

Search For Common Ground-Côte d'Ivoire

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Community Reconciliation in Moyen-Cavally

SFCG and a team of local facilitators trained in conflict resolution techniques conducted a series of trainings and exchange sessions in various localities in Moyen-Cavally, including Toby-Bangolo, Guiglo and Duekoue. The activities aimed to bring together community members to address existing conflicts and explore ways to solve them peacefully. At each dialogue and workshop, participants were encouraged to move their discussion into action by identifying concrete solutions and developing joint plans.

Community members and traditional leaders welcomed the initiative, as it offered a timely opportunity to map out existing conflicts and to strengthen their ability to respond to conflict situations as they occur.

Participants suggested involving all communities living in the area in similar activities, particularly youth and local authorities. This would help to create a space for dialogue and reconciliation between community members and their leaders in a region where suspicion and hatred have affected peaceful coexistence.

In addition to organising exchange activities for communities, SFCG met with the local facilitators separately to share information on their experiences and current challenges, and to strengthen their capacity to facilitate dialogue and mitigate conflict in their communities.

To date, more than 20 facilitators in the area have been trained and continue working in their communities to facilitate dialogue and peaceful conflict resolution. An increasing number of villages throughout Moyen-Cavally directly benefit from these services, thereby contributing to community reconciliation.

Fostering Youth Dialogue in Toulepleu

Youth leaders from diverse political groups participated in a training on conflict prevention and resolution organised by SFCG in Toulepleu. The purpose of the training was twofold: to facilitate dialogue among young members of political parties; and to increase their capacity to handle conflict situations particularly around political issues.

Participants explored the concept of conflict and examined specific conflicts among youth from different political parties, focusing on how these conflicts could be managed and resolved. The interactive discussions helped to break down the fear and suspicion between youth, and at the end of the training participants pledged to turn away from violence and share what they had learned with other youth through radio programmes and other channels. Participants also welcomed gaining additional skills and useful insights on conflict management and approaches to conflict, such as collaboration.

The youth offered several recommendations for additional steps to address these conflicts, including the importance of regular contact between youth and involving other youth groups such as young women and young patriots fighters, in order to step up dialogue and reconciliation in Toulepleu.

By engaging youth through dialogue and sensitisation, SFCG is encouraging them to turn away from violence and to contribute to peace and reconciliation in their communities.

Joint Evaluation of the Community Rehabilitation Project

SFCG and its partners CARE and PNDDR conducted a joint assessment mission in Bouaké,

Man, Korhogo and Yamoussoukro in September. The mission aimed to provide a preliminary assessment of the Project Committees (Comités Projets) and their role in managing conflicts in their communities. The team found that the Project Committees are fulfilling their role in preventing and managing conflicts in the communities; at the same time, the Committees are having an increasingly positive impact on community-level dialogue and social cohesion. Activities in target zones have fostered dialogue between community members and strengthened their capacity to identify common solutions to social and economic conflicts opposing them. Today, only a few villages in the targeted areas are still experiencing serious cohesion problems.

Additional findings from the mission indicate that communities have a good understanding of the project's objectives and the importance of restoring social cohesion and mutual understanding. However, it seems that they are not fully aware of their exact role in the project.

Working with the Project Committees, SFCG will continue to develop sensitisation tools and activities for local communities, helping to ensure that they are better informed of the Community Rehabilitation Project and that they can fully contribute to its implementation and success.

Listeners Provide Feedback on SFCG's Radio Programmes

After one year of broadcast, SFCG conducted a brief survey to assess the listenership of its programs. The survey, which targeted four main zones, shows that listeners are familiar with SFCG radio programmes and can either cite names of programmes or describe their content. The survey was conducted in order to measure listenership, to determine listeners' preferences and to better understand ordinary citizens' feelings and hopes in relation to the end of the crisis and the country's future.

The survey included respondents from all ages and walks of life in localities that have ready access to information on SFCG partner radios.

The majority of respondents said that they are fond of programmes like l'Equipe and Unis dans Nos Différences because they offer entertaining storylines and characters, interwoven with

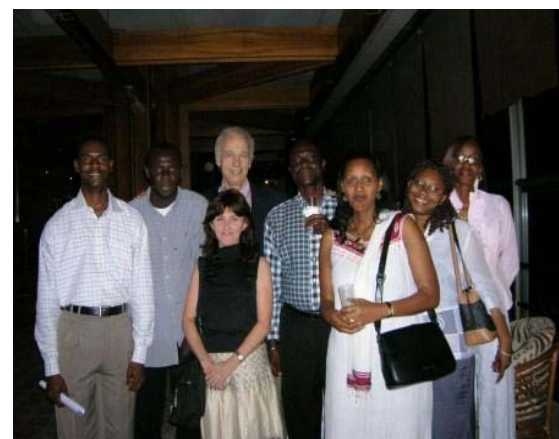
conflict and social issues themes. Listeners particularly welcomed themes of peace and reconciliation in the programmes as they wish for increased sensitisation on peacebuilding and mutual understanding among all Ivorians.

« I recently had an argument with a taxi driver. He told me that he couldn't argue with me because I was a customer. This reminded me of the Wôrô Wôrô Tour programme and I stopped. Today the taxi driver and I are good friends. »

Feedback from a listener

A middle-aged farmer from Lolobo stated that l'Equipe is his favorite programme because "it features a group of very diverse people that form a real family. The series is very successful in uniting three young people from different ethnic backgrounds around a common goal". Regarding the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire, the farmer commented that he was not up to date because negotiations are stumbling and peace accords are not implemented. He believed that SFCG's could play a role "in sensitisation, training and conflict management" in the current climate.

The results of the survey will feed into SFCG-CI existing programming, helping to ensure that SFCG's new initiatives respond to the needs and concerns of the target groups.



SFCG President John Marks with SFCG-CI team

SFCG-Côte d'Ivoire is grateful to the following donors for their generous support.

