

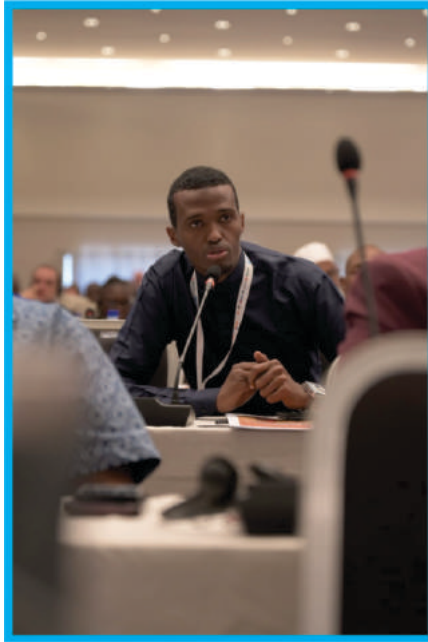


Annual Report 2023

Agents Of Peace



WORD FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear All,

I hope this message finds you in good health and spirits. As we reflect on the past year, I am incredibly proud to share with you the progress and impact of Agents of Peace in our mission to foster peacebuilding, promote peace education, and engage in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE) activities at the grassroots level.

Over the course of the year, we have remained steadfast in our commitment to empowering communities to become agents of change in building a more peaceful world. Through our various initiatives, we have witnessed firsthand the transformative power of education, dialogue, and collective action.

Peacebuilding Initiatives: Our peacebuilding efforts have reached new heights, with our dedicated team working tirelessly to mediate conflicts, promote reconciliation, and cultivate environments of understanding and cooperation. Through targeted interventions in conflict-affected areas, we have facilitated dialogue among diverse stakeholders, leading to tangible outcomes that have improved the lives of countless individuals and communities.

Peace Education Programs: Education lies at the heart of our work, and this

past year has seen our peace education programs expand and flourish. By equipping individuals with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to resolve conflicts peacefully, we are sowing the seeds for a more harmonious future. From workshops and seminars to curriculum development and teacher training, we are empowering the next generation of peacemakers to lead with empathy, compassion, and resilience.

PCVE Activities: In our efforts to prevent and counter violent extremism, we have adopted a multifaceted approach that addresses the root causes of radicalization while promoting inclusive and resilient communities. Through community engagement, youth empowerment initiatives, and partnerships with local authorities, we are working proactively to challenge extremist narratives and build social cohesion. By addressing grievances, providing alternative pathways, and promoting tolerance and acceptance, we are making meaningful strides in safeguarding our communities against the threat of violence and extremism.

Looking ahead, we are committed to building on our successes and confronting the challenges that lie ahead with determination and resolve. Together, as Agents of Peace, we have the power to effect positive change and create a world where peace reigns supreme.

I extend my deepest gratitude to each and every one of you for your unwavering support and dedication to our cause. Together, we are making a difference—one community, one individual at a time.

With warm regards,

Mohamed Abdirizak Abdullahi
Founder and Executive Director
Agents of Peace

Countering radicalization and community level extremism through knowledge creation, movement building and popular engagements.

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Agents of Peace [AoP] is a non-profit organisation in Kenya that works to Prevent and to Counter Violent Extremism and Radicalization within the community and to promote peaceful coexistence among our society; regardless of religious, ethnicity and tribal backgrounds. The organisation envisions to promote peaceful co-existence among our societies through providing a platform for peace in which people's differences and misunderstanding can be dealt with non-violently and through dialogue and discussions.

To achieve the overarching goal the organisation received funding from Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung to implement the project "Countering radicalization and community level extremism through knowledge creation, movement building and popular engagements" in Kamukunji Sub-county, Nairobi County. The project delivers its mandate through a series of activities geared towards empowering key social actors on prevention of CVE, enhancing prospects for peace and security. Its core activities include street campaigns addressing and awareness on violent extremism and terrorism, peace walks against terrorism attacks, peace summit with religious leaders to address radicalization and true meaning of jihad in Islam and university programs on preventing/ countering violent extremism and radicalization leading to terrorism. It also uses education, dialogue and forum discussions as evidence has shown this is a powerful weapon against CVE as it equips young people with the knowledge, skills and critical thinking to challenge and debate in an informed way. Any prejudice, discrimination or extremist views, including derogatory language, based on religion, ethnicity or tribal displayed by religious leaders, students or youth within our community will always be challenged and where appropriate, dealt with according to both Christian and Islamic values. Student Open Dialogue is one of the mechanisms AoP used to counter extremists and foster integration and cohesion among community members. In this activity, AoP facilitates learners and school administrations through the club patrons to co-create school clubs, club programs and exchange program methodology across the 8 schools participating in the program. Primarily, the Open Dialogues Program provides safe spaces for students to build knowledge, capacity and confidence as well as enhance learners' communication and critical thinking skills by facilitating constructive CVE-centric debates and discussions between peers.

On the 16th of March 2023, AoP facilitated a Student Open Dialogue session at, New Eastleigh Primary School. The activity drew participation of children and youth in primary, junior secondary and secondary level of education from seven learning institutions in Kamukunji Sub-county, namely:

- Kamukunji Secondary School,
- Punwani Riyadha Integrated Academy,
- Punwani Child Survival School,
- Zawadi Primary School,
- Sunny Vale Primary School,
- Sunny Vale Junior Secondary School,
- New Eastleigh Primary School.

The activity was attended by a total of 213 students across the 7 schools, accompanied by 14 teachers. The occasion was also graded by external stakeholders and AoP staff and volunteers. Some of the key stakeholders who graced the occasion included the area Deputy County Commissioner of Kamukunji Sub-county, Mr Kamau, the chief of the location, and the Eastleigh Garage Sublocation Assistant Chief, Mr Mohammed.

Activities carried out

The open dialogue forum was entirely community led to ensure inclusivity and participation of all community members. While AoP staff did the planning and coordination for the activity, the different stakeholders took charge of its facilitation.

The dialogue forum emulated the structure of a debate. The facilitators provided a brief context on the topic of debate, "Peace Building and Personal Development". The different schools present were then given 20 minutes to discuss the topic amongst themselves and make a presentation on the topic to all attendees.

A panel of three judges were present to provide feedback on each of the schools' presentations. The assessment criteria involved looking at each student group's understanding of the topic, contextual knowledge, relevance of the presentations and the ability to communicate effectively. The students, dubbed peace ambassadors, would then receive feedback that would integrate into peace responsive training to support them to continue fostering cohesion and integration within their communities.

Results achieved.

Across all three adjudicators, it was noted that the peace ambassadors from each school were contextually accurate. All the presentations were in line with the theme of the day and topic of discussion.

The team of judges also mentioned that the presentations were relevant to the topic of the day. Most of the peace ambassadors collectively talked about conflict management and mitigation, the need for patriotism, defined peace and ways to live in peace and harmony within the community, and ways of fostering cohesion. However, it was noted that the peace ambassadors still needed some indepth coaching to internalise and advocate for peace and cohesion, rather than just narrations. This was evidenced by the fact that most presenters did not use any local examples or scenarios to validate their deep knowledge of the topic. It was noted that more work needs to be done to ensure peace ambassadors have indepth understanding of the challenges at local community level and are able to take initiative within their individual capacities to act on them.

However, for the primary school students, it was noted that the presentations were very short. This is partly attributed to the fact that at primary school level, confidence and public speaking is a skill that is often neglected. While the content was relevant and accurate, the delivery skills needed some improvement. This would particularly be essential when the peace ambassadors are called upon or provided an opportunity to address the community. Some of the presenters were also not audible, contributing to the need to include public speaking into program activities.

The judges also noted that the presentation style for most schools was a standard speech. While acknowledging the time provided for preparation was short, they hoped there would be diversity in delivery methods such as games, skits, sing along and poems. These diverse methods of presentation mainly featured in the

plenary session where the master of ceremony encouraged individuals to step up and present any items using skills and talents they had.

Finally, AoP was commended for the good work they were doing within the community to foster peace and cohesion. It was noted that the recognition of the work they do was a huge contributor to the success of the event. This also enabled the teachers and students take time off their school break holiday to attend and participate in the open dialogue session.

Recommendations

- The teachers requested that more time be allocated to preparation for the activity in order to allow them sufficient lead-time to prepare the students for the debate.
- The teachers leading the peace clubs in the various schools noted that coordination of activities would be easier within them if they had an administrative committee. They therefore decided to form one and a point a lead who will be in direct contact with AoP.



INTER-GENERATION COMMUNITY DIALOGUE FORUM ON P.C.V.E through Knowledge creation, movement building and popular engagements.

Community Engagement Dialogue Report

Location: CITY COTTON SUB-LOCATION

UHURU LOCATION

SNR PRINCIPAL CHIEF'S CAMP

Date: November 16TH , 2023.



Agents of Peace [AoP] is a non-profit organisation in Kenya that works to Prevent and to Counter Violent Extremism and Radicalization within the community and to promote peaceful coexistence among our society; regardless of religious, ethnicity and tribal backgrounds. The organisation envisions to promote peaceful co-existence among our societies through providing a platform for peace in which people's differences and misunderstanding can be dealt with non-violently and through dialogue and discussions.

To achieve the overarching goal the organisation received funding from Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung to implement the project "Countering radicalization and community level extremism through knowledge creation, movement building and popular engagements" in Kamukunji Sub-county, Nairobi County. The project delivers its mandate through a series of activities geared towards empowering key social actors on prevention of CVE, enhancing prospects for peace and security. Its core activities include street campaigns, addressing and awareness on violent extremism and terrorism, peace walks against terrorism attacks, peace summit with religious leaders to address radicalization and true meaning of jihad in Islam and university programs on preventing and countering violent extremism and radicalization leading to terrorism. It also uses education, dialogue and forum discussions, as evidence has shown this is a powerful weapon against CVE as it equips young people with the knowledge, skills and critical thinking to challenge and debate in an informed way. Any prejudice, discrimination or extremist views, including derogatory language, based on religion, ethnicity or tribal displayed by religious leaders, students or youth within our community will always be challenged and, where appropriate, dealt with according to both Christian and Islamic values.

Community Open Dialogue

Community Open Dialogue is one of the mechanisms AoP is using to counter extremists and foster integration and cohesion among community members. In this activity, AoP facilitates Key community Non-state actors, stakeholders, and National Government Policing Agencies through public sensitization forums, open community dialogues forums and training forums for and between the community and Government Policing Agencies. Primarily, the Open Community Dialogues Forums provide an avenue of interaction and fact finding sessions for the community and G.P.A to gain knowledge, capacity and foster a working cohesive relationship as well as enhance each other understanding of roles, duties and mandates required to achieve desired goals and results.

● On the November 16th , 2023, AoP facilitated a INTER-GENERATION FORUM session at. Snr Principal Chief's Camp City Cotton Sub- location. The activity drew participation from the Community, Non- State Actors and Government Policing Agencies chiefly the Administration arm of the Government from the sub-location City Cotton constituents.

The activity was attended by a total of 73 attendees and N.G.A.O City Cotton Sub-Location and Uhuru Location.. The occasion was also graded by external stakeholders and AoP staff and volunteers. Some of the key stakeholders who graced the occasion included the area Snr Principal Chief Mr. Hillary Chumo of Kamukunji Sub-county, Uhuru Location, the Area Assistant chief of the Sub- location City Cotton Mr. Mutuku, Kamukunji Sub-County Peace and Security Committee Chairperson Mr. Kennedy Isigi.

Activities carried out

The open dialogue forum was entirely community and Non-State actors led to ensure inclusivity and participation of all community members. While AoP staff did the planning and coordination for the activity, the different stakeholders took charge of its facilitation and moderation.

The dialogue forum emulated the structure of an open interactive dialogue. The facilitators provided a brief context on the topic of dialogue, "Inter-Generation Forum on P.C.V.E".

A moderator was present to ensure relevance, inclusivity, informed dialogue, debate, deliberations and or discussion and provide feedback / guidance on each of the pertinent issues raised.

The attendees, now informed, shall be dubbed peace ambassadors, would then receive peace responsive training to support them to continue fostering cohesion and integration within their respective communities.

Results achieved

The deliberations were in line with the theme of the day and topic of discussion.

The collective deliberations were captured as below:-

Most of the attendees collectively talked about
nConflict management, contributing factors and mitigation,
nGenerational gaps, its effects in promoting and or enhancing peaceful coexistence,
nthe need for patriotism,
nInclusivity in community development and equity in Gender equality,
ndefined cohesion, co-existence and ways to live in peace and harmony within the community, and ways of fostering cohesion,
nNeed for political, cultural and religious detachment on matters social peaceful coexistence,
nNeed to address the societal gap in the different spheres in a community

However, it was noted that the community Non-State Actors and Government Policing Agencies still needed more in-depth training, sensitization workshops to internalise and advocate for peaceful coexistence and cohesion, rather than just reactionary adhoc mitigation measures. This was evidenced by the fact that the attendees did not have in-depth knowledge of the topic and issues in debate. It was noted that more work needs to be done to ensure both Non-State Actors and Governing Policing Agencies have in-depth understanding of the challenges at the local community level and are able to take initiative within their individual capacities to act on them.

Finally, AoP was commended for the good work they were doing within the community to foster peace and cohesion. It was noted that the recognition of the work they do was a huge contributor to the success of the event.

Recommendations

- More time allocation in future open dialogue forums, to allow in-depth deliberations.
- Increased frequency of the sensitization workshops to ensure an informed community and the interrelationship among the affected communities.
- The community stakeholders should own the process to ensure a sustainable process in the efforts to mitigate and maintain peace and cohesion.
- Training workshops to sensitize the Government Policing Agencies to be humane in handling community conflicts and applicable resolution mechanisms.



INTER-COMMUNITY AND NATIONAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES DIALOGUE FORUM ON P.C.V.E through Knowledge creation, movement building and popular engagements.

Community Non-State Actors Engagement Dialogue Report

Location: NGARA SUB-LOCATION

CITY CENTER (CBD) LOCATION

RIVER BANK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Date: November 21ST , 2023.

Introduction

Agents of Peace [AoP] is a non-profit organisation in Kenya that works to Prevent and to Counter Violent Extremism and Radicalization within the community and to promote peaceful coexistence among our society; regardless of religious, ethnicity and tribal backgrounds. The organisation envisions to promote peaceful co-existence among our societies through providing a platform for peace in which people's differences and misunderstanding can be dealt with non-violently and through dialogue and discussions.

To achieve the overarching goal the organisation received funding from Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung to implement the project "Countering radicalization and community level extremism through knowledge creation, movement building and popular engagements" in Kamukunji Sub-county, Nairobi County. The project delivers its mandate through a series of activities geared towards empowering key social actors on prevention of CVE, enhancing prospects for peace and security. Its core activities include street campaigns, addressing and awareness on violent extremism and terrorism, peace walks against terrorism attacks, peace summit with religious leaders to address radicalization and true meaning of jihad in Islam and university programs on preventing and countering violent extremism and radicalization leading to terrorism. It also uses education, dialogue and forum discussions, as evidence has shown this is a powerful weapon against CVE as it equips young people with the knowledge, skills and critical thinking to challenge and debate in an informed way. Any prejudice, discrimination or extremist views, including derogatory language, based on religion, ethnicity or tribal displayed by religious leaders, students or youth within our community will always be challenged and, where appropriate, dealt with according to both Christian and Islamic values.

Inter-Community Non-State Actors Open Dialogue

Community Open Dialogue is one of the mechanisms AoP is using to counter extremists and foster integration and cohesion among community members. In this activity, AoP facilitates Key community Non-state actors, stakeholders, and National Government Policing Agencies through public sensitization forums, open community dialogues forums and training forums for and between the community and Government Policing Agencies. Primarily, the Open Community Dialogues Forums provide an avenue of interaction and fact finding sessions for the community and G.P.A to gain knowledge, capacity and foster a working cohesive relationship as well as enhance each other understanding of roles, duties and mandates required to achieve desired goals and results.

● On the November 21st, 2023, AoP facilitated a INTER-COMMUNITY NON-STATE ACTORS OPEN DIALOGUE FORUM session at River Bank Primary School. The activity drew participation from the Community, Non-State Actors and Government Policing Agencies chiefly the Administration arm of the Government from the Administrative location City Centre CBD constituents.

The activity was attended by a total of 60 attendees inclusive of N.G.A.O City Centre (CBD) Location. The occasion was also graded by external stakeholders and AoP staff and volunteers. Some of the key stakeholders who graced the occasion included the Area Assistant County Commissioner Mr. Tobias Okoth, Snr Chief CDB Mr. Mukuria, Ngara East Area Chief Christine Otio, Ngara West Area Chief David Ndiritu, CBD Area Chief Fred Imbaka, Muthurwa Area Chief Lucy Anyania, Area Assistant Chief CBD Raymond Nyanchiro Kamukunji Sub-County Peace and Security Committee Chairperson Mr. Kennedy Isigi.

Activities carried out

The open dialogue forum was entirely Inter-community and Non-State actors led to ensure inclusivity and participation of all spheres of the community members and leadership. While AoP staff did the planning and coordination for the activity, the different stakeholders took charge of its facilitation and moderation.

The dialogue forum emulated the structure of an open interactive dialogue. The facilitators provided a brief context on the topic of dialogue, "Inter-Community Peace initiatives Forum on P.C.V.E".

A moderator was present to ensure relevance, inclusivity, informed dialogue, debate, deliberations and or discussion and provide feedback / guidance on each of the pertinent issues raised.

The attendees, now informed, shall be dubbed peace ambassadors, would then receive peace responsive training to support them to continue fostering cohesion and integration within their respective communities. In effect the peace ambassadors shall be more informed on roles, mandates, duties and best ways of complementing G.P.A security initiatives.

Results achieved

The deliberations were in line with the theme of the day and topic of discussion.

The collective deliberations were captured as below:-

Most of the attendees collectively talked about nonconflict management, contributing factors and mitigation, the need for patriotism, and embracing reporting mechanism, information sharing mechanism to boost peace and cohesion efforts. Inclusivity in community development and equity in Gender equality, reinforced cohesion, co-existence and ways to live in peace and harmony within the community, and ways of fostering cohesion, Need to address the societal gap in the different spheres in a community involvement of the youth age brackets on matters community development, peace initiatives and as Non-State Actors in the administrative community policing structures. The various G.P.A's and how they relate to each other and how the inter-twinned working relationship fosters peace and cohesion.

However, it was noted that the community Non-State Actors and Government Policing Agencies still needed more in-depth training, sensitization workshops to internalise and advocate for peaceful coexistence and cohesion, rather than just reactionary adhoc mitigation measures. This was evidenced by the fact that the attendees did not have in-depth knowledge of the topic, Non-State actors roles and duties, and issues in discussion. It was noted that more work needs to be done to ensure both Non-State Actors and Governing Policing Agencies have in-depth understanding of the challenges within themselves, at the local community level and are able to take initiative within their individual capacities to act on them.

Finally, AoP was commended for the good work they were doing within the community to foster peace and cohesion. It was noted that the recognition of the work they do was a huge contributor to the success of the event.

Recommendations

- Need to engage specialists in ADR systems of conflict resolutions in future Forums.
- Increased frequency of the sensitization workshops to ensure an informed community and the inter-relationship among the affected communities.
- The community stakeholders should own the process to ensure a sustainable process in the efforts to mitigate and maintain peace and cohesion.
- Training workshops to sensitize the Government Policing Agencies and seconded Non-State actors to be more informed on roles, mandates and how they can effectively co-relate to enhance peace and cohesion.



ACTIVITY REPORT

PEACE CLUBS IN SCHOOLS

Peace clubs in primary and high schools are organizations that aim to promote peace, understanding, and conflict resolution among students. These clubs often consist of students, teachers, and sometimes parents or community members who are interested in fostering a peaceful and inclusive school environment. They typically organize various activities, events, and initiatives to raise awareness about peace and to encourage positive interactions among students.

The primary goal of peace clubs is to create a safe and supportive environment where students can learn and grow without fear of violence or discrimination. They often focus on teaching conflict resolution skills, such as active listening, empathy, and negotiation, to help students resolve conflicts peacefully and respectfully. By promoting these values, peace clubs can help reduce bullying, improve student relationships, and create a more positive school culture.

In addition to conflict resolution, peace clubs may also address other issues related to peace and social justice, such as human rights, diversity, and environmental sustainability. They may organize educational workshops, guest speakers, and community service projects to raise awareness about these issues and encourage students to take action.

One of the key benefits of peace clubs is that they provide students with a platform to have their voices heard and to make a positive impact in their school and community. By participating in peace club activities, students can develop leadership skills, build confidence, and gain a sense of empowerment. They also have the opportunity to connect with like-minded peers and form friendships based on shared values.

Overall, peace clubs play a valuable role in promoting peace and understanding in schools. They provide students with the tools and support they need to navigate conflicts, build positive relationships, and contribute to a more peaceful and inclusive school environment.

The Importance of Debates in Primary and High Schools to Prevent and Counter Violent Extremism within Education Sectors

Introduction:

Violent extremism is a complex and multifaceted issue that poses significant challenges to global peace and security. It is a phenomenon that affects individuals, communities, and societies worldwide, and its impact can be devastating. The education sector plays a crucial role in preventing and countering violent extremism by promoting peace, tolerance, and understanding among students. Debates in primary and high schools are an effective way to achieve this goal. This essay will explore the importance of debates in primary and high schools to prevent and counter violent extremism within education sectors.

Importance of Debates in Primary Schools:

Debates in primary schools are an essential tool for promoting peace and preventing violent extremism. They provide students with a safe and structured environment to discuss sensitive issues and develop critical thinking skills. Through debates, students learn to express their opinions, listen to others, and engage in respectful dialogue. These skills are essential for preventing violent extremism, as they help students develop empathy, understanding, and tolerance towards others.

Debates also help students develop a deeper understanding of the root causes of violent extremism. By researching and discussing topics related to peace and conflict, students gain insight into the complex social, political, and economic factors that contribute to violent extremism. This understanding is crucial for preventing violent extremism, as it enables students to identify and address the underlying causes of conflict in their communities.

Importance of Debates in High Schools:

Debates in high schools are an important tool for countering violent extremism and promoting peace. They provide students with a platform to engage in critical thinking, research, and analysis. Through debates, students learn to evaluate evidence, construct arguments, and engage in respectful dialogue. These skills are essential for countering violent extremism, as they enable students to challenge extremist ideologies and promote tolerance and understanding.

Debates also help students develop leadership skills that are essential for countering violent extremism. By participating in debates, students learn to communicate effectively, work collaboratively, and lead by example. These skills are crucial for countering violent extremism, as they enable students to mobilize their peers and communities to promote peace and tolerance.

Debates in primary and high schools are an important tool for preventing and countering violent extremism within education sectors. They provide students with a safe and structured environment to discuss sensitive issues, develop critical thinking skills, and promote peace and tolerance. By participating in debates, students gain a deeper understanding of the root causes of violent extremism and develop the skills necessary to challenge extremist ideologies and promote peace and understanding in their communities. Debates are an essential component of a comprehensive approach to preventing and countering violent extremism within education sectors.

Debate clubs in both primary and high schools provide a structured platform for students to engage in constructive dialogue, analyze complex issues, and develop persuasive arguments. Through researching different perspectives, formulating counterarguments, and practicing public speaking, students gain valuable skills that are essential for addressing the root causes of conflict and promoting peaceful coexistence. In primary schools, debate clubs often focus on building foundational skills such as active listening, respectful communication, and teamwork. Students learn to express their opinions confidently, listen to opposing viewpoints, and work collaboratively to find common ground. These skills are crucial for promoting tolerance, empathy, and understanding among young learners and laying the groundwork for future peacebuilding efforts.

In high schools, debate clubs become more sophisticated, with students tackling complex social, political, and ethical issues. Students engage in in-depth research, analyze evidence, and construct well-reasoned arguments. They learn to critically assess information, challenge assumptions, and think critically about the root causes of conflict and violence. High school debate clubs often participate in regional and national competitions, providing students with opportunities to showcase their skills and engage with peers from diverse backgrounds.

Debate clubs in both primary and high schools also provide a safe and inclusive space for students to explore sensitive topics related to peace and security. By encouraging open dialogue and respectful debate, these clubs help students develop the skills and confidence to engage with difficult issues in a constructive and empathetic manner. This is particularly important in the context of PCVE, where addressing the root causes of violent extremism requires a nuanced understanding of complex social, political, and economic factors.

Debate clubs in both primary and high schools play a vital role in promoting peace education and countering violent extremism by fostering critical thinking, empathy, and understanding among students. By providing a structured platform for students to engage in constructive dialogue, analyze complex issues, and develop persuasive arguments, these clubs help students develop the skills and confidence to address the root causes of conflict and promote peaceful coexistence.



Countering radicalization and community level extremism through knowledge creation, movement building and popular engagements.

Activity Report: Violent Extremism School Debate

Location: Zawadi Primary School

Date: 17th June 2023

Introduction

Agents of Peace [AoP] is a non-profit organisation in Kenya that works to Prevent and to Counter Violent Extremism and Radicalization within the community and to promote peaceful coexistence among our society; regardless of religious, ethnicity and tribal backgrounds. The organisation envisions to promote peaceful co-existence among our societies through providing a platform for peace in which people's differences and misunderstanding can be dealt with non-violently and through dialogue and discussions.

To achieve the overarching goal the organisation received funding from Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung to implement the project "Countering radicalization and community level extremism through knowledge creation, movement building and popular engagements" in Kamukunji Sub-county, Nairobi County. The project delivers its mandate through a series of activities geared towards empowering key social actors on prevention of CVE, enhancing prospects for peace and security. Its core activities include street campaigns addressing and awareness on violent extremism and terrorism, peace walks against terrorism attacks, peace summit with religious leaders to address radicalization and true meaning of jihad in Islam and university programs on preventing/ countering violent extremism and radicalization leading to terrorism. It also uses education, dialogue and forum discussions as evidence has shown this is a powerful weapon against CVE as it equips young people with the knowledge, skills and critical thinking to challenge and debate in an informed way. Any prejudice, discrimination or extremist views, including derogatory language, based on religion, ethnicity or tribal displayed by religious leaders, students or youth within our community will always be challenged and, where appropriate, dealt with according to both Christian and Islamic values.

Context

Violent extremism (VE) has become an area of interest to government and policy makers. Violent extremism is well renowned as a catalyst of terrorism. Terrorism is part of the broader violent extremism phenomena. For a long period, violence extremism has been a subject of multiplicity of forms and guises and so there is an urgent need to expand the research gaze beyond Islamism and Muslim communities to the broader phenomenon. Current research suggests that through the identification of radicalization, strategies can be put in place to alleviate the problem of ideological extremism. Another emerging focus in the literature and policy is the role of social cohesion and resilience in preventing radicalization, marginalisation and social exclusion which may lead to violent extremism.

Student Debate
Holding Student Debates is one of the mechanisms AoP uses to counter extremists and foster integration and cohesion among community members. AoP engages students in primary, junior secondary and secondary level education in conversations geared towards awareness and knowledge creation to improve their capacity to both understand concepts related to CVE, and act as peace ambassadors to disseminate the same messages to the societies and communities they live in. AoP does this by working with school administrations through the club patrons to co-create school clubs, club programs and exchange program implementation methodology across the 8 schools participating in the program. Specifically, the School Debate provides safe spaces for students to build knowledge, capacity and confidence as well as enhance learners' communication and critical thinking skills by facilitating constructive CVE-centric debates and discussions between peers. This also provides the school patrons an opportunity to interact and engage in program delivery methodologies they use in their different schools, and assess what peer program implementers are able to achieve within their institutions. This also helps them deliberate on effective knowledge creation and communication strategies that will help them in advancing the objectives and activities of their clubs within their institutions. The main aim of the debate was to discuss how corruption and social exclusion contribute to violent extremism, and how we can counter these issues. This thematic area of focus was inspired by SDG 16.





PROMOTE PEACEFUL AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, PROVIDE ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL AND BUILD EFFECTIVE, ACCOUNTABLE AND INCLUSIVE INSTITUTIONS AT ALL LEVELS

Focusing on PCVE, this particular school debate was based on the sub-themes of corruption and bribery, and non-inclusivity. Through engaging the students in thoughtful conversations, the school debate targeted to shed light on the following research questions:

1. To what extent has social exclusivity contributed to violent extremism?
2. In which way will various stakeholders ensure social inclusivity promotes PCVE?
3. How has corruption promoted violence extremism?
4. What are the various enablers that the anti-corruption commission in Kenya put in place to prevent violent extremism?

Activities carried out

On the 17th of June 2023, AoP facilitated a Student Debate session at Zawadi Primary School. The main objective of the debate was to build a foundation on accounts of the nature of both corruption, social exclusivity and violence extremism. Specific objectives aligned to this include:

1. To discuss various policy solutions that will help reduce corruption and social exclusivity and how to counter both to reduce violent extremism.
2. To discuss how corruption creates a fragile state that is permissible to extremism.
3. To consider different roles of different actors in addressing corruption and violent extremism.
4. To explore vivid examples on how corruption has contributed to violent extremism.
5. To identify the various ways that corruption and social exclusion has contributed to violent extremism.

The activity drew participation of children and youth in primary, junior secondary and secondary level of education from eight learning institutions in Kamukunji Sub-county, namely:

- Kamukunji Secondary School
- Pumwani Riyadha Integrated Academy
- Pumwani Child Survival School
- Zawadi Primary School
- Zawadi Junior Secondary School
- Sunny Vale Primary School
- Sunny Vale Junior Secondary School
- New Eastleigh Primary School

The activity was attended by a total of 213 students across the 8 schools, accompanied by 14 teachers. The occasion was also graced by external stakeholders and AoP staff and volunteers. Formal activities began at 11.00AM. The deputy head teacher of Zawadi Primary welcomed the students, teachers and other stakeholders to the debate and passed on greetings from the headteacher who unfortunately was not available to attend the event. The teachers from various participating schools also introduced themselves and mentioned their enthusiasm to learn from the students through the presentations they would make in the course of the debate.

Some of the key stakeholders who graced the occasion included Mrs XX the area Assistant Chief of Section 3 Sub-location, Eastleigh South Location. In her opening remarks, she mentioned her residents are good ambassadors of peace and they advocate for peace in order to encourage the development of the area. They also shun corrupt practices, tribal or religious exclusion or activities that can bring chaos to the community. She encouraged the students to continue being good peace ambassadors and continue their work both in school influencing their fellow students, and educating their neighbours and friends back at home.

The Assistant County Commissioner was the chief guest for this activity. In his address, he spoke about corruption and emphasised that government services are free of charge and is the right of everyone.

He encouraged students to shun corruption and also stop people from issuing bribes to those in charge for favours or to access services. He encouraged the students to uphold peaceful practices up to their adult life; discipline is of most importance, respect teachers, parents and fellow students.

The judges who presided over the debate were:

- Madam Florence Syokau
- Mr. Mohamend Abdinoor Ismail
- Mr. Kennedy Isigi

Mr Isigi introduced the debate objective and assigned the schools the topics of discussion. The schools were then randomly divided into two groups, one group opposing the motion while the other group proposing the motion. This was done through a raffle system where each school randomly picked a piece of paper on the table, which assigned them to either of the groups. Schools were divided according to the motions of discussion. This was meant to ensure the peace ambassadors within each school had a proper understanding of the topic and could speak to the merits and demerits of the said topics of discussion well. The students were then given time to go into classrooms to discuss the topics, and come up with their points to contribute to the debate once called upon.



Opposers

Proposers

1.Kamukunji Secondary School

Pumwani Child Survival School

2.Pumwani Riyadha Integrated Academy

Zawadi Primary School

3.Sunny Vale Junior Secondary School

Zawadi Junior Secondary School

4.New Eastleigh Primary School

Sunny Vale Primary School

The judges mentioned they would assess the presentations based on a three point scale. Key to them were;

- Understanding of concepts around corruption and violent extremism
- Presentation skills of the participants
- The participant's confidence and audibility

Results achieved.

The students demonstrated great understanding of some of the concepts.

This was similarly echoed by the judges, who mentioned they were quite impressed with the level of knowledge and awareness the students demonstrated through the presentations.

"I am happy and impressed that most students displayed an understanding of the concepts and could relate how marginalisation, nepotism and exclusion could lead to or contribute to violent extremism" - Mr Kennedy Isigi

The table below represents some of the talking points noted during the debate

Research Question

Debate Taking Points

To what extent has social exclusivity contributed to violent extremism?

Proposers

- Job seekers have to pay for job opportunities therefore the frustrated groups can resort to violent and extreme measures to air out their grievances.
- Poverty has resulted in service providers demanding for bribes to offer services, therefore the poor become poorer and the rich become richer. This makes joining armed activities like burglary or non-state armed extremist groups a necessity for survival.
- Citizens have lost faith in government as the government fails to fulfil their promises each time. This makes joining extremist organisations for assistance more appealing.
- Insufficient services and amenities from government can also lead to VE due to frustration from citizens
- Denial of access to services has also led to frustrations and acts of VE

Opposers

- Frustrated people often look into self development and income generation opportunities therefore VE is not often an immediate option
- Violent people by nature will often engage in violence with or without government intervention because it is in their nature.
- Religious exclusion has never been a driver of VE, as depicted by many media outlets. Different denominations and religions peacefully coexist in society therefore blaming religious exclusion is a misguided perception.

In which way will various stakeholders ensure social inclusivity promotes PCVE?

Proposers

- Equal distribution of resources to all citizens
- Public participation and stakeholder engagement in policy formulation and implementation.
- Programming to support participation and engagement of all stakeholders to create awareness and sensitization about PCVE.
- Free education will increase awareness and income generation avenues for all
- NGOs should respond by helping and supporting vulnerable children in the community

Opposers

- There are no measures put in place to prevent violent extremism, and violence occurs organically.
- Violence is still ongoing despite the government measures in place and efforts by stakeholders. The measures are therefore not working
- Resources meant to be shared are owned and hoarded by individuals, including public resources.
- Feeling of neglect by the government and other relevant public service providers.
- Bribery for access to services
- Youth don't get jobs or tenders since they don't have money to bribe the people in charge, missing out on income generation opportunities.
- Corruption has led to growth of tribalism and nepotism which has also slowed down development projects. Denied opportunities to the right people because they don't have money.



How has corruption promoted violence extremism?

Proposers

- Resources meant to be shared are owned and hoarded by individuals, including public resources.
 - Feeling of neglect by the government and other relevant public service providers.
 - Bribery for access to services
 - Youth don't get jobs or tenders since they don't have money to bribe the people in charge, missing out on income generation opportunities.
 - Corruption has led to growth of tribalism and nepotism which has also slowed down development projects.
- Denied opportunities to the right people because they don't have money.

Opposers

- Corruption offers better live for those who engage in it therefore is not a driver of VE
 - Bribing may lead to better opportunities. They are using corruption to open opportunities that would otherwise be hard to reach.
- Those who don't participate in corruption still purse their daily livelihoods and have adopted mechanism to adopt to the environment

What are the various enablers that the anti-corruption commission in Kenya put in place to prevent violent extremism?

Proposers

- Recovery of property acquired through corruption
- Use of government mechanisms like courts to punish the corrupt.
- The EACC have managed corruption by
 - Exposing corrupt people and shaming them in public.
 - Stopping dishonest practices and arresting and prosecuting the guilty people
 - Barring the guilty from ever holding public office

Opposers

- Measures not put in place to manage corruption are ineffective
- There is no political good will to fight corruption
- People live lives individually and only look upon self for growth and development therefore everyone will still look at their own self interests.

Upon completion of the debate session, each of the schools were given an opportunity to present any additional poems, songs or skits they had rehearsed to share with the participants. Students from Zawadi Primary School presented a song to the participants attending the activity. The song was based on the struggles freedom fighters underwent to secure the independence of Kenya back in 1963. This song was meant to remind the participants of the struggle to gain independence and the rights and freedoms they currently enjoy as a result of gaining independence. Zawadi Junior secondary also entertained the audience with a poem titled "Non-violence". The poem aimed to encourage participants to shun violence and avoid acts of retaliation if offended because such actions will only lead to further violence and injury to their loved ones.

A student from Pumwani Riyadha Integrated Academy also presented a poem on respect and upholding respect to peers, parents, teachers and other community members: as it leads to peace and cohesion in the society. Another student addressed the role of education as a pillar to independence and peace promotion. The presenter mentioned that education will open up opportunities for youth and this will deter them from violence. Sunny Vale Academy presented a play touching on corruption among the police, politicians, exclusion issues, and denial of rights and freedoms. The play centred around citizens protesting to the political and administrative leadership over issues of corruption and social exclusion. The play aimed to demonstrate mechanisms through which community members can hold their leaders accountable without engaging in acts of violent extremism.

Debate results

During the presentation of the debate results, the judges reiterated that the debate was held so that students from the various schools learn and share about the issues affecting peace and cohesion within their community, as well as to build their confidence in public speaking. They noted that this was not a competition but a knowledge sharing event. Teachers were also encouraged to continue to work to build the capacities and knowledge of their students. The AoP staff will continue to work with the teachers and institutions to build their capacity and knowledge on violent extremism, ensuring that the peace ambassadors and student population at large benefit from this.

The judges evaluated the performance of the students based on a three point assessment criteria, each having a maximum score of 10 points. The assessment criteria included:

- Understanding the concept of of VE
- Appropriate articulation of corruption and how it links to VE
- Presentation skills.

The judges awarded the following scores to the school, based on their performance in the debate.

AoP closed out the activity by conducting a verbal feedback session with the participants. This session aimed at assessing general knowledge on VE. The executive director thanked the teachers and other stakeholders for their continued support to the project and acknowledged the good work they were doing with students in their schools. The director also encouraged the peace ambassadors to continue preaching peace in the community and embrace alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, rather than resorting to

Recommendations

- The presentation skills for most students taking part in the debate needed improvement. The teachers were therefore tasked to work on the public speaking and presentation skills of most peace ambassadors as this was critical in ensuring they are able to actively engage the community beyond the confines of school.
- The teachers were also encouraged to be in regular communication among themselves and learn from each other. It was noted that there were varied levels of awareness and knowledge on the subject matter and this would affect the peace ambassador's ability to communicate and undertake assignments. Sharing notes on teaching methodologies and techniques would help them disseminate and impact knowledge on project matters among their students.

School	Understanding Concept	Corruption	Presentation skills
New Eastleigh Primary School	5	5	4
Pumwani Riyadha Integrated Academy	3	3	4
Pumwani Child Survival School	5	7	7
Zawadi Primary School	6	6	5
Zawadi Junior Secondary School	7	6	7
Sunny Vale Primary School	7	6	4
Kamukunji Secondary School	8	7	8







