

FRANCISCAN PEACEBUILDING TOOLKIT

**Modules for workshops
on peacebuilding, conflict management, and
reconciliation**

**JPIC Office and Animation Committee
OFM**

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1 INTRODUCTION AND INSTRUCTIONS

Dear JPIC animators, friars, members of the Franciscan Family and other interested people, the OFM JPIC Office in Rome and the OFM Animation Committee for JPIC are happy to present this toolkit. It offers very practical materials on the topic of peacebuilding and reconciliation. The inspiration for this toolkit came from the JPIC Course at the Antonianum, the Animation Committee and more recently from the International Council for JPIC (ICJPIC), which was held in Nairobi in 2012.

Mandate 43.3 of the 2009 General Chapter reads that “in the next six-year period (2009-2015) all the Entities of the Order, with the help of the JPIC Office, should commit themselves to promote active nonviolence in our lives, with particular emphasis on the resolution of conflicts.” The mandate highlights the concern we Franciscans should have for conflict management, and the conviction that the way to do peacebuilding is by nonviolent resolution of conflicts, whether in group or social settings.

This toolkit can help to address these concerns in many different contexts, from local chapters to youth groups, from parish groups to short retreats. The material is easy to use and very practical. It offers many resources and good explanations to guide your preparations. Most exercises are taken from a Training Manual on peacebuilding prepared by Caritas International. We selected the exercises that seem most significant for us and have added Franciscan and biblical elements.

The first two chapters present general information about peacebuilding. You will also receive practical information that will help prepare those who will be trainers for the workshops. The content is divided in two parts or dimensions: the individual and group dimension, and the social and political dimension. The various chapters are presented as modules (for short meetings) or as a process (for longer seminars or weekend retreats). Each module takes about half a day.

The general structure of each chapter includes four elements:

- a) Ice-breaker - an exercise to animate and energize the group to interact with each other more easily. It's a way to introduce the topic. It should be light and help motivate participants.
- b) Franciscan or biblical text - a spiritual text to help participants see the topic from a Franciscan or Biblical perspective.
- c) Input – serves to help trainers understand the topic better and to help them explain it to the group.
- d) Exercises - offer a practical way to implement the content learned in the chapter. Usually each chapter offers one exercise, but if you need more examples or other exercises you can go to the Caritas Manual online: http://issuu.com/catholicreliefservices/docs/caritas_peacebldg

This material is prepared first of all for our JPIC animators, but it can be used by the entire Franciscan family and by others who want to enter more deeply into the work of peacebuilding. Do not be afraid to use the toolkit; it is self-explanatory and very dynamic. We hope you enjoy working with the material.

Fabio Lamour Ferreira OFM and Markus Fuhrmann OFM

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Most of the material used to prepare the workshops is taken from the Caritas Training Manual for Peacebuilding. It has been adapted for use in a Franciscan setting.

We thank Caritas International for the wonderful resource they have provided and for their permission to use and adapt it.

1.1 The Franciscan approach to peacebuilding

The third section of Mandate 43 from the 2009 General Chapter reads: “Promote active nonviolence in our lives, with particular emphasis on the resolution of conflicts.” One of the essential components of the “grace of our origins” found in the sources is that the Friars Minor are a fraternity sent into the world to announce peace (cf. Luke 10, 3-9). This peace must be lived first of all within ourselves and then in our relationships. Furthermore, the Franciscan way to live and work for peace is through active nonviolence which is not the simple absence of violence, but is rather dependent on the power of truth and love.

Nonviolence is the attitude which does not remain passive in the face of injustice and violence. Instead, it refuses to cooperate with injustice and violence, rejects all hatred and never forgets love of neighbor. It strives for sustainable development in an organized way with others, and for a society which guarantees dignity to all as human beings. It works to promote peaceful and fraternal relationships. In short, nonviolence is at the same time both a *resistance* to evil and injustice, and a *project* for a new society, for the construction of the Kingdom of God.

Active nonviolence is:

- A **spirit** (that of the Beatitudes and of Franciscan spirituality), which includes: absolute respect for every human being; not judging or condemning the enemy (Earlier Rule 11); not becoming disturbed by the sin of others; warning against evil; helping those who sin (Earlier Rule 5, 7-8); poverty of spirit (Admon. 14); welcoming all regardless of social position (Earlier Rule, 7); love of enemies (Earlier Rule 22 and Later Rule 10); reconciliation.
- A **lifestyle** that is simple, fraternal, patient, willing to serve, and ecological. It respects all beings and is willing to sacrifice for the common good and to practice civil disobedience. It is open to the Spirit of God in the hope of being freed from aggression, hate, jealousy, prejudices and stereotypes. Such a lifestyle demands an attention to oneself with special regard to personal discipline, self control, self knowledge and confidence, all of which will lead to a sense of fortitude and dignity.
- A **methodology for social and political struggle** (like that of Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Dorothy Day, Lanza del Vasto and others). It helps face interpersonal and social conflict in a humane and constructive way, and leads to profound social transformation.

1.2 General Considerations

1.2.1 Peacebuilding as a process of ongoing formation

Peacebuilding does not happen immediately; rather, it is a long term project. It does not help much to try to solve ‘incidents’ and conflicts without addressing their causes. In this sense, the peacebuilding process needs to be well thought out and planned as a long-term project to be successful. As Franciscan promoters of peace we are invited to enter this ongoing process.

1.2.2 Conflict resolution

As JPIC animators we do not see conflict as negative, but as an opportunity to improve situations and relationships. In dealing with conflict it is not sufficient to know facts and analyze reality; we also need to have wisdom and to build trust. We can be loving, knowledgeable, strong and assertive, but if we are not reasonable and trustworthy we will not be successful at peacebuilding. As Franciscan promoters of peace we are called to learn reasonable ideas and skills.

1.2.3 Challenging those involved in the process

As mediators of conflict we need to understand that not all those involved in conflict are victims. There is a problem when those who oppress or cause damage to others or to the community see themselves as victims. Peacebuilding is about challenging people, not only about listening, studying, and analyzing. People need to learn how to face their problems, engage in leadership, face their own wrongdoing and try to find solutions together with others. As Franciscan promoters of peace we are invited to challenge those involved in the process to understand their problems better, and to engage all in the search for a solution.

1.2.4 Getting the right people involved

At times those responsible for the peacebuilding process are not trained in the use of the tools needed for certain situations. In such cases it is necessary to choose others who are better prepared to move the process forward. It is very important to engage the right people in the process, including wise leaders from the community itself, especially those who can have a positive influence on the outcome.

1.2.5 Humanizing the parties

Conflict sometimes leads people to 'dehumanize' those on the opposite side. It is thus important to remember always that people are not objects, that we must avoid dehumanization of the enemy. To resolve a conflict all parts involved need to be humanized, need to enjoy the same level of respect and dignity. No one is an 'it' and everyone deserves respect at all times. As Franciscan promoters of peace we are invited to help everyone learn the values of respect and dignity, and to accept differences and mistakes.

This input is taken from a presentation for the JPIC animators of USG/UISG in Rome prepared by Nabil Oudeh from Palestine. He has over 20 years experience in conflict resolution and holds a Masters Degree in Conflict Resolution Studies. He is an accredited mediator through the ADR Institute of Canada, an Honored Fellow with the Canadian Institute for Conflict Resolution, and a member of the Society of Professionals in Dispute Resolution.

1.3 You as a trainer

1.3.1 Content must match Reality

One of the main goals of our peacebuilding workshops is to make them applicable to reality. They should raise the awareness of participants and encourage them to responsible social action; their attitudes toward reality will be expressed during the training.

It is necessary to empower participants to recognize spaces where they can act and opportunities to change things for the better. At the same time, it is important to adjust the contents of the training to one's reality. Close links to "real life" are necessary in order to prevent participants from becoming overly optimistic during the training and developing unrealistically high expectations of what can be achieved. If left unchallenged, weeks after the training, almost inevitably, this attitude will bring the entire process crashing down. To avoid this it is necessary to sensitize participants not only to a vision, but also to the obstacles they will face in translating this vision into action.

It is important for trainees to recognize how difficult it is to produce a visible social impact and to create a nonviolent and just society. Goals that seem to be achievable quickly are much more attractive than process-oriented approaches that will show results only in a distant and vague future. How are we to resist the temptation to set up unrealistic expectations? One way is to guarantee that participants experience the process practically and that they feel it emotionally. As they undergo a process of empowerment during the training, they must see and feel how difficult it is to achieve visible results on the long road to social change. This attitude must be instilled in everyone during the training process.

During the sessions trainees should experience situations they will face later in real life. They should not “pretend” during training and then continue on as if nothing has changed. A feeling of ownership will help them internalize the process; motivation will not come from outside, but from a sense of their own responsibility.

1.3.2 Trainers as Facilitators, Providers of Input and Partners

The pace of training should be adapted to those who learn most quickly, but at the same time trainers must address emotionally fragile situations, foster mutual care and solidarity among participants, and facilitate communication. Trainers have to know – at all stages of the training – where the brakes are, to slow down and give room for the settling of thoughts and emotions.

Furthermore, it is important that trainers create an open space for trainees to express their concerns, while realizing that at certain stages of the training this general rule could be counterproductive. Trainers should act as equal partners during discussion; their input is needed. They should express their own views because at the very least they also are part of the troubled society to which the trainees belong.

Trainers choose the methods and actions according to their own values and ideas. There is no single recipe for designing “effective” training. The quality of the process depends on the ability of the training team to discern what is right and fair. It is very important that each trainer and the team itself clarify roles, expectations and self-understanding.

1.3.3 Setting Realistic Expectations

Unrealistic expectations of training impact can be a huge source of dissatisfaction and disempowerment for the peacebuilding training team. In one case, during the evaluation of a training seminar with former combatants, the team expressed frustration with the results. It was pointed out, however, that the goal of motivating ex-combatants to engage in peacebuilding during a 6-day training session was far too ambitious and unrealistic. Instead of regret over lack of achievement (change of behavior), it was necessary to acknowledge what was achieved: a *change of individual attitudes* on the part of the trainees, who moved beyond attitudes or actions that justify, advocate and inflict injustice or violence. The team had helped *reduce the potential for peace-destruction*, which was definitely a huge step for the group, given the profile of the trainees (a mixed group of individuals from three sides that confronted one another in war, all of whom could be considered “losers”, suffering from physical injuries, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), poverty, unemployment and the lack of perspective).

1.3.4 From “Training” to “Social Change”: Reflections on Impact and Outreach

The work of peacebuilding is motivated by the idea that peace education can contribute to positive social change. We are convinced that training can be a tool for initiating such processes and can affect individuals at three levels:

- 1) Training can change personal attitudes and sensibilities. It can contribute to clarification and empowerment, which are manifested in different modes: superficial and only verbal; slow but deep; delayed and surprising; invisible, i.e. not easily perceived by others.
- 2) Training can contribute to change in the environment (institutions and groups) from which trainees come; often during the sessions trainees become more able to address conflict in their environment.
- 3) Training can lead trainees to more explicit and inclusive peacebuilding efforts which have a multiplying effect in the wider society.

In discussions on the impact and outreach of peace education, level 3 is often seen as the ultimate goal and the first two levels are neglected. However, our experience shows that peace education is effective only if it includes all three stages. One cannot skip the first two levels in order to achieve a rapid change in society. Also, not everyone is capable of passing through all three stages quickly. The pace depends on individual strength and the challenges one faces at the first and the second levels.

2 Individual and group dimension

2.1 Listening and dialoguing

A. Ice-Breaker

Slanted Story-telling

Purpose: Explore how bias can slant the way a story is told or how facts are communicated; encourage reflection on missing pieces of information when listening or receiving information; and practice listening skills.

Materials: Cards with attitudes/moods/situations written on them (see below)

Time: 30 – 45 minutes

Procedure:

- 1) Divide participants into pairs (preferably someone they have not yet worked with). One partner tells the other how they got to the session that day, including all the details from getting ready, leaving home or work, or wherever until they entered the door of the workshop venue. (Alternatively, they could recall a recent incident which involved them personally in a conflict.) Note: This should take 1-2 minutes.
- 2) When the story is over, the listener retells the story in the second person (“you...”). When retelling is complete, the speaker confirms or corrects the facts and comments on omissions. The listener can also comment on the speaker’s style, and whether this helped or hindered their absorption and recollection of detail.
- 3) Distribute one card with a mood or a situation or an attitude to each person. Ask them not to tell anyone else what is written on their card. They now have to work out how to retell the story using that interpretation. Examples of this card could be:
 - It is the funniest story you have ever heard or told.
 - You are a police officer and are telling the story of a suspect’s movements.
 - You have to use the toilet, but must first finish telling the story.
 - You detest the person you are talking about.
 - You are lying about most of the things.
 - You are stirring things up with some gossip.
 - It is the saddest story you have ever told or heard.

3) Discussion: Questions to ask include:

- In what ways was information changed and reshaped according to the presenter’s bias?
- Is this a process that is easy to detect in real life?
- Do we always change the information we pass on?
- In what ways and in what situations have we done this?

Trainer Notes: Cards could also cover specific issues rather than moods. It should be entertaining too.

This exercise is taken from: Caritas Internationalis: Peacebuilding. A Caritas Training Manual, Vatican City 2006, p. 124.

B. Franciscan Text

The dialogue between St. Francis and the Wolf of Gubbio

At the time that Saint Francis was staying in the city of Gubbio, in the district of Gubbio there appeared a very big wolf, fearsome and ferocious, which was so rabid with hunger that it devoured not only animals but even human beings.

St. Francis went to the wolf and said to it as it lay in front of him: "Brother Wolf, you have done great harm in this region, and you have committed horrible crimes by destroying God's creatures without any mercy... You therefore deserve to be put to death just like the worst robber and murderer.

Consequently everyone is right in crying out against you and complaining, and this whole town is your enemy. But, Brother Wolf, I want to make peace between you and them, so that they will not be harmed by you anymore, and after they have forgiven you all your past crimes, neither human beings nor dogs will pursue you anymore." The wolf showed by moving its body and tail and ears and by nodding its head that it willingly accepted what the Saint had said and would observe it. So St. Francis spoke again: "Brother Wolf, since you are willing to make and keep this peace pact, I promise you that I will have the people of this town give you food every day as long as you live, so that you will never again suffer from hunger, for I know that whatever evil you have been doing was done because of the urge of hunger.

But, my Brother Wolf, since I am obtaining such a favor for you, I want you to promise me that you will never hurt any animal or [human being]. Will you promise me that?" The wolf gave a clear sign by nodding its head that it promised to do what the Saint asked. Then St. Francis said: "Brother Wolf, I order you, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to come with me now, without fear, into the town to make this peace pact in the name of the Lord." And the wolf immediately began to walk along beside St. Francis, just like a very gentle lamb.

When the people saw this they assembled on the market place, where St. Francis said, "Listen, dear people. Brother Wolf...has promised me and has given me a pledge that he will make peace with you and will never hurt you if you promise also to feed him every day. And I pledge myself as bonds [person] for Brother Wolf that he will faithfully keep this peace pact."

Then all the people who were assembled there promised in a loud voice to feed the wolf regularly. And St. Francis said to the wolf before them all: "And you, Brother Wolf, do you promise to keep the pact, that is, not to hurt any animal or human being?" The wolf knelt down and bowed its head, and by twisting its body and wagging its tail and ears it clearly showed to everyone that it would keep the pact as it had promised. From that day, the people and the wolf kept the pact which St. Francis made.

The Little Flowers of Saint Francis, Chap. 21

Taken from: Francis of Assisi – Early Documents, Vol. III: The Prophet, New York/London/Manila (New City Press) 2001, 601-603.

Tasks:

1. Read the text with different people taking the roles of St. Francis and of the narrator.
2. Discuss the following questions:
 - a) How would you characterize the dialogue strategy of St. Francis in this story?
 - b) In your opinion, what is helpful in the approach of St. Francis to the wolf?

C. Input

The trainer reads the following material and prepares a presentation on it. The presentation is meant to help prepare participants to do the exercises.

1. Perception

In our everyday routines, we interpret events or conversations based upon our past experiences, religious and cultural background, and even our mood. Our senses of sight, taste, smell, hearing, and touch also

influence our interpretation. What we believe to be true is relative to who we are. In any situation, multiple interpretations exist. Our perception of events, information, people, or relationships influences how we communicate, how we see and act in conflict, and how we define solutions to problems.

Conflict and communication are intimately tied to perceptions. How we see the world depends upon where we stand, and where we stand is affected by our beliefs that are grounded in our culture, religion, family background, status, gender, and personal experiences.

Individuals who experience the same event who come from the same general background will still come up with different perspectives on that event, and define “truth” in that setting in different ways.

2. Communication

Communication takes a variety of forms – speaking or verbal, non-verbal or body signals, listening, and interpreting messages. The *Transactional Model of Communication* is useful because it integrates these various forms and additional external factors that affect communication. This particular model assumes that communication is a transaction or an interaction between two individuals, Communicator A and Communicator B. Both people send information and receive information simultaneously. Sending information takes the form of nonverbal messages (e.g. nodding your head or raising your eyebrows) and speaking. The individual receiving information listens and interprets the verbal and non-verbal messages. Both individuals take cues from the sender or listener regarding the other person’s level of interest. This is called feedback – a response to a message. The Transactional Model is useful because it takes into account internal and external factors that influence the quality of communication. The following factors are identified as important.

3. “Field of experience”

Individuals interpret messages according to their own experiences, moods, and cultural framework. These elements (experiences, moods, culture, and background) make up a person’s field of experience. The more the fields of experience of two (or more) communicators overlap the less the misunderstanding in their communication.

4. Contexts

The context is the situation in which the communication takes place. This includes shared contexts like culture as well as personal contexts like family or religion. Fields of experience and context change over time. We accumulate knowledge and experience every day, and this affects the way we communicate and how we interact with others. For example, if yesterday you had a negative encounter with a police officer, this encounter will color your next interaction with a police officer, and possibly others in uniform. The concepts of fields of experience and context emphasize how culture and perception affect the way we send and receive messages. For example, in one culture nodding one’s head up and down means “yes,” while in another culture it means “no.” This non-verbal message is interpreted within a particular cultural context, with entirely different meanings in two different cultures. This causes miscommunication, and possibly conflict.

5. Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing, a form of intense listening is demonstrated by the following conversation, the setting of which is a facilitated negotiation session between two colleagues in a community organization:

John: She’s impossible to work with in a group setting. She dominates conversations and she gets very upset if she doesn’t get her way. I just don’t feel that I can work with her anymore!

Facilitator: So you’re very frustrated with her response in group discussions, and at this point you’ve given up on working with her.

John: Look, I’m not saying I can’t do anything with her. We can still do the community service work together, and I’m open to cooperating in the research project. But I can’t work on the Executive Committee with her. I just can’t stand the constant battles.

Facilitator: You're prepared to work with her in most areas, but it's on the Executive Committee where you've become really discouraged about working together.

John: Yes, I just don't think I can take it anymore.

Facilitator: Um-hmm. Well, that gives us clarity about where you stand on this.

Mary, let's hear from you. How do you see this?

Paraphrasing is a powerful tool in facilitation work for a number of reasons:

- It communicates understanding to others;
- A good paraphrase often brings further, more reflective responses from others, as in the example above – it moves the conversation to deeper levels;
- It slows down the conversation between the parties and creates a buffer between their statements;
- It can be used to “launder” vicious or insulting statements so they are less inflammatory to the other party, if present, while retaining the essential points that were made.

Guidelines for paraphrasing:

a) To paraphrase is to repeat back in your own words what you understand someone else to be saying: this means keeping the focus of the paraphrase on the speaker and not on you, the listener.

For example, a facilitator can say:

- “You feel that...”
- “The way you see it is...”
- “If I understand you correctly, you’re saying that...”

Do not say:

- “I know exactly how you feel. I’ve been in situations like that myself.”
- “You know, my sister had something like that happen to her a couple weeks ago. She...”

b) A paraphrase should be shorter than the speaker’s own statement.

c) A paraphrase mirrors the meaning of the speaker’s words, but does not merely parrot or repeat the exact words of the speaker: for example, the speaker might say: “I resented it deeply when I found out that they had gone behind my back to the director. Why didn’t they just come and talk with me, and give me a chance to sort things out with them?” An effective paraphrase would be: “You were quite hurt that they didn’t come directly to you to resolve things.”

d) A paraphrase does not judge or evaluate; it only describes empathetically.

Use, for example, phrases such as:

- “So your understanding is that...”
- “The way you see it then...”
- “You were very unhappy when he...”
- “So when he walked out of the meeting you thought he was merely trying to manipulate you.”
- “If I understand you correctly, your perspective is that...”

Don’t say:

- “That doesn’t sound like a very constructive attitude to me.”

e) A small percentage of people seem to prefer not to be paraphrased: observe carefully the reaction of those you are paraphrasing and adjust your use accordingly.

This input is taken from: PACE E BENE Peacebuilding materials presented at workshop in Silver Spring, MD, December 2004.

D. Exercise

Dialogue for peace - Role-play

Work in pairs. Where there isn't an even number of people, one group can be with three people. The exercise is divided in 2 parts.

1st part - Paraphrasing:

Each person will tell in a few sentences something of their daily life that caused some feeling or impression. The other person will paraphrase it and vice-versa. This exercise will take 10 minutes (5 min. each).

2nd part - Dialoguing:

Each person will act as a parent whose child has had a fight at school with the other person's child. Both are angry. Participants will use the techniques just learned to create peaceful dialogue and agreement. They will have 5 minutes to think about what they are going to say to the other, and 15 minutes for dialogue. When finished the trainer will ask if some of the participants would like to share what they found helpful or difficult about the exercise, and if it was possible to use the techniques of listening and communicating to create a peaceful dialogue.

This input is taken from: PACE E BENE Peacebuilding materials presented at workshop in Silver Spring, MD, December 2004.

2.2 Dealing with Power

A. Ice-Breaker

Tropical Rainstorm

Purpose:

Energize the group and hear the effects of working together. This exercise can also be used to highlight conflict dynamics.

Materials: None

Time: 5 – 10 minutes

Procedure:

- 1) Ask participants to stand in a circle.
- 2) Ask them to copy the actions of only the person on their right, regardless of what you, the trainer, are doing.
- 3) Begin by rubbing your hands together. Ensure that the person to your right follows your action, followed by the next person, until everyone in the circle is rubbing his or her hands together.
- 4) Move from rubbing your hands to clicking your fingers until everyone in the circle is clicking their fingers.
- 5) Then progress to clapping your hands, followed by slapping your thighs, and finally stamping your feet following the same technique of waiting until the previous action is almost all the way around the circle.
- 6) To end the storm, follow the same pattern in reverse. Move from stamping your feet to slapping your thighs, clapping your hands, clicking your fingers and finally rubbing your hands together.
- 7) The last round ends in silence.

Discussion:

The sounds and dynamics of a rainstorm are very similar to conflict. You can point out these similarities at the end of the exercise or at the beginning. Some of the similarities are that like thunderstorms, conflicts

begin quietly and gather momentum and energy as they build. You can hear and see them coming. Storms and conflict then sweep in, through and over you, focusing all of your attention on them and the destruction they may bring. Finally, thunderstorms, like conflict, slowly recede into the distance and you are left in quiet.

Trainer Notes:

In order to do this exercise effectively, you will have to memorize the order of actions forwards (rubbing hands together, clicking fingers, clapping hands, slapping thighs, stamping feet) and backwards (stamping feet, slapping thighs, clapping hands, clicking fingers, rubbing hands).

This exercise is taken from: Caritas Internationalis: Peacebuilding. A Caritas Training Manual, Vatican City 2006, p. 24.

B. Biblical Text

Jesus Predicts His Death a Third Time and A Mother's Request (Matthew 20, 17-28)

Tasks (work on them for about 20 minutes):

1. Role-play the reading assigning different people to read the various characters.
2. Discuss the following questions:
 - a) What does the mother want for her children and why?
 - b) What does Jesus want to make clear with his answer?

C. Input

1. The trainer reads the following material and prepares a presentation on it. The presentation is meant to help prepare participants to do the exercises.

When most people think of “power,” they think of military strength or the use of force or coercion. In fact, philosophers and scholars have difficulty defining power, let alone agreeing on what power is. Here we understand power in a broad sense. There are a number of different types of power (Handout 1). These sources or types of power are not mutually exclusive. In fact, one person may simultaneously hold several sources of power, like relational power and status power. Power is often culturally defined and relevant. For example, cultures define status or position differently, and as a result, those having positional power will differ from culture to culture.

Helpful questions for a deeper reflection:

1. What first comes to mind when you hear the word “power”?
2. What sources of power do you possess? Does it change according to where you are or who you are with?
3. What do you think are the cultural dimensions of power?

This input is taken from: Caritas Internationalis: Peacebuilding. A Caritas Training Manual, Vatican City 2006, p. 68f.

D. Exercise: *Defining Power*

Purpose: Encourage groups to think about different sources of power.

Materials: Flip chart paper and markers and copies of Handout 2, “The Power of Human”

Time: 30 – 40 minutes

Procedure:

- 1) Decide beforehand how to divide group into smaller groups for discussion. You may decide to have the discussion in a plenary session.
- 2) Give out Handout 2 with the parable about The Power of Human. Allow participants 5-10 minutes to read it, or ask several volunteers to read the parable out loud.
- 3) If using sub-groups allow 15 minutes of discussion, then have groups return for large group reporting and discussion.

Discussion and Reflection:

How did the animals define power?

How, if at all, did this differ from Human's definition of power?

Likely responses might include:

- ❖ Animals came together to celebrate natural talents. Competition not about domination;
- ❖ The definition/sources of power included: might, authority, and strength;
- ❖ The power the animals displayed was the power of working together;
- ❖ The power Human displayed was domination and violence.

Who is the most powerful among the following: the president of the United States, the Pope, your country's leader, Mother Teresa, your local shopkeeper, you? Explain each person's source of power.

Additional questions include:

- ❖ How do you respond to the statement, "Everyone is powerful, but not everyone notices it"?
- ❖ Think of a conflict which you have personally experienced. How did power influence your decisions or your interactions with the person with whom you were in conflict?

This exercise is taken from: Caritas Internationalis: Peacebuilding. A Caritas Training Manual, Vatican City 2006, p. 75.

Handout 1: Sources of Power

Power can be used for destructive or constructive purposes. When power is understood broadly as ways to influence other people's behavior we can see new places where individuals and groups have power, which can help us to use these sources of power to correct imbalances and injustices.

Positional Power

Positional power is based upon the role, or position, an individual occupies in society. The power rests in the position and is transferred from one individual to another as individuals move in and out of the role. Examples are the president of a country, the principal of a school, or the head of an organization; they all have power because of their position, not because of their personal characteristics or social class. When a new person takes over the position as head of an organization, the power of the position is transferred to the new person.

Relational Power

Power is an integral part of social relationships. It does not reside in a particular individual, but is the property of social relationships. Power then can be used for both destructive and productive purposes. This view of power assumes that:

- ❖ We all need power for self-esteem and fulfillment. It is necessary for a sense of personal importance, not in an external opportunistic way, but in a fundamental internal manner. We all need to feel valued.
- ❖ Power is a necessary ingredient of communication.
- ❖ Power is not a finite resource. Power in a relationship is fluid and hard to measure. It can be expanded and limited.
- ❖ Over time, significant and static imbalances of power harm and destroy individuals and relationships.
- ❖ People will seek to balance real and perceived power inequities by productive or destructive means.

Power of Force

Physical strength and coercive mechanisms like the use of guns are sources of power. Individuals may use their own strength, as well as weapons, armaments, armies, police, and prisons to impose their will upon others.

Power of Resources and Status

Wealth and status within a society are both sources of power. Individuals can use their money or their social ties to maintain a situation that is to their advantage or to get what they want.

Power of Knowledge and Expertise

Those in a society with special knowledge and expertise, such as doctors, lawyers, teachers, engineers, or mechanics, have a source of power that comes from what they know.

Power of a Group

The phrase “people power” is often quoted and refers to the power of individuals when part of a group. For example, unions and mass protest movements have power because of their numbers.

This handout is taken from: Caritas Internationalis: Peacebuilding. A Caritas Training Manual, Vatican City 2006, p. 82.

Handout 2: THE POWER OF HUMAN

Once upon a time, the animals used to hold an annual power celebration. Recently, the celebration had become very competitive. New winners emerged because of new techniques.

Last year Monkey was the winner. Imagine! All the animals agreed that the monkey had succeeded in demonstrating new techniques of power and merited the first place.

This year the competition was a little different. A new animal joined the race – Human.

Most animals had not given Human any chance but Human had sailed through the preliminaries.

The finals were held up the hill of Kwetu Forest overlooking the waterfall of hope.

The five finalists were Lion, Elephant, Monkey, Giraffe, and Human.

As usual, the competitors arrived with their supporters. Monkey was the first to arrive. No one quite saw how Monkey arrived because he was jumping from branch to branch. It looked spectacular as the entire Monkey family arrived like a well-choreographed circus. Next was Lion who dislikes ceremony and arrived only with his wife. He looked around proudly as he stepped into the arena. Elephant and Giraffe are rather close friends and arrived almost at the same time. Elephant arrived chewing a branch while Giraffe nibbled some sweet leaves. Human arrived last and came alone, with an object dangling from his waist.

The master of ceremony, Squirrel, announced that the competition should begin. According to the rules, the competitors could step into the arena as soon as they felt ready. Elephant went first and demonstrated her power by digging a large hole, throwing lots of dust and making a lot of noise. Giraffe came next and did a poor modification of her dance of power but the melody sounded nice. She danced around gracefully and then sat down. Monkey weighed in with his acrobatic jumps from branch to branch, but few animals seemed impressed. Lion roared to demonstrate his power. Few animals were afraid since they had heard this roar many times before.

Last came the new competitor, Human. Human stepped into the arena and looked around.

The animals fell silent. Slowly Human untied something from his waist and raised it. Loud bangs followed. Suddenly almost every other competitor was bleeding. Lion was limping, and Monkey scampered away with blood oozing from his ear. Even Elephant seemed helpless.

She sat there with a bleeding trunk doing something between laughing and crying.

Human laughed and slowly walked back into the forest.

That night, all the animals met. Human was not invited. The animals wondered what had become of Human. Why did he attempt to kill the animals even when he did not want to eat them? Some animals thought Human was different because he walked on his two feet, while others said he could be suffering

from that rare disease, “superiority complex.” The animals decided to investigate Human further. Dog and Cat were given the task to investigate Human and bring back a report. However, since then, no other competitions have been held. Dog and Cat seem to enjoy living with Human, once they accepted being subject to Human’s control. They have not brought back a report.

This handout was taken from: Caritas Internationalis: Peacebuilding. A Caritas Training Manual, Vatican City 2006, p. 81.

2.3 Analyzing Conflicts

A. Ice-breaker

Potato Game

Purpose:

Help participants share feelings about themselves and their relationships, as well as identify how they work in a non-threatening way and build trust.

Materials:

A potato for each participant (potatoes should be roughly the same size), a large basket

Time: 1 hour

Procedure:

- 1) Ask participants to sit in a circle and take a potato from a basket that is quickly passed around.
- 2) Ask participants to examine their potato carefully – its weight, its smell, its peculiar features.
- 3) Have participants discuss their potato with the person next to them and be able to recognize their potato with their eyes shut.
- 4) In pairs, have one person shut his or her eyes and the other hold the potatoes. The person with eyes shut must pick his or her potato. Have pairs reverse roles.
- 5) Do this in groups of fours.
- 6) Have participants return to the circle and collect all the potatoes.
- 7) Pass the potatoes from hand to hand, behind people's backs, so they cannot see the potatoes.
- 8) Ask participants to keep their potato when they recognize it.
- 9) Keep passing the potatoes until everyone claims one.
- 10) End the game when all, or at least most, participants have found their potatoes.

Discussion:

- ❖ What was your first impression when you were given a potato?
- ❖ How did you identify your potato?
- ❖ What feelings did you experience during the process?
- ❖ What did you learn about yourself?
- ❖ What did you learn about how you relate with others?
- ❖ What does this exercise highlight for working together?

Trainer Notes: This exercise helps create a warm, relaxed environment for participants, and can be quite amusing. It may best fit in as an evening activity. If participants are having trouble identifying their potatoes, you may want to end the activity within a reasonable amount of time to avoid participants getting too frustrated or tired.

This exercise is taken from: Caritas Internationalis: Peacebuilding. A Caritas Training Manual, Vatican City 2006, p. 25.

B. Franciscan Text

The holy miracle that Saint Francis worked when he converted the very fierce Wolf of Gubbio

At the time that Saint Francis was staying in the city of Gubbio, in the district of Gubbio there appeared a very big wolf, fearsome and ferocious, which was so rabid with hunger that it devoured not only animals but even human beings. All the people in the town considered it such a great scourge and terror—because it often came near town—that they took weapons with them when they went into the country, as if they were going to war. Everyone in the town was so terrified that hardly anyone dared go outside the city gate. While the Saint was there at that time, he had pity on the people and decided to go out to meet the wolf. But on hearing this the citizens said to him: “Look out, Brother Francis. Don’t go outside the gate, because the wolf which has already devoured many people will certainly attack you and kill you!” But St. Francis placed his hope in the Lord Jesus Christ who is master of all creatures. Protected neither by a shield nor helmet, but arming himself with the Sign of the Cross, he bravely went out of the town with his companion....

Then, in the sight of many people who had come out, the fierce wolf came running with its mouth open toward St. Francis and his companion. The Saint made the Sign of the Cross toward it. The powers of God checked the wolf and made it slow down and close its cruel mouth. Then, calling to it, St. Francis said: “Come to me, Brother Wolf. In the name of Christ, I order you not to hurt me or anyone.” As soon as he gave it that order, it lowered its head and lay down at the Saint’s feet, as though it had become a lamb.

The Little Flowers of Saint Francis, Chap. 21

Taken from: Francis of Assisi – Early Documents, Vol. III: The Prophet, New York/London/Manila (New City Press) 2001, 601-603.

Tasks (work on them for about 20 minutes:

1. Read the story
2. Discuss: In the story the threat the parties posed to one another did not resolve the conflict. Instead, it only worsened it. The town and the wolf were locked in a spiral of violence that seemed sensible, inevitable, and without recourse. In your opinion, what could either party have done to stop violence and counter-violence (a path that left both sides resembling one another in their fear and ferocity)?

C. Input

The trainer reads the following material and prepares a presentation on it. The presentation is meant to help prepare participants to do the exercises.

Conflict is sometimes caused by miscommunication, but more often it is about other issues, like values or beliefs. A common definition of conflict comes from Lewis Coser, a sociologist, who defines social conflict as “a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power and resources”. This definition highlights possible causes of conflict (values, beliefs, power, scarce status or resources). Another definition of conflict comes from Christopher Mitchell and refers to “any situation in which two or more social entities or ‘parties’ ... perceive that they possess mutually incompatible goals.” This definition emphasizes the existence of incompatible or contradictory goals and the element of perception that leads to conflict.

Most people associate negative words or ideas with conflict – war, violence, anger, or hurt feelings. Peacebuilding assumes that conflict is a natural part of human existence, and that the goal is to transform the destructive ways we deal with conflict to lead to more constructive outcomes. Associating conflict with constructive outcomes generally changes our perspective to a more positive one when thinking about conflict.

One reason that social conflicts are hard to deal with is that they are very complex. Conflicts involve many actors in processes that are usually not very straightforward. Conflicts are not static, they change over time,

sometimes increasing in intensity and sometimes decreasing. Sometimes they escalate in intensity and violence, sometimes they de-escalate and we seem to make progress towards peace, and then often we fall back into violence before making a bit more progress towards peace. However, there are still some patterns within the messy conflict dynamics and understanding them can help us identify when and how to focus our peacebuilding efforts.

To begin with, we can understand conflict at a number of *levels*. Four levels are identified below:

1) Intra-personal conflict refers to conflicts occurring within a person. Usually people need to work on their own inner struggles and issues in order to be constructive in social conflicts.

2) Interpersonal conflict refers to conflicts occurring between individuals or small groups of people.

3) Intra-group conflict refers to those conflicts that happen within a particular group, whether it is a religious, ethnic, political or other type of identity group. It is important to be able to manage the conflicts within your own group, and be able to communicate with others within your group in order to build support for long-term peace processes.

4) Inter-group conflict refers to conflicts occurring between large organized social or identity groups. For example, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was a public forum designed to expose injustice and record events in order to achieve social reconciliation. To be successful peacebuilders we need to have the skills to work both within our own groups as well as between groups.

There are many challenges in working at conflict transformation across these different levels of conflict. One of the biggest challenges is *communicating with “the enemy”* without being viewed as a spy or traitor. In societies divided by long-standing hatreds it is very difficult to move out of your own group or act as an intermediary between groups.

A second very daunting challenge is *to change national structures*. Social, political and economic systems often need to change in order to achieve peace that is grounded in justice. Social transformation requires changes in attitudes and changes in structures. Achieving these changes takes years.

A third challenge is that national institutions and structures do not operate in vacuums but are also *influenced by global economic and political systems*. Successful change at the national level may require the involvement of other countries and actors, like the United States, the European Union (EU), the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the United Nations (UN), or the World Bank. Advocating change within these and other organizations is one role for peacebuilders.

This exercise is taken from: Caritas Internationalis: Peacebuilding. A Caritas Training Manual, Vatican City 2006, p. 58-60.

D. Exercises

Exercise 1: The 3 Ps

Purpose:

Provide an introductory tool for analyzing conflict.

Materials:

Flip chart paper and markers, copies of a case study (Handout 1).

Time: 1.5 – 2 hours

Procedure:

- 1) Decide beforehand how to divide the group into smaller groups for discussion. Decide what conflict you want groups to analyze, and distribute the case study to participants. All groups should analyze the same case study.
- 2) Introduce the *3 Ps-Model* (Handout 2). Draw the framework on flip chart paper, with each P (People, Process, and Problem) at a point in a triangle.
- 3) Divide large group into sub-groups to use the framework to analyze the conflict.
- 4) After 60 minutes of discussion, have groups return for large group reporting and discussion. Ask each group to report on their discussions. Point out differences in analysis.

This exercise is taken from: Caritas Internationalis: Peacebuilding. A Caritas Training Manual, Vatican City 2006, p. 73.

Handout 1:

Context Case Study – LANDLORD-TENANT DISPUTE IN KIBERA (NAIROBI)

Written by Peter Weke, Caritas Kenya

Kibera is one of the largest slum dwellings in the world. It is home to over 700,000 poverty stricken people, many of whom don't have jobs. It is situated on the outskirts of Nairobi City not very far from Langata Army Barracks. Over the years, this place has been mainly inhabited by two tribes, the Nubians and the Luos. Both tribes are of Nilotic origin from Sudan and have lived in Kenya peacefully without any conflict until recently. One night a very bitter fight broke out that left several houses burnt and many people injured. Several people were killed.

ORIGIN

Most landlords in Kibera are from the Nubian community while the majority of tenants are Luo. History has it that the Nubians were settled here by the colonial government after the First World War. This is because they could not go back to Sudan, their country of origin. The colonial government allocated land, including the land in Kibera, to the Nubians. Later, the Luo came to Nairobi from their traditional homelands in the countryside in search of employment and lived as tenants in Kibera. Most of them found various jobs in the industrial areas and on the railways as "casuals" with very meager pay. They could not afford good housing and the only alternative was to find refuge in the slums. People who have been working but have been laid off are known as "retrenchees". Most of them live in the slums of Nairobi and survive on odd jobs such as hawking; often they cannot make ends meet. During this time, the Nubian landlords built slum dwellings to rent. This is how these communities started living together in a mutual relationship: the Nubians provided the shanties for rent and the Luos lived as tenants. Over the years, the Nubian landlords amassed significant wealth in this relationship. Some charged exorbitant rents that were out of reach for the retrenchees. Nevertheless, both parties were important in this relationship because both benefited. This peaceful co-existence lasted for many years until recently when the president ordered rent reduction and told the tenants not to pay until this was done. Economic times in Kenya are very tight at the moment and many people are barely surviving. For this reason, the Kenyan President asked the landlords to reduce rents for poor people living in the slums, giving rise to the Kibera conflict. His statement indicated that no one should pay house rent since the land belonged to the government and therefore nobody should claim ownership. The Head of State's directive led to a situation of confusion and chaos as the tenants refused to pay rent while the landlords collaborated with the area Chief who insisted on collecting rent. This situation led to the bloody fight between the tenants and the landlords, and the police were called in to restore order. However, this did not last long. Some local politicians used the situation to issue inflammatory statements in readiness for the next year's general elections. Some business people also thought this could be an opportunity to grab the land as the residents were forced to flee for their lives. The local provincial administration also contributed to the conflict by failing to take action to reconcile the warring parties.

THE CURRENT SITUATION

As of now, ten people are feared dead and scores critically injured. At least ten houses were burnt and property of unknown value destroyed. So far the Provincial Administration has declared the slum a no-go area. The Provincial Commissioner in his last statement after touring the place in a helicopter promised that a survey of the slums was underway and that the government is in the process of establishing the perimeters of the land that was allocated to the Nubian community in colonial times. Once the boundaries are established, the Provincial Administration and community leaders will decide whether to allocate a joint command title deed or individual. These community leaders are chosen representatives from each community – area councilors and chiefs. They are in contact with the people living in Kibera and understand their problems.

ATTEMPTS TO RESOLVE THE CONFLICT

As it was reported in the papers, the area Member of Parliament (MP) visited the slums in order to help reconcile the warring groups. But, since he is a Luo he was seen to be supporting his tribe. Heavy fighting between Nubians and the Luos followed his visit. The argument of the Nubians is that the MP, who is also a Cabinet Minister, is seen to be working on a plan to evict the Nubians so that the land is occupied only by the Luos. In addition, the Nubians argue strongly that they were resettled here by the colonial government after the end of the First World War, and cannot move out. There has been no significant intervention by NGOs. The provincial Administration and the local MP have tried to mediate between the two parties and now calm is slowly returning. Some organisations assisted with food items and other basic needs. These included Caritas Nairobi, People for Peace in Africa, and the Kenya Red Cross Society. The government has also tried to reconcile the people through the provincial administration. At first this was rejected by the people because it was widely believed the government instigated the violence. Most of the people who were camping at the District Officer's compound have returned to their homes. Anti-riot police squads that were deployed have been withdrawn. The landlords and tenants are now negotiating for fairness and many believe that peaceful co-existence will soon prevail.

This handout is taken from: Caritas Internationalis: Peacebuilding. A Caritas Training Manual, Vatican City 2006, p. 231f.

Handout 2: The 3 Ps

An analysis tool used by John Paul Lederach is the model of **the Three Ps**. This model asks different questions about the people, the process, and the problem in order to analyze the conflict:

a) People: Refers to the relational and psychological elements of the conflict. This includes people's feelings, emotions, individual and group perceptions of the problem. Questions to ask include: Who is involved in the conflict? Who are the primary parties in the conflict? Who are the secondary parties? How does an individual or group perceive the situation? How do perceptions of the conflict differ between the groups?

b) Process: Refers to the way decisions get made and how people feel about it. The process of decision-making in a conflict is often a key cause of conflict because individuals may resent the decisions that are made and they may feel like they were treated unfairly, both of which contribute to feelings of powerlessness. People who feel excluded or sense they cannot influence decisions affecting their lives will rarely cooperate with decision-makers or support these decisions. They may not overtly reject the decision, but their behavior will disrupt the relationship in subtle and covert ways. Questions to ask include: What methods are being used, if any, to resolve the conflict? Are groups using violence or is the conflict playing out in other ways (e.g. demonstrations, protests, legal battles)? What is the phase of the conflict? How has the behavior of the various parties influenced the conflict?

c) Problem: Refers to the specific issues involved in the conflict and the differences people have between them. This may involve different values, opposing views about how to make a decision, incompatible needs or interests, and concrete differences regarding use, distribution, or access to scarce resources (land, money, and time). These are often referred to as the root causes of a conflict. Questions to ask include: What are the issues in the conflict? What are people fighting over? What are the underlying needs of the various parties in conflict? Do any mutually acceptable criteria or processes for decision-making exist? What might be some of the common values or interests in the conflict?

This handout is taken from: Caritas Internationalis: Peacebuilding. A Caritas Training Manual, Vatican City 2006, p. 65.

Exercise 2: The Who, What, and How of Conflict

Purpose: Provide pictorial analytical tools for analyzing conflict.

Materials: Copies of Handout 3: “The Who, What and How of Conflict?”, flip chart paper and markers, copies of a case study (Handout 1).

Time: 1 1/2 – 2 hours

Procedure:

- 1) Decide beforehand how to divide the group into smaller groups for discussion. Choose a conflict you want groups to analyze, and distribute the appropriate case study to members of the groups. All groups should analyze the same case study. This exercise works best if participants can be divided into 3 or 6 groups.
- 2) Explain the three (3) frameworks (who, what, how). Give handout to participants.
- 3) Divide large group into 3 or 6 sub-groups to use one part of the framework to analyze the conflict. With 3 groups, assign one group the “who,” another group the “what,” and the last group the “how” framework. With 6 groups, assign two groups to each framework.
- 4) After 60 minutes of discussion, have groups return for large group reporting and discussion.

Discussion:

Full group reporting for this exercise is necessary, since each group will have an incomplete picture of the conflict. Ask each group to report on their discussions. Point out differences in analysis.

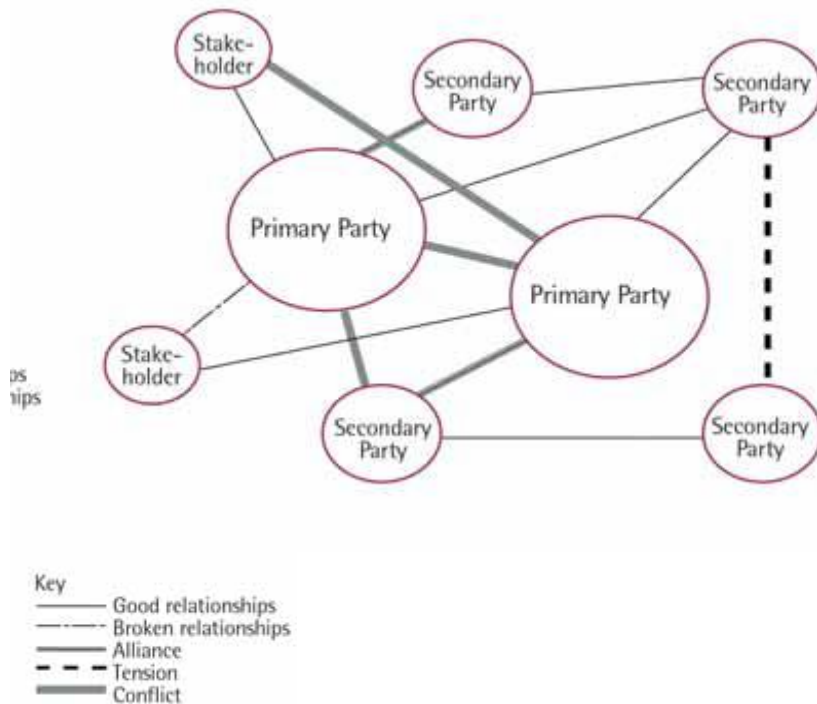
This exercise is taken from: Caritas Internationalis: Peacebuilding. A Caritas Training Manual, Vatican City 2006, p. 74.

Handout 3:

THE WHO, WHAT, AND HOW OF CONFLICT

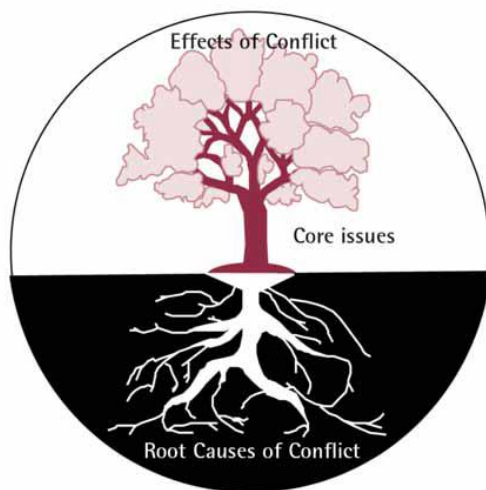
a) Who?

Who is involved in the conflict? How do they interact with each other? Where is the conflict centered? Which people or groups have strong positive relationships with each other? These relationships are expressed in the drawing below, with each party (including secondary and other peripheral or stakeholder parties) represented by a circle and their relationships by different types of lines.



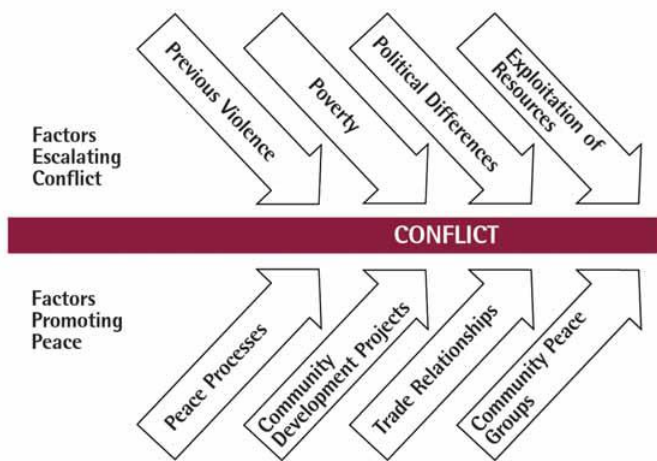
b) What?

Using the metaphor of a tree, we can identify the root causes of conflict under the soil, the core problems as the trunk and main support of the tree, and the effects of conflict as the many branches and leaves of the tree. What are the root causes, core issues and effects of the conflict?



c) How?

The how of conflict identifies factors that escalate or continue conflict, and factors that transform or resolve it. Which factors escalate conflict? Which factors promote peace? Some factors supporting continuation or escalation may include groups exploiting natural resources for their own profit under cover of war and violence, political differences, poverty, or history of previous violence between groups. Factors supporting transformation or resolution may include peace processes, community development efforts in war-affected regions, trading relationships (e.g. local markets) that continue across divided communities during times of war, or groups working actively to encourage tolerance and peace.

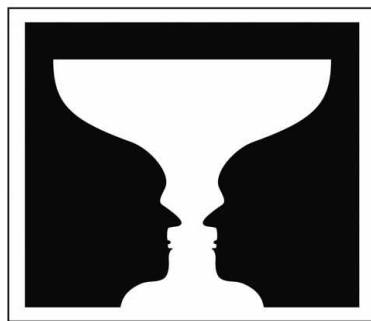


This exercise is taken from: Caritas Internationalis: Peacebuilding. A Caritas Training Manual, Vatican City 2006, p.78f.

2.4 Conflict Resolution

A. Ice-Breaker

Optical illusions



Purpose: Demonstrate the importance of perception on what we see and how we interpret situations or pictures.

Materials: Transparency or handouts of optical illusions, which include the Old Lady/Young Lady, and the Faces/Vase pictures

Time: 5 – 10 minutes, depending on length of debriefing

Procedure:

- 1) Show transparency of Old Lady/Young Lady.
- 2) Ask participants what they see. Some will answer a young lady, while others will see an old lady.
- 3) Ask one of the participants who sees both to show the others the parts of the two ladies in the picture.
- 4) Repeat with the picture of the Faces/Vase

Discussion:

Point out how everyone is looking at the same thing, yet seeing two entirely different pictures. For some it is easier to see both, but for many, it is only possible to see the other picture after someone traces the picture. If you don't have access to a transparency machine, make copies of the handout for each participant. You may want to present just one or both of these pictures in the training.

B. Franciscan Text

Franciscan Text: *How Saint Francis converted three murderous robbers and they became brothers*

...At that time three famous robbers frequented that area, and they committed many evil deeds in the area. One day they came to that place of the brothers and asked Brother Angelo, the Guardian, to give them something to eat. But the guardian rebuked them sharply ... At this they left, disturbed and deeply offended. Then Saint Francis returned from outside with a sack of bread and a small jug of wine that he and his companion had obtained. When the Guardian related how he had driven away those men, Saint Francis rebuked him severely, saying that he had acted cruelly: "They would be brought back to God more easily by sweetness than by cruel rebukes. Therefore our teacher Jesus Christ whose Gospel we have promised to observe, says that it is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick, and that He did not come to call the just, but to call sinners to repentance, and for that reason He often ate with them. Therefore, since you have acted against charity and against the Holy Gospel of Christ, I command you under holy obedience: immediately take this sack of bread and this jug of wine that I obtained and go after them diligently through mountains and valleys until you find them. Then on my behalf present all this bread and wine to them. Then kneel down before them and humbly tell them your fault of being cruel. Then ask them on my behalf not to do evil anymore, but to fear God and not to offend their neighbors. And if they do this, I promise to provide for them in their need and constantly give them food and drink. And when you have told them these things, return here humbly."

And while the guardian went to carry out the command, Saint Francis placed himself in prayer and asked God to soften the hearts of those robbers and convert them to penance.

The obedient Guardian reached them and presented the bread and wine to them, and did and said what St. Francis had commanded him...

(The robbers) went quickly to Saint Francis and said to him: "Father, because of the many horrible sins we have done, we do not believe we can return to the mercy of God. But if you have any hope that God will receive us into His mercy, we're prepared to do what you tell us and to do penance with you." Then St. Francis, receiving them charitably and kindly, encouraging them with many examples and assuring them of the mercy of God for them, showing them that the mercy of God is infinite...

The Little Flowers of Saint Francis, Chap. 26

Taken from: Francis of Assisi – Early Documents, Vol. III: The Prophet, New York/London/Manila (New City Press) 2001, 609-611.

Tasks:

1. Read the story

2. Encourage the group to share their thoughts on the story. You might initiate the conversation with the following: This story reminds us of certain characteristics essential to Francis' practice of nonviolence: courtesy, which disarms the heart, along with the fundamental motivation of loving as God loves and expressing that love in tangible and practical ways. As in the Gubbio story, he promises to provide food for the robbers, realizing that most bandits robbed because they were hungry. He does this through the brothers whom he sends to find the robbers. His nonviolence is practical, realistic and aims to take away the justification or reason for violence. His motives are not merely strategic. In the first place, he wants to follow Jesus' gospel way, and it happens that this is an effective way of nonviolent love. Concepts fundamental to restorative justice are also present; it becomes obvious in the course of the story that Francis' nonviolent response comes from his unconditional regard and respect for others.

C. Input

The trainer reads the following material and prepares a presentation on it. The presentation is meant to help prepare participants to do the exercises.

In thinking and learning about how to deal with or handle conflict, we need to examine:

(1) How do we handle conflict in our own interactions with others (conflict handling styles)?

(2) What skills are useful in dealing with conflict?

This module introduces both. Conflict handling skills are crucial for those doing peacebuilding work. In your work as peace agents, you will inevitably deal with conflict, perhaps on a daily basis. These skills and learning more about how you react to conflict will help you grow and deal with the conflicts you face in your personal life, in your professional life, in your relationships with other peacebuilders, and in your interactions with those who might not agree with your peacebuilding work.

After introducing different conflict handling styles, three types of skills are introduced: problem solving, negotiation, mediation. This is followed by a brief discussion of basic third party communication skills commonly used in mediation.

The skills included in this section and the various styles of handling conflict have been developed in a western cultural context. The skills are included here, but you are encouraged as trainers to discuss with participants the ways in which these concepts may or may not be applicable or adaptable to the contexts where you work. It is important to note that this section of the module is only an introduction to conflict-handling styles and skills – many university programs around the world devote several years of study to conflict and conflict resolution skills and techniques, and practitioners refine their skills only after years of experience with negotiating, mediating or problem solving.

1. Conflict Handling Styles

Many tools are available to help individuals be aware of the way they act in conflict. For peacebuilding, knowing how you react to conflict and how you communicate with people is very important. This module includes two different conflict-handling style instruments, which you can use with participants.

The first instrument is a Personal Conflict Style Inventory developed by Ron Kraybill and Mennonite Conciliation Services. It is a brief questionnaire that uses the five conflict styles identified in the Thomas-Kilmann instrument – accommodation, compromise, competition, avoidance and collaboration – and expands the focus to examine how you react to conflicts when they first arise and how you respond after the conflicts become more intense. The second is a conflict-handling style instrument that interprets different styles using animals. Below is a brief overview of the five basic styles for handling conflict. These categories emerged within a western cultural context and do not necessarily translate to other cultures. For example, collaborating is often referred to as cooperating. In some Arab cultures, collaboration has a very negative connotation and refers to “selling out” to an enemy. When using these instruments, make sure you check with individuals from the various cultural backgrounds of your participants to see if it is appropriate to use these terms.

Accommodating: People who accommodate are unassertive and very cooperative. They neglect their own concerns to satisfy the concerns of others. They often give in during a conflict, acknowledging they made a mistake or deciding it is no big deal. Regarding styles, accommodating is the opposite of competing. People who accommodate may be selflessly generous or charitable, they may obey another person when they would prefer not to, or yield to another’s point of view. Usually people who accommodate put relationships first, ignore the issues and try to keep peace at any price.

Competing or Forcing: People who approach conflict in a competitive way assert themselves and do not cooperate as they pursue their own concerns at other people’s expense. To compete, people take a power orientation and use whatever power seems appropriate to win. This may include arguing, pulling rank, or

instigating economic sanctions. Competing may mean standing up and defending a position believed to be correct, or simply trying to win. Forcing is another way of viewing competition. For people using a forcing style, usually the conflict is obvious, and some people are right and others are wrong.

Avoiding: People who avoid conflict are generally unassertive and uncooperative. They do not immediately pursue their own concerns or those of the other person, but rather they avoid the conflict entirely or delay their response. To do so, they may diplomatically sidestep or postpone discussion until a better time, withdraw from the threatening situation or divert attention. They perceive conflict as hopeless and therefore something to be avoided. Differences are overlooked and they accept disagreement.

Collaborating or Cooperating: Unlike avoiders, collaborators are both assertive and cooperative. They assert their own views while also listening to other views and welcome differences. They attempt to work with others to find solutions that fully satisfy the concerns of both parties. This approach involves identifying the concerns that underlie the conflict by exploring the disagreement from both sides of the conflict, learning from each other's insights, and creatively coming up with solutions that address the concerns of both. People using this style often recognize there are tensions in relationships and contrasting viewpoints but want to work through conflicts.

Compromising: Compromisers are moderately assertive and moderately cooperative. They try to find fast, mutually acceptable solutions to conflicts that partially satisfy both parties. Compromisers give up less than accommodators but more than competitors. They explore issues more than avoiders, but less than collaborators. Their solutions often involve "splitting the difference" or exchanging concessions. Conflict is mutual difference best resolved by cooperation and compromise.

These five conflict styles can be put together on a grid with two dimensions:

- (1) Degree of concern for the relationship between the parties in conflict; and
- (2) Degree of concern for the conflict issues.

A high degree of concern for the relationship and the issue typically yields a collaborating or cooperative conflict style. A high concern for the relationship and low concern for the issue usually generate an accommodating conflict style, while a high concern for the issue and low concern for the relationship lead to a competitive or forcing conflict style. A moderate degree of concern for the relationship and the issue will generally produce a compromising conflict style. Finally, a low concern for both the issue and relationship will typically yield an avoiding style.

Figure – Conflict Styles and the Degree of Concern for Relationships and Issues

In fact, each style is appropriate in different situations. For example, if a child is in danger of touching a hot object or running into the street, you will use a competing style to prevent the child from being harmed. We each need to develop competency in all of the five styles.

Questions for a deeper reflection:

1. In what circumstances is each of the five styles appropriate?

In addition, all cultures attach different positive or negative values to each of the styles. For example, some cultures positively value competition while others might interpret compromise as a positive style.

2. In your own cultural context, what values do you place on each style? Compare your responses to these to your other trainees or participants.

2. Problem solving

Problem solving is a technique that encourages individuals in conflict to jointly define the conflict or problem, analyze its causes, suggest various options for solving the conflict, and then select and implement the preferred solution. It is a five step process in which a group:

- (1) Defines the conflict;
 - (2) Analyses causes of the conflict;
 - (3) Generates or brainstorms options for resolution;
 - (4) Selects the preferred option; and
 - (5) Implements the solution.
- In many cases, step 5 (implementation) is done separately, at a later date.

Problem solving is often used in small groups to think analytically. It is a skill that can be extremely useful in conflict, especially for jointly defining the problem or conflict. Usually not all groups agree on the causes of the conflict! Problem solving is not necessarily useful in restoring relationships, which is one of its limitations as a conflict handling skill.

Another similar methodology is called *appreciative inquiry*. Appreciative inquiry takes a more positive approach and analyzes and appreciates the capacities that exist, rather than looking at the deficiencies or problems. It discovers and appreciates the best of what is, dreams about what might be and envisions possible impact, designs and creates what should be, and finally, takes steps to make these processes sustainable.

In some cases, encouraging *cooperation* as opposed to competition by reorienting an individual's or a group's focus is enough to defuse conflict. Creating a situation in which two formerly competitive groups work together to achieve a common ("superordinate") goal is a useful and commonly used technique in peacebuilding programming. For example, some peacebuilding programs have established joint projects that require former enemy groups to work together to build houses for all or that establish committees to improve the quality of education for both groups' children. Although these are often effective in promoting short-term problem solving and cooperation it is not yet clear if these strategies work in the long term to break down stereotypes and build relationships that extend beyond the common goal.

Brainstorming is a technique of problem solving that is useful in generating options. It separates the process of generating options from evaluating the various options, therefore encouraging individual and group creativity.

This input is taken from: Caritas Internationalis: Peacebuilding. A Caritas Training Manual, Vatican City 2006, p. 114-117.

D. Exercises

Exercise 1: Personal Conflict Style Inventory

Purpose:

Help participants explore their own responses to being in conflict and recognize that there are a number of different ways of responding to conflict

Materials:

A copy of Handout 1, "How Do I Respond to Conflict", for each participant, chalkboard and chalk or flip chart paper and markers

Time: 1 – 1 1/2 hours

Procedure:

- 1) Handout the Personal Conflict Style Inventory (Handout 1) to each participant.
- 2) Let participants know there are a number of ways to respond to conflict and this tool is designed to help identify how they respond to conflict as soon as it occurs and after it has continued for a while. Also mention that it is important for people doing conflict transformation and peacebuilding work to know how

they personally react to conflict in order to deal with conflicts in a healthy, constructive way when they arise during their work.

3) Have participants read the questionnaire and follow the instructions listed.

4) After participants answer the questionnaire, go through the scoring procedure if participants have difficulty with it.

5) Debrief the questionnaire by going through the different conflict styles and identify strengths and weaknesses for each. Let them know that it is not necessary to share their preferred conflict styles and that each conflict style has its strengths and weaknesses, which makes them better in some situations than others. Ask participants to call out strengths and weaknesses for each conflict style. Write their responses on the chalkboard or flip chart paper. If there is time, discuss some of the questions below.

Discussion:

You might want to have participants reflect on the cultural appropriateness of the Inventory, and how their responses to conflict are culturally influenced.

It could be useful to use the following questions for reflection:

❖ In what circumstances are each of the five styles appropriate?

❖ In your own cultural context, what values do you place on each style?

Some participants may be uncomfortable with sharing, but others may want to share. Often, individuals will talk in small groups with neighbors about their results.

This exercise is taken from: Caritas Internationalis: Peacebuilding. A Caritas Training Manual, Vatican City 2006, p. 126.

Handout 1:

“How do I respond to conflict?” - PERSONAL CONFLICT STYLE INVENTORY

Instructions:

Consider your personal response to situations where your wishes differ from those of another person. Statements A to J (Part One) deal with your initial or immediate response to a disagreement, while statements K to T (Part Two) deal with your response *after the disagreement has become stronger*. If you find it easier, you may choose one particular conflict setting to reflect on and use it as a background for all of the questions.

Please Note: The reflection on your own conflict style is more important – and more reliable – than the numbers in the tally sheet. There are no “right” or “wrong” answers, nor is this instrument “standardized”. Some will agree with the results and others disagree. Whether you like the results or not, reflect on what your conflict styles are and discuss them with others. The inventory is merely a tool for self-reflection.

PART ONE

Circle one number on the line below each statement.

When I first discover that differences exist:

A. I make sure that all views are out in the open and treated with equal consideration, even if there seems to be substantial disagreement.

Not at all characteristic 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very characteristic

B. I devote more attention to making sure others understand the logic and benefits of my position than I do to pleasing them.

Not at all characteristic 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very characteristic

C. I make my needs known, but tone them down a bit and look for solutions somewhere in the middle.
Not at all characteristic 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very characteristic

D. I pull back from discussion for a time to avoid tension.
Not at all characteristic 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very characteristic

E. I devote more attention to the feelings of others than to my personal goals.
Not at all characteristic 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very characteristic

F. I make sure my personal agenda doesn't get in the way of our relationship.
Not at all characteristic 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very characteristic

G. I actively explain my ideas and just as actively take steps to understand others.
Not at all characteristic 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very characteristic

H. I am more concerned with goals I believe to be important than with how others feel about things.
Not at all characteristic 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very characteristic

I. I decide the differences aren't worth worrying about.
Not at all characteristic 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very characteristic

J. I set aside my own preferences and become more concerned with keeping the relationship comfortable.
Not at all characteristic 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very characteristic

K. I don't push for things to be done my way, and I pull back somewhat from the demands of others.
Not at all characteristic 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very characteristic

L. I try to be reasonable by not asking for my full preferences, but I make sure I get some of what I want.
Not at all characteristic 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very characteristic

M. I put forth greater effort to make sure that the truth as I see it is recognized and less on pleasing others.
Not at all characteristic 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very characteristic

N. I enter more actively into discussion and hold out for ways to meet the needs of others as well as my own.
Not at all characteristic 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very characteristic

PART TWO

If differences persist and feelings escalate:

O. I interact less with others and look for ways to find a safe distance.
Not at all characteristic 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very characteristic

P. I do what needs to be done and hope we can mend feelings later.
Not at all characteristic 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very characteristic

Q. I do what is necessary to soothe (or calm) the other's feelings.
Not at all characteristic 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very characteristic

R. I pay close attention to the desires of others but remain firm that they need to pay equal attention to my desires.

Not at all characteristic 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very characteristic

S. I press for moderation and compromise so we can make a decision and move on with things.

Not at all characteristic 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very characteristic

SCORING AND INTERPRETATION

Transfer the number from each item to the tally sheet. For example, on item A, if you selected number 6, write 6 on the line designated for A on the tally sheet. Then add the numbers.

Sample: B 1 + H 4 = 5.

This exercise gives you two sets of scores. Calm scores apply to your response when disagreement first arises. Storm scores apply to your response if things are not easily resolved and emotions get stronger. The score indicates your inclination to use each style. The higher your score in a given style, the more likely you are to use this style in responding to conflict.

STYLES OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Collaborating/Cooperating

A _____ + G _____ = _____ Calm

K _____ + S _____ = _____ Storm

Assert your views while also inviting other views. Welcome differences; identify main concerns; generate options; search for a solution which meets as many concerns as possible; search for mutual agreement.

Perspective on Conflict: Conflict is natural, neutral. So affirm differences, prize each person's uniqueness.

Recognize tensions in relationships and contrasts in viewpoint. Work through conflicts of closeness.

Compromising

C _____ + J _____ = _____ Calm

M _____ + T _____ = _____ Storm

Urge moderation; bargain; split the difference; find a little something for everyone; meet them halfway.

Perspective on Conflict: Conflict is mutual difference best resolved by cooperation and compromise.

If each comes halfway, progress can be made by the democratic process.

Accommodating

E _____ + F _____ = _____ Calm

O _____ + R _____ = _____ Storm

Accept the other's view; let the other's view prevail; give in; support; acknowledge error; decide it's no big deal or it doesn't matter.

Perspective on Conflict: Conflict is usually disastrous, so yield. Sacrifice your own interests, ignore the issues, put relationships first, and keep peace at any price.

Avoiding

D _____ + I _____ = _____ Calm

N _____ + P _____ = _____ Storm

Delay or avoid response; withdraw; be inaccessible; divert attention.

Perspective on Conflict: Conflict is hopeless; avoid it. Overlook differences, accept disagreement or get out.

Forcing

B _____ + H _____ = _____ Calm

L _____ + Q _____ = _____ Storm

Control the outcome; discourage disagreement; insist on my view prevailing.

Perspective on Conflict: Conflict is obvious; some people are right and some people are wrong.

The central issue is who is right. Pressure and coercion are necessary.

PREFERRED AND BACKUP STYLES

Using your scores from the previous page, list your score numbers and style names here in order of largest to smallest. The style which received the highest score in each of the columns, calm and storm, indicates a “preferred” or primary style of conflict management. If two or more styles have the same score, they are equally “preferred.” The second highest score indicates one’s “backup” style if the number is relatively close to the highest score. A fairly even score across all of the styles indicates a “flat profile.” Persons with a flat profile tend to be able to choose easily among the various responses to conflict.

CALM STORM

Response when issues / conflicts first arise.

?	_____
?	_____
?	_____
?	_____
?	_____

Response after the issues / conflicts have been unresolved and have grown in intensity.

?	_____
?	_____
?	_____
?	_____
?	_____

This handout is taken from: Caritas Internationalis: Peacebuilding. A Caritas Training Manual, Vatican City 2006, p. 135-139.

Exercise 2: Chairs

Purpose: Demonstrate how to manage conflict by turning it into cooperation; focus on possible differences in interpretation of instructions; and highlight cultural differences in handling conflict.

Materials: A room without tables but with a chair for each participant, copies of each instruction (see below) for one third of the participants

Time: 30 – 45 minutes

Procedure:

- 1) Explain to the participants the relevance of the exercise by referring to the purpose.
- 2) Give each participant one set of instructions (A, B, or C), distributing equal numbers of the three different instructions. Tell them not to show their instructions to other participants as this will defeat the purpose of the exercise.
 - A. Put all the chairs in a circle. You have 15 minutes to do this.
 - B. Put all the chairs near the door. You have 15 minutes to do this.
 - C. Put all the chairs near the window. You have 15 minutes to do this.
- 3) The trainer tells everyone to start the exercise following the instructions they were given.

Discussion:

This exercise focuses on aspects of non-aggressive conflict resolution. The instructions cannot be carried out unless people with identical instructions cooperate. The sub-groups cannot carry out all their instructions unless they cooperate. Several solutions are possible:

- ❖ Putting all the chairs in a circle, between the door and window;
- ❖ Consecutively putting all chairs in a circle, then near the door, then near the window;
- ❖ Disobeying part of the instructions, by putting one third of the chairs in a circle, one third near the door and one third near the window;
- ❖ Renaming the situation, by hanging two newsprint sheets in the middle of the room, on one of which is written “door” and on the other “window”;

❖ Disobeying the instructions entirely.

The exercise has great scope for creative conflict resolution. Groups often burst into frantic action, use force and sometimes carry chairs with others desperately sitting on them to their corner.

While some participants are trying to find a cooperative solution, others can be seen continuing to collect and defend their chairs. This in turn frustrates the cooperators, who forget their positive intentions and join the argument.

Reflection:

- What did you experience when playing this game?
- Did you feel that the chair you were sitting in was yours, to do with as you pleased?
- How did you relate to people who wanted something else?
- Did you cooperate, persuade, argue, fight, or give in?
- If you confronted others, how did you do this?
- Did you follow instructions?
- Why did you interpret them as you did?
- Did you see them as an instruction to be carried out whatever the cost and to the exclusion of others?
- In what way are your feelings about instructions influenced by your cultural background?
- Has culture influenced the way you behaved in this situation?
- How would you handle this if you did it a second time?
- Can you relate what happened here to real life situations?
- How is this exercise applicable to peacebuilding?

This exercise is taken from: Caritas Internationalis: Peacebuilding. A Caritas Training Manual, Vatican City 2006, p.127f.

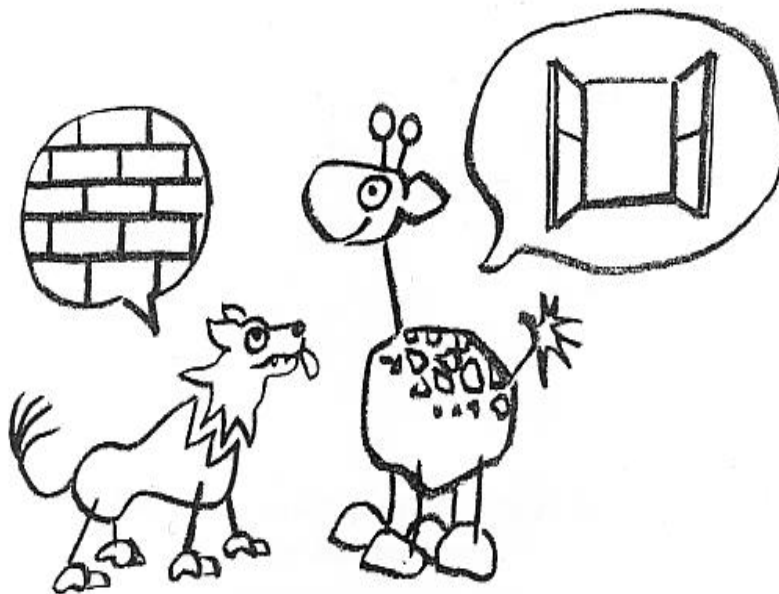
3. Social and political dimension

3.1 Non Violent Communication

A. Ice-Breaker

Trainer note:

Present the following cartoon while reading the sentence below and asking the participants for their ideas.



Words can be walls – or windows...

B. Biblical Text

Biblical Text: Jesus and the woman caught in adultery (John 8, 2-11)

Tasks (work on them for about 20 minutes):

1. Role-play the reading with a narrator and different people representing each character.
2. Discuss the question: What are the feelings and needs of each character?

C. Input

The trainer reads the following material and prepares a presentation on it. The presentation is meant to help prepare participants to do the exercise.

Nonviolent communication (NVC), also called Compassionate Communication or Collaborative Communication, is a communication process developed by Marshall Rosenberg in the 1960s. It often functions as a conflict resolution process, and focuses on three aspects of communication: self-empathy (defined as a deep and compassionate awareness of one's own inner experience), empathy (defined as listening to another with deep compassion), and honest self-expression (defined as expressing oneself authentically in a way that is likely to inspire compassion in others).

NVC holds that most conflicts between individuals or groups arise from miscommunication about human needs, due to coercive or manipulative language that aims to induce fear, guilt, shame, etc. NVC is based on the idea that all human beings have the capacity for compassion and only resort to violence and behavior that harm others when they do not recognize more effective strategies for meeting needs.

Rosenberg has used nonviolent communication in peace programs in conflict zones including Rwanda, Burundi, Nigeria, Malaysia, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Serbia, Croatia, Ireland, and the Middle East, including the occupied Palestinian territory.

“What I want in life is compassion, a flow between myself and others based on mutual giving from the heart. And on this ground acting for peace and social change”

Marshall Rosenberg

1. Nonviolent communication is:

- a language of compassion
- a tool for social change and peace work
- a way to connect with oneself and others
- an instrument to transform conflict
- an exercise of autonomy and free will
- an understanding at the level of needs and feelings

2. The four components of Nonviolent Communication are:

- a. **Observation:** description of what is seen/heard.
- b. **Feelings:** focus on our inner experience rather than reaction to what other people are doing.
- c. **Needs:** an understanding that needs are the cause of our feelings.
- d. **Request:** choosing doable, immediate and positive actions; distinguishing them from judgments, interpretations and demands; fostering of understanding, connection and autonomy.

3. Understanding **Empathy (which is a way to listen to what is going on in me and the other person)**, and **naming the actions and attitudes that foster or hinder communication:**

Disconnecting Communication:

Connecting Communication:

Evaluation, Interpretation	-	Observation
Devaluation	-	Appreciation
Position	-	Needs, Interests
Order	-	Request, Free will
Conflict = Danger	-	Conflict = Chance
War-tradition	-	Tradition of comprehension
Feeling=sign of failing	-	Feeling=signpost for understanding
Win-Lose – strategy	-	Win-Win – strategy, synergy
Judge, Guilt, blame	-	Mediation
Analysis	-	Compassionate listening
World of boundaries	-	World of rich variety

4. Feelings show whether needs are met or not:

Feelings we have when needs are not met:

afraid, concerned
nervous, over-whelmed, shocked
frustrated, irritated

Feelings we have when needs are met:

amazed, alive, calm
confident, encouraged, glad, grateful
hopeful, loving, peaceful, relaxed

bored, depressed, exhausted, hurt
hopeless, sad, tired

touched, stimulated
joyful, eager

5. Our Needs:

- Subsistence: Food / Rest / Shelter / Clean Air and Water
- Freedom: Autonomy / Choice / To speak one's mind
- Celebrating /mourning: Creativity / Learning / Inspiration
- Security: Openness / Order / Safety / Honesty / Trust
- Participation: Belonging/Community/Harmony/Recognition/Support/Respect/Enrich life/Learning
- Understanding: Consideration / Empathy / Peace of mind / Love / Peace / Beauty / Meaning

6. Ways/questions to help understand the four components or steps of Nonviolent Communication:

a. Four steps to help promote expression:

Observation: When I see/hear...

Feeling: I feel...

Need: Because I need...

Request: Would you be willing...?

b. Four steps to help promote empathy:

Observation: When I see you/hear you...

Feeling: Do you feel...?

Need: Because you need...

Request: Would you like...?

7. Example of use of Nonviolent Communication:

A father might accuse his daughter's teacher in the following way: "The class is out of control. The atmosphere is chaotic..."

Instead he might use Nonviolent Communication to express the same thing:

Observation: "I see how unhappy my daughter is when she comes home from school; she tells me that..."

Feeling: "I'm feeling alarmed and concerned..."

Need: "I need clarity about what's going on; I need to know that my daughter is safe and supported."

Request: "Would you be willing to share with me what you see happening and the steps you're taking to provide a healthy environment for the children?"

8. Fields of application for Nonviolent Communication:

- Our daily life in fraternities
- Intercultural dialogue
- Administration
- NGOs
- Local authority
- University
- Team, Networks
- School
- Neighborhood, Family
- Company
- Government, Politics

D. Exercise

Think of a violent communication reaction/response you have had:

Now transform it into a Nonviolent Communication:

1. What was your observation? _____
2. How did you feel? _____
3. What did you need? _____
4. What request might you make? _____

Trainer Notes: The answers should be written on a paper within 10 minutes. Afterwards the participants should discuss their proposed answers first two by two, and then in a plenary session.

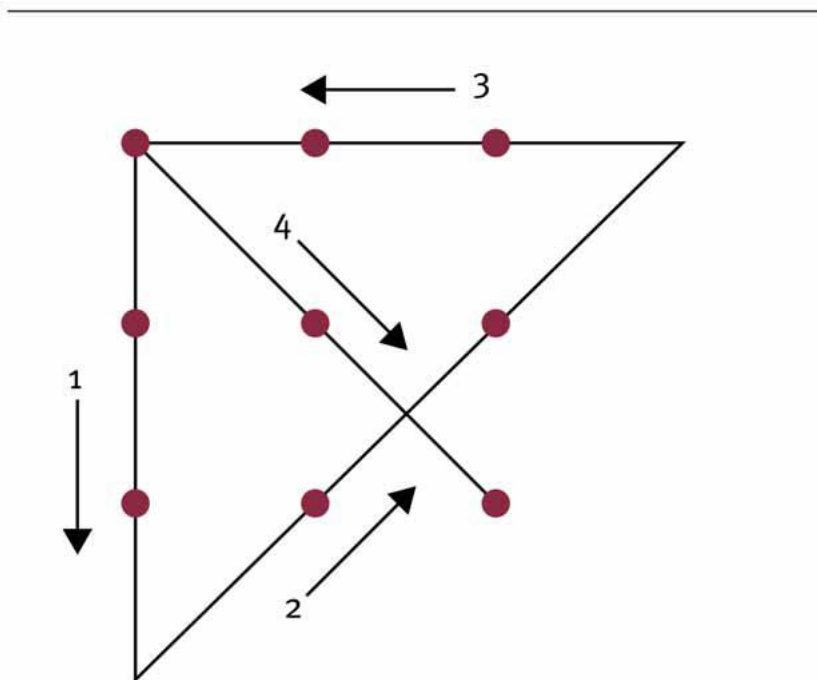
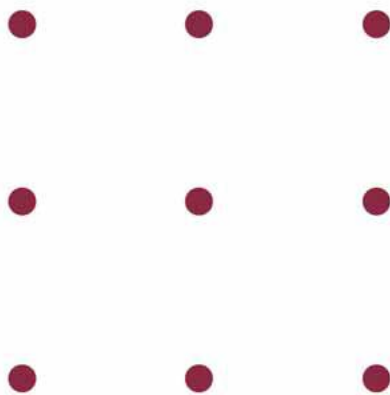
The modules of this chapter were taken from: *Nonviolent Communication (NVC) as a method for conflict resolution and social change*. A PowerPoint Presentation prepared by the *International Fellowship of Reconciliation – German Branch*.

3.2 Religious Perspectives on Reconciliation

A. Ice-Breaker

Nine Dots

Ask participants to draw nine dots on a paper (as below). Then ask them to connect all nine dots using only four straight lines and without lifting their pencils from the paper. If any participant has seen this exercise before, he or she should remain quiet until the debriefing.



For Discussion:

- What are the assumptions that you started out with when you tried to solve the problem?
- Can you think of a time when divergent (“out of the box”) thinking solved a problem that you face?

B. Franciscan Text

St. Francis' Meeting with the Sultan

In 1212, Francis set out for Syria but was shipwrecked. The next year he headed for Morocco but because of grave illness got only as far as Spain. In 1219, Francis finally traveled to Egypt and was able to meet people of Islam. On his arrival in Egypt, Francis received permission to go to the front lines and enter Damietta to speak with Malik-al-Kamil, the Sultan of Egypt. Jaques de Vitry, who was the Bishop of Acre [modern-day Israel] at the time, writes that Saracens captured Francis who told them that he was a Christian and asked to be taken to the Sultan. When the Sultan recognized in Francis a man of God, he treated him gently and gave Francis hospitality for several days, listening carefully to all Francis had to say. De Vitry says that the Sultan sent Francis back to the Christian camp, because he was afraid that Francis' preaching would convert his soldiers. Two other early accounts say that the Sultan was advised by his spiritual counselors that Francis should be killed. This the Sultan refused to do, and so asked Francis to leave for his own safety but first said to him, "Pray for me, that God may deign to reveal to me the law and the faith which is more pleasing to Him." The Sultan reportedly gave Francis a safe-conduct pass to visit areas in the Holy Land at the time off-limits to Christians.

Tasks (work on them for about 20 minutes):

1. Read and reflect on the text.
2. Discuss the following questions:
 - a. Can you identify religious or marginalized groups in our society that are considered "enemies" by most? Name them. Why are they felt to be enemies?
 - b. What is your experience with them?

C. Input

The trainer reads the following material and prepares a presentation on it. The presentation is meant to help prepare participants to do the exercises.

You can understand reconciliation in at least two ways: The first is as an activity within the practice of conflict resolution and the second is as a theological concept with a very specific meaning within the Church. This reconciliation module focuses on transforming relationships at the personal level and therefore refers to reconciliation as a process. It is rooted in the theological tradition as well as psychological concepts of reconciliation, but does not refer to specific program activities.

Reconciliation is a Christian concept, but it is also found in many other religions and takes on different characteristics in different cultures. As one of the important pieces of Caritas reconciliation and peacebuilding work is working with people and partners from other faith traditions and cultures, here we explore some of the diverse approaches to reconciliation.

Please be aware that this is just one of the possible interpretations of these diverse approaches to reconciliation by people from other faith traditions. More importantly, as peacebuilding trainers, we should be careful in giving our interpretations of other peoples' perspectives and meanings. It is best to encourage others to represent their own perspectives on reconciliation. Hearing other traditions and faith perspectives on reconciliation and forgiveness often helps us understand our own tradition more fully.

Ritual is commonly used in reconciliation processes because it is a powerful way of recognizing important events, employing multiple senses, and linking us to the past, present or even the future. The symbols used in rituals are able to convey much more meaning than words often are. For example, lighting a candle is a powerful symbol of warmth and life that can change the ambience of an entire room without saying a

word. We have simple rituals, such as how we greet each other and eat our meals, and more elaborate rituals like funerals and the Eucharist.

Christianity

In a Christian, and particularly Catholic, understanding of reconciliation Christ is placed centrally in the reconciliation process. Christ embodies the promise of God's reconciliation, which Christians try to follow. Understanding how reconciliation occurs varies across Christian groups. It's important to highlight the role of the victim in initiating reconciliation and offering forgiveness based on a restored relationship with God from a Catholic perspective, whereas a more Protestant perspective emphasizes that the process needs to start with the offender asking for forgiveness. Another way to understand reconciliation within Christianity is to focus on restoring relationships. Hizkias Assefa identifies *four dimensions* of relationships in which reconciliation occurs: spiritual, personal, social, and ecological. Each dimension must be addressed in order to achieve full reconciliation.

Spiritual. The spiritual dimension refers to creating harmony and restoring broken relationships with God. This relationship is central to the other relationships: an individual needs to restore her or his relationship with God before moving on to restoring other relationships.

Personal. The second dimension involves reconciling with the "self." In Christianity, renouncing personal sinfulness and selfishness to God leads to forgiveness. When forgiveness is received, it is expected to lead to personal tranquility, peace, and harmony – reconciliation with the self.

Social. Reconciling with those around us, our neighbors and the larger human community, is a third dimension. We need to restore relationships with our neighbors and larger communities to reflect justice, mercy, respect and love. Relationships here reflect reconciliation at the other dimensions; if we are not spiritually or personally reconciled, it is unlikely that we will be able to achieve social reconciliation.

Ecological. The fourth dimension of reconciliation can be called reconciling with nature. From a Christian perspective, this dimension recognizes that humans cannot be fully reconciled with God while disrespecting and abusing God's creation. Reconciliation at this level calls for respect and care for nature and the ecological system in which we live.

Christianity employs many rituals for reconciliation. Christian traditions employ different rituals that involve prayer, song, silence, incense, etc. For example, the Stations of the Cross could be adapted from a Catholic ritual devotional practice into a group reflection on reconciliation.

Trainer Notes: It may be appropriate to hold a ritual during or to conclude the training. Rituals from which you can draw include Lenten liturgies, or ceremonies that involve physically burning paper or burying items that symbolize hurt, anxiety, pain, fear or brokenness. Rituals can symbolize the desire to let go of past burdens and embrace a new future. Silence and prayer are powerful parts of rituals, which allow people to reflect on their experiences and what they have seen or heard.

Judaism

Three words for forgiveness can be identified in Hebrew (Gopin, 2001, p.90): *Teshuva*, which refers to repentance; *Mehila*, which is the standard word for forgiveness; and *Seliha*, which can be translated as pardon or forgiveness.

Marc Gopin, a Rabbi working in the field of religion and conflict resolution, emphasizes that *teshuva* is a very important term in Hebrew for reconciliation. With the concept of *teshuva*, forgiveness is embedded in a process of change that is initiated by the offender. Unlike the Catholic approach, this process starts with the offender and not the victim. The offender initiates by repenting, which brings forth the capacity to

transform not only the offender but also the larger community. Through this process one of the sublime elements of a good and forgiving God is enacted.

Another important idea in a Judaic understanding of reconciliation is the opportunity for an individual to act in order to complete true repentance. When an individual who committed an offence (such as stealing) has the opportunity to repeat the same offense, but resists, he completes the process of repentance. A person's ability to resist the action and act in a new way confirms that he has truly repented. The external behavior confirms the internal shift. In Judaism, authentic *teshuva* has the power to transform more than the individuals involved, but can transform the world. Again, the emphasis is on offenders taking responsibility for their actions and acting in new ways that demonstrate their commitment to the alternative path of reconciliation.

Islam

Reconciliation and forgiveness are also explored in Islam and the Koran. One of the most powerful uses of reconciliation in Islam is linked to two rituals: *sulh*, or settlement; and *musalaha*, or reconciliation.

Sulh is a ritual that consists of three stages, which incorporate *musalaha*. In the first stage, the families of the victim and offender choose respected mediators (*muslihs*). In the process, they publicly acknowledge that a crime was committed.

The second stage is the reconciliation or *musalaha* itself. Here, the mediators work to produce a pardon and settlement. In the process, the honor and dignity of both parties need to be upheld and restored. It is important that both parties retain respect within the community even while a crime is acknowledged – this is particularly important because large groups of the community are involved, not just individuals as often is the case in western, individualistic cultures.

In the third stage, a public ritual is held, which brings the community together as the main guarantor of the forgiveness.

The public ceremony of *sulh* includes four major stages:

- (1) The act of reconciliation;
- (2) The parties shaking hands under the supervision of the mediators;
- (3) The family of the offender visiting the home of the victim to drink a cup of bitter coffee; and
- (4) The offender's family hosting a meal.

The ritual of *sulh* does not necessarily emphasize either the victim or offender's role in initiating the process, but does emphasize using a third party to help facilitate the process. In this way, community relations are maintained and honor is preserved for both parties.

Rituals, such as *sulh*, can be very powerful for acknowledging and resolving a grievance, and allow the victim and offender, and their families to resume some kind of relationship.

"They will not there hear any vain discourse, but only salutations of Peace: and they will not have therein sustenance, morning and evening."

(Surah XIX: 62)

Buddhism

Buddhist approaches to reconciliation are embedded within the worldview that humans should not harm themselves or others. One goal for Buddhists is to strive to achieve awareness without judging whether something is good or bad. Tich Nhat Hanh, a Vietnamese Buddhist monk and widely travelled teacher of peace, practices engaged Buddhism. In his book *Being Peace* (1987) he highlights the importance of being aware of oneself within a larger society and world in order to build peace. In a reflection on the practice of "engaged Buddhism" Nhat Hanh observes: "I think that our society is a difficult place to live. If we are not careful, we can become uprooted, and once uprooted, we cannot help change society to make it more livable. Meditation is a way of helping us stay in society". Buddhist principles that guide followers in embodying peace include: not taking the life of another, awareness of others' suffering, and promoting others' well-being. Reconciliation, within this approach, involves becoming whole again. For reconciliation

to occur there is a need to acknowledge guilt – a confession that something is wrong – and a need to let go of that something.

Nhat Hanh includes a description of a reconciliation ritual in Buddhist monasteries in *Being Peace* (1987, pp.74-79). The ritual involves seven practices:

- (1) Face-to Face Sitting where all members of the community come together with the two in conflict;
- (2) Remembrance, where both parties retell the whole history of the conflict;
- (3) Non-stubbornness, which refers to the expectation that the conflicting parties will not be stubborn;
- (4) Covering Mud with Straw, where each party appoints a respected senior member representative who then addresses the assembly to de-escalate the conflict;
- (5) Voluntary Confession, where each monk reveals his own shortcomings;
- (6) Decision by Consensus; and
- (7) Accepting the Verdict.

These brief descriptions of Christian, Jewish, Islamic and Buddhist approaches to reconciliation gloss over the rich traditions and nuances of each approach. However, they do highlight different views and rituals for reconciliation, which can be used in discussions of reconciliation or incorporated into programming. While each religious tradition, including Christianity, includes stories of justified violence, they also include a wealth of stories about forgiveness and reconciliation. Participants in programs and training will have their own experiences of these concepts that can help deepen our understanding of reconciliation in various cultures.

This input is taken from: Caritas Internationalis: Peacebuilding. A Caritas Training Manual, Vatican City 2006, p. 31-34.

D. Exercises

Exercise 1: *Visioning the Future*

Purpose: Think creatively about a future vision; think concretely about actions needed to achieve the vision

Materials: Flip chart paper, markers, tape

Time: 1 – 1 1/2 hours

Procedure:

- 1) Divide participants into groups.
- 2) Ask groups to discuss the following questions:
 - ❖ What kind of society do you want your children and grandchildren to inherit in 2030?
 - ❖ What needs to happen immediately (1-2 years) to make that happen?
 - ❖ What needs to happen in the short term (2-5 years) to make that happen?
 - ❖ What needs to happen in the long term (5-15 years) to make that happen?
- 3) Reconvene and debrief.

Discussion: Have participants present and compare their visions.

Additional questions include:

- ❖ Do commonalties exist between the visions? Differences? What patterns exist?
- ❖ Do commonalties exist between the steps needed to achieve the visions? Differences? What patterns exist?

Trainer Notes: This visioning exercise may be focused more broadly or more narrowly, depending on your purpose and the training group. For example, if everyone is from the same region, visioning can focus

broadly on the region, or if everyone is from the same organization, it can focus in on a vision for that particular organization.

This exercise is taken from: Caritas Internationalis: Peacebuilding. A Caritas Training Manual, Vatican City 2006, p. 172.

Exercise 2: Three Questions

Purpose: Encourage participants to reflect on how stereotypes affect conflict, provide an opportunity for participants to think about the various groups they are a part of, hear others' perceptions about the groups to which they belong, and challenge stereotypes.

Materials: Blank index cards or small pieces of paper, tape

Time: 40 – 45 minutes

Procedure:

- 1) Ask participants to think individually about the cultural group or groups to which they belong. Each person may belong to multiple groups. Encourage them to think not only of race or ethnic group, but also of groups based on religion, gender, social class, or language.
- 2) Have participants write the names of the groups with which they associate themselves on index cards. The trainer collects these cards and posts them on a wall around the room to create a “word picture” of the group’s diversity.
- 3) Divide participants into groups of four. Each participant should think individually about one group that they strongly associate with, or that they feel has a formative influence on them. Ask them to reflect on the three questions listed below.
 - ❖ What is a strength that you have gained from being a part of the group you identified?
 - ❖ What is one thing about your group that you would like to change?
 - ❖ What is one thing that you never want to hear said again about your group?
- 4) In small groups, ask participants to share with their group their responses to these questions, taking no more than 5 minutes per person. Remind participants that they have the right to “pass” or not speak if they so choose.
- 5) **Discussion** in a plenary session. Questions to ask include:
 - ❖ What was your reaction to this activity? Was it comfortable or uncomfortable for you?
 - ❖ Did you learn anything from the activity? If so, what did you learn?
 - ❖ Did you learn anything new or surprising about members of various cultural groups? Can you share this information with the group without revealing any confidential information?
 - ❖ What are some of the common stereotypes about various cultural groups that others hold?
 - ❖ How might some of the stereotypes you discussed contribute to conflict? How does conflict influence stereotypes?

Trainer Notes: This exercise should be used only after sufficient trust has developed among participants to allow discussion of potentially emotional subjects. It is most effective when used in groups that bring together various parties to a conflict, even though it is likely to prompt heated discussion.

This exercise is taken from: Caritas Internationalis: Peacebuilding. A Caritas Training Manual, Vatican City 2006, p. 72.

For further thought...

The Parable of the Elephant

A group of blind individuals approach an elephant. The first person latches onto the leg and claims, “an elephant is a tree trunk; it is big, round and rough.” The second hits the stomach and says, “A tree, no way!

An elephant is like a wall: high, solid and wide.” The third grabs the trunk, and exclaims “The elephant is like a snake, long and flexible.” The fourth person finds the tail and replies, “No, the elephant is like a rope with a wire brush on the end!” The fifth blind person catches hold of the ears, and proclaims, “The elephant feels like a banana tree leaf.”

Who is right? All are right, and all are wrong. The lesson of this parable is that we need to simultaneously see the whole and see things from the perspective of what individuals are able to see and feel. The parable demonstrates the importance of perception.

This input is taken from: Caritas Internationalis: Peacebuilding. A Caritas Training Manual, Vatican City 2006, p. 111f.

3.3 Conflict transformation

A. Ice-Breaker

Game: Standing up by twos

The group is divided up into pairs. The pairs sit on the ground back to back. The goal is to stand up at the same time without using the hands, but using each other as support.

B. Franciscan Text

The Bishop and the Mayor

At that same time when [Francis] lay sick, the bishop of the city of Assisi at the time excommunicated the podestà [the mayor]. In return, the man who was then podestà was enraged, and had this proclamation announced, loud and clear, throughout the city of Assisi: no one was to sell or buy anything from the bishop, or to draw up any legal document with him. And so they thoroughly hated each other.

Although very ill, blessed Francis was moved to pity for them, especially since there was no one, religious or secular, who was intervening for peace and harmony between them. He said to his companions: "It is a great shame for you, servants of God, that the bishop and the podestà hate one another in this way, and that there is no one intervening for peace and harmony between them." And so, for that reason, he composed one verse for the Praises:

"Praised be you, my Lord, through those who give pardon for your love, and bear infirmity and tribulation. Blessed are those who endure in peace for by you, Most High, they shall be crowned."

Afterwards he called one of his companions and told him: "Go to the podestà and on my behalf, tell him to go to the bishop's residence together with the city's magistrates and bring with him as many others as he can."

And when the brother had gone, he said to two of his other companions: "Go and sing the Canticle of Brother Sun before the bishop, the podestà, and the others who are with them. I trust in the Lord that he will humble their hearts and they will make peace with each other and return to their earlier friendship and love."

When they had all gathered in the piazza inside the cloister of the bishop's residence, the two brothers rose and one of them said:

"In his illness, blessed Francis wrote the Praises of the Lord for His creatures, for His praise and the edification of his neighbor. He asks you, then, to listen to them with great devotion." And so, they began to sing and recite to them. And immediately the podestà stood up and folding his arms and hands with great devotion, he listened intently, even with tears, as if to the gospel of the Lord. For he had a great faith and devotion toward blessed Francis.

When the Praises of the Lord were ended, the podestà said to everyone: "I tell you the truth, not only do I forgive the lord bishop, whom I must have as my lord, but I would even forgive one who killed my brother or my son." And so he cast himself at the lord bishop's feet, telling him: "Look, I am ready to make amends to you for everything, as it pleases you, for the love of our Lord Jesus Christ and of his servant Francis."

Taking him by the hands, the bishop stood him up and said to him: "Because of my office humility is expected of me, but because I am naturally prone to anger, you must forgive me." And so, with a great kindness and love they embraced and kissed each other.

...All the others who were present and heard it took it for a great miracle, crediting it to the merits of blessed Francis.

Tasks (work on them for about 20 minutes):

1. Role-play the text, assigning different persons to read the part of the various characters.
2. Discuss the following questions:
 - a. What motivated the bishop and the mayor to change their attitudes?
 2. Do you remember any situation in your life similar to this? Tell about it. How did you cope with it?

C. Input

The trainer reads the following material and prepares a presentation on it. The presentation is meant to help prepare participants to do the exercises.

1. Training for conflict transformation generally addresses three main purposes:
 - a. Awareness-raising, including better, more integrative and comprehensive joint conflict analysis and sensitivity for intended and unintended consequences of intervening in a conflict system;
 - b. Providing local peacebuilders and potential conflict resolvers with skills, support, networks and empowerment;
 - c. Teaching new skills to potential – local and international – drivers of constructive social change.

2. Two models of conflict transformation:

a. Negotiation:

Negotiation is a basic way of getting what you want from someone else, usually using verbal communication. We all negotiate every day – with a vendor at the market, with our friends or relatives in deciding what to eat or where and how to travel. American authors Roger Fisher and William Ury developed a model of business negotiation in 1981 that has become extremely popular. Essentially, they propose four principles of negotiation:

i) Separate the people from the problem.

The relationship (the “people”) is separate from any substantive conflict (the “problem”) you have. By disentangling the relationship from the problem, you reduce the possibility of miscommunication and emotions negatively affecting the negotiation. You want to establish good working relationships in negotiation. Deal with relationship issues, if they exist, separately from substantive issues.

ii) Focus on interests not positions.

Interests are underlying needs, desires, concerns, wants, values, or fears. Interests motivate people, but often individuals will state a position. For example, many countries have a position that “we will not negotiate with terrorists.” This is a position, but the underlying interests probably relate to concerns and fears about personal security. In conflict, individuals and groups often state only one position. It is usually difficult to negotiate compromises on positions. Behind positions are multiple interests, and focusing on interests allows negotiators more room to generate solutions acceptable to all parties.

iii) Invent options for mutual gain.

This requires creativity and the commitment to brainstorm options that will be acceptable to both parties. In brainstorming, negotiators need to separate the stage of evaluating options from the stage of generating options. Both parties need to broaden the number of possible options and not search for just one option. Both parties also need to think about options that will satisfy the interests of the other side.

iv) Insist on using objective or mutually acceptable criteria.

Often it is possible to identify several relevant standards or criteria by which parties can evaluate the fairness or acceptability of a negotiated agreement. Negotiators can brainstorm criteria or standards in the same way as they brainstorm options.

This input is taken from: Caritas Internationalis: Peacebuilding. A Caritas Training Manual, Vatican City 2006, p. 117f.

b. Mediation:

Mediation is sometimes referred to as assisted negotiation. The main difference is that mediation involves a third party whose role is to help the parties reach a mutually agreeable solution to the problem or conflict or disagreement. Mediation is a voluntary process. The exact process of mediation differs from mediator to mediator, and according to the culture in which mediation takes place. In general, there are four stages to mediation.

i) Introduction. During the introduction, the mediator greets the parties, describes the process and the role of the mediator. The parties, together with the mediator, establish the ground rules for the mediation session(s) before entering into the story-telling phase.

ii) Story-telling. During this phase, each party tells its story from its own perspective. The mediator usually summarizes each of the stories, lists the issues for resolution, and the parties agree to this list.

iii) Problem solving. During the problem solving stage, parties engage in a problem solving process to generate and then evaluate various options for resolving their conflict. At times the mediator uses a *caucus*, which is a separate session with each party, to explore emotions, unstated interests, or goals.

iv) Agreement. After evaluating the various options for resolving the disagreement, the parties decide on a solution. The mediator facilitates a discussion about the details of the agreement – who will do what, when, and where. This is often written down, with some details about what to do if either party does not uphold his or her part of the agreement.

In a western context, mediators are seen to be impartial or neutral. This means they do not show bias toward either party but instead work to help the parties reach an agreement that is mutually acceptable (mediator A). In other contexts, mediators might be seen as partial but they are acceptable to both parties (mediator B). For example, a family member of one of the parties might be an appropriate mediator, provided that both parties agree on the choice of a mediator for their conflict.

Although mediation is often a more formalized and ritualized process, it does not have to be. Many people informally mediate between friends, co-workers, or family members, assisting with communication and restoring relationships between conflicting parties. For example, an informal mediator might listen to both sides, helping them to see the other person's point of view by restating the other person's story in language that is less accusatory. Or an informal mediator might help brainstorm possible solutions. In peacebuilding programming, mediation might be useful to resolve disagreements about how to implement a program, or to re-establish working relationships after a conflict has erupted.

This input is taken from: Caritas Internationalis: Peacebuilding. A Caritas Training Manual, Vatican City 2006, p. 119.

D. Exercise

Mediation Role-Play

Purpose: Provide an opportunity to practice mediation.

Materials: Copies of the two Mediation Role-Play Handouts.

Time: 1 – 1 1/2 hours

Procedure:

- 1) Introduce exercise and process of mediation.
- 2) Distribute role-play. Divide group into threes and have one person play the role of mediator, and the other two play the roles of the parties (staff member and director of partner organization). NOTE: You need to decide which type of mediator (A or B) will take part in the role-play. Make sure that you, as trainer, tell the two people playing the roles of the parties what their relationship to the mediator is (e.g. if using Mediator A, indicate to both parties that they have separately approached the mediator to mediate. If using Mediator B, indicate that the mediator is a relative of the staff member and a friend of the director, but that the Caritas person approached the mediator to mediate.)
- 3) Allow 30-40 minutes for groups to role-play mediation.
- 4) Reconvene and debrief.

Discussion:

Questions for the parties:

What did it feel like to be a party in the conflict?

Did you reach agreement?

How helpful was the mediator in assisting you in reaching an agreement?

What would have made the mediator more effective?

What, specifically, did the mediator do that changed the atmosphere of the mediation or moved you as parties to reach agreement?

What could the mediator have done differently?

What are the qualities of a good mediator?

Questions for the mediators:

How did it feel to play the role of mediator?

Were you comfortable in the role? Why or why not?

What was easiest about the role?

What was hardest?

Would you mediate differently if you had been mediating between family members?

How were you able to use your own natural strengths in the mediation?

What do you think did not go well? What do you wish you had tried?

Other questions include:

Has anyone ever played the role of mediator in real life? Informally or formally?

What kinds of cultural variations might exist with mediation? Can you describe your own culture's process of mediation?

How would mediation be useful in peacebuilding programming?

This exercise is taken from: Caritas Internationalis: Peacebuilding. A Caritas Training Manual, Vatican City 2006, p. 131.

Handout 1: *MEDIATION ROLE-PLAY*

Role for Franciscans International Staff Member

You are in charge of peacebuilding programming within the *Franciscans International* Africa program. One of your most effective peacebuilding programs is run in partnership with a local community-based organization (CBO). Other organizations in the region have approached you about piloting similar programs in their countries. However, this CBO has recently experienced some turmoil – the former director stole a large sum of money from the organization (a good portion of which came from *Franciscans International*) and was fired for fraud and mismanagement. Your supervisor has spoken with you about continuing to work with this organization as she values the partnership, but has left the decision up to you. Your

supervisor did instruct you to ask about options for reimbursing or somehow accounting for the stolen money, and suggestions for how to ensure that this does not happen again. Apparently your supervisor has received pressure from the funding agency about this money.

You have heard that the new Director of your partner CBO is very skeptical of your joint peacebuilding program and has talked about dissolving your partnership. At your first official meeting last week, you had planned to raise two issues: his/her plans for the peacebuilding program and the issue of the stolen money. You raised the issue of the stolen money, but the Director of the CBO was inflamed and stormed out of the office before you could even talk about the future of the peacebuilding program.

You are at a loss – the director of the CBO has not returned any of your phone calls over the past week and you are ready to give up on the organization and the program, much to your dismay.

You have decided, as a last option, to approach a respected leader in your community about mediating this conflict.

This handout is taken from: Caritas Internationalis: Peacebuilding. A Caritas Training Manual, Vatican City 2006, p. 151.

Handout 2: *MEDIATION ROLE-PLAY*

Role for Director of Partner Organization

You have recently been appointed Director of your organization, a local community-based organization (CBO). The previous director was fired for fraud (stealing money) and mismanagement. You have been involved in this organization for many years and are extremely committed to its goals and mission. However, you, together with several other leaders in the organization, were initially very skeptical when *Franciscans International* approached your organization to be a partner in their peacebuilding programming several years ago. Nevertheless, the organization got involved with peacebuilding, and apparently a large portion of the stolen money was from *Franciscans International* for the peacebuilding programming. Over the last month you have spoken with members of your organization to get a sense of their concerns and vision for the organization, and you have become convinced of the value of the peacebuilding programming. Several of the other leaders remain skeptical of peacebuilding and are pressuring you to dissolve the partnership with *Franciscans International*, especially after the events of last week. You are just settling into your position, and have only recently begun to meet with partner organizations and funders. Last week, you met with the *Franciscans International* staff member in charge of peacebuilding.

What a disaster! He/she demanded repayment of the stolen money (which your organization does not have), and you never got to discuss any of the programs or talk about vision for your partnership.

You were so offended and angry that you stormed out of the meeting. You feel like the *Franciscans International* staff person does not think you are qualified to lead your organization.

To complicate matters, a close relative suddenly took ill right after the meeting, and you have been out of the office. You have not been able to return any of the *Franciscans International* person's calls. You are wondering if it would be a good idea to approach a respected leader in your community about mediating this conflict.

This exercise is taken from: Caritas Internationalis: Peacebuilding. A Caritas Training Manual, Vatican City 2006, p. 151.