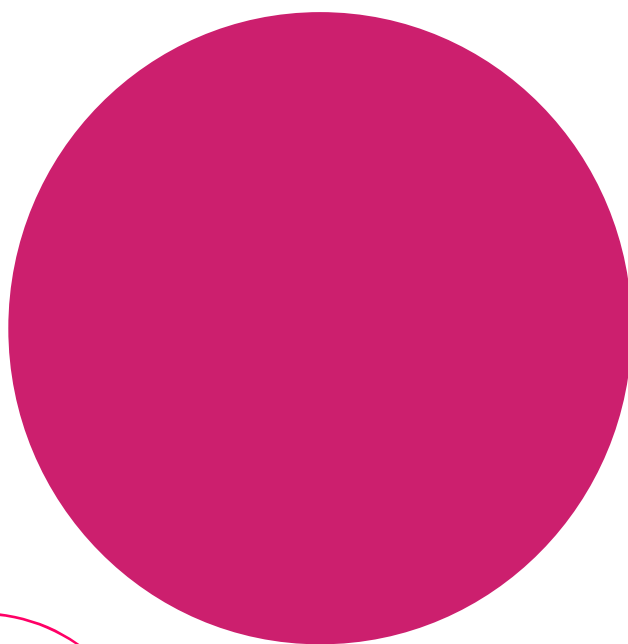


Misean Cara Learning Brief No. 2018/05

Peace-building in practice

Learning from a 2018 Effectiveness Review of Missionary
Peacebuilding and Human Rights projects in Kenya



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1. Introduction

In 2017-2018, Misesan Cara commissioned an effectiveness review of peacebuilding and human rights projects established by Misesan Cara Member Organisations (MOs)¹ in Kenya. The review was carried out by Mike Williams. This Learning Brief offers a summary of the main findings and a synthesis of what we have learned from the review.

Visits to the following four projects provided the information that contributed to the development of the Learning Brief:²

1. The peacebuilding component of a large Water for Food Security project run by two MOs in Ishiara (Embu County) and Wenje (Tana River County);
2. A Human Rights NGO (i.e. an autonomous non-governmental organisation established by, and linked to, the Misesan Cara Member Organisation) in three counties in the Coastal Region of Kenya: Kilifi, Mombasa and Kwale;
3. An academic peacebuilding institution in Nairobi with field projects in four counties: Nairobi, Kwale, Tana River and Mombasa;
4. A Nairobi-based conflict resolution centre with field projects in three counties: Turkana, Marsabit and Samburu.

All the projects were relevant to their local contexts. Most were based in the ASAL (Arid and Semi-Arid Land) regions in the north where rainfall is unpredictable, and both droughts and flooding are recurring problems. Conflicts among pastoralist groups and between pastoralists and settled farmers occur on a regular basis, and these localised conflicts impinge on each other to create complex and difficult situations. The impact of the Al Shabab militant group based in neighbouring Somalia was also a factor in some places. Projects 2 and 3 addressed conflict issues on the coast, where land grabbing and land ownership rights are major issues. Political violence was another concern, particularly in the lead up to the 2017 national election. Project 3 also focussed on political/election-related issues and gang violence in the Nairobi slums.

2. Findings

2.1 Quality of project design and planning

Clarity of objectives and project logic

The projects were able to draw on experience from previous phases of the same intervention, or a similar one. Various forms of needs assessments were done, with local research being a cornerstone of the conflict resolution centre approach (Project 4). A significant feature of this approach was to include a formal education component in peacebuilding projects, with a particular emphasis on peace education (including the development of a manual to support this) and inter-ethnic schooling. This was important because peacebuilding in such complex situations often requires a long-term approach to engage the younger generation in seeking lasting solutions to conflict.

STORIES OF TRANSFORMATION: 1

In the Ishiara/Wenje Project (Project 1), communities related several examples of peace committees bringing disputing parties together; people who had used violence paying compensation; stolen cattle being returned and those responsible being punished; a school boundary issue being resolved; village elders resolving fights in markets; calming of tensions before elections.

The development of outcomes and setting of targets in human rights and peacebuilding projects is difficult, as these projects are not linear in nature. They may require external duty-bearers such as government or the business sector to change their behaviour, which is outside the control of the project. In a deteriorating situation, maintaining the status quo may be evidence of success (e.g. in relation to the number of property evictions or outbreaks of violence). In these circumstances, the approach adopted by Projects 1 and 4 is to have a graded set of outcomes ranging from immediate or short-term outcomes, to intermediate outcomes, to long-term outcomes. For example:

- Immediate outcomes reflecting attitudinal or behaviour change among the community members or participants arising from greater knowledge and understanding of issues as a result of workshops, discussions or training;

¹ Misesan Cara is a network whose membership consists of 91 missionary organisations. Support is provided to development projects via these **Member Organisations**, in this report abbreviated to "MOs".

² Due to the sensitive nature of some of the work described, it was decided not to name the projects involved.

- Intermediate outcomes reflecting action on the part of communities or participants; e.g. the development of peacebuilding or advocacy plans;
- Long-term outcomes where duty-bearers have been held to account; e.g. legal processes securing formal land tenure rights; perpetrators of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) prosecuted and jailed; or peace among warring parties.

(This approach is illustrated in Table 1 below).

STORIES OF TRANSFORMATION: 2

The Human Rights NGO (Project 2) noted clients obtaining support in relation to Gender-Based Violence or death threat issues (44) family maintenance (37) land disputes (31) road and other accidents (30) labour issues (21) defilement (10) and family disputes (9). Specific stories of change were provided also for access to justice for informal settlers, GBV and child protection issues and the land project.

Clarity on selection of target groups

In most cases the target communities were clearly defined as people who were living in extreme poverty or marginalised circumstances.

All projects made a conscious effort to include women and girls as much as possible; e.g. through inclusion of specific numbers of women in peace committees or village committees. This was not easy in paternalistic communities, where the participation of women in village meetings was somewhat muted in the presence of men, or they were absent due to work activities (e.g. Projects 1 and 4). However, establishing the principle of female participation was an important first step. Community research in Project 4 included 40% female participation in questionnaire responses, and 50% participation in focus group discussions. 50% of the 60,000 target beneficiaries in Project 2 were female. Project 4 specifically targeted children as the peace-makers of the future, including both boys and girls and including different ethnic groups.

Specific targeting of other vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities (PWD), orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs), and people living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA) was not a notable feature of the project designs, but some of these groups were supported through referral to other agencies.

Evidence of appropriate resourcing

The level of funding for all four projects appeared reasonable in relation to the scale of the intervention and the expectations from the project. The projects

also had a good level of technical capacity in relation to peacebuilding and human rights work. Projects 2 and 4 in particular emphasised diversity in relation to age, gender and ethnic background in their core teams. The decision made by Project 1 (Wenje/Ishiara) to bring in the technical expertise and experience of the conflict resolution centre (Project 4), rather than relying on internal or local resources proved very beneficial.

2.2 Quality of Project Implementation

Evidence of community/beneficiary participation

By its nature, peacebuilding and human rights work requires a high degree of community participation, and all projects emphasised this. Project 1 (Wenje and Ishiara) initially targeted community leaders and ‘opinion shapers’ as a way to get the whole community involved in peacebuilding efforts. Project 2 (Human Rights NGO) was based on building the capacity of local communities to assert their rights. It aimed to work where community leadership was already strong, and building trust between the NGO and the community was a key factor. Issues to be addressed emerged from the communities rather than from the NGO itself. The focus of Project 3 (academic institution) was on training at grassroots level. Women and men who were involved in the needs assessment were also involved in the design of training modules.

The conflict resolution centre (Project 4) did not have a direct presence in the communities but used local church structures as an entry point. The absence of a direct presence on the ground brought an advantage, as it pushed local leaders and communities to resolve issues without constant reference back to the centre, thus allowing the centre to maintain a degree of neutrality in contentious conflict-resolution processes.

STORIES OF TRANSFORMATION: 3

The academic institution project (No 3) provided many stories of transformation, including forming a peacebuilding committee to develop a framework to go to the county assembly; increased peer group discussions; and inter-faith discussions. Two NGO initiatives were noted also relating to a food project to reduce tensions, and a situation analysis of drug abuse. Five government-oriented initiatives were also documented, for example linking with the National Campaign against Alcohol and Drug Abuse; linking with the Department of Education; and representing youth on the County Tourism Board. Participants on the project also spoke of working with former gang members on peacebuilding, and on organising a walk to decry police brutality.

Evidence of appropriate linkages with government or other agencies

The projects generally had good linkages with other actors in the sector, but there were some gaps. The peacebuilding NGO had a wide range of links at local, county and national levels, and sought to build relationships between community networks and local authorities. It worked with District Peace Committees and civil society Peace Actors Networks. The academic institution had good links with other church-based agencies and local organisations in project implementation. The conflict resolution centre has linkages at international level.

Discussions with beneficiaries in Nairobi slums indicated that the same local groups had linkages to a wide variety of national and international peacebuilding agencies, suggesting that many of these external agencies may be focussing on the same groups and individuals, and not spreading their activities sufficiently. It also gave the impression of there being a large peacebuilding ‘industry’ in Kenya, attracting a high degree of international interest, particularly since the 2007 post-election violence, but with limitations to the overall co-ordination and quality of delivery.

2.3 Quality of Project Delivery

Level of achievement against objectives



Though most projects were making good progress, progress against original objectives was difficult to measure because of a lack of outcome level indicators and targets. This was the weakest area in relation to the overall effectiveness of the projects. When allowance was made for necessary adjustments to project plans in response to the immediate situation on the ground, all projects were seen to be making good progress.

Practical evidence of change for the beneficiaries

In the course of the review, many ‘stories of change’ or positive outcomes were noted. They are too numerous to list here, but some noteworthy examples are described in shaded boxes on previous pages.

The original review framework listed ten generic **Effectiveness Outcomes** relating to peacebuilding and human rights projects. Table 1 below shows how these can be categorised as immediate, intermediate or long-term outcomes, which may help to develop more appropriate results frameworks for this type of work.

Table 1: Potential Peacebuilding/Human Rights Effectiveness Outcomes

Generic types of Effectiveness Outcomes	Level of Outcomes
1. Improved knowledge and/or understanding of peace-building/conflict prevention/human rights issues;	Immediate Outcomes 
2. Improved attitudes and/ or behaviours towards peacebuilding and/conflict prevention/human rights issues;	
3. Evidence of increased self-confidence and life-skills among beneficiaries (e.g. on active citizenship or leadership) leading to potential for improvements in peace-building or fulfilment of human rights.	
4. Improved levels of trust and increased reporting and follow-up of incidences of violence or abuse, legal cases pursued on HUMAN RIGHTS issues;	
5. Reduced incidents of conflict or human rights breaches within the community or at a broader level;	
6. Reduced level of casualties/losses or thefts arising from conflict or abuse situations;	Intermediate Outcomes 
7. Increased levels of collaboration among participants, community members, or rival groupings (positive actions);	
8. Greater levels of stability/peace in communities, allowing normal life to proceed or improve – reduced risks;	Long-Term Outcomes
9. Improved economic or social development progress/opportunities (e.g. on education or livelihoods) that contribute(s) in turn towards improvements in peace-building or fulfilment of human rights	
10. Positive changes in policy or practice (laws/implementation of policy) by authorities (including community leadership) in relation to human right/peacebuilding issues – or at least progress in achieving change. Successful legal actions on HUMAN RIGHTS issues.	

Specific benefits for marginalised or vulnerable groups

All projects had had some success in relation to the participation of women in the context of patriarchal communities. The Wenje/Ishiara project succeeded in including 34 women (42%) in their peace groups. Women also noted that they were now better informed about decision-making at village level.

The human rights NGO project placed a strong emphasis on countering gender-based violence and on child protection. The work on countering witchcraft accusations also supported a particular vulnerable group, and the project linked PWD with specialist service providers. The academic institution project (Project 3) had 59% women participants, against a target of 50%. Follow-up measures by women were also noted, including a women's peace march, follow up on rape cases, women's involvement in church peace committees and peace chats on Twitter. A participation rate of 44% women was recorded in the peace committees established under the conflict resolution centre (Project 4) in Marsabit and Samburu. As already noted, the project had a strong focus on children from all ethnic groups. More encouragement may be necessary to facilitate and support women to participate actively in meetings, and women themselves requested the formation of specifically inter-ethnic women's groups.

STORIES OF TRANSFORMATION: 4

During the visit to Samburu County (Project 4) the transformative benefits achieved through promotion of inter-ethnic dialogue were noted, particularly relating to children of different ethnicities mixing in schools, and participation in peace clubs.

3. Specific Lessons for Peacebuilding and Human Rights Work

Specific examples of good practice and lessons for Peacebuilding and Human Rights work were noted for each project during the review process. Here they have been categorised by project design, implementation and evaluation/measurement stages:

3.1 Lessons for Project Design

- A comprehensive approach is of great value. Working to a clear peacebuilding strategy and framework, based on international best practice

conflict management and peacebuilding methodologies, and delivered through a logical process and plan, which may include:

- Initial mini baseline survey, conflict mapping, research and formation of peacebuilding groups;
 - Training of key influential stakeholders/community leaders, and plans for problem-solving workshops;
 - Clearly identified roles for trained groups;
 - The development of specific action plans;
 - Working to an overall results framework with immediate, intermediate and long-term outcomes, and expected impact.
- Recruiting a specialist peacebuilding agency to deliver the peacebuilding component can add value where in-house specialist expertise is not available;
 - Context specific analysis is crucial to understanding the nature of and reasons behind conflicts, and therefore to developing appropriate solutions;
 - Promoting alternative dispute resolution mechanisms and non-violent conflict transformation techniques can be very valuable;
 - Targeting of women for inclusion in peacebuilding projects is important. Even in a male-dominated society, women can have significant influence within their households, which affects how the male community leaders deal with conflict situations;
 - Emphasis on education, including inter-tribal education, and a specific peace education curriculum/manual is of great value to projects of this nature;
 - A human rights organisation does not have to be big to have an impact. Much can be achieved by good research on the ground, strong community-driven approaches and links to broader advocacy;
 - There are a large number of agencies and actors in the peacebuilding sector. Each agency should be clear on its own role, forging links for coherence and complementarity and not duplicating unnecessarily;
 - For peacebuilding or human rights interventions, requests for material economic support are inevitable. Specific economic supports can help, but the focus should be on enabling economic development rather than handouts.

3.2 Lessons for Project Implementation:

- Taking time to build trust with communities is important in the early stages;
- Always involve community leaders (both elected and traditional) and local officials when identifying participants for training at local level;
- Be led by those in the grassroots community who want to lead or resolve an issue;
- The use of innovative approaches such as the 'invisible theatre' approach can be useful to promote public discussions through 'accidental' public dialogue;
- Create scope for workshop participants to meet outside of formal trainings, in order to build up relationships, trust and interaction over time;
- Tailor training courses to reflect the education and ability of the participants;
- Make allowance for low levels of education in some communities, that may result in more time being needed for training and to develop action plans;
- Training certificates and IDs are important in establishing the credibility of trainees to address local conflict issues;
- Adapting the training programme to provide localised training rather than at central level can be beneficial.

3.3 Lessons for project evaluation and measurement

- It is good practice to conduct participant evaluations, and facilitators' evaluations at the end of training, and the end of the project as a whole;
- Downward accountability to communities is essential for peacebuilding and human rights work;
- Where many peacebuilding agencies are involved in a particular community, focus on the contribution that a particular agency can make, rather than the specific attribution of results to particular agencies;
- For peacebuilding or human rights work, it is important to have a formal field monitoring framework or tool.
- Indicators of process change (attitudes, behaviours) may in some circumstances be more significant than indicators of reduced violence, as the latter may be influenced by other factors.

4. Impact of the Missionary Approach

The five key dimensions of Misesan Cara's Missionary Approach to Development Interventions (MADI) were used to assess the positive impact of the missionary approach on the work and achievements of the four projects:

1. Long-term Local Presence

- A long-term presence on the ground was a significant factor in building trust with the communities (primarily Projects 1 and 2).

2. Holistic Approach

- Project 1 involved three different MOs/missionary agencies. There was a high degree of common understanding of approaches, principles and values among them;
- The Missionary Organisations' Christian values motivated them to listen, encourage, support and take time (e.g. Project 4);
- Implementing agencies/MOs were particularly sensitive about cultural, social and inter-faith issues, and on developing trust with Muslim communities and NGOs. They share prayers as well as work (Project 2);
- Inclusion of a peacebuilding component in a water/food security project was a good example of a holistic approach by the MOs involved (Project 1).

3. Prophetic Vision

- The projects are in difficult areas, and personal courage is required on the part of staff facing risk on a daily basis;
- Some small organisations (e.g. Project 2) had a high level of ambition and succeeded in delivering on it.

4. Personal Witness

- The commitment to environmental sustainability (care for creation) was particularly evident.

5. The Missionary Movement Crossing Boundaries

- The Church connection provided a good entry point into communities, and also at national level;

- The human rights NGO ‘lives on the edge’ of the Church. It is not a part of the formal structure of the Church, but gains respect from being Church-related;
- Projects use existing Church structures such as CJCPs and policies e.g. on child protection. The reach of the Church is also important in accessing remote communities;
- The Church network is used for broader advocacy linkages.

5. Overall conclusions

The peacebuilding and human rights projects reviewed were generally well designed and managed in practical terms and were substantially effective in their delivery of benefits to target groups. The weakest area in relation to effectiveness was in the demonstration of achievements in comparison with the original objectives of the projects. Much of this weaker performance was due to deficiencies in the results frameworks and measurement systems. Projects were able to provide a greater degree of practical evidence of benefits to communities through stories of change, and there was evidence also of specific benefits for the most vulnerable or marginalised groups.

For a relatively small agency, the human rights NGO (Project 2) was particularly effective in delivering a significant level of human rights support on a broad range of issues to marginalised and vulnerable people in three counties.

The conflict resolution centre’s approach (Project 4) is, in many respects, a model approach to peacebuilding, with a strong emphasis on local research to drive interventions; a systematic approach to implementation based on international best practice models of peacebuilding; a community driven way of working; the application of a results-based management system; and a forward-thinking focus on education for future generations of local peacebuilders.

The Wenje-Ishiara Project (No. 1) has done well to utilise the technical capacity of the fellow missionary conflict resolution centre to add a specific peacebuilding component to its broader Water for Food Security project.

The academic institution (Project 3) has a particular national-level niche within the peacebuilding sector and also now has practical experience on the ground. It is this well-placed to focus on building partnerships with others in this regard.

6. Recommendations

- a) Misesan Cara Member Organisations should place a greater emphasis on the **development of peacebuilding or human rights results frameworks** with clear outcomes, targets and means of verification, so that interventions can move beyond basic activities and outputs (such as workshops or training sessions) to deliver specific contextually-appropriate peacebuilding or human rights outcomes. Given the complex nature of this work, it is recommended that MOs apply outcomes at three levels: *immediate* (short-term) *intermediate* and *long-term*, as illustrated in Table 1 above.
- b) Given that so much peacebuilding and human rights work aims to generate changes in knowledge, attitudes and behaviours, MOs should **develop simple tools such as KAPB (Knowledge, Attitude, Practice and Belief) surveys** or questionnaires to measure change in these areas on a consistent basis.
- c) A greater emphasis should be placed by MOs on **seeking collaboration and complementarity** with other MOs in connecting work on the ground to national level and connecting practical project implementation with advocacy initiatives within the peacebuilding and human rights sector.
- d) Misesan Cara should provide **specific support for MOs in relation to the selection and measurement of peacebuilding and human rights outputs and outcomes** for projects. The 10 generic peacebuilding and human rights effectiveness outcomes outlined in Table 1 provide framework which could be applied and adapted for this purpose.
- e) Misesan Cara should provide specific support to MOs in the development of **simple tools for the measurement of attitudinal and behaviour change** in their peacebuilding and human rights projects.
- f) Misesan Cara should develop guidance on **the missionary approach to peacebuilding and human rights work**.

About Mísean Cara

Established in 2004, Mísean Cara is an international and Irish faith-based missionary development movement made up of 91 member organisations working in over 50 countries. We work with some of the most marginalised and vulnerable people in developing countries. Adopting a human rights focus, we support communities addressing basic needs in the areas of education, health, and livelihoods, as well as advocating for economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights. At times of humanitarian crisis, the trusted and long-term presence of missionaries in affected communities also allows for rapid, efficient and targeted responses.

Mísean Cara and our members work collectively and individually through the missionary approach to development. This framework is based on five values: respect, justice, commitment, compassion and integrity. Together, these establish the basis for the approach of missionaries to good development practice.

Our Strategy 2017-2021 identifies five goals:

- Uphold the right to quality education
- Uphold the right to better health, clean water and sanitation
- Uphold the right to sustainable livelihoods
- Uphold and advocate for human rights
- Enhance and promote the missionary approach to development.

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Further expressing our desire to reach the most vulnerable and marginalised, the Strategy will see Mísean Cara bringing a particular focus to bear on targeting five groups: women, children, refugees, displaced people and people with disabilities.