



## **Initiatives of Change**

### **Workshop for Africa**

In mid-May, the Workshop for Africa (WfA) team of eight returned to South Africa from one of IofC's most ambitious and demanding projects in recent times - the South Sudan Peace and Reconciliation Initiative.

After a further six weeks review, preparation and fieldwork in South Africa, six of the group headed for Kenya where they will link up with the IofC team in that country to focus on two areas of priority - building an ethical leadership network among tertiary students and engaging with members of key county administrators' offices on issues of good governance. The group will spend two to three months in Kenya.

The WfA programme - partnering with the South Sudan Initiative as one of IofC's Common Action Programmes - was launched in South Africa in January with 11 people selected from 38 applicants from across Africa. After six-weeks of training and fieldwork (supported by 15 faculty members), eight of the group joined up with an international team in Juba in March to assist with the training of 200 Peace Mobilisers. Challenging and demanding as this project was, most WfA members are more than ready to return to South Sudan, should they be invited.

**Anthony Duigan**  
*Coordinator: Workshop for Africa*

### **Workshop for Africa charter**

Participants worked together on a charter of their commitment and agreed on the following statement:

*"We believe in the power of changed lives to change our continent so the ordinary people will live better. Through the application of absolute honesty, unselfishness, love and purity in our own lives we will make our contribution to ethical leadership, accountable citizenship and needs -based development in Africa. We believe our change starts from the inspiration received in silence and the guidance we get from God. With these tools of change, changed people of Africa will bring about changed communities and changed nations."*

From three of the WfA participants:

**Mediatrice Masava** from Kenya wrote about a 'turning point in her life'.

"I come from Eldoret, the fourth largest town in Kenya. It was a peaceful and fast growing town in Kenya - until December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2007 when it experienced post election violence.

"To give a little background - in Eldoret most of its inhabitants are Kalenjins, and most of them in the Election year of 2007 wanted presidential candidate Raila Odinga to win the presidential seat. So rumours spread that if the former president Kibaki, a Kikuyu, wins, the Kalenjins will burn the Kikuyu's houses and they will fight them, because they believed that Kikuyus rigged the votes in order for Kibaki to win.

"When it was announced that Kibaki had won, we immediately started seeing smoke at a distance and some people were running away from their homes. My family was inside our house, too frightened to go outside. Luckily my father received a call from the company he



**Mediatrice Masava**

works for a petroleum company where security was provided by the Government. So my dad took us and our neighbours to the company where we stayed for a while. Those were some of my longest nights that I ever had in my life. The small babies were crying all night for food, but there was no food for them. The mothers could not provide for them since they were traumatized psychologically. To venture outside the company building, was calling for death.

### **How can we do this to one another**

"After a while my dad insisted that he go back home to check if everything was okay. I was afraid my dad would go and not come back, so I accompanied him. On our way we passed burnt houses and dead people lying on the ground. I asked, 'how can a fellow human being do this to another human

being?' I developed hatred towards the Kalenjins. Even on the university campus, associating with them was a challenge.

"In 2009, in Ethiopia, I was selected to participate in a programme called Harambee Leadership Programme - a training programme to guide young Africans towards ethical living and server leadership.

"In one of the sessions we saw a film about the Australian National 'Sorry Day'. It tells the true story of the then Australian Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, apologizing to the Aboriginal Australians for what the government had done to them. It broke my pride down, because I recognized the spot of hatred within me. I decided to let go of my hatred, because hate was hurting me more than the person I hated. I asked myself, 'if I want to be the change that I want to see in the world, how can I carry so much hatred in my heart?' As I am so is my nation. I multiplied myself with the number of our population Kenya, and thought to myself, 'this is not the Kenya I want'. I want to see a country with less negative ethnicity.

### ***Break chains of hatred and revenge***

"So I made a commitment, to become a peace agent in my country. I came back to Kenya and have worked with a women's initiative called *Creators of Peace* which challenges women to break the chains of hatred and revenge. I have also taken part in The Kenya I Care programme, which aims at creating awareness in the youth of their responsibility for the nation of Kenya as the future leaders.

"My hope for my country is for peace amongst ourselves; for a better Kenya. Joining *Workshop for Africa* has enabled me to to expand my hope, not only for Kenya but for Africa. It has made me believe in the power of changed lives. Through the application of absolute honesty, unselfishness, love and purity in my own life and the inspiration and guidance received from God, in silence, I believe I can make a contribution to Africa."

Mediatrix has returned to Kenya and is now part of a team hosting the WfA group.



Cameroonian, **Umarou Yaya** writes:  
"Being with *Workshop for Africa* has been a landmark experience for me and has helped me in my moral and spiritual journey. Skills acquired, such as facilitation and communication skills, outreaches, talks and teamwork have all been

mind ticking, while personal discipline took central stage. I had to be responsible for my own learning. Personal introspection has given me clarity as to whether I was on the right track. The fact that changed individuals can lead to changed communities has helped to magnify the power of change in our society.

"Going to South Sudan with *Workshop for Africa* and at the invitation of the South Sudanese government to work with the Peace and National Reconciliation Commission, was ground breaking as it transcended all aspects of life. Going to a country where I know little was my greatest nightmare. Reading that 90% of the South Sudanese are traumatized after decades of wars was the only picture I had in mind. But to my surprise, I found people who still have love to share and a smile to give, people who still have an open heart, who stand tall with the humanity that is in them. I left South Sudan with a vivid image of a people who are prepared to give and show love when you open yourself to them."

Zimbabwean **Roy Ncube** had this to say:  
"Spending such a long time (from January 2013) with fellow WfA team mates from various African countries has instilled in me more patience and tolerance. It has given me the chance 'to be the change I want to see in the world' as pointed out by the great Mahatma



Gandhi. It has been challenging but I am now able to live with diversity and not make judgement about people because they are different from me.

"Listening to experiences of people has also strengthened my faith in God and His plan to use people in making the world a better place for all. The choice remains with me to make that decision to be a part of the problem or a solution to the problems facing our families, communities, nations and the world."

### ***Visits and Visitors***

Recently WfA participants visited Tiger Kloof Secondary School in the North West province of South Africa, at the invitation of the Director, Mark Boobbyer and his wife Catherine. Following the motto of the school 'Creating new paths in Learning, Doing and Serving', the WfA group also helped



*Children line up to get their meal at Adrian Losper Soup Kitchen*

out at a soup kitchen, a community project the school supports in the neighbouring town of Vryburg. Here children, some orphaned, line up for food which for many is the one meal they get per day.



*Prof. Cornelius Marivate, Emeritus Professor of African Languages at the University of South Africa (centre) meets here with some of the WfA group at Waaigras, outside Johannesburg. l – r: Umarou Yaya (Cameroon), Khamish Kenedy and Warija Mikeale (South Sudan), Roy Ncube (Zimbabwe) and hostess, Helen Duigan.*

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## ***International Moslem and Christian Teacher's Dialogue***

The third international Muslim and Christian Teacher's Dialogue conference kicked off on the 27<sup>th</sup> April at Canon Lawrence Primary Teacher's College, Boroboro, Lira, Northern Uganda.

The participants were welcomed to the conference by the principal of the college, Mr Aisu. He outlined the foundation of the college, founded by Canon Lawrence, an Australian Anglican missionary and was set up with specific goals of preparing the youth for the teaching profession, vocational training and above all, moral upbringing of young teachers. It is the largest government aided Primary Teachers'

College in Northern Uganda with enrolment of over 350 female & male students.

In welcoming the delegates, Bishop John Kami Odur, Bishop of the Anglican Church Of Uganda - Lira Diocese said the church is supposed to bring discipline to people, and echoed the theme of the conference - 'The Teacher in Changing Society'. He emphasised that teachers are agents for bringing positive change in society. He encouraged the teachers to be wise planners, practical, responsible and to love God and their neighbours regardless of their faith and religious background.

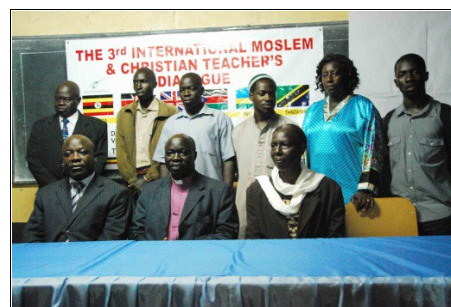


*Participants at Dialogue*

**Andrew Mukwana**, co-ordinator of the International Moslem and Christian Teachers' Dialogue, briefed the 250 participants about the work of Moral Re-Armament/Initiatives of Change and said that absolute moral values are the cornerstones for personal transformation of individuals and societies.

He stated the objectives of the Dialogue as the following:

- \* To promote a positive co-existence of the teachers, students, school administration, parents and other stakeholders in the education institutions regardless of their ethnicity and religion.
- \* To promote the four moral values of love, honesty, purity and unselfishness.
- \* To encourage the education system to meet the needs of the youth and community for social and economic transformation.
- \* To acknowledge the role of teachers in social, political and economic development of societies.
- \* To establish a global network of professional teachers.



*International Moslem and Christian Teacher's Dialogue organising committee together with Bishop John Kami Odur (centre front)*

The keynote address was given by Hajji Jamil Ssebalu, –principal of Namasuba College of Commerce, Kampala. Hajji Jamil is also co-ordinator of the Farmers Dialogue - Africa and a founder member of the International Muslim and Christian Teachers' Dialogue.

The main focus of the Dialogue, he said, is to create a positive co-existence between the teachers from different religious backgrounds. “As teachers,” he said, “our civic purpose is to help and prepare students to a world based on set principles, right peace, democracy, creativity, solidarity, inclusion, a commitment to a sustainable environment , international and inter-cultural understanding. On the issue of poverty and pedagogy, he advised the teachers to understand that poverty is not an excuse; it's a scourge and must be confronted head on.

“A person with a script is an actor and not a teacher. We need well trained, dedicated, qualified, reflective and thoughtful teachers in the teaching profession. Teachers must never allow themselves to be divided in terms of religious affiliation, a given belief system and ethnicity. They should be willing to undertake and revert to the original objectives for which they were trained as teachers and remain useful to the changing society.”

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The *Healing History* conference took place at Caux, the international conference centre for IofC, from 3-7 July. It aimed to explore the history and legacies of racism, and how communities can work together to build trust, heal wounded memory, and create cultures of inclusion and economies that work for the benefit of all. Participants included representatives of academic, business, political, and faith communities; inter-national development practitioners; grass-roots activists, youth leaders and artists.

Speakers included Rajmohan Gandhi, biographer and grandson of Mahatma Gandhi and former president of Initiatives of Change International, Gail Christopher from the W. K. Kellogg foundation. Also contributing to the input of the conference were South Africans, Ciraj Rassool, University of the Western Cape and Lucy Campbell, Founder of Transcending History Tours in the Cape Town area.



**Rajmohan Gandhi (Photo: Laura Graafen)**

During the session the speakers approached the topic of racism from different point of views, including the victim's perspective, the helper's perspective and the academic, explanatory perspective.

**For further information about the Caux conference and sessions please visit the website <http://www.caux.iofc.org>**

## ***Beyond Forgiving***

*Beyond Forgiving* is a documentary film, which depicts the journey of two South Africans to bring healing and reconciliation to their country post-Apartheid. Ginn Fourie and Letlapa Mphahlele form an unlikely pair: a black atheist man and a white Christian woman. One has suffered directly from



actions of the other, but both have been victims - and risen beyond their pain. What brings them together is a profound story of tragedy, forgiveness and hope.

The film tells of the journey they undertook to help their country, which suffers from the world's highest crime level in this post-Apartheid phase. Through their work, they try to bring a new spirit of community and forgiveness, in their country and beyond.

*Beyond Forgiving* will soon be available in South Africa at a cost of R210 plus postage.

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