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PROGRAM UPDATE

Winter 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.

Ongoing and new programs include

- **Burundi** - In 2006, CARE International launched a two-year campaign to build grassroots advocacy against gender based violence in Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. CARE invited Karuna Center to design and facilitate a training to launch their campaign. 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** – Building on previous work, Karuna Center lead a workshop in December 2006 to train teachers to lead multi-ethnic, multi-lingual kindergartens. Based on the success of the Search for Common Ground’s Moziak kindergarten program in Macedonia for Albanian and Macedonian children, Save the Children has launched a similar program in Kosovo. Karuna Center’s training focused on ways to use this program to build a culture of tolerance for the children and their parents, as well as on team-building for the teachers, who must heal from their own vastly different experiences of war and its aftermath.
- **Nepal** - Karuna Center, with a long history in Nepal, partnered with HURON, a human rights NGO in Kathmandu, for a workshop focused on conflict transformation in the context of Nepal in April 2006. In August and December, Karuna Center lead workshops on the themes of citizen participation in the new constitutional process and reconciliation. Karuna Center in partnership with Nepali partner, the Institute for Conflict Management Peace and Development, will launch a year long advanced peace leadership program in 2007. Support for an inclusive constitutional reform process and the establishment of democratic institutions is needed in this critical period following the decade-long Maoist insurgency.
- **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, annual future training programs are under discussion. Karuna Center believes that the development of a civil society skilled in conflict resolution is critical to a healthy democracy.
- **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. 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.

- **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 implementing *SOS Casamance*, an ongoing peacebuilding and psychosocial training program for NGO workers in southern Senegal to address tensions from long lasting civil war.
- **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 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** – *Peacebuilding in India*. In partnership with World Vision/India, Karuna Center is lead 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.
- **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.
- **Israel** - Karuna Center led dialogue groups for several years with Israelis and Palestinians. 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*. 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*. 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 lead 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*. 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. 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.