

# A RESOURCE GUIDE *for* GRASS-ROOTS PRACTITIONERS

By Pastor Dr James Movel Wuye &  
Imam Dr Muhammad Nurayn Ashafa

Using the films  
*An African Answer* and  
*The Imam & the Pastor*  
in conflict situations

# A Resource Guide for Grass-roots Practitioners

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and *The Imam & the Pastor*  
in conflict situations

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**Published by**

FLTfilms — *for the love of tomorrow*

London & Vancouver © 2011

**Supported by**



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## Editor's Note

This Resource Guide is based on a document written by Pastor James and Imam Ashafa.

Wherever appropriate, I have drawn out advice from the authors into 'tips', 'steps' and 'stages'. I have incorporated some additional material from Inter Faith Mediation Centre in-house manuals, from interviews with Imam Ashafa and Pastor James that did not make it into the final films and from other recorded conversations.

The Resource Guide is cross-referenced with the DVDs and with a further manual by Dr David Steele, which gives historical context, theoretical background and practical advice for dialogue groups. David Steele's manual is highly complementary to this guide. It is downloadable at <http://www.usip.org/publications/manual-facilitate-conversations-religious-peacebuilding-and-reconciliation>

The Bonus Features on the DVD of *An African Answer* are divided into chapters and these are mentioned in each reference, for speed of access to this visual material.

I would like to thank my co-Director at *FLTfilms*, Dr Imam Karam, for all his support. We have been on a seven-year journey, growing in understanding of the methodology of Imam Ashafa and Pastor James. I am also particularly indebted to facilitator and organizational development consultant Philip Joseph for insights and feedback that contributed greatly to my preparedness to attempt editing this guide. I thank my wife, Mary, for her support and for her insights.

The Peace Makers in Action Network of the Tanenbaum Center for Inter-religious Understanding, Wanjiku Kibunja Croy, Amina Dikedi-Ajakaiye and a group of Caux Scholars gave helpful feedback on the final material.

### The cross-references are abbreviated as follows:

- AAA** – *An African Answer*
- InPro** – *Inside the Process* (Bonus with *An African Answer* DVD)
- TYL** – *Two years later* (Bonus with *An African Answer* DVD)
- I&P** – *The Imam and the Pastor*
- DSMnl** – *Manual to facilitate conversations on religious peacebuilding and reconciliation*

## A Message from Pastor James and Imam Ashafa



*In the name of God, Peace be with you.*

Over the last 16 years, we have worked extensively in Nigeria, across the African continent and beyond, preaching the message of peace and reconciliation.

It is our belief that violence can be prevented, mitigated and transformed using *An African Answer* and *The Imam and the Pastor* films. Sincere and pragmatic dialogue is catalyzed by screening these films. In so doing, contemporary issues bedeviling a community can be addressed.

This manual is intended to guide the user on how to deliver lessons and techniques depicted in the films and thereby to help reconcile communities which have experienced violence. It does not assume to be a curriculum of peacebuilding. It is not at all exhaustive nor is it a complete presentation of the methodologies we use. It is a tool, amongst others, to help equip you to be an effective peacemaker.

You do not need to be an imam or a pastor, you do not need to have been a victim or a perpetrator of violence, to become a peacemaker. You can learn from our experience and from many other peacemakers around the world. You have your own inspiration.

If you find yourself out of your depth in any situation, you are welcome to contact our organization in Nigeria. Please refer to Further Information and Resources at the end of this guide for how to do this.

Peace begins with you! Don't give up! Keep working to prevent the shedding of blood and to create a more peaceful world for our children and grandchildren.

*Pastor Dr James Movel Wuye and Imam Dr Muhammad Nurayn Ashafa,*  
Kaduna, Nigeria  
15/8/2011

## 1.1 Preparation

Before intervening in a conflict situation, good preparation is necessary. If you do not have the confidence of the people or if you do not understand the conflict at hand, you are unlikely to succeed. It is the people, not you, who are the beneficiaries. They should own the process (*InPro* Ch 13).

A film show or a workshop is a smokescreen to bring people together. When people come to watch a film and receive training, they do not feel there are fingers pointing at them. On the other angle, they may not show up or they may be defensive, if you tell them that you have come specifically to resolve their conflict.

### How to prepare for an effective intervention

#### Build trust and confidence

Share food with your contact persons and the parties who invited you. Understand one another. Develop empathy (*InPro* Ch 6). Gently establish your experience as a facilitator. Win confidence.

Make sure that you are in tune with your hosts as regards terms of reference for the mission. Address grey areas, so there is no misunderstanding later.



*'Share food with your contact persons and the parties who invited you.'* KOSTI, SUDAN



*'Win confidence. Make sure you are in tune with your hosts.'* KOSTI, SUDAN



*'Take the temperature on the ground.'* KOSTI, SUDAN



*'Feel the pulse regarding the level of animosity.'* BURNT FOREST, KENYA



*'Visit identified stakeholders wherever they are... including the most vulnerable.'* ELDORET, KENYA

### Understand the conflict

Take the temperature of feelings on the ground. Feel the pulse regarding the level of animosity (*InPro* Ch 2). Make a survey of your beneficiaries. Make sure to include women and youth. Visit identified stakeholders wherever they are, including the most vulnerable. Identify any moving spirits/positive change agents and potential spoilers (*InPro* Ch 5). Hear people's stories.

### Plan

Plan your intervention based on the needs identified and the time allocated for the work. Share and discuss your draft plan with your contact persons. Don't be dogmatic with the plan. Let the context determine the programme (*InPro* Ch 2). Remain flexible at all times.

### Attract participants

Work with and encourage your contact persons to attract key stakeholders. Good and captivating posters for advertizing the film and workshop may include portable flyers, pamphlets and handbills. Approach local radio and other media where appropriate.

## 1.2 Facilitating a film screening

### Introducing the screening

How you introduce a film screening is influenced by who is in your audience.

Are there victims and people who may need trauma counselling? Are there perpetrators?

Is there pent-up anger that needs dousing? Does the group contain both sides in the conflict?

Are there government representatives present?

Are there informants or spoilers?

Is the level of English comprehension strong enough to grasp and follow the films?

Have there been other efforts at conflict resolution in this particular place?

If the group is at an early or hot stage of conflict, or if the conflict has religious connotation, it can be good to show *The Imam and the Pastor* first. If they are almost ripe for action for peace, start with *An African Answer*. (See *DSMnl* for more background on deploying the two films according to the target audience.)

Hopefully your preparation (see previous chapter) will have helped you know your audience. In the light of this, you can introduce the screening appropriately.

If you are working with a group where there is high level of trauma, some soothing words of encouragement and prayer is important at the beginning. You may mention that revisiting moments of pain in the film may be a first step on a journey of healing.

The setup for the venue must be conducive while respecting the norms and culture of the people. Think about the layout of the room for the screening — and for the workshop afterwards. Bear in mind where dignitaries and elders may be seated and take into consideration the seating of men and women.

### Technical aspects

We have conducted many screenings around the world, for large audiences of over 1,000 people and for just one person. We have seen the impact when technical aspects are optimized and we have witnessed frustration and loss of impact when conditions are not good.

Peruse the technical checklist provided by *FLTfilms* (on next page) before your film screening.

### Screening checklist

- Test the DVD.
- Familiarize yourself with the DVD Menu —
  - < Play movie >
  - < Bonus Features >
  - < Chapter Headings >
- Visit the venue before the screening.
- Make sure the venue can be darkened.
- Test-run the TV & DVD player / laptop / projector / sound system before the audience arrives, with the help of a person who is familiar with the equipment.
- Make sure all of the audience will be able to hear the audio.
- Make sure all of the audience will be able to see the screen.
- If you are not confident that the screening will be satisfactory, seek help in advance from someone with the technical know-how.
- If people are unable to get in, make sure to offer another screening.



'Screenings for large audiences...' BEIRUT, LEBANON



'The setup for the venue must be conducive.' KHARTOUM, SUDAN



'Be sure to offer another screening if not everyone could get in.' BURNT FOREST, KENYA

Courtesy of *FLTfilms*

### 1.3 Facilitating dialogue after the screening

How you handle dialogue after the screening depends on how the audience is reacting.

Your facilitation should be elicitive, not prescriptive in nature. Viewers must be allowed to vent out feelings, learnings, inspirations, and should be given space to contextualize scenes in the film to local situations.

Therefore, individuals should be allowed enough time to express themselves. The facilitator should watch out for words/subjects that may escalate tensions, so that emotions can be managed. Encourage people to speak softly.

You are just guiding the process from acquired background information. You need to know the culture of your audience because cultural differences will mean different treatments. For example, you may note some of the differences between Western and African approaches to resolving a conflict.

One of the purposes at this stage is to identify the moving spirits and change agents, those who may be most willing and motivated to continue with the peace-building process (see next chapter).

#### Some differences between Western and African approaches to conflict resolution

A F R I C A N	W E S T E R N
Open to anybody	Confidential
Community-focused outcome	Disputant-focused outcome
Spirituality welcome	Spirituality often marginal
Symbolic ritual more important; paper signing less important	Paper signing more important; symbolic ritual less important
Women often marginalized	Gender neutral
Starts when it starts; ends when it ends	Often subject to time limits
Dependent on agreement of elders	Dependent on professional mediators
Community members act as witnesses to decisions reached	Agreements are signed

As responses come out, you will sense what technique to adopt according to the temperature of emotion and the desire for conflict or peace.

Whatever type of intervention you are going to implement, it is good to know the basic ground rules of mediation (see ‘Some tips for The Mediation Process’).



‘Individuals should be allowed enough time to express themselves.’  
BURNT FOREST, KENYA



‘A film screening or a workshop is usually a beginning. Now you need to build on it. How you do this depends what stage the people are at.’ Muslim and Christian hard-of-hearing students after a film screening  
KADUNA, NIGERIA

#### Some tips for The Mediation Process

##### Be impartial

Do not take sides. Seek to understand and appreciate all sides. You may inwardly feel more appreciation for one side, but you must always function impartially.

If you take roles — where you temporarily identify with one side in ‘intra’ group work — this is for empathy and trustbuilding and must always be done in a pair where your co-facilitator has also equally identified with the other side, so together you are neutralized and remain impartial. (See page 16–17)

##### Foster confidentiality

The names of individuals, the issues discussed and any agreements reached are all private information unless the parties choose to let it be known.

##### Encourage self-determination

The parties themselves determine which issues they wish to address and solutions they wish to adopt. Any party has freedom to withdraw from the process at any time.

##### Educate and empower

The mediation should give disputants new understanding and knowledge, empowering them to act with greater skill and understanding in a future conflict situation. This happens when a mediator serves as a facilitator rather than a fixer who just tries to impose a solution.



JUBA, SOUTH SUDAN

## Confidentiality

Regarding confidentiality, there are certain traditional norms that naturally impose confidentiality on people discussing matters of peace or war. Catch on to those norms wherever you can. Let the dynamics of the group determine how you foster confidentiality. Usually we would ask people to commit to confidentiality as they

see fit, rather than try to impose it. As the proverb says, ‘The stomach is not made for food alone but also meant to store confidential things.’

## Anger

Depending on the intensity of the conflict, there may be venting out of anger. Your greatest fear may be that people will walk out of the process because they are angry (*InPro* Ch 1). If you have to deal with such instances, it is useful to understand the basic steps of anger management so you can

help individuals at times and maybe even salvage a process from over-heating. Sometimes it may even help you not lose credibility as you control some anger within yourself.



BURNT FOREST, KENYA

## Steps for anger management

### Buy time before reacting

If you find your anger is boiling up and will explode any minute, count from one to ten. This helps prior to actually having to leave a room or reacting negatively to the situation.

### Do a physical activity

Doing a physical activity could provide you with a positive outlet for your pent up emotions or anger, especially if you feel emotions erupting. Move a muscle, change a thought. Stand up, do something different. Go for a walk around.

### Calm yourself

Do a breathing-deep exercise for some minutes. Visualize a scene that is relaxing. Repeat a word or a phrase that is calming for you. Repeat this as often as you possibly can. The words could be as simple as ‘relax’. Listen to some calming music or write your thoughts out on a paper, to just let your feelings out.

## Identify and own your anger

Acknowledge and own your anger. If it is impossible to address your own anger in a way that is appropriate to the situation, then go and talk it over with a friend, family, counsellor or any person you can trust. If you can identify, own and process the emotion when it occurs, then it will not build up.

## Think twice

In the heat of anger, there may be instances where things said or done are those you would later regret. This may actually hurt more than the anger itself. You may wish you could take it back but you never can. Therefore, as much as possible, think twice before saying anything or acting in the heat of an angry moment. Explore the future ramifications.

## Work with, not against

It is always best to work directly with the particular person or situation that has angered you, in order to identify the possible solutions of a particular situation.

## Hold yourself accountable

Use statements that start with ‘I’. You may say, ‘I am upset’ rather than, ‘You made me upset’. This helps in describing a particular problem and in holding yourself accountable, rather than unnecessarily placing the blame on someone else. In fact, no one has more control of your feelings than you. Do not let others make you angry without your express permission. You can choose to be angry, and you can also choose not to be angry.

## Try not to carry resentment

Holding resentment or a grudge is unhelpful in the long run. It is heavy and it holds you back. Believe it or not, it is easier to forgive and let go. Resentments can linger for years after the event in your mind, when the person who affected you has long disappeared from the scene.

## Be realistic

The fact of the matter is that it is unrealistic to make sure or even expect anyone to behave exactly the way you want them to.

## Don’t take yourself too seriously

In God’s eyes, how important was the event that set you off? Humour can be an effective diffuser of tension. Remember there are many ways of looking at a situation, maybe your way is not the correct one?



For these reasons, the film-makers edited out some statements from *An African Answer* where what was said, in the heat of a moment, was too explosive to go on screen. The people would have later regretted those statements being broadcast widely. Whereas what you see in *An African Answer* everyone in Burnt Forest is happy with, as witnessed in the Bonus Film Two Years Later.

One of the things people ask us most is how to manage a discussion of ‘likes and dislikes’ as seen in the ‘intra’ (within) and ‘inter’ (between) group work in *An African Answer*.

This is the same methodology that we used in *Yelwa Shendam (I&P)*. In this case it was natural for us because the conflict was between Christians and Muslims, so we could each facilitate our own group.

In Kenya it was an ethnic conflict, so we decided to identify with each group. James took the name Kamau as a Kikuyu and Ashafa took Kepto as a Kalenjin. That is because our ethnic nationalities in Nigeria have some similarities to these ethnic nationalities in Kenya. So we could empathize with the people and this is quite critical. They will give you more when you are like one of them — so you are breaking the barriers of information sharing.

Taking roles like this can be cardinal to intra-ethnic dialogue. However, the facilitator must be careful not to get engrossed in the conflict, otherwise de-roling becomes a Herculean task. You are only a catalyst for change. Keep checking on your co-facilitator to ensure that you are both focused on the objective of the intervention.

## Tips for handling intra and inter group dialogue

### NB TWO FACILITATORS NEEDED

#### I N T R A

##### Empathize

You can even be emotional with the people. They can see you as one of them at this stage.

##### Start with the ‘dislikes’

It is easier to get people to talk when you start with the hot and even insulting issues. Be aware that these ‘dislikes’ may not be true; they are just perceptions about the other side. Although you are empathizing, you can also gently feedback that these are perceptions. Start to use subtle doubt creation strategy, to start preparing the minds of participants for the ‘inter’.

## Do the ‘likes’ after the ‘dislikes’

You can spend much less time on the ‘likes’. Keep asking for what they may admire or respect in the other side. (Note that in *An African Answer*, eliciting the ‘likes’ was not captured in the film. This is because it happened so quickly right at the end of the ‘intra’ sessions when the film-makers were already planning how to film the ‘inter’, expecting something very explosive.)

## B R E A K

### Take a break between the intra and inter sessions

Now you can share notes with your colleague. An overnight is even better. This allows you to plan, particularly how to handle explosive issues. Good understanding with your co-facilitator is very important before you enter the ‘inter’ stage.

## I N T E R

### Bring out the ‘likes’ first.

This changes the atmosphere.

### Do the ‘dislikes’ after the ‘likes’

Where possible rephrase or restate the ‘dislike’ on the board in a way that is less insulting.

Work on issues that are strong. Then look at them from the point of doubt creation. Carefully create doubt in their position. For example, when Ashafa says in *AAA* ‘You never burn anything down?’ And then again, ‘Throughout the fight, you never attack a single place of worship?’

Also use humour to douse down pain and anxiety. For example when James says, ‘He writes better because he cut off my hand.’

Let each group respond through their spokespersons.

Each side should nominate spokespersons to respond to points made by the other side.

## Closure

The ‘inter’ meeting should end with thanks to the people. You may not be able to form a Peace Committee at this stage; it may need more meetings. If the people are willing, allow them to choose from amongst them to say a prayer that peace, justice, happiness and prosperity will come to their area.

## Facilitating listening

Facilitated listening is a safe and easy process to use that enables people with differing or opposing positions and interests to engage in a safe dialogue. This can result in new ideas and possibilities that empower individuals and groups to take positive action on difficult issues.

Facilitated listening brings out deeper levels of reflection and sharing of thoughts and feelings. This occurs because the dialogue structure helps participants to feel safe from being judged or criticized and avoids confrontation. In this way diverse ideas and beliefs can be heard, sometimes for the first time. In some cases participants are deeply moved by the heartfelt sharing of others in the group.

### Ask each group 4-6 key questions

Each facilitated listening group responds to 4-6 questions carefully developed by the facilitators. Questions are open-ended, usually beginning with safe and affirming questions and continuing into questions that bring deeper levels of consideration and inner reflection. For example, ‘What struck you most in the film?’ ‘Is the conflict situation depicted in the film similar or different from here?’ ‘What is needed to bring peace to this area?’

In each group, ask one person at a time to answer each question and give each person equal time. If people do not want to answer a particular question, let there be no compulsion. Monitor body language to assess how much people are really listening. In some cases there is also time for listeners to ask clarifying questions or for open dialogue.

### Report back

Dialogue groups report back to the larger group. Participants take time to reflect on the reports.

### Plan next steps

Each participant is given the opportunity to communicate their “Next Steps”, which may include planning for continued dialogue or developing individual or group ideas or plans for action that address the issues.

## Steps for facilitated listening

### NB SEVERAL SMALL GROUP FACILITATORS NEEDED

#### Clarify the purpose of the dialogue

What is the desired outcome? For example, ‘Understanding the core of the dispute.’

#### Clarify the dialogue structure and rules

These include a temporary mutual contract between participants that enables listening to occur in a manner that facilitates safe, heart-centred, effective communication. It includes confidentiality.

#### Divide participants into small groups

The groups should ideally be 4-5. Here you will need each group to have an experienced facilitator and ideally a note-taker. Each group facilitator helps participants to respect the dialogue rules. Those who cannot do so are engaged otherwise, or may be invited to be observers. Normally the facilitator does not participate in the dialogue, though he or she may do in some cases, especially when the potential for conflict is not great.

## Breaks

Remember that all work without play can be stressful. Also people being free to mingle informally and being more relaxed is important. Plan availability of refreshments. Find time from the schedules for recreation and lighter moments.



*‘Find time from the schedules for recreation and lighter moments.’ SUDAN*

## 2.1 Going deeper

A film screening or a workshop is usually a beginning. Now you need to build on it. How you do this again depends what stage the people are at and what capacity you have to deliver the methodologies.

You may have identified some people who are ready to be change agents, some are not ready to let go, some who are traumatized. Sometimes it is more important to work one-to-one — or to make sure that this happens through local religious leaders or counsellors.

Other times you can work straight away with the group on an action for peace. If you want to build a sustainable peace in a particular place, aim to get to the point of having shared meals (AAA), a shared ritual (AAA and *InPro* Ch 7), a public action for peace (*I&P* and AAA), a peace affirmation (*I&P*) and a peace festival (*I&P*).

## 2.2 Healing inner injury

### Dealing with trauma

For anyone who wants to do holistic peace-making, you need to recognize and know how to handle trauma — because conflict is about causing injuries to people.

Once people have some trauma in their heart it takes someone with experience of trauma counselling to detraumatize them.

Seeing the pain that results from conflict or working with people with post-traumatic stress disorder, even you can also get affected at some point.

Where possible, you need to bring in a

person trained in counselling and psycho-social therapy. Our manual cannot go into the strategies of professional trauma counselling. Having said that, it is good to be able to diagnose before you refer. You may also have to give trauma ‘First Aid’ in places where counsellors have not yet reached.

A trauma situation arising in a conflict is one in which somebody has been rendered powerless and where great danger was involved. The person either knew or believed he or she may be injured or killed or that others about him or her may. The event is of such intensity or magnitude that it overwhelms any human ability to cope.

A traumatized person can sometimes, or suddenly, seem disconnected from people or circumstances around them.

Without warning, certain memories of the event can suddenly come into the person’s mind. This can happen at any time, when he is least expecting it, or if the person is faced with a reminder of the experience. The memory can come in the form of a visual image, a sound, a smell or a physical sensation.

A person can also keep thinking about the experience. It feels as if he will never forget about it and live a normal life again. This stress may also remind him about painful things that have happened to him in the past. He may have memories of feelings of loss or of love for other people in his/her life who have been injured or who have died.

A traumatized person may also experience flashbacks, which are like the feelings he experienced during the event, and which make him feel as if it were happening again.

If an individual exhibits behaviour that suggests past trauma that they cannot remember or attach to any event, a very lengthy treatment may be necessary for them.

Although traumatic events can be quite terrible and the emotional damage caused from them can be overwhelming, healing

is possible. A traumatized individual will require comfort, acceptance, reassurance, and a non-judgmental listening ear. They must feel safe and have an understanding that the way they are feeling is completely normal for what they have been through.

The following action steps can help individuals to overcome trauma:

### Steps in Trauma Counselling

**NB THIS IS TO BE APPLIED BY PEOPLE WITH COUNSELLING TRAINING WHEREVER POSSIBLE**

#### Understand the nature of the trauma

If it can be remembered, talk about what happened. Do so gently and do not allow for any denial. Although the memories may be very painful, discuss them honestly. Understand that you didn’t deserve or cause what has happened to you and that depending on the type of trauma you have experienced, you may have to make some changes in your life in order to not be hurt again.

#### Express the feelings

Express whatever your true feelings are regarding your traumatic experience. Whether it be anger, grief, or sadness, let it out.

#### Seek professional help

Your healing will come with time and help. Engage in the process of healing either through group or individual counselling.

(See *Further Information and Resources* at the end of this guide.)

#### Know that you will have victory

You will not only heal from your trauma, but you will triumph over it. Think about the positive strengths that will come out of the healing process. Know that in time you will be able to forgive and will be set free from the pain. Most importantly, realize that someday you will be able to help and comfort those who have experienced similar traumas.



*‘Whether it be anger, grief or sadness, let it out.’*  
BURNT FOREST, KENYA

## Forgiveness, repentance & reconciliation

Remind people that faith is the greatest medicine to heal inner wounds. As ministers of religion, we have a spiritual template, quoting relevant scriptures from the Bible or the Qur'an to foster forgiveness, repentance and reconciliation. It is our belief that The Holy Scriptures are the greatest resource available. Enlist religious leaders to help in the peace-building process.

If the people practise forms of traditional religion or animism, and also if they are non-religious, you can use idioms and proverbs. You can talk about other champions of forgiveness and non-violence like Mahatma Gandhi.

### Resources from the Holy Bible & the Holy Qur'an to heal inner injury

#### Facing the pain

In the Psalms, David is honest about his feelings (**Ps 62:8**)

On the Cross, Jesus Christ cried out (**Matthew 27:46**)

Pain can be a test of faith from Almighty Allah (**The Qur'an 2:155-157; 29:2**)

Be patient in pain as did the Prophet Job (**The Qur'an 21: 83-84**)

#### Repenting

Cry your tears into the heart of God (**1 Peter 3:9**)

Repent of sinful responses to being hurt (**1 Peter 2:23; Heb. 12:15**)

Do not pay evil with evil (**The Qur'an 41:34-36**)

Make the sinner's repentance (**The Qur'an 71:10**)

#### Seeking forgiveness from the Almighty

As you forgive, you will be set free (**Mark 11:25; Matthew 5:43-48**)

Seek for Allah's forgiveness and tranquility (**The Qur'an 110:1-3**)

#### Reaching out to bless others

Help them find healing (**John 4:10; Phil 2:4**)

Do good to others without expecting them to reciprocate (**The Qur'an 76: 8-10**)

There is a saying: 'Forgive and forget'. In reality, we can never forget the wrong that was done to us, or that we did to another. But we can 'let go' of the hatred and desire for revenge that the wrong has caused us. 'Letting go' is hard work and implies the need for Almighty God.

Confession, repentance and forgiveness is a process. It may be long and difficult but it leads to a peaceful heart. To live in unforgiveness is to live in pain. Not forgiving your enemy is like taking poison and expecting your enemy to die. When you understand that, it becomes easier to let go.

Forgiveness and repentance are related. Both...

- attempt to heal wounds
- attempt to break the cycle of violence (see *AAA*)
- require the same actions and attitudes
- look to a new future
- one tends to inspire the other (see *I&P*)
- either can come first
- lead to a peaceful heart

### The purpose of forgiveness

- To seek freedom
- To heal broken relationships
- To seek justice
- To bring change

### Criteria of forgiveness

- Empathy for the humanity of the wrong doer
- Refusal to exact penalty from the wrong doer in the same proportion as the wrong done
- Healing and restoration of relationships of all parties

## The purpose of repentance

- To seek freedom
- To acknowledge what wrong has been done
- To heal broken relationships
- To establish a sense of justice
- To bring change

## Criteria of repentance

- Acknowledgement of a wrong done
- Empathy with the victim's suffering
- Willingness to make restitution
- Healing and restoration of relationships of all parties

Forgiveness and repentance allow you to break the cycle of violence, as explained by Imam Ashafa on the flip chart in *AAA*. In the film, you can see people saying where they are in this cycle. This is also about taking personal responsibility, rather than blaming others or blaming the Government.

For more background on cycles of victimhood and cycles of transformation, including the diagram shown briefly in the film, see *DSMnl* pages 6 and 63.

When there is forgiveness and repentance there can be true reconciliation. With true reconciliation there is restorative justice. Otherwise there is only retributive justice.

True reconciliation is to be distinguished by the presence of mercy, truth and justice and peace.

In conclusion, we would encourage you to work with religious leaders where possible, to help heal the inner wounds of the people.

## 2.3 Community action

### Setting up a peace committee

A Peace Committee is the unit that will organize positive action for peace in the locality. About 8-12 people is a good number, with equal representation from both sides. It is the people who decide who they want to represent them (*InPro* Ch 4).

Encourage women and youth to be represented.

The Peace Committee will need unity and an action plan.

In order to strengthen the process and bring about unity and continuity, identify rituals that are known to them that will help them to bond. For believers, prayer is the most powerful. It could also be a ritual of slaughtering an animal and feasting together. It can also be dancing and singing.

Even when relationships within the Peace Committee are good, when there is no action plan, everything can go loose.

Develop a plan of activities after a facilitated listening exercise (see previous chapter) with relevantly honed questions or as seen towards the end of *An African Answer*, when groups are formed to implement solutions.



'Early warning and early response training'  
ALEXANDRIA, EGYPT

Vision what a peaceful future will feel and look like.

### Some peace-building activities

- Organize a healing ritual process like the burning of papers in *An African Answer* (see *InPro* Ch 7 for more background on this)
- Create a Peace Affirmation
- Organize a Peace Festival
- Learn the 'early warning, early response' methodology for conflict prevention
- Set up a joint choir
- Organize joint sports activities
- Create an exchange programme for children
- Organize joint livelihood and development activities — flour mills, wells, road repair, tree planting etc

**NB THE PEOPLE THEMSELVES WILL COME UP WITH  
WHAT CAN WORK BEST FOR THEM.**

Look at the action points with SMART analysis to help prioritize and render effectiveness. In other words, check the initiatives with respect to being Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound.

Funding is crucial for the Peace Committee to work optimally. Where there are no resources, it is more important to keep the people as engaged and motivated as possible as regards the Action Plan.

## Peace affirmations and peace festivals

Peace affirmations are an important process of ending hostilities.

For affirmations, work to redress problems that people have identified. You as a facilitator have to now bring out the key points of disagreement and see if the people can agree on an affirmation and append their signatures. As a small example, in *An African Answer*, there is a complaint that no policemen in the area are Kalenjin. See if the people want to redress this by affirming that in future the police of the area will always have a mix of ethnic nationalities.

With a Peace Affirmation, you can push the peace process wider.

When you have done a Peace Affirmation, you can remember the anniversary of signing the affirmation with a celebration every year. It is better to have an anniversary that remembers the peace than an anniversary that remembers a battle or a massacre.

The Kaduna Peace Declaration (*I&P*) is an important and now historically documented affirmation that sealed the peace after years of communal bloodshed in Kaduna State. The full Declaration is appended.

With regard to Peace Festivals, encourage the type of activity that you know people like doing — dancing, singing, eating together, prayer and worship.

A community procession through the area (*AAA*) can be part of a festival. It is a positive way of acquainting the populace on the dialogue outcome, and to generate support for peace and trust and the trust-building process.

A symbolic commitment by the disputants, in the form of unveiling a peace declaration/affirmation on a plaque (*I&P*), signing a Sorry Book and/or setting up a new peace office (*AAA*), communicates the end of hostility and the beginning of sustainable peace and can be a cause of celebration and dancing, further reducing tension (*I&P* and *AAA*).



'Encourage the type of activity that you know people like doing.' KOSTI, SUDAN



'A community procession through the area is a positive way of acquainting the people with the dialogue outcome.' BURNT FOREST, KENYA



'A symbolic commitment communicates the end of hostility.' BEIRUT, LEBANON



'Signing a Sorry Book' BURNT FOREST, KENYA

## The Kaduna Peace Declaration of Religious Leaders

In the name of God, who is Almighty, Merciful and Compassionate, we who have gathered as Muslim and Christian religious leaders from Kaduna State pray for peace in our state and declare our commitment to ending the violence and bloodshed, which has marred our recent history.

According to our faiths, killing innocent lives in the names of God is a desecration of His Holy Name, and defames religions in the World. The violence that has occurred in Kaduna State is an evil that must be opposed by all people of good faith. We seek to live together as neighbours, respecting the integrity of each other's historical and religious heritage. We call upon all to oppose incitement, hatred, and the misrepresentation of one another.

1. Muslims and Christians of all tribes must respect the divinely ordained purposes of the Creator by whose grace we live together in Kaduna State, such ordained purposes include freedom of worship, access to and sanctity of places of worship and justice among others.
2. As religious leaders, we seek to work with all sections of the community for a lasting and just peace according to the teachings of our religions.
3. We condemn all forms of violence and seek to create an atmosphere where present and future generations will co-exist with

mutual respect and trust in one another. We call upon all to refrain from incitement and demonization, and pledge to educate our young people accordingly.

4. Through the creation of a peaceful state we seek to explore how together we can aid spiritual regeneration, economic development and inward investment.
  5. We acknowledge the efforts that have been made within this State for a judicial reform and pledge to do all in our power to promote greater understanding of the reform, so that it can provide a true and respected justice in each of our communities.
  6. We pledge to work with the security forces in peacekeeping and implementation of this Declaration in the State.
  7. We announce the establishment of a permanent joint committee to implement the recommendations of this declaration and encourage dialogue between the two faiths, for we believe that dialogue will result in the restoration of the image of each in the eyes of the other.
- This declaration is binding on all people in the State from this day of 22nd August 2002 and agree that any individual or group found breaching the peace must be punished in accordance with the due process of the law.

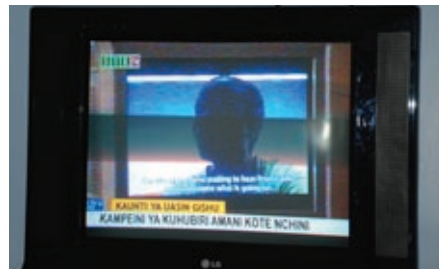
Modelled on the Alexandria Declaration of January 2002, this Peace Declaration was agreed and signed by 11 Christian leaders including Archbishop Achigili and 11 Muslim leaders, Imams and Sheikhs and by His Excellency Alhaji Ahmed Mohammed Makarfi, the Executive Governor of Kaduna State.



With Vice-President Riek Machar  
SOUTH SUDAN



'Spreading the word encourages others to build peace.' Article in *The Daily Nation*, KENYA, JANUARY 2011



'Taking the films for TV broadcast is another effective way of wider outreach' Excerpt of *An African Answer* on Sayare TV, ELDORET, KENYA



Article in *The Standard*, Kenya, September 2008

## Engaging political will

Getting government endorsement and government political will should be deliberately and continually sought, where possible. Note that the Governor of Plateau State unveiled the Yelwa Shendam agreement (*I&P*) and a local government official unveiled the Burnt Forest Peace Office (*AAA*), while a Kenyan Assistant Minister attended the first workshop in Burnt Forest.

Any grass-roots initiative exclusive of government political will may fail later. This is not to be partisan or to favour government versus non-government authorities. It is to win all stakeholders, including decision-makers at the highest level, to the benefits of sustainable peace.

## Harnessing the power of the media

Let it be advised that at the end of any successful intervention, media coverage and partnership should be sought, bringing stakeholders to speak on the issues.

Spreading the word both encourages others to build peace and makes those who are featured more committed and proud of what they have achieved.

Pass the DVDs to others. Taking the films to the airwaves for TV broadcast is another effective way of wider outreach.

## A final word

We hope you will have been encouraged to take deliberate and pro-active steps that can lead to positive social transformation. It is a question of mobilization — mobilizing individuals and organizations within society.

As a grass-roots practitioner, you need to take the message of peace out of the workshop hall and into the villages, streets and market places.

The starting point is individual transformation and self-awareness. A transformed individual can transform his/her neighbours, community and the nation at large. As war begins in the mind, so peace must be constructed in the mind.

Encourage transformed individuals to reach out to those who may have suffered particular losses in the conflict. Also see how they can work with other change agents, if they are to succeed in remaking the society.

In social transformation, change is a constant process, not just one event.



*'Take the message of peace into the villages, streets and market places.'*

BARINGO, KENYA

**Pastor James & Imam Ashafa, together with FLTfilms,  
thank the following for their co-operation and  
goodwill in the making of these films:**

**N I G E R I A**

The Government of Kaduna State  
The Government of Plateau State  
Jama'atu Nasril Islam (JNI)  
Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN)  
Academic Associates Peaceworks, Abuja  
HH Alhaji Ado Bayero, Emir of Kano

**K E N Y A**

The Government of Kenya, Ministry of Provincial Administration & Internal Security  
Ashoka, East Africa  
All Africa Conference of Churches, Nairobi  
Initiatives of Change, Nairobi  
British High Commission, Nairobi  
Centre for Human Rights & Democracy, Eldoret  
International Organization of Migration, Eldoret  
Rural Women's Peace Link, Eldoret  
Together Development Programme, Marigat  
Rural Women's Development Network, Marigat

**Photo credits**

*Canberra Times* (page 7)  
Alan Channer (pages 8, 9, 11.3, 13, 14.2, 19, 21, 26, 29, back cover)  
Imad Karam (pages 11.2, 14.1, 28.1)  
Mary Winstanley Channer (page 11.1)  
Amira Mitchell Karam (page 25)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank all those who have been our guides along the way. Starting with our parents and our spiritual teachers in Nigeria, through training from Dr Judy Burdin Asuni, Samie Ihejirika and going on with training we received at 'Responding to Conflict' in Selly Oak, UK and through exposure with the United States Institute of Peace. Also our thanks go to the British High Commission, British Council, USIS/ USAID and Christian Aid who gave us the needed support to stabilize in the early days.

Our methodology is a blend of faith-based, African, Western and conflict resolution approaches. It is pragmatic, shaped by many influences and we wish to thank all those from whom we have picked skills and wisdom along the way.

In particular, we thank our colleagues at Inter Faith Mediation Centre, Kaduna, Nigeria, and our fellow practitioners and partners across the continent of Africa and beyond who have made this work possible.

We would like to express our gratitude to USIP and in particular to Vice-President Dr David Smock for supporting the production of *The Imam and the Pastor* and *An African Answer* and commissioning this Resource Guide and also the Manual by Dr David Steele.

Starting with the late David Channer, we thank all of those who have worked through FLTfilms, whether in London, Nigeria or Kenya to bring out our stories in *The Imam and the Pastor* and *An African Answer*. In particular we thank FLTfilms co-Directors Dr Imad Karam and Dr Alan Channer and FLTfilms North America partner Christopher Hartnell for their work on this multimedia training package.

We especially thank Dr Alan Channer for working with us to put together this Resource Guide.

*Imam Muhammad Ashafa and Pastor James Wuye*



## FURTHER INFORMATION & RESOURCES

*An African Answer* Facebook Page

*An African Answer* website —

[www.anafricananswer.org](http://www.anafricananswer.org)

### **Inter Faith Mediation Centre**

4 East Wing, Muhammadu Buhari Way,  
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### **FLTfilms — for the love of tomorrow**

24 Greencoat Place,  
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info@fltfilms.org.uk  
[www.fltfilms.org.uk](http://www.fltfilms.org.uk)  
For further documentaries and  
training videos on conflict resolution

### **United States Institute of Peace**

Certificate Course in  
Interfaith Conflict Resolution  
Includes a case study of Pastor James Wuye  
and Imam Muhammad Ashafa.  
<http://www.usip.org/education-training/courses/certificate-course-in-interfaith-conflict-resolution>

### **Tanenbaum Center for Inter-religious Understanding**

COEXIST — An interactive conflict resolution curriculum for high school students.

Based on the case study of Imam Muhammad Ashafa and Pastor James Wuye.

<https://www.tanenbaum.org/programs/education/curricula#coexist>

### **EMDR Humanitarian Assistance Programs**

Building capacity to treat trauma  
anywhere in the world.

[www.emdrhap.org](http://www.emdrhap.org)

### **Creators of Peace**

A network of women peacebuilders.  
[www.cop.iofc.org](http://www.cop.iofc.org)

### **No Enemy to Conquer**

by Michael Henderson,  
Baylor University Press 2009  
Stories of forgiveness and reconciliation,  
including a chapter on Imam Muhammad Ashafa  
and Pastor James Wuye. Commentators include  
Archbishop Tutu, Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks,  
Rajmohan Gandhi, Benazir Bhutto and  
the Dalai Lama.

<http://www.mh.iofc.org/no-enemy-to-conquer>



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PRACTITIONERS

