



Care and Protection of Children In Crisis-Affected Countries Network:

- **Global Technical Group on Youth and Political Violence (GTG-YPV)** – in conjunction with the *Center for the Study of Youth and Political Violence at the University of Tennessee*



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The Challenge

- Millions of young people have faced and continue to face the ravages of **war** and **ethno-political violence** in recent and current conflicts across the world.



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Initial Goals

1. Better *understand* the impact of conflict on youth, so as to better *serve* their needs
2. Facilitate *integration* across professional groups working with you



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Why Goal 1 to “Better Understand Impact of Conflict on Youth?”

1. To provide *pre-practice* evidence
2. To better identify which youth need services
3. To inform programs and practice to target most important needs

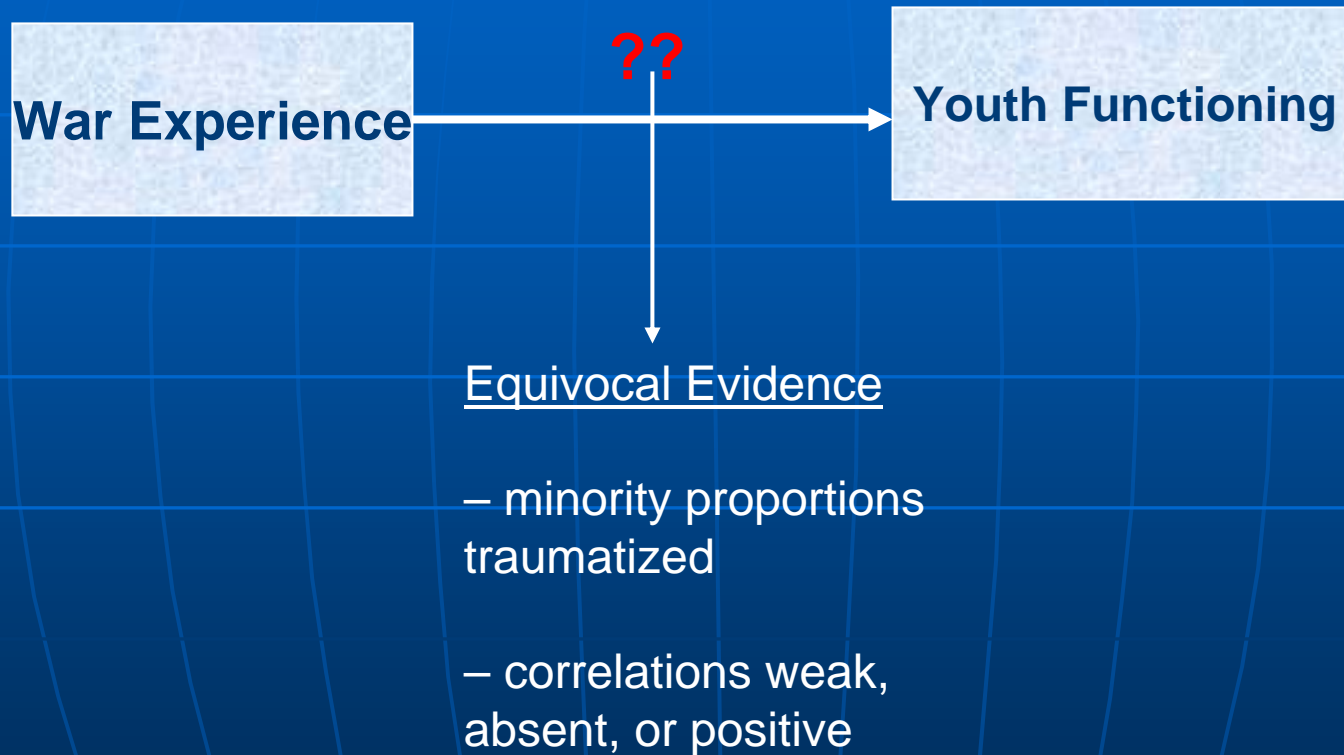


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First Major Limitation:

Research *has not provided adequate understanding* of the impact of political violence on youth

Basic Question: *What is the Impact of War on Youth?*



Adolescents in Political Violence Project

1. Ethnographic phase: 18 months immersion in Gaza Strip (1996-2000)
2. Semi-structured interviews with Gaza youth (1996-2000)
3. Large-scale survey of Gaza youth (1998)
4. Semi-structure interviews with Bosnian youth (2000)
5. Large-scale survey of Bosnian youth (2002)



Bosnian Portrait

- Onset: Sudden, inexplicable
- Tactic: Distal, unpredictable attacks
- Nature of violence: high destruction of property and life
- Opportunity for resistance: virtually none



Bosnian Portrait

- Long-term effects of **exposure**:
 - Lower political participation
 - Lower civic involvement
 - Higher antisocial behavior
 - Higher depression
 - Lower social competence



Palestinian Portrait

- Onset: continuation of conscious legacy
- Tactic: proximal, predictable fighting
- Nature of violence: intrusions into private space; harsh treatment
- Opportunity for resistance: high
- Activism: exceptionally high



Palestinian Portrait

- Long-term effects of **exposure**:
 - Lower political participation
 - No effect on civic involvement
 - Higher antisocial behavior
- Long-term effects of **activism**:
 - Higher political participation
 - Higher civic involvement
 - Higher social competence
 - Higher empathy



Adolescents in Political Violence Project

General Finding

- Sarajevo youth deeply troubled (narratives saturated with references to fear, anger, hopelessness)
- Gaza youth functioning well (narratives packed with feelings of contribution, achievement, ambition, social cohesion)



Adolescents in Political Violence Project

Identity-Relevant Meaning Systems



“Dynamic Identity”

Gaza

“Before the Intifada we were children. The only thing we thought about was football. Sometimes we studied, or watched TV, or did many things which were not so important. But during our actions or involvement in the Intifada, we began to think in another way. We began to have a role in our society. We changed the way people thought. We become leaders when we were children, so we began to think that we had a great role to perform. . . . By this we achieved self-satisfaction, self-assertion.”



“Identity by Default”

Sarajevo

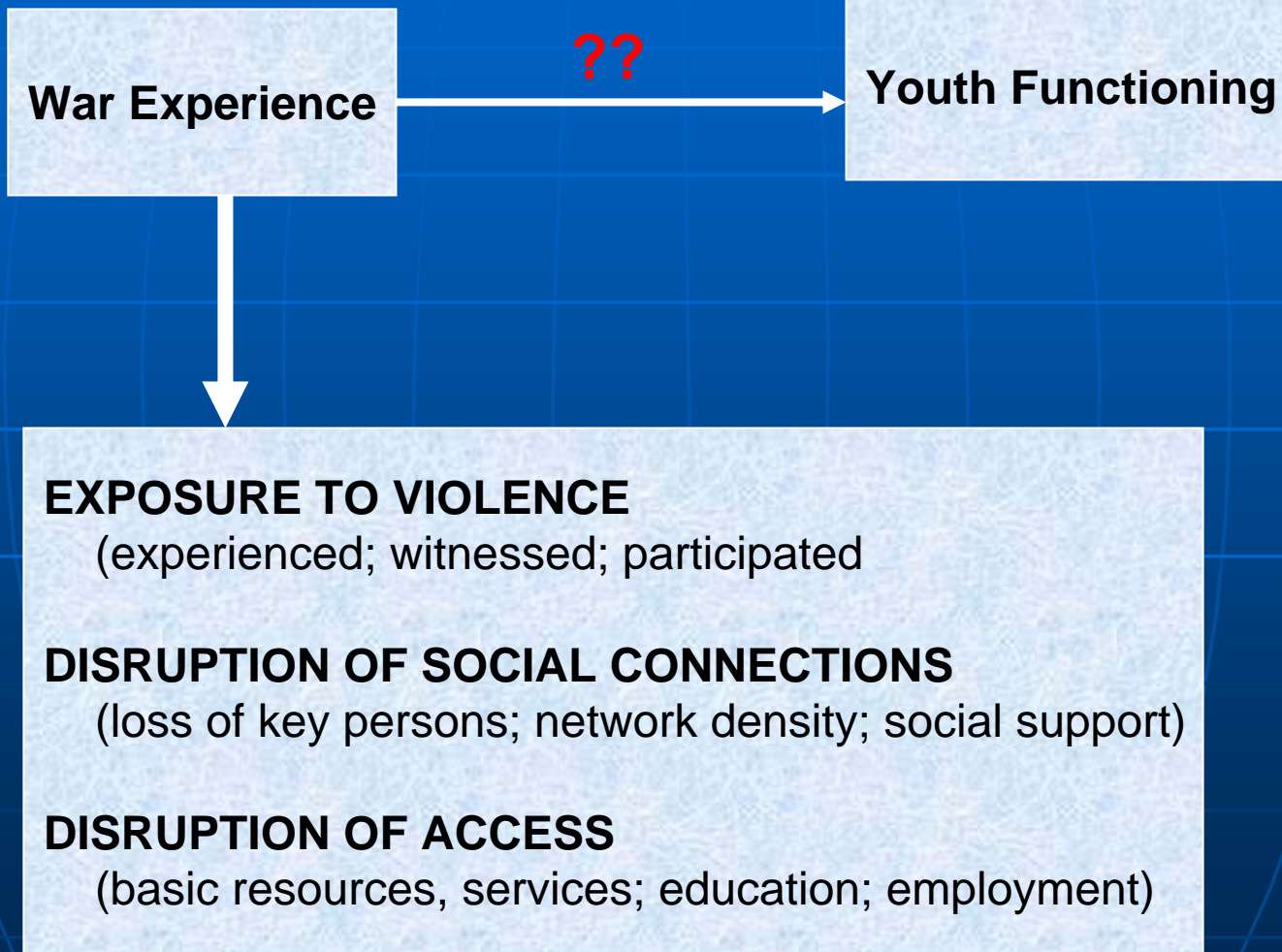
“My Serbian classmates, kids that I grew up with were carrying weapons. In one day they became complete strangers. In some ways I became a stranger to myself too. My life and the lives of my family members were in danger because of our names and religion. I never knew those things mattered, which means that I did not know many things about my self too. That is what made me a stranger to my self.”



Traditional Research Models



Enhance the Specification of Relevant Domains



Enhance the Specification of Relevant Domains

War Experience

??

Youth Functioning

SOCIAL

(relationship quality: family, peers)

CIVIC

(volunteer; religious, political participation)

STATUS ATTAINMENT

(marriage; children; education; employment)

SOCIAL NORMS

(antisocial behavior)

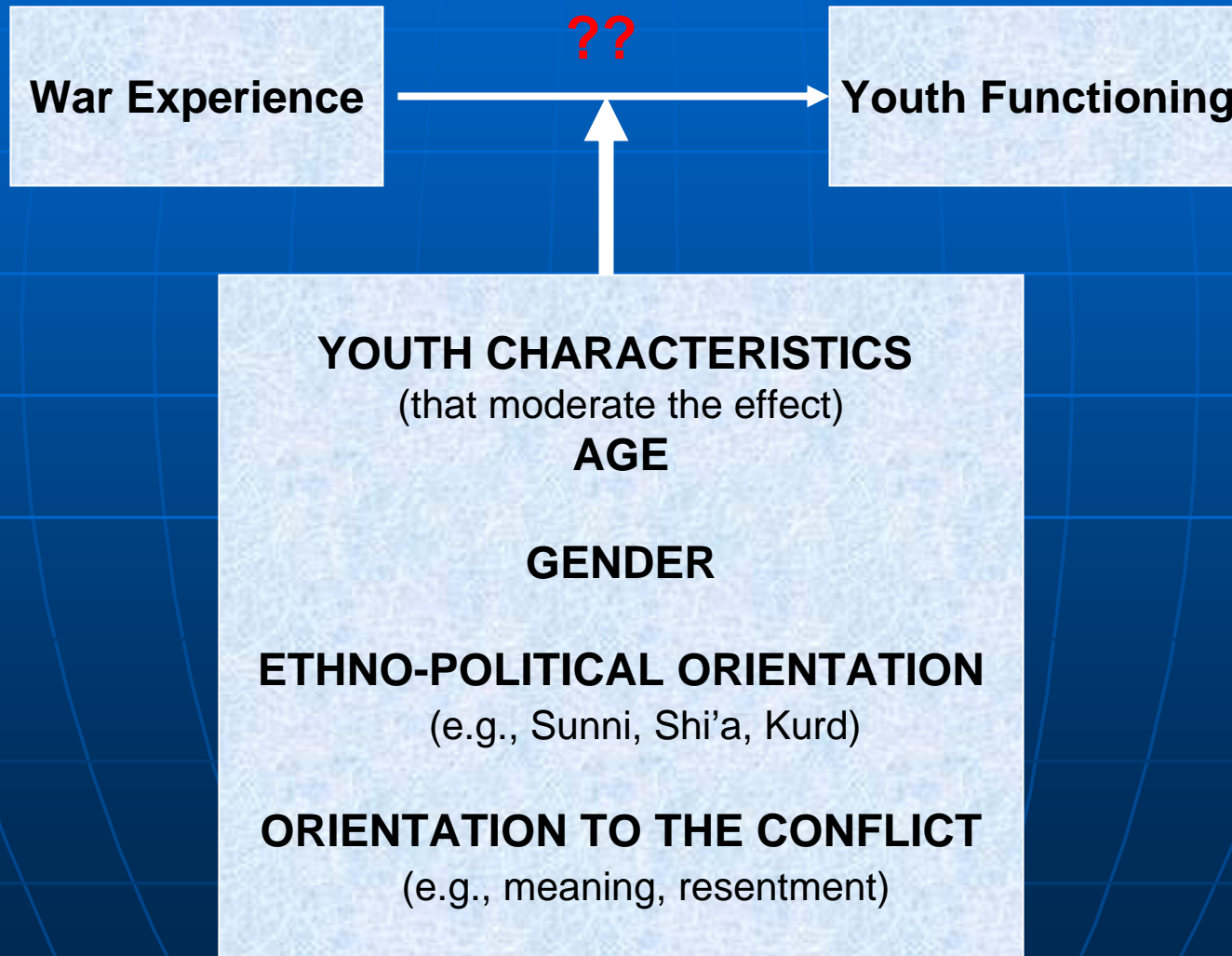
PSYCHOSOCIAL

(identity: group, collective)

PSYCHOLOGICAL

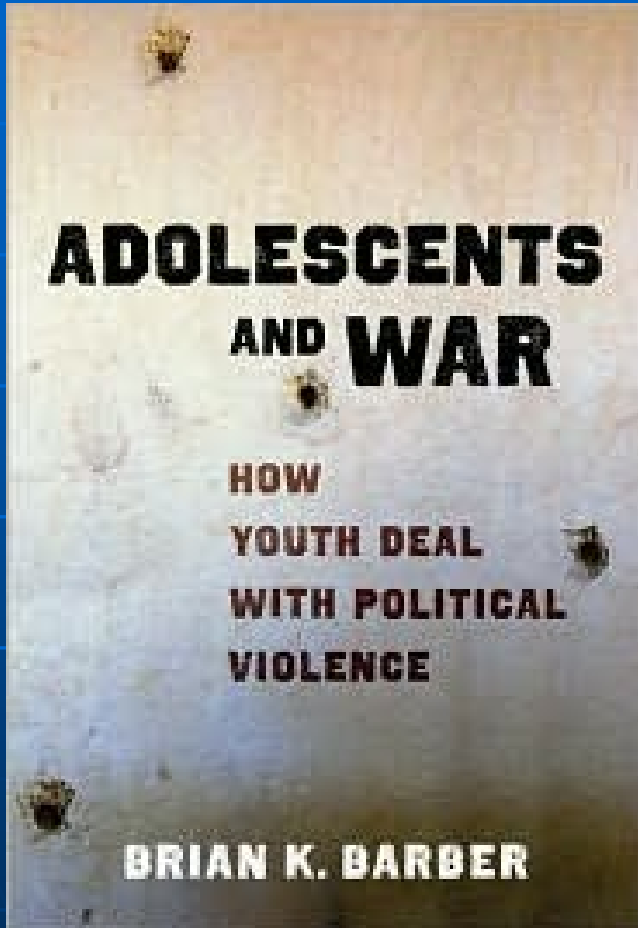
(self-efficacy; PTSD)

Enhance the Specification of Relevant Domains





- Common Limitations of Current Research
 - Not culturally informed
 - Inattention to youth perspectives
 - Inattention to female experience
 - Non-representative samples
 - Cross-sectional snapshots
 - Retrospective reports post-conflict



Contributors

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Oxford University Press, 2009



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First Major Limitation:

- The science of most research is **not yet rigorous** enough to provide reliable and representative evidence on youths' experiences with war.



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Second Major Limitation:

- **Youths'** experiences and expressed needs are rarely consulted in research designs.



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Third Major Limitation:

Researchers are not answering the questions most pressing to practitioners working on the ground to improve the lives of conflict youth.



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Goal 1

- **Fundamental purpose** is to facilitate the merging of practice and research on behalf of conflict youth.



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The GTG-YPV will consist of:

- Expert practitioners from regions of the world that have experienced substantial political violence (with particular emphasis on southern regions)
- Male and female young people who have had direct experience with conflict
- Expert researchers of conflict youth
- Experts whose work has explicitly merged practice and research

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The main purpose

Create new and reliable evidence on conflict youths' experiences by designing and conducting rigorous, representative studies of conflict youth that are explicitly guided by input of practitioners, youths, and researchers. Integrating existing practitioner and researcher efforts.



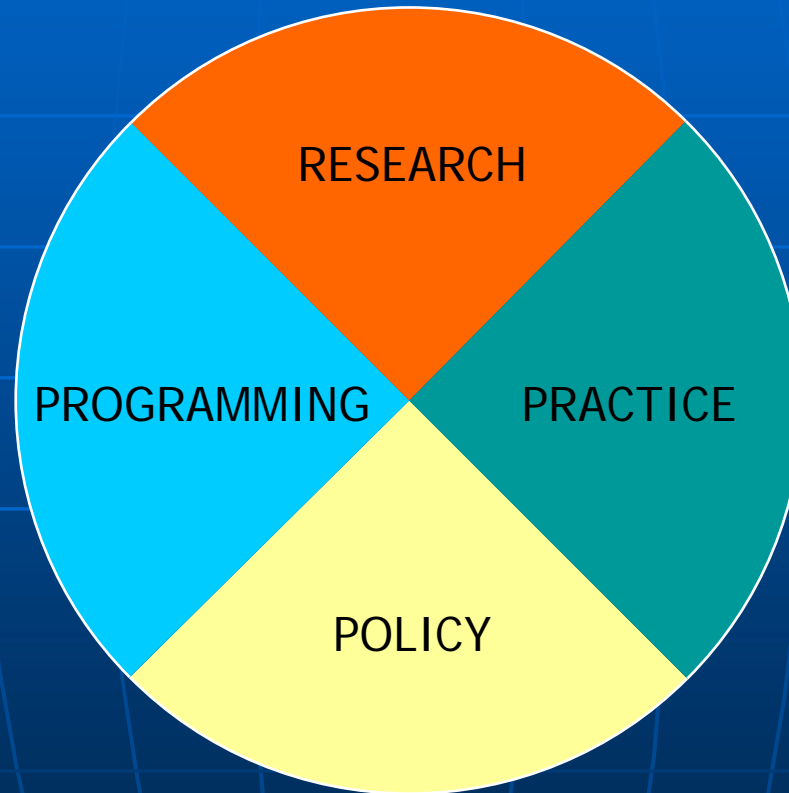
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Goal 2

To facilitate integration across
professional groups working
with you



Integrating Professional Efforts



“Forcing the Conversation”





UNDERSTANDING AND SERVING YOUTH IN ZONES OF POLITICAL CONFLICT: THE CASE OF NORTHERN IRELAND

OCTOBER 18 – 21, 2007

CAPE TOWN

SOUTH AFRICA

Hosted by

**Center for the Study of
Youth and Political Violence**

Bridging Research, Programming, Practice, & Policy



2nd Annual Conference

**FOURTEEN YEARS ON: CHALLENGES FOR
SOUTH AFRICAN YOUTH IN POST
APARTHEID SOCIETY**

OCTOBER 8 – 11, 2008

BELFAST
NORTHERN IRELAND

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2009: **Bosnian** experts will be convened in
E. Jerusalem

2010: **Palestinian & Israeli** experts will be
convened in Bosnia

2011: **Representatives of all delegations**
meet to draft a framework for how societies
can best address youth issues post-conflict



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Discussion on Goal 1: Merging Practice and REsearch

- Is it feasible?
- What are the obstacles?
- Which individual practitioners, researchers, and youth should participate in the group?
- Which regions of the world should be focused on?
- Funders?



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Discussion on Goal 2: Integrating Professional Efforts

- What further initiatives could be facilitated in these regions?
- What other regions should be investigated?
- Funders?