



Trust building program continues in Kenya having held two successful dialogues in both Mombasa and Garissa and the first mini workshop already complete in Garissa. 2020 started with a one-day communications skills workshop in Nairobi and later the first workshop in Garissa.

### Communications Skills workshop

On 11<sup>th</sup> Jan 2020 Trust building program facilitators were taken through a communications skills workshop in Nairobi. This was conducted by two public speaking experts Tuni Mburu and Kamau Irungu. The project manager Dan Mugera was also part of facilitators.

11 participants of this workshop, who also happen to be the main trust building program facilitators too part in the workshop.

1. Joseph Wainaina
2. John Njoroge
3. Christine Adhiambo
4. Esther Inzekella
5. Mike Muikia
6. Balqesa Abdi
7. Mediatrix Masava
8. Rose Njeri
9. Anastacia Munene
10. Judy Mumbi
11. Ann Gitu



*Rose Njeri shares her expectations.*

Participants started the day with sharing their expectations of the workshop as they prepared for more trust building work ahead.

*'I look forward to learning how I can enhance my presentation and communication skills especially in complex and sensitive environments'* Balqesa expressed.

Participants were taken through verbal and non-verbal communication strategies, methods of deliveries and how to become effective especially in cases of dialogue facilitation.



*Facilitator Tuni Mburu on body language session.*

One of the trainers Kamau Irungu emphasized on choosing a language that befits the audience and use of emotional appeal. For example, use of Rwanda genocide stories would remind people of the importance of unity and what strife can do to a society. This would be applicable where communities have had conflicts that need to be addressed sensitively through a dialogue or a workshop.

Among things that a facilitator should avoid is use of jargons and terms that only apply in one's profession, use of dogmatic expressions, endearments and getting too close to the audience, use of word wax and superlatives as well as use of vocabularies that one is unsure of the exact meaning.

Tuni Mburu, a trainer encouraged the participants to consider appearance, body language and good preparation as tools for presentation that will equally leave the audience challenged to do better. He also emphasized on being a model of one's words.



*Feedback session after presentation exercise*

Participants reflected on each one's areas of challenge and voiced their need to have them addressed. Towards close of business participants were paired into groups and had a chance to make a presentation in form of a short workshop in ten minutes.

'Today I have learnt how to be consistent in my approach and proper use of my skills' John Njoroge shared.

'I am feeling confident day by day, this trust building program has already built a courageous and very conscious person in me when I am in front of an audience.' Rose Njeri expressed.

## Garissa mini workshop

The Garissa mini workshop took place from the 30<sup>th</sup> of January to 1<sup>st</sup> of February 2020. This was the second activity after the outreach and dialogue that took place late 2019 to familiarize and create the atmosphere for the program.



*Outreach activity at Garissa University*

The first activity was an outreach that took place on the 30<sup>th</sup> of January at the Garissa University College, where the Trust building Program Kenyan team engaged 47 students from the university. The students were both locals (Kenyan Somalis) and non-locals (those from other parts of Kenya). The group also comprised of Muslims and Christian students. The group was introduced to why we (TBP team) were there, enjoyed some skits and finished with an elaborate speech from Mr. Dan Mugeru, TBP Kenya program manager. This activity was to create a rapport with the students who were to attend the mini workshop the following day (31<sup>st</sup>).

The two-day mini workshop took place at the Palm Oasis Resort in the outskirts of Garissa town. The workshop was attended by twenty participants from across the divide. We had 10 Muslims and 10 Christians. In both groups we had four women and six men in attendance. The workshop began by the participants airing out their expectations at the end of the activity.



*Workshop norms as set by participants*

The goal of the TBP team was to create a safe and neutral space for the team (participants) to reflect air out and find a way forward to the challenges that they are facing living in Garissa as a community, irrespective of which part of Kenya that they come from.

Some of the challenges brought forward by the team included: blame games from sides, susceptible thinking, and undefined purpose, fear of the unknown, betrayal and propaganda among others. The most dreaded threat was the terror attacks by Al-Shabaab every now and then. The most affected by this is especially educational system where teachers are attacked and killed every now and then.

Even during the workshop, the TBP team was made aware that three teachers had been killed a few days ago! The participants unison agreed that, terrorists were using Islam as a weapon to gain sympathy and support of the locals (since they can relate by being Muslims), to drive their agenda. Further the participants noted that this was beyond just religion, but as well had some ethnicity traits, given the fact that even Muslims who come from other areas and part of the country like Mandera and Wjir were also somehow facing difficulties in Garissa.



*Group activities*



*Historian Mr. Mohamed Khaliff.*

Garissa, even in the media world, is famously known for the university attack where 148 students were killed by the Alshabab on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of April 2015. Since then; we have had a series of other attacks from passengers in buses, quarry workers and non-local teachers. The situation is currently serious since we now witness an exodus of non-local teachers back to their home areas due to insecurity. This is interfering with the education and academic calendar of Garissa since most students, both in primary and secondary schools do not have teachers to teach them. Local leaders are now in loggerhead with the government and the teachers Service Commission (TSC) since the teacher's body is now transferring teachers from schools in Garissa to other safer areas. The local leaders now claim that the government is justifying the terrorists' agenda. With all these we realize that the TBP Kenyan team has a lot to do and act upon.



*Historical walk in Garissa University.*



*Reflections session at Garissa University memorial*

Mr. Mohamed Khalif, former education officer in the area shared the history of Garissa as well as the relationship between the locals and Christians to help with the understanding of the conflict genesis. Some of the participants appreciated the relationship they have with their fellows across the faiths. 'I have had an opportunity to pray in Muslim functions such as burials, which is not common especially for women, acknowledged catholic nun Eveline, a catholic sister, adding that, sometimes religion is just used as an excuse to perpetrate evil in the name of faith'. Rebecca, another participant suggested that people from the two faiths should at least have exchange programs, where Muslims learn about the Bible and Christians get the understanding of the Quran, for them to stop being misled by people with their own selfish agendas.



*A group photo with participants at Garissa University memorial stone.*

The workshop ended on the 1<sup>st</sup> February 2020 with the participants watching the film on the Imam and the pastor. The two days activities culminated in to the historical walk at the Garissa University, where the team had the opportunity to walk through the classes and hostels where the 148 students were brutally massacred by terrorists, then concluded our walk at the memorial Garden with a reflective healing cycle as participants and facilitators pledged to stay committed to building trust with people of different Faiths.

A second workshop will take place in Garissa on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> April where two peace workers Imam and the Pastor from Nigeria will take part.