

**‘TO BUILD A NATION
WHERE PEACE AND
JUSTICE SHALL
REIGN’:**

**A Report On OTI Nigeria Conflict
Resolution Initiatives**

**WIEBE BOER
December 2000**

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Introduction

In *This House Has Fallen: Midnight in Nigeria*, the first widely read book on Nigeria to be published in the last decade, journalist Karl Maier gives a rather daunting picture of the tasks ahead for Nigeria’s democratic leaders. Nigeria appears to be a nation in chaos, a nation at the brink. From the religious conflicts in the North and the Middle Belt,¹ to the ethnic violence in the South West, and to what he calls the ‘low-level guerrilla warfare’ in the Niger Delta, the defining characteristic of Nigeria over the last decade has been conflict. Nigeria is a country that often seems on the verge of collapse and places like Lagos appear to be little more than managed anarchy, but somehow the country stays together and keeps forging ahead. Yet, as Maier writes, “...given the level of tension in the society, I often felt surprised that confrontations were not more frequent. In Nigeria brinkmanship has evolved into an art form.”²

When the military stepped aside in Nigeria and handed power over to civilian authority in May, 1999, many of the strong arm tactics necessary for them to keep a chaotic society moderately in check left with them. Nigeria was already a country plagued by conflict, and things were only going to get worse. All over Nigeria tensions that had been pushed under the surface during the fifteen years of dictatorial rule began boiling over. Throughout the country conflicts big and small began erupting as

¹ See Appendix 1 for a list of the significant religious conflicts in North Central, North East, and North West regions over the last two decades.

individuals, communities, or entire ethnic groups took advantage of a more open society to settle old scores. In short, one of the unexpected democracy dividends was an increase in the already unhealthy level of conflict, a bi-product of a freer society caught in the midst of poverty.

To make matters worse, as has been the case for two decades, when conflicts do erupt, the government rarely seems to know how to handle them properly. Alhaji Balarabe Musa, a widely respected Northern Nigerian elder, the former civilian governor of Kaduna State, and a man who has devoted his life to the betterment of the ‘talakawa’ (peasants), had this to say about conflict in Nigeria:

“The government is behaving irresponsibly in how they respond to conflicts. Before 1979, we did not have this constant violence of various kinds resulting in loss of lives and property. We used to have them but on a very small scale with intervals of ten, fifteen, or even twenty years when nothing would happen. But now it is virtually every three months throughout the country. My view is that it continues simply because government at every level seems to be indifferent and this is very very bad. The report of the judicial inquiry into the Kaduna violence (February 2000) is yet to be released, so no one yet knows who was behind it. It means that people who are thinking of doing the same thing will feel they can do it, and get away with it...and there is no way we can build the foundation for democracy if this sort of thing is allowed.”³

OTI’s Conflict Resolution Initiative

In the early days of USAID-OTI’s mission in Nigeria, no one predicted that such conflicts would become one of the biggest threats to stability and democracy in Nigeria.

However, because of OTI’s flexible nature, when it became apparent that conflict was an

² Karl Maier, *This House Has Fallen: Midnight in Nigeria* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2000), xvii.

³ Interview with Alhaji Balarabe Musa, Kaduna, Kaduna State, 23 November 2000. Balarabe Musa works closely with Even Development Projects, an NGO that conducted some conflict resolution programs in Kaduna for OTI in the aftermath of the February violence.

issue that needed to be addressed in a timely manner, a national training program on conflict resolution was designed and implemented.

Stakeholders' Conference

The intervention began in February 2000 with a Stakeholders Conference in Badagry, Lagos. The conference was attended by representatives of civil society from each of the six zones with experience in conflict resolution, especially in regards to the focus areas of youth, local government, ethnic strife, and religious tension. The meeting was facilitated by the OTI Nigeria Country Director, with assistance from two conflict resolution training experts from the Institute for Applied Spiritual Technology (IFAST), a US based organization. The 36 participants discussed issues of conflict in Nigeria and came up with strategies on how to conduct a nation wide program to address it. The workshop took place shortly after a bloody religious conflict in Kaduna over the potential implementation of Sharia law. This conflict not only brought a level of urgency and importance to the gathering, but it also provided a particularly touchy case study for the participants to discuss.

On their own initiative, the participants in the conference resolved to form a conflict resolution network that would enable them to better work together on conflict solving throughout the country, drawing on each others expertise when necessary. This network, known as the Conflict Resolution Stakeholders' Network (CRESNET) has thus far had a bumpy ride, but is now moving towards realizing the goal of a national body of conflict mediators who can be mobilized at an instant anywhere in the country to address conflict.

National Training of Trainers (TOT)

The Stakeholders' Conference was followed by a TOT in Port Harcourt in March to which a good number of the stakeholders returned. The 30 participants at the TOT were made up of at least four representatives from each region and eight from the South South, exhibiting OTI's special commitment to the conflict prone Niger Delta. Using a training manual specially designed for the Nigerian situation after the Stakeholders' Conference, the IFAST trainers taught those in attendance skills related to mediation and conflict resolution as well as how to teach these skills to others in a highly participatory manner. The end result was 30 OTI trained Master Trainers who would not only form the core of CRESNET, but would also conduct the nationwide training programs that were to follow.

Regional Training of Trainers (TOT)

Following the TOT in Port Harcourt, a series of six regional TOTs took place beginning in Calabar in mid-March and ending in Jos in early June. In each of the six zonal training centres around the country, over 200 representatives of regional CBOs and NGOs were trained in mediation and conflict resolution. The training was conducted by the Master Trainers from the zone along with the two IFAST trainers. In this way, OTI was in a short period of time able to spread concepts of conflict resolution to the grassroots across Nigeria. Subsequently, these NGOs and CBOs across Nigeria have on their own or through assistance from OTI, carried out conflict resolution initiatives to spread the message further.

For many, the training in conflict resolution has been an eye opener, almost a revelation. Dr. Aliyu Musa of GINI Consult, the organization that did the logistics for the North West regional TOT in Kano, had this to say about the participants, "They were

going around with such missionary zeal that people thought they were a new kind of Christian or Muslim missionary, because it is usually only people who are religiously inclined who go around talking about peace. Previously, they only talked about conflicts after they had started. But now, with this new approach, there are attempts to detonate the conflicts before they take place.’⁴ Dr. K. Awosika of the Women, Law, and Development Centre, the NGO that carried out logistics for the South West regional TOT, said along similar lines, ‘The thing is starting to snowball, and CPDN (one of the NGOs trained) and others are finding it hard to keep up.’⁵

The Grassroots Nationwide Response

Since OTI Nigeria has put so much time, energy and finances into conflict resolution initiatives, it seemed fitting that some follow up study be done to ascertain how much of an impact the training had had throughout the country. It was for this reason that I was sent around the country to meet with grantees and participants to discover in what ways they were able to use the conflict resolution skills they had gained through OTI initiatives. This follow up research took me to the length and breadth of Nigeria, especially in the South. In spite of the interviews I conducted with 74 people, the clearest statement of what conflict resolution training has done for so many people around Nigeria came in an unsolicited letter from a young man who participated in a conflict resolution training for youth leaders in Lokoja, Kogi State. Sheik A. Mamman of the Federal College of Education, Okene, wrote,

‘I would like to seize this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to you and your organization, USAID/OTI for the opportunity they availed me for the four day workshop I attended in Lokoja. I want to

⁴ Interview with Dr. Aliyu Musa, Kano, Kano State, Nigeria, 23 November 2000.

⁵ Interview with Dr. K. Awosika, Surulere, Lagos State, Nigeria, 23 October 2000.

acknowledge the fact that the long course was not a waste. Through the knowledge I acquired, I was able to put in place democratic values in my community. I recently, through my mediation knowledge, resolved an age long conflict between two families in my area. This action of mine has earned me honour, glory and great respect not only among my friends but also has made me an important person in my area and a major contributor to issues that bother my community.’⁶

This simple acknowledgement of what the training in conflict resolution did for this young man is emblematic of what the training has done for people across Nigeria. People who desperately wanted to contribute positively to their communities but did not have the tools to do so have now been given them. They now go out with zeal to end conflicts in their communities, not only empowering themselves, but their communities as well. Communities that were previously conflicted are through them more able to enjoy peace and therefore, in future, prosperity.

Selected Major Success Stories

▪ **Ife-Modakeke Communal Conflict, Osun State**

While conflicts continue to rage around Nigeria, in those places that OTI has been able to carry out interventions, the level of conflict has reduced dramatically. One particular OTI success has been with regards to the conflict between the neighbouring Ife and Modakeke communities of Osun State. Conflict between them has been going on for over 150 years, and in recent years police committees, state committees, and even presidential committees have attempted to resolve the conflict with little success.

In mid-2000 OTI came in with a comprehensive conflict resolution strategy to work towards bringing the two communities together. The OTI Lagos office worked closely in conjunction with Dr. Isaac Albert of the University of Ibadan, Honourable Akin Akinteye of the Oyo State House of Assembly, and Professor Sola Olowu of

⁶ Letter from Sheik A. Mamman to Wiebe Boer, October 26, 2000.

Obafemi Awolowo University (all CRESNET members), to design and implement the conflict resolution program for the warring communities. Since then the fighting has stopped and former adversaries are now working together as members of an Inter-Communal Peace Advocacy Committee.

Leaders of the community are very vocal about their appreciation for OTI's historic accomplishment there. Chief Gabriel Adetola Agbe, a High Chief of the Ooni of Ife, the most important Yoruba traditional ruler, and the Chairman of the Inter-Communal Peace Committee said during the committee meeting I attended that, "We thank God that peace is gradually coming in to our territory. We will continue to thank USAID/OTI for what they have done. We are now sitting here face to face with ourselves, whereas some months ago we were shooting each other face to face!"⁷ Another High Chief of the Ooni of Ife serving on the Committee commented, "The governor, the president, and the bishop had come in before, but to no avail. OTI were professionals and talked us into a sensible conclusion. But such a long war has to like a candle die down gradually and naturally."⁸

The Committee naturally has representatives from the Modakeke community as well. One of the Modakeke representatives is particularly interesting as he was a former warlord. Captain Patrick Adewuyo Bayomi (Rtd.) was one of President Obasanjo's field commanders during the Nigerian Civil War in the late 1960s. He retired from active duty in the 1980s, and has since become active within his community. When the most recent round of conflict between the Ife and Modakeke emerged in the late 1990s, Captain

⁷ Introductory comments given by Chief Gabriel Adetola Agbe, the Chairman of the Ife-Modakeke Inter-Communal Peace Advocacy Committee at a meeting of the Committee held on 26 October, 2000 on the campus of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Osun State.

Bayomi was the one who mobilized Modakeke men and resources to defend themselves against Ife attacks. Now that the conflict is over, he proudly serves on the Committee to represent a people who he says could not be vanquished in spite of overwhelming superiority in strength of the other side. He said,

“It was a war of genocide where even two or three month old babies were slaughtered. The local government we were supposed to get was hijacked, and then they tried to wipe us from the face of the earth.

“I don’t have words to describe what OTI has done. It is such a marvelous achievement. Where it worked mostly was that on both sides, everyone was really tired of the war. It was bringing us together that made both of us realize that. OTI has made it possible for us to cross check rumours from either end. It was the Mobile Policemen who used to cause a lot of the friction, spreading rumours on both sides, and now we can verify these stories before taking action. It is the USAID effort that contributed 99% to peace in these towns. Because of our egos, the thing would have continued indefinitely, but for USAID.’⁹

All is not well between the Ifes and Modakekes, but at least OTI has helped them put down their weapons and prepare for dialogue, a dialogue that will likely carry on for years before any final resolution between the two communities is reached.¹⁰

▪ **Oke Ogun, Oyo State and the Aftermath**

Oke Okun is a region in northern Oyo State made up of ten local government areas. There are large numbers of Hausa/Fulani settlers there who have been in the area for up to a century. As is the case in much of Nigeria, however, longevity does not equate indigeneity, and so they are still considered ‘foreigners’ to the indigenous Yoruba in spite of living side by side for generations. Most of the conflicts between them take

⁸ Interview with High Chief Olanrewaju Adesunloro Omisore, Ife, Osun State, 26 October 2000.

⁹ Interview with Captain Patrick Adewuyo Bayomi (Rtd.), Ife, Osun State, 26 October 2000.

¹⁰ See Appendix II for a full report on the visit to Ife, Osun State and conclusions drawn from the interviews and site visits there.

place because many of the Hausa/Fulani are nomadic cattle rearers while the Yoruba are sedentary farmers.

OTI funded a conflict resolution program for key leaders in the Oke Ogun area carried out by the Conflict Management Project in conjunction with OTI conflict resolution Master Trainers. The program proved to be a great success, and a 16 member Inter-Ethnic Peace Committee was formed to mitigate violent conflicts in the area. The Peace Committee meets every month and the local governments are voting money to fund the committees continued existence. Since the inauguration of this committee, no major or even minor inter-ethnic conflicts have arisen in the area that once had so many. Even during the Hausa-Yoruba conflicts in Lagos in October, nothing started in reaction to that in Oke Ogun. The committee has since dealt with all sorts of conflicts in the community, involving everything from petrol salesmen to transporters and cattle rearers.

The Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF), a recently created body of Northern elites, put together a high powered committee to go to Oyo State and petition Governor Lam Adesina on the harassment of Hausa/Fulani in Oke Ogun area of the state. The committee was headed by former head of state Muhammadu Buhari, and included former military administrator of Lagos State Buba Marwa, the former Inspector General of Police Ibrahim Coomasie and several others.

During their meeting in Ibadan with Governor Adesina about the issue, Adesina simply handed Buhari the Conflict Management Project's report on the resolution of conflict in the area and the creation of the Inter-Ethnic Peace Committee. Adesina made it clear to Buhari and the rest of his delegation that the issue they had come to discuss had already been resolved months before through a USAID-OTI funded intervention. The

ACF delegation obviously had no rejoinder and left rather embarrassed that an issue they thought was so serious had already been dealt with.

That was not the only follow up to the program. As is often the case with such programs, security personnel in the Oke Ogun area were suspicious about what Conflict Management Project and USAID-OTI were trying to do in the area. Because of this, the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) Area Commander Haz Iwendi sent members of his staff to investigate. When he heard that the program was about building peace and not about making things worse, he came himself and stayed for the rest of the program. By the end of it all, he was very impressed and went so far as to volunteer to be on the Peace Committee.

Soon thereafter, he was transferred out of Oke Ogun and became the NPF's Force Public Relations Officer. This posting put him very close to Musiliu Smith, the Inspector General of Police. Iwendi informed Smith of the conflict resolution program in Oke Ogun and talked about how useful such training could be for police officers nationwide.

Conflict Management Project in conjunction with members of USAID-OTI's South West Conflict Resolution Stakeholders Network are presently finalizing arrangements to conduct the training which would take place in eight phases around the country. If the training goes ahead as planned, it will be completely funded by the NPF and much of the training will be conducted by USAID-OTI trained conflict resolution trainers around the country. In addition, Conflict Management Project will be contracted

as consultants to the Police Staff College to design a conflict resolution curriculum for the college.¹¹

▪ **The South West Region during the October Crisis in Lagos**

Although OTI is putting a lot of time and energy into conflict resolution, OTI does not have the resources or a structure in place to address conflicts when they actually erupt. Thus, when Lagos State was in turmoil in October 2000, there was little OTI could do while the conflict was raging. However, there was a strong correlation between conflict prone areas that did not erupt and places where OTI had carried out interventions. Thus, while Ajegunle and Apapa burned, places like Mushin, Lagos Island, Abeokuta, and Ibadan, where OTI had conducted conflict resolution programs, did not enter the melee. The hope is that once the Conflict Resolution Stakeholders Network (CRESNET) that OTI is mentoring at the national level is in place, strategies will also be developed to deal with conflicts even while they are in progress.

▪ **Calabar, Cross River State**

The Niger Delta is one of OTI's key focus areas, and hence extensive conflict resolution initiatives have been carried out there. In mid-November, 2000 a crisis involving rival youth bands was about to erupt in Calabar, Cross River State on the fringe of the Niger Delta. The usual response in the past had been to just shoot the protagonists on sight, a response that ensured that the conflict would carry on for weeks.

This particular time, the conflict erupted just as the local government officials of the area were completing their OTI sponsored conflict resolution training program. As the Council Chairman of Calabar Municipal told Rev. Mrs. Efiang, "If I was not there to

¹¹ Culled from interviews with Dr. Mobolaji Ogunsanya of Conflict Management Project, Dr. Isaac Albert of the University of Ibadan, and Honourable Akin Akinteye of the Oyo State House of Assembly, Ibadan,

mediate and to quell down the feud, it would have been serious.”¹² According to Calabar South Local Government Secretary Patrick Asikpo-Okon, “I could have followed suit on the earlier decision of my people (to shoot on sight), but because of this training I tried to see it from a different angle and I think it is having a positive impact.”¹³ The relevant officials immediately sought a peaceable solution and worked with key youth leaders and key traditional rulers in the area whom OTI had also taught. The result was a peaceful resolution to the conflict within 24 hours. What transpired in Calabar exhibited the type of success conflict resolution training programs can have when different categories of key people are targeted and organized into inter-related networks.¹⁴

Selected Narratives

The vast majority of the conflict resolution programs funded by OTI after the six regional TOTs were small scale programs conducted by NGOs and CBOs who had been impacted by OTI’s conflict resolution training. It is difficult for small scale, grassroots programs to have macro level impacts on the national level. They do, however, have micro level impacts which, when taken collectively, begin to have noticeable impacts on individual states, regions, and the entire country. What follows here are some of these narratives of small-scale success stories from the various programs around the country. They represent a variety of target groupings, so I will try as best as possible to make them fit within general categories. In terms of geography, I will place them in random order so as to show how similar problems and solutions around the country can be.

Oyo State, 24 October, 2000.

¹² Interview with Rev. Mrs. I. O. Efiog, Calabar, Cross River State, 9 November 2000.

¹³ Interview with Patrick Asikpo-Okon, Calabar, Cross River State, 9 November, 2000.

¹⁴ Culled from Interviews with Chris Martins of Reach Services, Ema Nyong of Efut Kparika II Village, Rev. Mrs. I. O. Efiog of Centre for Training and Gender Activities, and Patrick Asikpo-Okon, Secretary to the Calabar South Local Government, Calabar, Cross River State, 9 November 2000.

- **Communal and Ethnic**

1. *Mgbagbuowa, Ezeagu Local Government Area, Enugu State*

Soon after completing an OTI funded program in conflict resolution training for Youth Development Officers in the South East Region, Assistant Principal Youth Development Officer T. C. Aneke got involved in a communal conflict in this community. He was able to get the warring parties to sit down and discuss peaceably the history of the situation and the ownership of the land. In the end, the conflict was resolved peacefully.¹⁵

2. *Ibiono, Akwa Ibom State*

Obong (Chief) Austin Ekong participated in the OTI sponsored conflict resolution workshop for traditional rulers in Akwa Ibom State. After the workshop, he went back to his community and assembled 25 village heads to discuss what he had learned. They began by discussing issues that often created conflicts between them. The first of these was the issue of succession and they decided how this could be done in a more peaceful manner. They then discussed how they could better define the different roles between those who are chiefs by birth and those who are chiefs because of their standing in the community. Since this discussion, conflicts between village heads have reduced.¹⁶

3. *Nasarawa State*

There was a serious inter-communal conflict in Toto Local Government of Nasarawa State that forced the Bassa community to leave the state and seek refuge in neighbouring states. The present administration has made arrangements for the Bassa to gradually begin returning to Toto, but they need to do so in a way that does not encourage the revival of the conflict. In light of this, the state government has made a request to OTI, due to their expertise in conflict resolution, soliciting for assistance in order to consolidate the peace process in Toto Local Government.¹⁷

4. *Abeokuta, Ogun State*

In Abeokuta, the Centre for Peace Education and Development carried out a program in major markets and motor parks. As crowded places where masses of people with diverse backgrounds interact on a daily basis, markets and motor parks can easily become centres of conflict. This program involved training in concepts of conflict resolution through drama. Performances took place in Omida, Kuto, Lafenwa, and Iberekoda markets and in Kuto Ashero, Ijaiye, and Itaoshin motor parks, as well as a final command performance in the Cultural Centre. The total number of viewers was around 15,000, not including those who watched the drama afterwards on videotape.

¹⁵ Interview with T. C. Aneke, Enugu, Enugu State, 8 November 2000.

¹⁶ Interview with Obong Austin Ekong, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, 13 November 2000.

¹⁷ Letter from Labaran Maku, Honourable Commissioner of Information, Youth, Sports & Culture, Nasarawa State to USAID-OTI Abuja Program Manager, 14 December 2000.

The effects of such a program are generally not easy to quantify, but in this case surveys conducted by the NGO show that the program had a dramatic effect on peoples' perceptions of conflict. On pre-program questionnaires, respondents were clear that they were readily willing to fight if called upon, especially on issues relating to disputes between Abeokuta's five different sub-groups. In a post-program impact assessment, 80% of those who had previously expressed a readiness to fight and participate in conflicts expressed they were now ready to shun violence after learning about the real consequences of conflict.¹⁸

5. *Cross River State*

After the conflict resolution training for traditional rulers co-sponsored by OTI and the Cross River State government, Committees of Peace were established in each local government area. These Committees were made up of traditional rulers who had been trained in conflict resolution. Since many of the traditional rulers are also customary court judges, the conflict resolution training offered them an alternative way to settle problems between people in their communities.

The Committees are now working to resolve conflicts across the state in a peaceful manner and have already enjoyed successes in various communities. Some of the successes are the amicable resolution of:

- the Netim clan dispute
- a communal conflict in Efut Uwanse
- the conflict between Efut Abua and Ekot Inim communities over the clean up of an oil spillage.¹⁹

6. *Ibadan, Oyo State*

In Ibadan, key leaders of the Igbo, Hausa, and Yoruba communities of the city were brought together for a training program in conflict resolution. The outcome of the training was the formation of an Inter-Ethnic Peace Committee that presently meets monthly to discuss issues related to conflict and to plan ways of preventing them from becoming major incidents.

Soon after the training, tensions flared between O'odua Peoples' Congress (OPC – Yoruba) and Arewa Peoples' Congress (APC – Hausa) members. The Committee was able to assist in reducing the tensions and preventing conflict from erupting.

While Hausa-Yoruba tensions were rising in the South West and Hausa-Igbo tensions were rising in the North, Igbos began preparing to move en masse back to the East from all over the country. The leader of the Igbos in Ibadan, a recipient of the training and a member of the peace committee, got assurances of peace from the other ethnic leaders of

¹⁸ Interview with Kola Ewedairo, Kunle Afolabi, and Kunle Ewetade, Abeokuta, Ogun State, 24 October 2000.

¹⁹ Interview with Patrick Bassey, Rev. Mrs. I. O. Effiong, Hubert Ogar, and Stanley Edrah, Calabar, Cross River State, 9 November 2000.

Ibadan and based on these encouraged his people to stay in the city. For this reason, Ibadan did not experience an Igbo exodus as did many other urban centres in the country.²⁰

7. *Nok, Kaduna State/Kano, Kano State*

Amos Maichibi is both Barde Nok – a community leader among the ancient Nok people who's duties include maintaining peace within and without the community – and the Wakilin Nasarawa – the community leader of the indigenes of southern Kaduna living in Kano.

Maichibi commented, “There are so many things I gained in that course, let me mention one or two. I understand one or two mistakes I made before. Let's say there is conflict between two groups. I should not advise them to say ‘forgive me’, but I should put them through the process as a mediator. Try to make them understand more fully so that they know what they are forgiving. At the same time, before if there are rumours among my people, I will wait until it comes to me officially. Now I know that when rumours come, I should not wait. I should try and see that I cool it down at that stage before it comes to conflict...It helped me and it helped my people.”²¹

8. *Oruku, Enugu State*

A conflict was brewing between those of freeborn descent (indigenes) and those of slave descent (settlers) in Oruku, Enugu State. The settlers were told they had to leave and were ready to fight for the right to remain. OTI trained NGOs were able to intervene in the conflict and the settlers were allowed to stay without blood being shed.²²

9. *Kano, Kano State*

Rukayya Ahamad Mohammed participated in an OTI funded conflict resolution training program in Kano as a representative of an NGO focused on women and children's issues. Subsequently, she has been able to use the mediation tools in all sorts of ways in her daily life, both within and without her organization. One of her friends was having marital problems since her husband had made it clear that he was going to take a second wife. The couple refused to talk to each other at all. Using what she learned from the OTI training, Rukayya talked to each of them individually and then brought them together. They had a dialogue about their problems, and they are now happily back together, their marital dispute over.

10. *Abeokuta, Ogun State*

After the Hausa-Yoruba conflict erupted in Shagamu, Ogun State late last year, many people fled to nearby Abeokuta. This heightened tensions between the two communities

²⁰ Interview with Yemi Olukoya, Ibadan, Oyo State, 19 October 2000.

²¹ Interview with Amos Maichibi, Kano, Kano State, 23 November 2000.

²² Interview with Father Leonard Ilochukwu, Enugu, Enugu State, 8 November 2000.

in Abeokuta, leading many to believe that conflict between them was sure to come. Realizing this, the Foundation for Democratic Development (FDD) conducted a conflict resolution training workshop for Hausa and Yoruba community leaders in the city. The outcome of the training was the creation of an Inter-Local Government Peace Advocacy Committee.

I interviewed members of the committee soon after the October crisis in Lagos, and this is what they had to say:

Hausa:

“Especially during the recent crisis in Lagos, many of us on the committee did not sleep. We had to make sure that everyone slept before we slept, and that we woke up before anyone else woke just because of the situation in the town. When we hear of any problem, we have to rush there and see that things are OK... We are the peacemakers. Everyone in Ogun State, even the governor, knows that we are trying. We are trying, and we will continue to do so so that we have peace by the special grace of God. In Abeokuta here, we will not have problems.”²³

Yoruba:

“In this community, there are so many misunderstandings between the Hausa and the Yoruba. But due to the intervention of our committee, we always settle everything amicably. Between Hausas and Yorubas, we now quickly understand ourselves. As my colleague said, there has been no trouble in this town between Hausas and Yorubas. The conflicts in Lagos will not spread here due to the intervention of our committee and the workshop they gave us, we learned many things.”²⁴

Hausa:

“I wanted to know what I could do to help my community considering that people had already gone far in fighting and killing one another ignorantly, and some are doing it to benefit their own selfish and negative attitude... The Hausas are 90% illiterate, and don't know how to approach a conflict, so the committee educates them with the little knowledge they have. There will not be any conflict between the Hausas and the Yorubas in Abeokuta.”²⁵

11. Okrika vs. Eleme, Rivers State

Elder Gomba Osarollor remembers that there have been conflicts between his Eleme people and their Okrika neighbours ever since his childhood in the 1930s and 1940s. Even though these two communities interact and even intermarry, from time to time violent conflicts over land rights flare up between them. Since the two communities have oil producing land, and since Eleme hosts one of Nigeria's oil refineries, the conflicts between them over land now have much higher stakes.

²³ Interview with Malam Ado Tanko, Abeokuta, Ogun State, 24 October 2000.

²⁴ Interview with Chief S. A. Yusuf, Abeokuta, Ogun State, 24 October, 2000.

²⁵ Interview with Gambo Ali, Abeokuta, Ogun State, 24 October, 2000.

On October 4, 1999 a fight erupted between youths of the two communities. Such conflicts usually only lasted for a few days, but this one lingered on. OTI contracted Academic Associates Peace Works (AAPW) to carry out a conflict resolution program between the two communities. AAPW were able to bring the two sides together to dialogue and helped them form a peace committee that could help maintain good relations between the two communities.

Osaroller, the Eleme co-chair of the Eleme-Okrika Joint Peace Committee, remarked, “We learned that we gain nothing from conflict and that when we fail to work together, we lose. While the Eleme and Okrika were fighting, others were getting the major jobs at the refinery. It is not in our interest to have a conflict situation... We learned during the workshop that many of the things we thought about Okrika are the same things they feared about us. We learned that dialogue and verification is very important. We now have those we can talk to if we hear any rumours. We are equipped to prevent conflicts from erupting.”²⁶

12. Obudu, Cross River State

King Tom Adie is a traditional ruler and itinerant peace maker who uses music, books, drama, television shows, and festivals to promote peace between the people of northern Cross River State and their Middle Belt Tiv neighbours. He has received commendation for his efforts from the National Boundary Commission.

He was one of the participants in the OTI sponsored conflict resolution training workshop for traditional rulers in Cross River State and because of his long experience in the field, he was put on the Peace Committee for Obudu Local Government Area. He has since the training been instrumental in resolving three communal conflicts – between Kutiang and Begiaba, between Mbaduku and Obudu, and between Kutiang II and Kubong Bette.

13. Mushin Local Government Area, Lagos State

An OTI sponsored program in conflict resolution for youth, community leaders, and local government officials was held in Mushin Local Government Area, a conflict prone part of Lagos State and the headquarters of the notorious O’odua Peoples’ Congress (OPC). The Mushin Local Government Chairman attended the training and was so pleased that he offered land for the construction of a local government mediation centre.

The founder and leader of the OPC, Dr. Frederick Fasheun, also attended part of the program and made a speech on the last day calling for peace and tolerance, quite a switch from his usual attitude. When trouble erupted in Ajegunle soon after, the violence did not spread to Mushin as it had previous times and the usually defiant OPC leader called for peace rather than continued violence. He offered himself for arrest as one way to end the crisis, a sure sign that he was now more oriented to peace than before.

²⁶ Interview with Elder Gomba Osarollor, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, 15 November 2000 and with Thelma Ekiyor, Enugu, Enugu State, 8 November 2000.

Several 'Area Boys' (social miscreants) who attended the program were inspired by Fasheun's peace message and now attend meetings of the National Democracy Equality Vanguard, a partner of the coordinating NGO. They have decided to reorient their focus away from the violence and general harassment they meet out to the populace.²⁷

14. *Kano, Kano State*

When the fighting between Hausa and Yoruba erupted in Lagos in October, 2000, many believed that it would spread to other places in the South West as well as to Kano. In 1999, after a Hausa-Yoruba conflict in Shagamu, Ogun State, a retaliatory conflict followed in Kano, so there was certainly a precedent. However, the youth leaders and religious leaders trained in conflict resolution through OTI funded interventions in Kano worked tirelessly to ensure the conflict did not come to Kano and peace reigned.²⁸

15. *Nkana Etinan Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State*

Sunday Peter Akpaidem is a community leader who attended the OTI sponsored training on conflict resolution for traditional rulers in Akwa Ibom State. When he returned home afterwards, his entire community was in a major crisis between the youths and the elders. Using the training he had just received, he was able to assist with the resolution of the conflict in such a way that there was 'no victor and no vanquished.'

On a more general level, he mentioned that the training program allowed different levels of traditional rulers in the state to agree on their different roles so that conflicts between them would also be reduced. This was accomplished and now that their specific roles are more defined, conflicts between them have diminished.²⁹

16. *Nationwide*

Tola Olorunshola is a program officer for Prime Peace Project, a Kano based conflict resolution NGO. Her extended family spread around Nigeria has for three generations been involved in a serious conflict that has kept it completely divided. Using the training she garnered from the OTI North West Zonal TOT in Kano, she was able to get involved in bringing resolution to the conflict. Thanks to OTI her extended family has now been reconciled.³⁰

17. *Ibadan, Oyo State*

During a conflict resolution training for key market and community leaders in conflict prone parts of Ibadan, the Sarkin Hausawa (leader of the Hausas) was one of the participants. During the October 2000 conflict in Lagos between Hausa and Yoruba, the

²⁷ Interview with Dr. K. Awosika, Surulere, Lagos State, 23 October 2000 and with Damilola Saibu, Victoria Island, Lagos, 25 October 2000.

²⁸ Interviews with Dr. Mustapha Sanda, Tola Olorunshola, and Emmanuel Agbo, Kano, Kano State, 23 November 2000.

²⁹ Interview with Sunday Peter Akpaidem, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, 13 November 2000.

³⁰ Interview with Tola Olorunshola, Kano, Kano State, 23 November 2000.

Sarkin Hausawa in Ibadan actively made sure that the conflict did not spread to Ibadan even though other Hausa leaders were encouraging him to mobilize his people for conflict.³¹

18. Ikono, Akwa Ibom State

On 9 November, 2000, a conflict arose between two communities and was brought to the attention of the Ikono Palace Council. Obong (Chief) P. B. Inyang, the secretary of the Council, and a participant in OTI's conflict resolution workshop for Akwa Ibom State traditional rulers used his mediation skills to help work towards the resolution of the problem. He said, "I am quite happy that I used the knowledge I acquired in the training to help to mitigate the conflict. We are still trying to resolve it, but I am convinced we are on the right road. We have now set a pattern so that whenever a conflict arises, we will use the training given to us to address it."

Others on the council are now being trained by him in matters of conflict resolution.³²

19. Niger Delta

OTI conducted a series of conflict resolution training programs for 15 different conflict prone communities in the core Niger Delta states of Rivers, Bayelsa, and Delta. Thelma Ekiyor, a conflict resolution specialist from the Niger Delta, had this to say about the program:

"Other successes would be a reduction of violence in these areas. They have reduced. We would like for there to be no violence at all, but it is not as much as when we first moved in. A lot of people are now calling themselves mediators as a result of our training, so in that sense we have made progress but we have also caused a problem because they are not properly trained. But it is better for them to be calling themselves mediators than vigilantes. Particularly you will find that it is the elders we trained who have taken that role. They say, we are mediators, we can intervene in conflicts, and in that sense it is not a bad thing because they have the traditional role as mediators any way without our training. They are the ones who solve problems traditionally, and the training has given them a renewed sense of the importance of that role."³³

▪ **Government**

1. Akwa Ibom State

One of the earliest OTI conflict resolution trainings for government officials was conducted for the members of the Akwa Ibom House of Assembly in Eket, Akwa Ibom State. At the time of the training, the Akwa Ibom State Government was having a serious

³¹ Interview with Gbenga Alabi, Ibadan, Nigeria, 24 October 2000.

³² Interview with Obong P. B. Inyang, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, 13 November 2000.

³³ Interview with Thelma Ekiyor, Enugu, Enugu State, 8 November 2000.

conflict with Mobil, the company that has the largest interest in the production of Akwa Ibom's oil reserves.

After the training, the House members were able to refocus and approach Mobil with an attitude more amenable to dialogue rather than the usual hostility. They set up a joint study team between House members and representatives of Mobil, and this committee is presently working to peaceably resolve the conflict between the government and the company.³⁴

2. *Federal Capital Territory (FCT)*

According to Kunle Fagbemi of Socio-Political Research and Development (SPRD), much of the present political conflict in Nigeria emerges out of intra-party feuds rather than feuds between parties. These conflicts are what causes the systemic breakdown and near collapse of the Nigerian political system. In order to address this problem, SPRD organized three separate conflict resolution workshops, one for each of the FCT caucuses of the three registered political parties in the country – the People's Democratic Party, the All People's Party, and the Alliance for Democracy.

At the beginning of each workshop, the participants – drawn from both the leadership and active membership of the FCT caucuses – arrived with attitudes that suggested they did not think they were going to learn anything. But during the course of each workshop, this attitude changed dramatically. As Fagbemi noted, "By the time we finished, each and every participant came to realize that, if only we had known this much some years before now there would not have been all the systemic breakdown and military interventions in Nigeria. Some of the elders owned up and said, 'We are sorry. While we were trying to resolve conflicts we were actually aggravating these conflicts and in most cases it leads to people moving from that party to the other.'"

All three parties formed conflict resolution committees to deal with internal conflicts in their FCT party caucuses, and these are now being linked up with CRESNET. The Alliance for Democracy group are now working in collaboration with others across the party to resolve the present division that exists at the party's national level in a peaceable manner.³⁵

3. *Lagos State*

OTI funded a program through the Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives (CPDI) to conduct conflict resolution training for Local Government Chairmen and community leaders in the state. The participants were duly impressed and CPDI is now working through the Office of the Special Assistant to the Governor on Local Government Affairs to extend the training to other levels of local government officials at state expense.

³⁴ Interview with Emmanuel Akpanobong, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, 13 November 2000.

³⁵ Interview with Kunle Fagbemi, Abuja, Federal Capital Territory, 12 December 2000.

During the training itself, the Chairman of Surulere Local Government Council stood up to describe an ongoing conflict he was having with his Deputy. He admitted that he now saw that he was the one at fault and he promised to reconcile. The next day he returned with the Deputy so that he could also participate. The Deputy Chairman and the Chairman have now resolved their differences and Surulere Local Government Area is now functioning much better.³⁶

4. *Kaduna State*

Following the religious conflict in Kaduna State, the Women Opinion Leaders Forum (WOLF) was contracted to carry out a program on conflict resolution and religious tolerance for youths and women in the state. Although some of them and their male councillors did attend, the Local Government Chairmen sent their wives to participate. After the training, the Chairmen's wives formed an informal conflict resolution network. They are now actively involved in conflict resolution initiatives in the state and are lobbying their husbands to provide funding for training for more local government officials.

5. *Oyo State*

Honourable Akin Akinteye is an experienced conflict mediator, a member of CRESNET, and the Deputy Majority Leader of the Oyo State House of Assembly. His rise to political power itself came through his work as a mediator. A major conflict erupted in his home community of Igbo-Ora in the mid-1990s. The elders and community leaders failed to find a solution to the conflict. Akin came in and used his skills as a mediator to bring a peaceful resolution to the crisis. This catapulted him to stardom in his community and the people afforded him respect not usually bestowed on someone so young. In 1998, when the transition to democracy began, the people of Igbo-Ora called him from Lagos and said they wanted him to represent them in the State House of Assembly. Akin won the election without much of a campaign because of his reputation.

Upon entering the House of Assembly, Akin observed all the conflicts within the House and between them and the executive first hand. He thus designed a program on conflict resolution that would not only teach the legislators how to resolve conflicts once they erupted, but also teach them what their constitutional roles were so that the root of many of the conflicts would be addressed.

The program took place and was widely appreciated. The members of the House of Assembly now meet on the last Friday of every month with the governor and other members of the executive to iron out differences. The state governor, Lam Adesina, is also now a member of the board for the South West regional branch of CRESNET.

Niyi Babalola, the Oyo State Commissioner for Establishment and Training saw news reports about the conflict resolution training for the House of Assembly and became very excited about the possibilities. He has resolved that such training should be made

³⁶ Interview with Ekaette Ebitu, Lagos Island, Lagos, 31 October 2000.

available for every political functionary in the state and plans to include the costs for such training in his office's FY2001 budget.³⁷

6. *Kwara State*

As a state at the crossroads of Nigeria in terms of ethnicity, language, religion, trade and so much more, Kwara State's stability is key to the very survival of Nigeria as a political entity. Because of this, OTI encouraged the formation of a coalition of NGOs to seek ways of diffusing the rising ethnic and religious tensions in the state.

The NGO coalition, known as Kwara State Peace Campaign and Initiatives, has developed a three pronged strategy to encourage peace and harmony in the state. The campaign will begin with a media blitz followed by a series of workshops involving different groups of stakeholders in the state. The final part will be bringing people selected from these workshops together to form a network dedicated to keeping peace and resolving conflict in the state.

When the members of the Kwara State Peace Campaign and Initiatives introduced the concept to leading officials in the state, they were received with much enthusiasm. The Deputy Governor was so excited that he organized an official launching for the television and radio jingles. The Chief Judge of the state was also very receptive, as was Honourable Benjamin Yisa, the Speaker of the House of Assembly. The Speaker was so enthusiastic that he asked the NGO coalition to develop a draft bill that the House of Assembly could pass into law. The legislation would make mediation and conflict resolution an official part of the state legal system as well as establish mechanisms through which training in conflict resolution could be conducted throughout the state.³⁸

7. *Lagos State*

A similar training to that in Oyo State was carried out for members of the Lagos State House of Assembly. Through the training, members of the House were able to see how so much of the conflict between them and the executive was caused by their own misunderstanding of their constitutional roles. Initiatives for Peace, Development, & Good Governance (IPDG), the NGO that conducted the program, has subsequently been invited to set up a conflict management body to be affiliated with the Lagos State House of Assembly. Another bi-product of the training is that one of the trainers – Ozonnia Ojielo (a CRESNET member) – is now working for the Lagos State Office of the Public Defender to spread concepts of alternative dispute resolution and conflict management to the state's courts.³⁹

▪ **Religion**

1. *Enugu State*

³⁷ Interview with Honourable Akin Akinteye, Ibadan, Oyo State, 24 October 2000.

³⁸ Interview with Kunle Fagbemi, Abuja, Federal Capital Territory, 12 December 2000.

³⁹ Interview with Oyelowo Oyewo, Victoria Island, Lagos State, 3 November 2000.

The Catholic Institute for Development, Justice, and Peace (CIDJAP) is a church based NGO that has done a lot of work for OTI in the South East region, especially logistical work for OTI's large scale regional programming. Because of their role in conducting OTI's South East Zonal TOT in Conflict Resolution, CIDJAP has become a place where many come to for advice on conflict resolution training. One of the things they have tried to do is to get pastors in the various churches in Enugu to add issues of conflict resolution and peace from a Biblical perspective to their sermons. As Father Leonard Ilochukwu commented, "The Bible is a peace message, it is the good news. It is about being a good neighbour, about having peace and not causing trouble."

Father Ilochukwu has also found that being a church based NGO, they have had opportunities to get involved in resolving conflicts that government and other NGOs were not allowed access to. He said, "Many communities are conflict ridden, and when the government wants to come into it, the government is not allowed entrance. When other NGOs come into such situations, they are also not allowed entrance. When you come as a church, they have no option but to accept you. Because being a church gives you more access and credibility. Whatever you say is accepted, but with that also comes additional responsibility."⁴⁰

2. *Kano, Kano State*

When Prime Peace Project began their training workshop on conflict resolution for religious leaders in Kano State, there was an air of hostility when participants arrived. This was not only between Christians and Muslims, but also between Muslims and other Muslims. However, by the end of the training, those who began the program as adversaries were exchanging addresses and phone numbers, a sign that a more positive relationship between them had emerged.⁴¹

3. *Kaduna, Kaduna State*

There was a participant in the conflict resolution workshop organized by Women Opinion Leaders Forum (WOLF) who said that since the religious conflict in Kaduna in February, 2000, he had refused to interact in any way with people from the other religion who used to be his close friends. One of those former friends was also a participant, and in the course of the program, they were able to make up. In front of everyone they embraced each other and agreed to let bygones be bygones.⁴²

4. *Ngwo, Enugu State*

Rev. Charles Ugwuagu is a Catholic priest who participated in the South East Zonal TOT on Conflict Resolution. After the training, he became involved in resolving a conflict

⁴⁰ Interview with Father Leonard Ilochukwu, Enugu, Enugu State, 8 November 2000.

⁴¹ Interview with Tola Olorunshola, Kano, Kano State, 23 November 2000.

⁴² Interviews with Hajiya Laila Dogonyaro and Benjamin Okewu, Kaduna, Kaduna State, 23 November 2000.

between a local community and their parish priest. The community was so angry with their priest, that they wanted to kill him. The priest wanted to run away, but Rev. Ugwuagu got involved and helped resolve the problem using mediation skills learned from OTI. He has also worked on inter-church conflicts elsewhere and working with Father Ilochukwu of CIDJAP to develop a strategy of how to address such problems on a broader scale.

5. Dawakin Tofa Local Government Area, Kano State

There was a conflict raging in Dawakin Tofa Local Government Area over the selection of a new chief imam. The usual practice was to select an elderly man for the post, but this time a young man had been chosen which greatly angered the older people of the community who refused to accept him. A conflict was about to emerge until a community leader trained in a Prime Peace Project workshop got the supporters and adversaries of the nominated imam to dialogue. The young imam was eventually accepted without anyone having to resort to violence.⁴³

6. Kaduna State

In the aftermath of the horrific Christian-Muslim conflict that took place in Kaduna in February, 2000, President Obasanjo paid a condolence visit to the state and instructed the governor to launch a Peace and Reconciliation Committee to help the people of the state recover. The state governor obliged and announced that such a committee was established.

The staff of Even Development Projects (EDP) decided that such a committee would need some kind of training in peace building and conflict resolution to properly function, and so sought for funding to do so from OTI. Unfortunately, once they had the funding and were about to bring the committee to Kano for the training, they discovered that it was only a committee in theory, and not in reality. This encouraged EDP to put pressure on the governor to actually form the committee which he did. According to Alhaji Bashir Isyaku of EDP, “It was the EDP initiative that pushed the government to actually form the committee.”

EDP then carried the members of the Peace and Reconciliation Committee to Kano so that they could be away from any distractions. There, the members of the Committee were assisted in reconciling properly first with each other, and then instructed in methods of conflict resolution and mediation so that they would be empowered to carry out the tasks the Committee was designed for. The Committee was made of representatives from every local government in the state. There are now local government level committees, and representatives from these meet monthly at a statewide level to discuss issues of potential conflict – religious and ethnic – in the state. If there is any problem, a sub-committee is formed to address it.

⁴³ Interview with Dr. Mustapha Sanda, Kano, Kano State, 23 November 2000.

Mr. Waje Yayok, the Kaduna State Government official in charge of overseeing security in the state said about the workshop, “Everyone who attended left as a peacemaker. As a follow up, in order to expand the peacemaking at the local level, people were armed with tools for resolving conflicts. Armed with these tools we have carried the message, and that has contributed to the peace. A contribution of that seminar was to make it even possible for you to be in Kaduna now.”

When the Macauley Peace Foundation came to Kaduna to discuss a peace building project with the governor. They were instructed to go to EDP. Exhibiting his confidence in their abilities, the governor told the Macauley people, “Everything about peace in Kaduna State has to be handled by EDP.”⁴⁴

7. *Kaduna State*

In the aftermath of the Christian-Muslim conflict that erupted in Kaduna State in February, 2000, a number of OTI conflict resolution and peace building programs were designed and implemented. As men who have been actively involved in the quest for religious harmony in Kaduna State for many years, Reverend James Wuye and Imam Muhammed Ashafa both played pivotal roles in OTI’s conflict resolution programs in the state.⁴⁵

In recognition of their efforts to build religious tolerance in Kaduna, the two men were recently honoured by the New York based Tanenbaum Center for Inter-Religious Understanding and inducted into the organization’s ‘Peace Makers Network.’ The award was established at the suggestion of US Ambassador to the United Nations Richard Holbrooke. The purpose of the award is, “...to recognize those individuals on the ground who are making a difference, specifically religiously motivated individuals or religious leaders who at great risk of either their personal freedom or their lives have devoted themselves to the pursuit of peace and reconciliation.”⁴⁶

▪ **Youth**

1. *Kaduna, Kaduna State*

In the aftermath of the religious conflict that took place in Kaduna, a number of organizations were contracted by OTI to contribute to the peace building efforts. The Strategic Empowerment and Mediation Agency (SEMA), an organization headed by the present National Coordinator of CRESNET, was one of these. They carried out a series of media related programs as well as conflict resolution programs for youth leaders and other stakeholders.

⁴⁴ Interviews with Bashir Isyaku and Mohammed Salisu, Kaduna, Kaduna State, 23 November 2000 and with Waje Yayok and Ibrahim Sambo, Kaduna, Kaduna State, 24 November 2000.

⁴⁵ Interview with Denys Onoise, Kaduna, Kaduna State, 24 November 2000.

⁴⁶ “2 Nigerian Clerics Honoured in US,” *THISDAY Newspaper*, Thursday, 14 December 2000, p. 43.

On the very day that the workshop on conflict resolution for youth leaders began, the Kaduna State governor announced his revised suggestions for judicial reform in the state. He plan was to proceed with the establishment of Sharia courts in heavily Islamic parts of the state while in other parts of the state things would continue as they were. To Christians, it seemed as though it was the beginning of a process that would eventually cover the entire state. To Muslims, it was incomplete, meaning that the governor was siding with the Christians.

It was therefore excellent timing because the youth leaders participating in the workshop were able to peaceably discuss the workability of such an approach in the state. The workshop facilitators led everyone to see the governor as approaching the issue as a mediator, and that in fact he was not siding with Christians or Muslims. According to Denys Onoise, SEMA's program manager, "After the workshop, they said they thanked God that the workshop was on because some of them had been already planning to go on demonstrations because of the new reforms." However, rather than Kaduna erupting into another round of religious conflict, the youth leaders at the workshop were able to keep the youth calm so that the reforms were accepted without a continuation of the crisis.⁴⁷

2. *Eket, Akwa Ibom State*

One of the young men trained in the OTI Regional TOT on Conflict Resolution in Calabar went back to his oil producing community and set out to carefully document the various problems causing the heated boundary dispute in the area. He sent his write up to OTI's Regional Coordinator who then came to Eket for a follow up meeting. The result was the larger training program on conflict resolution for traditional rulers in the state.⁴⁸

3. *Kano, Kano State*

The president of the student body of Bayero University, Kano came to the office of the Prime Peace Project (PPP) to thank them for the training he had received in conflict resolution. He told them that the training he received empowered him as a student leader and made a huge difference in his leadership style. However, since he was soon going to graduate, he requested that the PPP try to conduct another training so that his successors could benefit as well.⁴⁹

4. *Enugu, Enugu State*

After three days without electricity, the students of the University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus went on a rampage to the offices of NEPA, the national electric company. They were bent on burning down the offices and destroying NEPA vehicles, but youth development officers whom OTI had trained in conflict resolution were able to convince the students to protest in a more peaceful manner.

⁴⁷ Interview with Denys Onoise, Kaduna, Kaduna State, 24 November 2000.

⁴⁸ Interview with Emmanuel Akpanobong, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, 13 November 2000.

⁴⁹ Interview with Tola Olorunshola, Kano, Kano State, 23 November 2000.

Such interventions by OTI trained youth development officers have been taking place around the South East region. It is not that they are asking the youth to stop asking for their rights. Instead, they are advising them to seek their rights in more peaceful, non-violent ways so that they can contribute to the resolution of conflicts in their communities rather than the instigation of them.⁵⁰

Another example of the success of the OTI trained youth development officers in mitigating conflicts among students was a situation that involved cult (gang) members on the University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus. Cult members are generally lazy students who do not want to study, and so rather than read their books they cause all sorts of trouble around exam time so that others cannot study either. Using his mediation training, the Chief Youth Development Officer of Enugu State, James Eleam, convinced cult leaders to stop disturbing those students who did want to study. They agreed to do so, and have now themselves taken up the challenge to study harder so as to catch up with the students they used to harass. As Eleam described on a broader level, “There is so much conflict among the youth, even in their schools and universities, and through this training we have been able to spread the ideas further and they are gaining ground in the schools and the youth organizations.”⁵¹

5. *Eket, Akwa Ibom State*

His Highness Obong Odungide is the chairman of the Eket Council of Chiefs and was a participant in OTI’s conflict resolution training for traditional rulers in the state. Since the training, he has been actively involved in resolving conflicts in his oil producing and conflict prone area.

In the Eket area, a group of frustrated youths began targeting and eliminating adversaries by accusing them of witchcraft. Odungide was able to use his mediation training to get the youths to rethink their approach and to stop taking the law into their own hands. The campaign to kill witches has since stopped.⁵²

6. *Federal Capital Territory*

Following the pattern of the youth in the Niger Delta who are calling for equity based on the huge contributions of their land to national development, the indigenous youth of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) have begun to agitate on their own. The FCT was created and built largely under military rule in a way that took no regard for the needs of the indigenous peoples. Now the indigenous youths of the FCT are beginning to see the injustices that have caused them to lose their land with nothing in return. In Dururmi recently, they went so far as to nearly beat up the Minister of the FCT over land issues.

In light of this, in conjunction with the OTI Abuja office, Community Action for Popular Participation (CAPP) developed a program to target these frustrated youth of the FCT

⁵⁰ Interview with Father Leonard Ilochukwu, Enugu, Enugu State, 8 November 2000.

⁵¹ Interview with James Eleam, Enugu, Enugu State, 8 November 2000.

⁵² Interview with Obong U. J. Odungide, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, 13 November 2000.

and encourage them to begin to push their cause through non-violent means. Three conflict resolution workshops have thus far taken place, the first with indigenous youth, the second with settler youth, and the third with traders. All three are victims of government attempts to keep the FCT 'sanitized' and to keep the poor as far from the capital as possible. However, similar to what happened in the Niger Delta, the Federal Government does not realize how serious the threat could become, and thus they are largely trying to ignore FCT youths as if they do not matter.

CAPP is trying to prevent the youth agitation in the FCT from getting any more hostile, and also to push the government to begin recognizing the problem. In order to push this forward, CAPP has selected youth representatives from each of the three earlier programs who will have a 'legislative dialogue' with the Minister of the FCT, legislators from the FCT, legislators on the House and Senate Committees on the FCT, and other relevant officials. This will be an opportunity for the youth to begin advocating for their cause in a non-violent manner. For the youths of the FCT, this will be their first opportunity to meet face to face with the officials that make their lives so difficult.

As Awal Ibrahim, the CAPP coordinator for the program commented, "After the training, we interviewed them and they told us that before they came to the training, they had no option but to resort to violence because they thought that that was the only way government could listen to them. After the training they have begun to realize that it is possible to negotiate some of these things without necessarily leading to confrontation with anybody."⁵³

7. *Umuleri and Aguleri, Anambra State*

The fratricidal land dispute that has been going on between the people of Umuleri and Aguleri in Anambra State has been of great concern to Igbo leaders since it exhibits breaks within their own people. Youth leaders who participated in an OTI funded conflict resolution workshop have since returned to their two communities and are now trying to work together to resolve the dispute. Youths had been actively involved in the conflict, and so the youth leaders worked hard to convince the youths that it was not in their interest to fight. They told their colleagues, "The leaders you are fighting for are not even here and neither are their children, so why should you fight their battle? We cannot run away from this place, so we need to bring about a peaceful resolution."

OTI trained youths have also been involved in the resolution of the dispute between Umuoba and Anam in Anambra State as well as between Orba and Ohoda in Enugu State.⁵⁴

8. *Kano, Kano State*

Before the Regional TOT on Conflict Resolution in the North West region, there had been constant conflicts between youths in places like Kano and Kaduna over a number of

⁵³ Interview with Awal Ibrahim (Rafsanjani), Abuja, Federal Capital Territory, 19 December 2000.

⁵⁴ Interview with Ibuchukwu Ezike and Emeke Ugwuoke, Enugu, Enugu State, 8 November 2000.

different issues, especially religion. Since the training in which he was in charge of logistics, and was not actually a participant, Dr. Musa has used the knowledge he picked up during the program to begin a process of spreading ideas of conflict resolution among the youth of Kano. He gathers youth from volatile areas and provides them the fora in which to talk amongst themselves and with community leaders about their problems and frustrations. This has been an important means for youth leaders in the city to divert their frustration to dialogue instead of to violence. It has also been a way for Christian and Muslim youths to get together so that when Sharia comes to Kano, the type of conflict that happened in Kaduna will not happen in Kano.⁵⁵

9. Oko, Anambra State

In the training program they conducted for youth leaders in the South East region, Friends of the Environment and Minorities (FEM) invited many student leaders from the tertiary institutions around the region. They also invited leaders of university based cult groups, groups which in an American context would be described as 'gangs'. The cult leaders who participated in the conflict resolution training have now seen to it that cult related violence on campuses in the South East has dramatically reduced. This has especially been observed on the campus of Oka Polytechnic in Anambra State, a school that many used to fear to even go close to because of the level of cult violence.⁵⁶

10. Jos, Plateau State

A program was conducted in Jos that brought youth leaders and representatives of law enforcement agencies together to discuss reasons for conflicts between them and how they might better work together. At the beginning of the program there was quite a lot of tension as law enforcement agents and youth leaders were not used to meeting each other in such a setting. In most cases, they only meet in confrontational circumstances. However, once the program got underway, representatives of the two groups started getting to know each other better and began to realize that most of their suspicion of the other was caused by misconceptions and miscommunications. In the aftermath of the program, a committee was formed with representatives of each group. This committee now meets to discuss issues of conflict in the Jos and its environs and how youth leaders and law enforcement agents can work together to bring peaceful solutions.

The police officers who attended the workshop have subsequently passed on concepts of conflict resolution to their colleagues and officers at the Plateau State Command are now requesting that such training be done for all of them. According to Aminu Garba, the Police Public Relations Officer for the Plateau State Command, the average Nigerian is rather aggressive, and therefore the police are inclined to respond aggressively. Through the seminar, he was able to learn how to confront people in a non-confrontational manner. He believes that such training will be helpful for the police in general,

⁵⁵ Interview with Dr. Aliyu Musa, Kano, Kano State, 23 November 2000.

⁵⁶ Interview with Ibuchukwu Ezike and Emeke Ugwuoke, Enugu, Enugu State, 8 November 2000.

especially the rank and file of the force, so that they will learn how to mediate appropriately in the midst of an often hostile public.⁵⁷

11. Calabar, Cross River State

Ema Nyong was a participant in the OTI funded conflict resolution training for youth leaders in Cross River State. Subsequent to the training, he has used his new peace-oriented consciousness and his authority among youths in his community to keep them from participating in the various conflicts that have erupted in the area over the past few months. He has held two meetings with youths in his community to discuss conflict resolution with them. He has further identified local troublemakers and has worked with community leaders to prevent them from causing problems. He has also identified other youths who are interested in peace and now works together with them. Together they are developing program activities to keep idle youths occupied and out of violence. During the youth conflict that was going on in Calabar while I was there, Nyong was proud to say that no youths from his community participated, even though attempts were made to recruit them.⁵⁸

12. Lagos State

One day soon after he had helped organize a conflict resolution training workshop for student leaders in Lagos State, Ola Alatise of the Agenda For Community Development (AFCODE), was at a bus stop in front of the Nigerian Institute of Journalism (NIJ). An NIJ student ran up to him to thank him for the training program. The student told Alatise that there had been a conflict in the NIJ and that he and the two others who had attended the AFCODE program were able to use what they had learned to resolve the conflict amicably.⁵⁹

13. Kaduna, Kaduna State

The Kaduna State Media Corporation (KSMC) manages a series of television and radio stations with a broadcast range covering several surrounding states. Because of their confidence in Even Development Projects' (EDP) work in peace building, they provided extensive free coverage to the workshop for the Peace and Reconciliation Committee that took place in Kano. KSMC also hosted the director of EDP on some of their talk shows so that he could spread his message of peace and reconciliation. As Nuhu Sani Ibrahim, KSMC's director of radio, commented, "We are ready to work with any NGO that is willing to promote peaceful coexistence in the state."

As a follow up to EDP's peace building efforts, KSMC hosted a "Peace At 40 Concert" on their premises which was broadcast live on TV and radio. Many of the crises that happen in Kaduna State are due to the actions of youth being used by others. The concert was a way to educate the youth and encourage them to seek peaceful coexistence rather

⁵⁷ Interviews with Iliya Yahuza, Betty Otimeyan, and Aminu Garba, Jos, Plateau State, 29 November 2000.

⁵⁸ Interview with Ema Nyong, Calabar, Cross River State, 9 November 2000.

⁵⁹ Interview with Ola Alatise, Ifako Ijaiye, Lagos State, 20 October 2000.

than violence. 21 different musicians performed and thousands of youths came to listen to the music and received the messages of peace. It was a great way to spread the message and reorient the youth of Kaduna State. They are planning to do another such concert around Christmas time since Sallah is taking place at the same time and it is a good opportunity to bring Christian and Muslim youths together. Nuhu Ibrahim said, “We can through this means preach the message of peace. We should not just wait for the next crisis to promote peace, but must do it all the time. We need to keep spreading the message to our people to seek peaceful coexistence and not violence.”⁶⁰

14. Ifako Ijaiye Local Government Area, Lagos State

In March, 2000, a conflict resolution training program took place to address rising youth violence in the local government. According to the local government’s youth development officer Thomas Fasuyi, there had been an upsurge in youth violence in the area, but that through the training many have been empowered to be change agents and are now contributing to the reduction of violence and conflict. He commented, “Local hoodlums who participated in the seminar changed their attitudes and are now involved in income generating activities instead of using their leisure time to engage in conflict here and there.”⁶¹

In addition, Comrade A. A. Olelade, the Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator said, “The training has benefited us in so many ways, and peace is now reigning here among the youths. If this type of training can continue, violence will come down permanently, but for now it has been reduced.”⁶²

15. Jos, Plateau State

After a long period without any electricity, the students of the University of Jos kidnapped officials of NEPA, the national electric company. The usual response of the police in such a situation is to confront students with force, an approach that often leaves students dead and the situation worse. In this instance, however, police officers trained in conflict resolution worked with youth leaders they had been trained with to bring about a peaceful resolution to the conflict without the violence spreading.⁶³

16. Kaduna, Kaduna State

Dominic Akor is the president of the Ibaji Youth Development Association, Kaduna State Branch. He was a participant in the OTI funded conflict resolution training program for youth leaders in Kaduna, and through the training went through something of a personal transformation. Here he describes his personal development in his own words:

⁶⁰ Interview with Nuhu Sani Ibrahim, Kaduna, Kaduna State, 24 November 2000.

⁶¹ Interview with Thomas Fasuyi, Ifako Ijaiye, Lagos State, 20 October 2000.

⁶² Interview with A. A. Olelade, Ifako Ijaiye, Lagos State, 20 October 2000.

⁶³ Interview with Aminu Garba, Jos, Plateau State, 29 November 2000.

“Before the program proper, I was really pregnant on what was going to take place. I was saying, this Sharia thing is not going to happen because I am a Christian and I will not allow things like that to happen. I got there and I was empowered and frankly speaking I came out a new person.

“My association is made up of youth from Ibaji LGA in Kogi State. We meet monthly to discuss relevant issues on how to improve our welfare here in Kaduna. All of us are Christians and so were hostile to the idea of Sharia. But, I have lived in Kaduna all my life and don’t really feel at home in Kogi State. I did not want to leave.

“Before the conflict we found it very difficult to mix up with youth leaders from the Muslim part of Kaduna. During the workshop we were able to meet and we interacted very well. After then, it has been smooth sailing for both sides. I now often interact freely with Muslim youth leaders.

“Most of what happened during the Sharia conflict was organized by youths, and if youth leaders can really bring our heads together, it cannot happen again.

“I have been able to resolve conflicts within my immediate community, and presently I am being called a peacemaker. I was not expecting that, but I am glad it happened to me. It is better to be a peacemaker than a conflict maker, and I am doing really well. In terms of respect, in terms of the way people view you, in terms of your interaction with people there is no comparison between being a peacemaker and a conflict maker. The gains of being a peacemaker is far ahead.”⁶⁴

17. Bayelsa State

Youths trained in conflict resolution in an OTI funded program conducted by Academic Associates Peace Works (AAPW) have been actively involved in reducing violence and tension in the Niger Delta region. In fact, in a recent takeover of a flow station by area youths, it was youths trained by AAPW who intervened and encouraged their counterparts to get their point across via negotiation with the oil companies rather than through violence and other illegal acts.⁶⁵

▪ **Labour**

1. Jos, Plateau State

Recently there was a labour dispute between civil servants and the governor of Plateau State. One of the people trained in the OTI North Central Regional TOT on Conflict Resolution was able to mediate in the crisis so effectively that it ended within two days in a peaceful manner.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Interview with Dominic Akor, Kaduna, Kaduna State, 24 November 2000.

⁶⁵ Interview with Thelma Ekiyor, Enugu, Enugu State, 8 November 2000.

⁶⁶ Interview with Dr. Dennis Ityavyar, Jos, Plateau State, 28 November 2000.

2. *Abakaliki, Ebonyi State*

In Ebonyi State, there was a crisis brewing between the state government and labour. Many of the labour leaders involved were young and trained through OTI funded programs in conflict resolution. The state government arrested the labour leader and banned the movement. Rather than responding with violence, influential members of the labour movement trained in conflict resolution said they would not dialogue with government until their leaders were released. The leaders were released, and the governor had to recognize them and they got the minimum wage they demanded. All this was accomplished without any violent acts, thanks to the reorientation of some of the young labour leaders through OTI programming.

3. *Eket, Akwa Ibom State*

Obong Odungide was a participant in OTI's conflict resolution program for traditional rulers of Akwa Ibom State. Coming from Eket, the centre of Akwa Ibom's oil industry, entails that Odungide is often confronted with problems between oil companies and workers. Since the OTI training, he has become better equipped to deal with such conflicts. For example, he was recently able to peaceably resolve a conflict between Mobil, Seawell (an oil servicing company), and local employees. Through encouraging dialogue between them, he opened up proper channels of communication through which they could resolve their dispute.

In addition, he also was able to help resolve a conflict between DBN (an oil servicing company) and local workers. At the end of their project in Eket, the workers were not satisfied with the termination pay DBN paid to them and they protested to the company. Odungide was able to bring the two sides together to discuss the issue amicably and in the end DBN paid out an additional N6,000,000 to the workers as they were supposed to. The workers collected their due reward and ended their contracts peacefully.

4. *Warri, Delta State*

Warri is one of the most conflict prone cities in Nigeria, especially with regards to conflicts between frustrated youths and oil companies. Subsequent to a conflict resolution training program funded by OTI, one of the youth leaders in Warri advised the oil companies to bring in conflict resolution specialists like the trainers they had to help both sides negotiate and dialogue peacefully. He saw this as a means to reduce the violence that often brings the area to a near standstill. As conflict resolution trainer Thelma Ekiyor commented, "When I first came in (to the Niger Delta) I was surprised to find that everybody saw violence as the only way to get anything done. What we provided them were options, that they do have options. They don't always have to let it get to violence."⁶⁷

▪ **Media**

⁶⁷ Interview with Thelma Ekiyor, Enugu, Enugu State, 8 November 2000.

Kaduna, Kaduna State

During the horrific crisis that took place in Kaduna in February, 2000, it was observed that the way the media reported the conflict exacerbated the situation. Because of this, OTI funded a training program for media practitioners in Kaduna to sensitize them to the danger of bringing in their own personal sentiments when reporting on conflict situations. Following the conflict resolution training program for journalists, one of them commented, “This (the program) was the first time Christian and Muslim journalists came together since the conflict and talked about it. We discussed the headlines and articles we wrote and how they contributed. We began to have an appreciation of how vital religion is and how careful one must be...If things like that come up again, what you will get reported out of Kaduna will be very different.”

Since the training program, there has been a noticeable change in the approach of journalists to the way they write on issues of conflict and religion. In the aftermath of the October crisis in Lagos, Hausa youths released a press statement calling for all Yorubas in Kaduna to leave the city within 24 hours or suffer the consequences. Previously, regardless of its veracity, such a release would have been front-page news. This time, however, media practitioners in Kaduna realized that in the interest of peace and national unity they should not publish the release or report on it so as not to cause unnecessary panic. The release was largely ignored, and thus no conflict ensued. As one of the participants noted, “We used to try and look for negative aspects of events for our stories, we now instead take time to advise people to look for peace rather than conflict.”⁶⁸

▪ **Education**

University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Oyo State

For the past six years, Dr. Isaac Olawale Albert, an OTI trained conflict resolution expert, has been trying to establish a Master’s program in Conflict Resolution and Peace Studies at the prestigious University of Ibadan, where he teaches in the Institute for African Studies. With the hype surrounding the successes of OTI funded initiatives in Ife and Oke Ogun, both of which he played important roles in, conflict resolution has finally become an occupation that is gaining growing respect, especially in the South West. Because of this influence, the University Senate finally approved the establishment of the degree program. Although not a direct result of OTI initiatives, Dr. Albert credits the legitimacy OTI sponsorship has put on the study and work of conflict resolution as being key to the University Senate’s decision.⁶⁹

▪ **Summary Statements**

Dr. Isaac Olawale Albert, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Oyo State

⁶⁸ Interviews with Haruna Salami (*the Source Magazine*), Agada Moses (*Nigerian Newswday*), Odoh Onuh (*Daily Monitor*), Kaduna, Kaduna State, 24 November 2000.

⁶⁹ Interview with Dr. Isaac Olawale Albert, Ibadan, Oyo State, 24 October 2000.

“People knew about conflict resolution, but for the first time OTI has pushed this project to the point where now every body is aware of it. In fact, Shell and LNG are in informal discussions with us on what we can do for them as well. OTI will eventually see some good results. In fact, some embassies in Lagos are talking to us, but they don’t want this to be known because they have seen the reports and they know what is going on. In fact, I am really proud of OTI because for the first time conflict resolution has been taken to the limelight.”⁷⁰

Dr. Ekeng Anam-Ndu, Centre for Advanced Social Science, Port Harcourt, Rivers State

“OTI is a short term program, and it is not their responsibility to take care of all our conflicts. That is our responsibility. OTI has done their part already. The Nigerian state caused so many of these problems with their laws, and it is at that level that the issues will have to be fully addressed. This is not the kind of thing that OTI can do with its limited resources and time.”⁷¹

The Way Forward

OTI was certainly not the first organization to get involved in conflict resolution initiatives in Nigeria, but it is the first international donor agency to give it so much attention and therefore so much status. Across the country, people who received the training seem enlightened and empowered with a near missionary zeal. As individuals equipped with conflict resolution and mediation techniques contribute back to their communities, their status is enhanced because they are able to accomplish what others could not.

Even while OTI Nigeria has indeed enjoyed remarkable success with their programming in conflict resolution, it is important to also assess the deeper issues and how to move forward from here. It seems evident to me that the overarching problem causing so much macro and micro-level conflict in Nigeria is **poverty**. The way poverty manifests into conflict situations is through three different causal agents. The first is **restless youth**. The second is through disputes over **land rights**. Land related conflicts

⁷⁰ Interview with Dr. Isaac Olawale Albert, Ibadan, Oyo State, 24 October 2000.

are where traditional rulers play a key role, and where the question of indigeneity is an important factor. The third is an institution that is often behind the scenes either contributing to conflicts or making them worse through an inability to handle them properly. These are the **police**, people who are supposed to keep the peace, but instead cause a lot of conflicts because of their own difficult financial situation.⁷²

Although these are the main agents or reasons for conflict, conflict in Nigeria are often disguised by those who foment them as based on either **ethnicity, religion**, or alleged **historic animosities**. Although it is easy to give these three factors credit for so much of Nigeria's conflicts, I believe that doing so leads one in the wrong direction. It is my assertion that, even though they do hold their religion and ethnicity in high regard, the average Nigerian is not ethnically or religiously bigoted as some may have us believe.

Another interesting observation I made, especially in light of the apparently chaotic nature of Nigerian society, is that **in each community there are select individuals who have the clout to start or stop conflicts**. These could be politicians, religious leaders, youth leaders, or traditional rulers. Whoever they are, these individuals are able to pull the strings that make communities either function or disfunction. These central figures in each community hold the keys to Nigeria's stability, and if properly targeted, trained, and networked, could completely turn the country around with regards to the dangerous levels of conflict. OTI programming has already accomplished this in places like Cross River State, Akwa Ibom State, Ife-Modakeke, and Kaduna, but for it to have a national impact, much work still needs to be done. The important element to

⁷¹ Interview with Dr. Ekeng Anam-Ndu, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, 14 November 2000.

⁷² It is important to note that OTI is working in conjunction with the British Department for International Development (DFID) on efforts to reform the Nigeria Police Force (NPF). Although not directly a conflict resolution initiative, reform of the NPF will go a long way in reducing the level of conflict in the country.

realize is that in spite of the apparent chaos that people like Karl Maier observe on the surface, **Nigeria remains a very ordered and heirarchical society where the actions of a few influence the many.**

One area of criticism that needs mentioning is that OTI has not used religious institutions effectively enough. Especially considering OTI's youth oriented conflict resolution focus, the church and the mosque could be very important for the proper diffusion of concepts of peace throughout the country without it sounding like just another wacky aspect of Western cultural imperialism.

The other major shortcoming I observed of OTI's conflict resolution programming around the country is that there has been too little targeting, coordinating, networking, and follow up. That is to say too many localized programs in conflict resolution are conducted that do not fit in to any 'big picture' framework. This is largely as a result of the applications to conduct conflict resolution programs from the countless NGOs and CBOs who participated in the Zonal TOT's. In order to empower them in their efforts, numerous such programs were funded that might not have been funded otherwise. It is therefore important that from here on, each conflict resolution program that takes places should fit in to a larger framework while participants from the previous programs need to be carefully networked to CRESNET so that there is a truly national network in place. Also, while OTI is moving towards closeout, efforts need to be made to target volatile places of national importance for conflict resolution programming rather than continuing to carry out programs everywhere, simply so we can say we did something in every state of the federation. All this will entail that when OTI prepares to

hand off their conflict resolution programming to another donor, there will be a tight network with a coherent targeted plan of action.

Finally, OTI has not done enough to liaise with or empower existing institutions whose mandates include issues of mediation and conflict resolution. These include the Abuja based International Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution, the Senate and House Committees on Peace and Reconciliation, the National Boundary Commission, the National Emergency Management Agency and a host of other such institutions that could benefit from conflict resolution training. If CRESNET is properly networked with these governmental organizations, the end result will be a powerful tool for peace in Nigeria.

It was not until I was opportuned to travel around Nigeria meeting with OTI grantees that I realized the full extent of OTI's reach in the country. OTI has managed to touch individuals and communities across the nation, something that most other donors will take many more years to accomplish. In their wake, OTI's conflict resolution programs have left people empowered and ready to fight for peace to such an extent that they are contributing in a major way, as the last line of Nigeria's national anthem says, **“To build a nation where peace and justice shall reign.”**

Appendix I

Religious Riots in the North

<i>Cities</i>	<i>Years</i>
Kano, Kano State	1980, 1991, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997
Bauchi, Bauchi State	1980, 1990, 1991, 1995
Kaduna, Kaduna State	1996, 1998, 2000
Katsina, Katsina State	1993, 1996, 1999
Kafanchan, Kaduna State	1987, 1996
Ilorin, Kwara State	1987, 1998, 1999, 2000
Zango-Kataf, Kaduna State	1992
Maidugari, Borno State	1980, 1998
Dambo	2000
Sokoto, Sokoto State	2000
Hadejia, Jigawa State	1993
Potiskum, Yobe State	1994
Gwandu, Kebbi State	1999
Jos, Plateau State	1996
Funtua, Katsina State	1993
Jalingo, Taraba State	1993
Zaria, Kaduna State	1998 ¹

¹ Culled from "Religious Riots in the North," *The NEWS Magazine* 20 November, 2000, p.20.

Appendix II

Ife-Modakeke Field Report

26 October 2000, Ile Ife, Nigeria

Interviewer/ Reporter: Wiebe Boer, USAID-OTI

Interviewee: Members of the Inter-Communal Peace Advocacy Committee

Project:

LAG6103 Using the Media to Build Peace in Osun State (NUJ Osun);

**LAG1609 Community Awareness Program on Conflict Resolution and Management
(Ife Development Board);**

**LAG8103 Community Awareness and Conflict Resolution and Management
(Modakeke Progressive Union);**

**LAG2135 Peace Building in Ife and Modakeke Communities (South West Conflict
Resolution Stakeholders Network)**

Introduction:

Joseph Shopade and Wiebe Boer arrived in Ile-Ife, Osun State and headed straight for the secretariat of the Ife Development Board to meet with the Chairman Alhaji Dauda Ijiyode and others to discuss USAID/OTI's Ife/Modakeke conflict resolution initiatives. Ijiyode was not around and we were told that he was at the university campus for a meeting. We headed straight for Obafemi Awolowo University to find the Inter-Communal Peace Advocacy Committee in the midst of a meeting. We had not called ahead, so they had not planned to have the meeting just so that OTI personnel would think they were active. The fact that they were meeting already for the third time since the establishment of the committee as a result of OTI's efforts exhibited dedication to the cause of peace between the Ife and Modakeke communities.

We entered the meeting room, and Joseph was hailed, showing how much appreciation the committee members have for OTI in general and Joseph in particular for the peace efforts. The chairman of the committee, Chief Agbe, welcomed us and again reiterated his thanks to OTI. He talked about how peace was reigning between the two communities, especially in the towns, and that they were now working to bring resolution and reconciliation to the surrounding villages small conflicts were still arising from time to time. He also pointed out that recent newspaper reports about renewed conflict between the two were completely false. He described the progress the committee had made so far, and then gave a laundry list of needs. Some I was to learn were things OTI had promised them to get the committee off the ground. Bigger requests like assistance for the reconstruction of damaged properties were also made, but Joseph was able to respond diplomatically so as not to commit OTI to something they do not have the capacity for.

The twenty members of the committee representing the two communities seemed to work amicably together. As Chief Agbe said, **“We thank God that peace is gradually coming in to our territory. We will continue to thank USAID/OTI for what they have done. We are now sitting face to face with ourselves, whereas some months ago we were shooting each other face to face!”** Considering this, it is evident that just the fact they were now sitting in the same room was itself a remarkable symbol of the success of the peace effort so far.

The meeting rounded up soon after our arrival. The final issue of discussion related to a controversy surrounding the land for a particular market. This was a conflict that a police committee, a presidential committee, and a state government committee had attempted to address without success. In about twenty minutes of discussing the issue, the peace committee all but resolved it after so many other groups had failed to do so. This was again symbolic of how far they had come. It soon became equally evident that there was still a long way to go.

Individual Interviews:

Chief Gabriel Adetola Agbe, Chairman (Chief of the Ooni of Ife) (Ife rep)

When asked about the history of the conflict, he failed to do so. Rather he just pointed out that it was something that had been ongoing for a long time and that OTI's effort complemented by the Federal Government effort had finally brought resolution.

When asked about what was unique about this particular peace effort that had succeeded where other efforts had failed in the past, he responded with a similar answer, saying “First and foremost, the combination of the Federal Government and the USAID/OTI, has actually worked miracles. The Federal Government came in with their eleven point resolution which they handed down to us that the resolution must be implemented. Then on the USAID/OTI initiative, they spent a lot of money, they brought us in from different angles to hold various workshop trainings. After we had that training on peace advocacy, both of us were invited to Ibadan. We went there and brainstormed ourselves and all our grievances were discussed and at the end of the Ibadan exercise, USAID/OTI went further to create this advocacy committee where the Ife's and the Modakekes, our brothers over there, can meet and discuss regularly to properly enhance the peace that is already on the ground. That is the difference between the previous ones and the present. OTI pumped a lot of time, money, and expertise to make it work.”

He went on to say, “What can make it permanent is a kind of assistance to both sides whereby people who sustained quite a lot of losses in infrastructure, properties, and human resources and other things can be cushioned. With all the damaged things, there is a kind of psychology towards a negative feeling.”

“I have never carried gun, I have never fought any body. Our duty is to make peace. Because they saw me as having never carried gun and as always making peace, the entire executive is the same, and that is why we are accepted by the generality of the people.”

Engineer Chief R. A. Akinjimi, J.P., Committee Vice Chairman (Modakeke rep)

When asked about the history of the conflict, unlike Chief Agbe, he actually outlined a history of 200 years. He outlined various conflicts in the 1800s where the Modakekes always won and always drove the Ifes out for a certain period of time. In 1887, a peace treaty was ‘agreed’ to by all Yorubas to end all their various conflicts, but the signature of the Ogunsua (the paramount chief of the Modakekes) was forged, as was the signature of his second and third in rank. Then the British discovered the manipulation in the 1890s and asked how can the conquered be allowed to stay, and the conqueror to be removed? Then another trouble started around 1909 with the grandfather of the present Ooni of Ife (Paramount Chief of the Ifes, and all the Yorubas). Throughout the 1900s, there were several other conflicts as well, one over land going all the way to the Supreme Court of Nigeria where Obafemi Awolowo, the Ife’s lawyer, tried to manipulate the proceedings. This conflict continues into politics, when the Ife’s join party A, the Modakekes join party B and so on.

A significant statement from him: **“When there is no truth, naturally there will be no peace.”**

Under Abacha, he was the chairman of the Modakeke committee that applied for a new local government, while Ifes applied for the creation of a state rather than of more local governments. The state application was not granted, but the Modakeke request was and the gazette said that they were to carve Ife East out of the present Ife North for the Modakekes to have their own local government. That is what started the conflict because the Ife’s refused to allow the new local government to be created. While the conflict was going on in 1997 and 1998, the government did almost nothing. The same was the case for the conflict in 2000 from March to July. His belief was that the government was watching, assuming that the Ifes would defeat the Modakekes., but the opposite resulted.

During the conflict, this town was a hell. You would see all types of guns, from traditional ones to sophisticated one. But now from the intervention of USAID/OTI and the president, Olusegun Obasanjo, everything has gone down completely.

The difference between the present peace initiative and previous ones is that this peace committee is more practical while previous ones were too theoretical.

“We have been going from village to village to make sure that peace is contained.”

Captain Patrick Adewuyo Bayomi (Rtd.) (former Modakeke war lord)

Like his Modakeke counterpart, he outlined a long history, stating that the Modakekes had settled there over 200 years before. Details of his description: We were living in peace with them for a long time, although our people kept going missing, only for us to later find out that the Ifes were using the missing people for sacrifice or to sell into slavery. The Modakeke chief then resettled the people far from the Ifes, although growth and development brought them back together again. The late Ooni before this one reigned peacefully for 50 years. **“We are kith and kin because of so many years of cohabiting and intermarriages. It has become like children of the same womb on both sides.”**

When this Ooni came to power, the trouble started. He wanted to change the name of Modakeke to Isale-Ife. He was hoping we would lose our identity. We protested and since then there has been one trouble or the other. Recently he organized for a massive war to destroy Modakeke.

As a retired military officer, I saw the thing coming in 1997, and went round to organize our people for resistance while even trying to convince the military boys in the area to prevent them. The Ifes were openly carrying arms and training in the presence of the military.

We vowed to defend ourselves, and as someone who was once one of Obasanjo’s field commanders during the Civil War, I mobilized my people to protect our people. We managed to survive by the grace of God, although 800 houses were destroyed. Most of them were destroyed by mobile policemen who were paid to destroy us. We thank God that peace is returning.

During the crisis, the town was a horrible place with all the suffering, inconveniences, the sorrows, the anguish that you see in the movies. It was a full scale war with sophisticated military weapons. We are hard working people, and we survived. The Ifes are so different, they are not hard working like us and they are jealous of our progress. The Ifes promised their boys that they would eliminate Modakeke and benefit from Modakeke success. So many mobile policemen were involved in the fighting on their side.

“It was a war of genocide where even two or three month old babies were slaughtered. The local government we were supposed to get was hijacked, and then they tried to wipe us from the face of the earth.”

“I don’t have words to describe what OTI has done. It is such a marvelous achievement. Where it worked mostly was that on both sides, everyone was really tired of the war. It was bringing us together that made both of us realize that. OTI has made it possible for to cross check rumours from either end. It was the mobile policemen who used to cause a lot of the friction, spreading rumours on both sides, and now we can verify these stories before taking action. It is the USAID effort that contributed 99% to peace in these towns. Because of our egos, the thing would have continued indefinitely, but for USAID.”

Dauda Ijyode, Executive Secretary Ife Development Board

The background to the conflict: **“Modakekes and Ifes are brothers of Yoruba stock. Ifes own the land, and Modakekes came at a point about 150 years ago to settle on Ife land.”**

As with the other Ife representatives I interviewed, he failed to go into any real detail of the history. He did point out that what has caused the conflicts over time is the issue of land ownership.

The underlying factor of the most recent round of conflicts starting in 1997 still surrounds the issue of land. The Ifes who own the land have a fear that since local governments control land ownership, if given their own local government area the Modakekes (the tenants) would use the law to take over ownership of the land from the real owners. (this seems to be a good summary of the Ife position on the recent conflict)

“During the recent crisis, it was hell. It was a disaster of great magnitude. Traders could not trade, farmers could not go to their farms, students could not go to school. Everything was upside down. We don’t want that kind of thing again because we want development.”

“USAID/OTI is the only international organization that has made any impact on the conflict. It was a well thought out program where no strata of the community was left out. What we planned to achieve has been achieved, that is peace here and everywhere. Things are improving every day. The road to a permanent peace is already here.”

High Chief Olanrewaju Adesunloro Omisore (Ife rep, on the Ooni’s Council)

“The basis for communal disagreements is on land. These Modakekes are settlers. There is no doubt about that. They are Yoruba people, but during the tribal wars of the 18th century they mobilized themselves until Lord Lugard came and then they found a base at the cradle of Yorubaland. (this exhibits a poor understanding of the actual history especially in terms of the chronology) They came like a wanderer voluntarily ready to serve as labourers, an integral part of production and development. We accepted them under our hegemony. After some time, they were feeling that they should be independent, they wanted their autonomy which we dissented to, because the moment they gain their autonomy is the moment they stop paying *isakole*, their rent for the land they occupy. They related to us that they had long been here, and after all they must be free. But we cannot allow them to be free on our land, which we cannot possibly retrieve. Hence, the conflict. But now they have realized after so many years of repeated incitement that there is no way they can take our land from us.”

“The governor, the president, and the bishop had come in before, but to no avail. OTI were professionals and talked us into a sensible conclusion. But such a long war has to like a candle die down gradually and naturally.”

Field Trip

In addition to the interviews, we were also taken to various parts of the Ife-Modakeke community to see the extent of the devastation. Captain Patrick Adewuyo Bayomi (Rtd.) took us to see Modakeke structures destroyed by the Ife, and Alhaji Dauda Ijiyode took us the next day to see the Ife structures destroyed by the Modakeke. On several occasions, our tour guides claimed the same buildings as part of the destruction carried out by the opposing side on their people.

The devastation certainly showed evidence of a small but total war. In some areas, blocks and blocks of houses were destroyed and overgrown. In others, structures not destroyed had long been abandoned out of fear. The devastation and desertion looked quite akin to pictures of war ravaged cities around the world. Hospitals, schools, churches, businesses, and private residences were destroyed indiscriminately, and one would imagine that in the carnage a large number of people lost their lives as well.

Along the border areas between the two communities where Ifes and Modakekes had been living side by side, houses were destroyed case by case dependent on who owned or lived in them. This not only showed the level of previous interaction between the two groups, but also the premeditated manner of the attacks. There is now an informal demilitarized zone between the two, and it was evident that Alhaji Ijiyode felt immediately uncomfortable even venturing a few metres into Modakeke territory.

A common problem both tour guides mentioned was the heavy involvement of Mobile Police in the conflict. It seems that the police played a big role in instigating the conflict. They also played significant roles in the fighting and made a lot of money either through looting or from levies paid by both sides for their services. I was told that many of the Mobile Police who were supposed to be there to settle the conflict made so much money off it that they left with new cars and other toys. Some even left with wives!!

Analysis

As is evident from the proceedings of the Inter-Communal Peace Advocacy Committee and the responses of the interviewees, USAID/OTI's intervention is not only historical, but very appreciated. What is also evident, however, is that at present the peace is a very shallow one.

An examination of the statements made by the interviewees from the two sides shows that they are committed to peace and feel the conflict is resolved, but what was resolved sounds like two totally different events. From the Ife side, the attitude is that the upstart

Modakeke settlers were finally put in their place. From the Modakeke side, the attitude was that they have suffered injustice for two centuries, but have always prevailed. This time around, the Ife's wanted to wipe them out, but again the Modakekes proved to be superior fighters even with far less resources at their disposal.

This is all to say that the underlying causes of the conflict are still there and that eruptions of violence could happen at any time, even with the committee in place. The Modakekes still feel like an aggrieved and oppressed people who are only sustained by their own hard work and commitment to survival. The Ifes still sound like haughty and superior landlords to whom the Modakekes remain nothing more than settlers. If the Modakekes try and challenge this in any way, which they surely will at some point, everything will flare up again.

What is at issue is the very basis of so many conflicts around Nigeria. The first is the issue of **indigeneity** and who was the right to be called an 'indigene' and who is the 'settler.' An outsider might find it odd that people who call each other brothers, consider themselves to be of the same ethnic group, and have lived together for two centuries would still divide themselves in this way. In Nigeria, however, this is not an uncommon situation. Thus even after centuries of living in certain areas, those who came second only have lease rights to the land while the original people (who themselves were also settlers at some point) retain permanent ownership.

It is this understanding of who owns what and who belongs where that keeps Nigeria permanently divided. If someone is still considered a settler and is treated as a second class member of the community after two hundred years, how much more difficult will it be for someone from one place to confidently start farming land in another in the present day. They will not be welcomed. Thus, even though constitutionally any Nigerian citizen can live anywhere in Nigeria, in reality that can never happen, at least not in rural areas. Urban Nigeria might prove a relative melting pot, but rural Nigeria to which the majority of Nigerians still hold strong ties will remain sharply divided along ethnic lines.

The second is the issue of **history**. Just from these interviews, I was given a number of totally different versions of the history of the conflict and the communities, even from people from the same group. In Nigeria, history is manipulated in all sorts of ways to make all sorts of points, even while it is rare that anyone concerned will actually attempt to piece together some kind of generally accurate and acceptable history. While such situations are field days for post-modernist academics, for people in the real world they are the source of all sorts of problems. In Nigeria, this is compounded by the fact that one-sided metaphorical oral histories were frozen into official histories by the colonialists, and on this basis all sorts of claims are made.

The third is the issue of **poverty**. If Ile-Ife was industrialized to a certain extent and almost the entire community's livelihood did not come from farming, there would not be such a squeeze on available land to cause such conflicts. Furthermore, if Nigeria was a prosperous country and Ifes and Modakekes were together investing in all sorts of enterprises in their communities, conflict between them would be much more difficult.

Also, in such a situation, Ifes would not feel as if they so desperately had to keep their hold on the land they now protect with their lives.

Recommendations

- Although what OTI accomplished in Ife-Modakeke was remarkable and resulted in the saving of human lives, we cannot yet rest on our laurels as the peace we have helped bring is still far from complete.
- OTI should continue to provide support to the Inter-Communal Peace Advocacy Committee within the bounds of OTI's limited capacity.
- OTI should use their clout as a respected international donor agency to get the Nigerian government to begin supporting the committee as well, even if only to offer them official recognition and to provide a facility for them to use as a secretariat.
- OTI should use their contacts in the international donor community to encourage other donors with greater financial capacity to contribute to strengthening the committee and rebuilding the community.
- The committee should be encouraged to discuss among themselves and between their communities on the deeper issues behind the conflicts and how these issues can be directly addressed to forestall further conflict at a later date.
- Committee members should be encouraged to set an example for their two communities by visiting each other back and forth and even investing in joint enterprises in each other's communities.
- On a broader level, the Nigerian government needs to be encouraged to begin an in depth study of issues of indigeneity and land rights in rural areas that keep Nigeria so divided and are the source of so much conflict. While such a situation that mandates division is helpful for colonial rulers and dictators, it should have no place in a truly democratic dispensation. (Incidentally, this is something that DFID has expressed interest in looking into as part of their broader justice initiatives). Ife-Modakeke could be taken as a pilot study because of the longevity and high profile of the conflict.

APPENDIX 3:

SUMMARIES OF THE INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED BY WIEBE BOER

19 October 2000, Lagos, Nigeria

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID-OTI

Interviewee: Yemi Olukoya, Women Centre for Leadership, Development, Research, and Training, (CELDERT) Ibadan

Project: LAG0228: Interactive Training forum on Conflict Resolution for OPC and APC representatives in Ibadan and Shagamu

Yemi Olukoya was trained and exposed to conflict resolution techniques through a program from the Freidrich Eibert Foundation. She used that training to assist with resolving the crisis between Yoruba and Hausa in Shagamu last year. She was pleased to hear that OTI was pursuing conflict resolution programming, so she sought funding from OTI to provide conflict resolution training to various key ethnic leaders in Ibadan and Shagamu.

In the program, key Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba community leaders came together to get training on conflict resolution. They then established inter-ethnic peace committees in both places to deal with later problems. The one in Ibadan meets every month in CELDERT's office in Ibadan to discuss conflict related issues and to plan ways to prevent them from becoming major incidents.

After the training, trouble was brewing in Ibadan between OPC (Yoruba) and APC (Hausa) factions. The inter-ethnic peace committee met with the various elements trying to foster conflict, and were able to assist in reducing the tension and avoiding major conflict.

While the Hausa-Yoruba tension was growing in the South West and Hausa-Igbo tension was rising in the North, Igbos began moving en masse back to the East from all over the country. The leader of the Igbos in Ibadan, one of the recipients of the training, and a member of the inter-ethnic peace committee, encouraged Igbos in Ibadan not to leave since he had assurances from leaders of other ethnic groups that they would not be harmed. For this reason, Ibadan did not experience an Igbo exodus like other parts of the country.

Members of the inter-ethnic peace committees spoke to Yemi Olukoya about their desire to go to Lagos and get involved in resolving the ethnic conflict happening there presently. The Hausa leader of Ibadan, a member of the peace committee and someone who had additional training at the Southwest Regional Conflict Resolution training, was the one most interested in them getting involved. Since the police and the military were already involved, Mrs. Olukoya advised them to stand by and not jump in so quickly. However,

it did exhibit their readiness and willingness to get involved and to use their own initiative, not waiting for the next round of OTI funding or the next push from the NGO. The Yoruba-Hausa conflict in Ibadan has not spread to Ibadan. It is likely that part of this is due to the activities of the peace committee.

They are becoming well known in the area and are involved in various communities who have problems. What they want now is some sort of follow up and legal backing as a peace making body so that the government will know they have a group of conflict mediators trained by OTI they can use. It was suggested that they link up with the South West Regional Conflict Resolution Network and become a body affiliated to them in some official capacity.

20 October 2000, Lagos, Nigeria

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID-OTI

Interviewee: Ola Alatise, Public Relations Officer, Agenda For Community Development (AFCODE), Ifako Ijaiye LGA, Lagos State

Projects: LAG9202 Developing Youth Capacity for Conflict Resolution/Management

LAG6084 Conflict Resolution/Management Training for Students Union Leaders

Unfortunately Olaitan Ibiyemi, the director of AFCODE, was not available when I visited their office. However, Ola Alatise, the PRO proved a worthy replacement since he was actively involved in both programs they conducted for OTI and attended OTI's South West regional conflict resolution training.

Their first program took place in March 2000 and involved all the stake holders in the community who had an influence on youth in particular and the community in general. These included all the traditional rulers (ba'ales), local government youth officers, concerned youth organizations around the local government, market women leaders, religious leaders, uniformed youth organizations, media, and students from all secondary schools in the local government.

The community leaders and concerned youth responded positively saying how much they had learned and how they were now committed to avoiding violence in their community. They implored AFCODE to continue to do such programming. AFCODE then followed up with a seminar of their own where youths were encouraged to not be used as tools of violence in their community. This was followed up with an essay competition for secondary school students on how to curb violence in the community.

The second program was for student union leaders from all the institutions of higher learning in Lagos State to address issues of rampant violence on campuses. The conflict resolution program was attended by leaders from all the institutions as they were enthusiastic about what they might gain. The student union leaders were encouraged to

form a conflict resolution network, which they did so in an informal manner since they already all knew each other any way and are all members of the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS).

One day soon after the training, Ola Alatise was at a bus stop in front of the Nigerian Institute of Journalism (NIJ). A student ran up to him to thank him for the program. The student said that there was a conflict in the NIJ and that he and two others who had attended the AFCODE training program were able to use what they had learned to resolve the conflict.

The Community Development Council chairman, Alhaji Lawal, personally told Alatise that the program really encouraged them to better understand and handle issues of conflict among them, especially in regards to recent political problems they had in the community.

In Samari Comprehensive High School, AFCODE set up a youth empowerment program that seeks to teach youth about conflict resolution and keep them off the street through helping them to harness their talents in positive ways. The program is also designed to train youths on how to be conflict mediators in their immediate environment. They plan to spread this program to all the secondary schools in the community, as much as possible using funds from the schools themselves.

Ola Alatise then spoke about the problems of idle youth and how easy they are to manipulate into violence. He suggested that the real way to keep them out of conflict was through economic empowerment, and then he talked of some of the initiatives AFCODE is trying to do in that regard. Their only limitations are related to a lack of more sponsorship.

Interviewee, Ifako Ijaiye LGA Youth Development Officer Thomas Fasuyi

The training was tremendous. I learned a lot of things which I was then able to use to bring about a positive change in the life of the youth in the local government. A large number of youth benefited from the training directly, and it has made a tremendous improvement in his work as a youth development officer.

Before, there was a great upsurge in youth violence in the local government. But through the training, many have been empowered to be change agents and reduce the level of violence and conflict. For example, “local hoodlums who participated in the seminars changed their attitudes and are now involved in income generating activities instead of using their leisure time to engage in conflict here and there.”

Interviewee, Comrade A. A. Ololade, the Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator

They introduced ideas of conflict resolution to all their programs, especially ones related to youth and it has had a positive change in the community. Through the program and follow up activities, violence has reduced and the youths have been reoriented. The elites who read the program pamphlets asked him to invite them when the next training in

conflict resolution would take place. “The training has benefited us in so many ways, and peace is now reigning here among the youths. If this type of training can continue, violence will come down permanently, but for now it has reduced.”

23 October 2000, Surulere, Lagos State Nigeria

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID-OTI

Interviewee: Dr. K. Awosika, Director and Coordinator of Programs, Women, Law and Development Centre (WLDCN)

Project: LAG6232 National training program on conflict resolution in South West zone

WLDCN took care of the logistics for the South West regional conflict resolution training. Since they are a very busy NGO and conflict resolution does not fit within their general mandate, they have not subsequently pursued programs of their own in conflict resolution.

However, other organizations that they mentor have carried on the flag. The best example is the National Democracy Equality Vanguard (NADEV). Members of NADEV were so inspired by the conflict resolution training that they proceeded to start a conflict resolution oriented NGO called Centre for Peace Development Nigeria (CPDN) which has already been registered.

CPDN already did a program on conflict resolution for Mushin LGA after which the LGA Chairman resolved to form a special LGA committee on conflict resolution. The impact of the program was strengthened by the presence of Frederick Fasheun, the founder and leader of the O’odua Peoples’ Congress (OPC), a militant Yoruba nationalist group that has recently been banned. On the final day of the program, Fasheun spoke on the need for better ways of resolving conflict, part of his apparent recent softening that has become especially apparent in his behaviour after the recent riots in which his organization played a role. He is now more and more preaching peace, and has made it clear that he is ready to redirect OPC’s direction.

Fasheun’s presence also inspired a group of ‘Area Boys’ (social miscreants) who were at the training to start coming to NADEV meetings and reorient their focus away from violence and the general harassment they usually mete out to the populace.

Now, Surulere LGA and Eti-Osa LGA are also calling for CPDN to do a training for them, as are a group of influential and confrontational local cattle traders.

In short, a fire is being lit towards conflict resolution. As Dr. Awosika said, “The thing is starting to snowball, and CPDN and others are finding it hard to keep up.”

24 October 2000, Abeokuta, Nigeria

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID-OTI

Interviewee: Kola Ewedairo, Kunle Afolabi, and Kunle Ewetade, Centre for Peace Education and Development, Abeokuta

Project: LAG4383 Edutainment Program on Conflict Resolution of Chieftancy Disputes

The members of the NGO had on individual levels been exposed to issues of conflict resolution previously, but it was at the OTI South West regional training that they were really strengthened in the proper techniques. It was from there that they decided to pursue this program.

Women and youth are those most affected negatively by conflict, and thus it is important to target them when pursuing issues of conflict resolution. One way to do this on a massive scale is by going to places where women and youth are well represented and educate them in a way that will catch their attention.

The grantees thus selected four motor parks and four markets in Abeokuta to target and contracted a drama group in Ibadan to script and carry out a drama that would teach its audience about issues of conflict resolution.

Before the program was carried out, a survey was conducted to ascertain what people think of conflict, and what the most serious conflict issues are. From the questionnaires, they learned that the people of Abeokuta are ready to fight if called upon, especially over issues relating to relations between the city's five different sub-groups and chieftancies – Owu, Ake, Okeona, Gbagura, and Ibara. People in the motor parks proved to be the most prone to violence. The concerns revealed in the survey were used to make the drama relevant to the local setting.

Performances took place in Omida, Kuto, Lafenwa, and Iberekoda markets and the Kuto Ashero, Ijaiye, and Itaoshin motor parks, as well as a command performance at June 12 Cultural Centre. About 5,000 watched the performance at the Cultural Centre, plus about 1,500 in each of the other 8 venues. Since there was some overlap, the total number of viewers was about 15,000 people spread all around the city.

After the performances were over, the NGO administered an impact assessment questionnaire to ascertain whether or not people's attitudes towards conflict had changed or not. 80% of those who had previously expressed a readiness to fight and participate in conflict if called upon expressed that they were now ready to shun violence after learning more about the real effects of conflict.

A specific example of how the conflict resolution drama program positively affected the community was that an ongoing conflict in Kuto motor park was finally put to rest after

people on both sides of the issue observed the show. The motor park executive then asked for a more specific training in conflict resolution, something the NGO is now working on.

Every market and motor park governing board requested for video tapes of the performances so that they can show it widely and also to remind them of what they had learned if conflict issues arise.

Since motor parks are the main point of entry for people entering the city, targeting people there in conflict resolution is a good strategy. During the crisis in Lagos in mid-October, conflict did not spread to Abeokuta and it is likely that this is one of the reasons.

24 October 2000, Abeokuta, Nigeria

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID-OTI

Interviewee: Various, Foundation for Democratic Development

Project: LAG0555 Conflict mediation program for LG representatives and opinion leaders in Abeokuta South, Abeokuta North, and Ewekoro Local Government Areas, Ogun State

Shina Adefolahan, Project Coordinator, Foundation for Democratic Development

Last year, there was an inter-ethnic crisis between Hausas and Yorubas in Shagamu. Many of those affected subsequently moved into Abeokuta. Such conflicts obviously inhibit development, and so FDD wanted to find a way to prevent them from coming to their city. After being trained by USAID-OTI in conflict resolution, he saw that as a way to engender peace in the society and so set out to organize a program to promote inter-ethnic conflict resolution in three key local government areas in Abeokuta and environs.

Realizing that one has to do more than just train people and abandon them, they decided to promote the establishment of an inter-ethnic peace committee that could be the point people to address any conflict that arises in the community. That committee has been doing a marvelous job. Two weeks before there was a clash in Sabo, the part of Abeokuta most heavily populated by Hausa settlers. The committee worked tirelessly and was able to contain the conflict.

Chief Akin Adeniji, Chairman Inter-Local Government Peace Advocacy Committee (Yoruba)

After the training program, a committee was set up and he was elected the chairman. They subsequently met with important people around the community and they are now well known in the city. There would have been a very bloody clash between the OPC

and Hausas in Sabo had it not been for the committee's intervention. "Our objective is to get peace at every local government in Ogun State."

Comrade Bola Ogunyemi, Program Manager, Foundation for Democratic Development

Following the training program in conflict resolution, the Peace Advocacy Committee was established. We have continued to work with them and they use our space to meet and we advise them as much as we are able so that they actualize their goals.

Malam Ado Tanko, Peace Advocacy Committee, member (Hausa)

Tanko is a member of the committee representing the Hausa community, although he and his father before him were born and raised in Abeokuta, symbolizing for how long these communities have lived together.

"Especially during the recent crisis in Lagos, many of us on the committee did not sleep. We had to make sure that everyone slept before we slept, and that we woke up before anyone else woke just because of the situation in the town. When we hear of any problem, we have to rush there and see that things are OK."

"We are the peacemakers. Everyone in Ogun State, even the governor knows that we are trying. We are trying, and we will continue to do so so that we have peace by the special grace of God. In Abeokuta here, we will not have problems."

Comrade Bunmi Adeluola, staff member, Foundation for Democratic Development

He asked that OTI consider assisting them to carry the training program to other local government areas of the state.

Chief S. A. Yusuf, Yoruba Community Leader of Sabo, Peace Advocacy Committee member

"In this community, there are so many misunderstandings between the Hausa and the Yoruba. But due to the intervention of our committee, we always settle everything amicably. Between Hausas and Yorubas, we now quickly understand ourselves. As my colleague said, there has been no trouble in this town between Hausas and Yorubas. The conflicts in Lagos will not spread here due to the intervention of our committee and the workshop they gave us, we learned many things."

Gambo Ali, Peace Advocacy Committee, Secretary (Hausa)

Gambo Ali is from Kano and came to Ogun State for educational purposes as a young man. His presence on the committee shows that it is possible for an outsider to quickly become a player within a community far away from his place of origin.

“I wanted to know what I could do to help my community considering that people had already gone far in fighting and killing one another ignorantly, and some are doing it to benefit their own selfish and negative attitude.”

He said that the training was so good it was like four to five years of university. Just a week after the program he was in a situation where he had to settle a conflict that was about to spread between one Igbo tanker driver and motorcycle drivers in Lafenwa, Abeokuta. He settled it, and no violence occurred. In his own area, he is doing all he can to make sure that conflicts don't arise between Hausas and Yorubas, using all the techniques he was taught by FDD and OTI. The Hausas are 90% illiterate, and don't know how to approach a conflict, so the committee educates them with the little knowledge they have. “There will not be any conflict between the Hausas and the Yorubas in Abeokuta.”

He ended by requesting that the Igbos in the community also be trained and brought into the committee since there is a significant number of them in Abeokuta. The committee is working on bringing them in on their own, but extra assistance would be appreciated.

24 October 2000, Ibadan, Nigeria

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID-OTI

Interviewee: Hon. Akin Akinteye, Visions of Peace and Civic Education (VPCE), Deputy Majority Leader, Oyo State House of Assembly

Project: LAG9842 Conflict Resolution Training Program for Legislators in Oyo and Ogun States

So far, only the program in Oyo State has taken place, so that is what Akin told me about.

Akin has been involved in conflict resolution initiatives for almost a decade now and has vast training and experience. His election to the House was actually as a result of his work as a conflict mediator. A major crisis was brewing in his home community of Igbo-Ora in the mid-1990s over a pretty minor issue. All the elders who were working to resolve the conflict were not having any success. Akin came in and used his training as a conflict mediator to resolve the problem, and even though he was very young at the time – around 31 – he became renowned in the area. So, when the transition to democracy came some years later, Akin's people came and called him from Lagos and told him he should contest. He eventually agreed and won the election without hardly needing to campaign because of his reputation.

In 1998, Akin started his NGO and went from local government to local government in Oyo State conducting mini-trainings on conflict resolution.

When he came into the House of Assembly, he discovered that most legislators did not know how to legislate, and this caused many internal and external conflicts. Members

would call for amendments on bills at the third stage, which is the point when they are no longer to be amended and are ready for passage. Others would rise to say they are 'thirding motions' which is obviously improper. He thus submitted an proposal on Legislative Skills and Conflict Resolution for the House that was approved. This program was designed to approach the two problems of conflicts themselves, as well as the root causes of the conflicts which are often due to a misunderstanding of one's proper legislative role and responsibility.

During the training, Akin received a message from Niyi Babalola, the Honourable Commissioner for Establishment and Training. He had heard about the legislative training program, and he felt that the training would be useful for every political functionary in Oyo State, one for the executive, one for local government chairmen, one for councillors, one for director generals, and so on. He was still in negotiations with them to plan the program and to decide how much of it the government would fund and how much funds they would solicit from international donor agencies. (So as not to give the Commissioner any feeling that he was guaranteed OTI funding, I decided not to interview him as planned).

After the training, the House of Assembly instituted a monthly meeting with the governor and other members of the executive to minimize the conflicts and disagreements between the two branches of government. These meetings take place on the last Friday of every month, to iron out issues before they reach crisis stage. (incidentally the Oyo State Governor Lam Adeshina is on the board of the South West Conflict Resolution Stakeholders Network)

VPCE is also working on a proposal to send to international donor agencies to train members of the volatile and influential O'odua People's Congress (OPC). He fears they are becoming so established at the grassroots that they need to be worked with before they lead people towards violence. Presently, the OPC is far more acceptable to many than the police, so it is important to train them in alternative methods of resolving conflicts than violence. Even though they are officially banned, he does not feel that should stop them from conducting training for them. In any case, the OPC never registered with the government any way, so they cannot really be banned. He has already trained OPC members during the OTI funded training in Oke Ogun, and they have now changed their attitude and approach to conflicts in those communities.

24 October 2000, Ibadan, Nigeria

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID-OTI

Interviewee: Dr. Mobolaji Ogunsanya, Dept. of Adult Education, University of Ibadan, Conflict Management Project

Project: LAG2970 Conflict Prevention for Hausa and Yoruba Communities in Oke Ogun, Oyo State

Oke Okun is a region in northern Oyo State made up of ten local government areas. There are large numbers of Hausa/Fulani settlers there who have been in the area for up to a century. As is the case in much of Nigeria, however, longevity does not equate indigeneity, and so they are still considered 'foreigners' to the indigenous Yoruba in spite of living side by side for generations. Most of the conflicts between them take place because many of the Hausa/Fulani are nomadic cattle rearers while the Yoruba are sedentary farmers.

In light of this, Conflict Management Project submitted a proposal to USAID-OTI to fund a conflict resolution program for key members of both ethnic groups in the ten local government areas that make up Oke Ogun. OTI approved funding for the project, and the program took place from the May 15 to June 16, 2000. The key trainers for the program were participants in USAID-OTI's Conflict Resolution TOT in Badagry and Port Harcourt.

The program proved to be a great success, and a 16 member Inter-Ethnic Peace Committee was formed to mitigate violent conflicts in the area. The Peace Committee meets every month and the local governments are voting money to fund the committee's continued existence. Since the inauguration of this committee, no major or even minor inter-ethnic conflicts have arisen in the area that once had so many. Even during the Hausa-Yoruba conflicts in Lagos last week, nothing started in reaction to that in Oke Ogun. The committee has since dealt with all sorts of conflicts in the community, involving everything from petrol salesmen to transporters and cattle rearers.

He suggested doing similar training from local government to local government in Lagos State to prevent future conflicts there. He also encouraged the creation of inter-ethnic and inter-religious peace communities as follow ups to the training.

Follow Up Story #1

The Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF), a recently created body of northern elites, put together a high powered committee to go to Oyo State and petition Governor Lam Adesina on the harassment of Hausa/Fulani in Oke Ogun area of the state. The committee was headed by former head of state Muhammadu Buhari, and included former military administrator of Lagos State Bubar Marwa, the former Inspector General of Police Ibrahim Coomasie and several others.

During their meeting in Ibadan with Governor Adesina about the issue earlier in the month, Adesina simply handed Buhari the report on the Conflict Management Project's report on the resolution of conflict in the area and the creation of the Inter-Ethnic Peace Committee. Adesina made it clear to Buhari and the rest of his delegation that the issue they had come to discuss had already been resolved months before through a USAID-OTI funded intervention. The ACF delegation obviously had no rejoinder and left rather embarrassed that an issue they thought was so serious had already been dealt with.

Follow Up Story #2

As is often the case with such programs, security personnel in the Oke Ogun area were suspicious about what Conflict Management Project and USAID-OTI were trying to do in the area. Because of this, the Nigeria Police Area Commander Haz Iwendi sent members of his staff to investigate. When he heard that the program was about building peace and not about making things worse, he came himself and stayed for the rest of the program. By the end of it all, he was very impressed and went so far as to volunteer to be on the Peace Committee.

Soon after, he was transferred from Oke Ogun and made the Nigeria Police national Public Relations Officer. This posting put him very close to Musiliu Smith, the Inspector General of Police. Iwendi told Smith about the conflict resolution program in Oke Ogun and talked about how useful such training could be for police officers nationwide.

Conflict Management Project in conjunction with members of USAID-OTI's South West Conflict Resolution Stakeholders Network are presently finalizing arrangements to conduct the training which would take place in eight phases around the country. I am not sure what level of police officers will be trained, (probably area commanders) but the training will be completely funded by the Nigeria Police and much of the training will be conducted by USAID-OTI trained conflict resolution trainers around the country. The agreement is to be finalized and signed today if all goes as planned. In addition, Conflict Management Project will be contracted as consultants to the Police Staff College to design a conflict resolution curriculum for the college.

Follow up story #3

For the past six years, Dr. Isaac Olawale Albert, an OTI trained conflict resolution expert, has been trying to establish a Master's program in Conflict Resolution and Peace Studies at the prestigious University of Ibadan, where he is a historian in the Institute for African Studies. With the hype surrounding the successes of OTI funded initiatives in Ife and Oke Ogun, both of which he played important parts in, conflict resolution has finally becoming an occupation that is gaining growing respect, especially in the South West. Because of this influence, the University Senate finally approved the establishment of the degree program. Although not a direct result of OTI initiatives, it is certainly indirectly related to the legitimacy OTI sponsorship has put on the study and work of conflict resolution.

Additional comments:

“People knew about conflict resolution, but for the first time OTI has pushed this project to the point where now every body is aware of it. In fact, Shell and LNG are in informal discussions with us on what we can do for them as well. OTI will eventually see some good results. In fact, some embassies in Lagos are talking to us, but they don't want this to be known because they have seen the reports and they know what is going on. In fact,

I am really proud of OTI because for the first time conflict resolution has been taken to the limelight.” (Dr. Albert)

Some of the information for the follow up stories are culled from interviews with Hon. Akinteye and Dr. Albert, 24 October, University of Ibadan.

24 October 2000, Ibadan, Nigeria

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID-OTI

Interviewee: Gbenga Alabi, Center for Community Education in Democracy and Development (CCEDD)

Project: LAG7573 Market Based conflict resolution program in Ibadan

After an ethnic conflict in Ketu Market of Lagos, CCEDD realized that markets can be volatile areas of ethnic conflict and so decided to tackle the problem in major markets in Ibadan.

They did the conflict resolution training programs in three key markets in Ibadan North Local Government – Bodija, Sango, and Sabo. The point was to promote communication between the various commercial, ethnic, and religious interests within the markets.

Each market now has a conflict resolution committee in place that he visits them from time to time to make sure they are still functioning. They are now planning to hold a joint workshop between the three committees.

The Sarkin Hausawa of Ibadanland, the leader of the Hausa people in Ibadan participated in the training at Sabo market and he actively made sure that the conflicts from Lagos did not spread to Ibadan, even when other Hausa leaders were advising him to start something.

25 October 2000, Lagos, Nigeria

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID-OTI

Interviewee: Damilola Saibu, Centre for Peace Development Nigeria

Project: LAG6329 Conflict/Resolution Management Training for Mushin Community in Lagos

This is the same NGO mentioned by Dr. Awosika of WLDCN in her example of an NGO influenced and empowered by USAID-OTI Conflict Resolution training in the South West.

He and two others from the National Democratic Equality Vanguard were trained by USAID-OTI. He was inspired by the training and the ideas, and so his colleagues and him started a peace related NGO called Centre for Peace Development Nigeria (CPDN).

With OTI support, they conducted a conflict resolution program in Mushin LGA, the headquarters of the radical O'odua Peoples Congress (OPC). The program was attended by Frederick Fasheun, the founder and head of the OPC as well as by the Mushin LGA Chairman who also sent five of his social workers.

The Mushin Chairman was excited about the training and subsequently offered land for a proposed mediation centre. CPDN is now looking for OTI support to build, develop, and staff the Mushin mediation centre, as are other LGAs who have heard about the initiative. He plans to spread mediation centres all around Lagos and around the federation.

He credits his effort in Mushin for preventing the mid-October crisis in Lagos from spreading there. Many were surprised because it seemed that Mushin was a changed place since it was usually so prone to violence.

He credits poverty as being the cause of so much of the violence, something he said Frederick Fasheun pointed out at the training. Although Fasheun was arrested following the recent OPC led violence, he was arrested because he was the founder of the OPC, not because there was any proof that he directly called for violence or was involved in the violence. The fact that he turned himself in to the police shows that he is ready to seek peace and resolution.

Saibu is now working to bring together various ethnic leaders in Lagos for a follow up program.

31 October 2000, Lagos Island, Nigeria

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID-OTI

Interviewee: Ekaette Ebitu, Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives

Project: LAG5415 Facilitative mediation skills for LG Chairmen and Community Leaders

As a lawyer, she has always been active in arbitration both professionally and in her community and church. In the church she is often called on to help settle disputes. In her location in the heart of Lagos, even though not a Lagosian, when there is a conflict people often say, "Lawyer, come and help us."

The actual formal OTI training in conflict resolution, however, was an eye opener. Initially she thought it was just going to be training in another form of arbitration that as a lawyer she was already acquainted with. She immediately realized it was something

quite different because of the method's ease and practicality. She learned how to use real life approaches to conflict resolution rather than the abstract methods used in arbitration.

Many lawyers she has talked to about conflict resolution methods have really taken to the idea, especially because of how inefficient the Nigerian court system has become. Lawyers discover this method works faster, and clients are happier. However, when things cannot get resolved in this way, they might still have to go to court. She has used the conflict resolution approach to solve conflicts for two different clients of hers already, and is sure to use it more in the future.

The OTI funded program on conflict resolution training her NGO did brought together the Local Government chairmen and community leaders from throughout the state. They were very positive about the training program and wondered why no one had talked to them about such things before. They had hoped other members of their staffs and the youth and women in their various local governments would also have been able to receive the training. Plans are now underway through the Office of the Special Assistant to the Governor on Local Government Affairs to extend the conflict resolution training to other levels of local government administration. The effort will be done by CPDI and will be funded by the state and local governments. For future conflict resolution initiatives on the local government level, it is important to remember that chairmen throughout the state have had the training and are ready to support it further.

During the mid-October conflicts in Lagos, she wanted to move in and do a conflict resolution initiative in the trouble areas, but the chairman there said the place was too volatile and that it would be better for them to stay out until the security forces had things under control. The local government officials did realize that conflict resolution training among key players in the area would have made the conflict much easier to start, but it was too late and too volatile by that time. Mrs. Ebitu suggested that OTI try and target key elements of the O'odua Peoples Congress, the major instigators of the violence, and train them in conflict resolution. Training them will certainly change their methods of confrontation and reduce such large scale violence.

She reiterated the story of the Chairman of the Surulere described in her report. The Chairman and his deputy had a long standing conflict that was well known. During the training, the Chairman's eyes were opened to his own shortcomings that contributed to the conflict and resolved to end the conflict so that the local government could be better governed. The deputy ended up coming for part of the training as a result and was himself introduced to methods of conflict resolution, something he as a lawyer took to quickly. Recently, the Chairman was having another conflict, this time with the councillors, and on this occasion it was the deputy who was able to resolve it!

The proposed conflict mediation centres are not yet in place, although the plan is that with the next round of training (funded by the local governments), core mediators will emerge who will then be able to work as mediators for each local government.

1 November, 2000, Lagos, Nigeria

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID-OTI

Interviewee: Dr. S. Randle, Lagos Island Community Partners for Health

Project: LAG0085 Civic education and conflict management training for Lagos Island Local Government representatives

She comes at issues of conflict resolution from the perspective of a medical doctor working on issues of child survival. In Nigerian family life, conflict is prevalent and children are negatively affected by this. She was not trained by OTI, but one of her colleagues was. She had been exposed to conflict resolution three years before during a workshop conducted by BASICS Nigeria, a USAID implementing partner.

The program brought together 100 participants from around crowded and volatile Lagos Island. These participants came from community leaders, religious leaders, youth leaders, market leaders, and local government representatives. "At the end of the program, many asked that we repeat it for others either at the grassroots level or for government because they had never thought in that line at all."

It is too early yet to assess what kind of a real impact the program has had on the Lagos Island community since it just happened a month ago. But, the area boys (social miscreants) who attended were definitely positively influenced to turn away from violence. In the communique at the end of the event, they requested that the training be repeated, or that at least the message should be broadcast continuously through the media to keep people aware of alternatives to violent responses to problems.

In regards to specific stories of how people trained were able to use the training, she has been out of town for most of the time since it happened, but there was a conflict situation at Lagos Island Community Partners for Health that was resolved by staff members who had been at the training.

1 November, 2000, Mushin, Nigeria

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID-OTI

Interviewee: Sunkanmi Adeniyi, Secretary, National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW), Mushin Chapter

Project: None, he attended the training but has not submitted a conflict resolution proposal of any kind.

Very enthusiastic about the training and all the things they were able to learn from the lecturers. Before he attended the training, they were having constant conflicts within the

union that they were finally able to resolve. They applied the content learned from the training and were able to solve the problem. Since then, nothing has flared up again. Have been too busy to take the conflict resolution training further, but still plan to do so.

3 November, 2000, Lagos, Nigeria

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID-OTI

Interviewee: Oyelowo Oyewo, Initiatives for Peace, Development & Good Governance (IPDG)

Project: LAG5611 Conflict Resolution/Management Training for Lagos State Legislators

Professor Oyewo is the Head of Department of the University of Lagos Department of Public Law in the Faculty of Law. IPDG is a side project for him to promote democracy and good governance.

Has been trained in various ways in conflict resolution and management in the past, but did not participate in the OTI South West regional training because he was out of the country at the time. Instead, Dr. Adams, the executive secretary of the IPDG attended.

Realized it was important to target Lagos legislators for such training since there is presently so much conflict between the executive and legislative arms of government, partly as a result of a poor understanding of their constitutional roles, but also because neither side knows how to manage conflict. Even within the House of Assembly itself, although largely made up people from the same party – Alliance for Democracy – there is still much internal conflict and division.

Was a very successful program where internal and external problems of the Assembly were addressed. Within the body, communication skills were improved through ice breaking. People who had been working together for over a year yet hardly knew each other because of protocol barriers, for the first time got to know each other on a personal level. This obviously encourages improved working relationships.

In terms of their relations with the executive, they suggested a further training either just for the executive, or for all of them together. However, by learning about their actual constitutional relationship to the executive along with techniques of conflict resolution, they were able to realize where the conflicts were caused by their own attitude or misunderstandings. They realized their approach was wrong and that their objectives themselves were often misguided, opening the way for conflicts.

One member of the House in particular improved his relationship with the executive by realizing the way he had been going about things were unconstitutional and simply

annoyed members of the executive who then became hostile. He also learned better how to relate to his constituents in a more humble manner and how to really seek broad advice before submitting bills, so as not to cause unnecessary conflicts.

Professor Oyewo has a creative approach where he mixes constitutional issues along with conflict resolution techniques. Rather than just training on straight conflict resolution, he also introduced the House members to those legal aspects that if improperly followed can lead to conflict. Thus, rather than just giving them the tools to solve conflicts when they erupt, he also gives them tools of how to reduce or avoid conflicts within the carrying out of their every day duties. It provides another value added dimension to our politically oriented conflict resolution training programs and makes the overall training more relevant. Oyewo's training offers a window into the sources of the problem rather than just a means to solve them once they happen.

Subsequent to the training, IPDG has been invited to set up a conflict management body to be affiliated with the Lagos State House of Assembly and to be funded by them. Also, one of the trainers – Ozonnia Ojielo (a CRESNET member) – is now participating in training and spreading concepts of alternative dispute resolution and conflict management in the Lagos State Office of the Public Defender. This too was a bi-product of the training.

Date: Nov. 8, 2000

Place: Enugu, Enugu State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewees: Ibuchukwu Ezike, Emeke Ugwuoke, Friends of the Environment and Minorities

Program: PHT0169 Transforming Violent Youths into Political Activists; PHT1860 First South East Youth Caucus Seminar/ Workshop (for this program, they were the lead NGO of a South East wide coalition of NGOs called Coalition for Democracy and Good Governance (CODEGG))

Assert that one of the major reasons for conflict in Nigeria is corruption at the top. This leaves unemployed youths on the streets to easily be used as tools for conflict.

They brought together student leaders from various tertiary institutions in the region to discuss problems of youth violence and ways of addressing these issues from a conflict resolution perspective.

During the program the youths demonstrated their willingness to serve their country patriotically. One example of how the program had an impact was with regards to a conflict that had erupted in Enugu because of the sacking of 5,000 workers by the state

government. These workers had been making all sorts of trouble, but after attending the training program, their leaders decided against violence and instead took the state government to court over the issue. Now there is no violence because of this. (although our conflict resolution initiatives are usually geared away from the courts, in this case it was one means of averting violence).

Okada drivers were also in conflict with the Enugu state government because of attempts to regulate them. Rather than resorting to violence against the state, the okada drivers' union took the matter to the courts after their leaders were trained in conflict resolution. Something similar happened in Ebonyi State.

In the universities, cult activities have been extremely problematic. Cult leaders were invited to the training and since then, cult related violence in the tertiary institutions in the affected states has dramatically reduced. This has especially been the case at Oko Polytechnic in Anambra State. Also, relations between student leaders and the administration have also improved as student leaders no longer approach them with such hostility.

When Obasanjo visited Awka, Anambra State, the students of Nnamdi Azikiwe University were carrying out a peaceful protest when Obasanjo decided not to visit the campus. They were however confronted by security forces who were scared by the crowd and killed a student. Rather than responding with violence as would usually be the case, the student leaders armed with their conflict resolution training were able to resolve the conflict peacefully without the protest turning into chaos and violence.

The youths involved in the program were active in bringing resolution to community conflicts between Orba and Ohoda in Enugu State. In the land dispute between Umuleri and Aguleri in Anambra State, youths were actively involved in the conflict. The youth leaders who participated in the training were able to go back and encourage the youth to stop violence since they were not gaining anything from it at all – that the leaders you are fighting for are not even here and neither are their children, so should you fight their battle? We cannot run away from this place, so we need to bring about a peaceful resolution. and between Umuoba and Anam, also in Anambra State.

In Ebonyi State, there was a crisis brewing between the state government and labour. Many of the labour leaders involved are young and were trained in conflict resolution. The state government arrested the labour leader and banned the movement. Rather than responding with violence, members of the labour movement said they would not dialogue with government until their leaders were released. The leaders were released, and the governor had to recognize them and they got the minimum wage they demanded. So, without violence they achieved their demands.

“It is only the people of an area that can solve the problems of that area.” This is true, but OTI has given youth in the South East the tools so that they can properly do so. We have been taught that violence is not the best option and that we need to face each other and dialogue.

“We are not God, but we have done our best and violence in the region has been greatly reduced.”

Date: Nov. 8, 2000

Place: Enugu, Enugu State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewee: Father Leonard Ilochukwu, Catholic Institute for Development, Justice, and Peace (CIDJAP)

Program: LAG TOT on Conflict Resolution for the South East Zone; PHT3010 Managing Youth Conflict from a Dualistic Social-Economic Perspective (in this effort CIDJAP was the lead NGO of a region wide coalition of NGOs called Centre for Eastern Services)

Since the zonal training so many NGOs have been able to follow up their conflict resolution training with initiatives of their own, most of them without OTI funding of any kind. One example is the initiative carried out in Oruku, Enugu State between those of freeborn descent (indigenes) and those of slave descent (settlers). The settlers were told they had to leave, but OTI trained NGOs were able to intervene in the conflict and now peace reigns.

We NGOs have also been able to resolve conflicts within our own offices. Unfortunately our organizations themselves are sometimes centres of conflict and now that is not happening so that NGOs can better do the work they are supposed to be doing without distractions.

The training has been spread widely through the NGOs that were trained who have now also spread the training to other groups and conflict prone communities around the state. They have done remarkably well considering how limited their resources are and how limited their high level clout is – they work at the grassroots where conflicts erupt from any way and where government does not really have much of an impact.

The other training they did was for youth officers in the government ministries. All but two youth officers from across the Eastern states participated, making a total of 116 representatives from across the region. These youth officers have since been actively involved in resolving conflicts both within government ministries, and with the youth they are actually supposed to be working with. Since so many youth conflicts are related to their relations with the government, these youth officers have now been instrumental in resolving these since they are the go-betweens between government and youth.

One of the specific conflicts that have been influenced through the training took place at UNN, Enugu campus. After three days without light, students went on a rampage to the NEPA office. They were bent on burning down the NEPA office and destroying the vehicles, but the youth development officers were able to convince the youth to protest in a more peaceful manner. This has been the case through the South East where youths who are easily prone to mob action are now not doing so because of the efforts of the youth development officers. It is not that they are asking them to stop asking for their rights, it is that they are advising them to ask for their rights in a peaceful, non-violent ways and also for them to see themselves how they can resolve conflicts within their communities rather than causing them. The peer influence through the youth development officers has been very powerful across the region.

Since CIDJAP is church based, they have used the pulpit in Catholic and other churches to spread the message of peace and conflict resolution. They have helped set up Peace Initiative Groups in many of the Enugu area churches to resolve conflicts within churches and between them. They have also trained other NGOs on conflict resolution by passing on information and expertise garnered from OTI to those who were not able to participate in the first round of training. They have also done their own workshops on conflict resolution, including a recent one called “Peace Initiative Movement”. People were invited from churches, NGOs and government bodies to benefit from what we have learned from USAID-OTI. CIDJAP has become a resource center on matters of conflict resolution for the area. They have been able to propagate the agenda of OTI on their own. CIDJAP already organized a workshop for USAID-OTI on anti-corruption for churches, and now they would like to do something similar for pastors and church authorities (and representatives of other religions in Enugu) on conflict resolution so the message can be spread even further. It is so easy to do this for church leaders because “The Bible is a peace message, it is the good news. It is about being a good neighbour, about having peace and not causing trouble.”

“Many communities are conflict ridden, and when the government wants to come into it, the government is not allowed entrance. When other NGOs come into such situations, they are also not allowed entrance. When you come as a church, they have no option but to accept you. Because being a church gives you more access and credibility. Whatever you say is accepted, but with that also comes additional responsibility.”

Date: Nov. 8, 2000

Place: Enugu, Enugu State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewee: Rev. Charles Ugwuagu, Development Education Centre

Program: LAG TOT on Conflict Resolution for the South East Zone

Really enjoyed the training and felt he was exposed to something new and very helpful. It enables him to better handle church and community matters which as a Catholic priest he is always expected to deal with.

He was invited to the Ngwo community where there was a conflict over a parish priest that was seriously threatening lives in the area. The community wanted to kill the priest, and the priest was trying to run away. We went there and dealt with it based on the training we had in conflict resolution and since then, the matter has been solved. He has also worked on church related conflicts in other communities, including one in Abor, and is now working with Rev. Ilochukwu on finding ways to address all these church related conflicts in a bigger way.

Date: Nov. 8, 2000

Place: Enugu, Enugu State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewees: James C. Eleam, Chief Youth Development Officer, Enugu State; Peter C. Isingene, Principal Youth Development Officer, Enugu State; T. C. Aneke, Assistant Principal Youth Development Officer, Enugu State

Program: PHT3010 Managing Youth Conflict from a Dualistic Social-Economic Perspective

The three were participants in the USAID-OTI funded training program in conflict resolution for youth development officers in the South East region.

The three had previously been exposed to conflict resolution on some level, but felt the training by OTI was a positive complement to what they had learned previously.

“There is so much conflict among the youths, even in their schools and universities, and through this training we have been able to spread the ideas further and they are gaining ground both in the schools and the youth organizations.”

There was a conflict between the motorcycle taxi drivers and the government, and we were able to use that training to bring about a resolution without violence. (this is the same conflict FEM mentioned they had worked on – are our efforts complementing each other, just repeating each other, or are those trained taking credit for things they did not actually work on??)

At UNN, Enugu Campus, there was an upsurge of cult activities and the cult members were causing trouble so that serious students who were not cult members and wanted to study for exams found it hard to do so. James Eleam brought the leaders of the major cult groups together and got them talking to encourage them not only to stop their own

conflict, but to stop making things hard for students who really want to study. Since this meeting cult activity has reduced and students have been free to study and take their exams without disturbance from cult members. The cult members were then encouraged to study harder themselves so that they could catch up with the more serious students who performed much better than them in the now more peaceful environment. They have seen the harm they were doing to others and to themselves.

Soon after returning from the training, T. C. Aneke got involved in a communal conflict over land in Mgbagbuowa, Ezeagu LGA. He got the warring parties to sit down and dialogue and discuss the history of the situation and the ownership of the land. In the end the conflict was resolved peacefully.

Date: Nov. 8, 2000

Place: Enugu, Enugu State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewee: Thelma Ekiyor, Connect Synergy (formerly of Academic Associates Peace Works)

Program: PHT0174 Conflict Prevention/Management Training in the Niger Delta; Conflict Resolution in Okrika/Elemé

Thelma Ekiyor was one of the conflict resolution trainers who trained for the AAPW projects around the SS zone. She subsequently left AAPW and established Connect Synergy with another colleague and is now continuing to serve as a conflict resolution trainer for OTI Port Harcourt as necessary.

Ekiyor is from Bayelsa State, and earned a law degree in England and did a Master's program in conflict resolution in Canada before returning to Nigeria to work for AAPW. She is a licensed mediator in Canada and is now working with other qualified mediators in Nigeria to establish a certification process that will allow qualified mediators to become an official part of the judicial system. At present, mediation is a small but growing field in Nigeria and there is no certification so that people with three days of basic training will go around calling themselves mediators without the real necessary qualification. The leader of the effort to introduce a certification process is Ozonia Ojielo, the president of the Nigerian Mediation Association. Ojielo is a member of CRESNET and was in fact the person who first hatched the idea of such a network at the first stakeholders meeting in Badagry.

After OTI gave AAPW a grant for a series of conflict resolution initiatives in the Niger Delta, the organization solicited for a Niger Delta indigene trained in mediation to come and lead the effort. It was through this that Ekiyor returned to Nigeria from Canada.

The project involved trainings in five local government areas of each of the three core Niger Delta states – Delta, Bayelsa, and Rivers. In each of the 15 trainings, 35 participants made up youth leaders, community elders, and local government officials were brought together to be trained in mediation and conflict resolution. Other than two instances where violence forced the workshops to be moved to neutral sites, the program went off without a hitch.

From their own follow up reporting, the after math has been quite positive. In one of the Nembe area local governments, the local government chairman is also the youth leader and so he has been actively involved in reducing the conflict involving youth from his LGA. In fact, in a recent takeover a flow station by area youths, it was youths trained by AAPW that intervened and encouraged their counterparts to get their point across via negotiation with the oil companies rather than through violence and other illegal acts.

Another major success was the initiative related to the Eleme-Okrika crisis. These are communities that border each other, but have been involved in hostilities for a long time and are hardly on speaking terms. Eleme is a branch of the Ogoni and is the location of one of Nigeria's oil refineries. There had been a serious altercation around the area of the refinery in which people from both sides were killed. OTI contracted AAPW to intervene and they were able to bring people from the two sides together and get them to form a peace committee that could sit down and negotiate the conflict in a peaceful manner.

One of the youth leaders in Warri who had been trained advised the oil companies to bring people like Thelma in to help both sides negotiate and dialogue so that the violence can be stopped, so it shows that the training is having lasting effects in other ways as well and that people are seeing options other than violence. "When I first came in I was surprised to find that every body saw violence as the only way to get anything done. What we provided them were options, that they do have options. They don't always have to let it get to violence."

"Other successes would be a reduction of violence in these areas. They have reduced. We would like for there to be no violence at all, but it is not as much as when we first moved in. A lot of people are now calling themselves mediators as a result of our training, so in that sense we have made progress but we have also caused a problem because they are not properly trained. But it is better for them to be calling themselves mediators than vigilantes. Particularly you will find that it is the elders we trained who have taken that role. They say, we are mediators, we can intervene in conflicts, and in that sense it is not a bad thing because they have the traditional role as mediators any way without our training. They are the ones who solve problems traditionally, and the training has given them a renewed sense of the importance of that role."

Date: Nov. 9, 2000

Place: Calabar, Cross River State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewees: Patrick Bassey, Link Service Marshall, and Rev. Mrs. I. O. Efiang, Centre for Training and Gender Activities. Both are members of the Coalition for Peace and Stable Democracy established by OTI in Calabar

Program: PHT7623 Conflict Resolution/Management/Mediation Training for Traditional Rulers; PHT2939 Conflict Resolution/ Management Training for LGA Officials

Rev. Mrs. Efiang was trained by OTI at the zonal Conflict Resolution TOT in Calabar and subsequently sent a proposal to an intervention. Instead of conducting the small intervention, her organization was invited to join the coalition. As someone who works for women's rights at the grassroots, she has been involved in conflict resolution of one form or another for some time, but since her OTI training she commented that her technique was been greatly refined.

Patrick Bassey and some other youths had formed Link Service Marshall to begin dealing with miscreants around Calabar who were causing a lot of trouble. Like Rev. Mrs. Efiang's NGO, they had submitted a proposal to do an intervention with these youths but were instead encouraged to join the coalition to do programs at a broader level.

On the program for local government officials, those in attendance were very excited because for the first time an important program was conducted where more than just the chairmen were invited. When the chairmen alone attend programs, they do not do enough to pass on what they had learned to their subordinates.

The LGA officials in attendance discussed openly those issues that caused conflicts between them and other levels of government, as well as between LGAs and within particular councils. They attempted to streamline procedures and to work out ways that such conflicts could easily be addressed and resolved so that they could spend more productive time on the business of governance. Those in attendance suggested that since training had already been done for traditional rulers and LGA officials, it should also be done for youth leaders.

Since the program for traditional rulers had taken place in September, it was easier for them to discuss various ways that the participants had been able to use the training for positive effect. After the training, the state government (co-sponsors of the training), used those trained to establish a Committee of Peace made up of traditional rulers in each Local Government Area. These Committees now work to resolve conflicts in peaceful manners and have already enjoyed successes in various communities around the state. Some examples of conflicts that the Committees have already been able to amicably resolve are the Netim clan dispute, a conflict in Efut Uwanse, as well as the conflict between Efut Abua and Ekot Inim over an oil spillage. These Committees are attached to the local government councils, so now those trained from the councils will likely join as

well. Also, the local government councils will now better understand the unusual approach of the members of the Committee of Peace as many of them have now been trained as well.

Back to the Local Government training completed the day before. On the morning of the interview, Rev. Mrs. Efiog had met the Calabar Municipal LGA Chairman. The Chairman mentioned that after leaving the training the evening before, he had encountered a rising conflict in the city. Some youths from Calabar South had attacked a funeral procession of youths from Calabar Municipal and cut somebody's hand. The Chairman immediately intervened in the situation and using the conflict resolution techniques garnered from the training he had just received, convinced the youth of Calabar Municipal to shelve their plans of an immediate attack on Calabar South. The Chairman told Rev. Mrs. Efiog, "If I was not there to mediate and to quell down the feud, it would have been serious."

Since the trainings there have no major conflicts in the state until this one in Calabar. "Formerly, the response from the chairmen would have been, we have to fight these people. But it was a different attitude instead."

Date: Nov. 9, 2000

Place: Calabar, Cross River State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewees: Chris Martins, Program Officer, Reach Services and Ema Nyong, Public Relations Officer of Efut Kparika II village (not really a village, part of Calabar South LGA and within an urban setting), participant in Reach Services initiative

Program: PHT5594 Building Capacity of Youths in the Niger Delta towards effective non-violence

Chris Martins:

Reach Services is a youth oriented NGO in Calabar South LGA area whose members realized that without peace, the youth of Calabar would have a hard time progressing. They thus conducted a training program for youth leaders in the area in methods of conflict resolution in hopes that the youths would no longer instigate or be used by others to cause conflict. The focus of their training were members of trouble making groups of miscreants who keep Calabar South unstable.

The person I was interviewing did not seem to know himself much about what the program was actually about, or even much about his NGO. The coordinator was unavailable because he was in Calabar South trying to help resolve the youth conflict that had arisen there, and the security situation was such that it would not have been wise for

me to go there. Thus I did not get many more details on the actual program. What was good to see though was that people from Reach Services were following up on the training they had done to encourage those they had trained to resolve the ongoing conflict peaceably.

Chris Martins claimed that none of the youth Reach Services had trained were involved in the present conflict but that the plan was to use them instead to help in the conflict's resolution. The reason for their non-involvement was that through the training they had become conscious of the negative results of conflict and were thus no longer interested in being involved in them.

Enma Nyong:

Nyong was a participant in the training for youth leaders, and following the training he went back to his community to spread the ideas of conflict resolution. He has used his new consciousness and his authority among youths in his community to keep them out of the various conflicts that have erupted in the area over the last few months since the training took place. He has held two meetings for the youth on conflict resolution. He has identified the local troublemakers and has worked with the community leaders to ensure they are unable to pursue their objectives. He has also identified the trouble shooters and works with them to keep others in check. He and the other peace oriented youth leaders in the community do all sorts of things to keep idle youths occupied and are now soliciting the government to establish factories in their area to provide these youths with meaningful employment.

During the ongoing crisis in the area, even when violent youths from other communities came to recruit, the youths in his village stayed in doors and refused to fight. It is now known that in that village any one within or without who are involved in causing conflicts will be reported to the police.

Date: Nov. 9, 2000

Place: Calabar, Cross River State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewees: Hubert Ogar, Congress for Democracy, Transparency, and Good Governance (CODTAG), and Stanley Edrah, Development Action Program

Program: PHT7623 Conflict Resolution/Management/Mediation Training for Traditional Rulers; PHT2939 Conflict Resolution/Management/Mediation training for Local Government officials

Hubert Ogar and Stanley Edrah are representatives of two of the four NGOs that made up the OTI coordinated NGO coalition in Cross River State called Coalition for Peace and Stable Democracy (COPESTAD)

Hubert Ogar has been involved in NGO work for a long time, and had previously done conflict resolution oriented programming in Yakuur through Academic Associates Peace Works. No one in his organization were trained in the OTI training. Stanley also did not attend OTI training, but while providing logistics for these two programs, he has done his best to pick up what he could and is now using the methodology himself.

The training for the traditional rulers had a broad impact, although not necessarily specifically in relation to how they relate to youths. Since many of the traditional rulers are also customary court judges, the conflict resolution training offered them an alternative way to settle problems between people in their communities. The traditional rulers have been asking that the training should be done twice a year, but were reminded that the Peace Committees put in place after the training were the means for them to keep meeting on the issues. The Peace Committees are now working with their local governments to make sure they are empowered financially to conduct the activities they need to do.

The local government training was spectacular and the attendance was very high. The traditional rulers were inhibited from total interaction because of their cultural status while the local government officials were more free. They made it clear that they had never previously had such training. They now plan to intermarry their conflict management initiatives with those of the traditional rulers. The chairmen of chairmen said he was very impressed and ensured that the Peace Committees across the state would be properly empowered.

Previously, traditional rulers rarely communicated even with their neighbouring communities. After the training they realized that communication was necessary so as to mitigate conflicts, and now dialogue between them has increased and conflicts reduced. They have been encouraged to start hosting their counterparts from other parts of the state so that all can learn more about the other, decreasing the likelihood of conflict between them.

Date: Nov. 9, 2000

Place: Calabar, Cross River State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewee: Patrick Asikpo-Okon, Secretary to the Local Government, Calabar South LGA

Program: PHT2939 Conflict Resolution/ Management Training for LGA Officials, Nov. 6-8, 2000

Patrick Asikpo-Okon and other Cross River LGA officials had just completed their training in conflict resolution the day before. The same day the training ended, a major crisis erupted between youths of Calabar South and Calabar Municipal LGAs.

Asikpo-Okon was very clear that all aspects of the training were extremely beneficial -- both the good governance aspects that taught them their proper constitutional roles as a way to avoid conflict, as well as the conflict resolution aspect that taught them how to solve problems amicably. He commented, "I must confess, I was very impressed." From his summation of the contents of the program, it was obvious that he had been an attentive participant throughout who had learned things that he intended to use to good affect in his job.

He had just come from a Calabar South LGA security meeting to discuss how to deal with the ongoing youth conflict which was making the place unsafe. He said that most in the meeting were of the opinion that the conflict should be handled as usual, they should shoot on sight anyone involved in causing the chaos. Youths were going around with cutlasses on motorbikes cutting people and so on, but he advised against such a violent form of security operation to bring their activities to a halt.

With his experience from the OTI training course, he and the others from the LGA who had been trained convinced the rest of the council that this conflict should be handled differently. Instead of shooting those causing the trouble, they would instead bring the various youth groups fighting each other to the table for them to negotiate their difference and come to some kind of resolution amicably. Using conflict resolution techniques, they would get the groups to get at the roots of the problem in an effort to bring peace and for them to realize on their own that the violent approach is not the best way to accomplish what they want to accomplish.

"I could have followed suit on the earlier decision of my people (to shoot on sight), but because of this training I tried to see it from a different angle and I think it is having a positive impact."

He also mentioned that the traditional rulers in the area (also trained by OTI) had decided to also move away from the old course of shoot on sight and to instead have the police comb the community and quietly arrest those who were causing the trouble so as to find out from them what exactly the problem was.

He then had to rush back to the meeting since it had been on hold during his absence, obviously showing the important role he was playing in the process. I am still trying to follow up with Asikpo-Okon on phone to find out what the end result of the meeting was and how the conflict was resolved.

This was a fantastic example of the kind of impact well coordinated and conceived programs can have. In this case, in less than 24 hours after the conclusion of an OTI sponsored conflict resolution program, participants were already putting into practice what they had learned as a means to avoid additional bloodshed.

The reports by the weekend were that the crisis was over. Normally, such a crisis would have carried on for weeks, so it seems that OTI's intervention was timely and successful.

Date: Nov. 9, 2000

Place: Calabar, Cross River State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

**Interviewee: King Tom Adie, Traditional Ruler from Obudu, Cross River State;
ObuTiv Peace and Reconciliation Movement**

**Program: PHT7623 Conflict Resolution/Management/Mediation Training for
Traditional Rulers**

King Tom Adie has been actively involved in initiatives for peace and good neighbourliness between the people around Obudu, Cross River State, and the Tiv people who border them in Benue State. These neighbours have often been involved in bloody skirmishes over boundary issues, and he has worked tirelessly to promote harmony. His efforts have attracted support and attention from the National Boundary Commission.

He has also been actively involved in promoting peace within the Obudu region of Cross River State itself. He is involved in all sorts of different peace building initiatives including television documentaries, peace festivals, writing books, and even recorded music.

He and the Obudu paramount ruler were the only attendees from Obudu LGA at the OTI conflict resolution training workshop for traditional rulers in Cross River State. It was his first formal training in conflict resolution and has helped him be more focused on techniques of conflict resolution.

Since attending the workshop, he has continued to be actively involved in conflict resolution in his community and is now on the state government sponsored Local Government Peace Committee. He has already assisted with the resolution of three communal conflicts – one between Kutiang and Begiaba, one between Mbaduku and Obudu, and one between Kutiang II and Kubong Bette.

Date: Nov. 13, 2000

Place: Uyo, Akwa Ibom State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewee: Obong O. U. Ekpo, member, Ikono Traditional Rulers Council, member Palace Council of the Paramount Ruler of Ikono, community leader of Mbioku Ikot Abasi, participant in OTI training program on conflict resolution

Program: PHT6392 Workshop on Conflict Management for Traditional Rulers in Akwa Ibom State

Two weeks after the training, there was a problem between two communities and his experience from the training helped him contribute positively towards resolving the conflict between the two communities.

There was also a conflict between factions of his extended family over land ownership, and he was able to help them resolve the crisis before it erupted into violence.

In the traditional council, he and the other participants have been able to impart the knowledge and skills they acquired on their counterparts who did not attend and now ideas of conflict resolution are well known among all the traditional rulers of Ikono.

Date: Nov. 13, 2000

Place: Uyo, Akwa Ibom State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewee: His Highness Obong U. J. Odungide, Chair Eket Council of Chiefs (Mbugho Mbong Eket), participant in OTI training

Program: PHT6392 Workshop on Conflict Management for Traditional Rulers in Akwa Ibom State

“It is worthwhile to mention that it was a very laudable program.” He mentioned that previously when conflicts would erupt they would just allow them to continue until they died down, but now he knows that it is important to bring resolution as quickly and amicably as possible.

Obong Odungide is an important traditional ruler from Eket, the key oil producing area of Akwa Ibom State and Mobil’s main site of operations in Nigeria. Thus they are often confronted with conflicts related to the oil companies. Now they have better ways of addressing them.

Recently he was able to peaceably resolve a conflict between Mobil, Seawell (an oil servicing company), and local employees. He created the necessary environment for them to talk and discuss the conflict as equals which opened up proper channels of communication.

Another conflict he addressed was with regards to DBN, an oil servicing firm. At the termination of the project, the workers (from all over Nigeria) were not satisfied with their termination pay and protested to the company. Obong Odungide was able to bring the two sides together to discuss amicably and in the end DBN paid out an additional six million Naira to the workers as they were supposed to without it becoming violent.

He has not only been involved in resolving conflicts between companies and employees, but also communal issues. In the Eket areas, some of the youth began a campaign to kill witches and wizards in the community. Obong Odungide was able to get the youths to rethink and to stop taking the law into their own hands and settle their scores in different manners.

“The training I got from OTI was really wonderful. It introduced other dimensions of how you can get people who disagree to sit down and do something, to sit down and communicate. That is the most important thing in conflict resolution, to agree to sit down and start communicating. The training I got here was very useful.”

Date: Nov. 13, 2000

Place: Uyo, Akwa Ibom State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewee: Obong P. B. Inyang, secretary to the Palace Council of the Paramount Ruler of Ikono, Chairman, Ikot Nseyen village council, participant in OTI's conflict resolution training program

Program: PHT6392 Workshop on Conflict Management for Traditional Rulers in Akwa Ibom State

He commented that so many of the relevant community and paramount rulers of the state were able to attend the workshop and they were highly impressed. “We learned about how to resolve conflicts, and if not that, at least how to mitigate them.”

Most of the problems we face are chieftancy disputes and in the workshop we were able to come up with reasonable means to mitigate such conflicts. Another source of conflict is the Traditional Rulers Edict of 1991 that at the end of the conference we resolved to suggest to the state government on how to amend it. Land disputes is another major cause of conflicts, so we tried as much as possible to find solutions and to find ways of amending the Land Use Decree so as to reduce such conflicts.

Last Thursday a conflict arose between two communities and they brought this conflict to the attention of the Ikono Palace Council. I am quite happy that I used the knowledge I acquired in the training to help to mitigate the conflict.” We are still trying to resolve it, but I am convinced we are on the right road. “We have now set a pattern so that

whenever a conflict arises, we will use the training given to us to address it.” Others on their council are now being educated in matters of conflict resolution.

Date: Nov. 13, 2000

Place: Uyo, Akwa Ibom State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewee: Obong Austin Ekong, Chief of Ibiono, participant in OTI training workshop on conflict resolution

Program: PHT6392 Workshop on Conflict Management for Traditional Rulers in Akwa Ibom State

Obong Austin pointed out that as communal leaders, traditional rulers are constantly faced with conflict resolution oriented tasks for students, youths, families, and with other communities, so for them this kind of training was extremely helpful.

After the training, he went back to his community and assembled 25 village heads to discuss what he had learned. They first discussed among themselves one of the key causes of conflict for them – succession, and how they could have this done in a peaceful way. Another issue was the conflict between those who were chiefs by heredity and those who were chiefs based on their standing in the community. They all agreed to overcome these problems and to work better together, and chieftancy rivalries have now been reduced. He also discussed techniques of conflict resolution with youths in his community and requested that we now train youth leaders as well.

Date: Nov. 13, 2000

Place: Uyo, Akwa Ibom State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewee: Emmanuel Akpanobong, Obong Manuel Ventures, the lead NGO in the OTI coordinated Akwa Ibom State NGO Coalition. He is also a member of CRESNET.

Program: PHT6392 Workshop on Conflict Management for Traditional Rulers in Akwa Ibom State; PHT1530 Workshop on Conflict Management for LGA Officials in Akwa Ibom State; LAG3369 Appreciative Inquiry: An approach to conflict management for the Akwa Ibom House of Assembly

First exposed to conflict resolution techniques through a conference organized by the Committee for the Defense of Human Rights in September 1999. In February he was invited to the stakeholders workshop on conflict resolution, his first encounter with OTI activities and since then has been actively involved with conflict resolution oriented programming in Akwa Ibom State.

The first training program he conducted was held in Eket and was for the members of the Akwa Ibom State House of Assembly, a body in which he was a member in the Third Republic. For that training, Lisa Desoto was one of the trainers. He also served as one of the facilitators for the zonal conflict resolution training program in Calabar. He then joined hands with other NGOs in Akwa Ibom to conduct conflict resolution training programs for traditional rulers and local government officials in the state.

The trainings are having a positive impact on the people of the state and they are now learning that by clarifying what conflicts are actually about, one can better understand them and better resolve them.

The participants from the House of Assembly were very appreciative of the training and indicated that they would have preferred the training to have lasted longer. While the training was taking place, a serious crisis was raging between the people of Akwa Ibom State and Mobil, the major oil company in the state. After the training, the House of Assembly members became more amenable to dialoguing with the people from Mobil. That led to the establishment of a joint study team which is still working now. So, rather than facing each other with hostility, House members are now able to discuss the deeper issues with Mobil in a way that they are also more willing to negotiate. The House now see the value of sitting down to talk to Mobil rather than sending people to cause violence.

Members of the House of Assembly have been actively involved throughout the state subsequently in mediating in one conflict or the other.

He feels that after the zonal TOT where over 200 were trained in conflict resolution, there has not been proper coordination for their skills to be properly utilized. He hopes that with the formation of CRESNET they will better be able to organize them. At the individual levels, however, these people have been contributing a lot. There are so many boundary conflicts, conflicts between youths and elders, and conflicts between traditional religionists and Christians throughout the state. Wherever these people we trained are located, they have been empowered to participate in resolving them and have made a great impact on the local level. There was a lot of conflict in the four core oil producing LGAs in the state, and those trained at the TOT have been involved in different ways in contributing to resolving problems in these areas.

One of the young men trained in the Calabar TOT went back to his community, in an oil producing area with boundary disputes, and carefully documented what the problems causing the disputes were. He sent the write up to the OTI Regional Coordinator who then came to the area herself to meet with traditional rulers and others who would be key

to resolving the conflict. This meeting evolved into the larger training program for traditional rulers in the state.

There is now a growing network in the state made up traditional rulers, NGO and CBO representatives, local government officials, and possibly in the future youth leaders who have all been trained in conflict resolution techniques. These are now trying to work together to solve problems in their areas. Now, whenever there is a conflict anywhere in the state, there are a core group of people who can immediately be contacted to go in and work to resolve the conflict. The hope is that this group can be formed into some kind of coherent body that itself could solicit for donor funding.

Date: Nov. 13, 2000

Place: Uyo, Akwa Ibom State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewee: Sunday Peter Akpaidem, Special Services Department of State Government, community leader in Nkana Etinan LGA, participant in OTI conflict resolution training program

Program: PHT6392 Workshop on Conflict Management for Traditional Rulers in Akwa Ibom State

Immediately after the workshop, his entire community ran into a major conflict between the youths and the elders. Using the training, he was able to assist with the resolution of the conflict. In the end, there was no victor, no vanquished and the problem was solved amicably.

His job with the government entails that he often has to conduct investigations in places that are volatile. He now feels empowered to do so without fear because he knows that whatever the situation he has techniques of how to bring about peace and resolution so that himself and others will not be in danger.

Another thing that came out of the workshop was that different levels of traditional rulers were able to agree on what their different roles were so that now the level of conflicts between traditional rulers will be much reduced. Formerly, there was so much confusion between them that they often stepped on each others' toes without meaning to. Now they know their areas of command and their distinctions.

Date: Nov. 13, 2000

Place: Uyo, Akwa Ibom State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewee: Ime Idinyang, Nka Iwad Etah (Organization of Conscientious Youth), one of the partners in the OTI coordinated NGO coalition in Akwa Ibom

Program: PHT6392 Workshop on Conflict Management for Traditional Rulers in Akwa Ibom State; PHT1530 Workshop on Conflict Management for LGA Officials in Akwa Ibom State

Nka Iwad Etah is an Eket based youth NGO, a place full of conflict because of the presence of Mobil's main operations in the area. He realized that all the agitation and conflicts in the area related to oil production was giving his people a bad name, so he started the organization to find a way to unify the youth towards positive goals.

They have so far organized a few small programs on their own in the Eket speaking area to encourage youths from resorting to raw violence and to encourage them to instead seek dialogue with the foreign corporations. It was through these efforts that they got to know Obong Odungide who linked them up to OTI. He was one of the ones trained in Calabar along with two others from his organization and was subsequently linked up with other NGOs to conduct OTI programs in Akwa Ibom State.

The four oil catchment local government areas have been in constant conflicts over land disputes for which there was already a government enquiry in 1991 after a total breakdown of law and order. The conflict over who owns the land Mobil operates on has continued since then. Even where one of the local government secretariats is located is a site of tension where some are called settlers and others are called indigenes. Conflicts over land are the most severe conflicts in oil producing areas because so much is at stake.

The youth leaders in the area are continually compromised because the oil companies continue to buy them off, until a new set throws them off and takes the lead until they too are compromised. Thus, there is no credible leadership for the youth and that needs to be developed so that key change agents can be involved in resolving all the youth oriented conflicts.

He suggests a youth oriented training program for the conflict prone area of Eket, but along with key local leaders who have an influence over the youth. He also suggests that people from the international corporations be represented so that they too will know how to approach the conflicts in a less hostile way.

Date: Nov. 14, 2000

Place: Port Harcourt, River State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewee: Dr. Ekeng Anam-Ndu, Centre for Advanced Social Science

Program: Zonal Training in Conflict Resolution, SS Zone

The training took place in four stages, and participants were chosen from NGOs and CBOs around the region who were key players and would be able to use the conflict resolution training to good effect. The usual response for those trained was that the three days of training was too short – too much important information in too short a time.

Unfortunately, there was not enough follow up from OTI to ensure that these people are known by their communities and by the government as conflict mediators and that they should be used as such. CASS on their own liaised with various state governments and gave them the lists of people who seemed most able to be credible mediators so that the mediators would be fully utilized.

A short coming of the training's short duration was that those trained are only capable of handling conflicts that are not multi-dimensional because of the limited scope of their training. They cannot handle anything too complex. The multi-faceted conflicts of the Niger Delta where everything is so deep needs a much more professional and skilled approach. Now with oil there too, people are struggling to find all sorts of old historical proof of ownership and access to the land. Without understanding all these subtleties, properly addressing conflicts is not easy.

“OTI is a short term program, and it is not their responsibility to take care of all our conflicts. That is our responsibility. OTI has done their part already. The Nigerian state caused so many of these problems with their laws, and it is at that level that the issues will have to be fully addressed. This is not the kind of thing that OTI can do with its limited resources and time.”

During the training in Calabar, the trainers were fantastic. They understood the materials and knew what they were meant to do. The trainers were very credible people and they will be able to carry this thing forward even without OTI.

Since the training, so many of the organizations who were represented have called to ask for guidance, or to request training manuals so they can carry conflict resolution out conflict resolution on their own. There are now such initiatives going on all over Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, and Delta States.

Date: Nov. 15, 2000

Place: Port Harcourt, Rivers State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewee: Elder Gomba Osarollor, participant in OTI sponsored conflict resolution to address the Orkrika/Elemé conflict.

Program: Conflict Resolution in Okrika/Elemé

Osarollor is the co-chairman of the Elemé-Okrika Joint Peace Committee, representing the Elemé side.

The conflict is a long standing one over land that has been on even since he was a youth – he is now 57. In primary school I remember running from the village to hide during conflicts with Okrika. In 1957 a Supreme Court judgement said that Elemé are the owners of the land. In spite of the judgement, conflicts have erupted over the land. When conflicts are not on, we do get a long quite well. I schooled in Okrika and my wife is from there for example. So we don't want this kind of skirmishes.

On October 4, 1999 a fight erupted between the youths of the two communities. The conflicts used to last two to three days, but this one lingered on and involved a lot of fights. It ended with the government setting up a commission of enquiry which confirmed what the Supreme Court had said. This now lets the younger generation know who the rightful owners of the land are, and even if the Okrika use land on the Elemé side, it is not their's.

Some of us came together through the initiative of USAID-OTI and we formed a committee that is supposed to be working with various identified groups to help us initiate communication. "We learned that we gain nothing from conflict and that when we fail to work together, we lose. While the Elemé and Okrika were fighting, others were getting the major jobs at the refinery. It is not in our interest to have a conflict situation."

We started the committee and many of us were quite enthusiastic, but it came to the point where we needed some funds to move around each other's communities and to meet with target groups – chiefs, women, youth, and so on. We are still waiting for funding for that from the government or from OTI, but nothing has come of it yet.

We still work within our communities to encourage and maintain peace. But there are still many things we need to do to ensure a basis for permanent peace. We learned during the workshop that many of the things we thought about Okrika are the same things they feared about us. We learned that dialogue and verification is important. We have those who we can talk to if we hear any rumours. We are equipped to prevent conflicts from erupting.

Date: Nov. 23, 2000

Place: Kano, Kano State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewee: Dr. Aliyu Musa, GINI Consult

Program: Zonal TOT on Conflict Resolution, NW Zone

Those who came from the training went back to their areas and began talking about conflict. This surprised a lot of people, because although they are used to conflict, they are not used to talking about it when there is peace. They started asking people how do we manage conflicts, who are the parties to the conflict, what can we do to appeal to both parties, how can we broker a truce between different communities? “They were going around with such missionary zeal that people thought they were a new kind of Christian or Muslim missionary, because it is usually only people who are religiously inclined who go around talking about peace.”

The only problem is that they did not get any identification to certify that they participated in such a program, so people are wondering where they got the information from. In the North people are not used to such sudden and new ideas, and they wonder if these people are crazy or if they are ‘born again’, or some graduate with new ideas. It has aroused a lot of interest, but also a lot of questions.

“Previously, they only talked about conflicts after they had started. But now, with this new approach, there are attempts to detonate the conflicts before they take place.”

So many of the participants are now actively passing the information on to the grassroots, and they keep asking for more information and hand outs to use.

Before the training took place, there had been so many conflicts in Kano and Kaduna especially over different things, usually religion. Since the training, we have been working with youth in Kano to encourage them to not get involved in conflicts and to focus on peace. We have set up a forum for youths to come together and speak their minds and discuss their frustrations openly rather than turn to violence.

If there is another series of conflict resolution workshops, it should be across geo-political zones so that people from different parts of the country can learn first hand about problems people in other zones are facing.

Date: Nov. 23, 2000

Place: Kano, Kano State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewee: Amos Maichibi, Wakilin Nasarawa, participant in Prime Peace Project workshop

Program: KAN0125 Training Workshops on Ethnic and Religious Conflicts

Maichibi is a community leader from Nok, Kaduna State. He is the Barde Nok. That title entails that his job is to maintain peace between his community and others, and within his community. He is also the community leader of the indigenes of southern Kaduna living in Kano, a position given to him by the Emir of Kano.

“There are so many things I gained in that course, let me mention one or two. I understand one or two mistakes I made before. Let’s say there is conflict between two groups. I should not advise them to say forgive me, but I should put them through the process as a mediator. Try to make them understand more fully so that they know what they are forgiving. At the same time, before if there are rumours among my people, I will wait until it comes to me officially. Now I know that when rumours come, I should not wait. I should try and see that I cool it down at that stage before it comes to conflict.”

There was a misunderstanding in the beer parlour, and rather than taking them to the police, I took them to the house and got them to make peace, which makes me very happy.

There was another conflict between a husband and a wife. I sat down as a mediator and got them to talk to each other, because before they had refused to even talk to each other. He refused to eat her food, and she refused to cook. No welcome, no good morning to each other. Now they say, baba, thank you so much.

“It helped me and it helped my people.”

Date: Nov. 23, 2000

Place: Kano, Kano State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewee: Dr. Mustapha Sanda, Field Program Officer, Prime Peace Project

Program: KAN0125 Training Workshops on Ethnic and Religious Conflicts

Sanda has been involved in the NGO world since his student days. He became involved in conflict resolution work through his employment by Barrister Mohammed Yama of Prime Peace Project and has also done conflict resolution programming with SEMA, run by Yama’s friend Sammy Ihejerika.

This program was done in seven parts for a number of different target groups -- community leaders, religious leaders, youth groups, media practitioners, security personnel, CBOs, women’s organizations, ward heads, district heads.

After the training program, a major conflict erupted between Hausa and Yoruba in Lagos in October. Such crises often escalate to Kano where Hausa people retaliate for whatever happened to their people in the south. The youth trained worked hard to prevent any violent eruption from taking place in Kano.

There was a conflict between the old people of Dawakin Tofa LGA over the choice of a chief imam. Usually they chose an old man, but this time a young man was chosen and the old people refused to accept him. A community leader trained by PPP got the two sides to dialogue and eventually the new imam was accepted without anyone resorting to violence.

“What we got the youth to understand is that when others are trying to foment trouble, they use the youth. The youth go out shouting, stoning, destroying so many things, while they themselves remain at home. The only thing they do is they finance the youth. We made the youth to understand that they should not be used as a tool for destruction. Rather, than can participate in a positive way. After the training, when problems arose, rather than destroying things, the youth now calmed down. From the training to date there is no any single problem with the youths.”

Date: Nov. 23, 2000

Place: Kano, Kano State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewee: Mrs. Tola Olorunshola, Program Officer, Prime Peace Project, participant in OTI North West Zonal TOT

Program: KAN0125 Training Workshops on Ethnic and Religious Conflict

Her first exposure to conflict resolution training was during the OTI regional TOT in Kano. Subsequent to that she began working with PPP and so has been doing a lot of conflict resolution work.

There has been an age long conflict within her extended family that no one has been able to solve for a long time. With the training she got from OTI, she was able to use mediation tools to bring together the elders and the youths in the family. Courtesy of OTI her family has now resolved the conflict.

When the religious leaders came in for the training, there was obvious conflict amongst them, even between Muslims and Muslims. By the end of the training they were exchanging addresses and phone numbers, so that shows what a success it was.

We also trained youths, and that was what made sure that the Lagos conflict between the Hausas and Yorubas did not spread to Kano.

We also trained security personnel, and so they now know how to look for early warning signs of conflict so that they know what to look for before a conflict erupts. They now know how to keep conflicts from erupting. We trained them along with journalists who learned that the way they report conflicts can have a significant effect on their outcomes.

The president of the student body of Bayero University, Kano came to the office to thank them for the training he had received because it helped him so much as a student leader. However, since he was graduating, he requested that PPP try and do another training so that his successors can also benefit.

Date: Nov. 23, 2000

Place: Kano, Kano State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewee: Emmanuel Agbo, Training Officer 2, Prime Peace Project

Program: KAN0125 Training Workshops on Ethnic and Religious Conflicts

Has been working with Mohammed Yama's conflict resolution outfit for some years, but says he was only properly trained when he participated in the OTI zonal training in Kano, entailing that he has been working for an organization that claims to have expertise in conflict resolution, yet three of their senior staff were not trained in conflict resolution until a brief program from OTI in March, 2000!!

Some of the participants from the training for religious leaders they did told Agbo after the Hausa-Yoruba conflict in Lagos in October that, "If not for the program where a lot of people were sensitized, they were able to at least stop the conflict from coming here to Kano."

Date: Nov. 23, 2000

Place: Kano, Kano State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewee: Rukayya Ahamed Mohammed, Public Relations Officer for the Society for Women, Youth, and Child Care Development, participant in conflict resolution PPP program

Program: KAN0125 Training Workshops on Ethnic and Religious Conflicts

Her first experience with conflict resolution techniques was the PPP training program which she says was very worthwhile. She has been able to apply them in her day to day activities and even within her organization.

A friend of hers was having marital problems, and Rukayya was able to help the husband and wife resolve it. "We learned that dialogue is better than confrontation." The husband was about to take a second wife, so she got them to talk together after she talked with them individually about the problem. They are now still living together, and the crisis between them is over.

The training also made her organization stronger and internal conflicts are now not so common.

Date: Nov. 23, 2000

Place: Kaduna, Kaduna State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewees: Hajiya Laila Dogonyaro and Benjamin Okewu of the Women Opinion Leaders Forum (WOLF)

Program: LAG6631 Women and youth as tools for religious and ethnic harmony

Hajiya Dogonyaro is a formidable force for women, especially in Northern Nigeria, Okewu runs the youth section of WOLF. WOLF is an organization with a nationwide reach. Two members of CRESNET are part of her organization.

Because of the religious crisis that happened in Kaduna, they felt they needed to do a program for youths and women. Theirs was the first of such programs that actually took place in Kaduna itself as others were doing programs in Kano or elsewhere because of fear of the situation in Kaduna. OTI provided funds for a program with 50 participants, and WOLF provided the money to enable 70 additional participants to attend. It was a highly successful program with youth, women, politicians, traditional leaders, and religious leaders in attendance.

Members of the state House of Assembly were there, as were some national representatives from Kaduna State. Senator Khairat Gwadabe of the FCT also attended as did the deputy governor of Kaduna. During the program, there was smooth interaction between the youths and the politicians and they participated together in role playing and discussions. Local governments are now clamouring for the training to take place at their level, so now WOLF is working with them to provide some funding for the training. The idea is to at least train social workers and youth development officers so that in each Local Government Area in the state there will be a core of mediators that can be mobilized when crises and conflicts are emerging.

There was a man in attendance at the workshop who said that since the religious conflict happened in Kaduna, he had refused to talk to a very close friend from the other religion. At the program, both happened to be in attendance and midway through they embraced each other and agreed to let bygones be bygones.

Since it was a largely female event, the local government chairmen sent their wives, although some chairmen and councillors came too. They returned to their local governments and began getting actively involved in conflict resolution and pushing their husbands towards spreading these ideas through the state. The wives formed their own conflict resolution network and are now pushing the agenda in Kaduna at the local government level.

Senator Khairat requested that something like this training be done in FCT (incidentally, OTI has funded a program through Community Action for Popular Participation to do just that).

Date: Nov. 23, 2000

Place: Kaduna, Kaduna State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewees: Bashir Isyaku and Mohammed Salisu, Even Development Projects

Program: KAN9035 Support to the Peace and Reconciliation Committee of Kaduna State

Mohammed Salisu is from Zango-Kataf in southern Kaduna and lost much of his family and all of his possessions in the conflict that took place there in 1992. This has made him into a person who desperately wants to see peace reign so that others don't have to suffer what he had to go through.

In the aftermath of the Kaduna crisis in early 2000, they saw the destruction first hand and wanted to do something to forestall the reoccurrence of such a tragedy. They helped with getting relief materials directly to the victims rather than through middle men as the government was doing. The government then followed suit. They also worked with the youth leaders they have in their network to ensure that the conflict did not erupt, which at a point seemed quite likely. In fact another small eruption did take place in May.

The government had decided to establish a Peace and Reconciliation Committee that would work to encourage peace and harmony in the state. We decided that we could contribute by building the capacity of the committee and ensuring that it actually functions, rather than the civil service way where the committee will be established and then will never meet. OTI provided us with the resources to conduct a training program to strengthen this committee.

The government kept changing the names and numbers of the people on the committee, so that no one really knew who was on it and it seemed nothing would actually happen. Through the efforts of EDP, the government was forced to give a list of names so that they could go to the EDP workshop. They decided to hold it in Kano since a gathering of such people in Kaduna would have caused endless distractions and people in the city would wonder whether they were there for peace or to relaunch the conflict.

The workshop was instrumental in not only forcing the government to actually form the committee, but it also started it off on the right footing by equipping the Christians and Muslims in attendance with the right perspective from which to start building peace. Those who participated were renowned opinion leaders who can either cause or stop crises, and now they are focused towards the latter. We have since then not had any problems in the state like before. It was obvious at the beginning that the committee would not function properly if left to the government. At the inauguration, a Commissioner was assigned to conduct it, and no speech was prepared, and only three of the members showed up! The reason the state government did not seem so interested in the committee was that it was not out of their initiative. President Obasanjo visited Kaduna soon after the crisis and told the governor to set up a committee to ensure peace. The governor obliged and announced that the committee was formed, even though in reality it was not. "It was the EDP initiative that pushed the government to actually form the committee."

Kaduna is such a sensitive place and for a long time it will remain so. Everyone there can be polarized so quickly and so such training needs to continue for a larger part of the society. Most in the Committee agreed that the crisis in March started because the Kaduna State House of Assembly did not properly handle a very sensitive subject – the implementation of Sharia law. Because the issue was so politicized, it became a serious problem. If had been handled properly, no crisis would have happened. That is why the House of Assembly so badly needs this training also because their decisions and indecisions can have such a negative impact on the state.

After the program, the committee was firmly established and each local government was encouraged to establish their own peace and reconciliation committees. Six local governments are now banding together to carry out similar training for themselves. There were also conflict resolution programs carried out throughout the state in small communities conducted by members of the Peace Committee. Many of these have focused on youth since they are usually the ones who are used to cause the violence. The media has also changed their tune. While it was happening, the media were hyping the violence up and making people extremely upset, now they are writing reports to see that genuine peace has returned.

The state governor expressed his appreciation for what OTI and EDP did for the committee. For the first time in Kaduna State, the government is now trying to tackle the problem of chieftancy, the problem of religious advocacy.

We have published a small book on the proceedings so that everyone can know what happened in Kano and lessons can be learned. “The Committee was set up in a panic because they did not know what to do. It was this project that got them to really do what they were supposed.” The Peace and Reconciliation Committee now meets monthly with state government funding, and is made up of the local government level committees. If there is any small problem, a sub-committee is set up to address it.”

The Kaduna State Media Corporation who had given our program extensive coverage worked with us to organize a two day peace concert for youth on the 40th anniversary of Nigeria. The theme was a message of peace and reconciliation, and it was broadcast live for two days.

When the Macauley Peace Foundation came to Kaduna to propose a program, they were sent to EDP. The state authorities told them, “Everything about peace in Kaduna State has to be handled by EDP.”

Date: Nov. 23, 2000

Place: Kaduna, Kaduna State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewee: Alhaji Balarabe Musa, patron of Even Development Projects, former civilian governor of Kaduna State

Program: KAN9035 Support to the Peace and Reconciliation Committee of Kaduna State

Balarabe Musa is one of the most respected elders of the people of Kaduna State. He has resisted a return to politics, and opens his modest home up to anyone who wants to see him. He is a real man of the ‘talakawa’ – peasants and seems almost too simple to have once been a governor, especially compared to the way those of today behave.

He put his full support behind EDP’s program with the Peace and Reconciliation Committee, and his presence added an additional level of legitimacy to it. He was very impressed and was proud to be associated with the program because of what it has contributed to Nigeria.

He expressed his dismay at how since the Second Republic (1979-1983), conflicts in Nigeria have been on the rise. “The government is behaving irresponsibly in how they respond to conflicts. Before 1979, we did not have this constant violence of various kinds resulting in loss of lives and property. We used to have them but on a very small scale with intervals of ten, fifteen, or even twenty years when nothing would happen. But now it is virtually every three months throughout the country. My view is that it continues simply because government at every level seems to be indifferent and this is very very bad. The report of the judicial inquiry into the Kaduna violence is yet to be released, so

no one yet knows who was behind it. It means that people who are thinking of doing the same thing will feel they can do it, and get away with it...and there is no way we can build the foundation for democracy if this sort of thing is allowed.”

He discussed how such violence will keep out investors and will prevent development. He also mentioned that basically none of these violent uprisings have really been investigated since 1979 so that those behind them are still running free, doing them again and again. This is another form of human rights abuse and nothing is being done about it. “The one that happened in Lagos is not even being looked into, and thousands of lives were lost. And recently the Northern governors met and said that if any revenge acts are carried out to retaliate to what happened in Lagos, they will not suppress it. If the chief security officers of each state talk like this, we must prepare for the worst.”

The US government can contribute best by using diplomatic means to encourage the Nigerian government to seriously look into these conflicts in the interest of investment.

He expressed his willingness and that of other elders like him to contribute in whatever way they can to spreading ideas of conflict resolution and to bring about lasting peace in Nigeria.

Date: Nov. 24, 2000

Place: Kaduna, Kaduna State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewees: Waje Yayok, Permanent Secretary, Special Services and Cabinet Affairs, Kaduna State

Program: KAN9035 Support to the Peace and Reconciliation Committee of Kaduna State

Mr. Yayok is the Permanent Secretary who oversees security in the state, so he was the government liaison person whom EDP worked with to get the Peace and Reconciliation Committee formed and empowered. He is a Christian Kataf man from Zango-Kataf, the site of a serious religious/ethnic conflict in 1992. In the aftermath of the crises when the entire area was in chaos, he was appointed as the stand in Local Government secretary. Thus he knows how to manage conflict, and like Mohammed Salisu from EDP, he has experienced what conflicts can do a community.

(Of all the interviewees, Yayok and his assistant were the only ones that refused to be recorded on tape, the following is taken from notes based on what he had to say)

There was a big problem of misunderstanding which resulted in a conflict that led to burning of property and the loss of life. Peace equilibrium was set aside. Thankfully, we have people like Isyaku and Salisu. They came to say, “We do not want this situation. We

require an atmosphere where each and every citizen will be free to pursue his life without undue interruption.”

They wanted to get significant players and take them outside Kaduna to discuss – to let them look at each other and ask why it happened and what is the way forward. They were welcomed by the state government because it seemed an excellent program. We cannot lecture everyone, so we took people somewhere else as representatives to come up with a lasting solution through dialogue. They brought in competent peace workers as resource persons and began a process of reconciliation in a different environment. They were given time to discuss, and all accepted that they had made a mistake. They realized that, “We need each other, we must remain together. We had to start by asking for forgiveness of our shortcomings, that was the peak of the program.”

“Everyone who attended left as a peacemaker. As a follow up, in order to expand the peacemaking at the local level, people were armed with tools for resolving conflicts. Armed with these tools we have carried the message, and that has contributed to the peace. A contribution of that seminar was to make it even possible for you to be in Kaduna now.”

He made it clear that the work of peace is not yet over and that the state government still needs assistance from international donors and NGOs to achieve a lasting peace. They still encourage other programs, especially ones focused on keeping youths busy and out of trouble.

Date: Nov. 24, 2000

Place: Kaduna, Kaduna State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewee: Ibrahim Sambo, Director of Security, Kaduna State

Program: KAN9035 Support to the Peace and Reconciliation Committee of Kaduna State

“When we attended this program, what impressed me most was the selection of participants, including Local Government Chairmen.”

“During the workshop, the discussion we had contributed a lot. We went blindly there with all our memories, but we got to know each other very well. Once chairman expressed his different view of Sharia after the discussions.”

“It would be good to organize a similar workshop for the lawmakers. They need to be equipped with these skills. They need to know the value of others, to respect them so we can live in harmony.”

“Even among our own staff there is much less distrust, especially between Christians and Muslims. I can now go anywhere without fear.” (Sambo is Muslim while his boss, the Permanent Secretary, is Christian)

Date: Nov. 24, 2000

Place: Kaduna, Kaduna State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewee: Nuhu Sani Ibrahim, executive director for radio, Kaduna State Media Corporation

Program: KAN9035 Support to the Peace and Reconciliation Committee of Kaduna State

The Kaduna State Media Corporation’s (KSMC) radio and television broadcasts have a wide reach, to as many as nine surrounding states. Nuhu Ibrahim was very impressed with EDP’s peace making efforts and thus gave them free access to the radio and television stations to broadcast their messages to the people of the state. When the program took place in Kano, KSMC gave hours of free radio and television coverage in Hausa and English so that the reconciliation and peace building taking place could be observed by people throughout the state and surrounding states. KSMC will continue to support their peace building efforts by offering free coverage to their programs. “From the responses we received from listeners, I can say that the seminar was highly successful and has helped in restoring peace and unity in Kaduna State.” They have also included EDP’s director on their talk show programs three times so that he could further discuss issues of peace and reconciliation on air. “We are ready to work with any NGO that is willing to promote peaceful coexistence in the state.”

As a follow up to EDP’s peace building efforts, KSMC hosted a “Peace At 40 Concert” on their premises which was broadcast live on TV and radio. Many of the crises that happen in Kaduna State are because of the actions of youth being used by others. This was a way to educate the youth and encourage them to seek peaceful coexistence rather than violence. 21 different musicians performed and thousands of youths came to listen to the music and received the messages of peace. It was a great way to spread the message and reorient the youth. They are planning to do another such concert around Christmas time since Sallah is taking place at the same time and it is a good opportunity to bring Christian and Muslim youths together. “We can through this means preach the message of peace. We should not just wait for the next crisis to promote peace, but must do it all the time. We need to keep spreading the message to our people to seek peaceful coexistence and not violence.”

Date: Nov. 24, 2000

Place: Kaduna, Kaduna State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewees: Denys Onoise, Senior Program Officer, Strategic Empowerment and Mediation Agency (SEMA)

Program: LAG4941 and LAG0548 Kaduna Conflict Resolution Intervention 1 & 2

Onoise came to SEMA for his national service after earning a degree in Sociology from the University of Calabar. He worked well with SEMA and thus stayed on to continue his work on peace making. After another year of serious work with SEMA during which he was trained in conflict resolution and facilitative mediation, he applied for a scholarship to do a post-graduate program in Austria and went there to study at the European Centre for Peace Studies. Worked with SEMA on the conflict between the Bassa and Igbira in Nasarawa State earlier in the year through funding from the Swiss Embassy. He also participated in the OTI Zonal TOT in Kano.

Sammy Ihijirika of SEMA was at the Stakeholders' Workshop in Badagry when the religious crisis erupted in Kaduna, and he was charged to go back and start an initiative related to resolving the conflict and building peace. What they quickly realized was that in the charged atmosphere on ground, any initiative would have to start with a media campaign. The campaign involved a weekly talk show that lasted for 13 weeks and brought together different stakeholders in Kaduna to talk about how to resolve the conflict and build a lasting peace. They also put jingles with peace messages on television and radio which were enthusiastically received. The duration of the broadcast of the jingles was extended beyond the original plan and Hausa ones were added as well. They also spread posters with peace messages around the city. In all, it was a comprehensive peace building media blitz.

Besides the media blitz, they also had a series of workshops. The first was for media practitioners in the state so that they could discuss how the media contributed to the escalation of the Kaduna conflict and how the media could be reoriented towards helping resolve conflicts rather than escalating them. The second workshop was for youth leaders in Kaduna, especially those representing particularly volatile areas of the city. When conflicts arise, it is usually youth who cause the destruction, so it is important to work with them. The last workshop is for stakeholders in Kaduna State and is yet to take place. This will include religious groups, cultural groups, women's groups and so on.

Since the workshop for media practitioners, we have seen a big change in the way people report on issues of conflict in Kaduna. People are continually coming to us asking us why the jingles and the talk shows had to end.

The day they were starting the youth program was the day the state governor announced the judicial reforms for the state. He said there could be Sharia courts in Muslim dominated parts of the state while the present system would continue elsewhere. The youth leaders present at the workshop used the opportunity to rub minds and discuss the workability of such an approach in the state. “After the workshop, they said they thanked God that the workshop was on because some of them had been already planning to go on demonstrations because of the new reforms.” Both sides were skeptical of the halfway measures, but through the workshop the youth leaders were able to see that the governor was approaching the issue from a mediatory approach rather than a confrontational one. Several of the youth leaders said that if not for the workshop, they would not have told their people to calm down and not cause trouble after the announcement of the reforms.

Date: Nov. 24, 2000

Place: Kaduna, Kaduna State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewees: Haruna Salami, *The Source*; Agada Moses, *Nigerian Newsday*; Odoh Onuh, *Daily Monitor*

Program: LAG4941 and LAG0548 Kaduna Conflict Resolution Intervention 1 & 2

The three journalists were all participants in SEMA’s conflict resolution training program for media practitioners in Kaduna. Were very clear that the workshop enhanced their skills on how to better report conflict situations without exacerbating the problem by bringing in their own sentiments. They were taught how dangerous it can be to take sides when reporting a conflict situation and how they need to be neutral arbiters. It is especially important to be cautious when the conflict is religiously oriented, because people hold to that so deeply.

“This was the first time Christian and Muslim journalists came together since the conflict and talked about it. We discussed the headlines and articles we wrote and how they contributed. We began to have an appreciation of how vital religion is and how careful one must be.” “If things like that come up again, what you will get reported out of Kaduna will be very different.”

There has been a noticeable change in how journalists in Kaduna are writing on issues of religion and conflict. One example of the change is that recently, a group of Hausa youths sent out a release calling for all the Yorubas to leave Kaduna within 24 hours or they would be dealt with. When the news media in Kaduna received that release, they realized that in the interest of the nation they should not publish it or report on it because it would cause unnecessary panic. Before, such an item would have been front-page news, regardless of how serious the group behind it was.

They said they have been sensitized to mediation and now get involved in small small conflicts around them, realizing that even little conflicts between people of different religions can turn into something really big. It also made them more tolerant of those from other religions in their personal lives.

“We used to try and look for negative aspects of events for our stories, we now sometimes take time to advise people to look for peace rather than conflict.”

“Even among us journalists we don’t care if one is Christian and another is Muslim. We just relate better.”

Date: Nov. 24, 2000

Place: Kaduna, Kaduna State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewee: Dominic S. Akor, President, Ibaji Youth Development Association, Kaduna branch

Program: LAG4941 and LAG0548 Kaduna Conflict Resolution Intervention 1 & 2

Dominic was one of the participants in SEMA’s program for youth leaders in Kaduna.

“Before the program proper, I was really pregnant on what was really going to take place. I was saying, this Sharia thing is not going to happen because I am a Christian and I will not allow things like that to happen. I got there and I was empowered and frankly speaking I came out a new person.”

My association is made up of youth from Ibaji LGA in Kogi State. We meet monthly to discuss relevant issues on how to improve our welfare here in Kaduna. All of us are Christians and so were hostile to the idea of Sharia. But, I have lived in Kaduna all my life and don’t really feel at home in Kogi State. I did not want to leave.

“Before the conflict we found it very difficult to mix up with youth leaders from the Muslim part of Kaduna. During the workshop we were able to meet and we interacted very well. After then, it has been smooth sailing for both sides. I now often interact freely with Muslim youth leaders.”

“Most of what happened during the Sharia conflict was organized by youths, and if youth leaders can really bring our heads together, it cannot happen again.”

“I have been able to resolve conflicts within my immediate community, and presently I am being called a peacemaker. I was not expecting that, but I am glad it happened to me. It is better to be a peacemaker than a conflict maker, and I am doing really well. In terms of respect, in terms of the way people view you, in terms of your interaction with people

there is no comparison between being a peacemaker and a conflict maker. The gains of being a peacemaker is far ahead.”

Date: Nov. 28, 2000

Place: Jos, Plateau State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewee: Dr. Dennis Ityavyar, Executive Director, International Centre for Gender and Social Research

Program: LAG North Central Zone TOT in Conflict Resolution; ABJ9155 Democratic Development and Women’s Rights; ABJ6357 Fostering a Harmonious Relationship Between Youths and Law Enforcement Agents

Dr. Dennis Ityavyar has been a workshop facilitator for twenty years. His organization did the logistics for the North Central zone TOT on conflict resolution, and it was there that he added conflict resolution training to his arsenal.

The program in Minna, the first of a four part series for women on democracy and conflict resolution, he says was excellent, a program that more or less changed the lives of the participants. They are now change agents and peace creators in their communities. “What touched the women the most was the techniques of mediation. They saw it as a very important thing. They said there are so many conflicts that if they had had the training before they would have been able to mediate in.”

“Women are often neglected, but they are so important to this process. If they are trained they could be very good change agents, because they speak with integrity and they are the victims of the conflicts when they develop into crisis stage. If they are trained and ready and eager to put the skills to use, we will have a very peaceful country.”

On the youth workshop: youth were very enthused to find out about so many other means of solving disputes other than fighting. The motor cycle and road transport workers unions are using the mediation skills to settle problems between them and with customers so as not to have to take disputes to court.

Claims the level of peace in the North Central zone is partly due to the widespread effects of the conflict resolution TOT. “People are looking for peace, and there are no major conflicts. People all over the region are applying to OTI to carry the work further.”

“Conflicts here do not last very long any more. Recently there was a labour dispute between the Plateau governor and the workers. One of the people trained in phase 1 of the TOT mediated in the conflict and it was resolved within two days.”

“Conflict resolution training is wonderful because it is practical, not theoretical. As soon as people get the training, they want to go out and solve one conflict or the other. People get so excited about the training, they are almost crying, and they pay such close attention.”

In Makurdi, people we trained are working hard to resolve the conflict between the University of Agriculture administration and the staff. He himself is involved in mediating another conflict at the University of Jos as well.

“People are gaining skills and they are asking why they should bring such matters to the courts, let us bring them out and resolve them by ourselves. This will entail a more friendly atmosphere.”

Date: Nov. 29, 2000

Place: Jos, Plateau State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewee: Iliya Yahuza, International Centre for Gender and Social Research

Program: ABJ6357 Fostering a Harmonious Relationship Between Youths and Law Enforcement Agents

Yahuza worked with Danladi Bot of the National War College to coordinate the program on behalf of Inter-Gender.

The program brought together youth leaders from around Jos as well as representatives of different security organizations – the police, military, etc... to discuss issues of conflict in the city and how they can work together to avoid them. At present the two groups face off and cause a lot of the conflicts.

“At the beginning there was kind of a misconception between the police and the students and the students and the police and so on. But after the program they realized that does not need to be, that they need to work hand in hand in order to make Nigeria great. They realized that many of the problems between them are due to misunderstandings and poor communication.”

After the exercise, a network was formed with 12 people and they have been meeting to discuss ways to keep the good relationship going for a more peaceful Jos.

The participants said that the training changed their perceptions about society and how they think.

Date: Nov. 29, 2000

Place: Jos, Plateau State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewee: Aminu Garba, Police Public Relations Officer, Plateau State Command

Program: ABJ6357 Fostering a Harmonious Relationship Between Youths and Law Enforcement Agents

Garba was a participant in the Inter Gender program for youth and law enforcement agents.

“The program was very educative. We have now learned a lot of strategies, particularly on how to solve some of these conflicts.”

There was recently a clash between students of the University of Jos and officials of NEPA since the student hostels had not had electricity for so long. The police got involved in the conflict and working together with some of the youth leaders who had been trained with them in conflict resolution techniques, they were able to peacefully mediate the conflict. Such conflicts usually erupt in violence where one or more students lose their lives.

In Nigeria, almost every citizen is a bit aggressive, and therefore the police often respond aggressively as well. This seminar taught us how to study people and how to mediate appropriately in the midst of hostility.

The police were represented at the program from officers, inspectorate ranks, and the rank and file level, so those at the different levels have been able to pass on the information to their colleagues. He personally has been teaching other officers on issues of conflict resolution.

“This type of training would be very useful for the Nigeria Police Force generally, especially for police men of the rank and file since they are the ones dealing directly with the populace.”

Date: Nov. 29, 2000

Place: Jos, Plateau State

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewee: Mrs. Betty E. Otimeyan, Assistant Superintendent of Police, Command Education Officer, Plateau State Command

Program: ABJ6357 Fostering a Harmonious Relationship Between Youths and Law Enforcement Agents

Otimeyan is a police officer who attended the program conducted by Inter Gender for youth and law enforcement agents.

For the first time, police officers came out in full uniform and had direct interaction with youth leaders in the community. Everyone was able to share their honest views and at the end of the day we all had better understanding. At the beginning of the day we had some fears which we had of each other and we discovered that most of them are just complications. We had built up bad ideas of others, the police had their own views about the youth, the youth had their views about the police. At the end of the day we developed a harmonious relationship.”

There was a huge conflict over the launching of the Prado Jeeps purchased by the Association of Local Government of Nigeria (ALGON) for security in local government areas, and she said that the conflict mediation techniques she learned were very useful in mediating that problem. The launching was now scheduled to take place today.

She has been able to pass what she learned in the training to other officers, and their response is how they wish such a program could be organized for all of them.

Date: Dec. 12, 2000

Place: Abuja, Federal Capital Territory

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewee: Kunle Fagbemi, Socio-Political Research and Development (SPRD)

Program: ABJ9855 Workshop on Intra-Party Conflict Resolution for FCT Party Caucuses; ABJ3266 Inter-Faith Conflict Resolution in Kwara State (Kwara Peace Campaign and Initiatives)

Kunle Fagbemi has been a tireless asset to OTI working with the Network On Police Reform in Nigeria (NOPRIN), the Conflict Resolution Stakeholders Network (CRESNET), through his own NGO – SPRD, as well as coordinating the Kwara State NGO Coalition put together to conduct conflict resolution and peace making programming for Kwara State.

Fagbemi studies political science and international relations which exposed him to concepts of conflict resolution. Earlier this year, he was a participant in the North Central Zonal TOT on Conflict Resolution held in Jos and since then he has gained much experience on the subject and is now a member of CRESNET.

The program his NGO conducted for the three political parties in the Federal Capital Territory brought together the executives of the FCT party caucuses as well as active members of the parties. Each party – the People’s Democratic Party (PDP), the All

People's Party (APP), and the Alliance for Democracy (AD) – has plenty of internal conflict which are making it difficult for them to properly function. SPRD organized a separate workshop for each of them out of which committees were formed to work on broader internal conflict issues.

Much of the present political conflict in Nigeria emerges out of intra-party feuds rather than feuds between different parties. This causes a systemic breakdown and near collapse of the political system.

When the party members first came to the workshops, they had a pompous attitude and made it clear that they were doubtful that they would learn anything new. “By the time we finished, each and every participant came to realize that, if only we known this much some years before now there would not have been all this systemic break down and military interventions in Nigeria.”

“Some of the elders owned up and said, we are sorry. While we were trying to resolve conflicts we were actually aggravating these conflicts and in most cases it leads to people moving from that party to the other.”

All three parties formed conflict resolution committees after the training. They've been really active and we are networking them with CRESNET.

“For the Alliance for Democracy, a party that has been in conflict since the outset, even at the national level, the FCT caucus members are now working in collaboration with some other people to resolve the national level feuds and conflicts within the party.”

The Kwara State campaign is designed to look at Kwara as a key state that links the north and the south, Hausas and Yorubas, Islam and Christianity. Volatility in Kwara means instability for Nigeria. The campaign will begin with a media blitz encouraging people to seek harmony and revel in Kwara's status as an important neutral zone where all can be at home. This will be followed by different levels of programs geared towards spreading conflict resolution ideas throughout the populace. Key people will be selected from these programs to form a network for peace in the state to keep the initiatives going long after OTI is gone.

So much commerce going both directions have to pass through Kwara, so it is an important crossroads. There have been a number of feuds there which if they are not nipped in the bud can lead to greater conflicts that could have negative effects for all of Nigeria.

Radio and television jingles have been developed in all the major languages of Kwara State and these are to be launched before Christmas and Salah to sensitize people to the need for harmony in the state.

During the advocacy visits to the governor, chief judge, and Speaker of the House of Assembly. The one with the Speaker of the House, Honourable Benjamin Yisa was very exciting. He said that he was more than willing to receive from the NGO coalition a draft bill designed to integrate concepts of conflict resolution and mediation into the state legal system as well as to develop a means by which training in conflict resolution could be done across the state.

Also, the jingles were so appreciated by those they met with on the advocacy visits that the state government organized an official launching of the jingles and the broader program of the Kwara Peace Campaign and Initiatives, the name of the NGO coalition developed by OTI, to take place on 19 December, 2000. It was to take place earlier, but the Acting Governor (the Deputy Governor) wanted to be at the event so it was postponed to make that possible. In short, the state is so excited about the program and it is getting support at the highest levels.

Date: Dec. 19, 2000

Place: Abuja, Federal Capital Territory (FCT)

Interviewer: Wiebe Boer, USAID/OTI

Interviewee: Awal Ibrahim (Rafsanjani), Community Action for Popular Participation (CAPP)

Program: ABJ7311 Conflict Resolution for Youth Activists in the FCT

Since the inception of democracy in Nigeria in 1999, groups all over Nigeria have begun to rise up and call for justice. Following the pattern of the youth in the Niger Delta who are calling for equity based on the huge contributions of their land to national development, the indigenous youth of the Federal Capital Territory have begun to agitate on their own. The FCT was created and built largely under military rule in a way that took no regard for the needs of the indigenous peoples. Now the indigenous youths of the FCT are beginning to see the injustices that have caused them to lose their land with nothing in return. In Dururmi recently, they went so far as to nearly beat up the Minister of the FCT over land issues.

In light of this, in conjunction with the OTI Abuja office, CAPP developed a program to target these frustrated youth of the FCT and encourage them to begin to push their cause through non-violent means. So far, the first three stages of the program have been completed – the first one was for frustrated indigenous youth who feel that in spite of being indigenes of the FCT, they have no rights and no homes. The second was for settler youth who have come to Abuja from around the federation because of the opportunities a new capital offers. However, since the government only made plans for where the rich would live, these youths often face endless frustration as their dwelling places are continually being destroyed, making accommodation very difficult to find. The third part of the program was for traders. They too face the same problems as the

settler youth as their shops and work places are continually destroyed by government in their attempt to keep Abuja ‘sanitized’ and appealing. It is interesting to note that even though the government keeps knocking down all these ‘illegal’ structures, while they are standing they are more than willing to make the occupants pay taxes on them, legitimizing them first, and the destroying them later.

Over all, the major problem is that there is growing frustration among youths of the FCT who see so much wealth, yet enjoy so little of it. Similar to what happened in the Niger Delta, the Federal Government does not realize how serious the threat could become, and thus they are largely trying to ignore FCT youths as if they do not matter. CAPP and OTI are trying to prevent this from happening, and that is where the final part of the program comes in. CAPP has selected youth representatives from each of the three earlier programs who will have a legislative dialogue with the Minister of the FCT, legislators from the FCT, legislators on the House and Senate Committees on the FCT, and other relevant officials. This will be an opportunity for the youth to begin pushing their cause forward through advocacy and lobbying and in a non-violent manner. In order to ensure that the government officials will indeed show up for what could be a difficult meeting for them, CAPP is working in conjunction with a government body – the National Human Rights Commission – so that the government officials feel that there is a greater legitimacy to the event.

“After the training, we interviewed them and they told us that before they came to the training, they had no option but to resort to violence because they thought that that was the only way government could listen to them. After the training they have begun to realize that it is possible to negotiate some of these things without necessarily leading to confrontation with anybody.”

Appendix 4

Completed, Ongoing, and Approved Conflict Resolution Related Programs, OTI Nigeria

1. **3 day Workshop on Management of Conflicts through the Interplay of Social Justice, Law and Cultural Value Systems, *Anti Corruption and Fraud Organisation of Nigeria (ACFON)*, Kano State**
2. **3 day Workshop on Developing Mechanisms for the Management of Conflict and Conflict Resolution, *Anti Corruption and Fraud Organisation of Nigeria (ACFON)*, Kano State**
3. **Youth as a factor in Conflict Situations in Kano Metropolis, *Women's Health and Development Network (WHADNET)*, Kano State**
4. **The Peoples Parliament, *Kristoff Dixons Kano*, Kano State**
5. **'Ka Shirya' – Conflict Resolution Film, *Moving Image*, Kano State**
6. **Training for Church Ministers on Conflict Resolution and Democracy, *Christian Association of Nigeria*, Kano State**
7. **Prime Peace Project, *Training Workshops on Ethnic and Religious Conflicts*, Kano State**
8. **National Training Program on Conflict Resolution in the North West Zone, *GINI Consult*, Kano, Kaduna, Zamfara, Kebbi, Katsina, Jigawa, and Sokoto States**
9. **Conflict Management Training Workshop for Members of Kaduna State House of Assembly, Executives and Registered Political Party Officials, *Even Development Projects (EDP)*, Kaduna State**
10. **Support to the Peace and Reconciliation Committee of Kaduna State, *Even Development Projects (EDP)*, Kaduna State**
11. **Kaduna Conflict Resolution Intervention 1 & 2, *Strategic Empowerment and Mediation Agency*, Kaduna State**
12. **Women and Youth as Tools for Religious and Ethnic Harmony, *Women Opinion Leaders Forum*, Kaduna State**
13. **Role of Media/Journalists in the Democratization Process in Nigeria, *Media Services Center Kaduna*, Kaduna State**

14. **Conflict, Resolution between Pastoralists and Farmers in Katsina State**, *Carefore*, Katsina State
15. **Conflict Resolution Techniques on Diversity, Interagency Relations and Functional Co-existence in Katsina**, *Transparency International of Nigeria (TIN)*, Katsina State
16. **Sensitization on Conflict Prevention/Management for Women of various Ethnic Groups**, *National Council of Women's Societies*, Katsina State
17. **Youth Program on Religious and Ethnic Tolerance**, *Center for Sustainable Development and Youth Organization*, Katsina State
18. **Youth Exchange**, *National Association of Social Workers (NASOW)*, Katsina State
19. **General Public Enlightenment Campaign on the importance and Benefits of Tolerance and Peaceful Co-existence among the Citizenry**, *Haske Media Services Sokoto*, Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara States
20. **NGO Capacity Building Training (includes a conflict resolution element**, *CRUDAN and DEC*, All 13 States
21. **National Training Program on Conflict Resolution in the North East Zone**, *Borno Coalition for Democracy and Economic Progress (BOCODEP)*, Borno, Yobe, Adamawa, Taraba, Bauchi, and Gombe States
22. **Ethnic/Religious Tolerance**, *Borno Coalition for Democracy and Economic Progress (BOCODEP)*, Adamawa, Yobe and Borno States
23. **The Role of the Media in Conflict through Responsive Reporting**, *Public Enlightenment Project (PEP)*, Adamawa State
24. **Capacity Building on Conflict Resolution for council members**, *Adamawa Youth Council*, Adamawa State
25. **Towards a Conducive Political Atmosphere & Peaceful Coexistence**, *Women Opinion Leaders Forum (WOLF)*, Borno State
26. **Religious/Ethnic Tolerance Billboard Campaign**, *Media Consultants*, Borno, Taraba States
27. **'Gari Ya Waye' (A New Dawn)**, *Forward in Action for Education, Poverty and Malnutrition (FACEPAM)*, Bauchi State
28. **Conflict Resolution in Kaltungo Emirate**, *Kal'podale Women's Association*, Gombe State

29. **National Training Program on Conflict Resolution in the South East Zone**, *Catholic Institute for Development, Justice, and Peace (CIDJAP)*, Enugu, Ebonyi, Anambra, Imo, and Abia States
30. **Transforming Violent Youths to Political Activists**, *Friends of the Environment and Minorities (FEM)*, Enugu, Anambra and Ebonyi States
31. **Managing Youth Conflict from a Dualistic Socio-economic perspective**, *Catholic Institute for Development Justice, and Peace (CIDJAP) on behalf of Centre for Eastern Services (CES)*, Enugu State
32. **Conflict Mitigation and Good Governance Workshop for Traditional Rulers in Enugu State**, *Partners for Peace Advocacy and Good Governance (PAPAGG)*, Enugu State
33. **Democracy and Good Governance/Conflict Resolution in Abia State**, *Centre for Indigenous knowledge, Environment, Research and Development (CIKERD) & Abia Charity Circle (ACC)*, Abia State
34. **Conflict Mitigation and Good Governance Training in Ohaji/Egbeme, Oguta LGA**, *Movement to Save Ohaji/Egbene/Oguta Youths*, Imo State
35. **National Training Program on Conflict Resolution in the South South Zone**, *Centre for Advanced Social Science (CASS)*, Cross River, Akwa Ibom, Rivers, Bayelsa, Delta, and Edo States
36. **Appreciative Inquiry for Members of the Akwa Ibom House of Assembly**, *Obong-Manuel Ventures (OMV)*, Akwa Ibom State
37. **Workshop on Conflict Management for Traditional Rules in Akwa Ibom State**, *Come Partners (CP)*, Akwa Ibom State
38. **Workshop on Conflict Management for Local Government Officials in Akwa Ibom State**, *Come Partners (CP)*, Akwa Ibom State
39. **Building Capacity for Youths and Conflict Resolution/Management Training in Calabar South**, *Reach Services*, Cross River State
40. **Workshop on Conflict Management for Traditional Rulers in Cross River State**, *Coalition for Peace and Stable Democracy (COPESTAD)*, Cross River State
41. **Workshop on Conflict Management for Local Government Officials in Cross River State**, *Coalition for Peace and Stable Democracy (COPESTAD)*, Cross River State

42. **Skill Training as a conflict management tool**, *University of Calabar Development Network (NCWDN)*, Cross River State
43. **Warri Youth Leadership Training**, *Academic Associates Peace Work (AAPW)*, Delta State
44. **Conflict Resolution**, *Academic Associates Peace Work (AAPW)*, Delta State
45. **Conflict Resolution**, *Academic Associates Peace Work (AAPW)*, Delta, Rivers and Bayelsa States
46. **Conflict Resolution (Okrika-Elleme)**, *Academic Associates Peace Work (AAPW)*, Rivers State
47. **Conflict Mitigation and Good Governance Training in Ogba/Egbene/Ndoni LGA**, *Ogba Youth Link*, Rivers State
48. **Conflict Prevention through Economic Empowerment- Skill Training in Garri Production in Amassoma**, *Centre for Participatory Development (CENPADEV)*, Bayelsa State
49. **Conflict Mitigation and Good Governance Training in Odi LGA**, *Odi Youth Network*, Bayelsa State
50. **National Training Program on Conflict Resolution in the North Central Zone**, *International Centre for Gender and Social Research (INTER-GENDER)*, Plateau, Nasarawa, Benue, Kogi, Kwara, and Niger States, Federal Capital Territory
51. **Democratic Development and Women's Rights**, *International Centre for Gender and Social Research (INTER-GENDER)*, Plateau, Nasarawa, Benue and Niger States
52. **Peace in Suleja**, *Mother's Club Suleja*, Niger State
53. **Stewardship Forum for State Legislators and Executive Governor**, *The Nigerian Centre for Women, Youth & Community Action (NACWYCA)*, Nasarawa State
54. **Inter-Ethnic Conflict Resolution in Plateau State**, *Plateau State NGO Coalition*, Plateau State
55. **Fostering a Harmonious Relationship between Youth and Law Enforcement**, *International Centre for Gender and Social Research*, Plateau State
56. **Conflict Resolution Training Workshop**, *Tiv Youth Organization (TYO)*, Benue State

57. **Training of Pastors in Conflict Resolution in Benue State**, *Centre for Family Development (CFD)*
58. **Conflict Resolution Skills for Community Representatives in Benue State**, *Ecumenical Commission for Justice and Peace*, Benue State
59. **Inter-Faith Conflict Resolution in Kwara State**, *Kwara State NGO Coalition*, Kwara State
60. **Exploring the Options for Expanding Women's Role in Peace Building**, *International Women Communications Centre*, Kwara State
61. **Mind Re-engineering Program for Youth Leaders in Kwara and Kogi States**, *Peace Network Movement*, Kwara and Kogi States
62. **Intercommunal Conflict Management in Idah LGA**, *Idah Local Government Area Development Association*, Kogi State
63. **Conflict Resolution for Youth Activists in the FCT**, *Community Action for Popular Participation (CAPP)*, Federal Capital Territory
64. **Workshop for BON Programme Managers**, *Broadcasting Organisation of Nigeria (BON)*, Federal Capital Territory
65. **Workshop on Intra-Party Conflict for FCT Party Caucuses**, *Socio-Political Research & Development (SPR&D)*, Federal Capital Territory
66. **Parley of South West Traditional Rulers on Conflict Mitigation**, *Organization for Lasting Peace in Nigeria*, Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Osun, Ondo and Ekiti States
67. **Students as Conflict Mitigators and Change Agents**, *Network of Ex-Students Leaders (South West Zone)*, Lagos, Ogun, Osun, Oyo, Ondo and Ekiti States
68. **National Training Program on Conflict Resolution in the South West Zone**, *Women, Law and Development Center*, Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Osun, Ondo and Ekiti States
69. **Conflict Resolution for Hausa and Yoruba Representatives**, *Women Center for Leadership Development, Research and Training*, Oyo and Ogun States
70. **Market based Conflict Management Training**, *Center for Community Education in Democracy and Development*, Oyo State
71. **Conflict Prevention Training Program for Hausa and Yoruba Communities in Oke Ogun**, *Conflict Management Project*, Oyo State

72. **Conflict Management and Legislative Skills for Oyo State Legislators**, *Visions of Peace and Civic Education*, Oyo State
73. **TOT Workshop on Conflict Management for Student Leaders/Administrators**, *The Ibadan University Social and Behavioural Research Group*, Oyo State
74. **Community awareness program on Conflict Resolution**, *Ife Development Board*, Osun State
75. **Community awareness program on Conflict Resolution**, *Modakeke Progressive Union*, Osun State
76. **Peace Building Training Program for Ife and Modakeke Communities**, *Conflict Resolution Stakeholders Network (South West Zone)*, Osun State
77. **Conflict Mediation Program for Local Government Representatives and Hausa / Yoruba Opinion Leaders**, *Foundation for Democratic Development*, Ogun State
78. **Enter-Educate Program on Conflict Resolution**, *Center for Peace, Education and Development*, Ogun State
79. **Conflict Management and Legislative Skills for Ogun State Legislators**, *Visions of Peace and Civic Education*, Ogun State
80. **TOT on Conflict Resolution and Peace Building for Community Women Representatives in Osun and Ondo States**, *Constitutional Rights Project*, Ondo and Osun States
81. **Empowering Youth Representatives in Lagos and Ogun States in Conflict Mitigation**, *Center for Democratic Values and Practices*, Ogun and Lagos States
82. **National Survey of State Executive-Legislative Relations**, *McSeeks Associates*, Lagos State
83. **Facilitative Mediation Skills for LG Chairmen and Community Leaders**, *Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives*, Lagos State
84. **Conflict Resolution/Management Training for Lagos State Legislators**, *Initiatives for Peace, Development, and Good Governance*, Lagos State
85. **Developing Youth Capacity for Conflict Resolution/ Management**, *Agenda for Community Development (AFCODE)*, Lagos State
86. **Conflict Resolution/Management Training for Students Union Leaders**, *Agenda for Community Development (AFCODE)*, Lagos State

87. **Civic Education and Conflict Management Training for Community Representatives in Lagos Island Local Government**, *Lagos Island Community Partners for Health*, Lagos State
88. **Conflict Mediation Workshop for Officials from LGAs, CBOs and Media Organizations**, *Negotiation and Conflict Management Group*, Lagos State
89. **Workshop on Religious/Communal Conflict Resolution for Editors/Publishers**, *Negotiation and Conflict Management Group*, Lagos State, Federal Capital Territory
90. **Conflict Resolution Training for Journalists**, *Negotiation and Conflict Management Group*, Lagos State
91. **Empowering Youth Representatives with Conflict Resolution Skills in Lagos and Ogun States**, *Centre for Democratic Values and Practices*, Lagos and Ogun States
92. **Conflict Resolution Stakeholders Workshop**, *Women, Law, and Development Centre*, National
93. **National TOT on Conflict Resolution**, *N. O. Rapu & Co.*, National
94. **Conflict Resolution Stakeholders Network (CRESNET)**, *Various meetings*, National