

In July 2008, the Institute of Peace and Strategic Studies (IPSS) at Gulu University, and its Community Outreach Peace Project (COPP) signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Community-Based Organisation Amuru Parents' Initiative to Enhance Education (APIEE), in view of the common objectives with respect to education and peace building. This Memorandum of Understanding provides a structure for joint community-based peace building efforts.

Cooperation Partners

The Institute of Peace and Strategic Studies (IPSS) at Gulu University

In 2003, in the midst of protracted armed conflict in Northern Uganda, Gulu University established the Centre for Conflict Management and Peace Studies (CCMPS), which became the Institute of Peace and Strategic Studies (IPSS) in 2007. IPSS promotes an interdisciplinary action-oriented and community-centred approach with regard to conflict prevention, management, resolution, transformation and peace building, in order to support a harmonious and peaceful societal coexistence.

The objectives of IPSS are:

- To conduct research in the field of peace, conflict and strategic studies, and any other discipline that bears relevance to the peace interests and needs of the community,
- To act as an intervener and multiplier in peace and reconciliation work, involving civil society and community initiatives,
- To be an open space and forum of training and experience of new methods and tools in peace work in order to create and reinforce new capacities of peace builders as genuine catalysts within their respective communities and societies.

The Community Outreach Peace Project (COPP) at IPSS, Gulu University

COPP is a new project of Gulu University within the Institute of Peace and Strategic Studies, and conducted in

cooperation with the German Development Service (Deutscher Entwicklungsdienst / DED).

The objectives of COPP are

- To support community-based peace building initiatives,
- To research, document and disseminate relevant information in the field of peace building and conflict transformation,
- To enhance advocacy and networking that can influence policies and decision-making processes.

COPP targets the students of Gulu University, representatives of civil society and local government, NGO staff and all those who are interested to enrich their knowledge in conflict management and peace building skills either for private or professional reasons.

Amuru Parents' Initiative to Enhance Education (APIEE)

APIEE is a Community-Based Organisation, which was founded in November 2007 and was registered by the Senior Community Development Officer of Amuru District on 21 December 2007. APIEE's Registration Number is CDR/07/128.

APIEE runs St. Andrew's Nursery and Primary School (SANAPS) in Pabbo and conducts activities in the fields of education and peace building.

The objectives of APIEE are

- To construct and open an experimental (sample) school for nursery and primary education in Pabbo Sub-County,
- To introduce peace education in schools to change the negative reactions to conflict among the community, especially children,
- To support the orphans, the girl child and other vulnerable children in the community,
- To create peace building through psychosocial support to young children to help them cope with conflict and traumatic conditions by initiating the cultural aspects of life in education,
- To develop the physical, mental, social and emotional growth of children through plays (games and sports, music, dance and drama),

- To enrich the child's experience by developing imagination and thinking power, i.e. to be creative and innovative.

Cooperation between IPSS/COPP and APIEE

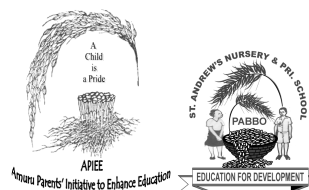
IPSS/COPP and APIEE agreed to jointly conduct community-based education and peace building efforts, including

- Planning and conducting joint activities in the community with regard to awareness-raising and education in the field of conflict management and peace building,
- Research on community-based peace building activities, documentation and dissemination of results, and report of lessons learnt to relevant stakeholders inside and outside academia, in order to improve approaches,
- Networking between representatives of civil society and academia active in the field of conflict management and peace building, and enhancement of advocacy.

Community-based peace building efforts

Current activities include the following activities:

- APIEE's St. Andrew's Nursery and Primary School (SANAPS) in Pabbo will become a pilot project for peace education at nursery and primary levels. IPSS/COPP will conduct training in peace education for SANAPS teachers, starting in August 2009. Peace education will become part of the curriculum of SANAPS.
- IPSS/COPP and APIEE have started to jointly conduct cultural activities in the community. Cultural leaders and elders are invited to instruct the teachers and pupils of SANAPS on cultural aspects of life in general, and culture as a resource for conflict transformation and reconciliation in particular. A cultural group of pupils and parents of SANAPS and other interested persons from the community



COOPERATION IN THE FIELDS OF EDUCATION AND PEACE BUILDING

performing Acholi dances and other cultural activities will be built up.

- IPSS/COPP and APIEE agreed to jointly organise peace movie shows with follow-up discussions, public debates and dialogues concerning problems and challenges in times of recovery from armed conflict, and the building up of a drama group, which picks up problems and challenges in the post-conflict period and presents these topics in an artistic way.

In the long run, IPSS/COPP and APIEE intend to jointly engage in further activities, which still need to be worked out in detail. These concern:

- Psychosocial support / rehabilitation,
- Communal agricultural projects as a means of conflict management,
- Community exchange programmes to enhance communication and interaction between regions.

Research

IPSS/COPP will conduct research on IPSS/COPP-APIEE joint community-based peace building activities. The documentation and dissemination of results, and report of lessons learnt to relevant stakeholders inside and outside academia shall contribute to the improvement of the respective approaches.

Networking

IPSS/COPP and APIEE are engaged in networking with representatives of civil society, local government and academia active in the field of conflict management and peace building, in order to bundle efforts to become more effective.

Advocacy

IPSS/COPP and APIEE jointly stand up for the rights of the community and support those people who, despite the precarious poverty and the war, strive for the betterment of their situation.

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