

OTI Special Focus Areas: Conflict Management and Peace Initiatives

Description	Immediate interventions are identified and implemented to build momentum in support of the peace process. Grassroots groups at the national, regional, and/or local levels are empowered to provide input into peace/settlement processes. Support is provided to local/regional/national organizations, political leaders at all levels of society, and the private sector for peace-making efforts.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To expand public support for the peace process and to build national consensus on plans for the country's future and positive relationships between competing groups. ■ To identify root causes of conflict and violence, and enable local populations to address them. ■ To improve prospects for success of peace agreement by increasing input of key groups in the negotiation process. ■ To lay the foundation for more inclusive institutions and democratic mechanisms through public dialogue. ■ To increase government's accountability for its actions and expand popular participation in government decision-making processes. ■ To empower local groups to recognize and respond to conflict quickly and effectively.
Prerequisites	A minimum level of security must exist so that activities can be implemented. The parties to the conflict, along with community members and donors, must be committed to a process that can result in peace. Relations between competing groups must be civil enough to allow for dialogue. The negotiation team must be willing to accept additional representatives, expand the agenda, and/or support public debate on agreement components. The new groups must possess knowledge of issues associated with the disputes.
OTI Experience	Sri Lanka (1997-1998); Guatemala (1997-1999); Kosovo (1998-1999); Democratic Republic of the Congo (1998-2000); Indonesia (1999-2001); Sierra Leone (1999-2002); Colombia (1999-2001); Nigeria (2000-2001); Aceh, Indonesia (1999); Burundi (2002-2004); Venezuela (2002-2004)
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Support workshops for local and national authorities, and private sector groups to help design strategies for investing in the peace process. ■ Work at the municipal levels by building partnerships between civil society and government through the delivery of critical services (water, roads, school reconstruction) that are identified by the community. These projects demonstrate confidence in the future and provide a peace dividend. ■ Assist implementation of a peace agreement by establishing citizen peace commissions. ■ Provide independent mediation expertise. ■ Finance independent analytical studies of conflictive issues as basis for peace negotiations. ■ Strengthen the skills of the negotiators by providing training, research, and support. ■ Support broad dissemination of information about peace negotiations. ■ Support civil society's efforts to engage the government in dialogue with opposing forces (rebels, insurgents, etc.). ■ Fund participation of civil society organizations in peace negotiations. ■ Provide training for NGOs on advocacy. Conduct trainings and workshops on conflict mediation techniques, and work with participants to set up a conflict mediation network. ■ Sponsor media campaigns to spread accurate information that can

	<p>defuse explosive situations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Support regional reconciliation conferences that are sponsored by local government and citizen groups and bring together different groups to explore ways they can live together in peace. ■ Provide capacity-building training in advocacy and media relations to conflict resolution civil society organizations. ■ Fund media campaigns before and after elections to reinforce the pledge of political parties to refrain from violence. ■ Support grassroots efforts that focus on non-violence and ways to solve community conflict peacefully. ■ Encourage and support networks of NGOs and community-based organizations involved with conflict mitigation activities to leverage resources and provide coverage to larger geographic areas. ■ Identify and train local mediators. ■ Establish networks of community and religious leaders who meet regularly to discuss areas of cooperation and, as needed, to defuse rising tensions. ■ Fund studies to map conflicts and identify likely sources of violence. ■ Identify stakeholders and spoilers, and develop specific activities to engage them.
<p>Examples</p>	<p>OTI developed a "Peace Fund" grant-making mechanism in Colombia with the International Organization of Migration (IOM). This mechanism provided seed money to local Colombian groups attempting to facilitate dialogue and bring an end to violence in their communities. Grants under \$50,000 were made, with special attention paid to local initiatives that could have a national impact. Grantees included community radio and television stations, youth clubs, and journalist groups promoting the use of neutral, non-inflammatory language in the media.</p> <p>OTI employed another approach in Aceh, Indonesia, where it supported the work of an independent mediator, the Henry Dunant Center (HDC) of Switzerland. The Center facilitated peace negotiations between the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) and the Government of Indonesia. OTI grants covered travel costs for negotiation delegates and operational support for HDC's Public Information Unit and Monitoring Team. OTI also helped prominent Achenese NGOs publish calls for both sides to respect the cease-fire.</p> <p>Working with government officials and civil society organizations in Venezuela, OTI is currently supporting new avenues of dialogue in order to lower tensions among groups and bridge divisions among the population. OTI is not only expanding opportunities for government and opposition forces to meet at the bargaining table, but is helping them identify common interests. In a situation where political sensitivities have made both sides reluctant to talk, formal and informal events that bring the various groups together can enabled improved understanding and created new openings for the exchange of ideas.</p>

The Ife-Modakeke Conflict Resolution Program

Conflict between the Ife and Modakeke in Nigeria's Osun State has been going on for over 150 years. Past attempts by police committees, state committees, and even presidential committees to resolve the conflict have had little, if any, success. In February 2000, OTI made a major

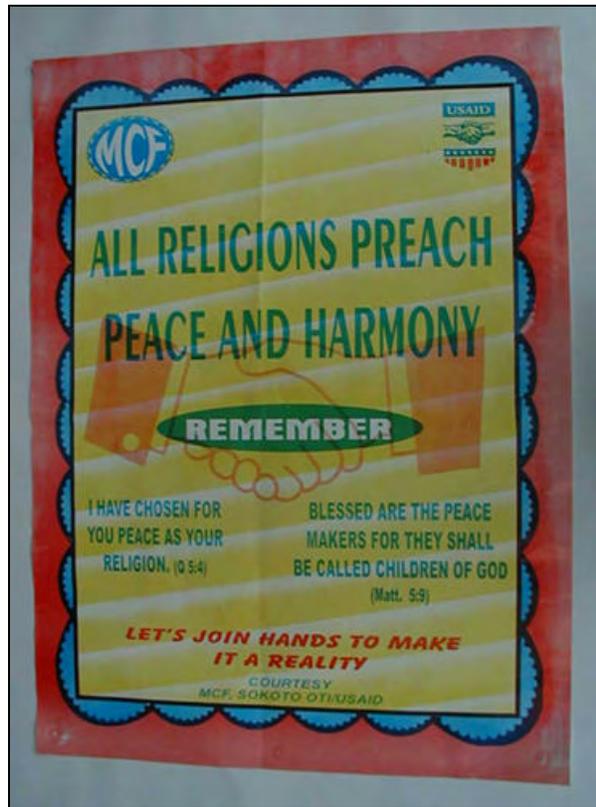
commitment to help these two communities manage their differences without the use of violence.

In brief, the program began with a grant to the Modakeke Progressive Union, a community based umbrella organization that since 1948 has carried out development projects and community mobilization for development. The grant's objectives were to: create awareness of communal conflict resolution and management; identify causes and consequences of communal conflict; generate a corps of conflict mediators; import conflict resolution skills on vital stakeholders; and enhance peace and development in Osun State.

The first activity was a five-day visit to introduce the training program to key stakeholders in the Modakeke community including opinion and market leaders, leaders of road transport workers, youth leaders, and village heads. Following-on the visit, a three-day training program was held on alternative dispute resolution techniques. Two hundred participants attended, including representatives of groups of youth, professionals, artisans, villages, and community leaders. A parallel effort was conducted through a grant to the Ife Development Board, which had the same objectives and activities as the one to the Modakeke Progressive Union.

As a direct result of these two grant activities, joint Ife/Modakeke workshops were held on "Forgiveness, Reconciliation, and Transformative Leadership." These workshops involved 15 representatives of the four critical stakeholder groups from each of the two communities. These four two-day workshops presented alternative dispute resolution theory and techniques, and most important, provided opportunities for each group of 30 Ife/Modakeke participants to identify the fundamental issues involved in the conflicts between them and to jointly offer solutions. Also during the workshops, a proposal was made and accepted to form an inter-community peace advocacy committee that would sustain the gains of the workshops. Since then the fighting has stopped and former adversaries are working together as members of the Inter-Community Peace Advocacy Committee.

To illustrate, The Modakeke Progressive Union reported an incident which, if not for the training workshop, would have degenerated into another round of killings and destruction between the two communities. In Modakeke on August 19, 2000, word was received that a member of their community had been killed. People rushing to the reported scene were stopped by the police. A short time later, emissaries of the community were sent to Oshogbo to ask for directions from their community leaders, who were at that very moment participating in the alternative dispute resolution training workshop. Using the conflict management techniques they were learning at the workshop, the leaders questioned the emissaries as to the circumstances of the incident. The leaders then conferred and decided to send a strong



In the aftermath of Kaduna's May 2000 communal riots that left thousands dead, OTI supported a program to promote reconciliation and coexistence between Christians and Muslims. A media campaign using posters, T-shirts, and radio spots and organized by an inter-faith consortium, reminded followers of both faiths that they are called to live in peace.

message that the people should return to their homes and not resort to violence. Their instructions were obeyed and a potentially violent confrontation was averted.