



EDUCATING FOR PEACE

NOVEMBER 2008

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QUOTES OF THE MONTH:

"Much violence is based on the illusion that life is a property to be defended and not to be shared"

- Henri Nouwen.

"A new world is not only possible, she is already on her way. On a quiet day I can hear her breathing"

- Arundhati Roy.

SHALOM NEWS UPDATES

Shalom Educating for Peace is a non-governmental, non-profit organization working for building and sustaining positive peace through education. Shalom pursues the following objectives: (i) educating for peace, (ii) researching for peace and (iii) cultivating the culture of non-violence.

Shalom is a relatively young organization and we have spent the past few months establishing ourselves in Rwanda and Burundi. Our primary activity has been developing proposals and networking for the purpose of raising interest and funds for our projects.

Basabose has continued to broadcast our weekly peace program on a community radio station in Rwanda where the message of nonviolent means to resolving conflict has reached a wide audience and solicited high levels of debate.

Together with an American volunteer we have been initiating a peace education project with self-help cooperatives in rural Rwanda to assist in nonviolent means of communication and resolving conflict. Thanks to Megan for her help!



Basabose Jean de Dieu directs Shalom and is based in Kigali, Rwanda. He holds a Masters degree in Conflict Resolution and Peace Studies and has five years experience as a peace practitioner in the field.



Cori Wielenga co-directs Shalom and is based in Pretoria, South Africa. She is currently completing her doctorate in Peace Studies and is working on a project for nonviolence in schools.



Jean Prime Harerimana is launching Shalom's work in Bujumbura, Burundi. He holds a degree in African Literature and History. He has a passion to see peace become a reality in Burundi.

Thank you to all of you who responded by email to our first newsletter, released in August. The requests for internships and partnerships, the sharing of resources and the general encouragement was phenomenal! Thanks also for contributions to this newsletter which will be included in our four-page edition early next year.

SHALOM'S PROJECTS IN 2008/2009

YOUNG PEACEMAKERS PROJECT

This project seeks equip youth leaders in training youth in peace principles. Shalom has developed a training manual to assist these leaders in this task. The aim is to reach 250 youth leaders in 50 local churches through this training.

PEACE EDUCATION THROUGH RADIO

Currently members of Shalom speak on a weekly community radio program in Rwanda, called Umcyo, where peace principles are discussed and debated and people can call in with their questions and comments. A similar project is set to launch in Bujumbura, Burundi.

SHALOM IN BURUNDI

In July this year Basabose spent a few days in Bujumbura, assisting Harerimana in setting up Shalom in Burundi. During this time, they were able to meet with numerous potential partnering organizations to discuss the way forward for Shalom.

One such organization, Trauma Healing And Reconciliation Services (THARS), is partnering with Shalom to educate communities in peace through adult literacy. Another organization is considering financing our Young Peacemakers Project which trains Church youth leaders in conflict resolution in order that they in turn educate their youth groups. This project aims at reaching some 250 youth leaders, and through them, thousands of young people.

Shalom is also negotiating with a radio station in Burundi to start the same peace education program there as is running in Rwanda. Radio is a powerful medium of communication in the Great Lakes region and this is a relatively cost-effective means of reaching thousands of people with the message of nonviolence.

Lastly, Shalom is exploring the possibility of dialogue groups at university campuses which would encourage students from various ethnic groups to engage in deep listening exercises which would contribute towards healing and reconciliation.

There have been various requests for Shalom to expand its work to include the Democratic Republic of Congo, Zimbabwe and Kenya. Please contact us if you are aware of any related projects taking place there or would like to participate in starting a project in any of these countries through financial support, expertise or partnership.

A VOLUNTEERS EXPERIENCE

"Arriving in Rwanda you expect to see a country still torn apart by the war in 1994. At least, that's what I expected to see. Instead on the clean streets of the capital, Kigali, I see a city that could be a nearly perfect fit to my home for the last four years—the Mississippi Delta. There's definitely poverty and there's definitely wealth, but this city is not at all what you expect when you de-board a plane in Rwanda.

The reconciliation process is in full swing here both through government and civil society action. Shalom is certainly providing a voice to this process here, as well. Though it's a newer organization in Rwanda, it's got quite an agenda planned for this country. One of the projects I've been able to assist with is the development of a conflict transformation module for Self Help Groups in rural areas, as well as a few grant applications.

It's been an incredible experience so far, definitely one to repeat!"

Megan Colnar is from San Antonio, Texas. She recently graduated with a BA in International Relations and Latin American Studies. Additionally, she was the recipient of the Thomas J. Watson Fellowship for 2008-2009 to do a comparative study of global nonviolence and reconciliation movements in India, Rwanda, South Africa, Chile and Northern Ireland.



Photograph: © Annette Fick

SHALOM'S PROJECTS IN 2008/9, CONTINUED...

BEPEACE PROJECT

In partnership with the Peace Academy of Costa Rica Shalom hopes to implement this project which educates communities in nonviolent communication and emotional awareness.

PEACE EDUCATION THROUGH LITERACY

In this project, Shalom will assist in the development of adult literacy material, communicating peace principles through adult literacy. Further, Shalom will train adult literacy project staff in peace principles for them to carry these over in adult literacy classes.

PEACE EDUCATION THROUGH THEATRE, SONG AND SPORT

Shalom seeks to educate communities through the use of song, theatre and sport, which is an accessible and cost-effective form of entertainment for struggling communities.

PARTNER WITH SHALOM

Shalom is entirely dependant on gifts and donations to remain operational. Help us make our projects a reality and transform communities for peace! Contact us for more information.

INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Shalom welcomes anyone wanting to follow an internship, wanting a learning encounter or wanting to volunteer for whatever length of time. Our first internship program will be launched in February, 2009.