Peacebuilding Program

This program strengthens conflict resolution mechanisms to enable integrated peace and economic growth.

Photo: A meeting with traditional rulers and Divisional Police Officer of Uzuakoli, Abia State on activities of herdsmen, crops destruction and allied offences to forestall clash between farmers and herdsmen.

Expertise in the Network Development Approach to Peace Building

Since 2013, PIND has been promoting synergy and cooperation among peace actors in the Delta region through the Partners for Peace (P4P) Network – a unique approach to peacebuilding designed to build social capital around peace in the region. In 2018 we promoted peacebuilding and conflict mitigation as a collective responsibility and collective action requiring multiple players, men and women at the community level.

From the outset, we observed that not many people were motivated to be peace actors in their various communities as there were no incentives for them to promote peace. The community-based organizations similarly lacked the capacity for conflict analysis and mitigation; their peacebuilding activities were not coordinated, and there were low awareness and voice for CBOs and individuals promoting peace in the region. Their lack of conflict management and mediation skills fueled a sense of helplessness in the face of systematic violence in conflict-affected areas.

A Platform for Peace Actors

But that situation is changing now. P4P provides platforms for continuous capacity building and mentoring for members. P4P covers a wide range of activities on conflict early warning, conflict prevention, conflict management, conflict resolution, and peacebuilding. The network has

open membership. That is, it is not restricted to persons, CSOs and organizations that have peace and conflict experience.

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> The platform accommodates people without peacebuilding experience but has a passion for peacebuilding. Agata Osueke, the Edo State P4P chapter Coordinator, describes P4P as "a network of persons and organizations of like minds coming together to take formidable peace actions."
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To increase the membership of P4P Network, the State chapters established 20 P4P subchapters. These are geo-located in the following local government areas and States: Etim Ekpo and Oron local government areas in Akwa Ibom State; Bakasi and Akampa local government areas in Cross River State; Bendel, Ikuano, Ugwunabor, Ukwa West, Umuahia North and Umuahia South local government areas in Abia State; Ekeremor, Ogia and Nembe local government areas in Bayelsa State. Others are in Akoko Edo, Owan East and Etsako West local government areas in Edo State; Warri South and Bomadi local government areas in Delta State; and Arogbo and Apoi communities in Ese-Odo local government areas in Ondo State.

The newly established subchapters focused on interventions that mitigate and or resolve conflicts within their communities. With the establishment of these subchapters, the P4P network is increasing its membership and reach in the villages. Now that there are nine functioning State Chapters, by drilling down to the LGA level to inaugurate and train Sub-Chapters, the network can reach outside of the main urban centers. To date, there are 99 Subchapters out of a total of 185 LGAs, making P4P truly region-wide.

Local peace agents in the Network continued to participate in the Niger Delta Peace and Security Network (NDPSN) facilitated by PIND and in the Peace and Security Network (PSN) at the national level. In 2018, through the NDPSN and PSN, they contributed to a PIND-led development of election scenario plans for Abia, Akwa Ibom, Cross River, Imo and Rivers States.

These States were identified as hotspots for the 2019 elections. The scenario plans provided vital members of the PSN with the right information to formulate their strategy for addressing violent conflicts in the upcoming 2019 elections. PIND also led the working group to develop a plan for engaging with key stakeholders on the 2019 elections.

Skills for Peacebuilding

To continuously equip volunteers with the relevant skills for peacebuilding and conflict resolution is crucial in sustaining P4P. The Leadership and Volunteerism module was established as a compulsory module for new entrants to the P4P network. We built the capacity of ordinary citizens who are members of the P4P and highlighted the "collective action approach". The logic of collective action for peacebuilding became popular and peace volunteerism deepened in Niger Delta communities.

Atakpa Effiong, a volunteer in Akwa Ibom, who is a retired civil servant, points out that they did not have a structured means of actively engaging in peacebuilding before P4P was established. According to Effiong, P4P made it easier for volunteers to come together to deliberate on issues facing their communities. "People may have ideas, and if there is no organized forum for them to put the ideas into use, the ideas die with them," says Effiong "P4P, that is the forum we have used to put our ideas into practice."

In 2018, we complemented training by implementing a combination of mutually reinforcing approaches that provided a fertile ground for collaborative actions to germinate. Examples include providing an opportunity for members to actively participate in peacebuilding activities, ensuring equal participation of men and women and allowing P4P members to jointly design and implement peace interventions. Finally, PIND successfully created and launched CAPABLE training modules for Peace Building to strengthen the impacts of peace agents and organizations in the Niger Delta.

PIND's work to ensure that new and existing peace agents were better equipped to engage in interventions resulted in the conduct of 40 responses to mitigate and resolve conflicts in communities by the P4P Network in 2018. One of such is P4P Network's intervention in Arochukwu and Ohafia local government areas of Abia State where they prevailed on farmers and herdsmen to improve

herdsmen-farmer conflict which has claimed thousands of lives and displaced hundreds more since 1999.

PIND's Integrated Peace & Development Unit Research Coordinator, Afeno Odomovo facilitating a training for P4P peace monitors on Short Message Service (SMS)-based Early Warning and Early Response (EWER) infrastructure to aid conflict analysis, at the PIND EDC, Warri, Delta State.

A P4P member that coordinated the response in Arochukwu attributed this feat to human capital development from PIND. "The network has developed a lot of people," he said, "where I was before and where I am is way different, and I can tell myself that I'm now an expert in conflict management, personally. Secondly, getting myself engaged in peacebuilding has enabled me to check my activities because you cannot tell people to stop fighting when you are a fighter. Before now I use to be an activist, criticize the government, criticize community stakeholders positively, you know. But right now, even if I have to criticize, I have to do it in a conflict-sensitive manner''.

> " Peacebuilding efforts amplified by capable local peace agents mitigated and prevented about 153 conflicts as at 2018, with new organizations and individuals self-identifying as peace agents. "

The understanding of the impact of conflicts and having the skills for peacebuilding triggered affirmative action towards peace from the peace agents. This involved active mass media messaging on peace aimed at motivating more persons to take a stand for peace. For example, Akwa Ibom, Edo, Ondo and Rivers States P4P chapters continued with their peace advocacy messages on radio and television ahead of the 2019

Nigerian elections. Cumulatively, the total number of people reached with P4P facilitated media messages within and outside the Niger Delta is estimated to be 45 million..

Data for Peacebuilding - "A Stitch in Time Saves Nine."

P4P peace monitors in the communities integrate and collate conflict data from across the region to our Short Message Service (SMS)-based Early Warning and Early Response (EWER) infrastructure to aid conflict analysis. The data informs a subset of the P4P called the PREVENT team that identifies conflicts that could escalate into violence and works towards preventing or mitigating them. As such, the EWER platform serves as a technological infrastructure for the P4P volunteers for sending and receiving actionable conflict information in the region. During the year, PIND organized joint workshops for the PREVENT teams from all the state chapters where the members shared lessons and best practices and reviewed strategies regarding the data collection, analysis, planning, and interventions.

Creation of Etinan Sub-Chapter in Akwa Ibom State

By 2018, over 11,000 data points on local conflict have been provided by the local peace agents on the EWER – making conflict risk data available for decision-making and planning. PIND used the data from the P4P monitors to develop a total of 28 conflict briefings to cover various emerging issues in the region. A survey on the effectiveness of PIND's conflict reports and data carried out in September 2018 revealed these conflict briefings to aid conflict analysis were utilized by 64 organizations within and outside of the region. About 80 percent of these organizations are based in the Niger Delta.

Resources for Peacebuilding - Sustaining the P4P Network

During the year, PIND helped the P4P Network to develop their fundraising skills, provided in-kind support, and small grants to enable them to execute their peacebuilding interventions.

Across the state chapters, the volunteers are exploring potential sources of funding for their activities.

According to the volunteer that leads the PREVENT team of Cross River State chapter, Shaabam Abdullahi, they have understood the need to diversify their funding for their long-term sustainability, and they are already brainstorming on possible means of sustaining the network. Armed with resource mobilization skills provided by PIND, the Abia State P4P members have constituted a resource mobilisation committee to scout for local and international funding sources. Beyond building the capacity of members for peacebuilding and conflict resolution, the chapters are linking the volunteers to entrepreneurship and economic empowerment programs. This, they believe, will sustain P4P as members become more empowered economically.

Mitigating Ethnic Conflicts

One crucial support in 2018 was the Warri Multi-Stakeholder (MSP) Platform. In the reporting period, PIND provided technical assistance to the Delta State P4P Chapter to establish this Forum where stakeholders from the Itsekiri and Ijaw ethnic groups in Warri local government areas can dialogue on the deeper drivers of violent conflict and ways to resolve those issues. The platform is a coordinating forum and comprises 16 members cutting across traditional rulers, representatives from the Delta State and respective local government areas, and community representatives from the Ijaw and Itsekiri ethnic groups.

As part of efforts to mutually forge a pathway for addressing those issues that trigger conflict among the Itsekiri and Ijaw ethnic groups, members of the Warri multi-stakeholder platform carried out seven advocacy visits in the last quarter of 2018. Visits were to the Deputy Governor of Delta State; the Chairpersons of

Warri North, Warri South and Warri South-West local government areas; the Pere of Gbaramatu and Olu of Warri; as well as the Department of State Services (DSS). This initiative earned PIND an honorary award by the Governor of Delta State in recognition of PIND's invaluable leadership in promoting peace in the state.

Photo: Swearing-in of Benin River/ Warri North LGA Chapter P4P Executives, Delta State

FACT BOX

2018: Fostering Stability

- 1,860 people self-identified as peace agents, giving the P4P a total membership of 7,563.

- 184 new organizations signed up as peace agents, increasing the overall P4P organizational membership to 627

- 64 stakeholders utilizing analytic data products for interventions in 2018, with a cumulative of 421 stakeholders

- Additional 4,598 conflict data points on the Niger Delta mapped on the peace map, making a cumulative total of 11,197 (33,590 nationally), making it the most comprehensive dataset on conflict risk in Nigeria publicly available.