

Quakers and Peace in Africa

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BY
MALESI KINARO



Malesi Kinaro is Executive Director of the Uzima Foundation. “Uzima” means “wellness” and is a youth organization that equips youth to live positive, healthy, peaceful lives. She is also Coordinator of Friends for Peace and Community Development which is currently bringing the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) workshops to western Kenya. She was formerly General Secretary of the Friends World Committee for Consultation-Africa Section.

FRIENDS PEACE TEAMS
AFRICAN GREAT LAKES INITIATIVE

3031 Laclede Station Road., St. Louis, MO 63143, phone/fax: (314) 645-0336 e-mail: davidzarembka@juno.com

I. QUAKER HISTORY IN AFRICA

UNDERSTANDING FRIENDS STRUCTURES

Quakers, also known as Friends, the world over have different modes of worship and theology. However, they have in common core organizational structures, which are expanded or shrunk according to the need locally. All Quaker organizations have the monthly meeting as the lower functional unit. In some countries there is a lower cadre, the village or preparatory meeting. Several monthly meetings congregate to form a Quarterly meeting. In some churches in Kenya, Quarterly meetings join to form Regional meetings. In all Quaker organizations all units join to form a Yearly Meeting that meets once a year to carry out business and worship.

Yearly Meeting
(Regional Meetings)
Quarterly Meetings
Monthly Meetings
Village/ Preparatory Meetings

TYPES OF WORSHIP AMONG FRIENDS

Un-programmed Meetings

This is the original mode of worship where people gather to worship in silence waiting upon God to speak to their hearts before they can minister to others. Membership in these meetings range from those who are Christ centered to Liberals to Universalists. One meeting can have members who belong to all these categories. These are found in Europe, USA and parts of Africa.

Programmed Meetings

These started in the USA and were brought to some parts of Africa by the American missionaries. Worship meetings are structured but the structure is very flexible. All programmed meetings in Africa are Christ centered. There are two major types of programmed meetings i.e. The Pastoral meetings where lay people are the leaders of the meeting with the pastor serving as spiritual role and the Evangelical Meetings where church leadership is in the hands of trained pastors. Some programmed meetings have un-programmed sessions, especially in the USA and Latin America while worship in some, especially in Africa is all programmed.

QUAKERISM IN AFRICA: BEGINNINGS AND EXPANSION

Central and Southern African Yearly Meeting

Two Dutch Quakers came to South Africa in 1728. They started to hold meetings for worship and to study the Bible. Later, Cape Town was found to be a rich, whale-breeding ground. Whalers from Europe soon arrived and used Cape Town as a base for this trade. Some of these were Quakers. These Quakers carried out Quaker Faith and Practice. Among them was a Methodist lay preacher, Richard Gush who had become a Quaker and is remembered for refusing to bear arms against the Xhosa. In 1838, two British Friends James Backhouse and George Washington Walker joined the meeting in Cape Town and established a Quaker school.

In 1948, Friends in Southern Africa were granted Yearly Meeting status by the London Yearly Meeting, (now British Yearly Meeting). This was sub-divided into South Africa General Meeting (South Africa, Lesotho, and Swaziland) and Central Africa Yearly Meeting (Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi). At the end of the apartheid system of the 1990's, the meetings were merged to form one meeting, the Central and Southern Africa Yearly Meeting. Like the founding London Yearly Meeting, all meetings in the Central and Southern Africa Yearly Meeting are un-programmed.

Eastern Africa Region

Kenya

In 1902, three young American missionaries, Willis Hotchkiss, Arthur Chilson, and Edgar Hole came to Kaimosi, Western Kenya where they founded a mission that would become the biggest Quaker body in the world. They came from Five Year Meeting, now Friends United Meeting (FUM) in the USA. They had an evangelistic church planting mission, having come from the programmed arm of Quakers in America. From the onset these missionaries had a two-pronged objective, to teach the good news of Jesus, therefore lead people to Christ and give holistic education to the inhabitants (Kavirondo natives, as they called them.)

By 1906, they had founded the first industrial mission where they taught reading, writing, carpentry, and dress-making. By 1944, a printing press had been installed and the church had spread to three other places in Western Province namely Lirhandanda, Lugala and Malava. In 1941, the Kaimosi Mission Hospital was opened, followed in 1942 by the Friends Bible Institute. By 1945, Kenyan Quakers were themselves missionaries, expanding the church as far as Uganda.

Expansion of the church in Kenya was fast and vigorous. Schools sprang up where the mission worked reached. Lugulu hospital was added to Kaimosi, an epileptic village was established in Kaimosi, a farmers training center was established in Lugari and a college of technology was built in Kaimosi. The church had been confined to the Luhya tribe only. But in 1962 a relief camp was set up to help Turkana further north affected by famine. By 1970, the Friends church was well established in several places in Turkana and later Pokot and Samburu. Quakerism had by now spread to Kisii and Luo people in South Nyanza as well.

Formation of Yearly Meetings in Kenya

The EAYM was so huge it had to split. The mode of separation was not agreed upon by everybody, with some advocating for gradual process starting with the formation of Regions which would become yearly meetings. Other members saw this as a ploy to deny them autonomy and so started the painful separation in 1973. The Elgon Religious Society of Friends separated from the EAYM and after this many other separations followed, some painfully, some peacefully. By the year 2002, the Centennial celebration of Friends in East Africa, Kenya had 14 yearly meetings stretching from Mombasa on the east coast to Mt. Elgon to the west-most corner of Kenya. It has membership close to 200,000 adult Friends and several hundred thousand more attenders and children.

Friends Church in Kenya (FCK)

This is the umbrella body that brings together all yearly meetings in Kenya. It has had many false starts as Kenyans worked through the pain that had come from the break up of East Africa Yearly Meeting. Currently FCK is on course having the blessings of all Yearly Meetings.

Uganda Yearly Meeting

Kenyans working for the East Africa Community as well as those who had immigrated to Uganda became evangelists starting Friends Churches wherever they were working. Other Kenyan evangelists crossed the border from Bungoma into Mbale to start other Friends Churches. By 1945, there were Quaker churches in Sibuse and Nabiswa to the East, Kigumba to the West and Nang'oma and Kampala.

In 1971, Idi Amin started his rule of terror that led to many people fleeing Uganda. He banned many Christian churches, including the Friends church in 1973. When he was disposed in 1979 freedom of worship was restored and the remaining 200 Friends gathered to rebuild broken dreams and churches. It is at this time that they formed an independent Uganda Yearly Meeting, autonomous from the East Africa Yearly Meeting. By 1982 membership had reached 1,300 in ten monthly meetings in Mbale, Kigumba and Nang'oma. Also in 1982, two American missionaries (the Lotons) went to Kampala where they helped build a church and a community center.

Currently, Uganda has two yearly meetings, they Uganda Yearly Meeting and the Evangelical Friends Church. The war in Uganda broke the spirit of people and it has taken long before the church could be rebuilt.

Tanzania Yearly Meeting of Friends

Quakerism in Tanzania was brought by a few Friends who migrated to Tanzania from Western Kenya in the mid fifties in search of land. They settled at Mugumu in Serengeti District. This district borders the famous Serengeti Game Reserve. Quakers eventually multiplied as they recruited indigenous people. In 1962, Friends Africa Mission headquarters at Kaimosi sent their officers to Mugumu to preach as well as do social welfare activities as missionaries. World Neighbors (in cooperation with Rural Service Program (RSP) – Kaimosi) focused training and encouraging people to adopt modern farming methods and other agricultural techniques. It was popularly known as the “Lord’s acre plan”. They deployed Field Extension Workers. Adult education and health were promoted in the area as well as preaching.

A primary school, Kasangura, was built. In 1978, the East Africa Community broke up. There was tension between the Kenyan Government and Tanzania. Most Kenyans who had migrated to Tanzania were expelled and went back to Kenya. The Quaker community therefore lost a lot of members. However, since Quakerism had taken roots in the area a few of them remained and continued.

In 1980, Tanzania became an autonomous Yearly Meeting. Their headquarters is still in Mugumu. They have Quaker sponsored primary and secondary schools. The membership has increased and spread to the entire District and beyond.

Burundi

The age of enlightenment continued to grow and took deep roots among many churches in the Northern hemisphere. Quakers in America became more and more liberal. The FUM was caught in this and some Friends who felt that the basic Christian faith was being compromised formed the Evangelical Friends Church. In East Africa, Arthur Chilson, his wife Edna and daughter

Rachel, left Kenya to found the Evangelical Friends Church in Burundi in 1934. They landed at Kibimba where they formed a mission station.

In 1984, the Burundi government expelled all missionaries. The church has been well rounded locally and it continued to grow in the hands of Africans. Currently, there are about 90 congregations and 40 monthly meetings. Quakers are in 13 of the 16 provinces with a membership of 13,000 adult and 30,000 attenders.

Rwanda

This was an offshoot of the Burundi Yearly Meeting. George Morris, Willard and Dorice Ferguson moved from Burundi where they had been missionaries for many years to the Friends Church in Rwanda. The first mission station was Ruhengeri then to Kicukiro (the present headquarters) and Cyangugu. The Rwanda church practices water baptism in response to demands by the early converts who felt lack of water baptism signified cultism. At present Rwanda has three quarterly meetings. It has a membership of 5,000 and 3,000 regular attenders. It is in 9 of 12 provinces.

Democratic Republic of Congo

There are two types of Quaker meetings in DRC. The Eastern part which forms Evangelical Friends Church was founded by the Burundians in 1981. In 1991, the Evangelical Church of Zaire (now DRC) became an independent yearly meeting. It has churches in North and South Kivu provinces, with headquarters in Abeka in Fizi district. There are sixteen monthly meetings and four quarterly meetings. The church is organized on the same basis as the one in Burundi, except they have baptism by water.

The Kinshasa meeting was started by traveling and isolated Quakers of the un-programmed version. Currently the Kinshasa meeting has been granted monthly meeting status with a membership of about 50.

Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Congo Brazzaville

These countries have preparatory or monthly meetings of Friends. All of them were formed by isolated or traveling Friends of the un-programmed version. Membership ranges from 20-50.

II. QUAKER PEACE EFFORTS IN AFRICA

South Africa

As early as the 19th century, Quakers in South Africa opposed the Anglo-Boer war. Emily Hobson (a friend of Friends) spoke against the war and spoke at different forums in Britain, prompting the setting up of relief supplies to those suffering and being involved in reconciliation and rehabilitation work after the war.

During the apartheid era, Quakers were activists in the resistance to this horrendous system. Two Quakers exemplify this struggle, Jeremy Routledge, a white Quaker man, married Nosizwe, a Zulu Quaker woman at the height of the apartheid system. They suffered imprisonment and persecution but continued to agitate against the system. They founded the Quaker Peace Center. Nosizwe is a member of parliament and an assistant minister in South Africa, having been active in the ANC struggle.

Uganda

During the Idi Amin rule of terror, many Ugandans were heart broken as they saw their country being systematically broken and looted. Many fled to Kenya as refugees. Here the FWCC worked hand in hand with Quaker Peace Service to support refugees. Currently, QPS, now called Quaker Peace and Social Witness (QPSW) have a peace and development program in Northern Uganda. Friends have an active Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) and carry out AVP workshops in many parts of Uganda. They work with all faiths in Uganda.

Kenya

Friends in Kenya were actively involved in relief work in Western Kenya during the 1991-1992 politically instigated civil conflicts. Some worked through the National Churches of Kenya while others worked through their churches. QPS was instrumental in helping FWCC set up peace committees that helped settle displaced people, some who came together to build a school in Eldoret and a dispensary in Mount Elgon area.

The Change Agent Peace Programme (CAPP) brings together Friends from all Quaker churches to carry out peace workshops while the AVP is targeting schools and prisons. Nairobi Yearly Meeting has a comprehensive HIV/AIDS program while individual churches have support programs for AIDS orphans. The Friends Church in Kenya is part of the MAP international program that brings churches together to fight HIV/AIDS.

Friends were represented in the Ufungamo Initiative, an inter-faith movement that put pressure that eventually brought down the KANU government of misrule.

Burundi/ Rwanda 1993-2004

The attempted coup of 1993 in Burundi happened when the FWCC interim committee was meeting in Britain. It was possible to set relief programs in place very quickly. Two weeks after the coup, QPS sent funds to be used in relief work. The Mennonite Central Committee, American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), and Evangelical Friends International (EFI) all joined together for relief, rehabilitation or setting up peace committees. Through these tremendous efforts the highly traumatized population began to regain a sense of self. This was repeated in Rwanda, after the genocide.

Friends in Burundi and Rwanda put up many rehabilitation, relief and peace programs that are on-going. The following initiatives were started by Friends in Burundi although not all are run by yearly meetings because they have been registered as independent organizations:

- Ministry of Peace and Reconciliation Under the Cross (Mi-PAREC)
- Alternatives to Violence Program – Burundi (AVP)
- Trauma Healing and Reconciliation Services (THARS)
- Faith in Action
- Friends Women Association

The Yearly Meeting runs Friends Peace School at Magarama where Hutu and Tutsi children are brought together to learn regular subjects interspersed with peace messages in a holistic way from pre-school right up to primary school. It has also put in place programs where Tutsi and Hutu youths come together to build houses for people whose houses have been burnt. They have Peace Drums that use participatory dance/drama to pass on the peace effort.

In Rwanda, all peace programs are under the Friends Church and are housed at the Friends Peace House. These programs include AVP, CAPP, trauma healing and others.

Democratic Republic of Congo

The Quaker response to the situation in East Congo has been slow. Currently, there are two main programs:

- Change Agent Peace Programme (CAPP) sponsored by Quaker Service – Norway
- AVP supported by the African Great Lakes Initiative (AGLI)

The church is also involved in peace education, civic education including human rights, trauma healing and Women and Family for Peace programs.

III. A SUMMARY OF MAJOR PEACE PROGRAMS

ALTERNATIVE TO VIOLENCE PROJECT (AVP)

AVP Rwanda

AVP-Rwanda works with all sectors of society, but they have placed particular emphasis on training judges involved in the Gacaca process with principles of restorative justice and ex-prisoners. Other important target groups include soldiers, genocide survivors, active soldiers and demobilized soldiers. The AVP initiatives have been well-received in Rwandan society. There are many AVP facilitators in Rwanda. An evaluation done on AVP in Rwanda shows that people want more training and local facilitators as it has proved to be useful in helping them heal.

AVP South Africa

AVP-South Africa works in teams and is primarily focused on youth in schools, prisons (remand centers), etc. When working in institutions such as schools and prisons the program involves the entire institutional community, including the youth, the staff who work with them, and other stakeholders such as institutional governors and local community members. The program's commitment to such institutions generally lasts about two years. AVP initiatives in South Africa are community or institution driven and place particular emphasis on long-term sustainability. AVP-South Africa is also changing its focus to include working in business and other workplaces as a part of a government initiative to educate workers. This new emphasis may also provide additional funding to the program. The goal of AVP South Africa is not to prevent war, which it does not have, but to change the overwhelming culture and reality of violence that exists in the country.

AVP Burundi

AVP-Burundi is in prisons, with peace-keeping forces, with NGO Search for Common Ground and the Kibimba peace committee. By working with the local militias ('peace-keepers'), AVP hopes to train them to respond to conflict non-violently. These forces are a major source of violence and insecurity in the communities which they terrorize.

AVP Uganda

AVP-Uganda works in southern, western, northern and eastern regions of the country, but the staff do try to collaborate. Sixteen other NGO's are working with the AVP, including prison organization (working with prisoners, prison staff and families), the police, Roman Catholics, an organization for demobilized soldiers and refugees and restorative justice and humanitarian relief organizations. Most of these organizations raise funds internally, though AVP-Uganda does seek

to help them if possible. Continuing insecurity in the north has limited the use of the program in that area, but workshops are on-going even there.

AVP Kenya

AVP-Kenya started in 1995 but became active in 2003 with support from AGLI. AVP workshops take place in different places. To date over 500 Kenyans have undergone the basic training. Forty of these are facilitators. The AVP project in Kenya is targeting police, prisons and schools where there is a high rate of violence. The AVP project is in Western, Rift Valley and Nyanza and in Nairobi Provinces.

CHANGE AGENT PEACE PROJECT (CAPP)

CAPP--Regionally

The three primary areas of CAPP activities are 1) human rights, 2) conflict transformation and 3) transformation and democracy and good governance.

CAPP-DRC

South Kivu trains cell groups/peer groups for peace and human rights and has a sewing workshop for women. They also have a Charter for Non-violence, which they want all members to sign.

North Kivu has several programs: peace education, the rights of women and children, youth peacemakers, etc. The program is based in two cities in the province (Goma and Masisi). The situation in North Kivu is particularly violent, with open rebellion against the central government, competing foreign influences, large numbers of small arms, a tradition of revenge and a general culture of violence. A team of permanent trainers work with teachers and students in schools.

CAPP-Rwanda

CAPP has established local peace communities for conflict resolution in local communities. The program also includes short training and discussions for busy officials who are not able to come to long seminars, peace education in schools, street children outreach and working with vulnerable women in their communities.

CAPP-Burundi

CAPP only supports training and other activities including a national peace committee for the Friends Church. There is no national program or office, per se.

CAPP-Kenya

CAPP has programs in peace and democracy, where women are trained about their rights. There are also programs specifically aimed at women, conflicts in churches and church leadership, programs for youth regarding HIV/AIDS, drug abuse and good governance, their rights and many others. CAPP – Kenya is also working with the fourteen yearly meetings in Kenya despite the difficulties in coordinating such activities. Each yearly meeting is responsible for three training sessions, many of which are well underway. After these trainings, CAPP encourages them to write proposals to receive resources to continue these activities. The program is hopeful that the yearly meetings can take responsibility for these activities so that it can pursue other projects. They are working on a peace-making manual in both English and Swahili. In general,

progress is slow because of the difficulties inherent in working with fourteen autonomous groups. Other strategic partnerships are being pursued such as the UZIMA foundation.

QUAKER UMBRELLA ORGANIZATION IN AFRICA

Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC-Africa Section)

This was established in 1971. Its headquarters are in Nairobi, Kenya. Its mandate is to serve as a consultative, facilitative body, keeping all Quakers in Africa in touch with each other and with Friends globally.

Evangelical Friends International (EFI)

This group brings together all the evangelical Friends churches in Africa, which are mainly Burundi, Rwanda, and DRC (East).

Friends United Meeting (FUM)

This is the umbrella organization of churches that were started by Five Year Meeting and those that were formed as a by-product. It is found mainly in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania.

Quaker Conflict Prevention Network (QPN)

QPN brings together all Quaker people and organization working on peace issues. They share their work experiences, their stories and they work towards supporting each others work so that those working at policy level, like Quaker United Nations Organization (QUNO) and Friends National Council on Legislation (FCNL) understand the issues at the grassroots level and vice versa. Five consultations have been held in London, New York, Bujumbura (Burundi), Kigali (Rwanda) and Kakamega (Kenya).

INTERNATIONAL QUAKER ORGANIZATIONS WORKING ON PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

Quaker Peace and Social Witness (QPSW – London)

Formerly Quaker Peace Service (QPC) is working in the war torn area of North Uganda.

American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)

The AFSC peace work has been mainly in development. AFSC has had programs in Angola, Mozambique, Somali and Sudan. Currently, AFSC through the Africa Peace and Justice Initiative are carrying out leadership training programs for African youth. The youth have formed a network, the Africa Youth Initiative Network (AYINET), which has members in 12 African countries, in East, Central and Southern Africa.

Quaker Peace Norway (QPN)

QPN raises funds from the Norwegian government for an African based organization, CAPP. QPN works through churches and other faith based organizations in the field of human rights, governance and conflict resolution.

African Great Lakes Initiative (AGLI/ Friends Peace Teams)

AGLI is part of a larger project known as Friends Peace Teams in which 16 yearly meetings in the USA and Canada have joined. AGLI raises funds for four areas in Africa. AVP, trauma

healing, work camps and exchange of Friends between Africa and USA for the purpose of sharing information and experiences. AGLI works in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Burundi, Rwanda, and DRC supporting peace and development projects.

QUASI-QUAKER LOCAL PEACE ORGANIZATIONS

These organizations were either started in the church and moved out to become independent entities or they were formed by Quakers but not in the church context.

Burundi

Mi-PAREC in Burundi is a relatively new organization with the principal objective of social harmony based on a spirit of dignity and love amongst people. It has five programs:

- Community Reconciliation which offers seminars, etc. targeted at church leaders, displaced people, soldiers and other communities.
- The youth project which brings people together
- Women and families which works with widows and families in conflict
- Peace education with a special focus on schools
- Documentary center with a peace library of videos, books and other publications and education.

School of Peace in Burundi is a project of Friends Church in Burundi was founded in response to the militia using youth in the destruction of the country. School of Peace activities include:

- Education of young children for peace
- Visits to children in distress – such as orphans, street children and the sick
- Clubs in which children are educated in responsibility and peace
- School program training parents in human rights
- Bursary and Scholarship scheme

THARS in Burundi has set up listening rooms in most provinces in Burundi where traumatized people come for counseling and prayers. It also carries out reconciliation among communities and individuals. These include:

- Soldiers
- Child Soldiers
- Raped women
- Those who have lost relatives in the wars

Kenya

Friends International Center (FIC) in Nairobi operates on a very small budget and participated in various programs. Work done by the center includes:

- Involvement in interfaith activities
- Voter education
- Dialogue for Somali people in Nairobi
- Youth Education Workshop for surrounding communities including Quaker refugees on topics including clean-ups, food distribution and so on.

The vision of this center is to become a center offering peace education in schools and AVP. It works with a wide body of network partners.

Friends in Peace and Community Development (FCPD) in Kenya has a mission of responding to social situations by facilitating spiritual, mental and physical healing especially to

vulnerable and traumatized groups and to promote and encourage peaceful co-existence. Its membership consists of both Quakers and non-Quakers. It has worked to rehabilitate and reconcile tribal members that were fighting in 1991 in Kenya. This was in Uasin-Gishu, Bungoma and Mt. Elgon districts. Later it was involved in soliciting for release refugees illegally held in Kenyan prisons. It trains church leaders and pastors in counseling, evangelism, discipleship and conflict resolution skills. It works through three departments:

- Community Development which has as its objective the building of self-sustaining communities
- Peace and reconciliation (recently including AVP)
- Evangelism and disciple building

UZIMA Foundation in Kenya is a youth organization that seeks to equip youth with leadership skills to enable them to live positive, healthy and peaceful lives through a number of extensive programs and networks in three provinces in Kenya with 102 youth groups comprising 10,000 youth. This organization was founded by Quakers and runs on Quaker principles, is not but it is not strictly a Quaker organization.

Africa Quaker Vision (AQUAVIS) is involved in Evangelism and church growth, peace and reconciliation, education and leadership training and community development. It has leadership training for church leaders and provided learning facilities for children in Kibera slum, supported women's income generating projects in Western province.

Rwanda

Friends Peace House Rwanda was founded by the Evangelical Church of Rwanda with the assistance of the Friends in the USA in response to the genocide in Rwanda. It's objectives include sharing the way, method and training of peace with Friends, other church denominations, community groups, schools and so on, on neutral ground (not in the Friends Church compound). It works through trainings, workshops, forums and peace clubs with the goals of:

- Structuring and reinforcing peace groups at a grassroots level
- Sensitizing Rwandans to peace issues, helping them understand their personal role in this work
- Providing leadership in the work of national reconciliation including working with the national commission

Friends Peace House has four departments:

- Youth department: youth clubs, AIDS program, Sports for Peace and peace education
- Women's Department: conflict resolution, peace building, micro-finance, AIDS program, women and children's program, and women in dialogue program
- Peace Education Program: houses CAPP, AVP projects, trauma healing and sustainable peace programs.

Trauma Healing in Rwanda operates from Friends Peace House in Kigali where an office structure has been established. Rwanda has held many workshops training 490 survivors of genocide, release prisoners and community leaders. The program helps participants to understand trauma, grieving and trust and has been immediately successful.

DRC

Project Muinda in Kishasa DRC was started ten years ago during the Mobutu regime. Its main goal is to inform and educate the communities in the field of peace work. These include:

- Peace cells which comprise of 5-7 diverse participants in Kinshasa and two other cities in the central region of the DRC. Participants meet to communicate with each other and hold discussions.
- Organizing workshops and seminars on non-violent conflict resolution
- Publications on how to achieve peace
- The production of posters with peace messages
- Sharing of information via the internet
- Trauma healing of children in distress

South Africa

Quaker Peace Centre (QPC) Cape Town, South Africa promotes projects which are meant for the empowerment of the people at the grassroots level both in South Africa and neighboring countries. Using direct interventions to stop acts of violence, peace education and mediation training are means of educating the less educated South Africans to solve conflicts non-violently. Such training is targeted both at adults and children. Other programs include a restorative justice initiative and vocational training.

QPC houses a mediation service. Out reach projects beyond South Africa include peace course, which are trainings for a group of Africans and Americans (AYINET) as well as work camps and internships, though both programs have largely American and European participants. The QPC would like more African and more Quaker involvement in these activities.

QPC Work camps and Non-violent Communication Programs: The work camp started in 1998 with various work camps and particulars from a number of countries. It offers:

- Leadership training
- One-day work camps
- Weekend work camps
- Three to four week international work camps involving participants from around the world.

The non-violent communication program has a number of components helping people to understand the impact of the language that they use when communicating with others.

Uganda

Friends in Peace, Community Development and Child Care in Bubuda, Uganda developed out of Friends in Peace and Community Development in Kenya. The organization has a number of departments including:

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| ○ Peace | ○ Child Care |
| ○ Organic Agriculture | ○ Child Peace |
| ○ Health | ○ AYINET |

The program has an executive committee and administration and over departmental workers. The organization has a number of supporters around the world including AGLI which sponsors individual children and work camps.

COPA: Consists of people trained and Woodbrooke Center in England and the organizations they work for. It trains people in peace building and conflict resolution.

IV. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Peace efforts in Africa by Quakers is many pronged and is currently happening at many levels. Basically peace education is being taken as on the discipleship tools. The issues being addressed are:

- ❖ Understanding political systems and policies including human rights so that we are not easily swayed by those who want to exploit our tribes without our understanding the facts
- ❖ Understanding ourselves, our reactions under different circumstances
- ❖ Learning to affirm ourselves and others
- ❖ Looking for positive ways to economic empowerment so that our poverty is not exploited
- ❖ Looking at and incorporating traditional peace making processes that do not go against Christian principles
- ❖ Building capacities of the youth so that they can grow up in the culture of peace and governance

As I consider peace making among Quakers in Africa many different peace making strategies come to mind:

- ❖ The Thursday meetings in Kenya, at village level when church members come together for the express reason of openly discussing conflict areas in the church, working towards a healing environment
- ❖ The Kenyan women who chose to meet often just to pray, many times to the chagrin of their husbands, when the church was going through great conflict and through these prayers starting a movement that eventually brought healing to the rest of the church
- ❖ The young woman, Susan Seitz, who put her life on the line to go to Kibimba in Burundi as a nurse when times were so dangerous. Her presence helped restore a degree of normality to the area, leading to the formation of peace committees that did so much to bring reconciliation.
- ❖ The courage of church leaders like David Nyonzima and Pontien Bararunyarezi of Burundi, Japeth, David Bucura and Sizeli of Rwanda. These leaders put their lives on line by carrying out reconciliation and rehabilitation during very dangerous times in their countries.
- ❖ Missionaries like Willard and Dorice Ferguson who were willing to be accused by both sides of the conflict in Rwanda but stood firm and brought healing.
- ❖ David Zarembka and Bridget Butt who have a burden for Africa and spent time and resources encouraging and reaching out to those directly involved in peace and rehabilitation work, many times at risk of their own lives.

Food For Thought

Violent conflicts in Africa, especially in the countries that are said to be predominantly Christian has led critics to say things like, “Christianity among Africans is skin deep” of “Africa Christians are pretenders”. An Africa theologian has gone as far as to say, “Africans are notoriously religious,” as though that is necessarily a bad thing. Basically the African Christian is made to feel guilty or inferior.

As we look at the prevention of violent conflict in Africa and as we wrestle with the issues of what Christianity means to an African we need to include these thoughts:

- ❖ What does being a Christian mean to a poor African person? Does it mean a chance to get an education, other material gains that are associated with Christianity? How was and is the gospel presented?
- ❖ How does Christianity impact cultural beliefs? How do you explain a younger brother of a diseased man insisting on inheriting the brother's wife knowing well that the brother dies of AIDS? Deciding that it is better to die than live with his brother's curse for refusing to take care of the brother's family. Or a woman who marries an HIV positive widower because she would rather die as somebody's wife than remain single? What kind of socialization do Christian peacemakers need to carry out that will affect the collective conscience?
- ❖ What bonds hold people so strongly to their tribes that all theological teachings fly to the wind when a tribal knob is pressed? How can Christianity make use of tribal affiliations that just refuse to go away?
- ❖ The African Christian left his/her traditional beliefs to embrace Christianity and before this could take root liberal theology came in. What effect has this had on the formation of ethics? We are living in the agrarian age side by side with the technological age, electronic age. How can peacemakers help the African to reconcile these tensions?

Conclusion

The Friends Church is one the fastest growing churches in Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi and DRC. If a true culture of peace is practiced by these churches great strides can be made in peace work. Together we must re-examine our theology so that there is a greater rooting of what we believe then resolve to practice it. I find the collaboration among Friends is very important. The Friends of the North give financial and material resources while Friends in the South give human resources. Friends in the South need to sort themselves out quickly so that they can take their spiritual resources back to the North where Christianity is challenged at every corner and Christian core beliefs are considered an affront. A situation has developed where Christian principles have been thrown out in order to accommodate everybody. The power of the Peace Testimonies lay in the absolute belief in the Holy Spirit and in Jesus Christ by those who practice it. That is what made is so successful.