



Capacity Building Program for Civil Society Activists as Conflict Resolution Mediators

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Pakistan is one of the leading stakeholders on the “war on terror” and has remained engaged eradicating terrorism and resolving the conflict for a couple of years now. Nevertheless achievements in winning a peaceful solution have been only few. Lack of understanding and capacity in non-violent conflict resolution of law enforcement and executing agencies and departments to peacefully analyze and deal with religious differences paved way for these issues to escalate into violent confrontations as is the case in the N.W.F.P & FATA belt of the region today.

With the conviction that non-violent approaches and tools are the ultimate way to bringing peace and sustainable solution the Sustainable Peace & Development Organization (SPADO) in its Capacity Building of Community Stakeholders program in Conflict Resolution and Mediation, laid the

foundations of a network of mediators and peacebuilders. The network was provided training in skills of non-violent conflict mediation and is expected engage in conflict resolution and mediation for peaceful dispute resolution within their communities. It is also anticipated that the networks' activities would be advocated with government and relevant institutions for passing on the conflict prevention and resolution skills to the line departments and to ensure that government incorporates the input of the skilled conflict resolution experts from civil society and communities as part of the government policy in its war on terror.

In the first stage of the initiative, the SPADO organized a training workshop from 10-12 in August 2009 for around 35 individuals coming from civil society organizations, religious school of thoughts, and government line departments from N.W.F.P and FATA with the technical support of USIP. In this training themes of conflict analysis, conflict styles, communication styles, negotiation techniques, third parties role and significance and problem solving were thoroughly discussed in participatory manner. The learning group was divided into six groups to work on the themes to adapt these frameworks in their local and cultural context for the training in December 2009.

SPADO feels proud to take the initiative of bringing civil society together and develop the platform of mediators-Peacebuilders Pakistan. It is hoped that the forum of Peacebuilders Pakistan would serve the purpose of a platform for providing technical expertise for the good cause of peacebuilding and conflict resolution in addition to their individual contribution as mediators and peacemakers within their communities. I look forward to seeing the facilitators taking initiative for sustainable peace in their communities and making input for the development of the society at large.

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(an extract from USIP Peacemakers Toolkit “Managing a Mediation Process” pg. 48, 49, 50 authored by Amy L. Smith and David R. Smock)

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THE NETWORK OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION FACILITATORS - PEACEBUILDERS PAKISTAN

The Peacebuilders Pakistan-is the network of Conflict Resolution facilitators which came into existence as the outcome of the TOTs workshop conducted in August 2009. The network has been created with an aim to have a forum that initiates discussion on peace and non-violence and has capacity to mediate conflicts within their communities. The network comprises peace activists from media, NGOs, religious groups, academia and youth including women and have been connected through an email list by SPADO. The network holds discussions on themes of conflict resolution and gives input on issues related to peace and non-violence. The network comprises peace activists from media, NGOs, religious groups, academia and youth including women and have been connected through an email list by SPADO. The network holds discussions on themes of conflict resolution gives input on issues related to peace and non-violence.



FOLLOW-UP on FACILITATORS ACTIVITIES

In the first ToTs workshop the facilitators were divided into seven groups. The groups were assigned to work together and develop a module applicable to Pakistani local context using the materials taught in the ToTs workshop. After the first event all the groups remained engaged coordinating their roles and input for designing the module. The group members came together and worked on defining the given approaches and models in the indigenous context and came up with ideas to blend the modern skills with the traditional tools of peacebuilding and conflict resolution. The idea was to build on substance of what they had learnt in the first course, to make these approaches relevant and workable on ground. Meetings were held with each one of the groups to facilitate them with their assignments in terms of setting benchmarks for reporting back on their work, distribution of responsibilities, setting agendas, and setting criteria for selecting problems.



The assignment guidelines were shared with each of the group members and contact details were shared with all the members. Each group nominated one of the members as focal point for their group to coordinate activities with network coordinator from SPADO and dissemination of messages and coordination within the group. The network was also in contact with their peers, the trainers and the network coordinators through an email list.

In due course Mr. Habib Ahmad, member Peacebuilders Pakistan facilitators network and incorporated modules on Conflict Resolution in two days training workshop on Adult Learning with his staff.

Three other facilitators of the network, Ms. Attia Hanif, Ms. Memuna Tirmizi and Ms. Amna Durrani also successfully



TOT FOLLOW-UP WORKSHOP (Dec 2009)

The follow-up training was organized in December 2009 for all the facilitators to present their models of the conflict resolution approaches put together with the ground skills in the context of traditional practices. Theories of Conflict analysis, conflict styles, Communication styles, Negotiation techniques, Third Parties Role and Problem Solving were discussed by the trainees. The trainees presented a mix of modern and traditional approaches of conflict resolution in the form of role plays, presentation, individual and group work. The trainers from USIP observed all the modules and gave their technical inputs. There were a number of new suggestions to make the network more effective for promoting the message and skills and services they had

acquired. The proceedings of the workshop were reported and disseminated among all the members of the network and the implementing partners.



Recommendations from the Network

- * The facilitators shared that in order to make meaningful input to prevent and manage a conflict on community level, the government personnel and Jirga members should also be capacitated through similar training.
- * It was suggested that the vision and objectives of the Peacebuilders' Pakistan network should be promoted through print and electronic publicity tools including newsletters, brochures and brief documentary films.
- * It was proposed that a manual of the training should be developed.
- * The network recommended for an advanced training on dialogue, mediation and facilitation skills as key areas of focus for the advance stage of capacity building of the network.
- * The facilitators requested for some successful case studies from USIP elicited from experiences of training and facilitation of conflict resolution in other countries where USIP had been engaged. Such resources they said would be helpful in enhancing the understanding of underlying principles and skills.



The Holy Quran about Peace

"O mankind! We created you from a male and a female and made you into nations and tribes that you may know and honor each other (not that you should despise one another). Indeed the most honorable of you in the sight of God is the most righteous." (Chapter 49, Verse 13)

ADDRESSING VIOLENCE, EXPLORING ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS

Asad Haleem (*Member Peacebuilders Pakistan*)

People living in conflict-hit regions in the north west of Pakistan have been passing through a crucial period for the last two years and are now crying for lasting peace in order to come out of the worst ever situation they are confronted with. Those who have been witnessing conflict in their regions i.e. the people of Swat, Dir, Bunir, Bajaur, South Waziristan, Mohmand agency, Khyber agency and even Peshawar can better define the term 'conflict' now.

Like other universal truths, one is that 'development, happiness and prosperity in human life cannot be ensured without peace. People in the north west of Pakistan are fed up with war, terror, violence and conflict and looking forward for peace-builders and mediators.

The conflict curve shows that there exists durable peace which turns into stable peace, likewise unstable peace leads to crisis which finally turns into war. Ending wars is not an easy task and takes decades to resolve, so being peacemaker one should resume talks, mediation, arbitration and negotiation at the earliest stage of conflict and that's where it becomes important to be aware and equipped of skills and approaches important to make positive intervention.

The Peacebuilders Pakistan equipped with knowledge, skills and techniques for conflict and its peaceful resolution will serve as change agents and is a long awaited step in the direction towards peacebuilding.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN THE ORGANIZATIONAL POLICY

Arif Khalil

Member Peacebuilders Pakistan

When I got the news of preliminary selection by the board of Helping Hand to their orphans and vulnerable children program, the first thing I discussed was to introduce an internal policy on conflict resolution. The proposal was approved in principle. We are currently engaged for its induction in the organizational structure and to adapt existing literature into policy guidelines to begin with.

NEW MEMBERS PEACEBUILDERS PAKISTAN

Asad Haleem

Mr. Haleem belongs to Lower Dir and has a degree in Political Science and History. He works as news serves as volunteer with the development organizations. Mr. Haleem joined the network of mediators in the second training and presented the module on Conflict Analysis along with his group.



Muhammad Rahim Haqqani

Mr. Haqqani belongs to Lower Dir. He is a graduate of Darrul-Uloom Haqania and is currently serving in NWFP Textbook Board as Research Officer. He also provides freelance consultancy on themes of Peace, harmony and mutual Co-existence. He joined the Peacebuilders Pakistan Network in the follow-up training and presented a module on Conflict Analysis with his group fellows.



Hussain Ali Sina

Mr. Sina belongs to Swat. He holds a degree in English Literature and International Relations and is currently enrolled in Gender Studies program. He started his career with British Council Pakistan in 1999 and ever since has worked with a number of other organizations including IDSP in Quetta, IRC, Save the Children Sweden and is currently employed with the UNICEF as Child Protection Officer.



GETTING DOWN TO PRACTICING

Habib Ahmad

Member Peacebuilders Pakistan

Sharing his experience of applying the conflict resolution approaches learnt in the TOTs course Mr. Habib Ahmad shared the following case of peaceful resolution of a conflict within his community:

Mian Adam is a beautiful valley in Swat, which has been hardly hit by the conflict recently. Mian Adam is also famous for tourist attractions. Ten years ago the local population had erected themselves a small market in the center bazaar comprising twenty two shops. In January 2010 (three months ago) after the conflict was over in Swat, the government undertook a survey of the property in the locality during which it was revealed that the market was built on illegal and it has been included as encroachment. The government demolished the shops. Pakistan Army, who is present in the valley as peacekeeping force also favored for the demolishing as they had mobility problems due to trade activity and hence it came up as third party for the land and recommended for building a park for the locality.

My organization is working for restoration of small businesses in the locality and was approached for being the mediating party. The organization already had development funds for the locality and the solution sounded feasible with the resources in hand. The govt, army, community heads and shops owners were brought together by our organization and we mediated for a solution whereby the government agreed to grant the possession of the confiscated land to the affected parties, on the provision that each of the land owners would pay the Mianadam Village Committee a stipulated amount on monthly basis to contribute for the building of a park and reconstruction of roads. The Qatar Charity agreed to provide technical support and funds from the budget allocated for the restoration of small businesses in the locality. In the negotiation process took almost 3 months to get to the peaceful solution. In this period we involved all the stakeholders i.e. Shopkeepers, Pakistan Army, Police, Local Influential (Elders & youth), local Village Organizations and Nazim (Elected representative) and the issue was resolved amicably.

Finding Peace Within-Starting from Self

Attia Hanif

Peacebuilders Pakistan Facilitator To be able to work for peace it is essentially important to have peace within, this is an extract from *Peace Works*, which I thought would be useful to share with everyone.

Here are some tips on finding peace within yourself:

- Read inspirational books, such as *Peace Journals*, *magazines*.
- Realize you cannot control every event in your life.
- Organize your life in ways that reduce stress, rushing around, or forgetting things.
- Behave with integrity, so you never have to look over your shoulder.
- Make a "peace appointment" with yourself once a week, and write down those items and events that most threaten your sense of peace. Make an action list for resolving the top three.
- Realize that most events are simply not worth worrying about or being upset about.
- When you are worried about something, write down the worst thing that can happen. Then write down the most likely thing to happen. Cross out the worst thing and focus on the most likely thing.
- When something upsets you, ask yourself if it is really that important.
- When something upsets you, ask what you could do differently in the future. For example, if someone cuts you off in traffic, could you have left yourself more room or gone a less-traveled route?
- Look for the positive part of a negative event.
- If someone insults you, recognize that is only one person's opinion, and you are not obligated to refute it or insult that person back.
- Recognize that each person is special in some way. You are special. You have gifts and interests that make you a worthwhile human being.
- Accept that some people will like you, and some will not. Accept that some people will love you, and some will not.
- Accept failings in other people. Nobody is perfect.
- Accept failings in yourself. Nobody is perfect.
- Live to your own expectations, not those of other people.
- Meditate on peace, once a day. Fill your mind with thoughts of peace, and it will direct you toward peace.

HOW WE CAN START THIS?

Amna Durrani

Developing and catalyzing skills & competencies in peace and non-violent disputes resolution for realizing promising non-violent communities is long needed in our society. Serious efforts for promising peacebuilding that needs due heed. Serious efforts and Institutionalization of peace efforts is essential and call for establishing of new structural and formal systems as well as strengthening of the existing tools and techniques. Though strengthening of political institutions, provision of access to free and speedy justice, ensuring access to purposeful education and economic prosperity are prerequisite for creating peaceful society, nevertheless, the role of civil society in playing role in peacebuliding is crucial too hence building their skills and competencies can go a long way in contributing to peace and non-violence within their communities. Here are some ways on how tangible and desired outcomes can be achieved when as mediators we are working within our communities. Having the advantage of direct contact with the communities, the mediators can bring conflicting parties on table organizing meetings, mosques, *hujras* and other spaces can serve a purpose of meeting point for being culturally and religiously acceptable in our society.

The facilitators can emphasize communication and behavioral signals affect mediation and conflict resolution processes. These can be manifested through formal and informal ways using mediums of relevant expression and by personally demonstrating them.

NGOs and development sector have widespread presence among marginalized communities and are often looked upto as channel of resolving conflicts and bringing populations together through social organization and community building programs, which earns deep respect for the non-government activists. The mediators from development sector can cash in on their trust relationship with the marginalized communities and offer to mediate for their minor disputes.

Where there's a deadlock in the direct communications between the conflicting parties, intervention can also be made by motivating and stimulating the parties involved initiating communication by choosing alternative ways including writing letters and making calls this would help

break the deadlock and help getting the conflicting parties to get to the table for a talk.

The mediators can prevent an anticipated conflict by writing or signing letters to members of provincial and national assemblies and local authorities where power relationship in the conflicting parties and with the mediators is not balanced and may not seem to be working.

Lobbying in informal gatherings along with local influential, religious scholars, teachers and indigenous people from government can bring along larger number of community to initiate mediation for a conflict in the community.

PEACE QUOTES

"If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other." [*Mother Teresa*](#)

"There never was a good war or a bad peace."
[*Benjamin Franklin*](#)

"Peace is not an absence of war, it is a virtue, a state of mind, a disposition for benevolence, confidence, justice". [*Benedict Spinoza*](#)

"I am only one, but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something. I will not refuse to do the something I can do."
[*Helen Keller*](#)

"If you had seen what it was like in that stairway, you'd be proud. There was no gender, no race, no religion. It was everyone, unequivocally, helping each other."
[*Survivor of the attack on the World Trade Center in New York, September 11, 2001*](#)

"God has mercy upon those who are merciful to others."
[*The Prophet Muhammad*](#)

"Peace cannot exist without justice, justice cannot exist without fairness, fairness cannot exist without development, development cannot exist without democracy, democracy cannot exist without respect for the identity and worth of cultures and peoples."
[*Rigoberta Menchu, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate*](#)

CASE OF PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF ENCROACHMENT ISSUE OF GOVT. HIGH SCHOOL BAFA

Dr. Fazlur Rehman

Member Peacebuilders Pakistan

Disasters, whether man made or natural are followed by conflicts amongst the communities in one way or the other. Earthquake 2005 in the Northern parts of Pakistan was such unprecedented disaster in the history of Pakistan leaving 72000 casualties, 100000 injured and collapse of the whole of infrastructure.



Here, I have been focusing on education sector, reconstructing 2,978 in the 5 affected districts. Earlier schools were approved in Annual Development Plan of the province, land was either purchased or donated by the community/individuals and in return peons/gatekeepers were appointed from the community or the owner of the land. After disaster new policy was introduced for reconstruction of the damaged facilities. The Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority had to follow it because the fund for reconstruction came either as loan or donation from the international community.



In some cases, owners of the land had reoccupied the land and were not willing to permit the contractors to initiate reconstruction of the school. There was no record of mutation of the land. Such was a case of Government High

School Baffa, a historic High school established before independence of Pakistan. The Chinese Government pledged to reconstruct it. There were three private houses adjacent to the boundary wall of the school. The owners of the houses had silently extended their boundary wall and encroached on 5000sq.feet of the school land. Chinese team had designed the school on measurement provided to them by the education department and now the issue was that a part of the area was occupied by the three adjacent houses and construction design could not be implemented until the stipulated areas was available.



As Provincial Donors/NGOs Coordinator, one of my jobs is to facilitate donors/NGOs and resolve issues, for their work. When we visited the land with the Chinese team, we found the discrepancy in the actual land and the land shown on papers.

The situation called for careful analysis and solution to avoid any unpleasant happening. We adopted the following strategy with the result that the illegal occupants of the land withdrew their hold and demolished the additional building voluntarily and peacefully. We adopted the following steps in resolving the problem.

- The stakeholders to the conflict were identified as Education Department, District Government (UC Nazim, DCO, DOR) and the occupants of the school land.
- The verification of actual land area by involving Commissioned line department.
- Taking on board the influential of the area like the UC Nazim, Imam Masjid, and teachers to negotiate with the land occupants.
- The occupying parties along with other population were apprised of the bright prospects of having an

international standard school in the locality for their children if they let go of the possession. The Union Council Nazim pledged to bear the expenses of demolition of illegal construction from his own pocket. (You can see snaps of demolition in the article). When the Chinese were again invited to measure the required land, they found it according to their layout. Now we are in the process of demolishing the school, have an adequate space for rubble (provided by the villagers) a friendly environment for the Chinese team and hopefully the area would get a beautiful school in the near future.

Engage the Public and Media Develop Channels for Public Involvement

(an extract from USIP Peacemakers Toolkit “Managing a Mediation Process” pg. 48, 49, 50 authored by Amy L. Smith and David R. Smock)

- * **Consider giving civil society stakeholders a seat at the table.**
- * **Consider using parallel meetings with civil society stakeholders.**
- * **Promote communication with the public.**

Public participation in the negotiations in some form is imperative; after all, the ultimate responsibility for resolving a conflict lies within the local society. Public participation is also strategically sound, as participants are far more apt than spectators to support and sustain a settlement. Context will determine the best means of incorporating the public. For example, the more representative and accountable the parties have been, the less important it is that civil society actors have a seat at the table and vice versa.

Public involvement can take many forms.
At the Table.

Civil society stakeholders may be directly engaged, particularly those from representative organizations with experience or expertise on specific issues. They may be important assets in working groups addressing issues relevant to their constituencies. By being engaged, such actors provide a counterweight to elites and potential spoilers and ensure that broader public interests are negotiated. They may also be very effective at explaining the negotiating process to constituents. Resistance by the combatants to the direct involvement of these actors, however, may require alternative means of inclusion.

Parallel Meetings.

Conducting parallel consultative meetings for civil society can help legitimize and sustain formal talks without making formal talks unwieldy. Such meetings may provide additional bargaining power for negotiators voicing civil society's interest. They also present an opportunity for civil society to practice democratic procedures.

Two-Way Communication.

Another way to incorporate the public is by instituting some form of two-way communication. News of negotiations should reach the public, and public discussion and reactions should be heard by negotiators. The means of such communication could include discussion forums, workshops, opinion polls, and referenda.

None of these methods is without risk. Broad engagement can make negotiations unwieldy or unfocused. Parallel meetings could be hijacked by elite groups to promote their own, narrow interests. An informed civil society may reject delicate agreements reached by elites or may conclude that talks are not addressing their own concerns.

Manage Media and Public Relations

During a mediation effort, a media strategy that extends beyond responding to press questions is essential. The strategy should take into account the role that the media has played thus far in the conflict; any legacy of hate media or propaganda must be addressed. At the same time, the mediator should work with the media to reduce inflammatory or biased news coverage. Confidentiality may be an important aspect of talks, yet the lack of information is a vacuum that someone will fill, perhaps with rumors, fears, or slander. The mediator should encourage the parties to make joint public appearances, which will model the progress of negotiations while reducing the ability of the parties to spin public announcements to their own benefit.

A good communication and public relations strategy will aim not just to explain isolated events but also to educate the public about the path to peace. The mediator will usually have natural local allies in the effort to build support for the peace process. These allies can be empowered by cultivating press freedom and peace media (including popular forms such as community publishing, interactive websites, and social networks using mobile phones).