

Report

Diaspora-oriented Peacebuilding Training



21 – 25 September 2015

The Hague Academy of Local Governance
The Hague

Acknowledgements

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Introduction

Background

This report is the second of three planned Peacebuilding training workshops hosted through the Diaspora Academy project. The Diaspora Academy (DA) project was launched in May 2014 by the African Diaspora Policy Centre (ADPC) in cooperation with The Hague Academy for Local Governance (THA) and The Network University (TNU). The overall objective of the DA is to upgrade and strengthen professional skills and competences of diaspora organizations in Europe engaged in improving the social and economic conditions and communal harmony in their countries of origin.

Within the project capacity building for diaspora organizations focuses on three thematic areas: Peacebuilding, Advocacy & Lobbying and Smart Partnerships/Networking. The project will offer 3 peacebuilding workshops in total which will train 10 diaspora organisations per training. The Diaspora Academy project will run until April 2017.

Welcome Remarks

Welcome remarks were provided by Constance Formson, ADPC's Programme Coordinator who welcomed participants on behalf of the Director Dr. Awil Mohamoud. In her remarks, she emphasized the importance of the training workshop which was to equip the participants with knowledge, skills and tools to enhance their ability to contribute effectively towards peacebuilding and conflict resolution in their respective home countries. Elma Jooste also provided introductory remarks and welcomed participants on behalf of The Hague Academy for Local Governance. In conclusion Jasmin Nordien, lead trainer for the workshop welcomed participants and took them through the programme overview, the course contents as well as the objectives.

Aims

The workshop was aimed at strengthening the peace-making capacity of diaspora peace activists/brokers, and supporting them in the application of the gained skills in peace-building activities that they are involved in their countries of origin. By increasing the peacebuilding capacities of diaspora peace activists, it is expected that diaspora interventions contributing to peace and social stability in their countries of origin will become more effective and enduring. Acquiring adequate conflict transformation techniques, skills and practical tools will enable diaspora peace activists and their counterparts in the home countries to operate more efficiently in their peace making activities. This would also help to widen the number of peace-building actors in the homelands by incorporating the diaspora in the process in a more structured and formal manner.

Target group

The target beneficiaries of the training were primarily African diaspora organizations, organized professional associations, groups and individuals in Europe active or interested in areas of peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction in their countries of origin. In particular, preference was given to diaspora peace activists originating from the Great Lakes and the Horn

of Africa regions. The workshop consisted of ten participants¹ with an equal gender balance (5 women and men).

Training Description

Training Approach

An elicitive participatory methodology was used. The elicitive participatory approach is highly participatory and assumes all participants are resource persons who bring their knowledge, experience and skills to bear in the training and group learning process. The approach focuses on collaboration and learning together while developing idea(s) into concrete plans, tapping into the groups' collective wisdom and experience to shape and sharpen the plans.

Another important aspect of the methodology is the medium of communication for the training. Even though English was the medium of communication for the training, participants were encouraged and allowed to make their contributions in their own language with the information then translated into English. In this way, participants were able to articulate their thoughts and experiences more confidently and in a comfortable manner. Participants were also given the chance to facilitate select sessions, in particular during the presentation of the case studies, as a way of improving their presentation skills. Feedback on presentations and discussions was a key aspect of the training.

Gender Balance of Participants: The gender balanced nature of the group proved to be essential aspect of the training. In particular it became very useful during discussions where participants offered different gender perspectives, especially during the gender and peacebuilding sessions. Many of participants commended the ADPC for this balanced selection.

Reflections and Feedbacks: Another important observation was feedback, which was timely. Participants were also given ample time to reflect on issues discussed and then share with the group if they were willing to. This enabled them to assimilate and contextualize the information and knowledge provided.

Case Studies: Participants expressed their delight over the positive impact of the case studies. Essentially, the case studies demonstrated the effective application of the various tools and strategies offered during the course of the training. Participants testified of the level of inspiration that they had from the presentation and interactions with the presenters.

Networking: The issue of networking was also an integral part of the training. Apart from participants sharing important contacts among themselves, the respective resource persons also provided very important contacts and information on strategic partners on matters ranging from peacebuilding, donors and financial supports, amongst others.

¹ The complete list of participants are provided in the Appendix

Training Content

The training covered four main modules as outlined below:

Peacebuilding discourse: This module introduced diaspora members to various aspects of peacebuilding processes. Within this module peacebuilding concepts, approaches, frameworks and interventions, were addressed. The module also addressed diaspora in the context of peacebuilding.

Conflict and stakeholder analysis: This module focused on how to analyse the causes, actors, and dynamics of conflict as part of being able to provide context specific responses. The module covered conflict analysis and tools; stakeholder analysis and tools and the role of the Diaspora.

Interventions and skills: This module provided participants with the opportunity to develop their own Action Plans. In doing so, the modules covered issues like problem solving: process and skills and; presentation and feedback skills.

Key issues: This module provided participants with a sense of the issues to consider during post conflict development. The module focused discussion on economic development and peacebuilding and, integration of gender into peacebuilding.

Strategic Role of Diaspora as Peacemakers and Soft Power

By Constance Formson



This session underscored the unique position and the strategic role diaspora hold in the context of peacebuilding in their homeland. The session stressed the shift of the negative perception about diaspora in the past, to a positive one which is evidenced in the socio-economic contributions by the diaspora toward their homeland.

Moreover, the issue of power and its different forms were explained as participants gave their own conceptions of power.

In particular soft power, which is the ability to get things done through persuasion rather than force, remained a key part of the presentation. Using different case studies and world renowned persons, like Nelson Mandela and Mahatma Ghandi, the session demonstrated the soft power that the diaspora wields and how it can be utilized in their peacebuilding interventions.

Information was also underscored as an important aspect of soft power. In this regard social media was cited as an influential tool in facilitating transfer of soft power across space and time. Other sources of soft power include education, diplomacy, government, cultural heritage, business innovation as well as networks.

Challenges and dilemmas of Diaspora as Peacebuilders

- Lack of adequate financial support
- Lack of recognition
- Division between diaspora groups
- Hijack of projects and visions by bigger organizations
- Misuse of funds
- Policies of home and host countries that inhibits peace interventions
- Bridging the gap between elders and youth among diaspora members

Summary of discussions and Lessons Learnt

The issue of interest was noted as having substantial influence in the use of power, be it hard or soft. The discussions focused on making the distinction between soft power and hard power (military power), was made clear. Furthermore, even though soft power cannot be said to be positive or negative, it should be differentiated from manipulation.



A cartoon that articulates Soft power versus Hard power

Discussions focused on the fact that the use of soft power should yield mutually beneficial outcomes. In conclusion soft power was linked to leadership in that leaders who lead by example have greater influence.

The Role of the Diaspora

By Jasmin Nordien

The session discussed the wide range of opportunities and resources available to the diaspora which they can capitalize on towards peacebuilding in their homelands. These include, but are not limited to entrepreneurship and investments skills; access to the international community; financial resources and mobilization of funds; links with homeland governments; and knowledge of the local context.

However, while working towards peacebuilding in the homelands, diaspora members must be cognizant that they are carriers of values from another society; that they often represent 'success'; that they are in positions of power; and have insider-outsider perspectives etc.

Role of Diaspora as peacebuilders

- Capacity building and training (e.g. in areas like leadership, civic and peace education)
- Global vision – different perspectives
- Economic resources (investments/entrepreneurship)
- Lobbying/Advocacy (e.g. peace negotiations)
- Knowledge transfer
- Mediation
- Influence culture

Conflict and Stakeholder Analysis Tools

By Jasmin Nordien

This module was intended to expose and provide participants with skills in analyzing conflicts to enable them to contribute effectively to its resolution towards peace. It begun with participants giving their own conceptions of conflict, the causes and kind of feelings experienced during a period of conflict. It was understood that theoretically, conflict is an expression of difference, and that it is neither good nor bad. It is one's response to conflict that makes it positive or negative. In the same way, violence is just one way of responding to a conflict situation and comes in different forms. Conflict analysis is not a neutral activity. It is a contested issue and can be approached in ways that do not cause harm to the conflicting parties.



A good understanding of the causes of conflicts (structural, proximate, triggers etc.), the various actors or stakeholders² which impacts the shape of conflicts; and the dynamics are very critical in conflict analysis. Participants were also encouraged to be creative in developing their tools which would best address their context. In other words, while the existing conflict analysis model or tools³ of conflict analysis are important, they may not necessarily address every conflict situation. It is also urgent to examine the respective stakeholders in a conflict situation using existing tools⁴, but also creating new ones that fit better in a particular context. In doing this, one must be cognizant of the interests (needs) and positions (demands) of the various actors; as well as the perspectives (location) and perceptions (experiences).

Summary of discussions and Lessons Learnt



There are opportunities as well as challenges in conflict and individuals possess the ability to shape conflict positively or negatively. Language is the expression of people's perception of reality of the world. Language develops in response to a group's experience, in the same way conflict is experienced.

However, different cultures experience conflict differently, for instance a participant shared that "Hakuna Matata" (no worries) makes reference to peace in Swahili in Southern African countries, however for the Congolese it signals a readiness to fight.

² Actors/Stakeholders differ in terms of their interests, objectives,

³ It includes the problem tree, ice-berg approach, need-creed-greed approach, etc.

⁴ Examples include the pyramid, spheres and types of actors, conflict map etc.

It is imperative for the diaspora to identify their sphere of influence in which their actions can hugely be felt. Diaspora should invest in building leaders or growing leadership. This led to the discussion on the fact that issues of identity and belonging need to be addressed. For instance, who is an African and who qualifies to be an African. How do Africans receive other Africans of different color or race? Even though people usually identify with those they share the same culture with, it is important to approach it in a way that doesn't offend or create a situation of "us" vs "them". Reflections were also understood as a powerful tool during conflict analysis in that it makes us conscious of our own perceptions and potential biases. It allows us to respect and understand the lens through which other actors are approaching the same situation, for instance, the conception of peace from the different parties. Furthermore, the session also highlighted the urgency for diaspora members to separate peacebuilding interventions from their personal feelings. Thus, there is need for space to deal with emerging emotions in order to allow for more objective conflict analysis.



The session also highlighted the notion that diaspora (especially those from conflict areas) is effectively predisposed to be conflict sensitive which they can capitalize on in analyzing conflicts in a more constructive way. It was also understood that, imposing peace on others may not be the best approach because it does not necessarily address the main issues and sometimes may lack measures to consolidate peace in the long run. In cases where it is imposed, conflicts may resurface and even with more violence. However, imposing peace may depend on issues like the level or stage of conflict, the causes, conflicting parties etc.

Peacebuilding Approaches, Framework, and Interventions

By Jasmin Nordien

The session started with the concept of peace from the perspective of the human security paradigm which places "human" at the centre of security. This is opposed to the traditional definition of security which is shaped according to the needs of the state. Again, the state is the



only actor allowed to use violence to protect its territory. Power was demonstrated as an essential element towards peacebuilding and conflict resolution. Particularly, the issue of power relations needs to be addressed in achieving fairness and justice.

Participants were also enlightened on the different approaches to peace and conflict, with language as an integral part of the variations. For instance, in term of peace, we have peacemaking, peacebuilding and peacekeeping etc. Peacebuilding addresses structural issues, past grievances and long-term

relationships.

In terms of conflict one could be looking at conflict resolution, conflict management etc. The session also pointed to the dynamic nature of armed conflicts in terms of the root causes, actors and the “battle field” which has moved beyond the state territory. Furthermore, the presentation underlined the role of states towards peacebuilding and conflict resolution as mandated by the UN 1992 Agenda for Peace.

Case Study 1 : Ben Mussanzi wa Mussangu’s Story

Ben Mussanzi wa Mussangu shared his peacebuilding experience via skype. In his session he began by introducing participants to the extent and causes of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). He also underscored the differences among groups of people, citing the over 400 different ethnicities, which affected the conflict adversely.



Ben demonstrated how he transformed his vision of peace into reality, in the face of financial and life-threatening challenges. The presentation also highlighted the relevance of training in enhancing the capacity of diaspora to contribute to peace.

Summary of discussions and Lessons Learnt

The session demonstrated how a vision of peace could be transformed into an actual peace project, even when people do not believe in it. Thus, one of the main challenge is to have the courage to take the first step towards that unknown path to peace. Another main challenge is the lack of financial resources. Again diaspora participation in peacebuilding comes with certain risks which peacemakers must be aware of. Peacemakers normally face life threatening situations which sometimes results in their relocation to other geographical locations, as exemplified by the case studies.

However, in spite of the challenges, there are many opportunities available which could be accessed with open-mindedness. Everyone can make a difference and can start from anywhere. The diaspora should perceive the current place of residence as the most important point to initiate their vision of peace.

Ben perceived peace as spiritual activity and hence urged participants to seek divine guidance in exploring which area of peace one could pursue, since there are many people involved in different areas of peace. Ben offered practical advice and networking opportunities



to participants who were also involved in similar peace projects. However, he indicated that, instead of begging which is characteristic of some diaspora, diaspora should learn how to give, support and finance their own projects. Ben underscored the impacts of his peace interventions in DRC and these include the fact that people from different ethnicities and backgrounds in the homeland are increasingly understanding the need for peace and are doing things together; and women are gradually being given the space they needed to contribute meaningfully to society. He also mentioned how the youth are inspired by their interventions through a constant touch on social media.

Peacebuilding and Gender

By Merle Gosewinkel



This session provided insights into non-violence approaches to conflict situations, with a focus on a non-violent approach (Active Non-Violence ANV) which places respect for human dignity at the centre. Participants were enlightened on the key aspects of the approach which includes, analysis of systems to identify real issues; being proactive rather than reactive; and including all relevant actors etc. Another key aspect of the approach is identifying and tackling the respective power actors linked with a particular conflict.

In particular, the session also demonstrated the relevance of gender-sensitive approach to ANV (GSANV) in addressing gender-based challenges in peacebuilding. The GSANV approach ensures that men and women are equally involved in peace processes, including the analysis of issues, planning and organization of programmes and events; logistical issues; and roles and responsibilities etc.

Summary of discussions and Lessons Learnt

ANV is not only about using the safest way, but also the most appropriate way that encourages maximum participation of men and women. Strategies should also take into consideration the expected reactions from different actors and the adaptation mechanisms. The session also highlighted the fact that women can also be violent, just like men. However, it depends on the circumstances, for instance, many forms of violence are in reaction to violence. As part of measures to ensure that actual empowerment and participation of women in leadership, diaspora women were encouraged to organize and groom themselves as leaders; make use of other women in leadership positions, e.g. First Ladies; and establish healthy relationships among themselves.



The media or social media as a tool may not be positive or negative in itself, but it depends on how it is used. Even though it is effective in achieving some ends, the right people from the media must be identified in order to get the right message across. The session also covered the

need of addressing issues of masculinity and violence in cultural and childhood practices which reinforce gender inequalities. Furthermore, it was emphasized that the best approach to gender issues should not only focus on women, but also men should be equally factored into programmes and activities.

Case Study 2: Stephanie Mbanzendore's story

Stephanie's presentation showcased practical dimensions of women's involvement in peacebuilding in the homelands. As a conflict induced migrant, the presentation highlighted the transformation of her intrinsic desire to contribute to peace into actual peacebuilding projects. Some of the initial steps include the need to mobilise Burundian women in the Netherlands towards a common voice before engaging the homeland.



Stephanie underscored the need of winning the support of select political actors, for instance, the First Lady and the Minister for Gender, and their impacts on their peacebuilding activities. They also undertook several capacity building and empowerment activities in areas like domestic violence, gender based violence, and self-esteem. A key aspect of this capacity was to have separate trainings for men and women, before a joint training. This allowed for effective handling of gender based issues which are deeply rooted in cultural practices.

Summary of discussions and Lessons Learnt

Women's roles in peacebuilding can clearly be seen from the family, in that the woman have to be strong enough to keep the family together. It was also indicated that the issue of addressing poverty in homelands should aim at exposing the local community to mechanisms that sharpens their creative and innovative skills. The discussions also highlighted the dynamic nature of conflicts, so that, for instance, in the case of Burundi, the current conflict situation has more to do with power relations, while the previous conflict had ethnicity at the centre.



The survival of the peace practitioner is always important and therefore it is important to analyse their safety when physically present in conflict areas. In consolidating financial support for project initiation, running and sustainability, it was always important to have physical evidence or testimonies of success which plays a critical role in convincing donors.

For instance, Stephanie pointed out that, with the establishment of the Center for Peace training and the library in Burundi, her efforts at getting the support of other actors was enhanced. This led to the issue of ownership and sustainability where she was able to lobby the local government to own the training centre and even recruited library staff

on the government's payroll. The session also demonstrated how Stephanie moved from her initial thinking to have trainings only women, and moved towards inclusion of men as a critical part of being able to effect positive change for women. Consequently, she underscored that male involvement in the discussion on women in peacebuilding is important for more effective solutions.

Peacebuilding through Economic Development

By Connie Formson



The session highlighted the links between peacebuilding, conflict, and development. For instance, conflicts impede development and peace is a necessary condition for development. An enabling environment, for instance, the right policy framework for engaging actors in post conflict situation is necessary. Thus, the session demonstrated the need and ways of incorporating development mechanisms into peacebuilding strategies. This is to tackle poverty which is one of the main causes of conflict.

The session also emphasized the comparative advantage of the diaspora towards development in post conflict situations, mainly through “solidarity networks” and informal economic systems. Particularly the session demonstrated the urgency in exploring how the diaspora can contribute through employment (e.g. through remittances, tools, entrepreneurial skills, etc.), education, and investment opportunities.

Summary of discussions and Lessons Learnt

The session acknowledged the challenge that the diaspora face is ensuring that, goods which are transported to homelands communities are relevant to the needs of communities, and that the necessary conditions to utilize these goods are in place. Participants were urged to have a good understanding of homeland systems and operations and more importantly feasible projects to undertake. The session also demonstrated that positive link between countries (e.g. Mexico, Israel, China, India, Kenya etc.) with comprehensive policy and regulatory frameworks for diaspora issues and their respective socio-economic benefits.

Conclusion and Way Forward

It was a successful week of knowledge impartation, skills acquisition and sharing of experiences in peacebuilding. To a large extent, the workshop was successful and achieved the following outcomes:

- It provided the space for critical reflection on the concepts of peace and peacebuilding; deeper awareness of the potential strategic role of the diaspora as peace promoters in the diaspora and countries of origin; and insight into the dynamics, concepts and various approaches to conflict transformation tailored to their specific peacebuilding needs

- The workshop also provided knowledge of practical tools to contribute to the process of conflict transformation. In this way their capacity to operate more efficiently in their peacebuilding endeavours was enhanced.
- Moreover, the training provided the platform for strategic partnership and networks necessary for an effective peacebuilding operation.
- Lessons and practical approaches from the case studies provided much needed inspiration to transform the passion and vision of peace into reality, thereby saving and improving lives.
- The workshop also resulted in the production of Back Home Action Plans (BHAP)⁵ by the participants. This was an outcome of applying the theoretical, practical and analytical tools in conflict resolution and peace building discussed in the training. Particularly, BHAPs were also shaped by respective backgrounds, skills and experiences of the participants through constructive criticisms, recommendations, and instant feedback.

Follow up Actions

As part of the follow-up actions of this training, the ADPC will monitor the progress of the BHAP developed by the participants. It is expected that participants will continue to work on it from their various places of residence, but also with their diaspora associations. The ADPC and the lead trainer expressed their willingness to provide follow up support where possible. As part of maintaining contacts and furthering the exchange of information and ideas among diaspora members, a social media account (Facebook group) is to be created for the participants. Within this group participants of the previous training in April 2015 will be invited to join in order to widen the network base of diaspora peace practitioners.

Recommendations

As indicated above the training was successful to a large extent. However select recommendations were made to improve future trainings. These include the inclusion of fundraising component in the course content. Participants indicated the challenges confronting the diaspora in mobilizing funds to undertake projects. Alternatively, the ADPC could organize a training workshop focused on building capacity of diaspora members in mobilizing funds. The training also revealed that the lack of a database of African Diaspora organisations and their respective projects, especially in the home lands is a huge challenge towards effective coordination, networking and sharing of knowledge. It was therefore suggested that the ADPC could consider setting up such a database.

⁵ The BHAP is a list of what participants intend to do as a result of having taken part in this training.

Appendix 1: List of Participants

Name	Organisation	Home/Host	Contacts
Emmanuel Ozoekwe Adigwe	NIDOE Italy	Nigeria/Italy	eadmondo@gmail.com +39 3466880108
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Appendix 2: Resource Persons and ADPC Staff

Name	Contact
Jasmin Nordien	Lead Trainer jasmin.n@mweb.co.za
Constance Formson-Lorist	Programme Coordinator, ADPC c.formson@diaspora-centre.org
Ben Mussanzi wa Mussangu	Centre Resolution Conflicts (CRC) crc_bradford@yahoo.com
Merle Gosewinkel	Women Peacemakers Programme merle@womenpeacemakersprogram.org www.womenpeacemakersprogram.org
Stéphanie Mbanzendore	Burundian Women for Peace and Development (BWPD)/ Multicultural Women Peacemakers Network-Nederland bwpdnl@yahoo.fr

ADPC Staff

Name	Contact
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Sari Holtland	sari_holtland@hotmail.com
Malcom Richardson	m.richardson@diaspora-centre.org

Appendix 3: Programme Overview

Time	Day 1, 21 September	Day 2, 22 September	Day 3, 23 September	Day 4, 24 September	Day 5, 25 September
<i>Focus</i>	<i>Role of diaspora; peacebuilding concepts; conflict analysis and tools</i>	<i>Peacebuilding frameworks and interventions; stakeholder analysis and tools</i>	<i>Gender; Economic development; role of diaspora; vision of peace</i>	<i>BHAP - prepare and present</i>	<i>Present BHAP; implementation support and follow-up, evaluation</i>
Session1 09h00	Welcome & Introduction 09h00-10h00 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Welcome by partners - Group introduction and expectations - Programme, methodology, and learning objectives - Agreements - Basket issues 	Opening Circle <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Announcements - Recap - Reflections and questions 	Opening Circle	Opening Circle	Opening Circle 09h00-9h25
Session 2 9h30	Back Home Action Plan (BHAP) 10h00-11h00	Peacebuilding: approaches	Peacebuilding and gender by Women Peacemakers Program	BHAP: (individual) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - develop plan - prepare presentation 	BHAP presentations
11h00	Tea	Tea	Tea	Tea	Tea
Session 3 11h15	Diaspora as soft power in the peacebuilding by Constance Formson-Lorist Participants peacebuilding	Peacebuilding: frameworks and interventions	Peacebuilding and economic development by Constance Formson-Lorist	BHAP presentations ⁶	BHAP: implementation, support and follow-up By Constance Formson-Lorist

⁶ Presentations are 35 minutes, with 5 minute in between presentations for the next participant to setup their presentation

	experiences				
12h30	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch @ 12h45	Evaluation and Closing Circle
Session 4 13h30	Peacebuilding – concepts	Case-study 1: By Ben Mussanzi wa Mussangu (Centre Resolution Conflicts) ‘establishing the Centre Resolution Conflicts – challenges, dilemmas and resources’ (Democratic Republic of Congo)	Case-Study 2: By Stephanie Mbanzendore – My journey as peacebuilder: challenges, dilemmas and resources (Burundi)	Case-study 3: By Habtom Yohannes – Local community and empowerment (Eritrea)	Lunch @ 13h00
15h00	Tea	Tea	Tea	Tea	End @ 1400
Session 5 15h15	Conflict analysis and tools	Stakeholder analysis and tools	Role of the diaspora: challenges, dilemmas, opportunities and resources	BHAP presentations	
Session 6 16h15	Conflict analysis tools, application	Stakeholder analysis and tools - continue	Envision Peace	BHAP presentations	
Session 7 17h15	Closing Circle	Closing Circle	Closing Circle	Closing Circle	
17h30	End	End	End	End	