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COMMUNITY DIALOGUE FOR CONFLICT MITIGATION AND RECONCILIATION (CDRP)

October 2018 - September 2021 | Implementer: Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA)

The Community Dialogue for Conflict Mitigation and Reconciliation (CDRP) activity is a 36-month initiative addressing (potential) violent behavior, reconciling differences, and promoting greater understanding and mutual trust in communities in Montserrado (Paynesville, Todee), Bomi (Tubmanburg), Bong (Gbarnga & Totota), Nimba (Sanniquellie), Grand Gedeh (Zwedru) and Lofa (Foya) Counties, by implementing community-based sociotherapy (CBS). CDRP activities target 15,976 men, women, and youth, to:

- Facilitate a process where community members can address the underlying causes of conflict and trust, regain dignity, and enable trust, reduce social and mental distress by giving new and adequate meaning to conflicts caused by religion, land, or lack of trust in project locations.
- Improve communities' capacity to create an enabling environment that enhances community engagement where people can reconnect with one another to build trust and safety.
- Increase community cohesion by conducting community leaders' forums and high school peace clubs to build social bonds and increase access to community members' information.

Current Activities

1. CBS sessions ongoing in all locations. CBS sessions involve 15 people, led by two facilitators, meeting once a week for 15 weeks.
2. Quarterly Community Leadership Forum, involving key community stakeholders, held in all locations.
3. School peace clubs conducting activities in schools.

Accomplishments to Date

1. One hundred twenty local government officials mobilized at national and county levels to participate in Community Leaders Forums.
2. 112 CBS facilitators identified and trained in year one and refresher training conducted in year two.
3. Five cycles of 112 social groups completed 15 weeks of CBS sessions, reaching 6,849 people (Males – 2,723 and Females – 4,126). The sixth cycle has commenced with 1,680 participants.
4. One hundred sixty peace clubs were established and 320 "youth catalysts" trained, using the YMCA's Subject to Citizen (S2C) module. Peace clubs have conducted 102 activities in their schools.
5. Thirty-two community leaders' forums were held with the eight community steering group (CSG) committees established.

Planned Outcomes

1. Majority of people in the community, as well as local authorities, key leaders of different groups and students in the community, participate in CBS sessions, leadership forums, and school clubs facilitated by trained facilitators and supervised by trainer-facilitators, will experience constructive shifts in their consciousness and discover and reflect on shared values, which will help them develop an appropriate understanding and appreciation for the "other."
2. Community members will use newly gained ideas, attitudes, and behaviors to solve personal problems, improve social relationships at the household level, and have improved conflict resolution mechanisms, thereby developing commitment to problem-solving, capacity towards peaceful resolution of conflicts, building trust, and improving social interactions. The newly appreciated value of non-violent conflict resolution will take root widely in society at the end of the project.
3. People in the communities in the target area, together with key leaders of existing groups, will build trust among themselves (regardless of age, social status, or gender), which will transform attitudes toward negative (violent) attitudes and behaviors into personal developed knowledge about their capacity for a positive intergenerational, inter-ethnic, inter-religious approach, based on principle-driven practice (rather than power-driven practice) at the end of the project.