



FELLOWS 2016

The International Dialogue Centre
KAICIID International Fellows Programme

Yearbook 2016

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The International Dialogue Centre
KAICIID International Fellows Programme

Yearbook 2016



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Editor

Mariela Hoyer Starcevic

Contributors

Brian Pellot
Kaleb Warnock

Portraits

Daniel Shaked (International Fellows)
Alexander Müller (South-East Asia Fellows)

Design

Tudor Rose

Print

Gomer Press

The International Dialogue Centre (KAICIID)

King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Centre
for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue
Schottenring 21
A-1010 Vienna
Austria

Telephone: +43 1 313 22-0

E-mail: office@kaiciid.org

www.kaiciid.org

KAICIID Fellows Team

Anas Alabbadi: Senior Programme Manager

Mike Waltner: Programme Manager

Kyfork Aghobjian: Programme Assistant

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After a very successful launch in 2015, the KAICIID International Fellows Programme has spent its second year increasing the number of people it reaches and helps. In 2016, we were able not only to double the number of Fellows – we also expanded the programme geographically to include both an international cohort (with Fellows coming from almost every continent), and a regional cohort, (this year South-East Asia). This expansion reflects our commitment to the cause of dialogue and, especially, to future generations. It reflects our wish to contribute to a peaceful future where people respect each other and cooperate regardless of their ethnic background, religion or culture.

At the International Dialogue Centre (KAICIID), we work to strengthen social cohesion and build solutions in conflict situations around the world. And while we have programmes addressing the needs of communities that have been divided along religious lines, we also work to prevent such division, by building capacity for dialogue. Each KAICIID Fellow works in their community, with their students and with each other to promote interreligious dialogue, and so prevent differences from igniting conflict. The success they have so far enjoyed fills us with hope.

Over the course of one year, we provide training and support to educators and community leaders, so that they can be leaders, multipliers and advocates for interreligious dialogue in their communities and institutions. KAICIID Fellows understand the important role that religion and religious leaders can play in promoting peaceful coexistence, and they are already sharing these views and values with their students.

The fruits of this programme are clearly visible. In many cases, KAICIID Fellows have been personally transformed through their interactions and learning from each other. At the same time, the programme has equipped them with the skills and support to implement interreligious dialogue initiatives with their students or communities, a total of 43 in 2016.

This Yearbook tells the stories of these 43 individuals. It shows their work before and after the Fellows programme. They are, without doubt, dialogue ambassadors and peacebuilders that will train the next generation of religious leaders. In a world that needs dialogue and peace more than ever before, their work, and the work of other believers in dialogue, is our best hope for a united future.

In their evaluations and testimonials, the 2016 Fellows expressed their gratitude to KAICIID for the programme and the Network that supports them and continues to connect them after they graduate. I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to them, for embarking on this journey with us, with open hearts and open minds, and the willingness to be transformed by the power of multireligious friendships and dialogue. We are proud of their achievements and look forward to following and supporting their work.

KAICIID Secretary General
Faisal Bin Muaammar

About the International Dialogue Centre

The International Dialogue Centre (KAICIID) is an international organization with the mission of promoting dialogue to help people to understand and respect different religions and cultures.

The Centre works to counteract discrimination and resolve conflict. It is the first intergovernmental organization that teams up policymakers and religious representatives to encourage dialogue between people who may never meet or enjoy mutual trust, and to talk through their problems, especially if there is a cultural or religious issue at stake.

The governing Board of Directors comprises representatives of five major religions representing about 80% of the world's believers and thus offers the international community a unique asset. The Advisory Forum, comprised of influential leaders from world religions and religious and cultural institutions and communities representing more than 20 countries, supports the activities of the Board of Directors and advises on their programmes.

Through its networks, the Centre has access to religious communities around the world. Combined with the support of the member governments, the Centre can convene influential stakeholders who usually never meet or collaborate, yet have many goals and methods in common. This collaboration between religious and secular leadership can create new, more inclusive solutions.

The Centre is inclusive of all religions, yet not bound to any single faith or denomination. Through dialogue, the Centre helps communities to create peace and to build harmonious societies. To achieve this, the Centre fosters cooperation between diverse religious communities to close the divisions created by the manipulation of religion to engender fear and hatred.

Our vision is a world in which there is respect, understanding and cooperation among people; justice, peace and reconciliation; and an end to the abuse of religion to justify repression, violence and conflict.

OUR ROLES

We help create the platforms, knowledge, and commitment that foster interreligious dialogue (IRD) in conflict areas

We support international and national institutions in using IRD to work for positive change

We convene religious leaders, policymakers and other stakeholders to engage in IRD

We create and disseminate knowledge on IRD to help achieve peace and reconciliation

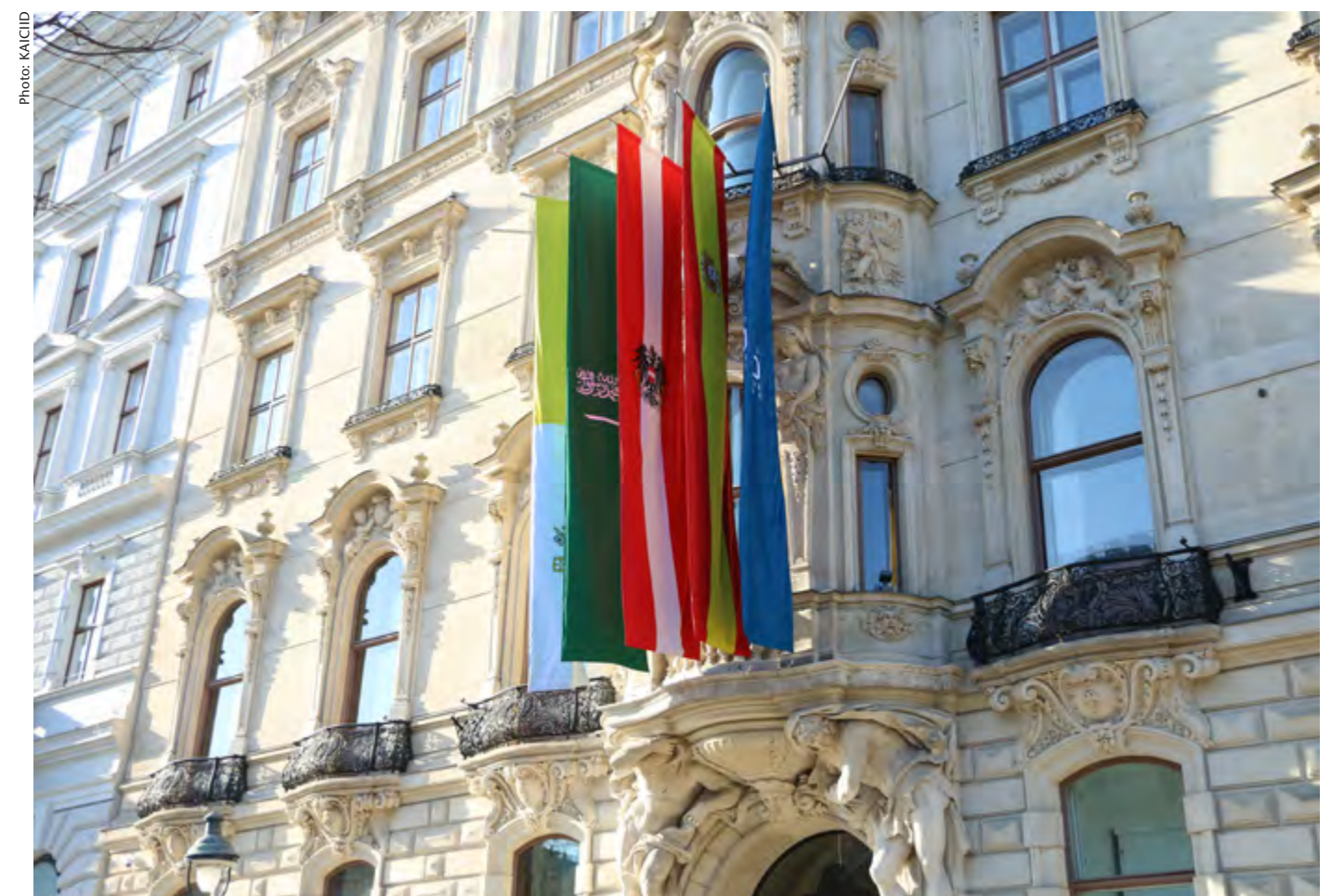
WHAT WE DO

We promote IRD to help find sustainable solutions to contemporary challenges and conflict situations, working in four priority areas:

- Applying IRD for supporting peace and reconciliation in four designated conflict situations: the Central African Republic, Iraq/Syria, Nigeria, and Myanmar
- Capacity building efforts, which aim to empower religious leaders to become active peacemakers in communities experiencing conflict and division
- Working to advocate on behalf of IRD with international organizations, policymakers and other stakeholders
- Offering, through the Dialogue Knowledge Hub, a virtual platform with resources for the field of dialogue worldwide



KAICIID is the only intergovernmental organization with a Board of Directors made up of representatives from five world religions: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism



The International Dialogue Centre is based in Vienna and was established by Austria, Saudi Arabia and Spain. The Holy See is the Founding Observer

Building the Foundations for Peace – The KAICIID International Fellows Programme

The KAICIID Fellows programme supports leadership development and learning throughout the world. Every leader from a religious community and educator has the potential to impact their students and followers in ways that resonate with their deepest held beliefs. While changing people’s attitudes towards others does not require reducing devotion toward ones’ own faith tradition, it does require skills and know-how to create connections across religious and cultural lines.

KAICIID envisions a world where people of faith are able to respectfully acknowledge each other and respect their differences. Interreligious dialogue, conducted properly, provides a firm foundation rooted in common human values that can lead to reconciliation, peace and a creative coexistence. The KAICIID International Fellows Programme (KIFP) aims to fulfil this vision.

The Centre’s Fellows programme was inaugurated in 2015 and gathers people from diverse world religions and nearly every continent, fostering a spirit of understanding and cooperation. The programme empowers an interreligious network of peacebuilders who understand religion’s complex and important role in their work.

KIFP expands opportunities for dialogue among young religious leaders, by giving teachers at religious institutions the knowledge, tools, experience, and networks to model and teach skills to others. The 2016 Fellows implemented over 40 of their own activities and trainings, teaching



Fellows are trained to be able to educate others as facilitators and leaders in interreligious dialogue

students to become IRD facilitators and leaders in their own right.

Through KIFP, KAICIID supports leaders who are establishing connections and passing on the skills and practices that contribute toward building a lasting foundation for peace.

Religious diversity is expanding but a global platform needs to be developed for accommodating and engaging this diversity. What is needed today is a lasting sustainable infrastructure to link religiously and culturally diverse individuals, institutions and countries. Currently, not enough schools are training religious leaders in IRD or content about diverse faiths. Many young religious leaders in one region are not equipped to interact with those from other parts of world. During the past two years, KIFP found that at least half of the Fellows’ institutional affiliations had no existing IRD work or faced significant challenges in implementing activities and programmes. The Fellows programme works to fill this critical educational void.

The 2016 yearbook tells the story of the KIFP’s second year and the 43 leaders who have joined the alumni from 2015. These leaders, like their predecessors, have received intensive trainings and participated in practical discussions. They have shared their stories and are offering their skills and knowledge to the field.

The Fellows come from four continents and six major world religions. Some of the Fellows reside in communities where diverse religions coexist peacefully, while others have witnessed tragedies wrought by social divisions and intercommunal conflict.

Peace cannot be achieved by working in isolation, therefore Fellows are the connectors of their communities: Select leaders, educators and actors from religious and academic institutions that are creating the new global framework on which dialogue and cooperation will traffic in years to come. All Fellows are committed to involve others in this task through educating and empowering others to be facilitators



In 2016, 43 Fellows from 16 countries graduated from the Programme, under an international and a regional cohort

and leaders in IRD; and by encouraging their institutions and communities to collaborate for change.

In 2016 a total of 44* Fellows attended trainings taught by KAICIID experts. The first training of the 20 Fellows from the international cohort took place in Vienna at KAICIID’s headquarters. In addition, KAICIID launched its first regional Fellows training programme for 24 leaders from South-East Asia who received their first and second trainings in the Philippine province of Mindanao.

These trainings helped the Fellows to practice diverse dialogue strategies, build community among themselves, and enhance their knowledge and skills on IRD. The intensive trainings centred on the precise skills the Fellows said they needed most: dialogue design, facilitation, communication, outreach, peacebuilding, conflict transformation, and evaluation, among others.

The international group gathered for the second training in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Fellows learnt from IRD practitioners working in the field to heal divisions after a long civil war. From the trainings and guest lectures, Fellows gained practical lessons and insight which informed the design of their individual initiatives. Additionally, The South-East Asia Fellows also had the opportunity to receive training from KAICIID and other experts from the Mindanao Peacebuilding Institute

(MPI). Fellows learnt first-hand from those on the frontlines working to bring peace to Mindanao.

Throughout their trainings, Fellows were taught to design sustainable models that incorporate lessons learnt and best practices from field. They received valuable tips and know-how on mobilizing partners and resources, tracking, and reporting on their initiatives.

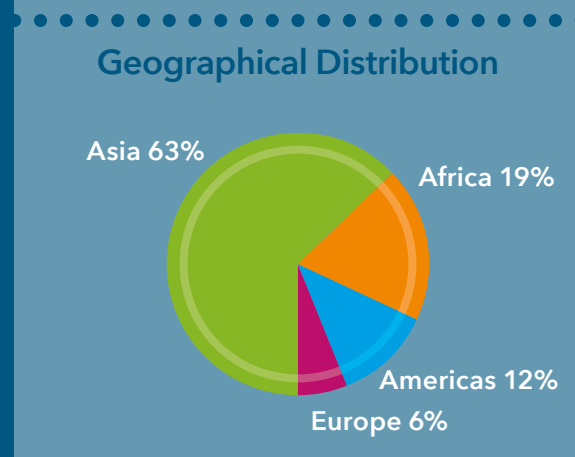
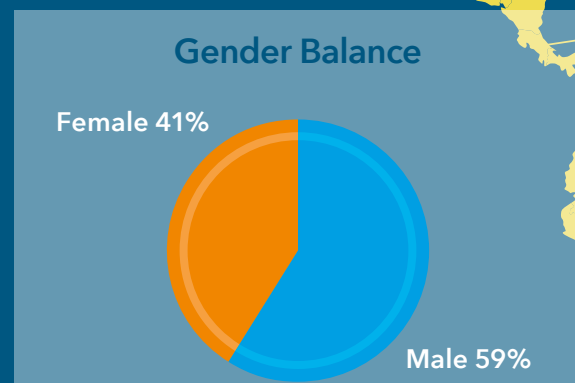
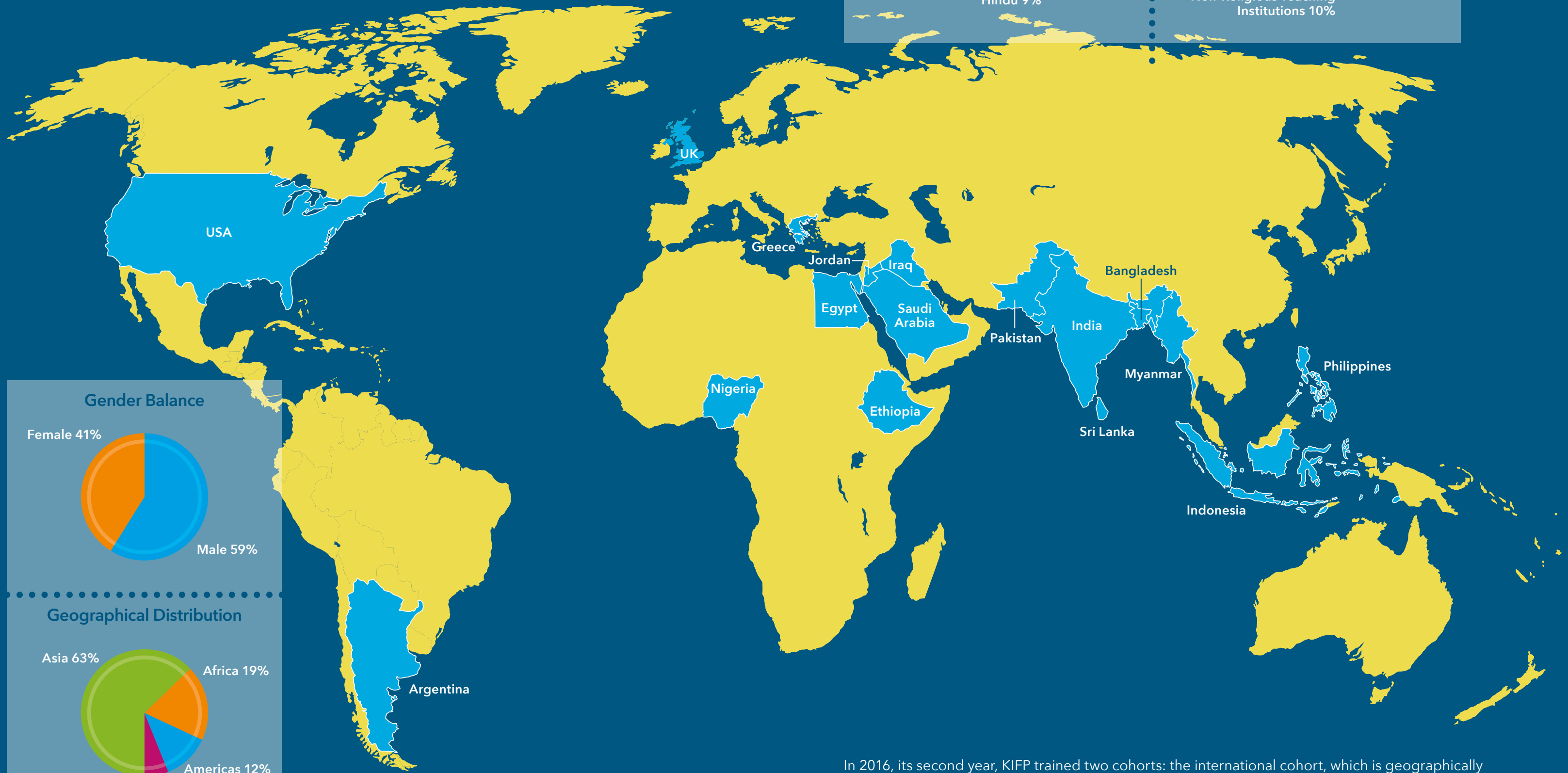
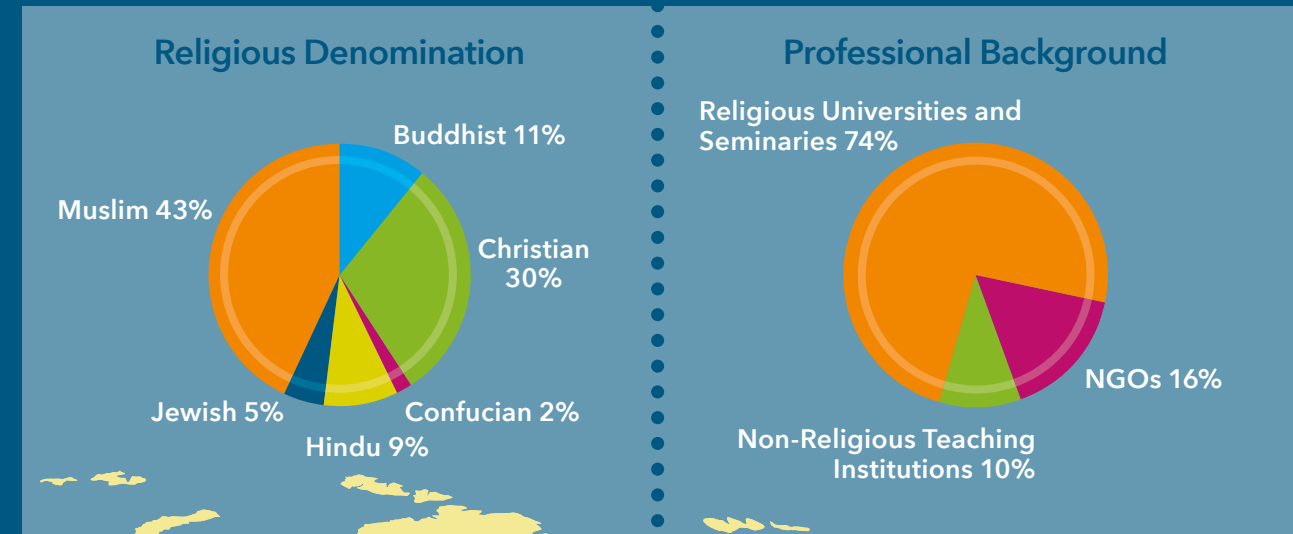
During their final training in Vienna, Fellows reflected on their projects and received helpful feedback on their work. Both cohorts received training together, meeting each other and comparing their experiences. In addition, they welcomed the 2017 KAICIID International Fellows to the programme.

Fellows indicate that they better understand the transformative nature of IRD and the importance and potential of authentic interreligious collaboration. They learn from trainings and also from one another, sharing perspectives and stories on IRD from region to region. 2016 Fellows appreciate the strong bonds they have forged, through a shared commitment to dialogue and peace, within a religiously diverse and growing peer community of active IRD practitioners. By working together to better understand the challenges ahead and through inspiring and supporting one another, Fellows are a cornerstone for expanding a foundation for lasting peace.

*Deendayal Gunti, from the SEA cohort, participated in the first and second trainings but is still in the process of finalising his requirements to complete the programme

KAICIID International Fellows Programme 2016

The KIFP is a one-year learning and training programme that empowers institutions that train future religious leaders by building capacity of educators. Its curriculum is designed, developed and delivered by KAICIID staff.



In 2016, its second year, KIFP trained two cohorts: the international cohort, which is geographically global, and the South-East Asia cohort, which is regional. The 43 Fellows came from 16 different countries, four continents and six religions.

The KAICIID Fellows Network

The KAICIID Fellows Network (KFN) is a rapidly developing global community of religious leaders and educators from various traditions and beliefs who are active peacemakers in their communities. The KFN builds upon the momentum and enthusiasm generated by the Fellows training experience, catalysing synergies and collaborations among KIFP alumni and their institutions. The Network provides continuing learning and professional development opportunities to reinforce lasting outcomes in the field.

The Network sustains cooperation and communication of Fellows across cohorts and in just two years has established a sense of continuity and shared identity among all Fellows. Through the Network, Fellows can connect with further education, training and resources to support and promote their work.

The Network serves:

- To keep Fellows regularly connected among each other and with KAICIID;
- To provide a space for continuing learning and professional development;
- To empower Fellows to be self-motivated and regularly contributing to the IRD field;



KFN gathers KIFP alumni and promotes collaboration between Fellows and their institutions

- To encourage Fellows' institutions to network among each other and with KAICIID.

KFN members are already contributing to the field of IRD beyond KAICIID. In turn, these contributions benefit the Fellows themselves, as well as the KIFP and KAICIID's other programme areas.

The KFN is comprised of 64 members, including the 43 graduated 2016 Fellows. During 2016, the Network became more firmly established and expanded more than doubling in size. The Network will continue to grow to over 110 members by the end of 2017. Several KFN activities took place in 2016.



The Network keeps Fellows regularly connected among each other and with KAICIID

KFN activities in 2016

KAICIID has developed the KAICIID Fellows Online Platform (KFOP), a unique online platform which serves as an accessible online hub connecting KFN members to one another, to KAICIID and to valuable resources to support their continuing development and learning. KFOP is customised for a specially trained diverse global network of leaders and educators and will ensure efficient coordination and monitoring of the Network into the future.

KAICIID launched KFN Micro-grants to support KFN members' continuing development in project design, management, replication and assessment. Micro-grants allow members to replicate or scale-up successful IRD-related initiatives and to incubate new projects and collaborations.

Other important KFN activities

Additionally, Fellows are participating in and planning important events and conferences.

KAICIID Fellows Network members participated in the G20 Interfaith Summit Preconference: South Asia 25 - 27 July 2016 speaking on a panel organized by KAICIID, "IRD Education: Religious Leaders as Practitioners of Interreligious Dialogue". The panel consisted of KAICIID Fellows representing different cohorts from the South Asia and South-East Asia region. Each Fellow had time to present his or her initiative and reflected on the overall KAICIID Fellows experience before a group of religious leaders, representatives of academic institutions and policymakers.

KFN members from Europe, UK and North and South America have organized the Transatlantic Conference focusing on the role religious leaders can play in promoting interreligious coexistence in urban areas

Fellows are making a difference in KAICIID programmes and activities

During the 2nd African Union Interfaith Dialogue Forum, Agatha Chikelue (Nigeria, KIFP 2015) was elected to serve as one of 12 representatives on the African Union Interfaith Steering Committee which is expected to partner with the African Union, the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and other peacebuilding organizations.



The Fellows are also connected through an online platform, where they can access learning resources



The Network offers further education, training and resources to support the Fellows' work

In addition, KAICIID Fellows Simon Dolly (KIFP 2016), and Agatha Chikelue (KIFP 2015) also participated in Coordinate to Achieve (CTA): Intra-religious Understanding in Nigeria Conferences in Abuja, Nigeria, resulting on a constitution for the Nigerian Interfaith Dialogue Forum.

Alex Goldberg (UK, KIFP 2015) and Mabrouka Rayachi (Austria, KIFP 2015) had the opportunity to meet with then Austrian President Heinz Fischer during his visit to KAICIID Headquarters in Vienna during the Interfaith Harmony Week in 2016 and had the opportunity share their experiences in the Fellows programme.

Several KFN members are currently developing the KFN first product, an IRD toolkit for South Asia and South-East Asia. The toolkit will be a practical and accessible guide for individuals and organizations seeking to incorporate IRD into their work in the region.

International and South-East Asia Fellows Train in Asia, Austria and Online



The International Fellows had their second training in Colombo, Sri Lanka in May 2016

KAICIID's 20 International Fellows and 24 South-East Asia Fellows followed separate paths around the world on their journeys through the 2016 programme, learning similar lessons about peacebuilding, conflict resolution and interreligious dialogue along the way. They all met again in Vienna to find out how much they had discovered in common.

The 2016 International Fellows first gathered in November 2015 at KAICIID's Hall of Dialogue in Vienna where they watched the inaugural Fellows graduate and learnt from their inspiring stories and initiatives. The 2016 class spent the week getting to know one another and KAICIID, developing both theoretical and practical IRD teaching skills.

These new International Fellows represented more than a dozen countries and six religious backgrounds. They bonded over shared meals and a guided tour of Vienna, many of them experiencing Europe for the first time. After five days of orientation and capacity-building exercises covering such topics as peacebuilding and conflict resolution, dialogue theories and practices and social media literacy, the Fellows returned to their home communities where virtual lessons continued via the newly established KAICIID Interreligious Dialogue Online Course (KOCID).

The International Fellows reconvened in Colombo, Sri Lanka, in May 2016 for their second training, which focused on developing their IRD initiatives and further incorporating IRD into their

educational institutions. The KAICIID team chose Sri Lanka as a host country because of its broad religious diversity and post-conflict efforts to promote religious and ethnic reconciliation.

"We went to a country that is still working to resolve an active conflict. We could see the devastation of the civil war. We learnt about how conflicts take root and the trauma they create and the challenge of undoing harm afterwards," UK-based Rabbi Jeff Berger said of the visit.

María del Milagro Dallacaminá, a Fellow from Argentina, said the week in Sri Lanka with KAICIID staff and Fellows was crucial in helping to improve and refine her initiative. She took inspiration from visits to local houses of worship, which served as a pedagogical experience.

"One of the most wonderful days was when we visited a mosque, a Buddhist temple, and a Hindu temple. It was my first time in an Asian country and my first time visiting these types of places. The flavour of mangoes and pineapples, the warm humidity of the tropics, the smell of spices and incense, the silence interposed with chants and drums, everything made an impact on my life," she said.

Ven. Acinna, a Buddhist monk from Myanmar who studies in Colombo, showed off Sri Lanka to his Fellows cohort.

"The trainings gave me confidence to carry out the initiative and made me think to include dialogue practice in my teaching to juniors and society at large," he said of the KIFP experience.



The South-East Asia Fellows met in Mindanao, the Philippines for their first and second trainings in May and June 2016



The Fellows work on topics such as peacebuilding and conflict resolution, dialogue theories and practices and social media literacy



The trainings include visits to houses of worship. In the photo, SEA Fellows are learning in a Sikh gurdwara

The South-East Asia Fellows' first two trainings took place over two weeks in May and June 2016 in partnership with the Philippines' Mindanao Peacebuilding Institute. 24 Fellows from six countries and six religious backgrounds gathered outside Davao City to enhance their IRD education and to put what they learnt into practice at their home institutions.

"The trainings we received were not only holistic and theoretically stimulating, they were also very helpful," said Sneha Roy, a SEA Fellow from India. "We learnt how to execute projects at a very regional level."

Jannatul Maaq, a SEA Fellow from Bangladesh, was excited to network with like-minded Fellows from across South-East Asia.

"Many people are working in this field, but you don't always know who. The KAICIID trainings provided a nice melting pot of IRD activists and peacebuilders from various countries and gave us

a chance to speak together and share our views," she said.

After implementing their initiatives at home, the two Fellows programmes converged in Vienna in November 2016 to share their achievements, reflect on their experiences, and strategise how to move forward with their projects. They also met the incoming 2017 International Fellows and toured religious sites around Vienna.

Justina Mike, a Fellow from Nigeria, was one of five religiously diverse Fellows selected to offer closing remarks during the graduation ceremony.

"Now that we've graduated, we must go back to our communities, talk about what we've learnt, and put it into practice," Justina said. "In our world, with so much religious and cultural diversity, conflict is inevitable. What matters most is how we handle conflict when it comes."



Justina addresses Fellows and KAICIID staff during the graduation ceremony



The second training focused on developing IRD initiatives and incorporating IRD into their educational institutions

2016 Fellows Build Bridges for Peace in an Increasingly Divided World



Photo: KAICIID
Fortune and Jagrat engage in dialogue during a session in Colombo



Photo: KAICIID
The 2016 cohort had 17 women. Both groups met in Vienna for the last training and graduation

“In a world where people are building more walls...we should be building bridges.” These words from Director General Fahad Abualnasr resonated across KAICIID’s Hall of Dialogue and within the hearts of 70 KIFP Fellows last November when the 2016 and 2017 cohorts overlapped for a week of training in Vienna.

In the preceding months, KAICIID’s 2016 International Fellows and South-East Asia (SEA) Fellows had implemented more than 40 interreligious dialogue (IRD) initiatives, building bridges among more than 2,300 people in 16 countries around the world.

These metaphorical bridges have taken many forms, connecting diverse communities across religious, ethnic, and cultural divides.

Fellows taught students and teachers IRD skills in Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, United Kingdom, and Pakistan; connected religious leaders and educators in the Philippines and Sri Lanka; organized high-level exchanges in Iraq; encouraged mutual understanding and cooperation in Egypt; highlighted IRD success stories in Ethiopia; researched coexistence among faiths in Indonesia; engaged women in peace and security issues in Nigeria; introduced young people to unfamiliar religious traditions in Argentina; researched the causes of religious violence in Jordan; conducted a roundtable on refugees in Spain; coordinated a workshop on the migration crisis in Greece; staged a theatre production on the need for religious harmony in India; and even developed an adventurous mobile gaming app to promote dialogue skills and peace education in the virtual realm.

Throughout the year, Fellows also built bridges among themselves, breaking down stereotypes, prejudices, and misperceptions about each other’s religions and cultures and replacing former walls with new bonds of understanding, empathy, compassion, and respect.

For María del Milagro Dallacaminá, the only 2016 Fellow from South America, the Fellows programme marked a series of firsts, including her first trips to Europe and Asia.

Fellows built bridges among themselves, breaking down stereotypes, prejudices, and misperceptions about each other’s religions and cultures and replacing former walls with new bonds of understanding, empathy, compassion, and respect.



Photo: KAICIID
During the trainings and as part of informal conversations, Fellows learn about each other and about IRD practices around the world. In the photo, Rogelio and Bishoy exchange ideas



Photo: KAICIID
Simon and Rogelio enjoy during a coffee break in Colombo

“I have never been with such a variety of people from all over the world. It was my first time meeting with Buddhists and Hindus. I was awestruck by the warmth, the empathy,” she said of the other Fellows. “Despite our diverse backgrounds, we shared many of the same interests and have such a strong relationship even though we live thousands of kilometres apart. We say to each other, ‘You are my sister. You are my brother.’ We really feel that way.”

In the final six months of the programme, Fellows applied the skills they learnt during training sessions and the new KAICIID Interreligious Dialogue Online Course (KOCID) to implement IRD initiatives in their home regions based on the needs of their institutions and communities. Fellows’ initiatives were divided into four thematic groups for discussion and presentation during the final training week in Vienna: Community Dialogue and Training; Formal Education; Non-Formal Education; and Research and Knowledge Production.

Community dialogue and training

Nearly half of the KIFP and SEA Fellows implemented projects that directly addressed local community dialogue and training needs.

Justina Mike Ngwobia is a KIFP Fellow from Nigeria and Executive Director of the Justice, Peace and Reconciliation Movement, an interreligious organization in the central Nigerian city of Jos that works across faith, culture and tribal lines to resolve conflict.

Her initiative paired more than 30 Christian and Muslim women together for three days of dialogue on peace and security issues in the region.

Jos, which bills itself as the “home of peace and tourism,” has been marred by violence since 2001 when tensions erupted over resource scarcity, leading to factional divisions among religious and ethnic communities.

“It was a disaster. More than 2,000 people were killed, their houses burned, churches and



Photo: Nelly Rosa Miranda
María del Milagros was the only Fellow from South America in the 2016 group. Her initiative covered 800 kilometres of northern Argentina, visiting diverse houses of worship and religious communities



Sneha, a Fellow from India, used theatre to show students how youth can help peace and harmony prevail over conflict



Jannatul worked with Hindu and Muslim children at a secular public school and a madrasa in Bangladesh



Ven. Accina worked with Buddhist monks from Myanmar, raising awareness of the positive role they can play in restoring communal peace and harmony in their country

mosques destroyed. The city became polarised with Christians and Muslims moving to different areas," Justina said of the aftermath.

Her initiative brought Muslim and Christian women from six communities of North Jos into each other's lives and homes to help heal lingering resentment. Justina's three-day workshop focused on building women's capacity in peacebuilding, decision-making, dialogue, and conflict analysis. At the end of the training, participants committed to becoming active peace actors and ambassadors in their communities

and to promoting interreligious cooperation, understanding, tolerance, and mutual respect. "In cases of violent conflict, women and children are the most vulnerable part of our community. We started engaging with women to see how they can be part and parcel of the peacebuilding process. The women have a voice now and are saying they are tired of this crisis. They want to learn to live together as one people," Justina said.

One participant said the workshop has given her the confidence to contribute more meaningfully to society while others said it has empowered them to stand up and work towards positive change.

"If women are trained and have the capacity to take care of their families and instil good values in their children, those children will grow up to be responsible and won't become perpetrators of violence," Justina added.

She is now working with the United Nations to expand her Women Peacebuilders Network beyond Jos to regional villages most affected by Boko Haram while also campaigning to increase women's involvement in government and decision-making processes in Nigeria.

Sneha Roy, a SEA Fellow from India, approached her KIFP initiative with artistic flair, using dramatic theatre as a tool to instil IRD principles in the minds of university students and help establish peaceful coexistence in Kolkata.

Sneha was raised Hindu, India's majority faith, but recently spent two years in the U.K. living as a minority. Now back in India she promotes interreligious harmony and tries to help others find beauty in diversity.

"They say once you belong to the majority you don't realise the problems of minorities, but I did see things were amiss and realised that people who enjoy luxuries should go out and help those less fortunate. If we treat each other as equals, we can learn to respect each other's ideas," she said.

Sneha's initiative "Transitional Masks" was a one-day workshop at Presidency University in Kolkata involving 120 Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim and Sikh students from across India. The goal was to make young people "protagonists" in their own lives, empowering them to promote IRD.

"In cases of violent conflict, women and children are the most vulnerable part of our community. We started engaging with women to see how they can be part and parcel of the peacebuilding process. The women have a voice now."

The workshop began with the video of a play Sneha produced with a local theatre group showcasing how young people can help peace and harmony prevail over conflict.

The play is set amid Kolkata's diverse religious, ethnic, and cultural tapestry. Small scuffles over water and other resources bloom into violent conflict with people taking arms along religious lines. Gradually the characters understand the need to rise above religious identity and work together for the common good.

After watching the play, students reflected on how the fictional story mirrors their society and learnt about each other's beliefs and practices.

"The topic, though controversial, was approached with great care and neutrality. It was a great video to broaden our horizons and realise that there are many perspectives," one participant wrote after the workshop. Another said Sneha's project had inspired him to organize practical activities that will promote interreligious relations and bring peace among different societies.

"People have started to disrespect diversity, and despite education, we are not respecting pluralism and multiculturalism," Sneha said of Indian society and the world at large. "IRD plays an important role not only for respecting other religions but also one's own faith. With such great diversity in our languages, food, dress, and beliefs, we need to identify the similarities among our faiths and learn to respect the differences." Sneha plans to stage the play for a larger

audience and conduct similar workshops with other universities in India. Students who participated in this first round of Transitional Masks have pledged to promote interfaith harmony and plan to establish an organization that will focus on initiating peacebuilding processes in neighbouring areas.

In the UK, KIFP Fellow and American Rabbi Jeffrey Berger leads the Rambam Sephardi Synagogue and teaches at the Judith Lady Montefiore rabbinical training college.

Although religious conflict is less pronounced where he lives than in many of the Fellows' countries, Jeff has noticed an enormous rise in divisive, hateful, discriminatory, and prejudicial behaviour and speech in the U.K. in the last few years that has resulted in an increase in Islamophobia and anti-Semitic crime.

"This is a really negative trend. The hope is that faith leaders can have a wider influence and reach in terms of shaping the opinion and moral view of the population," he said. "It's incumbent that we become voices of peace, tolerance and respect



Rabbi Jeffrey Berger wants to replicate the the KIFP experience on a smaller scale among Britain's faith leaders of tomorrow



Justina's initiative, in Nigeria, built capacity of women on peacebuilding, decision-making, dialogue and conflict analysis



Photo: KACIID
Ven. Ashin Varasami, SEA Fellow from Myanmar, shared his experience during the graduation ceremony in Vienna

Formal education

Ven. Acinna is a KIFP Fellow and Buddhist monk from Myanmar who studies at the University of Kelaniya's Postgraduate Institute of Buddhist and Pali Studies in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

He grew up in Western Myanmar where in 2012 religious and ethnic tensions erupted in violent conflict across Rakhine State resulting in at least 80 deaths and the displacement of more than 100,000 people.

With relations still strained in the region, Ven. Acinna designed his IRD initiative to help Buddhist monks from Myanmar who are studying with him in Colombo play a positive role in restoring communal peace and harmony back in their home country.

"Several brutal conflicts between Buddhists and Muslims have taken place in our region. Due to tensions, misconceptions, and complicated conditions, IRD has not happened there yet. I think the IRD practice can restore peace in our region in the future," Ven. Acinna said.

Seated around two tables in their saffron, brown, and orange robes at Makutarama Myanmar Temple in Colombo, the 11 Rakhine and five Bamar monks discussed how IRD principles and strategies might benefit their communities.

Many were initially sceptical that IRD between Buddhists and Muslims would be possible given deep-seated distrust and festering animosity between the communities. To address their concerns, Ven. Acinna introduced the concept of intra-religious dialogue as a possible starting point.

"Some of them concluded that the honesty and compassion of religious leaders on both sides should play an important role in the peace

"The Fellows programme humanised religions that we only knew about in stereotypical form."



Photo: KACIID
Muhammad Ilyas, from Pakistan, participates in a discussion during the International Fellows' second training in Colombo

and that we recognise the dignity of difference in all human beings."

Jeff's initiative brought more than 50 theological students from five different faith backgrounds and from across the UK to London for a day of IRD training and religious site visits in the capital. He hopes the project will encourage up-and-coming faith leaders to discuss topics that impact each of their faith communities but that are seldom addressed.

"The main aim is to familiarise future theological students with each other. Hopefully that leads to friendships and friendships lead to activities done jointly, like running a soup kitchen or hosting a multifaith talk in their community," he said.

Ultimately, Jeff wants to replicate the wonderful experience he had as a KIFP Fellow on a smaller scale among Britain's faith leaders of tomorrow.

"The Fellows programme humanised religions that we only knew about in stereotypical form. Now we know faith leaders who are Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish and Muslim without any sense of critical judgement or the stereotypes that are usually ascribed to each," he said.

process. They paid attention to how they should educate their people first," he said.

Ven. Acinna said that by the end of the day-long workshop most of the monks had agreed to teach the novices and young monks in their temples about the merits of IRD and the need to understand people of other faiths.

Ven. Acinna's personal motto, "Diversity must be a weapon for the 'Welfare' of society," is a fitting alternative to the weaponised violence that still plagues his society. He hopes his focus on social healing and commitment to regular dialogue workshops in his hometown will help bring lasting peace to the community, where Buddhists and Muslims have long lived side-by-side.

Other Formal Education initiatives implemented by the 2016 Fellows included Swamini Brahmajnananda Sarsawati's youth leadership programme to promote harmonious coexistence among faiths and combat Islamophobia in Mumbai; Atalya Baransano's IRD training course on Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, and Islam in Jayapura, Indonesia; and Muhammad Shahid Habib's IRD training for M.Phil. and PhD students in Lahore and Islamabad, Pakistan.

Non-formal education

María del Milagro Dallacaminá, who goes by Mily, is a KIFP Fellow and Catholic volunteer with the Work of Mary (Focolare Movement) in the mountainous Salta Province of northwest Argentina. Mily titled her initiative "Building Bridges of Dialogue: An Ecumenical, Intercultural and Interreligious Trip".

"I was thinking about holding a conference or a seminar or working with academic institutions. Then I asked myself, 'what do I love most?' The

answer was traveling. That's when I decided to put together a trip for young people who are interested in meeting people from other religions and cultures," she said.

Mily organized a three-day community road trip for 18 mostly Catholic and non-religious youth from her region. Through rolling green hills and rocky peaks, the group covered 800 kilometres of northern Argentina, meeting with six different religious and belief communities and visiting diverse houses of worship along the way.

"At first, the idea seemed crazy," Mily said of the trip, but her confidence grew as she remembered how powerful the KIFP site visits in Colombo had been in enhancing her own IRD experience. "I wanted the group to open their hearts and open their minds to better understand different faiths, cultures and communities in our country, just as I had done in Sri Lanka."

The group's discussions with a Catholic Bishop, an indigenous leader, and a Mennonite community and visits to a mosque, a Buddhist temple, and a Sikh gurdwara offered the young people a unique opportunity to learn about others' beliefs straight from the source.

"The experience of this interreligious, intercultural, and ecumenical trip surpassed what I had expected. It ended up touching me deep inside as a person and as a believer. I feel that it made me love humanity more. I found more commonalities than differences," one young participant said.

Following this life-altering road trip, the group has continued to visit religiously diverse communities back in Salta, most recently an Orthodox church and a Jewish synagogue. Mily hopes to replicate and expand the initiative in future years.

SEA Fellow Jannatul Maa's initiative "Beauty in Diversity" built bridges between Hindu and Muslim children at a secular public school and a madrasa in Bogra, Bangladesh.

Over two days, 30 students aged 10 to 13 from vastly different backgrounds played games together, worked in groups, and heard stories about the diversity of religious beliefs and practices around the world. They also visited a mosque, two cemeteries, a Hindu temple, and a



Photo: KACIID
Rogelio and Fransiska capture a happy moment during one of the training sessions in Vienna



Smiles and humour are often present during the trainings

Buddhist monastery, engaging directly with faith leaders at each site.

“We tried to teach them to respect all the diversities around us, to not be judgemental, to learn from all people, to know that beauty lies in diversity,” Jannatul said.

One of the children’s favourite activities was dressing up in traditional clothes from each other’s religious heritages.

Jannatul decided to engage children in her initiative because she believes youth have the greatest chance of bringing about positive change in the future.

“Children are learning terrible things about other humans. That’s why this land is becoming a place for extremists. To stop this, we need to include everyone from children to elders in peacebuilding. Children are vulnerable, so we need to protect them and nurture them by educating them about the beauty of diversity,” she said.

Jannatul plans to spread her project to other schools, first in Dhaka then across the country.

“If I can run this project regularly, we will be able to create a new generation that will know to respect diversity without being judgemental,” she said.

Research and knowledge production

Dr. Suhadi, a SEA Fellow from Indonesia, began his IRD work and research two decades ago when an ugly wave of interreligious and interethnic violence and discrimination swept across his country.

Suhadi had grown up Muslim in a small village in East Java and was enjoying the more religiously and culturally diverse city of Yogyakarta when this surge of hatred against his ethnic Chinese neighbours peaked in the late-1990s.

“There was a combination of interreligious and interethnic tensions along with elements of social class and the economy,” Suhadi said of the violence he witnessed. Although relations today have improved, anti-Chinese prejudice and discrimination still linger.

Confucians make up only a small portion of Indonesia’s Chinese minority, and nearly all

“We will be able to create a new generation that will know to respect diversity without being judgemental.”

Confucians in the country are ethnically Chinese, which is precisely why Suhadi teamed up with Kamilia Hamidah in Central Java, Kris Tan, a Confucian Fellow in West Java, and Muhammad Afdillah in East Java – three other SEA Fellows from Indonesia – to research this particular community.

“We wanted to focus on Confucians because there are very few programmes focusing on relations between Muslims and them,” Suhadi said. “We did research to find best practices of IRD and historical ground of coexistence between the two faith communities.”

Suhadi, Kamilia, Muhammad and Kris Tan made the decision to partner on a joint project during the KIFP-SEA training in Mindanao.

Working together, Suhadi and the other Fellows discovered Muslim relics within a Chinese temple in West Java and intricate Chinese carvings in mosques and Muslim shrines in Central Java. Suhadi took several classes of students to a Chinese temple in Yogyakarta to see with their own eyes the shared artefacts and historical heritage, and to engage in interreligious dialogue with Confucian leaders.

“We wanted to show the youth that there were overlapping identities between Islam and Chinese Confucian communities in the past,” he said. “They need to realise that the two communities actually lived together in the past to see that it is possible today.”

Suhadi’s research initiative was part of the four Fellows’ collaborative project on “Strengthening Confucian-Muslim Coexistence through Research, Education, and a Youth Interreligious Peace Training Programme in Java,” which explored both conflict resolution and dialogue opportunities amid ongoing anti-Chinese sentiment. Suhadi hopes to continue his IRD work

in West Kalimantan, the most populated Chinese area in Indonesia, in collaboration with a local Islamic university and Chinese foundations in West Kalimantan.

Suhadi is also considering plans to create an exhibition about Zheng He, a Muslim Chinese explorer and diplomat who is credited with helping develop Islam in Indonesia in the 15th century.

“Young people need role models. If you can show them that there were peaceful figures who bridged Chinese and Muslim cultures in the past, that would help encourage discussion among society about peacebuilding opportunities today,” he said.

Other Research and Knowledge Production initiatives that the 2016 Fellows implemented include: Ridwan al-Makassary’s publication of a book about IRD’s positive peacebuilding potential amid religious radicalism and fundamentalism in Papua; Geleta Simesso’s efforts to gather and analyse inspiring stories of religious leaders cooperating to advance peace in Ethiopia; Sameera Abdullah Al-Refaie’s survey of postgraduate students regarding causes of and potential solutions for religious violence; and Amanah Nurish’s publication of a book on IRD for young children aimed at raising their awareness of peacebuilding work.



Shamir, from India, and Zon, from Indonesia, enjoy a conversation during their training in the Philippines



SEA Fellows and programme managers Anas and Mike visiting a Sikh gurdwara in Mindanao



An exhibition with posters on the Fellows and their initiatives are part of the graduation ceremony in Vienna. In the photo, Abbas poses with his poster



Throughout the year, Fellows built bridges among communities and among themselves. In the photo, Shamir and Yulianti during one of the trainings

South-East Asia

Tirmizy Esmail Abdullah

Country: Philippines
Languages: English, Filipino
Organization: Interfaith Cooperation Forum (ICF)
Expertise: Education, Peacebuilding, Interreligious Relations, Human Rights
Focus area: Academic
Religious affiliation: Islam



Assistant Professor, Department of History, Mindanao State University

Tirmizy Esmail Abdullah is the current Interfaith Cooperation Forum (ICF) National Coordinator in the Philippines. ICF is an Asian movement for justice and transformation that is interreligious in nature, is regional in scope, focuses on marginalised communities, confronts the roots of violence and promotes justice in economic, political, and social spheres.

He is one of the active resident resource persons and facilitators on Islam and interreligious relations in the workshops and training programmes organized by ICF in different parts of South and South-East Asia such as Sri Lanka, Indonesia, East Timor, Thailand and Cambodia. He is also an Assistant Professor of History in the Department of History in the College of Social Sciences and Humanities at Mindanao State University in Marawi City, Philippines. He teaches at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. He earned both his Bachelor's and Master's degrees in History in Mindanao

Studies at the same university. He is currently writing his dissertation for a doctoral degree as a Philippine Studies major in Mindanao Society and Culture. In addition, he administers a local Islamic centre in his province that seeks to teach and train young Muslim students and youth about the principles of Islam. Moreover, he is actively involved in different civic societies and non-governmental organizations working for interreligious dialogue, social justice,

Personal transformation is crucial if one is truly serious in working for interreligious dialogue. Your self is your strong message to the world.

peacebuilding, nonviolence, environmental protection and human rights. His background as part of an ethnic minority (Muslim Moro) in the southern Philippines and the historical narrative and context of his area combined with his religious and academic background and his involvement in ICF, inspired and encouraged him to work for interreligious dialogue as a tool for justice, peace and transformation. He believes that personal transformation is very crucial if one is truly serious in working for interreligious dialogue. Your self, he believes, is your strong message to the world. Furthermore, he believes that religion is a choice, i.e., every single individual has a choice to use their faith either to promote violence or peace. Tirmizy chooses the path of peace.



Youth Leaders Interreligious Dialogue Training Workshop

The training workshop was conducted in Marawi City, Lanao del Sur, an autonomous region in Muslim Mindanao, the Philippines, where violence has erupted recently. The island youth are vulnerable to religious intolerance and radicalism. The workshop aimed to

educate, train and equip Christian, Lumad (indigenous people) and Muslim youth leaders with skills in interreligious and intercultural dialogue to respond to rising religious intolerance and extremism in Mindanao.

Objectives

- Educate, train and equip Christian, Lumad and Muslim youth leaders with the necessary skills for promoting and advocating interreligious and intercultural dialogue in their respective organizations and communities
- Realise and understand that interreligious and intercultural dialogue can be found in the very core of their respective religious traditions
- Organize a network-organization-movement of youth leaders in Mindanao that would cooperate and collaborate with other youth organizations for interreligious and intercultural activities

Ven. Acinna

Country: Sri Lanka

Languages: Arakanese, Burmese, English

Organizations: Buddhist and Pali University of Sri Lanka, University of Kelaniya

Expertise: Education

Focus area: Academic

Religious affiliation: Buddhism



Doctoral Candidate, Postgraduate Institute of Buddhist and Pali Studies, University of Kelaniya

Ven. Acinna is a Buddhist monk from Myanmar. He is studying for his doctorate at Postgraduate Institute of Buddhist and Pali Studies, University of Kelaniya in Sri Lanka. He received his L.L.B from Yangon University in 2004 and his MA in Buddhist Studies from Buddhist and Pali University of Sri Lanka in 2013. He taught basic Buddhist scriptures to young novices and Basic English courses and Buddhist cultural courses to young children and adults free of charge in Yangon from 2005 to 2012. During his studies in Sri Lanka, he has participated in several workshops related to social healing and wellness. He has also been teaching English and related subjects to a group of junior student monks at Myanmar Temple in Colombo, who are earning masters degrees in Sri Lanka. Since 2012, he returns to his hometown every year, in the western part of Myanmar, and conducts workshops for dialogue and teaches English and cultural courses

to children. He is eager to facilitate and promote interreligious dialogue among young children. He has also founded a library and an education foundation in his hometown for economically disadvantaged children. He is very committed to socio-religious work and to create a peaceful environment within his community, where the Buddhist majority and a large proportion of the Muslim populations of Myanmar are living together. His motto is "Diversity must be a weapon for the welfare of society."

He is committed to creating a peaceful environment within his community.



Two Workshops on Interreligious Dialogue, Peaceful Coexistence, Rakhine Conflict, the Role of Rakhine Buddhist Monks and the Youth

The first workshop took place in early November 2016, with the participation of 16 Buddhist monks, who were not familiar with the concept of interreligious dialogue. Explanations on the nature and meaning of dialogue, the seven principles of dialogue and functions of interreligious dialogue were presented. Participants later discussed the Rakhine conflict, which took place in 2012 between the Buddhist and Muslim communities in Myanmar. Discussions transitioned to whether interreligious dialogue could be possible between the two communities and the role of Rakhine monks in

restoring peaceful relationships between them. Some participants concluded that the honesty and compassion of religious leaders in both sides will play an important role in such peace processes. Much emphasis was placed upon their unique role in educating their followers.

The second workshop took place in March 2017, with 44 students from 4 villages. They were asked to suggest possible ways of avoiding conflicts in villages and played interactive games which aimed to highlight the disadvantages of discrimination among the society and to encourage the participants to be inclusive. Equality and peaceful coexistence were also promoted.

Objectives

- Understand interreligious dialogue and how and why people are engaging in IRD
- To create a religiously peaceful society in the near future
- To value and be aware of diversity, to foster critical thinking, to comprehend future prosperity of society through communal harmony, and to make known the significance of religious coexistence for peaceful society



International

Onoseme Fortune Afatakpa

Country: Nigeria

Languages: English, Etsako, Urhobo, Yoruba

Organizations: Institute of Church and Society, 21st Century Youth Leadership Conference

Expertise: Youth, Peace and Conflict Studies

Focus area: Academic, Religious

Religious affiliation: Christianity

PhD Candidate, Peace and Conflict Studies, University of Ibadan;
Senior Instructor, Institute of Church and Society

Onoseme Fortune Afatakpa holds a Bachelor's degree in Religious Studies from Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile Ife and a Master's degree in Peace and Conflict Studies from the University of Ibadan. Currently he is a doctoral student of Peace and Conflict Studies also at the University of Ibadan. His research focuses on the Management of Sectarian Conflicts in Igbo Religion.

He told us his interest in interreligious dialogue was awakened in 1989, when a Muslim named Abubakar Haruna helped him out of a difficult situation. That singular action changed his mentality towards Muslims and prompted him to engage in the study of religions. Fortune believes that the major cause of religious violence, intolerance and fundamentalism is not unconnected with socialisation strategies of most religions which focus on children and youth. Therefore Fortune has spent a better part

of his life working among youth from different religious persuasions and engaging them on the inherent dangers in embracing the philosophy of religious particularism. Every year, he organizes the 21st Century Youth Leadership Conference where the capacities of young people between the ages of 10-17 are built in the area of religious tolerance. This is predicated on his long standing philosophy that it better to prepare a child than to repair an adult.

Interest in interreligious dialogue was awakened in 1989, when a Muslim helped him out of a difficult situation.



Catch Them Young Leadership Programme on Conflict Management

The *Catch Them Young Leadership Programme on Conflict Management* was meant to enhance cross-cultural and interreligious opportunities for teenagers in secondary schools to improve their skills on interreligious and intercultural dialogue. Participation in the programme provided the teenagers with an unparalleled opportunity to build networks, voice their generation's viewpoints, gain a deeper understanding of serious conflicts and issues in Nigeria, learn how experts and leaders deal

with these problems, and develop their own perspectives. The first initiative component was the training of a group of 14 teenagers, comprising Christians and Muslims from seven different schools. The second initiative component was for students who had been trained to go back to their various schools and organize a cascade-training programme for their fellow students. They shared their experience on IRD with 178 peer students.

Objectives

- Create a culture of dialogue and foster cooperation among students of different faith traditions in public schools
- Build their capacities and understanding on triggers of religious or ethnic conflicts
- Equip them with the values of tolerance and appreciating diversity

International

Sameera Abdulla Alrefai

Country: Jordan
 Languages: Arabic, English
 Organization: Yarmouk University
 Expertise: Islamic Studies
 Focus area: Academic
 Religious affiliation: Islam



Professor, Dept. of Islamic Studies, al-Sharea'a College, Yarmouk University

Dr. Sameera Abdulla Alrefai is currently working as an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Sharia, Department of Islamic Studies, Yarmouk University, Jordan. Sameera has participated in several conferences and events on various topics such as the Fourth International Conference for Scientific Research, titled "Scientific Research Pillar of Sustainable Development in the Digital Age" (2015). She is also a researcher contributing to several publications since 2011 and still has some other works in manuscript. Sameera is also a member of the World Union of Muslim Scholars, a member of the scientific counselling committee for Al Modawwana Journal, which is a Fiqhi Journal issued by the Islamic Fiqh complex in India, and a member in several arbitrating and reviewing committees, such as the arbitrating committee for research of the annual book "The Dictionary of Divine Sunna in the Holy Qur'an". Sameera is widely interested in IRD and is ambitious in supervising and discussing topics in this domain.



Religious Violence: Its Root Causes and Potential Solutions from the Perspective of Postgraduate Students at Yarmouk University

Through a survey among postgraduate students of the 2015/2016 academic year at Yarmouk University in Jordan, the research aimed to reveal the reasons for and solutions to religious violence. In order to achieve the research objectives, the researcher designed the research objectives, the researcher designed two questionnaires, the first one consisted of 46 items, distributed into six domains:

ideological, economic, social, political, psychological and educational. The second questionnaire was for potential solutions and consisted of 30 questions distributed across four domains: framing the ideological system for the individual and community, organizational work, values and international standards.

Objectives

- Reveal the conceptual frame for the religious violence and the related phrases
- Understand the reasons or root causes for religious violence from the perspective of postgraduate students
- Recommend potential solutions for religious violence based on the results of the questionnaire
- Show the statistical differences at the level ($\alpha \geq 0.05$) among means for the reasons of religious violence and its potential solutions with independent variables (gender, scientific degree, age, department, specialisation, monthly income and residential area)
- Explore the correlational relationship between the reasons of religious violence and its potential solutions from the perspective based on the samples

Shaima Bakhet Alnamani

Country: Saudi Arabia

Languages: Arabic, English, Spanish

Organization: Complutense University of Madrid

Expertise: Religious and Civilisation Studies, Christian Literature

Focus area: Academic

Religious affiliation: Islam



PhD Candidate, Complutense University of Madrid

Shaima Bhaket is a PhD candidate from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, pursuing Religious and Civilisation Studies at Complutense University of Madrid. She holds a Master's degree in Christian Literature and Studies. She is a researcher in ancient Hebrew manuscripts of the Catholic Church at the Hebrew and Aramaic Studies Centre.

Shaima is very much interested in interreligious dialogue and peaceful coexistence. Also, she is an active contributor to several international organizations such as UNESCO, CARITAS and other nonprofit organizations. She has been actively involved in research on comparative religious studies, interreligious dialogue and religious pluralism.



She is an active contributor to several international organizations such as UNESCO, CARITAS and other nonprofit organizations.

Photo: KACIID



Religious Coexistence between Refugees in Shelters

The project convened a roundtable of experts and politicians and included discussion about religions, refugee issues and the importance of religious coexistence in refugee shelter centres. Panellists included Ghassan Majali, Jordan's Ambassador to Spain; José Agunu, Instituto de Estudios Bursátiles; Eva Borreguero Sancho, Complutense University Madrid; and Francisco Garrido, from the Spanish Commission to Help Refugees. Some of the recommendations from the roundtable included: supporting refugees' religious rights and practices, activating the media and social journalists, highlighting the importance of coexistence and the acceptance of the Other, training refugees and providing working hubs through specialised and authorised persons, and providing protection between the refugees themselves to stop conflict in the shelter centres.

Objectives

- Promote religious coexistence among refugees in shelters
- Understand the nature of the current challenges that conflict areas are facing



International

Sayyed Hayder Bahr Al-Uloom

Country: Iraq
Languages: Arabic, English, Farsi
Organizations: Al-Najaf Center for Culture and Research, Al-Uloom Charity Foundation
Expertise: Islamic Philosophy, Education
Focus area: Religious
Religious affiliation: Islam

Director of the Dialogue Chair, Bahr Al-Uloom Charity Foundation

Sayyed Hayder Bahr Al-Uloom was born in 1986 in the holy city of al-Najaf al-Ashraf, Iraq. He is the Director of the Al-Najaf Center for Culture and Research and also serves as the Director of the Dialogue Chair at the Bahr Al-Uloom Charity Foundation. He holds a B.S. in Medical Laboratory Studies from Tehran University and pursued a Master's Degree in Islamic Philosophy. Currently, he is studying

Islamic Studies at the Islamic seminary (hawza) in the holy city of al-Najaf al-Ashraf. He believes in dialogue and is against all kind of acts of violence and extremism. He believes that terrorism begins as an idea, which, in turn, translates into action. Therefore, he believes that this phenomenon needs to be addressed through education and by addressing the problematic foundations of such extreme ideas. He is greatly interested in the commonalities between world religions.



Terrorism needs to be addressed through education and by addressing the problematic foundations of such extreme ideas.



Establishing Coexistence and Rejecting Extremism in the Cradle of Middle Eastern Religions

This initiative was comprised of two parts. The first one, was a Seminar titled "The Increase in Religious and Nationalistic Fundamentalism and its Impact on the Future of Humanity". Cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick, Archbishop Emeritus of Washington and the Right Rev. John Bryson Chane were among the participants. It was the first time that these religious leaders visited the holy city of Najaf in Iraq. The second part was a workshop titled "Horizons for Religious Education in Iraq's Primary and Secondary School Curricula" that invited Dr.

Sadik Suleiman, Head of the Advisory Board of the Center for US-Arab dialogue from the Sultanate of Oman. This initiative engaged both Iraqi and non-Iraqi religious leaders from the Middle East. The project, implemented for the first time in Najaf, included Iraqi elites and clerics from different religions who met and discussed the educational system reforms and stressed the importance of having an educational system that protects all Iraqis' rights regardless of their religion.

Objectives

- Establish a network of various religious figures by holding constant meetings and dialogue sessions which will reflect, with the passage of time, the good relationships among the followers of these religions
- Consolidate the concept of citizenship in the national identity by calling for peaceful coexistence and tolerance
- Work on educating the masses, and especially the elite about the necessity to accept religious diversity for the sake of a safe homeland where everyone can live in harmony and peace

South-East Asia

Atalya Baransano

Country: Indonesia
Languages: English, Indonesian
Organization: I.S. Kijne Theological School Jayapura, Papua, Indonesia
Expertise: Theological Studies, Education
Focus area: Academic
Religious affiliation: Christianity



Lecturer, I.S. Kijne Theological School, Jayapura

Atalya Baransano is a lecturer at I.S. Kijne Theological School Jayapura, Papua, Indonesia. In her capacity as a lecturer, Atalya develops seminars and workshops on interreligious dialogue. Before joining Kijne Theological School, she earned a Diploma in Theological Studies from the Vancouver School

of Theology and a Bachelor's degree in Theology from Sekolah Tinggi Teologi I.S. Kijne.

Atalya believes that teaching is a good way to bring interreligious dialogue into religious education and educational institutions. She is also convinced that interreligious dialogue is not easy to learn without practice, therefore she is constantly engaged in dialogues and IRD-related programmes to gain more knowledge and experience and, most importantly, to become one of those practitioners who achieve a better environment for religious diversity.



Interreligious dialogue is not an easy thing to learn without practice.

Interreligious Dialogue Course for STT GKI I.S. Kijne Students on Diversity of Religions

The focus of this project, which was carried out in cooperation with STT GKI I.S. Kijne in Jayapura in Indonesia, was to train future trainers in interreligious dialogue to promote harmony in Papua through education. This train-the-trainers course provided 45 students with interreligious and peacebuilding skills, and increased their understanding of Buddhism,

Catholicism, Hinduism and Islam. It also encouraged them to promote pluralism in their communities and congregations. As part of this programme, the students had a dialogue with Buddhist, Catholic, Hindu and Muslim leaders. It was a training course offered as part of the institute's Religious Studies curriculum.

Objectives

- Empower students with interreligious and peacebuilding skills and knowledge
- Advance students' knowledge and understanding about Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism and Islam
- Involve the students in dialogue with Buddhist, Christian, Hindu and Islamic religious leaders and also visit their respective houses of worship

International

Rabbi Jeffrey Steven Berger

Country: United Kingdom

Languages: English, Hebrew, Japanese

Organization: Judith Lady Montefiore College

Expertise: Education

Focus area: Religious

Religious affiliation: Judaism



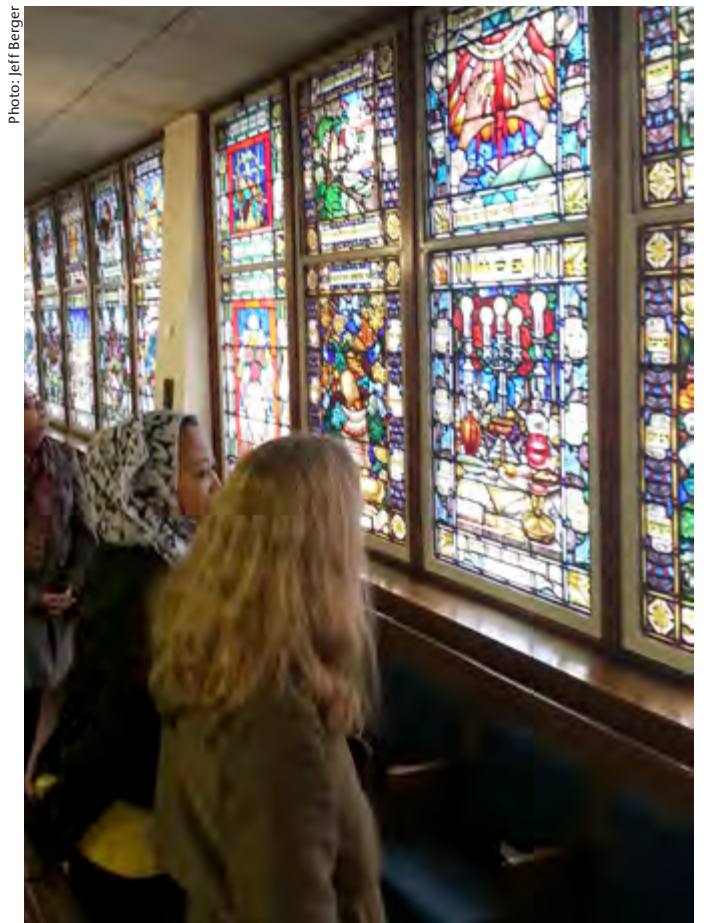
Rabbi, Lecturer, Montefiore College

Rabbi Jeffrey Steven Berger leads the Rambam Sephardi Synagogue and teaches at the Judith Lady Montefiore College Semikha Programme. Rambam Sephardi Synagogue provides religious services and pastoral care for Jews living in the Hertfordshire area, to create a model spiritual community that is an example of religious tolerance, intelligence and inclusion. For their young families, a key mission is to provide a nurturing atmosphere, ensuring children grow up with a healthy understanding of their religion, as well as a respect for those from different backgrounds.

At Judith Lady Montefiore College, Jeff teaches hermeneutics and rabbinic practice. He attended the 2013 Cambridge Co-Exist Leadership Programme and 2015 Arianne de Rothschild Fellowship. Previous fellowships include; US Department of Education, Japan Iron & Steel, and Nippon Glass. Jeff holds advanced degrees in Asian Studies and Business Administration

and did post-graduate study at Stanford's Inter-University Center in Yokohama and at Keio University. He appears on BMTV's Ask the Alim, on BBC Radio 2's Pause for Thought, and is published in local newspapers. He speaks publicly at the Limmud Conference, to adult-education groups and in local schools throughout the year. Jeff's great passion is working with people of diverse backgrounds to create and promote 'Good'. He's married with two children.

He helps create a model spiritual community that is an example of religious tolerance, intelligence and inclusion.



Living in Testing Times: An Interreligious Dialogue Seminar

This project is a London-based initiative to offer training in the use of interreligious dialogue to prevent and resolve conflict and to enhance understanding and cooperation. The aim of the project was to approach existing religious organizations and persuade them to work cooperatively on a day-long seminar that would attract mid-level faith leaders.

To that end, planning and organizational work began in May 2016, after returning from the second training in Sri Lanka, at preliminary meetings and discussions with leaders of several interreligious organizations, including: Touchstone, Believing in Mediation & Arbitration (BIMA), Senior Faith Leaders Programme, Lon-

don Forum of Faiths and Hope Not Hate. The one-day IRD Seminar was held in central London in May 2017 with 15 participants from 11 countries and representing 5 religions. Though not all were in ordination-granting programmes, at least half expect to become faith leaders.

The others were studying religion, international relations or working in the field. The seminar included three training sessions and visits to four houses of worship (a synagogue, a mosque, a church and a Buddhist temple). Advisors representing Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism added their expertise and support to the day-long, life-changing experience for the participants.

Objectives

- Provide participants with basic tools in interreligious dialogue and to promote peer-to-peer interaction that could in future prevent and/or resolve conflict, enhance understanding and build cooperative relationships
- Open new opportunities for discussion and to begin creating trust in relationships that can be carried forward after the event

South-East Asia

Saw Ler Bwe

Country: Myanmar
Languages: Burmese, English, Japanese, Karen
Organization: Myanmar Institute of Theology
Expertise: Theological Studies
Focus area: Religious
Religious affiliation: Christianity



Photo: Fred Goddard



Baptist Minister and Trainer

Saw Ler Bwe holds an MA in Christian Ministry from Karen Baptist Theological Seminary, Yangon, Myanmar. He also received training in interreligious dialogue at the Myanmar Institute of Theology. Through his involvement in the Fellows Programme, he has deepened his knowledge of how to create peace between different cultures and religions. He is currently working as a freelance minister and trainer, promoting interreligious dialogue in Baptist and other Christian communities, especially in his work with young people. He is committed to building bridges among Buddhists, Christians and Muslims in Myanmar.

His motto is "Love all the people in the world like God does". In his own words, KAICIID's Fellows Programme has become a turning point in his life. He has committed himself to do his best to build love, establish peace and bring justice to all people.

Photo: Fred Goddard



"Love all the people in the world like God does."

Interreligious Dialogue Awareness Training for Young Christian Leaders in Myanmar

The training focused on equipping 35 young Christian leaders to understand the importance of IRD for the church and society in Myanmar. Participants were mostly young-adult ministers and pastors in churches. This training had three main subjects based on the lessons from the first and second Fellows trainings: What is IRD?, interreligious conflict transformation, and

peacebuilding with storytelling. The training encouraged participants to utilise techniques to peacefully resolve conflicts in their societies, especially those with a religious dimension. The participants were responsive to training and understood the importance of working as peacemakers in society and promoting IRD in their congregations and communities.

Objectives

- Develop a better understanding about IRD among the participants
- Encourage young-adult ministers and pastors to build positive relationships with members of other religions
- Encourage the participants to build cooperation in peacefully resolving conflicts in their societies



International

Brahmachari Jagrat Chaitanya

Country: Sri Lanka

Languages: English, Sanskrit, Sinhala, Tamil

Organization: Chinmaya Mission of Sri Lanka National Inter Religious Council

Expertise: Education, Community Outreach

Focus area: Religious

Religious affiliation: Hinduism

Resident Acharya (Hindu Monk)

Brahmachari Jagrat Chaitanya has studied Advaita Vedanta from 2005 to 2007. He completed a two year intensive Vedanta and Sanskrit course in India with Pujya Swami Tejomayanandaji, the global head of Chinmaya Mission, the foremost scholar of Sanskrit and Vedanta living today. Jagrat is the Acharya of Chinmaya Mission of Sri Lanka, He teaches Sanskrit to beginners, as well as Vedanta and Vedic chanting. He was educated at the Hindu College of both Jaffna and Colombo and then graduated from the University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka in 2005. He was appointed Acharya at Jaffna in 2011, when the region had been at war for over thirty years. He joined the Jaffna District Inter Religious Council, which brings together representatives of Hinduism, Christianity, Islam and Buddhism. He is a member of the National Inter Religious Council. He lives his life simply, following the Chinmaya Mission's motto: "To give maximum happiness to maximum people for maximum time."



Introducing IRD to Hindu Youth

This project primarily focused on developing various soft skills in individuals by reflecting on the theme: "Lift yourself by yourself". This enabled participants to understand their positive and negative attitudes and behaviours through group discussion, self-awareness exercises, meditation and field trips to places of worship.

As part of this project, a two-day residential training was held in December 2016 in Chinmaya Kovil Rambodha, situated in the central province of Sri Lanka. The training touched upon topics

such as self-awareness, facilitation skills, IRD, and learning through site visits.

After the training, an intra-religious dialogue class was held at Chinmaya Gnanavel, Jaffna in February 2017 as a follow-up project. The Resident Acharya facilitated the whole day sessions with a recap of the previous training and focused on sharing practical experiences of interreligious dialogue and how young Hindus can become more engaged with IRD in their daily lives.

Objectives

- Build individual understanding and confidence to overcome challenges in daily life
- Conceptualise the ideas of inter and intra-religious dialogue and increase mutual understanding and good relations between people from different religions

International

María Del Milagro Dallacaminá

Country: Argentina

Languages: English, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish

Organization: Núñez Burgos & Associates Mediation Centre

Expertise: International Relations, Mediation

Focus area: Academic

Religious affiliation: Christianity



Mediator, Núñez Burgos & Associates Mediation Centre; Member, Work of Mary, Focolare Movement

María del Milagro Dallacaminá is an International Relations professional and a Mediator. She currently works in community mediation and is involved with a project which combats human trafficking. Since she was at university, she has been interested in human rights and their relation to interculturalism. In fact, her thesis title was: "The Universality of Human Rights: a View from Cultural Diversity."

She is from Salta, the north of Argentina and has lived in 9 different cities, including a rural area in Angola -working with children and youth, with the Salesians of Don Bosco- and in Nairobi -studying social innovation at Amani Institute and working at Gatoto Primary School. These and other experiences have helped her develop skills in teaching, training, active listening, empathy, and deepened her interest in interculturalism and peacebuilding. She has been an active member of the Work of Mary - Focolare Movement since

2008. She was a volunteer for two years, driven by the vision of unity and understanding between cultures and religions. The dialogue that the movement promotes is founded on the spirituality and, in particular, on the central importance of love, following the Golden Rule: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Mily truly believes in this vision of Chiara Lubich, the foundress. She says that she likes "building bridges, not walls", not as an engineer, but as a mediator; building bridges between religions, people, countries, and cultures.

She likes building bridges, not walls, not as an engineer, but as a mediator.



Building Bridges of Dialogue: An Ecumenical, Intercultural and Interreligious Trip

The project was a "community trip" with 18 young people to visit different communities and temples of other Christian churches, religions and indigenous populations. The trip was a training as well as a deeply experiential journey for the participants who had the opportunity to learn about other religions and beliefs through interacting with different people and communities. The trip lasted for three days and took the participants 800 kilometres through the northern Argentinian provinces of Salta and Tucumán. It brought together young

people from different movements and religious institutions of northern Argentina including Franciscans, Salesians, the Focolare Movement, Catholic Action, Palestra, the Tavella Institute of Religious Studies, the Catholic University and the Argentina Youth Organization for the United Nations (known in Spanish as OAJNU). The local communities that the participants visited included Mennonites, Orthodox Christians, Sikhs, Muslims, Buddhists, Jews, and indigenous populations which were happy to host young travellers and share life experiences.

Objectives

- Promote reciprocal knowledge between different religions, Christian communities and indigenous populations in northern Argentina, by conducting a "community trip" to different religious communities
- Strengthen contacts with communities of other religions and other local institutions (e.g. Ministry of Religious Affairs, religious institutions, etc.)
- Promote brother- and sisterhood among young people and different communities

International

Geleta Simesso Denga

Country: Ethiopia
Languages: Amharic, Dutch, English, Oromiffa
Organization: Life in Abundance
Expertise: Peacebuilding
Focus area: Religious, Academic
Religious affiliation: Christianity



Director, Life In Abundance Ethiopia

Geleta Simesso from Ethiopia is a Lutheran Pastor serving at the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY), the largest Lutheran Church in Africa and the second largest globally. He is currently Director of Life in Abundance. He studied at Addis Ababa University and the Mekane Yesus Seminary, where he later served as professor and Academic Vice President. Mekane Yesus Seminary (MYS) is the only Seminary/Theological College in Ethiopia which offers a Bachelor's degree in Christian Muslim Relations (CMR). He majored in Intercultural Studies during his graduate studies at the Radboud University of Nijmegen in the Netherlands. He also studied theology at the Ethiopian Graduate School of Theology in Addis Ababa and peace studies at the Universitat Jaume I in Spain. Geleta also designed and taught a course entitled "Religions in Dialogue" at the Global Studies and International Relations department of the New Generation University College. Geleta teaches peacebuilding,

religion and politics, and philosophy courses at the Mekane Yesus Seminary and different universities/colleges. He has a special interest in the area of contemporary issues in religion and politics. He has attended various national and international conferences where he presented research papers on philosophy and religious studies. He is serving as one of the commission members for the Judiciary and Arbitration Commission of the EECMY.

The Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus is the largest Lutheran Church in Africa and the second largest globally.



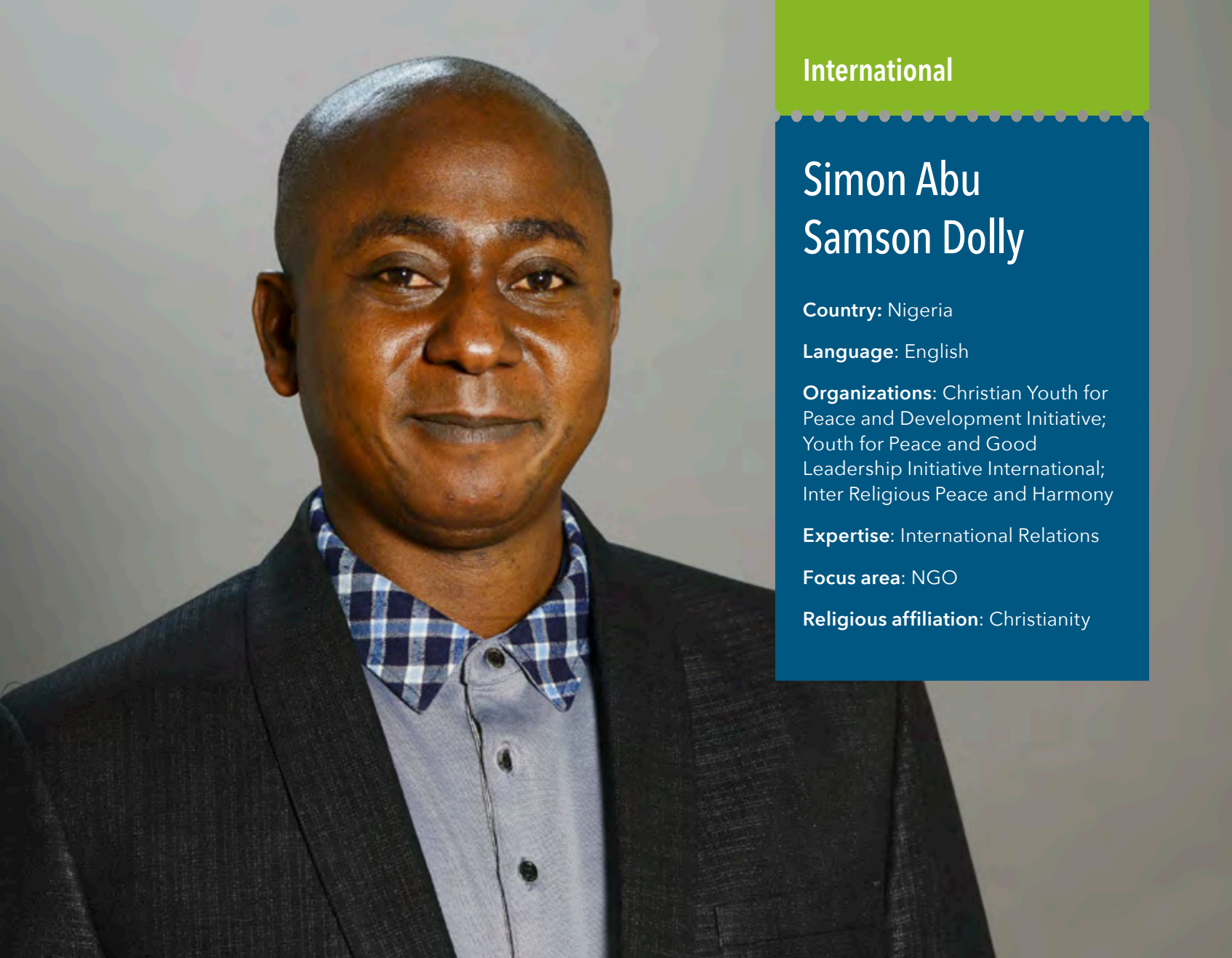
Selected Stories of Religious Leaders Cooperating towards Local Dispute Resolution

It is needless to say religion and leadership when misused can provoke conflict; however, they are also instrumental to manage and resolve conflict. Especially in countries like Ethiopia where adherents of different religions live together, religions can easily be manipulated to incite conflicts. On the other side, religion can also be used to create and sustain peace while its leaders can play important roles in contributing to the cause of peace. It is a time-tested truth that exemplary leadership influences constituencies to develop a healthy culture of respect and coexistence.

To this end, this project aimed at selecting, analysing and recording exemplary stories of respect and coexistence from the field. This, in turn, analysed and further developed into a training module so that emerging leaders can make use of successful methods and approaches and replicate them, as needs for religious leaders to interfere may arise. Data gathered using combined methodologies such as desk research in a form of document review. Key religious leaders interviewed one-on-one as well as group settings to draw lessons from religious teachings and practical perspectives.

Objectives

- To collect, analyse and publish success stories from religious leaders as key players in managing conflicts at different levels
- To develop and produce reference materials out of such stories to train emerging leaders in the field



International

Simon Abu Samson Dolly

Country: Nigeria

Language: English

Organizations: Christian Youth for Peace and Development Initiative; Youth for Peace and Good Leadership Initiative International; Inter Religious Peace and Harmony

Expertise: International Relations

Focus area: NGO

Religious affiliation: Christianity

Director General, Christian Youth for Peace & Development Initiative, Special Assistant to the Governor of Nasarawa State on Christian Religious Affairs

Simon Abu Samson Dolly, from Nigeria, has many years of experience working in policy and interreligious dialogue. He has worked with the National Orientation Agency in Nigeria, as the National President of the Youth Wing, Christian Association of Nigeria, Special Assistant to the Deputy Speaker of the State House of Assembly, Special Assistant to the Governor of Nasarawa State on Christian Religious Affairs, Director General of the Christian Youth for Peace and Development Initiative Nigeria, President /Founder of the Youth for Peace and Good Leadership Initiative International and Director General of "Inter Religious Peace and Harmony", Nigeria. Simon has a Diploma in Law, Certificate/ Diploma in Biblical Studies, BA in Theology and is working on a Master's in Organizational Leadership and Management.



Training of Leaders of Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) on Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue Techniques

This project was designed to enhance the capacity of young leaders of Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) within the Abuja area of Nigeria on interreligious and intercultural dialogue techniques. The one-day capacity building workshop aimed at providing avenues for networking, trust and confidence-building among young leaders of the Christian and Muslim faith in Nigeria. Thus, the capacity of

young leaders of FBOs were enhanced in IRD in ways that would allow them to share what they learnt with members of their organizations. One of the most important achievements of the initiative was creating a platform for interaction of young Christian and Muslim leaders. After the training, participants were sensitised to the need to sustain interreligious dialogue especially among young religious leaders.

Objectives

- To enhance the capacity of young leaders of Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) on interreligious and intercultural dialogue techniques and best practices
- To provide a medium for dialogue between Christian and Muslim young leaders
- To facilitate the process of interreligious networking among Christian and Muslim young leaders

South-East Asia

Ridwan Al-Makassary

Country: Indonesia

Languages: Arabic, English, Indonesian

Organization: Nahdhatul Ulama Papua, Indonesia

Expertise: Conflict Resolution

Focus area: Academic

Religious affiliation: Islam



Lecturer in International Relations, Universitas Sains dan Teknologi Jayapura Papua

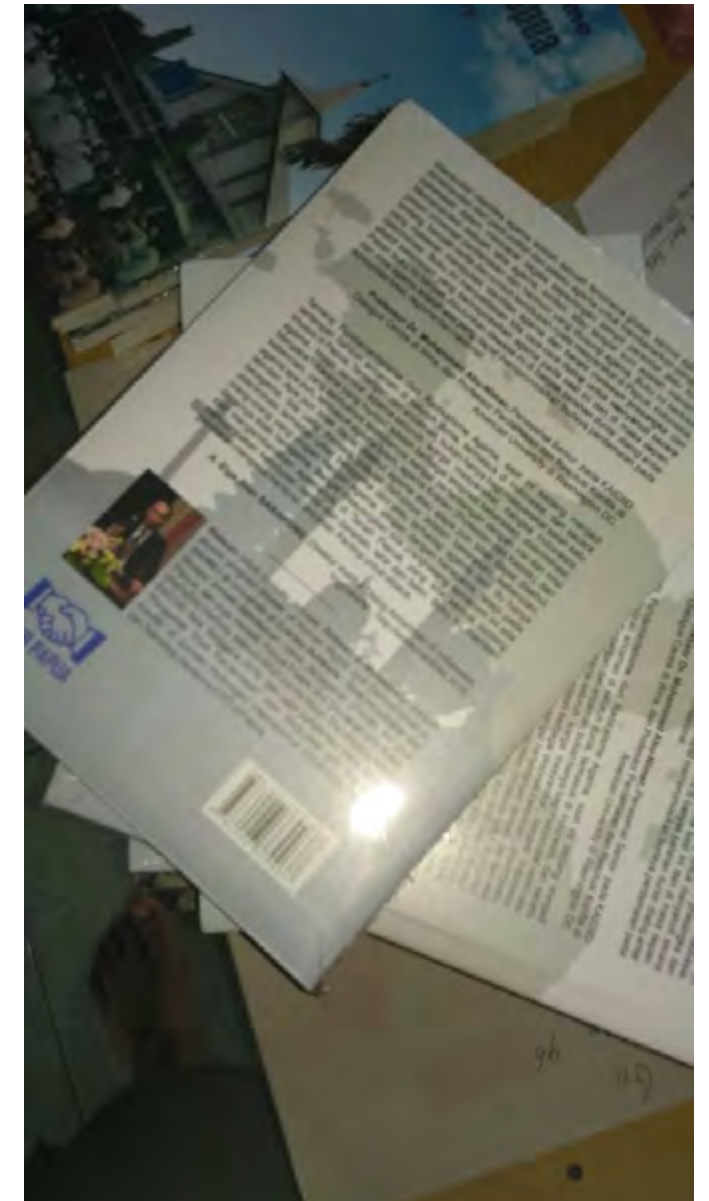
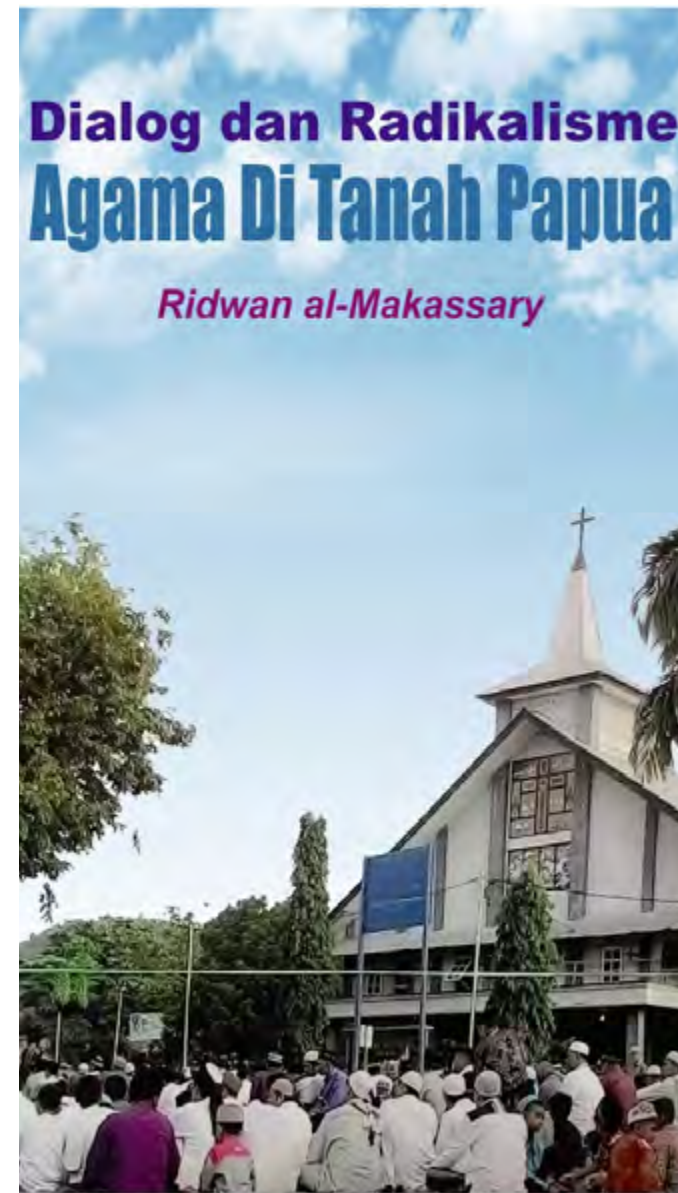
Ridwan (known as Ridwan al-Makassary) is a young religious leader of Islam in Papua Province, Indonesia, as well as a lecturer in International Relations of the Universitas Sains dan Teknologi Jayapura Papua teaching Negotiation and Conflict Resolution and Introduction to Peace Studies. He works to mainstream moderate Islam and non-violent movements. He earned his first Master's degree in Sociology, from the University of Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta and his second Master's in Human Rights and Democratisation from Sydney University and Mahidol University.

Currently he is staff at the Forum for Interreligious Harmony Papua and research director of the Papua Peace and Development Action Institute, a local NGO for peace in Jayapura, Papua. He has authored several books on peacebuilding and politics in Islam such as *Damai Papua Damai Indonesia (Peace in Papua, Peace in Indonesia)* and *Neo-Fundamentalism*

in Office Mosques in Indonesia. He attended Peacebuilding and Conflict Reconciliation trainings at American University, USA in 2009 and Muslim exchange programmes in Australia in 2014.

Moreover, since 2012 he has worked for Papua Land of Peace in Papua as a facilitator and trainer in interreligious dialogue. Since the first decade of the century, he has been working for peace in Indonesia as Peacebuilding and Human Rights Coordinator at the Center for the Study of Religion and Culture in Jakarta. One of his efforts in peacebuilding in Papua is as a member of the mediator team of "Tolikara Incident 2015" between Muslims and Christians.

Since the first decade of the century, he has been working for peace in Indonesia.



Interreligious Dialogue and Religious Radicalism in Papua

This book project was initiated through the author's KAICIID Fellows experience. It was an exercise of patience in reflecting the knowledge and experience of many years struggling for peace. It comprises articles published in several media outlets across Papua which were modified to fit the project needs. However, other parts of the book were specifically written after attending the Fellows training and based on the training materials

received during the programme.

The book is organized according to three main sections. The first, discusses interreligious dialogue for peace which was contextualised to the experiences in the Land of Papua. The second, addresses religious radicalism in the city of Jayapura and the third chapter focuses specifically on peacebuilding and the challenges faced in Papua.

Objectives

- To promote IRD at the large scale in Papua province and Indonesia
- To provide a theoretical framework on IRD that can be used in conducting IRD in Papua
- To enrich library resources on IRD in Indonesia

South-East Asia

Shamir Shimshon Galsurkar

Country: India

Languages: English, Hebrew, Hindi, Marathi

Organization: ORI Education Fund Committee

Expertise: The Cultures and Religions of the World

Focus area: Civil Engineering

Religious affiliation: Judaism



Photo: Fred Goddard



Photo: Fred Goddard



Jewish Community Leader

Shamir Shimshon Galsurkar is a Jewish leader and an entrepreneur in Mumbai who is associated with many local and international Jewish organizations. A qualified civil engineer and a builder, he currently runs a construction firm in Mumbai, India. He is actively involved with many programmes related to community development, leadership, spirituality, Torah studies, social work, psychology, science and collective consciousness. He is associated with Jewish Youth Pioneers as the Head of Logistics and is a Hebrew reader for the congregation of Magen Hassidim Synagogue.

He is actively involved with the American Jewish University, American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee and World ORT (Association for the Promotion of Skilled Trades). He is studying Torah and spirituality from an international Torah organization and institute called Bnei Baruch, which deals with spirituality, humanity, unity of people, integral society and human development.

He is very passionate about studying Jewish spirituality and believes that an age of integral societies is approaching where humans will be able to live in harmony, love and oneness with the Creator. His motto is: "Love others as yourself, unity and love for others is true Spirituality."

He believes that an age of integral societies is approaching where humans will be able to live in harmony, love and oneness with the Creator.

Project HIRD (Human Interreligious Dialogue) Training

The project was built around the premise that the world needs more IRD leaders in order to improve relations between different religious communities and beliefs. And also that anyone who desires peace and harmony among human beings can become an IRD leader and a peacebuilder. During the project 55 participants engaged in dialogue on important topics, much attention was paid to creating a loving and supportive environment. Participants could come out of their comfort

zones and speak confidently. Participants discussed current societal challenges and concluded that only through peacebuilding and revealing one's essence can these challenges be effectively addressed.

Project HIRD has also created a platform for networking and meeting others who share similar values. The group is also planning to create a book on values supporting diversity, inclusion and peace.

Objectives

- To help all the team members to bond with each other and understand the other better
- To create an informal and friendly environment during the programme
- To create an awareness of IRD and awareness of issues facing the world today, namely fights between countries and religions, natural disasters, economical issues, etc.

Muhammad Shahid Habib

Country: Pakistan

Languages: Arabic, English, Farsi, Urdu

Organization: Lahore Garrison University

Expertise: Comparative Religions

Focus area: Academic

Religious affiliation: Islam



Executive Director, International Interreligious Dialogue and Research Centre

Dr. Muhammad Shahid Habib is an Assistant Professor of Comparative Religions and serves as the Executive Director of the International Interreligious Dialogue and Research Centre and the Editor of the Research Journal of 'ABHATH' for Islamic Studies and Social Sciences at Lahore Garrison University, Pakistan. He is also Associate Editor of the International Journal of Religion and Spirituality in Society, published in London. He completed a Bachelor's, Master's and a PhD in Comparative Religions with a specialisation in the Christian Theology of Interfaith Dialogue from the International Islamic University in Islamabad, Pakistan. He also holds a Master's degree in Arabic from Punjab University Lahore, and a Master's Degree in Islamic sciences (Sahadatul Aalamiya) from the renowned Islamic seminary, Darrul Uloom Muhammadia Ghusia in Bhera Sharifa, Pakistan.

He has authored research articles in national and

international publications and published a book on interreligious dialogue and Islamic studies. His book *Religious Dialogue between Muslims and Christians in the Pakistani Context* was published by Lambert Publishing Germany in 2014.

Muhammad teaches at various universities in Pakistan and also presents his research at national and international conferences. He organized conferences and seminars in Pakistani universities. He speaks Arabic, English, Farsi and Urdu. He seeks to promote peace and harmony at the national and international level through interreligious dialogue and to serve humanity through minimising armed conflicts among nations. He delivers Khutbat (religious sermons) at mosques and religious platforms. He believes in the values of tolerance, pluralism and diversity.

Training the Students of M. Phil. & PhD in Pakistani Universities on Interreligious Dialogue and Peacebuilding

The project was carried out at four universities in Pakistan: the University of Lahore, Imperial University Lahore, Lahore Garrison University, and the International Islamic University, Islamabad - The project trained and equipped 90 students pursuing a Masters or PhD in Religious Studies with the necessary knowledge and skills to become trainers of interreligious dialogue and peacebuilding. The project was designed with the specific

dialogue and peacebuilding needs of Pakistan in mind. The training workshop had a positive effect for all involved students of Islamic Studies. Students indicated they want to learn more about diversity and religious pluralism in multicultural societies. The project is trying to introduce dialogue elements, structure and its objectives in the curriculum of Islamic Studies to promote peace and harmony.

Objectives

- Equip the students of Islamic Studies with the necessary knowledge, skills and capabilities for interreligious dialogue
- Promote the culture of tolerance among the students of Islamic Studies regarding other religions
- Train students of Islamic Studies to promote peacebuilding and interreligious activities in the society

International

Nang Loung Hom

Country: Myanmar

Languages: Burmese, English, Shan

Organization: Walpola Rahula Institute

Expertise: Education, Conflict Transformation

Focus area: Civil Society

Religious affiliation: Buddhism



Board Director and Secretary, Walpola Rahula Institute

Nang Loung Hom is Board Director and Secretary of the Walpola Rahula Institute and trainer in conflict transformation and peacebuilding. Throughout her childhood, she grew up witnessing the atrocities of civil war, oppression and violations of human rights. The experiences taught her to detest violence, to strive to understand the root causes of conflicts and to work towards social healing, dialogue and conflict transformation.

Hom coordinates content development for the Mindfulness for Children and Mindfulness for Family programmes, as well as supports Myanmar Buddhist monks and nuns from Sri Lanka in a personal capacity by providing training workshops and dialogue programmes on conflict and peace issues. Hom also co-facilitates Buddhist approaches on conflict transformation programmes at Buddhist institutions in Myanmar. She conducts several peace education programmes for children, family and teachers in

Myanmar. She works as a Programme Trainer for Peace Education at the Institute for Political and Civic Education, Yangon, Myanmar.

Experiences taught her to detest violence, to strive to understand the root causes of conflicts and to work towards social healing, dialogue and conflict transformation.

Sharing Values of Humanity

This initiative involved a series of trainings in dialogue skills and practices that took place over the period of 17 July - 15 October 2016 for 19 religious leaders from peacebuilding organizations. A safe space was created for participants to engage in multiple sessions on intra-religious and interreligious dialogue. The group also had the opportunity to meet with high-level

religious leaders and humanitarian leaders in the country. The training included a visit to Mercy Village (an Interreligious village for homeless people), to meet with the head of the village and the villagers and visit their community centre. During their experience, participants learnt from one another, and shared diverse perspectives to increase understanding.

Objectives

- Inspire religious leaders to become peace advocates and leaders committed to non-violence through IRD in their communities
- Empower tolerant, culturally sensitive leaders who are trained with IRD skills
- Promote amiable communities disposed to non-violence, not divided by differences in faith or ethnicity, and who have the desire to live in peaceful coexistence

International

Muhammad Ilyas

Country: Pakistan

Languages: Arabic, English, Punjabi, Urdu

Organization: International Islamic University Islamabad

Expertise: Islamic Studies

Focus area: Academic

Religious affiliation: Islam

Assistant Professor, Department of Hadith and Its Sciences, Faculty of Islamic Studies, International Islamic University

Dr. Muhammad Ilyas is an Academic Advisor to the President of the International Islamic University Islamabad, Pakistan. He got his BA (General), MA Islamic Studies and MA Arabic from the University of Punjab Lahore, Pakistan as he earned his MPhil in Hadith and its Sciences from International Islamic University Islamabad. He has been awarded a PhD in Islamic Studies with specialisation of Qur'an & Sunnah from the University of Karachi, Pakistan. He got his Post-Doctorate from the Centre for Islamic Development Management Studies (ISDEV), School of Social Sciences, University of Science Malaysia, Penang. He has memorised the Holy Qur'an. As a well-known scholar and researcher he has represented the International Islamic University Islamabad, Pakistan on various national and international platforms. He is a leading Imam & Khateeb in a mosque in Islamabad.

As a well-known scholar and researcher he has represented the International Islamic University Islamabad, Pakistan on various national and international platforms.



Training Muslim Students for Interreligious Dialogue

This project trained 15 students at the International Islamic University and 15 at the madrasa level in Islamabad/Pakistan in interreligious dialogue. In addition to the training, the participants visited local religious sites and took part in a series of lectures and trainings. The training was a good platform for open and active discussions on issues

and challenges related to IRD, accepting the Other and coexistence. For the majority of the participants, the concept of IRD was relatively new and interesting. After taking part in the initiative, the participants expressed their desire to improve their knowledge on these topics and the urgency to foster the principles of dialogue among the public.

Objectives

- Introduce IRD, its principles, role and goals to university students in Islamabad
- Capacity building for university students on IRD
- Provide them the tools and experience to continue IRD beyond the training

Khalilullah Mohammed Baharul Islam

Country: India

Languages: Arabic, Bengali, English, Hindi, Urdu

Organizations: PFI Foundation, Indian Institute of Management Kashipur

Expertise: Transitional Justice, Conflict Resolution

Focus area: Education, Law

Religious affiliation: Islam



Teacher & Director, Interfaith Dialogue Programme PFI Foundation India, S K Memorial Girls Pre-Senior Madrasa

Dr. Khalilullah Mohammed Baharul Islam is a Professor and Chair of Communications at the Indian Institute of Management, Kashipur (India). Since 2007 he has worked to introduce interreligious dialogue among the students of Islamic faith-based schools (Madrasa) in North-East India. It started with a group of 71 Madrasa leaders who took up the challenge to use interreligious dialogue both as a means and end to achieve peace and modernisation of Madrasas in the region. It was followed by a mainstream programme called Minorities Initiative for Learning, Advancement and Partnership (MILAP) funded by The British High Commission in India. The project created a network of religious teachers who are trained to propagate the message of peace as enshrined in various religions through their teachings and preaching platforms.

He also serves as Director of the Interfaith Dialogue Programmes with PFI Foundation India. He holds an LLM degree from University of Strathclyde (UK). He also has B.Ed., MA, MBA, PhD (English) and Post-Doctorate degrees. He has earned his second PhD from Assam Don Bosco University, India working on Transitional Justice and Peacebuilding in Post Peace Agreement Societies.

Khalilullah has published widely, covering subjects like Women's Rights, Media, and Education Policy. He strongly believes in 'Learning to Live Together' philosophy as his world view. In 2011, he was trained as a master trainer on the subject of interreligious dialogue by the Arigatou International and Global Network of Religions for Children in Colombo, Sri Lanka.



Development of a Foundation Course on Interreligious Dialogue for Madrasas in India

The project aimed to develop a basic training course on interreligious dialogue for the Madrasas in India through a joint consultative process among various faith-based educational institutions. Through a participatory research process involving different faith-based schools, an IRD curriculum was prepared and

piloted in a few Madrasas. In the long run, the project envisages adoption of the IRD Foundation Course by the state government and Directorate of Madrasa Education for implementation among the more than 600 state-funded Madrasas in Assam, India.

Objectives

- Develop a draft of a basic training course on IRD through a joint consultative workshop process among educational teachers from various faith-based educational institutions
- Test the course in a few Madrasas through the participatory action research method to collect feedback from teachers and students and incorporate it while finalising the course
- Adoption of the IRD Foundation Course by the state government and Directorate of Madrasa Education for implementation among the 600+ state funded Madrasas in Assam



International

Bishoy Zayed Fikry Labib

Country: Egypt

Languages: Arabic, English

Organization: Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services

Expertise: Advocacy, Communications

Focus area: Religious

Religious affiliation: Christianity



Dialogue Coordinator, Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services

Bishoy Zayed Fikry Labib is the Dialogue Coordinator at the Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services in Egypt. In this role, he works to build capacity among religious leaders and community leaders in facilitation, and to strengthen inter-community ties. He believes that this supports tolerance, pluralism and the respect of individual rights. He has formed a committee of religious leaders, from among those he has trained, to disseminate these values in their communities.

He also works on a project for young religious leaders, implemented in cooperation with the Ministry of Islamic Endowment. The New Generation Programme engages young Muslim and Christian religious leaders in open-minded and respectful dialogue with researchers, intellectuals, media experts, scholars and civil society leaders concerning new ideas and opinions that expands their horizons and promotes understanding of issues affecting Egyptian society.

In the aftermath of violence after the Egyptian revolution, his organization was involved in organizing immediate meetings to calm the situation, and to prevent further incitement and inflammatory speech.

The New Generation Programme engages young Muslim and Christian religious leaders in open-minded and respectful dialogue.

We All Complete Each Other

This project aimed to establish mutual understanding and cooperation between the citizens of the El Tayeba village in Egypt, among their different religions and cultures, to promote the culture of respect for diversity and to establish rules of justice, peace and consolidating the spirit of belonging and loyalty to the homeland. To this end, a committee consisting of 25 representatives from the village was established. Besides training the committee on communication

skills and teamwork, the initiative consisted of dialogue sessions between the committee, leaders and the village's elders on community issues and problems, such as acceptance of the Other, deployment of social peace and renouncing violence. The initiative also included site visits and two seminars with the participation of 150 young men and women from the village, including community leaders, religious men and government officials.

Objectives

- Capacity building of 25 representatives of the Menbal community to prevent communal and sectarian crises in the community. The committee was formed by village clerics, community leaders, some government officials, youth and women
- Raising the cultural awareness of 150 young men and women between 18 to 35 years of age on issues related to the civic values system and citizenship and the strengthening of national identity

International

Rogelio P. Lelis

Country: Philippines

Languages: English, Filipino

Organization: Ateneo de Davao University

Expertise: Psychology, Peacebuilding, Conflict Resolution

Focus area: Academic

Religious affiliation: Christian



Photo: Rogelio P. Lelis



Lecturer, Department of Psychology, Ateneo de Davao University

Rogelio P. Lelis, Jr. earned his Bachelor's degree in Psychology in 2012 from the Ateneo de Davao University (ADDU), where he is currently a Lecturer at the undergraduate programme of the Department of Psychology. While completing his graduate studies, he was affiliated with the ADDU Center of Psychological Extension and Research Services (COPERS), the community engagement arm of the Department of Psychology. In the last three years, COPERS had given him increased responsibility to handle special projects.

Highly trained for post-disaster Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS), Lelis delivers MHPSS interventions and psychosocial services to a diverse population in times of disasters - both human-initiated and natural disasters. He also assists in organizing symposia and workshops on themes of major concern to the center including psychoeducation, disaster management, and intercultural and interreligious dialogue, among

others. He is particularly interested in culturally-appropriate applications of social psychology for peacebuilding and conflict resolution. His interest to become an agent of interreligious dialogue began 5 years ago as a student volunteer when he was exposed to the relevance of understanding the needs of grassroots communities of varying religious beliefs. He believes that dialogue is pivotal to promoting peace and reconciliation.

Lelis delivers MHPSS interventions and psychosocial services to a diverse population in times of disasters.

Rajah Peace Education Project: Training Elementary School Teachers on Peace Education

This project was designed to complement efforts in the Philippines on effectively implementing the Executive Order 570 signed in 2006 entitled "Institutionalizing Peace Education in Basic Education and Teacher Education", which seeks to mainstream peace education in both basic formal and non-formal school curriculum on all levels.

15 elementary school teachers from Rajah Muda Elementary School in Pikit, North Cotabato were introduced to peace education

teaching methodologies and pedagogical principles to equip them in developing a K to 6 curriculum where the elements of peace are well-integrated and aligned with the requirements of the Department of Education. The training highlighted a holistic model of peace encompassing peace with oneself, others, and nature, and accentuating values formation and spiritual life. The participants acted as consultants as the themes were translated in the context of Rajah Muda.

Objectives

- Assist the 15 elementary school teachers of Rajah Muda Elementary School on peace education integration in their K to 6 curriculum
- Equip the participants with the skills to be peace educators
- Document the challenges and lessons learnt, and outline recommendations on the process of peace education lesson planning and curriculum development

International

Datu Mussolini Sinsuat Lidasan

Country: Philippines

Languages: English, Filipino, Iranun, Maguindanao

Organization: Ateneo de Davao University

Expertise: Community Development, Conflict Transformation

Focus area: Academic

Religious affiliation: Islam



Executive Director of the Al Qalam Institute of Islamic Identities and Dialogue in South-East Asia; Member of the Bangsamoro Transition Commission

Datu Mussolini Sinsuat Lidasan is the Founder and currently the Executive Director of the Al Qalam Institute of Islamic Identities and Dialogue in South-East Asia at Ateneo de Davao University; and a Facilitator in Intra-religious and Interreligious Dialogue (he worked as a United Nations Volunteer - Community Development Specialist from 1998 to 2003). He is a post graduate candidate of an MA in Anthropology focusing on Islam, Identities, and Political Anthropology. He is a former Provincial

Board Member of the 1st District of Maguindanao Province (Shariff Kabunsuan). He is a conflict transformation and socio-political landscape consultant to local and international agencies in Muslim areas of Mindanao. He is a group facilitator in dialogue, non-violence training and conflict analysis and management. He is interested in interreligious dialogue, conflict transformation and violence mitigation, especially in South-Central Mindanao and conflict prone areas in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

He is interested in interreligious dialogue, conflict transformation and violence mitigation.



Photo: Al Qalam iComms



Photo: Al Qalam iComms

Engaging and Training Selected Religious Leaders (Christians and Muslims) in Davao Region for Peace and Reconciliation in Southern Mindanao: An Interreligious Dialogue Approach to Conflict Mitigation and Peacebuilding

The youth leadership training was held at Banyan Training Center, Tugbok, Davao City. The event was attended by 24 participants from the Salaam Student Organization and AB Islamic Studies' students who became part of the project's working committee.

The second part of the initiative took place on 1-2 September 2016. Muslim, Christian and Buddhist religious leaders attended the training workshop on interreligious dialogue

for peacebuilding. It was attended by 19 participants. The training/workshop and discussions took place and the participants expressed their reflections, especially on the civilian victims of conflicts, since they are the most affected in conflict, which leads to poverty, famine and restlessness. There was also an emergence of peace advocate programmes from different sectors and the intervention of NGOs.

Objectives

- Inspire religious leaders to become peace advocates and leaders committed to non-violence through IRD in their communities where the action resides
- Empowering tolerant, culturally sensitive leaders who are trained with the skills in IRD, amiable and disposed to non-violence communities not so much divided by differences in faith or ethnicity with the desire to live in peaceful coexistence

South-East Asia

Mansoor L. Limba

Country: Philippines
Languages: English, Farsi, Filipino
Organization: Al-Qalam Institute
Expertise: Islamic Studies, Islamic Law, International Relations
Focus area: Academic
Religious affiliation: Islam



Associate Professor of Political Science and International and Islamic studies, Ateneo de Davao University

Dr. Mansoor L. Limba is Associate Professor of Political Science and International and Islamic Studies at Ateneo de Davao University in Davao City, Philippines, and a Research Fellow at the Al-Qalam Institute for Islamic Identities and Dialogue in South-East Asia. He obtained his Bachelor's degree in Islamic studies and Islamic History *magna cum laude* in 1994 and another degree in International Relations from Mindanao State University, Marawi City, Philippines in 1996.

He holds a Master's degree in International Relations from Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran, Iran, and a Doctoral degree in International Relations from the University of Tehran, Iran. Apart from teaching, he translates from Farsi into English and Filipino, writes, edits, and blogs and has dozens of written and translated works to his credit on international politics, history, political philosophy, Islamic finance, jurisprudence (fiqh), theology ('ilm al-kalam), Qur'anic sciences and

exegesis (tafsir), hadith, ethics and mysticism ('irfan). Apart from directing an educational and research institute advocating peace and development in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao in the Philippines, he has been writing, lecturing and facilitating dialogues in international, national and local academic venues and universities on interreligious, intra-religious, and intercultural dialogues. It is his personal conviction that dialoguing with members of other faiths and cultural traditions is an integral part of his Islamic faith.

“Dialogue with members of other faiths and cultural traditions is an integral part of Islamic faith.”

Photo: Mansoor Limba



Interreligious Dialogue Training for Young Muslims

In a multicultural and multireligious country with a history of religious majority-minority violent conflict, promotion of the culture of dialogue – interreligious and intercultural dialogue, in particular – are an effective peacebuilding measure. In the Philippines, relations between the Muslim minority and the Christian majority have been burdened by tensions and conflict for decades. In this region, generally more

workshops on peacebuilding skills and knowledge are offered to Christian youth compared to their Muslim counterparts. This project aimed to level the field by providing interreligious and intercultural dialogue capacity building training for young Muslims. The initiative increased the capacity of 52 young Muslim men and women to engage in interreligious and intercultural dialogue.

Objectives

- Inform the trainees of Islam's emphasis on engaging in dialogue with followers of other religions and persuasions
- Promote the culture of dialogue and religious pluralism in society in general and in academia in particular
- Equip the young participants with a theoretical framework and practical skills in interreligious and intercultural dialogue to build a network of successful Muslim peacebuilders and forerunners in interreligious and intercultural dialogue

Jannatul Maa

Country: Bangladesh

Languages: Bengali, English

Organization: Dhaka University

Expertise: Journalism, Interreligious Dialogue

Focus area: Academic

Religious affiliation: Islam



Writer and Interreligious Dialogue Activist

Jannatul Maa is a writer and an interreligious dialogue activist. She has 11 years of experience in working and dealing with people from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds. As a student of the Department of World Religions and Culture, Jannatul participated and voluntarily facilitated several interreligious dialogue programmes arranged by the Center for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue of Dhaka University, Bangladesh. She has worked with various organizations like the International Association for Religious Freedom, Universal Peace Federation, and the Youth Group of Global network for Rights and Development.

She has presented many papers at several international and local conferences that have been published in local and international journals. In addition, she has published a book in Bengali on gender discrimination in religious contexts. Acknowledging her contribution to the field of interreligious dialogue in Bangladesh, the US

State Department invited her to participate in a leadership training on interreligious dialogue.

Currently, Jannatul is pursuing research for her Master's degree. Her plan is to spread the message of interreligious harmony among children. She believes that dialogue between atheists and people of faith is also important. She also thinks gender discrimination in religion should be a topic of dialogue between women and religious leaders so that conflicting views can be discussed openly. For Jannatul, dialogue is not just a polite discussion, but about the development of new ideas.

For Jannatul, dialogue is not just a polite discussion, but about the development of new ideas.



Beauty in Diversity

This project in interreligious and intercultural dialogue was designed for children aged from 10 to 13 years old. This is a key time because what they learn at this age has a long-lasting impact. 30 students, with an equal number of boys and girls, were selected from two schools in Bogra, Bangladesh, to ensure diversity. One public school and one religious school, a Madrassa were selected for the project.

The first day was comprised of indoor activities. Through games, group work, storytelling and video clips, participants learnt about diversity of beliefs and practices throughout

the world. The second day followed with visits to places of worship, which included a Hindu temple, a Mosque and a Buddhist monastery. Students had the opportunity to meet with the religious leaders from different traditions. They also became aware about diversity around them. At the end of the day, children took part in a "dress as you like" session where they were encouraged to wear traditional attire from various religions and cultures of Bangladesh. The programme was well received and supported by other teachers in the schools.

Objectives

- Familiarise children from age 10 to 13 years with people of other religions and cultures living in their society
- Educate children about religious and cultural diversity in their society and how to appreciate diversity
- Provide the opportunity for the young participants to visit various religious sites in their society

South-East Asia

Ven. Deegalle Mahinda

Country: Sri Lanka

Languages: English, Japanese, Pali, Sinhala

Organization: College of Liberal Arts at Bath Spa University, Research Centre for Buddhist Studies

Expertise: Religion, Philosophy and Ethics

Focus area: Academic

Religious affiliation: Buddhism



Reader, Study of Religions, Philosophies and Ethics, College of Liberal Arts, Bath Spa University

The Venerable Dr. Deegalle Mahinda is a Reader in the Study of Religions, Philosophies and Ethics at the College of Liberal Arts at Bath Spa University in the UK. Mahinda is a graduate of Harvard University and the University of Chicago and has held professorships at McGill University, Canada, and Colgate University, USA, and conducted post-doctoral research at Kyoto University, Japan.

He is the author of *Popularizing Buddhism: Preaching as Performance in Sri Lanka* and editor of several volumes including *Buddhism, Conflict and Violence in Modern Sri Lanka*. His current research concentrates on minority issues, ethics of war, violence and religious extremism.

Mahinda's exposure to interreligious dialogue goes as far back as the early 1980s to his undergraduate days at the University of Peradeniya. In the last three decades, he has been engaged in many international dialogue forums

with Catholics, Protestants and Jews and recently with Islamic initiatives. He is the former Editor-in-Chief of the journal *Buddhist-Christian Studies* published by the University of Hawaii Press. He contributes regularly to the BBC1, BBC World Service, Aljazeera and Buddhist TV. As Executive Director, Mahinda heads the Research Centre for Buddhist Studies located in the vicinity of University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka that promotes the academic study of Buddhism and facilitates close interaction with ethnic and religious minorities.

His current research concentrates on minority issues, ethics of war, violence and religious extremism.

Photo: KAICIID



Buddhist Monks as Agents of Peace (postponed until summer 2017)

This project is a capacity building project in the intra-dialogue. The project concentrates on the Buddhist community with the objective of providing training in interreligious dialogue for Buddhist monks. It introduces training exercises for a select group of young Buddhist monks of the University of Peradeniya, Sri

Lanka (or Sri Lanka Buddhist Academy). The purpose is to enable them to act effectively as agents of peace. Its primary aim is to train and equip 20 Buddhist monks of the University of Peradeniya with the necessary knowledge and skills to become trainers and facilitators of interreligious dialogue and communication.

Objectives

- Train 20 Buddhist monks as a team of interreligious professionals
- Empower monks by acknowledging their experience with interreligious dialogue and by learning new skills so they can serve in different communities in Sri Lanka
- Train monks as beneficiaries in conflict transformation so that they become active peacemakers in their communities
- Equip monks to be educators of the culture of tolerance and peace by cultivating respect for all religions
- Develop links between the Buddhist monks at the University of Peradeniya and the wider community that they operate in

South-East Asia

Rince Felpina Manao

Country: Indonesia
Languages: English, Indonesian
Organization: Artha Wacana Christian University
Expertise: Theology and Islamology
Focus area: Academic
Religious affiliation: Christianity



Photo: Fred Goodard



Lecturer, Artha Wacana Christian University

Rince Felpina Manao was born in Soe, West Timor, East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia. She graduated from Artha Wacana Christian University, at Kupang with a degree in Theology in March 2015. She started her career at the Association of Indonesian Christian Scholars for Islamic Study. Currently, she is pursuing graduate studies at Artha Wacana Christian University, and works as a lecturer assistant teaching Islamology. Her interests lie in Theology

and Islamology and she wrote her thesis on the role of religious organizations in her region in interreligious dialogue. She often participates in various interreligious dialogue events and also offers assistance to researchers working on interreligious dialogue within her region.

She finds value in meeting the Other and helping religious life to gain strength. For Rince, interreligious dialogue is a chance to be aware of the spiritual experience of other religions, as well as to strengthen one's own religious life. If people of different religions dialogue with each other, it leads not only to greater understanding, but also builds cooperation, harmony and peace.



Photo: KAICIID

She finds value in meeting the Other and helping religious life to gain strength.

School of Peace

This project was conducted over three days at Artha Wacana Christian University with the Association of Indonesian Christian Scholars for Islamic Study (ASAKKIA) and the Master Programme of Artha Wacana Christian University. It included 41 university students from Catholic, Protestant and Muslim backgrounds. Throughout the project, participants attended interreligious dialogue lectures and visited places of worship, as well as Islamic and Christian schools. They discussed the importance of building peace and enhancing understanding and harmony

between people of different cultures and followers of different religions. The project aimed to equip youth with the necessary knowledge, skills and experience to become trainers, peacemakers and facilitators of interreligious dialogue in their community.

In order to sustain and expand the project the stakeholders have established the School of Peace I/ 2016 Organization. The project is being continued at the STFK Ledalero (Ledalero Seminary), which is expected to host the School of Peace II.

Objectives

- To know and understand each other
- To equip participants with the necessary knowledge, skills and capabilities to improve interreligious dialogue

International

Vassiliki Missira

Country: Greece**Languages:** English, French, Greek**Organizations:** EU Commission, Panteion University**Expertise:** Human Rights, Democracy, Identity, European Law**Focus area:** Academic, Governmental**Religious affiliation:** Christian

National Expert on Human Rights, EU Commission; PhD Candidate, Panteion University

Vassiliki Missira is a national expert for the EU Commission, Athens (Team Europe Programme, Greece) on issues related to Human Rights and Democracy. She has worked for the Directorate-General for Communication, European Parliament Information Office, Athens. Previously, Vassiliki taught a course on “European Legal Order and Human Rights” at the University of the Aegean. She has also worked for the Greek Ombudsman. Her research interests are Human Rights and related issues of International and European Law. She has successfully drawn on academic research in these fields and participated in different scientific activities within the framework of the European Centre for Research and Training in Human Rights and Humanitarian Law and the Institute of Research and Training on European Affairs. Vassiliki is a doctoral student at Panteion University, Athens, working on her doctoral thesis on “The European Dimension of Education for Democratic

Citizenship”. The multidimensional crisis in Greece and the increase in political extremism have influenced relations between the native population and the large number of ethnic, national, cultural and religious minorities in the country. Focusing particularly on the role of education in the development of students’ intercultural and interreligious citizenship and identity, in her study she analyses the European official strategies and programmes designed for Citizenship education. She holds an MA in International and European Studies from the Panteion University and a BA in European Law and Policy from the same University. She has published scientific articles on the issue of human rights and the book: *The Protection of Human Rights in Europe*. Vassiliki’s motto is “You never succeed at pretending to be someone else”. Therefore, she strongly believes that no one should have to wonder whether he/ she will be accepted for his/ her beliefs, including culture, religion etc.



“The Potential of Interreligious Dialogue Vis-À-Vis the Contemporary Migration Crisis in Greece and the EU”

This project was a workshop in which participants discussed the current immigration crisis within the context of interreligious and intercultural dialogue. Europe and Greece have accepted a great number of migrants and refugees in the last two years, and there is a major challenge of integrating those populations with different religious and cultural attitudes in Europe. In that sense, it was of crucial importance to organize the

workshop and explore potential solutions and opportunities for cooperation with local trainers and experts. The project was implemented with the support of local think tanks, the Academy for Freedom and Democracy and Koinon Oropion, and it brought together 25 young people from Greece. The workshop lasted for two days and it included training sessions on IRD and field visits with local religious leaders and refugee accommodation.

Objectives

- Strengthen the capacity of Greek young people to make ethical decisions based on values that promote respect for other cultures and beliefs
- Deepen understanding of IRD through providing methodological tools for IRD development
- Combat fear of the Other and promote unity in diversity

South-East Asia

Yulianti Muthmainnah

Country: Indonesia
Languages: English, Indonesian
Organization: Muhammadiyah University of Prof. Dr. Hamka, KAPAL Perempuan
Expertise: Women's Rights
Focus area: Academic, Civil Society
Religious affiliation: Islam



Lecturer and Researcher, Muhammadiyah University and KAPAL Perempuan

Yulianti Muthmainnah has more than 13 years' experience in areas related to women and human rights issues. She teaches at the Muhammadiyah University of Prof. Dr. Hamka, Jakarta and is a researcher at KAPAL Perempuan (the Circle of Alternative Education for Women). Yuli completed six years in Indonesia's National Commission on Violence against Women (Komnas Perempuan). She holds a Master's degree in Social Studies on Diplomacy and International Relations from Paramadina University. Yuli has experience as a trainer for judges, public prosecutors, police personnel and law enforcement officials, local government and for illiterate women in rural areas and has four years' experience working to promote interreligious dialogue.

Yuli was named best graduate of the 61st graduation cohort of the State Islamic University Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta from the Syari'a and Law Faculty in 2005.

Later she was featured by Women Unlimited which profiles Indonesian women leaders from various fields of science and expertise. She was also selected by Three (3) a telecommunication provider in Indonesia as one of "3 Satria Pantang Menyerah" (3 Knights Who Never Give Up), which recognizes inspiring and encouraging Indonesian women. Furthermore in 2016, she was chosen to participate in the Women Ulama/Mufti from Rahima.

In her own words, Yuli always makes an effort to see the positive and bright side of every single problem, and to be an optimistic rather than a pessimistic person. She believes that we should make a change, to act, and to give a contribution no matter how small. "Our gift or contribution today makes a difference to women and children tomorrow" is her motto.

Enhancing the Role of Women in Interreligious Dialogue

Yulianti conducted eight trainings/workshops entitled "Enhancing the Role of Women in Interreligious Dialogue" in five different cities for more than 250 people, primarily youth, women, religious leaders and activists. The project was designed to engage local communities at the grassroots to promote gender as one of the main issues

in interreligious dialogue. Local communities were chosen because they are most acutely affected when conflicts break out. By engaging them in interreligious dialogue, they are able to prevent and de-escalate conflict. The project included members of local communities who are often left behind or excluded from existing IRD programmes.

Objectives

- Mainstreaming women to enhance their capability in peace and interreligious dialogue
- Increase the number of women in decision making on IRD and to ensure women participate in interreligious dialogue
- Protect women from any kind of violence
- Contribute to strengthening women's leadership in interreligious dialogue and peacemaking/conflict prevention in general

Justina Mike Ngwobia

Country: Nigeria

Language: English

Organization: Women Peace Builders Network

Expertise: Peacebuilding, Gender

Focus area: Religious

Religious affiliation: Christianity



Executive Director, Justice, Peace and Reconciliation Movement (JPRM)

Justina Mike Ngwobia is a peacebuilding practitioner who has worked in the field of interreligious relations for over 15 years. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Social Work and Administration. Her passion for Christian-Muslim harmony and dialogue was ignited when she moved to the northern part of Nigeria and discovered that the ongoing crisis in that part of the world was the result of political manipulation: people were using the different religious groups for their own selfish gain, leading to violent conflicts. Her motivation grew when she visited people living in rural communities and saw how people were suffering and struggling to survive. Her focus is on empowering communities through interreligious joint projects, adult education, peace clubs, Christian-Muslim harmony, and the empowerment of women, which are all aimed at interreligious dialogue and sustainable development. She has travelled to different parts of the world sharing her experiences in interreligious

dialogue. At present, she is the ecumenical coordinator of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, Jos Presbytery. She is also interested in promoting the participation of women in governance, peace, and security issues. She considers her greatest milestone to be the establishment of the "Women Peace Builders Network" in Nigeria, which gives women the opportunity to add their voices to events in society through dialogue. Justina strongly believes that our world can only be better and more peaceful if people of diverse religions learn how to interact positively for mutual cooperation.

Our world can only be better if people of diverse religions learn to interact positively for mutual cooperation.



Engaging Women in Peace and Security Issues in Jos Through Dialogue

This project took place at a time when it was most needed. Women in Jos, Nigeria are often relegated when it comes to issues of peacebuilding, conflict prevention, dialogue and participation in decision-making processes. Many of the women are in need of the capacity to analyse, monitor, prevent and report potential conflicts. Jos North - known as the "hot spot zone" because of recurring violent conflicts - needed a group of women peace actors and ambassadors who would champion peacebuilding and conflict prevention in their communities. The project brought

33 Christian and Muslim women from six communities of Jos North for capacity building in peacebuilding, conflict analysis, prevention strategies, conflict monitoring (early warning and early response), gender issues, the role of women in peacebuilding, governance, dialogue and communication skills. At the end of the training, the women committed themselves to becoming active peace actors and to establishing structures in their communities. They also created an action plan of activities to be carried out in their localities.

Objectives

- Strengthen the relationship between Muslim and Christian women in Jos for interreligious mutual cooperation, understanding, tolerance, integration and respect for one another
- Build the capacity of women in conflict prevention, monitoring and skills for peacebuilding
- Advocate for the participation of women in governance, peace and security issues and decision-making processes in Jos

International

Amanah Nurish

Country: Indonesia
Languages: Arabic, English, Indonesian, Javanese, Malay, Osing
Organization: Indonesian Consortium for Religious Studies
Expertise: Minority Rights
Focus area: Academic
Religious affiliation: Islam



PhD, Indonesian Consortium for Religious Studies (ICRS), Gadjah Mada University

Amanah Nurish received her PhD from the Indonesian Consortium for Religious Studies (ICRS), Gadjah Mada University - Yogyakarta, Indonesia. She is actively involved with several research projects as well as assessment for the programmes on religion, environment, development, and empowerment. Her special focus in the field of religious studies is on minority religions in South-East Asia, especially the Baha'i community. She has been involved for many years with religious minority and interreligious issues. She intensively advocates for the civil rights of the Baha'i community, as a non-official religious community in Indonesia.

Amanah is a dedicated scholar and social worker, working in both the academic environment and NGOs. She was a member of a Ford Foundation-sponsored research team on population, religion, and family planning that investigated target areas in Central Java.

She has been a visiting research scholar at several outstanding universities such as: Utrecht University, The Netherlands, National University of Singapore, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand, and Temple University, US.

Her special focus in the field of religious studies is on minority religions in South-East Asia.

Empowering Children with Interreligious Dialogue and Peacebuilding in Indonesia Archipelago

This project aimed to empower 10 to 12-year-old schoolchildren through interreligious dialogue in several areas of the Indonesian archipelago, specifically Java, Bali, and Sumatra - the three most diverse places in Indonesia in terms of religions and culture. The project included school visits, research documentation, and observation, which will be used to publish a non-academic book on IRD for children. The book will be circulated among 500 to 1000 elementary students in approximately 10 to 20

schools from different religious institutions. The project was conducted from 31 August to 30 September 2016. The second part of the project continued in January through March 2017 when the book was printed and launched, and included a campaign for IRD and peacebuilding for schoolchildren. The project included collaboration with the Center for the Study of Religion and Conflict/ CSRC - Arizona State University.

Objectives

- Empower 10 to 12-year-old schoolchildren through interreligious dialogue in several areas of the Indonesian archipelago, specifically Java, Bali and Sumatra
- Publish a non-academic book on IRD for children that will be promoted in 10 to 20 elementary schools
- Raise awareness and campaigning for peacebuilding among schoolchildren

Abbas Panakkal

Country: India

Languages: Arabic, English, Hindi, Malayalam

Organization: International Interfaith Harmony Initiative

Expertise: Teaching, International Academic Relations

Focus area: Interreligious dialogue

Religious affiliation: Islam



Director, International Interfaith Harmony Initiative

Dr. Abbas Panakkal is the Director of International Interfaith Harmony Initiative, which has been organizing the International Interfaith Conferences in collaboration with United Nations initiatives, the Malaysian Prime Minister’s Department for Unity and Integration and the International Islamic University Malaysia for the past six years. Abbas was awarded a fellowship by the Centre for Interfaith and Cultural Dialogue from Griffith University, Australia.

Abbas, as Project Coordinator of G20 Interfaith Summit, is actively involved in the coordination of G20 Interfaith Summits and co-organized pre-conference summits in Middle East and South Asia. He has organized intercultural engagements and adoption programmes for interreligious enrichment with the support of governmental and non-governmental agencies. He is a columnist and poet, and contributes to various newspapers and magazines. He also writes and directs

documentaries to promote peace and harmony. Abbas has presented at various interreligious events and dialogues in America, Australia, France, Germany, India, Jordan, Morocco, U.A.E, the UK, and the Vatican.



Peace Education and Training (PET)

This project was an academic initiative, a training of trainers on peacebuilding and interreligious engagement. It focused on healthy dialogue and harmonious coexistence and engaged 100 students, future Islamic scholars from the Islamic Share’a College Under Jamia Madin, Malappuram, Kerala India and selected 60 students from the Department of

Journalism and Mass Communications. The intensive training activities aimed to increase the students’ competencies in interreligious engagement. The main themes addressed during the academic training were virtue, integrity, coexistence, shared heritage and traditions of peace and harmony in everyday life.

Objectives

- Create interreligious awareness among the future religious leaders and scholars
- Conduct special formal training for students on interreligious experiences and activities
- Foster openness and develop creative sense for intercultural and interreligious understanding and actions

South-East Asia

Sneha Roy

Country: India

Languages: English, Hindi

Organization: Hindu Council of the UK

Expertise: Socio-cultural anthropology

Focus area: Academic

Religious affiliation: Hinduism



Transitional Masks, Theatre

This project has motivated youth to realise their duties and become active agents of change by using theatre as a tool to reach out and connect with people and to promote non-violence as an alternative to the senselessness of violence and to emphasise that peace and coexistence are the only way forward. The project gathered young activists and peacebuilders with members of the general public to promote the importance of respect for difference and celebrate diversity. In the initial phase, a script was drafted and then staged, which focused on the theme of violence and the urgent need to achieve

religious harmony. It was recorded and shown to the students at the Presidency University and also showcased to the general audience of the city of Kolkata.

There is a consensus among the world leaders that youth today are the most powerful resource and hence, in the project, they were the protagonists. The participants proactively took part in reiterating that interreligious and intercultural harmony are what the world needs. Transitional Masks is helping some passionate young people to take up leadership roles and work on their own to initiate peacebuilding processes.

Objectives

- Spread the message of peace through intercultural and interreligious dialogue by using theatre as a tool
- Encourage youth to actively participate in peacebuilding processes
- Establish a strong ground for social coherence and coexistence

Commonwealth Scholar and Founder of "Religion Through my Lenses"

As a result of her Master's degree in Socio-Cultural Anthropology she received from the Durham University in Durham, UK, during which she specialised in Religious Anthropology and World Cultures, Sneha has gained deep insights on how religion is misused to incite conflict. Coming from India, she has witnessed the beauty in diversity, but has also perceived the enormous challenge in maintaining inter- and intra- religious harmony. She endeavours to make her community and the world a better place to live in, where respect for the Other, compassion, empathy and peace thrive. She aspires to become an interreligious peace facilitator to achieve this goal.

For the past two years, she has worked with the Hindu Council of the UK and spearheaded the first comprehensive report on the Hindu diaspora of the UK. She conducts exhibitions, cultural fests and excursions to help people engage socially with those of other faith backgrounds

in both India and the UK. She is the founder of "Religion through My Lenses" a forum that exhibits photographs of religious experiences and helps others to observe the diverse manners in which one understands his or her religion. She focuses on the importance of youth and women empowerment and is a firm believer that peace spreads when it starts from within ourselves.

She endeavours to make her community and the world a better place to live in, where respect for the Other, compassion, empathy and peace thrive.



Rev. Fr. Hermes Bajao Sabud

Country: Philippines
Languages: English, Filipino
Organization: Silsilah Forum
Expertise: Theology
Focus area: Academic
Religious affiliation: Christianity

Photo: Fred Goddard



Photo: Fred Goddard

Missionary Priest of the Society of Mary, Marist Fathers; Visiting Professor, St. Alphonsus Theological and Mission Institute

Reverend Father Hermes Bajao Sabud S.M. is a missionary priest of the Society of Mary, Marist Fathers. He is a visiting professor at Saint Alphonsus Theological and Mission Institute in Davao City, Philippines, teaching Theology of Religions and Religious Pluralism and Dialogue, and Mission Spirituality. He completed his postgraduate studies in Tagaytay City, Cavite, Philippines. He holds a an MA in Theology with a Major in Missiology from the Divine Word Seminary.

Currently, he is the Sub-regional Coordinator of the Silsilah Forum - Southern Mindanao, of the Silsilah Dialogue Movement. In addition, he is the priest-in-charge of the Matti District Catholic Centre, Diocese of Digos, Matti, Digos City, Philippines. When he is inspired, he composes and sings dialogical, missionary and religious songs. He believes in the adage that "music is the language of the soul." His motto is "Life in dialogue is possible and it is happening."



Religious Educators' Seminar - Workshop on Interreligious Dialogue

This two-day seminar aimed to contribute to the promotion of an interreligious atmosphere in public elementary schools and to inspire dialogue of life and action among religious educators. The first objective of the workshop was to establish friendship and active collaboration among 23 Muslim and Catholic religious educators in different state elementary schools in Digos City, Davao del Sur, Philippines. The Muslim educators, known as Asatidz, are

under the auspices of the Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education (ALIVE) programme of the Department of Education. The Catholic religious educators, also known as Catechists, are under the supervision of the Diocese of Digos. The workshop provided a safe space for participants to get to know one another, address individual perceptions and prejudices, and draw from their own religious traditions in reflection and prayer.

Objectives

- Get to know one another as religious educators and build up friendships
- Gain knowledge of the basic Islamic and Christian teachings
- Know the importance of interreligious dialogue among religious educators and students
- Find some ways where the interreligious educators could promote IRD in their classrooms
- Inspire the religious educators to become peace advocates and builders in the society

International

Swamini Brahmaprajnananda Saraswati

Country: India

Language: English, Hindi, Sanskrit

Organization: Aarsha Vidya
Foundation

Expertise: Psychology, Counselling

Focus area: Religious

Religious affiliation: Hinduism

Teacher, Aarsha Vidya Foundation

Swamini Brahmaprajnananda Saraswati is a traditional teacher of Vedanta and a monk in India. She conducts classes and courses in Vedanta, Sanskrit and Vedic chanting in Mumbai and online for international students alongside conducting workshops on personal growth in the light of Indian scriptures and culture. She completed an intensive course of study under Pujya Swami Dayananda Saraswati ji, the foremost scholar of Vedanta and Sanskrit recognised worldwide, in Aarsha Vidya Gurukulam. She holds an MPhil and an MA in Psychology from SNDT University, Mumbai and her thesis was on "Coping Strategies of Street Youth," after her early years in a convent school. Having trained as a psychologist, she worked for 15 years in different capacities as a counsellor and a coordinator of initiatives for street youth. She also led an international organization which impacted 15 thousand children annually. Other roles have included Professor of Psychology and now Religious Teacher. She believes collective dialogue, conflict

resolution and discovering harmony in oneself and with others is part and parcel of everyday living. In recognition of her earlier work in the social sector, she was invited by the government to serve as a judge in cases of alleged juvenile offenders. Given the diversity of cultures she constantly interacts with in India, Swamini recognises that the only way to discover harmony at all levels in the world is "to acknowledge differences, live a life of mutual respect and celebrate each other, with the vision of oneness."

"Acknowledge differences, live a life of mutual respect and celebrate each other, with the vision of oneness."



I am the Change - Leadership Programme for Youth

Mumbai is a cosmopolitan Indian city and is home to diverse religious communities who have coexisted for generations. The city has the largest number of youth in the world, but is also home to a growing wave of Islamophobia and misconceptions about Hinduism and nationalism. Therefore, the seminar titled I Am the Change - Leadership Programme for Youth, was organized to address these issues through conflict resolution and promoting harmonious coexistence.

The project was an open public seminar of religious leaders for the community and reached out to 21 students of SIES College, Mumbai and five religious scholars from

Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism and Islam. The project also included a public seminar under the title "Many Religions, One Nation and a Harmonious Existence", organized on Mahatma Gandhi's birth anniversary. The 80 participants from the community, with the eldest being 75-years-old and the youngest 13, saw five religious leaders and practitioners from Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism and Buddhism come together on one stage to share teachings on coexistence from their respective religions and to dispel misconceptions. The programme also had a successful website, www.vedicwisdom.in and more than 4,000 followers on Facebook.

Objectives

- Enrich the knowledge of college students about leadership, conflict resolution, coexistence and peacebuilding
- Provide opportunity for challenging and clarifying the image of the Other
- Organize a public seminar on Gandhi's birthday to highlight the message of mutual respect and coexistence with religious differences

Nur Hidayah Arif Tiro

Country: Indonesia
Languages: English, Indonesian
Organization: Community Empowerment Smart Indonesia Foundation
Expertise: Conflict Resolution
Focus area: Academic
Religious affiliation: Islam



Lecturer, Medical and Health Science Faculty, State Islamic University of Alauddin Makassar

Dr. Nur Hidayah is a lecturer at the Medical and Health Science Faculty at the State Islamic University of Alauddin Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. She holds a Doctorate in Public Administration Studies. She is the Secretary of the Alauddin Peacebuilding Institute, which focuses on promoting, educating and training on peace among students, university and community leaders.

Over the past three years, she has been active in providing training in conflict resolution and peace education because she believes that these subjects are important components in instilling inner peace among students, institutions and communities. She was also involved in developing curriculum and peace education modules.

Currently, Nur is the Vice Dean of Academic and Institutional Development Affairs. She is also one of the founders of the Community Empowerment Smart Indonesia Foundation called Yayasan Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Indonesia Cerdas,

which focuses on human resources development for health workers, and researches hospital development and community empowerment.

Nur has participated in several national and international workshops on pluralism, interreligious dialogue and human rights. Her latest work is the development of a peace education curriculum and module for students to promote peace values in her hometown. Her motto is "Peace is My Life."

Her latest work is the development of a peace education curriculum and module for students to promote peace values in her hometown.



Sekolah Cerdas (Smart School) Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue for Peace

This project was divided into two parts. The first part included the development of a curriculum and a module on interreligious dialogue for peace for students in universities and schools. The curriculum and the module are being used in training activities to improve the knowledge and skills of students practicing interreligious dialogue, to develop a sense of appreciation and fairness and to promote

a culture of peace and tolerance in everyday life. The second part was a character-building training on interreligious and intercultural principles called "Sekolah (smart learning), or "Cerdas", which stands for the six fundamental character-building aspects: care, empathy, relationships, diversity for peace, and awareness of nature and spirituality.

Objectives

- Build the capacity of university and school students in practicing intercultural and interreligious dialogue
- Provide opportunities to practice skills for coexistence in diverse societies
- Build participant's character to be more tolerant and accepting of diversity



Khin Sandar Tun

Country: Myanmar

Languages: Burmese, English

Organization: Freelance civic educator

Expertise: Education, Conflict Transformation

Focus area: Civil Society

Religious affiliation: Islam



Civic Educator and Peace Activist

Khin Sandar Tun is a young activist who currently works as a freelance civic educator and is actively involved in public demonstrations for peace in Myanmar. In May 2016, Khin and her friends organized a peace march for diversity and promoting tolerance in Yangon with young people from different religious backgrounds. She is also a committee member of "Youth participation in Peace Process." She enjoys her work with youth groups and has provided civic education to ethnic minorities on a voluntary basis since 2012. She also serves as a Network Coordinator and Facilitator at the Peace Cultivation Network (PCN). She occasionally facilitates interreligious dialogues hosted by PCN. In 2014, she spoke at an event hosted by the Center of Diversity and National Harmony on peace and tolerance from an Islamic perspective.

She is a member of the Kaman minority group, which formed part of a diverse and peaceful interreligious community in Rakhine state. This

peace was shattered by ethno-religious conflict in 2012. Since she and her family are victims of conflict, she is eager to work for peace. She studied conflict transformation across cultures (CONTACT) at the School for International Training Graduate Institute in Vermont, US. As an activist, she is always thinking about alternative ways to promote tolerance and peace.

Since she and her family are victims of conflict, she is eager to work for peace.

Interreligious Visiting Tour - Visiting and Experiencing all Religious Buildings for Peaceful Coexistence

The project was carried out in cooperation with PCN. It included visits and dialogues with eight religious leaders, 25 youth and 13 men and women interested in interreligious exchange and provided the space to positively acknowledge different basic religious

backgrounds and encourage participants to return to their communities to share their experience to and to promote the importance of interreligious dialogue. The project was designed according to specific needs in Myanmar.

Objectives

- Reduce religious tension and increase mutual understanding between Buddhists and Muslims
- Promote interreligious dialogue through social media and community outreach
- Develop respect for religious and cultural pluralism
- Enable participants to become active peacebuilders in their community
- Develop a network between youth from different religious communities

South-East Asia



Zon Vanel

Country: Indonesia
Languages: English, Indonesian
Organizations: Peace and Multicultural Foundation, Satya Wacana Christian University, Syailendra Buddhist College
Expertise: Journalism, Conflict Transformation
Focus area: Academic, Civil Society
Religious affiliation: Buddhism

Lecturer in Public Relations, Satya Wacana Christian University

Zon Vanel is a lecturer at the Public Relations Programme of the Information Technology Department at Satya Wacana Christian University in Central Java, Indonesia. She holds a Master's degree in Mass Communication Studies and is actively involved in research at the university and community services in her hometown of Solo in Indonesia.

In her hometown, Zon is engaged with the Peace and Multicultural Foundation as a facilitator in conflict transformation. In addition, she also teaches journalism at Syailendra Buddhist

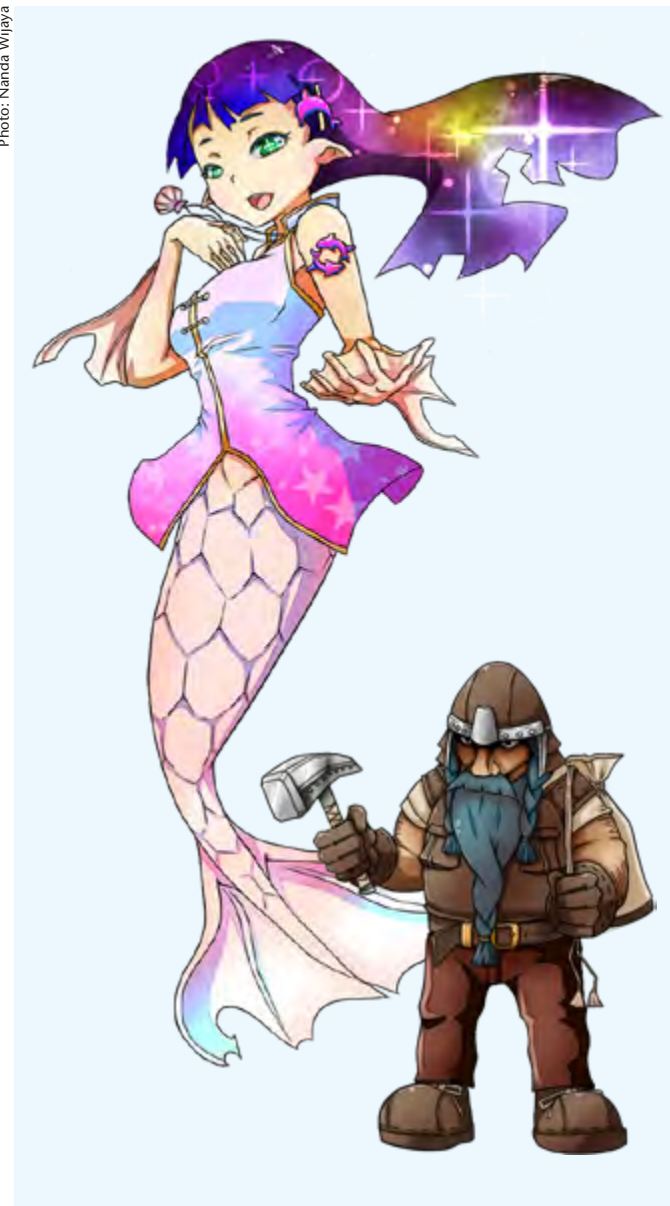
College in Central Java, Indonesia. Her focus is on interreligious dialogue and conflict transformation. Zon is also one of the founders of an elementary children's interreligious dialogue community programme called Sobat Anak Solo (SAS).

She has participated in several national and international workshops on interreligious dialogue and human rights. Her latest project is a computer-based information system programme to prevent conflicts and map conflict areas in her hometown. Her motto is "unity in diversity."



Her latest project is a computer-based information system programme to prevent conflicts and map conflict areas in her hometown.

Photo: Nanda Wijaya



Characters from Zon Vanel's information system programme

Photo: Nanda Wijaya



Photo: Nanda Wijaya



Dialogue for Peace Game Application

The goal of this project was to produce a mobile phone game to enhance the players' skills in dialogue to build peace in their communities. The game allows players to choose different characters who face a series of different challenges as they progress. Dialogue is a key part of overcoming the challenges as players are required to utilise

dialogue techniques to navigate obstacles and complete the game. Players progress through different stages and must complete varying tasks. As they reach higher levels, the challenges become increasingly complex. Only those players who can successfully conduct dialogue and negotiation strategically can reach the final stage.

Objectives

- Provide an interactive and fun platform for practicing dialogue for peace and build understanding and collaboration among players
- Promote dialogue for peace education
- Enable game players to interpret and understand different cultures

South-East Asia

Ashin Varasami

Country: Myanmar
Languages: Burmese, English
Organization: Shweyatu Tipitaka Eye Hospital
Expertise: Education
Focus area: Religious
Religious affiliation: Buddhism



Buddhist Monk and Educator

Ashin Varasami has been working in development and social change with people from different religious backgrounds in the Mandalay area in Myanmar since 2010. His interest in dialogue with people from different religions stems from an encounter with his English teacher, a Catholic teacher from Ireland.

A responsible citizen and socially engaged individual, he aspires to learn something new every day. Environmentally conscious, he plants trees in his community, collects plastic refuse from public areas with friends from different religious backgrounds as an interreligious endeavour and teaches Buddhism to Catholic theological students. His motto is "open your heart and embrace the world."

"Open your heart and embrace the world."



Buddhist Intra-faith Dialogue Training

Buddhist monks in Myanmar have a strong influence and are highly respected in society. For this reason, this project aimed to bring young Buddhist monks together to reflect upon their teachings from a social science point of view to better understand the needs of their society. The training emphasised

tolerance as being crucial to building a peaceful multireligious society and encouraged monks to integrate this into their teaching in their respective communities. As a result of the training, a network of young monks has been assembled and plans are underway to take the training into academic level studies in the future.

Objectives

- Empower the next generation of Buddhist religious leaders to become socially engaged
- Reflect upon Buddhist peace teachings from a social sciences point of view
- Provide a networking opportunity among young monks interested in peacebuilding

South-East Asia

Fransiska Widyawati

Country: Indonesia
Languages: English, Indonesian
Organization: Saint Paul Teacher Training College
Expertise: Education, Religion, Community Development
Focus area: Academic
Religious affiliation: Christianity



Lecturer and Director of Research and Community Development, Saint Paul Teacher Training College

Dr. Fransiska Widyawati is a lecturer and the Director of Research and Community Development at Saint Paul Teacher Training College, in Ruteng-Flores, eastern Indonesia. She was awarded her PhD in interreligious studies from the Indonesian Consortium for Interreligious Studies at Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta.

Fransiska teaches courses on interreligious, multicultural and inclusive education. As a researcher, she conducts research on religion, development, community, culture and education. She also actively promotes interreligious dialogue, gender equality, awareness of violence against children and character-building education for the young people in her region.

She has been a research fellow and visiting scholar at the National University of Singapore, the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley California and the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia at the Chinese University of Hong Kong.



She actively promotes interreligious dialogue, gender equality, awareness of violence against children and character-building education for the young people in her region.



IRD Saint Paul College Student Group for Peacebuilding

The project was carried out at Saint Paul College at Ruteng, Flores Eastern Indonesia and provided training to 42 students of Theological Education with the aim of equipping them with the necessary skills and knowledge to become trainers and facilitators of interreligious dialogue. Following the training sessions, the Catholic students visited Vihara, a holy site for Hindus, and a mosque, where they experienced first-hand

the atmosphere of a diversity of sacred places of others. They were introduced to Hindu and Muslim religious leaders and participated in interreligious dialogue. Participants were not only introduced to other religions but were also able to directly engage their tradition and community through the experience. The students are still promoting messages of peace and harmony through continuing interreligious engagement in their community.

Objectives

- To promote IRD and peace to university students and community
- To develop awareness of the Catholics about other religions



South-East Asia

Muhammad Afdillah

Country: Indonesia

Languages: Arabic, English, Indonesian

Organization: State Islamic University of Sunan Ampel Surabaya

Expertise: Religious and Cross-cultural studies

Focus area: Academic

Religious affiliation: Islam



South-East Asia

Kamilia Hamidah

Country: Indonesia

Languages: English, Indonesian

Organization: The Institute Pesantren Mathali'ul Falah Pati Central Java, Indonesia

Expertise: Politics and International Relations

Focus area: Community Development

Religious affiliation: Islam

Faculty Member, Department for the Comparative Study of Religion, Faculty of Ushuluddin and Philosophy, State Islamic University of Sunan Ampel

Muhammad Afdillah is a Secretary and Faculty Member at the Department for the Comparative Study of Religion, Faculty of Ushuluddin and Philosophy at State Islamic University of Sunan Ampel, Surabaya, Indonesia. The institution belongs to the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MoRA), Indonesia. He holds two Master's degrees in Social Science and Religious Studies. At his alma mater, he teaches History of Religion, Islam in South-East Asia and Religious Pluralism. In the past five years, his research has focused on peace and violence in religions, religious regulation, religious persecution, and the academic study of religion. He has been awarded several grants to support his research and studies on these issues, such as the Henry Luce Exchange Student and MoRA Scholarship.

In addition to his academic pursuits, he also volunteers as secretary at the Department of International Relations in Muhammadiyah of the

East Java Provincial Board. He assists with the organization of monthly interreligious dialogues in the East Java province. Overall, he utilises his skills and experience to assist scholars working in the fields listed above; helps government officers in policymaking regarding religion and society, and socio-religious conflict; and supports NGO activists and individuals in supporting minority groups confronting socio-religious conflict.

His research has focused on peace and violence in religions, religious regulation, religious persecution, and the academic study of religion.

Director, Centre for Peace Promotion, Institute Pesantren Mathali'ul Falah Pati

Kamilia Hamidah is the Director of Centre for Peace Promotion of the Institute Pesantren Mathali'ul Falah Pati Central Java, Indonesia, which focuses on promoting, educating, and training values of peace. Over the last two years, she has been a trainer and programme coordinator for several peacebuilding trainings, capacity building trainings and training of trainers for peace facilitators - all with the important shared component of teaching the value of understanding religious differences.

For more than ten years she has served as one of the board members of www.pesantrenvirtual.com, which has more than 100,000 daily visitors. She has been invited to speak at several conferences and forums on gender, human rights and Islamic Sharia. Recently, she was a speaker at the International Seminar on Sharia and Human Rights, Conflict and Coexistence in the Contemporary Muslim Society hosted by the Department of Sharia and Law of the State Islamic University Jakarta. She was one of the

authors of the book *Konflik Intra dan Antar Agama* (Inter-intra Religious Conflict).

In addition, she speaks on community development, including community economic development planning, social development and policy planning, sociology of the rural and paradigm and theories of social change. She obtained her bachelor's degree in theology and comparative religions and her master's degree in politics and international relations from the International Islamic University in Islamabad, Pakistan. Her motto is "transcendental piety should go hand in hand with social piety and sincerity is the essence to keep the balance between the two."

"Transcendental piety should go hand in hand with social piety."



South-East Asia

Suhadi

Country: Indonesia

Languages: Arabic, English, French, Indonesian, Malay

Organization: Gadjah Mada University

Expertise: Education, World religions

Focus area: Academic

Religious affiliation: Islam

Lecturer, State Islamic University Sunan Kalijaga

Dr. Suhadi is a lecturer at the graduate school of the State Islamic University Sunan Kalijaga in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. In addition, he teaches at the Center for Religious and Cross-Cultural Studies at the Graduate School of Gadjah Mada University. He is also a Board Member of Higher Islamic Education at the Pesantren (Islamic Boarding School) of Sunan Pandanaran based in Yogyakarta.

Suhadi's PhD thesis at Radboud University Nijmegen in the Netherlands was published in Germany in 2014 under the title: *I Come from a Pancasila Family: A Discursive Study on Muslim-Christian Identity Transformation in Indonesian Post-Reformasi Era*. He teaches world religions, interreligious dialogue theories and practices, religions and human rights, as well as religions and natural disasters. Aside from his teaching activities, Suhadi researches interreligious issues in different parts of Indonesia.

Through a KAICIID programme in Indonesia,

Suhadi co-authored an interreligious education module for university students, which was published in cooperation with the Centre for Dialogue and Cooperation among Civilisations and Religions for Peace in 2016.

Through a KAICIID programme in Indonesia, Suhadi co-authored an interreligious education module for university students, which was published in cooperation with the Centre for Dialogue and Cooperation among Civilisations and Religions for Peace in 2016.



South-East Asia

Kris Tan

Country: Indonesia

Languages: Chinese, English, Indonesian

Organizations: Indonesia Young Confucian Generation, the Surya University in Serpong Banten, Indonesia

Expertise: Religious Comparative Study, Economics

Focus area: Interreligious dialogue

Religious affiliation: Confucian

Lecturer in Comparative Religion, Surya University

Kris Tan holds a Master's Degree in Comparative Religion from the State Islamic University in Indonesia. He is currently a lecturer in Comparative Religion at Surya University in Serpong Banten Indonesia. Although he is a follower of the Confucian religion, he studied at an Islamic religious university where he was pleased to learn of the goodness inherent in all religions.

He is deeply committed to the furtherance of interreligious dialogue in Indonesia and often delivers lectures on the topic organized by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, the Indonesian Bishops' Conference, Supreme Council for Confucian Religion in Indonesia and various universities.

His interest in interreligious dialogue has been firmly rooted since 2005 when he was a student and started to understand the needs of communities in Indonesia. He believes that dialogue is crucial to promoting peace and

reconciliation. In 2009, Kris represented the Republic of Indonesia as the sole delegate of the Young Indonesian Confucians at the 5th Regional Interfaith Dialogue Forum 'Future Faith Leaders: Regional Challenges and Cooperation' in Perth, Western Australia.

Kris believes that dialogue is crucial to promoting peace and reconciliation.

Strengthening Confucian-Muslim Coexistence through Research, Education, and a Youth Interreligious Peace Training Programme in Java

This interreligious collaborative project was conducted by four KAICIID 2016 Fellows based in Indonesia: Muhammad Afdillah, Kamilia Hamidah, Suhadi and Kris Tan. The research project aimed to provide knowledge on the common ground between Confucianism and Islam. In Indonesia, Islam is a multi-ethnic religion, while the adherents of Confucianism are mostly Chinese. Major riots targeting ethnic Chinese took place from 1996- to 2000, during which hundreds of homes were destroyed, and over 1000 people were assaulted or killed. The project explored both tensions and constructive relations between Confucianism and Islam in Indonesia and addressed the current context of growing

anti-foreign sentiment in the country. Because Indonesia is such a large country, the research project focused on the experience in Java. Within the group, Suhadi conducted the research; Muhammad designed a training module on interreligious dialogue for peace, aiming to support coexistence between Muslims and Confucians; while Kamila and Kris took the lead on organizing and implementing the training itself, with the support of Suhadi and Muhammad. The training involved 25 youth and aimed to build mutual trust between Muslims and Confucians and to explore both conflict and integration between Confucianism and Islam in Indonesia.

Objectives

- Explore coexistence between Islam and Confucianism
- Identify the challenges of Confucian-Muslim relations
- Find opportunities for dialogue between Confucian and Muslim communities



Photo: Fred Goddard



Photo: Fred Goddard



Photo: Fred Goddard

Photo: Fred Goddard



Houses of Worship Visits – an Applied Dialogue Experience

The diverse cohort of KAICIID Fellows visiting churches, gurdwaras, mosques, synagogues and temples during their training is a stirring sight, and their open and gregarious nature often inspires dialogue and inquiry among the Fellows and the congregations with whom they interact. The houses of worship tours, which take place during the second and third trainings of the Fellows Programme, are a key part of the Fellows' applied dialogue experience in which the Fellows interact, face-to-face, with people of other faiths and religious traditions in the community outside of a formal dialogue setting.

As part of the Programme, each cohort has the opportunity to experience local houses of worship in diverse countries and contexts, and this exposure facilitates interactions among the Fellows and the communities they visit, which contributes to appreciation, mutual understanding and respect.

The Fellows receive training on conducting such visits to allow them to incorporate visits to houses of worship in their teaching. During the visits, the Fellows are introduced to the leaders of the communities and learn about the history of each faith and religious community in the country. They also receive a briefing on the state of IRD in the host

country before having the opportunity to interact with members of the congregation. The houses of worship are always welcoming, and sometimes the Fellows are invited for a meal.

The Fellows also share their own beliefs and experiences and freely ask and answer questions about one another's traditions and customs. For some of the Fellows, these visits are their first opportunity to interact with the congregations of different traditions and to apply the dialogue methods that they have learnt through their KAICIID training. Many of the Fellows also incorporate houses of worship visits in their own Fellows projects.

Both cohorts of Fellows had the opportunity to visit houses of worship in Colombo and in the Philippines and visited local houses of worship in their final training in Vienna.



The 2016 International Fellows visited local houses of worship in Colombo, Sri Lanka, during their second training. Their first stop was the Red Mosque, one of the oldest mosques in Colombo, built in the early 20th century



Two Fellows, a Muslim and a Christian walk together in Colombo during the tour



During their second training in Mindanao, the Philippines, South-East Asia Fellows visited Saint Peter Metropolitan Cathedral, also referred to as the San Pedro Cathedral or Davao Cathedral



SEA Fellows also visited the Davao Indian Temple in Mindanao. The temple is primarily run by the Sikh community, mainly serving as a Sikh Gurdwara, although it also hosts a small Indian Hindu community



The Fellows removed their shoes out of respect during some of the visits. This is common practice in many houses of worship and is done out of respect and reverence for the sanctity of the temple or mosque



A man lights a candle in prayer. The tour in Colombo concluded with quiet reflection in the garden of the temple complex under a sapling from the Bodhi tree, the tree under which the Buddha sat when he reached enlightenment



The Venerable Acinna, a member of KIFP 2016, looks on while the tour passes the Reclining Buddha. Painted on the walls of the temple are images from Buddhist scripture that serve as educational material for young Buddhists



The Fellows visited the Old Kathiresan Hindu Kovil of Colombo. Like many Hindu temples, the roof of the building is richly adorned as is customary in the Hindu tradition



The Fellows look on during the tour of the historic Red Mosque of Colombo



Ven. Acinna and Hom engage in dialogue during a break in front of the beach



The tour included a visit to St. Lawrence Church, a Roman Catholic church in Colombo



The tour of the Kovil, as they are called in Tamil because of their distinct architecture, was conducted by Jagrat, a Hindu monk who is a member of the 2016 Fellows class pictured here



Photo: KACICIID

During the visit to the Jewish Museum, Rabbi Hofmeister briefed the Fellows on the history of the city of Vienna and the history of Judaism in the city



Photo: KACICIID

The Fellows visited St. Lawrence Church, a Roman Catholic church in Colombo



Photo: KACICIID

In Vienna's first district, both International and SEA Fellows were able to visit Judenplatz, the old square of the city's Jewish district that is now the monument to Austrian Jews who died during the Holocaust



Photo: KACICIID

The tour in Vienna ended with an evening of dialogue and exchange with the congregation of Christ Church



Photo: KACICIID

The tour in Vienna concluded with a visit to Christ Church, where they observed a religious service to commemorate the Advent season



Photo: KACICIID

The Fellows also visited the archeologically preserved foundations of the old Viennese synagogue, where the Rabbi answered questions about Jewish worship and the Jewish tradition

Photo: KACICID



In Christ Church, the Fellows had the opportunity to meet the chaplain and discuss their work as Fellows and his work as a Christian leader in Vienna



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