



KARUNA CENTER FOR PEACEBUILDING, INC.

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PROGRAM UPDATE

Fall 2007

Karuna Center for Peacebuilding (KCP) was founded in 1994 to address the growing global challenge of ethnic, religious, and political conflict. Karuna Center works by invitation and in collaboration with local and national organizations, including civil society groups, non-governmental organizations, government representatives, educational and religious institutions, and regional peacebuilders. Karuna Center is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization.

Current Programs

- **Afghanistan** – In September 2007, Karuna Center partnered with the Initiative for Inclusive Security on a six-day multi-sector training seminar in Kabul for women parliamentarians, government officials, and civil society leaders, titled *Securing Afghanistan: Women's Vital Contributions*. The program focused on building broad-based coalitions to address security challenges and culminated in a policy forum held at the Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs that brought together more than 60 Afghan leaders and 17 international policy makers.
- **Nepal** - Karuna Center, in partnership with a Nepalese partner, the Institute for Conflict Management Peace and Development, is leading a year-long multi-sectoral peace leadership program in 2007. Work in 2006 included trainings on peacebuilding and human rights for HURON, a Nepalese human rights NGO, and on citizen participation in the new constitutional process for the NGO partners of the Canadian Cooperation Office. Support for an inclusive constitutional reform process and the establishment of pluralistic, democratic institutions is much needed in this critical period following the decade-long Maoist insurgency.
- **Senegal** – *Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution with Key Constituencies in the Casamance*. Karuna Center is in its second year of partnership with PADCO on a USAID-funded training program for civil society, government leaders, and rebel groups to build their capacity to negotiate and sustain a peace process following a 20-year civil war.
- **Senegal** - Karuna Center is also implementing *The Casamance Culture Project*, which promotes reconciliation and conflict transformation through the arts.

Recent Programs

- **Burundi** - In 2006, CARE International invited Karuna Center to design and facilitate training to launch a two-year campaign to build grassroots advocacy against gender-based violence in Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The participants were senior CARE staff from the four countries, and the goal was to develop guidelines to insure that all actions in the campaign would be both conflict sensitive and gender sensitive.
- **Kosovo** - Karuna Center was invited by Save the Children in December 2006 to train teachers to lead multi-ethnic, multi-lingual kindergartens, based on Search for Common Ground's Moziak program in Macedonia for Albanian and Macedonian children. Building upon previous work in Kosovo, Karuna Center's training focused on using the kindergartens to build cross-cultural tolerance and understanding for the children and their parents, as well as the teachers, who must heal from their own vastly different experiences of war and its aftermath.
- **Palestine** – Karuna Center led training programs in 2005-2006 for Palestinian NGO activists from the Ramallah area, focused on NGO skills development in conflict and change management.

Karuna Center believes that the development of a civil society skilled in conflict resolution is critical to a healthy democracy.

- **Philippines** - In 2006, Karuna Center partnered with the Department of Agrarian Reform of the Philippine government to deliver a ten-day conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding training program for 30 development workers in Mindanao. As societies confront the earth's limited natural resources, development personnel with direct access to local communities can play a critical role in conflict prevention.
- **The United States** - The Karuna Center continues to facilitate a number of dialogues for community groups and university campuses around difficult and divisive social issues.

Programs completed include:

- **Bosnia-Herzegovina** - *Project DiaKom (Project for Dialogue and Community Building)* was conducted with Bosnian Muslim and Serb educators in the Sanski Most and Prijedor regions of northern Bosnia between 1997-2002. Through this program, Serb and Bosnian Muslim DiaKom facilitators joined together to create and register the only bi-communal NGO working in both entities in the region. Working in inter-communal teams across the ethnic divide, they promoted tolerance and understanding as the process of repatriation took place and remain determined to play leadership roles in building a peaceful civil society.
- **India** – *Peacebuilding in India, 2004-05*. In partnership with World Vision/India, Karuna Center led conflict transformation programs for conflict vulnerable regions of India. Programs included work on Hindu/Muslim tensions in Gujarat and tribal conflict in the Northeast region.
- **India**- *Project with Tibetans-in-Exile: Leadership Training in Conflict Transformation, 2003-05*. Karuna Center developed a training and mentoring project with the Tibetan Centre for Conflict Resolution (TCCR) in Dharamsala, India, an NGO endorsed by the Tibetan Government in Exile, to address issues within the Tibetan community and with their Indian neighbors.
- **Israel-Palestine** - Karuna Center led numerous dialogue groups with Israelis and Palestinians before 2000. A program under exploration would develop parallel and overlapping workshops with Israeli Jewish and Israeli Arab NGOs to address the divisions, disparities and misperceptions within Israel.
- **Macedonia** - *Macedonian Educators Project, 2002-05*. In this three-year project, Karuna Center facilitated dialogues between Albanian and Macedonian teachers in Tetovo. Fifty educators were trained in dialogue skills and strategies that promote tolerance and co-existence. Twenty-five participants received advanced training as facilitators to continue dialogue work and peacebuilding projects with colleagues, youth, parents, and other community members. Completed in 2005 and supported in part through grants from the Houghton Mifflin Company's Fund for Religious and Racial Understanding.
- **Rwanda** - *Rwandan Women's Peace Leadership Project, 2003-05*. In partnership with Pro-femmes, an umbrella group of women's organizations in Rwanda, Karuna Center led a two-year series of workshops for women leaders in peacebuilding, conflict transformation, and facilitation skills. Follow-on mentoring seminars built on the series and offered more advanced skills.
- **Rwanda** - In 2005, Karuna Center led seminars for the Rwandan government's National Unity and Reconciliation Commission to help build the capacity of their commissioners, staff and partners to manage conflict and post-genocide reconciliation.
- **Sri Lanka** - *Preparing for Peace: Leadership Training for Dialogue and Reconciliation, Sri Lanka, 2003-05*. Karuna Center led a two-year training-of-trainers program for 25 participants who were mentored in leading their own reconciliation projects for all sectors of society. This program was supported in part through a grant from the United States Institute of Peace, and built upon a long history of Karuna Center work in the country.