



CONCERNED CITIZENS FOR PEACE

Giving a voice to Kenyan citizens to engage and contribute in the creation of peace and hope

CCP REPORT

INTRODUCTION

Following the announcement of the disputed presidential elections and the subsequent violence, there emerged an urgent need to initiate a process that would have national appeal for calm as solutions were being sought. The Concerned Citizens for Peace (CCP) led by renowned mediators, peace builders and diplomats, was formally launched on 1st January 2008. It immediately emerged as a crucial vehicle for rallying Kenyans around the call for peace and dialogue. The initial step was to call upon Kenyans through the media to shun violence, and stop the killings and wanton destruction of property. CCP at the same time began making contacts with the leadership of the leading political parties, as well as encouraging international solidarity and support. As other initiatives emerged (the humanitarian response, religious leaders, civil society-led efforts and the national dialogue process, etc), the role of CCP in bridging the gap between these initiatives became important. CCP's key initiatives can be grouped as follows:

1. Supporting high-level political dialogue
2. Creating public awareness by spreading positive messages to dissuade people from engaging in violence and retaliation
3. Advocating peace through the mass media
4. Encouraging dialogue at the grassroots level
5. Linking civil society initiatives with the national dialogue and reconciliation process

These initiatives can further be categorized as Upstream, Middle level and Downstream activities.

UP STREAM – *supporting the top level mediation and dialogue process.*

- Facilitating the initial contact with Protagonists
- Requesting former president of Sierra Leone Ahmed Tejan Kabbah to stay on and help in the initial contacts
- Support to Desmond Tutu visit
- Interacting with and briefing former African heads of states (Chisano, Masire, Kaunda, Mkapa)
- Discussions with other interveners, including Kenya-based and international diplomats, UN Secretary General
- Process support to mediator (briefing papers)

To support this upstream process, CCP created a small task team (the Technical and Strategy Team) of 12 members to take forward the ideas from the Open Forum (see

below). This team helps in the distillation and use of ideas to support the work of the National Mediation Process as well as inform the day to day local action through media outreach.

MIDDLE STREAM - *to support middle level key public and private institutions and key individuals who have capacity to improve practice and link into policy framework nationally.*

a) Mobilizing the government/ public institutions

1. Ministry of education

- Concern about the effects of the crisis on the soon to be opened schools and universities led to a visit to the Ministry of Education and a meeting with the Permanent Secretary who is the senior-most civil servant in the Ministry. The permanent secretary organised a further meeting with heads of Secondary schools in Kenya and Education officers both at district and national level. This meeting took place on the 15th January 2008 and focused on Education for Peace in School and First aid in Trauma Healing for the school communities (teachers, students and non teaching staff).
- A meeting with the vice chancellor of the public universities discussing the impact of the post election violence on the public universities and the strategies to mitigate the impact. This led to meeting with the Ministry of Youth affairs and dialogue with student leaders from the public Universities bringing about their role in contributing to the national dialogue and safety and security in their universities.

2. Ministry of Internal Security and Reforms

- Visit to the ministry of Internal Security led to discussions on strategies for cooperation that could add value to the initiatives by the government. The meetings agreed on a strategic partnership linking CCP to the permanent secretaries' initiatives.
- Meeting with Permanent Secretary in charge of Public sector Reforms and also a member of the inter-Ministerial committee on Humanitarian Response and Peace Building. The meeting discussed the establishment of a collaborative framework for dialogue and Peace Building from the ground up.

b) Mobilizing the Media

The FM vernacular stations have taken a role in the fuelling of the conflict during the campaign period. After an initial discussion with a small group of presenters they agreed to mobilise 50 local vernacular stations for a ½ day training on Conflict and Peace sensitivity in radio programming. A public dialogue session with the 50 media houses led to a commitment from the presenters to hold the country together and take active roles in Building Peace through the radio.

A follow up meeting with the Media Council of Kenya was held, where the discussion focused on the need to train journalists on peace journalism and revisit the gap in the **code of conduct**.

DOWN STREAM – to support local level pragmatic actions by key individuals, groups and institutions to transform local violence, mobilize for change and offer practical support for confidence building and healing.

a) Open Forum

At the launch of CCP, the initiators called upon Kenyans to join and contribute their thoughts towards the resolution of the crisis. The Open Forum became the place where Kenyans of all walks of life came together to reflect, analyse and strategise, connect and act jointly. In the first month of the crisis, the Open Forum met for 2-3 hours every day. Each session is attended by anything between thirty and sixty persons from different backgrounds.

The issues generated from the analysis sessions of the Open Forum formed the basis of the paper entitled The Citizens Agenda for Peace launched on 9th January 2008. The paper was widely circulated locally and on the internet, and was shared with diplomats and eminent persons. The paper was also shared with the Inter Religious Forum in order to avoid duplication and create synergy between initiatives.

b) Support to Nairobi Province

At a point when violence was threatening to engulf the capital city of Nairobi, CCP saw an urgent need in mobilising for peace in Nairobi. Activities here have included:

- Formation of the Nairobi Peace Forum comprising of the NSC Secretariat, Nairobi Province Security Committee and key line ministries of Education, Youth, Health and Information. Other sectors included Jua-Kali (informal sector) Association, Resident Associations, Kenya Private Sector Alliance, Maendeleo Ya Wanawake (the leading women's organisation in Kenya) and Non Governmental Organizations such as Safer World and Peace net.
- Formation of District Peace Committees covering the three Nairobi districts (Nairobi North, Nairobi West and Nairobi East) with the support of three organizations which have extensive experience of the district Peace Committee Model. These committees are now fully operational and working to build relationships between the citizens and state institutions.
- Training and capacity building plan for Nairobi Province targeting all sectors of society both at the district and Provincial level;
 - Training of Provincial and district security committees for Nairobi province and adjacent towns of Kiambu, Machakos, Thika, Kajiado is scheduled for 20th February 2008.
 - Other training planned to target youth, community leaders, women and ex-service men and women.
 - A training module has been developed to cater for the training needs.

c) Decent Burials and Mourning initiatives

1. Decent Burials

The nature of the crisis and the numbers of deaths that caused meant that there was an accumulation of bodies in morgues, streets and even people's homes. At

the same time, the people's ability to bury their dead in a dignified and culturally acceptable manner was severely limited. CCP helped to mobilise resources and supported communities in Kisumu, Eldoret, Nakuru and Nairobi in burying their dead. This became an important way of encouraging healing.

2. Mourning

Some of the participants in the Open Forum came up with the idea of using flowers as an expression of mourning and memorialisation. Following weeks of negotiation with the Government, permission was granted to build a temporary memorial and lay flowers at the hitherto and heavily guarded and sealed Uhuru Park. Within a matter of days, the flowers memorial was attracting people from all walks of life including politicians and the police who all brought flowers to the memorial. Flowers were also laid in other towns such as Kisumu and Eldoret, including at the site of the church that was burned with 35 people in it.

WAY FORWARD

In the next 3-6 months, CCP plans to continue its work and do the following:

1. Continue the open forum meeting but on a weekly basis (at the height of the crisis, the Open Forum meeting was held every morning for 2 hours). The venue of the meeting would be shifted from Serena Hotel to make it more accessible and less expensive.
2. Popularisation and monitoring of the agreement. This will be done through the Open Forum and the mass media.
3. Encouraging continued political dialogue and co-operation. This will be done through creation of relationship building forums for political leaders from different sides of the divide.
4. Engagement with Kenya Diaspora.
5. Supporting downstream activities including:
 - a. Creation of peace building structures in collaboration with the Civil Society and the Provincial administration.
 - b. Encouraging and supporting the initiatives of religious leaders.
 - c. Encouraging and supporting community dialogue processes.
6. Provide criti-constructive accompaniment to some of the structures agreed upon through the National Dialogue Process such as:
 - The Independent Review Commission to look at the 2007 electoral process.
 - The proposed Truth Justice and Reconciliation Commission.

In all this, CCP's vision is to continue to be a non-partisan, inclusive space for citizens' expression and contribution to the restoration of peace and healing in Kenya.

CONCLUSION

CCP applauds and welcomes the signing of agreements pertaining to agenda items (1) up to (3) and are hopeful that the remaining issues will be concluded in the coming weeks. We see this as a very positive development that could signal the return of peace to Kenya. However, as in all peace processes, the signing of an agreement is never the same as the resolution of conflict. The sustainability of an agreement depends on what happens after its signing. The role of vigilant monitoring encouragement and critical discernment remains crucial.

The above suggested roles of CCP are broad and mostly indicative. A lot of what CCP finally does will depend on the unfolding process and dynamics. Finally, CCP greatly appreciates the initiative of USIP to support its work at a very critical moment even without the benefit of clearly articulated programmes and activities. We hope that this commendable spirit will continue in the coming months.

Source: http://www.rightlivelihoodaward.org/fileadmin/Files/PDF/Literature_Recipients/Dekha_Abdi/CCP_Report_03-2008.pdf