

Alternatives to Violence Project a chance for violence prevention in Sudan



In 8 workshops on AVP (Alternatives to Violence Project) in December, February and March more than 50 different participants, who are trainers working with different target groups, experienced an alternative way of violent prevention. And as they said, this could be a practical way to prevent violence from the basis in Sudan. Beside these courses, the first 13 AVP-facilitators where trained, who work with different groups as street children, IDP's, prisoners, their guards and social workers and youth.

The program is open for all people and especially for those, who have experienced violence or where violence is a known practice in their life. The workshop conception uses a minimum of intellectual or theoretical lectures, based on experience and practical methods, exercises and role-plays. It believes, that in every human being, there is a good essence and everybody has the potential to find non-violent solutions. In an atmosphere of trust, openness, creativity and fun participants can start again, to find their self-confidence, empathy to the others and hope for the future. The transforming power inside people creates opportunities to find new non-violent solutions.

AVP offers basic-, advanced- and TOT-workshops. In the advanced-workshop the participants choose their own theme for the workshop in a consensus process and the trainers prepare the following days with special methods and role-plays concentrated on this subject. In the last workshops the themes "intercultural diversity" and "forgiveness", were selected but also gender was an included theme. After an escalated conflict forgiveness and also reconciliation, is not easy to practice, but to cool down a situation and to build up a common future. That this is not easy, most of the participants had experienced in their own life and in different role-plays. As an outcome they agreed, that forgiveness is a long and difficult process, starting with rebuilding trust, apologizing, giving empathy and not sustainability without justice.



fun with games inbetween



debriefing after a role play

The group itself was an important field for practicing it. Gender balanced, they come together from different parts of Sudan, North, South, West and Middle. So the group experienced to accept each other, to respect diversity and even to build friendship. Also the common equality and that open communication can find non-violent solutions. The conception of facilitating the workshop is an important point of AVP. The facilitators see themselves as learners, moderate the discussions and help to reflect exercise and experiences. The teams have the unusual number of 4 up to 6, always including experienced and new facilitators, men, women and of different origin to practice the peace process themselves.

In the first TOT, where 13 trainers took part, they learned to use different methods and to practice a basic AVP-course. The intensive feedback of the others helped to

strengthen the trainer skills and qualifications. Learning by doing and reflecting the own practice empowered the capacity of the trainers in their role as an emancipatory facilitator. Further the participants started to plan AVP-workshops for the future. They formed an AVP-trainer forum. They will meet for advanced lessons and to build up mixed teams for planned workshops and integrate the AVP-program in the programs of their NGOs and to bring this kind of workshops to the people they are working with.

In May the next TOT will start and the waiting list of people is already full. The AVP workshops was lead by Christoph Baumann, a lead facilitator from South Africa, and Miriam Kraemer from Germany, who is working to establish AVP in Sudan and to supervise the new trained AVP-facilitators in their first year of practice. The plans are also to start in the South with the AVP-program this year and specially to integrate ex-combats in the workshops there. Cooperation with AVP-Uganda is planned and also the mixing of the facilitator teams with Northerners and Southerners, to show the practicality, that peace can be build up from the ground. DED (German Development Service) was sponsoring the AVP-workshops. Experiences in the Civil Peace Program shown, that AVP is a successful program in violence prevention and conflict transformation.



Cooperation games

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