

# FOOTSTEPS

No.36 SEPTEMBER 1998

COPING WITH CONFLICT

Photo: Richard Hanson, Tearfund

## Conflicts about natural resources

by Scott Jones

CONFLICTS can often arise about access to and control of natural resources like land, water in a stream or well or products from a forest or lake. Such conflicts may result in that resource not being managed in a productive or sustainable way. We usually think of conflict as being negative. But conflict can be used positively – it can bring issues to the surface which can then provide an opportunity to heal wounds, to develop goals and ways to achieve those goals that are acceptable to everyone.

### The causes of conflict

Conflicts do not just occur between different communities, companies and governments, they also occur **within** them. People in local communities are not all the same. Groups and individuals differ in gender, class, caste, clan or tribe, education, age and religion. People may use and depend on the resource in a different way. Each group or individual has different levels or types of power over the access to and control of the resources – some may have very little power.

Companies face pressure from competitors and shareholders. They have to balance the ability to make a short-term profit with the importance of developing sustainable income in the longer term.

Governments also face conflicts of interest. Agriculture, Water and Forestry departments may not always appear to be on the same team as they discuss resource use. Most departments or ministries are short of cash, so staff and

resource shortages can increase the tension.

This may be the situation when a development project or a company arrives. Often their arrival has been planned outside the area of impact, raising old conflicts and creating new ones. Some groups may respond with a 'grab what you



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*Managing conflicts, both local and national, is one of the most important issues in the world today so that youngsters grow up knowing peace and not conflict.*

## FOOTSTEPS

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*Footsteps* is a quarterly paper, linking health and development workers worldwide. Tearfund, publisher of *Footsteps*, hopes that it will provide the stimulus of new ideas and enthusiasm. It is a way of encouraging Christians of all nations as they work together towards creating wholeness in our communities.

*Footsteps* is free of charge to individuals working to promote health and development. It is available in English, French, Portuguese and Spanish. Donations are welcomed.

Readers are invited to contribute views, articles, letters and photos.

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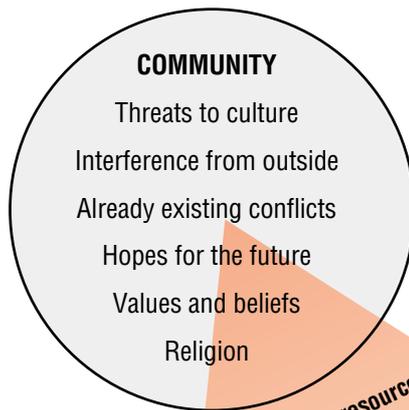
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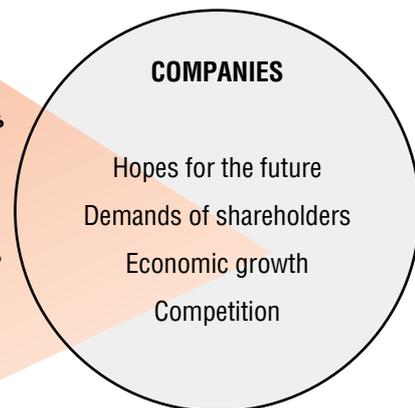


CHRISTIAN ACTION WITH THE WORLD'S POOR

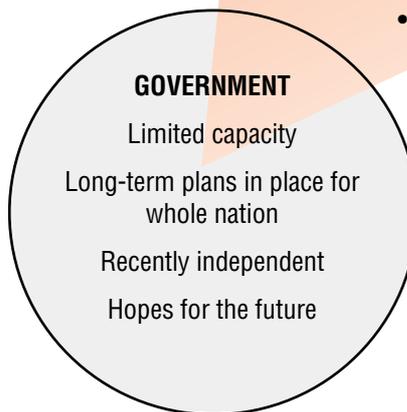
*Involve everyone in the process of discussion.*



Internal and external pressures on communities, companies and governments



- diminishing resources
- increasing population
- ecological change
- rapid transport developments
- information revolution
- technological change
- rapid economic change and developments
- poverty



for the common good – for example physical or economic power, or power that comes from knowledge.

### Approaches to conflict management

There are many different ways of managing conflict – and often more than one will be used.

**Traditional or customary approaches** Every society has its own ways or customs for dealing with conflict. These customs should not be ignored. They can often lead to long-term, sustainable solutions because they are rooted in local values and beliefs. They are generally accessible

can now' approach and rely on force or persuasion. Relationships may worsen and so may the conflict itself. Some groups may seek to exert power and authority over the situation, selfishly or



Photo: Gordon Davies, Tearfund

and people usually have confidence in the result. On the other hand, customary approaches can have important weaknesses. They may neglect some people such as women, minorities and caste groups. They may maintain existing power imbalances. Decisions may be made in favour of a few with local power. They also usually lack written documentation.

**Legal approaches** Legal approaches may be found in the local, customary systems or in wider national government structures. Evidence is gathered, a case is argued and a judgement made that is backed by the law. In some societies the legal approach is almost always used to resolve conflict. Sometimes this approach is adopted too quickly before other ways have been tried. In other situations, people may not have confidence in the legal system, or do not have access, experience or money to use it.

**Force** Physical power is an obvious approach to conflict management. But other forms of power may come from

someone's charm, character or role – they may use their power to persuade others. Force seldom brings success in the longer term and can sow seeds of discontent. Memories of the previous use of force may prevent people moving forward now.

**Partnership approaches** This is a general term for approaches in which people work together, involving everyone in the process. Often it is necessary to involve an outsider to guide the process from the start or at key stages in it. The aim is to reach a fair, long-term outcome that everyone is happy with, in which all sides win. Partnership conflict management generally involves a series of steps. At each step check that all parties agree before moving on to the next step. The steps are described in the diagram in the centre pages.

*Dr Scott Jones is a lecturer and research coordinator at CRDT with experience in forestry, healthcare and conflict management in Africa, India, SE Asia and the Pacific region. Address: CRDT, University of Wolverhampton, Gorway Road, Walsall, WS1 3BD, UK.*



*There has never been a greater need for peacemakers in our troubled world.*



## FROM THE EDITOR

MANAGING CONFLICT is something we all have to do in our own lives. We have all experienced conflict within our families and with work colleagues, usually over small matters, but sometimes over very serious ones. Sometimes we feel we have helped to settle the conflict: at other times we may feel we have made things worse. This issue of *Footsteps* tackles conflict within and between communities. As resources become scarce and life more difficult, so conflicts are likely to become more common. As Tom Houston of World Vision said, 'The main problem in the world today is conflict and the greatest need is for reconciliation in these conflicts. There is no greater contributor to human suffering and no more significant barrier to effective development action than the violent conflicts that are tearing apart communities and societies throughout the world. Since 1945 120 armed conflicts in Third World countries have killed over 20 million people, most of whom were civilians.'

This issue looks mainly at conflict over natural resources since this is likely to be one of the areas of most relevance to *Footsteps* readers. Ian Wallace also examines the need for reconciliation after ethnic conflict in Rwanda. This issue may simply help you to understand some of the causes of conflict. It may help you to raise and discuss issues causing conflict in your own community or work situation. It may even help you see a way to resolve a more serious conflict in your region. There has never been a greater need for peacemakers in our troubled world. As Christians, not only are we all called to be peacemakers but also to teach forgiveness and reconciliation. I hope this issue will help us meet that challenge more effectively.

Staff at the Centre for Rural Development and Training (CRDT) at the University of Wolverhampton have provided most of the content for this issue. They have much experience in conflict management and we are very grateful indeed for their inputs.

Future issues will look at sustainable healthcare, children working for the benefit of others and disability.

*Isabel Carter*



Photo: Nyangoma Kabarole

## Post-conflict reconstruction: Experiences in Rwanda

by Ian Wallace

THE EVENTS IN RWANDA in 1994 had an impact around the world. At Tearfund they caused us to think long and hard about our response both to the needs of the survivors of the genocide and the rebuilding of the social trust that had been destroyed.

### Deep roots

Contrary to what many outsiders believe, it is not simply an ethnic conflict. The two principle ethnic groupings (the Hutu and Tutsi) share language, culture and history and have also inter-married. The roots of the complex conflict run deep in Rwanda's history and involve colonial mismanagement, power struggles, shallow doctrine in the church, unresolved injustice and false beliefs about racial differences. In the years before the genocide Tearfund had worked closely with the church, helping the poor. However, it soon became clear that most of our traditional partners had been seriously affected by the conflict and were not able to respond to the needs which existed.

As we studied what had happened, it became clear that an accurate understanding of the problem was vital to help the Rwandan people escape from the cycle of conflict which has troubled them for many years. Several things appeared significant:

- Any political settlement reached was unlikely to alter the way in which one person regarded their neighbour. The desire for personal revenge would undermine any agreement reached by politicians.
- Only the Rwandans could solve the problems which had prevented them living together peacefully. Our role as outsiders was to stand with them in their time of trouble and help create secure situations where they could look honestly at the events which had destroyed their country.
- For the Rwandan people to work hard at making peace they must believe in a better future and have confidence that some of their hopes (for their children, if not for themselves) would be met for the future.
- For people to make progress in development they must work together within communities.

### Building trust

The difficulty was that for people to work together there needed to be social trust between them. Yet the most damaging consequence of the war was that it had encouraged hatred, resentment and mistrust among ordinary people. We recognised that any response from Tearfund had to encourage the rebuilding of social trust as a priority. The real needs were not financial, but for restoring relationships, addressing the pain in people's hearts as well as their bodies.

We recruited a married couple, Dick and Judy, to visit Rwanda for 15–20 days every two months. They were a couple who had experienced tragedy in their own lives and were able to win the trust and confidence of the Rwandans they worked with. Their instructions were to spend time listening to Rwandan people and to identify and work with Rwandans whom God seemed to be using to bring healing. Their role was to be that of friends and facilitators. The fact that they were only ever visiting, prevented them taking a leadership role. They were also careful not to rush people into finding short-term results but to take a long-term view.

### An exceptional organisation

They quickly identified a local organisation called MOUCECORE as having an important role and formed a close working relationship with Michel, the Director. MOUCECORE became one of the most important elements of our work in Rwanda. It is an exceptional organisation for several reasons:

- It modelled the kind of relationships which it was trying to promote. At first it had just two staff: a Tutsi, male lay-preacher in the Anglican Church, and a female leader (a Hutu) of the women's movement in the Presbyterian Church.
- It was not interested in power and status so was not seen as a threat by others trying to develop their own power and influence.
- Its staff were sufficiently well-known and trusted by those with power to be given freedom to go about their work, yet they were able to relate to people at village level.

Together they travelled the country challenging people about the way they

saw their neighbours. Dick and Judy supported them in this work.

Michel's basic message challenged people to think more deeply about what it meant to be a Christian in Rwanda. He focused particularly on the idea of a new identity in Christ as more important than ethnic identity (2 Corinthians 5:17). In this, Michel was addressing one of the key issues head on, since the threat to ethnic identity was one of the causes of the conflict. Once people began to understand that their identity was not just tied up with their ethnic origin, Michel would challenge them to decide what effect this might have on their daily lives and to live out their new understanding in a practical way. He also made it quite clear that lack of support from others should never be an excuse for not doing what you believe to be right. The result of this 'training' was that small groups of people at village level started to take the initiative to put right what had gone wrong. There were examples of houses being rebuilt for those who had been disabled, of gardens being dug for widows, of people cooking food and taking it to the hospital to feed those who now had no family.

## Supporting local initiatives

As more of these initiatives sprang up, small grants enabled groups to buy the basic tools and equipment they needed. MOUCECORE took on a development advisor to help the groups plan how to use the money most effectively. MOUCECORE administered the grants through a local committee of trusted church leaders. The maximum grant was \$300 and there was an understanding



Photo: Richard Hanson, Tearfund

*Working together to put right what was wrong can help remove the initial tensions between people and help them learn about each other.*

that if the grant helped set up an income-generating activity, the group should 'pay back the credit' by helping someone else with similar needs. A lot of trust was placed in these new groups and in most cases this trust was respected. One group of young people saw that disabled people in their neighbourhood were having a particularly difficult time, so they taught them how to make furniture to sell in the local market. Gradually, both trust and activity began to grow.

After such conflict people find it almost impossible to talk about their hurts and feelings. However, in a programme run by African Revival Ministries the emphasis was put on working together to put right what was wrong. As people worked together, they discovered their 'enemies' had suffered in similar ways to themselves and felt the same hurts. This provided the basis to begin discussion about the pain in people's hearts; discussion which gradually broke down the deep sense of mistrust that had existed. The group later dug and planted the gardens for those remaining in a nearby refugee camp as a way of demonstrating it was safe for them to return home.

The impact of 'reconciliation' initiatives is hard to assess. The critical question is whether there has been a permanent change in attitude towards people previously regarded as enemies. One sure sign of reconciliation is when someone allows their livelihood to become closely tied up with the livelihood of their

*Finding a new identity in Christ is more important than ethnic identity.*

traditional enemy. That is what we have seen within the new groups established by MOUCECORE.

## Lessons learnt...

- People are more important than money in post-conflict reconstruction.
- Key people are those who can bridge the gap between those in power and the ordinary villager.
- Programmes should encourage the growth of social trust.
- Listening is an important way of building confidence and security which will allow deeper issues to be explored.
- Meeting to work together can help remove the initial tensions between people and help them learn about each other. This may lead onto discussions which may not otherwise be possible.
- It is necessary to challenge people to think through their assumptions, particularly about the basis of their identity and the threats they think exist to that identity.
- Responsibility for finding the solution must always remain with the people who are involved in the conflict. The role of the outsider is that of friend and facilitator.
- True reconciliation takes a long time and cannot be rushed.

*Ian Wallace is International Services Group Leader in Tearfund with experience in community development in West Africa and in managing Tearfund's response to the conflict in Central Africa.*



Photo: Richard Hanson, Tearfund



## Rabbit rearing

RABBITS CAN EASILY BE REARED by young people for a profit, helping them to become financially independent of their parents for small items such as books and pens.

Rabbit meat is very nutritious, providing a source of tasty meat which is much cheaper to produce than mutton or beef. They can be kept in small hutches and can eat vegetable matter which is unsuitable for humans. They multiply very fast. Their manure is very good for crops and they may also be combined with fish farming.

I have found in my work as an extension worker that young people have been very successful with raising rabbits, helping needy families.

*Emmanuel Maloba  
PO Box 343  
Fumyula - Busia  
Kenya*

## Gully erosion

THIS PHOTO shows gully erosion in our area. There are many places like this here in Western Kenya. Tons of good topsoil have ended up in the sea because farmers do not know or care enough to take action. ICRAF have helped with training



Photo: Hezron Sande

and assisting farmers here to learn how to prevent soil erosion by preventing overgrazing and covering the soil.

*Hezron Sande  
PO Box 60954  
Nairobi  
Kenya*

**EDITOR:**  
*See Footsteps 24 for one way of controlling gully erosion.*

## Building mud brick houses

I WOULD LIKE TO ADD to the letter regarding building stone houses in Ethiopia, in *Footsteps 33*.

The writer is absolutely correct – the deforestation due to building houses and gathering wood for cooking is dreadful. Stone houses are ideal here in northern Ethiopia, but not for the south where stone is scarce and expensive.

Here in Meki Township, I built a model house of mud and straw bricks. We use soil from ant hills and straw from teff, a cereal crop. The house is still as good now as when it was built five years ago.

The local people follow my example and they are now using the mud and straw bricks for building houses. These houses are very cool for this area as the climate is very hot, dusty and windy. I do hope this may encourage others and help save trees.

*Sister Elizabeth Barry  
Holy Rosary Sisters  
PO Box 43  
Meki, East Shoa  
Ethiopia*

## Christian healthcare and counselling

CHRISTIAN HEALTHCARE and counselling have already made a difference in our hospitals and clinics. But perhaps we could all improve in our counselling ministry.

■ Am I truly **concerned** for the patients? How much? Am I prepared to show the level of my concern? If a patient requires one hour's service by their bedside, am I prepared to stay for two hours or even more?

■ Am I **compassionate** to the patients? To be compassionate means to have a heart full of sympathy. Am I kind enough to my patients? What if the

patient is not co-operative, makes a lot of noise, is very irritating and disgusting, unable to pay the fees or does not follow the treatment? Such patients also require our compassion. Otherwise they may leave before completing treatment. Sometimes patients' relatives or friends may cause unexpected problems. Often caring service speaks more loudly than words, solving problems and reducing tension in its own way with wonderful results.

■ Am I showing **correct** behaviour? Different patients require different kinds of behaviour. It is wiser to wait, watch and behave correctly.

■ Am I truly **committed** to this service? How far am I committed to my own particular job and duty? Am I doing less or more than I could? Am I doing someone else's work? Commitment demands sincerity and faithfulness. A lack of commitment results in slackness, unfaithfulness and then come failure, crime and sorrow.

■ Are my activities truly **Christian**? We must always remember that we belong to Christ and stand and serve for him. In all our activities we must remember and demonstrate that we are Christians.

Christian healthcare demands that we deal not only with people's health, but also with the people themselves, so that they might find true peace which is eternal.

*Rev Dr I N Senapati  
c/o Mrs V S Senapati  
Govt Girls High School  
PO Raja Khariar  
Orissa, 766107  
India*

## Action for Social Assistance in Central African Republic

ACAS are looking for partners, for sincere and lasting collaboration to help in their programme of awareness-raising and care for health patients, taking care of AIDS widows and orphans and the training of leaders within political, religious and trade union clubs and organisations. They plan to establish an ACAS Centre.

*ACAS  
BP 146  
Bangui  
Central African Republic*

## Safe disposal of waste

AS A PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEER in Papua New Guinea, I am concerned to see villagers throwing away modern materials the same way they dispose of natural waste.

I would like to know how harmful it is to burn plastic bags, as I get mixed messages about disposing of plastics. Will burning the bags release dangerous chemicals that might affect villagers? I'd appreciate any advice on how to dispose of these and other waste safely.

*Kathryn Roy*  
PO Box 3804  
Lae, Morobe  
Papua New Guinea

### EDITOR:

*Plastic bags can be cleaned and reused, recycled to make other plastic products or burned at high temperatures in a small incinerator.*

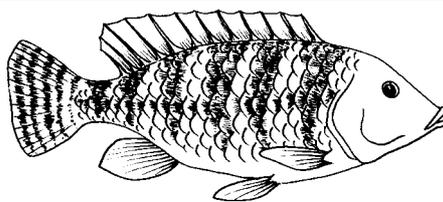
## Highland malaria

WE REALLY APPRECIATED Issue 33 on malaria and I have one comment concerning this. Here we live at an altitude of 7,400 to 8,000 feet above sea level. The most common illnesses are malaria and typhoid. These are confirmed through blood tests. Some, especially the children, have never left the area. Although I have lived in the area nearly sixty years I have only noticed this in the last few years. We call it *highland malaria* though I do not know if that is the correct name.

*Miss G Scott Kellie*  
Administrator, Matumaini  
PO Box 62, Molo  
Kenya

## Fish with other agricultural systems

WE BUILT PIG PENS on sloping ground with canals running down the slope for about 20m. We constructed the canals with bricks and cement to avoid seepage. At the bottom of the slope we dug five fish ponds of medium size. When cleaning the pig pens, the waste products flow down the canals into the fish ponds. These waste products stimulate the growth of algae and water plants for the fish to eat. We observed that the growth rate of our fish increased rapidly and they multiplied rapidly. We also observed that we had to purchase fewer



commercial feeds. Cleaning out the pig pens is also very easy as there is no manure to transport.

*Macmillan Njekeya*  
Soon Christian Fellowship  
PO Box 13, Gutu  
Zimbabwe

## Breast-feeding and soya

I AM WORKING in community development in my church, called the Christian Centre for Community Development Support (CECADEC) in the south of my country, Chad.

An organisation was created in 1994 called Organisation for Promoting Breastfeeding and Soya (APAMIVS). Soya is rich in proteins and is not well-known in the region or even in the country as a whole. The process of gaining official recognition was launched on 1st March 1998.

Through *Pas à Pas* I am launching an SOS to those who would like us to succeed. I am the Technical Adviser to the organisation.

*PEUDEBNE, Zoua Daniel*  
CECADEC, BP 22, Pala  
Chad

## Cancellation of debt for poor countries

DEBT FOR POOR COUNTRIES is a sad reality. It has reached a worrying level with the drastic fall in prices of exported goods. In consequence, the repayment of foreign debt has become a huge burden everywhere. Ordinary people suffer because of this and in some places they have a great struggle to pay heavy taxes. But despite these high taxes they receive inadequate healthcare, poor education for their children and an almost total lack of social security services.

Today the situation has become much more serious with the economic crisis and devaluation. Naturally, people still sell the hard-earned products of their daily labour but the money they receive no longer compensates them for the energy they have used up, nor does it

enable them to provide for the day to day needs of their family. They still look forward to receiving help from governments which are practically destitute because of the tremendous burden of foreign debt.

Reading the article 'A New Way Forward' from Jubilee 2000 in *Footsteps 31* shows us that initiatives to remove Third World debt are the concern not only of pressure groups but also of economists, business men and many Christians throughout the world. We need a great awakening of conscience towards the debt of poor countries as this debt has been a forbidden subject for a long time. Many Africans, Asians and Latin-Americans are beginning to become aware of the situation and are presenting a united front to address the problem. Your article has inspired us to undertake several actions: to make an effort to understand the problem intellectually, to increase our knowledge and to look into the background.

*Maxime Ebogdian*  
BP 44, Nkongsamba  
Cameroon

## Jubilee 2000 update

About 70,000 supporters formed a human chain around the building where the G8, the leaders of eight of the world's leading economies, were meeting in Birmingham in May 1998 and 1.4 million petition signatures were presented. Meanwhile, Jubilee 2000 groups continue to spring up all around the world and are now established in 32 countries.

Groups in Africa can contact The Jubilee 2000 Afrika Campaign, PO Box 1938, Accra, Ghana. Tel/Fax +233 21500718.

Groups in Asia can contact South-South Solidarity, C-17 Community Centre, SDA, New Delhi, India. Fax +91 11 685 5363. E-mail: niloy@solidarity.unv.ernet.in

Groups in Latin America can contact ASONOG, Apdo #2239, Tegucigalpa, Honduras. Tel/Fax +504 30 3546. E-mail: asonog@sdnhon.org.hn



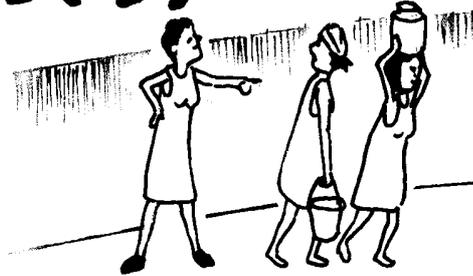
## DIFFERENCES

Discussions and differences can be healthy and productive if met with tolerance.



## TENSIONS

Promises may be broken. People's actions may not be the same as their words. Views become fixed and people begin to criticise their 'opponents' and view them as the enemy.



## DISPUTES

Neither side will admit they have made mistakes in case they are seen to 'lose face' in the eyes of their opponents. They become determined. More extreme positions are taken. Threats are made but not carried out.



## HOSTILITIES

People become convinced that their views are right. Opponents are mocked, scorned and isolated. Some threats are carried out.

## Key skills

in building and maintaining effective communications

- Listening, listening, more listening
- Understanding and describing the viewpoint of others
- Identifying needs, interests, concerns and fears
- Encouraging conflicting parties to listen to each other
- Setting and getting agreement on rules
- Starting constructive discussions (and keeping them going!)
- Creative problem solving
- Building relationships

# Conflict The lo back u

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THRESHOLD

'No way back.' 'They must lose.' People in organisations may be sacked. Force is used, perhaps physical violence.



## ARMED VIOLE

# Conflict: A long road to Agreement

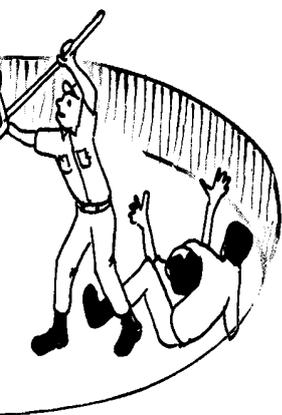
If differences develop into tensions, there are likely to be any short-cuts to agreement. Agreements must start by opening channels of communication and working upwards to reach agreement.

Where are we on the way down?

What is the way forward?

Where do we start on the way up?

OF VIOLENCE?



INFLAMMATION OF CONFLICT?

## AGREEMENT

Everyone agrees. They may agree to keep different views but always to accept the views of others. It may be helpful to have a written and signed agreement for future reference.



By CRDT staff, with ideas used with permission from Frank Oomkes and Richard Thomas. *Developing Cross-Cultural Communication*. Connaught Training.

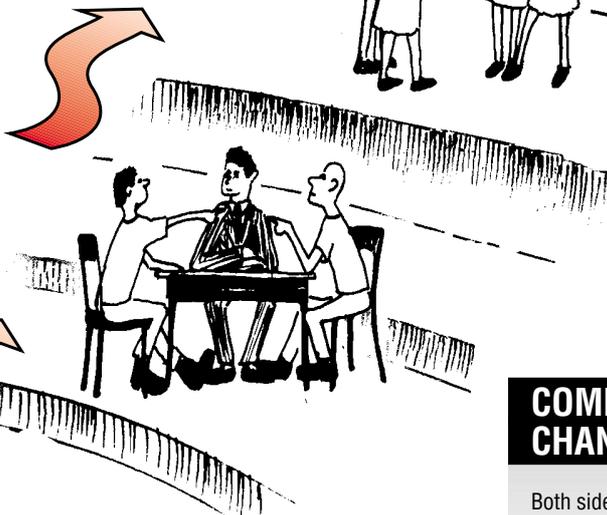
## FINDING SOLUTIONS

An approach is found that everyone agrees on – whether this uses the law, customary methods or partnership. Solutions are agreed and acted upon.



## MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING

People come to understand the views of others and to respect them. The conflict is described (sometimes mapped) to help find possible solutions.



## COMMUNICATION CHANNELS OPENED

Both sides agree that a solution is needed. Outsiders may be needed to help both sides communicate. Ways to move forward are established.

## Key principles in conflict management

- Conflict is often inevitable because different people have different needs, interests, concerns and fears.
- Conflict can be used creatively to develop improved relationships.
- Early intervention prevents conflicts getting worse.
- Focus on the **problem**, not the **people**.
- Focus on underlying needs, not immediate demands.
- Build on people's experiences.

Force may run its course until one party 'wins' or all are exhausted. Outsiders may intervene with force to bring violence to a halt.

## How people respond to conflict

*Sometimes role play can help people think about how they are responding to conflict.*



Photo: Richard Hanson, Tearfund

GROUPS OF PEOPLE IN A CONFLICT SITUATION each have their own interests or **goals**. But how they respond to conflict depends also on how important they feel it is to maintain a **relationship** with the other group or groups involved and on how much power they think they have. What are the different ways in which people respond?

**Withdrawing** If people feel their goals are not important and also that it is not important to maintain good relationships, they may respond to conflict by withdrawing. They stay away and stop talking. They may withdraw because they feel the conflict is none of their business. On the other hand, they may feel their involvement will make no difference at all – they feel powerless and helpless, they may lack confidence and find it easier to avoid the conflict. Gandhi and Martin Luther King, however, both used withdrawing from conflict with great effect to make their points of view clear.

**Giving in** People give in as a means of handling conflict if they place great importance on their relationships with

others and little upon their own goals. They want peace at all costs; to be accepted and liked by other people is most important. This may work especially when it means keeping an important relationship. Conflicts may even disappear just because someone stayed friendly. But **giving in may mean keeping silent about the real issues and bottling up hurts and ill-feelings**. Power balances within a community may result in some people having a habit of giving in, perhaps because of other benefits relationships can bring them.

**Forcing** People who overpower their opponents have a low regard for other people. **They do not place much value on relationships with others**. They are

rarely as powerful as they like to believe. 'Winning' and being seen to win is part of the goal. Some people force their goals through because they are in the habit of being on top or because they want to protect themselves from the pain of being wrong. But if someone wins by force, others are being 'forced' to lose. The loser may withdraw, refuse to co-operate or even sabotage the decision.

**Compromising** People compromise if they recognise that they cannot expect to achieve all their goals. They negotiate and bargain, building relationships without it costing either side too much. They recognise the need for both sides to gain something – for the outcome to be seen as 'fair'. But sometimes **the result may be that everyone feels the outcome is unsatisfactory: neither side feels any commitment to the solution**.

**Co-operating** For those who choose to co-operate, personal goals and relationships are important. They believe that people can find new and imaginative solutions to conflict that lead to both sides winning. Just because there is a winner, does it therefore mean there must be a loser? When conflicting groups sit down together to discuss their needs (their goals), often they themselves realise their needs have changed. Perhaps they did not look to the long term. Or perhaps they came to see that everyone gained more by working as partners, rather than opponents.

No single response is the right one. Each depends on the circumstances and the particular relationships. However, co-operating usually holds the greatest promise.

*Sit down together to discuss your goals.*

*Adapted from various sources by CRDT staff.*



Photo: Richard Hanson, Tearfund

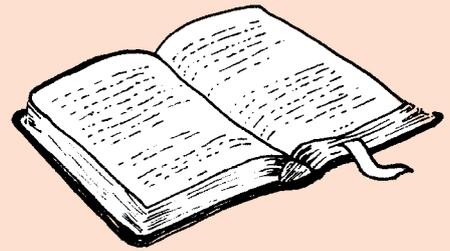
## BIBLE STUDY

# Loving our enemies

by Gladys Mwiti and Benson Kamande

READ ACTS 6 AND 7. Stephen was a young man richly blessed by God and full of power. He performed great miracles and wonders among the people. But some men did not like him. They started arguing with Stephen, but God gave him great wisdom and no-one could stand against him. So, they bribed some bad men to tell lies about Stephen. Finally, he was arrested and brought before the Council (the highest religious court of the Jews) and the High Priest. When young Stephen appeared before this awesome group, he had so much peace that his face shone like that of an angel. After he had given a speech challenging these leaders for rejecting God's salvation, they became angry, chased him out of the city and stoned him to death. As Stephen lay dying, he had no hatred for his persecutors. With love in his heart, his final prayer was, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them.'

- What did God's love for mankind cost him?
- What difference did this love make to the state of mankind?
- Fairness means that those who do wrong must be judged and punished. Does the reading above agree with this? Are there any lessons here for us as Christians? Discuss.



### Meditation

Quietly read I Corinthians 13:4-13. To examine your love for others, replace the word 'love' with your own name all the way through. For example: 'Mary is patient and kind. Mary is not jealous or...' Note down areas in your life that need change.

### Prayer

Lord Jesus, I have not loved others as I should. Remembering how much you loved me and gave up your life for me, I am deeply sorrowful that I have failed to love. Help me from today to share your love with others. Remind me that love is much more powerful than hatred.

### Memory verse

**John 13:34** 'And now I give you a new commandment, love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another, then everyone will know that you are my disciples.'

*Gladys and Benson work with Oasis Counselling Centre, PO Box 76117, Nairobi, Kenya. This study is from a Bible study guide (see page 12).*

# Involving outsiders

SOMETIMES parties involved in a conflict themselves see the need to do something about it, to meet and discuss. They *negotiate* to find a solution.

**Negotiation** This is when the people or groups who are in conflict meet face to face to find a solution which they can both accept.

However, often a 'third party', who may sometimes be an outsider (or team of outsiders), is needed – perhaps to start and to remain throughout the process or perhaps to help in particular stages.

There are many ways in which an outsider can help. Some of the possible roles of an outsider are given below. In any language the words used to describe these roles can be confusing, and sometimes even more so when they are

translated into other languages. Finding the exact word is not important – what is important is that everyone involved has a clear and agreed understanding of what the outsider can do. It is quite possible for an outsider to change roles during the process, but only with the understanding and agreement of all concerned.

### Outsider roles

**Factfinder** Someone not directly involved, who gathers information from all sides and prepares a list of the key issues.

**Facilitator** Someone not directly involved who helps the two sides to meet together for discussion but has no power to make a decision.

**Mediator** Someone not involved in the dispute who talks separately with the people in conflict, with the aim of reducing the strong feelings that have made the conflict so difficult. They help them agree on a way to carry on talking, so that an agreement can be reached.

**Broker** Someone who, though not directly involved in the dispute, has views on some of the issues and

wants the outcome to fit in with those views.

**Arbitrator** Someone not directly involved, who listens to the evidence of each side and then makes a decision that all sides must accept.

**Police Officer** Someone not directly involved who reminds each side of the law and warns them if they consider breaking the law. If necessary they will force people to obey the law.

**Judge** A judge is outside the dispute and hears the evidence from both sides, supervises the proceedings of a court and makes a judgement according to the law.

*NB Sadly, in many situations both judges and police may be biased or open to corruption.*



## Thy Word... a Lamp and a Light

A bible study guide towards peace, healing and reconciliation

by Gladys Mwiti and Benson Kamande

Oasis Counselling Centre

A collection of ten thought-provoking Bible studies on themes such as hope, forgiveness, repentance, peace, freedom and unity. The Bible study on page 11 is taken from this booklet. An excellent source for learning and reflection. Oasis have also produced a study guide for Rwandan pastors, *The 'Kairos' for Rwanda* in French and English.

Order copies from...

Oasis Counselling Centre

PO Box 76117

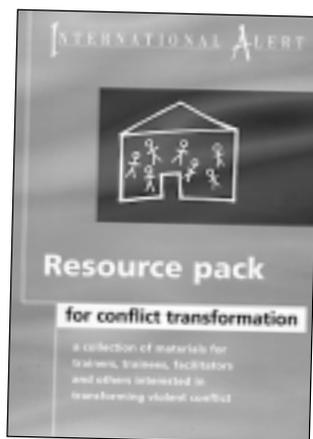
Nairobi

Kenya

## Resource Pack for Conflict Transformation

A collection of materials for trainers, trainees, facilitators and others interested in transforming violent conflict. This pack contains five main sections:

- An introduction to conflict transformation to improve understanding of conflict and its prevention, resolution and transformation

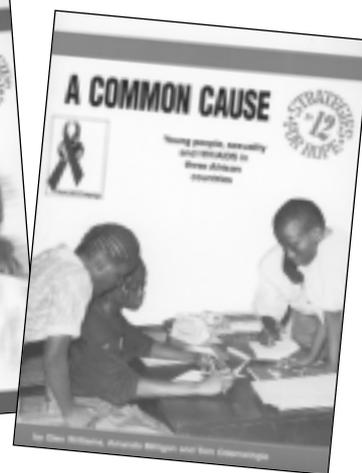
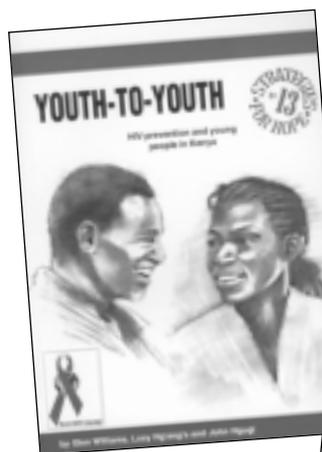


- An analysis of the nature of conflict
- Ideas for content in capacity-building workshops
- The process and planning of capacity-building workshops
- Notes on further training materials.

The resource pack comes in a large folder and costs £34.45 (US \$55) including postage and packing. It is only available in English from:

IT Bookshop  
103-105 Southampton Row  
London  
WC1B 4HH  
UK

Fax: ++ 171 436 2013



## A Common Cause

### Youth-to-Youth

Strategies for Hope Series

The youth of the world are at greatest risk from the HIV infection. Though young people between 15 and 24 make up 20% of the world's population, 60% of all new HIV infection occurs within this age group. The two books tell of how local community-based initiatives in four African countries are helping young people to make better-informed decisions about their sexual behaviour.

*A Common Cause* looks at case studies of successful programmes in Botswana, Nigeria and Tanzania. *Youth to Youth* is a vivid account of how three youth-led NGOs and a football club in Kenya became involved in HIV prevention work.

Copies of these books are available free of charge to organisations in sub-saharan Africa. Otherwise they cost £3.25 each including postage and packing. Available from...

TALC  
PO Box 49  
St Albans  
Herts, AL1 5TX  
UK

## New booklets from Studio Driya Media

### Caring for the Elderly at Home

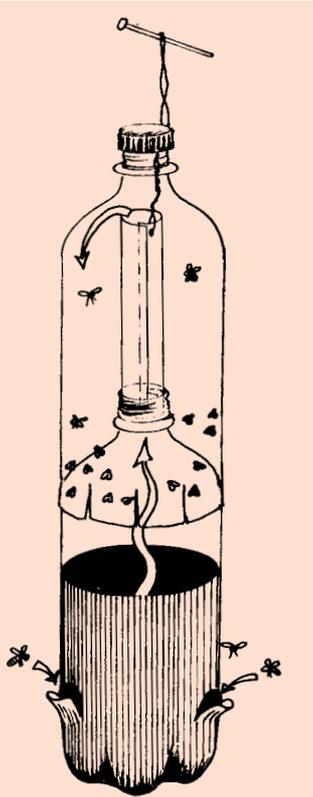
This booklet provides simple guidelines to help families in dealing with the common health problems of elderly people. It covers subjects such as preventing accidents, exercise, nutrition, illnesses, dying and caring for a bedridden person at home. This is available in English and Indonesian.

## A useful fly trap

SO MANY DISEASES can be spread by flies that an effective and practical fly trap would be very useful. Meegan and Morley have designed a simple trap which can catch 200-300 flies a day and is made out of plastic bottles.

The lower bottle is painted with a dark paint to keep out the light and two entry holes are cut near the base. Some smelly bait to attract the flies is placed in the base. Goat droppings are suggested. The upper bottle has the base cut off and is pushed firmly onto the lower bottle. Cut out a piece of square plastic from another bottle, roll it into a tube and push it into the top of the lower bottle to connect the two. Hang the trap up. Flies will enter through the base, feed on the bait and then fly towards the light and become trapped. Once the flies are dead, simply open the trap, shake them out (for chickens to eat!) and reassemble.

Taken from *The Lancet* Vol 349, 1997, p886.



## Sterilising seed beds

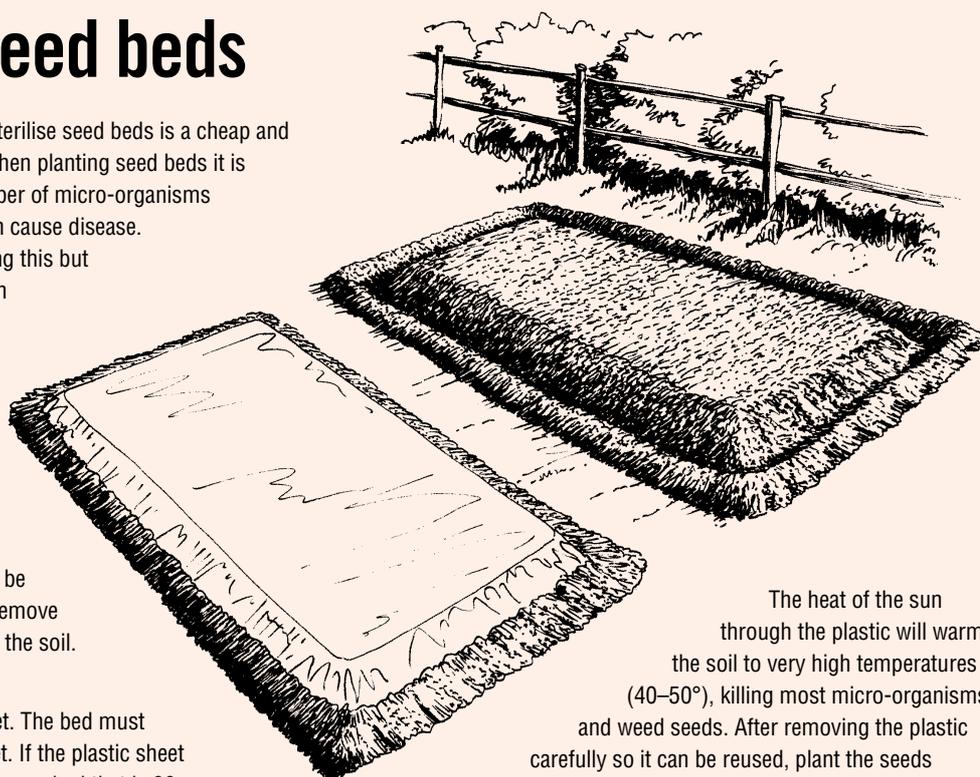
USING THE HEAT OF THE SUN to sterilise seed beds is a cheap and simple method of sterilising soil. When planting seed beds it is very helpful first to reduce the number of micro-organisms found naturally in the soil which can cause disease.

There are chemical methods of doing this but they are expensive and may result in pollution.

Solarisation is a technique developed in Israel in 1974. It uses plastic sheets to cover the soil to be prepared as a seed bed.

### Method

- First prepare carefully the area to be used as a seed or nursery bed. Remove stones and rubbish, dig and level the soil.
- Water it very well.
- Cover it using a clear plastic sheet. The bed must be narrower than the plastic sheet. If the plastic sheet is 120cm wide, for example, prepare a bed that is 90cm wide. Bury the edges of the plastic in a small trench and cover them with earth to hold the plastic in place.
- Leave the plastic covering the soil for five sunny days. If there are cloudy days, leave it covering the soil for longer.



The heat of the sun through the plastic will warm the soil to very high temperatures (40–50°), killing most micro-organisms and weed seeds. After removing the plastic carefully so it can be reused, plant the seeds immediately to gain the maximum benefit. You will notice that there is a higher rate of germination (so you will need fewer seeds) and better growth.

Information on *desinfestacion de semilleros* sent in by Leyder Ruiz and Jorge Giraldo of IMCA, Buga, Colombia.

### Farmer Experimentation

This well-illustrated booklet looks at how to encourage experimentation among groups of farmers so they can better judge new methods or crop varieties. Again, it is available in Indonesian (single copies are free) and in English for US \$4.00.

Order the Indonesian versions from

*Studio Driya Media*  
Jl Rajamantri Tengah IV #12  
Bandung 40264  
West Java  
Indonesia

E-mail: [ybm-sdm@indo.net.id](mailto:ybm-sdm@indo.net.id)

and the English versions from

*World Neighbours*  
4127 NW 122 Street  
Oklahoma City  
OK 73120-8869  
USA

### Eye Diseases in Hot Climates

by John Sandford-Smith

This is an updated edition of an excellent and detailed guide to eye care written in clear English. It provides comprehensive and practical information on all aspects of eye care in the tropics. Highly recommended for medical staff at all levels. With 352 pages, its price has been kept low with generous financial support. Available at £9.10 including postage and packing from TALC (address on page 12).

### Women's Health Exchange

This is a new eight-page newsletter which aims to provide information on

women's health. It is produced by the organisation responsible for the excellent *Where there is no Doctor* series. It is available in English and Spanish, free of charge. Highly recommended.

Order from:

*The Hesperian Foundation*  
1919 Addison Street #304  
Berkeley, CA 74704  
USA

E-mail: [hesperianfdn@igc.apc.org](mailto:hesperianfdn@igc.apc.org)

The Hesperian Foundation also have grants available to any grassroots health groups wanting to make their publications accessible to local people with few or no literacy skills.



## Case Study

# 1

# The tree with healing properties

by Scott Jones

THE FORESTS OF SW CAMEROON are a valuable natural resource. There are many conflicts of interest among and between local people, government agencies and companies. One example is about the harvesting of a useful tree called *Prunus africana*. A European company uses the *Prunus* bark to make a medicine to treat a type of cancer. Local people earn money by supplying the company with the bark. Demand for the *Prunus* bark is high and rapid harvesting threatens its survival.

In one area a long-standing conflict was deepening among villagers, the company and the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MINEF). Staff from a government project were working in the area to manage the conflict. The goal was for everyone involved to reach agreement on how to obtain the benefits from harvesting *Prunus* without completely destroying it, damaging the environment and being angry with each other.

## Describing a conflict

Build up a description of the conflict if possible with all the conflicting groups together. It usually helps to write the description down on paper; but don't do this if illiterate people will feel left out. If appropriate, draw pictures and maps to show the areas of conflict.

- What is the issue?
- Which individuals and groups are involved? Don't forget to include those who may have withdrawn or whose voice is not being heard.
- What is the viewpoint of each party?
- What are the needs, hopes and concerns of each party?
- What is the history of the conflict, of past misunderstandings and relationships?
- What power does each party have?
- What solutions to the conflict does each party have?
- What solutions may be acceptable to everyone?

The conflicts were intense – there seemed to be no way out. Some people were very angry and used force, even physical violence, to get their own way, ignoring the rights of others. Some people lacked confidence and withdrew from any confrontation.

### The first meeting

We begin at a village meeting to which interested villagers came. The meeting was run by a three-person team from the government project. The purpose of the meeting was to agree a 'village' approach to the next meeting when the company and government ministry would be present.

The meeting started promisingly but soon became heated – it was clear the village was not united. Three main sections of village opinion appeared: the elders, the women and the youths. Each group had different ideas, their own opinion leaders and quiet people. It was clear there were deep conflicts between the groups, not just about the *Prunus* harvesting. Whilst most shared the goal of gaining income from the *Prunus* without over-harvesting it, mistrust and misunderstandings were common.

The project team called for a temporary break in the meeting. They then met separately with different groups and individuals. The team listened, came to understand people's viewpoints and offered suggestions. Tempers cooled as some common ground was established. The village meeting was restarted and progressed well. The villagers did not

reach a united position to present to the company. But they did agree that, before this was possible, they had to solve their own problems between elders, women and youths. They also agreed that each person would try to understand others' points of view and to think creatively to find ways forward. The meeting ended but for several days the team continued to meet with village groups.

### The second meeting

The second meeting took place two weeks later. The villagers, a company representative and two government officials were present. The project team again led the meeting but this time they were not neutral: they had an interest in a particular outcome – sustainable management of the forest resources for the benefit of the community. They had stopped being mediators and had, in fact, become brokers (see page 11).

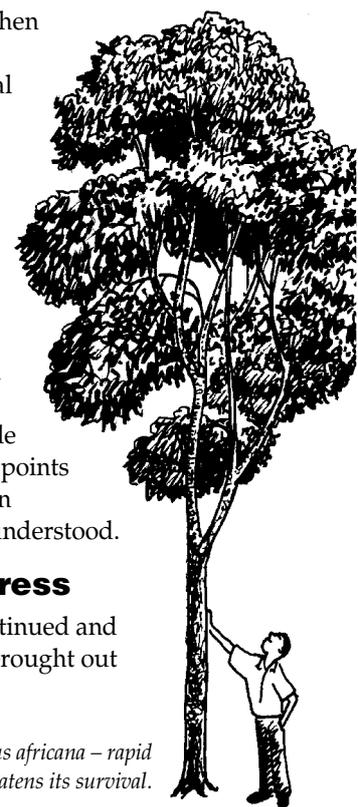
The meeting started badly when several participants arrived late. Each group presented its position and these were discussed. Heated arguments emerged and some participants walked out.

There were two main difficulties. Firstly, the divisions within the village were still very obvious. Secondly, people had high expectations of the meeting. The team called for a break for tempers to cool and for small group discussions to take place. When

the meeting restarted, its goal was changed to one of simply trying to understand others' points of view and concerns. Agreement or solutions would have to come later, after people checked that all points of view had been expressed and understood.

### Slow progress

Discussions continued and concerns were brought out



*Prunus africana* – rapid harvesting threatens its survival.

into the open. How much bark could be harvested? By whom? How was payment to be calculated? Who would get the money? How much should go to village funds? At times, the debate became heated again. The team skilfully kept the agenda under control.

Final agreement was not reached but progress was made. The meeting had several important outcomes. In spite of the anger and strong emotions, communications had been maintained.

Everyone felt a commitment to finding a solution. Everyone had expressed their point of view and had begun to understand the viewpoints of others. The real issues, some of them previously hidden, had been brought out into the open. Everyone agreed to continue with more carefully timetabled objectives – aiming towards a final agreement.

*Discussions during the second meeting in Cameroon.*



Photo: Scott Jones

## Case Study

# 2

## Conflict and watershed management

by Vidya Gorakshkar

THE WATERSHED OF A RIVER includes all the land which drains into a river, the upland and wooded areas where streams begin, as well as areas nearer the river itself. Managing this watershed area may involve soil and water conservation, afforestation, fodder, animal husbandry, fuelwood, community development and indeed most aspects of rural life. Some villages in the Ahmadnager District of Maharashtra State in India are participating in the Indo-German Watershed Development Programme implemented by an NGO called Social Centre.

To take part in the programme, an entire community must follow three principles: a ban on free grazing, a ban on tree felling and *shramdaan* (the contribution of two days free labour each month). As in any community and programme, there are conflicts – conflicts between individuals, households and groups with different interests, and conflicts between institutions such as the village, the NGO and government.

A study was made to understand areas of conflict and ways of managing conflict. When villagers were asked, they all suggested that force should never be used to manage conflict because it just makes everyone think that the conflict has been resolved. In reality, because the conflict is not really settled, it is likely to erupt in another form.

Villagers were also unhappy about using the law to resolve conflict. Going to court

– for example, for a boundary dispute – is time-consuming and expensive and does not ensure justice. It involves outsiders who may never really understand the local issues.

The customary method used in the area is *panch paddhati*. Traditionally five

respected members of the community were called to analyse the conflict and give a decision that the conflicting parties had to follow. This social system has fallen into disuse in recent years and villagers felt it was of limited benefit today – although building on this local approach through training has proved useful.

The system used at present is agreement-building. The Village Watershed Committee, which is made up of representatives of all the geographical locations and interest groups, calls a village meeting. The issue is discussed, misunderstandings are cleared up and a decision is made, acceptable to both conflicting parties. Care is taken not to put to one side those who oppose the final decision but to involve them in the process.

*As a postgraduate student at CRDT, Vidya Gorakshkar carried out research funded by the UK Department for International Development into conflict management in Maharashtra.*

*Vidya and villagers discussing conflict management.*



Photo: Scott Jones

# The Bead Game

*An example of the sort of data that can be gathered on sensitive issues while allowing participants to share information anonymously.*

## Questions

Questions	yes	no	% yes	% no
1. Have you ever heard of STDs?	15	5	75%	25%
2. Can HIV be transmitted by sharing food with someone who is HIV+?	1	19	5%	95%
3. Do you feel at risk of contracting HIV?	4	16	20%	80%

## a useful evaluation tool

by Siri Wood

IT IS DIFFICULT to collect data to evaluate HIV/AIDS education programmes. Working with people who have low levels of literacy is particularly challenging, because written questionnaires cannot be used and people are hesitant to reply honestly in oral interviews.

CRWRC project staff in Senegal developed a game technique to evaluate participants' knowledge, attitudes and practices before and after educational sessions about AIDS. This tool helped us gather data on sexual practices while allowing participants to share information anonymously.

The game uses small, numbered cloth bags. Coloured beads are given to participants. A series of questions to which the answer is either 'yes' or 'no', are read out. For each question, a participant responds by placing a bead in a numbered bag which is passed around the room by a facilitator. A red bead is 'no' and a green bead is 'yes.'

This technique allowed participants to respond anonymously to questions such as: 'Do you talk with your children about sex?' or 'Have you ever had a sexually transmitted disease (STD)?' The participants found the activity amusing, and we were able to gain useful data.

Groups quickly became comfortable with this method.

## Materials

- numbered list of 'yes/no' questions to be read out
- numbered small cloth bags – one per question
- beads (or other small objects) of two different colours (for example: red and green)
- unnumbered bags (one per participant) to hold the beads.

## Directions

- 1 Ask participants to sit in a circle.
- 2 Explain the activity, and give each participant a bag with beads in it.
- 3 Ask participants to answer each question by placing a bead in the numbered cloth bag as it is passed around. Make it clear that their replies are anonymous, as there is no way to know who answered 'yes' or 'no' to

each question. Participants should hide the bead in their hand.

- 4 Read each question aloud to the group, at least twice.
- 5 After each question, pass a numbered bag around to collect each participant's answer. When everyone's response has been collected, close the bag and move on to the next question.
- 6 To find the results, count the beads in each and work out the percentage of 'yes/no' answers for each question.

Envelopes can be used instead of cloth bags. Other small objects such as shells, beans or rocks can be used instead of beads. Yellow beads can be added if a 'maybe/I'm not sure' answer is necessary. To help participants remember how to answer, we used the colours of a traffic light (green for go or 'yes,' etc). We suggest asking a maximum of 20 questions.

The game could be used in all kinds of ways to gather information from participants, especially health programmes that deal with sensitive topics such as family planning, drug/alcohol use, STDs and AIDS prevention.

Do remember to share the results with the participants and discuss what they reveal.

*Siri Wood was project coordinator with the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC) AIDS prevention project in Senegal, BP 5323, Dakar Fann, Senegal.*

*E-mail: giraffe@telecomplus.sn*



*A participant responds to a question by placing a bead in the numbered bag. A red bead is 'no' and a green bead is 'yes.'*

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