

# *Peace-building* within our communities





## **Peace-building within our communities**

by Rachel Blackman

Design: Wingfinger

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# Introduction

In recent years, increasing attention has been given to the value of encouraging peace and reconciliation at community level. *Peace-building within our communities* looks at key issues that should be considered when encouraging peace and reconciliation. These issues have emerged from the experiences of Tearfund partners who have been involved in peace-building activities with communities. The case studies are taken from partners in Rwanda, South Africa, Northern Ireland, Sudan, Bangladesh, India, Peru, Sierra Leone and Colombia.

The aim of this book is to encourage and inspire organisations to see the value of development which is conflict-sensitive. Many of the case studies are examples of effective conflict-focused work where partner organisations set up peace-building initiatives in response to widespread conflict. Their work was focused on the conflict situation and was vitally important. However, it is also important that all organisations, whether or not they are currently working in the context of widespread conflict, do not neglect their role as peacemakers. In a secular sense, peacemaking can refer to the area of political negotiation. However, the Bible tells us that all Christians are peacemakers, so peace-building and reconciliation should be part of our everyday ministry. This is what conflict-sensitive development is about – incorporating peace-building into whatever kind of development work we do. The learning points from partner experience are as useful for organisations wishing to be conflict-sensitive as they are for those in a situation requiring conflict-focused work.

The book first looks at conflict and reconciliation theory and gives the biblical basis for involvement in peace-building. It then outlines learning points from Tearfund partner experience that should be considered when encouraging peace and reconciliation. It also contains many practical ideas for peace and reconciliation initiatives.

## Who is this ROOTS book for?

*Peace-building within our communities* is for anyone who is interested in reading about, and reflecting on, learning points that have emerged from Tearfund partner experience in encouraging peace and reconciliation.

### Points to consider

- If your organisation is already encouraging peace and reconciliation, it may help you to think about other issues to address or activities to carry out.

- If your organisation has seen opportunities to encourage peace and reconciliation, but is unsure about how to get involved, this book will help you start to think about what issues you may need to address and the options you could consider.
- If your organisation does not currently see the need to incorporate peace and reconciliation into your work, then this book will help you think about why conflict-sensitive development is important. You are likely to face conflict situations in the future. These may be violent, or they may be small-scale tensions over a community project. The learning points in this book apply as much to these types of tensions as they do to larger conflict situations.

## How to use this book

You could simply read *Peace-building within our communities* without working through the reflection questions. However, we believe that working through it with others and taking time to reflect on the issues will increase its usefulness. It has been divided into short sections so that you can work through it during a number of sessions:

- SECTION 1 and SECTION 2 look at conflict and reconciliation theory. We suggest that you read these sections individually and then work through them with other people to make sure you understand the theory. In SECTION 2 we have included group Bible studies to help you to think through the biblical principles. You might like to use these Bible studies in awareness-raising seminars to encourage reconciliation.
- In SECTION 3 there are case studies from Tearfund partners to help you see how the learning points work in practice. We hope that these case studies will provide ideas for initiatives that you might like to carry out. After the case studies, you will find reflection questions to help you think about how each learning point relates to your local situation.
- It is important to spend time on SECTION 4. The learning review helps you consider whether your organisation could become involved in encouraging reconciliation. The action plan helps you think about how you would put it into practice.
- In SECTION 5 we list some publications and websites that you might find useful if you are interested in finding out more about peace-building and reconciliation.



# Glossary

This glossary explains the meaning of difficult words according to the way they are used in this book.

<b>arson</b>	when a piece of property is set on fire deliberately
<b>atrocities</b>	acts of violence
<b>bereavement</b>	loss through the death of a loved one
<b>brainstorm</b>	state whatever immediately comes to mind about an issue
<b>confrontation</b>	when two or more parties meet face-to-face, often in an aggressive way
<b>credibility</b>	trustworthiness
<b>demobilisation</b>	changing from a situation of war to peace (eg: by discharging soldiers)
<b>dispute</b>	a disagreement or argument
<b>diversity</b>	a wide range of differences
<b>draughts</b>	a board game
<b>genocide</b>	organised mass killing of an ethnic, racial or religious group
<b>guerrilla</b>	person in an independent armed resistance force
<b>incompatible</b>	not agreeing with each other, to the extent that they cannot co-exist
<b>indifference</b>	lack of interest, concern or importance
<b>nation</b>	a people with a common name, origin, history, culture, customs and territory
<b>perpetrator</b>	someone who is responsible for a crime
<b>psychological</b>	to do with the mind
<b>rebellion</b>	refusal to accept or respond to authority
<b>reconciliation</b>	when relationships are restored, or the process of restoring relationships
<b>reconstruction</b>	building again
<b>re-excavate</b>	to dig again

<b>reintegration</b>	including someone back into a social grouping
<b>state</b>	an area ruled by one government that usually consists of a number of nations
<b>timeline</b>	a tool used to help communities draw what has happened over time
<b>trauma</b>	a physical or emotional wound that creates lasting damage
<b>violations</b>	when rights are ignored

## Acronyms

<b>AEE</b>	African Evangelistic Enterprise
<b>CHASL</b>	Christian Health Association of Sierra Leone
<b>EFSL</b>	Evangelical Fellowship of Sierra Leone
<b>MOUCECORE</b>	Christian Movement for Evangelism, Counselling and Reconciliation
<b>NSCC</b>	New Sudan Council of Churches
<b>RDIS</b>	Rural Development Interdiocesan Service
<b>RURCON</b>	Rural and Urban Resources: Counselling, Outreach and Networking
<b>SPLA</b>	Sudan People's Liberation Army
<b>TEASA</b>	The Evangelical Alliance of South Africa
<b>TRC</b>	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
<b>YFC</b>	Youth For Christ

# What is conflict?

When people think of the word conflict, they often think of wars or violence. However, conflict exists at all levels of society in all sorts of situations. It is easy to forget that we experience conflict every day of our lives.

**Conflict happens when two or more people or groups have, or think they have, incompatible goals.**

## Reflection

- Brainstorm the word *conflict*. What words come to mind?
- Write down as many different examples of conflict as you can think of.
- Group these examples according to the level at which the conflict occurs (eg: personal, family, church, community, ethnic, state, international).

Conflict is a fact of life. God made each of us in his own image, but he also made us unique. Therefore some of our views and opinions will differ from those of others. Conflict often occurs because of a lack of respect for one another's needs and views.

However, in most cases we resolve the conflict. From a personal level to international level, good communication is usually used to overcome differences and to reach an agreement before violence breaks out. At a personal level, we often do not realise we are overcoming our differences.

It is important to remember that conflict can be creative. Conflict is sometimes necessary to bring justice where injustice exists. It can provide an opportunity for new social and political systems to be established and can help to shape the future. However, when conflict becomes violent it will usually do more harm than good. After violent conflict, it is often difficult to see the opportunities for a better future due to the widespread destruction of infrastructure and livelihoods, the breakdown of trust and the suffering caused through bereavement, trauma, grief and anger. It is also likely that such social change could have occurred before the conflict became violent.

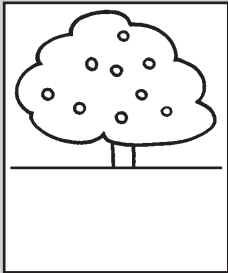
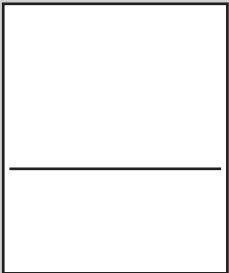
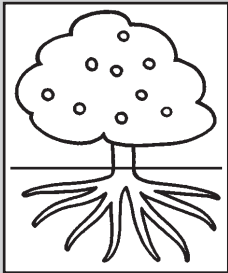
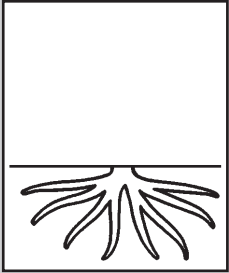
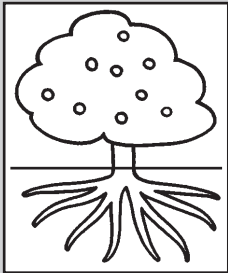
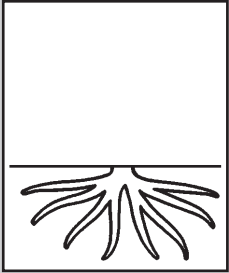
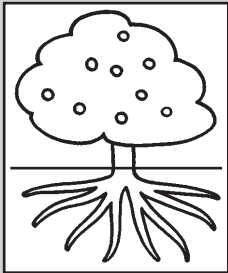
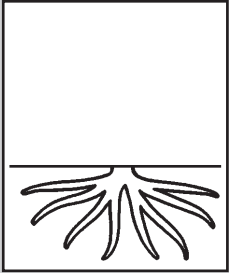
## Reflection

- Think of a time when you have experienced conflict. For example, when you had a disagreement with a colleague or a neighbour.
- How did you deal with it?
- Did the conflict have a positive outcome?
- If so, would the positive outcome have been achieved if the conflict had not occurred?

## Types of conflict

There are many different types of conflict experienced by communities all around the world. We suggest four categories into which most conflicts will fall:

Four types of conflict

	<p><b>1 No conflict</b> Any peaceful community is likely to face conflict sometimes, although communities in this category are good at resolving conflict before it develops.</p>	
	<p><b>2 Surface conflict</b> This has shallow or no roots. It may be due to misunderstanding of goals, which can be addressed by improved communication and the conscious effort of opposing groups to understand each other's needs and opinions.</p>	
	<p><b>3 Latent conflict</b> This is conflict below the surface. It might need to be brought out into the open before it can be effectively addressed.</p>	
	<p><b>4 Open conflict</b> This conflict is very visible and has deep roots, sometimes over several generations. Both the causes and the effects need to be addressed.</p>	

Adapted from Working with Conflict page 5

Communities experiencing surface or latent conflict are those where the disagreement can quickly turn into open conflict. Open conflict can cause more physical, social, psychological and environmental damage than the other types. It affects people who are not involved in the conflict as well as those who are.

## Causes of conflict

Conflict starts because people do not agree about an issue. Issues of disagreement in recent large-scale conflicts include territory, language, religion, natural resources, ethnicity or race, migration and political power. Sometimes there is more than one issue of disagreement. Conflict at community level could be about any of these issues.

While a conflict starts because of an issue of disagreement, there are usually background influences that fuel the conflict. The most important influence is power. Others include culture, identity and rights.

**Power** Power is the ability or capacity to do something or to control and influence what others do. It determines who makes decisions and what decisions are made. Power is often shown when two or more people interact. We tend to think of power as belonging to public figures who make decisions, such as politicians and directors of commercial companies. These people often hold a lot of power compared with the people they represent or the people who work for them and buy their products. There are also differences in power in everyday relationships. For example, age, gender, education, literacy and location all influence the amount of power we have or the amount of power that other people will recognise.

There are many sources of power. Power is not just military strength. It can include money, networks, information, authority, knowledge, security and access to resources.

Everyone has power to some degree. The state of 'powerlessness' occurs when people do not think they have power, when they cannot use their power, or when others do not recognise their power. Many people lack the confidence to influence situations which they believe are outside their control. Helping people to gain a sense of self-worth and self-confidence is the first vital step in the process of empowerment. As people gain such confidence, they become more motivated to take action and work together to challenge power imbalances.

Conflict is fuelled when the balance of power between different groups changes or is very uneven. Perhaps one group abuses their power, wants more power or fears losing their power. Perhaps another group wants to challenge those in power in order to improve the balance of power.

It is important to note that the way in which power is used varies. In a conflict situation, power can be used either to fuel conflict or to help build peace.

**Two types of power** It is useful to distinguish between two different types of power:

Source: *Working with Conflict* page 39

- **HARD POWER** is the ability to command and enforce. Hard power usually represents physical or military power. It is dominant in violent conflicts as opposing groups struggle for victory.
- **SOFT POWER** is the ability to bring about co-operation. This type of power is vital for peace-building.

Reflection

- How many different sources of power can you think of?
- Think about your local area. What types of people or groups have power?
- What sources of power do you have?
- Is it possible for someone to possess both hard and soft power?

## Stages of conflict

### 1 Pre-conflict

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

**TENSIONS** Views become fixed and people begin to criticise their opponents and view them as the enemy. Differences between the groups get worse. The groups become more divided.

When differences develop into tensions there are unlikely to be any short-cuts to an agreement. Once the crisis point is reached, there are no quick solutions.



### 2 Confrontation

**DISPUTES** Neither side will admit that they have made mistakes. They become determined. More extreme positions are taken. Threats are made but not carried out. Supporters may engage in demonstrations or other confrontational behaviour.



### 3 Crisis

Peak of conflict with open hostility and/or violence. Communication between sides often stops.

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

**VIOLENCE** 'No way back'. 'They must lose'. Force is used, perhaps physical violence.



### 4 Outcome

Force may run its course until one party 'wins', another surrenders, a cease-fire is agreed, or all are exhausted. Outsiders may intervene with force to bring violence to a halt.



Adapted from *Footsteps* 36 pages 8–9 using *Working with Conflict* page 19

Opposing groups must open up channels of communication and work upwards to reach full agreement.

**9 Agreement**

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



**8 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.



**7 Mutual understanding**

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



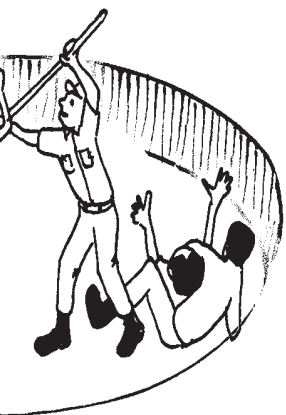
**6 Communication channels opened**

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

**5 Post-conflict**

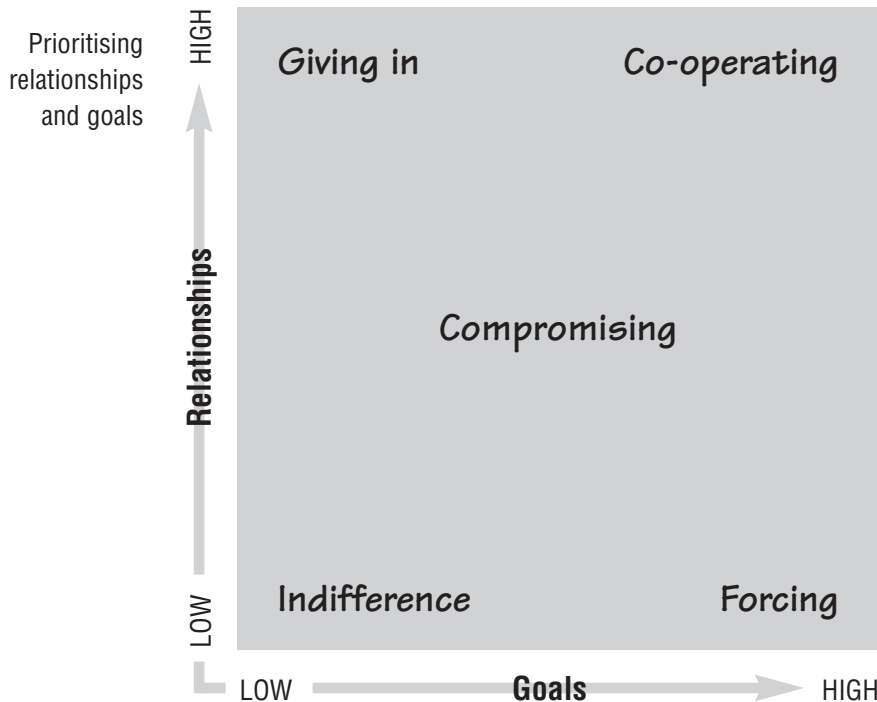
End of violent confrontation

*When one side 'wins', it may not lead to positive change. It may create new injustices which could result in confrontation (Stage 2) once again.*



## How people respond to conflict

People respond to conflict in different ways, depending on how important they feel it is to maintain a relationship with the opposing group and depending on the amount of power they think they have. This can be represented on a grid:



### Good and bad points of each response

**INDIFFERENCE** If people feel that both their goals and relationships are not important, they might simply stay out of the conflict. They might feel the conflict is none of their business. On the other hand, they might feel their involvement will make no difference.

**GIVING IN** People give in if they place great importance on their relationships with others and little upon their goals. They want peace at all costs. To be accepted and liked by other people is most important. Conflicts may disappear just because someone stays friendly. But giving in may also mean keeping silent about the real issues and hurts.

**FORCING** People who overpower their opponents have a low regard for other people. They do not place much value on relationships with others. Winning is part of the goal. Some people use force because they are used to being on top or because they do not want to admit that they might be wrong. What they do not see is that by winning, they are forcing others to lose and that they might only stop the conflict for a short time.

**COMPROMISING** People compromise if they know they will not achieve all their goals. They negotiate, bargain and promote relationships without it costing either side too much. They see the need for both sides to gain something. But sometimes the result is that everyone feels the outcome is unsatisfactory or that neither side is committed to the solution.



**CO-OPERATING** For these people, relationships and goals are important. They believe that people can find new and imaginative solutions to conflict that lead to both sides winning. When conflicting groups sit down together to discuss their goals, they often realise that their goals have changed. Perhaps they did not look at the long term. Or perhaps they came to see that everyone gained more by working as partners, not opponents.

## Reconciliation

The issues of disagreement that start conflict often hide a deeper problem. Notice that each stage of conflict identified on pages 12 and 13 links to the way people relate to each other. Christians believe that broken relationships are at the root of conflict. A broken relationship with God due to sin leads to broken relationships between people. In SECTION 2 we will look at this in more detail.

If broken relationships are at the root of conflict, peace-building must involve reconciliation as well as resolving the issue of disagreement.

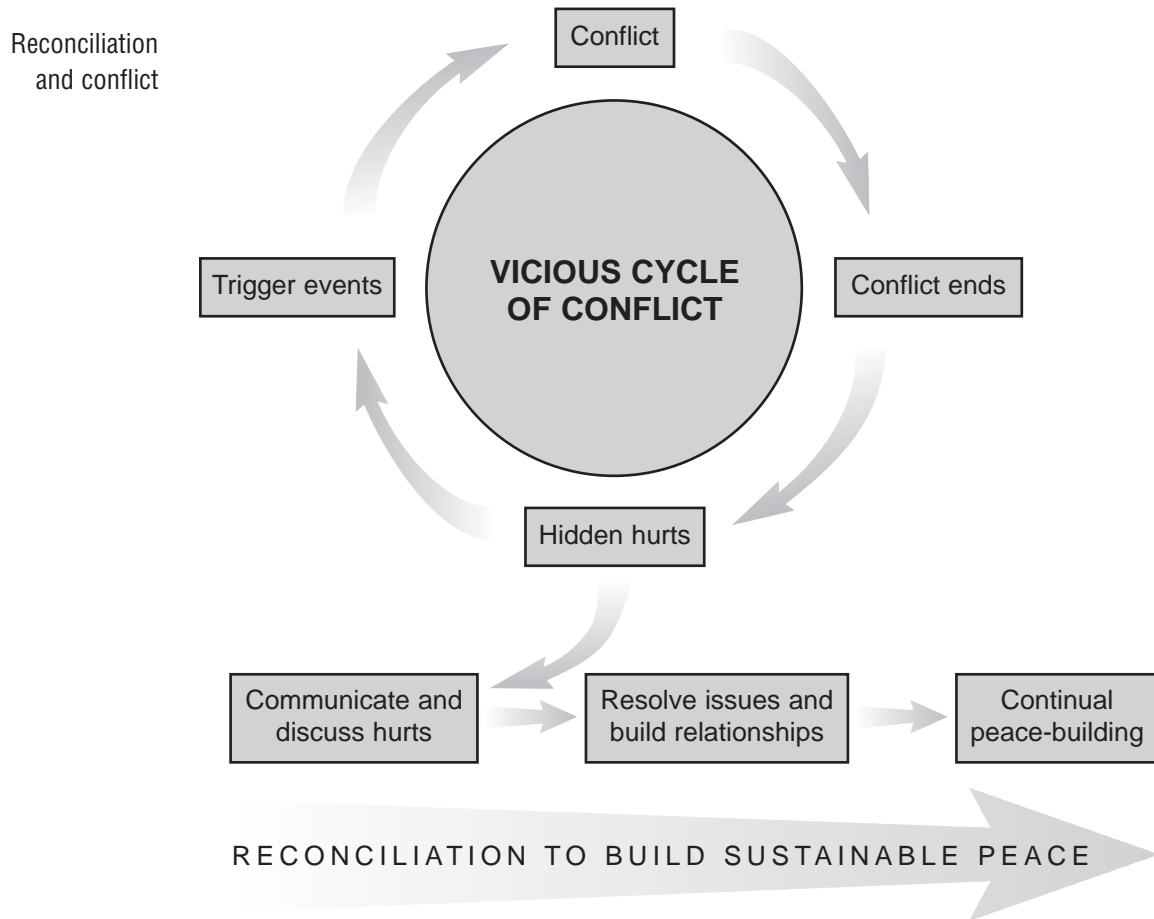
### Why good relationships are important

- If the issue and the relationship are not addressed, then conflict could more easily break out again in the future.
- As with other development work, it is important to deal with the underlying cause of the problem as well as the symptoms, if change is to be sustainable.
- Restoration of relationships can also avoid conflict on other issues in the future, since there is better understanding and experience between opposing groups.

Organisations seeking to work towards reconciling communities need to remember that they cannot resolve the conflict or restore relationships themselves. Our role as organisations is to provide an opportunity for opposing sides to communicate with each other in order to resolve the conflict and to reconcile with each other.

Tearfund partners have been involved in encouraging peace and reconciliation for a number of years. They have a lot of experience for us to learn from. In SECTION 3, we outline the learning points from Tearfund partners' experience in providing opportunities for reconciliation.

The diagram below shows the role that reconciliation plays in transforming conflict. Without concentrating on communication and relationships, it is likely that a vicious circle of conflict could continue. Reconciliation is the key to sustainable peace.



# What does the Bible say about reconciliation?

It is important to look carefully at what the Bible says about reconciliation. This helps to form a basis for the development work we do. This section looks at some biblical principles to help us think through why Christians should be involved in encouraging reconciliation. These principles can also be shared with Christians affected by conflict so that they can be godly in their attitudes and actions during or after conflict.

## Reconciliation with God

Our model for reconciliation is reconciliation with God through Jesus Christ.

The first chapter of Genesis tells us about God's creation. God created the heavens and the earth. God saw that what he was creating was 'good'. He then created man and woman and declared them to be 'very good'. Adam and Eve lived in God's land under God's blessing (v28). People experienced shalom (peace) with God, each other and the environment.

### Shalom

The Hebrew word *shalom* is used in many places in the Bible. It is translated into English as *peace*. The modern English definition of *peace* is an absence of tension or war. But the word *shalom* means more than that. It means a completeness and wholeness with God, with others and with creation.

However, in Genesis 3 we are told that God's good creation was spoiled by sin. The shalom of the garden of Eden was destroyed. People's relationship with God was broken. This resulted in the relationships between people, and between people and the environment being broken.

The rest of the Bible is a story of God's plan to restore his creation – to bring his creation back into a right relationship with him. Isaiah 9 prophesies the coming of Jesus. Verse 6 describes him as the 'Prince of Shalom'. The New Testament adopts the Hebrew idea of shalom as wholeness in God's presence. Shalom, or peace, comes through Jesus' death on the cross. Colossians 1:19-20 says 'For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him [Christ], and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.' Jesus brings people back into a right relationship with God, with each other and with creation as a whole. Revelation 21:3-4 tells us that in heaven, God will dwell with his people, and 'there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain'.

## Reconciliation with others

Christians should be committed to reconciling people to God. In Corinthians 5:18-20 Paul tells us that God has given us the ministry of reconciliation. He calls us 'Christ's ambassadors' to share the message of reconciliation with others. This is our call to witness to those who are not yet reconciled to God through the cross. In the Bible, reconciliation with others accompanies reconciliation with God. Our response to God's saving grace is expressed through our response to others.

The Bible shows that broken relationships are at the root of poverty, marginalisation and conflict. We are living in a world where human rebellion against God has led to self-centredness, which in turn results in exclusion, mistrust, greed and injustice. God's intention is reconciliation and community. There are many places in the New Testament where Christian unity is emphasised, and guidelines about how to live at peace with one another are given.

In the rest of this section we look at some biblical principles in order to come to an understanding about why Christians should become involved in encouraging reconciliation.

### PRINCIPLE 1 **Blessed are the peacemakers**

In Matthew 5:9, Jesus tells his disciples 'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God'. Peacemaking is an essential aspect of the Christian character. Notice the word *peacemakers*. Peace has to be made. It is not something that just happens. It is interesting that our sinful nature makes us peace-breakers. This is shown in today's world as much as in the time of Jesus. Because of sin, people all too easily break the peace. This can be through large-scale wars, destructive conflict between individuals, and sadly conflict within or between churches.

People's relationship with God is restored through the blood of Christ. But in these verses in Matthew 5, Jesus is also showing concern for healing within society. He wants to see restored relationships between people, and he assumes that Christians will be peacemakers. This means that Christians should make peace with each other. Christians also have a role in creating opportunities for conflicting non-believers to meet and reconcile.

By providing opportunities for reconciliation, we can show the reconciling power of the gospel in a visible way. This requires that we ourselves are reconciled with God. It also means that church conflict needs to be resolved. There are many passages in the New Testament that address the issue of church conflict. It was as much a problem in the early church as it is today. Church conflict will not be covered in this book, but it is an important issue, so we provide useful Bible passages and resources in SECTION 5.

Resolving conflicts among Christians ensures that:

- we are acting in the way that God wants us to
- we can identify with others in conflict because we know that we experience conflict ourselves
- we are not accused of being hypocrites
- non-believers can see how Christians work together in harmony
- we point people towards Jesus so that they might be reconciled with God.

## PRINCIPLE 2 **Identity and unity**

The people that we relate to best are usually those with whom we have something in common. God made men and women in his image, but he made us all unique. There are no two people completely alike in the world. We all have a different identity. This is partly due to inherited characteristics such as our ethnicity. It can also be moulded by the people we spend time with or where we work. We may find it easier to get on with people of the same ethnic group, family, language group, age or gender, or with those who have similar interests, such as sport or music.

Reflection

- Think of different elements of your identity (eg: ethnicity, religion, gender, caste, age).
- Think of your best friends and colleagues. What is it about their identity that enables you to relate well to each other?

God loves the idea of groups, such as family and ethnic groups. The desire to belong to a group is part of our human nature, created by God. Sadly, group identity is often abused rather than celebrated. When two groups come into contact, it is often their differences that are emphasised. Group identity is also often used as an excuse for conflict, or to hide other issues.

Yet the Bible tells us that Jesus is able to unite people from different groups and give them a common identity. The terms *family*, *community* and *nation* are all used in the Bible to describe the group of believers (see Galatians 6:10, Hebrews 2:11, 1 Peter 4:17, Genesis 28:3, Genesis 12:2, Genesis 18:18, Deuteronomy 26:19, 1 Peter 2:9-10).

BIBLE STUDY  
**Unity in Christ**

And they sang a new song: 'You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.'  
**Revelation 5:9**

- Read Romans 10:12-13.
  - *What do these verses tell us about God's attitude towards different groups?*
- Read Ephesians 2:11-22. This passage emphasises that all people can have equal access to God, and that his peace affects our relationships with other people. The Jewish people took pride in their circumcision, which was a sign of God's covenant with Israel. The Ephesian Christians were not Jews by birth.
  - *What assurance does Paul offer the Ephesians in verses 11-13?*
  - *What do verses 14-18 say about hostility between Gentiles and God, and Gentiles and Jews? What is the unifying force?*
  - *In verses 19-22, how are the Ephesian Christians described? What vital role does Jesus play?*
  - *How does this passage challenge you in your relationship with other Christians? How does this passage challenge you in your relationship with Christians from a different culture?*
- Read Colossians 3:11 and 1 Corinthians 12:12-13.
  - *What do these verses mean for us today?*
  - *Replace words such as Greek and Jew with the names of groups in a community with which you work.*
- Read Romans 15:5-6. Why does Paul emphasise the need for unity?
  - *Many partners use the phrase 'Unity in diversity, rather than uniformity.' Discuss this phrase in the light of the Bible passages you have just read.*

PRINCIPLE 3 **Love your neighbour**

Many times in the Bible we are called to love our neighbour. As the Bible study below shows, our neighbour is not only the person who lives next door to us or even from the same country.

BIBLE STUDY  
**Loving our neighbour**

- Look at Leviticus 19:18, Matthew 19:19, Mark 12:28-34 and Romans 13:9.
  - *What do all of these verses have in common?*
- The parable of the Good Samaritan explains the command to 'love your neighbour'. Read Luke 10:25-37. The important point that Jesus is making is that we should love each other even across cultural and social boundaries. When the lawyer asks Jesus 'who is my neighbour?' he was perhaps expecting Jesus to answer 'your fellow Jew'. But Jesus answered otherwise.
 

We are not told anything about the man who is attacked in the parable, although those listening were Jewish and would have assumed that he was a Jew. However, a priest and a Levite, who were both members of the religious elite in Israel at the time, passed by the injured man. In the time of Jesus, Samaritans were despised by the Jews. Yet in the parable, it is a travelling Samaritan who sees the injured man and has compassion on him.

- *Who is your neighbour?*
- *Think of times when you have found it difficult to love your neighbour. Why did you find it difficult?*
- *How will your attitude towards others change in the light of this passage?*

## PRINCIPLE 4 **Love your enemies**

It is often hard to show compassion to people we do not know or find difficult to relate to. It is even harder when we are hated or threatened by those we are in a position to help. The Bible's teaching on the issue of how to approach our enemies is quite clear.

### BIBLE STUDY **Loving our enemies**

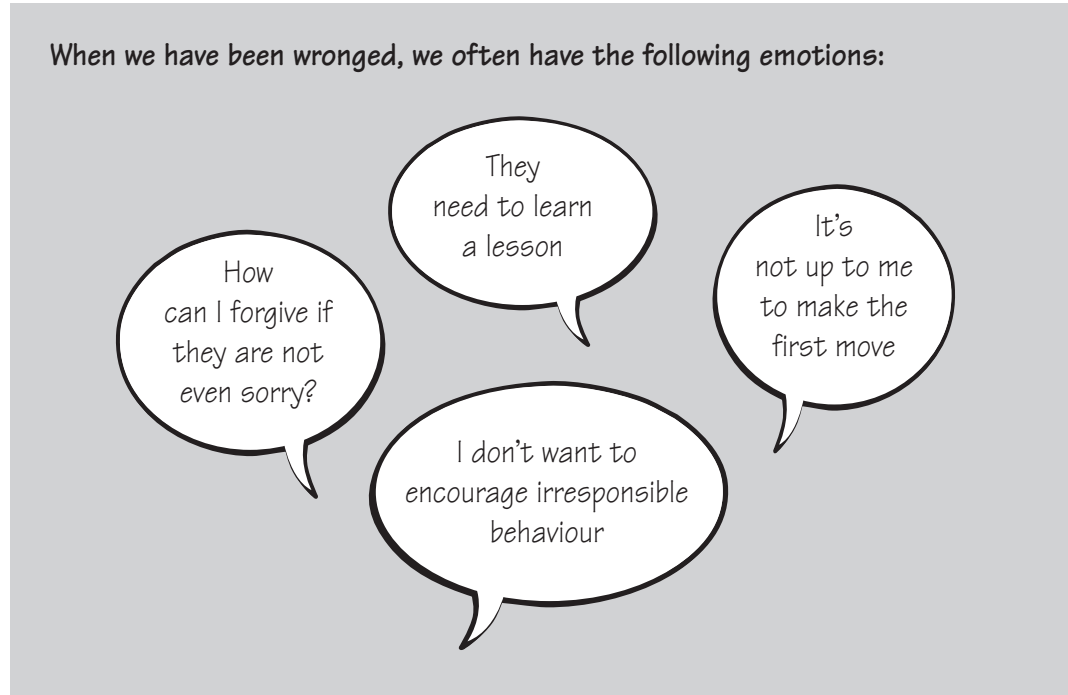
- Read Matthew 5:43-48. Jesus urges his listeners to love their enemies. He uses the example of God, who causes the sun to rise and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous alike. He is talking about unconditional love. The greatest demonstration of unconditional love is God's grace through Jesus Christ. He loves us despite our sin.
- It is very easy to love and spend time with those who love us.
  - *What does Jesus challenge us to do in verse 46?*
  - *What does he also challenge us to do in verse 47?*
  - *What implications does this have for our relationships with people who hurt us?*
- The passage ends with verse 48 encouraging us to seek perfection or completeness – an idea that is very close to the wholeness of shalom. Although we will never be perfect on this earth, we should try to follow God's example by showing grace to our enemies. This means reaching out to them with God's love despite their wrongs against others and against us.
- Other passages to study: Luke 6:27-36 and Romans 12:14-21.

## PRINCIPLE 5 **Forgive each other**

Forgiveness is an important element in reconciliation. For the victim, forgiveness means 'letting go' of resentment because of the pain that has been caused them. It involves finding relief in Christ as the one who bears our pain. In the Bible we are called many times to forgive each other (eg: Matthew 6:15, Matthew 18:21-22 and Colossians 3:13).

Philip Yancey, in his book *What's so Amazing about Grace?*, shows how forgiveness is needed to break the chain of ungrace (lack of grace) which exists in the world. Ungrace is a natural human state, while forgiveness is an unnatural act. Like grace, there is nothing fair about forgiveness. Forgiveness is a very difficult thing to do.

Emotions when we have been wronged



Yancey explains **why** we should forgive:

- Grace and forgiveness are part of God's character, and we are called to be like God.
- One of the lines in the Lord's prayer is 'Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us'. Jesus demands that we forgive in this world of ungrace. (See also Matthew 18:21-35. The key to this parable is verse 33.) By not forgiving each other, we are in effect suggesting that other people are unworthy of God's forgiveness.
- Forgiveness breaks the cycle of pain and blame. By letting go of resentment, the forgiver finds healing. There is also the possibility that the offender might be transformed.

How do we find we are able to forgive?

- Our experience of being forgiven by God helps us to find it easier to forgive others.
- Forgiveness is an unnatural act. We therefore need God's strength and grace to be able to forgive others.

**Justice** Where does justice fit into this principle of forgiveness? Romans 12:17-21 gives us some insight. After reading that passage, Yancey realised that 'By forgiving another, I am trusting that God is a better justice-maker than I am. By forgiving, I release my own right to get even and leave all issues of fairness for God to work out' (page 93).



It is important to remember that forgiving does not pardon an evil act. As Yancey points out, 'Though wrong does not disappear when I forgive, it loses its grip on me and is taken over by God, who knows what to do' (page 93).

Following that passage in Romans, Paul goes on to talk about the authority God has given to governing authorities to protect society. One of the roles of governing authorities is to 'bring punishment on the wrongdoer' (Romans 13:4). Therefore, even though a victim may have forgiven an offender for a crime committed against them, there is a mechanism to bring justice. This mechanism can be useful where there is no forgiveness, because it can stop a cycle of revenge. However, because of humans' sinful nature, no governing authority is perfect. Not all rulers are 'God's servants', and they often abuse their power.

Today's justice systems do not recognise that crimes hurt people in addition to breaking the law of the land. An increasing number of Christians are arguing that justice should aim to help restore the relationship between the offender and the victim. This type of justice is called 'restorative justice'. It is an attempt to personalise the legal process. Restorative justice looks at the needs of the victims, communities and offenders in order to promote the repair of the harm caused by crime and bring reconciliation.

Often, restitution occurs during a restorative justice process. Restitution is the act of compensating the victim for loss, damage or injury. It is not a necessary element in the reconciliation process, but it is a fitting response to forgiveness and repentance. The story of Zacchaeus the tax collector in Luke 19:1-10 tells of how he recognised Jesus as Lord. He realised that his past practice of cheating taxpayers was wrong and he wanted his lifestyle to change. He therefore gave back the money that he had gained by cheating as a response to the forgiveness that he had received from Jesus.

### **Forgiveness and reconciliation**

Forgiveness leads to reconciliation if the victim and offender come face to face to talk about how they feel. There must be forgiveness on the part of the victim, and repentance on the part of the offender. Whether forgiveness or repentance should come first is not clear in the Bible, but they usually happen very close together.

Whichever comes first, forgiveness from the victim is crucial in breaking the cycle of ungrace. The offender may not first ask the victim for forgiveness. It may be that the victim first needs to tell the offender that they forgive them. The unfairness of forgiveness may then cause the offender to think about their actions and to repent of what they have done. The offender and the victim can then come together to be reconciled with each other.



# Learning points

This section outlines learning points emerging from Tearfund partner experience in encouraging reconciliation. Some of these partners have been working during a conflict. Others have been working in post-conflict situations to try to restore relationships within communities.

## LEARNING POINT 1

### Analyse the conflict

Following conflict, there are often very clear structural needs that can be addressed, such as rebuilding infrastructure and helping to restore livelihoods. However, for peace to be sustainable, it is also necessary to look at what started the conflict in the first place. It is important to stand back and analyse the conflict so that appropriate, sustainable strategies can be identified.

#### Conflict analysis

Conflict analysis can be carried out during or after the conflict:

- Getting one group or even both groups together **during the conflict** to analyse it can help them to aim for peace and identify solutions. However, this should be a properly-managed process with clear ground rules so that getting the groups together does not result in greater conflict.
- Analysing conflict with opposing groups or affected communities **after the conflict** can help them to think of ways to address some of the deep causes of the conflict. It can also help to reduce tension. Participants start to see things from the other's point of view and see that everyone has been affected in a similar way.

Conflict analysis helps to:

- understand the history and background of the conflict
- identify all the stakeholders, their perspectives and how they relate to each other
- identify the issues of disagreement.

While it might be useful for an outside organisation to do conflict analysis to identify ways in which it can contribute towards reconciliation, conflict analysis is best carried out with the community. The community then begins to own the initiative to bring peace.

A number of tools can be used, such as a timeline and a conflict tree, which are explained on pages 26–27.

## Key questions for conflict analysis

**During or after conflict**

- What is/was the issue of disagreement?
- Who (individuals and groups) is/was involved?  
Don't forget to include those who may have withdrawn or whose voice is not being heard. It is also useful to identify other stakeholders who are not directly involved (eg: orphaned children). Identifying these helps when developing a strategy for action.
- What is/was the viewpoint of each group?
- What are/were the values, needs, hopes and concerns of each group? Which of these differ and which are the same?
- What is the history of the conflict, of past misunderstandings and relationships?
- What power does each group have?

**During conflict**

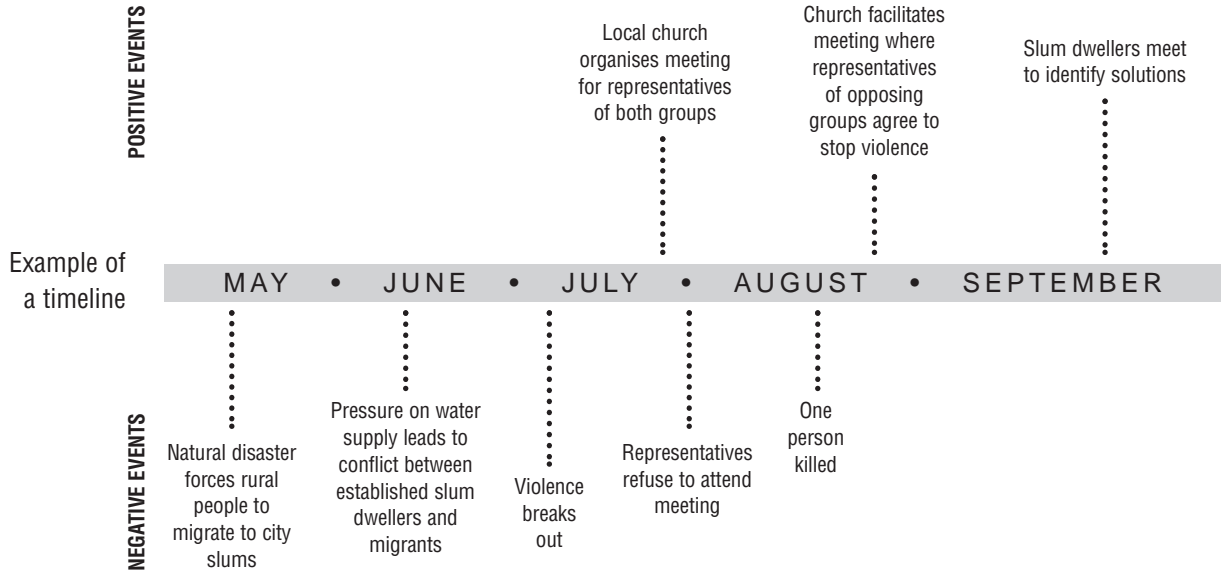
- What solutions to the conflict does each group have?
- Why might some of those solutions be unacceptable to the opposing groups?
- What solutions may be acceptable to everyone?

**Drawing a timeline**

- The timeline helps those affected by conflict to outline the key events surrounding the conflict.
- It enables people coming from the outside to understand the conflict better.
- It helps those affected by the conflict to identify some of the causes.
- It can be carried out during the conflict as a way of analysing it before identifying solutions.
- It can also be carried out after a conflict when planning reconciliation initiatives.

**Method**

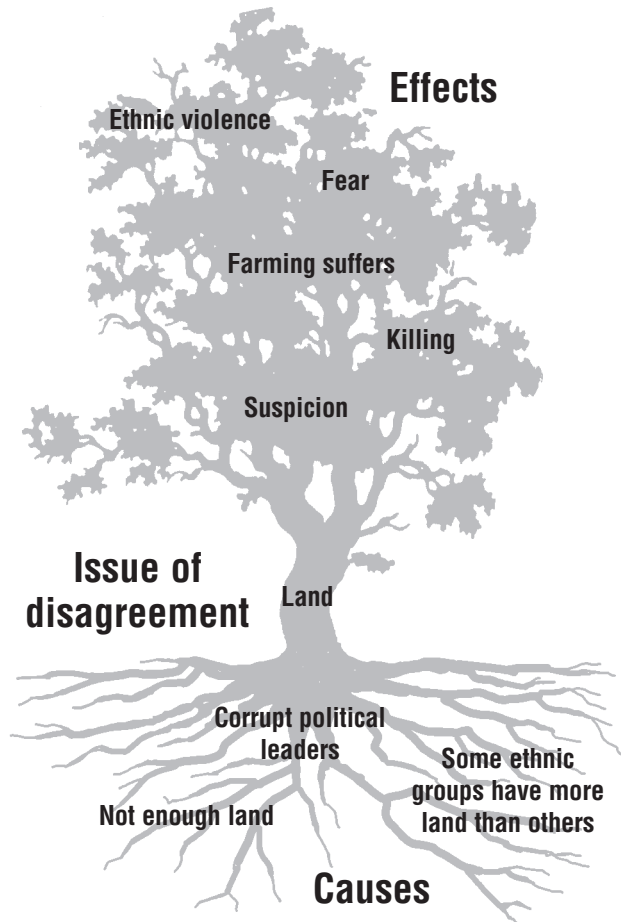
Draw a timeline covering a certain number of years, months or days, similar to the one on the opposite page. Ask those affected by the conflict to agree which have been the key events that have influenced the conflict. If they were positive events, such as a cease-fire or agreement, write them above the line. If they were negative events, such as violence breaking out, write them below the line.



Example of a timeline

### The conflict tree

It can be helpful to draw a conflict tree to help you think through some of the key causes and effects of a particular conflict. The example below is a conflict tree of a dispute over land.



Example of a conflict tree

Adapted from *Working with Conflict* page 29

The case study below summarises a peace-building and reconciliation process that was carried out in southern Sudan. Each stage helped the workshop participants to analyse the conflict and identify solutions together.

### CASE STUDY Analysing and resolving conflict in Sudan

When the government in Khartoum imposed Islamic law on the whole of Sudan, some leaders from the non-Muslim south formed the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA). In August 1991, the SPLA split due to a struggle for power between an officer of the Nuer people and the leader of the Dinka people. The Nuer and Dinka fighters started to kill each other and their families. By 1998, the **New Sudan Council of Churches (NSCC)** decided that something needed to be done to stop the fighting. The NSCC had links with both sides of the divide, so was in a position to bring the two groups together.



Photo: Richard Hanson

*The Nuer and Dinka leaders analysed the conflict together to help them identify solutions and bring peace.*

#### The peace conference

The NSCC first held a peace conference for 35 participants in Lokichoggio, Kenya. There were a number of activities:

- Participants drew a map of the local area and put it on the wall. Then they copied the map by putting a piece of rope on the floor to represent the river, and each participant placed their chair where they lived. The participants identified who their neighbours were and therefore the people with whom relationships most needed to be developed for sustainable peace. The wall map was useful later on, as some participants used it when speaking about their experience of the conflict, to point out where various events had occurred.
- The participants discussed how they had resolved conflicts in the past. This encouraged them to use their indigenous knowledge and values to help them decide how to make peace. They also looked at modern conflict resolution practices.
- They analysed the conflict by identifying the causes and stakeholders.
- Participants wrote a list of issues and some proposals for solutions. The issues were divided into six categories, such as missing persons or reclaiming land. The participants were then divided into working groups – one for each category – and they developed proposals for peace. The proposals were then presented at a plenary session, where they were discussed by all the delegates, and amendments were made.

The peace accord was signed or thumb-printed. Each participant was given an opportunity to voice their commitment to peace. They also agreed to help with other peace conferences for other Nuer and Dinka in southern Sudan to ensure that everyone in the region was committed to peace.

- Reflection**
- Why is it important for communities to reflect on the causes of conflict, rather than only looking to the future?
  - How can conflict analysis be done in a participatory way, ensuring that all stakeholders' views are listened to?
  - The case study shows how the participants used the conflict analysis to identify solutions. How was this done so that everyone was involved?
  - What problems might arise when communities come together to analyse conflict? How could these be avoided?

## LEARNING POINT 2

### Look at identity

SECTION 2 on biblical principles for reconciliation looked at the issue of identity, particularly:

- how God made us all unique
- that this uniqueness is often abused rather than celebrated
- that all Christians have a united identity in Christ that enriches all their other identities such as ethnicity, family, gender and age.

#### Identity categories

People affected by conflict need to look at their own identity and their identity in relation to others. They need a chance to step back and think about who they are. Following conflict, some people may fall into one of these categories:

- 1 They want to remain faithful to their group, unwilling to look beyond it.
- 2 They feel pressure from their group to stick to the group identity for fear of being rejected by their own group while not being accepted by others.
- 3 They feel so hurt by the opposing group that they are unwilling to forgive.
- 4 They feel guilty for their involvement in violent conflict.
- 5 They feel guilty for the hurt caused by their group during the conflict, even if they were not involved themselves.
- 6 They feel unhappy being labelled as belonging to one group and being associated with the atrocities it carried out.

This section will look at how Tearfund partners have experienced and dealt with some of these situations.

The case studies from Northern Ireland and South Africa address the first two categories, which involve remaining faithful to the group and feeling pressure from the group to stick to the group identity. As a result of the partners' work, people have stopped seeing group identity as a barrier to reconciliation, but rather consider common issues.

### CASE STUDY Northern Ireland – background history

The current troubles in Northern Ireland go back deep into history. England took control over most of Ireland between the 1200s and 1600s. The Irish population in the north of Ireland were forced to live separately in order to keep their own culture and religion (Roman Catholic). In the 1800s there were a number of uprisings by the Catholic Nationalists who wanted greater rights and independence from Britain, and the Protestant Unionists who wanted greater integration with Britain.

In 1921, the British government divided Ireland into the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The British kept control of Northern Ireland, where the majority of the population was in favour of union with Britain. The Catholic minority found that they had little political power, and so the 1960s saw the beginning of the fight for civil rights and complete separation from Britain. Over the next 30 years, there were riots between Catholics and Protestants, fighting between the IRA (Irish Republican Army) and British Army, hunger strikes, and terrorist activity within Northern Ireland and on the British mainland. Many neighbourhoods of Belfast, Northern Ireland's capital city, built walls to separate the communities as protection from 'the other side'. During the 1990s there was a series of cease-fires and talks, with little success until Good Friday 1998 when an agreement was signed.

The peace agreement, which involves a sharing of power by Nationalist and Unionist politicians has brought some peace to Northern Ireland at political level, although it is very fragile. However, many Protestant and Catholic civilians still live in segregated areas. The two groups have kept their separate identities, with marches through Belfast each year, on dates of historical importance to each group. This often causes tension. There have also been terrorist attacks and small riots since the peace agreement. So despite a vague commitment to peace at state level, the unwillingness of Catholic and Protestants to communicate at grass roots level could threaten the pursuit of sustainable peace.

#### Young people's perspectives

Tearfund partner Springfield Road Methodist Church has been working in inner city West Belfast since the 1980s. The Springfield area is one of the poorest in Northern Ireland with high unemployment, domestic violence, young male suicide, low level crime and poor education. Communities are clearly divided into Protestant and Catholic areas. However, despite this separation, the area has a history of work to try to break down barriers. Springfield Road Methodist Church is working with other organisations to achieve this through the **Forthspring** project.

One Forthspring activity for young people was a photographic and video project. This enabled young people on both sides to show their perspective of life to those on the other side and other generations. The young people were empowered by being trusted with cameras, by learning new skills and by being encouraged by the positive feedback that they received from those who attended the exhibition. Interestingly, many local residents thought that the exhibition put the local area in an unfavourable light, which encouraged them to think about taking action to improve the quality of life.



**CASE STUDY**  
**Seeing life from another perspective in South Africa**

**Youth For Christ (YFC)** KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa ran a camp for young people of all races. The camp took place during apartheid, when children were educated in segregated schools, and so rarely mixed with children of other races. YFC gained permission from the school authorities to run a Student Leadership training weekend for young leaders. On the camps that YFC ran, one of the activities encouraged them to look at their identity. Each student drew a picture of their home and family. They then asked each other questions. This exercise helped them to understand more about their different personal and living contexts. It helped them to learn how to appreciate each other and to accept each other's differences.

**Returning home**

It has sometimes proved difficult for the young people to remember all that they have learnt when they return home from camps, conferences or other activities. It is often tempting to give in to peer pressure and to try to fit into the group identity once again. This is a drawback of setting up initiatives for specific people away from the local area.

- Forthspring, Northern Ireland, set up a youth club for children from both sides. As the summer period of parades and tension approached, people started to throw stones across the peace wall. Young people from the Forthspring Youth Programme were involved in it. They wanted to demonstrate that they were no less Protestant or Catholic just because they were going to the joint youth club.
- YFC, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, considered how to overcome this kind of problem. It realised that new friendships that had been made on student camps appeared strange to family and school friends back at home. So a 're-entry plan' was drawn up. This involved an exchange programme where the young people visited each other's schools for a day. The group also met socially in each other's homes. This enabled the students to support each other and to show the benefits of cross-racial friendships to those around them.

**CASE STUDY**  
**Genocide in Rwanda – background history**

This case study addresses categories 3–6 on page 29, which involve feeling hurt or guilty.

The population of Rwanda is made up of three people groups – Twa (1%), Hutu (85–90%) and Tutsi (10–14%).

The society shares the same language, religion and customs, but there used to be a class distinction, with the Tutsi as the ruling class. Before colonisation, Hutus and Tutsis lived in harmony and there was considerable intermarriage. When the Belgian colonisers arrived, they produced identity cards for the two groups, which put emphasis on their ethnic differences. The Belgian authorities supported Tutsi power and gave them advantages in education and employment. In 1959 there were massacres as Hutus revolted against Tutsi rule. When the Hutus eventually took power at independence in 1962, they took revenge on the Tutsis, killing many and driving a large number into exile. Although the second president, General Habyarimana, wanted 'ethnic pacification', a powerful group linked to his wife's family developed a strategy of genocide to wipe out the Tutsi population.

For many generations, the Rwandan population had learnt to obey orders without question. Unfortunately this meant that the genocide in June 1994 was not challenged by Rwanda's population.

Many ordinary people became involved in the killing. It is estimated that as many as 800,000 people were killed during the genocide. Thousands of people were internally displaced and many fled the country as refugees. The genocide left many deep scars throughout Rwanda and in surrounding countries. Rwanda's political, agricultural, economic, health delivery and education systems were destroyed. Physical infrastructure had been damaged, but key personnel had also been killed. There was deep trauma due to bereavement, guilt, fear, betrayal and loss of property. People found it very difficult to trust each other, which led to a breakdown of relationships, even within families and communities.

### Healing in Rwanda

Following the genocide in Rwanda, the Church needed to recognise that even though it had not spoken out against the genocide, it had a role as God's agent of healing and reconciliation. No one in Rwanda was unaffected by the genocide. Even those who were not directly involved had a family member or friend who was killed. Christians needed healing themselves before they were ready to help others to be reconciled.

Tearfund sponsored some healing workshops run by **African Evangelistic Enterprise (AEE)** for Christians in Rwanda, facilitated by Rhiannon Lloyd. The workshops addressed several concerns:

- Many Christians had been so hurt that they found it difficult to forgive. There was a need for them to understand God's heart.
- Many people needed to overcome cultural barriers in expressing emotion. In Rwandan culture, there is little expression of emotion and shedding tears is seen as a sign of weakness.
- Many people believed that talking about traumatic experiences traumatises people even more.

The workshops focused on Jesus as the pain-bearer. They looked at what the Bible says about forgiveness and Christians' identity as members of God's holy nation. The idea of identificational repentance was introduced, where people repent on behalf of sinful actions of their nation in order to bring reconciliation.

At the workshops, people were encouraged to be very open with each other and to share their hurts. People were given the opportunity to take their pain to the cross. This was symbolised by having a large wooden cross to which people could nail their pain, which was written on a piece of paper. The papers were then taken off the cross and burnt.

Examples of how workshops helped in Rwanda

The following testimonies show how workshops for Christians in Rwanda have resulted in reconciliation at family and community level:

I lost my husband during the conflict. As a result I felt God was useless in my life because he didn't stop the death of my loved one. I also hated the Hutus and could not trust them. When I went to the seminar, one of the facilitators was Hutu and I had no interest in listening to him. I regretted going to the seminar. However, I was surprised when the Hutu facilitator confessed the atrocities of Hutus towards the Tutsis. My soul was healed and I forgave the Hutu. He is now one of my best friends.



I have been an evangelist since I became a Christian in 1983. I belong to the Tutsi ethnic group but married a Hutu in 1986. We lived in Congo in 1994 when the Rwandan refugees came to our area. The conflict between the two ethnic groups was bad in Congo too. Killings started and I was forced to take refuge in Rwanda. My wife was left behind with our four children and two of my brothers. My wife and children fled to the forest.

In Rwanda, my family was cursing me for having married a Hutu, and some advised me to get remarried to a fellow Tutsi. But as a pastor I was very reluctant to make such a decision. I once returned to Congo to find my wife, but was unsuccessful. Eventually she came to Rwanda. When she told me that one of my brothers had been killed and our property looted, I was upset and considered her to be involved in what had happened. Whenever I looked at her, I thought she was a murderer. I started to isolate myself from her. As a pastor I tried to pretend to love her so that the community would not notice.

In December 1996 I attended an AEE workshop alongside pastors in my area. On the second day, we looked at the Father heart of God and the relationship between married people. I started crying out the words 'I love her, I love her.' As part of the workshop we wrote down our suffering on a piece of paper and nailed it to a cross. I did this and it brought me healing. When I returned home I started to put things right again by telling my wife that I loved her.

We are now a happy family. I now have a burden to help others pass through this process of healing.



## Working together

Leading by example is important if others in the community are to reconcile with each other (see LEARNING POINT 7 on page 43). Some partners have therefore ensured that they include representatives of different identities in encouraging reconciliation. For example:

- In Rwanda, MOUCECORE's founder and one of its early employees were from different ethnic groups. This set a good example to the organisations, churches and communities that MOUCECORE worked with.
- MOUCECORE has encouraged Christians from different denominations to recognise their common identity through ensuring that workshops are interdenominational rather than for specific denominations. The body of Christ was therefore encouraged to work together, rather than as sections competing with each other.
- African Evangelistic Enterprise (AEE) in Rwanda has gained credibility among Christians because its work is cross-denominational. As a result, different denominations have started to accept each other and work together.
- One of the peace-building programmes of Tearfund partner Christian Health Association of Sierra Leone (CHASL) trained 150 volunteers as peace promoters. Some of the volunteers are former fighters and war victims themselves. This makes it easier for them to identify with those whom they minister to.

### Celebrating reconciliation

Partners have found it useful to symbolise or celebrate new-found relationships between members of opposing groups:

- Once the peace accord had been signed by the opposing groups at the conference run by the New Sudan Council of Churches in southern Sudan, there was a feast. The fact that the participants were able to sit down together to eat a meal was a sign of forgiveness. The feast was an important activity as it gave the participants a feeling of oneness.
- At the end of the healing workshops established by Rhiannon Lloyd in Rwanda, the participants take part in a feast. Each ethnic group is asked to stand in turn. The other participants then tell them what they appreciate about them, share scripture with them, pray for them and embrace them.

### Reflection

- What initiatives could you use to ensure that identity is celebrated rather than abused?
- Identity is a deep issue. What steps need to be taken to ensure that the focus on identity, which is essential in reconciliation, leads away from conflict and not towards it?

## LEARNING POINT 3

**Reconciliation takes time, not money**

People rarely reconcile quickly. Relationships take time to establish and strengthen. Most work by Tearfund partners to encourage reconciliation has taken place over a number of years, and the full impact of the work has yet to be seen in some cases.

Reconciliation cannot be done for opposing groups. They need to want to rebuild their relationships. Organisations therefore may find they need to invest a lot of time in providing opportunities for reconciliation.

It is important to consider what activities to carry out with the community. If the activities are expensive or long-term, then external funding may be difficult to find, because the impact will not happen quickly or be easy to measure. However, many reconciliation initiatives can be low cost.

Funds eventually run out, but there are many non-limiting resources that organisations and communities possess that are useful and even vital for encouraging reconciliation. These resources do not run out as they are used:

**LOVE** The Bible tells us to love our neighbour and our enemy. There are many different ways of showing love to others – even simply spending time with other people.

**PRAYER** Prayer should underlie any development work we do, because we are dependent on God.

**SKILLS** In addition to using skills, they can also be shared through training – those trained can pass what has been learnt to others and nothing is lost in doing so.

**KNOWLEDGE** Local organisations or churches can share knowledge about a situation or how to solve a problem. Often, this knowledge is gained through past experience or projects.

**CASE STUDY  
Coming together  
to pray in  
Northeast India**

Northeast India has experienced many years of conflict. The conflict is about ethnic identity, but also involves land. In the late 1990s, the conflict became violent. Many innocent people were killed and villages were burnt. Tearfund partners **Evangelical Fellowship of India** (EFI) and **North East India Committee On Relief and Development** (NEICORD) set up a reconciliation process. Peace Prayer Assemblies were held for the different language groups. These meetings lasted around two days. At first, they involved single tribal groups, but later, several tribal groups joined together for the meetings. After a meeting in one community, a peace march was organised.

The pastors set up a Pastors' Forum for Peace where they could discuss the problems. The Forum organised a camp, which was attended by pastors from different denominations. The pastors fasted and prayed and discussed ways to bring peace.

Reconciliation is an ongoing process in Northeast India. Much progress has already been made, but the partners continue in their efforts.

**Reflection** Think of all the different resources (human, financial, social, physical, faith) that your organisation possesses:

- Are there some that you use more than others?
- Are there other resources that you never use?
- Could some of these resources be used more often or more effectively?
- Could you encourage communities to identify the resources that they possess which they could use for reconciliation activities?
- How would you facilitate this?

## LEARNING POINT 4

### **Encourage communication and understanding**

As shown in the diagram on page 12, disagreement can turn into conflict if communication breaks down. Once there is conflict, communication is needed to bring reconciliation.

Effective communication requires that opposing groups have a chance to talk and that each group listens to what the others say. However, it is often easier to talk and give our own point of view than to listen. Listening is more than just hearing. It is about paying attention to what is said.

This is an important issue in encouraging reconciliation. If people are to be reconciled, each person needs to be able to talk about how they have been hurt by the other. This aids healing and helps to build understanding within the community. People are more willing to communicate with others once they have been able to share their feelings and know their views have been listened to.

#### A note on trauma

It is important to recognise that following violent conflict, some people might be suffering from trauma. Trauma is a psychological illness due to the shock of witnessing or experiencing physical harm, death of a loved one, destruction of home or crops. It can happen immediately after an event or months after. Children are particularly at risk.

It is important that people suffering from trauma are helped as soon as possible after the symptoms occur. If left untreated, trauma can lead to depression, alcoholism, drug addiction, schizophrenia or suicide.

Things to look out for are:

- trouble sleeping
- nightmares
- nervousness
- flashbacks
- becoming angry easily and even violent.

You should seek professional help for those suffering from trauma.

**CASE STUDY**  
**Listening to each other in Sudan**

The conference that was held for leaders of the opposing Dinka and Nuer tribes in southern Sudan followed a peacemaking process that involved a lot of listening.

To bring the hidden hurts caused by the conflict to the surface, participants took turns to say what one had done to the other. They were able to speak openly of the pain that they had caused each other. This revealed to the participants that they had all suffered as a result of the conflict and helped the chiefs to understand one another better.

During this story-telling, people were encouraged to listen. Rules were agreed:

- Each person could speak for as long as they wanted.
- No one was allowed to interrupt or argue.
- Everyone would eventually get a chance to speak and would then expect everyone to listen to them.

This exercise helped the participants to analyse the conflict. It also encouraged them to find a way to build peace and bring reconciliation.

**CASE STUDY**  
**Community meetings and discussion groups in Northern Ireland**

**Forthspring** provides a forum for the community to discuss controversial issues. Every year Protestants hold traditional parades through the community to retain their identity. This is a time of tension for the community.

Forthspring therefore organises meetings before the parades to enable community members from both sides to express their concerns to local politicians. The idea is not to resolve the issue of whether there should be parades, but to help the community deal with the tension that the parades create.

## Truth and reconciliation commissions

Truth and reconciliation commissions (TRCs) have been set up by governments after conflict in some countries, such as South Africa, Peru and Sierra Leone. The purpose of the Commissions is to uncover the truth about the cause of violence and human rights abuses that occurred during conflict. Once the truth has been revealed, communities can move on towards reconciliation. The Commissions usually agree to not take legal action in return for the truth. They help the victims and promote healing and reconciliation in order to prevent the abuses ever happening again. Some Tearfund partners have been involved in these Commissions.

**CASE STUDY**  
**Working with**  
**the Truth and**  
**Reconciliation**  
**Commission in**  
**South Africa**

At the height of the racial conflict in South Africa in the 1970s and 1980s, churches set up reconciliation initiatives aimed at promoting greater understanding between the different race groups. For example, they would try to bring different race groups together over meals, in their homes and at conferences. This had a huge impact at a personal level. The ability to spend time together facilitated the building of trust. It enabled those involved to discover new things about each other. The histories of each group were discussed in the light of the histories of the other groups. Racial prejudices were exposed and theologies were re-examined. These friendships were important in keeping alive the vision of a reconciled South Africa during the 1990s.

The **Truth and Reconciliation Commission** which the government put in place after the end of apartheid in 1994 was a larger version of the mini reconciliation events that had been going on in the churches. The Commission gave the people of South Africa an opportunity to hear the stories of both the victims and perpetrators of racial abuse. The hope was that a repeat of those violations of human rights would not happen in the future.

The cross-racial friendships that had been made as a result of the work of the churches before the end of apartheid made possible the next step in the process. In order to move on, there had to be a vision for a unified future and transformation of the structures of racial oppression.

The Evangelical Alliance of South Africa (TEASA)

Tearfund partner **The Evangelical Alliance of South Africa** (TEASA) was set up in 1995. The evangelical churches began to carry out new forms of social involvement. Reconciliation, parliamentary advocacy, democracy and nation-building found a place in the work that evangelicals do together. A reconciliation fund was established as the evangelical contribution to the country's reconciliation. The proceeds are used to fund social reconstruction work among victims of human rights violations. Over 300 victims of human rights abuses have so far been assisted by the fund. TEASA also gave testimony at a Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearing, as a representative of the evangelical churches in South Africa. TEASA apologised for the lack of action by the evangelical church to challenge apartheid.

**CASE STUDY**  
**Working with**  
**the Truth and**  
**Reconciliation**  
**Commission in**  
**Peru**

In the 1980s and 1990s, Peru experienced political violence and human rights abuses due to an internal war between the armed forces and revolutionary groups. During that time, 30,000 people were killed, 600,000 families were displaced, 7,000 people disappeared and 5,000 people were illegally detained as political prisoners. Hundreds of innocent prisoners, orphans, widows and raped women suffered psychologically. The evangelical church in the rural areas suffered greatly as both the army and the guerrillas accused them of participating with the opposition. Hundreds of people were falsely convicted under Peru's harsh terrorism and anti-treason law.



**Peace and Hope**

Tearfund partner **Paz y Esperanza** (Peace and Hope) reviews cases of innocent prisoners and helps to get them out of prison. Since 1996, Peace and Hope's legal service has achieved the release of 200 innocent prisoners. It is also now officially co-operating with the TRC by helping to identify other false convictions.

Peace and Hope encourages evangelical churches to support the work of the TRC. In addition to raising awareness in civil society through publications and radio broadcasts, it provides training for pastors. Peace and Hope also supports public acts of reconciliation, such as a community pardoning illegal acts of its members.

Peace and Hope and other organisations have been pressurising the government to provide financial reparation for innocent prisoners who have been released.

Once freed, many innocent prisoners find it difficult to go back and live normal lives in their communities. Peace and Hope therefore provides support to families as they receive released innocent prisoners. Also, released innocent Christians often find that they are not fully accepted by their churches. Peace and Hope do not take up the case of a prisoner until they have done thorough research and are sure that the prisoner is innocent. However, many churches are still doubtful that released prisoners are completely innocent. By educating the Church leadership about reconciliation, attitudes are beginning to change. Pastors are now encouraging released prisoners and victims of the violence to share their testimonies in churches and in the community. By bringing the issues out into the open, people now have a better understanding of the past 20 years in Peru and are more willing to accept released prisoners, whether innocent or not, back into the community.



*Collecting signatures for peace in Lima.*

Photo: Antonio Escurra

**Reflection**

- Someone once said 'God gave us two ears and one mouth so that we can listen twice as much as we speak.' Why is listening so important for peace-building?
- Why is it important that everyone has a chance to speak, and not just the leaders of opposing groups?
- Are there ways in which you could provide an opportunity for communities to discuss their hurts?
- How could you facilitate the discussion to ensure that everyone has a chance to speak and everyone listens? Are there other factors that you would need to consider during a discussion where hurts are brought out into the open?
- Are there activities at state level that your organisation could become involved in?

## LEARNING POINT 5

**Develop a vision for sustainable peace**

Conflict, particularly if it has lasted for months or even years, can cause those affected to lose hope:

- They might have forgotten what life was like before the conflict began.
- They might also have forgotten what their hopes were back then.

It is important that people have hope for the future. After conflict, the immediate concern is often dealing with the physical, social and psychological devastation that it has caused. People usually feel negative, and do not necessarily give attention to the future until the effects of the conflict have been addressed. But having a vision gives people something to work towards and gives them hope.

Organisations involved in providing opportunities for reconciliation need to have a vision or goal before they can start to think about what activities to carry out. After a conflict it is easy to be reactive and simply try to address the consequences of the conflict. However, it is important to look beyond the immediate needs and effects, towards addressing the deep roots of the conflict in order to avoid it happening again. Having a vision helps people to focus on a positive change, rather than just on problems or difficulties.

Organisations should encourage the communities they are working with to develop a vision for the future. The following panel gives an idea about how this can be done. By identifying a vision, a community can decide what it would like to change now, and also start to think of the future in a positive way. It helps them to see themselves as agents of change.

## Envisioning the community

- Ensure that this activity is carried out with the whole community, not just the leaders.
- Ask the people what they would like the community to be like in 5, 10, 20 or even 50 years time. Will it be peaceful? What will it look like? How will it feel to live there? What will be happening in the community?
- When the participants have had a chance to share their ideas, ask them to draw their vision on a large piece of paper.
- The participants might then want to prioritise the ideas according to what they can achieve the soonest, or what they believe to be more important. This gives them something to work towards. Even if some of the ideas are unlikely to be achieved, it is important that the community has this opportunity to express them as it helps to make people more positive about the future.
- Display or store the vision somewhere so that the community can have access to it, and even add ideas to it.

- Reflection**
- Does your organisation have a vision for peace and reconciliation?
  - If you do not have a vision, spend time working through the previous exercise as a group. Think about what you would like your organisation to aim for.
  - Consider doing the exercise with communities that you work with.

## LEARNING POINT 6

**Develop peace and reconciliation indicators**

In any type of development work it is important to set indicators. Indicators help us to measure the extent to which change is taking place and our objectives are being achieved.

- Indicators ask the question ‘how will we know when we have fulfilled our objectives?’
- Good indicators should be clear and understandable. There are two types of indicator:
  - **QUANTITATIVE** Where the results are counted.
  - **QUALITATIVE** Where words are used to describe how people think things have changed and how they feel about it.
- Either of these types of indicator can be used to measure two factors:
  - **OUTPUT** What a project actually produces, coming from completed activities.
  - **IMPACT** Long-term sustainable changes (positive or negative) relating to either project objectives or unexpected changes.

It is difficult to measure the success of reconciliation initiatives because reconciliation involves relationships and changes in attitude. It is not always easy to see the results. The impact of reconciliation initiatives needs to be measured in terms of better relationships. The impact indicators therefore tend to be qualitative.

For example, if an activity is reconciliation workshops, then an output indicator would be the number of participants who report that their knowledge has increased (quantitative). An indicator of impact might be that those who attended the workshops feel more able to communicate with opposing groups (qualitative). This might then result in members of opposing groups carrying out joint activities in the community, which can be measured in a quantitative way.

The indicators should be identified at the planning stage of any development work. Where possible, they should be identified by the community.

Using Forthspring in Northern Ireland as an example

The impact of Forthspring’s work is measured in terms of life choices:

- Whether young people join paramilitary groups
- Whether adults feel able to freely express differences of opinion with others
- Whether people from opposing sides socialise with each other outside the programmes
- During annual parades, relations between all community members become strained, so a good test is to see how long it takes for the relations to normalise again.

Indicators developed by a community in Wajir, Kenya, following conflict over land and cattle

TYPE OF PEACE INDICATOR	SPECIFIC INDICATORS
Physical and psychological health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low population mortality</li> <li>• Few injuries caused by weapons</li> <li>• High nutritional status</li> <li>• Rejection of acts of violence</li> <li>• Participation in society's affairs</li> </ul>
Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inter-communal management of natural resources</li> <li>• Inter-communal sharing of natural resources</li> <li>• Normal patterns of cultivation and livestock-tending</li> </ul>
Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refusal to be violent</li> <li>• Free assembly of people</li> <li>• Creation of community peace structures</li> </ul>
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Freedom of thought, belief, religion, speech and media</li> <li>• High-level and varied types of social interaction</li> <li>• Inter-marriage</li> </ul>
Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cross-communal political parties</li> <li>• Fair and free elections</li> <li>• Freedom of movement</li> </ul>
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress in addressing economic complaints</li> <li>• Reduction in levels of poverty and unemployment</li> </ul>

Adapted from *Working with Conflict* page 164

It might be helpful to work with communities to identify peace and reconciliation indicators shortly after they have developed their vision (see LEARNING POINT 5). This helps them to measure the extent to which their vision is being achieved. The indicators might not respond to specific project activities, but rather complement their wider vision.

**Reflection**

- Can you think of some peace indicators for your situation? Try to think of indicators that are most likely to show the result of your work, rather than external circumstances.
- Are these indicators easy to measure?
- How will you measure the indicators? This might involve interviews with those involved, looking at government statistics, doing a survey, etc.
- How would you carry out this exercise with a community?

## LEARNING POINT 7

**Value servant leadership**

All types of leaders should set a good example. Unfortunately, as the case study on Rwanda below shows, leaders often forget this responsibility in conflict situations. And even if they were not involved in violence, some leaders find it difficult to set a good example to build peace after conflict. Leaders are normal people with special responsibilities, so they are just as likely as anyone else to find reconciling with other people a challenge. However, experience shows that if leaders are involved in encouraging reconciliation, the rest of the community will follow their example.

For example, Tearfund partner TEASA in South Africa, believes that united leaders have played an important role in the reconciliation that has occurred in South Africa. Black Nelson Mandela worked alongside white Joe Slovo, and black theologian Archbishop Desmond Tutu worked side by side with white Afrikaner theologian Beyers Naude.

Tearfund partners have emphasised the need for servant leadership if reconciliation is to happen, as the following case studies show.

CASE STUDY  
**Finding good leaders in Rwanda**

Before the genocide, the evangelical church in Rwanda did not challenge the impact that politics had on the people. This was because Rwandans were scared to question political authority, and because the emphasis in evangelical churches was on evangelism rather than engagement with politics. Therefore, when the genocide was being planned, the Church did not speak out against it. Some individual Christians did challenge the authorities, but they often paid for it with their lives. In many cases, Christians became involved in the killings, including church leaders. Some church leaders even denied that the genocide had occurred. The credibility of the evangelical church was therefore questioned by Rwandans and the worldwide church.

**MOUCECORE**

Tearfund partner MOUCECORE wanted to find Christian leaders who were willing to analyse the genocide and take responsibility for any damage created by the Church. This involved:

- confronting the past: examining cultural attitudes, values, patterns of behaviour
- examining the problems that led to the genocide: competition and disunity in the Church, power politics, the role of the leader, relationships
- clarifying the Church's mission and developing a vision
- identifying the good from the past: lifting up the stories of faithful Christians during the war and remembering God's presence during that time.

Once the leaders were identified, MOUCECORE provided training for them on the biblical model of servant leadership. Since MOUCECORE's training sessions were for leaders of many different denominations, no particular denomination was led to believe that it had only good, or bad, leaders.

### CASE STUDY Bringing leaders together in Sudan

The 35 participants who attended the peace conference in southern Sudan, organised by Tearfund partner **New Sudan Council of Churches**, included border chiefs, local pastors, senior church leaders and representatives of the two major military factional groups. The aim of the conference was to:

- help reconciliation of chiefs and church leaders
- reflect upon traditional patterns of peacemaking and gain new understanding of conflict management and reconciliation in the modern context
- form and develop strategies for building peace at the grass roots and middle levels of society.

The conference was a great success. The leaders promised to urge their tribes to attend a larger peace conference in the dry season. To mark increased trust between the two tribes, a Nuer chief visited a Dinka chief's home village.



*Peace conferences enabled chiefs of the Nuer and Dinka people to discuss their differences.*

### Reflection

- What makes a good leader?
- Can you think of examples of bad leadership?
- How important is good leadership in encouraging peace and reconciliation?
- What can you do to encourage leaders to lead by example?
- What are the disadvantages of holding workshops only for leaders? How can these problems be overcome?

### LEARNING POINT 8

## Find common ground

Conflict results from different interests, perspectives, belief systems and values. After conflict, it is often difficult to see how the opposing groups can ever interact in a positive way. However, the groups often share common ground.

For example:

- they have had a common experience
- they have all suffered the consequences of the conflict
- the groups have an interest in resolving the conflict
- they may have friends in common
- they may use the same local facilities, such as a school or community centre
- they may also need to interact in some way in everyday life, such as buying and selling to each other.

These points of agreement and contact provide an opportunity – the common ground can be built on so that the outcome is sustainable peace.

### CASE STUDY A common aim in Sudan

A driving force behind the Nuer-Dinka peace agreement in Sudan was that they had a common aim. The fighting between the two groups had meant that they were not able to resist attacks from outside, which was causing famine in the region. However, they realised that if they could resolve the issues they were fighting about, they could stand together to hold off attacks, and both groups would benefit from the food they were able to hold onto.

### CASE STUDY Looking at the benefits for everyone in Bangladesh

Tearfund partner **Koinonia** helped a community in Bangladesh to resolve a conflict over the construction of a canal and road.

Koinonia's strategy is to work for people's participation. Therefore the people were encouraged to participate throughout the planning stage of a canal and road project. The plan was to re-excavate the canal and divert it through the village to make water available for winter irrigation. A mud road, built using the earth from the canal, was to run along the east side of the canal to link with the main road in the area. The whole community agreed with this idea. Many families had been wanting the road for a long time. It meant that they would be able to reach schools and the village market a lot more easily.

However, when the canal digging started, six households on the west side of the canal demanded that the road be diverted from the east side so that it went past their homes, even though they had agreed during planning that it should be on the east side of the canal. But others on their side of the canal wanted the work to go ahead as planned.



Photo: Koinonia

*Digging the canal.*

The dispute got worse when legal notices were served by one of the villagers who wanted the road to be diverted. The legal notices stopped all digging of the canal and construction of the road. The news spread quickly through the village. Over 300 families became furious. They got together and decided to disobey the court order and complete the work themselves for the benefit of all the villagers. They also decided to surround the disputing six families with weapons to ensure that the work could be completed without disruption. The situation resulted in violence that night.

Koinonia needed to take action to resolve the dispute. It wanted to ensure that the conflict was resolved by the people themselves, so it only took on a facilitatory role. The next day a meeting was arranged for all villagers. A member of Koinonia staff made a presentation at the meeting to remind everyone of their participation at the planning stage and what they had all agreed. As well as reminding them of the agreed project activities, such as where the canal and road would be dug, he also reminded them of the environmental and agricultural benefits they had all agreed would be gained from the project.

All those present then agreed that they wanted to complete the work as had originally been planned. The members of the disputing families went forward and asked for forgiveness for their behaviour. They decided to withdraw the law suit.

**CASE STUDY**  
**Providing opportunities to come together in Northern Ireland**

Although there are many issues that create conflict between Catholic and Protestant communities, they also share many social problems. One method **Forthspring** uses to bring communities together is through social programmes. For example, it runs activities such as carer and toddler groups, after-school clubs, senior citizens activities (lunch club, crafts), a women's discussion group, a counselling service and a community café. All these are attended by both Catholics and Protestants. Local community members are encouraged to participate as volunteers and staff as well as simply users of the social programmes.



Photo: Geoff Crawford

*These Catholic girls take part in activities organised by Forthspring which help them to meet friends and keep out of fights on the streets.*

**CASE STUDY**  
**Farming together in Rwanda**

Tearfund partner **Rural Development Interdiocesan Service (RDIS)** encouraged and stimulated the formation of local farming groups that work together on church land. The aim was to show those involved that despite their different ethnicities and experiences during the conflict, they could unite to achieve the same goal of improving their lives. RDIS also ran reconciliation seminars. The following story is just one of the successes of the programme.



Photo: RDIS

*Working together to build a house for an orphaned family.*

One of the many success stories

One woman confessed that she did not like to work in the same agricultural group as a man who was suspected of having participated in the killing of her husband during the 1994 genocide. At first she wanted to organise people to accuse the man and get him put into prison. She wanted him killed. Through a reconciliation seminar, she discovered that God is merciful and compassionate. She learnt that instead of punishing us, he seeks to help and heal, rehabilitate and reconcile, and restore us to the richness of life for which we have been created. Through their daily activities she realised that they shared the same sufferings due to poverty and she became convinced that her best option was to forgive.



**Reflection**

- The African National Congress leader Andrew Masondo once said ‘Understand the differences: act on the commonalities (what people have in common).’ Discuss what this phrase means.
- If you are working in a conflict situation, what common ground exists?
- Could this be used in a positive way for peace and reconciliation?
- What role could your organisation play?
- How could you encourage members of opposing groups and other stakeholders to play a role?

## LEARNING POINT 9

**Build trust**

Even though opposing groups start to communicate with each other, they might not be able to trust each other. Trust is an important element in any relationship. Without trust, it is difficult to value and act upon what other people say. People may find it harder to ‘agree to disagree’ on a difficult issue, and instead allow the issue to become a barrier in the relationship.

Organisations can build trust within communities by running workshops or starting development projects within the community that require groups to work together. Working together strengthens understanding and brings reconciliation. The following case studies outline some of the ways in which Tearfund partners have carried out these activities and what the impact has been.

**CASE STUDY**  
**Playing games**  
**to build trust in**  
**South Africa**

When the young people first met to travel to the Student Leadership training camp, they formed cliques with other young people of the same race. One said ‘We could not believe we were travelling together, let alone staying in the same accommodation.’

*The Student Leadership training camps brought together young people from different ethnic groups.*



Photo: YFC/KZN staff

However, when the young people arrived at the camp, they began to form mixed groups. The activities encouraged the young people to work together. The outcome was a success:

- A black youth carefully guided a blindfolded white youth through a tough series of obstacles.
- A young Indian man fell backwards into the arms of his teammates in a trust game.
- Soon they were hugging each other to show their support for their mixed group and achieve the objectives set.

**CASE STUDY**  
**Training programmes in Rwanda**

MOUCECORE is involved in a number of training activities, including:

- country level training programmes that bring Christians from different denominations together to help them to understand and support each other – these programmes include seminars for pastors and laity, training of trainers and special programmes for women and social development
- participatory community mobilisation through the local church – this leads to conflict resolution and reconciliation and small enterprise development.

The considerable impact of these activities

As a result of these kinds of training programmes, many peace-building initiatives have been started all over Rwanda:

- One pastor who attended a seminar decided to visit his neighbour from another ethnic group for the first time.
- Some women formed a group called ‘burden-bearers’ who meet monthly to help those in need. This might involve giving money for medical expenses, physical labour in gardens for those unable to work, prayer support, meals and visits to those too sick to care for their family.
- After a seminar, the Hutu and Tutsi participants started an initiative to construct and rehabilitate Tutsi houses and to cultivate and plant Tutsi fields with the Hutus’ seeds. The participants built 44 houses with support from Tearfund. This token of love served as a bridge in the restoration of relationships between the two groups.

**CASE STUDY**  
**Sierra Leone – background history**

Sierra Leone experienced protracted armed conflict since 1991, when a group invaded from neighbouring Liberia, accusing the Sierra Leone government of poor governance and corruption. The aim of the group was to overthrow the ruling party. Other issues fuelled the conflict, such as lack of access to mineral resources for a large proportion of the population, and economic problems, which led to a breakdown in social cohesion.

The conflict affected all civilians. Children as young as six years old were conscripted to fight, women and girls were raped, there was destruction of public and private property, arson, murder and forced labour. The result was mass displacement of the population. Despite peace accords in 1996 and 1999, the violence against civilians continued. However, in 2000, the government and other parties took steps to ensure that all involved were committed to the peace process. In 2001, the demobilisation of fighters began, with provision of training in vocational and technical skills to help their reintegration into civilian life.

### EFSL's work to train peace promoters

The **Evangelical Fellowship of Sierra Leone (EFSL)** started a Conflict Management and Peace-building Programme in 1999 to encourage peace between fighters and civilians in communities. They identified peace promoters from local community leaders, including traditional leaders, religious leaders, women's leaders and youth leaders. These were trained in peace-building and conflict resolution. At the end of the workshop they drew up an action plan for promoting peace in their communities. Activities included campaigns on the need for peace, training workshops for community stakeholders, songs and drama, and counselling services to community inhabitants, leaders and former fighters.

The impact of the programme included the following:

- There have been open confessions of violence from fighters during the war.
- People have requested forgiveness. A former fighter said at one workshop: 'I am not known to most people in this community, but some of you may know my parents. They left this town because of the mistreatment we suffered as a family. Life became very hard for us. I admit that I joined the fighting to avenge my parents. I was part of the group that invaded this town. I ask for your forgiveness and I also forgive your leaders.'
- Bad feelings against former fighters has greatly reduced in the communities that have attended workshops.
- Community leaders are admitting their faults in judging community members unfairly and charging large fees for resolving conflicts. A chief in one community said: 'I have encouraged conflict in my area so I could charge fines and provide for my family. I also needed money to pay for what was spent on my crowning ceremonies. What I have learnt in the workshop has brought a complete change of direction in my life.'

EFSL's work to integrate former fighters into communities continues. Activities such as football matches, erecting memorials and holding peace and reconciliation parades are suggested to communities.

### CASE STUDY Easing tension

During CHASL's training programmes, games have been very useful in bringing groups together. Football, draughts, board games and musical instruments have helped to ease tension among those trained.

*CHASL trained peace promoters to encourage peace in their communities.*



Photo: Melvin Kamara

**Reflection** In the peace efforts in Northeast India, this slogan is used: ‘Social peace is necessary for development, but also development is necessary for peace.’

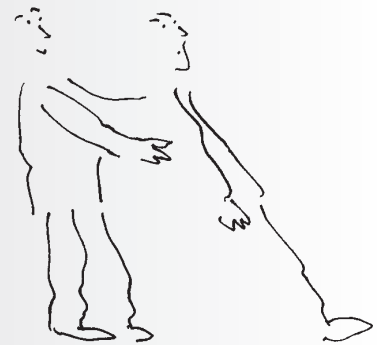
- What do you understand by this slogan?
- Do you agree with it?
- What implications does it have for encouraging reconciliation?

## Trust games

### TRUST GAME 1

Falling and catching

- Divide the group into pairs.
- Person A in each pair stands just less than a metre in front of Person B, with their back to B.
- Person A then leans backwards, keeping their body as straight as possible.
- It is the role of Person B to catch them before they fall.
- Do this a second time, then reverse the roles so that Person A is doing the catching.



This game can be used as an icebreaker, or as an effective team-building exercise. It is harder than it looks!

### TRUST GAME 2

Obstacle course

- Set up a simple obstacle course, using chairs, logs, buckets or tables for example.
- Divide the group into pairs. One person is blindfolded and the other has to guide them through the obstacle course without touching them.
- This game can be made into a race. Either identical obstacle courses are set up or each pair is timed.
- Repeat the game after each pair has had a go so that the person who was blindfolded in the first round now guides the other.



This game can be made even more challenging if the blindfolded person does not see the obstacle course before their turn.

**Reflection** Play the trust games. Talk about how people felt when they took on the two roles:

- **FOR GAME 1** How did you feel when you had to trust someone to catch you? Did you find it easier to trust the other person to catch you the second time? Why was this? How did you feel when you had the responsibility of catching the other person? Did you feel as if the person falling trusted you? How did it feel to change roles? Was it easier to trust the other person when they had already trusted you?
- **FOR GAME 2** How did you feel when you were being guided around the obstacles blindfolded? Were you scared? Did you find it easy to trust the other person to stop you bumping into the obstacles? How did it feel when you changed roles? Did you feel that you were more trustworthy once you knew what it felt like to be blindfolded? If you had a race, did you find it easier to trust each other in order to beat the other pairs?
- What can we learn from these trust games? Consider using them with communities with which you work.
- What happens to a relationship when the trust is broken?
- Is it easy to trust someone again once the trust has been broken?
- At a workshop for Hutu and Tutsi pastors in Rwanda, one pastor asked ‘Why is it that the last ones we trust are fellow Christians?’ Discuss this question in light of what the Bible says about identity (see SECTION 2, page 19).
- Can you think of ways to build trust?
- What could your organisation do to help build trust within communities? Could you build elements into existing projects? Are there separate initiatives that you could carry out?

## LEARNING POINT 10

### Network

Networking is about making contact with individuals and organisations in order to strengthen the effectiveness of your work.

#### Advantages

Networking has a number of advantages:

- Sharing of information
- Sharing of skills
- Sharing of resources
- Working together to avoid duplication
- Strength in numbers when dealing with policy-makers.

Networking has particular advantages after conflict:

- After widespread violent conflict, considerable funding often comes in from outside the country. This can result in competition between local organisations and churches. Networking helps organisations access funding together and ensure that their projects are not duplicated.
- Repairing the damage caused usually involves reassessing the situation in the area affected. By networking, organisations can plan a unified approach, which will be more effective in the long-run.
- Organisations and churches working to reconcile communities are not setting a good example if they are not communicating with other organisations or churches. (See case study on Forthspring, Northern Ireland, below.)

### CASE STUDY Networking in Rwanda

Before the genocide, the Church in Rwanda was not unified. After the genocide, there was much competition between or even within churches for funds and other resources. Most denominations wanted to control their own funds for their own purposes. There was very little sharing of experience or information. Yet the enormous impact of the genocide required a unified approach.

Tearfund put great emphasis on partners networking. This enabled them to learn from each other's successes and failures and build trust. They were also able to avoid duplication and even work together on certain issues. **MOUCECORE** and **RDIS** have together held reconciliation seminars for young people from Rwanda and Congo.

As a result of networking, the Church in Rwanda is now more unified than before the genocide and has been able to take effective action in reconciling communities.

### Networking with other countries

Tearfund partners have also been networking with organisations in other countries. For example, **MOUCECORE** participated in a programme with a similar organisation in Kenya. This helped improve the quality of **MOUCECORE**'s work and enabled **MOUCECORE** to share its experience with other groups. **MOUCECORE** has also been networking with Tearfund partner **RURCON** in Nigeria.

### CASE STUDY Working together in Northern Ireland

**Forthspring** has been set up by four organisations in West Belfast, including Tearfund partner Springfield Road Methodist Church. The four organisations represent both sides: the Methodist church is located on the Catholic side of a peace wall, there are two communities consisting of united Protestants and Catholics, and the Mid Springfield Road Community Association is not Christian. **Forthspring** is dedicated to working with all people, Catholic and Protestant, young and old, within the Springfield Road area. It tries to create an environment that builds trust and relationships within and between communities.

### CASE STUDY The Children's Movement for Peace in Colombia

The lack of social mobility in Colombia has led to growing support for left-wing guerrilla groups. At the other end of the political spectrum are right-wing paramilitary groups, who are sometimes supported by wealthy drug traffickers and large landowners, backed by elements in the army and police. The paramilitaries have targeted human rights workers and those suspected of helping left-wing guerrillas. There is also much drug-related crime. Over 35,000 people have been killed by political or drug-related violence over the last decade. One report estimates that 100,000 children in the city of Medellín are at risk of being killed due to the high levels of violence. There are thought to be 1.8 million internally displaced people, including 700,000 children.

In 1996, Colombian civil society organisations attended a conference about children organised by UNICEF. Before, the organisations had been working separately to protect children in armed conflict. At the conference they decided to combine their efforts by establishing the Children's Movement for Peace. The idea was to work together to increase their impact and to give children a leading role in all aspects of the Movement.



Photo: Jim Loring

*Jessica Menesses, who represented Tearfund partners in the United Nations Special Session on Children.*

Children were encouraged to vote to identify the priorities of the Movement. One of the benefits of having a network of civil society organisations supporting the Movement is that they cover a large geographical area and work at all class levels. As a result, around 2,700,000 children from all areas of the country and different social classes voted. The process helped to ensure that the Movement is owned by the children.

#### The impact so far

The Movement has already had an impact on public opinion and made a significant contribution to political change during the time of President Pastrana. There will hopefully be a long-term impact when the children grow up and create a culture of peace in Colombia.

Various child leaders of the Movement have travelled to different parts of the world carrying the message of peace and sharing their experiences. The Movement has been the model for other children's peace movements that have been formed in other countries. In May 2002, four children from the Movement, including a representative of Tearfund partners in Colombia, attended the United Nations Special Session on Children.

- Reflection** Think of organisations or individuals with which your organisation comes into contact:
- What are the benefits of this networking to your organisation, project or programme?
  - What are the benefits of this contact to the other organisation or individual?
  - Are there any obstacles stopping the relationship working as well as it should?
  - How can these obstacles be overcome?



# Learning review and action plan

Now that you have got to this stage of the book, you may find it helpful to write down what you have learnt. You could do this on your own and then share your thoughts, or you might prefer to brainstorm as a group.

Then look back at the learning points in SECTION 3 and answer the following questions:

- Which ones are most relevant to your situation? Why?
- Could your organisation consider sending a member of staff to be trained in encouraging peace and reconciliation? If so, find out about training centres in your area.
- What practical ideas given in this book might you consider using to encourage peace and reconciliation?
- Do you have any other ideas for practical activities that could be carried out?

It might help to look at the resources and contacts in SECTION 5 as you start to think more carefully about what action you could take.

If you want to put what you have learnt into action, you will need to draw up an action plan. Action plans help you to think through what action you are going to take, as well as how and when it will take place. The questions below might help:

## Action plan

- What have you learnt? List the main points.
- What would you like to see your organisation achieving in the future? (**VISION**)
- In the light of the case studies, do you now believe your objectives need to change? If so, in what ways? (**OBJECTIVES**)
- What can you start to change immediately?
- What can you begin to change over a period of time?
- How are you going to do this? (**ACTIVITIES**)
- What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of including these activities in your work?

Once you have thought through these questions, it may help to draw a table like the one on the following page. This will guide the action you take.

## Example of an action plan

ACTION	PRIORITY (1-5)	ACTIVITIES	INDICATORS	BY WHEN?	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?	RISKS

# Resources and contacts

You might find these resources and contacts useful if you wish to find out more about how to encourage reconciliation. We recommend you order these from a web-based book retailer such as [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) or contact the publisher, although we provide specific ordering details for some of the resources.

## Publications

- *At Cross Purposes: handling conflict in the church* (2000) by Martin Eggleton and David Trafford. Foundery Press.
  - Available from Metanoia Book Service, 14 Shepherds Hill, London, N6 5AQ, UK. Website: [www.menno.org.uk](http://www.menno.org.uk) E-mail: [metanoia@menno.org.uk](mailto:metanoia@menno.org.uk)  
*This book is very practical, giving suggestions about how Christians and churches should handle conflict.*
- *Building Peace: sustainable reconciliation in divided societies* (1998) by John Paul Lederach. United States Institute of Peace.
- *Castrating Culture: a Christian perspective on ethnic identity from the margins* (2001) by Dewi Hughes. Paternoster Press.  
*Dewi Hughes is Tearfund's theological advisor. The last chapter of this book looks at theology and the ethnic conflict in Rwanda.*
- *Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation: a Bible study guide*. Produced by MAP International's East Africa office.
  - Write to PO Box 21663, Nairobi, Kenya. E-mail: [mapesa@map.org](mailto:mapesa@map.org)
- *Footsteps Issue 36: coping with conflict* (1998) by Tearfund.
  - Free. Write to Footsteps Office, PO Box 200, Bridgnorth, Shropshire, WV16 4WQ, UK. E-mail: [footsteps@tearfund.org](mailto:footsteps@tearfund.org) or download from [www.tilz.info/footsteps](http://www.tilz.info/footsteps)
- *Forgiveness and Reconciliation: religion, public policy and conflict transformation* (2001) by Raymond Helmick and Rodney Petersen (eds). Templeton Foundation Press.
- *Healing the Wounds of Ethnic Conflict: the role of the church in healing, forgiveness and reconciliation* (1998) by Dr Rhiannon Lloyd with Kristine Bresser.
  - Available from Le Rucher/Mercy Ministries, Switzerland.  
E-mail: [reconciliation@lerucher.org](mailto:reconciliation@lerucher.org)  
*This booklet was written for participants at reconciliation workshops in Rwanda and later modified for South Africa. It is not a manual on how to run a workshop, but the material is useful for anyone working in conflict.*

- *Making Peace with Conflict: practical skills for conflict transformation* (1999) by Caroline Schrock-Shenk and Lawrence Ressler (eds). Herald Press.
  - Available from MennoLink Books, PO Box 525, Mountain Lake, MN 56159, USA. E-mail: [books@mennolink.org](mailto:books@mennolink.org) Order online: [www.mennolink.org/books/](http://www.mennolink.org/books/)  
*This book explores how to transform conflict by looking at identity, culture, communication, tension and power. It includes family and church conflict in addition to community conflict.*
- *The Mediator*, a Christian magazine published three times a year in English, French and Swahili by Peacebuilding, Healing and Reconciliation Programme (PHARP).
  - Write to PO Box 15324 00100, Nairobi, Kenya or e-mail [info@pharp.org](mailto:info@pharp.org)
- *What's so Amazing about Grace?* (1997) by Philip Yancey. Zondervan Publishing House.  
*See chapters 7–10 about forgiveness.*
- *Working with Conflict: skills and strategies for action* (2000) by Simon Fisher and others. RTC/Zed Books.
  - Available from Zed Books, 7 Cynthia Street, London, N1 9JF, UK. E-mail: [sales@zedbooks.demon.co.uk](mailto:sales@zedbooks.demon.co.uk) Order online: [www.zedbooks.demon.co.uk](http://www.zedbooks.demon.co.uk)  
*A key resource for organisations working to build peace during violent conflict. It looks at conflict theory and tools for tackling conflict.*
- Bible passages that look at conflict in the Church and between Christians:
  - Matthew 5:23-24
  - Matthew 18:15-35
  - 1 Corinthians 1:10-17, 3:1-23, 6:1-11
  - Galatians 6:1-10
  - Ephesians 4:1-16
  - Philippians 2:1-11
  - Colossians 3:1-17
  - 1 Thessalonians 5:12-15
  - 2 Timothy 4:1-5
  - Philemon

**Websites** These are just a few useful websites looking at peace-building and reconciliation. Some of them have links to other useful sites.

- [www.colorado.edu/conflict/abstract.htm](http://www.colorado.edu/conflict/abstract.htm)
  - *Computer searchable abstracts describing hundreds of 'core' books related to general conflict resolution, peacemaking and environmental problem-solving.*
- [www.crimfo.org](http://www.crimfo.org) Conflict Resolution Information Service
  - *You can search for websites, books, training materials and organisations involved in conflict resolution.*
- [www.desarme.org](http://www.desarme.org)
  - *Contains a list of materials, research documents, links and news (in Spanish and Portuguese).*
- [www.disarmament.un.org/rcpd](http://www.disarmament.un.org/rcpd)
  - *United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific.*
- [www.incore.ulst.ac.uk/home](http://www.incore.ulst.ac.uk/home) INCORE (Initiative on Conflict Resolution and Ethnicity)
  - *INCORE was set up to carry out research and policy work for the resolution of ethnic, political and religious conflicts. The website includes the Conflict Data Service, where you can search for other websites related to conflict themes, such as truth and reconciliation, religion and conflict, and children and conflict.*
- [www.international-alert.org](http://www.international-alert.org)
  - *International Alert facilitates dialogue about conflict, facilitates local peace-building initiatives and encourages the international community to address the structural causes of conflict.*
- [www.mcc.org/mcs.html](http://www.mcc.org/mcs.html) Mennonite Conciliation Service, US
  - *This site lists a number of printed resources that can be ordered. It also gives details about how to subscribe to Conciliation Quarterly, a journal of conflict resolution from a Christian peacemaking perspective.*
- [www.peacebrigades.org](http://www.peacebrigades.org)
  - *Peace Brigades International promotes non-violent transformation of conflicts (in English, French and Spanish).*
- [www.respond.org](http://www.respond.org) Responding to Conflict, UK
  - *The site has a detailed page with links to many organisations involved in peace-building.*

- [www.restorativejustice.org](http://www.restorativejustice.org)
  - *This gives information about restorative justice.*
  
- [www.unlirec.org](http://www.unlirec.org)
  - *United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (in English, French and Spanish).*
  
- [www.unrec.org](http://www.unrec.org) United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa
  - *In English and French.*



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