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Open Statement by PeaceNet Kenya and partners in peace and conflict transformation in Upper Eastern

PeaceNet issues a memorandum on TJRC Bill

Peace Building Update, Issue No. 1, October 10-24, 2008.

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Our Programmes



PeaceNet has got five main thematic Programmes:

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Human Security and Development Programme

This programme is PeaceNet's entry point into the wider security sector development processes in Kenya. Through this programme, PeaceNet is able to integrate interventions in the security sector into the broader national peace building and conflict management initiatives.

The focus of this programme lies in two priority areas: Strengthening government-civil society partnership institutions and enhancing civil society capacity for effective participation in the Kenya security sector development.

The Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in collaboration with the government have established partnership institutions at the national, provincial and district levels to address peace and human security issues.



Through expertise, PeaceNet provides leadership in the development of peace-building structures and serve as a link between the peace building organizations and communities. PeaceNet also provides leadership in the development of strategy plans and security structures within the Kenya National Focal Point on Small arms.

PeaceNet believes that, sufficient strengthening on the capacities of all peace building institutions will give immense opportunities to both the government and the civil society groups in sustaining security interventions.

It is through this programme that, PeaceNet together with the government developed long-term partnership programmes in selected districts in Kenya including documentation of best practices and innovations.

Through its partnership with the government, PeaceNet is also providing civil society groups with required leadership in developing appropriate administrative procedures, policies and legislations in the sector.

The programme seeks to organize and empower CSOs to take an active role in establishing and sustaining a vertical and horizontal platform at the national, provincial and district level as well as in the civil society networking and partnership forums on security sector development.

The programme utilizes a national civil society capacity building strategy that incorporates training, awareness raising, research and information dissemination as well as lobbying and advocacy.

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Research and Documentation Programme

The environment within which peace building and conflict management discourses are pursued globally is highly dynamic. Priorities also constantly change and to peace actors, this presents challenges that can be overcome largely through research.

The peace research subset of this Programme seeks to encourage inclusion of new ideas and insights that mobilize people's creative capacity towards achieving sustainable peace. The Programme also informs all peace actors, both in government and the civil society of the contexts within which they are operating and the analytical content of issues they seek to resolve.

Through this Programme, PeaceNet Kenya engages in peace research on specific conflict and developmental issues as well as commissioning assessment missions to conflict areas so as to create a deeper understanding of conflicts in Kenya and unravel the reasons behind their unique manifestations. To date, PeaceNet-Kenya has developed numerous literature resources including case studies, research reports, monthly diary and other documented experiences that greatly enhance peace work in Kenya.

While availability and accessibility of information is a critical pillar to peace work, such information may not usually achieve its purpose if it is not designed to suit consumer dynamics.

To bridge such gap, existence of information resources and their usability, the Research, Communication and Documentation Programme, promotes the development of user friendly materials as well as constantly updating them according to partner and other stakeholder needs.

Some of the on going projects/activities include:

- **Conflict/Peace Research**

Currently PeaceNet is carrying out research on the effects of Post elections violence in various areas of the country especially those classified as the epicenters of the post elections violence (which include Nairobi, Kisumu, Kakamega, Eldoret, Mombasa and Nakuru) and on the Mt. Elgon resource based Conflict.

The Programme is also currently engaged in assessing the Internally Displaced Situation in the various IDP camps with a view to discovering opportunities for dialog between the IDPs and the host communities. It is expected that the study will yield findings that will facilitate a smooth resettlement strategy.

PeaceNet in the recent past also carried out a comprehensive research on the Pastoralist and Agriculturists conflict in Mai Mahiu, Rift Valley which amongst other findings gave recommendations on how best the conflict could be mitigated.

- **Civil Society Indexing Project**

PeaceNet was selected by CIVICUS to undertake a one year Civil Society Indexing project in Kenya which will see the assessment of civil society performance in four dimensions which are Values, Environment, Structure and Impact. This is expected to document the status of civil society and performance in the four dimensions as a platform against which civil society can be strengthened.

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Advocacy and Information Programme

This programme is primarily responsible for mobilizing various forces to participate and ensure that appropriate legislation, policies and programs are developed at the national and local levels to promote a sustainable culture of peace in Kenya.

Through this programme, PeaceNet produces regular updates to share timely information with partners on various peace issues, dynamics, activities, as well as opinions. PeaceNet gather peace and security information through an enhanced Short Message Service (SMS) service system from over 100 field monitors spread across Kenya.

Ongoing projects/activities include:

- **The Peace Newsletter**

This is a quarterly publication carrying peace and security information from across the country, including news and analysis on a wide variety of issues and events that take place in the country and amongst Peace Building Organizations.

- **E-Updates**

This is an e-mail based publication that is circulated fortnightly giving updates and highlights of the happenings within the Peace-Building Fraternity. The updates also circulates timely security updates and information on other Programmes within PeaceNet as well as those implemented by partners.

- **The Short Messages Service (SMS) Center**

This is one of the most vibrant projects at the moment and involves the use of mobile technology in accessing rural communities and enhancing their communication with Peace Building Structures in the country. At the PeaceNet secretariat there is what the network refers to as the "Nerve Center" where project officers can communicate with individuals in different parts of the country via SMS and vice versa.

During the 2007 post elections violence, the nerve centre became one of the most reliable conduits for information at a time when there was a ban on live coverage of the violence by the media. PeaceNet at this difficult period kept the peace building fraternity, the media and security machinery on what was unfolding.

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Training and Capacity Building for Peace Programme

This programme aims at enabling peace actors acquire essential knowledge and skills necessary in implementation of peace related projects.

It strives at strengthening local capacities to develop creative interventions within their communities towards conflict prevention and transformation. The Programme is geared towards entrenching peace building as a core value in development planning.

Another core aspect of this programme is engaging the Civil Society groups in participatory approaches as a means to effectively influencing relevant policy change.

The Programme's operations are informed by research findings which help shape its strategies for intervention as well as creating linkages between peace and other social factors. This provide an integrated approach towards a holistic sustainable peace and development that challenges both structural and cultural violence.

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Membership and Networking Programme

PeaceNet facilitates networking between peace building conflict management civil society groups both at the national and regional level. PeaceNet believes that increased networking ultimately results in improved synergy and coordinated efforts among the groups. PeaceNet also spearheads networking by hosting a number of regional, national and international initiatives and coalitions.

The worth of PeaceNet as a civil society peace-building and conflict management network is in the numerical strength of her wide membership. Today, PeaceNet-Kenya members consist of institutions (NGOs, CBOs, donor agencies, and religious organizations working in the areas of relief, peace building and conflict management, development, human rights and justice); individuals (peace icons, researchers, consultants, advisors and frontline practitioners) and associates.

The lobbying and advocacy subset of the programme is primarily responsible for mobilizing various forces of peace to ensure that appropriate legislation, policies and programs are developed at the national and local levels to promote a sustainable culture of peace in Kenya.

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