WALKING IN ANOTHER’S SHOES

exchange, empathy and dialogue

THE COMMUNITY MEMORIALISATION PROJECT

MANNAR: AMPARA: MATARA

DECEMBER 2017 – JANUARY 2018
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1. Introduction

1.1 Rationale and expectations of dialogue process:

The community memorialisation project has collected over 350 stories about experiences of violence and war from Mannar, Matara and Ampara districts. These peoples’ histories are used as reminders of our violent past, and as a launching pad for discussion on how we as a community can move towards non-violence so as to endure non-recurrence of violence.

The objective of the dialogue process is to engage diverse communities in this discussion in order to ultimately create a group of ‘champions’ or community leaders at different levels of society who are aware of the potential of non-violence, basic understanding of problem solving skills and are interested in non-recurrence of violence. These are ideally supported within a village setting that has been exposed to multiple narratives, acceptance that war or violence is not what we want for our future, and the need for a value-based society that chooses non-violence, empathy, compassion and understanding of the other as a basis for future peace. Therefore, they are able to provide a basis of support for the champions to act on peacebuilding and managing emerging tensions within their contexts.

Deepening dialogue at a community level, involves a relationship with the same communities over a period of time. These same communities have been engaged in introductory pocket meetings, multiple story collection visits, and now the dialogue process.

Rationale and expectations of dialogue process:
In Phase 1, the village level dialogues have worked with homogeneous communities across Matara, Ampara and Mannar districts who have gone through the workshop for building non-violent, value-based societies. These communities have had the opportunity to open up about their own prejudice in accepting a non-violence future for the next generation. Currently, 13 dialogue workshops have been held in Ampara (with 30 villages and 365 people participating), 10 dialogues have been held in Matara (with 37 villages and 280 people participating), and 15 dialogues in Mannar (with 32 villages and 442 people participating). In phase I of the series, the interest to read the other’s story while fully engaging in the memory mapping exercise indicated their interest in engaging in conversations about the past, willingness to deal with it, and the patient sharing of information and hopes between the young and the old.

In phase 2, at the inter-divisional dialogues, people were chosen from these groups (based on volunteerism and identified ‘champions’) who will be invited to move onto phase 2. These are drawn from the village dialogues and is hoped would be individuals (including youth) who display leadership qualities, have a voice or standing in their communities, committed to peace, and those who are ready to mobilise their communities in times of need. At this level, the groups were not homogenous but mixed in race, religion, language as they represented 4-5 villages from across divisions within the same district. At this stage, the group were given an introduction to a set of skills, tools and a further exposure to the stories and issues of their own district, in order to create a wider group of individuals with skills and interest in addressing emerging and existing conflicts non-violently. At this stage some of the key figures or ‘champions’ that were identified will play a major role. The feedback from phase II of the dialogue series revealed that, there is significant interest in meeting the ‘other’ community and in exercises that were creative and fun ways for inter-generational dialogue and learning skills.

In phase 3, at the inter-district level dialogues, a selected group of champions are further strengthened and networked between districts. These champions will be able to not only accept that non-violence is necessary, but have a higher level of skills and tools to go back to the village level having been exposed to the ‘other’ in their own setting - learning about their lives, experiences through ‘memory walks’ to sites of memory, facilitated dialogue, and living in each other’s houses. This is in order to deal with emerging conflicts effectively by linking the experiences and lessons of the past – to the potential for violence in the future. It is expected that about 90 champions will be created through this process, representing as many of the 90+ villages from phase 1 as possible. At each of these workshops the participants will stay in the homes of their ‘district hosts’. It is expected that each district visit will have 30 participants (20 from each district and 10 hosts). Phase III is primarily about ‘connection’ and understanding the other, as a real human being and a friend. The sessions are centred on learning that the values, principles, hopes for the future, belief in the need for a stable future for youth, belief in non-recurrence of violence are all similar regardless of who they are and where they are from in Sri Lanka. Based on these similarities, the sessions are aimed at building further skills and ability to envision sustainable peace. The phase 3 is a balance between learning about each other, and the other’s real-life challenges, dialogue, interactive activities and facilitator input/training.

Through this dialogue process, the CMP hopes to support the creation of a public discourse on non-recurrence of violence by learning from the mistakes of our pasts, through access to stories of ordinary people with extraordinary experiences of violence and courage. The people to people dialogue process is complimentary to the wider media campaign that saw social media, TV, radio, newspaper and dialogue with media personnel on building a discourse on non-recurrence of violence conflict. The discourse in both methods of outreach and dialogue, is centred on the concept of a value-based society.
1.2 General tips for facilitators –

TIP – the most important part of every session is the ‘debrief’. It is during this component that the abstract lessons learned through games/activities are clearly defined, unpacked and presented to the group as a ‘take-away’ skill, idea or practice. The facilitator must be diligent in facilitating the connections between the memory walk, the game, the conversation between groups and the values and skills that can be drawn from it, as it relates to real life. It is important that the facilitator develops a set of questions for each session based on the guidelines provided.

TIP – the facilitator must be clear in instructions, in the order of the session and in providing input where necessary, without going into to ‘trainer mode’.

TIP – The facilitator and the partner organisation would be the familiar contact points for the visiting participants. Therefore, the role of the facilitators and partners will also include guiding the participants through interactions, cultural differences, language barriers and workshops.

TIP – the timings within the sessions are suggested only. The facilitator is free to adjust them as he sees fit. The session content is also a guideline. Where necessary the terms, level of complexity, and even activities can be adjusted or substituted depending on the composition, openness, capacity and potential tensions within the groups.

TIP – it is important to create opportunities for bonding and inter-generational dialogue within and between village groups where possible. The memory walks are extremely important in fostering a connection between groups. Make sure that people are in mixed groups as they share, understand and debrief on what they see. Encourage the participants to ‘put themselves in the others’ shoes’ while they walk around.

TIP – have all the relevant village maps to choose from. The partner should also provide the facilitator with a list of village names, so that the facilitator can familiarise him/herself with the type of issues or capacities of the village as well as the reports which should be read before each session.

TIP – have all necessary material – coloured papers, pens, markers, blue-tack, flip charts, boards, Flashcards, Jigsaw puzzle pieces, feedback material and a box of props for role-play game.

TIP – support the community leaders who are conducting the memory walk with questions, suggestions or language needs without making your presence very prominent.

TIP – A group photo should be taken of the participants on the first day, to be printed and shared with all the contact details of participants at the end to ensure further engagement/connection.

TIP – There should be a first-aid kit with partners, as well as a plan for contingencies or emergencies during the exposure visit.

TIP – The participants should be asked to bring something from their districts as small souvenirs to the hosts and vice versa if they would like to do so. While traditional greetings and welcomes should be encouraged, it is best to avoid religious practices if all religions cannot be represented.

TIP – The facilitators will be supported by translators and group facilitators in each group. It is important that all these support personnel are briefed well in advance of their role as well as each session, so that they are able to ensure the smooth progression of the workshop and amply support primary facilitators.

TIP – Try to maintain the timing of the sessions, however due to translations this may not always be possible. The sessions are designed with breaks in between that could absorb some of the extra time participants may take if needed.
1.3 Agenda

Travel Day

05.00 - 05.30 a.m.  - Gathering in designated meeting place
05.30 - 14.30 p.m. - Arrival at location (the accompanying project partner will provide an introduction to the visiting district)
15.00 – 16.00 p.m. - Traditional non-sectarian welcome, introduction and departing to hosts’ houses

Day 1: Workshop

08.30 – 09.00 a.m.  - Arrival at venue, together with hosts
09.00 – 11.00 a.m.  - Session 1: Who are we? Where are we from? What have we experienced?
11.00 - 11.30 a.m.  - Tea/Coffee and exhibition of village-level maps from previous sessions
11.30 - 13.00 p.m.  - Sessions 2: What values do we share? What do we want in the future? What lessons have we learned from our past?
13.00 – 13.30 p.m.  - Lunch
13.30 – 14.30 p.m.  - Session 3: Identifying conflicts, and transforming conflicts through value-based visioning and mediation
14.30 – 16.00 p.m.  - Session 4: Debrief and wrap-up
16.60 – 16.30 p.m.  - Tea/coffee and return to hosts’ houses/ free time/ cultural show/site visit

Day 2: Memory walks

08.30 – 09.00 a.m.  - Arrival at meeting point with the hosts
09.00 – 10.00 a.m.  - Travelling and introduction to site of memory (in Division 1)/ tea/coffee/breakfast while travelling
10.00 – 11.30 a.m.  - Session 1: Visiting the site of memory (in Division 1)
11.30 – 12.30 p.m.  - Travel to second site of memory or 'conversation point' (in Division 2)
12.30 – 13.30 p.m.  - Introduction to division and lunch on location
13.30 – 15.00 p.m.  - Session 2: Visiting the site of memory (in Division 2) or exchanging stories
15.00 – 15.30 p.m.  - Session 3: Walk and Talk
15.30 – 16.00 p.m.  - Session 4: Debrief of exchange visit and feedback
16.00 – 16.30 p.m.  - Tea/coffee/ Cultural show/ site visits/ return to hosts' houses/ free time

Travel Day

06.00 - 06.30 a.m.  - Gathering at designated meeting point
06.30 – 07.00 a.m. - Farewells and departure
16.00 -16.30 p.m.  - Arrival at home district and departure to homes
Session guide – preliminary workshop

2.1. Session 1: Who are we? Where are we from? What have we experienced?

Objectives of the session: This session is meant to introduce groups of participants to each other, and connect them at a deeper, empathetic level to each other through story-telling and sharing of experiences both positive and negative.

Requirements: Maps of all villages represented should be put up around the room, Pens, Paper, a set of flashcards with phrases written on them / translators

Activity:
- Depending on number of participants, divide into 4 or 5 groups, so that it is a mixed group where possible (with translation options). Ask the district based groups to stay together first, then shout out a number from 1 to 4 or 5. Before dividing into their new groups the district based groups are given coloured name tags to write their names on (the colour indicates the district). Divide the groups so that they are mixed language and district groups. Each participant gets a card from the flashcards, with a phrase written on it. Each participant also gets two post-it notes. The group selects a spokesperson and names their group. (15 minutes).
  - Part I: The participant has to ‘tell a story’ about themselves, beginning with the words on the card. There are 5 topics. The story must include their names, their places of birth, their village and any other details they want to share with their group. This is an account of their personal or family history. The group translator takes notes and summarises each story in the other language. The spokesperson must also take notes in his/her own language. Once everyone has gone through the round, the round ends and the next part begins. (30 minutes).
  - Part II: Each person writes a phrase that relates to a difficult experience of violence or war and sticks it on their person. One person starts and the others ask questions from the person about the phrase. The group facilitator/translator must try to incorporate the following questions if they do not emerge from the group - what does the phrase mean, why that experience matters or is important, what impact it had on their lives and how did it make one feel. The facilitators can help each group come up with some of these questions to launch the conversation if necessary and summarises each response for the group in the sister-language. (30 minutes).
  - Part III: Each person writes a phrase that relates to a happy experience or positive memory of co-existence and non-violent resolution to an issue and sticks it on their body somewhere. One person begins while the others ask questions about the phrase. The group facilitator/translator must try to incorporate the following questions if they do not emerge from the group - what does the phrase mean, why that experience matters or is important, what impact it had on their lives and how did it make one feel. The facilitators can help each group come up with some of these questions to launch the conversation if necessary and summarises each response for the group in the sister-language (30 minutes).
  - Part IV: The group spokesman then introduces everyone in their group to the plenary giving their name, village, and something specific about their life story while the translator summarises in the sister-language. (15 minutes).

During tea/coffee between session 1 and session 2, everyone is then encouraged to go see the village maps that are pasted around the room. Long explanations are not necessary because most people within the small groups would have had the opportunity to hear about these experiences. This is meant to be a walk-through where the magnitude of experiences regardless of where one is from, shows how pervasive and real the experiences of violence and war is for all those who are participating.
Session 2: What values do we share? What lessons have we learned from our past? What do we want in the future?

Objectives of the session: During this session, the participants are reminded again of the values they believed were important to them, and they can personally control. The session also reminds the participants of the mapping exercise they did, and the lessons they learned in analysing their own past, as well as the kind of society they wanted their children to inherit as discussed in phase I and II. The overall objective of this session is to realise that Sri Lankans in all parts of the country, do have a basic set of values and a vision for the future that are more similar than different. This is then the starting point to building bridges towards non-recurrence of violence in future.

Requirements: pen/post-it notes/ Jigsaw puzzle that completes a tree of life/ tree of life exhibition material as a sample

The large group is broken up into 4 -5 new groups in the same way as before where all districts and languages are represented in each group as much as possible. Each group is given a few pieces of the jigsaw puzzle that are of different colour. The tree of life, which some are familiar with is converted for this exercise so that ROOTS representing values/ BARK representing lessons learned/ the leaves represent hopes for the future. The puzzle should be on a table or the floor. While the translator has a role there is no need for a spokesperson or new group name. (15 minutes).

Game: Jigsaw
- Part I: Each small team, introduce each other again, with their name and village. They then take each piece of the jigsaw that they have been given which are a mixture of parts of the bark, parts of the roots and some leaves of varying colours. Each part will say words such as values, lessons learned, future hopes. Each part is discussed as a group. Each conversation should be recorded and summarised for the group by the translator/facilitator.

- Part II: within the groups the participants discuss what values they have or believe should develop personally or are important for co-existence, democracy and governance based on the very first dialogue workshop. They then write down a few values they agreed are the most important on the post-it notes and paste it on the relevant jigsaw part. The facilitator gives the groups 15 minutes to discuss this, and then rings a bell which signals moving to the next set of pieces. They then discuss the pieces of bark and the lessons they have learned through their experiences, in order to ensure non-recurrence of violence at a personal or village level. Facilitators need to remind people here that what is beyond one’s control (politics, government policy is secondary here, unless it is about what as citizens they can do to advocate for change). They write down some of the lessons on which they agree on post-it notes. After 15 minutes the facilitator signals when it is time to move on to the next section. They then discuss the final pieces – leaves – which is about what they want their lives and their children’s lives to be like in the future. Again, they write down three visions for the future on post-it notes. The facilitator indicates times-up after 15 minutes. (Overall 45 minutes)

- Part III: Each group comes to the middle and tries to put the jigsaw together, until it forms a tree. Then each group tells the plenary what their values, lessons and future hopes are. Together with the facilitator the whole group looks at the completed tree. A brief discussion can ensure about filling in any missing values or lessons or hopes that the group believe must be highlighted. (30 minutes).

Debrief: The facilitator takes out a few pieces from each colour in the tree and proceeds with debrief. The debrief is important and should highlight the similarity of basic values, similarity of lessons learned and similarity of hopes for the future. The idea that all citizens have a role to play in the future, all citizens have rights and responsibilities to make that happen, all have similar hopes and dreams in a united Sri Lanka should be highlighted here. The differences should also be highlighted (land issues or missing persons might be relevant only to a particular group) and discussed. By taking a few values, or lessons or hopes out of the tree, the facilitator should show how it is important for each of these needs to be met in order to complete the ‘whole’ tree. A tree that has
missing pieces will not be sustainable. Therefore, even though we are from different places, we as a Sri Lankan community are connected: what affects one, affects all and we have a responsibility to learn about the other, and if possible work towards all our various goals being met rather than avoiding or disregarding others’ issues, in order for a sustainable, just peace and non-recurrence of violence. (30 minutes).

During lunch break, ask for volunteers for a role-playing game from a single language group that is prominently represented in the region (regardless of ethnicity). The facilitator hands over a character to each person, as well as the roles and characteristics of the others. The facilitator explains to this group what the context is, and asks the group to sit together while they eat so that they may prepare or plan for their drama which should be a maximum of 15 minutes. It should be a mime with minimal speaking unless absolutely necessary to convey meaning. Facilitators help the group prepare.

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Session 3: Identifying and transforming conflicts through value-based visioning and mediation

Objectives of the session: During this session, the participants are introduced to basic skills for identifying conflicts or early warning signs as well as a set of skills for negotiation and mediation. The overall objective is to increase the understanding and skill level of community leaders for managing and transforming potential or existing local conflicts

Requirements: the escalation of conflict cards, white board, basic character props like wigs, sarees, scarves, walking sticks, moustaches

Activity: Walking in another’s shoes
Volunteer ‘actors’ from the group are given a real problem or potential conflict from the district. Due to language barriers, the role-play is to be mimed with minimal speaking. It is probably best to have one language for role-play while translators help the others to understand the context. The volunteers who have already had time to prepare are given a further few minutes to get ‘into character’. (10 minutes).

- Part I: All the participants are asked to stand in a circle around to form a ‘theatre’. In the middle, act one of the game begins where the characters are at a village meeting or a scene of fight or other relevant location. Each character is given a tag or board to wear with the character’s details written in two languages. Each character mimes the issue from their perspective. (5 minutes).
- Part II: There are two ways to play this - the facilitator can either stop the role-playing at any time, asking the players to halt, while the audience has a chance to suggest options or ideas, like in Forum theatre, where the role-playing resumes taking these suggestions into consideration. Or the facilitator can let the actors complete the story-arc as devised without participation. The facilitator stops the game when it reaches an impasse, a solution or when enough time has passed. Please note that option 1 may take too much time and is therefore less preferred. The facilitator asks the characters to go back to the group. (20 minutes).
- Part III: The facilitator leads the group through the following perspectives in an interactive dialogue (25 minutes):
  o analysis
    ▪ who are the actors involved? what are their needs?
  o options
    ▪ Can we coordinate and collaborate to achieve all needs? Is there an option that may satisfy everybody? Where are the points that threaten a violent outcome and can these be avoided or managed?

It is important to note that this session is not about finding a solution to these problems, and therefore, the impossibility of easily solving entrenched problems should be highlighted. However, we are using an existing problem to showcase concepts that are important in recognising potential conflicts and violent outcomes in order to move onto the debrief.
Session 4: Debrief and wrap-up of the day

Objectives of the session: Continuing on from the previous session, during this session, the participants are introduced to basic skills for identifying conflicts or early warning signs as well as a set of skills for negotiation and mediation. The overall objective is to increase the understanding and skill level of community leaders for managing and transforming potential or existing local conflicts.

Requirements: the Thomas-Kilmann conflict modes chart translated into two languages to be placed on a board. Two areas for debrief in each language.

Debrief: (20 minutes)
For ease and clarity of providing an input, the facilitator breaks up the participants into language specific groups. The facilitator reminds every one of the escalation cards that are pasted on one of the walls at this point. The facilitator reminds the participants about the lessons from phase II of the dialogue process:
- that conflict can be negative or positive and it can help us improve and learn.
- If we are to achieve a win-win situation, basing any negotiation on the other’s interests or by understanding their needs is the correct place to start.
- It is also important to highlight here that it is easier to intervene before a conflict becomes too entrenched.
- Similarly, it is important to intervene before egos are hurt, or there is a loss of face, or anger distorts the original problem.

The facilitator then shows the following diagram on the board, highlighting that there are five ways to address a conflict. The facilitator highlights the following:
Moving from avoiding the problem until it becomes too much of a conflict; to competing for either side’s victory which leaves one party as the loser; to accommodating one party which is still peaceful but one part loses out; to compromising which is a workable solution but remains limited in achievements for both sides; to collaborating with each other to find many different options of creating win-win situations.

Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Modes

**Competing**
- Zero-sum orientation
- Win/lose power struggle

**Collaborating**
- Expand range of possible options
- Achieve win/win outcomes

**Compromising**
- Minimally acceptable to all
- Relationships undamaged

**Avoiding**
- Withdraw from the situation
- Maintain neutrality

**Accommodating**
- Accede to the other party
- Maintain harmony

**ASSERTIVENESS**
Focus on my needs, desired outcomes and agenda

**COOPERATIVENESS**
Focus on others’ needs and mutual relationships
Activity: Interactive brainstorming (30 minutes)

The group is encouraged to participate in an interactive discussion on the qualities of leadership that is needed for engaging their communities and their community leaders in managing or transforming existing or potential conflicts on the ground.

Part I: The facilitators begin by asking the group what the ideal end to a conflict situation is as learned in other phases of the dialogue process and in the previous session. Then facilitator highlights that final and ideal situation - Win/Win, is where potential opponents are treated as problem-solving partners. The facilitator asks the group for what the required characteristic are in an environment of ‘problem-solving’ in conflict contexts. These are some of the following possible responses: it requires empathy, understanding, curiosity, caution, willingness to listen, tolerance, kindness, patience and a sense of respect for the other. The facilitator can remind the group that this is what a value-based society can hope to achieve.

Part II: In order to do this, the facilitator reminds the group that community leaders and mediators need to have certain leadership qualities that make it possible for them to be heard, or to engage effectively with other leaders. The facilitator asks the group for suggestions of what these maybe. If some of the following don’t emerge, the facilitator could also share the characteristic and ask the participants for their ideas of what that may mean in real life-situations.

- **Creative Responses:** Positive attitudes to addressing conflicts are displayed. Try something new or different. But always keep one’s context in mind.
- **Empathy:** Acknowledging the other’s point of view and trying to understand why it may be important to them. Be willing to listen to the other and feel for them. Try to make them feel for you. What are their interests rather than their entrenched positions?
- **Appropriate Assertiveness:** Without blaming or attacking, one’s own needs are clearly stated. When engaging the other, it is important to be respectful and kind, but confident.
- **Co-operation and collaboration:** Where power imbalance affects decision-making, appropriate responses to the inequalities are first understood, actors are identified and approached. Alliances with powerful voices are formed for positive resolution of conflicts.
- **Managing Emotions:** emotions are expressed without hurting the other and the other’s emotions are acknowledged without prejudice or hatred. Take time out to calm down. Come back to the conversation when calmer.
- **Willingness to Resolve:** Benefits of resolving - for all parties - are understood and analysed before engaging the other. But always be willing to give and take, rather than come away without resolution.
- **Mapping the Conflict:** All key parties are identified and their needs and concerns are understood. It is important to understand who is involved and what are their interests?
- **Designing Options:** A wide range of options is considered without debating or justifying at this stage. Present these options to leaders or communities. Try to establish at the very outset, that the ideal resolution is a win-win situation where everyone is satisfied but no one is victorious. Fairness should be a characteristic of such a situation.
- **Negotiation:** Fair, just and common-sense should prevail. Always listen before speaking.
- **Mediation:** Remain impartial as much as possible. If one cannot be, and one’s interests ae in conflict with another, try to find a suitable third-party that can remain impartial.
- **Broadening Perspectives:** Suggested solutions are presented in terms of how they affect the broader context beyond the issue itself. Showcase, and remind the community that the best options are where, they will stop a violent outcome or create a negative impact on one’s community.
Wrap-up: (10 minutes)

Facilitator starts the wrap-up by outlining the objectives of the workshop and follows through a quick summary of each session:
- sharing stories and building empathy for each other
- learning that our values are the same, so we can build on that for co-existence
- learning that the lessons learnt are similar, so we can build on that for co-existence
- learning that we have similar goals for ourselves and our children, so we can build on that for the next generation
- learning that there are still specific needs and wants that we have to understand in each other and understand as challenges that need to be resolved if peace is to be sustainable
- learning that there are many ways to deal with conflict but the best being collaboration towards a win-win situation
- learning and understanding the qualities of leadership and how to mediate or negotiate in a situation that is difficult, entrenched, and in a dynamic political and social context

Final game: Triangle game (30 minutes)

The facilitator asks each participant to silently select two other people in the group as ‘partners’, but keep it themselves. Depending on the size of the group, the facilitator might want to split the group into two or three. Each participant must form a triangle with the other two people he/she has selected without speaking or indicating to them in any way that they are the chosen. The facilitator draws an equidistant triangle on the board or shows one made of paper as an example of the three corners of a triangle. The game begins as participants are asked to walk around the room but always trying to maintain an equidistant triangle with the two selected individuals. Eventually once the room settles as everyone finds the ideal placement, the facilitator will highlight how everyone is inter-dependent and linked to each other. What affects one, affects the other. At this point the facilitator gives a twist in the game: the facilitator tells the group that if one person dies, anyone who selected that person dies too, and so on. The facilitator taps one person and says you’re dead, at which point the tapped person must fall to the ground. As one by one connected to the person also dies, the whole room should fall down, further highlighting the point that we are all inter-connected.

At the end of day, along with the tea/coffee, the participants may want to end the session in a way they see fit. The possibilities are with a song/ speech/ dance /silent mediation of religions/ a handshake or in any other way the groups choose to thank each other for their presence.
3. Session Guide: Memory walks and dialogue

3.1. Memory walk

The objective in this session: This session is about being able to see, hear and walk through an experience of another. The visceral experience of being in situ, is hoped would create a greater sense of awareness, empathy and understanding for the other.

Activity:
The community leaders take the visitors through their personal experiences of a violent or difficult experience. The facilitator plays a secondary role. The facilitator provides translation support, or helps manage the group and their questions if necessary.

Debrief:
Once the community leaders have walked the visitors through their site of memory, the facilitator can step in to facilitate questions from the visitors. Some of these should be –

- How do the visitors feel when they walk through this site and listen to the stories of the villagers?
- How is this experience helpful?

The participants are encouraged to ask questions from each other and the hosts. They are encouraged to share how they feel about the experience of the other, rather than their opinion about the incident, its veracity or who is responsible. This session is not about explaining, refuting, excusing or justifying any incident. The facilitator needs to be prepared for dissenting voices particularly by not justifying the actions of any part as the truth or just. Instead if and only if dissenting voices that argue about ‘truth’ should emerge, the facilitator needs to explain to the group that this exchange is about people's personal experiences and while the truth is important, it is always important to remember that personal experiences and feelings are subjectively true and important to the individual.

3.2. Walk and Talk:

The objective in this session: is to provides the hosts and visitors with time to share, learn and bond with each other away from the project staff, facilitators and planners. This is also a way for the groups to focus on what they want to learn, or talk about, rather than the designated workshop module. It provides the participants an opportunity to control the dialogue.

Activity:

Part I: The group is broken up into mixed groups of 3-4 people with at least one person with dual language ability or a translator where possible.

Part II: In plenary, the facilitator asked for topics or questions that people might have for each other (they don’t all have to do with violence, war and can be about positive experience, business, partnerships, culture etc.). The facilitator jots these down on a board and asks people to get together in groups of 3-4 under each topic that interests them. It can also be something completely different that is not on the board.

Part III: The groups grab a question from the board or create a question of their own. The groups are asked to walk about in the vicinity on their own or with another person who is able to translate and discuss whatever they want to talk about.
3.3. Debrief of exchange visit as a whole:

The facilitator runs through all the activities that the participants have completed during the weekend. The facilitator can highlight each session and what was learned or discussed in brief. The facilitator highlights the importance of understanding, empathy and compassion, communication and curiosity in learning about the other; patience, tolerance and negotiation in managing relationships within and across community groups for the goals of co-existence and non-recurrence of violence.

Facilitator goes through each of the site visited, shares the key topics of discussion, key questions asked and the key concerns or challenges highlighted during the sessions so that the participants are able to develop an idea about the journey that they have been on – not just on this exposure visit but on the project from collecting stories, to each of the dialogue processes which builds one on the other.

3.4 Feedback game:

Give everyone 3 coloured post it notes (or cards)
- on the green - write what you liked best about the weekend
- on the pink - write what you liked the least about the weekend
- on the yellow - write the most important thing you learned from the weekend
(The colour code should be written up on a board so that participants do not get confused)

Once they finish, they can come up and stick it on a board or if we feel anonymity is important to get more candid feedback, they can fold the card / paper and drop it in a box.

People are invited to share their thoughts if they are willing to do so. Participants are encouraged to ask questions from each other, or share each other’s thoughts on the exposure visit.

End the session with standing in a circle and silently meditating on one’s own religion.

The facilitator thanks the group for their participation and ends the weekend by offering participants the opportunity to thank each other in any way they choose. The participants are each given a group photo and the contact details of the whole group, so that they may stay in touch.
4. Annexes

4.1. Annex 1 - List of words for deck of cards to begin conversations about self:

1. I love...
2. When I was a child...
3. My father ...
4. My mother...
5. I went to school...

Annex 2: List of potential problems for the Walking in Another’s Shoes activity

Mannar District issue: Public good vs. Personal gain

The issue: the encroachment of land and filling up of villus that increase the chance of floods, garbage, disease and potential conflict. The issue is about negotiating with everyone who has encroached the canals, wet lands, villus in and around Mannar Town to be able to release the few feet they have encroached for the greater good of all, so that water drainage systems are cleared.

Characters: LG official who is sympathetic to the cause but his corruption overrides his desire to do what is correct, encroacher who is unwilling to let go of the land he has encroached, Civil society activist working on the issue who is trying to convince people of the greater good, bystanders to are affected by the situation, speak about it passionately, have voice in the community and could be convinced to act but remain on the fringes, flood victims who are directly affected but voiceless, community leaders who are key opinion leaders or mobilisers but yet remain with the status quo of how things have ‘always been’ rather than make drastic changes, youth who are agitated and interested in creating the change that is needed to make a better city while another youth is apathetic about the issue.

Matara district issue: The building of a new religious site vs the fear of losing identity

The issue: Group X fears change and anger about another religious place of worship being built in the area in addition to the existing places of worship of the y community, in an area they consider themselves as the majority. There used to be a Y Community co-existing for years but the solidifying of communities into sub-villages is threatening this co-existence as it indicates a challenge to the feelings of majority, imagined history and identity in the area. The elections are close at hand which has resulted in politicians in the area playing openly with ethno-politics for their gain.

Characters: The X community leader of the local three-wheeler group who is upset at what he perceives is the growing population of Y community in the area. An X community elder who remembers how well the communities co-existed respected each other’s festivals and religions and cannot understand why the communities are pulling apart. A X community elder who is nervous about the wave of radicalisation in the X community youth and fears that am enmity between the races that was perceives generally peaceful. A Y community cleric who is the leader of the established existing place of worship. A y community elder who remembers how things used to be between the communities and is fearful of the growing threat of radicalisation in Y community youth. A Y community youth who is a believer of fighting fire with fire, and not backing down from what is perceived as his communities right to build a place of worship if the land is purchased and the LG permissions are given. The religious leader of the ancient x community place of worship in the area who has always had a good relationship with the Y community elders. Two x and y community politicians who play ethnic politics, playing one communities needs against the other.
Ampara district issue: Cattle grazing across villages vs making wayward cattle an ethnic issue

The issue: Village X is on one side of the boundary while village y is on the other. Village X is inhabited by X ethnicity while Y is inhabited by Y ethnicity. X and Y were at war less than a decade ago although they are attempting to move on peacefully now even though they have not dealt with the past together. There is meant to be a fence between the villagers but the local authority has not done this. Cattle from village X crosses the village boundary and goes to village Y, eating all village Y’s crops. Village Y capture the cattle and makes village X pay ransom sometimes for captured cattle while sometimes, they release it back into the graze lands peacefully. Sometimes, village Y calls the police or the special task force into the village to deal with the cattle problem, thereby seizing or putting villagers from X village in jail, fining them or making a non-ethnic issue an ethnic problem by the very presence of the STF.

Characters: Angry villager from village Y about their crops being eaten, who remembers how the ethnicity of village x, was the same ethnicity as the so-called ‘terrorists’ that once killed people in their village; Angry villager from village Y, who is angry about the fence not being implemented, and is not harbouring any ill-will towards village X; angry villager from village X who is upset about the way village Y always calls the police or STF to throw the cattle owners into jail or fine them simply because he feels they are of a minority ethnicity; Angry villager from village X who is upset that the fence between the villages has not been implemented by the LG; two religious leaders from village X and village Y who would like to resolve this conflict without violence and fear that it can lead to a larger conflict if not resolved; two youth from village X and Y who are angry about the situation and are radicalising on ethnic lines; a civil society member who is not from either village but understands that both villagers are suffering due to this problem, and might be able to find a solution together if they only try to engage with each other by dealing with their past separately while solving the issue at hand without the negative context many remember

ANNEX 1: Travel sites in districts

Matara sites of memory and violence

1. Godapitiya Mosque: The last southern bomb of the ethnic conflict was in Godapitiya. On 12.03. 2009 at an annual festival held at the 100-year-old, historic mosque, an LTTE bomb killed and injured several including politicians. The mosque is also the resting place of an Islamic saint, and revered by people of many faiths. The local community leaders will lead this memory walk and share their eye-witness accounts as well as the current situation. Villagers from Wilpita, Batugota and Urubokke will also participate at this site.

2. Belliwatte, Temple: this is one of the site of the tsunami where everything but the statue of Buddha was affected. Here, villagers from Dikwella, Nilwella, Yonakapura, Dandeniya and Beliwatte will participate and share their stories. The stories that may be shared: JVP period, soldiers who died during the war, the tsunami, current ethno-religious tension, history of co-existence and harmony, religious unity

Ampara sites of memory and violence

1. Veeramunai Hindu Kovil: the site of a refugee camp where the villagers sought a safe haven during the conflict. The historic temple is said to have been founded in the 1500s. However, on 12.08.1990, 55 villagers taking refuge at the Kovil were allegedly brutally attacked and massacred by Muslim Home-guards from Sammanturai. The communities now live in peace although the strains of a violent past affect their fear and desire to prevent a return to violence. Community leaders will lead the memory walk.

2. Gonagolla village and temple: The site of a historic temple, dating back to the 3rd century with ancient frescos. The village in the area, suffered the deaths of 55 people in one night on the 03.08.1990. The memories of the incident still play heavily on the minds of the villagers. Their connection with the temple that provided them aid, and emotional support is indelibly linked to the daily lives of the people. The memory walk will be led by the community leaders.
Mannar sites of memory and violence

1. Pesalai Church: Our Lady church in Pesalai is a place of refuge and safety for villagers during the war. Many spent the nights inside the church believing it to be the safest place, leaving for their homes and daily lives in the morning only to return to the church at night in times of strife. On 17.06.2006 in reaction to an LTTE attack on the Navy at sea, the Navy allegedly attacked the people taking refuge at the church killing 6 and injuring 47. The community leaders will lead this memory walk.

2. Conversation space in Silvaturai, or Salampan Muslim village: here the conversation will include experiences of tsunami, displacement, resettlement, war with the participation of villagers Manthai West