



IAHV

PEACEBUILDING



Human. Holistic. Highly Effective.

IAHV Peacebuilding Programs

An Integrative Approach to Sustainable Peace

The International Association for Human Values (IAHV) is a non-profit, United Nations-affiliated organisation with consultative status at ECOSOC (UN). Founded in 1997 by Sri Sri Ravi Shankar and other global humanitarian leaders in Geneva, Switzerland, its mission is to build a sustainable and inclusive peace by promoting the development of human values in both the individual and societies on a global scale.

The aim of IAHV's Peacebuilding Program is to increase the impact of peacebuilding and development efforts worldwide by effectively transforming mindsets, attitudes, wellbeing and behaviours of individuals and communities engaged in or affected by conflict. Cooperating with other organisations in a holistic approach, IAHV aims to strengthen the psycho-social foundation in which other peace and development efforts take root, turning personal transformation into greater peacebuilding impact.

IAHV's proven track record includes efforts to provide rehabilitation of victims as well as perpetrators, re-integration of ex-combatants, youth leadership and women's empowerment training, prevention of radicalization and leadership development initiatives in areas beset by conflict, including Iraq, Kosovo, Kashmir, Sri Lanka, Ivory Coast, Israel- Palestine, India and South Africa. Given this expertise, the IAHV Peacebuilding Program focuses on the following program areas: (1) Trauma Relief, Resilience and Empowerment; (2) Preventing and Transforming Violent Extremism – Mobilising Youth for Peace; (3) Bridging Divided Communities, Dialogue and Reconciliation; and (4) Training Professional Peacebuilding and Development Agencies.

Evidence of IAHV's holistic programs include significant and sustainable reduction in PTS symptoms of US army war veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan; significant reduction in PTS, anxiety and depression among survivors of the tsunami in 2003; a 30% reduction of violent incidents in several Los Angeles juvenile detention centres; reconciliation among warring tribes in Ivory Coast; prevention and renunciation of violence by thousands of militants and terrorists in India; and an 85% suicide reduction rate in Kosovo prisons in 2 years time.

Our human-centred approach lends itself to working across sectors and populations, including international organisations (UN, EU, World Bank), governments, managers and CEO's, social and community workers, women's groups, religious leaders, refugees, victims of violence, youth, terrorists and rebels, prisoners and children, bridging religious, ethnic and social divides. Together with our sister organisation, the Art of Living Foundation, our programs have reached over 20 million people in 150 countries.



“I wholeheartedly endorse the IAHV Peacebuilding Program that you are launching. I firmly believe that IAHV has the promise of bringing something unique and impactful to traditional peacebuilding efforts.”

Sanjay Pradhan, Vice-President World Bank Institute



Four Key Program Areas

1. Trauma Relief, Resilience & Empowerment

IAHV delivers effective and scalable trauma relief and resilience building, attending to the very clear link between trauma and cyclical conflict as well as the contribution of healing to sustainable peacebuilding. Providing affordable and accessible trauma- and stress -relief tools to large populations and small groups alike in complex emergencies, IAHV's 8- 12 hour programs produce measurable results, including rapidly and significantly reducing the symptoms of PTS, depression and anxiety, and improving the quality of life for individuals and communities. In addition, rather than foster humanitarian dependency and create long-term resource dilemmas, IAHV trained participants are able to sustain integrative improvements with continued practice and skills application.

2. Preventing and Transforming Violent Extremism – Mobilising Youth for Peace

IAHV's responses to violent extremism address gaps in both the analysis and practice of countering violent extremism, broadening a focus on prevention and interdiction to include effective transformation of individuals and groups involved in or affected by radicalization. Our programs transform attitudes and behaviours, inspire and train participants to use nonviolent means to achieve legitimate needs, and empower them to become effective peacebuilders in their own communities. Working inclusively across populations, we offer five programs including: (1) Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism for those at risk, in the earlier stages, or seeking re-entry from periods of radicalization (16 to 22 hours); (2) a Youth Leadership Peacebuilding Training, or intensive program to empower and mobilize youth as effective, local agents for peace (7 to 10 days). This training program is followed by a tailored three to 12 month period, in which participants engage in ongoing learning and implement local peacebuilding projects guided by experienced peace workers; (3) Rehabilitation & Reintegration of Ex-Combatants (16 to 22 hours); (4) Rehabilitation & Reintegration of War Veterans (16 to 22 hours); and (5) Healing, Resilience and Empowerment training for survivors and affected communities (8-12 hours).

3. Bridging Divides: Reconciliation and Dialogue

The complex challenges presented by war, including violence, poverty and separation, often leads individuals and communities to take refuge in the security of structured ideologies, narratives and identities. If not addressed, communities and generations may become mobilized by revenge, resentment and polarization, becoming a major obstacle to sustainable peace. Covering 16 to 22 hours, IAHV's Reconciliation and Dialogue programming supports individuals and communities to increase healing and well-being while also transcending identity based conflict and sectarianism and building social resilience and cohesion. Our practical yet advanced stress-management tools and human values-based education foster respect for cultural sensitivity and diversity and support participation in reconciliation activities.

4. Professional Training: Towards Integrated Peacebuilding

Designed by experienced practitioners and peace workers to address a critical component of effective peacebuilding far too often overlooked, our bespoke training programs provide professional peacebuilders and peacebuilding organizations with the experience and skills to improve and integrate psychosocial skills and self- care into their peacebuilding work. Spread over 12-22 hours and 3-5 consecutive days, this training consists of 3 components: (1) Providing for Peacebuilders: Personal resilience and stress management; (2) Framing & Factors: Overview and in-depth examination of psychosocial frameworks of analysis and factors; (3) Professional Skills Training: Providing tools for analysis, design and delivery of psycho-social interventions to increase sustainability and effectiveness of peacebuilding outcomes. The integration of a strong personal experiential component with professional skills training makes this a uniquely powerful program.

From Personal Transformation to Peacebuilding Impact

Peace: A New Existence 7 Dimensions of the Individual



Recognising that no peace can become sustainable as long as it is not internalized and socially supported by the people, IAHV focuses on strengthening a fertile psycho social foundation for sustainable peace.

On the personal level we transform the mindsets, attitudes, behavior and wellbeing of individuals and communities involved in or affected by conflict and violence.

IAHV uses a holistic approach to personal transformation that addresses the physical up to deeply existential layers, transcending the strictly cognitive. Restoring peace at every level, our programs are deeply human, life affirming and empowering.

Healed and empowered, these individuals can play a positive peace enhancing role in their communities, institutions and all sectors of society.

At the same time we foster the development of human, effective and just structures and systems in all sectors of society, such as inclusive leadership, transparent governance, ethical business, humane prison rehabilitation and holistic education.

Underpinning this work, we promote universal human values such as non-violence, dignity, equity, justice and well-being, which produce a positive impact on the way individuals, relationships and communities interact at every level of society.

Peacebuilding Wheel



IAHV enacts individual transformation and structural change at every level of society, from grassroots to global leadership.

Focusing on the individual as the basis for social and political transformation is how we turn personal transformation into peacebuilding impact.

Case Studies

Trauma-Relief and Resilience, Community Empowerment, Reconciliation

During the civil war in **Ivory Coast**, the Guerès and Dioula tribes were involved in a violent conflict over land, identity and economic issues, involving destruction, harassment, looting, beatings and killings. Almost everyone in the area had lost at least one family member. The people had been extremely traumatized by the war, had their houses looted over and over again, seen dead bodies strewn being eaten by dogs, and many had become insomniac, lost all hope in life and had taken to alcohol to forget bad memories.

In 2006, IAHV brought young people from both tribes together for its 10 days Youth Leadership Training Program, combining personal development techniques (stress management tools; physical training for improved health and energy levels; explanations on the functioning of body, mind, emotions and identity; powerful breathing techniques to release negative emotions and increase well being; confidence building exercises; processes to overcome mental limitations) with skills training (leadership development, entrepreneurial skills, communication skills, skills to handle challenging situations), fostering interpersonal relationships and a sense of connectedness across divides, and joint service to the community (team building; responsibility; project development support).

Consequently, 20 young people of both tribes released deep-rooted stress and traumas, were able to recognise each other as brothers and sisters, renounced "senseless" violence, and developed and implemented joint projects for the development of their communities. They rebuilt each other's houses and invited the displaced people back to live in harmony in the same village. Factions within the communities who had never mixed before had come together. Motivated by the youth's initiative, local authorities geared up community development support, the Ministry of Reconciliation of Ivory Coast awarded IAHV and its sister organisation Art of Living for their unique peace work, and the EU provided a grant to the community. IAHV was widely appreciated by the local population as making a real difference, in contrast to many other NGOs who had come and gone.

Rehabilitation & Reintegration for ex-combatants, terrorists, gangs, prisoners

For many years, Assam (India) has been a hotbed of militancy of varied kinds related to tensions between the state and the government, local people and immigrants, and among tribal groups.

240 militants belonging to different extremist groups, often since a young age, were offered to participate in a one month IAHV rehabilitation training. They practiced physical exercises to release accumulated stress and gain energy; powerful breathing techniques to release trauma and negative emotions of anger, fear and revenge; relaxation and fun processes to increase life-supporting emotions; discussion and reflection to broaden their perception and sense of identity; vocational training and training in organic farming to earn their living in a non-violent way.

100% of the participants felt their lives changed for the positive with many renouncing violence, taking up agriculture, and becoming willing to contribute to sustainable and peaceful development of their communities.

IAHV has worked with rebels in Kashmir, Naxalites in India, Kosovo Liberation Army veterans, the LTTE in Sri Lanka, militants in Assam, Maoists in Nepal, US war veterans from Afghanistan and Iraq, gangs in Panama and US, and 300,000 prisoners in 50 countries worldwide.

Healing the wounds of war: Trauma-relief, Resilience and Empowerment training

IAHV offers effective, affordable and accessible trauma- and stress-relief programs to large populations in complex emergencies.

The 1-8 hour programs have shown to be effective in rapidly and significantly reducing the symptoms of PTSD, depression and anxiety and improving the quality of life. They teach participants how to process their emotions and stress through the breath, to shift their attention away from reliving the past towards future possibilities. The programs not only reduce stress-induced symptoms, but also increase thinking and problem solving power of the participants and provide them with tools to cope and deal with future difficulties and challenging situations.

Instead of becoming dependent on outside support, the participants are empowered through the program and able to sustain its effects with continued practice.

IAHV has provided trauma-relief workshops for 200,000+ people, including in Iraq, Israel-Palestine, Kashmir, India, US, Balkans, Kyrgyzstan, Sri Lanka, Northern Caucasus and Afghanistan.

Selected Impact Metrics

- Reduced stress and trauma for 150,000 trauma-relief workshop beneficiaries worldwide ([IAHV: Trauma Relief](#))
- 1,500 Kashmiri militants renounce violence
- Hundreds of Naxalite terrorists renounce terrorism and violence, their leaders join the political process, and peace and security are restored in 1,000 villages in the Red Corridor
- Violence prevented in 3 Assam villages when whole area was aflame
- 2 warring tribes in Ivory Coast reconciled and cooperate
- Reduced PTSD symptoms in US war veterans ([Project Welcome Home Troops](#))
- Advancing psycho-social programming for hundreds of women affected by the war in Iraq ([Women's Empowerment Iraq](#))
- Rehabilitation and reintegration of youth gangs in Panama
- Reconciliation of warring communities in Muzaffar Nagar, India
- FARC leadership embraces Gandhian principles of non-violence and agrees to speed up the peace process after mediation by IAHV Founder Sri Sri Ravi Shankar in June 2015.

Contact and Information

Dr. Katrien Hertog
Director Peacebuilding Programs, IAHV
Katrien.hertog@iahv.org.uk, 0044 740 5638795
www.peaceunit-iahv.org

Nina Noorali
Program Officer Peacebuilding Programs, IAHV (Bruxelles)
nina.noorali@gmail.com 0032 489 33 17 62