

NATIONAL MIND-HEART DIALOGUE TEAM TRAINING

NOV - DEC 2021

SUMMARY REPORT

Summary

In November and December 2021, over 80 Inter-Religious Council (IRC) and Faith-Based Organization (FBO) nominees from eight countries were trained as national Mind-Heart Dialogue teams and equipped to support the Faith and Positive Change for Children (FPCC) initiative. Facilitators were from diverse faiths and included male faith leaders, women of faith and youth. They will support their IRC to set up a Multi-Faith Advisory Committee on Children (MFACC) that brings faith leaders, FBOs and UNICEF together to find shared priorities and partner for positive change for children. They will integrate Mind-Heart Dialogue into the internal structures and mechanisms of the MFACC; and be deployed to facilitate Mind-Heart Dialogue according to their priorities.

“After going through the training, my commitment to children has taken a different angle where I see myself as a protector of children.” *Participant*

***Mind-Heart dialogue** is an evidence-based, reflective and experiential learning process, exploring faith convictions, lived experiences and knowledge to influence positive social and behavior change. It supports faith groups and partners to work together to protect and empower children, families and communities.

“**[Mind-Heart Dialogue] empowers people to be very creative in influencing positive change and creates space for collaboration and transformation in areas where there are deep-rooted beliefs.**” *Participant*



Even from four-days of training, there is evidence of attitude change among participants. The process is not primarily to train people in an approach or an intervention, but rather to shift mindsets and create an experience that participants can replicate. Participants clearly expressed what made Mind-Heart Dialogue different and were eager to integrate it into other work and facilitate as a team. They shared testimonies of personal shifts in behavior within the training, and many immediately used activities in the spaces that

they could easily access, demonstrating their confidence, ability and commitment to the approach.

FPCC Background

FPCC is a global partnership between: UNICEF; Religions for Peace (RfP), the world’s largest inter-faith network; and Joint Learning Initiative on Faith and Local Communities (JLI), knowledge partner and umbrella membership network of diverse faith actors including Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) and academic partners. FPCC was conceived in 2018 to help UNICEF to move beyond single-sector, ad-hoc and sometimes instrumentalist approaches of faith engagement. FPCC recognizes that faith groups have a mandate and motivation to protect and empower children and that development agencies and FBOs need to work together with them as equal partners to facilitate transformation in communities.

The FPCC initiative builds on and has brought together evidence from a variety of sources, including a 2014 mapping of its approach to working with faith actors across 150 countries; an in-depth review of faith-based

approaches and resources; and a global consultation workshop with over 100 faith leaders, FBOs, government representatives and UNICEF officers from 20 countries across all regions and faiths.

In 2019, five countries across Africa piloted the Mind-Heart dialogue approach through a series of 'WorkRocks',* which were documented in a draft toolkit and the learning later pulled into a Facilitators' Guide. FPCC then facilitated a series of six virtual Mind-Heart dialogue sessions in Eastern and Southern Africa from 2020-21 to support faith leaders, FBOs and UNICEF to respond to vulnerable groups during COVID-19.

**A WorkRock combines Mind-Heart dialogue activities with action planning to enable faith actors and partners to work together effectively for social and behavioral change.*

For effective, efficient and inclusive implementation that is locally owned and sustainable, FPCC envisions national Multi-Faith Advisory Committees for Children (MFAACs), building on existing networks in each country and including representatives of the Inter-Religious Council (IRC), UNICEF staff and FBOs. To ensure Mind-Heart Dialogue is embedded within their internal mechanisms as well as their strategies for facilitating positive social and behavior change, each country needs a national team of Mind-Heart Dialogue facilitators.

Training model

Eight pilot countries were selected based on enthusiasm, previous engagement with FPCC and a positive relationship between UNICEF and the IRC: Kenya, Malawi, South Sudan, Zambia, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Mali and Sierra Leone. Participants included eight IRC and up to three FBO nominees who, after the training, became the initial national Mind-Heart Dialogue team. Each interfaith team included male faith leaders, women of faith and youth. They were equipped to use the Facilitators Guide to:

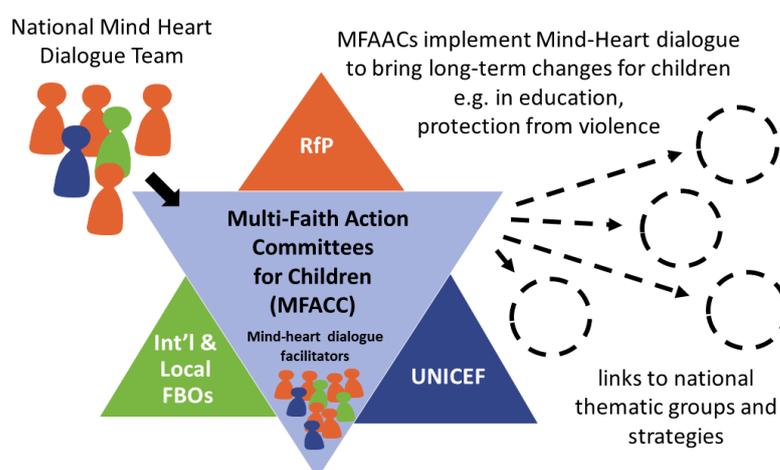
- Train others to facilitate Mind-Heart dialogue for social and behavioral change;
- Facilitate a WorkRock for the MFAAC, combining Mind-Heart dialogue activities with action planning;
- Facilitate Mind-Heart dialogue sessions with diverse groups according to MFAAC priorities, integrating technical guidance into Mind-Heart Dialogue activities.

National trainings were facilitated by a Core Team of experienced facilitators who were trained virtually in the approach and facilitated the four-day national trainings in pairs or threes.

Core team training, 1-5 November 2021

The Mind-Heart Dialogue Core Team met together virtually to experience Mind-Heart dialogue activities and plan the next steps. The Core Team was led by CORAT Africa, a training organization based in Kenya with extensive experience in faith-based facilitation. FPCC wanted to institutionalize Mind-Heart Dialogue within an organization that could take ownership of the approach and carry it forwards within Africa. Most facilitators were from or connected to CORAT; others nominated by FBOs or from RfP, ACRL or JLI.

Originally planned to be in person, the training used the learning from the FPCC Virtual Sessions on Faith and COVID-19 to ensure genuine Mind-Heart dialogue could still take place at a deep enough level to impact attitudes and emotions. The training limited online time to two hours each morning and afternoon to



maximize people’s attention, giving participants individual activities for self-reflection in the lunch breaks and evenings. It used features such as the Zoom annotate tool and Google JamBoard to create interactive online sessions and breakout rooms for discussions. The Core Team ended by planning the national trainings.

Despite being online, the activities still impacted the Core team: **“It is not something that just happens in the room, and then you leave... When we were looking at the ways that we have perpetuated violence against children, I didn’t stop there, I even thought about... the girls who have come through my hands, could I have mistreated any one of them without knowing? I found I was guilty.”**

Core team:

- Fred Olweny (CORAT, Kenya)
- Dr Lonah Mumelo (CORAT, Kenya)
- Monica Mungai (CORAT, Kenya)
- Dr Daniel Akal (CORAT, Kenya)
- Victor Mughogho (Eagles, Malawi)
- Steffie Kemp (JLI, Malawi);
- Vincent Kogo (Youth Interfaith Network, Burkina Faso)
- Sh Issa Traore (Interreligious Council, Mali)
- Jimmy Otieno (RfP, Kenya)
- Dr Rozilla Adhiambo (ACRL, Kenya)

“The approach is amazing and has made me think about changing my way of training. I’ve realized that in most of the cases we’ve been dealing with the mind and not the heart... this training has been so emotional, so intentional, at the same time a lot of thinking has been happening. It takes the whole person.” *Participant*

National Trainings

Training flow

The trainings modelled the Mind-Heart dialogue approach for participants to experience. Activities engaged minds, hearts and beliefs, enabling participants to share their own expertise, experiences and motivations. Mind-Heart Dialogue penetrates deeper than traditional participatory facilitation, surfacing positive and negative beliefs, breaking negative mindsets of dependency and supporting faith groups and organizations to create a safe space to discuss sensitive issues.



Longest line: an activity to identify locally available resources

Facilitators were encouraged to adapt and contextualize the national trainings within a tested framework (see Annex 1). In collaboration with the IRC and UNICEF, facilitators chose to focus each training on one or more technical issues: child protection, back-to-school or vaccine hesitancy. The specific focus makes it easier to explore contextual drivers in a meaningful way and to identify desired behavior changes. It also provided a practical example of how to adapt activities.

“If everybody would take this training seriously... this dialogue, it’s not a training... I think the lives of the children in the world would train completely. Because anyone who goes through this goes out saying, ‘I will never mistreat a child’.” *Participant*

Day 1 focused on faith and childhood, allowing participants to explore their personal motivations for being part of FPCC through scripture reflection and drawing journeys of their own childhood. Days 2 and 3 focused on the chosen issue, its drivers and their own role in perpetuating it. They adapted the global Journey of Change to focus on the issue to experience how MFACCs can do the same for any

priority issue. They practiced using the Facilitators’ Guide by designing a two-hour Mind-Heart dialogue session. Each group facilitated one activity from their session plan on Day 4, then explored next steps.

Outcomes

“Most of the time we make decisions for other people without even knowing what they are going through and this was really a breakthrough to me.” *Participant*

The four-day training demonstrated the power of Mind-Heart Dialogue to shift deep-rooted beliefs. For example, several participants changed their views on vaccination, partly through participatory dramas they made about vaccine hesitancy: taking on the roles of people with opposing views to their own created a non-confrontational way to explore alternative ways of thinking.

Participants engaged deeply in the participatory activities, allowing their own attitudes to shift. One participant shared that after reflecting on his own childhood, he found a child attacking his car. Where he would normally have become angry, he was instead able to empathize and remain calm and kind. Another explained: **“I used to just be a bystander, noticing from a distance. But after that training, I have learned to take responsibility for things that are happening to children.”**

Participants felt equipped with the confidence and skills to facilitate Mind-Heart Dialogue. They identified existing spaces that they could use, for example the time between prayers at the mosque. Participants were eager to begin; even before the end of the training, many had begun to do so in their families, with their neighbors, at evening youth groups, and with colleagues. Everyone was enthused to take forward Mind-Heart Dialogue nationally, excited by its potential.



Balloon game –about working together

“The training left me with a lot of confidence. I didn’t hesitate to bring the activities to the people closest to me.” *Participant*

“It was a wonderful training, the only one of its kind I ever attended... Truly this training has changed my mindset. I believe that if we pass this training on, a lot of things will change in our society.” *Participant*

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL)

FPCC is in the process of finalizing a full MEAL process, but in the meantime, a simplified version to for the national Mind-Heart Dialogue teams involves:

- A short reflection form for each individual within the team to do every 4 months, capturing any Mind-Heart dialogue sessions they have facilitated individually or for the IRC
- Virtual sessions, facilitated by CORAT, to share learning with teams in other countries and provide inputs as needed to support the national dialogue teams
- A simple Mind-Heart dialogue activity to do with a community group after a year to uncover any impact

Details of National Trainings

Country & dates	Facilitators	FBO participants	Highlights
Kenya 8-11 Nov 2021	Dr Lonah Mumelo Fred Olweny Dr Rozilla Adhiambo	John Mangenge & Florence Achapa – nominated by ERD Halimo Adan – nominated by IRW	The Kenya training kept a general focus on child protection and encouraged participants to choose which technical issue to focus. Participants all agreed to make individual plans for facilitating Mind-Heart Dialogue in 2022. Meanwhile, the IRC will meet to discuss how to proceed with an MFACC at national level.

Malawi 8-11 Nov 2021	Victor Mughogho Steffie Kemp	Oscar Mponda & Louis N'goma – nominated by ERD	As vaccination hesitancy persists, the organizers selected this as the focus. After analyzing their own role in perpetuating vaccine hesitancy, participants made individual commitments, such as inviting health workers to speak in their faith groups; and planned to take forward Mind-Heart Dialogue. The IRC plan to use Mind-Heart dialogue in their national programs with UNICEF, beginning with vaccine hesitancy and nutrition.
Zambia 15-18 Nov 2021	Victor Mughogho Steffie Kemp Jimmy Otieno	no nominees	They too focused on vaccine hesitancy as it integrated into ongoing work - with UNICEF helping facilitate a participatory session on the issues. The IRC plan to take Mind-Heart Dialogue to each of their seven member 'mother bodies', then cascade it to 800 congregations, initially on vaccine hesitancy and then more widely.
Nigeria 22-25 Nov 2021	Monica Mungai Dr Daniel Akal	no nominees	The IRC plan to roll out Mind-Heart Dialogue nationally, collaborating with the government, who support interfaith work. A high-level government official visited the training and responded positively to supporting the process of taking Mind-Heart Dialogue to communities. Various issues emerged as important, including child protection and health.
Sierra Leone 22-25 Nov 2021	Dr Lonah Mumelo Dr Rozilla Adhiambo	Canon S.B. Kargbo Johnson (Focus1000) Rev. Annie A. Coke (Anglican Diocese of Freetown) invited by IRC	Participants responded well to the approach, feeling that it recognized how their own experiences had shaped them and created space to lay down burdens. Personal testimonies became points of connection to identify shared experiences. UNICEF led a technical session on school completion, vaccination and gender-based violence, equipping participants with details to integrate into Mind-Heart Dialogue sessions.
Burkina Faso 23-26 Nov 2021	Vincent Kogo Sh Issa Traore Jimmy Otieno	no nominees	Participants were eager to begin Mind-Heart Dialogue in their own context, especially around child marriage and education.. Although UNICEF did not attend the training, the IRC met with them after to share their plans for further Mind-Heart Dialogue trainings. UNICEF agreed to include some of them in their budget for 2022.
South Sudan 6-9 Dec 2021	Monica Mungai Dr Daniel Akal	John Mwanza – nominated by ADRA Habiba Abdallah Noah – nominated by IRW	Participants drew out several harmful practices, such as the removal of lower teeth and marking of marks of faces. Another harmful practice identified was revenge killing between clans. A UNICEF representative participated throughout, bringing great added value.
Mali 7-10 Dec 2021	Sh Issa Traore Jimmy Otieno	Geoffrey Mtike – nominated by ADRA but did not turn up	Participants were struck by the religious unity that was fostered between participants. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), children's mental health and vaccination emerged as key issues, and UNICEF facilitated a session to deepen participants' understanding. Everyone left the training convinced of the need for interfaith partnerships and excited to pursue them with children as active participants.

FBO & UNICEF participation

Due to the last-minute arrangements, there was low participation from UNICEF and FBOs. In countries where FBOs participated, such as Malawi, Sierra Leone, Kenya and South Sudan, they added value with their different skills and experiences. They were excited to join the national Mind-Heart Dialogue teams and integrate it in their own work. In Malawi, Zambia, Mali and Sierra Leone, UNICEF attended a day of the training or facilitated a session, sharing important facts that participants could integrate into Mind-Heart Dialogue activities; in Kenya, Nigeria and Burkina Faso, they did not manage to join, although the Burkina IRC did meet with them the week after. However, only in South Sudan did UNICEF staff manage to commit to the full week. These absences for action planning could hinder the smooth implementation of next steps.

Next steps

ACRL will follow up with each IRC to set up an established structure that meets regularly and includes IRC members, UNICEF staff and FBO representatives, as opposed to the current approach of engaging on siloed projects which may not be sustained. ACRL will work with the IRCs to contextualize the idea of Multi-Faith Action Committees for Children (MFACCs), depending on their existing structures and ways of working.

In the meantime, ACRL will encourage the IRCs to implement plans made during the training, include UNICEF in their annual planning and proactively take ideas to UNICEF for inclusion in theirs. Some countries have pre-existing programs with UNICEF in which Mind-Heart Dialogue could be immediately integrated.

Recommendations for future training

- **Importance of practical experience:** the trainings that did not include time for participants to plan sessions and facilitate activities noted that this would have made a significant difference to their confidence and enabled a more accurate assessment of their skills.
- **UNICEF & FBO participation:** it is vital that UNICEF and FBOs are given enough notice to attend fully alongside faith leaders in future; UNICEF facilitating technical sessions but not fully participating, although a good compromise due to the last minute confirmation of dates and busy time of year, could perpetuate the image of an unequal partnership where faith groups alone need behavior change. Integral to FPCC is the recognition that we all have attitudes that hinder effective partnerships that support positive change for children. Their absence also complicated action planning. Where possible, greater interfaith representation of FBOs is desirable.
- **Pre-established structures for next steps:** while individual action planning was carried out, national planning was difficult due to UNICEF's absence and the lack of a pre-established structure. Participants were eager to continue but unsure where to start. Where the IRC Director attended, a certain level was possible. However, if MFACCs had already been established, concrete plans could have been made. Failing this, if a program in which the team could be deployed had been agreed in advance or if high-level UNICEF staff had attended, solid plans could have been made.
- **Residential or high-level presence:** non-residential trainings brought problems of lateness and absences. This was partly counterbalanced by the presence of the IRC Director where they modelled commitment. Participants suggested that **certificates** should be issued to those who completed the full program.
- **Wider representation of faith groups:** in several countries, participants commented that the training did not represent the full range of faith groups.
- **Longer training:** four days felt rushed for several facilitators and participants.

Annex 1: National Training Framework

Pre-session - 1. Journey of childhood with children (optional)					
Time	Day 1 – FAITH & CHILDHOOD	Day 2 – GOING DEEPER		Day 3 – CREATING OUR TRANSFORMATION TREE	Day 4 – NEXT STEPS
Introduction 20 mins	Scene-setting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Icebreaker ● Week outline & outcomes 	Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introduction/ recap ● Ice-breaker 		Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introduction/ recap/ sharing commitments ● Ice-breaker 	Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introduction/ recap ● Ice-breaker
Session 1 1 hour 40 mins	Creating safe space <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mind-Heart dialogue intro ● Hopes/ fears ● 12. Listening Well or 13. Power Walk– to create guidelines 	Technical session – bring in expert to explore issue(s) in more depth		Our role eg. 1 or 2 activities from <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 13. Power Walk – who is left out or ● 8. Perpetuating cycles of violence or ● 9. Child Protectors Balloon game or ● 15. Mapping Safety or ● 4. Faith Object Reflection or ● 25. Individual commitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Practicing session & feedback
20 mins	BREAK				
Session 2 1 hour 40 mins	Faith & Childhood – to reflect how faith affected their own childhood eg. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2. Connecting Faith & Childhood or ● 3. Scripture Reflection or ● 4. Faith Object Reflection or ● 6. Mapping Childhood Journey 	Option 1: Learning what works eg. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 21. & 22. Stories of Change or ● 23. Case studies 	Option 2: Identifying drivers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 11. Participatory Drama & 10. Prioritizing Drivers/ Causes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 24. Adapting the Journey of Change/ Transformation Tree 	Living out Partnership – to explore healthy partnerships eg. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What’s an MFAAC? ● 16. String Game or ● 17. Balloon Game or ● 20. Changing Hats: partner roles
1 hour	LUNCH				
Session 3 1 hour 40 mins	Children’s voices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 14. Secret in a Box ● 1. Journey of childhood or 7. Listening to Children 	Continued		Facilitators’ Guide <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introduction ● Quiz ● Practicum session planning 	Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What is the national training team role? ● Action planning
20 mins	BREAK				
Session 4 1 hour	Mind-heart activity – activity to explore why topic is important eg. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 5. Personal Testimony or ● 6. Mapping Childhood Journey 	Reflection on transformation tree <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● See pg 11 Check-in eg. ● Feedback form 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Practicum session planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evaluation ● Closing