



PACIFIC CENTRE FOR
PEACEBUILDING

WOMEN'S PEACEBUILDING LEADERSHIP SOUTH PACIFIC PROGRAM

January 2012- December 2014

Case Study:
Jerolie Navala Belabule, Participant class one



**Building Peace
from the Ground
and Up**

Jerolie Navala Belabule, a veteran youth worker with the Adventist Development and Relief Agency¹ in Solomon Islands only realized she was a peacebuilder during her classes at the Summer Peacebuilding Institute at the Eastern Mennonite University. She got a chance to attend this world-renowned institution part of the Women's Peacebuilding Leadership Program.

The Women's Peacebuilding Leadership Program is a practice based peacebuilding program that allows women peacebuilders access to quality education in the field of conflict transformation and strategic peacebuilding. The Pacific Centre for Peacebuilding hosts the South Pacific program since January 2012. The program funded by the Brot fur die Welt has enabled twenty women from the Pacific to be part of a global network of peacebuilders. These women are participants of two classes: class one May 2012- December 2013 and class two May 2013- December 2014.

Jerolie was part of the first class that consisted of three other women from Solomon Islands and Fiji. These women from the Pacific were joined by a cohort of women from East Africa to undertake classes in Strategic Peacebuilding and Conflict Analysis during the Summer Peacebuilding Institute. They also traveled to Monrovia, Liberia (March 2013) and Nairobi, Kenya (August, 2013) for Strategic Negotiation and Leadership in Peacebuilding courses respectively. Jerolie also took up an elective course in Psychosocial Trauma during her time at Eastern Mennonite University.

As a Monitoring and Evaluation Officer for the Adventist Development and Relief Agency the courses have helped Jerolie enrich her contributions to the organization through peer sharing's on 'theories of change' that has helped her colleagues better understand about project goals and indicators. She was also able to use her learning from the Conflict Analysis class: conflict mapping- alliance and connections related to the conflict model to resolve a local conflict.

The conflict involved youth in a community that had begun receiving assistance from Adventist Development and Relief Agency through one of their water tank projects. A misunderstanding between the youth group Adventist Development and Relief Agency and the chief quickly escalated into a tense standoff with the chief. The youth had implemented their water tank project without due consultation with the community elders. A chief of the community threatened the youth and staff of Adventist Development and Relief Agency. Jerolie who was away at the time of the standoff decided to approach the conflict using her learning's from Eastern Mennonite University; she used conflict mapping to analyze the positions, interests and needs of different actors involved. During this process, she also spoke to the chief to hear his view of the conflict. The youth, Adventist Development

¹The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) is the humanitarian agency of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The organization was established for the specific purposes of individual and community development and disaster relief.

and Relief Agency and the chief were able to reach a consensus after the intervention. A reconciliation ceremony was held where food was exchanged to bind their relationship.

The Women's Peacebuilding Leadership Program also enables participants to interact with like-minded women. The class one women got a chance to travel to Liberia where they visited several places like the Gbowee Peace Foundation; established and directed by 2011 Nobel Peace prize recipient Leymah Gbowee. They also visited the 'Messengers of Peace' school clubs in Monrovia. Jerolie found these visits empowering since the resilience of women in Liberia has been a cause of recovery for the nation.

The recipients of the Women's Peacebuilding Leadership Program Scholarship were required to develop peacebuilding action plans as part of the courses undertaken. True to her commitment to improving the lives of the younger generation; Jerolie mapped out a plan called The Strongim Youth Peace Building Leadership Programme.

The program would be an extension of Adventist Development and Relief Agency's Youth Engagement and Livelihood Project² and will promote access to quality, practice-based peacebuilding and leadership education for Youths in Malaita and Guadalcanal Provinces.

The programme targets 20 youth strength motivators from 12 communities to undergo three weeks training of trainers on peacebuilding and leadership modules that will be designed by ten peacebuilding practitioners. After the training of trainers these 20 youth strength motivators will implement peacebuilding work plans in the 12 communities. This program will be integrated in 12 Youth Engagement Livelihood project sites on Guadalcanal and Malaita. There will be mini trainings similar to the training of trainers in the 12 communities that will increase the number of programme beneficiaries. Jerolie hopes to equip young people with key peacebuilding and leadership skills through this programme.

The Strongim Youth Peace Building Leadership Programme was initially proposed as a separate project. However, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency accepted Jerolie's project but as an integrated approach to be implemented through existing projects. Although, Jerolie works as a Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, she has had to assume various role for this project. She has done programming, design and implementation. Her rationale behind this was the specialized skills that she had acquired during the course, which has helped her establish herself as a peacebuilder.

By July 2013, the Pacific Centre for Peacebuilding begun receiving implementation reports and evidence of the work that Jerolie had begun. She had started meeting

²The Youth Engagement and Livelihood project is adopting a youth and community focused strength based approach to development. AusAID under the Solomon Islands NGO Partners Agreement (SINPA) funds this positive approach to community development. By focusing on inherent strengths and resources the project aims to enhance livelihood opportunities, improve personal resilience and bring greater social engagement for youth with the context of a more empowered and sensitive community.

peacebuilding practitioners to identify key areas that the peacebuilding and leadership module will cover. Jerolie also met youths from the two provinces to identify youth strength motivators to undergo the training of trainers. Janet Murdock from the United Nations Development Program- Strengthening Capacities for Peace and Development is mentoring Jerolie to implement the action plan.

Mrs. Belabule has been able to increase her sphere of influence as a peacebuilder. She has had the opportunity to speak at various events on peacebuilding. She lately spoke alongside former Prime Minister Manasseh Sogovare³ at the Seventh Day Adventist Church Women Fellowship.

Jerolie has also helped fellow peacebuilders in their practice. She provides assistance to the 'Commonwealth Diploma in Youth Development' students to collate their paper on peacebuilding. Jerolie was also instrumental in organizing and preparing the four Solomon Islands women selected to participate in class two of the Women's Peacebuilding Leadership Pacific Program. She helped organize regular preparatory meetings and basic orientation in Honiara.

Since March 2013, Jerolie has also been training with the 'Young Women in Parliament' a joint initiative of the United Nations Development Program and the Government of the Solomon Islands. The program trains young women for politics who intend to stand for the 2014 elections. Manasseh Sogovare is mentoring Jerolie for her political career.

To anyone, it sounds as if Jerolie Navala Belabule lives a pretty accomplished life. Not so for the staunch Seventh Day Adventist and mother of one. She intends to stand for elections and has begun working towards this. "I will stand for provincial elections and it wont stop there. I will one day go to national parliament, that's my ultimate aim; to build peace at the highest policy level in Solomon Islands."

³Manasseh Sogovare, the sixth Prime Minister of Solomon Islands. He is currently the Leader of opposition. Sogovare leads the Solomon Islands Social Credit Party.



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