



BENUE STATE COMMISSION FOR PEACE AND RECONCILIATION

BENUE STATE SCHOOL PEACE CLUBS INITIATIVES

Operational & Training Manual

For

All Public and Private Secondary Schools in Benue State

Lead Implementing Partner:

GoGreen Environmental Health Sustainability Initiatives (GOEHSI)



Forward



It is with great pleasure and deep sense of responsibility that I present this **Benue State School Peace Clubs Operational and Training Manual**. Peace is not merely the absence of violence; it is the presence of justice, inclusion, dialogue, and shared responsibility. In Benue State, where our diversity is a source of strength and identity, it is imperative that we intentionally nurture a culture of peace among our young people particularly within our schools, which remain the most formative spaces for values, attitudes, and lifelong behaviours.

The establishment of School Peace Clubs across Benue State represents a proactive and preventive approach to peacebuilding. By equipping students with the skills for dialogue, empathy, non-violent conflict resolution, leadership, and responsible citizenship, we are investing in a future generation capable of managing differences constructively and contributing meaningfully to social cohesion and development.

This manual provides a standardized, practical, and inclusive framework for the formation and operation of Peace Clubs in secondary schools across all Local Government Areas of the state. It has been developed to ensure consistency, safeguarding, accountability, and sustainability, while remaining flexible enough to reflect the unique contexts of our schools and communities.

The Benue State Peace Commission acknowledges the technical leadership and commitment of **GoGreen Environmental Health Sustainability Initiatives**, appointed as the Lead Implementing Partner for the School Peace Clubs Initiative, in supporting the development of this manual and advancing youth-led peacebuilding across the state. We also recognize the vital roles of school administrators, teachers, parents, community leaders, and implementing partners whose collaboration is essential to the success of this programme.

I therefore call on all school authorities, educators, students, and stakeholders to adopt this manual as a guiding document and to work collectively in translating its principles into action. Through sustained commitment, integrity, and shared ownership, our schools can become safe spaces for learning, dialogue, and peaceful coexistence.

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Purpose of this Manual:

To provide a standardized, practical, and adoptable framework for establishing and running School Peace Clubs across Benue State ensuring consistent quality, safeguarding, inclusion, and measurable peace outcomes.

Target Group:

1. Students (JSS–SSS),
2. Teachers,
3. School Administrators,
4. PTAs,
5. Community Stakeholders

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Benue State has a rich social fabric, diverse identities, and strong communal values. However, recurring tensions often linked to resource pressures, identity-based disputes, misinformation, school-based violence, and wider community conflicts have implications for safety, learning outcomes, and youth wellbeing.

Schools are among the most strategic places to build a culture of peace early. The School Peace Clubs Initiative is designed as a preventive and developmental programme that equips students with life skills, communication tools, conflict transformation practices, and civic values. Peace Clubs also strengthen the relationship between schools and communities through constructive dialogue and youth-led action.

1.2 Rationale for Peace Clubs in Schools

Peace Clubs help:

1. Reduce bullying, intimidation, discrimination, and school-based violence
2. Improve student relationships, learning environments, and discipline outcomes
3. Build skills for dialogue, empathy, leadership, and non-violent problem-solving
4. Strengthen inclusion of girls, students with disabilities, and marginalized groups
5. Link peacebuilding to responsible environmental behavior and community service

1.3 Intended Users of this Manual

This manual is designed for: - Benue State Commission for Peace and Reconciliation, programme coordinators (state and LGA levels) - School principals and management teams - Teacher Coordinators/Patrons - Student Peace Club leaders and members - Accredited implementing partners and facilitators

1.4 How to Use the Manual

Use Sections 6–8 to establish and train Peace Clubs.

Use Sections 9–12 to manage conflict cases responsibly.

2. Policy & Institutional Framework

2.1 Alignment

The School Peace Clubs Initiative aligns with: - Benue State peacebuilding and social cohesion architecture, the Benue State durable solutions, Child Rights Act and child safeguarding standards - Sustainable Development Goals: **SDG 16 (Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions)**

2.2 Programme Governance

State Level: BSCPR provides strategic leadership, standards, coordination, and quality assurance.

LGA Level: An LGA Peace Clubs Coordination Team (led by BSCPR focal points where applicable) provides supervision, mentoring, school support visits, and consolidation of reports.

School Level: Peace Clubs operate under School Management with a Teacher Coordinator and Student Executive.

Implementing Partners

Where partners are engaged, they must: - Follow BSCPR guidelines and approved tools - Comply with safeguarding and data protection requirements - Use standard reporting templates and indicators

3. Theory of Change and Programme Logic

3.1 Theory of Change

If students receive structured peace education, practice dialogue and mediation, and lead inclusive community/service actions supported by teachers, school leadership, parents, and BSCPR then school environments become safer and more inclusive, and young people contribute to reducing conflict drivers in their communities.

3.2 Programme Outcomes

Outcome 1: Increased student knowledge and positive attitudes toward peace and inclusion.

Outcome 2: Reduced school-based conflicts (bullying, intimidation, discrimination).

Outcome 3: Improved peer-to-peer and student-teacher relationships.

Outcome 4: Strengthened school-community collaboration on peace and civic action.

Outcome 5: Students demonstrate leadership through sustained peace and environment activities.

3.3 Output

1. Regular peace club sessions conducted
2. Peer mediators trained and active
3. Inter-school dialogues and peace events held
4. Safeguarding referrals handled appropriately
5. MEAL reports submitted quarterly

4. Definitions and Guiding Principles

4.1 Key Definitions

Peacebuilding: Actions that reduce drivers of conflict and strengthen systems for coexistence.

Conflict Transformation: Turning conflict from destructive to constructive outcomes.

Peer Mediation: A guided process where trained students support peers to resolve minor disputes.

Safeguarding: Preventing harm and responding appropriately to any concerns about abuse or exploitation.

GEDSI: Ensuring meaningful participation and safety for all—girls, boys, students with disabilities, and marginalized groups.

4.2 Guiding Principles

Do-No-Harm: Activities must not expose students or communities to risk.

Child-Centred: Safety, dignity, and consent are non-negotiable.

Inclusion: Gender balance and disability inclusion in leadership and participation.

Neutrality: Peace Clubs are non-partisan and non-discriminatory.

Confidentiality: Sensitive matters must be handled discreetly.

Accountability: Clear reporting lines and responsible documentation.

Local Ownership: Schools and communities shape priorities within the standard framework.

5. Peace Club Model and Programme Pillars

5.1 Programme Pillars

1. Peace Education & Life Skills
2. Peer Mediation & Conflict Prevention
3. Civic Responsibility & Social Cohesion
4. Gender, Disability & Inclusion
5. Environment and Climate Action for Peace
6. Sports, Arts, and Culture for Peace

5.2 Minimum Standards for Every School Peace Club

Each Peace Club must have: -

1. A Teacher Coordinator and Student Executive
2. A meeting schedule (minimum: twice monthly)
3. A register and minutes book
4. A safeguarding awareness orientation
5. At least one peace activity and one inclusion activity per term
6. Quarterly report submission through the LGA structure

6. Establishing a Peace Club: Step-by-Step

Step 1: School Engagement and Approval

1. BSCPR/LGA team meets the principal and management.
2. Explain objectives, roles, and safeguarding expectations.
3. Obtain written approval and designate a Teacher Coordinator.

Step 2: Sensitisation of Students and Staff

1. Conduct a brief assembly talk or class-based sensitisation.
2. Explain what Peace Clubs are and what they are not (non-political, non-religious).
3. Encourage gender-balanced membership and inclusion of students with disabilities.

Step 3: Membership Registration

1. Voluntary sign-up using a simple registration form.
2. Encourage representation across classes/streams.

Step 4: Election/Selection of Student Executive

1. Transparent process guided by Teacher Coordinator.
2. Ensure at least **40–50% female participation** in leadership (where feasible).

Step 5: Induction and Code of Conduct

1. Orientation on values: respect, confidentiality, inclusion.
2. Sign Code of Conduct (students + teachers).

Step 6: Training and Kick-Off

1. Deliver the core training modules (Section 8).
2. Agree on a term plan and first set of activities.

Step 7: Registration with LGA Peace Clubs Coordination Team

1. Submit club details: executive list, coordinator, meeting schedule.

7. Governance, Roles, and Accountability

7.1 State Level (BSCPR)

Responsibilities:

1. Approve policy direction and standards
2. Validate training materials and tools
3. Coordinate state-wide events and learning forums
4. Provide oversight on safeguarding compliance

7.2 LGA Level Coordination Team

Responsibilities:

1. Mentor school coordinators
2. Conduct supportive supervision visits (at least once per term)
3. Consolidate LGA reports and escalate issues appropriately

7.3 School Management

Responsibilities:

1. Provide safe space and time for meetings
2. Integrate peace club activities into co-curricular calendar
3. Support referrals and disciplinary processes when required

7.4 Teacher Coordinator

Responsibilities:

1. Facilitate or supervise sessions
2. Ensure safeguarding, inclusion, and safe participation
3. Maintain club records and reporting
4. Support peer mediators and manage escalation

7.5 Student Executive

Responsibilities:

1. Plan and lead activities
2. Encourage participation and inclusion
3. Keep minutes, registers, and activity logs
4. Promote peaceful conduct and respectful communication

8. Training Curriculum and Session Guides

8.1 Training Approach

1. Participatory learning (group work, role plays, debates)
2. Safe learning environment (no shaming, no forced disclosures)
3. Skills practice (listening, negotiation, mediation)

8.2 Core Modules (Minimum Package)

Each module includes objectives, time, materials, and activities.

Module 1: Introduction to Peace and Peacebuilding

Objectives - Define peace (positive vs negative peace) - Understand why peace matters in schools - Identify behaviours that build or break peace

Activities - "What peace looks like" brainstorm - Group agreement: classroom/club peace rules - Reflection: one action I will take this week

Module 2: Values, Identity, and Respect for Diversity

Objectives - Explore diversity (ethnic, religious, gender, ability) - Recognize stereotypes and how they fuel conflict

Activities - "Identity circles" exercise (safe and voluntary) - Myth vs Fact discussion - Commitment statements on inclusion

Module 3: Understanding Conflict

Objectives - Define conflict and recognize triggers - Differentiate constructive vs destructive conflict

Activities - Conflict triggers mapping (school-based examples) - Conflict escalation ladder

Module 4: Communication Skills and Emotional Regulation

Objectives - Practice active listening and "I-statements" - Learn calming techniques for anger and fear

Activities - Listening pairs exercise - "I feel... when... because..." practice - Breathing and pause techniques

Module 5: Conflict Analysis Tools

Tools - Conflict Tree - Stakeholder mapping - ABC Triangle (Attitudes, Behaviours, Context)

Activities - Group conflict tree using a real (non-sensitive) school example - Identify entry points for solutions

Module 6: Peer Mediation Basics

Objectives - Understand mediation role and boundaries - Practice the mediation steps safely

Activities - Role play: mediator, party A, party B, observer - Feedback using observation checklist

Module 7: Citizenship, Rights, Responsibilities, and School Safety

Objectives - Understand rights and responsibilities - Promote anti-bullying and safe reporting

Activities - Rights/responsibilities matching game - School safety mapping (safe/unsafe spaces)

Module 8: Gender, Inclusion, and Safe Spaces

Objectives - Promote respectful gender relations - Encourage girls' leadership and disability inclusion

Activities - Barrier identification and solutions - Inclusive leadership commitments

Module 9: Environment and Climate Action for Peace

Objectives - Link environmental harm to conflict risks - Promote stewardship actions in school

Activities - “Environment-conflict link” story cards - Plan a clean-up/tree planting campaign

Module 10: Planning, Documentation, and Reporting

Objectives - Create a term plan - Learn registers, minutes, activity reporting

Activities - Develop a term activity calendar - Practice filling templates

9. Conflict Analysis & Practical Tools

9.1 Conflict Tree (Detailed Guide)

Purpose: Identify root causes and visible effects.

Steps

1. Write the conflict problem on the trunk.
2. Identify root causes (roots): poverty, discrimination, misunderstanding, peer pressure, rumours.
3. Identify effects (branches): fights, exclusion, fear, poor learning.
4. Identify solutions: what addresses the roots? what limits the branches?

Facilitator Notes - Use non-sensitive examples; do not expose individuals. - Avoid political or inflammatory identity framing.

9.2 Stakeholder Mapping

Stakeholders may include: - School: principal, teachers, prefects, counsellors - Community: parents, youth leaders, faith/traditional leaders - Institutions: BSPPC, education authorities, child protection services

9.3 “Hot Moments” and De-escalation

1. Pause and breathe
2. Separate parties safely
3. Call a teacher
4. Use calm language
5. Avoid crowds and public shaming

10. Peer Mediation and Referral Pathways

What Peer Mediation Can Handle (Minor Disputes)

Examples: - Misunderstandings, name-calling, friendship disputes - Minor classroom disputes - Non-violent disagreements

What Peer Mediation Must NOT Handle (Escalate Immediately)

1. Sexual abuse or exploitation concerns
2. Physical violence causing injury
3. Threats involving weapons
4. Severe bullying/extortion
5. Any case involving adults harming students
6. Any issue where a child is unsafe

Standard Mediation Steps (School Level)

1. Preparation: confirm both parties agree to mediation.
2. Ground Rules: respect, no interruptions, confidentiality.
3. Story Sharing: each party speaks; mediator listens.
4. Identify Needs/Interests: what each person needs to feel safe.
5. Generate Options: brainstorm solutions.
6. Agreement: choose realistic actions, timeline, follow-up.
7. Follow-Up: check after 1 week.

Escalation and Referral

1. **First point:** Teacher Coordinator / School Counsellor
2. **School management:** Principal / designated safeguarding focal person
3. **LGA:** LGA Peace Clubs Coordination Team
4. **State:** BSPC safeguarding/technical desk (as designated)

11. Safeguarding, Child Protection, and Ethics

11.1 Safeguarding Principles

1. Best interest of the child
2. Confidentiality with limits (safety overrides secrecy)
3. Informed participation and non-coercion
4. Survivor-centred approach

11.2 Code of Conduct (Minimum Standards)

1. All Peace Club facilitators and leaders must:
2. Treat every student with dignity and respect
3. Never use humiliating punishment
4. Never request personal favours or money
5. Never engage in romantic/sexual relationships with students
6. Report concerns immediately through approved channels

11.3 Managing Disclosures Safely

If a student reports harm:

1. Listen calmly; do not interrogate.
2. Thank them for speaking up.
3. Explain what you must do to keep them safe.

4. Report immediately to safeguarding focal person.
5. Document only essential facts using the incident form.

11.4 Confidentiality and Data Protection

1. Keep registers and incident reports secure.
2. Share only on a need-to-know basis.
3. Do not circulate sensitive information on WhatsApp.

12. Gender, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI)

12.1 Inclusion Commitments

1. Balanced participation of girls and boys
2. Leadership opportunities for girls
3. Meaningful inclusion of students with disabilities
4. Zero tolerance for discrimination

12.2 Practical Inclusion Measures

1. Use accessible meeting venues
2. Encourage peer support and buddy systems
3. Avoid stigmatizing language
4. Provide separate safe spaces when needed (e.g., girls' mentorship circles)

12.3 Preventing Gender-Based Harassment in Schools

Peace Clubs should promote: -

1. Respectful relationships
2. Safe reporting,
3. Anti-bullying norms
4. Student-led awareness activities

13. Community Engagement and Stakeholder Coordination

Students are influenced by home and community norms. Community engagement strengthens legitimacy and sustainability. Minimum Engagement Expectations is One PTA/community briefing per term (where feasible), invite community role models for peace talks, coordinate with LGA peace structures when running inter-school events. Hold inter-School Peace Platforms, LGA Peace Clubs Forum (quarterly), inter-school debates/drama competitions, Peace & Citizenship Week activities