

## Peacebuilding & Development Institute - Summer 2006



The Peacebuilding & Development Institute, offered through the International Peace and Conflict Resolution Program and the School of International Service at American University in Washington, DC recently concluded its 6th annual Peacebuilding and Development Summer Institute. This is a professional training program is geared towards scholars and practitioners who live and work in conflict affected countries. In addition to this summer program, the Institute has embarked on a successful path to partner and work with reputable international organizations and non-governmental organizations to establish long-term partnerships in conflict affected countries to strengthen civil society networks, curriculum development, and conflict resolution trainings in the areas of peacebuilding and development.

### **The Summer Institute**

The Summer Institute is a unique training program designed to give foreign aid workers, government officials, and conflict resolution and development practitioners the practical skills to complement their daily work in conflict affected areas. Experienced trainers guide participants through three separate, but complementary, week-long sessions which explore the relationship of religion, culture, human rights and gender in peacebuilding and development work. The Peacebuilding and Development Summer Institute is one of the first academic and training programs specifically organized to bridge the two issues of peacebuilding and development.

### **Objectives of the Institute**

The goals of the Peacebuilding and Development Summer Institute are to:

- Examine the interplay between democracy, governance and civil society leadership in the context of peacebuilding and development and present theoretical frameworks for helping practitioners understand the relationship between these issues
- Provide training in peacebuilding and development to practitioners in the field who may lack other opportunities to expand their skills
- Form a supportive community of practitioners who can use the institute as a forum for sharing their successes, obstacles, and ideas with each other.

- Assist participants in developing and strengthening programs they work on to ensure it is conflict sensitive.

In order to achieve these goals, our Institute strives to:

- Bring practitioners from various conflict areas to the institute to learn practical skills and share their experiences
- Have participants from different sides of the same conflict so that all involved with the institute can come to understand their different perspectives, and so that they may take steps toward building a relationship that can help create a middle ground in their communities and countries conducive to peace
- Coordinate forums with peacebuilding and development workers in Washington, DC to further enlarge the institute community and allow additional opportunities for networking
- Assist & nurture programs that the participants develop while at the Institute.

The focus on training practitioners specifically from conflict areas is a valuable component of the Institute. In many developing countries there are no opportunities for professional development for staff and managers of development organizations. In addition, many non-governmental organizations involved in civil society activities do not have the chance to examine and share the accomplishments and challenges they face with others in distinct, yet often parallel, situations. Very few organizations have taken the initiative to bring such practitioners together in order to exchange lessons learned from their experiences in their respective countries.

#### **Progress of the summer Institute over the years**

Year	Number of total Participants	Number of AU students	Number of outside Practitioners	Number of countries represented
2001	49	12	37	14
2002	71	28	43	20
2003	106	64	42	26
2004	170			27
2005	178	79	99	24

## **The Success of the Summer Institute 2006**

The 6<sup>th</sup> annual Summer Institute was a tremendous success. Interaction between 119 official participants, 20 interns, and 13 instructors helped contribute to the social and professional development of all involved. Some of the 21 countries represented included Nigeria, Uganda, Nepal, the Phillipines, India, Bahrain, Cameroon, Greece, Sierra Leone, Colombia, Peru, Togo, and Spain. The background and organizations of participants was equally as diverse: 45 advanced undergraduate and master degree students, employees of Shell Oil Company, Winrock Int'l, Lutheran Refugee Service, Chemonics, DFID, World Vision and the UN.

## **Effect of the Institute on the School & University**

The Peacebuilding & Development Institute compliments the direction the goals of the university and the school of International Service. The Institute offers programs which draw students and practitioners from various parts of the world, to Washington, DC and also offers programs in various parts of the world. By doing so, the University advances its goal in becoming a “global university.” There have been an increased number of participants who have or are interested in applying for either a PhD program or a Master’s degree program in the School of International Service and the International Peace & Conflict Resolution.

Since the Summer Institute brings participants from many conflict and transition areas the students in International Development and International Peace and Conflict Resolution get to use PDI as an ideal networking opportunity. This is evident from the increased number of students who have been to Uganda to work on street children and ex combatants to one student being sponsored by shell-Nigeria to assist some staff in their community outreach efforts in the Niger Delta and Boney Island Conflicts. Another student will be going to Ethiopia in the fall to work with a human rights organization to complete his field research.



Elizabeth Mutamba (Rwanda), Kiran Karki (Nepal), Muletta Hurissa (Ethiopia), & Angelos Agok (Sudan)  
with two PDI Interns

## **Courses Offered**

This year's Summer Institute was held from June 19<sup>th</sup> – July 8<sup>th</sup> 2006. The following are descriptions of the courses offered during this year's program.

### **Session I (June 19-23)**

#### **Religion & Culture in Conflict Resolution**

*Mohammed Abu-Nimer*

This course focused on the impact of cultural and religious factors in peacebuilding processes. Participants explored the role of cultural and religious identities in peacebuilding and gained concrete skills and approaches to integrate with their ongoing work. This course was vital for a peace and conflict resolution training program because it assisted participants in recognizing the assumptions all possess and helped them to deal with these assumptions in order to create an atmosphere of learning, listening, sharing, and understanding. Since religion and culture often pose huge obstacles to resolving conflict, this course was excellent in helping its participants to be more receptive to the differences in others. Eight students received credit while five were field practitioners.

- ◇ 10% of the participants found this class to be satisfying. 90% of them found it to be very satisfying.
- ◇ Based on participants' comments, the class discussion was "very reflective," the topic was appropriate and insightful and the professor was "astonishing."



Religion and Culture in Conflict Resolution

#### **Course II: Bridging Human Rights & Conflict Resolution**

*Edy Kaufman*

This workshop built participants' understanding of the connections and tensions of human rights and conflict intervention. Participants were introduced to the values, norms, techniques, and processes used by practitioners in the two fields and had an opportunity to reflect on what each field can contribute to the other. One student wrote the following on the class:

In the first two days, we learned about basic concept of Human Rights and how to build a good environment for conflict resolution, in other words, trust building, because we cannot solve conflict without trusting each other. For trust building, we introduced ourselves and explained the meaning of our names and their origins. After two days, we knew each other well and felt comfortable talking, sometime more aggressively and emotionally. On the third day, we did Ho no pono which is South Pacifica traditional conflict resolution method. On the forth and fifth day, we discussed the Danish cartoon conflict. Throughout the discussion, we searched how to make win-win solutions, not zero-sum solutions. Students were very motivated and interacted with each other very well. Professor Kaufman led and guided us very well so that we could easily to get to a conclusion.

- ◇ All of the participants found this course wither satisfying or very satisfying.

- ❖ Over 70% of the participants found the class to be useful and applicable to their work.
- ❖ At the conclusion of the institute, students stressed the importance of combining human rights and conflict resolution in the peacebuilding process. This, they added, was an approach they learned in this class.



Bridging Human Rights & Conflict Resolution Participants

### **Positive Approaches to Peacebuilding & Development**

*Claudia Lieber & Mark Chupp*

This interactive and practical course was for participants who enjoy a creative learning environment that encourages "out of the box" thinking and experimentation. The course introduced participants to some of the most innovative approaches for change of our times that have application for both peacebuilders and development practitioners. It drew on the book *Positive Approaches to Peacebuilding: A Resource for Innovators*. Positive approaches are building common visions among diverse stakeholders, mobilizing elements of a community, building improbable partnerships, eliciting cooperation where none has existed before, and focusing participants on the positive change core existing in every human system. There were a total of thirteen students in this course. The majority were practitioners while there were three were AU graduate students.

- ❖ 85% of the participants rated the course as satisfying.
- ❖ 100% of the participants found the course to be relevant and useful for their current work.
- ❖ One student in particular found the class to be "very revealing." They also remarked that the topic was helpful in presenting "new ideas and tools directly applicable to my work."



Positive Approaches to Peacebuilding & Development Participants

## **Session II (June 26-30)**

### **Applied Conflict Analysis and Resolution**

*Ron Fisher & Brian Mandell*

This course provided an overview of useful conceptual tools such as models, concepts and theories for understanding violent and protracted conflict between racial ethnic, religious, cultural, and other identity groups. The course was also an overview of constructive methods (negotiation, mediation, consultation, dialogue) for addressing such conflicts. Through a combination of lectures, discussions, analytical exercises, role plays, and simulations, participants came to appreciate the dynamics of destructive conflict and learned practical approaches for its de-escalation and resolution. This class consisted of twelve practitioners and two AU graduate students.

- ◆ The large majority of the class was somewhat satisfied or very satisfied with this course.
- ◆ Nearly 70% of the participants found the information learned in the class to be useful and applicable to their current work.

### **Training for Trainers in Peacebuilding & Development**

*Mohammed Abu-Nimer*

This course utilized training approaches and explored their practical applications in peacebuilding and development contexts. It focused on skills and approaches for designing, implementing, and evaluating effective training courses in conflict resolution, humanitarian assistance, and democracy and governance. The course was geared toward trainers and gave them the ability to experience several different roles. These roles included those of the participator, an observer, and that of the trainer. First, students acted as participators, then stepped back to observe everyone's reactions and results. Finally they analyzed their reactions and results through the eyes of a trainer. Altogether, this role playing served as a unique way to progress through the activities. Overall this course was very informative and practical as well as enjoyable because the course was able to incorporate everyone's experiences and ideas. Eleven practitioners took this class along with three AU graduate students.

- ◆ 93% of the participants found the class to be very satisfying and relevant and useful to their current work. The remainder found the class to be satisfying.

- ◆ 100% of the participants agreed that the classroom interaction among instructors and participants was great.
- ◆ Students found the course to have an excellent mixture of Conflict Resolution and training. They also thought the subject matter was great.



Participants of Training for Trainers in Peacebuilding & Development

**Practical Approaches to Peacebuilding & Development in Conflict Areas**  
*Erin McCandless*

This course was designed specifically for the individual and organization working in conflict-affected and post-conflict developing country contexts around the world. With emphasis on the community and national levels, the course engaged numerous conceptual frameworks and operational methodologies utilized by NGOs and international actors – in particular the United Nations – for peacebuilding, humanitarian coordination, recovery, development and reconciliation/justice. Students gained analytical and practical skills and knowledge through a combination of presentations, group discussions, exercises, simulations, and case studies from conflicts around the world, drawing upon their own experiences as well as those of the professor. Eight AU students took this course and an additional five practitioners were enrolled.

- ◆ The large majority of the class found it to be very satisfying and applicable to their work.
- ◆ 100% of the participants would be interested in attending more training at future institutes and/or training programs at AU.
- ◆ Students found there to be a good balance between theory and practical application.



Practical Approaches to Peacebuilding & Development in Conflict Areas Participants

### **Islam and the West: Strategies for Peace**

*Meena Sharify-Funk & Nathan C. Funk*

This course explored the relevance of peacebuilding as a framework for policymaking vis-à-vis the Islamic world. Readings and lectures covered a variety of topics pertinent to American relations with Islamic cultural groups, with particular emphasis on intellectual debates and sociopolitical conflicts within the Islamic world that have a direct bearing on the quality of Muslim-American relations. Special attention was devoted to the interplay of global trends with internal dynamics of social change and political contestation and to strategies for resolving deeply rooted conflicts through democratization, negotiation, and intercultural peacebuilding measures. There were six students in this course, half of whom were practitioners and half of whom were AU students.

- ◆ 75% of the participants found the class to be satisfying and useful and applicable to their work.
- ◆ 100% enjoyed and thought there was enough classroom participation among everyone.
- ◆ Students reflected how much they enjoyed the course and wished there has been more time to continue on the subject.

### **Session III (July 3 – 8)**

#### **Forgiveness & Healing**

*Eileen Borris*

This course was designed to provide participants with a thorough overview of the complex issues of forgiveness as it relates to trauma healing, reconciliation and conflict transformation. Participants explored the social-psychological processes of responding to deep personal loss, pain, and suffering in settings of protracted, violent conflict, and examined a Trauma Recovery Forgiveness Intervention Model developed for individual and group healing. Of particular interest was the different ways in which forgiveness is understood in spiritual, social, and political terms. Overall, participants learned that forgiveness is a process of inner healing; it is about owning the complex feelings of trauma and letting go of the burden of revenge. While students discussed this, they shared stories of trauma from their homes and lives. Participants took away a greater understanding of forgiveness and healing for societies and individuals, as well as a new community of supportive friends. Five people took this class for credit, while there were another six non-credit students.

- ◇ The majority of the class found this course to be satisfying and relevant and applicable to their work.
- ◇ One student commented that political forgiveness is something “we should all learn about.”

## **Design, Monitoring & Evaluation in Peacebuilding & Conflict-Sensitive Development**

*Julia V. Nennon*

This introductory level course combined presentations and interactive, experiential learning methods. The major themes covered included: project design, monitoring and evaluation, theories of change, indicators, evaluation criteria, methods of data collection, working with external evaluators, and the newest thinking on effectiveness in peacebuilding. There was an opportunity to apply the material to participants' current programming. The course was ripe with discussion and participatory learning. The class remained interesting throughout the week with tips for maximizing a project's effectiveness through planning and evaluation. Jennifer Ulman and Juile Nennon from MSI were experienced instructors who could teach from their own work in evaluations and development in conflict areas.

- ◇ 88% of participants found the course to be satisfying or somewhat satisfying.
- ◇ Students described the class as having rich content and a great framework.

### **Community Oriented Events and Activities**

The Peacebuilding & Development Institute strongly believes in providing a sense of community to all participants and to accomplish this task, it is important that the participants are provided with many opportunities to network or share experiences. The following are just a few events that took place for the participants during the Institute.

**Key note Speakers** — Dave Peterson of the National Endowment for Democracy was the opening speaker of week one. Mr. Peterson has been with NED for 15 years and is the director of the Africa division. He spoke at length of the work that NED is currently doing both in DC and around the world. Mr. Peterson was optimistic about the progress being made and the participants were enthused for the beginning of the Summer Institute.

Ambassador John McDonald joined us to close the first week. He is currently the director of IMTD, the Institute for Multi-Track Democracy. Ambassador McDonald shared stories of his career as they related to the countries of participants and the challenges of development. The participants were impressed by his experience and were further inspired for the coming weeks.

Jon Temin of CHF International joined us for week two to share his expertise in monitoring and evaluation. Mr. Temin's background is in Africa and he spoke on the work that CHF does in conflict, development and security. It was a great start to a week of practical approaches to peacebuilding and other examinations of the applications of peacebuilding work.

Sara Cohen from USAID Office of Conflict Management closed the week bringing her extensive experience. Ms. Cohen currently manages the NGO Sector Strengthening program and shared the

perspective of USAID as a donor and the collaborative work with local NGOs. Participants were excited to hear the viewpoint of such a large donor.

The Practical Approaches to Peacebuilding class examined the frameworks for implementation of projects in post conflict areas. There was a large focus on West Africa, drawing case studies from Liberia, drawing from the instructor's extensive experience in the region as well as from the knowledge of participants from the area. There were presentations by representatives from the World Bank and trainers just back from Nepal. The class used fictional cases to practice project frameworks and explore creative solutions to NGO operations in conflict areas.

**Grant Writing Workshop:** On Wednesday June 21<sup>st</sup>, Dayna Brown from Collaborative for Development Action Incorporated (CDA), made an hour and a half long presentation on the process of and effective techniques in writing grants. Approximately 22 people were in attendance and they learned specifically about what tends to be missing from grants and also the importance of tailoring your grant to whichever organization or donor you're trying to get money from.

**Monument Tour** — Friday June 23<sup>rd</sup>, A group of participants were given a sunset evening tour of the Monuments on the National Mall in downtown DC. Participants were able to see the White House, Washington Monument, Jefferson Memorial, Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, Lincoln Memorial, and the WWII Memorial. PDI staff members gave historical facts about each of the attractions seen and the people they honored. Inspirational quotes on the Jefferson and FDR Memorial had the participants speechless. They were highly inspired by the messages of freedom, peace, and love each of these monuments represented. The participants enjoyed the tour and each other's company.



Participants at the White House  
Mussie Hailu (Ethiopia), Solomon Olweny (Ughanda)  
Ruchi Sharma (India), Joy Mariscal (Phillipines), Wabako  
Kobayashi (Japan), Elisha Yero (Nigeria)



and with the Jefferson Memorial  
Wabako Kobayashi (Japan), Ruchi Sharma (India)  
Joy Mariscal (Phillipines), Elisha Yero (Nigeria)  
Solomon Olweny (Ughanda)

**National Zoo** -- On Saturday June 24<sup>th</sup>, a small group attended the National Zoo. The pandas and the reptiles were the two most popular exhibits and the group found pleasure in identifying which animals could also be found in their own countries.

**Youth and Conflict Workshop/Discussion** — On Monday, June 26, 2006, several Summer Institute participants and staff members gathered in the Peacebuilding Café to discuss various issues concerning youth from all over the world. Sharing their experiences with the group, Chris Ashton

described his knowledge about how the Marshallese youth are spreading awareness about the injustice of U.S. test bombing in the Marshall Islands. Beth Mutamba also described her experience with creating one unique Rwandan identity among the youth today. On the same topic of identity, Angelos Agok also shared his concern and knowledge involving Northern and Southern Sudan.

**World Cup** — The 2006 World Cup Soccer/Football games took place during the three weeks of the Institute. The games were projected on a large screen in the Peacebuilding Café. During breaks, students watched eagerly and debated over which teams would win. This good-natured competitive spirit helped to create a fun atmosphere during the Institute.



Participants watching the World Cup

**4<sup>th</sup> of July Celebrations** — The 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebrations fell on the Tuesday of the final week. Classes were recessed and Institute participants and interns attended the 2006 Folk Life Festival on the National Mall. Enjoying each other’s company and the fireworks celebrations were a memorable experience for those who attended.

**Public Health & Conflict**— On Thursday July 6<sup>th</sup>, Dr. Richard Alderslade, the Interim Director at the World Health Organization, Office of United Nations in New York spoke on “Health as a Bridge for Peace.” His audience consisted of practitioners, alumni, participants, and students. He spent a lot of time on public health issues and how they intersect with peacebuilding programs. The information he presented was very well received and invoked interesting conversation among the participants.



Participants waiting for the AU shuttle  
 Angelos Agok, Diya Agha, Bridgette Oderlin,  
 Andreas Karelak, Olukemi Yai



Riding the Metro  
 Elisha, Joy, Ruchi & Solomon

**Movie Night Excursion** — On Thursday, June 29, 2006, several Summer Institute participants and staff took the Metro Bus to the Georgetown Theatres to view Al Gore’s film, An Inconvenient Truth. After viewing the documentary, many participants were pleased with the information they gained about global warming and other environmental issues facing the world today and the future. Before venturing back to campus, the group walked along the Waterfront and had the opportunity to visit the Kennedy Center at night. Overall, many relationships were developed between the participants because of this out-of-classroom interaction.

**Panel Discussion** — During the first week of the institute, a panel discussion was held in which one person from each course spoke in front of a large group of fellow participants. One presenter was from Ethiopia, another from Colombia and the last from Liberia. They each spoke about the work they do and the challenges they face in their fields. This was very helpful and sparked great conversation and sharing of ideas and practices.

**NED** — On another evening, Zen Hunter-Ishikawa and Adam Bonini accompanied about ten students to the Democracy Awards ceremony at the National Endowment for Democracy. Four African leaders and rights activists received awards for their work in peace, human rights, and transparency in government.



**Dinners and Social Gatherings** —

**PDI BBQ** -- On Friday June 30<sup>th</sup>, a barbeque was held on AU's campus. Participants chatted over turkey wraps, veggie wraps, veggie burgers, and hamburgers. The barbeque was a pleasant way to continue conversation outside the classroom.



Jamal (Sierra Leone) Cooking



Participants and staff enjoying food

**Networking Event** – Wednesday June 28<sup>th</sup>, a networking event was held at Cloud in Dupont Circle. Twenty Summer Institute participants attended and enjoyed tapas and cocktails while meeting with AU Alumni.



Mary Beth, Kristin, Marie, Amola networking

### **Obstacle Faced**

The primary obstacle of this Institute was uncertainty of international participant's attendance due to the heightened security procedures to obtain the US entry visa.

**Visas** — This year was a particularly difficult year for obtaining entry visas. In order to help with some of the difficulties we required prospective participants to apply for their visas early, especially those from Africa, the Middle East, and South East Asia. Because of this process we were able to send them the necessary paper work earlier to help them prepare earlier. We were able to get proper visa invitation letters out to those who needed them within a short period of receiving their

application. A considerable amount of applicant's visas were denied. The program coordinator spent a considerable amount of time with various embassies and consulates.

**Funding** — The Institute's experience over the past 3 years has been that the people who need the trainings the most are those who cannot afford to attend such trainings. Therefore, a concerted effort is under way to provide scholarships (in full or partial) to ensure a diverse group of participants are given this valuable opportunity. This year the Institute was able to offer 4 scholarships to 4 individuals. The four scholarship recipients were from Nepal, Germany, Albania and Australia.

### **Successful Planning Elements and Lessons Learnt**

**Pre-payment** — Requiring participants to pay before they arrived (upon receiving the visa) was a large reason for not having to refund anyone who was not able to attend. The international participants were not registered for any course till payment, in full, was received. Accepted payment methods included wire transfers, personal/organizational checks, and credit card payments. The Institute encountered many challenges with the wire transfer methods and it will be more streamlined for next year, while we will not be accepting credit payments in the future.

**Staff for the Institute** — The success of the Institute is in many ways a reflection of the hard work devoted by the PDI interns and staff. This year, we've seen an increase in help with nearly 20 people on staff. Interns were responsible for setting up the Peacebuilding Café, and keeping it running. Some also played a key role in evaluating and processing the participants' applications.



### **Concluding Remarks**

The participants of this Institute were overall very satisfied with their experience here. They felt privileged to be part of a group which contained such a diversity of participants who were working in the fields of peacebuilding and development. As the course evaluations indicate, the participants learned a lot in their classes and felt that what they learned would be of great benefit to them in their work. With the continued partnership with the Organization for American States and new partnerships with various International Organizations, the Institute will make a tremendous impact in the fields of

Peacebuilding and Development. The participants will have a wonderful forum to mix theory with practice and share experiences in a safe manner. Therefore, the Institute is confident that the network of practitioners and students will grow and continue to touch people's lives in various conflict zones.



*Some people come into our lives, & quickly go,  
Some stay awhile & give us a deeper understanding of what is  
truly important in this life.  
They touch our souls. We gain strength from the footprints they  
have left in our hearts & we will never be the same.*

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