

TOR for JLI F&LC Learning Hub on Peace & Conflict May 2015

Purpose of the Group

The intention of this Hub is to be a horizontal learning community that links academics, policy makers and practitioners working on issues of faith and peace/conflict, within two areas (1) A 'faith based approach' to peacebuilding, conflict prevention & conflict resolution¹ and (2) multi faith/inter religious co-operation and programming². These areas will be refined further in due course.

The goal would be to arrive at practical actionable recommendations in these areas (for programmes and policy) that JLI members³ would be encouraged to implement in their own organisations, use to potentially influence the practise of others, and which could increase effective partnerships/collaboration between members of the hub (secular and faith based) in conflict situations. The hub will aim to look at what do we know within these areas, how do we better communicate it and then what do we need to know in terms of gaps (the latter being addressed through further research and learning, with an emphasis on practical application afterwards⁴).

Background

The interest in faith and conflict/peace has been steadily growing over the last few years, with many faith based agencies, including humanitarian/development INGOs, looking at such issues in more depth and reflecting this in growing programmatic portfolios, collaborations and research. This interest is not confined to faith based agencies, but growing interest is also found amongst secular agencies - in both humanitarian and peace building sectors. The academic literature on these subjects is expanding rapidly and most current projections of future conflict trends feature prominent emphasis on faith-related conflicts. Beyond faith and non faith based agencies, and academic stakeholders, external interest has also been demonstrated in DFID, the UN, the EU, AUSAID, and the US State Department. Networks of foundations are also showing interest.

In mid 2014 World Vision and Islamic Relief began exploring whether a faith and conflict hub under the 'Joint Learning Initiative on Faith and local communities" (<http://jliflc.com>) would be the most appropriate way of bringing together the variety of stakeholders working on/interested in this area. After initial scoping to see if there was interest, and ruling out whether other platforms were suitable, the concept of the hub was endorsed by the JLI Steering Committee. A first meeting was held in November 2014 with 10 agencies, to see what specific issues within 'faith and conflict' organisations would potentially want a hub to look at. At the same time a more proactive outreach took place to extend the reach of the hub. A survey was then sent out around Dec 2014/Jan 2015 to assist in narrowing down which areas the hub wishes to focus on. The results of this survey were then used to inform the writing of this ToR.

Hub functioning

Leadership

The convening co-chairs of the JLI F&LC Learning Hub on Peace & Conflict are:

- Practitioner: Sarah Pickwick, Snr Conflict Adviser, World Vision and Lucy V. Salek, Senior Advisor: Conflict Transformation & Fragile States, Islamic Relief

¹ **A 'faith based approach' to peacebuilding, conflict prevention & conflict resolution:** What is the evidence for faith based peace building projects having positive impact? How are local faith communities resources in and of themselves/agents of change in peace building, conflict prevention, resolution etc? How do the theological reflections of local faith communities on issues around peace building and conflict resolution/prevention add to their approaches?

² **Multi faith/ inter religious co-operation and programming:** This would look at relationships between faith communities and organisations, particularly where they interface in areas currently experiencing most conflict. What experience can be drawn on from specific faith groups/communities and their interactions?

³ For more information on members see background section and list of organisations at the end of the document.

⁴ Any research conducted would be expected to adhere to academic values and principles including respect for academic independence, a focus on academic excellence and an aspiration to develop practical recommendations based on evidence generated by research.

- Academic: Professor Alpaslan Ozerdem, co-director of the Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies at Coventry University and Professor Jeffrey Haynes, director of the centre for the Study of Religion, Conflict and Cooperation, in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, London Metropolitan University

The hub chairs would guide the development and production of a scoping paper, coordinate learning and sharing amongst the group on an ongoing basis and also provide leadership for any research pieces that emerge from the hub.

Membership

Membership of the JLI F&LC Learning Hub on Peace & Conflict is international and open to any expert working on conflict and faith, and will include members from global south and north, drawn from the worlds of academia, policy and practice. It aims to have a diverse cross section of different faith based groups (Christian, Islamic, Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist, etc) as well as non faith groups and individuals.

Expectations of Members

Learning hub members will participate as both holders and seekers of evidence and will be expected to participate actively in the shaping of the Hub itself, the research questions, evidence gathering, and oversight and contribution to the Scoping Report

Specific expectations - members will:

- ensure as far as possible that the most suitable person in their organisation is engaging with the hub (Note: this can be more than one person), but in acknowledgement that there is flexibility given organisational changes in focus and staff changes.
- suggest other members of the group.
- complete surveys to help frame overarching areas of focus.
- share existing learning on key thematic areas (studies etc), through the hub web page and meetings, and engage with other agencies learning.
- participate and help frame the research questions (for scoping paper and main research paper)
- send out surveys to partners and networks (where relevant) to draw in additional hub members and get their input.
- review draft reports: scoping and main research reports.
- contribute to evidence as appropriate (e.g. suggesting partners, facilitating visits, providing case studies etc) and helping to seek sponsorship of reports where possible.
- provide guidance for a summary note based on the scoping report
- disseminate the reports internally for learning purposes and commit to reporting back on take up/learning and engagement with the wider group on next steps.
- seek opportunities to present scoping study, its recommendations and policy brief to relevant policy makers and practitioners.

Hub stages

The JLI F&LC Learning Hub on Peace & Conflict is expected to last for 3 years and the stages of a hub would be as follows (roughly):

1. *Consultation and formation* of the group
2. *Scoping*: a review will be conducted of what is out there and what is being done in the four thematic sub areas. A scoping study, annotated bibliography and summary note will be produced. This will be led by the academic co-chair of the hub but also with the involvement of the other co-chairs as well. This would lead to outlining a number questions about areas where there is further research to be conducted.
3. *Learning and sharing*: Ongoing learning and sharing of existing analysis, research, debates and evidence relating to key thematic areas and trends within the hub, to encourage collective learning, dialogue and influence and identify future opportunities for collaboration.

4. *Research*: based on questions and gaps identified in scoping, funding would be sought for specific projects, each led by an academic partner (not necessarily the co-chair). The Hub's role will be to look for funding opportunities and encourage Hub members to do the same so the research gaps can be addressed. The Hub may also link members from academia and practice in research collaborations
5. *Dissemination*: The policy and practice implications of the research would be fed back as learning to members, to digest internally, further other collaboration, and also used in advocacy to wider policy, practitioner and academic community.
6. *Hub sustainability*: It is anticipated that the hub would help form partnerships and relationships that would endure beyond its official lifespan of 3 years . If members so wished, discussions can occur about how to continue such a platform beyond its JLI lifespan.

Notes

- *Learning Hubs operate virtually, generally meeting by conference call, initially once a month (TBC), and actively collaborating over a three year period.*
- *JLI F&LC provides limited financial support for research assistance for the Scoping report, and coordination and linkage to other Hubs and to the JLI Steering Committee, through its Coordinator.*

Hub timeframe (approximate)

Stage 1. Feb/March 2015

- ToR finalised and hub officially launched
- Co-chair's and members of the hub clarified
- First meeting held
- Online JLI F&LC website presence established

Stage 2. Mapping (approx 1 year, 2015-2016), as well as ongoing learning in the hub

- Specific ToR for Scoping study agreed by members, with questions, processes and leads identified and confirmed.
- Scoping process begun, first draft completed and circulated for members for feedback , document finalised and launched. Summary note developed and finalized
- Powerpoint presentation on Scoping report developed for use by Hub members in presentations
- Members post resources to the web based Hub page

Stage 3. Learning and sharing (across all three years of the project, 2015-2017)

- Hub continues to meet with members sharing other learning and new projects at meetings and virtually via website.
- New hub members continue to join and sharing learning.

Stage 4: Research stage (over course of 2nd & 3rd years of the hub, 2016-2017)

- Based on research questions in the scoping paper, collaborations / partnerships will be encouraged between potential funders, research institutions and other JLI members, to address these areas and undertake discrete pieces of research. Other members can feed into this in terms of case studies, reviewing, assistance to find funding etc

Stage 5: Dissemination (over course of 2nd & 3rd years of the hub, 2016-2017)

- JLI faith and conflict research is disseminated amongst members and also other external stakeholders.
- Paper submitted to peer-reviewed journal
- Learning is internalised as well as discussed in the hubs.
- Learning is showcased at high level events to inform policy and practitioner discussions.

Organisations who have expressed interest to date:

Practitioner

- World Vision (WV)
- Islamic Relief (IR)
- Oxfam
- Muslim Charities Forum(MCF)
- Muslim Aid
- Lutheran World Foundation (LWF)
- Tearfund
- Catholic Agency For Overseas Development (CAFOD)
- Christian Aid
- Pax Christ International
- Cord
- Anglican Alliance
- World Jewish Relief
- Tony Blair Faith Foundation
- World Evangelical Alliance (WEA)
- Forward Thinking
- Concordis International
- Muslim Charity UK
- Mennonite Central Committee in the Middle East
- Three Faith foundation
- International Alert
- Human Appeal

Policy

- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

Academic

- American University
- Chatham House
- United States Institute of Peace (USIP)
- King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (KAICIID Dialogue Centre)
- Coventry University
- The Kroc Institute, University of Notre Dame
- University of Edinburgh
- University of Cambridge
- The Arts and Humanities Research Council
- British Academy
- Pardes Center
- Goldsmiths, University of London
- Open University
- University of Exeter
- Quale
- Partnership for Conflict, Crime and Security Research (PACS)
- Harvard School of Divinity

- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- Department for International Development (DFID)