



Arigatou International - Nairobi

The Global Network of Religions for Children

&

The Goldin Institute

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KEY ACRONYMS

AI	:	Arigatou International
ADEA	:	Association for the Development of Education in Africa
BRAVE	:	Building Resilience Against Violent Extremism
CRAVE	:	Community Resilience Against Violent Extremism
ECP	:	End Child Poverty
GNRC	:	Global Network of religions for Children
HH	:	His Holiness
ICQN	:	Inter Country Quality Node
IOC	:	International Organizing Committee
NIT	:	National Institute of Transportation
SDG	:	Sustainable Development Goals
SG	:	Secretary General
UNESCO	:	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	:	United Nations Children’s Fund
WFP	:	World Food Programme
WHO	:	World Health Organization

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The second Quarter of 2016 was eventful with mainly peacebuilding and related activities being implemented in the region. The GNRC Secretary General (SG), Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali had several engagements aimed at partnership development and advocacy for the rights of children and youth.

2.0 PEACEBUILDING

2.1 Kenya:

Kisumu County: GNRC members in Kenya held a youth engagement forum through Building Community Resilience Against Violent Extremism (BRAVE) program on 20th June, 2016 in Kisumu County.

The function dubbed BRAVE Messengers' Conference was to educate the youth against radicalization and violent extremism. Presided by BRAVE's Coordinator in Kisumu, Hon. Farida Salim, the forum was attended by four hundred (400) youth from various schools, the community and religious leaders from the county. It was pointed out that the youth have become susceptible to extremist ideologies that are spread by violent extremist groups in the Horn of Africa and beyond. The leaders pointed out that there were reports of disappearances of boys and girls who were alleged to have joined ISIS in Syria or al Shabab in Somalia. It was also established that children and youth were the most vulnerable and targeted in radicalization.



A section of the youth during the BRAVE Messengers' Conference

In her remarks, Hon. Farida Salim said that no religion supports nor promotes violent extremism and cautioned the youth against joining extremist groups. She said that, Islam exhorts its adherents to be good to mankind and perform good deeds and that killing innocent people is abhorred and prohibited in the holy Qur'an (5:35). She also quoted from the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), "The Muslim is the one from whose tongue and hand the people are safe, and the believer is the one who is trusted with the lives and wealth of the people." She urged the youth to concentrate in their studies so that they become fruitful future members of their communities.

Kilifi County: One hundred and seventy five (175) in-school youth took part in a 3-day retreat at Town Secondary School, Malindi, in the ongoing efforts to engage young adults to address radicalization and violent extremism in Kenya.

GNRC Members in Kenya, through the Building Resilience Against Violent Extremism (BRAVE) initiative, led by Dr. Othman Mujahid, who is also a member of the BRAVE Steering Committee, held BRAVE Messengers retreat with the theme '*Together we Can Find Peace*'.

The 175 young adults and children participating in the retreat, whose aim was to strengthen the young people's value system, benefited from the topics covered, including principles of peace building, prevention of radicalization into violent extremism, early warning and role of the youth in countering violent extremism. The methods used were lectures, role-plays, poems and songs, discussions, excursions and panel presentations.

The threat of radicalization in Kenya remains a serious challenge to children and youth. The youth are associated with such high risk factors to extremist ideologies like guns, drugs, and gangs and bullying among others. These make high school students more susceptible to embracing violence coupled by their adolescent age, environment they live in and the daily stressors in their lives.

The retreat therefore was held as part of an effort to build resilience among the youth against violent extremism.



In-school boys at the BRAVE messengers' retreat in Malindi

Mombasa County: GNRC-Kenya conducted an outdoor peace activity for youth at Tononoka Social Hall in Mombasa, Kenya on the 23rd of April 2016. GNRC hosted the activity under its program dubbed Community Resilience Against Violent Extremism (CRAVE). More than a hundred (100) youth drawn from Mombasa County, attended the workshop. Local elders, persons with disability, women leaders, youth leaders as well as representatives from the local Government also attended. Among other organisations represented in the event were: Pwani Youth Network, Reach Out Center Trust, Faris Rubeya Foundation and Company, Kenya Youth for Change, Amani Pwani and al-Muqtadir Organization for the physically handicapped. The event was used to create awareness and empower the youth on matters peace, social co-existence and to campaign against exploitation.

During the event, topics such as drugs and substance abuse, child abuse, youth exploitation and lack of employment were discussed. The need for education, obedience, teamwork and success were widely conversed as well. The youth agreed to take an active role in developing their region and country at large.



The program ended with the youth learning about CRAVE and their roles, and rights and responsibilities in the society towards peace and development. The event concluded with a football match.



Participants during a focus discussion group session during the workshop

Throughout the reporting period, consultations and community engagement on strategies to address VE continued in North Eastern, Coast and Eastern regions of Kenya

2.2 Ethiopia:

Addis Ababa: Education influences society's social, economic and political dimensions. In the face of the global challenge posed by the spread of violent extremist ideologies, UNICEF in collaboration with a number of partners namely:- Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), Federal Government of Ethiopia, Ministry of Education- Ethiopia, ADEA Inter Country Quality Node (ICQN) on Peace Education and the 'Learning for Peace' Institute, organized a symposium that sought to assess how inclusive, equitable and innovative education policy and programmes can contribute to sustainable peace and development across the continent. The high-level Symposium, attended by Ministers of Education from sixteen (16) African countries and other education stakeholders took place between 1st and 3rd June 2016, in Addis Ababa.



As part of the Kenyan contributors, the GNRC was represented by Dr Dorcas Kiplagat, who presented on “Building Community Resilience to Prevent Violent Extremism”. The presentation focused on GNRC’s two peacebuilding programmes; Community Resilience Against Violent Extremism (CRAVE) and Building Community Resilience Against Violent Extremism (BRAVE) and how their implementation strategies can be utilized to impact learning, Intra-Faith and Inter-Faith programs respectively.

Commitments were made at the end of the symposium to strengthen education policies and programmes so as to achieve SDGs and Africa’s Agenda 2063, notably the signing of the inter-ministerial communique and commitment to build on lessons and evidence to education policy and programmes.

3.0 ETHICS EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN

3.1 Tanzania:

GNRC-Tanzania and the Ethics Education for Children, Geneva organized a training workshop based on the principles and methodology prescribed in the *Learning to Live Together (LTLT)* Manual. The workshop was held from 16th-19th June, 2016 at the Radio Maria premises in Mikocheni Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, as part of GNRC-Tanzania’s

contribution to developing good citizens and leaders among children and youth. Over forty (47) participants including peace clubbers and peace ambassadors, most of them youth between 18 -28 years and teachers, benefited from the training. Mr. Suchith an international LTLT Trainer representing the Geneva office, Pauline and Charles Mwaniki from Nairobi, Kenya facilitated the workshop. Dr Dorcas Kiplagat, the GNRC Network and Programs Coordinator was also present.

The LTLT workshop was meant to equip youth peace ambassadors, teachers and GNRC staff with knowledge and skills on how to effectively use the manual in efforts to promote peaceful co-existence in Tanzania. Once trained they are expected to facilitate sessions in their various capacities within their communities and places of work.

On 15th June, 2016, a day prior to the workshop, the Kiswahili Version of the LTLT Manual was launched. In attendance, were officials from UNESCO, Tanzania Institute of Education, Kinondoni Municipality Education Department, Norwegian Church Aid, *Under the Same Sun- UTSS-* an NGO dealing with people with albinism, *Dogodogo Centre Street Children Trust* and *Vipaji Foundation for Artists*. The media was represented by Radio Maria, the Guardian newspaper and Channel Ten TV. There were youth/students from fourteen (14) different learning institutions including secondary schools, colleges and universities. Secondary schools included Keko, Migombani, Kinondoni Muslim, Jangwani, Oysterbay, Wailes and Benjamin Mkapa while Colleges/Universities included the National Institute of Transportation-NIT, Institute of Public Service and Administration-Zanzibar, University of Dar-es-Salaam, Zanzibar University, State University of Zanzibar and Mzumbe University. A total of seventy (70) people participated in the event.



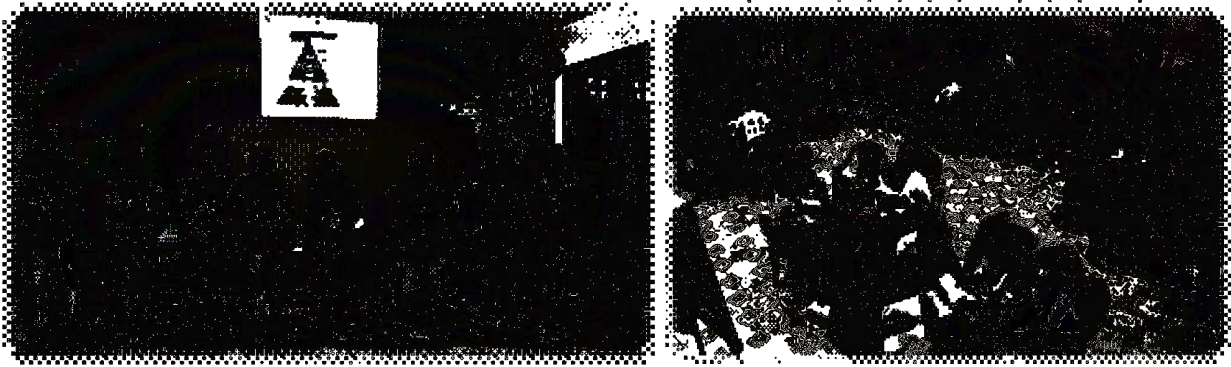
LTLT participants in one of the training activities

The trainers shared about the positive effect of the LTLT on people's attitudes in relation to coexistence in places where it had been tried and practiced. Ms. Vicky Ntetema, the executive director of UTSS was moved by the presentation and wished that the manual could be shared to the entire society especially now with the availability of the Kiswahili version. Clara J. Mduma and Nuru J. Sheha (youth) and Sr. Jean Pruitt who were involved in the translation of the manual, were very happy to witness the launch.

The training was participatory as it engaged participants in different activities; Silent Journey, games and video shows which led them to self-realization. Through follow up discussions, participants were enabled to see how in fact **"their differences brought them together"**.

The various training strategies taught participants the core values of the LTLT; **Respect**-listening to other peoples' thoughts, **Responsibility**- as a process to reflect upon and without being pushed, **Empathy**- caring about the values of others and **Reconciliation**-through understanding each other. The above can be achieved by exercising Love and forgiveness since no one can claim perfection. Putting oneself in another's shoes, to feel how they feel; acknowledging yourself and understanding others; and environmental conservation can move us to act with dignity while dealing with others and our surroundings and in turn we can appreciate diversity and together we can transform

our community, nation and the world. Additionally, this helps us to better handle children’s rights and use non-violent alternatives in resolving conflicts. One should constantly look inside oneself, value oneself and examine how we relate with others.



Participants during Group discussions and presentations

4.0 ESTABLISHMENT OF A YOUTH ORGANIZATION IN UGANDA

The over twenty year’s civil war in Uganda led by the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) completely destroyed the socio-economic structures of the northern Uganda people. Although peace has now returned in the region, many people continue to languish in poverty- a situation if not arrested will result in continued underdevelopment or even new cycles of civil strife.

A large number of ex-child soldiers still live in the streets of Gulu and other major centres in Northern Uganda due to rejection by community, poverty and lack of land. Major indicators of potential conflict in this region include: recurrent violence within

the community indicating high levels of bitterness, anger and hopelessness among people; high number of suicide cases; increased domestic violence; and over drinking especially among men.

In 2016 the GI and AI–Nairobi partnership took a step towards capacitating former child soldiers through helping them establish an organization led by former child soldiers with the aim of building their leadership skills, enabling them to fund raise and allowing them to take charge of processes that would enable them and others be fully and properly be reintegrated into society. The conviction was that, having directly suffered makes them more committed and passionate to their own cause.

The registration process is now at an advanced stage, with the name of the organization chosen by the youth being **“Youth Leaders for Restoration and Development (YOLRED)**. The process was privileged to have ANORAK, a team represented by two young experts from Denmark- Mr. Anders Donskov and Mr. Morten le Dous Bruun. They are currently on the ground, helping the YOLRED leaders design the organization.

5.0 UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

A. Countering Violent Extremism through Community Dialogue Sessions: This project on countering violent extremism through community dialogue forums aims to engage with youth between 14-29 of Jubaland and South west states of Somalia, specifically the states of Gedo, Kismayo, Afmadow, Dhooblay, Bardhere Beled hawo, Luuq and Doolow. The aim is to generate responses and create a deeper understanding from communities and individuals that result into a commitment to addressing violent extremism among individuals and communities in order to influence change and mobilize local resources to address it. The project will adopt a Communications for Development approach, using radio as a platform to reach youth.

The project will be implemented by Somali Family Services (SFS), in partnership with Arigatou International–Nairobi and IOM. The eight- month project is expected to take off in the course of this year.

B. Towards an Understanding of Radicalization into Violent Extremism among the Eastern Africa Youth and Children: Arigatou International - Nairobi partners plan to facilitate a three days regional reflection workshop titled: *Towards an Understanding of Radicalization into Violent Extremism among the Youth of Eastern Africa*. The workshop seeks to foster a deeper understanding of the reality young people from Eastern Africa (With a deliberate focus on 4 countries - Kenya, Somalia, Tanzania and Ethiopia) are living in; drivers of youth radicalization in the region; and to generate recommendations aimed at sensitizing people working with youth to address the topic

utilizing adequate and youth-centered approaches.

The planned workshop is part of a five-year project that seeks to increase the knowledge and understanding on radicalization and violent extremism in the region while minimizing the same by joint and/or common intra and Inter-Faith initiatives. Other activities include: 1) Conducting a research on radicalization and violent extremism in the region and disseminating the findings. 2) Providing support to religious leaders and other faith actors to develop alternative narratives and counter narratives; 3) Support lobbying and advocacy initiatives aimed at addressing factors leading to youth radicalization; and 4) Promoting inter-sectoral linkages to address root causes of radicalization and violent extremism

CONCLUSION

It is evidently clear that a lot of attention is being paid to the challenge of Violent Extremism globally, especially among the youth. It is expected that the new partnerships being formed by GI and AI–Nairobi with other organizations such as the Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) and Somali Family Services (SFS) will scale up action to address the challenge.