



ACTION Support Centre

**Africa Regional Hub of the Global Network
Action for Conflict Transformation**



Bi-Annual Report - 2006 to 2009

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Acronyms

ACT - Advanced Conflict Transformation Course

ACTION - Action For Conflict Transformation

APRM - African Peer Review Mechanism

ASC - ACTION Support Centre

AU - African Union

CAX - Campaign Against Xenophobia

CBO - Community-Based Organisation

CBP - Capacity Building Programme

CSSP - Continental Solidarity and Support Programme

CCP-AU - Centre for Citizens' Participation in the African Union

COPA - Coalition for Peace in Africa

CoRMSA - Consortium for Refugees and Migration in South Africa

COSATU - Congress of South African Trade Unions

ECOSOCC - Economic, Social and Cultural Council

IDASA - Institute for Democracy in South Africa

IF - International Forum

ISC - Interim Steering Committee

LSC - Local Steering Committee

NCA - National Constitutional Assembly

NEPAD - New Partnership for Africa's Development

OD - Operations Department

ODP - Organisational Development Process

OSISA - Open Society Initiative of Southern Africa

PAD - Peace and Development Platform

RTC - Responding To Conflict

SADC - Southern African Development Community

SMI - Social Movement Indaba

STA - Solidarity and Transformation Agenda

SSC - Skills and Strategies for Change

SZC - Save Zimbabwe Campaign

YCL - Young Communist League

ZSF - Zimbabwe Solidarity Forum



Introduction to the Report

Peace and greetings to all our partners, colleagues, comrades and friends! Many thanks for taking the time to explore this report.

Our hope is that it at least begins to tell the story of the energy and commitment of the friends and comrades of ACTION and the reservoir of strength and inspiration it has become for so many people.

No less importantly, the report will also give you a glimpse into the unique and effective impact that the programmes and strategies of the ACTION Support Centre are having across Africa. The report highlights the critical value that is being added to grassroots initiatives that are responding to immediate conditions and urgent collective concerns.

A plethora of changes and positive developments have taken place during this phase of the centre's growth. One of the most significant among these was the highly successful November 2007 global retreat in Cambodia, where an array of strategic resolutions was made and adopted by the Global Steering Committee membership. These continue to inform the activities of the Centre. One of them was the establishment of the Local Steering Committee and the instituting of the Organisational Development Process. Owing to this, inter alia, the Centre has experienced massive transformation. It is highly conspicuous within the programmes and the other support endeavours. Notable among them are the Vision documents and the ACTION Support Centre Business Plan, which is in line with its newly assumed trajectory of sustainability.

In this issue, reports of major activities by individual programmatic areas are highlighted. There are also reports from other ACTION regions. Since solidarity and support are at the heart of ACTION's mandate, activities around special initiatives by the Support Centre have also been put in the spotlight.

We hope you will enjoy reading this document. In keeping with ACTION's tradition of learning and sharing, we welcome any contributions as we endeavour to enhance and fulfill of our mission.

We look forward to continuing to work together and to building new relationships, and are forever indebted to our supporters, who have enabled us to achieve the small gains that have been made. Many thanks for sharing the journey thus far.

Please make the time to digest the report and make contact if it sparks off any new ideas. The ASC staff, the newly formed Interim Steering Committee and global ACTION members around the world welcome feedback and innovative ways of seeing things differently.



Background to the Action Network

By Richard Smith, advisor and mentor to the Joint Management Committee

As part of the global network of community-based practitioners, members of Action For Conflict Transformation have been developing context specific strategies to respond effectively to conflict since 2000.

The ASC has initiated programmes and projects aimed at engaging with conflicts that affect South Africa, the SADC region and the whole of Africa, including initiatives linked to xenophobia, poor or absent service provision, the victimisation of marginalised and vulnerable groups, and the poor public participation of civil society in governance processes and democratic institutions at every level.

Maintaining long-term learning relationships between relatively small groups of people will always be a more powerful force for systemic change than the short-term links formed around a high impact campaign. Structural and systemic changes are essential if we really want to transform economic and social relations.

Integrating both of these approaches so as to provide momentum and broaden support bases, while continuing to strengthen the established foundation, forms a unique part of the ASC African Solidarity Transformation Agenda and the Skills and Strategies Capacity Initiative.

The Peace and Development Platform, which was initiated at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002, is still driven by the ASC. PAD has made great progress in its intention to link African Union and other African and global institutions directly with its network members and their communities across the continent.

In the next three years, we will see the consolidation of the ASC into a solid base for building a civil society contribution to sustainable peace and development processes that ensure human security, not the military security of repression and profit, and that recognise the dignity and humanity of all of us.

“ Maintaining long-term learning relationships between relatively small groups of people will always be a more powerful force for systemic change than the short-term links formed around a high impact campaign. Structural and systemic changes are essential if we really want to transform economic and social relations ”



Reports from the Global Regions

Asia

By Carl Siebing

The second ACTION Asia biennial peace builders' forum was hosted by Action For Conflict Transformation at the Hotel View Bhrikuti, in Godavari, just outside Kathmandu, in Nepal, with the aim of collecting, discussing and learning from the experiences of peace builders from different parts of Asia.

It furthered the aims of the first forum in Mindanao, in Philippines, held in October 2006, to identify uniquely Asian approaches in the field of peace building and to deepen the relationships between members of the network throughout Asia. The 2008 forum was supported by the American Friends Service Committee, Caritas Nepal, Skillshare International and the Center for Promotion of Reconciliation and Peace, and structured as a set of workshops through which the participants shared their experiences with each other.

The forum hosted over 120 peace practitioners from across Asia and the world. The following Asian countries were represented: Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, India (especially Manipur, Orissa, Gujarat and Nagaland), Indonesia (especially Aceh), Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Vietnam. Additionally, experts were drawn from the UK, Germany, Netherlands, Serbia, Sweden, USA and Switzerland. Several participants were also workshop facilitators and trainers at the forum. The forum comprised a number of workshops, where presenters used various approaches to share their experiences of peace building and conflict transformation, as well as creative art workshops where participants could try out different artistic forms of addressing conflict,

including yoga, Nepalese thank a painting, traditional Nepalese peace theatre and body movement therapy.

The combination of the two different types of workshops complemented each other and the creative arts workshops were especially appreciated by the participants. Issues were explored such as women's empowerment and gender in India, traditional peace building mechanisms such as the Pukhtoon Jirga of Pakistan, and spirituality and trauma healing in Aceh. Other workshops were Care Nepal's Learning in Peacebuilding, Personal Safety of Peace Workers or Security Management in Sri Lanka, Peacebuilding and Education Approaches in Indonesia, Conflict Transformation in Myanmar and Indigenous Institution for Peacebuilding in Pakistan, to mention a few.

Attendees at the forum were also able to participate in one of five different exposure visits to gain insight into different aspects of Nepalese civil society and the work of local NGOs. These included a trip to the National Business Initiative of the Nepalese Chamber of Commerce, the National Human Rights Commission, a trek into the mountains to visit the Federation of Community Forestry Users Group, the Rural Women Creative Forum's Working Area (RCWF) in the mountains of the Sindhupalchowk District, and the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction, one of only two such ministries in the world.

Documentation of the lessons learned and the practical implications of the forum will in time be published by the organisers, aimed at sharing the ideas that were born at the event with peace builders throughout Asia and the world.



As well as contextualising peace building from an individual outlook, it will also comprise the successes and failures of different approaches to conflict transformation from a uniquely Asian perspective.

In addition to being a space for sharing, discussion and brainstorming, the forum also created a venue through which to reconnect to the field, to gain insights into the work of others and to share a common feeling of trust and companionship with practitioners from within the field of conflict transformation. It was a conference about benefiting from the experiences of each other and also of gaining new ideas and inspiration, about building networks and support through one another, and being re-energised when sometimes the obstacles seemed too great.

After a week of building relationships and making connections, the forum ended with a celebration of the diversity of and the common goals within the group. As the Filipinos serenaded the audience, and the Sri Lankans made them sing along to their traditional song, and as the Cambodians, the Bangladeshis, and the Timorese brought the audience off their seats and into circles of bhangra, line dancing and Apsara dancing, the unity in this diversity burst forth in a conga line where the Indians linked up with the

Pakistanis, the Indonesians with the Timorese, the Cambodians with the Vietnamese, and peace builders from across a continent formed bonds that promised to further our dream of a harmonious and productive Asia.



America

By Delia María Dávila-Illescas

ACTION America has participated in the Global Action Network since the beginning in different ways, which has allowed it to contribute American thoughts to building a global network. This in turn, has nourished the global network with knowledge, experience, energy and optimism for America.

The Strategic Planning Meeting developed in November 2007 in Phnom Penh, established the need to strengthen regional networks and between them to strengthen the activities of ACTION America, which agreed to develop the next International Forum in Guatemala. For different circumstances this activity will run until next June 2009.

The International Forum is aimed at consolidating the network at the level of the American continent and, of course, at the strengthening of our global network. In pursuance to this, during December 2008, the first American Regional Meeting was convened. It brought together members from North America, Central America, South America and the Caribbean, colleagues from Africa and Europe and other experts who have participated in various activities related to local references.

Generally, in America, with the exception of Colombia, which still lives in an open conflict of many decades, the oldest in America, countries have shifted towards political systems that guarantee the political rights of the people, the old military dictatorships left behind. However, these changes have not meant the same access to economic and social development. Poverty and marginalisation for a large majority remain constant and the risk of explosions of violence is still present.

The work of strengthening the social actors in constructing their demands remains a challenge and this is where most of the members of ACTION America develop their work. Work that continues to express social demands is considered to be terrorism and therefore has very high risk.

Our main focus as ACTION America and ACTION Global is to direct our efforts towards building social skills for action. From there on, we will need to dwell on the creation of regional workshops at different levels as well as creating opportunities for exchange of knowledge and experiences. America has accumulated knowledge and experiences that contribute to conflict transformation.

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Europe

The ACTION network has strong links with Responding To Conflict (RTC), an independent non-governmental organisation based in the United Kingdom that works to transform conflict and build peace. In 2005, this partnership was formalised through the Integrating Development and Conflict Transformation Project, supported by Skillshare International and funded by the UK Department for International Development. The formal partnership aims to:

- Strengthen partners' organisational capacity; and
- Share practice and learning between conflict transformation and development organizations.

As part of this collaboration, the ACTION Support Centre produced a collection of practitioners' stories entitled *Voices from Both Sides of the Atlantic*, published jointly with ACTION members in Guatemala.

RTC believes that local people are best placed to find their own ways of dealing with conflict and has trained practitioners from more than 70 countries, including from some of the world's most violent conflicts.

This has included providing specialist advice and consultancy services to the governments of the UK, Australia, Japan, the United Nations Development Programme and leading international NGOs and charities such as Oxfam GB, Christian Aid, AGEH, Care International, CAFOD, the American Friends Service Committee and a variety of Red Cross national societies.

Dr Vesna Matovic, the peace and conflict adviser to RTC, is the deputy chair of the ACTION Global Steering Committee.

RTC's conflict transformation approach contributes to developing the capacity and strengthening the contribution of local

organisations to work on informal mediation, field-based socio-political analysis, early warning and response (for example, addressing emerging inter-community tensions), conflict sensitive development and early recovery from crisis. The approach draws from the inspiration of peace building practitioners worldwide as well as writers such as John Paul Lederach, Hugh Miall, Diana Francis, Oliver Ramsbotham, John Burton and Johan Galtung.



ACTION Support Centre Regional Hub for ACTION in Africa

The Organisational Development Process: Transforming the ACTION Support Centre

At the ACTION members review and global retreat in Cambodia in November 2007, the ACTION Global Steering Committee confirmed and further committed itself to the building of regional centres as a central part of the ACTION strategy.

This expanded and helped to focus discussions that had taken place between steering committee members in the Philippines in 2006 and during the initial transition phase from May to September 2007.

It was agreed that the ACTION Support Centre (ASC) in Johannesburg, originally envisaged as a global hub for ACTION, should redefine itself as a regional centre and take steps to explore the strategic and organisational implications of this decision, and then implement a new strategic direction accordingly.

A Global Steering Committee member was deployed to work part-time on co-ordinating the change with the support of the Integrating Development and Conflict Transformation project run by ACTION in partnership with Skillshare International, RTC and the Coalition for Peace in Africa.

In line with this, the ASC engaged the services of an organisational development agency, The X Factor In Change, with local expertise and the skills required to facilitate the process. ASC staff and ACTION members in Southern Africa have committed themselves to this process, integrating the proposed directional shift with other processes that address a broader set of concerns.

The organisational change initiated a dynamic way of doing things differently. By linking the organisational changes to programmatic processes, the ASC has been able to redefine its strategic direction and political purpose. This has been driven by staff and partners and there is

now a clear understanding of ACTION's role as the Africa Regional Hub of a network movement committed to community-based linking and learning.

ACTION will work closely with peace networks in Africa, including the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding and the Coalition for Peace in Africa.

The aim is to transform the ASC into a regional base that is more sustainable, more easily able to respond effectively to local needs, without losing its global context or contacts, and to be less project-bound and accordingly less donor dependent in its direction.

The ASC also aims to more clearly link its projects to the expected impact they will have and thus be able to demonstrate the changes it believes its programmes are already contributing to.

The strategic changes at the ASC need to be seen as connected to the development of the rest of the network movement. The global strategy intends to enable the regions to lead the growth of the global movement. ACTION will grow in accordance with the conditions it faces and the local strategies it uses. Part of this will include linking to and helping to develop globally informed opportunities for sharing and learning and for amplifying the needs and concerns of people. This will be done in a way that provides additional strategic opportunities for transforming local conflicts.



Learnings that arise during this process will feed into deeper research initiated by the support centre into effective organisational models for network movements like ACTION, that link development and conflict transformation initiatives at community level with advocacy and lobbying interventions that influence policy makers and structures at national, regional and global levels.

Ongoing learning will be communicated with the rest of the network and a shared body of knowledge will develop that strengthens other contexts in which ACTION is building movements and organisations that close the gap between vulnerable communities and powerful external interests.

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Programme Reports



Peace and Development Platform

The Peace and Development Platform (PAD), through the Bridging Gaps – Forging Partnerships programme, creates and explores opportunities through which grassroots civil society can engage with policy makers on national, regional and international levels on issues relating to peace and human security. This creates an inclusive, long-term coalition that strengthens programmes of peace and justice in the global civil society movement, and provides opportunities for grassroots voices and concerns to be heard by policy makers and decision takers at all levels.

It also builds the capacity of community-based organisations to contribute to the peace and security initiatives of policy-making institutions, encouraging community involvement in policy making and development issues, and networking and sharing information with both the grassroots and policy makers in order to form links and strengthen partnerships, and create a culture of collaboration and co-operation.

Programme focus

Newsletters

During this period, the programme has continuously produced the *Drums of Change*, a quarterly newsletter whose content comprises peace building contributions from grassroots communities and policy issues regarding peace and security on the continent. It is distributed as widely as possible to community members, policymakers, funders, academics and other stakeholders. The newsletter captures most of PAD's activities, especially those undertaken parallel to African Union Heads of State summits.

Information Packs

PAD has published information packs in English and translated them into French and Portuguese.

These have helped to cater for our Virtual Coordinating Team members, who hail from diverse linguistic backgrounds, and who are working on peace and security in Africa. The packs cover information on the African Union, regional economic communities, the African Renaissance, the New Partnership for Africa's Development, democracy and good governance and the path to sustainable peace.

They have benefited communities throughout Africa tremendously through sharing knowledge on policy which affects them. The information packs continue to capacitate them to make informed engagements with policy makers. These packs are continuously distributed at all meetings and events organised or attended by PAD.

Networking: Discussions, Seminars and Conferences

PAD has participated in local, national, continental and global forums, either as a participant or presenter. This has served as a perfect networking and marketing strategy for the programme and has made it possible to expand the membership of its VCT and other stakeholders. These meetings have served as a platform for communicating the programme's activities and as a space for seeking involvement of other civil society partners at all levels

PAD's continued partnership with other like-minded organisations during the Heads of State summits has been strategic for advocacy and lobbying on policy issues, but also for networking and collaborating with other civil society organisations both from the host countries and from the continent. This continues to grow.

The programme has also used numerous meetings as platforms to speak about community participation in policy making and implementation, especially the importance of building bridges and forging partnerships between communities and policy makers. Electronic and manual communication mechanisms have greatly strengthened networking contacts made during meetings.



Community Issues

Members continue to gather data on grassroots issues to inform an evidenced-based advocacy that is carried out by the programme, through existing programmes being run in the communities of members. Issues that affect communities are collected and sent to the PAD Working Group. This helps in identifying issues for advocacy and in developing an advocacy strategy for the programme.

Key Achievements and Impact

As the primary target groups, members of community-based organisations have participated in various conflict transformation programmes, training and other activities. Participants have engaged in advocacy and lobbying initiatives and in formulating local-level strategies that influence and engage policy makers and governance structures at national and continental levels. This process has engaged hundreds of community workers and peace builders across the continent, and has played a part in building a non-violent culture of peace and the transformation of structural barriers to sustainable development.

With its focus on key structures within the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the African Union (AU), in particular the Economic, Social and Cultural Council, the African Peer Review Mechanism, regional economic communities and the Peace and Security Council, as well as the people represented on them, the programme has managed to build and strengthen relationships with the said institutions' secretariat structures in different regions.

PAD has sought out and supported existing networks and forums and disseminated the material produced as widely as possible. This material includes information packs, the *Drums of Change* newsletter, and weekly continental peace and security updates that serve as vehicles for a general exchange of ideas, experiences and best practices. Local initiatives are now making contact with national representatives to the AU in an effort to influence government locally to discuss and implement the resolutions of NEPAD and the AU.

Most importantly, local communities have been encouraged and are empowered through the programme to lobby their local representatives on an effective communication and outreach programme, ensuring government takes responsibility for implementing and reporting back on its role within continental structures and institutions.

The PAD programme secretariat consults with other global and continental civil society organisations to identify opportunities for lobbying and influencing that can be shared across the network. It has also created partnerships with other networks outside the continent in an attempt to initiate global interest.

The network continues to share best practices in peace building initiatives between PAD members and the communities in which they work. This has helped communities to improve their own approaches to peace building in ways that are specific to their own contexts.



Solidarity and Transformation Agenda

The Solidarity and Transformation Agenda (STA) is an integrated approach to understanding and responding to conflict and crises on the African continent as well as providing support for refugees and migrant communities in South Africa.

STA has broad strategies which include mobilising and organising community members around common issues. Activities include pamphleteering and information sharing, working directly with and supporting the implementation of initiatives identified by community members, especially grassroots communities and CBOs. Specific events have included learning and awareness raising workshops, seminars, roundtable discussions and conferences, massive campaigns in the form of rallies, festivals, marches, and picketing, media campaigns that combine press briefings with media production for STA events, and direct lobbying and engagement with SADC and the AU on issues affecting people of the region.



A component of the STA programme includes advocacy and lobbying that is rooted in evidence-based research and analysis, and that is focused on policy recommendations around migration, xenophobia, criminal violence and refugee issues.

Working with sectors that have diverging views and ideological perspectives on the most critical continental challenges is an enormous challenge to the STA aim of building a broader solidarity movement. However, despite such differences, some members of the regional governance body, the SADC, several individuals, and a large section of civil society organisations have adopted a common stance of condemnation of regional atrocities taking place in Zimbabwe and Swaziland. This has been partly the result of the direct and indirect efforts of STA and its alliances and coalitions within civil society and the social movements.

The STA programme will continue to make the most of the opportunities for reciprocal learning that help to create a stronger and more unified regional and continental effort that asserts the needs of vulnerable people.

Key Achievements and Impact

STA, as a broader ACTION solidarity initiative programme, which includes serving as the host to the Zimbabwe Solidarity Forum in South Africa, has made a visible impact in supporting the development of efficient and effective services that strengthen political partnerships between communities and the organisations and movements that represent them.

It has conducted awareness campaigns to help the general public in South Africa and others understand better the truth about the experiences of refugees. In many areas, South Africans have moved towards a more tolerant and welcoming approach to foreign nationals, despite the outbreaks of xenophobic violence that grabbed the headlines in May 2008. These results were strengthened after the programme organised an array of workshops on understanding discrimination and xenophobic attitudes and developing good practices for the effective management of diversity in different South African communities.

The programme has initiated several workshops whose themes revolve around understanding human rights, conflict transformation, civic education and advocacy and lobbying for both South Africans and other countries on the continent. It has also identified counselling avenues that have greatly helped in developing clear and practical support systems that act in a collaborative and systematic way in helping the refugees. As a result, there has been a significant increase in the number of vulnerable migrants able to process the trauma associated with forced relocation.

STA has teamed up with other like-minded organisations and has continued to lobby the South African government to ensure that frontline personnel, especially in the Department of Home Affairs, are better prepared and skilled in dealing with refugee problems.

The programme has helped to promote a functional partnership with other key service agencies in target areas so as to ensure that resources are shared equally. It has also established and co-ordinated an effective network between mainstream education, health and social service providers. This pilot project is expected to be extended in 2009.



Skills and Strategies for Change

Brief Outline of Programme Focus

For the past five years, the programme has been building capacity within communities in South Africa, which comprise a variety of NPOs, FBOs, municipalities, government institutions and individual stakeholders. The programme has since expanded its focus to link national work to the region, in order to further develop critical thinking skills, visionary leadership and strong institutions to face the many challenges within the region.

One important factor that validates the need for capacity is that countries in the region have undergone rapid changes in political, social and cultural contexts, and the civil society response varies from country to country, creating



complexity on interventions and matters of solidarity. This also happens locally and nationally, with civil society addressing these challenges with different views – and they end up working against each other.

The work of donors and partners is affected by these changes, which require both operational and adaptive capacities that will allow flexibility in dealing with the challenges faced in various countries.

Programme strategies are carried out in the following methodologies:

- Training;
- Advocacy and lobbying;
- Research and information dissemination;
- Social mobilisation;
- Networking partnerships; and
- Informal contacts.

Key Achievements and Impact

The programme has successfully built capacity within five organisations in six provinces, where it is mentoring. It has built partnerships with other CBOs locally and regionally to fast track services for communities.

The Community Strengthening Programme has had great success in building the capacity of various communities in understanding and resolving conflict through conflict transformation skills, linking grassroots communities to each other and the government, civil society institutions and the private sector.

The programme has successfully engaged a number of target communities in local-level conflict transformation initiatives and early warning systems to build peace and security in Africa. It has facilitated community participation in policy formulation at a grassroots level. This has greatly helped to highlight the functions of bodies like the AU and NEPAD, which formulate continental policies, and how these policies affect communities.

This has enabled communities to understand the roles played by such institutions and what roles they need to play as a way of influencing policy. The programme has made enormous strides in forging partnerships with government, business, CBOs and other NGOs.

It has also introduced communities to the ACTION Support Centre networks to link them with a broader field of peace builders and conflict resolution practitioners, to share knowledge, experiences and best practices.

The Youth Programme has made tremendous progress in addressing the importance of human rights and the promotion of good citizenship among young people. Significant work has been done in building awareness of rights and the responsibilities of respecting other people's rights.

The programme has created a platform for learning from past experiences of human rights abuses, and for comparing the different paths taken towards educating people about their basic human rights. Lastly, the Youth Programme has succeeded in its endeavour to empower young people with information that enables them to disseminate this information as agents of human rights, locally, regionally and continentally.

It has also improved its donor management, financial management and has instituted better fundraising methods for its survival and long term sustainability.

“ The Youth Programme has made tremendous progress in addressing the importance of human rights and the promotion of good citizenship among young people ”



Operations Department

The department's key responsibilities entail financial and organisational sustainability and ensuring the smooth running of an organisational base that efficiently and effectively enables the programmes to make the maximum use of the resources that are available.

Financial Stability: Financial Continuity and Security

Diversified Funding Base:

The department strives to secure funds from as wide a base as possible through leasing out office space, selling books, shirts and videos, holding funds in the investment account to earn interest, providing audited and well-managed financial services to smaller organisations without the necessary financial infrastructure and by selling facilitation skills to government and civil society stakeholders. Administrative services including photocopying; typing and printing form another component of this initiative. It strives to reduce its reliance on external institutional donors.

Financial Reserves:

The ASC is attempting to establish a reserve fund to reduce risks and meet the financial needs of unexpected future events. These funds are kept in an investment account that can be used during times of cash-flow shortage and to help the organisation withstand financial shocks.

Strong Stakeholder Relationships:

It strives towards building donor confidence by collaborating with programmes to ensure strict adherence to donor monitoring and narrative and financial reporting schedules. Audited reports are also produced timeously.

Organisational Sustainability

The operations team has learned that sustainability is more than just a question of "rands and cents" and it revolves around the relationship between "resources, impact and organisational regeneration." We have focused on:

- Short-term practical needs - availability of funds for core costs to cover office space, telephones or meeting room for workshops;
- Long-term practical planning - making sure that we do not rely on today's sources of funds to pay for next year's costs. We are striving towards financial sustainability so that programmes can achieve long-term impact too; and
- Ethical and principled decision making - we believe that we have a moral obligation to use every rand that we are given in the most productive way possible. This is an obligation that we all owe to the beneficiaries of our projects.

Efficiency of Operation

The operations team is working hard to ensure that the organisation's resources are used in the most efficient way:

- Making sure that materials for the programmes are easily accessible while still being closely monitored for appropriate and efficient use;
- Ensuring all equipment is functional and well maintained; and
- Making sure that all legal and ethical financial and governance requirements governing the organisation are met promptly and within the strict guidelines provided by the King Reports.



Special Initiatives

Zimbabwe Solidarity Forum and Stop Xenophobia Campaigns

The xenophobic attacks of May 2008 prompted urgent action from the Zimbabwe Solidarity Forum (ZSF) in South Africa and its partners to work with a cluster of South African and Zimbabwean groups to assist displaced people and facilitate dialogue in communities from which people had been displaced.

Such partners include the Coalition Against Xenophobia (CAX), the Consortium for Refugees and Migration in South Africa (CoRMSA), the Social Movements Indaba (SMI) and many other South African grassroots organisations.

Actions revolved around establishing the root causes of the violence and building locally grown peace committees. They also entailed exposing and challenging xenophobia in the media, especially through community radio stations.

Research and surveys on xenophobia, learning and information sharing conferences, seminars and workshops were organised, including a big march against xenophobia in May 2008, in which more than 20 000 people participated.

Research findings and outcomes of conferences and seminars on xenophobia are fed into policy recommendations for the South African government. ZSF-SA's work on xenophobia is ongoing.



Learning and Exchange Opportunities

The conflict transformation approach to peace building that forms the core of ACTION's vision and mission empowers marginalised local initiatives engaged in conflict resolution and development processes by including them in finding and implementing solutions and learning processes that provide real skills that build and strengthen the ability to implement effective action strategies.

Conflict transformation thinking also informs the supportive relationships the ASC establishes with other organisations and the importance that is placed on long term and consistent engagement.

By creating opportunities for linking, sharing and exchange, and facilitating collaborative processes that form part of an overall learning strategy, the ASC has sustained civil society initiatives and enabled many platforms for grassroots voices to be heard.

Zimbabwe Youth Network

1. The launch of the Zimbabwe Youth Network was initiated by the ZSF
2. United Network of Young Peace Builders regional meeting in Kenya
3. Zimbabwe Youth Action Campaign in Harare
4. Consultative meeting on Responses to the Humanitarian Situation of Zimbabweans in South Africa
5. Consultative meetings about the March 2008 elections
6. Joint press conference with the Zimbabwe Youth Network, Young Communist League, Zimbabwe National Students Union and the South African Students Congress
7. Picket at the Zimbabwe Consulate

Responding to Conflict

Sipho Theys attended the Peacebuilding: Strengthening Policy and Practice workshop in Birmingham, England

Learnings generated in conflict transformation and peace building courses in general are not a short-term process.

It takes a long-term approach to understand and create effective strategies to deal with conflict. There is great opportunity for the links with RTC to be further strengthened, which will ensure more exchange opportunities are created for people from Africa to learn skills in effectively dealing with conflict. More networks will also be created.

International Youth Conference

Sandisiwe Qweni attended the International Youth Conference in East Timor

It was an opportunity to see a country in transition from violent conflict to democracy. However, there are still many challenges, including transitional justice, gender, community development and governance issues. The objectives of the conference were to introduce youth from around the globe to East Timor, and to expose Timorese youth to their global counterparts. It was also aimed at discussing issues that were of concern to Timorese youth regarding their own country while the global youth participants would give recommendations and advice.

Coalition for Peace in Africa

Clever Chikwanda, Philani Ndebele and Sandisiwe Qweni attended the COPA Advanced Conflict transformation course

This was an opportunity to learn from individuals who work in communities and countries that were or are still affected by violent conflict, and how they deal practically with it. This was an opportunity to get other perspectives from people on the ground, as opposed to reading media reports about decisions taken by political figures, and not actually understanding how those affect the grassroots and peace building practitioners.

Through their involvement in the course Support Centre staff acquired a deeper understanding of conflict dynamics and how to analyse them, approaches to working with conflict, conflict intervention methods in Africa and building sustainable peace using hands-on strategies and sharing knowledge and experiences with peace builders in the field from all walks of life, across the African continent.



ACTION Global Retreat

Clever Chikwanda attended the retreat in Cambodia, in November 2007

This retreat afforded the rare opportunity to meet, learn from and exchange ideas with Global Steering Committee members, learn the history, achievements and future plans of ACTION in graphic detail, to fully appreciate the work of the movement and the type of world the network endeavours to achieve. A communication strategy that was agreed to nominated four Continental Connectors, namely Carolina Villamizar (Colombo), Dullan Abdullah Ferizi (Kosovo), Baht Latumbo (Philippines) and me. Indeed, this was an experience of a lifetime.

Peace and Governance for Developing Countries

Simon Kobedi attended this event held in France

Irenees Network for Peace and Resource Mobilization hosted a global peacebuilding seminar in November 2007. The ASC's Simon Kobedi was invited as a peacebuilding practitioner from Southern Africa to speak about the region and the peace initiatives in place. The colloquium's primary objective was to bring together politicians, civil society organisations and researchers to share their contexts with regard to peace building and good governance in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Europe, America and the Middle East.

Collaborative Initiatives

Coalition for Peace in Africa

The Coalition for Peace in Africa (COPA) has been a key partner of the ACTION Support Centre. As a result, there have been several strategic partnership undertakings between the two organisations which have resulted in the support centre offering services to COPA for its Advanced Conflict Transformation courses. The courses offer conflict transformation training to peace building practitioners across Africa. The ASC has offered course material, human resources

and financial services to COPA for the Advanced Conflict Transformation course.

Uhuru Network

We facilitated several meetings with civil society, trade unions, a strategic planning meeting with their partners and a resistance festival.

Magamba Concerts

We held a big festival to build people-to-people solidarity in the region as a way of increasing grassroots activism around the Zimbabwe crisis.

Congress of South African Trade Unions

A civil society national march against high food and electricity prices and xenophobia was led by COSATU. There was an International Solidarity March on free and fair elections to the Kenyan, Swazi and Zimbabwean embassies. And there were seminars on Building momentum, Elections in Zimbabwe, Defending democracy and Respect for human rights in Zimbabwe.

Creative Writers and Arts Workshop

Road to Lindela, a book, was launched at Constitutional Hill, in Johannesburg. Transport support was given to our members during the Harold Wolpe memorial lecture at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

The University of KwaZulu-Natal Centre for Civil Society

Zimbabwe and People's Solidarity: Now is the Time was the Harold Wolpe Lecture panel discussion. The Harold Wolpe Lecture was given by Tendai Biti, with commentary by Bishop Rubin Phillip. The CCS monthly community meeting looked at solutions to the crisis in Zimbabwe and stopping xenophobia.

OSISA Campaign

The theme of the International Day of Action was Stand up (for) Zimbabwe to highlight that the people of the region and the world were standing up and with the people of Zimbabwe in their desire for a democratic, peaceful transition of government and an end to the violence that is so much part of their lives. During this campaign



there was also a candle-lighting ceremony to remember all those who were victimised, tortured and killed by the ZANU-PF government.

SACC

The ASC has worked closely with the SACC on the issue of Xenophobia. A seminar was held in Soweto immediately after the brutal xenophobic attacks, at which the youth of the Methodist church wanted to know how this had happened and what the root causes were. The seminar was a special opportunity for these youth to learn more about the causes of this behaviour but, more especially, they learned good practices that counteracted what would have become a war zone in Soweto had community members and these youth not intervened in some cases.

Responding to Conflict

Learnings generated in conflict transformation and peace building courses in general are not a short-term process. It takes a long-term approach to understand and create effective strategies to deal with conflict. There is great opportunity for the links with RTC to be further strengthened, which will ensure more exchange opportunities are created for people from the continent to learn how to deal effectively with conflict and, furthermore, create more networks.

CBOs that Received Conflict Transformation Training

(a) Gauteng Province

1. Johannesburg (Soweto) Community – Pimville Skills Centre

Various organisations working in the health sector, clinics, ward committee members, the South African Civic Association, food gardening and faith-based organisations.

2. Ekurhuleni (Devon) Community – Impumelelo

Organisations working in the health sector, youth and skills development and ward committee members.

3. West Rand (Kagiso) Community – Tshakane ext. 9

Organisations working in moral and restoration, faith-based organisations, home-based care and HIV and Aids.

4. City of Tshwane Community – Atteridgeville

Youth-based organisations, health organisations, skills and development and youth forums.

5. City of Tshwane Community – Soshanguve

Organisations working in health, politics, youth and arts.

(b) North West Province

North West (Groot Marico) Community – Kuilfontein

Community leaders, traditional leadership and community members.

(c) Western Cape Province

1. Western Cape (Plettenberg Bay) Community – Plettenberg Bay

Youth for life skills and camping, organisations working in the health sector, capacity building organisations, small companies and community people.

(d) Limpopo Province

1. Limpopo (Polokwane) Community – Gamothibi

Community police forums, faith-based forums, and ward committee members.

(e) Mpumalanga Province

1. Mpumalanga Community – Enhlazatshe

Faith-based organisations, youth organisations, community people, people with disabilities and ward committee members.

(f) KwaZulu-Natal Province

1. KwaZulu-Natal Community – Durban

Organisations for solidarity and community people.



Publications

The following publications are available from the ACTION Support Centre

- **Working with Conflict** - Skills and Strategies for Action
- **Transforming Conflict** - Reflections of Practitioners Worldwide
- **The Peace and Development Platform quarterly newsletters**
- **The Peace and Development Platform information Packs**
 - Pack 1:** The African Renaissance
 - Pack 2:** The African Union
 - Pack 3:** New Partnership for Africa's Development
 - Pack 4:** Regional Economic Communities
 - Pack 5:** Democracy and Good Governance
 - Pack 6:** The Path to Sustainable Development
- **Voices from both sides of the Atlantic**
- **The Zimbabwe Solidarity forum Comprehensive Report**
- **Struggles in Peacetime:** Working with ex-combatants in Mozambique, their work, their frustrations and successes.

ACTION Support Centre Staff Members

Operations Department:

Tiro Dipudi – Operations Manager
Nteboheng Matekola - Office Administrator
Busisiwe Zuma – Logistics Support
Robinah Sanyangore – Operations/Management Support Officer

Programme Staff:

Sipho Theys – Programmes Manager
Philani Ndebele – Media and Communications Officer
Sandisiwe Qweni – Projects Manager
Clever Chikwanda – PAD Programme Manager
Simon Kobedi – Training Content Specialist

At the time of going to press the ACTION Support Centre was honoured to have welcomed Netsianda Tshifhiwa (Gift) and Robinah Sanyangore on board. Sadly we had to say goodbye to Clever Chikwanda, but value the contribution he made to the work of the organisation during his time as Programme Manager of the Peace and Development Platform.

Interim Local Steering Committee and Global Steering Committee representative:

Richard Smith

Interns:

Each year, ACTION has an opportunity to tap into the University of the Witwatersrand-International Human Rights Exchange internship programme, from which ACTION hosted two resourceful interns in 2008 - Kudzaishe Ndawana and Camilla Shuma Many thanks to them for their hard work!

Global and Local Steering Committee Members of ACTION

Luis Davila Sanchez - Guatemala (Global Chair)
Vesna Matovic - Serbia (Deputy Chair)
Donna Copnall - England (Communications)
Habiba Nessa - Bangladesh
Sue Williams - Ireland
Mxolisi Len Khalane - South Africa
Fatima Swartz - South Africa (interim)
Jabu Dladla - South Africa (interim)
Sophie Mayisela - South Africa (interim)
Mzimasi Sibeko - South Africa (interim)
Richard Smith - South Africa (Local Representative to the ASC)

“ Each year, ACTION has an opportunity to tap into the University of the Witwatersrand-International Human Rights Exchange internship programme...”



Audited Financial Statements



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REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS

TO THE STEERING COMMITTEE

ACTION FOR CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION (NPO REGISTRATION NUMBER : 027-156- NPO)

Report on the financial statements

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Action For Conflict Transformation, which comprise the steering committee's report, balance sheet as at 30 September 2008, and the income statement, statement of changes in reserves and cash flow statement for the year then ended and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes set out on pages 3 to 12.

Steering committee's responsibility for the financial statements

The steering committee is responsible for the preparation and the fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with their accounting policies. This responsibility includes : designing, implementing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

Auditor's responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing. These standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control.



An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Basis for qualified opinion

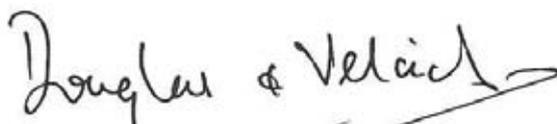
In common with similar organisations, it is not feasible for the organisation to institute accounting controls over collections of income other than interest prior to the initial entry of the collections in the accounting records. Accordingly, it was impracticable for us to extend our examination beyond the receipts actually recorded.

Qualified Opinion

In our opinion, except for the effects of the matters described to in the Basis for Qualified Opinion paragraph, these financial statements fairly present, in all material respects, the financial position of Action For Conflict Transformation as at 30 September 2008, and of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with its accounting policies.

Emphasis of matter

As is explained in note 10 to the financial statements, the organisation needs ongoing donor support if it is to continue operations. These financial statements have been prepared on the basis of accounting practices applicable to a going concern which assumes that the organisation will generate sufficient funds by way of grants from donors to continue funding its activities in the ensuing year. Accordingly they do not include any adjustments, relating to the recoverability and classification of assets or to the amounts and classification of liabilities, that would be necessary if the organisation were unable to continue as a going concern.



Douglas & Velcich
Chartered Accountants (S.A.)
Registered Accountants and Auditors

Johannesburg
20 November 2009



**ACTION FOR CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION
(NPO REGISTRATION NUMBER : 027-156- NPO)**

BALANCE SHEET AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2008

	Notes	2008 R	2007 R
ASSETS		610,257	719,193
Non - current assets		45,768	26,317
Equipment	5	45,768	26,317
Current assets		564,489	692,876
Accounts receivable		29,700	-
Cash and cash equivalents	3	534,789	692,876
Total assets		610,257	719,193
RESERVES AND LIABILITIES		610,257	719,193
Reserves		564,950	714,077
Accumulated surplus		564,950	714,077
Current liabilities		45,307	5,116
Accounts payable	4	45,307	5,116
Total reserves and liabilities		610,257	719,193



**ACTION FOR CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION
(NPO REGISTRATION NUMBER : 027-156- NPO)**

**INCOME STATEMENT FOR THE
YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2008**

	Notes	2008 R	2007 R
INCOME		2,471,083	2,114,292
Grants and donations received	6	2,243,641	2,080,599
Courses fees		-	20,420
Consulting income		12,825	-
Sundry income		181,126	8,569
Interest received		33,491	4,704
EXPENDITURE		2,620,210	1,540,681
Accommodation and meals		281,828	64,849
Administration costs		150,000	-
Advertisement		-	5,959
Audit fees-project		2,542	13,006
Bank charges		40,834	18,808
Consultation		131,985	102,695
Depreciation		13,534	16,050
Fund raising officer		-	20,956
Project contributions		186,950	58,357
Hire of equipment		39,671	17,063
General expenses		4,764	5,264
Honorarium		118,364	30,200
Insurance		422	1,674
Office supplies and refreshments		77,386	20,919
Printing and reproduction		109,551	196,212
Professional fees		66,743	18,003
Research and development		-	9,049
Rent, water and electricity		85,326	82,088
Repairs and maintenance		16,038	17,584
Salaries and contributions		570,029	510,968
Staff development		1,595	7,869
Telephone and fax		103,114	132,794
Travel costs		619,534	190,314
(DEFICIT)/SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR		(149,127)	573,611

Acknowledgements and Thanks

The support of our partners, those who have donated resources to the Support Centre and those who have signed grant contracts with us is deeply appreciated.

As we struggle together to redefine the meaning of partnership and strive together to make a meaningful difference to the quality of the freedom and justice we seek to build, it is your support that makes the work of the Support Centre possible. Many, many thanks!

Income Sources, Donations and Contributing Partners 2006 to 2009

- British High Commission
- Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation
- Charlotte and Douglas Roberts Trust
- Christian Aid
- Conflict and Governance Facility
- Department of Community Safety
- HIVOS
- J and J Group Development Trust
- National Constitutional Assembly
- Netherlands Institute for Southern Africa
- Norwegian People's Aid (Norway)
- Norwegian People's Aid (SA)
- Orec-Organisation
- OSISA
- OXFAM GB
- PACT
- Schooner Foundation
- Skillshare International
- South African Liaison Office
- Southern African Trust
- The Atlantic Philanthropies
- X/Change Management
- Zimbabwe Institute Trust

Our appreciation also goes to X/Factor for taking the ASC team through an organisational development process that has enabled the centre to establish excellent and effective internal organisational systems and structures. To our partners, both within and outside Southern Africa, your support is of tremendous value. Conflict transformation and peacebuilding are processes, along a winding and often difficult road. We hope that we will continue to walk this road together and find ever more rewarding and life-changing ways of making the difference and demonstrating that indeed, another world is possible.



ACTION Support Centre

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