



Children Led **Community Peace Labs**



KAJIADO PEACEBUILDING AND PEER MEDIATION TRAINING CLCP-LABS LEARNING WORKSHOP FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

In Collaboration with Amani Communities Africa

Sponsored By



April 2024 Report

“

**A child's life is like wet cement;
when you touch it, you leave a mark.**

”

Joy Gitau

CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

Kajiado County, located in the southern part of Kenya, is a predominantly rural area with diverse landscapes ranging from arid plains to highlands. Ngong, a town situated near the Ngong Hills, is one of the notable regions within Kajiado. While Ngong and its surrounding areas are known for their scenic beauty, they face significant challenges that impact the well-being and education of children.

Among the challenges faced by children within this region are severe challenges due to the adverse impacts of climate change, including erratic weather patterns, prolonged droughts, and occasional floods; educational barriers signified by High pupil-to-teacher ratios, inadequate infrastructure and cultural practices; and resources and land conflicts exacerbated by climate change and other factors.

Addressing these issues requires collaborative efforts from local communities and relevant stakeholders to create sustainable solutions that ensure the health, safety, and educational development of the children.

One way of the efforts is supporting teachers. Equipping teachers with mediation and conflict transformation training is crucial as they play a vital role in fostering a peaceful and supportive learning environment. Mediation skills enable teachers to manage and resolve conflicts effectively within the school setting, promoting a culture of peace and cooperation among and between the learners, teachers, parents and community at large.

CLCP-LABS LEARNING WORKSHOP

23rd - 24th April 2024 | Kajiado County

APRIL LEARNING WORKSHOP



The learning workshop took place on 23rd and 24th of April 2024 at Oloolua Primary School in Ngong Sub County, Kajiado County. 15 teachers from 3 primary schools participated in the workshop. The participating schools included:

Oloolua Primary School Oletepesi Primary School Calvary Baptist Academy	}	Kajiado County
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DAY ONE

1

INTRODUCTION

The workshop commenced with a round of introductions, where each participant, facilitator, and convenors had the opportunity to introduce themselves. This initial activity was crucial in setting a collaborative tone and fostering a sense of community among all attendees.

Following the introductions, the participants collaboratively developed a set of guiding rules to ensure a productive and respectful learning environment throughout the two-day workshop. This exercise helped create a shared sense of responsibility and commitment to the workshop's success.

Once the ground rules were established, the participants were introduced to a body-centering activity. This activity was designed to help participants become more aware of their physical presence and to promote a state of mindfulness and relaxation. By centering their bodies, participants could better focus their attention and fully engage with the workshop's content and activities.

Throughout the workshop, the emphasis was on creating an inclusive and supportive environment where everyone felt valued and heard. The structured introduction, collaborative rule-setting, and body-centering exercise were all integral in achieving this goal, setting a positive and productive tone for the remainder of the training.

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Session:

1

Self-Awareness

The session guided participants on a journey of discovering their identity and finding their true selves. The exercise "Who are you?" encouraged participants to recognize their intrinsic identities, separate from their societal roles, achievements, appearances, and emotions. The participants gained deeper insights into their personal identities, which laid a strong foundation for further learning and growth throughout the workshop.

Further, participants differentiated between personality and character. Some notable responses included:

Leiyen: "Character is adaptive while personality is innate."

Doreen: "Personality can be influenced."

The facilitator, Sahlim Charles, emphasized the importance of self-awareness for educators, stating that it is important for the teachers know who they are because they impart lives on their learners. Participants were encouraged to continuously discover and improve themselves by:

- 1) Observing their patterns,
- 2) Journaling their journeys,
- 3) Reading to understand what they can and cannot change,
- 4) Establishing strategies to mitigate issues in their lives, and
- 5) Seeking help when needed.

This session laid a strong foundation for further learning and growth, underscoring the importance of self-awareness in personal and professional development.



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Anthony

I have been able to recognize who I am, my strengths and weaknesses

Timothy

"Knowing who you are helps you know your uniqueness"

Participants Reflection

Joyce

Self awareness helps boost one's self-esteem

Peter

"This session has really opened my eyes"

Key Take-away

"Being aware of who you are, helps you appreciate other people's ability" Doreen Gitau, Oloolua Primary School

Session:

2

In the second session, participants engaged in some activities explore the roots of conflict. They discussed the factors that lead to differences and how these differences can spark conflict. One particularly insightful activity, known as the "6 picture" activity, prompted participants to reflect on what they believed were sources of conflict. Participants shared their reflections from the activity.

These reflections led to a broader discussion on understanding different perspectives and the importance of empathizing with others by metaphorically "wearing the other person's shoes." This exercise emphasized the value of acknowledging and appreciating diverse viewpoints to mitigate potential conflicts.

The session then delved into the specific causes of conflict, identifying perception and unmet human needs—such as social, psychosocial, economic, physical, and safety needs—as primary factors. Participants learned that conflict often arises when we fail to recognize or address the needs of others. This was illustrated through the story of the orange

Participants offered various solutions:

Participants 1 suggested that it should be divided into two halves and each child given a piece.

Participants 2 suggested that the orange should be cut into many pieces.

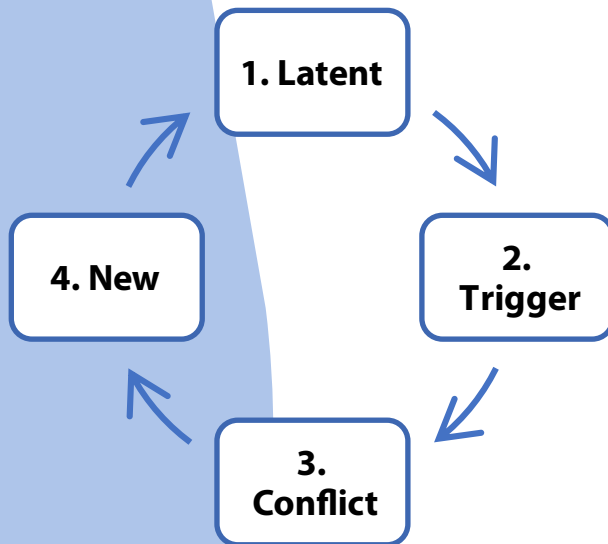
Participants 3 recommended finding another orange so that each child has a whole orange.

These responses highlighted how conflicts can escalate when parties do not communicate their needs and instead stick rigidly to their positions. By understanding and addressing the underlying needs and interests of all parties involved, conflicts can be more effectively managed and resolved.

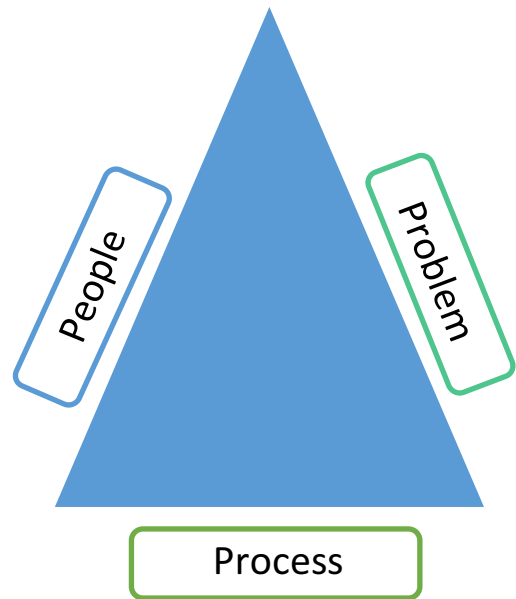
Participants further learnt the different types and phases of conflict. There are several levels that conflicts happen

- a) Interpersonal & Intrapersonal
- b) Intragroup & Intergroup
- c) National & International

Phases of Conflict



3 PS of Conflict



The story of an orange- Once upon a time there was a mother who had two children. One day, the kids came to the mother fighting. There was one orange left in the house and they both wanted it--typical of small children. The mother takes the orange from the crying children and asks them why they want it. When asked, one child expresses the desire to make orange juice. The other is baking muffins and needs to shave the peel into the recipe. The children, with the help of their mother, compromise. By allowing one to make all the juice he or she wants, giving the leftover peel to the other only once every drop of juice has been squeezed out of it, the other gets the entire peel intact. Both are therefore satisfied.

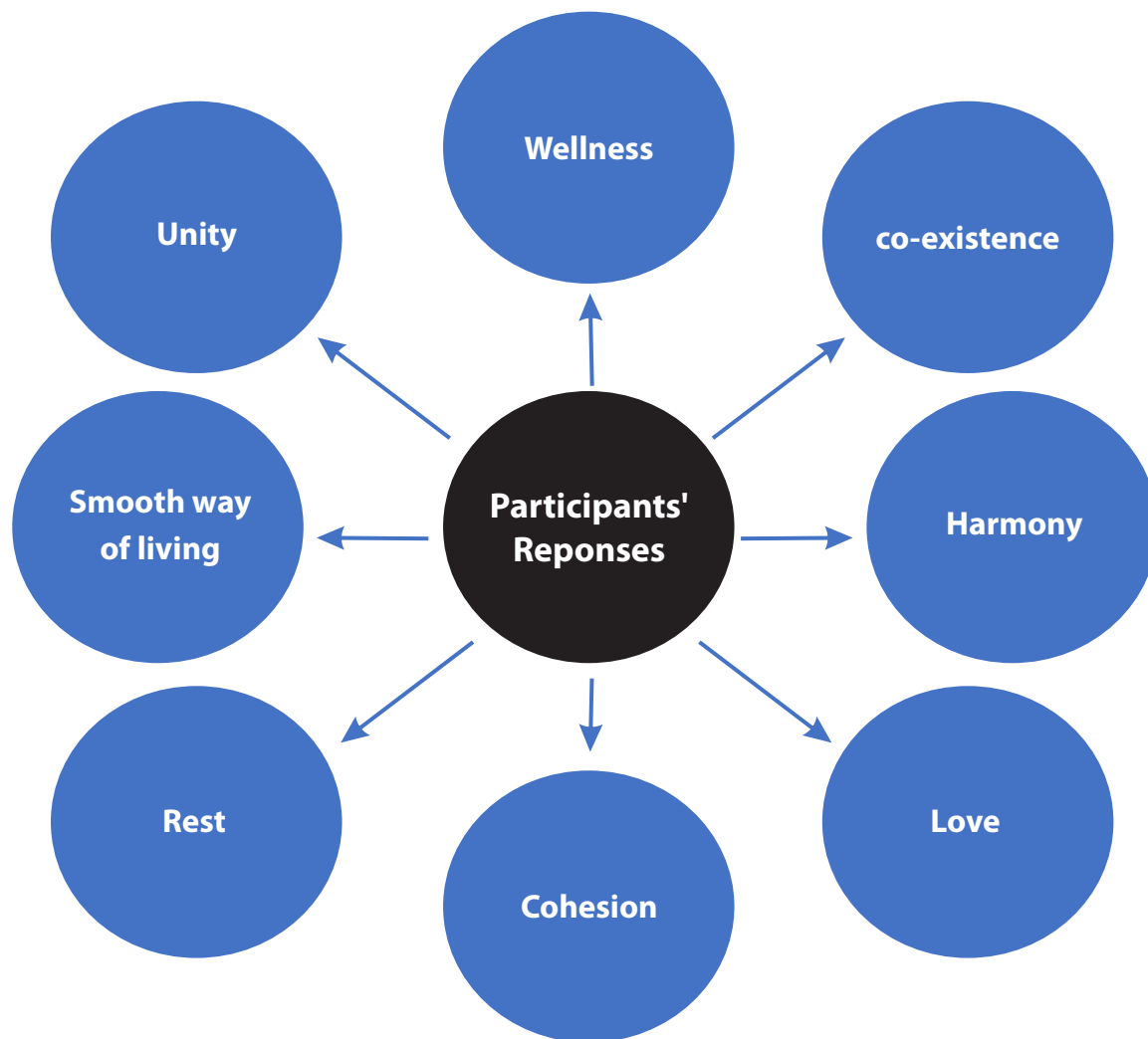
Key Take-away

Conflict often arises due to unmet human needs such as social, psychosocial, economic, physical, and safety needs. By openly communicating needs and interests, conflicts can be managed more effectively.

Introduction to Peacebuilding

As an introductory to this session, participants learnt about the importance of relationship building. The participants were taken through the different level of relationship circles in their capacity as teachers can Being teachers. They learnt that understanding and nurturing your relationships are important to developing as a peacebuilder.

What comes to your mind when you hear the word peace?



Participants worked in groups to come up with a class definition of PEACE. This exercise encouraged them to share their ideas and perspectives, fostering a deeper understanding of what peace means to each individual and to the group as a whole.



After thoughtful discussions and collaboration, the class arrived at a comprehensive definition of peace: **"Peace is a deliberate effort, action, process, and activity to co-exist in tranquility."**

This definition emphasizes that peace is not merely a passive state but an active pursuit. It involves intentional actions and continuous processes to ensure harmonious co-existence. The participants recognized that achieving peace requires ongoing commitment and active participation from all individuals involved.

Further, participants delved into discussing some of the peace processes they had been involved in or witnessed within their communities, whether in Kenya or on an international scale. The exercise prompted participants to reflect and share what they had observed, emphasizing how these processes contributed to peacebuilding efforts within their respective contexts. Specifically, participants engaged in discussions about local peacebuilding efforts they had witnessed firsthand.

These examples showcased the diverse range of strategies and initiatives undertaken to promote peace within their respective contexts. By sharing their experiences, participants not only gained a deeper understanding of effective peacebuilding methods but also inspired others with tangible examples of positive change within their communities.

Key Take-away

With a clear understanding of what peacebuilding entailed, participants renewed their commitment to promoting peace within themselves and their communities and expressed a desire to further explore peace concepts, enhance self-awareness, and embrace positive approaches to peacebuilding.

Managing Conflict

Building on day one discussion, this session provided participants with valuable insights into the dynamics of conflict and its impact on relationships.

Participants were guided through the psychological and emotional effects of conflict on individuals, understanding how mishandling conflict can strain relationships. In managing conflict, particularly dealing with difficult conversation participants were encouraged to consider key questions such as, "Is the conversation worth having?" and "What are the risks and rewards for yourself, the relationship, and the group/organization?" These questions help individuals distinguish between genuine danger and fear, aiding in the assessment and planning of how to address challenging topics.

The session included a role-playing exercise where participants acted out a difficult conversation scenario between a trainee teacher and a senior teacher, while the rest observed and provided feedback. Observers focused on improving the conversation, ensuring the issue was clear, evaluating body language, and assessing the overall tone of the interaction. This exercise was repeated with different participants until the group achieved the desired outcome of the conversation, fostering practical skills in managing conflict.

To further solidify their understanding, participants were divided into groups to discuss the positive and negative risks, as well as the short-term and long-term rewards of conflict. Using scenarios from their school settings, they analyzed the potential outcomes and developed strategies for managing conflicts effectively in their work environments. This group activity helped participants apply theoretical concepts to real-life situations, enhancing their conflict management skills.

Key Take-away

Understanding the psychological effects of conflict and using strategic communication techniques can significantly improve the management of conflict.

Mediation

Participants were introduced to mediation, delving into its nature and essential principles which includes omni partiality/impartiality, voluntariness, confidentiality, collaboration, good faith, non-adversarial approach, fairness, and cultural sensitivity. These principles are fundamental to ensuring that the mediation process is effective and equitable for all parties involved.

The facilitator, Joy Gitau, highlighted several advantages of mediation, including:

- a) Parties being able to make their own decisions
- b) The process focuses on future outcomes.
- c) The process aims for a win-win resolution
- d) The mediation process helps build relationships, and is cost-effective.

These advantages demonstrate why mediation is a preferred method for resolving conflicts, as it promotes cooperative and sustainable solutions.

To deepen participants' understanding, a video was shown that illustrated the essence of mediation process. The video helped participants grasp the practical application of



mediation principles and reinforced the theoretical knowledge shared by the facilitator. Further, the participants learnt several qualities that a skilled mediator possesses.

These include:

- Deep understanding of conflict resolution techniques and strong communication skills, allowing them to navigate complex situations and guide conversations effectively.
- Attentiveness and open-minded
- Active listening, creating an environment where all voices are heard and valued.
- Stability, providing a steady presence during mediation.
- Patience required to manage prolonged and challenging dialogues.
- Compassion, empathy, and understanding, essential for building trust and rapport among parties.
- Ability to validate and acknowledge feelings without judgment, skillfully managing and holding difficult emotions to facilitate a constructive resolution.

Key Take-away

Mediation with its emphasis on impartiality, collaboration, and cultural sensitivity, is a powerful tool for peacebuilding and conflict management, complementing the skills and insights gained by the participants in earlier sessions.

Communication Skills

This session emphasized the importance of understanding the type of questions to ask, the timing, and the purpose behind them. Participants explored how different types of questions impact the establishment and maintenance of meaningful conversations, which are essential in conflict resolution.

An activity challenged participants to construct an open-ended, non-leading question that wasn't a "why" question. This exercise highlighted the complexity of effective questioning. One of the participants' expressing a common fear, "I feel like I could ruin everything with one question."

This sentiment guided the discussion towards designing questions that consider the consequences and aim to bring clarity to feelings, perceptions, and ideas.

Participants also discussed the importance of active listening, reinforcing that thoughtful questioning and attentive listening are vital for effective communication. They delving into discussing the essence of both verbal and non-verbal communication in remaining present-focused during conversations.

The principle that "*you get what you asked for*" encapsulated the session's goal, emphasizing that well-crafted questions and active listening are foundational to peacebuilding and conflict transformation.

Key Take-away

Effective questioning and active listening enable deeper understanding and more constructive dialogues.



Conclusion



Over the course of the two-day workshop, participants gained practical skills essential for conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Beginning with self-awareness and the dynamics of conflict, and progressing through mediation techniques and effective communication skills, the sessions equipped participants with the knowledge and tools needed to manage and transform conflicts within educational settings. The workshop placed on understanding personal identities, recognizing the sources and effects of conflict, and utilizing mediation and active listening to foster positive interactions and sustainable peace.

The workshop concluded with the issuance of participation certificates and commitments from the conveners of the workshop (**Re-Imagining New Communities and Amani Communities Africa**) to support ongoing learning and the implementation of peer mediation in schools. The workshop was deemed a resounding success, highlighting the importance of continued education and active engagement in cultivating a culture of peace and understanding in schools.



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