



PEACEBUILDING DIALOGUES PRODUCTION GUIDE



CHILDREN'S RADIO
FOUNDATION

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INTRODUCTION

Along with the rest of the world, South Africa has had to endure the challenging effects of COVID-19, which placed our country in the top 10 global list of countries worst affected by the pandemic. In July 2021, South Africa was faced with yet another crisis of violent unrest that resulted in the destruction of property and looting, following the arrest of former president Jacob Zuma.

Even though the acts of violence started in KwaZulu Natal and spread to parts of Gauteng, the impact of the disruption was felt throughout the whole country. The violence also interrupted the roll out of the national COVID-19 vaccine programme meant to save people's lives. These kinds of incidents have long-lasting, devastating effects, especially for vulnerable communities.

The virus and the violence have also made it clear that there is an urgent need to address the major problems of inequality, poverty, food insecurity, gender-based violence, and

youth unemployment in South Africa. And as much as it is right to expect strong leadership from the government, and to look to them for solutions, it is also important for communities to find their own ways to work together for social cohesion.

Research has shown that dialogue is necessary to move towards understanding different points of view and building peace within communities that have experienced conflict. And even though dialogue is not a new concept, it has only recently been recognised as a powerful tool for peacebuilding. Dialogue is key to promoting inclusivity, engaging women, youth, marginalized groups, and anyone that is normally not at the centre of peace negotiations.



DEFINITIONS

- **Dialogue**

The aim of dialogue is to engage diverse and divided communities in a constructive conversation in order to break down stereotypes and rebuild trust. The intended result of dialogue is that participants gain an understanding of others' ways of feeling, thinking and expressing themselves, which then develops empathy towards each other and allows them to bring about change. Dialogue is a process that involves peoples from different walks of life in a community gathered together to foster understanding and share information on issues of importance to them.

- **Intersectionality**

Intersectionality is a way of defining how a person, group of people, or social problem is affected by a number of disadvantages and types of discrimination. It takes into account people's overlapping identities and experiences in order to understand the layers of prejudice that they face. People are often disadvantaged by multiple sources of oppression: their race, class, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, and other identities. For example, when someone is both a woman and identifies as black, these two identities do not exist independently of each other, but rather interact and influence their experience of oppression in their daily lives.

- **Diversity**

Diversity is the acknowledgement and respect of differences in terms of age, gender identity, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, education, socioeconomic status, political beliefs, and national origin. Honouring diversity allows for the exploration of differences

in a safe, positive, and nurturing environment. Diversity is valuable in that it celebrates and embraces the contribution of each individual in making the community richer.

- **Conflict**

Conflict is when two or more people or groups disagree, and the disagreement causes friction. It is a normal part of human life. Whenever there is engagement between people, there is a possibility that conflict may arise. Unhealthy conflict is an expression of negative attitudes, aggression, attack, and misunderstanding. But if managed well, conflict can be healthy and spark creativity as parties try to come to a mutual understanding.

- **Conflict resolution**

Conflict resolution is the informal or formal process that two or more parties use to find a peaceful solution to their disagreement. The disagreement may be personal, financial, political, or emotional. In conflict resolution, the best solution is the solution that takes into account both sides. When a disagreement arises in a community, often the best course of action is to negotiate in order to resolve the disagreement. In most cases of conflict resolution, each side will get more by participating in negotiations than they would by walking away.

- **Mediation**

Mediation is a process led by a neutral person called a 'mediator' in order to mend relationships when there is a disagreement or conflict. The mediator is impartial, which means that they do not take sides. Their role is to help everyone involved find a solution they can all agree to. They do not judge who is right or

wrong in the situation, but look rather at how they can get everyone to agree on working together in the future.

- **Inclusivity**

Inclusivity is a practice or mindset which intentionally attempts to include and embrace people from different backgrounds, especially people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalised, in a group or collaboration. It's when different people and their perspectives are valued and their needs are responded to sensitively and respectfully, so as to promote a sense of belonging.

- **Peacebuilding**

Peacebuilding is a way of encouraging people to talk, to repair relationships, and transform systems and institutions. Peacebuilding can look like bringing different groups together to discuss the issues, or using film and media to help

people understand the viewpoints of others. Peacebuilding is about dealing with the reasons why people fight in the first place and supporting communities to manage their differences and conflicts without resorting to violence.

- **Social cohesion**

Social cohesion is the willingness of members of a society to cooperate with each other in order to survive and prosper. Willingness to cooperate means they freely choose to form partnerships and have a reasonable chance of realizing goals, because they are willing to share the fruits of their actions equally. Social cohesion contributes to a wide variety of social outcomes such as health and economic prosperity.

RESOURCES

- [UN: Peace Dialogue In The Social Integration Process](#)
- [nni Dialogue Institute: Local and global dialogues around the world](#)
- [United States Institute Of Peace: importance of youth in peacebuilding](#)
- [globaldiversitypractice.com/what-is-diversity-inclusion](#)
- [Conciliation Resources: What Is Peacebuilding?](#)
- [issafrica.org: national dialogues are key to peace](#)
- [Harvard University: conflict resolution](#)
- [Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation: Peacebuilding Dialogue](#)



TO GET YOU THINKING

Article:

“If You Want Peace, You Have to Plan for It”

By Kristin Lord and Ann-Louise Colgan

September 21 will mark the annual observation of the International Day of Peace, established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1981. On this day each year, people around the world engage in educational and cultural activities focused on peace as the original U.N. resolution had urged. Thirty years ago, events on college campuses and in local communities attracted those who already considered themselves advocates for peace. Today, social media enhances the opportunity to involve greater numbers of people, especially young people, in marking this day — sharing information, organizing activities, and encouraging action on global issues. Most significantly, it serves as a rallying cry for the next generation: The problems that fuel the world’s conflicts will only be solved through creative thinking and committed action, including by the young people whose own futures are at stake.

Young people also need to understand that there is a possibility of resolving conflicts through non-violent means. They need to know that tools exist to prevent and manage conflict — tools such as facilitation, mediation, negotiation, and more. They need to hear that this work is happening around the world, behind the scenes, even in the toughest contexts. And they need to see that it is being carried out in many cases by their peers in the conflict zones themselves; that young people have a unique capacity to contribute to peacebuilding, and that their engagement matters.

As the trend toward greater global violence looms large, this Day of Peace reminds us why working for peace matters, and why it’s essential to include young people.

QUESTIONS

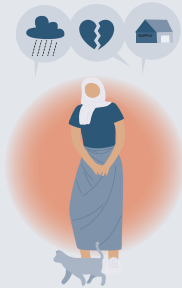


1. What do you think are the responsibilities of a ‘peace advocate’?
2. How can social media help the cause for peace?
3. Describe a committed action that you can take towards solving a global problem.
4. What are the benefits of solving conflict through non-violent means?
5. How would you celebrate a “Day of Peace” in your community?

WHAT CONTRIBUTES TO PEACE

Since the July unrest and looting, there hasn't been any visible violence on the streets or reported by media, but it doesn't mean the issues that came up in that period have been resolved. What we have witnessed is stability coming back, and everyday life going back to normal. And as much as stability can bring temporary peace, what lies at the root of the conflict may not have been addressed and could erupt again. That's why periods of stability are a great time to host a dialogue that can contribute to longer lasting peace and prevent future violence.

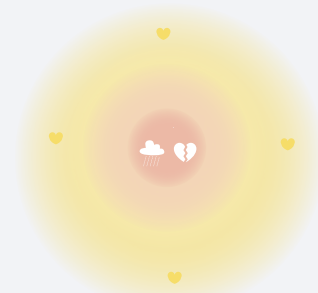
Chances are there is someone in your community who still remains deeply impacted by the unrest that happened. They could have lost a loved one, a business, a job, or even lost hope - so much so that it's holding them back from getting on with their lives. These are not ordinary times - people have experienced great loss, and because of the restrictions, it's been impossible for people to be there for each other and come together to grieve together. Our hope is that having these dialogues will allow communities to recognize the painful emotions they and their community members may be experiencing.



Loss can turn into inspiration when communities realize that they have shared grief.



Opening up emotionally allows those who have suffered from unresolved grief to restart the process of bonding with other people.



As the focus shifts outward, the internal dialogue shifts from defensive to positive.



This brings calm, clarity, gratitude, and even playfulness.



With a focus on achieving peace, a community can once again prioritize vision, goal setting, and courage, and can once again inspire others to get involved.

- McKinsey: [The Hidden Perils of Unresolved Grief](https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/peacebuilding/our-insights/the-hidden-perils-of-unresolved-grief)
international-alert.org/what-we-do/what-is-peacebuilding

PEACE STATEMENTS

- Peace is when everyone lives in safety, without fear or threat of violence, and no form of violence is tolerated in law or in practice.
- Peace is when everyone is equal before the law, and the systems for justice are trusted, and fair, and the laws protect people's rights.
- Peace is when everyone is able to participate in shaping political decisions and the government is accountable to the people.
- Peace is when everyone has fair and equal access to the basic needs for their wellbeing – such as food, clean water, shelter, education, healthcare and a decent living environment.
- Peace is when everyone has an equal opportunity to work and make a living, regardless of gender, ethnicity or any other aspect of identity.

HOSTING A PEACEBUILDING DIALOGUE IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Hosting a successful peacebuilding dialogue requires good preparation and knowing how to create a safe space for participants. In a peacebuilding dialogue, a facilitator acts as a mediator between participants. This means that the facilitator needs to focus on listening from a neutral and non-judgmental place, and making sure that the dialogue leads to a collective agreement around goals or actions that suit all participants.

Designing Your Dialogue

Face-to-face or online?

Many of you may find it more practical and easier to host a face-to-face dialogue using your local community radio station as your venue. But some radio stations were attacked during the unrest and do not in this time represent a safe space for the community. Please work together with your station manager to finalise what is suitable for your community, and how they could support you to host a successful dialogue.

Those of you who decide to host a dialogue online have to realise that it does come with its own challenges, such as:

- Not being able to experience physical human interaction, and missing out on reading people's body language or being able to play games.
- How conversation is not always as spontaneous as in real life, especially when people participating in the dialogue are new to online platforms.
- The exclusion of people without devices such as smartphones or those who have no access to the internet.

That being said, an online peacebuilding dialogue is cheaper, quicker, and easier to organise than face-to-face meetings, as well as safer in terms of following COVID-19 restrictions. Other advantages of using the online tools include making it simpler for groups to join peace dialogues from their homes, therefore allowing a wide geographical coverage of participants.

Whatever format you decide to use for your dialogue, make sure that you are able to capture the views of all participants through an audio recording that your local facilitators can submit to CRF. Once all the audio is submitted, it will be produced into an edited podcast episode that you can broadcast once a month on your regular radio show. You can then invite your listeners to grow the conversation by giving further comments, which you will record and submit to CRF as well.

- **Whatsapp:** You can create a group via Whatsapp to host your peacebuilding dialogue. This means that you and your co-facilitator can be the admin of the group and decide when and how participants can respond. This platform will allow you to choose the exact number of participants, and make sure that they make up different socio-economic groups, genders, and ages from your community. You can make the dialogue live by sending an animated GIF in the group with your conversation starter or a question for the group, then give them 5 minutes to respond via text or voice note. You can allow time before the next interaction, which gives you time to gather all the answers. And once you understand the general points that came up, summarise what was shared for the whole group to comment on, before asking the next question. If someone has shared a written answer that you'd like to capture via audio, send them a personal message asking them to expand on their opinion via a voice note/recording.
- **Facebook:** You may already be active on Facebook via a group for your weekly radio program. Having a group is great because it means that you have an already existing fanbase that appreciates your content. When planning the dialogue, you can use Facebook Live to stream the conversation you want to have, making sure to ask questions to your community that they can respond to via a special Whatsapp group that has already been created. Invite people to comment on your page or send voice notes to the Whatsapp group.
- **Zoom:** Those of you who have laptops and would like to use Zoom, are welcome to. CRF is happy to assist facilitators in learning how to schedule dialogues and send a copy of the invitation to participants via their Whatsapp messages or in a previously created Whatsapp group. Many people can just click on the Zoom link invitation to join the meeting, and this meeting can be recorded by the app, meaning that both facilitators can focus on working together to keep the conversation going.



Steps to a successful dialogue

1. First and foremost, you need to design an invitation for participants that lets them know why they should participate in the dialogue, how long it will take, and why it is important to include their opinions and voices. Once you confirm all the participants, you can create a register where you write down the participants' full names, contact details, and which day they participated.
2. Find people who will participate in your dialogue - and if you're wondering who from your community can participate, remember that diversity makes the dialogue richer and more reflective of your community. Invite people with as many different views as possible, which could include fellow youth reporters, staff members from radio stations, family members, leaders from the community or school, as well as your friends. It is recommended that you invite 10 - 15 participants for each dialogue. Remember to find participants who are willing to be recorded. For each peacebuilding dialogue, make sure to give at least an hour for the conversation.
3. Decide whether you will be hosting a face-to-face dialogue at your radio station - making sure to adhere to the appropriate COVID-19 restrictions suggested for this time, or you can also host your dialogue online, using Whatsapp or Facebook. Online dialogue can be just as effective as face-to-face dialogue, it just requires that you provide additional technical training support for the comfort of all participants.
4. Before introducing yourself, or the participants to one another, make sure that you are recording the dialogue, either using Voice Memo on your mobile phone or using an audio recorder. Make sure to test your sound quality and ensure that the sound environment is suitable by doing a test recording before the conversation, and playing it back to yourself to see if you are satisfied with the quality.
5. Start your dialogue with some background information on why these discussions are being held and what impact they will have on your community. Participants will have a vague idea of the topic of the dialogue from the initial invitation, but this is an opportunity for you to paint a picture for them of how the unrest may have disturbed people's personal lives, and state your goals for the dialogue. All facilitators will develop their introductions and scripts during the training period, so that you feel confident and prepared to lead a dialogue for your community.
6. After you have given some background information at the very beginning about why you are hosting a dialogue, then it's time to break the ice. Breaking the ice allows everyone to get to know each other. A good way to do this is to get people to speak about their favorite song and why they love it, or to tell others the story behind their names, you can also ask people to imagine what kind of animal they would be and why. There are many different ways to get participants to share something personal about themselves so as to help them feel connected to the other people that are participating.
7. Once you've broken the ice, you can start your dialogue by asking some questions that will begin the conversation. The questions that you will ask will follow this structure that is adapted from the [nni \(no-name-initiative\) dialogue institute](#):

- **Personal Storytelling**

Ask participants to tell a story about what they experienced during the unrest. Try to get everyone to describe in as much detail about their own personal experiences, whether they were involved or were just following what happened through the media. Questions like:

- What were you doing when you first heard about the violence and looting in July?
- How did the unrest affect you personally?
- How did you feel during the period of unrest?
- What did you believe would happen as a result of the unrest?

- **Group Storytelling**

Ask participants to speak about what they think caused the unrest. Ask them questions that help them talk about what they think were the real issues that caused disruption and who was responsible for what happened? You can also ask them how their community or family reacted to the unrest. You can also ask them to share what they heard or saw reported in the media. And how safe or unsafe they felt during that period.

- **Dreaming**

Ask your participants to speak about other ways in which the issues that came up could have been addressed. You can follow this by asking them how they would want the future generations to deal with similar social issues 10 - 20 years from now. Ask them to share their dreams for the future of their community and the country.

- **Reality Checking**

Discuss with participants what they think might stand in their way of their dreams. Ask them if there is a way around the challenges they might identify, and what support they might need from the community leadership or from one another.

- **Gathering Solutions**

This part can be challenging as it requires getting practical steps and a plan of action from community members. This requires getting the community to think outside of the box to come up with a solution for some of the issues that they have identified in their community. Do they want to start a campaign, continue with regular dialogue meetings, paint a wall, write a letter to the councilor, write a manifesto, or fundraise for food packs to donate to under-resourced families? Either way, it is important to decide on a timeframe and roles within the group to perform the separate actions. Make sure to assure the participants that you can be relied upon to continue to facilitate the change that they want to see, especially through your efforts at the radio station broadcasting the youth show.

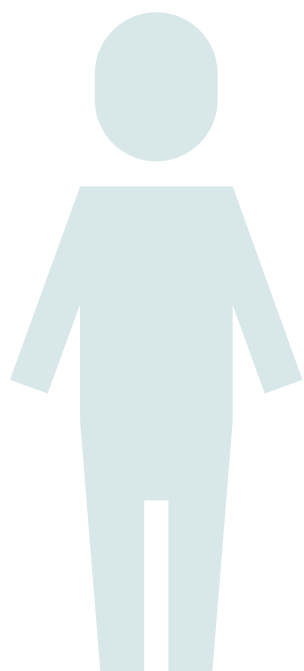
Tips for facilitating

- **There needs to be more than one facilitator hosting the dialogue.** While one facilitator leads the conversation and asks questions, another facilitator can focus on listening, observing, taking notes, and making sure that the dialogue is being recorded.
- **Facilitators should create a safe space for the people involved in the dialogue** by preventing any speaker from being criticised, harassed or harmed by others in the group. It is important to give space to what participants want to say, but feel free to paraphrase or 'translate' when participants express themselves in a way that could hurt others. You can also establish some ground rules together as a group that can guide what is unacceptable or acceptable behaviour.
- **When designing your dialogue, plan the opening carefully.** It should use understandable language and concepts that will be easy for your participants to grasp. Decide early on what language you will use to suit the community and stick to it.
- **Make sure that you provide enough time for your dialogue or event.** Time is needed for human relating to unfold and for trust to be built. We know that you may experience challenges with online connection problems for remote dialogues, or COVID-19 restrictions for face-to-face meetings, but the more time you give, the richer and deeper the experience will be for the people involved.
- **Facilitation is not about skills, methods, or personal ambitions, but about being fully present** and holding the space with love, and in full service of your community participants. It is about being rather than doing, and requires you to be selfless and honest.
- **While facilitating peacebuilding dialogues, take your own time to reflect** on your experience through using a notepad or your mobile phone to record your impressions, thoughts and feelings after each session.
- Even though your questions as facilitator will lead the dialogue, **a free flowing discussion with participants should make up most of the discussion.** Be curious, ask questions, listen, be brave, and where appropriate, be playful.

Conclusion

At the end of the dialogues you will be hosting, make sure to get the lead facilitator to share the participants' voice recordings or voice notes with CRF. Find out from participants if they would like to continue communicating beyond the dialogue process on the Whatsapp group and how often. Remember to also remind participants that the recording will be edited into a radio show that will be broadcast on your radio show. Use social media to make sure that you invite as many listeners as possible to tune-in and engage.

Building trust and community, as well as implementing the collective actions can take time. It is important that you as a facilitator approach your role as mediator with humility. Which means that you are a behind-the-scenes type of leader, who is always willing to learn from your group, gently nudging everyone along with questions and encouraging them to share more in order for the group to progress.



“Peacebuilding requires a type of humility that recognises that no matter how much I know or have learned, there is always more.”

- Paul Lederach

