



Partnership building to

Promoting a culture of peace and intercultural dialogue

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	2
Introduction	2
Programme	3
Evaluation	5
Conclusion and Recommendations	5
Annex 1: Programme	6
Annex 2: List of participants	7
Annex 3: List of Resource Persons	9
Annex 4: List of Workshop Partners	9

Executive Summary

This workshop is an outcome of the Youth Consultations on Peacebuilding and Intercultural Dialogue meeting organized by Conscience International (CI) at its offices in Bakau (The Gambia) on 30 June 2014. The consultations ended with a focus on outlining the various resources available to support work with youth and youth focused organizations for peacebuilding and intercultural dialogue and identifying key areas where we can work together strategically at both national and regional levels. Also, collaboration in peacebuilding and intercultural dialogue emerged during the discussions to address the gaps identified during the consultations. Enhanced coordination among the participants was identified as a key element to maximizing impact in communication, networking, capacity building and research.

Consequently, Conscience International (CI) in collaboration with eight (8) civil society and youth focused organizations held a workshop at the Father Farell Hall (Westfield) on Friday, 8th May, 2015. The workshop partners were Sensitive Youth Association (SYA), Triple D Foundation, Gambia Federation of the Disabled (GFD), Fortress of Development in Africa (FDA), Youth Consortium for Progress (YCP), Unique Foundation (UF), Biodiversity Action Journalists (BAJ) and the Association for Young Peace Advocates (AYPA). Thus, this report gives a day overview of our gathering of young people at the Father Farell Hall. It is meant to try and summarize the outcomes of our discussion, to give some insight into the background thoughts of the topics that we touched upon and the results we believe we have achieved with this workshop.

The theme of the workshop was the “Role of Youth in promoting Peace and Intercultural Dialogue”. Thus, the main focus lay on topics like the situation of young people and intercultural violence in West Africa, peacebuilding and intercultural dialogue dimension of our faith and local context, the role of the media in promoting peace and intercultural dialogue.

We believe that the participants of the workshop have now a deeper knowledge of the concepts around peacebuilding and intercultural dialogue as well as an increased self-awareness on why they are and why they want to be involved in peacebuilding and intercultural dialogue. They gained skills in tolerance building, creativity and dialogue and their capacity to involve in peacebuilding was enhanced.

INTRODUCTION

The aim of the workshop which brought together 49 young people is to involve Islamic and Christian leaders in the work to engage youth in promoting and sustaining peace and intercultural dialogue in The Gambia under the project “Network for Peace and Inter-Cultural Dialogue (NetPID)”. As youth are both partners and stakeholders in today’s efforts to foster dialogue and mutual understanding, their meaningful participation in larger processes and a

clear recognition of their expertise and initiatives are essential to the success of any endeavour in this area.

Considering the focus of the workshop, the crucial role of youth in advancing peacebuilding and intercultural understanding is increasingly recognized within the global development agenda. The Peacebuilding and Intercultural Dialogue workshop offered a unique opportunity to raise awareness about the need to partner with youth to foster dialogue and transform it into global understanding.

In terms of norms and standards promoting diversity and intercultural understanding, a series of legal instruments exist: the 1972 World Heritage Convention; the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage; the 2005 Convention on the Protection and the Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions; the 2007 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, among others. In addition, a number of General Assembly Resolutions reiterate the importance of sport in achieving peace and development and specifically refer to youth as fundamental beneficiaries of sport.

The launch of UNESCO's programme on interfaith dialogue has strengthened the UN institutional support towards the development of mutual knowledge about religions and other spiritual traditions. Also, the creation of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) in 2005 to "improve understanding and cooperative relations among nations and peoples across cultures and religions" in four key sectors, including youth, clearly demonstrates that the UN System's commitment to advance global understanding in close partnership with young people.

PROGRAMME

In his opening remarks, Shaka Ceesay, Director of Conscience International (CI), said the organizers recognize the current challenges and opportunities of promoting peace through dialogue for sustainable development in Africa. He said the workshop is a platform to bring young people together to promote peace considering that they have continued to be the perpetrators and victims of violence in communities across Africa. He further stated that the workshop will provide opportunities to develop sustainable solutions that can be a stepping stone to intercultural dialogue and peace building in communities of The Gambia.

Thus, based on the principle of participant-centered learning and a synergetic approach to the workshop, we started the day by facilitating the participant's reflection on their underlying ideas and concepts of peacebuilding, culture and dialogue. The reason for this was to create an environment for a productive exchange of experiences, ideas and concepts in the field of

peacebuilding and intercultural dialogue for the participants to identify common interests and issues.

The dialogue between the participants and facilitators was ensued by a presentation on the situation of young people and intercultural violence in West Africa. The presentation was made by Ms. Anna Jones, Programme Officer of the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP-Gambia). This presentation was aimed at providing participants with information on the current dimension of intercultural violence in West Africa. This was also done with the motivation to provide the participants with information, which can help to implement new ideas and methods of intercultural learning in their local contexts.

Dr. Omar Jah, Acting Vice Chancellor of the University of The Gambia presented on the topic “Islam and Peacebuilding & Intercultural Dialogue”. There the participants discussed terms like peacebuilding and dialogue. Each individual is a member of a large number of groups. Some groups are very big and some are small. They differ from each other not only in the frequency in which the members of the group meet each other, but also in the shared values, habits and histories. Dr. Jah further stated that Islam promotes peace and dialogue - quoting some relevant verse from the Holy Quran to support his position. He urged the participants to be more tolerant and avoid violent conduct. He said it is a principle of Islam that people from different tribes and nations should be tolerant because they all exist for one purpose which is to love one another. Dr. Jah admonished the participants to be pro-active in order to sustain peaceful co-existence. He also advised against the caricature of other religions.

Presenting on Christianity and Peacebuilding & Intercultural Dialogue, Pastor Edith Anthony Ibeneme, Senior Pastor of Christ Embassy Church (CEC Gambia) provided relevant scriptures where the Holy Bible talked about the importance of peacebuilding. Religion can be of extreme importance to some, while it is not important to others, nevertheless it has an integral part of the identity of people. The same can be true with any other group one might belong to, like family, organization, gender, etc. The identification with one of those groups has a strong impact onto the identity as a whole. Thus, Pastor Edith applauded the organizers of the workshop for their foresight in coming up with such an initiative. She said peace is fundamental and should be safeguarded. She noted that there cannot be peace for anyone whose relatives and friends are at war. Pastor Edith said as Christians who believe in Jesus Christ, they must promote peace both at home and abroad.

Mr. Abdurahman Sallah, Director of Biodiversity Action Journalists (BAJ) and Reporter at the Point Newspaper presented on the “role of the media in promoting peace and intercultural dialogue”. He said the media provide a window on events happening in society to an audience that may not experience them directly. A free and informed debate in society through the media and the dissemination of objective information is necessary in order for citizens to make informed decisions. Therefore, this is no exception in the promotion of peace and intercultural

dialogue. He pointed out that if the media could be used to fuel violence it could equally be used to promote peace and dialogue. He therefore urged the organizers to use the media in subsequent activities that are geared towards promoting peace in The Gambia.

EVALUATION

Participants completed the evaluation questionnaire at the end of the workshop to assess the content, facilitation and coordination of the workshop. With regard to content, the majority of participants commended the relevance of the topics addressed by the workshop. The workshop was fun and very strong emotionally, the participants and the atmosphere were wonderful, and lots of useful information was given. The organizers were appreciated, and the participants left very motivated.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The workshop has greatly contributed to raising youth's awareness of the role that they can play in building bridges across cultures and religions. At the same time, participants have benefited from encounters with their counterparts from other cultures in terms of knowledge of and respect for diversity. Participants have also been able to discover how to regard this recognition of diversity as a valuable asset rather than a threat. As organizers, we can say that this workshop was an extremely helpful and important opportunity for us to discuss a theme that is of great importance to us with the necessary time and the educational support that was needed. This workshop was the first for us, but we will develop new programs that will further strengthen our work of promoting youth participation in peacebuilding and intercultural dialogue in The Gambia.

We therefore recommend the following:

1. Donors provide more multi-year grants and core funding rather than funds for short-term peacebuilding and intercultural dialogue projects.
2. Corporate entities support projects that promote peacebuilding and intercultural dialogue.
3. NGOs Develop structures on how performance is evaluated and measured.
4. NGOs organize research programs and seminars on peacebuilding and intercultural dialogue.

Annex 1. Programme

TIME	ACTIVITY
09:00 - 09:30	Arrival of participants /Registration
09:31 - 09:45	Introduction Presenter: Ahmed Salami
09:46 - 10:00	Welcome Statement from Conscience International (CI) Presenter: Shaka Ceesay
10:01 – 10:30	The situation of young people and intercultural violence in West Africa Presenter: Ms. Anna Jones
10:31 - 11:00	Islam and Peace Building & Intercultural Dialogue Presenter: Dr. Omar Jah
11:01 – 11:30	Christianity and Peace Building & Intercultural Dialogue Presenter: Pastor Edith Anthony Ibeneme
11:31 – 12:00	The role of the media in promoting peace & intercultural dialogue Presenter: Abdurahman Sallah
12:01 - 12:30	Discussions
12:31 - 1:00	The way forward Closing Remarks: Ms. Maimuna Bah Photography & Refreshment

Annex 2. List of Participants

No.	Name	Organization/ School	Tel/Email
1.	Fatoumatta Jallow	Gambia Federation for the Disabled (GFD)	6299917
2.	Lamin Colley	Gambia Federation for the Disabled (GFD)	9952030 l.colley20@gmail.com
3.	Mariama Touray	Imam Malick Islam Institute	9750259
4.	Maimuna Touray	Imam Malick Islam Institute	7404137 mtouray62@gmail.com
5.	Kadijatou Njie	Imam Malick Islam Institute	3520665 kadijatou16@hotmail.com
6.	Kadijatou Jawara	Imam Malick Islam Institute	7008993 kadijatoujjawara@yahoo.com
7.	Zainab Sawareh	Imam Malick Islam Institute	2118935 zainab.sawareh@yahoo.com
8.	Ekeh Malachi	Unique Foundation (UF)	7431846 ekehmalachi@yahoo.com
9.	Amie S. Ndure	Unique Foundation (UF)	3937421
10.	Mutarr Bah	Unique Foundation (UF)	3123577
11.	Jerrai Jabbi	Gambia Federation for the Disabled (GFD)	9990213
12.	Biram Bawo	Youth Consortium for Progress (YCP)	3163545 bawobiram@yahoo.com
13.	Alpha Omar Jallow	Fortress for Development in Africa (FDA)	3925720
14.	Haddy Chorr	Youth Consortium for Progress (YCP)	7050247 hchorr@gmail.com
15.	Maimuna Bah	Fortress for Development in Africa (FDA)	3991168 maibtra@hotmail.com
16.	Kebba Jeffang	Sensitive Youth Association (SYA)	6362485
17.	Modou Colley	Youth Consortium for Progress (YCP)	3563522
18.	Papa Dominic Dacosta	Life Spring International	7066355
19.	Paul O. Mendy	Scripture Union	7259650/6633128
20.	Jesse Joe Dacosta	Life Spring International	3839604
21.	Isatou Conteh	Sensitive Youth Association (SYA)	3722183

22.	Kutubo Saidykhan	Sensitive Youth Association (SYA)	7200129
23.	Sang A. A. Mendy	Scripture Union	6790021 / 7985945
24.	Ramatoulie Leigh	Triple-D Foundation	7574885
25.	Ebriama Dibbasey	Gambia Federation for the Disabled (GFD)	9921196 / 3921197 6232645
26.	Lasana Touray	Imam Malick Islam Institute	7973939 / 9812994
27.	Halimatou Ceesay	The Point Newspaper	3480409
28.	Demba Kandeh	Youth Alliance-The Gambia / Net-Impact-The Gambia	6314881 / 3903435
29.	Ahmed A. Salami	Fortress for Development for Africa (FDA)	7874550 9259165
30.	Muhammed Sailu Bah	Foroyaa Newspaper	7660179/3760179/6680179/ 9442610
31.	Emmanuel A. Owoyemi	Triple-D Foundation	7328210
32.	Fatou Jobe	Conscience International (CI)	7813434 info@conscience-international.net
33.	Dr. Lawrence Oweyemi	Triple-D Foundation	7805015 tripledfoundation@gmail.com
34.	Yaya Camara	Imam Malick Islam Institute	7909599
35.	Malick Kanuteh	A Hand in Education	9806662 / 6518826
36.	Ousman Jatta	A Hand in Education	7006165
37.	Saffie Barry	Association of Young Peace Advocates (AYPA)	3103094
38.	Mariama Jallow	Association of Young Peace Advocates (AYPA)	7781387
39.	Fatou Dahaba	Triple D Foundation	3081387
40.	Assan Faal	Association of Young Peace Advocates (AYPA)	3011481
41.	Ebriama Sillah	Association of Young Peace Advocates (AYPA)	7845928
42.	Oulimatou Ceesay	Triple-D Foundation	6118240
43.	Mama M. Touray	Triple-D Foundation	3138461/7283139
44.	Binta Jallow	Imam Malick Islam Institute	9263003/9900260

45.	Samuel Mendy	Conscience International (CI)	7913427
46.	Tatiana Mendy	Christ Embassy Church	7263608
47.	Kebba Tamedou	Imam Malick Islam Institute	3947850 abuhumza062@gmail.com
48.	Thomas S. George	Scripture Union	7952283/3069218
49.	Shaka Ceesay	Conscience International (CI)	4498068

Annex 3. List of Resource Persons

No.	Name	Organization	Position
1	Anna Jones	West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP-Gambia)	Programme Officer
2	Pastor Edith Anthony Ibeneme	Christ Embassy Church (CEC-Gambia)	Senior Pastor
3	Dr. Omar Jah	University of The Gambia (UTG)	Acting Vice Chancellor
4	Abdurahman Sallah	Biodiversity Action Journalists (BAJ-Gambia)	Director

Annex 4. List of Workshop Partners

No.	Name of Partner
1	Sensitive Youth Association (SYA)
2	Triple D Foundation
3	Gambia Federation of the Disabled (GFD)
4	Fortress of Development in Africa (FDA)
5	Youth Consortium for Progress (YCP)
6	Unique Foundation (UF)
7	Biodiversity Action Journalists (BAJ)
8	Association for Young Peace Advocates (AYPA)