

PARTICIPANT WORKBOOK

1.

Introduction to Religious Engagement

THE COMMON GROUND APPROACH TO RELIGIOUS ENGAGEMENT

IN THIS MODULE

Religious engagement plays a role in the broader peacebuilding field.

There are benefits to engaging a wide range of people-of-faith at all levels of society in peacebuilding efforts.

In this module we will discuss and explore the idea of who is a 'religious actor,' the potential risks of religious engagement and emphasize the importance of 'Do-No-Harm' principles.

CASE STUDY
NIGERIA



Universal Code of Conduct on Holy Sites

In 2016 Search for Common Ground Nigeria launched, 'Building Consensus on the Protection of Holy Sites' in northern Nigeria. The project culminated its first stage with a two-day national conference where 64 Christian and Muslim religious leaders developed a shared statement that endorses the protection of holy sites. Religious leaders committed to disseminating the statement in their communities and institutions through the media, town hall meetings, and educational programs in schools.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Attacks on places of worship often change the nature of a conflict by adding a religious dimension to it which exacerbates tensions.
- Attacks on places of worship factionalize communities and are used as weapons to inflict physical and psychological pain.
- Religious actors generally want to be part of a solution to reducing conflicts.
- Practically, religious actors who serve as guardians of holy sites are able to work at the grass-roots level with their communities to promote the protection of holy sites.

REFERENCES

[Search, 'Building Consensus on Protection of Holy Sites in Norther Nigeria', 2017](#)

[Search, 'Project Brief: Building Consensus on the Protection of Holy Sites in Northern Nigeria', 2017](#)

ACTIVITY

Risks of Religious Engagement: Think-Pair-Share

My thoughts

My partner's thoughts

Thoughts to share with the group

NOTES

A series of 25 horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.

NOTES

A series of horizontal dotted lines provided for writing notes, spanning the width of the page.

Introduction to Religious Engagement

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Religion plays a significant role in many societies and in a majority of people's lives.
2. Religious engagement goes beyond interreligious dialogue. It is a variety of concrete activities that reduce conflict and build peace.
3. Religious actors include a diversity of people: men, women, youth, community leaders, activists, educators, social workers etc.
4. Note the risks when engaging religious actors. Carefully consider how to engage; particularly prior to ground-breaking initiatives in new locations.

SLIDES



- 8 Religious Engagement
- 9 Religious Actors
- 12 Difference between religious engagement and interreligious dialogue
- 14 Risks of Religious Engagement
- 15 Do No Harm

FURTHER READING

[Universal Code of Conduct on Holy Sites](#)

[Search for Common Ground, Building Consensus on Protection of Holy Sites in Northern Nigeria, 2017](#)

[Search for Common Ground, Project Brief: Building Consensus on the Protection of Holy Sites in Northern Nigeria, 2017](#)

[CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, Do No Harm Workshop Trainer's Manual, 2016](#)

These are the key slides that we used in this module. They can be found in the workshop's PowerPoint presentation for further reference.

PARTICIPANT WORKBOOK

2.

Religion: A force for peace - a driver of conflict?

THE COMMON GROUND APPROACH TO
RELIGIOUS ENGAGEMENT

IN THIS MODULE

There are complex dynamics between identity, religion and violent conflict. Yet, there is a potential for religious engagement to transform conflict.

In this module we will explore identity and the role religious actors can play as 'connectors' and as a force for peace.

CASE STUDY

Myanmar



Search Myanmar has been active since 2014 and works to promote inclusive governance, the acceptance of diversity, and the reduction of inter-communal violence. It engages all stakeholders, including government, armed groups, civilians, and religious actors, as part of its long-term commitment to building social cohesion and sustaining change through its initiatives.

When considering the intersection of religion and peacebuilding, religious actors are generally sought out as allies in efforts to transform conflict. However, in Myanmar the confluence of religion, ethnicity, and nationalism has created a complex landscape where religious actors may be working in ways counter to this and doing more harm than good. Religious actors in Myanmar have intersected with socio-political movements in the country at many points throughout its struggle for independence and transition to democracy. Their actions have carried significant weight for persons of faith across the country and the world. In 2007, thousands of monks participated in the Saffron Revolution, protesting against Myanmar's military government. More recently, the nationalist, lay Association for the Protection of Race and Religion (commonly referred to by its Myanmar-language acronym, MaBaTha), has promoted the institutionalization of Buddhism in education and welfare, including through updated national security laws (that denies voting rights to Rohingya Muslims) and the Race and Religion Laws passed in 2015. In both of these examples, the actions of religious actors have inspired vast support by some, but greatly alienated others.

An exclusive definition of national identity, based on race and religion and promoted by powerful players in the country, has increased marginalization of Muslims and other religious minorities such as Christians and Hindus, as well as members of minority ethnic groups. For decades Myanmar has been engaged in a civil war with various ethnic armed organizations (EAOs) throughout the country, in part because of this exclusive national identity based on singular race and religion. These divisions are deep-rooted, irritable, and easily ignited.

Animosity towards Muslims has escalated in the last five years, during which nationalist and anti-Islamic narratives have been linked to violence against Muslim civilians in townships around the country. The growing socio-political influence of the MaBaTha, has increased



themes of a “Muslim takeover of Myanmar” and a “Muslim threat to Burmese racial purity.” In part, the pervasiveness of anti-Muslim sentiments in the general population allowed for the general acceptance of the Myanmar military’s operations in 2017 which led to the mass exodus of Rohingya Muslims into neighboring Bangladesh.

This complex intersection of ethnicity, religion, and nationality creates a dry tinderbox ready to ignite. Given this scenario, religious actors may not be accepted as neutral to the conflict dynamics or are unready to be allies for peace. However not engaging them demonstrates a clear failure to recognize their roles in contributing to both conflict and peace. While many religious actors may not be natural allies in building social cohesion and multi-faith acceptance, it is essential to find and engage those who can champion these efforts and build constituencies within their own networks.

That is why Search Myanmar insists on a highly contextual and creative approach to building relationships with religious actors and other sectors. One example is its Let’s Think, Let’s Change: Promoting Diversity through Popular Culture project which challenges popular stereotypes related to gender, youth, ethnicity, and religion. It has developed radio and television shows that are broadcast by the national MRTV (Myanmar Radio and Television), active social media pages, and people to people programs that include collective listening circles and community-level discussions that explore these sensitive issues. Engaging religious actors from different religions in these programs exposes large audiences to the diverse nature of Myanmar society and the possibility of building a more inclusive one.

THE COMMON GROUND APPROACH TO RELIGIOUS ENGAGEMENT

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Pay attention to the way intertwined deeply-held identities impact and complicate conflict
- Consider engaging religious actors creatively with other sectors to minimize a direct focus on religious issues
- Religious engagement includes engaging religious actors on topics not directly related to religion

REFERENCES

Angela Ullman & Seng Mai Aunt, 'Addressing Religion in Conflict: Insights and Case Studies from Myanmar,' CSS Mediation Resources, 2018

[Search for Common Ground, 'Rapid Conflict Assessment: Let's Think, Let's Change. Promoting Diversity through Popular Culture', 2017.](#)

[S. Trotta & O. Wilkinson. 'Partnering with Local Faith Actors to Support Peaceful and Inclusive Societies.' Washington DC; Bonn: Joint Learning](#)



NOTES

Dotted lines for writing notes.

Religion: A force for peace - a driver of conflict?

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. A large majority of the world is religiously affiliated
2. Religion/religious identity can be manipulated to exacerbate conflicts
3. We may do more harm than good when we overestimate the role of religion in conflicts
4. Religion and religious actors can act as 'connectors' and be a force for peace

SLIDES



- 21 Religion is not the main cause of war. Majority of Armed Conflicts have a religious dimension (optional)
- 25 When do we use Religious Engagement

These are the key slides that we used in this module. They can be found in the workshop's PowerPoint presentation for further reference.

FURTHER READING

Angela Ullman & Seng Mai Aunt, [Addressing Religion in Conflict: Insights and CaseStudies from Myanmar](#), CSS Mediation Resources, 2018

[Institute for Economics & Peace, Five Key Questions answered on the link between Peaceand Religion](#), October 2014.

[Jonas Baumann, Daniel Finnbogason, and Isak Svensson, Rethinking Mediation: Resolving Religious Conflicts](#), CSS Policy Perspectives Vol. 6/1, February 2018.

[Pew Research Center, The Global Religious Landscape](#), December 2012

[Search for Common Ground, Rapid Conflict Assessment: Let's Think, Let's Change.Promoting Diversity through Popular Culture](#), 2017

[S. Trotta & O. Wilkinson. Partnering with Local Faith Actors to Support Peaceful and Inclusive Societies](#). Washington DC; Bonn: Joint Learning Initiative on Faith and Local Communities: International Partnership on Religion and Sustainable Development(PaRD), 2019. See Myanmar: A secular international actor partnering with local faith actors as part of civil society engagement for social cohesion (pp. 30-32)

3

Engaging Religious Actors in Peacebuilding

THE COMMON GROUND APPROACH TO RELIGIOUS ENGAGEMENT

IN THIS MODULE

Various types of religious actors bring different perspectives to the peacebuilding table.

There are benefits to engaging religious actors at all levels of society in order to target diverse populations and achieve wide-ranging objectives.

This module introduces tools that can be used to effectively recruit and engage religious actors of diverse ages and backgrounds.

ACTIVITY

Benefits and Challenges

BENEFITS

CHALLENGES

CASE STUDY
KYRGYZSTAN

Promoting Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB)



As a post-Soviet country, Kyrgyzstan has a complex relationship with religion and state. Rooted in Soviet, communist ideals, many in Kyrgyzstan maintain that religion must not influence state laws, and in turn it is the state's role to regulate and control religious groups. The resurgence of Islam in Kyrgyzstan (supported by Saudi Arabia and Pakistan) after independence, led to a profound level of mistrust between state authorities, fearing the rise of religious extremism, and some religious communities. Consequently, this has influenced how the police, judiciary, and other state instruments relate to Kyrgyzstan's religious communities.

Search has been active in Kyrgyzstan since 2011 working to promote a culture of mutual respect amid political, religious and ethnic tensions. Promoting Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) in Kyrgyzstan is an initiative that engages religious leaders, government authorities and civil society organizations to jointly foster institutional legal reform and an environment of interreligious acceptance.

Since June 2018, Search, in partnership with Kyrgyzstan's State Committee for Religious Affairs, organized 14 public sessions across the country to address amendments to Kyrgyzstan's draft law on Freedom of Religion and Religious Organizations. 591 representatives from state and law enforcement bodies, religious organizations (including Muslim, Christian, Jewish, Buddhist, and Baha'i senior religious leaders), academic and educational institutions, human rights organizations and the media participated in these public hearings and were able to raise questions and contribute to improving the legal framework on religious freedom. The religious actors who participated in this project had a hand in formulating new government legislation that directly affects the religious rights of their communities.

Additionally, Search in partnership with legal experts, created a unique guidebook entitled, 'Freedom of Religion or Belief in the Kyrgyz Republic: Legal Regulation Practices in Accordance with Constitutional and International Standards'.

THE COMMON GROUND APPROACH TO RELIGIOUS ENGAGEMENT



215 copies of this guidebook (in Kyrgyz and Russian) were distributed to the Training Center for Lawyers, High School of Justice, Kyrgyzstan Bar Association, State Committee for Religious Affairs and the Training Center for Prosecution and the General Prosecutor's Office. This guidebook also formed the basis for professional development workshops and webinars where judicial actors were trained in national and international FoRB policies and practices, and countering violent extremism.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Senior religious actors are able to effect top-down change due to their authority and high-level connections
- The Common Ground inclusive approach supports religious actors to effect sustained institutional and societal change when engaged as equal actors with other sectors of society

REFERENCES

[Gulnara Asilbekova & Kanvey Jailobaeva, 'Final Evaluation: Promoting Religious Freedom through Government and Civil Society Collaboration in the Kyrgyz Republic', Search for Common Ground, July 2017](#)

[Search for Common Ground, 'Freedom of Religion in Kyrgyzstan – A Common Ground Approach 2015-2017', 2017.](#)

CASE STUDY
JERUSALEM

Constituencies for Peace

Search's Constituencies for Peace project brings together mid-level (ages 35-50) Jewish and Muslim religious actors, men and women, in the Holy Land with the aim of finding ways to advance a negotiated settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict through a religious perspective.

The participants, (not all of whom have formal religious qualifications (e.g. some are lawyers and educators) are highly regarded in their communities and serve them through a variety of spiritual, professional, and communal positions. They are all citizens of Israel.

Through the project, the religious actors discuss religious texts that relate to issues at the heart of the conflict - e.g. the sanctity of the land and the people, the meaning of sovereignty, jihad and peace, and peace and the significance of holy sites - and meet with religious and political leaders, diplomats, academics, and security experts to gain a deeper insight into the multiple facets of the conflict. They then spearhead group-projects in order to spread pro-peace messages within their own faith communities.



THE COMMON GROUND APPROACH TO RELIGIOUS ENGAGEMENT

One of the projects is a series of joint-lectures delivered by pairs of Muslim and Jewish religious actors who talk about their personal experiences in the Constituencies for Peace project, religious issues within the Arab-Israeli conflict and more broadly about Islam and Judaism. These joint lectures take place in religious seminaries, community centers, high schools, and pre-army academies.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Community level religious actors influence their communities through close connections, accessibility and understanding of local needs
- Community level religious actors include men, women, and youth
- Religious actors can bring value to peace processes when constructively included

REFERENCES

Key Impact Consulting, 'Evaluation of Constituencies for Peace: Final Report', March 2019

Key Impact Consulting, 'Evaluation of Constituencies for Peace: Executive Summary', March 2019



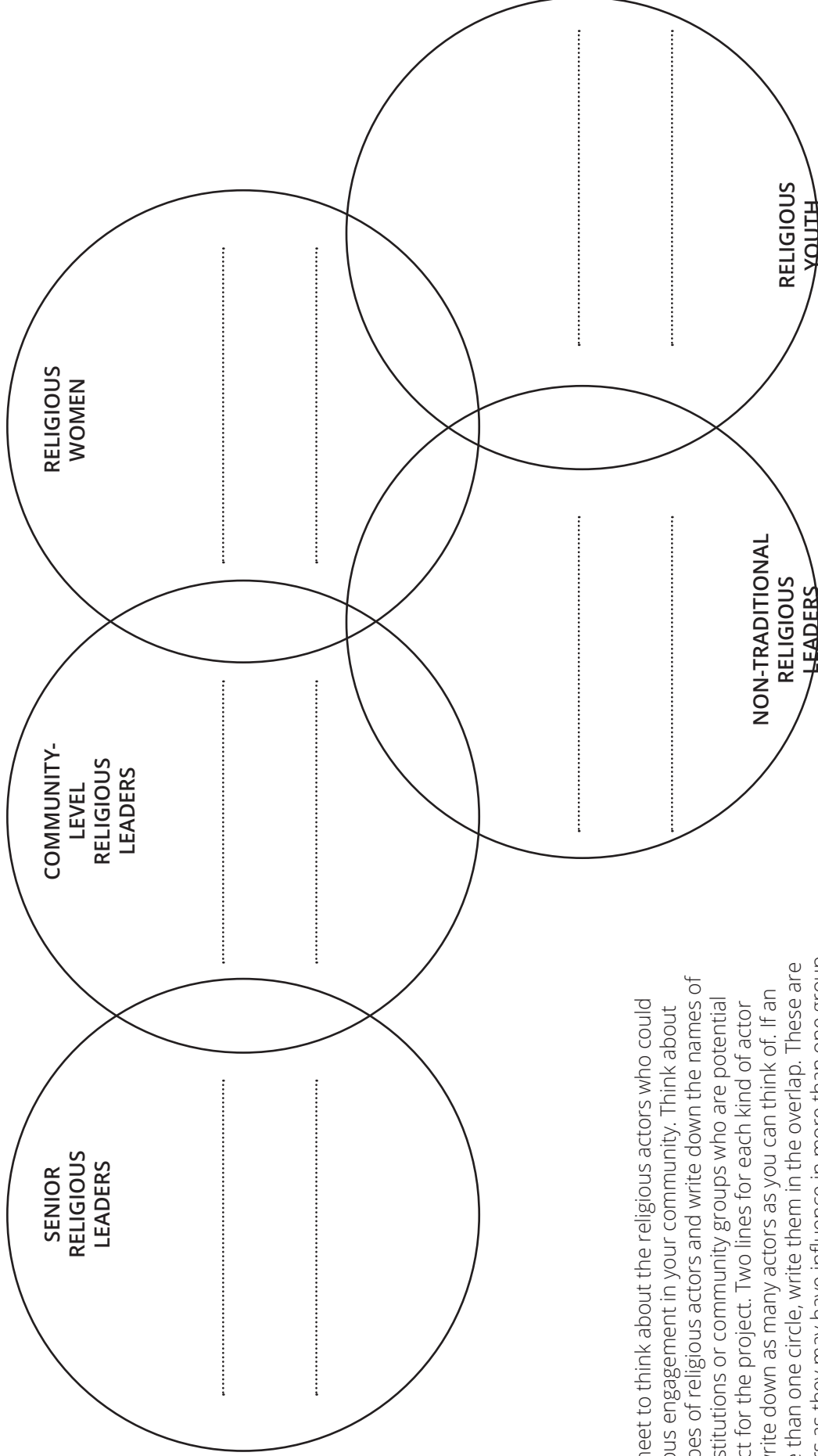
Jerusalem images:
[Wikipedia Commons](#)



TOOL

Identifying Religious Actors

POTENTIAL
RELIGIOUS
ACTORS



Use this worksheet to think about the religious actors who could be key to religious engagement in your community. Think about the different types of religious actors and write down the names of people, local institutions or community groups who are potential points of contact for the project. Two lines for each kind of actor are provided; write down as many actors as you can think of. If an actor is in more than one circle, write them in the overlap. These are important actors as they may have influence in more than one group.

Analyzing Religious Actors

Think of a project you are already implementing (or that you want to implement). Choose one religious actor that you identified on the Identifying Religious Actors template who you would like to involve in this project. Go through each box on the template to bring out a complete picture of this potential actor in relation to your project. Are they a good fit? How would you recruit them?

- SENIOR RELIGIOUS LEADER
- COMMUNITY-LEVEL RELIGIOUS LEADER
- NON-TRADITIONAL RELIGIOUS LEADER
- RELIGIOUS WOMAN
- RELIGIOUS YOUTH

.....

RELIGIOUS ACTOR

VALUE

What is the value-add of this person to the project? Does s/he have any information, access to people/resources, expertise that is valuable?

LEGITIMACY / AUTHORITY

Is there any reason NOT to reach out to this religious actor?

WILLINGNESS TO ENGAGE

How willing do you think s/he will be to partner with Search?

INFLUENCE

How would their participation have a constructive influence on the project?

NECESSITY OF INVOLVEMENT

What would happen if this religious actor wasn't included or reached out to, or refuses to be involved? How relevant is s/he to your project?

NOTES

A series of 25 horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.

Engaging Religious Actors in Peacebuilding

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Age, role, and gender of religious actors may affect the way they perceive the same conflict
2. Different religious actors offer different benefits in a collaboration
3. Senior religious leaders provide top-down 'vertical' influence
4. Community-level religious leaders are more accessible and connected to constituents; influential AND collaborate horizontally
5. Identify religious 'champions' from each group to engage 'horizontally' and 'vertically'
6. Use a variety of creative designs and methods to engage religious actors in projects

SLIDES



- 30 Religious Actors
- 33 Types of Religious Actors
- 40 Entry points to engage Religious Actors
- 43 Tools to Engage Religious Actors

FURTHER READING

[Gulnara Asilbekova & Kanyey Jailobaeva, Final Evaluation: Promoting Religious Freedom through Government and Civil Society Collaboration in the Kyrgyz Republic, Search for Common Ground, July 2017.](#)

[Search for Common Ground, Freedom of Religion in Kyrgyzstan - A Common Ground Approach 2015-2017, August 2017.](#)

Key Impact Consulting, Evaluation of Constituencies for Peace: Final Report, March 2019

Key Impact Consulting, Evaluation of Constituencies for Peace: Executive Summary, March 2019

These are the key slides that we used in this module. They can be found in the workshop's PowerPoint presentation for further reference.

4.

Religious Sensitivity

THE COMMON GROUND APPROACH TO RELIGIOUS ENGAGEMENT

IN THIS MODULE

When designing religious engagement projects, religious and cultural traditions need to be considered. Also challenges may arise when working with religious actors.

This module provides a basic understanding of theologies and rituals of five world religions and highlights factors to consider when designing projects.

Religious Literacy Quiz

1. MEDINA IS A SACRED SITE TO WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING RELIGIONS?

- A. CHRISTIANITY
- B. JUDAISM
- C. ISLAM
- D. BUDDHISM

2. WHICH CHRISTIAN HOLIDAY IS PRECEDED BY LENT, A TIME CHRISTIANS USE FOR SPIRITUAL REFLECTION?

- A. CHRISTMAS
- B. EASTER
- C. PENTECOST
- D. PASSOVER

3. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING IS ASSOCIATED WITH THE FOUNDING OF BUDDHISM?

- A. BHAGAVAD GITA
- B. VEDAS
- C. SIDDARTHA GAUTAMA
- D. KRISHNA

4. THE OM SYMBOL IN HINDUISM IS ...

- A. SACRED LIFE BREATH
- B. TRUE MEDITATION
- C. NIRVANA
- D. PURPOSE IN LIFE

5. WHAT IS THE CENTRAL RELIGIOUS TEXT OF ISLAM?

- A. SHARIA
- B. SHAHADA
- C. QURAN
- D. AL AQSA

6. WHICH OF THESE HOLIDAYS ARE CELEBRATED BY HINDUS?

- A. | DIWALI (FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS)
- B. | VESAK
- C. | HANUKKAH (FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS)
- D. | HOLI (FESTIVAL OF COLORS)

7. WHO DO JEWS BELIEVE TO BE THE FOUNDER OF JUDAISM?

- A. | ADAM
- B. | MOSES
- C. | ABRAHAM
- D. | JOSEPH

8. THE DALAI LAMA IS AN IMPORTANT FIGURE IN WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING RELIGIONS?

- A. | HINDUISM
- B. | SHINTO
- C. | BUDDHISM
- D. | SIKHISM

9. WHAT ARE THE FIVE PILLARS OF ISLAM?

- A. | FAITH, PRAYER, ALMS, FASTING AND PILGRIMAGE
- B. | FAITH, ABLUTION, PRAYER, ALMS AND FASTING
- C. | HALAL DIET, PRAYER, ALMS, PILGRIMAGE, CIRCUMCISION
- D. | HALAL DIET, PRAYER, PILGRIMAGE, ALMS, MODESTY

10. WHAT ARE THE LARGEST BRANCHES OF CHRISTIANITY?

- A. | PROTESTANT, MORMON, CATHOLIC
- B. | CATHOLIC, PROTESTANT, ORTHODOX
- C. | CATHOLIC, EPISCOPALIAN, EVANGELICAL
- D. | EVANGELICAL, ORTHODOX, CATHOLIC

11. HINDUISM'S SACRED TEXTS INCLUDE...?

- A. | THE BODHISATTVA
- B. | THE LOTUS SUTRA
- C. | THE WRITINGS OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH
- D. | THE VEDAS, MAHABHARATA AND THE UPANISHADS

12. IN BUDDHISM, A BELIEVER WHO ESCAPES THE CYCLE OF BIRTH, DEATH AND REBIRTH REACHES WHAT?

- A. SAMSARA
- B. KARMA
- C. NIRVANA
- D. KRISHNA

13. FROM WHICH CHRISTIAN CHURCH DID MARTIN LUTHER BREAK AWAY DURING THE REFORMATION?

- A. CATHOLIC
- B. PURITAN
- C. PROTESTANT
- D. CALVINISM

14. WHAT ARE THE MAIN PRACTICES OF CHRISTIANITY?

- A. CHURCH WORSHIP, SACRAMENTS (E.G. BAPTISM, COMMUNION)
- B. READING SCRIPTURES, FASTING
- C. SACRAMENTS, CHRISTMAS AND EASTER SERVICES
- D. READING SCRIPTURES, SUNDAY WORSHIP

15. WHAT IS THE NAME OF JUDAISM'S WEEKLY HOLY DAY OF REST?

- A. HANUKKAH
- B. HALAKHA
- C. YOM KIPPUR
- D. SHABBAT

16. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING ARE STIMULI USED BY BUDDHISTS DURING PRAYER?

- A. MANTRAS
- B. SUTRAS
- C. BODHIS
- D. GURUS

17. THE TORAH IS THE PRIMARY HOLY BOOK OF WHICH RELIGION?

- A. BAHA'I
- B. BUDDHISM
- C. MORMONISM
- D. JUDAISM

18. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING IS THE MONTH THAT MUSLIMS OBSERVE AS A DAYLIGHT FAST?

- A. HAJJ
- B. RAMADAN
- C. EID AL AADHAR
- D. UMRAH

19. THE FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS AND THE EIGHT-FOLD PATH ARE PART OF THE CORE BELIEFS OF WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING RELIGIONS?

- A. HINDUISM
- B. SHINTO
- C. JUDAISM
- D. BUDDHISM

20. WHAT IS THE NAME GIVEN TO PERMISSIBLE FOOD WITHIN THE DIETARY REGULATIONS OF ISLAM?

- A. HALAL
- B. KOSHER
- C. ZAKAT
- D. LENT

21. IN WHICH RELIGION ARE SHIVA, VISHNU AND GANESH MAJOR DEITIES?

- A. HINDUISM
- B. BAHA'I
- C. BUDDHISM
- D. SHINTO

22. WHO PARTICIPATE IN ASHURA CEREMONIES IN KARBALA (MODERN IRAQ)?

- A. SUNNI MUSLIMS
- B. JEWS
- C. AHMADIS
- D. SHIA MUSLIMS

23. WHICH ARE THE FOUR LARGEST RELIGIONS IN THE WORLD IN DESCENDING ORDER?

- A. CATHOLICISM, ISLAM, BUDDHISM, HINDUISM
- B. ISLAM, BUDDHISM, CHRISTIANITY, HINDUISM
- C. CHRISTIANITY, ISLAM, HINDUISM, BUDDHISM
- D. ISLAM, CHRISTIANITY, HINDUISM, BUDDHISM

ACTIVITY

What's wrong with this scenario?

Due to various political fluctuations, your community has recently experienced a resurgence of interreligious violence between Christians and Muslims. This has led to a breakdown in trust and communication between the local Christian and Muslim communities, further exacerbating the conflict. In order to begin repairing the relationship between the two communities, local CSOs decided to gather together religious actors, men and women, to discuss the conflict and find ways to increase mutual respect between the groups.

The meeting takes place during Lent at a conference center on the outskirts of the capital city in the afternoon and continues throughout most of the evening. The schedule for the meeting is jam-packed and there is little time allotted for breaks. Refreshments provided by the hotel during the meeting include wine and charcuterie boards with many varieties of cured meats.

The meeting is facilitated by a senior priest who does his best to foster civil discussion between the religious actors. However, by the end of the evening both the Christian and the Muslim religious actors leave the meeting feeling frustrated and disrespected. The local CSOs discuss a follow-up meeting but the religious actors are not excited about attending.

NOTES

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes, spanning the width of the page.

Religious Sensitivity

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. It is vitally important to have some knowledge of religious theology and practice when working with religious actors
2. Be sensitive and attentive to religious actors' differing needs throughout the project
3. If addressing LGBTQ issues, particular sensitivity is required while respecting all sides
4. It can be challenging to work with religious actors

SLIDES



- 49 Religious Needs
- 52 Challenges of Working with Religious Actors

FURTHER READING

[Search for Common Ground, Accommodating Religious Identity in Youth Peacebuilding Programs, May 2017](#)

These are the key slides that we used in this module. They can be found in the workshop's PowerPoint presentation for further reference.

5. Engaging Women

THE COMMON GROUND APPROACH TO RELIGIOUS ENGAGEMENT

IN THIS MODULE

This module provides an inclusive definition of female religious actors that ensures their engagement in the process of peacebuilding.

It offers good practices on how to recruit and engage religious women in conflict transformation activities while exploring the challenges that may arise when including them in activities.

CASE STUDY
JERUSALEM

Constituencies for Peace

Search's Constituencies for Peace project brings together mid-level (ages 35-50) Jewish and Muslim religious actors, men and women, in the Holy Land with the aim of finding ways to advance a negotiated settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict through a religious perspective. Most of the Jewish and Muslim women participating in this project are not ordained or recognized as clergy in their respective religion. Rather, they are women who are deeply committed to practicing their faith, and many have profound learning and an extensive understanding of religious rituals and theology. Others, although not communal leaders, have a desire to bring about change and envision themselves as leaders. Through the Constituencies for Peace project, many religious female participants began assuming leadership responsibilities once they were empowered to see themselves as leaders.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Religious women are included in the definition of religious actors
- Some religious women may have formal ordination others may not, yet still serve as leaders in their communities
- Female religious actors are deeply committed to their religion and may also have a profound knowledge and understanding of it

REFERENCES

Key Impact Consulting, Evaluation of Constituencies for Peace: Final Report, March 2019

Key Impact Consulting, Evaluation of Constituencies for Peace: Executive Summary, March 2019

Following are some examples of recruited female religious actors from the Jerusalem case study. They are all leaders in their fields and deeply religious. Note their variety of occupations.

Idit S. is a sales manager at Clalit health services and works as part of the general management responsible for the National Religious sector. She is a board member of the 'Jewish Home' party committee (appointed by the party's chairman) and manages the women's forum of the party, headed by Member of Knesset Shuli Mualem. She also leads the 'Women for Health' forum that promotes projects relating to health issues of National Religious women and is on the advisory board of 'Yad La'Isha' organization, for women whose husbands refuse or are unable to grant them a divorce. She is a delegate in the World Zionist Congress and also active on the local level, running the women's forum of the 'Jewish Home' party in Rechovot, where she lives with her husband and three children.

Maha B. has worked for the past 17 years in Kfar Qassem's Junior High School and for the past four years has also worked in the medical laboratories in Beilinson hospital and Meuchedet health clinics. Her BA is in Medical Laboratories' studies and her MA in Education. She is currently studying for a PhD in Educational Counseling and volunteers guiding inter-religious dialogue groups. Maha lives in Kfar Qassem.

Rabbanit Surale R. is a graduate of Matan's Advanced Talmud Institute and Hilkhata program, for advanced study of Jewish Law. She founded Shayla, an online column that answers questions in Jewish law and is used by many of her fellow, female colleagues. She was trained as a lawyer in the religious court system and teaches Talmud and Jewish Law. Surale is married to a community Rabbi in Jerusalem and is the proud mother of many sons and daughters.

Reem M. is a LL.M graduate of the University of Haifa and a practicing lawyer for the past 12 years. She works in a law office specializing in tort law and appeals to Israel's Supreme Court, in Palestinian human rights issues (such as casualties, family unification and citizenship). Reem is also active in several social initiatives. She is the founder and a board member of Al-Bir NGO for the community of Wadi Ara, focusing on women and youth empowerment through community activities. Reem also founded an organization promoting bone marrow donation in Arab society. She is on the board of the Arab Association for Human Rights in Nazareth, dealing with the civil, social and economic rights for the Palestinian minority in Israel, and is also active on the municipal level through her positions on different committees of Arara's local council.

ACTIVITY
SCENARIO

Try Walking in our Shoes



Adapted from an original scenario developed by the United States Institute of Peace.

Violent extremist organizations that ground themselves in religious (Islamic and Christian) symbolism, narrative, and justification are operating in your area. Youth in the community have been joining these violent movements, driven by their anger at injustices their community has faced, government corruption, and its ineffectiveness/unwillingness to address community needs. Christian and Muslim communities face high levels of tension between them at present, despite generations of generally peaceful coexistence. The community's markets and schools have become religiously and ethnically segregated. Local politicians from both sides have been inciting violence through hate speeches. Regular attacks by the Christian and Muslim extremist groups have made it difficult for people – especially women – to move freely and safely. In the midst of this situation, women from two organizations -- the Christian Women's Society (CWS) and Muslim Women for Peace (MW4P) -- decide to work together to build peace. You hold regular interfaith dialogues that convene Muslim and Christian women in order to build relationships, address biases, and discuss challenges women from both communities are facing as a result of violence and insecurity. These dialogues have been ongoing for seven months, even as violence has escalated around.

Recently, the primary Christian extremist group attacked a market in the Muslim neighborhood that led to the death of 67 people, including many children and women. In retribution, a church was attacked during Sunday worship services, leading to the death of 80 community members including the pastor of the church and his wife. Some of the women participating in the interfaith dialogues organized by CWS and M4P lost family members in these attacks. Trauma and tensions are high; the community fears escalating violence. The government has responded by sending in armed forces to serve as peacekeepers; these soldiers, many of whom are Christian, are believed to have perpetrated sexual violence in other parts of the country and to have harassed non-Christian communities. Meanwhile, staff from a major international organization have arrived hoping to mediate a ceasefire and/or a negotiated end to violent conflict.

The Christian and Muslim Women's interfaith initiative, of which you are a part, has determined it must respond to the current situation. You have decided to explore three forms of action:

1. Provide multi-faith trauma healing services for the broader community;
2. Advocate to the government to reduce its military presence, and;
3. Explore what role you can have in the peace process.

Male clerics in your community tell you to stop doing this work, claiming that it is inappropriate for religious women to do “political” work, much less to lead religious services for healing.

WHAT DO YOU DO?

OPTION 1

Engage the male clerics in dialogue about their concerns and include them in the project.

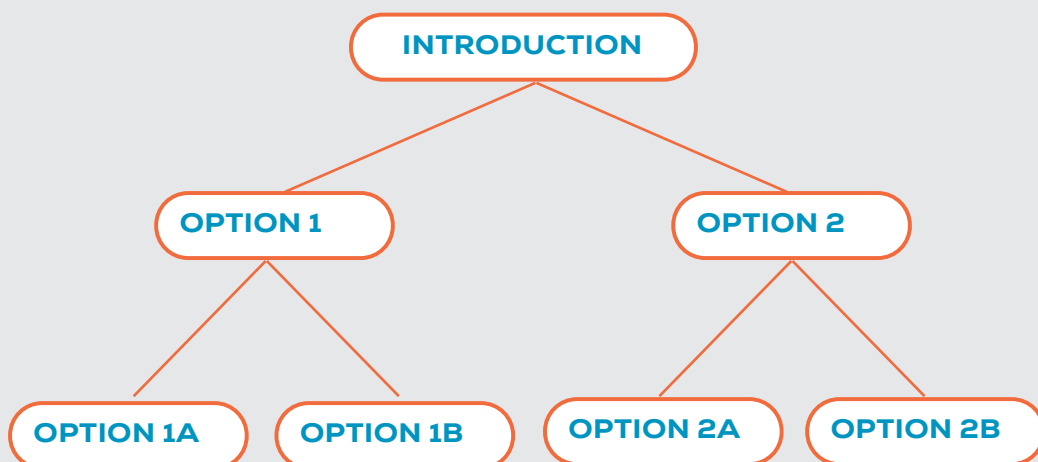
OPTION 2

Ignore the male clerics and keep moving forward with your initiative as planned, despite their lack of support.

CONSIDER:

- What are the risks of choosing one or the other option? How might you mitigate those risks?
- Which option do you anticipate is more or less likely to ensure successful outcomes of the project’s objectives?
- What does a successful outcome look like for the option you’ve chosen?

NOTE: During this activity you will build your own scenario, choosing between options at two decision points. You will be handed further written options depending on the decisions you make. Make sure you keep these written options in your workbook for later reference. There is no right or wrong path.



NOTES

A series of 25 horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.

NOTES

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.

Engaging Women

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Women are effective peacebuilders – include them in peacebuilding activities
2. Be inclusive when defining female religious actors
3. Be sensitive and attentive to religious actors' differing needs
4. In some locations you will face push-back when including women
5. Many of these challenges can be addressed during project design and by facilitators once the project is underway

SLIDES



- 56** Religious Women
- 58** Recruiting Religious Women
- 61** Challenges of Working with Female Religious Actors

FURTHER READING

- [Manal Omar, Video: Women at the Negotiating Table: The Missing Piece in Peacebuilding, TEDxSanDiego, January 2018.](#)
- [Search for Common Ground, Accommodating Religious Identity in Youth Peacebuilding Programs, May 2017.](#)
- [United States Institute of Peace, Women in Religious Peacebuilding, Peaceworks no. 71, 2011.](#)

These are the key slides that we used in this module. They can be found in the workshop's PowerPoint presentation for further reference.

PARTICIPANT WORKBOOK



Religious Youth

THE COMMON GROUND APPROACH TO
RELIGIOUS ENGAGEMENT

IN THIS MODULE

Religious youth play a role in peacebuilding.

There are many creative methods to engage youth in religious engagement projects.

This module explores the role youth can play, uses case studies to show creative ways that they are involved in peacebuilding, and explores the generation gap between youth and older religious actors as well as the benefits of intergenerational projects.

CASE STUDY
LEBANON

A Youth Led Approach to the Promotion of Lebanese Cultural Heritage



Many of Lebanon's religious and cultural heritage sites are at risk due to a lack of public awareness about them, lack of local preservation skills and the sectarian nature of Lebanese society. Search's Tourathi: Protecting our Future: A Youth Led Approach to the Promotion of Lebanese Cultural Heritage project brings together youth volunteers from six different communities in Lebanon to learn about local religious and cultural heritage sites through research, mapping, and recording oral histories. These volunteers highlight what personal meaning these sites have for them as well as their historical, religious and cultural importance to the Lebanese people. Activities led by youth volunteers include exchange visits, guided tours, festivals and social media campaigns. 600 people attended the project's final event in Beirut. The youth volunteers produced 8 brochures and reached more than 3000 people through social media campaigns on Facebook and Instagram. Through this project the youth champion a message that pride in local religious and cultural heritage can unite Lebanese society. As a result, they also play a role in preventing exclusionist attitudes.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Building local and national pride around religious and cultural heritage creates a sense of unity and can help in reducing exclusionist approaches
- Religious youth bring a fresh, personal approach to the significance of religious and cultural sites through their engagement in the project

REFERENCES

Search for Common Ground, Tourathi Project PowerPoint Presentation, January 2019

[Out of the Box, Tourathing: Protecting our Future: A Youth Led Approach to the Promotion of Lebanese Cultural Heritage, November 2017.](#)

CASE STUDY
GLOBAL / NEW MEDIA

Soliya



Soliya Connect is a virtual exchange program that allows university students around the world to engage in intercultural and interfaith dialogue. The program empowers young people to address religious, cultural and political differences constructively, while building international relationships based on cooperation and mutual respect. This intersection of digital technology and dialogue allows peacebuilding efforts to engage youth who are often excluded, and also reaches further than the students themselves due to their diverse physical and virtual social networks. The NGO Soliya is a strategic global partner of Search.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- New media technologies can connect people across geographical, cultural and religious divides
- As digital natives, young people are a prime audience for virtual exchange projects and it is an attractive way to draw them into peacebuilding
- Youth peacebuilding programs can have far-reaching effects due to young people's diverse social networks, online and offline

REFERENCES

[Soliya Connect Program](#)

ACTIVITY

Six Thinking Hats



DATA & FACTS

LOGIC, DATA, FACTS,
INFORMATION

What do you know about intergenerational peacebuilding projects?

What are some examples of past intergenerational peacebuilding project?

What did they look like? What were their results?

Focus on data and facts; those already known and those needed.



CHALLENGES

LOGIC, DATA, FACTS,
INFORMATION

What are the challenges of intergenerational peacebuilding projects?

What actions need to be avoided to preempt difficulties when creating an intergenerational project?

Focus on difficulties and challenges.



OPPORTUNITIES

OPTIMISM, VALUES,
BENEFITS, OPPORTUNITIES

What are the benefits of intergenerational peacebuilding projects?

Where opportunities open up when building a project like this?

What needs to be included in an intergenerational project to ensure its success?

Focus on values and benefits, why something may work.



EMOTIONS

EMOTION, FEELINGS,
INTUITION, INSTINCT

Do you have an emotional response to intergenerational peacebuilding projects?

Put yourself in the shoes of a young religious actor. How would s/he feel about a project like this?

Put yourself in the shoes of a senior religious actor. How would s/he feel about a project like this?

Focus on emotions and intuitions.



NEW IDEAS

CREATIVITY, NEW IDEAS,
POSSIBILITIES,
ALTERNATIVES

What are your ideas for an intergenerational peacebuilding project?

If you can't create a project that brings senior religious and young religious actors together, what could you do instead?

Focus on creativity, possibilities, new ideas.



PROCESS GUIDE

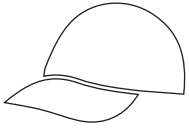
MANAGER, LEADER,
GUIDE

After brainstorming together, what is the next step to create an intergenerational peacebuilding project?

Lead the process and discussion.

MY HAT

CIRCLE YOUR ROLE



DATA & FACTS



CHALLENGES



EMOTIONS



OPPORTUNITIES



NEW IDEAS



GUIDE

BRAINSTORM NOTES

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Engaging Youth

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Religious youth are valuable contributors to peacebuilding.
2. Broad definitions of 'young religious actor' aids recruitment.
3. Program activities need to be creatively designed.
4. Including young people offers a sense of belonging and reduces a need for them to seek it from extremist groups.
5. Youth today are digital natives and have large online and offline networks.
6. Intergenerational projects may pose challenges but also offer benefits to religious actors, young and old.

SLIDES



- 68 Youth
- 69 Recruiting Young Religious Actors
- 72 Youth and Violent Extremism (optional)
- 76 Challenges

These are the key slides that we used in this module. They can be found in the workshop's PowerPoint presentation for further reference.

FURTHER READING

[Graeme Simpson, The Missing Peace: Independent Progress Study on Youth and Peace and Security United Nations Population Fund and Peacebuilding Support Office, 2018](#)

[Margaret Williams, Working Together to Address Violent Extremism: A Strategy for Youth-Government Partnerships, Search for Common Ground, 2017.](#)

[Search for Common Ground, Memo on Disaggregating Data by Age Groups, Children & Youth and Institutional Learning Team, February 2017.](#)

[United States Institute of Peace, Implementing UNSCR 2250: Youth and Religious Actors Engaging for Peace, June 2017.](#)

[United States Institute of Peace, Faith and Fragile States First Panel: Religious Engagement in Countering Violent Extremism \(CVE\), August 2018.](#)

[United Nations, Security Council, Unanimously Adopting Resolution 2250 \(2015\), Urges Member States to Increase Representation of Youth in Decision-Making at All Levels, Meetings Coverage and Press Releases, December 2015](#)

[United Nations Development Programme, Preventing Violent Extremism through Promoting Inclusive Development, Tolerance and Respect for Diversity, 2016](#)



A Multi-Sectoral Approach to Religious Engagement

THE COMMON GROUND APPROACH TO RELIGIOUS ENGAGEMENT

IN THIS MODULE

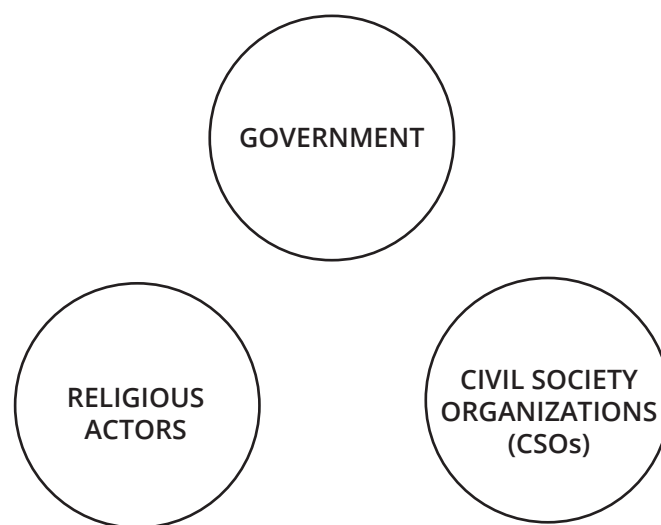
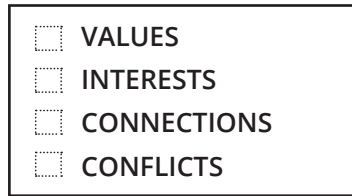
Many different sectors interface with religious actors in peacebuilding projects.

This module explores who these multi-sectoral stakeholders are (e.g. state, governmental, multilateral, civil society, media), discusses the shared values and common interests that underpin their cooperation in building more peaceful societies, and highlights the benefits and risks of such collaborations.

TOOL

Mind Map

Use this tool to identify shared values and interests between religious actors and other sectors of society. The resulting map will inform your project's strategy and is likely to make it more inclusive and effective.



You may choose to draw more bubbles and include more sectors in your mind map. Some suggestions for **additional sectors** are international institutions, security forces, media, economic corporations, health systems etc.

Mark values and interests of each sector on your mind-map in your chosen color. **Examples of values** include equality, charity, justice, peace etc. **Examples of interests** include economic growth, health and educational services, security, environmental awareness, information sharing, freedom of religion and access to holy sites.

As values and interests are added to the mind map, draw a line between the bubbles in your chosen color to represent the **connections** between sectors, values and interests. You can further explain what the connection is by writing it above the connection line. Use a different color to represent conflicts.

ACTIVITY

Station Rotation

After you read the case study, discuss the following guiding questions as a group.

While your group discusses the case study, add new actors/values/interests to the mind map.

After 20 minutes move to the next station.



GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. Who were the different actors involved in the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) project? What were their shared values? What were their common interests?
2. Which governmental bodies deal with religion or religious communities in your country?
3. Who are the connectors between government and religion in your country or community?
4. Who are the dividers between government and religion in your country or community?
5. What are the opportunities for collaboration between religious actors and political institutions in your country? Are there particular values, histories, laws, or leaders that hinder cooperation?

STATION ROTATION CASE STUDY
GOVERNMENT & POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

Morocco

Since 2001, Search Morocco has worked to promote Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) within Moroccan society and judiciary. As a result of a long-term collaboration with the Ministry of Justice and civil society organizations, a state ombudsman that serves as a national mediation body was established to resolve disputes between citizens and the state. Moroccan legislation now provides a variety of avenues for ADR including arbitration, conciliation, and mediation. These innovations were created with the support of the King who is designated as the 'Leader of Believers' and Morocco's supreme head of religious affairs. Search encourages religious scholars to engage with the changing face of Morocco's judicial system. Religious scholars from Rabita Mohammadia des Oulemas au Maroc study Islamic texts and traditions that model ADR and are creating systems to merge them with contemporary approaches to conflict resolution.

REFERENCES

'Alternate Dispute Resolution and Mediation in Morocco Merging Islamic and Contemporary Approaches: The Way Forward', 2014

ACTIVITY

Station Rotation

Watch the United Nations video (or read the transcript) then discuss the following guiding questions as a group.

While your group discusses the case study, add new actors/values/interests to the mind map.

After 20 minutes move to the next station.



GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. Which sectors were involved in forming this plan of action?
2. Which other international actors might have an interest in religious engagement? What are their shared values? What are their common interests?
3. Who are the opportunities for your local religious actors to engage with international actors?
4. Who are the connectors between international actors and religious communities in your country?
5. What are the dividers between international actors and religion in your country or community? Are there particular values, histories, laws, or leaders that hinder cooperation?

STATION ROTATION CASE STUDY
INTERNATIONAL ACTORS

United Nations Video Transcript

(High Representative AOC Miguel Moratinos) I would like to welcome the Secretary General, His Excellency, Mr. Antonio Guterres and I invite him to take the floor and brief the distinguished delegations.

(Sec. Gen. Guterres) Excellencies, colleagues and friends, thank you for joining us as we launch an important new effort to counter hate and violence around the globe. As we are also tragically aware, our world is facing a surge in anti-Semitism, anti-Muslim hatred, attacks against Christians, and intolerance targeting other religious groups. In recent months alone, Jews have been murdered in synagogues; Muslims gunned down in mosques; Christians killed at prayer. I condemn these attacks in the strongest possible terms. In the wake of the March massacre at the mosques in Christchurch, I went to the Islamic Center of New York and many of you joined me for that solidarity visit. I then made a global call to reaffirm the sanctity of all places of worship and the safety of all worshippers. And I asked the High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, Miguel Moratinos, to develop an action plan for the U.N. and to be fully engaged in support of safeguarding religious sites. Since then, he and his team have been reaching out to a wide variety of actors, including governments, religious leaders, faith-based organizations, civil society, young women and men, local communities, traditional and social media and the private sector. And today we are launching the product of that work, the United Nations Plan of Action to safeguard religious sites. The plan provides concrete recommendations to support member states in their efforts to ensure that religious sites are safe, that worshippers can observe their rituals in peace, and that the values of compassion and tolerance are fostered globally.

The plan is anchored in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and rooted in seven guiding principles; 1. respect for all peoples; 2. responsibility to build bridges of mutual understanding and cooperation; 3. diversity to accept and respect differences among human beings; 4. dialogue as a tool to better communicate and engage with one another; 5. solidarity to support one another, particularly in times of sorrow or trouble; 6. standing together as one to respond with unity and attempts to divide us and; 7. staying together as one to ensure that unity in response to attacks against religious sites is sustained and reinforced over time.

This effort is complemented by the strategy and plan of action on hate speech that we launched in June. That initiative aims to coordinate efforts across the United Nations system to address the root causes of hate speech and make our response more effective. Taken together, both plans provide the important and mutually reinforcing new tools to combat intolerance and to promote peaceful coexistence. Excellences, religious sites are powerful symbols of our collective consciousness. When people are attacked because of their religion or beliefs, all of society is diminished. Houses of worship around the world must be safe havens for reflection and peace, not sites of bloodshed and terror.

People everywhere must be allowed to observe and practice their faith in peace in situations of armed conflict. Buildings dedicated to religion are specifically protected by international humanitarian law. And intentional attacks against such buildings is a war crime, and indeed, the International Criminal Court has already convicted a person for such a crime. The best way to overcome the threat of violence based on unacceptable forms of manipulation of religion and belief is by uniting our voices for good; countering messages of hate with messages of peace; embracing diversity as a richness, not a threat; investing in social cohesion and protecting human rights.

Together, we can help prevent attacks against religious sites and do our part to secure the safety of the faithful to worship in peace. With this Plan of Action, the United Nations is taking an important step to advance that critical goal and address what has emerged as one of the leading global challenges of our era. I count on your support for this plan, which will be led and monitored by the U.N. Alliance of Civilizations in these troubled times. Let us keep working together to uphold the values that bind us as a single human family. Thank you.

(M. Moratinos) I thank the Secretary General, Mr. Antonio Guterres, for his briefing, and I also thank him for his support and his trust.

ACTIVITY

Station Rotation

After you read the case study, discuss the following guiding questions as a group.

While your group discusses the case study, add new actors/values/interests to the mind map.

After 20 minutes move to the next station.



STATION 3
CIVIL SOCIETY
ORGANIZATIONS

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. How does the Joint Learning Initiative (JLI) engage religious actors?
2. What other sectors do they engage?
3. What type of organization is JLI? What is a Civil Society Organization (CSO)?
4. What types of CSOs might be engaged with religious actors? How do nonsectarian CSOs view religious actors (and vice versa)?
5. Who are the connectors between CSOs and religious communities in your country? What types of work do they share in common?
6. Who are the dividers between CSOs and religion in your country or community?

CASE STUDY

Joint Learning Initiative

The Joint Learning Initiative on Faith and Local Communities is an international collaboration on evidence for faith groups' activities and contributions to local community health and wellbeing. It was founded in 2012 with the aim to build collective understanding of local faith communities, to establish peaceful coexistence and improve community health. An open source, non-partisan knowledge sharing platform for all sectors, JLI seeks to engage religious and faith-based groups to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. By enhancing their capacities, the initiative strives for excellence in evidence, communications, and advocacy through effective partnerships with public sector and secular entities, and among religious groups themselves. The JLI works through Learning Hubs, publications, conferences and projects, and targets the policy, practitioner and academic sectors. Currently more than 500 stakeholders are members of JLI's Hubs, which stretch from anti-human trafficking and modern slavery to gender-based violence. They also focus on ending violence against children, refugees and forced migration, and the mobilization of local faith communities. With their interdisciplinary, collaborative, and share learning aspect, the Hubs increase the evidence on faith engagement to improve policy and practice. JLI is a valued partner of Search.

REFERENCES

Adapted from KAIIICID DKH partners: [Joint Learning Initiative Faith and Local Communities](#).

ACTIVITY

Station Rotation

After you read the case study, discuss the following guiding questions as a group.

While your group discusses the case study, add new actors/values/interests to the mind map.

After 20 minutes move to the next station.



GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. Who were the different actors/stakeholders involved?
2. What were their shared values/common interests in working together?
3. What actions were taken that resulted in success?
4. How was the success sustained?
5. Are there connectors/dividers between media and religion in your country?
6. What media is most suited for peacebuilding collaboration in your country?
7. What are the risks and opportunities for collaboration between media and religious actors in your country?

While your group discusses the case study, add new actors/values/interests to the mind map.

After 20 minutes move to the next station.

CASE STUDY

Central African Republic (CAR)

For decades CAR has been a country torn apart by violence, including attacks against places of worship, and increasing religious intolerance between Christians and Muslims. 2018 saw an explosion of violence with new actors invoking hate speech on social media platforms and radio. The Government Communications Regulatory Authorities (HCC) requested assistance from Search's CAR office in revising and rolling out a 'national plan to prevent incitement of hate and violence'.

In October 2018, Search began a 10-month project whose goal was to reduce intercommunal violence and increase non-violent communication in CAR's capital, Bangui. It used a top-down, bottom-up approach by creating a collaboration of partners and stakeholders that included the governmental HCC, the National Youth Council, 4 community radio stations, religious leaders and victim advocates, bloggers associations and about 10 web platforms. The baseline survey showed that 47% of media actors were not confident in dealing with hate rhetoric; 77% had not been trained in verifying online 'news' and 65% felt that there was 'no plan' to address hate or disinformation.

Activities included top down coaching and a training of trainers' program for the HCC; training of media hosts and producers; multi-stakeholder dialogues and feedback; and the bottom up creation of a youth editorial group and a national multimedia campaign.

Results demonstrate a significant reduction in hate speech cases and a large drop in defamation complaints between 2018 and 2019. The independent Observatory Group (OMCA) has indicated a significant improvement. Moreover a sustained change, post-project, is reflected in continued regular meetings across religious and ethnic lines; HCC's continued delivery of trainings within government and externally to media partners, the National Youth Council's independent running of media campaigns, and continued relations between web activists, youth and regulators.

REFERENCES

- Search for Common Ground, 'Project Abstract: Be Africa ti ye ti la so' (We own the modern CAR), 2019
Search for Common Ground, 'Final Report: Human Rights Support Mechanism', PROgress, 2019

NOTES

A series of 25 horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.

NOTES

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.

A Multi-Sectoral Approach to Religious Engagement

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. There are common values and shared interests between religious actors and other sectors on which collaboration can be built
 - a. Governments and Political Institutions
 - b. International Actors
 - c. Civil Society Organizations
 - d. Media
 - e. Private Market
2. There are risks and benefits to engaging with each sector that must be considered before building partnerships
3. A multi-sectoral approach encourages systemic, enduring change

SLIDES



83 The basis of a Multi-sectoral Approach

These key slides were used in this module. The slides can be used as a reference on these key topics.

FURTHER READING

[Marie Juul Peterson & Katherine Marshall, Promoting Freedom of Religion or Belief – Key Lessons, Berkley Center, December 2019](#)

[Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Freedom of Religion or Belief and Security: Policy Guidance, OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, 2019](#)

8

Design, Monitoring, and Evaluation for Religious Engagement

THE COMMON GROUND APPROACH TO
RELIGIOUS ENGAGEMENT

IN THIS MODULE

Designing peacebuilding projects for religious actors has similarities and differences to designing other peacebuilding projects.

In this module we review the importance of a 'Do-No-Harm' approach to peacebuilding with religious actors.

This module includes hands-on exercises for project planning, and introduces best practices for effective monitoring and evaluation when working with religious actors.

TOOL

Analyzing Religious Conflict

RELIGIOUS FACTORS

Are there current factors contributing to the conflict that contain religious elements?

RELIGIOUS CONNECTORS

Who are the religious connectors?

RELIGIOUS DIVIDERS

Who are the religious dividers?

IMPACT ON RELIGIOUS PEOPLE

How does the conflict affect the daily lives of religious people, communities and institutions?

ROOT CAUSES

Are there root causes contributing to the conflict that contain religious elements?

TOOL

Planning for Religious Engagement

<p>ACTIVITIES What are the religious-sensitive activities that fulfill your established objectives?</p>	<p>OBJECTIVES What changes can be observed in religious actors, societies, and institutions?</p>	<p>GOAL What are the relationship between religion and the conflict you want to change?</p>
<p>INDICATORS What will show the different types of change that are happening among religious actors, societies and institutions?</p>		

ACTIVITY

Case Study: Uruzania

Uruzania is a coastal country with a large rural agricultural inland and active coastal fishery communities. Oil and gas companies have been engaged in exploration off shore, but no viable resource has been identified yet. Uruzania has experienced horrific violence since independence in the mid-1960s. Its population is divided across thirty-two different ethnic groups, of which 60% are Christians, 30% Muslims, and 10% of other faith traditions, including indigenous religions. Despite this diversity, the people have lived together peacefully, even during recurrent violent conflicts resulting from coup d'états and other political upheavals. These incidents of violence have led to the creation of many militia groups that claim to defend different population groups defined by ethnicity, geography, or religion. Five years ago, one such upheaval brought a predominantly Christian military group to power. The brutalities that the military units inflicted on civilian populations as they fought their way to power prompted Muslim militia groups to mobilize themselves for reprisals and to defend their communities. The ensuing war led to the deaths of at least 8,000 combatants and civilians, with thousands more internally displaced or seeking refuge in neighboring countries.

Following international intervention, a peace accord was signed, and an elected government is now in place after a three-year transition period. An interim president has been installed, and there are UN peacekeepers in the country. The situation is now calmer, but still punctuated by outbreaks of violence and an ongoing sense of insecurity for many. Militia groups are still active. The mobilization along religious lines has led to the portrayal of the civil war as a Christian-Muslim struggle, although most analysts argue that the conflict is mostly about power and resources in which religious identity is used as a tool for rousing fear, gaining allegiance and seeking power. While the role of faith traditions as an identity marker must be recognized, additional conflict drivers include political and economic tensions magnified by corruption, weak governance and the failure to create a national identity that supersedes other identities. While many rural minority groups experience marginalization, Muslim groups are particularly aggrieved, feel excluded from political influence, and observe that they have not received their fair share of economic development support. To engage effectively in such a context, any actor—religious or secular—will need to recognize the specific role each conflict driver plays as well as the ways they interact.

SOURCE

Example Taken from Woodrow, Peter, Nick Oatley, and Michelle Garred. 'Faith Matters: A Guide for the Design, Monitoring & Evaluation of Inter-Religious Peacebuilding.' CDA Collaborative Learning Projects and Alliance for Peacebuilding, September 2017.

ACTIVITY

Role Play: Uruzania

Narrator: For several years, the Interfaith Peace Platform has had many vigorous discussions about the conflict in the country and whether it has religious dimensions. Last year Pastor Otano and Imam Bubakar were interviewed by the BBC. Part of the interview went like this:

James Menendez (BBC): Thank you, Pastor Otano and Imam Bubakar for joining us today. We have been told that the conflict and violence in Uruzania arises from tensions between Muslims and Christians. Yet the two of you have been cooperating to promote peace. How do you explain that contradiction?

Imam: Thanks, James, we are pleased to be here. Actually, we don't agree that the conflict here is primarily about religion. The contending groups are struggling for political power and have been manipulating peoples' religious identities to mobilize actions and violence. But there is no fundamental contention between religious groups.

Pastor: I would just add that a lot of the conflict is about neglect and marginalization of the huge majority of the population—both Muslim and Christian. Elite groups (which include both Muslim and Christian as well) are doing well, while most people suffer. And, the farther from the capital you are, the less likely you will receive services, including health care, education, and even basic security.

James: So, the issue is about how to ensure that everyone receives an equitable share of resources, regardless of their faith community. Is that right?

Imam: Absolutely! And resources are connected closely to political and economic power. As religious leaders, we don't intervene in political struggles—at least not directly. But each of our faith traditions emphasizes a responsibility to ensure that all are fed, clothed and have shelter.

SOURCE

Example Taken from Woodrow, Peter, Nick Oatley, and Michelle Garred. 'Faith Matters: A Guide for the Design, Monitoring & Evaluation of Inter-Religious Peacebuilding.' CDA Collaborative Learning Projects and Alliance for Peacebuilding, September 2017.



CASE STUDY

Mercy Corps in Myanmar

When Mercy Corps and World Vision International tested the pilot version of this Guide, they adapted their usual evaluation practices to make them more faith-sensitive. Mercy Corps in Myanmar was developing the monitoring and evaluation strategy for their Some Hmat community-based inter-communal peacebuilding project. They had originally planned to focus on mostly theory-based approaches and a quantitative set of indicators. However, they increasingly considered the relevance of goal-free impact evaluation approaches (i.e., Most Significant Change), and decided to expand that plan to include more qualitative data gathered through participatory processes, so that project stakeholders (community leaders, government officials and interreligious leaders) could voice their own interpretations of project experiences and results in ways that influence monitoring and evaluation findings and future project design.

This decision involved adding semi-structured interviews to elicit stories, and training staff in how to facilitate this form of data collection and highlight individual behavioral changes. It also involved convening project participants to discuss the purpose of participatory monitoring and evaluation, and to collectively identify the best way to tell the story of the project's impact. This adjustment greatly increased religious leaders' understanding, ownership, and active participation in the monitoring and evaluation process, and reduced suspicions about the investigation of sensitive topics such as peace and religion. The Mercy Corps team still plans to analyze the findings according to their traditional results framework, but they expect those findings to be more robust and meaningful.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Ask project participants to tell their own stories of the project's impact
- Focus on qualitative data measures

REFERENCE

From [Faith Matters: A Guide for the Design, Monitoring and Evaluation of Interreligious Action for Peacebuilding](#)

Design, Monitoring, and Evaluation for Religious Engagement

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- DM&E for religious engagement is not particularly different from general peacebuilding projects.

BUT

- Choose suitable evaluation methods for your indicators and your subjects.

Participatory and qualitative evaluation methods are often more effective when evaluating religious engagement projects.

- Use religious language/terms to enhance religious actors' understanding of the project objectives.
- Know well with whom you are working.
- Set reasonable expectations and time-frames.

SLIDES



95 Designing for Religious Engagement

104 Key Considerations

These key slides were used in this module. The slides can be used as a reference on these key topics.

FURTHER READING

[Peter Woodrow, Nick Oatley & Michelle Garred, Faith Matters: A Guide for the Design, Monitoring, and Evaluation of Interreligious Action for Peacebuilding, CDA Collaborative Learning Projects and Alliance for Peacebuilding, September 2017.](#)

[Alliance for Peacebuilding, Policy Brief: The Effective Interreligious Action in Peacebuilding, November 2017.](#)

[Alliance for Peacebuilding, Learnings and Findings: Effective Interreligious Action in Peacebuilding, November 2017.](#)