A Mennonite Peace? An Analysis of Mennonite Central Committee's Work in East Africa

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Abstract: This article analyzes the ways that Mennonite Central Committee demonstrates distinctively Mennonite understandings of peacemaking and argues that both in terms of content—that is, the particular ways of defining peace—as well as in its programs, M.C.C. works in a distinctly Mennonite way within the context of other international faith-based nongovernmental organizations. Through an ethnographic analysis of M.C.C.'s country programs in East Africa the essay argues that M.C.C.'s peacebuilding and development work have remained consistent with the deeper Mennonite understandings of the theology and practice of peace.

Mennonite peacemaking is rooted in a unique historical and theological heritage. Traditionally, Mennonites have understood peace to be at the heart of Christian discipleship and God's kingdom on earth. Peacemaking is also the work for which Mennonite Central Committee is best known by other international relief and development non-governmental organizations. But is this reputation justified? In an age of N.G.O. professionalization and the pressures for institutions to conform, is it possible for a faith-based N.G.O. to maintain its distinctive denominational identity while also carrying out its peacebuilding work in an effective manner?

This article analyzes the ways M.C.C. demonstrates distinctively Mennonite understandings of peacemaking and argues that both in terms of content—that is, the particular ways of defining peace—as well as in its programs, M.C.C. works in a distinctly Mennonite way within the context of other international faith-based N.G.O.s. Through an ethnographic analysis of M.C.C.'s country programs in East Africa the essay argues that M.C.C.'s peacebuilding and development work have remained consistent with the deeper Mennonite understandings of the theology and practice of peace.[1]

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1. In 2008-2009, 2015, and 2016 she engaged in ethnographic fieldwork with the M.C.C. country programs in Uganda and Kenya as well as in Tanzania, examining the ways in which country representatives, service workers, local partners, and beneficiaries understood the

Despite the pressures of institutional isomorphism, M.C.C.'s distinctive approach to peacemaking is evident in the choice of its partner organizations, the personal ethics and religious beliefs of its employees, and its particular ethos of humble, relationship-oriented work.

A MENNONITE PEACE ETHIC

Many scholars have surveyed and categorized various understandings and expressions of Mennonite peacemaking.[2] Early Anabaptist understandings of peace generally emphasized "nonresistance" along with a willingness to suffer nonviolently for their faith as illustrated in *The Martyrs Mirror*. The ongoing tension of maintaining faithful peace witness as a community in the context of opposition shaped early Mennonite self-understandings and was one factor in their emigration to North America in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

In the early history of the United States Mennonites faced challenges to their patriotism—especially during the War of Independence, the War of 1812, and the Civil War—since most Mennonites refused to fight or to swear oaths of allegiance as an expression of their religious convictions.[3] Throughout much of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Mennonite community in the eastern part of North America preferred to remain "the quiet in the land," theologically embracing a "two-kingdom" theology that regarded the church and the world as distinct ethical realms.

World War II marked the most organized and coherent collaboration among the various peace church traditions in an effort to create viable alternatives to participation in the military, such as Civilian Public

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work of M.C.C. She conducted 97 interviews and engaged in daily participant observation of the lives of the country representatives, service workers, SALT volunteers, partners, and beneficiaries. Her research focused on how the people most directly involved in the work of M.C.C. understood what peace meant from a Mennonite perspective.

2. The author expresses "a deep intellectual debt" to the following works: Ervin Stutzman, *From Nonresistance to Justice: The Transformation of Mennonite Church Peace Rhetoric 1908-2008* (Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 2011); John Richard Burkholder and Barbara Nelson Gingerich, *Mennonite Peace Theology: A Panorama of Types* (Akron, Pa.: Mennonite Central Committee Peace Office, 1991); Leo Driedger and Donald B. Kraybill, *Mennonite Peacemaking: From Quietism to Activism* (Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1994); Perry Bush, *Two Kingdoms, Two Loyalties: Mennonite Pacifism in Modern America* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1998); Cynthia Sampson and John Paul Lederach, eds., *From the Ground Up: Mennonite Contributions to International Peacebuilding* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Duane Friesen and Gerald Schlabach, eds., *At Peace and Unafraid: Public Order, Security and the Wisdom of the Cross* (Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 2005); Richard Detweiler, *Mennonite Statements on Peace 1915-1966* (Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1968); and Urbane Peachey, *Mennonite Statements on Peace and Social Concerns, 1900-1978* (Akron, Pa.: Mennonite Central Committee, 1980).

3. See: James Lehman and Steven Nolt, *Mennonites, Amish and the American Civil War* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007).

Service.[4] The publication of Harold Bender's *Anabaptist Vision* in 1944—which underscored peace as a core tenet of Mennonite identity—was, in part, a response to the challenges of World War II and the Civilian Public Service experience.

The scholarship of Guy F. Hershberger, one of Bender's colleagues, expanded on the theme of non-resistance, arguing that it was biblically-mandated and embodied in both the Old and New Testaments.[5] Hershberger's work attempted to bridge the divide between a growing number of liberal Mennonites who were ready to engage in politics and more quietist traditional Mennonites who continued to insist upon a separatist, non-political faith. Hershberger embraced the traditional two-kingdom theology, but suggested that Mennonites might make an important social contribution if they could live as "the colony of heaven" in the midst of a sinful, secular world.

Not everyone accepted Hershberger's interpretation of the Mennonite peace witness. In the second half of the twentieth century theologians such as Gordon Kaufman and J. Lawrence Burkholder argued for the inclusion of *justice* in any conception of peace. "Whereas love is appropriate and meaningful in personal face-to-face relations," Kaufman wrote, "justice, precisely because it is more abstract and general, is impartial and objective, and thus appropriate to large-scale social relations. Situations that require me to decide between the needs of several neighbors, therefore should be dealt with in terms of justice."[6] For Burkholder, the love of neighbor could not be separated from the demands of justice: "Justice is, or at least can, be a 'mode' of love; it is love parceled out, divided, distributed. . . . Justice is love come to terms with multiplicity and institutional organization."[7]

In the 1950s and 1960s a new generation of Mennonite conscientious objectors began to express their resistance to the wars in the Korean War and Vietnam in more visible ways.[8] Some Mennonites, for example, began to write letters to Congress opposing military engagement and became increasingly active in vigils and protests against the war. Some students at Mennonite colleges participated in vocal opposition to American

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4. Guy Hershberger, *The Mennonite Church in Second World War* (Scottdale, Pa.: Mennonite Publishing House, 1951); Melvin Gingerich, *Service for Peace* (Akron, Pa.: Mennonite Central Committee, 1949); Albert Keim, *The CPS Story* (Intercourse, Pa.: Good Books, 1990).

5. Guy Hershberger, *War, Peace and Nonresistance* (Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1944), 44.

6. Gordon Kaufman, *The Context of Decision* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1961) 99.

7. J. Lawrence Burkholder, "Autobiographical Reflections" in *The Limits of Perfection: a conversation with J. Lawrence Burkholder*, eds. Rodney J. Sawatsky and Scott Holland (Kitchener, Ont.: Pandora Press, 1993), 36.

8. Calvin Redekop, *The Pax Story: service in the name of Christ, 1951-1976* (Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 2001).

militarism that sometimes included draft resistance. Around the same time, Mennonite theologian John Howard Yoder articulated a new form of pacifism that was both deeply anchored in a christological foundation while also actively engaged in society. In *The Politics of Jesus*, Yoder argued that the life of Jesus provided a model of radical social and political action, which is "not only relevant but normative for a contemporary Christian social ethic."[9]

By the late 1970s and early 1980s, others in the Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition like Ronald Sider insisted that Christian peacemaking must challenge the structural injustices and oppressive economic systems that give rise to poverty.[10] Sider identified "institutionalized violence" and "structural sin" as pressing issues, arguing that "if we are serious about our heritage of peacemaking, then we must explore more carefully than we have thus far how economic systems kill people just as surely as do guns and bombs."[11]

Thus, by the 1980s, justice had become increasingly integrated into Mennonite definitions of peace. One expression of this shift in discourse could be seen in the revival of the Hebrew word "shalom" to describe a holistic approach to peace that included justice. Perry Yoder's definition of shalom as "the presence of physical well-being and the absence of physical threats like war, disease and famine. . . working for just and health giving relationships between people and nations. . . working to remove deceit and hypocrisy and to promote honesty, integrity, and straightforwardness" was characteristic of this expanded definition.[12] Peace as shalom is evident in the "Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective" (1995), which addressed the issues of peace, justice, and nonresistance in a single article.[13]

In the last twenty years, practitioners such as Howard Zehr and John Paul Lederach have further developed the Mennonite peace ethic. Zehr, for example, is widely credited with the emergence of the restorative justice movement. Based on an understanding of reconciliation as a form of peacemaking, restorative justice balances the needs of victims with the

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9. John Howard Yoder, *Politics of Jesus* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1972; reprint Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1994).

10. Ronald Sider, *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1977), 59.

11. Ronald Sider, *Christ and Violence* (Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1979), 70.

12. Perry Yoder, *Shalom: The Bible's Word for Salvation, Justice and Peace* (Newton, Kan.: Faith and Life Press, 1987), 13, 15, 16.

13. Article 22. *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective* (Newton, Kan.: Faith and Life Press, 1995). This trend also coincided with the burgeoning field of peace studies, including Johan Galtung's notion of "positive peace," which incorporated health, equity, social justice, and collaboration.—Johan Galtung, *Peace by Peaceful Means: Peace and Conflict, Development and Civilisation* (Oslo: PRIO, 1996).

possibility for forgiveness and mercy towards offenders. Zehr's approach integrates the traditional Mennonite emphasis on community and relationships with the more recent impulse toward active peacemaking—two strands that the criminal justice system often places in opposition to each other. Restorative justice reintegrates offenders into society while recognizing the need for them to take responsibility for their actions. Zehr's landmark book, *Changing Lenses*, described restorative justice as part of a biblical vision of shalom that privileges covenants over legalistic interpretations of justice based on retribution and deterrence.[14] One practical application of Zehr's thought has taken the form of Victim-Offender Reconciliation Programs, which emphasize voluntary rebuilding of trust, accountability, and relationships, mediated by trained volunteer facilitators, as an alternative to the criminal justice system.[15]

John Paul Lederach is one of the most prominent contemporary Mennonite practitioners and thinkers in the field of peacebuilding and development. His approach combines a deep commitment to nonviolence with an emphasis on community and humility. Lederach helped to pioneer the use of the term "conflict transformation" rather than "conflict management" or "conflict resolution." Conflict transformation, he writes,

> represents a comprehensive set of lenses for describing how conflict emerges from, evolves within, and brings about changes in the personal, relational, structural, and cultural dimensions, and for developing creative responses that promote peaceful change within those dimensions through nonviolent mechanisms.[16]

At the heart of Lederach's peacebuilding model are the values of community and relationship-building: "Peacebuilding requires a vision of relationship. Stated bluntly, if there is no capacity to imagine the canvas of mutual relationships and situate oneself as part of that historic and ever-evolving web, peacebuilding collapses."[17] Lederach describes reconciliation as "a place for truth and mercy to meet, where concerns for exposing what has happened and for letting go in favor of renewed

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14. Howard Zehr, *Changing Lenses* (Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1990).

15. For more on VORP see: Howard Zehr, *VORP: An Overview of the Process* (Elkhart, Ind.: MCC Office of Criminal Justice, 1983); Howard Zehr, *VORP Organizer's Handbook.* (Elkhart, Ind.: MCC Office of Criminal Justice, 1983); Howard Zehr, *VORP Volunteer Handbook* (Akron, Pa.: MCC Office of Criminal Justice, 1990).

16. John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace:Ssustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997), 83. Conflict transformation has been popularized by Mennonite schools such as Goshen College and Eastern Mennonite University.

17. John Paul Lederach, *The Moral Imagination: The Art and Soul of Building Peace* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 35.

relationship are validated and embraced."[18] Furthermore, he subverts the *realpolitik* paradigm by proposing that peacebuilding actors should be understood in terms of three different levels—top, middle, and grassroots—a method that he calls a "middle-out approach" to peacebuilding. The middle level has the advantage of access to both the grassroots level as well as the upper echelons of power without the same constraints that each of those levels face.

The latest frontier for Mennonite peace thinking has been stress and trauma healing. Combining the disciplines of psychology and peace studies, this trend recognizes the need to deal with trauma suffered by victims of violence as a means of reducing conflict. The Center for Justice and Peacebuilding at Eastern Mennonite University has pioneered this approach through its Strategies for Trauma Awareness and Resilience (STAR) program and various publications by its faculty on themes related to trauma and peacebuilding.[19] The training model, which focuses on resilience, looks at cycles of violence by both aggressors and victims to address how unresolved trauma can lead victims to become perpetrators of violence. Stress and trauma healing draw upon both the restorative justice and reconciliation traditions of Mennonite peacebuilding while acknowledging the important role of spirituality in healing.

M.C.C.'s Commitment to Peacebuilding

From the time of its founding in 1920, all of these themes have been absorbed and expressed in the work of Mennonite Central Committee.[20] In 2015, M.C.C. supported programs in 58 countries around the world and worked with 466 different partner organizations.[21] In fiscal year 2014-2015M.C.C. spent $19,339,000 on relief, $33,765,000 on development, and $11,443,000 on peacebuilding activities.[22]

At the organizational level, M.C.C. may appear to be a fairly typical N.G.O. With headquarters incorporated in both the U.S. and Canada,

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18. Lederach, *Building Peace,* 31.

19. See Barry Hart, ed., *Peacebuilding in Traumatized Societies.* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 2008); Carolyn Yoder, *The Little Book of Trauma Healing: When Violence Strikes and Community is Threatened* (Intercourse, Pa.: Good Books, 2005); Nancy Good Sider, "At the fork in the road: trauma healing," *Conciliation Quarterly* 20, no. 2 (Spring 2001). Karl and Evelyn Bartsch, *Stress and Trauma Healing: A Manual for Caregivers* (Durban: Diakonia Council of Churches, 1996).

20. For a comprehensive history of M.C.C. see: Cornelius Dyck, *From the Files of MCC* (Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1980); Guy Hershberger, "Historical Background to the Formation of the Mennonite Central Committee," *Mennonite Quarterly Review [MQR]* 44 (July 1970); Robert Kreider and Waltner Goossen, *Hungry, Thirsty, a Stranger: The MCC Experience* (Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1988).

21. M.C.C. Annual Report 2015

22. Ibid.

Mennonite Central Committee employs administrators in both countries to jointly manage international programs. M.C.C. staff outside of North America include country representatives, area directors, service workers, and SALT/YAMEN volunteers,[23] along with salaried national staff. M.C.C. country programs are led by representatives who serve for five years or longer during which time their basic needs and a small stipend are provided. Country representatives are the direct supervisors of local staff and the indirect supervisors of service workers and SALT/YAMEN volunteers. They report to area directors who are responsible for regional clusters. Service workers typically commit to a three-year term during which they are provided with housing, food, medical insurance, and other necessities in addition to a small monthly stipend. Their work assignments vary but many are technical advisors doing capacity-building work with the local organizations to which they are attached. The local organization is the primary supervisor for service workers. Each M.C.C. program outside of North America also typically hires national staff members from the host country. These local workers serve in administrative as well as technical positions and are a valuable source of local knowledge and cultural interpretation for other M.C.C. volunteers.

Yet despite these outward similarities with other N.G.O.'s, the way that Mennonite Central Committee conceives of and executes peacebuilding reflects a distinctively Mennonite understanding of peace. As an institution deeply rooted in the Mennonite faith tradition, M.C.C. is required by policy to have at least two-thirds of its board membership consist of representatives from Anabaptist church bodies. And whenever M.C.C. is working in countries with a local Mennonite church, its workers should relate to that church, even though what this means in practice can be a matter of ongoing debate since M.C.C. country representatives are not generally given specific direction on what form this relationship should take and connections with local Mennonite churches can sometimes be complicated. These relationships have helped to preserve a distinctive orientation to peacebuilding that has found consistent expression in M.C.C.'s work in East Africa.

PEACEBUILDING IN FAITH-BASED N.G.O.'S

Although M.C.C. has long incorporated peacebuilding work into its mission as a relief and service organization, many faith-based N.G.O.'s have only recently begun to use peacebuilding as a central frame for their

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23. The Serving and Learning Together (SALT) and Young Anabaptist Mennonite Exchange Network (YAMEN) programs place young adults in a yearlong service assignment in a different cultural context living with host families.

work.[24] Some, such as Church World Service, Lutheran World Relief, and the United Methodist Committee on Relief, have begun to integrate peace-related work as a part of their relief and development effort. Others, like the Presbyterian World Service and Development, Baptist World Alliance, ACT Alliance, Norwegian Church Aid, Trocaire, and International Justice Mission, regard peace as a secondary emphasis, while concentrating their work primarily on issues of justice and human rights.

Organizations that do make peacebuilding a clear priority include Christian Aid, Pax Christi, Catholic Relief Services, and World Vision. Christian Aid began to prioritize peacebuilding in 2011 with a focus on Palestine, northern Kenya, and Democratic Republic of Congo. In 2014, it released a report summarizing what it had learned about peacebuilding and development work, concluding, "while humanitarian assistance will always be necessary to a certain extent in conflict contexts, participatory community-centred and risk-oriented development make it possible to reduce people's dependency on aid and increase their sense of personal and group agency to achieve changes in their situation."[25] The report suggested that peacebuilding work was inseparable from building sustainable livelihoods, and that local input into the creation of projects increases participation.

As a non-denominational faith-based N.G.O., World Vision does not frame its peacebuilding work within any particular theological understanding of peace, and peacebuilding is not one of its primary focal points. Rather, World Vision regards its conflict reduction work as one important way of serving children in regions affected by violence. The 1994 genocide in Rwanda prompted several leaders within the organization to begin considering how the work of relief and development might foster reconciliation, and they have initiated projects in northern Uganda, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Israel/Palestine.

Due to the influence of Catholic social teaching, several Catholic faith-based N.G.O.'s have highlighted peacebuilding as an area of interest.[26] Catholic Relief Services, for example, increasingly incorporates

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24. For more on peacebuilding and development generally, see the *Journal of Peacebuilding and Development, Development in Practice* or the books that summarize trends such as Jonathan Goodhand, *Aiding Peace? The role of NGOs in Armed Conflict* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 2006); Mary Anderson, *Do No Harm: how aid can support peace – or war* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 1999); and Severine Autesserre, *Peaceland: conflict resolution and the everyday politics of international intervention* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

25. Christian Aid, "Building Resilience and Managing Risk in Conflict-affected Areas," working paper, 2014. Available: http://resilientlivelihoods.christianaid.org.uk/lessons-for-resilience-in-conflict/ (Accessed Aug. 10, 2015).

26. The link between peacebuilding and humanitarian work in a variety of Catholic agencies has been reinforced by the growing influence of the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies at Notre Dame University.

peacebuilding into its humanitarian work. In the late 1990s, Catholic Relief Services adopted a "justice strategy" that framed the agency's programming under the rubric of creating "right relationships" between individuals, communities, institutions, nations, and God. The organization later began to frame this concentration on justice and human rights under the heading of "peacebuilding."[27] Pax Christi defines itself as "a global Catholic peace movement and network that works to help establish Peace, Respect for Human Rights, Justice and Reconciliation in areas of the world that are torn by conflict."[28] This work includes conflict transformation, reconciliation, interfaith dialogue, education, advocacy, developing a theology of peace, and working for nonviolent social change though a network of worldwide offices and the work of local affiliates.

In addition to M.C.C., the historic peace churches are represented among peacebuilding N.G.O.'s by the Brethren Volunteer Service (B.V.S.), American Friends Service Committee (A.F.S.C.) and Quaker Peace and Social Witness (Q.P.S..W.). Brethren Volunteer Service frequently partners with Americorps in the United States to offer individual volunteers placements in a variety of service positions, many of which emphasize peacebuilding. A.F.S.C. engages in peacebuilding and social justice work both internationally as well as in the United States through a combination of lobbying, mediation, trust-building among enemies, reconciliation work, and peacebuilding trainings.[29] Q.P.S.W. emphasizes nonviolence and disarmament as prominent aspects of their peacebuilding work through their "Turning the Tide" workshops and partial coordination of the Ecumenical Accompaniment Program in Palestine and Israel.

As this article will demonstrate, M.C.C.'s approach to peacebuilding is qualitatively different than each of these other faith-based N.G.O.'s. These differences stem largely from a historical grounding in a particular faith tradition with a long tradition of engagement with peace. While other faith-based N.G.O.'s employ a variety of approaches to peacebuilding, most do not have a clearly delineated definition of peace and do not draw on particular theological understandings in the way that M.C.C. does. While M.C.C. is theologically the closest to B.V.S., A.F.S.C., and Q.P.S.W.,

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27. For a direct comparison of this trend and M.C.C.'s work, see: Loramy Conradi Gerstbauer, "The Whole Story of NGO Mandate Change: The Peacebuilding Work of World Vision, Catholic Relief Services and Mennonite Central Committee," *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 39 (2010), 844-865.

28. Pax Christi, "About Us," http://www.paxchristi.net/about-us (Accessed Aug. 10, 2015).

29. Daniel Ntoni-Nzinga, "Faith and Peacebuilding in Angola: An Endeavour towards Just and Sustainable Development," *Journal of Peacebuilding and Development* 1(2003), 87-91; Mawlawi Farouk, "New conflicts, new challenges: The evolving role for non-governmental actors," *Journal of International Affairs* 46 (1993), 391-413; AFSC, "Preventing Conflict." http://afsc.org/project/preventing-conflict (Accessed Feb. 28, 2011).

the Quaker N.G.O.'s have been much more willing to engage in prominent lobbying and advocacy than M.C.C. Larger faith-based N.G.O.'s like Christian Aid or World Vision have only begun to prioritize peacebuilding in the last twenty-five years or so, often in response to global outrage over an event like the genocide in Rwanda. In these programs, peacebuilding is often a smaller division of the overall work. Although M.C.C. has defined peacebuilding differently in different contexts these definitions all reflect an ethos of peace drawn from Mennonite theology and Mennonite tradition in a way that is distinct from other faith-based N.G.O.'s.

DEFINING PEACE IN M.C.C. PROJECTS

Although the organization does not have a singular statement on what peace means or how it should be achieved—preferring to demonstrate its commitments through peace-related projects rather than abstract formulations—M.C.C.'s mission statement does provide a nuanced Mennonite approach to peace:

> Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), a worldwide ministry of Anabaptist churches, shares God's love and compassion for all in the name of Christ by responding to basic human needs and working for peace and justice. MCC envisions communities worldwide in right relationship with God, one another and creation.[30]

This statement is striking because it clearly outlines both the religious nature of M.C.C.'s work ("sharing God's love and compassion for all") as well as the scope of its work ("responding to basic human needs and working for peace and justice"). Peace involves work on the grassroots level—not primarily high-level negotiation or diplomacy, but among people who are suffering. The desire to engage in this work is not based on a sense of heroism or a hunger for recognition but rather an obligation to demonstrate God's love and compassion. Thus, M.C.C. volunteers are expected to see their work as a way of working with God for the transformation of human communities. The mission statement is also explicit about the preferred method of peacemaking—not economic sanctions, armed intervention, or policy change, but through building "right relationships."

These understandings are clarified more fully in "MCC's Commitment to Peace," a brochure that details the ten primary ways M.C.C. workers engage in peacemaking: cultivating a personal spirit of peacefulness; providing a reconciling presence in the midst of tension; supporting local peacemaking efforts; explaining peacemaking as at the heart of Christian

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30. See: www.mcc.org. (Accessed Aug. 8, 2016).

life; providing trainings in peacemaking; sponsoring seminars or meetings with elected officials in North America; building relationships with church and community leaders overseas; sharing peacemaking information with North American constituents; and sponsoring seminars on peace.[31] These ten avenues for peacemaking reflect M.C.C.'s belief that peacemaking is rooted in personal relationships and reflected in the lives of M.C.C. volunteers. As the most basic unit in these relationships, individual volunteers are expected to develop a personal, spiritual basis for peacemaking, act as a peaceful presence in the midst of both local and international conflict, continually share information about peace both in North America and abroad, and actively encourage others to embrace peacemaking. In this sense, M.C.C. volunteers are evangelists—not for the Mennonite tradition, but for a way of life that is rooted in nonviolence and peace.

While most of M.C.C.'s peace theory has been developed in the field rather than in formal reflection, several official statements trace the organization's evolving conception of peace. The first attempt by M.C.C. to formally declare a conviction about peace was "A Declaration of Christian Faith and Commitment," the product of a conference on nonresistance held in 1950 at Winona Lake, Indiana. The declaration articulated eight Mennonite peacemaking beliefs: ministry to all without regard to race, class, or religion; loyalty to God rather than the state; responsibility to work for the good of society; outreach to all as an expression of service; refusal to condemn those who disagree, refusal to cooperate with any form of war; and, in the case of war, a commitment to render every help which conscience permits.[32]

In 1993, M.C.C. adopted the statement "A Commitment to Christ's Way of Peace" summarizing North American Mennonite and Brethren in Christ understandings of peace and the way in which these convictions should shape the work of M.C.C.[33] According to the statement, the Winona Lake declaration was no longer sufficient in light of the growing diversity of Mennonite congregations and the increased violence in the world. Grounded in biblical texts that affirm God's intention for the goodness of the earth; the life, death, and resurrection of Christ; God's call to the work of reconciliation, peace, and justice; and God's expectation that human beings will abandon hatred and violence, the statement proposed ten ways to pursue peace, including: praying for peace;

31. Mennonite Central Committee, "MCC's Commitment to Peace," undated.

32. M.C.C., "Declaration of Christian Faith and Commitment (1950)." *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online.* 1950. Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online. Retrieved June 30, 2009. http://www.gameo.org/encyclopedia/contents/D383ME.html.

33. M.C.C., *A Commitment to Christ's Way of Peace*, undated.

demonstrating peace through the lives of individuals; working to restore the health of the earth; studying scripture; working together to discern what God's intentions for the lives of human beings and living in relationships of mutual love and support. The statement also included a confession of human shortcomings and a commitment to "live holy lives worthy of our calling and to discover anew Christ's message of reconciliation and peace in the world today."[34]

In 1999, M.C.C. adopted "A Policy on Peacebuilding and Program Planning" that mandated the organization to "take peacemaking goals and methodology into account in *all* of its work."[35] The statement stressed that every M.C.C. staff member must be able to describe their assignments in terms of its contribution to peace, and that all M.C.C. project evaluations must address the ways peace is incorporated into objectives. The statement did not explicitly define peace, suggesting that "Christian peacemaking will look different in differing contexts." But it did describe several specific expressions, including: restorative justice; elicitive—or participant-centered—approaches to conflict transformation; and training in peacemaking skills, advocacy, or dialogue.[36]

Finally, the 2009 booklet *Pursuing Peace: The Essence of Mennonite Central Committee* outlines a biblical basis for peacemaking, explores early Christian commitments to peace including the development of the Anabaptist movement, details the evolution of peace programming in M.C.C., and responds to some frequently asked questions about pacifism, nonviolence, and Christian peacemaking.[37] Collectively, these statements capture in words a distinctly Mennonite approach to peacemaking that anchors M.C.C.'s work within a broader understanding of peace shared with the larger Mennonite world. As M.C.C.-Uganda country representative Muigai Ndoka noted, "Peace is a core competency of MCC—that's what people think of when they think of MCC."[38]

MENNONITE PEACEMAKING TRAINING NETWORKS

Even though there was never one standard manual on peacemaking practices that all M.C.C. volunteers and partners were required to follow, a Mennonite form of peacebuilding seems to have remained relatively consistent across programs. Nevertheless, as M.C.C. increasingly

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34. Ibid.

35. Emphasis mine. M.C.C., *Policy on Peacebuilding and Program Planning: Mennonite Central Committee*, adopted Feb. 19, 1999.

36. Ibid.

37. Esther Epp-Tiessen, *Pursuing Peace: The Essence of Mennonite Central Committee* (Winnipeg: Mennonite Central Committee Canada, 2009).

38. Muigai Ndoka, interview, July 25, 2016, Kampala.

welcomes volunteers who are not Mennonite, it can no longer be assumed that everyone shares a common grounding in the Mennonite theological/sociological framework outlined here. Two institutions—the African Peacebuilding Institute (A.P.I.) and the Summer Peacebuilding Institute (S.P.I.)—have been critical in articulating M.C.C.'s particular vision of peacebuilding to its partners and strengthening the peacebuilding capacities of M.C.C. partners in East Africa..

M.C.C. was intimately involved in the development of A.P.I. at the Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation in Zambia in 2001, and M.C.C. staff, both African and North American, teach courses in A.P.I.'s annual four- to six-week program. A.P.I. is M.C.C.'s primary context for instructing promising African partners in the theology, theory, and practice of peacemaking. Participants take four classes, taught in English, on topics that include conflict transformation, nonviolence, trauma healing, and reconciliation, each of which reflect a distinctively Mennonite understanding of peace.

The six-week program of the Summer Peacebuilding Institute is held in North America at Eastern Mennonite University. The classes offered at S.P.I. tend to be more academic than A.P.I. and less focused on practical skills. Participants in the S.P.I. program include promising partners that M.C.C. has selected and funded; but they also include E.M.U. students and other people from around the world interested in peace and justice issues. As a part of S.P.I. program, M.C.C. partners visit the M.C.C. Akron headquarters, the U.N., or the Washington advocacy offices and the homes of North American Mennonites.

Both A.P.I. and S.P.I. communicate a distinctly Mennonite approach to peacemaking with the goal of strengthening these qualities in its partners. M.C.C. partners are thereby exposed to more theoretical approaches to peacemaking; but M.C.C. also benefits by gaining East African partners who may replicate this value in peacemaking projects at home.

RELATIONSHIPS AND MUTUALITY

One element that distinguishes Mennonite peacemaking from the work of other faith-based N.G.O.'s is M.C.C.'s strong emphasis on relationship-building and community, both at the individual and the institutional level. M.C.C. leaders often create events designed to nurture relationships, and they encourage volunteers to relate to each other as friends and family, not just colleagues, thereby reinforcing and solidifying a sense of community. M.C.C. workers are expected to invest time getting to know their teammates and community and to use team meetings and retreats to

enhance these relationships.[39] Jonathan Pageau recalled the role of M.C.C. orientation in framing these relationships:

> MCC tells you stories and makes you feel like you are joining something that is very deep and very rich. It's all about these people. They know the names; it's not just like they're telling the story of the organization but it's almost like they are telling their family story. So you feel this intimacy right away.[40]

Amos Okello, program manager for M.C.C.-Uganda in 2015 and now M.C.C. country representative for South Sudan, described M.C.C. in this way:

> In MCC, the partnership with local organizations is based on long-term friendship and relationships. We are working with people who understand the local context and know the local conditions. But this not a one-sided relationship. Other NGOs might give money, demand reports and then disappear. But MCC is about mutual relationships. MCC nurtures you, develops your capacity so you can do the work and people grow as people in the long term.[41]

M.C.C. also reflects the Mennonite value of community by structuring much of its life around opportunities to build deeper and more profound relationships with one another. These relationships provide social, psychological, emotional, and spiritual support that supersede bureaucratic relationships between co-workers. These relationships, however, also serve a strategic function for M.C.C. since the organization relies heavily on its relationships with East Africans to provide insight into local conditions and security. Unlike many N.G.O.'s in the region M.C.C.'s approach to security in insecure contexts does not depend on armed security guards but rather on long-term relationships of trust that both protect and guide its workers in situations of violence.[42] "We don't just have professional relationships with the partners," reflected Gann Herman, M.C.C. country representative in Uganda:

> We know their kids, we know their families. We share life together. It's about relationships and trust. They [the partners] have to be able to trust an international organization enough to share their weaknesses. . . .We walk with them, we live with them. You can't do

39. Many M.C.C. service workers as well as Kenyan, Ugandan, and Tanzanian partners used the term "family" in describing the work of M.C.C. and the way each of them related to other members of the M.C.C. team.

40. Jonathan Pageau, interview, July 9, 2009, Nairobi.

41. Amos Okello, interview, July 14, 2015, Kampala.

42. For an explanation and critique of the N.G.O. approach to security see: Séverine Autesserre, *Peaceland: Conflict Resolution and the Everyday Politics of International Intervention* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

all of this if you aren't based in the context—if you are living in a fancy hotel and just flying in for monitoring visits.[43]

Daniel Kiroket is a good example of the way in which M.C.C. nurtures relationships with particular individuals on a long-term basis. In 2008, Kiroket was serving in Canada as part of M.C.C.'s International Volunteers Exchange Program; he worked with Canada Foodgrains Bank, an M.C.C. partner organization. Upon his return to Kenya, Kiroket worked for an M.C.C. partner organization on food security during the drought in 2009. Then, in 2015, Kiroket joined the staff of M.C.C. in a full-time capacity and was managing a cross-border program working on food security, water, and peacebuilding in the Lodwar area.[44]

HUMILITY AS METHODOLOGY

Another way that M.C.C. distinguishes itself from other international N.G.O.'s operating in East Africa is a commitment to practices that embody the historic emphasis in the Mennonite tradition on humility. One expression of this is its support of partner-led programs rather than creating its own projects. M.C.C. also uses a form of participatory development, consistent with the elicitive approach of Lederach, that helps people define and devise solutions to their own problems rather than importing solutions from the outside.[45] M.C.C. does not design programs in North America and implement them in East Africa. Still another expression of the humility that characterizes M.C.C.'s peacebuilding work is its commitment to "seconding"—or supplying staff members—as a primary resource for other organizations. M.C.C. seconded workers always serve in a supportive, rather than leadership, roles in the parent organization.

Partner organizations in East Africa have repeatedly expressed their appreciation for secondment and the way it shifts the power dynamic between international and local N.G.O.'s. When M.C.C. partner Sister Martha Mganga described her relationship with M.C.C. service worker

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43. Interview, Gann Herman, Dec. 1, 2008, Kampala.

44. To be sure, Bob and Judy Zimmerman Herr, former M.C.C. area directors in East Africa, cautioned against relying too heavily on a relationships as a central framework for peacebuilding work: "There can be a problem with relying on relational motifs too heavily – it can filter out other information which is why a results-based management is also needed."—Interview, Bob and Judy Zimmerman Herr, June 26, 2009.

45. Participatory development includes beneficiaries in the design and planning of projects as a way to increase the effectiveness and sustainability of programmes. There are a variety of books on participatory development but among the most prominent are: Robert Chambers, *Whose Reality Counts? Putting the Last First* (London: ITDG Publishing, 1997); Food and Agriculture Organization, *Participation in Practice: Lessons from the FAO People's Participation Programme* (Rome: FAO, 1997); World Bank, *World Bank Participation Sourcebook* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 1995).

Terry Morton, she poetically used the metaphor of a flashlight: "If I am the torch, then Terry is the battery."[46] This description captures M.C.C.'s preferred methodology—to highlight, empower, and enable the achievements of local people in a way that they remain visible while M.C.C. remains in the background.

M.C.C. further expresses a type of humility in its refusal to "brand" the work of its partners in visible ways. None of the peacebuilding projects in East Africa used the name of M.C.C. in their work; M.C.C. volunteers in East Africa do not travel in the highly-visible S.U.V.'s that are common with most aid agencies; the M.C.C.-Kenya and M.C.C.-Tanzania headquarters are in complexes that do not display the M.C.C. sign on the property;[47] and all of the beneficiaries I interviewed identified the local partner organization as the sole owner and leader of the projects.

M.C.C. East African Partners and Peacebuilding

Although it may appear as if M.C.C.'s strategy of working primarily through local partner organizations and its reluctance to promote its "brand" might risk diluting the Mennonite peace witness, my research suggests that this is not the case. In fact, each of M.C.C.'s partner organizations in East Africa works in ways that are deeply consistent with Mennonite conceptions of peace.

The expression and scope of peace programming varies depending on the country and the time period. In 2008 M.C.C.'s funding allocation and choice of partners in Uganda, for example, was dominated by a commitment to peacebuilding, with peace programming representing 49 percent of its total budget in the country. Leaders of the M.C.C.-Uganda program described their focus as: "based on a concern for peacebuilding. *All* of the relationships and activities within the country are seen through this lens."[48] By contrast, only one of M.C.C.-Kenya's partners in 2008-2009 (Lari Peace Museums) was working primarily on peace, but all of M.C.C.-Kenya's relief, development, and education activities had peacemaking as a secondary goal. However, when I returned to the region in 2015 and 2016, substantially more of M.C.C. programs had shifted towards peacebuilding work.

The relative emphasis on peace within each country program depends largely on the interests and expertise of M.C.C. area directors and the amount of funding dedicated to peacebuilding within M.C.C. as a whole.

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46. Interview with Sister Martha Mganga, July 13, 2016.

47. The M.C.C.-Uganda office has a modest, small sign on the front lawn.

48. Emphasis mine. M.C.C., "MCC-Uganda Annual Plan Narrative, Budget Year 2008-2009," unpublished, 3.

An initial ethnographic look into the programs in Kenya and Uganda led me to conclude initially that peacemaking was less of a priority overall in Kenya than in Uganda (which in 2008 was still suffering from the vestiges of a civil war). However, a longitudinal look at the country programs and a wider perspective that includes Tanzania suggests that the degree to which any one program emphasizes peacebuilding at a given time depends on the interest of local M.C.C. leadership and the availability of M.C.C. funds.[49]

The following summary of peace projects and partners in Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda demonstrates the way in which a commitment to peacebuilding permeates the work of M.C.C. in East Africa.

M.C.C. TANZANIA

In 1934 Eastern Mennonite Missions, an outreach formed by Lancaster Conference Mennonites, began to establish mission stations in East Africa. In 1935, Orie Miller, who served as both general secretary of Eastern Mennonite Missions and executive secretary and treasurer of M.C.C., decided on Tanzania (then Tanganyika) as a priority area for mission schools and basic medical care. That same year Eastern Mennonite Missions helped to form *Kanisa la Mennonite Tanzania*, the Tanzanian Mennonite Church.[50] M.C.C. entered Tanzania through its Teacher Abroad Program.[51] As many African nations gained independence from colonial powers that had subsidized missionary schools, a growing need emerged for qualified teachers in secondary schools and teacher training colleges.

In 1962, M.C.C. joined Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions in support of the national Christian Council of Tanzania. Harold Miller, an early M.C.C. and Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions "seconded" volunteer, recalled that "these links also facilitated MCC's determination from the beginning to relate to a broad range of churches and church institutions in Africa rather developing its own institutional presence. In subsequent interactions with national councils of churches in several southern African

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49. In 2016, the area directors for East Africa had more training in water and agriculture than in peacebuilding, and the M.C.C. constituency was donating less money specifically for peace. The previous area directors, Bob and Judy Zimmerman Herr, were quite supportive and experienced in peacebuilding and the M.C.C. dedicated fund for peace increased.

50. Alemu Checole, Samuel Asefa, Bekithemba Dube, et al., *Anabaptist Songs in African Hearts*, ed. John Lapp and Arnold Snyder (Kitchener, Ont.: Pandora Press, 2006); A. Grace Wenger, *A People in Mission: 1894-1994* (Salunga, Pa.: Eastern Mennonite Missions, 1994).

51. For more background information on TAP, see: Cornelius Dyck, *Responding to Worldwide Needs* (Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1980), 123-134; Kreider and Goossen, *Hungry, Thirsty, a Stranger*, 98-105.

countries, MCC's engagement agenda shifted toward a range of issues beyond the initial pattern of placing [volunteers] in secondary schools."[52]

As M.C.C. began to engage in Tanzania, it did so exclusively in partnership with the Tanzanian Mennonite Church. However, in the early 1980s, after a series of large-scale development projects proved overwhelming for the church to manage alone, M.C.C. began to partner with other organizations and to function more like an N.G.O. than a mission organization. Partly as a result of this longer history of interaction, the Tanzanian Mennonite Church has identified itself more closely with the work of M.C.C. than that of Mennonites in other contexts. Several M.C.C. volunteers, for example, noted that Tanzanian Mennonites often inquired about how many Mennonites M.C.C. was employing and expressed a strong preference for the employment of Mennonites rather than persons from other faith traditions.[53] In 2016, M.C.C. had seven service workers in Tanzania along with two national staff.

Albino Peacemakers

In contrast to its strong presence in early years, in 2016, M.C.C. had only one ongoing peacebuilding project in Tanzania—the Albino Peacemakers. This project is unusual because it was partially initiated by M.C.C. in cooperation with a Tanzanian woman, Sister Martha Mganga. Together with M.C.C. service worker Terry Morton, Mganga brought to M.C.C. an enthusiastic vision for working with a group in Tanzania who lived under the constant threat of violence. The rate of albinism in Tanzania is 1 in 1400, about ten times the incidence rate in North America. Albinos are in danger in many of their communities due to beliefs that albino body parts will bring fortune or good luck. Many albinos in Tanzania live in institutional facilities called protectorates to keep them safe from abductions or attacks by those who believe their body parts are magic. Although the protectorates provide basic security, conditions are often quite difficult. Residents lack not only privacy and the freedom of movement but also beds and basic utensils.

M.C.C.'s Albino Peacemakers program has tried to raise awareness about protectorates, support alternative programs such as boarding schools for albino children, and reduce social stigmas around albinism through sensitization workshops that help Tanzanians better understand the genetic causes of albinism as well as some of the challenges that albinos face in their communities. As part of the village education model,

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52. Harold Miller, "The African Liberation Quest," unpublished presentation to the Anabaptist Center for Religion and Society, Eastern Mennonite University, Oct. 14, 2013.

53. Based on multiple interviews with MCC volunteers, July 2016, Arusha, Tanzania.

M.C.C. Tanzania and the Albino Peacemakers also produced a video called *Watu Kama Sisi* (People Like Us) that provides basic information about albinos and dispels many of the common false beliefs. Each workshop lasts three hours and includes discussion with local traditional healers, members of the Tanzanian Albinism Society, and a discussion about the *Watu Kama Sisi* film. If local communities begin to value and protect their albino members, the need to move into protectorates could be reduced.

Between 2013 and 2016, 2,555 people attended village workshops hosted by Albino Peacemakers. Another 415 people attended follow-up advocacy planning meetings. The first round of village education workshops took place with the support of the Tanzanian Mennonite Church but the project also joined with the Africa Inland Church for the next phase of workshops in Mwanza district. Albino Peacemakers have also partnered with traditional healers in the Mara region to ensure that albino body parts will have no role in traditional medicine.

As with other M.C.C. projects, the financial resources devoted to this project were relatively small (less than $50,000). But in follow-up evaluation meetings, it is evident that the project is producing results. People with albinism reported less harassment when they walked down the street, and being allowed to wear a hat and long sleeves in school rather than their school uniform, which provides less protection from the sun.

M.C.C.-KENYA

The Kenyan Mennonite Church traces its origins not to North American missionaries, but to an indigenous outreach of the Tanzanian Mennonite Church. In 1942, Tanzanian Mennonites near Shirati, influenced by the East African Revival movement, began preaching across the Tanzanian border in Kenya. After denying the group permission to establish an official church structure in 1960, 1962, and 1964, the Kenyan government finally officially recognized Mennonites as a church body in 1965.[54] Today, K.M.C. has more than 11,800 members in some 145 congregations, primarily in the Nyanza province.[55]

Like M.C.C.-Tanzania, M.C.C.-Kenya entered the country through the Teachers Abroad Program. Between 1968 and 1978, it helped to oversee more than 100 volunteers in Kenya working as teachers. From 1978 until

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54. For a longer history of the Mennonite Church in Kenya see, *Forward in Faith: History of the Kenya Mennonite Church*, ed. Francis Ojwang and David Shenk (Nairobi: Kenya Mennonite Church, 2015).

55. See Mennonite World Conference, http://www.mwc-cmm.org/mwc_map/country-/1112# (accessed Aug. 26, 2016).

the mid-1990s, much of M.C.C.-Kenya's work focused on partnerships with pastoralists. But in the 1980s, M.C.C.-Kenya also helped to establish the Nairobi Peace Initiative, one of Kenya's most prominent civil society peace organizations. In the early 1990s, M.C.C.-Kenya's commitment to peacebuilding deepened through its support of the Wajir Peace Committees, its role in helping to form PeaceNet, a national peacebuilding network, and its support of the Rural Women Peacelink—three successful grassroots initiatives that continue today but no longer draw on M.C.C. support. The success of these three partnerships is a testament to M.C.C.'s support of Kenyan grassroots peace work.

In 2008, M.C.C.-Kenya had sixteen partners, eight service workers, two country representatives, and four locally-appointed staff. The office had a budget of more than $1.1 million, which it distributed over a wide range of projects. By 2016, the number of national staff had risen to six while the number of service workers declined to three.

Daima Initiatives for Peace and Development (DiPaD)

Doreen Ruto, a Kenyan Fulbright scholar who studied at Eastern Mennonite University, created the Daima Initiatives for Peace and Development (DiPaD) in 2011 in the aftermath of the post-election violence in Kenya in 2008. Ruto's leadership was influenced by her training and a master's degree from Eastern Mennonite University's Cetner for Justice and Peacebuilding program, where she honed her expertise in trauma and restorative justice before starting DiPaD. The organization works on peacebuilding, trauma-healing, restorative justice, capacity-building, and community development seeking to address particularly the experiences of women, youth, survivors of terrorism, traumatized people, religious leaders, and judicial officers. They use appreciative inquiry (an elicitive methodology that helps grassroots communities develop plans of action) as a mechanism of social change. At the heart of DiPaD's work is a belief in the interconnectedness of peace, justice, and development, reflecting a holistic vision of shalom rather than simply a liberal conception of political peace. DiPaD describes itself as "taking a holistic approach to trauma, drawing on trauma science, conflict transformation, restorative justice and human security."[56]

Since the 2008 post-election violence, Kenya also suffered from the 2013 Westgate Mall terrorist attack and the 2015 Garissa University College mass shootings, which have traumatized large segments of the society—both those who experienced it directly as well as their families, friends, and larger community. DiPaD has worked directly with both of these

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56. DiPaD, "Programs document", unpublished, undated.

groups. Both Executive Director Ruto and William Kiptoo, the M.C.C. peacebuilding coordinator for Kenya, were trained through the STAR program and thus have been able to implement this distinctively Mennonite approach to trauma.

Using the STAR model, DiPaD trained Kenyans in responding to trauma in ways that promote personal and societal healing. Many traumatized Kenyans do not have the money or time to regularly see a psychologist. In the aftermath of the Westgate and Garissa incidents, M.C.C. provided funding for trainings in trauma healing for survivors and their families. The Garissa program was based at Moi University for students who were too traumatized to continue at Garissa. Twenty-five different "circle keepers" (facilitators trained in trauma healing by DiPaD) managed a four-day training for more than 300 students. Consistent with its partner-driven approach, M.C.C. staff were not in leadership roles; rather the program was led by those who had experienced the trauma firsthand. One DiPaD staff member explained, "If you know how the MCC partner structure works, that is what we used here."[57] A SALT volunteer seconded to the organization explained that the approach to "walk with them"—"DiPaD builds long-term relationships with partners. In fact, it's hard not to because by the end you feel like family".[58]

In addition to working with the survivors of the Garissa massacre, DiPaD also works with religious leaders from both the Christian and Muslim communities to break cycles of violence in the Tana River County, a place deeply affected by post-election violence. In 2015-2016, M.C.C. helped to fund DiPaD's work with the Justice that Heals project, a replica of Eastern Mennonite University's STAR program, and seconded a SALT volunteer to serve as its documentation officer. The Justice that Heals project addresses trauma and pursues restorative justice in parts of Kenya that have suffered from acute violence.

All of these approaches are consistent with pursuing peace as shalom and conflict transformation. Further evidence of the influence of Mennonite conceptions of peace on the work of DiPaD can be seen in the initiative to send eight Kenyan women for additional peacebuilding training at Eastern Mennonite University. While this was funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development and not M.C.C., the fact that DiPaD selected the E.M.U. program is evidence of the value of the Mennonite approach.

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57. Meeting with DiPaD staff, Nairobi, Kenya, July 7, 2016.
58. Ibid.

Lari Peace Museum

On March 26, 1953, villagers in the Lari area of Kenya were devastated by a massacre during the Mau Mau uprising.[59] Mau Mau fighters had attacked the lands of Chief Luka, a government loyalist who had personally benefited from the colonial government's land concession, burning hundreds of homes and killing 97 residents. Throughout 1953, British and Kenyan security forces responded with a series of harsh reprisals, resulting in the deaths of hundreds of suspected Mau Mau members. Hundreds more were convicted and executed in the trials that followed. The events left the Lari area deeply divided between those with ties to the loyalists and those with ties to the Mau Mau.

Waihenya Njoroge, curator of the Lari Peace Museum, grew up in this divided environment. In 2001, Njoroge expressed his commitment to reconciliation by forming the Lari Peace Museum to collect and display artefacts documenting the Lari massacre and its aftermath. Njoroge also brought veterans from the Home Guard and the Mau Mau movement together for dialogues, hoping that such conversations would begin to heal wounds of the past.

In 2009, M.C.C. funded Njoroge's attendance at Eastern Mennonite University's Summer Peacebuilding Institute, and became the Lari Memorial Peace Museum's primary funder. Later that year, M.C.C. further supported the museum by seconding a short-term volunteer from the U.S. In the wake of the 2007 post-election violence in Kenya, the Lari Memorial Peace Museum brought together elders from eight ethnic groups in Kenya to participate in a process of reconciliation as part of the Inter-Ethnic Elders for Peace Initiative, which M.C.C. also partially funded. These gatherings began with meetings in Nairobi where elders committed themselves to peacemaking and visited refugee camps to distribute blankets, mattresses, soap, and food. In June 2008, the elders began touring the country, holding forums on reconciliation and peace that included a public ritual in which participants added beads to a wire tree sculpture to symbolize their commitment to rebuilding trust, unity, and peace. The elders also led earth-healing and tree-planting ceremonies,

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59. For more on the Mau Mau, see Caroline Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning: The Untold story of Britain's Gulag in Kenya* (New York: Owl Books, 2005); S.M. Shamsul Alam, *Rethinking Mau Mau in Colonial Kenya.* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007); Greet Kershaw, *Mau Mau from Below* (Oxford: James Currey, 1997); David Throup, *Economic and Social Origins of Mau Mau* (London: James Currey, 1987); Tabitha Kanogo, *Squatters and the Roots of Mau Mau* (London: James Currey, 1987); David Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged: Britain's Dirty War in Kenya and the End of an Empire* (London: Wiedenfeld and Nicholson, 2005); Daniel Branch, "The Enemy Within: Loyalists and the War Against the Mau Mau in Kenya" *Journal of African History* 48 (2007), 291-315.

a traditional Kenyan way of cleansing the earth after loss of life or bloodshed.

In 2008, the Lari Memorial Peace Museum began to explore peace education in schools as a way of preventing future violence, with M.C.C. funding a project to introduce computers into several secondary schools in Kenya and to create a social networking site for Kenyan students to meet others in different parts of the country. In September 2010, the first shipment of 171 computers arrived in Kenya for distribution to the Lari project.

The Lari Peace Museum's vision of reconciliation and building relationships between conflicting groups clearly reflects a Mennonite emphasis on peace. This methodology of peace clubs became quite popular in M.C.C. programs in sub-Saharan Africa and, by 2016, many M.C.C. teams referred to the success of the M.C.C. Zambia peace clubs and similar programs being implemented or considered by members of the M.C.C. East African Peacebuilding Network for Uganda, Tanzania, South Sudan, and other parts of Kenya.

M.C.C. UGANDA

Unlike Kenya and Tanzania, there was no missionary effort to plant a Mennonite church in Uganda the 1930s and 1940s. The first Mennonite presence in the region was not the result of missionaries or the Teachers Abroad Program but an initiative in 1979 by M.C.C. to place personnel in Anglican churches. By 2008, the M.C.C.-Uganda team consisted of six service workers, two SALT volunteers, two country representatives, and two locally-appointed staff members, with an annual budget of $670,000. At that time, the program had eighteen partner organizations—some receiving funding and some receiving secondments—working on projects related to peacebuilding, HIV/AIDS, education, and relief. Over the next eight years, the number of national staff rose to six plus two country representatives while the number of volunteer service workers declined to zero in 2016. One of the most significant changes in staffing in the M.C.C.-Uganda program was the hiring of a country director from Kenya, Muigai Ndoka, and his spouse, Valerie Muigai. This represents a slow shift over time in M.C.C. from having exclusively North American country representatives to including local or regional staff in these leadership positions. The increased regional expertise at the level of M.C.C. leadership has resulted in a significant growth of new partners throughout the program.

Teso Diocese Development Office (TEDDO)

The Teso Diocese Development Office (TEDDO) was formed in 1995 as part of the Church of Uganda (Anglican) to coordinate development activities in the Soroti and Kumi Dioceses. Its activities included emergency relief, HIV/AIDS, health, sustainable livelihoods, human rights, and peacebuilding. M.C.C.'s primary focus has been on funding TEDDO's peacebuilding and livelihood work.

TEDDO first became an M.C.C. partner in 2000. By 2015, that partnership had expanded to include a focus on cross-border dialogues and mediating conflicts involving agriculture and land. TEDDO trained local peace promoters to work on a grassroots level in villages in mediating disputes as well as collecting information on conflict in the region. Each month, peace promoters reported all conflicts in the village to TEDDO, information that then was used to train mediators. By 2015, TEDDO had more than eighty trained peace promoters working in four parishes in Amuria, four parishes in Wera, seven parishes in Ngariam (all in Teso), and four parishes in Iriiri (in Karamoja). The program focused primarily on the middle level of village leadership—a key principle in Mennonite peacebuilding theory. Thus, local communities chose the peace promoters, who came from both Christian and Muslim backgrounds. The program trained them in conflict transformation, peace education, reconciliation, and basic trauma healing. Each promoter mediated five or six conflicts per year, focusing mostly on domestic disputes between spouses or neighbors and issues related to land ownership and usage.

Promoters were unpaid but given a bicycle, gum boots, and a flashlight for use in their work. This was noteworthy—since there is not a strong culture of volunteerism in Uganda, most organizations pay "volunteers" a small stipend. For M.C.C., partnering with the organization became an opportunity to share a common value beyond peacemaking—the value of service. Peace promoters reported in interviews that they enjoyed the work because it decreases conflict and because their role as promoters gives them prestige in the community.[60]

In 2003, the Teso region experienced incursions by the Lord's Resistance Army that caused many people to move into camps for internally displaced persons. As those people returned to their home villages, conflicts over landownership and land use increased. These conflicts have sharpened when the regions were affected by drought, forcing people to move into other districts in search of water. TEDDO's

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60. Group interview with James Odomo, Sarah Apolot, Betty Aliano, and three promoters wishing to be identified only by their first names: Lawrence, Imaat, and Dinah. Dec. 3, 2008, Amolo County.

strategy of low-level mediation has also succeeded in resolving domestic disputes that reflected the legacy of war in the area.

The strategy of these peace promoters depends heavily on relationships, while also acting as neutrals in the conflict. The peace promoters are trained to incorporate psychosocial support since many communities in which TEDDO work have experienced trauma. As described in one of TEDDO's internal reports: "It is impossible to separate psychosocial care from other peacebuilding components as it is integral to peacebuilding."[61] This strategy of mediation and trauma healing resonates strongly with the work of Lederach and the Mennonite conception of peacemaking.

TEDDO's reconciliation work extended into its own program as the peace promoters were drawn from both Iteso and Karimojong—communities which rarely cooperated with each other—who often attended trainings and meetings together. TEDDO peace promoters also facilitated dialogues between the Iteso and Karimojong. In 2008, for example, TEDDO co-sponsored a World Peace Day celebration that included more than 1,000 people from both Karamoja and Teso and was held around a tree that used to be a site for planning raids but was now being reclaimed as a symbol of reconciliation.

Kotido Peace Initiative (KOPEIN)

Inspired by the Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative, the Kotido Peace Initiative (KOPEIN) attempted to replicate this model of interfaith peacebuilding in the Karimojong context. In 2000 the Catholic Diocese Peace and Justice Desk assisted in the first incarnation of KOPEIN by partnering with the Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative to facilitate the Jie-Acholi peace dialogues.[62] At that time, the Karimojong people were clashing with non-pastoralist groups in neighboring districts over issues of overgrazing, animals grazing in gardens, and pollution of water by animals.

Karamoja is one of the most underdeveloped and conflict-ridden areas of Uganda; and yet, until recently, the region had rarely attracted the attention of international aid agencies. The Karimojong are a pastoralist group who raise cattle. Cattle-raiding was a persistent problem and violence escalated as more guns poured into the region from South Sudan,

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61. TEDDO, "Quarterly Report" (July-Sept. 2007), 5.

62. The Karimojong consist of several smaller ethnic groups, including the Bokora, the Matheniko, the Dodoth, and the Pian. The Jie are often considered part of this group but are more closely related to the Turkana people in Kenya.

Somalia, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.[63] The Ugandan government has made several attempts to disarm the Karimojong, often resulting in violence. Disarmament has divided the community as the men and boys move with the grazing cattle while the elders, women, and children remain in villages. Since the villages were the primary target of the government's disarmament campaign, opportunistic armed raiders targeted the largely defenseless settlements to steal the remaining cattle.

In 2003, KOPEIN became an independent entity as a joint partnership of Anglican, Catholic, Pentecostal, and Muslim religious leaders in northern Karamoja. Its peace work has focused on mediation and reconciliation in the Kotido area: collecting data on cattle rustling; tracking stolen cattle; and negotiating for the return of stolen animals. KOPEIN continues to negotiate peace agreements among the Jie, Matheniko, Bokora, and Dodoth communities to reduce the incidence of raiding and the arms trade. The Jie-Matheniko and Jie-Dodoth dialogues also increased contact between the communities and created commitments to graze cattle together in an effort to share decreasing grassland and provide mutual protection against raiding.

KOPEIN's understanding of peace is further predicated on the idea that peacebuilding is inseparably linked to development. In the words of leader Romano Longole, "there can be no development without peace."[64] Therefore, KOPEIN participates in trainings on poverty-resource tracking and monitoring in the Moroto area and undertakes longer-term development work concentrated on educational assistance to the marginalized Ik community in northern Karamoja.

From the time of the group's inception, M.C.C. was strongly involved in KOPEIN's peacebuilding initiatives. M.C.C. funded several KOPEIN projects; supported the training and capacity-building of leaders; and, by 2008, seconded a service worker as a documentation officer. However, more recently, as more international N.G.O.'s began working in Karamoja and KOPEIN was able to secure funding from other agencies, M.C.C. has shifted its funding from KOPEIN's peace work to support for Ik education.

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63. For background on conflict in Karamoja see: Kennedy Mkutu, *Guns and Governance in the Rift Valley: Pastoralist Conflict and Small Arms* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008); Jonah Leff, "Pastoralists at War: violence and security in the Kenya-Sudan-Uganda Border Region," *International Journal of Conflict and Violence* 3 (2009), 188-203; Kennedy Mkutu. "Disarmament in Karamoja, Northern Uganda: Is This a Solution for Localised Violent Inter and Intra-Communal Conflict?" *The Round Table* 97, no. 394 (2008), 99-120; Ben Knighton, "The State as Raider Among the Karamojong: 'Where There are no Guns, They Use the Threat of Guns'" *Africa* 73 (Aug. 2003), 427-455; Sandra Gray, "A Memory of Loss: Ecological Politics, Local History, and the Evolution of Karimojong Violence," *Human Organization* 59 (Winter 2000), 401-418.

64. Romano Longole, interview, Feb. 13, 2009, Kotido.

Living with Shalom

In 2003, M.C.C.-Uganda initiated a program called Living with Shalom to bring together youth from all of the areas in Uganda where M.C.C. works. Drawing on the principle of peace as shalom, the program promotes peace with God, peace with self, peace with the environment, and peace with others. Its primary initiatives have included providing HIV/AIDS education, planting trees, building low-impact stoves, and developing mediation skills.

Living with Shalom includes youth from eight areas of the country—the Bunyoro-Kitare diocese, the North Karamoja diocese, Masindi-Kitara diocese, Lango diocese, Masaka Catholic diocese, Soroti diocese, Kitgum diocese, and Kamuli. Each area sent five youth and one youth advisor to live together in Hoima for three weeks to explore cultural differences and build relationships. Participants were high school students—an age group at risk in Uganda for engaging in violence.[65] The primary approach to peacebuilding of Living with Shalom is building relationships among Ugandans from different parts of the country. During the first part of the program, participants spend time in field trips and playing games to build trust and break down stereotypes. The program always closes with a cultural gala where students present dances, songs, skits, and poems from their home communities, while also participating in dances from other cultures. At the end of their time together, the youth were expected to design, propose, and execute a plan to do something positive in their communities based on what they learned. The facilitators are typically M.C.C. partners with expertise in HIV/AIDS, mediation, and conflict resolution.

Student exchanges among different areas of Uganda continue even after the Living with Shalom program ends. During visits, students tour each other's schools, watch films, plant trees, and visit local areas of interest as well as witness some of the harsh realities of daily life such as seeing camps of displaced people or areas where cattle raids and violence are still common. These visits reduce stigma and stereotypes as students see the challenges facing youth across Uganda.

One of the clearest indicators of Living with Shalom's success is that one group of student graduates from the program went on to form a new local N.G.O., the Omukago-Businge Peace Initiative, which later became a new M.C.C.-Uganda partner.

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65. After grades S4 and S6, there is a lengthy break before the student returns to school or enters university. This age group has been blamed for a rise in crime that occurs during these breaks and Ugandans feel that idleness among youth puts them at risk for criminal behavior as well as sexual promiscuity.

RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT AS PEACEBUILDING

Many of the M.C.C. projects in East Africa emphasized overt forms of peacebuilding such as reconciliation, mediation, restorative justice, and relationship-building as primary methodologies. However, most of M.C.C.'s relief and development work is also driven by a peace ethic. In interviews, local M.C.C. partners emphasized the interdependency of economic development and peacebuilding. "Most everything that we do," noted M.C.C. partner Samuel Okiror, "is focused on the greater goal of peacebuilding. Relief and development are done in the context of peacebuilding . . . without peace there is no development."[66]

This integrated understanding of peacemaking and development work is based on a desire, consistent with Mennonite theology, to view issues of structural injustice and violence—particularly poverty—through the paradigm of peace. Without inclusive, strong education systems, functioning hospitals, and enough food for all, it is impossible to have a peaceful society.[67]

One expression of the close relationship between the physical needs of a community and efforts to promote peace was evident in 2007 following the devastating post-election violence in Kenya. In the immediate aftermath of the violence, M.C.C.-Kenya responded by provided funding for relief aid. As it distributed food to those affected by the violence, M.C.C. specifically encouraged neighbors to share with those of different ethnicities. A 2008 review of M.C.C.-Kenya noted that the relief program "is able to interconnect its community development and peace efforts, so as to contribute to longer, more sustainable solutions."[68]

In the case of M.C.C.-Uganda, the Mennonite understanding of peace was sometimes the rationale for *not* providing relief. During the famine in Karamoja in 2007-2008, M.C.C.-Uganda decided not to give relief for fear that it would undermine peace efforts. M.C.C. believed that injecting more outside resources into the region might increase violence due to insecurity and looting. This strategic decision was based not on a calculation about hunger but on a worldview in which preventing violent conflict is paramount.

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66. Samuel Okiror, interview, Dec. 3, 2008, Soroti.

67. A review of M.C.C. HIV/AIDS programs, for example, found that a significant number included peace work as a secondary focus of their health work.—M.C.C., "Generations at Risk Program Assessment Report" (June 2007), unpublished.

68. M.C.C., "MCC-Kenya Program Review: For Five Year Period Ending August 2008" (Sept. 2008), unpublished, 13.

Development

M.C.C.'s integrated understanding of development work and peacebuilding is reflected in its partner organizations, which base their work on a holistic understanding of the connection between care for the environment, community cooperation, and peace. My field research suggests that all of M.C.C.-Kenya's partners engaged in community development and water projects understood peacebuilding to be a significant part of their work. The Utooni Development Organization (UDO) and SASOL Foundation, for example, worked with community-based groups to build sand dams to increase access to water for rural Kenyan farming communities. Linking such work to peace is an appropriate expression of shalom as environmental stewardship; but it is also contextually relevant in Kenya where ethnic clashes often erupt when groups compete for scarce water resources. M.C.C. national staff member James Kinyare, who worked with both UDO and SASOL, described the philosophy this way: "Peace and togetherness is the key to [UDO] and SASOL. Nothing can be done without this peace. We know that we have to be together if we are going to fight drought."[69] Jacob Stern, an M.C.C. service worker seconded to UDO, noted: "There is a definite relationship between what [Excellent Development Kenya] does and peace—it's all one thing. Getting people water to grow vegetables, enabling them to pay school fees, escape poverty—all that is also peace."[70]

Education

Education is another expression of M.C.C.'s commitment to peacebuilding. At times this means that peace is an explicit part of the curriculum; in other settings, educational programs bring together students from groups of people who have been engaged in violence to promote peace in a more indirect way. M.C.C. regards KOPEIN's educational outreach to the Ik people as a peace project, for example, because it promoted cross-cultural interaction in schools among the Karimojong and the Ik.[71] The majority of students at Stella Matutina, a secondary school for girls in Katulikire, were affected by the civil war in northern Uganda. Many were displaced from their homes and several were abducted by the Lord's Resistance Army. The school received M.C.C.

69. James Kinyare, interview, June 30, 2009, Nairobi.

70. Jacob Stern, interview, June 9, 2009, Kola.

71. The Global Family report that introduced M.C.C. donors to the Ik project highlighted its relevance as a peace project: "The Ik people are respected as a peaceful culture, and MCC's support through this Global Family project for their nonviolence in a very violent part of Uganda is witness to Jesus' blessing for peacemakers."—Gann Herman, "Kotido Peace Initiative (KOPEIN) Ik Project, Karamoja Region, Kaabong District, Northeast Uganda," *Global Family Program Initial Report* (April 2006), 1.

sponsorship through its Global Family program, which paid school fees for select students and sponsored trauma healing sessions. Stella Matutina incorporated peacebuilding programs by creating peace clubs to engage students in promoting a culture of peace both on campus and in the community.

Education as peacemaking is also often expressed in the context of discipline in local schools. Kristina Lewis, a volunteer teaching in St. Jude Junior School in Bukoto, found that her personal commitment to peace meant challenging some of the prevailing Ugandan notions of school discipline. Caning children as part of discipline in schools is prevalent in Uganda despite a 2006 government directive that officially prohibited it in government-funded schools. Lewis's commitment to nonviolence and M.C.C.'s emphasis on peacemaking compelled her to raise the issue of corporal punishment in conversations with her Ugandan supervisor and fellow teachers. As a result, St. Jude Junior School held two listening sessions—one with students and one with teachers—about the utility and value of physical punishment. School administrators invited Lewis to offer positive discipline strategies and alternative methods of punishment for consideration. While not banning caning altogether, the students and teachers established basic guidelines to limit the severity of the punishment and developed incentives to reward good behavior. Lewis's experience is emblematic of M.C.C.'s ideal type for peacemaking—she expressed her commitment to nonviolence in a way that deferred to the wisdom of the community and did not assume that she as an outsider had all the right answers, while also providing a quiet critique of the violence she witnessed.

Personal Commitments to Peacemaking

A commitment to peace also informs the daily lives of the M.C.C. volunteers in East Africa and many of the individuals working with M.C.C. partner organizations. All applicants to M.C.C. must write an essay on their personal beliefs and commitments in response to the question: "summarize your understanding of the biblical call to nonviolence, to love others and to peacemaking, and your personal response to that call. What are your beliefs about military training and participation in war?"[72] In evaluating applicant responses, M.C.C. looks for an unequivocal rejection of military service and violence, a commitment to struggle against structural injustice, and a personal story

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72. M.C.C., "MCC Application Form" (Aug. 2008), unpublished.

that reveals an ongoing desire to be a peacemaker, all framed within the context of answering God's call to obedient and faithful Christian living.[73]

M.C.C. volunteers are expected to exemplify the Mennonite commitment to peace in all of their interactions. Evidence of these commitments was apparent in the lives of the M.C.C. workers I interviewed. Many chose to work with M.C.C. instead of other N.G.O.'s because they valued M.C.C.'s commitment to peace. For some, a commitment to pacifism required a personal spiritual conversion. One worker candidly admitted, "I wasn't totally on board with the nonviolence aspect at first. [My spouse] was encouraging us to do this and I wasn't sure. MCC said you had to be a pacifist, which I wasn't. But I really thought about it and prayed about it and suddenly it made sense to me."[74] Another person felt that the process of applying for M.C.C. service itself helped make her commitment to pacifism more concrete:

> I only "came out" as a pacifist my first year of divinity school—and was then, and still am—really defining what that means for me theologically. But I knew that being involved with MCC … would push me to articulate my theological grounding for pacifism, and give me a safe space to continue to grow in my understanding and talking-about and living-out of pacifism.[75]

For many of M.C.C. volunteers, this approach to holistic peace is deeply ingrained. One volunteer described her experience with peace and M.C.C. in this way:

> There have been occasions when I have felt it was clear to Kenyans around me that peace is very important to me. But there are other times—and I am very sorry to have to admit this— that I have responded in the wrong way and I was not a very good picture of MCC. And I feel so guilty about that. That is the thing I feel most guilty about in my job and it wasn't even in my job – it was my life. It was a situation where someone came to the door and I responded in a mean way and I feel very bad about that. MCC is not a job – it's your life. It's how you live your whole life.[76]

M.C.C.'s partner organizations share M.C.C.'s vision and commitment to peacebuilding. Like the volunteers, the leaders of partner organizations are often deeply committed to pacifism, and some have remarkable personal stories that testify to that commitment. Many of the leaders of

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73. M.C.C., "Policy Handbook: International Programs Service Workers" (2008), unpublished, 19-20.

74. Interview, May 14, 2009.

75. Email to author, Feb. 25, 2009.

76. Interview, June 11, 2009, Nairobi.

M.C.C. partner organizations are also well-read in Mennonite peace literature, which they encounter while attending Mennonite-affiliated institutes such as Summer Peace Institute. Virtually every partner, for example, mentioned the writings and work of John Paul Lederach. Training in Mennonite institutions has created a generation of East African peacemakers who regard Lederach's work very highly and seek to implement his ideas. One partner described Lederach in this way:

> There were a lot of things that I already knew. But going to a formal institution, such as API and SPI, confirmed some of the things that I was doubting. Throughout the reading, especially the works of John Paul Lederach, I was laughing [because] he was saying things that I knew also. They encouraged me because they let me know I was on the right track in doing some things.[77]

Partners often noted that they did not first learn about peacebuilding from books, but that the books confirmed what they already knew to be true and urged them to think more theoretically.

M.C.C. identifies individuals or organizations that share its vision of peace, and then provides support in the form of seconded workers, funding, and further training, typically in Mennonite institutions. The interest and expertise in peacebuilding evident among African partners is something M.C.C. embraces and amplifies as an expression of its historical, theological, and sociological commitment to peacemaking.

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

Returning to East Africa in 2015 and 2016, six years after the completion of my first fieldwork, provided a clear confirmation of the enduring power of a distinctively Mennonite approach to peacebuilding. Most of the partner organizations I encountered in 2008 were still actively working with M.C.C.; and the M.C.C.-Kenya program had significantly reoriented its work to include more peacebuilding partners and projects. Following the post-election violence in late 2007, M.C.C.-Kenya began to seek more partners with peacebuilding as a primary focus. There was also a notable change in the staffing of both M.C.C.-Kenya and M.C.C.-Uganda. While the majority of the staff in both countries was North American during my initial research, by 2016 both programs were staffed primarily by local workers.

There may be even bigger changes on the horizon. M.C.C. programs may soon be applying to United States Agency for International Development for grants, which, if awarded, could significantly increase

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77. Romano Longole, interview, Feb. 13, 2009, Kotido.

M.C.C.'s funding. While this might mean that M.C.C. has more financial resources to pursue its visions of Mennonite peace, USAID grants come with many stipulations that restrict the freedom M.C.C. and M.C.C. partners have in establishing the terms of their projects. USAID grants will entail particular design, monitoring, and evaluation requirements that may drive the creation or implementation of M.C.C. programs. One factor that may have protected M.C.C. from the institutional isomorphism of other faith-based N.G.O.'s has been its independent, largely Mennonite funding base. A shift to USAID funding may drive M.C.C. to more closely resemble other N.G.O.'s.

The necessity of relating to the local Mennonite church continues to complicate the work of M.C.C.- Kenya and M.C.C.-Tanzania on a number of levels. In M.C.C.-Tanzania, the local Mennonite church would prefer to be the primary implementing partner on most of M.C.C.'s projects, even in regions where there is not a particularly robust Mennonite church presence. The leadership of the M.C.C.-Tanzania is put under greater pressure to explain M.C.C.'s programmatic decisions than is the case in Uganda where there is no significant local Mennonite presence. Local Mennonites sometimes feel that M.C.C. would prefer to partner with other faith-based entities from other denominational families, creating a potential source of tension.

CONCLUSION

A distinctively Mennonite conception of peace is a persistent theme throughout the work of M.C.C. in East Africa—on the country program level; in the work of the partners doing peace work; in relief, development, and education work; and in the lives of the M.C.C. volunteers and partners. M.C.C. selectively funds partners and projects that reflect a Mennonite conception of peace—reconciliation, restorative justice, stereotype reduction through relationship-building, mediation, conflict transformation, and trauma healing.

Several common themes emerge within the six case studies of M.C.C. peace projects that consistently reflect the influence of Mennonite peace theory. All six partners work on a grassroots level and use mid-level leaders as catalysts. Some partners occasionally work with government officials; but M.C.C. did not fund this portion of their work. All six organizations embraced conflict transformation and saw the potential for lasting change that can occur even in the midst of conflict. Two organizations, DiPaD and TEDDO, identified trauma healing as a primary avenue of peacebuilding. All six organizations acknowledged the interconnections between development work and peace work, and all six had a religious component—either the group was composed of religious

leaders, was based in a diocese, or understood religion to be at the heart of its work. In four of the six case studies, M.C.C. did not initiate the peace work but sought local partners with compatible values and nurtured their projects. M.C.C. encouraged and built upon particular aspects of peace work that reinforced its own understandings of peace by providing funding, seconded workers, and training in Mennonite institutions.

M.C.C. selects country representatives, service workers, and short-term volunteers based on their commitment to peacemaking, and it trusts them to replicate Mennonite principles of peacemaking in the field. M.C.C. volunteers demonstrate their commitment to nonviolence and peace both by incorporating peacemaking into their assignments as well as by exemplifying it in their daily lives. M.C.C. partners also demonstrate personal as well as professional commitments to peace, which forms the basis of their relationship to M.C.C. and which helps to reproduce and strengthen particular understandings of peace in local organizations.

The strength and potency of peace as a defining value for M.C.C. can be seen at every level of its work, from the initiatives that have peacemaking as their heart to the relief, development, and education projects that regard peacemaking as a secondary goal. In substantive and visible ways, M.C.C. volunteers, partner organizations, and the individuals who lead them all share this distinctive marker of Mennonite identity.