



KARUNA CENTER FOR PEACEBUILDING, INC.

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PROGRAM UPDATE

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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.

Ongoing and new programs include:

- **India** – *Peacebuilding in India*. In partnership with World Vision/India, Karuna Center is leading conflict transformation programs for conflict vulnerable regions of India. Recent programs have included work on Hindu/Muslim tensions in Gujarat and tribal conflict in the Northeast region. A workshop in Bhopal is planned next.
- **Israel** - Karuna Center led dialogue groups for several years with Israelis and Palestinians. Currently, Karuna Center is partnering with an Israeli NGO to offer peacebuilding leadership training to community activists. 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.
- **Nepal** - Karuna Center, with a long history in Nepal, is partnering in 2006 with HURON, a human rights NGO in Kathmandu, for training focused on conflict transformation and human rights. Nepal faces challenges from Maoist insurgents who utilize violence to bring about change and from a monarchy increasingly militarized and out of touch with the population. Support for civil society movements are needed in this critical period, where either escalated violence or innovative nonviolent social change methods might influence Nepal's currently precarious future.
- **Palestine** – Building on previous work in Palestine, Karuna Center began a training program in 2005 for Palestinian NGO activists from the Ramallah area focused on NGO skills development in conflict and change management. In partnership with a Ramallah NGO, future training programs are under discussion, focused now on Training of Trainers in social change and peacebuilding.
- **Philippines** - KCP partnered in early 2006 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. This program was designed to increase the capacity of development specialists to manage conflict, reduce ethnic tensions and multiply the connectors among local populations. Promoting conflict sensitivity among development personnel in violence prone regions is a rising trend among peacebuilders, who have come to see the importance of frontline development workers with their direct access to local communities. Karuna Center considers this an important aspect of conflict prevention and resolution that will become more relevant as societies confront the earth's limited natural resources.
- **Rwanda** - *Rwandan Women's Peace Leadership Project*. In partnership with Pro-femmes, an umbrella group of women's organizations in Rwanda, Karuna Center continues to lead a series of workshops for women leaders in peacebuilding, conflict transformation, and facilitation skills. Mentoring seminars are planned for 2006 to build on the training series and to offer more advanced skills.

- **Rwanda-** Karuna Center is engaged in leading 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.
- **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. Conducted in French.
- **Senegal-**Karuna Center is implementing *SOS Casamance*, an ongoing peacebuilding and psychosocial training program for NGO workers in southern Senegal to address tensions from long lasting civil war. Conducted in French.
- **Sri Lanka-** Karuna Center is developing a new program with the Centre for Peacebuilding and Reconciliation, an NGO developed through KCP's work in Sri Lanka, to bring skills of conflict transformation and peacebuilding to the academic communities throughout the island, both for faculty and students. 2006-08.
- **The United States** - The Karuna Center continues to facilitate a number of dialogues for community groups and university campuses around difference 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 and secured their own funding from the Council of Europe, the Finnish government, and other international organizations to develop and conduct numerous conflict transformation programs and workshops for teachers, students, and parents. Working in inter-communal teams across the ethnic divide, they are promoting tolerance and understanding as the process of repatriation begins and are determined to play leadership roles in building a peaceful civil society.
- **India-** *Project with Tibetans-in-Exile: Leadership Training in Conflict Transformation.* 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.
- **Macedonia** - *Macedonian Educators Project.* In spite of a peace settlement and constitutional reforms in Macedonia, tensions remained high between ethnic Albanians and ethnic Macedonians. In this three-year project, Karuna Center facilitated dialogues between Albanian and Macedonian teachers in Tetovo, the epicenter of recent conflict. 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.
- **Sri Lanka** - *Preparing for Peace: Leadership Training for Dialogue and Reconciliation, Sri Lanka.* Although a cease-fire was established after 19 years of civil war, a peace agreement has not yet been negotiated, and the challenge of reconciliation in this long divided country is enormous. In the past, through a number of programs, KCP trained over 100 NGO leaders in techniques of inter-communal dialogue and building tolerance. Beginning in 2003, 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.