

THE CYPRUS CONSORTIUM

Long Term Impact Evaluation Report for the Advanced Training of Trainers Program

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In October 1996, the Cyprus Consortium evaluation team of James Notter of the Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy and Wendy MacLeod of Conflict Management Group conducted evaluation interviews with the participants in the October 1995 Training of Trainers workshop. The purpose of the trip was to assess the ongoing implementation of the trainers' skills and measure impact of the overall conflict resolution effort on the Cyprus system.

In the year since the October 1995 Advanced Training of Trainers program, the Trainers Group has developed and implemented at least ten ongoing conflict resolution projects, most of which center around training in conflict resolution skills and the facilitation of dialogue and discussion around the Cyprus issue. They have witnessed a great expansion of their work, to the point where they are no longer able to meet the increasing demand for conflict resolution training.

The sheer numbers of people involved demonstrates the growing strength of the movement in Cyprus toward peace, reconciliation, and cooperation. The conflict resolution work that these trainers are spearheading is changing the way the public discusses the Cyprus issue in some circumstances, and has begun to generate new language, new assumptions, and new ways of thinking about conflict in parts of both communities. In a limited way, the trainers have even observed a shift in how the conflict and conflict resolution work is discussed in the media and among politicians. The people who pursue conflict resolution are subjected to fewer public attacks, and the public suspicion of this work has decreased dramatically in the last few years.

Despite this progress, the trainers noted that even positive impact, as shown in media coverage, for instance, is sometimes outweighed by the recent resurgence of nationalism on the island. The trainers also lack the financial resources needed to fully support this work, and they have been unsuccessful in addressing the issues of organization, coordination, and institutionalization of this work. The trainers realize that they need more training for themselves in order to take their groups to a more advanced level. They are also unable to meet the increasing demand for training, thus they have requested another round of training of trainers for new participants. They also want to expand their training activities in both communities in order to work with specific issues, include people from Greece and Turkey, involve the youth in both communities more, and expand training into the villages with non-English speakers.

This corps of local trainers on the island has brought the principles and practices of conflict resolution into the daily lives of hundreds of people in both communities. The challenge now is to take their work to the next level, to support the local conflict resolution infrastructure so that it can broaden its impact, expand its activities, and begin to support the structures and policies that will build lasting peace in Cyprus.

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INTRODUCTION

The Cyprus Consortium evaluation team of James Notter of the Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy and Wendy MacLeod of Conflict Management Group interviewed participants in the October 1995 Training of Trainers workshop in a visit to the island from October 25–November 2, 1996. The purpose of the trip was to assess the ongoing implementation of the trainers' skills and measure impact of the overall conflict resolution effort on the Cyprus system. Interviews were conducted with all of the participants who were in the October 1995 workshop who were present on the island at the time of the visit. A total of twenty-two of the twenty-eight participants from the October training were interviewed.

While some of the October 1995 participants have not been very active in the continually expanding bicomunal conflict resolution community due to personal and professional commitments, the majority do participate regularly in training projects and other bicomunal activities. The trainers remain enthusiastic and hopeful about the positive effects of their efforts, despite not infrequent setbacks, such as the violent events of August 1996, the seemingly arbitrary closings of the checkpoints, and logistical difficulties. Just over half of the October 1995 participants are still active as trainers; most of the remainder participate occasionally in already organized bicomunal activities.

Interviews with the participants yielded four principal topics, around which this report will be organized.

- (1) **Activities and Goals:** the activities in which the trainers have been involved, including specific goals for their work as trainers.
- (2) **Impact:** the impact conflict resolution work has had on the island, including the impact of their own projects and the impact of conflict resolution training in general has had on the island.
- (3) **Challenges:** the challenges they have faced and expect to face in doing this work.
- (4) **Needs and Next Steps:** the needs of their work and the next steps they propose in order to keep the process moving forward.

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ACTIVITIES AND GOALS

The participants in the Advanced Training of Trainers program are now known on the island as the "Trainers Group." These people, many of whom began their involvement with the Cyprus Consortium in 1991 and 1992, have been working together as a group since 1994, and their overarching goal has been to build and support a peacebuilding movement in Cyprus. Since their earlier trainings in 1993 (Oxford and CASP) and 1994 (Project Leaders), they have been developing local projects that support bicommunal understanding and peace. In this section of the report, we will document the various projects that the Trainers Group has developed and implemented over the last year, and we will identify the specific goals they had and methodologies they used for these projects.

Activities of the Trainers Group

The scope of activity in which members of the Trainers Group engaged is extraordinarily broad. There are currently ten groups meeting on a regular basis. During the Cyprus Consortium training events of that summer (including Project Leaders One, Project Leaders Two, and the Training of Trainers programs), people in the Trainers Group developed a long list of ideas for bicommunal projects and trainings. In the year following those events, the Trainers Group worked closely with Fulbright Scholar Dr. Ben Broome to develop more concrete action plans for these projects. In the summer of 1995, the group had identified fifteen different projects. Following the Advanced Training of Trainers program in October 1995, the group re-focused its efforts based on its advanced training ability, bringing in more training-related projects. The eight projects listed below represent the most active groups doing bicommunal work that have developed over the last few years.

1. Trainers Group: this group was the subject of this evaluation trip. Their focus is on the design and implementation of various peacebuilding activities in Cyprus. Members of this group are responsible for initiating most of the groups listed hereafter. This group includes most of the members of the Bicommunal Steering Committee. The Trainers Group meets regularly, usually once a week, at the Ledra Palace.

2. Young Business Leaders: This group began meeting in March 1995. At this time, political tensions prevented them from meeting bicommunally, so the young Turkish-Cypriot and Greek-Cypriot business leaders had separate weekend residential workshops to explore the obstacles facing business leaders working towards cooperation with the other community. They used Cyprus Fulbright Scholar Ben Broome's methodology of "Interactive Management": a group problem-solving methodology employed in complex situations where the different perspectives and perceptions are synthesized

into a comprehensive understanding of all the various concerns, fears, and aspirations of the participants. Later, the group met bicommunally at the Ledra Palace to share their respective "products" and had three additional bicommunal meetings outside of Nicosia. In addition, the group was invited to Brussels and Strasbourg as the guest of the Head of Delegation of the European Union in Cyprus. While there, the group was able to examine closely the workings of the EU, as one their primary concerns as businessmen is the accession of Cyprus to the EU. The group has continued to meet over the last year, discussing other sensitive issues such as security.

3. Youth Leaders: This group has been meeting since May 1996, and is made up of youth representatives of the majority of the political parties in both communities of Cyprus. They are working to develop a deeper understanding the issues facing youth in Cyprus, and are currently addressing the question of around which goals to concentrate their efforts of improving the future of youth on the island. The group also had an initial monocommunal meeting where they developed respective presentations on problems, challenges, threats, and fears facing the youth of Cyprus in the next decade that were then presented to a bicommunal meeting of the participants.

4. Women's Group: The group began work in April 1996, with a focus on "Pain and Suffering in Cyprus Through Women's Eyes." The group has define the system of problems in which pain and suffering are embedded and is in the process of developing a shared vision for the future, including an integrated agenda, which will support the implementation of various bicommunal women's projects.

5. Educators: The Educators Group was formed and given an introductory conflict resolution training during the October 1995 Training of Trainers workshop. The participants in the group are representative of a wide range of academic institutions: public and private; and primary, secondary, and tertiary levels. In follow-up meetings, discussions have centered around a comparison of the two educational systems on Cyprus. At the same time, a number of projects with the general aim of promoting peacebuilding activities were started. One such project involves bringing children from each side into contact with each other, to start building bridges of communication and trust. Members of the Educators group have also started "letters to the other side"—a pen-pal project enabling students in the two communities to learn about each other and life on the "other side." The group also organized a second Educators workshop for interested colleagues that took place in May 1996, wholly designed and facilitated by the Turkish- and Greek-Cypriot trainers. This new group has merged with the original group and continues to meet at the Ledra Palace. A new bicommunal group of Educators was formed of participants in the August 1996 Boston Educators workshop. Two trainers form the October 1995 training who participated on the Boston training team are now facilitating follow-up meetings on the island.

6. Citizens Group: The citizens group has been meeting approximately every three weeks since its creation during the October 1995 Training of Trainers. It is made up of Turkish and Greek Cypriots of various backgrounds, and the numbers are constantly growing. The group has focused on basic conflict resolution and communication skills and has conducted dialogue sessions on several aspects of the Cyprus problem. They are currently working on an action plan for their shared vision of the future as well as an implementation plan.

7. European Union-Federation Study Group: The group has had many meetings around a variety of topics, including: advantages of a federal Cyprus entering the European Union and the difficulties, fears, and concerns related to this, as well as discussion of projects that might be financed by the EU. The group has organized several presentations and invited high-level speakers such as the Head of Delegation of the European Union to Cyprus and the Swiss Chargé d'Affaires to address issues of federalism and accession to the European Union, as well as to present the bodies, policies, institutions, and funds of the EU. They plan to hold more meetings in order to better inform members of both communities about the EU and federalism issues.

8. Peace Concert Group: This group organized an enormously successful concert with the theme "Peace" in October 1995, which over 500 people attended. They are currently planning a series of follow-up concerts.

Members of the Trainers Group are also involved in some bicomunal activities that were created by other people. For example, there is a Lawyers Group that has been meeting since March 1996 and focuses on changes in laws of the two communities since 1974. There is also a bicomunal management group that was created by participants in the February 1996 training program in Modern Management techniques organized by the Fulbright Commission and administered by the International Management Development Institute of the University of Pittsburgh. The group meets monthly and has drafted an action plan for meeting the needs in its members' working environments for training and advice on management issues. Their activities target the whole business community of the island as well as other professionals who might benefit from training, consulting, or research in the field of management.

In addition to these groups meeting regularly, the participants also mentioned several one-time events where they had used their skills of training, facilitation, and/or conflict resolution to put on a conflict resolution program. These projects included a training done for women in Turkey at the Habitat II meeting and a meeting of members of environmental organizations who asked one of the trainers for help with communication skills. Other activities included a project trying to set up links between conflict

resolution proponents in the two communities via the Internet and a project with members of Neve Shalom, a mixed village in Israel made up of Israelis and Palestinians.

Not everyone, of course, is involved in all of these activities. Fourteen of the twenty-two people interviewed were actively involved in training projects. Of the eight that were not, three had done one non-repeating training event that was separated from the rest of the group's activities. Only one interviewee reported not being involved in peace work at all any more. During the interviews, the participants constantly referred to a "core" group of very active people, which they numbered from eight to twelve people.

Clearly this group of trainers has established a broad base of conflict resolution activities on the island that is, for the moment, self-sustaining. This was an explicit goal of this group, as recorded in an evaluation questionnaire at the October Advanced Training of Trainers, and has long been a goal of the Cyprus Consortium.

Goals and Methodologies of the Training Programs

Far and away, the goals most often cited by the trainers when implementing their own programs reflected the intangible: a desire to make their participants feel they are a part of a larger peacebuilding process; to enable the bicomunal community to act as a supplement to the political process; and to promote understanding of both sides by trying to "break down walls and build bridges"—bridges that will be in place and strong once a definitive resolution is reached. One trainer remembered his own experience of wanting to have friends on the "other side," and wants to facilitate that same experience for others, to help "create relationships and a deeper understanding."

Other more concrete goals of the trainers include: involving more and more people in bicomunal activities, whether purely for social reasons or to become part of a larger movement; passing on skills in communication and listening; teaching people to be patient and not jump to defend themselves; securing funding to train another group of trainers; and transferring of conflict resolution and communication skills from the bicomunal setting to participants' and trainers' every day work and personal contexts.

The primary method for achieving these goals was facilitated discussion and dialogue, often with an accompanying session on communication skills. Some groups began solely by providing space for dialogue, since that was clearly the demand of the participants, but they quickly saw the need to inject skills training into the process in order to create meaningful dialogues and discussions. Without the skills training, dialogues would devolve into positional debates, or even shouting matches. Some of the programs also use

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the Interactive Management methodology, which has been introduced to the island by Dr. Benjamin Broome, the former resident Fulbright Scholar on conflict resolution. This methodology uses computers and dialogue to create vision statements and action plans that reflect a consensus among the group. The Women's group and the Youth Leaders group are both using this methodology. Interactive Management is often used in combination with training in communication and other conflict resolution skills.

IMPACT

The impact the Trainers group has had on the island can be measured in two different ways. First, we can examine the impact these trainers had on the specific individuals who have been participating in the Trainer-led projects. Just as the Cyprus Consortium has conducted evaluations with its participants, we can examine how this new crop of participants—this time trained by Greek and Turkish Cypriots—has been affected by this work.

Second, we can examine the collective impact that this work has had on Cyprus. This will include an analysis of what the trainers' projects have been accomplishing, as well as an analysis of how the island has changed since the beginning of the Cyprus Consortium's intervention, as the Trainers' activities can best be understood as a part of that larger process.

Impact on Participants

Regarding the micro-level impact, not a single interviewee expressed major disappointment with the results of a specific training program they conducted. The trainers saw how specific individuals in the training were able to internalize the skills and apply them in the training/dialogue situation right there. They saw the participants begin to phrase things differently, ask questions differently, and approach a difficult topic with the desire to learn and understand instead of attack, debate, and convince. These are core skills that the Cyprus Consortium taught the trainers, and now these trainers are passing them on. They see these skills as the centerpiece of the conflict transformation process.

The trainers have not performed any rigorous evaluation processes themselves. They do not use written instruments, or anything that is systematic or that gathers data from a large number of participants. Their evaluation is intuitive, or based on observation of a limited number of situations. Usually they describe it in physical terms, like being able to "see it in their eyes." They have, at times, noticed application of skills in other settings. For example, one trainer noticed his participants using new language in a press release following a training event.

Impact on the Social System

Regarding the macro-level impact on the Cyprus situation in general, the trainers responded in two different ways. First, they identified five different areas in society where the conflict resolution work was having an impact in Cyprus, and we will report on each of those areas below. Second, nearly every single participant also referred to two, specific bicommunal gatherings that symbolized the powerful effect this movement is having in Cyprus. These gatherings were organized primarily by the people in the Trainers Group, and

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they generated a great deal of hope and momentum within the conflict resolution movement at a time of great tension and despair. In order to understand the extent of the impact of these two events, they will be described in some detail here.

August–September 1996 was one of the most violent periods in Cyprus since the war in 1974. During this period, there was an intense resurgence of nationalism and hard-line stances on both sides of the island. Despite this harsh environment, the social movement in support of conflict resolution on the island continued to push forward. On September 30, 1996, at the initiative of members of the Trainers Group, members of the diplomatic community on Cyprus hosted a bicommunal meeting in the UN Buffer Zone to show support for bicommunal cooperation and to call for an end to the violence. Three hundred people showed up, most of whom had participated in one of the Cyprus Consortium training events over the last few years.

This successful event led to an even more successful event in October. The UN in Cyprus normally celebrates UN Day on October 24th, but due to the violence and tension of the summer, they had canceled the celebration for 1996. Based on the success of the September 30th gathering, however, the UN decided to reinstate their plan to celebrate UN Day on October 24th with a large gathering in the Buffer Zone. Again, they relied mostly on the Trainers Group to organize the event and gather the names for the invitation list. Nearly 3,000 people attended this celebration, and many waited for hours at the entrance to the Buffer Zone to attend the function. The trainers told stories of youths from each community desperately seeking to talk to someone from the other side, just to see what they were like. Many of the trainers were approached at this meeting by people who wanted to get more involved in the conflict resolution projects.

Both of these gatherings were organized primarily by the people the Cyprus Consortium trained last October. The fact that these two major demonstrations of good will could be organized in the midst of renewed tensions on the island is testament to the strength of the movement these peacebuilders have created. This is a very specific indication of the impact the conflict resolution work is having on Cyprus, and the Trainers Group was acutely aware of this fact.

In addition to these events as symbols of the broad impact, the trainers also reported five specific areas where they saw the impact of this conflict resolution work: (1) an increase in the number of people interested and involved in bicommunal conflict resolution work; (2) the development of new attitudes, new questions, and new discussions around the conflict that reflect principles of conflict resolution; (3) a reduction in the number of attacks that conflict resolution work receives from the "hard-liners" in both communities and a general decrease in suspicion of this work; (4) a change in

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the way the media covers the conflict or the conflict resolution work; and (5) the way politicians view conflict resolution work and how the conflict is treated in political discourse. In addition, some participants made reference to the lack of impact or to negative impacts from this work, and these will be described as well.

Increased Numbers

Over two-thirds of the interviewees made specific comments about the impact being measured in the increased numbers of people being involved in this work and the increased opportunities for bicommunal contact. The proliferation of bicommunal groups meeting around varying topics of mutual interest—from women's issues to young business leaders—was cited as evidence of a positive impact. One person said that thousands are now involved in conflict resolution in one way or another, although most referred to numbers in the hundreds. "Even the critics are curious to attend," as one person noted.

One trainer noted that from the time of the separation of the two communities in 1974 until the early 1990s there was hardly any bicommunal dialogue or contact, and that since the Bicommunal Steering Committee and Trainers Group have given way to these new groups, one can see how the two communities are slowly learning from each other. He likened the exchange of views of history and explorations of how the "other side" thinks to "stones being thrown into a pool, with the learnings spreading to the edges of the pool like ripples." The various bicommunal groups create a forum for shared experiences; consequently stories are shared among members and positive experiences and interactions with the "other" become almost collective, giving people a broader base to draw on and sustain their faith in the inherent benefit of a healthy, productive relationship with members of the other community.

In addition to the numbers currently participating, many cited the importance of the very large number of people who want to be involved, but have not yet had the opportunity. Several mentioned that the current training staff cannot keep up with the demand. "Lots wanting to join—becoming a movement." Many trainers noticed this at the two bicommunal gatherings this fall, where many people would search out people from the Trainers Group to ask them how to get involved. The increasing number of people involved gives the movement legitimacy.

New Attitudes, Questions, Discussions

One third of the respondents noticed how this work had changed the way the public thought or acted around conflict. For example, after the killings this summer, one Turkish-Cypriot trainer noticed that some of his colleagues

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questioned the use of excessive force during the Greek-Cypriot motorcycle rally event in August (where a Greek Cypriot was beaten to death with clubs). They wondered why the transgressor was not handcuffed, arrested, and taken away. Why did he have to be killed? Before, this trainer noted, they would not even have questioned.

They said there is now alternative thinking about war, and a new vocabulary for discussing these issues. Three years ago, one respondent claims, the concept of understanding the need behind a position could not even be explained to the average person. Today people are comfortable with the idea. New concepts are being introduced, like the concept that Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots can talk like friends. Where it used to be implied that meeting the other side was a threat to your own community, it is now publicly accepted that people meet. "That is progress," said one of the interviewees.

Despite this progress, however, there was also some skepticism about how widespread this change in attitudes is in the two communities. Many participants, while commenting on the positive impacts their work has had on attitudes, simultaneously pointed out that this progress is being made within a context of rising nationalism and confrontation. One participant felt that sometimes it was as if they were working in an "aquarium," where they would have an impact on their participants, but the impact would not reach into the broader community as much. With such limited data, it is impossible to conclude one way or the other on the question of whether or not this work has had a "significant" impact on the broader community. Clearly the work is making a difference regarding community attitudes, but the extent of that impact remains unclear.

Fewer Attacks and a Reduction in Suspicion

One third of the respondents mentioned the difference they had noticed in the attacks they used to endure for doing this work, and in each case they cited a reduction in attacks. 1993, 1994, and early 1995 were marked by a good deal more suspicion surrounding the conflict resolution work and those involved in it, and over time this wariness has been dispelled through increasing involvement, third party support, and a realization that those involved are not all "radical" left wing activists or "intellectuals." People involved in conflict resolution work are now less frequently attacked as being traitors and spies than previously, although some noted that attacks do still happen from some sectors of society. This change was attributed by one person to the work with high-profile policy leaders at Airlie and Coolfont. It has made the work publicly more legitimate.

Media Coverage of Conflict and Conflict Resolution

Only five of the twenty-two interviewees pointed to the media when describing the impact of this work, and the impact they described was mixed. They did note that there were now a handful of journalists who gave positive coverage to conflict resolution activities. This, however, was limited mostly to one major newspaper and one major radio station. For the most part, however, this positive impact seemed to be outweighed by the negative impact the media continued to play on the island, both in general and in relation to conflict resolution work. "Yes, there is a little difference," one respondent stated, "but the difference is negligible."

Politicians and Political Discourse

The analysis of impact at the political level given by the Trainers Group was mixed. One fourth of the participants noticed a positive impact at the political level. One trainer noted that "especially" after the August 1996 violence at Dherynia, "even the politicians use our language now." This was echoed by another trainer, who also commented that several community leaders who have participated in the two workshops for public policy leaders have modified their language choice. As noted above, this support from the political establishment is linked to the decrease in suspicion about the conflict resolution work.

An almost equal number of participants, however, claim that there was no change in the tone of political discourse. The politicians who do not support this work are quite vocal in Cyprus. Playing off of the resurgence of nationalism in Cyprus, these politicians can create enough noise to "drown out" the positive work being done by the Trainers Group, according to some of the trainers.

Impact at the governmental level is not solely confined to the governments of the two communities on Cyprus, however. The conflict resolution work being led by these trainers is also involving the diplomatic community on Cyprus. The success of the trainers group and the rapid expansion of bicomunal activity has galvanized the diplomatic community around their efforts. Certain key diplomats have been convinced of the importance of conflict resolution activities as part of the process of building bridges between the two communities—bridges that help change the existing climate and that are strong enough to continue to stand once a resolution to the Cyprus problem is achieved.

The involvement and backing of the diplomatic community is very important to the trainers, as it lends them a certain legitimacy. The increasingly strong support from the diplomatic community has been very helpful. When the trainers wanted to convene a bicomunal meeting

following the violence of the summer, they asked the diplomatic community to be involved. The meeting convened on September 30 was called by a group of diplomatic missions on the island, including that of the United States. The trainers were quick to note, however, that they could not have developed these relationships without the help of Dr. Ben Broome, whose ability to work full-time on this and position as a Fulbright Scholar facilitated these relationships.

Negative Impact or Lack of Impact

As noted above, some of the comments about the positive impact of this work were paired with comments that this positive impact is sometimes "outweighed" by forces in the community that oppose conflict resolution work. People change within themselves, one person argues, but that is not a worthwhile project—what Cyprus needs is change on a larger scale. Others pointed out that whatever change is being brought about by this work, is being overshadowed by the resurgence of nationalism. "Relatively speaking," one person argues, "the impact is negligible in terms of the average man on the street." These criticisms were in the minority. Only two of the twenty-three people interviewed gave primarily negative accounts of the impact.

The other negative impact that can be cited is the impact that this intense work has had on the trainers themselves. Some trainers' personal lives have suffered, with families feeling resentful of time spent on bicomunal activities. Some careers have suffered as well, with a few trainers feeling they spend more time out of the office than they can afford from a professional perspective. In addition, a few trainers are feeling the financial pinch of continually providing snacks and drinks for participants in workshops they facilitate.

Conclusion

The programs being run by the Trainers Group are meeting with great success. Their own participants have reported positive experiences, and judging by the rapid expansion of the programs and the long list of people waiting to become involved, the work of the Trainers Group has great value for the population in Cyprus. In addition to the impact that these trainings have on individuals, it is clear that the collective work of the Trainers Group is also impacting the social system in both communities in ways that support peace and conflict resolution. Popular attitudes towards this work have changed, allowing for an easier expansion of their activities. They have even been able to garner limited support from the media and the political establishment for this work.

Members of the Trainers Group do still endure some attacks against their work, and a significant portion of the population on both sides does question

the value of conflict resolution activities, but the social movement these people have helped to create remains strong. Despite renewed violence and an increase in nationalism, this movement has been able to mobilize hundreds and, in one case, thousands of people in support of peaceful conflict resolution. With the explicit support of the international community on Cyprus and the institutional support of the Cyprus Fulbright Commission, they are forging ahead.

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CHALLENGES

Resources

The single biggest issue raised in the category of challenges is lack of resources. In most cases, this came out as lack of time. The trainers do not have enough time to meet the demand for training on the island. They also do not have enough time to succeed in coordinating or organizing all of the work they are doing. This explains why nearly half of the people trained in October 1995 are not very active in training one year later. The dozen or so people that are doing a lot of training are the ones that have enough free time to devote to doing this work. And even those people are being stretched to their limits. Many of these trainers spend three nights a week to do this work, in addition to every other week-end for a training event. Lack of time makes doing the training and coordinating the work very difficult.

Another important challenge in the resource category is the lack of money. The trainers find it difficult to put on training events when they have to spend their own money for refreshments, flip charts, and other supplies. They also are searching for money to hire someone full time (or, better yet, two people—one in each community) who can take over the logistical details of coordinating the work and sharing information among all the trainers.

Institutionalization and Coordination of Activities

At the October 1995 Advanced Training of Trainers, the trainers reported that getting clarity around organization, coordination, and institutionalization as an explicit long-term goal for the trainers group. During the interviews in October 1996, each trainer was asked about the organization and institutionalization issue, and nearly all of them expressed disappointment. The trainers have not yet been able to resolve their differences regarding the Bicomunal Steering Committee.

The Bicomunal Steering Committee was formed in November 1992 to serve in an advisory capacity to the Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy as it developing its early training program in Cyprus. Since the Advanced Training of Trainers in October 1995, however, the Bicomunal Steering Committee has not been meeting regularly as a group. Most (but not all) of the members of the Committee were part of the Trainers Group, and since that group was meeting once a week, Steering Committee meetings simply faded away. The simultaneous existence of the Steering Committee and the Trainers Group has created some confusion and conflict around authority and leadership within the movement.

This issue is complicated by the fact that the Steering Committee was the closest thing this movement has ever had to an institution. It had been

granted a permanent room in the Ledra Palace to facilitate meeting, and there was some talk of getting phone lines put in—one to each community. The phone lines, however, were never put in, and when the evaluation team visited that room in October 1996, there was a thick layer of dust over everything. The Trainers Group is very concerned about institutionalization, seeing it as an important part of coordinating their activities, but they have not found a vehicle for institutionalizing.

Some trainers, especially Turkish Cypriots, question the desirability of institutionalization. It has been made clear that institutionalization would complicate their work. If they were to gather in one organization, they would be more vulnerable to attacks, and access to the buffer zone would be limited, to the detriment of their larger goals.

To date, the fact that the institutionalization issue has not been resolved is not a huge problem in itself. The Trainers Group has demonstrated clearly that it can move forward with this movement without clearly organized institutions with rigid structures. However, the issue of institutionalization relates directly to the issues of coordination, information sharing, and strategic planning for the training activities. The trainers expressed a great deal of frustration with their inability to communicate and coordinate activities between the two communities. For many training programs, the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot trainers were not able to prepare or plan together before the event. Without a clear structure for control of the group, it was difficult for the various trainers to coordinate work with each other, and communication difficulties, both within communities and between them, caused problems.

Follow Up

Some of these issues concerning institutionalization and coordination are addressed by the presence of the Cyprus Fulbright Commission, which is one of the sponsors for this work. The Fulbright Commission brought Dr. Ben Broome to Cyprus in the fall of 1994 as a resident Scholar on conflict resolution. He was also present at two of the Cyprus Consortium training events in the summer of 1994. He recently returned from Cyprus permanently in January 1997. Ben worked closely with the Trainers group, both between the 1994 Training of Trainers and the 1995 Advanced Training of Trainers, and also in the year following the 1995 event. Ben has been working with the group using a specific methodology, called interactive management, which he has used to help the Trainers Group implement the ideas they generated at the Cyprus Consortium trainings.

In addition to providing a structured methodology for developing and organizing their conflict resolution projects, Dr. Broome has been playing the primary coordination role for the Trainers Group. Almost every single

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trainer mentioned Dr. Broome during the interview, usually in the context of, "I wonder what will happen when Ben leaves." Broome had the ability to travel across the Green line with ease, and he had access to the diplomatic community, as well. As a Fulbright Scholar and as an American, Broome has much more "clout" than the trainers themselves have. Ben has also worked very closely with the U.S. Embassy staff, who has, in turn, been very involved in supporting the Trainers Group. Without the Fulbright connection, the Trainers Group does not have that kind of access. Full-time support of a Fulbright Scholar to provide moral and logistical support, facilitation, and coordination has been a key factor to the success of the AMIDEAST-sponsored work.

However, Dr. Broome's presence presents, in one sense, a dilemma—one that two members of the Trainers Group alluded to in their interviews. That is, Dr. Broome's ability to assist in the coordination of the activities and to facilitate communication across the Green Line was recognized as very valuable, but at the same time, these two participants were concerned that it inhibited the members of the Training Group from taking responsibility for these issues. One participant referred to the fact that many times they act as Dr. Broome's "assistants." This is indeed an important issue—particularly in Cyprus, where an over-reliance on the third party has arguably contributed to the political stalemate—but other participants referred to this reliance in a positive light. The Trainers Group relied on Dr. Broome not because they were incapable of addressing the issue of control and authority, but because the physical separation of the two sides made it impossible to do so. Dr. Broome's departure will present a special challenge to the trainers' ability to continue their work and build on the foundation that has been created over the last few years.

Vision

Finally, another challenge expressed by a few trainers was that of a lack of vision—not only for how the various bicomunal groups fit together, work together, and feed off each other, but for the peacebuilding and conflict resolution movement as a whole: "where we want this to end."

Other Issues

Resources and Institutionalization/Coordination were by far the most important challenges existing according to the people interviewed, but they did refer to some other issues as well. Several trainers referred to the language barrier. Nearly all of the work has been done in English, and that limits the scope of the work. Also, most of the events take place in Nicosia at night, and that also limits participation by people from the villages.

Some members of the group are also concerned about the lack of participation from people on the "right" of the political spectrum. During 1993 and 1994, participation by people close to the authorities was more commonplace than in the last year. In this sense, the group has become more homogenized in the last year, and several trainers cited this as a challenge. A few trainers also cited the eagerness and impatience of the participants as a challenge. They want to jump right into discussions of substantive issues surrounding the Cyprus problem, without engaging in any conflict resolution or communication skills training. One trainer remarked that a bicomunal group was in fact "simply a forum for discussion."

In addition, many members of the group feel challenged by the current political situation and the rise of nationalism over the last year. This has a negative effect on the availability of permissions to do the bicomunal work, and it is also threatening to people in the group. One trainer described the computer training business he runs, indicating that he trains 2,000 children each year, and two thirds of these children have nationalist parents. This makes defending the peace work publicly impossible for him. One of the interviewees has been publicly threatened for supporting this work.

Since the violence of the summer, some Greek Cypriots now protest every weekend at the checkpoint to the UN Buffer Zone, trying to dissuade tourists from visiting the North. This makes it socially awkward for the trainers to enter the buffer zone for bicomunal work, and it has also led to the closing of the checkpoint by the authorities in the North, preventing any bicomunal work scheduled for that day. This, in fact, happened while the evaluators were in Cyprus in November and prevented them from meeting with some of the trainers to discuss evaluation.

Conclusion

Although the Trainers Group has been very successful, they are simultaneously beset with a lack of important resources. The most active people in the Trainers Group are stretched to their limits regarding their time and their financial support of this work. None of them is able to work full-time on this, and they do not have the money to hire people to organize the logistical details and provide the much needed coordination function. The trainers are frustrated by their own inability to effectively coordinate the work, and there is ambiguity about the role of existing coordinating bodies like the Bicomunal Steering Committee, as well. The Fulbright Conflict Resolution Scholar has helped tremendously to coordinate and provide a communication link across the Green Line in ways the members of the Trainers Group could not, but frustration remains. These internal challenges, along with external challenges like the rise in nationalism on the island, have restricted the Group's ability to expand their work, but the group for the most part remains optimistic about being able to deal with these challenges.

NEEDS AND NEXT STEPS

In the interviews, we asked each trainer to talk about what the Trainers Group needed from the Cyprus Consortium (or from other groups), and what the next steps should be. Responses were organized into the following six categories of needs and next steps: (1) more training and training-related experience for the Trainers Group; (2) develop new activities, other than training, for Trainers Group; (3) better organization/institutionalization; (4) expansion of training and bicommunal interaction for both communities on Cyprus; (5) better governmental relations and help with dealing with politicians; and (6) more resources to support the work.

1. More Training/Experiences For Trainers Group

The trainers pointed to two separate needs. First, some (but not all) of the trainers felt that the Trainers Group themselves needed more training. Several made reference to the fact that they were qualified to do training in communication skills, but they could not do the more advanced work that they had seen done by the Consortium. They needed advanced training in techniques. Some also requested training on project planning and fundraising and how to organize workshops. Other trainers also felt that beyond the techniques, the Trainers Group needed to connect together as a group again and receive some training in team building. In addition to formal training, several of the trainers asked to be included by the Consortium in projects other than the Cyprus project. They want the opportunity to gain experience in conflict resolution in a context other than Cyprus.

In addition to their own professional development, the trainers felt that the Trainers Group needed to be expanded, so they requested another training of trainers program for new participants. Several of the trainers said that they could produce twenty to thirty people, all trained in conflict resolution, who would be willing and able to participate in a training of trainers program. Many trainers felt that a new group of trainers was desperately needed to meet the overwhelming demand for training that they sensed in the community.

2. Other Activities Aside from Training for the Trainers Group

Although most of the trainers were focused on developing their training capabilities, a small number of trainers had become more "activist" focused. These trainers, mostly Greek Cypriots, felt that the Trainers Group needed to "defend" their positions in the media more often, and develop more activist projects that focusing on sending out their message: "make a voice and force the media to deal with it," as one trainer put it. They wanted more public exposure for this work and the people involved with it. One trainer also

expressed a desire to create small peer groups of trainers that would meet regularly to monitor the learning and development of the trainers.

3. Better Organization and Institutionalization

The needs and next steps regarding the organization of this work follow logically from the challenges identified above. Several trainers called for a more democratic process for choosing the "leaders" of this movement, and there was a split about the role the Bicomunal Steering Committee should play. Nearly all of the trainers wanted to develop some structures for coordination of all the different activities. In the interviews, the trainers told us that a new coordinating group was being formed, but it had not yet been operative long enough to make a judgment as to its effectiveness. Many felt the need to develop clarity of goals and to develop a strategic plan. They wanted a mechanism to coordinate, without losing the autonomy of the different groups. It should also be noted that at the time of the interviews, it was not known among the trainers that Dr. Broome's Fulbright position would be filled immediately upon his departure, which would address these issues as well.

Regarding institutionalization, many people in both communities expressed the desire to have full-time staff people working to organize these projects, to keep records, maintain communication and serve as an institutional base for the work. Many wanted two offices, one in each community, connected via electronic mail. Of course, not one of the trainers was able to identify the resources to put such a plan into action, and many trainers, particularly in the Turkish-Cypriot community, expressed doubts in the political feasibility of this kind of institutionalization.

4. Expansion of Training and Bicomunal Interaction for the Public

The trainers had many different ideas for new directions in training for the general public in Cyprus. Here is a list of the different types of training that they wanted to pursue in the future:

- Deep workshops on specific issues, like identity, demilitarization, federation, etc.
- Workshops involving people from Turkey and Greece; develop solidarity with the peacemakers in those two countries
- More workshops with youth. This was perhaps the most popular idea among the trainers. They all noted how eager the young people in both communities were to pursue this work.
- Provide training to people from the villages
- Provide more social contact. Bring families together. The trainers feel that it is vital to meet with the other side in any kind of activity.

As noted above, the trainers feel that they cannot expand or begin to develop these new activities unless more trainers are trained first.

5. Governmental Relations and Dealing with Politicians

Several trainers made reference to different things "Track One," or governments, could do to support this process. Some wanted the Western powers to pressure Greece and Turkey, and another trainer wanted the superpowers to "stop supporting the people in the island who are against peace." Other trainers wanted the embassies on the island to get more involved and take the process under their wings. One trainer eloquently identified what the trainers needed to do in order to get Track One more involved: "We need to create a safer environment for political leaders to take brave actions."

6. Resources

Most of the trainers identified the need for money to support this work. Money was needed for supplies, refreshments at training events, and salary money to support full-time help in coordinating this work. Some trainers also noted that the two rooms dedicated for bicomunal work at the Ledra Palace were being used to their capacity, and they needed more room to support the many different projects that are now active. In particular, they want a place where they can meet without having to get permissions.

Conclusion

In order to further strengthen this budding movement and take it to the next level, the Trainers Group will need more training—both for themselves and for a new group of trainers. The new group of trainers has already been identified, and as soon as they are trained as trainers, they could begin to meet some of the constantly increasing demand for this work. The trainers group themselves could also benefit from more training and the opportunity to assist the Cyprus Consortium in their other training projects. They have identified specific target audiences for expanded training programs, but they will need to address the challenges of institutionalization and lack of resources before they can expand in the ways they have identified.

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CONCLUSION

In August 1994, following the first Training of Trainers event, the Cyprus Consortium had just finished an intense round of conflict resolution training events, reaching several hundred participants in the two communities on Cyprus. The Trainers Group, however, did not feel confident enough to strike out on their own and do training. Their activities over the next year were confined mostly to working with Fulbright Scholar Ben Broome. Meeting nearly once every week, the group began to become more organized and focused on developing a training agenda.

When the October 1995 Advanced Training of Trainers program was completed, the Trainers Group was now actively involved in doing training and ready to develop their own programs. At that training, they identified two major long-term goals: (1) to provide training events on their own, both bicommunally and within each community; and (2) to make some decisions and get some clarity about the organization and institutionalization of this work.

In the year since the October 1995 Advanced Training of Trainers program, the Trainers Group clearly accomplished their first goal. The trainers have developed and implemented at least ten ongoing conflict resolution projects, most of which center around training in conflict resolution skills and the facilitation of dialogue and discussion around the Cyprus issue. In some cases, they rely on assistance from Fulbright Scholar Ben Broome, but in most cases they are training and facilitating on their own, often in bicommunal pairs. They have witnessed a great expansion of their work, to the point where the current Trainers Group is stretched beyond its capacity, and there are still many new people who are requesting training.

The sheer numbers of people involved demonstrates the growing strength of the movement in Cyprus toward peace, reconciliation, and cooperation. The conflict resolution work that these trainers are spearheading is changing the way the public discusses the Cyprus issue in some circumstances, and has begun to generate new language, new assumptions, and new ways of thinking about conflict in both communities. In a limited way, the trainers have even observed a shift in how the conflict and conflict resolution work is discussed in the media and among politicians. The people who pursue conflict resolution are subjected to fewer public attacks, and the public suspicion of this work has decreased dramatically in the last few years.

Despite this progress, the trainers have noted that even the positive impact, as shown in media coverage, for instance, is sometimes outweighed by a recent resurgence of nationalism and confrontation on the island. This nationalist movement is very popular in both communities, indicating that although the conflict resolution movement is growing, it still represents a

minority in both communities on Cyprus. The trainers lack the financial resources needed to fully support this work, and they have been unsuccessful in addressing the issues of organization, coordination, and institutionalization of this work.

Out of these challenges, the trainers have identified several needs and next steps. First, they need more training for themselves, and they have requested another round of training of trainers. They are stretched to the limit as it stands now, and they need more trainers on the island to meet the demand for conflict resolution training. The ten ongoing projects they have developed in both communities are not enough. They want to expand their training activities in order to work with specific issues, include people from Greece and Turkey, involve the youth in both communities more, and expand training into the villages with non-English speakers.

As one trainer pointed out, if the Cyprus Consortium had tried to start this conflict resolution movement today, it would be defeated by the nationalist factions in Cyprus. Fortunately, the Cyprus Consortium started in 1991 and by now has helped create a social movement that can withstand the pressure from these groups and continue to do conflict resolution work. The corps of local trainers on the island has brought the principles and practices of conflict resolution into the daily lives of hundreds more people in both communities, a feat that the Cyprus Consortium could not have accomplished by itself, from overseas. The challenge now is to take this work to the next level, to support the local conflict resolution infrastructure so that it can broaden its impact, expand its activities, and begin to support the structures and policies that will build lasting peace in Cyprus.