

## Building Trust – Uniting People



Kenya has been selected as one of the countries within IofC global network to carry out a Trust Building program pilot that has already kicked off. In the last six years IofC Kenya has had an active team of young and old running programs like Creators of Peace Circles, Peace and Reconciliation, Kenya I Care schools program and interfaith dialogue. This has been possible through financial support from international funders of IofC like Sylvia Zuber, Frits Philip and IPT.

***‘I feel excited as great minds gather here to consolidate an idea. I look forward to a lot of input and conversations.’***

The team has also carried out Clean Elections Campaign every election year, to sensitize masses on ethical practices during the voting season. It is therefore a well-grounded team with skilled facilitators who have a great experience of working with communities. A good number of the young facilitators have also had opportunities to train with international IofC programs like Action for Life, Life matters numerous Caux programs.

To prepare for interfaith dialogues and outreaches, a four-day capacity building training of 14 participants and took place 8<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> October at Hope Retreat Centre Nairobi with Mathew Freeman (IofC USA) and Dan Mugeru (Program manager, Kenya) as the main trainers.

Before the training participants expressed their expectations. *‘I feel excited as great minds gather here to consolidate an idea. I look forward to a lot of input and conversations.’* John from Subukia shared. *‘I am delighted to be part this amazing team for the next four days’.* Abdikadir, a participant from Garissa shared. One of the purposes of the program is to equip community leaders with inner qualifications to be trust-builders.

On the first day, the participants were taken through training objectives to understand the basic principles and framework of being a trainer particularly for the upcoming dialogues. The team was divided into two groups, to represent Garissa and Mombasa respectively. Each group did a



*Mathew Freeman. Trainer*

thorough study of the history of its people, activities, governance and the genesis of existing conflicts.

Garissa is a town in North Eastern Kenya, semi-arid and majority Muslim. The team highlighted unemployment and lack of equal opportunities as one of the causes of youth radicalization into extremism and terror organisations. Abdikadir who comes from Garissa shared that there's fear and whatever happens affects everyone. He also suggested that mentorship programs be introduced from as low as primary schools.

lofC Kenya has in the past carried out interfaith dialogue in Garissa University but there's need for more dialogue and space for conversations to take place. The upcoming dialogue and outreach activities through the trust building program will also help people accept and appreciate differences. Mombasa team highlighted land issues, unemployment and historical injustices as a cause of conflict where some communities also feel marginalized. Ulfat, a participant from Mombasa shared her experience working with peace and women organisations in the past five years. She has played an active role in advocacy for fairness and justice and participated in amnesty work. Her primary obsession is to build good relationship between police and the public.

In both regions, injustices are felt of the ground through interference of government services, bias, unequal opportunities for employment as causes of conflict. In extreme cases, there has been collective punishment by security forces leading to insecurity and opening new wounds. For instance, when a criminal is wanted and is believed to be living within people.

Second and third day deliberated on Trust as a value and attributes of a trust-builder. Different level of trust and why people feel trust had declined. One of the learning's was that trust is distinctive and is given by other people. However, one needs to be trustworthy to be an effective trust builder.

The participants were taken through unconscious bias topic. This was one uncomfortable topic too. We all want to think of ourselves as rational and very logical beings but there's a challenge in aligning our values with our behaviors.

***'We like to make statements about people and communities and this has fueled conflict and led to mistrust.'***

**Joseph Wainaina  
from Eldoret**

There are biases and stereotypes that have been placed on certain communities as an identity. How do we make sure that these stereotypes do not determine how we treat other people?

Later participants took to the stage to deliver a dialogue and were divided into pairs of two. Each pair was to manage the audience and engage them as much. The first pair would set the norms and set prepare the audience for the day, second pair would introduce the question of that would open a conversation on what causes conflict and how people feel about it.

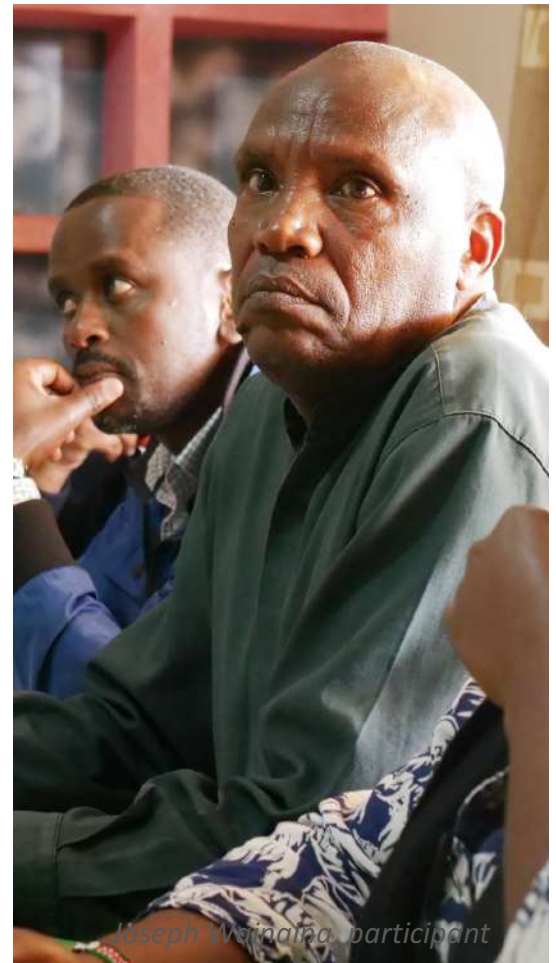
Each pair delivered their part and later each one shared their thoughts and feelings about each pair's presentation. This was essential to help each participant learn the

art of creating a space for effective dialogue.

This being the first program that the Kenyan time will have to carry out as a national program, it was necessary to take the participants through a capacity building workshop to make them ready for dialogue facilitation and other activities geared towards bringing conflicting communities/groups together.

The participants consisted of 8 men and 8 women.

- 1) Steve Kimaru - observer, (Kenya's Board Member of International Council)
- 2) Ulfat Masibo - participant (from Mombasa)
- 3) Ann Njeri - participant
- 4) John Maina Njoroge - participant
- 5) Abdikadir Mohamed -participant (from Garissa)
- 6) Joseph Wainaina -participant
- 7) Rose Njeri - participant
- 8) Raphael Ngwaro - participant
- 9) Annastacia Munene - participant
- 10) Christine Adhiambo - participant
- 11) Mediatrix Masava - participant
- 12) Mike Muikia - head of communications
- 13) Esther Inzekellah - assistant communications
- 14) Dan Mugeru - program manager
- 15) Judy Mumbi - assistant program manager
- 16) Mathew Freeman – trainer (IofC USA).



*Joseph Wainaina, participant*

Most these participants have been trainers with different IofC programs like Creators of Peace, Peace and Reconciliation and Kenya I Care. The training ended with an exercise on temperamental test where each one could know their personality as either choleric, phlegmatic, melancholy or sanguine. Here are some points on what participants shared;

**'Here I have learnt that first I must be trustworthy in order to be a trust-builder. I must also learn to get along with people I want to build trust with.'**

*Mediatrix Masava, participant*



**'I have learnt how to ask the right questions and drive the conversation towards understanding of each other. A trust-builder in me also needs an honest person in me.'**

*John Njoroge, participant*

**'Through this program I have learnt to accommodate others and listen without judgments.'**

*Raphael Ngwaro, participant*



**'I have learnt that to be a trust builder I will need to have humility.'**

*Ulfat Masibo, participant*

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## *INTER-FAITH DIALOGUE, Garissa*

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*Dialogue participants*

The multi-faith Dialogue took place at Garissa University in North Eastern part of Kenya. On 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2015, the university was attacked by Somali-based Al-Shabaab terrorists leading to 148 deaths of students and many other fatalities. In recent years attacks on the military and civilians have been reported raising tension in the region and leading to a conflict between different groups. These attacks form a genesis of past and existing conflicts.

An interfaith dialogue and a student's outreach took place in Garissa University on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> October. The dialogue had 33 participants, all from within Garissa town, 16 Muslim and 17 Christians.

The objective of the day was to have an open conversation between Christians and Muslims about trust. Is there trust between these two groups? IofC and other peace organisations have done similar activities here before. IofC's approach is however different as it aims at continuing the conversation beyond the main dialogue.

***“We depend on our Christian brothers for so many goods and services. They are good teachers in schools our children go to and some of my best employees are some wonderful Christian young men from Western Kenya.”***

These activities have been welcomed here by the administration to primarily build trust and encourage good relationships between students, staff and community members. According to the Dean of students Mrs. Khadija, inter-faith activities remain the best approach to promote cohesion especially between young people in the region. After the attack that made international news, many organisations have visited Garissa University and seen the positive side of Garissa as a cosmopolitan town.

The four-hour dialogue had profound learning's to the whole group. One being that conflict has been experienced even between tribes and groups that share the same faith. Some economic and cultural aspects have also led to differences that precipitated crisis that people of other faiths were unaware of. For example, some participants felt that a Muslim of Somali origin is treated differently from a Muslim of Kenyan origin (or converts).



*Outreach session with University students*

Even though Garissa is highly cosmopolitan with both Christian and Muslim engaging in business, Mr. Shakul Kassim expressed that that both communities have had a very symbiotic relationship. *“We depend on our Christian brothers for so many goods and services. They are good teachers in schools our children go to and some of my best employees are some wonderful Christian young men from Western Kenya.”* Shared Mr. Shakul, a businessman who represented community members.



*University inter-faith Soccer game*

One unexpected request was made by Sister Evelyn from Garissa Catholic church. She appreciated that Imams and pastors have visited each other religious places but they have only gone when there were no worshipers. *'We'd like that you make visit to the church on Sundays to model this trust and friendship to the larger congregations'* Said Sister Evelyn.

A mini-workshop is scheduled to take place in Garissa on February 2019 where Imam and the Pastor of Nigeria are expected to take part. The location is yet to be decided as Garissa community members requested that other social groups to be included. This will be followed by a Training of Trainers activity in Nairobi where a few participants from Garissa will be selected and formulate consecutive steps.

*'We can only neutralize the criminal minds that have used religion as a tool for conflicts in our Garissa society through this very inter-faith dialogue. What is making our young people vulnerable to radicalization? And what is the role of the leaders and elders within us? These questions can only be answered through conscious conversations like we've had today.'*

*Margaret Muriithi, Assistant Police Commissioner, Garissa County.*



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## **INTER-FAITH DIALOGUE, Mombasa**

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***On Friday 8<sup>th</sup> November, the first activity took place at Mombasa Baptist High School. First was a football match between Christian and Muslim students from Mombasa Aviation College, then an inter-faith dialogue at Royal Castle Hotel on the Saturday 9<sup>th</sup>.***

These two activities were brought about by the fact that Mombasa has been listed as hot spot for youth radicalization and a breeding ground for extremists. Since terrorism has majorly been associated with Islam, trust issues have cropped up between the followers of Islam and other faiths and precipitated crisis.

The Outreach had 36 participants including both the players and cheering team, while the dialogue had 29 participants excluding the IofC team members. All the participants were from within Mombasa city. The ratio was almost the same but in both cases the Muslims were slightly more in number than Christians given that the Coastal region is majority Muslim.

The aim of the day in both activities was to bring together the people from the two religions to have a safe space that would demystify some of the unconscious biases, perceptions and

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always  
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religion***



*Participants expressing their thoughts*

prejudices against each other. It was all to help find a common point to bring together the people to begin the



process of identifying, airing concerns that overshadow human relationships and find practical ways to address them so that they can learn to relate with people from other areas and religions.



*Outreach with students*

*‘Most of the time the conflict is caused by our pride, ignorance, lack of knowledge to understand the different religious cultures, as well as biased interpretation of the same information. We however need to always remember that humanity should always come before religion’.*

Those were the words of Emmanuel, one of the Christian participants during the dialogue.

The participants committed to taking up the challenge of initiating change processes in their different capacities.

Some participants pledged to hold stakeholders’ forums and outreaches, where they will incorporate everyone including drug abusers and the youth who has reformed from terror groups and criminal gangs.

A Christian lady shared on how a person from the Islam faith had not shaken their hand while greeting. This led her to carry a lot of bitterness for a significant time her life. She had thought it was out of ignorance only to get a better understanding much later and this changed her perceptions. *‘It is very important some times to seek information to understand people of the other faiths and respect their doctrines as much as we may not personally agree with the practices.’* she said.

Parents too have failed to create a safe space for good interactions between the two faiths. A participant shared how in his childhood they would visit each other with fellow kids, eat together and even accompany each other in their different places of worship. He continued that this days such interactions this days are met with serious objections by parents making people grow with fear of each other and poor relationships.

The best foundation will begin in the Mosque and Churches. Though most religious leaders have failed and are teaching wrong teachings, it’s high time that the religious leaders take responsibility to teach truth, also let’s begin with our families.

Our education system also has narratives that have negatively impacted people, including unfair treatments to people of certain faiths in things like dress codes and other practices. Our education system seems to be building people more materially and not to be responsible human beings.

Anna, one of the participants had this to say; *'I will respect people of a different faith from mine and be an agent of change.'* *I will work towards creating good relationships and improving on the already existing ones I have at my work place as well as influence and impact them on building trust amongst ourselves and others.'* Another participant expressed.

After the dialogue five community based organizations that expressed interest to partner with the Trust Building program. These organizations deal with environmental, education, sustainability as well as religious matters.

## OTHER ACTIVITIES

International program manager Talia Smith from UK visited Kenya in the month of October and had a couple of fellowships with the core and communications team.



IofC Kenya held a 2-day national retreat in mid-November and brought together 22 active IofC members from across the country. This was of a different as compared to previous retreat as the team had to reflect more on the trust building program and how to build capacity of the national team.

Dan Mugera took the team through games and activities that teaches best teamwork and trainer practices.

## Program Manager's note

We began the Trust building program with a lot of zeal and enthusiasm. So far, the outcome has been amazing.

The accomplishments of the activities in our implementation plan so far such as capacity building training for our facilitators and trainers, the two dialogues and outreaches in Garissa and Mombasa and the debriefing fellowship for our Kenyan team in the recently held retreat are major progress in this project. We are looking forward to the other activities in December and 2020 with great expectations.

As the leader of the project I take this responsibility with a lot of humility. Going forward we expect challenges but we will never lose sight of the victory ahead. With prayers, reflection and resilience we believe the pilot project will be completed successfully.

The total reach so far is:

1. Garissa Dialogue: 30 people  
Garissa outreach: 56 people  
Total : 86 people
  2. Mombasa dialogue: 29 people  
Mombasa outreach: 63 people  
Total : 92 people
- Grand total : 178 people

