

REPORT FROM ANMDH

TRAINING ON ACTIVE NONVIOLENCE UNDER THE PROJECT TO STRENGTHEN NEW GENERATIONS ON ACTIVE NONVIOLENCE AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

As part of the official launch and implementation of the program, with Pax Christi International, entitled: "Strengthening New Generations on Active Nonviolence and Entrepreneurship", our organization "**Les Amis de Nelson Mandela pour la défense de Droits Humains** », ANMDH for short, organised Thursday, August 23, 2018 at its headquarters in Kinshasa, Matonge district, commune of Kalamu, a training on "Active Nonviolence", for animators and leaders, from different groups and movements of young people, pupils and students.

Sixty-four (64) people including 18 young women from the "Commissions Justice et Paix " and "MIJERCA" (Ministères des Jeunes du Renouveau charismatiques) from two Catholic parishes, Saint Joseph (in the neighborhood of Matonge) and Sainte Marie Goretti (in the neighborhood of Kauka), Kalamu commune, the "Jeunes Défenseurs des ANMDH ", Mouvement citoyen « ECCHA » (Engagement Citoyen pour le Changement) and the young students delegated by the Higher Institute of Statistics and the Cardinal Malula University, took an active part in this training.

While the overriding goal is to train youth from the Great Lakes region to active nonviolence, Peacebuilding and Pacific Conflict Transformation as well as entrepreneurship training, the training series that ANMDH organises, with the support of Pax Christi International, specifically aims to:

- (a) Create a group of men and women trained on active nonviolence and who will provide training on active nonviolence in schools and youth movements;
- (b) Support a group of disadvantaged unemployed youth to start Income Generating Activities (IGAs);
- c) Strengthen our cooperation with other Pax Christi members of the Great Lakes Region in terms of communication, information exchange, joint decision-making on common issues to build a common vision and strengthen our collaborative capacity

Before this training, in addition to the meeting of August 7, 2018, ANMDH met again Tuesday, August 21, 2018 groups and movements of young people concerned, to reassure themselves of their effective involvement in the realisation of this project. The project coordinator, Mr. Robert Ilunga Numbi, began by explaining the project and its program by indicating to the various officials invited to this meeting that the action will be effective in the city of Kinshasa with the support of Pax Christi International who has placed nonviolence at the heart of his mission for more than 70 years.

This action, he added, aims to educate the population and mainly young people about active nonviolence in order to become actors of peace. A group of nine to twelve young unemployed who will be distinguished in their commitment will benefit from micro-financing to develop an income-generating activity (IGA). According to the decision made during previous meetings, this group could be called GAP which means: "Group of Peace Actors".

This project aims to have a large number of young peace actors in the country of Great Lakes.

II. PROGRAM OF THE TRAINING

The training on active nonviolence took place on Thursday, August 23, 2018, in the conference room of Les Amis de Nelson Mandela pour la défense de Droits Humains in Kinshasa. The opening ceremony was marked by the moderator's welcome, Mr. Franck Banza, coordinator of ANMDH / Pool of Kinshasa, followed by that of the project coordinator, Mr. Robert Ilunga Numbi, Executive Director.

Both interventions made it possible to place the training in the current context of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The Executive Director of ANMDH reminded that Pax Christi International is a Catholic World Peace Movement with 120 member organizations around the world that promotes peace, respect for human rights, justice and reconciliation around the world. Its main purpose is to create and strengthen the culture of peace and reconciliation. Pax Christi International is committed to the practice of active nonviolence on the path to just peace, and promotes nonviolent practices and strategies among its members as a key common element. This organization has a long presence in Africa, networking with and through more than 35 member organisations in 13 African countries, including 16 organisations based in the Great Lakes subregion. For this program, which runs from March 2018 to 2020, Pax Christi International provides overall coordination.

The speaker ended his word by urging participants to be more diligent. Before giving the floor to the moderator, Mr. Robert Ilunga introduced the trainers to the participants: Mrs. Marie Thérèse Kalonda and Justine Kapinga, assisted by Mr. Raymond Luneko, an Expert-animator of the youth.

In turn, the moderator took the opportunity to invite participants from universities, churches, citizen movements and schools to present themselves individually. And the rest of the game was devoted to the actual training on active nonviolence. The methodology was interactive, in the form of questions and answers exchanges, followed by appropriate explanations. The trainers relied on a fact sheet they prepared and which served as a guide.

Based on this fact sheet, the facilitators allowed participants to define and then understand some concepts such as: violence, nonviolence and active nonviolence. In a participatory way, all the participants freely gave answers around these concepts. For the participants, the concepts violence, nonviolence and active nonviolence are defined in turn as follows:

1. VIOLENCE:

Coercion, the use of force without the consent of someone, brutality, an act contrary to consents, aggression, maltreatment, action against the will, naughty words;

2. NONVIOLENCE:

Respect for others, consideration of others

3. ACTIVE NONVIOLENCE:

Use of peaceful means, fight against injustice, resist aggression, courage, commitment.

In order to determine the participants, the facilitators gave the following explanations:

1. To the question, What does it mean? :

- VIOLENCE: It is when two or more people have incompatible interests (which do not agree). It is also a force exerted by a person or a group of people to subdue someone to obtain something. It is

an act of aggression (attack) committed voluntarily against another person, on his/her body or his/her property.

- NONVIOLENCE: is the absolute respect (complete, total) of the human being. We speak of nonviolence when there is the human family of which God is the father.
- ACTIVE NONVIOLENCE: when peaceful means are used to promote one's ideas, fight injustice or resist aggression. It is when the respect of the adversary is preached. It is when one advocates the struggle that does not undermine the integrity (the whole state) physical or moral of his opponent.

2. What is the synonym of:

- VIOLENCE: brutality, barbarity, bestiality, cruelty, ferocity, rudeness, inhuman.
- NONVIOLENCE: peace, appeasement, calm, serenity, quietude.
- ACTIVE NONVIOLENCE: action, initiative, step, acting, job, surgery, gesture, fact, act.

After a small discussion supported by examples, the facilitators invited the participants to give their understanding of the causes of violence, the perpetrators and victims of violence, the consequences of violence as well as nonviolent methods and solution.

In a completely free way, the participants reacted respectively in the following way:

-Violence is often caused by:

- Injustice
- Incomprehension;
- The superiority or inferiority complex;
- The poor sharing of the country's income;
- Witchcraft;
- Etc.

- For the authors, these are:

- Those who feel to be stronger than others;
- The oppressors;
- Authorities;
- Etc.

- The consequences of violence are:

- Wars;
- Starvation;
- Lack of development;
- Non-schooling of children;
- Installation of epidemics and other diseases;
- Increase in unemployment;
- Etc.

Facilitators for their part listed, in addition to what the participants said, the other elements as follows:

3. CAUSES OF VIOLENCE? (Where does the violence come from?)

- Rejection;

- Refusal to lose what we have;
- Bullying (disturbing someone by causing fear)
- Blind submission to authority (when someone believes that without authority, there is no survival, it can even kill for authority);
- Drugs;
- To disadvantage (to treat disadvantageously);
- Family problems (divorce);
- Lack of money.

4. WHO ARE THE AUTHORS OF VIOLENCE?

- The strongest (weapon bearer)
- Those who overestimate themselves (who have a great opinion about themselves compared to others)

5. WHO ARE THE VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE? : Those who suffer.

6. CAN THE VIOLENCE BE ALSO VERBAL?

- Yes, because :
- It is violence related to insults.
- It is a violence without injuries but which hurts more than the brutality of the blows of the points.
- It is psychological violence (which affects the soul).

7. WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES THAT VIOLENCE BRINGS?

- Injuries (fractures, miscarriages);
- Health problems (sleep disorders, headaches, back pain);
- Mortality;
- Psychological problems (loss of self-esteem, stress (...), Hopelessness, suicide attempt);
- Alcoholism;
- Social isolation;
- Agressiveness;
- Absenteeism at work (decrease in productivity, dismissal).

8. WHAT DOES NONVIOLENCE BRING US?

- Resistance: we do not have to let ourselves be hurt. But neither should we respond with violence.
- Rejecting the humiliation of the opponent but rather gaining his friendship and understanding.
- The fight against the forces of evil and not against people who do evil.
- The acceptance of receiving shots without giving back shot.
- The rejection of hate and life according to the principles of love (We must break the vicious circle of hate and live according to principles based on love)
- Justice (believe deeply that God is always for the truth and for justice).

9. HOW IS NONVIOLENCE RELEVANT IN THE CITY OF KINSHASA?

Nonviolence favors:

- The culture of peace:
- Tolerance culture: ability to bear a disadvantage (boredom, worry)
- The culture of understanding.

10. WHAT ARE THE NONVIOLENT METHODS YOU KNOW?

- FORMAL DECLARATIONS (clearly expressed): public speeches, letters of opposition or support; the declarations of the organizations; group petitions etc.
- COMMUNICATIONS TO REACH A GREAT NUMBER OF PEOPLE: slogans, caricatures, banners, posters, leaflets, newspapers and magazines, radio and television recordings etc.
- SYMBOLIC PUBLIC ACTIONS: exhibition of flags, symbol port, prayers and masses, protest paintings etc.
- PROCESSIONS: markets, pilgrimages, car parades.
- PUBLIC MEETINGS: assemblies of protest or support, protest meeting, training sessions.
- NO POLITICAL COOPERATION: rejection of authority, refusal of public support, boycott of elections, refusal to receive officials.

11. WHAT TO DO TO AVOID VIOLENCE IN THE CITY OF KINSHASA?

- We must develop our lucidity (design things clearly): we must understand that violence is rooted in our families and changes the way we look at the other and at ourselves. It must be realised that the other is not that bad and I am not that bad; we are vulnerable beings who collide clumsily because of our wounds. This awareness can change the course of our quarrels.
- We must think of one or two altercations (quarrel, debate) recent (with your father, mother, teacher, fiancé, friends, colleague of service etc...)
- We must explore our own fears and those of the other:
 - Am I afraid of being wronged, judged, wrongly accused, devalued, being assaulted, being ridiculed or unloved?
 - And what are the fears of the other?
- We must identify the violence that has come out:
 - What shocked me? What gesture, what look, what sentence? What violence did I detect?
 - And when I feel threatened, what do I do in return to hurt back?
- The effects of these disputes must be observed:
 - What happens to this relationship? Do we become isolated, we are wary, we do not talk anymore, we avoid each other, we blame ourselves? Who does what? What purpose?
- Make a commitment to yourself:
 - In the future how would I like things to happen? What are my limits? What can I do to appease, reassure, recreate complicity? What can I do to make it better?

At the end of the training, participants recognised that their struggle must remain nonviolent in order to hope for lasting results in the DRC. Thus, they expressed the wish to join this campaign by starting with training with all the members of their respective structures. ECCHA youth suggested that ANMDH organise another training especially with them on Tuesday, August 28, 2018.

The young people of MIJERCA promised to invite ANMDH after their retirement, precisely in September. The students being on vacation and the students in full preparation of the 2nd session, encouraged ANMDH to work with them in their institutions, because often during the demonstrations in Kinshasa, it is rather the young people who engage in acts of vandalism and pay heavy tributes.

The participants in this training have shown that active nonviolence is a supreme moral and political force that serves the development of humanity. Also, participants realised that to promote their ideas, fight an injustice or resist aggression, the most effective weapon is ACTIVE NONVIOLENCE.

The facilitators made the following recommendations to participants:

1. Young people in the city of Kinshasa must learn from the nonviolent struggle of Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, etc.;

2. Young people in the city of Kinshasa must avoid passivity (we suffer, we accept defeat);
3. They must belong to the generation of practitioners of peace and active nonviolence;
4. They must practice nonviolent methods of action in the conflicts and injustices they face;
5. They must become peacemakers;
6. They must be determined to transform the violent situations in their country.

III. CONCLUSION

The closing word marking the end of this first session was pronounced by the Executive Director of Les Amis de Nelson Mandela pour la défense de Droits Humains who thanked the participants in turn for having accepted to sacrifice their time to participate in this training on active nonviolence; facilitators Marie-Thérèse Kalonda and Justine Kapinga and co-facilitator Raymond Luneko, for the quality of the material transmitted to the participants, for the management of the interventions and for the smooth running of the training, not to mention Pax Christi International which provided the resources needed to successfully deliver this training.

Finally, Robert Ilunga Numbi indicated that ANMDH will do its utmost to consolidate the dynamics around issues related to nonviolence in youth circles throughout the city of Kinshasa province.

At the end of the active nonviolence training, participants were invited to take a family photo with the coordinating team at the main courtyard of Les Amis de Nelson Mandela headquarters.

This activity was relayed by the audio-visual and written press of Kinshasa.