



## Living as Peacemakers in a Broken World

*“My humanity is bound up in yours,  
for we can only be human together”*  
Archbishop Desmond Tutu

A two-session study resource prepared by Elizabeth Vélez, Plowshares Institute,  
for the **Churches’ Center for Theology and Public Policy**

In cooperation with  
**The United States Institute of Peace**  
**Church World Service**

**Study Goals:** This study will use case studies and other participatory exercises to help participants:

- 1) Identify areas in need of healing in the world
- 2) Begin to analyze and understand how to be peacemakers in these situations
- 3) Begin to learn how to support peacemaking in particular countries.

**Preparation:** Facilitator will need to have: sufficient copies of the case study, prepared newsprint, and easel. Participants should read the case study, *“Jakub’s Call”* prior to the first session.

**Note to the Facilitator:** This study has been developed below for two one-hour sessions. However, this study could also easily be adapted for two 90 or 120 minute sessions or three or four one-hour sessions. Refer to the website, [www.cctpp.org/supportingpeacemaking.htm](http://www.cctpp.org/supportingpeacemaking.htm), for the case study, *“Jakub’s Call”*, suggestions for adaptation, and additional resources.

### Session One: The Role of the Peacemaker

**I. Introduction:** A walk down a nearby street, a glance at a newspaper, and watching the evening news reveal that all around the world there are situations desperately in need of a healing presence. Some of these wounds occur very close to us and as peacemakers we are called to intervene very directly. Other wounds take place a world away. As peacemakers we can still play a very important role in easing these conflicts by supporting local peacemakers in particular countries as they seek to bring justice and understanding to those around them.

Over the next two sessions we are going to learn ways that we can support peacemakers in countries around the world through a case study, an examination of sacred texts from a variety of religious traditions, and a study of “best practices” for supporting peacemakers around the world. Through this whole process, it is important to remember that one of your greatest resources as a peacemaker is yourself. As individuals, our own wounds and experiences make us sensitive to the needs of others and teach us skills that equip us to live as peacemakers.

#### **Jakub’s Call Case Discussion**

**Introduction to the Exercise:** Some case studies are like good mystery novels. There is a setting, characters, a plot, and a problem. However, unlike a finished story, this kind of case study ends before the resolution. This allows the reader to enter the story and advise the characters how best to deal with the problems they face. Jakub’s call is this type of case.

The discussion process is much like what we do when we support peacemakers in particular countries around the world. We are not directly involved in the situation, but we try to understand the situation and support local peacemakers as they seek to

empower those in conflict to shape an outcome which promotes greater understanding, justice, and peace for everyone involved. *Ask the participants to read the case Jakub's Call (available at [www.cctpp.org/supportingpeacemaking.htm](http://www.cctpp.org/supportingpeacemaking.htm)) if they have not already done so.*

**I. Background to the Case:** Jakub has earned the trust of both the unemployed villagers near Kuda and the mine foreman and workers. He has decided to return to the village to help resolve this potential conflict. Before he arrives, he needs to think about the needs, interests, and feelings of each person or party involved as well as his own goals and feelings. He has asked you to help him prepare for his arrival in Kuda.

**II. Understanding the Situation:** In order to advise Jakub on how to respond to the brewing crisis, we need to understand the situation in Kuda.

1) **Background:** Show the map of the Kuda region. Ask the participants the “facts” of the situation. (e.g. a foreign company, taxes being paid to Indonesian government, pollution from mine tailings, etc.) *Record on newsprint.*

2) **People:** In order to advise Jakub, you need to understand the people who are asking him to get involved. Divide the participants into two groups. The **first** group includes Darius, the Amungme leader, and unemployed local tribal people who want to shut down the mine until their demands are met. The **second** group includes Nathaniel, the mine foreman, and those who are hired by the mine and want it to stay open. Ask each group to consider:

- Why they have adopted the position they hold.
- How they feel about the situation.

At the end of 5 minutes, have a spokesperson from each group share the group's primary reasons for taking their position.

**III. Understanding Jakub:** Jakub knows that in order to be an effective peacemaker, he needs to consider his own goals and feelings. He also needs to take into account additional actors who can affect whether or not a sustainable and just peace can be reached in Kuda. Have participants share answers to the following questions: *Record on newsprint.*

- Jakub has just heard the presentations from both sides of this brewing conflict. How does he feel? (*record*)
- What is Jakub most concerned about? (e.g. possibility of violence, employment, environment, his own effectiveness)
- What other actors must Jakub be aware of as he consults with both groups? (e.g. PTFI company, Indonesian government, Indonesian military)
- Why is it important that Jakub consider these other actors? (e.g. they have the potential to upset the agreement)

**IV. Advising Jakub:** Jakub has come to you and asked your advice on what he should do to be a peacemaker in this situation.

- **Option One:** If time allows, divide the group up into groups of 4-6 and have them develop a plan of how Jakub should proceed. Have each team write up their suggestion on a page of newsprint. After 5-7 minutes give everyone a chance to go around and look at each team's written plan of action.
- **Option Two:** If time is short, the facilitator can play the role of Jakub. Sit in front of the full group and ask them to advise you on how best to proceed in this situation.

**V. Concluding Discussion: How to Support Local Peacemakers in Particular Countries:** As a North American, you have learned of Jakub's struggle through your local congregation. Brainstorm and share: *Record on newsprint.*

- Ways to support Jakub as a local peacemaker.
- Ways to help promote justice in Kuda.
- Principles to keep in mind as you support Jakub and the Kuda community.

**VI. A Process for Peacemaking:** After the group has brainstormed their own strategies and principles for supporting peacemaking efforts in other countries, share the following principles of peacemaking with the group through either a handout or prepared newsprint.

- 1) Remember that your local partners are the primary peacemakers. Your purpose is to support their efforts, not take charge.
- 2) Take the time to understand what is happening before jumping in with a solution that might not be appropriate.
- 3) Seek to understand the context, needs, feelings, and motivations of the people involved.
- 4) Be aware of your own motives and feelings as a peacemaker.
- 5) Make sure the process of your action, not just its outcome, promotes peace and participants' ownership of the outcome.
- 6) Be aware of the long-term implications of your actions. Are you empowering the community or creating dependence?

**Making it Real:** At the next session the group will: examine the definition of peacemaking, consider sacred texts that motivate peacemakers from many religious traditions, brainstorm effective ways to support peacemaking efforts around the world, and commit to serving as peacemakers. In preparation, ask participants to:

- 1) Write out a simple definition of peacemaking and bring it to the next session
- 2) Consider both local and global situations that they are aware of in which they could serve as peacemakers.

## Session Two: Living as a Peacemaker

### What is Peacemaking?

**Introduction:** Ask participants to share what the word peacemaking means to them. Record the core of each response. At the end of sharing, point out commonalities in participant's definitions. The facilitator may choose to share the following as an example definition (*write out in advance*):

Peacemaking can be defined as:

Developing **relationships** and structures that **prevent** or stop violence

**Lowering levels of hate** and suspicion between people and **healing** the hurts that have occurred

Increasing security and **stability** while providing **justice** for all

Promoting **economic security** and fulfillment of basic needs which fosters **reconciliation** and **wholeness**

### Motivations for the Peacemaker

**I. Sacred Texts:** All around the world people of faith draw upon the sacred texts or traditions of their religious tradition as motivation for their peacemaking work. The references below are examples of these motivators from a diverse representation of religious traditions. *Facilitator may want to either list these on newsprint in advance or have copies of sacred texts available and ask participants to read them.*

- 1) From the Qur'an, the sacred text of **Islam**:
  - "Whosoever pardons and amends, his wage is the affair of Allah, who does not love tyrants". *Surah Shura, 40*
  - "Be steadfast witnesses for Allah in equity, and let not hatred of any people seduce you that you deal not justly. Deal justly, that is nearer to your duty." *Surah Ma'idah, 8*
  - "The good deed and the evil deed are not alike. Repel evil with that which is better, then he between whom and you there was enmity will become like an intimate friend." *Ha Mim, 34-35.*
- 2) From the Hebrew Scriptures, sacred to **Jews** and **Christians** states:
  - "Some take pride in chariots, and some in horses, but our pride is in the name of the Lord our God: - *Psalms 20:7.*
  - "You have plowed wickedness, you have reaped injustice, you have eaten the fruit of lies. Because you have trusted in your power and in the multitude of your warriors, therefore the tumult of war shall rise against your people and all your fortresses shall be destroyed." *Hosea 10:13-14*
  - "Depart from evil and do good; seek peace, and pursue it." *Psalms 34:14.*
- 3) From the New Testament, sacred to **Christians**:
  - "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven." *Matthew 5:44-45*
  - "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid." *John 14:27.*
- 4) From the Dhammapadam, a sacred text of **Buddhism**:
  - "A man is not just if he carries a matter by violence; no, he who distinguishes both right and wrong, who is learned and leads others, not by violence but justly and righteously, ... is called just."
- 5) From the Bhagavad-Gita, a sacred text of **Hinduism**:
  - "When I see my own people ranged, drawn near, impatient to give battle, my limbs cannot hold me and my mouth becomes dry and trembling shakes my whole body."

**II. Making it Personal:** Ask participants to think about a time they were a peacemaker. Ask each person to describe that instance with someone else and to indicate what motivated them to be peacemakers. Then ask two or three people to share their examples with the whole group.

### Supporting Peacemaking in Other Countries

**I. Introduction:** As individuals, most of the time we are called to serve as peacemakers in situations in which we are immediately involved. By recognizing our own hurts and our own feelings, and drawing on our own moral and spiritual resources, we can build peace in our families, among friends, congregations, and circles of influence. When it comes to peacemaking in particular countries, our role is less direct. Rather than being present, our role may be "to walk alongside" or support local efforts rather than initiating programs in particular countries.

**II. Why is it Important to Support Peacemaking in Other Countries?:** Ask participants to build a list of why "long distance" support can be useful. Describing a current example of a situation in need of peacemaking may provide useful direction for this portion. *Record responses on newsprint.* Examples include:

- Global interdependence means that a foreign crisis could have an impact in the U.S.

- Efforts by U.S. religious bodies might bring visibility to situations that might otherwise go unnoticed
- We care about protecting human rights and the sanctity of each individual

### III. Examples of Local Actors working as Peacemakers in their own Communities

- In Northern Uganda, local Orthodox, Muslim, Catholic, and Protestant religious leaders are working together to end an 18-year civil war that has resulted in the abduction of 50,000 children for use as soldiers and prostitutes.
- Protestant and Catholic leaders have worked tirelessly for decades in Northern Ireland to lessen violence and move toward peace.
- In Indonesia, individuals from both Muslim and Christian traditions are forming interfaith teams and together working to train local leaders in peacemaking skills in conflict regions.

**IV. Why Support Local Actors Engaged in Peacemaking in Particular Countries?** Ask participants why it is important to support local peacemakers. (Facilitator may want to bring out the newsprint with principles for peacemaking that participants created during section VI of the case discussion). *Record participants' additions and add any of the suggestions below participants do not identify.* Possible responses include:

- Local actors know the situation better than even well informed foreigners.
- Local actors have a higher stake in the outcome than foreigners.
- Local actors have to live with the result of any peacemaking activities, so it is best to involve them from the beginning.
- You want to empower local individuals to build peace, not make them feel that only foreign experts are suitable for the job.

## How to Support Peacemaking in Particular Countries?

**I. Suggested Ways to Get Involved:** The following examples provide general categories of support as well as specific examples for supporting global peacemaking efforts. Have participants make their own practical additions to each general category. (It may be helpful to remind participants of the ideas brainstormed in Section V of the case discussion). *Record additional suggestions on newsprint.*

- 1) Providing human and financial resources for training and support of peacemaking efforts in other countries
  - Raising money for particular indigenous peacebuilding projects
  - Equipping international students through courses and events in the U.S. to provide leadership to peacebuilding in their own or another country
  - Sending people to a particular country to work with people from that nation in peacebuilding efforts
- 2) Relationship building among people who are in conflict with each other
  - Engaging in interfaith dialogue with people whose religions are in conflict in a particular country (e.g. Christian, Muslims, and/or Jews in Israel/Palestine, the Balkans, etc)
- 3) Educating people in the US about the need for focused international peacemaking and developing relationships between those engaged in peacemaking in particular countries and people of faith in the US.
  - Personally or as a group learning more about the conflict in a particular region in order to become an advocate/educator
  - Preparing opinion pieces and letters-to-the-editor to raise awareness of peacebuilding efforts in particular countries
  - Sponsoring educational events on the need for healing in a particular country
  - Establishing relationships with religious bodies or organizations in a country experiencing conflict
- 4) Public policy advocacy in the US about conflicts and peacemaking opportunities in particular countries
  - Providing information and opportunities to those in the faith community concerned about conflicts in a particular country to share their concerns with their congresspersons and other policy-makers.
  - Calling or writing letters to elected officials

**II. Committing to Next Steps:** Before the end of the session, commit as a group to supporting global peacemaking efforts through acting on one of the suggestions brainstormed during this session. At this early stage, this commitment may need to be a pledge to further researching a particular conflict or approach. The website, [www.cctpp.org](http://www.cctpp.org), provides several examples of organizations currently supporting global peacemaking efforts as well as additional information on supporting peacemaking in particular countries.

Additional copies of this resource are available from the Churches' Center for \$.50 each. Two additional resources that will be helpful in supporting peacemaking in particular countries are available online without cost from the Churches' Center at [www.cctpp.org/supportingpeacemaking.htm](http://www.cctpp.org/supportingpeacemaking.htm) and Church World Service at [www.churchworldservice.org](http://www.churchworldservice.org). Printed versions are also available:

**The Role of U.S. Regional and Local Religious Bodies in Supporting Peacemaking Efforts in Other Countries** – *A Shalom Paper*, the journal of the Churches' Center for Theology and Public Policy - \$3.00 – an individual study guide

**Supporting Peacemaking: How U.S. Local and Regional Religious Bodies Provide Support to those Engaged in Peacemaking in Particular Countries** - \$1.00 – an 8 page practical guide for religious bodies interested in supporting peacemaking in particular countries

To order or for more information, call 202-885-8648, e-mail [info@nrdsi.org](mailto:info@nrdsi.org), or write Churches' Center for Theology and Public Policy, 4500 Massachusetts Ave. .N.W., Washington, D.C. 20016-5632.

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