruction and suffering are over. There are many peacebuilding efforts which have to be established and carried out. According to Mohammed Abu-Nimer, in the past, peacebuilding focused only on the “pre-negotiation phase” and the “negotiation phase,” however, in the most recent history much more attention has been placed on the “post settlement phase”, which is more focused on the actual implementations of the agreements which were drawn as well as the peacebuilding processes (Abu-Nimer, 2001: ix). Peacebuilding consists of social, economic, political and security dimensions and according to Lisa Schirch those efforts include: “conflict transformation, restorative and transitional justice, legal and judicial systems, environmental protection, human rights, humanitarian assistance, early warning and response, civilian and military peacekeeping, economic, social and political development, education, activism and advocacy, research and evaluation, trauma healing, military intervention and conversion, governance and policymaking” (Schirch, 2004:12).

The Panel on the United Nations Peace Operations underlines the important role reconciliation plays in the peacebuilding process (Brahimi et al., 2001:3). In peacebuilding it is the “obstacles and ways of overcoming new political stalemates and innovative methods of transforming the conflicting parties relationship which become core themes” and more so the “ability to reconcile and reconstruct a new relationship” become vital (Abu-Nimer, 200: ix). Reconciliation is one of many peacebuilding approaches utilized in a post conflict situation;
nonetheless it plays an important role in the reconstruction and the peacebuilding efforts. According to John Paul Lederach, “reconciliation is not pursued by seeking innovative ways to disengage or minimize the conflicting groups affiliations, but instead is built on mechanisms that engage the sides of a conflict with each other as humans-in-relationship” (Lederach, 1997: 26). Reconciliation is the grouping of both the rational and emotional processes by which a person, population, community, and/or a state eventually agrees to build relationships grounded on cooperation, collaboration, concession, and moreover leads to the eventual encouragement of peace in their society (Maoz, 2004: 225-6). Reconciliation would eventually enable both victims and perpetrators to move on with their lives, while the society could establish a “civilized political dialogue and an adequate sharing power” (Barnes, Bloomfield and Huyse, 2003:19).

The hardships which conflicts carry leave a trace on everyone, especially the youngest members of a society. Children are also exposed and targeted by the destruction which the atrocities of conflict bring about: death, injury, torture, loss of loved ones, displacement, deprivation of basic needs and above all the loss of their childish innocence (Barnes, Bloomfield and Huyse, 2003). According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) report, in 2011 the persistent conflicts have led to more than 42 million forcibly displaced people worldwide; out of which, nearly 20 million are children under the age of 18 (UNHCR, 2012: 3). If taking into consideration all the children exposed and traumatized by wars, that number would be much higher; as the 2013 UN Secretary General’s report states that in 2012, the 22 countries which were involved in an armed conflict, have all engaged in violations against children (UN, 2013). The entire population is effected, yet children are mostly seen as playing the role of innocent bystander, while their participation and input in the peacebuilding process is overlooked (Schnabel and Tabyshalieva, 2013).

Literature that mentions children, or is dedicated specifically towards children in conflict affected regions, only sees them as victims. They see the children’s psychosocial, cognitive and physical health as damaged and fragile; while at the same time being socio-economically deprived, losing out on education, being separated from their families, losing their innocence and having the traumas that they’ve experience carry over to the rest of their lives (Barnes, Bloomfield and Huyse, 2003; Kletter et al., 2013; Lloyd and Penn, 2010; Staub, 2013). Nonetheless, it is estimated that more than 250,000 children (under the age of 18) are directly involved in the conflict as child soldiers (Szijj, 2010) and many more which are affected by it, in one way or another. So they are definitely traumatized by the conflict in one way or
another, yet their participation in the peacebuilding and reconciliation process is overshadowed by them being viewed as innocent bystanders whose psychological state needs to be assessed and understood, as mentioned in the above literature.

However, there has been a gradual shift in recent history; more literature than before is dedicated towards reconciliation practices which are geared towards reconciling children, for they are seen as the future of a country. According to Saliba Sarsar, “if reconciliation and peace are to take root deeply in culture and daily lives, the children must plant their seeds” (Sarsar, 2002: 319). As mentioned above, there is literature which focuses on the mental, social and emotional state of children that have been affected or involved in the conflict directly. However, this research will not focus nor go into different psychological traumas and symptoms which are associated with children that have been exposed to the conflict in their country. Rather it will present the methods which are based on general description of the reconciliation approaches children are participating in. Some of the peacebuilding efforts aimed at reconciling children in post conflict are; Truth and Reconciliation Commissions specifically focusing on children (Cook and Heykoop, 2010; Pigou, 2010; Sowa, 2010), reconciliation through education (Paulson, 2010; Hamber, Magill and Smith, 2009), dance and play therapy (Harris, 2010; Ognjenovic, Savic and Skorc, 2003; Barath, 2003: ); sports initiatives (Gasser and Leivinsen, 2004; Sugden, 2006) and through traditional rituals (Boothby, Crawford and Halperin, 2006; Stark, 2006; Wessells, 2005).

It should be pointed out that the reconciliation methods, which are mentioned above only focus on one particular way children reconcile. There is no study which encompasses the various methods of child reconciliation. Thus this study will be the one that analyzes the various methods of reconciliation which children partake in.

Children are exposed to the traumas of war and conflict just as much as adults. As children, they are involuntarily exposed to the beliefs and values that their families and communities share. And in some cases children are even abducted and forced to partake in the conflict. Over time, the opinions people around them express and hold of the group they are in conflict with reflects what the children themselves believe to be true. Although children might have been pushed into a position involuntary, they too are conflict actors, and as such they also need to be reconciled. Reconciliation efforts which are made now and the methods which are carried out today need to be compared and looked at in order to know which methods are implemented more than others and what works and what does not work. UN’s World Fit for Children initiative and the Convention of the Rights of Children are implemented into
international law, and as such there are steps that are taken which address children´s needs and rights, yet a more participatory initiative in the peacebuilding processes is not that greatly addressed; children have also unique skills and experiences with which they can contribute to the reconciliation and the peacebuilding process (Sugden, 2006). By doing an inventory of what has been written, implemented and carried out in terms of reconciliation practices, it might be possible for future research to build on the findings of this study to design a general plan to give children a bigger space in peacebuilding and reconciliation processes in the future, as well as point other research towards the gaps which emerge from this study.

NGO’s, governments, and other internal and external actors might be able to see the reconciliation trends which children in various parts of the world partake in, learn from and even incorporate those experiences when establishing new programs or projects which are geared towards reconciling children.

1.2 Research objective and research questions

The objective of this research is to analyze current child reconciliation practices in post-conflict peacebuilding around the world. The point which has not yet been taken up is the grouping and comparing of all these various methods that are used in aiding children in the reconciliation and peacebuilding efforts. Thus, instead of adding to the numerous case studies which focus on one particular manner in which children reconcile, and taking into account that there is no such comprehensive overview and analysis of the existing knowledge, that is what this study aims to do. The research questions that will be guiding this study are as follows:

- Which methods are implemented in children´s post conflict reconciliation and what is their impact?
- Which groups of children are targeted for reconciliation?
- Who implements child reconciliation programs?

1.3 Theoretical and analytical framework

Reconciliation is a term and/or concept which has been used by various scholars, yet there are numerous opinions on what exactly the concept means and there is no one definition that everyone can agree upon.

Thus the way in which this study has chosen to analyze reconciliation, and the ways in which children in post conflict situations are involved in the peace building processes, has been to look closer at the reconciliation approaches which were established by one of the founding
fathers of peace and conflict studies, Johan Galtung. According to Galtung, reconciliation equals closure plus healing. He defines it as “closure in the sense of not reopening hostilities, healing in the sense of being rehabilitated” (Galtung, 2001: 4). Galtung identifies twelve reconciliation approaches which aid in the reconciliation of conflict affected societies; in addition, he adds that only when these approaches are combined can reconciliation be attained (Galtung 2001:4). The analytical framework adopts Galtung’s 12 step approaches through which the literature on children’s reconciliation is evaluated and compared. The approaches are used in order to facilitate more understanding towards which approaches are practiced by children.

1.4 Methodology and Method

This study aims to analyze the current literature on what has been written about child reconciliation in post conflict societies, especially the reconciliation methods which are used on children. Thus the data will be looked upon qualitatively. Textual analysis is implemented as the focus is on “interpreting the content and the meaning of already existing text” (Markula and Silk, 2011:112). Hence, the goal of the research is to construe that which is being expressed in the text in regards to children and reconciliation processes.

As textual analysis is an umbrella term, which includes many different analytical undertakings, this study is also relying on insight from content analysis in order to make better sense of the data that is found in the texts.

There are an array of sources which are evaluated, the goal is to rely mostly on already proven and published scientific research which was carried out by private and/or public institution, yet non-scientific sources (such as newspapers and unpublished and/or working papers) are also looked at for more insight or to aid in the search for the appropriate literature. There are 18 texts which are analyzed in detail that pertain to this particular study; nonetheless, there were dozen other texts which were looked upon for insight. The data is collected mostly via the electronic database as well as through books, reports and journals.

1.5 Limitations and delimitations

As this is a desk study, the texts serve as the primary data in the research. Thus the limitation lies in what has been written and what information is available since that is all secondary material. Furthermore, the available data may need to be looked at with caution keeping in mind the various positions and agendas the organizations and/or institutions hold even if the texts derive from published scientific research, reports, journals and books. It also has to be
kept in mind that most of the sources give a subjective evaluation of the organization, methods and approaches which the researchers themselves were involved or affiliated with. Despite the limitation of external evaluators and researchers it has been important to see which methods are used and how they are used, as the literature that this study relies on is scarce and limited in its availability. A further limitation is that this study does not compare or take adult reconciliation practices into account, nor the psychological traumas which children are exposed to which might have broadened the extent of the research. Moreover, all texts which relate to the topic could not be analyzed due to language constrains.

The focus will be delimited to the methods used to reconcile children in conflict affected areas. Furthermore, as the focus is on mostly scientifically proven research, journals, books and reports, much of the non-published research is left out. Underlying issues may arise which are related to the topic, nonetheless such issues will be addressed only if they contribute and/or add to further understanding of the overall research topic.

1.6 Disposition

The structure of the thesis is as follows: The introduction provides a brief insight into the structure of the thesis which is followed by a more detailed description of the conceptual and analytical research frame in chapter two. The second chapter introduces the concept, important themes and methods of reconciliation, as well as, Galtung’s 12 approaches to reconciliation. The first part of chapter three gives an overview of the methodology selected for this study, whereas the later part will present the method chosen, followed by the data collection criteria and the reliability and validity of the sources. In chapter four the findings are presented in accordance to the research questions. The following chapter, chapter five, presents the analysis of the findings which show the patterns which are reflected in the texts and child reconciliation in accordance to Galtung’s reconciliation approaches. Lastly, the conclusion chapter sums up the main results of the thesis, the research gaps which emerged and explores suggestions for future research.
2. Conceptual and analytical research frame

The chapter starts of by introducing the concept of reconciliations and the confusion surrounding its meaning. This is followed by the important themes and methods of reconciliation. Furthermore, a brief summary of the intergroup contact theory is given. Lastly, an introduction and explanation of Johan Galtung’s 12 approaches to reconciliation is presented.

2.1 The concept of Reconciliation

There is much debate and discussion about the term reconciliation and its practice in countries affected by violent conflict. The literature points to the various meanings of the concept, yet no one can agree on a common definition. As for example, Daniel Bar-Tal and Gemma H. Bennink who study the “nature of reconciliation”, clarify it in their work as the “outcome of peacemaking” and also the “process through which stable peace is build” (Bar-Tal and Gemma, 2004:12). As more or the less the founding father of reconciliation, John Paul Lederach suggests that “relationship” is the foundation of “both the conflict and its long-term solution,” Lederach points out that “relationships are the centerpiece, the beginning and the ending point for understanding the system” and “that is the essential contribution brought by reconciliation as a paradigm” (Lederach, 1997:26). David Bloomfield on the other hand writes that different conceptual notions of reconciliation aid as well as work together in the building of relationship and in the peacebuilding process. “Thus reconciliation is not one instrument amongst several, including justice, healing, truth-telling and reparations; rather, it is the overall relationship-oriented process within which these diverse instruments are the constitutive parts” (Bloomfield, 2006:11).

While reading the various texts on reconciliation, it has become apparent that almost all of the scholars point to the apparent confusion of the term and to the lack of common understanding of its definition and its use (just to name a few: Lederach, 1997, Kriesberg, 2001, Galtung, 2001, Maoz, 2004, Bar-Siman-Tov, 2004, Bloomfield, 2006). Yaacov Bar-Siman-Tov expresses this best by reiterating that reconciliation has “different connotations, and there is no consensus as to its role in stabilizing peace and the required conditions for it” (Bar-Siman-Tov, 2004:5).

Nonetheless, David Bloomfield sees the lack of agreement in a positive light, in that “multiplicity means that we can generate distinct and multidimensional versions of practice
that better suit specific contexts, without the need to produce definitive, universal models” (Bloomfield, 2006:5).

Figure 1 shows this multidimensionality of reconciliation and the core elements it encompasses. As Lederach explains,

“Truth is the longing for acknowledgement of wrong and the validation of painful loss and experiences, but it is coupled with Mercy, which articulates the need for acceptance, letting go, and a new beginning. Justice represents the search for individual and group rights, for social restructuring, but it is linked with Peace, which underscores the need for interdependence, well-being, and security” (Lederach, 1997: 29).

Figure 1. “The Place Called Reconciliation” (Lederach, 1997:30)

The above mentioned components are at the heart of reconciliation in countries exposed to conflict and the ones that are in the post-conflict stages. Moreover, the four basic elements of Truth, Mercy, Justice and Peace encompass other sub elements (figure 1), thus it becomes much clearer that the term “reconciliation” has many strands.

David Bloomfield has recognized this dilemma surrounding reconciliation and attempted to shed light on eight important themes of reconciliation: reconciliation as a process and an outcome, reconciliation as relationship building, reconciliation and politics, reconciliation as an umbrella, reconciliation and coexistence, reconciliation as justice, reconciliation as forgiveness and reconciliation from the top-down and from the bottom-up (Bloomfield, 2006: 3-31). These themes are described hereafter in a bit more detail.

**Reconciliation as a process and as an outcome** deals with the process of change in the values and beliefs people in a conflict environment have of each other; outcome on the other hand builds on a peaceful and harmonious relationship of trust and acceptance (Bar-Tal and
Bennink, 2004:15, Sluzki 2003:23). Reconciliation as relationship building “engages the sides of a conflict with each other as humans in relationships” (Laderach, 1997:26), Kriesberg also builds on the same idea about reconciliation referring to the rebuilding or the reestablishing of a relationship which was at one point in time damaged by conflict (Kriesbeg, 2001:48). Reconciliation and politics identifies that if not enough emphasis is placed on the violent roots of the past, even the greatest societies will eventually fall since the wrongs which were committed will not disappear or be forgotten unless they are dealt with early on (Bloomfield, 2006: 9). Reconciliation as an umbrella emphasizes the various reconciliation tools not as competing parts but as additional mechanisms which should be used in the building of relationships (Bloomfield, 2006:11). Reconciliation and coexistence is seen as the less loaded term, thus it is much easier to achieve and have conflicting parties live side by side than reconcile; thus coexistence is seen as a process that eventually leads to reconciliation (Bloomfield, 2006:13-16, Kriesberg, 2001:60-61). Reconciliation as justice is about order and morality; and the phrase that “there cannot be peace without justice” is fundamentally true (Montville, 2001: 129), and reconciliation cannot be achieved unless the conflicting parties feel that they have attained a justified outcome (Estrada-Hollenbeck, 2001: 65). The justice and reconciliation concept share a mutually dependent relationship which they both benefit from (Bloomfield, 2006: 17). Reconciliation as forgiveness is in the hands of the victim and as such the victim chooses whether or not to offer his/her forgiveness to the wrong doer. And it is through reconciliation that sort of transaction becomes a possibility (Lederach, 1997, Galtung, 2001). Nonetheless, the forgiveness aspect has been scrutinized and questioned by numerous scholars as an overarching idea (Auberbach, 2004; Gopin, 2001; Ross, 2004; Bloomfield, 2006). Reconciliation from the top-down and from the bottom-up refers to top-down as political while bottom-up is more about the grassroots level. Although there is a separation of these two concepts, their interaction is vital in both the vertical and horizontal achievement of reconciliation amongst the conflicting groups in society (Bloomfield, 2006: 25-28).

This was an attempt to briefly summarize the various reconciliation themes, and more often than not, they overlap and/or work together simultaneously to create the desired outcome (Bloomfield, 2006). It is clear that reconciliation is not one thing but rather a combination of various other instruments and concepts. Nonetheless, even if there is no all-encompassing consensus on the terminology, definition and usage of reconciliation (Bloomfield, 2006), ultimately what all of these concepts have in common is the very basic understanding of
reconciliation which “involves changing the relationship between parties both instrumentally and emotionally in a more positive direction so that each can more easily envision a joint future” (Ross, 2004:200). So all of the above mentioned reconciliation themes have human relationships at the core upon which everything else is built on.

2.2 Reconciliation methods and approaches
There are a variety of methods and approaches which are carried out in order to enable reconciliation. According to Daniel Bar-Tal and Gemma Bennink these are either officially formal policies while others are informal in the sense that they are carried out voluntarily. Nonetheless, they “all serve as a mechanism to change society member’s motivations, goals, beliefs, attitudes, and emotions in the direction of reconciliation” (Bar-Tal and Bennink 2004:28). Bar-Tal and Bennink also describe the most widely used methods and approaches of reconciliation which will be discussed hereafter.

2.2.1 Apology
One needs to confront the past in order to reconcile, and through that release the negative feelings one has been holding on over time. When the guilty party offers an apology, the sorrow and the wrong doing of the past is recognized and addressed. It is the acknowledgment of the wrongs committed and a plea for forgiveness which allows the victim to heal and in the process their feelings towards the perpetrator may be changed. (Bar-Tal and Bennink, 2004: 28-29; Auberach, 2004; Cohen, 2004)

2.2.2 Truth and Reconciliation Commissions
The purpose of the commissions is to reveal and deal with the past atrocities and for instituting justice. By revealing the past injustice which was committed it allows the individual and/or the group in question to recover by having established newly mutual recollections. The TRC creates a record of what happened, grants amnesty, allows the victim to be heard and establishes reparation and rehabilitation practices. (Bar-Tal and Bennink, 2004:29-30; Schaffer, 2008; Merwe, 2001)

2.2.3 Public trials
Holding trials for individuals that have committed the worst crimes imaginable is seen as a method which facilitates in the reconciliation process. “In essence they enable catharsis, foster a sense that grievances have been addressed, and thus allow progress toward reconciliation by satisfying the basic needs of the victims” (Bar-Tal and Bennink 2004: 30).
2.2.4 Reparations payments

This is a method in which the individual and/or the group which recognized responsibility for the injustice committed offer a form of compensation to the victim/s. Nonetheless, compensation is also offered to the victim by the government. The offering assumes the perpetrator’s remorse and sense of wrong doing. Furthermore, if the offering is accepted by the victim it also suggests a willingness to forgive. And this mutual exchange is part of the reconciliation process. (Bar-Tal and Bennink, 2004:30; Estrada-Hollenbeck, 2001)

2.2.5 Writing a common history

This method involves the documenting and writing of a common history by all the groups that were involved or affected by the conflict. This allows for a closer look at the injustices which were committed by all sides. In order for this method to be successful, facts have to take precedence over myths and biases. The joint contribution and construction of the past events and the writing of a common history creates a collective memory, which is in line with reconciliation. (Bar-Tal and Bennink, 2004:31; Galtung, 2001)

2.2.6 Using education to promote a culture of peace

The school system is mostly used to facilitate in this type of reconciliation. And this is done by teaching courses about peaceful resolutions, reconciliation, conflict resolutions and similar subject which contribute to the students understanding, tolerance, acceptance and the advancement of reconciliation. Learning about the issues before they arise, or learning about them so that they are not repeated is essential. (Bar-Tal and Bennink, 2004-32; Abu-Nimer, 2001(b))

2.2.7 Using the mass media to promote a culture of peace

The media transmits all sorts of information, be it about rival groups, the peace agenda of a country, or a leaders visions for the future, it can also be used as a tool to promote reconciliation. Thus the media’s role in reconciliation is crucial, as the ways in which the information is framed and presented to the audience either helps or hinders in the construction of a reconciliatory mind set amongst the population. (Bar-Tal and Bennink, 2004:32, Cole et al., 2003)

2.2.8 Workshops

While the meetings of opposing groups are often secret and away from the public eye, it is crucial in the promotion of reconciliation that such meetings are publicized because that can
influence the public’s perception of their rival group. It shows that it is possible to discuss and negotiate with the other side, the idea that we are all the same is perpetuated in the end. (Bar-Tal and Bennink, 2004:32-33)

Since Bar-Tal and Bennink also mention various other approaches to reconciliation, most of which fall under the contact theory category, it is important to highlight both the theory and the activities as they are also notable components of the peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts.

2.3 Intergroup Contact Theory

Reconciliation efforts which are geared towards bringing individuals of opposing sides together in order to establish contact between the conflicting groups implement the intergroup contact theory. Gordon Allport established the “contact hypothesis” back in the 1950’s which over the years has evolved into a theory that is able to reach its full potential only “if contact involved equal status between the groups, common goals, no competition, and institutional support” (Crisp et al., 2008: 2; Maoz, 2000: 722). Moreover, according to Miles Hewstone and Al Ramiah when individuals that are in conflict are involved in intergroup contact they are less likely to be prejudice towards the outer group, more so than the individuals that do not establish such contact (Hewstone and Ramiah, 2013: 528). Thus contact between the groups in conflict is vital in eliminating the prejudice and being able to reconcile with the members of the opposing group.

The previous section included the methods used to establish reconciliation; Bar-Tal and Bennink also mention informal (voluntary) ways to foster reconciliation through activities that are based on contact theory. Those activities include joint projects which enable encounters between opposing groups; this in turn creates an opportunity for joint collaboration and even the establishment of peaceful relationships (Bar-Tal and Bennink, 2004:33-34; Daly and Sarkin, 2007). Furthermore, activities that encourage the rival members to visit each other’s communities enables both sides to have a better sense of each other’s backgrounds which can lead to change in attitude and the ways in which one has viewed others (Bar-Tal and Bennink, 2004:34; Sugden, 2006). Efforts where individuals are being exposed to the culture of the group that they were in conflict with can aid in reconciliation as well. This can be facilitated through the translation of books, films, TV programs, and through artistic means and expression where both sides are exposed and able to foster new knowledge and learn about the conflicting group’s cultural background (Bar-Tal
and Bennink, 2004:34, Cole et al., 2003). Thus activities which are geared towards fostering contact and understanding between both sides aid in the elimination of prejudice and may eventually lead to newly established relationships.

While the various methods as well as activities via contact aid in fostering reconciliation, both international and domestic actors, as well as institutions also undertake reconciliation projects as part of peacebuilding. They help by spreading the peaceful message and often take on the role of the mediator. Especially in cases of NGO’s which have direct contact with the civilians and provide help when needed, and as such they are seen as assets to the reconciliation efforts (Bar-Tal and Bennink, 2004:33; Bhadra, 2012).

The methods and activities which aid in promoting reconciliation involve different levels of the population in a society. According to Bar-Tal and Bennink there is no one perfect method and/or approach; rather it is the combination of the various methods which facilitate reconciliation. Many factors have to be taken into account, like the severity of a conflict, the historical, economic, and cultural dimensions that a society in conflict has undergone, that is why success cannot be guaranteed (Bar-Tal and Bennink, 2004:34-35).

2.4 Johan Galtung´s 12 approach analytical framework

According to Johan Galtung “reconciliation is a theme with deep psychological, sociological, theological, philosophical and profound human roots- and nobody really knows how to successfully achieve it” (Galtung, 2001:4). Nonetheless, Galtung, as the result of his experiences with reconciliation processes, presents 12 approaches which when working separately and/or together can help in the process of achieving reconciliation amongst groups in conflict. Since there is no literature nor a handbook which explains a variety of approaches which are specifically designed for children, Galtung´s approaches are used in order to facilitate more understanding towards which approaches children are exposed to and partake in.

2.4.1 The Exculpatory Nature-Structure-Culture Approach

In this approach, according to Galtung, it is important for the third party (mediator) that is involved and helping in the reconciliation process to adjust the perpetrator and the victim´s understanding of the root problem and underlying source of their conflict as that of the particulate society´s limitations. Once individuals realize and agree on what the underlying root causes of the conflict are than that they are able to reconcile. Galtung also reiterates that this process does not necessarily have to be done together with the other party; it might be a
good way to do it in one’s own group in order to better reflect on the situation. Once the individual has rid him/herself of the guilty and shameful feelings then both parties can be brought together for joint peacebuilding efforts. (Galtung, 2001:5-6)

2.4.2 The reparation/restitution approach
Galtung describes this process as “X has harmed Y. X is conscious of his guilt, Y is conscious of the trauma. X comes to Y and offers reparation or restitution: ‘I’ll undo the harm done by undoing the damage” (Galtung, 2001:6). This approach is very sensitive and should be presented very carefully, according to Galtung, especially in situations when the trauma is so deeply rooted. In such cases the gesture of reparation and/or restitution can bring about even more violence due to the insensitivity of the perpetrator of the trauma that the victim experienced. (Galtung, 2001:6-7)

2.4.3 The apology/forgiveness approach
Galtung explains that when a sincere apology is uttered it can bring with it a spiritual transformation, for both the person that is apologizing and the person that has apologized. A new chapter can begin with a clean slate. However, just because an apology has been expressed that does not mean that it brings about forgiveness. Hence forgiveness is related to the strain of guilt. This concept is very spiritual and as well as psychological. (Galtung, 2001:7-8)

2.4.4 The theological/penitence approach
Galtung links this approach to the Western world’s connotation to Christianity, while other cultures link it to other religions. Thus, “this approach consists of a well-described, well-prescribed chain: submission-confession- penitence-absolution; to and from God” (Galtung, 2001:8). This approach is only relevant for those that are believers. In this approach it is the “priest” (or any other third party) that comes in to pave the way for reconciliation between people who are/were at conflict, or at least builds gradual dialogue with each party separately. Galtung concludes this approach by stating that it is an incomplete approach all by itself and needs to be expended or include other approaches. (Galtung, 2001:8-9)

2.4.5 The juridical/punishment approach
According to Galtung this approach is the “secular” opposite to the theological/penitence approach as God is replaced by the State. This process is as follows “submission-confession-punishment-readmission (to society)” (Galtung, 2001:10). Galtung mentions such examples
as the International Tribunal and/or the Truth and Reconciliation processes in which victims are able to have their voices heard and the guilty are punished. Above all, the task is not finished by having served time, but one must move on to other approaches which will bring a person closer to reconciliation. Galtung argues that it is important to expand this approach by adding other aspects to it: such as restitution and apology and above all genuine inner change. (Galtung, 2001:9-10)

2.4.6 The codependent origination/karma approach
In this approach, Galtung emphasizes that whether a person acts violently, or not, is determined not only by one’s own karma but also by the collective karma of the group and/or community. Thus all the responsibility is not held by one person but it is rather shared. And the only way to bring about improvement and change is through dialogue. First, it is vital to have inner dialogue with oneself (e.g. meditation) which is followed by outer dialogue with others (e.g. mediation). The third party (mediator) that is involved in the process can aid in fostering dialogue, identifying the conflicts and motivating and encouraging the individual and/or groups in conflict to embark on joint creative activities. Galtung believes that this approach is above all other approaches because of its holisms, its neutrality and above all its emphasis to dialogue. (Galtung, 2001:10-11)

2.4.7 The historical/Truth Commission approach
In this approach, Galtung argues that it is of high importance to speak in detail about what has occurred and to have as many people as possible be involved in that process via truth commission, local communities and/or via NGO’s, in order to create a mutual understanding of what has occurred and thus further aid in the reconciliation process. The key is to have as many dialogues as possible and have as many pages as possible filled with people’s experiences of the violent traumas, on reconstruction and reconciliation and on their vision for the future. It is the people themselves that create the truth as well as a collective history which in turn should, can and will be accessed and referred to by future generations. (Galtung, 2001:12-13)

2.4.8 The theatrical/reliving approach
This is a holistic approach by which an individual or a group reenacts an experience, and uses it as an outlet for the emotions one is feeling. The process before the performance, such as the writing phase and/or the period after the performance can also be a valuable tool in the healing process. The overall idea is to come to a mutual understanding on an emotional and
expressive level instead of a descriptive level. An alternative future may be developed and reenacted by other individuals, not necessarily the victim. Regardless of who performs it, the main objective is for the subjective experiences to be relived and expressed through reenactment. (Galtung, 2001:13-14)

2.4.9 The joint sorrow/healing approach
In this approach, Galtung explains joint sorrow as a process in which all the countries which were involved in the war should participate. Nonetheless, he does also mention that this can and should also occur between civilians as well as veterans, in small towns and villages. “Togetherness” is at the core of this approach. The idea is to go through the sorrow and healing process together. It might not be possible directly after a war but after some years if the opportunity presents itself it should be taken up and as many people as possible should be encouraged to be part of it. (Galtung, 2001:14-15)

2.4.10 The joint reconstruction approach
This approach, just like the previous one is about working together. The ideal would be to have the civilians as well as the soldiers come together and participate in reconstruction of their village, community and/or country. Even though one is faced with seeing the perpetrator or the victim, the aim is to one day be able to get to the stage which gradually builds on positive moral and on accomplishing something positive by working together. Most importantly, while working together “shoulder to shoulder and mind to mind” they are able to feel a joint sorrow, understand that their fate (karma) is the same and that they eventually will be able to come to a common truth. (Galtung, 2001:15-16)

2.4.11 The joint conflict resolution approach
Galtung writes that the main problem with joint conflict resolution is that it is a top-heavy approach. Furthermore, decisions are usually made in secrecy by politicians, ambassadors, military and elites, while people on whose behave they are assumed to be negotiating for are excluded in the process. Galtung proposes that more participation from everyone in a society is necessary in order to foster a joint conflict resolution mindset, so that citizens do not only rely on the decisions someone else has made on their behalf but that they are encouraged to influence and have a say in those decisions as well. (Galtung 2001: 17-18)
2.4.12 The ho´s ponopono approach

Galtung explains that this approach is practiced in the Hawaiian culture and it consists of “reconstruction, reconciliation and resolution” (Galtung, 2001: 18). Nonetheless, this is a common approach which is used in other traditional and as well as distinguished societies which are run by elders, chiefs, healers and other influential figures in the community. Their role is to bring the effected parties and their kinfolks together to go through four phases: “facts, sharing responsibility, joint reconciliation, and closure” (Galtung, 2001: 18). Such a traditional culture is able to include all those parts that Western cultures keep separate.

(Galtung, 2001:18-19)

Galtung emphasizes that none of these approaches can stand alone; there is usually a combination of approaches that are working together at any given time, or the approaches are building on one another to create the ultimate “goal” of reconciliation (Galtung, 2001:4). There are some approaches which Galtung mentions that are based on contact and togetherness such as for example the joint reconstruction, joint conflict resolution and joint sorrow/healing approaches. As these approaches are geared towards achieving reconciliation through joint efforts, they too are reflected in the contact theory. Thus the intergroup contact theory can be seen as an important notion which is used in peacebuilding as well as reconciliation efforts.

2.5 The use of Galtung´s approaches in the study

Johan Galtung introduced the 12 above mentioned approaches in an article. In this study these approaches have been proclaimed as an analytical tool in order to find out if the approaches children use fit into the categories of Galtung´s themes, as those themes are geared towards adults and there is no mention of children. Furthermore, the approaches are used in better guiding the understanding of the underlying thinking of the methods used on children. Since there are no such all-inclusive, nor are there a variety of approaches which are geared towards and emphasize children, Galtung´s approaches will aid in the comparison of the reconciliation methods which are used by children in various conflict affected countries. Furthermore, it will also aid in the categorization of the approaches which children are exposed to as they are all classified differently.
3. Methodological Framework

The first part of this chapter gives an overview of the methodology selected for this study. The next part introduces and explains the method chosen and its implementation in the research. Lastly, the data collection criteria as well as the reliability and validity of the research is presented.

3.1 Methodology

This study aims to analyze the current literature on what has been written about child reconciliation in post conflict, as well as comparing the methods used, the target group, the impact and the actors involved, through the examining of appropriate texts which focus on the topic at hand. The data is looked upon qualitatively as it is the best methodology suited in exploring the information that is available in order to better understand “the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to social or human problems” (Creswell, 2009:4).

Since the focus is on analyzing texts of the existing literature, qualitative textual analysis is the methodology which is implemented. As Alan McKee explains, “textual analysis is a way for researchers to gather information about how other human beings make sense of the world” (McKee, 2003:2). And in this case, that would be the approaches which are implemented to enable children to reconcile. And to get a better understanding of which methods are used in order for children to overcome the violent past and reconcile. McKee also describes this methodological approach as a “data gathering process” especially for this study as it aims to gather data on children through the available texts, in order to get an overall picture of what approaches have been implemented, by whom and for whom (McKee, 2003:2).

“Textual analysis differs from the other ways of practicing research because the researchers do not actually assemble empirical text material themselves” (Markula and Silk, 2011:112). As mention above, all of the data that is collected is text based which is written by other researchers and will be the primary data in the study. Pirkko Markula and Michael Silk point out that in a textual analysis the focus is on “interpreting the content and the meaning of already existing text” (Markula and Silk, 2011:112). Hence, the goal of the research is to “interpret the content”, more so that which is being expressed in the texts in regards to reconciliation processes which children partake in. On the other hand the “meaning” which Markuela and Silk refer to helps in identifying what is intended and/or actually indicated in the texts. Furthermore, textual analysis can provide a deeper understanding of a text, as it
goes in great detail to deconstruct that which is written and as such it does not just rapidly and/or briefly go over the surface of what has been written in the text (Lockyer, 2008: 865-867).

In order to take a more specific approach to the above mentioned qualitative textual methodology, this study is also relying on insights from content analysis in order to structure the data better as well as make better sense of the data that is found in the texts.

3.2 Content analysis

Content analysis, according to Ole Holst, is “any technique for making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying special characteristics of messages” (Holst, 1968:608). In this particular study content analysis asks the texts questions, as it would in an interview setting, which are geared towards better describing and understanding of the texts. Thus, this will be done in order to identify Holst’s above mentioned “message characteristics”, which in this study pertains to child reconciliation in post conflict. In addition, it will further explore these messages through the interpretation of texts.

According to Klaus Krippendorff, when starting off with a content analysis one either scans the available text for possible research questions or the research questions are used to guide in the search for the appropriate texts, or both (Krippendorff, 2010: 234-239). The content analysis for this research started off by analyzing the scientific research available, out of which questions about the methods, impact, target group and the authors children in post conflict societies are exposed to in the attempt to foster reconciliation. This has in turn led to the search of more specific texts that are able to answer the research questions. So in essence both the approaches which Krippendorff mentioned were implemented in guiding the research questions as well as in the search of appropriate texts.

Krippendorff refers to the description of text as the most likely starting point in content analysis. He mentions three descriptions of text: “selected word counts, categorizations by common dictionaries or thesauri, and recording or scaling by human coders” (Krippendorff, 2010:234-239). The most common form of description of text is through codes. Furthermore, there are many ways to uses codes, such as by, “words, propositions, paragraphs, news items, or whole publications of printed matter; scenes, actors, episodes, or whole movies in the visual domain; or utterances, turns taken, themes discussed, or decisions made in conversations” (Krippendorff, 2010:234-239). The coding that is implemented in this research is to look for themes in the texts, in particular the once that focus on the target
group, actors, impact and methods used in regards to children in violent and conflict affected societies which foster reconciliation. Naturally, most of the themes which were just discussed need to be present in a text in order for that text to be of value to the study. The texts were evaluated based on the themes that they provided, moreover in some of the cases other themes emerged based on Galtung´s 12 reconciliation approaches. The material that reflected Galtung´s approaches were grouped together. Furthermore, themes that did not reflect Galtung´s approaches were grouped in separate categories. This allowed for a variety as well as for more available texts to be examined.

In the examination phase it is important to also determine whether the manifest or the latent content will be analyzed. Heidi Julien refers to qualitative content analysis as “latent content analysis” which refers to the data that is analyzed below the surface (Julien, 2008: 121-123) as well as manifest content analysis, which refers to the literal meaning of the data. The research will focus on what is literally expressed in the texts as well as that which is implied in the texts. Thus both the latent and the manifest approaches will be implemented.

3.3. Abduction

As this research is about describing and explaining, the inference which is best suited is abduction. According to Norman Balikie, abduction consists of two parts “(a) describing these activities and meanings and (b) deriving categories and concepts that can form the basis of an understanding or an explanation of the problem at hand” (Blaikie, 2004: 2). Since this study focuses on interpreting the meaning of that which is expressed in the texts, it falls in line with this inference of “reasoning towards meaning” through which the study expends the “realm of plausible explanations” (Shank, 2008: 2-3).

According to Gary Shank, researchers that apply abductive reasoning use 6 modes of inference that “lead to hunches, omens, clues, metaphors, patterns, and explanations” (Shank, 2008: 2-3). The study takes all those modes into considerations, yet relies mostly on examining the patterns and explanations which are found in the texts as those are most important tools which guide as well as answer the research questions.

Krippendorff emphasizes that that which distinguishes methods used in observation to content analysis is abduction and that “inferences of this kind require some evidential support that should stem from the known, assumed, theorized, or experimentally confirmed stable correlations between the textuality as described and the set of answers to the research question under investigation” (Krippendorff, 2010: 234-239). As there is literature on child
reconciliation, although it is not as vast as adult literature that is available on the subject, and especially since the methods which children use are fragmented, this is the inference that is most suited for this research as it aids in bringing about more knowledge through the interpretation of the texts in accordance to the questions which are asked of the texts in order to answer the overall research questions.

3.4 Data collection
Dozens of articles were read, evaluated and analyzed. A total of 18 articles were selected from that material, which includes individual case/field study research and evaluation research, as well as descriptions of programs and projects. Out of the 18 texts, 4 studies from the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre report were included as well. The time frame of the published texts which were analyzed ranges from 2001-2012. This is due to the limited availability of scientifically proved and published data, books and reports as well at the attempt to analyze as much of the recently published texts as possible. The literature on child reconciliation and the methods which are used is a topic which has recently been started to be researched and as such there is not as broad an array of information which is available to be explored. Furthermore, some of the texts which focused on child soldiers were excluded due to the overwhelming realization that they all focused on the same method, mostly on restoration as opposed to reconciliation. As this research focuses on reconciliation, restoration methods were seen as less important as that is not the aim of the study. The articles were mostly collected via the electronic database, as well as through books, journals, articles and published reports.

3.5 Reliability and validity of the sources
Since this is a desk study, all the data that has been collected is text based. An array of sources were evaluated, nonetheless, the study relied on published scientific research, reports, journals, articles and books, yet nonscientific sources (such as newspapers and unpublished and/or working papers) were also taken into consideration for more insight or to aid in the search for the appropriate literature. The articles vary from UNICEF to NGO texts, as well as individual project and program field study research. Different categories of texts, such as evaluations, pure academic studies, internal assessment or reporting on methods, approaches, organization, projects and programs were looked upon. Thus, one needs to be mindful of the various positions, agendas and purposes the individuals, organizations and/or institutions hold, even if most of the reports stem from scientifically published research, most of the texts
were shown to provide a more subjective rather than objective purpose and view of their activity, method, research, program or project. This goes back to the previously discussed paragraph of the limited availability of the data on this topic made it so that this research relied and used those subjective texts. Nonetheless, the combination of the reports which were produced for an institution such as UNICEF, or NGO’s as well as scientific research allows for a greater scope, meaning and variety of texts to be analyzed, as well as show the limitations in the research that is available on child reconciliation.
4. Findings

The finding’s chapter consists of 18 examined texts which are specifically dealing with the various methods children in post-conflict are exposed to and use in order to reconcile. This takes into account child soldiers as the ones directly affiliated with the conflict and children that were indirectly affiliated but still experienced the conflict. The main questions of methods used and how they are used is asked of each text, as well as the target group, impact and the actors involved in implementing the methods, reporting and/or conducting the study. Nonetheless, the chapter will start off with an overview of the geographical areas which emerged from the examined texts.

4.1 Geographic area

In total 12 countries emerged from the 18 texts which were examined. The countries include the regions of Asia, South America, North America, Africa and Europe and they are the following: Liberia, Sierra Leone, Mozambique, Uganda, Angola, Canada, Colombia, India, Peru, Sri Lanka, Palestine/Israel and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Half of the texts focus on the countries in Africa: Sierra Leone, Liberia, Mozambique, Uganda and Angola. There are 4 studies which focus on Sierra Leone, 3 on Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2 on Israel/Palestine, 2 on Angola, and 1 study on each of the other 7 remaining countries. Some of the studies place the emphasis on child reconciliation in specific regions or cities; such as Mostar in Bosnia and Hercegovina (Hjort, 2006), Kailahun in Sierra Leone (Harris, 2010) and Gujarat in India (Bhadra, 2012). Other studies on the other hand focus on the entire country, as is evident in the case of Liberia (Sowa, 2010), Sierra Leone (Cook and Heykoop, 2010) and Peru (Paulson, 2010). In the case which focused on Colombia’s child soldiers, the reconciliation process was conducted in Canada (Marchand and Serna, 2011).

4.2 Target group

The definition of the target group when referred to as “children” differs in the texts. In some of the texts children, youth and young adults are clumped together under one study. This is the case of Mostar’s Koraci Nade (Steps of Hope) study which focuses on children and youth ages 13-24 (Hjort, 2006), the Sierra Leone female cleansing study which includes girls and women ranging from the ages of 8-30 (Stark, 2006), Uganda’s Mato oput study which

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1 Appendix 1 and 2 show a table and summary of all the cases
involves 15-21 year olds (Acikrop, 2010) and the personal and communal expression study of children and adults in India (Bhadra, 2012).

There are also particular studies which focus only on children and their age is specified, such as in Bosnia and Herzegovina’s football schools study which children from the ages of 8-14 participate in (Gasser and Leivinsen, 2004), Israeli football project which includes 10-14 year olds (Sugden, 2006), Palestinian/Israeli series study of 4-6 year olds (Cole et al., 2003), Bosnia’s book making project aimed for 10-13 year old girls (Darvin, 2009) and the Mozambique study which monitored former child soldiers from the ages of 6-16 for 16 years (Boothby, Crawford and Halperin, 2006).

Yet, many of the remaining studies do not specify the age of the participants, and use the term children and/or school children, former combatants, child soldiers, youth, young adults, boys and girls interchangeable. This was the case in Angola’s western/traditional approach study (Monteiro and Wessels, 2001), Sri Lanka’s Butterfly Garden study, (Bush and Chase, 2002), Colombia’s former child soldiers study (Marchand and Serna, 2011), Sierra Leone’s child friendly TRC (Cook and Heykoop, 2010), Sierra Leone’s holistic approach (Wessells, 2005), Peru’s TRC national curriculum case (Paulson, 2010), Sierra Leone’s dance-movement therapy study(Harris, 2010) and Liberia’s children TRC study (Sowa, 2010).

The target group can also be divided into two categories. The first category is of the cases which focus on reconciling and/or bringing children together that are of a different ethnic and/or religious background. This would include the studies which focus on bridging gaps between Serbian, Croatian and Bosnian children in Bosnia (Gasser and Leivinsen, 2004; Hjort, 2006; Darvin, 2009), Arab and Jewish children in Israel/Palestine (Sugden, 2006; Cole et al., 2003), Tamil (Hindu and Christian) and Muslim children in Sri Lanka (Bush and Chase, 2002) and Hindu, Muslim and Christian children in India (Bhadra, 2012).

Whereas the second category is of cases where children reconcile with their families and community members, this is applicable to all the studies which focus on former child soldiers. The reconciliation amongst community members is also encouraged in a few of the above mentioned cases (Gasser and Leivinsen, 2004; Sugden, 2006; Bush and Chase, 2002; Bhadra, 2012). In most of the studies reconciliation amongst the children and their own and/or neighboring community is seen as an objective as well. Although children are the target group, the people in their close everyday environment are also included in the
reconciliation process. This includes their parents, teachers, coaches, trainers, mentors, healers, chiefs and other community members.

4.3 Number of children partaking in the program, project and/or study
The number of children that participate in a project, program and/or study varies widely in each study. This ranges from the case of Colombia where only 6 child soldiers participated (Marchand and Serna, 2011) to the soccer schools in Bosnia which over time had 20,000 children involved (Gasser and Levinsen, 2004). Thus most of the other studies lie somewhere in between the range of the above mentioned cases, although there are studies which do not mention the exact number of participants in a program, project and/or study. As in the case of Angola’s communal and psychological assistance program which aim was to aid 320,000 children, yet no concrete number on how many children were assisted was given (Monteiro and Wessels, 2001) and Peru’s educational TRC report which was distributed to 2,600 schools, although the number of children it was distributed to was omitted (Paulson, 2010) just like in the India (Bhadra, 2012) and the Sierra Leone cases where the number of participants was not mentioned at all (Wessells, 2005).

4.4 Length of the program, project and/or study
The length of the program or project varies as well. Some are held once a year during a 5-7 day long summer event, like the Israeli (Sugden, 2006) and Bosnian football project (Gasser and Levinsen, 2004), the Bosnian book writing camp (Darvin, 2009) or the Columbian child soldiers project where they visit Canada during the summer to try and foster reconciliation (Marchand and Serna, 2011). Then there are those projects that are established after a conflict for children and adults that live in camps for months at a time, like in the case of India (Bhadra, 2012). Other project are held on a regular basis, after school or once a week, year round like Sri Lanka’s Buterfly Garden program or Bosnia’s Koraci Nade (Steps of Hope) program (Bush and Chase, 2002; Hjort, 2006). The children’s TRC, the involvement of children in the development of child friendly TRC’s reports and having it part of the curriculum is a process which takes years (Cook and Heykoop, 2010; Sowa, 2010, Paulson, 2010). Then there are those cases which do not necessarily describe the length of a program or project, such as in most of the child soldier cases, rather the length of the field work the research has conducted is given. Nonetheless, there is also a combination of describing how often or how long a project or program has been in place and also the length of the field work conducted. In the articles the fieldwork lasted anywhere from weeks, like in the case of
Frisén Hjort’s evaluation of the Koraci Nade (Steps of Hope) non-profit organization in Bosnia (Hjort, 2006), to 16 years as in the Mozambique progress and monitoring research of former child soldiers (Boothby, Crawford and Halperin, 2006). The other field studies fall somewhere in between the two mentioned cases, although most of them fall under the category of a couple of months, while some research took a couple of years.

4.5 Methods used

While reading the texts a number of different approaches which are used to foster reconciliation amongst children, families and communities are evident and they include: sports, education, creative play, individual/group activities, dance-movement therapy, the media, psychological trauma, child TRC’s, and traditional initiatives.

It is sports, in particular football that is used in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Israel for the purpose of reconciliation. In the Bosnian Open Fun Football Schools (OFFS) program, the Croatian, Serbian and Bosnian children come together for one week to play and interact with one another. Furthermore, two neighboring municipalities with different ethnic backgrounds have to work together to organize the event; thus parents, teachers, schools and community members are involved in the whole process (Gasser and Levinsen, 2004). This method is also implemented in the Israeli Football for Peace (F4P) project, where Israeli and Arab children come together to establish contact, communication and understanding. Peaceful coexistence between the children and between the members of the various communities was encouraged in such a way that half of the practice would be held in one’s own community and half in a neighboring community so that a better understanding of each other’s cultural environment could be established (Sugden, 2006). Thus it is said that this broadens “the utility of the program as a peace-building tool, applying it not only to promote contact between children, but also establishing sustainable contacts which foster relationships between the adult trainers, schools, clubs and municipalities that are involved in organizing the school, and potentially even spectators (presumably mostly parents) from antagonistic communities” (Gasser and Levinsen, 2004: 463).

While in the above mentioned cases, football is a main approach used, in other cases sports are also incorporated with other individual and/or group activities such as dancing, storytelling, writing, drawing, singing, theater, and many other creative means in order to aid in assisting the children’s psychological traumas and in fostering contact and relationships. As in the case of the Hindu, Muslim and Christian children that participate in Sri Lanka’s
Butterfly Garden program who’s positive interaction with one another through various activities is seen as a way to foster reconciliation amongst the religiously divided communities as well (Bush and Chase, 2002). Also in the case of India where the creative methods used by children eventually led to the establishment of Hindu and Muslim activity centers and community events so that everyone was welcome and encouraged to interact, learn and build peaceful relationships with one another (Bhadra, 2012). Furthermore reconciliation and conflict resolution was encouraged and part of the curriculum in 10 schools (4 Muslim, 4 Hindu and 2 Christian) (Bhadra, 2012). In Bosnian and Herzegovina’s Koraci Nade (Steps of Hope) organization which promotes reconciliation and peace amongst girls of different ethnic groups (Bosnjak-Muslim, Croatian, Serbian, or Bosnian (national and no ethnic affiliation), provides psychosocial (discussion groups) as well as various activities, such as: socializing, friendships, language courses, practical courses, social assistance, excursions and seminars for the girls so that they are given an opportunity to meet and develop contact and dialogue between each other (Hjort, 2006). Instead of focusing on many creative activities, the Sierra Leone study only focused on dance and movement therapy that implemented the kinesthetic empathy method on former boy soldiers in order to encourage self-worth, empathy, positive interaction and reconciliation within the child soldiers individually and collectively as well as with the members of their community (Harris, 2010). The boys performed a re-enactment of their experience for their community members, that in turn created empathy amongst the audience for the traumas the former child soldiers experienced, and through this gesture the boys renounced further violence and were welcomed back to their community by the local elders (Harris, 2010).

Education is also a means through which contact, understanding, tolerance, peace and reconciliation is encouraged. Peru’s Recordándonos (reminding ourselves) report which is based on the country’s TRC can be viewed as an educational guiding tool for Peruvian school children, it was initially going to be part of the national curriculum but only reached out to 2,600 school as it was eventually discontinued (Paulson, 2010). Nonetheless, the goal was not to expose children to all the atrocities which were committed but instead the report was used in a way so that the students would be exposed to the truth. That way the children would be able to understand and analyze the information for themselves so that reconciliation, recognition of the historic events and the creation of new values and a brighter future would be possible amongst the new generation (Paulson, 2010). Schools are not the only way through which education and knowledge can be spread as is evident in the Bosnian summer
camp program which encourages the Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian girls to come together to foster reconciliation through bookmaking. The children related the illustrations to the text by depicting their own thoughts about religion, segregation, ethnicity and writing was used to promote communication and healing amongst the girls of different ethnic and religious backgrounds in a non-threatening academic environment (Darvin, 2009). The media is also used as an educational tool in encouraging respect, tolerance and understanding even amongst the youngest members, which are caught in a conflict filled environment. The study of the educational television series amongst 4-6 year old Palestinian and Israeli children showed that by watching the program and being exposed to each other’s culture, its people and their everyday life, the children’s cultural knowledge of everyday life, social judgments, and identification of cultural signals had improved and helped create positive cultural and individual images (Cole et al. 2003).

The studies conducted in Sierra Leone and Liberia on the involvement of children in the TRC is yet another method that was used on children in order to create a historical record of what happened, offered them the ability to share their story, mourn their loss and have the opportunity to be reintegrated and reconciled with their family and community. The guiding principles of the TRC for children are as follows: for there to be particular attention given to children, children’s right should be promoted and protected, all children should be treated equally before the TRC, special attention should be given to girls (especially those that experienced sexual crimes), that the participation of children is voluntary, and all the information shared should be kept confidential and anonymous (Cook and Heykoop, 2010).

As Sierra Leone was the first country to involve children in the TRC, shortly after other countries had children partake in the TRC as well (Cook and Heykoop, 2010). In Liberia for example, “activities organized for children included awareness-raising workshops at county and district levels, statement-taking, and regional and institutional children’s hearings” and included “children systematically throughout the process, in Monrovia, the capital city, and in all fifteen counties” (Sowa, 2010: 199). The implementation of the child TLC in Sierra Leone encouraged the establishment of the child-friendly TRC report which was developed in cooperation with children and handed out to various schools and reached an estimated 40,000 students (Cook and Heykoop, 2010). As mentioned previously, the TRC was also used to foster knowledge, awareness and reconciliation amongst Peru’s school children.

In the studies conducted on child soldiers, most of the methods implemented in order to foster reintegration and reconciliation between their family and their community were based on
traditional values and beliefs. In Sierra Leone, former female child-soldiers which were sexually abused had to go through a cleansing ritual as they were deemed impure and their spiritual contamination which causes misfortune for the girls as well as the community at large (Stark, 2006). The idea of being impure and spiritually tainted is seen in other child soldier cases as well, in order to restore balance and peace within oneself and the community; the children must go through such a process. While counseling is the preferred method in the West to deal with such issues, in a small village in Angola the preferred method is for a healer to conduct spiritual cleansing in order for spiritual peace and harmony to be restored (Monteiro and Wessels, 2001). In the regions of Port Loko, Bombali, Tonkalili and Koinadugu in Sierra Leone a ceremony of dance, music and feast is held by the community, and is seen as measures of reintegration, as the sharing of food is seen as a gesture of reconciliation; this is naturally done after the cleansing ceremony has been complete (Stark, 2006). In northern Sierra Leone, another part of reconciliation was for the child soldiers to tell their story to the chief, and if the chief believed that the child was remorseful than an adult would be assigned as a mentor who would guide and train the child in a local job (Wessells, 2005). While in the above mentioned cases the child had to go through the traditional process in order to reintegrate, reconcile and create harmony amongst themselves and the community members, in northern Uganda’s Acholi region, on the other hand, in order to reestablish justice and reconciliation, confession, mediation and compensation would be presented by the offender’s clan (not the individual) in front of the entire community in order to assume responsibility for the crimes which were committed (Acirokop, 2010). Once this has been established, both clans perform the Mato oput traditional ritual (drink the bitter potion) as a sign of apology and forgiveness and this is seen as a sign of reconciliation which is based on the principles of restorative justice (Acirokop, 2010). In the texts that are analyzed, it is only through the above mentioned traditional rituals and ceremonies that child soldiers are able to have inner peace and reestablish harmony in the community, are welcomed back, seen as part of the community and able to live civilian lives.

An approach which emerged in one of the studies is based on the idea that even people that emigrate their country can aid in a country’s peacebuilding processes. Thus Colombia’s former child soldiers visited Canada in order to foster reconciliation with the people that had to leave the country due to the conflict. It is not only child soldiers that are seen as beneficiaries, they are also active participants who promote reconciliation through welcoming an open dialogue and sharing their life stories with the refugees; which the refugees benefit
from as well and reciprocate with the same kind of openness (Marchand and Serna, 2011). This case shows that reconciliation methods can be implemented and carried out even outside a country’s borders.

4.6 Impact of the program, project and/or study

Most of the texts start off with describing a particular project, program or study, the people that participated and the people that were involved, the number of events held and what has been done. Yet, in some of the cases, as in Bosnia and Herzegovina’s Open Fun Football Schools program, it does not reported on whether or not the project had the impact it promised, such as reconciling and building inter-group relationships among the children and adults that were involved in the program (Gasser and Levinsen, 2004). This was also the case in Sri Lanka’s Butterfly Garden program, in which case the study served more of a descriptive purpose of what the program offered, yet little emphasis was placed on the impact (Bush and Chase, 2002). These cases are seen more as descriptive than informative studies which do not really say much on whether or not the goals and aims that were set out were in fact achieved.

The other studies did emphasize the impact a particular program or project had, yet it was only on the accomplishments which were achieved immediately. The immediate impact was explained in the Israeli and Palestinian study which showed that the stereotypes based on ethnicity and culture which are exhibited in a divided society by children who are as young as four can actually be changed by such educational programs as Rechov Sumsum/Shara’a Simsim (Cole et al. 2003), the bookmaking project in Bosnia and Herzegovina which achieved what it set out to do and that is to bring together children of different backgrounds to interact, open up to one another, share their stories and use writing and storytelling as a form of expression and understanding (Darvin, 2009) or the numerous reports on child soldiers which emphasize that a relationships was reestablished between the children, their families, community members, elders, healers and mentors and that the children are able to live civilian lives due the traditional ritual that was performed (Stark, 2006; Wessells, 2005; Acirokop, 2010).

In the above mentioned cases, as well as the other remaining cases, the achievements, accomplishments and impact of a program or project are described in a mostly positive light. Although there are exceptions, as in Bosnia and Herzegovina’s Koraci Nade (Steps of Hope) organization, where Hjort’s study was able to bring forth that although the organization...
promotes reconciliation and cross-ethnic relationships, in reality such efforts are not being carried out by the participants of the program; as they mostly attend centers where they identify with the same ethnic group and cross-cultural interactions between members of other groups is not very common (Hjort, 2006). While mostly positive achievements of a particular method or approach are described, some cases even include the negative aspects such as the recordándonos report which was used in some schools in Peru, mostly in the areas that were affected by the violence, yet it was not made part of the national curriculum due to political hinders as the report also includes the atrocities and the wrong doings the State was involved in (Paulson, 2010). As well as some of the reports that emphasized traditional interventions in fostering reconciliation, yet also reiterated that it is not accomplished by all, as undergoing a traditional ritual or ceremony does not guarantee acceptance and some of the children are not even able to partake in the ritual; especially those children that are not able to provide financial compensation, have living no known relatives, or who have been born in captivity, thus there are many children that are excluded in the process (Acirokop, 2010).

As mentioned previously, most of the studies focus on immediate or short term impact of a specific program, project or study which examined or implemented reconciliation amongst children, their families and communities. Nonetheless, a method such as establishing the first child TRC, which is the case of Sierra Leone, was able to have a long term impact as it was adapted in other countries shortly after (Cook and Heykoop, 2010). Or in the case of the Mozambique study which followed former child soldiers for sixteen years. The study helped determine that by undergoing the rituals and being reconciled with their families and communities’ former child soldiers were able to live productive civilian lives (Boothby, Crawford and Halperin, 2006). As well as the Sierra Leone study on the boy soldiers whose participation and positive outcome of the dance-movement therapy led them to be awarded the Freedom to Create Prize in 2009, use the funds to create a new study facility and as adults their relationship and status with the members of the community had grown (Harris, 2010). Out of all the cases, the three that were mentioned above were able to display the long term impact of the method and approach which was used. And with that show the long term accomplishments which were able to develop out of the initial reconciliation method that was applied.

4.7 Actors that implement child reconciliation programs

The actors which are being referred to in this part are those individuals, organizations and institutions that implemented and/or conducted the projects, programs and studies with or for
the children. Nonetheless, it is important to point out that the children’s families, community members, coaches, teachers, mentors, elders, healers were also involved, supported, encouraged, facilitated and/or partook in the various methods in order to aid in the reconciliation process.

A number of the various projects, programs and studies were run by and/or financed by external actors. As is the case of the Football for Peace program which was organized by the University of Brighton and the British council and most of its project leaders, directors, assistance and volunteers were from the UK (Sugden, 2006), or in Angola where the Christian Children’s Fund (CCF) organization involved foreign but also included domestic trainers in the program (Monteiro and Wessels, 2001), or the Open Fun Football Schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina which is a mostly grassroots run program, yet it is funded by various international donors (Gasser and Levinsen, 2004). As well as other programs which are run by, financed or work in cooperation with The Global Children’s Organization, Christian Children’s Fund, UNICEF, USAID, UEFA, UNHCR, ECHO, etc. The people take on a vulnerable position as the continuation of a particular project or program depends on the international actors (Gasser and Levinsen, 2004). In some of the cases the continuation of a program or project depends on the willingness of the particular government to support or aid in the efforts to have it continue, as for example in the case of Peru’s national TRC curriculum where a change in the political leadership led to the discontinuation of the TRC report in schools (Paulson, 2010). Thus internal as well as external actors could either aid or hinder a particular effort which is established or have a specific program or project continue or discontinue.

The ones involved in the particular research, study, program or project were also in most of the cases the authors of the reports. Thus the texts that they’ve written are a subjective description of what was done and accomplished, as the accomplishments which they mentioned were mostly described in a positive light. There were also studies which were conducted by external evaluators on a particular project or program, and those tended to have more of an objective view of its success, such as Hjort’s (2006) study on the Koraci Nade (Steps of Hope) organization which was able to show that girls that attended that organization did not necessarily promote reconciliation or even foster relationships between the various ethnic groups. Thus the sense of success or failure which is expressed by the various authors depends on their affiliation with the particular study, program or project.
In this chapter the findings that were exhibited in the texts were presented and guided in accordance to the research questions. The main results were highlighted in the previous paragraphs, however, a more detailed description of all the cases is offered in appendix one and appendix two. In appendix one, the 18 cases are presented in a table, which allows for a quick overview on all the studies. In appendix two, each case is summarized and the target group, methods used, impact and actors involved is presented. It allows for greater understanding of each case individually. Furthermore, certain points which might not be covered in great detail in this chapter are highlighted in the mentioned appendices.
5. Analysis

This chapter starts off with analyzing the patterns which are reflected in the texts in accordance to the target group, methods used, impacts, and actors that implemented child reconciliation. The chapter ends with a categorization of the child reconciliation methods which were analyzed in accordance to Johan Galtung’s reconciliation approaches.

5.1 Pattern found in the texts

5.1.1 Target group

All the cases that were mentioned have children as their main focus; although there are some exceptions in some of the articles. When analyzing the target group in the texts, it was evident that in half of the studies individuals under the age of 18 and over the age of 18 were clumped together in the same research. While the title referred to them as children, in the text the age range of being a child (under the age of 18) was surpassed. Thus terms such as children, youth, teenagers and young adults were used interchangeably. Also in various studies the age of the children was never mentioned at all, thus it was difficult to relate the text to the specific target group which it was referring to. Furthermore, a number of the studies did not mention whether the research involved boys, girls or both, also the term “child/ren” was used without identifying gender. Moreover, information on how the children in need of reconciliation were selected was omitted in most of the texts, whereas in the child solider cases the reason children were chosen or participated was due to them being former war combatants. There is no particular mention on how and why the specific children that were picked to be part of the program, project or study where chosen, other than that they participated in the project or program which was evaluated and as such were part of the study.

5.1.2 Methods used

There were various methods implemented with the stated aim to foster reconciliation amongst children, such as sports, play, dance, theater, arts, media, TRC, kinesthetic empathy, traditional and holistic approaches. Although in some of the studies there was great detail placed on explaining all the steps taken which got the parties to reconcile, in other research the approaches taken were mentioned without speaking of the processes which were undertaken. Although the texts emphasized reconciliation, when it came to ethnically divided children that were not directly involved in the conflict, more psychosocial assistance and coexistence approaches where implemented in building bridges between the various groups,
as it was mostly about bringing the different groups together so that contact, dialogue and cooperation would be established and the projects hoped that one day that would lead to reconciliation. In the cases of the children that were directly involved in the conflict as perpetrators, as were child soldiers, reconciliation and reintegration worked hand in hand and it seems that one was not possible without the other. The children would reconcile and reintegeate simultaneously when going through the traditional ritual. They were welcomed back and accepted by the community and thus would be able to live civilian lives alongside their fellow community members.

In most of the cases, at the heart of reconciliation was the involvement of family members and the community in the peacebuilding process, turning it into a collective effort for the benefit of all. Nonetheless, there were differences amongst the traditionally run communities and those that did not fall into this category. Especially since the former child soldiers came back and had to deal with their own communities, whereas the children that were separated due to ethnic and/ or religious conflicts had to face members of a different background than their own. Thus the bond between the groups and the willingness to reconcile seemed more prominent amongst child soldier communities than the children which were divided due to religious and/or ethnic differences.

Furthermore, the traditional approaches were mostly evident in African countries which involved child soldiers, especially Sierra Leone, since four of the cases focuses on the regions in that particular country. Due to the fact that half of the texts stem from Africa and the other texts are so sparse it is difficult to make general assumptions or statements on the regional differences, other than to say that the traditional approaches were used in African countries whereas other regions used a variety of other creative play activities in the fostering of reconciliation.

All the children were seen as innocent victims on whom the future depended on and thus it was beneficial for them to be part of the reconciliation process in order to not repeat the past injustices and learn from their historically violent past. This was also reiterated in the child soldier cases, although it was their spirit that was polluted and evil and not them. This imbalance could be made right again through various rituals and the children could live productive civilian lives once again and restore their sense of innocence.
5.1.3 Impact of the program, project and/or study

Most of the cases only reported on the effects the program, project, ritual and/or organization had on the children during the duration of the particular event, not so much on whether or not it had the lasting impact it had aimed for. In only three of the reports they discussed the impact the reconciliation initiative had afterwards. It was positive in Sierra Leone dance-movement therapy approach (Harris, 2010) and Mozambique’s traditional ritual approach (Boothby, Crawford & Halperin, 2006), where the positive results of the methods which were implemented and carried through were able to be adapted even into their adult lives. However, it was negative in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina where it showed that involvement in the Koraci Nade (Steps of Hope) organization did not translate into the reconciling or building of cross-cultural relationships amongst the girls (Hjort, 2006). Just because children come together, exchange dialogue and cooperate, that does not mean that they have reconciled and will continue to hold on to those same feelings once they are back in their own environment.

The child-soldiers that went through a reconciliation and reintegration process were welcomed back, integrated and part of the same community that initially shunned them. On the other hand, in the cases of non-child soldiers, while the children did manage to come together to a place of neutral ground to do such things as play, write, dance and/or socialize, build relationship and reconcile with each other, they eventually had to go back to their own homes and communities, back to the same places and people that still hold the same ideas and prejudices as before. Long term positive results cannot be expected as some of the reconciliation initiatives were held once a year, like the football programs, book writing summer camp, or the visits to Canada. This refers mostly to the children that came together due to ethnical/religious differences (except for the Colombian child-soldiers which visited Canada), and not the children that were directly involved in the conflict, like child soldiers. Even in the cases of child soldiers, the studies give a mostly positive description of the immediate reconciliation and reintegration process. Yet only one of the studies states that undergoing the traditional ritual does not necessarily lead to acceptance. And furthermore, children that were not able to provide financial compensation, have no living relatives or no known relatives, or who have been born in captivity are not able to partake in the ritual either (Acirokop, 2010). Thus even in traditional communities many children are excluded in the previously mentioned rituals and ceremonies. It leaves those children vulnerable and without a way to reintegrate back into communal life.
5.1.4 Actors that implement child reconciliation programs

As most of the programs/projects were run by NGO’s and/or funded by international agencies, many of the people that were involved in running the events were international coaches/tutors/teachers as opposed to local people, although there were some which included and cooperated with the locals as well. Having local people run the programs and projects, as well as having the government be more involved in the initiatives could lead to the members not only aiding in their children’s reconciliation but their communities as a whole as well. It has to be initiated from the bottom up and encouraged and aided from the top down, as was described earlier by David Bloomfield (Bloomfield, 2006: 25-28). This was the case in the traditional communities, where they accepted outside help but still were as much part of running the program or project as well as them being in charge of implementing the type of approaches which were in line with their culture beliefs and values.

Most of the articles were based on field studies which were conducted and reported by the individuals who were involved and/or affiliated with the organizations or institutions that were in charge of the program. Thus the results of the study were more a subjective reflection of what was accomplished than an external evaluation of its success and failure.

As is evident, there were numerous patterns which emerged from the various texts. The main pattern which emerged was the different approaches that were implemented for child soldiers as opposed to children overall. All the children were seen as victims, regardless if they were involved in the conflict or not. Nonetheless, in the cases of child soldiers they had to go through particular rituals in order to regain back their role in the community, as opposed to children that were not involved in the conflict. Non-child soldier children´s participation in the various reconciliation activities was more about receiving psychological assistance as well as the encouragement of coexistence between the groups. It appeared that the organizers and facilitators were anticipating that the involvement, cooperation and dialogue between the opposite sides would create a better future grounded on reconciliation.

5.2 Child reconciliation and Johan Galtung’s reconciliation approaches

As the most prominent patterns were discussed and analyzed in the previous paragraphs, the following section of this chapter will continue the analysis of the methods used to reconcile children by implementing Galtung’s 12 reconciliation approaches.
5.2.1 Exculpatory nature-structure-culture approach

According to Galtung, in this approach the third party (mediator) that is involved helps in the reconciliation process by changing the perpetrator’s and the victim’s understanding of the root problem; placing the blame on the insufficiencies which are exhibited in their society and away from the parities in conflict (Galtung, 2001:5-6). When it comes to looking at the root of the problem and identifying that both sides were victimized during the conflict, that is more apparent in the former child soldier cases than the children overall. The family, community members and former child soldiers realize that it was outside conditions which created their conflicting situation and reconciliation can be achieved through the help of a healer, chief or other community member. In the Sierra Leone holistic approach, mediators such as trainers from the Christian Children’s Fund (CCF) spoke with the community members in order to create empathy amongst the community members for the situation the child soldiers found themselves in and thus the opportunity for reconciliation opened up. The child soldiers underwent traditional rituals such as retelling their story to the chief and girls underwent cleansing rituals, thus the children could once again be part of their community. (Wessells, 2005)

5.2.2 The reparation/restitution approach

In this approach, according to Galtung, the guilty party recognizes his/her wrongdoing and offers a form of compensation to the victim (Galtung, 2001:6). This approach was evident in two of the child soldier cases. In the case of Uganda’s Mato oput approach where the child soldier’s clan offers an animal, financial or other form of compensation to the victim’s clan in recognition of the wrong doing and an attempt at undo the damage (Acirokop, 2010). This was also the case in Sierra Leone where child soldiers as well as the local children from the villages came together to build schools as well as health clinics in their communities; it aided in the reconciliation amongst the youth; furthermore, it showed the community the willingness of the child soldiers to aid in the cooperation and reparation of their community (Wessells, 2005).

5.2.3 The apology/forgiveness approach

Galtung refers to this approach as the way for both of the parties to start off with a clean sleight once apology and forgiveness have been established (Galtung, 2001:7-8). In the case of the child soldiers, according to Lindsey Stark, apology and forgiveness is not at the heart of reconciliation, although when one takes accountability and goes through ritual purification
it is seen as the Western cultures gesture of “apology” and the community shows “forgiveness” through welcoming them back, as was the case for Sierra Leone’s girl soldiers that went through the cleansing ritual to rid themselves of the spiritual contamination and were accepted back into the community (Stark, 2006). There was no mention of forgiveness or apology in the cases of children that were not directly involved in the conflict. As these were the children that were not causing the violence and were just seen as victims who are reconciled in hopes of establishing a better future, there was no blame placed on them, thus there was no need for forgiveness.

5.2.4 The theological/penitence approach

Galtung states that this approach is only relevant to those that are consider believers and it is with the help of a religious leader that reconciliation between people that were/are at conflict can be established (Galtung, 2001:8-9). While there were no direct religious connotations in the texts, most of the reports which dealt with child soldiers included the spiritual realm, not so much the texts on children overall. Being spiritually contaminated or spiritually impure meant that one could not be reconciled with their loved once nor their community, as the individuals evil spirit carried over to the community. Once a healer performed a cleansing ritual, the spirit of the individual and the community regained positive balance and reconciliation was developed, as both sides believe in a greater power, it was only through the ritual process that harmony could be reestablished between the children and the community. This was evident in texts which discussed traditional rituals, as was exemplified in the Sierra Leone (Wessells, 2005), Uganda (Acirokop, 2010) and Angola (Monteiro and Wessels, 2001) cases.

5.2.5 The juridical/punishment approach

Galtung refers to this approach as the way for the victims to be able to have their voices herd and the guilty to be punished, such as for example the International Tribunal and/or the Truth and Reconciliation processes (Galtung, 2001:9-10). The juridical approach is applicable to the children’s TRC, as in the case of Sierra Leone (Cook and Heykoop, 2010) and the Liberia (Sowa, 2010) children which were able to make their voices herd at the hearings. The punishment approach which Galtung mentions is not applicable to children, as they are not held accountable if they were under the age of 18. Although, the former child soldiers acknowledgement of what they´ve done in front of the entire community might be seen as a form of punishment, as everyone is made aware of their past wrongs.
5.2.6 The codependent origination/karma approach

Galtung emphasizes in this approach that whether a person chooses not to act violently is determined not only by one’s own karma but also by the collective karma, as no single person holds all the responsibility but it is rather shared (Galtung, 2001:10-11). Galtung refers to this approach as karma and most of the texts refer to this as spiritual contamination, thus if one person in a particular village has done wrong the bad karma does not only affect them but the community as a whole. Thus one must rid oneself of the bad karma and with that one rids the community of its negative vibes through the help of a healer, as in the case of Angola’s child soldiers that went through the purification ritual. They are victims, and as such, the children are not punishment but cleansed in order to be considered spiritually pure members of the community and thus are able to bring back harmony and peace to the community and its members (Monteiro and Wessels, 2001).

5.2.7 The historical/Truth Commission Approach

Galtung refers to this approach as creating a mutual understanding of what has occurred through the common knowledge of the conflict (Galtung, 2001:12-13). This was the case of Sierra Leone’s and Liberia’s child TRC’s which included children in the TRC as a way to make a historic record of what has happened, as well as having some of the children testify at regional hearings throughout the country. The child and their caregiver would be asked for permission first and then the child would give a testimony to the commissioner in private (Cook and Heykoop, 2010; Sowa, 2010). In Sierra Leone a child friendly TRC report was published and distributed to various schools in the country so that the children that were not involved in the violent conflict were also able to learn about what happened (Cook and Heykoop, 2010). In Peru, on the other hand, it was the adult TRC which was made into a report and presented in various schools as a teaching tool (Paulson, 2010). It allows for both children that were directly involved in the conflict and those indirectly involved to have common knowledge about what had occurred, reconcile through that process and building a new vision for the future, as was evident in the Peru case.

5.2.8 The theatrical/reliving approach

This is a holistic approach, according to Galtung, it is a way for a person to reenacts an experience and use it as an outlet for the emotions one is feeling and the overall idea is to come to a mutual understanding on an emotionally expressive level and less of a descriptive level (Galtung, 2001:13-14). The only case which discusses a theatrical or more specifically a
dance-movement approach in detail is the Sierra Leone case where former child soldiers reenacted what they’ve experienced and through that were able to show their community members what they’ve went through and be accepted back into civilian live (Harris, 2010). There is mention of dance and theatrical approaches taken on in the Indian (Bhadra, 2012) and Sri Lankan (Bush and Chase, 2002) cases, although how exactly children used those approaches to reconcile where not discussed in great detail.

5.2.9 Joint sorrow/healing approach
Galtung’s explanation of this approach is that it is important to emphasize the “togetherness” of the healing and the sorrow process (Galtung, 2001:14-15). This approach is evident in all the cases which speak of child soldiers. The joint sorrow and healing process is shared between them, their families and their communities. It is a collective reconciliation process. As in the Angola case for example, where the children go through a cleansing ceremony and share their story, through which they express their remorse. The community members are part of every process, they are there to encourage and support the efforts made in order for all of them to collectively come out of the processes healed, which include ceremonies of dance, song and big feasts. (Monteiro and Wessels, 2001)

5.2.10 Joint reconstruction approach
This approach also centers on “togetherness” and working side by side while reconstructing or rebuilding that which was destroyed or needs fixing (Galtung, 2001:15-16). There was only one case which mentions joint reconstruction, Sierra Leone, where child soldiers and children from the community came together to build schools, hospitals and repair other things in the community. This created dialogue amongst the children and fostered reconciliation amongst them. It also showed the community that child soldiers are able to contribute to the community and live peaceful and harmonious civilian lives. (Wessells, 2005)

5.2.11 The joint conflict resolution approach
According to Galtung, decisions are usually made from the top down and it is important to foster joint conflict resolution approaches which are built from the bottom up (Galtung 2001: 17-18). This is also an approach which was mostly used in the cases of former child soldiers where traditional ways of reconciling were implemented instead of including the State or the Western deemed appropriate approaches into the process. Traditional approaches are based on their own historically and generationally defined and handed down norms, beliefs and conditions which do not adapt or change so easily to what their government, the West or any
other culture deems as the appropriate way to reconcile. The community members and child soldiers jointly dealt with the conflict the children were exposed to and they have approaches in place to resolve the situation and create a more positive and harmonious civilian life for the former child soldiers. This is accomplished with the acknowledgement of the community that the children are not to be blamed for the conflict; as it was the circumstances which were out of the children’s control that forced them to be part of the conflict.

5.2.12 The ho’s ponopono/traditional approach

Although ho’s ponopono is a Hawaiian approach, Galtung uses it as an example to explain how a traditional culture deals with reconciliation (Galtung, 2001:18-19). Cultural norms and values were applied to the process of reconciling child soldiers and their communities, as was evident in all of the previously discussed cases. In this approach it is important to bring the child soldiers kin and the community members together so that they can go through the process of what happened, take responsibility, reconciling and find closure.

All of the above mentioned approaches which Johan Galtung described can be ascribed to the processes which former child soldiers are likely to experience and partake in in order to establishing reconciliation with their family and community. Children that did not participate in the conflict themselves do not particularly subscribe to the approaches Galtung was mentioning. Children in ethnically divided countries were not seen as the perpetrators of the conflict but rather as innocent bystanders. Thus the methods by which they reconcile were mostly geared towards fostering cohesive co-existence and exchange of dialogue when they were interacting with groups from different national or religious backgrounds, than actually going through the reconciliation process and building a long term relationship with individuals from the opposing side.

Overall, this chapter was able to shed light on some of the limitations as well as the strengths which were exhibited in the texts. These were discussed in accordance to Glatung’s approaches in the previous paragraph. As well as, in the patterns which were presented in accordance to the research questions. When analyzing the target group, it became evident that some of the studies did not make a distinction between children and adults, as well as omitting the age, gender and how specific children were chosen to participate in a particular project or program. There were a variety of reconciliation methods that children participated in, yet most of the approaches which were implemented also involved the family as well as the community in the peacebuilding process. It is important to point out that although there
were a number of different approaches, the traditional approach seemed to be most dominant, as was the case in the child solider studies. Furthermore, the methods implemented for child soldiers verses non-child soldiers varied, as methods used towards reconciliation and reintegration prevailed in child solider cases, non-child soldier cases, on the other hand, implemented more coexistence approaches. When it came to the impact of a particular project, program, or method which was implemented, in most of the cases there was no great discussion on the long lasting impact or a follow up study done. It was mostly about the positive impact that was exhibited during or right after being involved in the activity, project, or program, not so much on whether or not it had the long lasting impact it had aimed for. As for the actors that implemented child reconciliation programs and methods, they were either affiliated, running the entire process or were funded by international actors. Leaving a lot of the responsibility in the hands of outsiders, as opposed to having such programs be led by the particular community’s local population, institutions and/or having more involvement from the county’s own government in the implementation and follow up of such reconciliation initiatives.
6. Conclusion

This chapter concludes this study with a concise summary of the research, the results achieved and suggestions for future research.

This research focused on reconciliation methods used on children in post conflict societies, as well as the impact, the target group and the actors there were involved in implementing various methods and activities. Although there has to be a distinction made between the children that were involved and the ones that were not directly involved in the atrocities of their country’s conflict. Nonetheless, both groups suffered and are seen as conflict actors, as they were either forced into the conflict by being abducted, or their values and believes about the opposing group was influenced and shaped by their parents, community, national, and/or religious backgrounds. Children eventually take on a position and they make a distinction between “us vs. them.” And as such, they are seen as conflict actors which need to be reconciled as well.

Throughout the research the different methods which are used in children’s reconciliation have been explored and the most frequent pattern which emerged in the literature is that in almost all of the cases which were analyzed, the family and the community played a vital role in reconciliation, as they either aided or were part of the peacebuilding process. It was not only about fostering reconciliation amongst children but also about reconciling family as well as community members.

Although there are a variety of methods which were implemented such as using play, games, dialogue, reenactment, rituals, the media, TRC, etc., most of the processes which lead to reconciliation were the one that were implemented in the cases of child soldiers, and those are the methods which are most in line with Galtung’s 12 reconciliation approaches. As the child soldiers were also perpetrators, Galtung’s approached which are geared towards adult, could also be ascribed to child soldiers as they take on the role of an innocent child as well as that of a violent offender.

The children that were involved in the violence were both perpetrators and victims and in the cases of children that did not partake in the conflict; they were just seen as victims thus reaching the ultimate goal of reconciliation was not as vital. Even though reconciliation was promoted, it was more about bringing the children together, having them play and exchange dialogue in hopes that one day they would reach reconciliation but for the time being that they respected, learned about each other and peacefully coexisted in the same environment.
was seen as a step towards reconciliation. Although the intention behind all these methods is positive, seeing that some of the programs were only held once a year makes it a bit difficult to promote reconciliation as the children are not constantly exposed to those kinds of encouraging, harmonious and peaceful messages.

6.1 Research gaps and possibility for new research

This study only goes so far as to examine the available published research on the reconciliation methods which are used on children. While going through the texts, it was established that there are a limited number of scientifically proven and published texts (when compared to the vast literature on adult reconciliation), especially when it comes to children and the reconciliation methods which are implemented. While there are dozens of organizations both domestically and internationally which promote various methods of reconciliation amongst children in post conflict regions, most of the organizations and/or institutions just have a brief description of what they do on their web sites and do not have that research published. As the future lies in the hands of children more emphasis needs to be placed on documenting the words and deeds of the youngest generation, as they are the ones that will be responsible for what is to come and their voices need to be more prominent in the literature.

The focus of only children was narrowed due to some of the studies intertwining children and young adults together; making it difficult to distinguish between the child’s and the adults experience. Thus there needs to be more of an in-depth focus placed only on the children’s experience.

Much more needs to be explored when it comes to the various methods children use to reconcile, as the literature is so sparse and more focus is placed on certain conflicts, like the once in Bosnia, Israel and Sierra Leone as opposed to other countries. It might have to do with the fact that these are countries that went through a conflict a while ago or are still going through it; nonetheless, countries that underwent recent conflict and the way in which children are reconciled should also be taken into consideration.

The study shows that children in general are still seen as victims; even though they have participated in atrocities, they are considered to be innocent and the hope for a better future overshadows the idea that they too are conflict actors and have negative, predetermined and pre-established ideas of the members in the other group. The approaches are created from the top-down where children are just the participants, instead of creating approaches from the
bottom up where children themselves undertake or create their own peacebuilding approaches, and are more actively involved in the process as opposed to being a passive participant.

There is also a clear distinction between child soldiers and non-child soldiers when it comes to the reconciliation approaches which are used and the degree of reconciliation which is achieved. The findings which emerged out of this study can aid in the branching out of other research which could further examine the reconciliation differences between child soldiers and non-child soldiers, especially the difference in the methods which are undertaken and implemented. As maybe some of the methods used to reconcile child soldiers could also be implemented on non-child soldiers, and vice versa which might lead to more positive results overall.

In addition, the concept of childhood and when one is considered a child should be explored, especially in non-western cultures, where an individual is considered a child under the age of 18, yet in other cultures “children” under 18 are married have been in combat, have their own children, are responsible for their parents and very much live “adult” lives. Furthermore, comparing child reconciliation methods to adult reconciliation methods might broaden the scope of future research. It would be beneficial to know about the differences and similarities which are exhibited and whether a long term impact can be achieved in either, both or none of the children vs. adult approaches.

It is also important to have external evaluators examine a particular project or program in order to limit the subjectivity of the research. Follow up studies which show the short term as well as the long term impact of having children partake in a particular project or program are vital as they can help in determining whether or not positive or negative effects can be expected from a particular method which is being implemented. Especially in the cases where international donors and facilitators are involved, and as such, evaluations would aid in discovering which methods would be most beneficial for the project or program and which should be avoided or changed.

It has to be kept in mind that with the limited number of texts that were examined one needs to be cautious when placing greater generalization on all the methods and approaches which children partake in. Although, what can be learned from this study is that the examined texts shed light on the limitations and advantages, as well as the strengths and weaknesses of the methods which are used on children, the target group, impact and the ones that implement the
methods children participate in. There is still a lot of research that needs to be conducted and many other methods which still need to be implemented and evaluated so that children can take a more central role in peacebuilding and in the literature overall.
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# Appendix I

## Table of all the cases

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<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Target Group</th>
<th>Program, project and study conducted</th>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Actors</th>
<th>Authors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bosnia</strong> (Gasser and Levinsen, 2004)</td>
<td>8-14 year old- Bosnian, Serbian and Croatian children</td>
<td>Program started in 1999, till 2004 20,000 children participated</td>
<td>OFFS Summer Football</td>
<td>No long term impact/ in-creased participation</td>
<td>Danish organization -foreign aid</td>
<td>Affiliates of the organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Israel (Galilee)</strong> (Sugden, 2006)</td>
<td>10-14 year old- Muslim, Christian and Jewish children</td>
<td>Started in 2001-100 children, by 2004-700 children</td>
<td>F4P Summer Football</td>
<td>No long term impact/ in-creased participation</td>
<td>Brighton University &amp; British council</td>
<td>Affiliates of the organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>West Bank &amp; Israel</strong> (Cole et al. 2003)</td>
<td>275 Palestinian &amp; Israeli children, 4-6 years</td>
<td>Study conducted in 1998</td>
<td>Study about educational series</td>
<td>No long term impact</td>
<td>U.S., Israeli and Palestinian affiliates</td>
<td>U.S., Israeli and Palestinian affiliates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bosnia</strong> (Hjort, 2006)</td>
<td>30 females 13-24 59 females and males 15-23</td>
<td>Study conducted from June-July 2003</td>
<td>Study on Koraci Nade (steps of hope) organization</td>
<td>Participation does not lead to reconciliation</td>
<td>Study conducted by Frisen Hjort</td>
<td>Frisen Hjort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Angola</strong> (Monteiro and Wessels, 2001)</td>
<td>No info on age &amp; number of children (aim was 320,000 children)</td>
<td>Study conducted from Jan-Oct 2008</td>
<td>TRC and the national curriculum</td>
<td>No long term impact</td>
<td>Field study conducted by Julia Paulson -UNICEF</td>
<td>Julia Paulson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Peru</strong> (Paulson, 2010)</td>
<td>Primary and secondary school children</td>
<td>Program started in the mid 1990’s, 600 participated over time</td>
<td>Butterfly Garden program- creative play</td>
<td>No long term impact</td>
<td>Bush and Chase gave a description of program</td>
<td>Bush and Chase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sri Lanka</strong> (Bush and Chase, 2002)</td>
<td>Tamil (Hindu and Christian) and Muslim children, (no age given)</td>
<td>2002, after the communal violence which erupted in Gujarat</td>
<td>Psycho logically expressive methods</td>
<td>No long term impact</td>
<td>Field study conducted by Subhasis Bhadra</td>
<td>Affiliate of the organization</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Bosnia</strong> (Darvin, 2009)</td>
<td>Sixteen 10-13 year old Serbian and Bosnian girls</td>
<td>Summer camp 2005</td>
<td>Bookmaking</td>
<td>No long term impact</td>
<td>Global Children’s Organization</td>
<td>Affiliate of the organization</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Colombia-Canada</strong> (Marchand and Serna, 2011)</td>
<td>6 child soldiers (no age given)</td>
<td>Summer of 2006, 2007 and 2008</td>
<td>Agape project- Visiting Canada</td>
<td>No long term impact</td>
<td>Marchand and Serna conducted the study</td>
<td>Affiliate of the organization</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sierra Leone</strong> (Starl, 2006)</td>
<td>25 interviews with females 8-30 years of age</td>
<td>May-August 2005</td>
<td>Female cleansing ceremony</td>
<td>No long term impact</td>
<td>Field study conducted by Lindsay Stark</td>
<td>Lindsay Stark</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sierra Leone</strong> (Cook and Heykoop, 2010)</td>
<td>83 child soldiers &amp; 84 various actors interviews</td>
<td>Study conducted in 2007</td>
<td>TRC established in other countries</td>
<td>No long term impact</td>
<td>Field study conducted by Cook and Heykoop UNICEF</td>
<td>Philip Cook and Cheryl Heykoop</td>
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<td><strong>Angola</strong></td>
<td>Focus on 158</td>
<td></td>
<td>Western and</td>
<td>No long term impact</td>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>Affiliate of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Study Details</td>
<td>Approaches</td>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>Boy and girl child soldiers (no age or number of children given)</td>
<td>Holistic educational approach</td>
<td>No long term impact</td>
<td>Christian Children’s Fund, Affiliate of the organization</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>12 male child soldiers (no age given)</td>
<td>Dance-movement therapy</td>
<td>Live productive adult lives</td>
<td>David Alan Harris and 3 local colleagues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>43 interviews with child soldiers (no age given)</td>
<td>Traditional method of mato oput</td>
<td>No long term impact</td>
<td>Field study conducted by Prudence Acirokop -UNICEF</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mozambique</td>
<td>Start 39 male child soldiers, last phase 23 child soldiers</td>
<td>Traditional cleansing and communal reconciliation</td>
<td>Live productive adult lives</td>
<td>Boothby, Crawford and Halperin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>Interviews with child soldiers and other actors (no specifics given)</td>
<td>Children’s TRC</td>
<td>No long term impact</td>
<td>Field study conducted by Theo Sowa -UNICEF</td>
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</table>

(Monteiro and Wessels, 2001)
Appendix II

Summary of all the cases

Children that were not directly involved in the conflict

1. Bosnia and Herzegovina: football schools

**Target group:** Boys and girls of Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian backgrounds from the ages of 8-14 partake in the Open Fun Football Schools (OFFS) grassroots program in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The program started in 1998, and by 2003 up to 20,000 children took part in 99 of the OFFS programs across the country. (Gasser and Levinsen, 2004: 457-472)

**Methods used:** In the 5 day long football program which takes place when the children have school vacation, kids of Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian backgrounds come together to play football on the same team. Two neighboring municipalities with different ethnic backgrounds have to work together in organizing this event. This broadens “the utility of the program as a peace-building tool, applying it not only to promote contact between children, but also establishing sustainable contacts which foster relationships between the adult trainers, schools, clubs and municipalities that are involved in organizing the school, and potentially even spectators (presumably mostly parents) from antagonistic communities” (Gasser and Levinsen, 2004: 463).

**Impact of the program/project/study:** While information is being collected by OFFS on the number of children, school leaders, schools, communities, and coaches that are participating, their overall ethnic balance throughout the program, and the number of events that have been organized, it only shows what has been done and the amount of people that were involved. It does not, however, report on whether or not it had the impact it promised, such as reconciling and building inter-group relationships among the children and adults that are involved in the program. (Gasser and Levinsen, 2004: 468)

**Actors/authors involved in the program/project/study:** As this article is a subjective evaluation of the OFFS program done by Patrick Gasser and Anders Levinsen (creator of the program), the success and validity of the program might be put into questions. As this is a grassroots project, it is mostly run by local schools, community coaches and parents in the region. Nonetheless, the funding is done by various international donors. (Gasser and Levinsen, 2004: 457-472)

2. Israel: football project

**Target group:** The UK’s Football for Peace (F4P) project started in 2001 in Galilee, north Israel for Muslim, Christian and Jewish children that live in that region. In its first year only
100 children participated, but by 2004, 700 children were involved in the project. Children from the ages of 10-14 participated in the first year, although there is no data on the age of the children that participated in the years that followed. Although the program is designed for all girls and boys, the majority of the participants are Arab boys. (Sugden, 2006: 221-240)

**Methods used:** The aim is to create contact, communication, understanding and desire for peaceful coexistence between the children and the adults in the opposing communities. When the children first arrive, they segregate themselves within their own group. The coaches then divided them into four groups with different soccer skills and different towns. This way contact between the different groups is established, and with different skill levels no one group is superior to the other. The children’s built up walls eventually come down as they play side by side. The program encourages children to see the other group in their own cultural environment. Hence, half the practice time is spent in one community and half in the other. Children are able to see for themselves how the other half lives, and see the inequality with their own eyes. (Sugden, 2006: 221-240)

**Impact of the program/project/study:** The F4P might not have made a drastic change in this socially and politically divided society, although considering that in the beginning no Jewish community participated in the project and in 2005 there were 10 Jewish communities which were involved in the project can be seen as progress. (Sugden, 2006: 221-240)

**Actors/authors involved in the program/project/study:** University of Brighton and the British council have organized the F4P program. Although the project includes Arab and Israeli volunteers, most of the project leaders, directors, assistance and volunteer are from the UK. This article is a subjective evaluation of the organization as it has been written by John Sugden, a founding member and the co-director of the F4P program. (Sugden, 2006: 221-240)

3. **West Bank and Israel: a television serious promoting respect and understanding**

**Target group:** The study included Israeli-Jewish children from Tel Aviv, Israeli-Palestinian children from Acre in northern Israel, and Palestinian children from the West Bank who were exposed to an educational series. Preschooler and elementary school boys and girls from the ages 4-6 were involved in the study. There were a total of 275 kids that participated (99 from West-bank, 113 from Tel Aviv, and 63 from Acre). (Cole et al. 2003. 409: 422)

**Methods used:** In 1998, Rechov Sumsum (Hebrew) and Shara’a Simsim (Arabic) series, based on the American version of Sesame Street was introduced in order to promote messages of understanding and respect amongst the Palestinian and Israeli children. A study was conducted before the show aired, and four months after it had aired. The aim of the study
was to gain more knowledge about the cultural stereotypes the children had of each other, whether the show contributed in a positive change of those stereotypes and whether the children had more respect and understanding for their own as well as the other’s culture. For the most part the children’s cultural knowledge of everyday life, social judgments, identification of cultural signals, and the characters in the series had improved. (Cole et al. 2003. 409: 422)

Impact of the program/project/study: This study shows the stereotypes based on ethnicity and culture which are exhibited in a divided society by children who are as young as four can actually be changed by such educational programs. No long term change was mentioned. (Cole et al. 2003. 409: 422)

Actors/authors involved in the program/project/study: It was a collective effort from people from the Sesame Workshop in New York, Al-Quds University in West Bank, the Israeli Educational Television in Tel Aviv, the Arab College of Education in Israel, Maryland University and Harvard University. As numerous actors were involved in this study the findings do not seem to serve a subjective but more of an objective purpose. (Cole et al. 2003. 409: 422)

4. Bosnia and Herzegovina: promoting reconciliation?

Target group: This study included 89 children and young people that live in Mostar and its surrounding towns in June-July 2003. The sample group consisted of 30 female participants from 13-24 years of age who attended the Koraci Nade (Steps of Hope) organization. The comparison group consisted of 23 males and 36 females ranging between the ages of 15-23 who were participating in the Mobile Culture Containers project (media activities). (Hjort, 2006:141-163)

Methods used: The Koraci Nade (Steps of Hope) organization with five local centers in the area (Mostar, Nevisinjia and Blaganj), which promotes reconciliation and peace amongst the different ethnic groups (Bosnjak-Muslim), Croatian, Serbian, or Bosnian (national and no ethnic affiliation), is a local, non-governmental organization which started in the mid 90’s. The girls and young women that participated in the Koraci Nade organization do so due to the psychosocial (discussion groups) and various activities (socialize, develop friendships, language courses, practical courses, social assistance, etc.) which the centers offer. Excursions and seminars offer the opportunity for the members to meet and develop dialogues between the different ethnic groups. (Hjort, 2006:141-163)

Impact of the program/project/study: What the study was able to bring forth was that while the Koraci Nade organization fosters a place which promotes cross-ethnic contact
based on everyone having an equal status, on cooperating within groups, on having common
goals and on having supportive norms, one third of the girls and young women feel that it is
more of a social forum; it could not be established that the participation in this organization
promotes reconciliation and cross-ethnic relationships or friendships amongst the girls and
young women. (Hjort, 2006:141-163)

**Actors/authors involved in the program/project/study:** This study was carried out by
Frisen Hjort, a non-affiliate of the Koraci Nade organization, which shows for more objective
results of the study. (Hjort, 2006:141-163)

5. Angola: traditional and western approaches

**Target group:** The focus is on communal involvement and aiding in the psychosocial
assistance for the children that have experienced war. The aim of the program was to provide
psychosocial assistance to 320,000 children, yet no concrete number on how many children
were assisted was given. (Monteiro and Wessels, 2001:10-16)

**Methods used:** Christian Children’s Fund (CCF) trained local trainers who would speak to
the community leader/chief/elder/healer and build a collaboration to aid the children in
creating a peaceful and reconciliatory mind set, so that the violent behavior would not
escalate. Traditional methods such as healing rituals were combined with Western methods of
emotional expression which would be displayed through art, dance, theater, educational
dialogue, and sports to create teamwork, cooperation and for the children to learn how to
react in a non-violent manner. (Monteiro and Wessels, 2001:10-16)

**Impact of the project/program/study:** Parents and community members realized the
important role they had in influencing the children and changing the war mentality which the
children were exposed to. Thus communities developed activities such as soccer, dance,
theater where children were able to gather. (Monteiro and Wessels, 2001:10-16).

**Actors involved in the project/program/study:** As the authors of the article, Michael
Wessells and Carlinda Monteiro examined, described and mentioned the accomplishments of
the program. However, as they are employed by the CCF, it makes it a subjective evaluation
of the program. (Monteiro and Wessels, 2001:10-16).

6. Peru: TRC and the national curriculum

**Target group:** The field study which was conducted from January-October 2008 focuses on
Peru’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Recordándonos report and the process of
making it part of the national curriculum for primary and secondary school children.
(Paulson, 2010:327-364)
Methods used: Recordándonos (reminding ourselves) is a report which is based on Peru’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission was used in Peruvian school curriculum. There were two editions which were released to schools, one in 2005 and one in 2006. According to a survey done the students had mostly positive responses and were more knowledgeable about the conflict and what actually happened. The goal was not to expose children to all the atrocities committed. It was more about exposing them to what happened in order to understand and analyze the events so that reconciliation, recognition of the historic events and the creation of new values would be possible amongst the new generation. (Paulson, 2010:327-364)

Impact of the program/project/study: Although the recordándonos report is used in some schools in Peru, mostly in the areas that were affected by the violence, it was not made part of the national curriculum due to political hinders as the report also includes the atrocities and the wrong doings the State was involved in. (Paulson, 2010:327-364)

Actors involved: The field study was conducted by Julia Paulson, who examines the recordándonos report, its possibilities and the national hinders. The research was undertaken in cooperation with the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre. (Paulson, 2010:327-364)

7. Sri Lanka: creative play

Target group: The focus is on Sri Lankan’s Butterfly Garden program; attended by school children that live in 20 communities in the region of Batticaloa. Since it´s opening in the mid 1990´s it has offered various activities to more than 600 ethnic Tamil (Hindu and Christian) and Muslim children which were affected by the conflict in their country. (Bush and Chase, 2002: 50-66)

Methods used: This is a program that is open to all the school children that live in the region. Children with different ethnic or religious backgrounds are able to come together and deal with their psychological distress by participating in various creative activities (theater, music, dance, etc) after school and during the weekends. Local facilitators are seen as mentors and offer the children group activities as well as one on one activity which encourage trauma healing and the building of relationships. The organization works with local communities in order to promote dialogue and reconciliation between the various community members. The children’s involvement and positive experience with one another is seen as a way to foster reconciliation amongst the various communities as well. (Bush and Chase, 2002: 50-66)
Impact of the program/project/study: The author mentions what the program is doing, its goals and aims and the number of children that are involved, yet no specific detail of the impact of the program is given. (Bush and Chase, 2002: 50-66)

Actors/authors involved in the program/project/study: Bush and Chase have just given a description of what the program offers and what its aim is. There is no detailed description as to how the Butterfly Garden carries out the activities. (Bush and Chase, 2002: 50-66)

8. India: personal and communal expression

Target group: The focus is on children and adolescence who’ve experienced the communal violence which erupted in Gujarat, India in 2002; especially those that were forced to live in relief camps for three to six months. No specific age and the number of children that participated was given. (Bhadra, 2012: 212-232)

Methods used: Various NGO’s and volunteers that were in place encouraged that the psychological traumas which the children experienced would be facilitated through psychologically expressive methods. Various group activities (song, dance, free-drawing, storytelling, creative writing, reading, games, clay modeling, etc.) were established so that the children could express their feelings, see the changes that are occurring, establish hope for the future and build trust. And there were also measures taken to aid in the rebuilding of communal, people to people contact, dialogue and cooperation and the rebuilding of trust. (Bhadra, 2012: 212-232)

Impact of the program/project/study: Activity centers were established so that both Hindu and Muslims could come together, discuss ideas, share and learn about one another. Also community events such as religious festivals, ceremonies, national and internationally special days were organized so that they could learn about each other’s culture/religion. Reconciliation and conflict resolution was encouraged in 10 schools (4 Muslim, 4 Hindu and 2 Christian). (Bhadra, 2012: 212-232)

Actors/authors involved in the program/project/study:

Subhasis Bhadra, reported on the situation in Gujarati in relations to the psychosocial approaches used in reconciliation. It was a subjective evaluation as Bhadra was involved and worked in the affected region. (Bhadra, 2012: 212-232)

9. Bosnia and Herzegovina: bookmaking

Target group: The focus is on sixteen 10-13 year old Serbian and Bosnian girls from Bosnia and Herzegovina that came together at a summer camp near Sarajevo in 2005 in order to foster reconciliation through book making. (Darvin, 2009: 50-59)
**Methods used:** The Global Children’s Organization (GCO) organized a camp which involved a literacy workshop which allowed the girls to illustrate and write their own books. Most of the girls choose to write about peace and friendship. The children related the illustrations to the text by depicting their own thoughts about religion, segregation, ethnicity and war by drawing mosques and churches, different religious symbols, doves, hearts, and people holding hands to show peace, friendship and harmony. Writing was used to promote communication and healing amongst the girls of different ethnic and religious backgrounds in a non-threatening academic environment. (Darvin, 2009: 50-59)

**Impact of the program/project/study:** The bookmaking project achieved what it set out to do and that is to bring together children of different backgrounds to interact, open up to one another, share their stories and using writing and storytelling as a form of expression and understanding. (Darvin, 2009: 50-59)

**Actor/Author involved in the program/project/study:** Darvin was involved in the camp as one of the teachers and she gives a subjective description on the book making project in Bosnia and the importance of literacy initiatives for children in conflict divided societies and the promotion of reconciliation. (Darvin, 2009: 50-59)

**Children that participated in the conflict (child soldiers)**

10. **Colombia-Canada: refugees and child soldiers**

**Target group:** The Agape project is based on reconciling 6 former child soldiers who visited Canada in the summer of 2006, 2007 and 2008. They are just referred to as children or youth, not specific age mentioned. (Marchand and Serna, 2011: 35-43)

**Methods used:** The project is based on the idea that even Colombians that emigrated can aid in Colombia’s peacebuilding processes. The reconciliation process undertaken by Agape is to bring the child soldiers and refuges together on neutral ground so that both sides can see that they were only victims in the conflict. While the victims of the war crimes become more aware of the children’s traumatic experience, in turn the child soldiers become familiar with the victims experience. They shared a common experience of the loss of loves once, traumatic memories, displacement, discrimination, rejection, and hopes for being reunited with their families and so on. They share a mutual hope for peace and forgiveness and at least for a moment put aside their hateful feelings. (Marchand and Serna, 2011: 35-43)

**Impact of the program/project/study:** The immediate impact of the program is described, yet no long-term effects of having participated in the program are mentioned. For long term
impact, the authors mentioned that it is Columbia´s government which needs to create programs specifically geared towards child soldiers to help in their integration and reconciliation. (Marchand and Serna, 2011: 35-43)

**Actors/authors involved in the program/project/study:** This report was conducted by Daniel Ruiz Serna and Ines Marchand, members of the Agape organization and as such they give a subjective analysis of the program. (Marchand and Serna, 2011: 35-43)

11. **Sierra Leone: female cleansing ceremony**

**Target group:** The target group in this field study is former female child-soldiers that were sexually abused in Sierra Leone. There were 25 interviews conducted of girls and young women ranging from 8-30 years from May-August 2005 in the regions of Port Loko, Bombali, Tonkalili and Koinadugu. (Stark, 2006: 206-218)

**Methods used:** The female child soldiers that return to their community are deemed as impure, abused both physically and verbally, and shunned by their families and their community members (although there are some exceptions), as their spiritual contamination is seen to causes misfortune for the girls as well as the community at large. Cleansing is seen as a necessity so that the community and the former child soldier can reconcile. After the girls undergo a cleansing ceremony they shed their old clothes and with that break from spiritual pollution. They are escorted by the healer to the chief, who welcomes them back into the village. A ceremony of dance, music and feast is held by the community, and is seen as measures of reintegration as the sharing of food is seen as a gesture of reconciliation. (Stark, 2006: 206-218)

**Impact of the program/project/study:** The report shows that overall the girls were basing their good fortune and their ability to have reconciled with their families and the community members to the cleansing process which has rid them of their polluted spirit. They were able to integrate and have relationships with their family and community members. (Stark, 2006: 206-218)

**Actors/authors involved in the program/project/study:** Lindsay Stark´s field study served as an external evaluation of the traditional healing ceremony. (Stark, 2006: 206-218)

12. **Sierra Leone: children´s TRC**

**Target group:** The study was conducted in 2007 and included 13 group discussions with child soldiers and their communities, as well as 83 individual interviews with the child soldiers (and their families) that participated in the TRC, and 84 interviews with various actors that were involved in the development and implementation of the children´s TRC. (Cook and Heykoop, 2010:162)
**Methods used:** The first children´s Truth and Reconciliation Commission was specifically geared towards the children of Sierra Leone. The policy was that children under the age of 18 would not be prosecuted as they were targeted during the conflict and experienced extreme hardships. The main goal of the child TLC in Sierra Leone was to create a historical record of what happened, for the children to share their stories, mourn their loss and have the opportunity to be reconciled. Children are encouraged to reintegrate and reconcile with their families and communities. This is usually done through local leaders. (Cook and Heykoop, 2010:159-192)

**Impact of the program/project/study:** The implementation of the child TLC encouraged the development of a child-friendly TRC reports which were handed out to various schools and reached an estimated 40,000 students. (Cook and Heykoop, 2010:159-192) Children TRC were also undertaken in other countries shortly after, such as in South Africa and Liberia. (Sowa, 2010)

**Actors/authors involved in the program/project/study:** The field study conducted by Philip Cook and Cheryl Heykoop, of the International Institute for Child Rights and Development (IICRD), serves as an evaluation of the children´s TLC; the process it took and the lessons which can be learned from it for its improvement. The research was undertaken in collaboration with UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre. (Cook and Heykoop, 2010:159-192)

13. **Angola: combining western and traditional approaches**

**Target group:** 158 ritual ceremonies conducted on child soldiers is the focus. Yet no specific age is given, and the article only speaks of male child soldiers, no female soldiers are mentioned. (Monteiro and Wessels, 2001:16-22)

**Methods used:** The first step was to reunite these children with their families. Inform them on the issues which might arise due to the children´s war history and give recommendations in how to integrate the children into the community. For children to reconcile and reintegrate into the community they go through a spiritual cleansing; as they are seen to been contaminated by the spirits of the people that they´ve killed and thus can spiritually contaminated the community. In Angola the preferred method to deal with such issues is for a healer to conduct spiritual cleansing in order for spiritual harmony to be restored. Then an event is held at the child´s home where the child is presented to the chief with whom the child speaks which shows that the child is part of the community again. Afterwards, the child´s future plans are discussed with the elders in the community. (Monteiro and Wessels, 2001:16-22)
Impact of the program/project/study: While integrated into the community, it does not mean that the hard work is complete. Many of the children still have difficulty with their families, communities or are re-recruited. (Monteiro and Wessels, 2001:16-22)

Actors/authors involved in the program/project/study: As this program is run by the CCF, with the help of UNICEF and USAID. The authors are associated with the organization which makes the article more of an insider’s description than an evaluation of what the program has done and achieved. (Monteiro and Wessels, 2001:16-22)

14. Sierra Leone: holistic approach

Target group: Both boy and girl soldiers are mentioned, yet neither age range, time frame nor the number of children that participated in this project was mentioned. (Wessells, 2005: 363-369)

Methods used: To aid in the process of fear and stigmatization the child soldiers faced upon their return, the Christian Children’s Fund (CCF) implemented a holistic approach to aid them in the reintegration and reconciliation process. Part one included speaking with the community members in order to create empathy amongst the community members for the situation the child soldiers found themselves in and thus the opportunity for reconciliation opened up. Another part of reconciliation was for the child soldiers to tell their story to the chief, and if the chief believed that the child was remorseful than an adult would be assigned as a guide in the services of the village. And for girls, it was healers who would perform cleansing rituals to rid them of the spiritual impurities. (Wessells, 2005: 363-369)

Impact of the program/project/study: The child soldiers as well as the young members from the villages came together to build schools and the health clinics in their communities. The last process was for the child soldiers to be trained in a local job by a mentor. (Wessells, 2005: 363-369)

Actors/authors involved in the program/project/study: The main actor responsible for this project has been the Christian Children’s Fund (CCF). Michael Wessells, a CCF’s Child protection specialist was the author of the text, and as such it is a subjective evaluation. (Wessells, 2005: 363-369)

15. Sierra Leone: dance-movement therapy

Target group: The study which was undertaken from March till September 2006 focuses on 12 former Revolutionary United Front (RUF) child soldiers in the Kailahun region of Sierra Leone. Only male soldiers participated in this study, and the author refers to them in the text as boys, youth, children, teenager’s, ex-combatants interchangeably, as no specific age was mentioned of the once that participated. (Harris, 2010:335-354)
Methods used: The kinesthetic empathy method was implemented with the boys which builds on self-worth, empathy, positive interaction and reconciliation within themselves and with the members of their community. They performed a re-enactment of their experience for their community members which created empathy amongst the audience for the sufferings the former child soldiers experienced. The boys renounced further violence, and were welcomed back to their community by the local elders. The empathy, humility and forgiveness was a mutual choice expressed by both the former child soldiers and their community members. (Harris, 2010: 334-354)

Impact of the program/project/study: The boys were awarded the Freedom to Create Prize in 2009. Those funds were used to create a new study facility in the area. No longer children but adults, “their stature within the community has grown accordingly” (Harris, 2003:353).

Actors/authors involved in the program/project/study: The study was conducted by David Alan Harris and his three Sierra Leone local colleagues. Harris specializes in mental health and rehabilitation and is a dance-movement therapist. He both reported and conducted the study, thus there is no outside opinion taken into account. (Harris, 2003:353).

16. Uganda: traditional ritual

Target group: The field study was conducted in Acholi in February 2008 focuses on 43 individual interviews and group interviews with former Lord Resistance Army (LRA) child soldiers from 15-21 years. The traditional method of mato oput is used as a ritual of taking accountability and being able to reconcile in northern Uganda’s Acholi region. (Acirokop, 2010: 267-292)

Methods used: Mato oput means to drink the root from the bitter oput tree. In order to establish justice and reconciliation, the offender’s clan (not the individual) is presented in front of the entire community in order to assume responsibility for the crimes which were committed. Once this has been established, both clans drink the bitter drink as a sign of apology and forgiveness. That is seen as a sign of reconciliation which is based on the principles of restorative justice. (Acirokop, 2010: 267-292)

Impact of the program/project/study: The ritual helps restore the children´s psychological well-being and reconciles them with the community. Children that were not able to provide a financial payment, have no living or known relatives, or who have been born in captivity are not able to partake in the ritual either. (Acirokop, 2010: 267-292)

Actors/authors involved in the program/project/study: Prudence Acirokop is a human rights lawyer who conducted the field study in cooperation with UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre. (Acirokop, 2010: 267-292)
17. Mozambique: effects of communal reconciliation

Target group: The research of 39 male child soldiers from the ages of 6-16 began in 1988 and their progress was monitored for 16 years. During the last phase of the research, only 23 of the 39 were included, as some had died and others had moved. (Boothby, Crawford and Halperin, 2006: 87-107)

Methods used: The first step for the children was to receive psychological and social assistance at a rehabilitation center. The next step was for the children to reunite with their families. Traditional cleansing and healing ceremonies were performed which established acceptance, forgiveness, unity and trust amongst the children and the members of their community. Once reconciled and accepted as members of the community, the children were able to have mentors/tutors who would teach them skills which they would use later on in life to earn a living. (Boothby, Crawford and Halperin, 2006: 87-107)

Impact of the program/project/study: After a decade and a half the study shows that most of the former child soldiers, who are now adults, were able to reconcile with their families and communities and thus are able to have productive civilian lives. Their economic situation is slightly better than the national average. Their school age children (both boys and girls) were more likely to attend primary school and they were perceived to be good husbands by their wives and were perceived as valuable members of their community. (Boothby, Crawford and Halperin, 2006: 87-107)

Actor/authors involved in the program/project/study: This research was conducted and written by Boothby, Crawford and Halperin was a study which was conducted over a long time on child soldiers and their transition into adulthood. (Boothby, Crawford and Halperin, 2006: 87-107)

18. Liberia: children´s TRC

Target group: There were 43 interviews conducted with child soldiers, their families and various organizations and institutions. No specifics given. (Sowa, 2010: 193-230)

Methods used: One of the first steps in the preparation of the TRC was for the children to participate in 45 of the awareness-raising workshops across the country so that children would be aware of what the TRC was all about and to prepare them for the process. Regional and institutional hearings were held, children were individually more prominent in regional hearings, whereas in national hearing the hearings were highlighting the collective experiences of the children. (Sowa, 2010: 193-230)

Impact of the program/project/study: The children that had participated in the awareness raising workshops came up with the idea for the TRC children´s gallery, where children were
able to show their writings and artistically express what they’ve experienced, the issues they currently struggle with and their visions for the future. This was a one day event. (Sowa, 2010: 193-230)

**Actor/authors involved in the program/project/study:** This research was conducted by Theo Sowa who is a social development consulted, in cooperation with UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre. (Sowa, 2010: 193-230)