



# PeaceWorks News

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Official Newsletter of Academic Associates PeaceWorks.

## AAPW opens New Office in Abuja

**A**APW officially moved its headquarters from Lagos to Abuja in April 2002. The new office is on a hilltop in Asokoro, overlooking the nightlights of Abuja where we can both watch the world and have lofty thoughts. The newly named street is Abubakar Koko Crescent, near the intersection of Nnamdi Azikiwe, Yakubu Gowon and Maitama Sule. We're at Plot 1765 (look for our signs).

The newly acquired NITEL landline (after 7 months!) is 09 3149009 (add international code 234, then 9 3149009). GSM phones continue to work: Judy Asuni 0803 309 8271 and Rose McBean 0803 316 4572, but please try to phone the landline.



*AAPW New Office in Asokoro, Abuja*

## Peace & Development Work in Karu

*Tapping the Unlimited Potential*

From October to December 2002, Academic Associates PeaceWorks has been conducting phase I of a peace and development project in Karu Local Government area of Nasarawa State, with funding from GTZ (German Technical Cooperation). Karu LG has a growth rate of 40% per year and is one of the fastest growing urban areas in the world. Thus the local government is an economic growth engine for the state, largely because of its proximity to the Federal Capital Territory (Abuja). While this rapid growth can be an advantage, it can also pose a number of social, physical and economic problems as thousands of immigrants flood into the area from all parts of Nigeria. Thus we have embarked upon a proactive approach to building bridges of interdependence among the various groups in the population, while also maximizing the human capacity through adult literacy; entrepreneurial training; HIV/AIDS awareness; capacity building for CBOS and NGOs; peace education; and conflict management training for traditional leaders, community leaders, local government officials, and police officers. We will also conduct a technical skills needs assessment, to determine the current skills base as well as training needs for the anticipated extension of the project.

This project has brought together an interesting collection of consultants and staff members from around Nigeria. Our initial PRA was conducted with Peraboh Selekeye from Port Harcourt and Alex Wokocha of Abuja, and continued with Istifanus Gimba and Joshua Kasai of ECWA People-oriented Development in Jos. The next activity was REFLECT literacy survey, training-of-trainers and formation of literacy circles by AAPW staff members Danjuma Sa'idu, Binta Wokocha and volunteer Kaman Igoche, along with consultants Dr. Maimuna Fyenu and Rev. Mrs. C.O. Oguntona. The Pastor and Imam from the Muslim Christian Dialogue Forum in Kaduna, Pastor James Movel Wuye and Imam Mohammed Nurayn Ashafa, have spearheaded the various conflict management trainings, with help from Moses Aba of the National Orientation Agency, FCT and our own Kaneng Ja.

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# REFLECT:

## A Veritable Tool for Peace and Development

*Dr. Maimuna Fyenu and (Rev) C.O. Oguntona  
REFLECT Consultants*



*Dr. Maimuna Fyenu conducting a literacy and numeracy survey, part of AAPW's REFLECT adult literacy/community development in Karu Local Government*

From October to November, 2002, AAPW in collaboration with GTZ conducted series of REFLECT activities for five districts in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa state. These districts are Karu, Kodope, Aso (comprising Aso and Luvu), Gurku and Kabusu. The first phase of the activities involves advocacy visits and surveys of the five districts (for data collection, planning and formation of Action Committees). The second phase involves a 2-week participatory training of 26 facilitators from the five districts. This training was conducted with the aim that the facilitators should go back to their various communities and set up REFLECT circles. The third phase was the formation of Literacy Circles, where a total of 24 circles were formed as opposed to the 20 earlier planned. The training team which included Danjuma Sa'idu and Binta Wokocha, staff members of AAPW, were to go round, in a week or two, to monitor the activities of the circles in all the districts.

Academic Associates PeaceWorks (AAPW), in its peace effort, realized the need to use literacy as an instrument for achieving a more enlightened and peaceful society. It decided on the most current strategy-REFLECT, to facilitate the realization of this vision. REFLECT (Regenerated Freirean Literacy Empowering through Community Techniques) is the attempt by literacy practioners to use participatory techniques within adult literacy programmes, combining it with Paulo Freire's methodology. REFLECT has been found to be the most

effective way of getting people to read and write while linking literacy to peace and development issues.

The advantages of REFLECT over the traditional approach to literacy are that it is cost effective as no textbooks are used; participants generate their own books through graphics and matrices. The assumption that 'illiterates' know nothing is ignored as it is known that adult learners have a wealth of experience, which can be tapped. This strategy creates a situation in which the facilitator and the learners learn in a symbiotic way. To ensure ownership and sustainability, adult learners participate right from the planning and implementation to the monitoring and evaluation stages of the programme.

AAPW's first experiment with the methodology, as part of its peace and development programme was in Ife/Modakeke, where a 2- week training-of-trainers workshop was conducted. This strategy had helped in ensuring that the two communities are in constant contact with one another and keeping the peace effort alive.



*REFLECT trainees on the mapping ground, using graphic construction to facilitate adult literacy.*

## REFLECT In Karu Local Government Area

*Binta Wokocha*  
AAPW Development Officer

The two weeks of REFLECT training programme that took place in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State was very interesting to me. It was an eye opener and revolutionary. The team comprised of our able Executive Director, Dr Judith Asuni, who came around to supervise once in a while and the REFLECT trainers in persons of Dr Maimuna Fyenu, a PRA reflect technician and Rev. (Mrs) Oguntona another experienced REFLECT trainer, along with Mr. Danjuma Saidu our AAPW staff from Jos, Mrs Kaman Igoche our most able volunteer who is doing her Masters Degree in Conflict Management, and myself Binta Wokocha of AAPW Abuja. REFLECT employs community techniques using advocacy which is going through the community leaders i.e familiarize with them, sensitize them by telling them to know the reason of our coming and what our aims and objectives are. Also, REFLECT can mean adult education of community members through observation, active listening and participation. The literacy survey can be done through observation, semi structural interventions i.e. adequate questions on various topics that one prepares before getting into the community, or even by sampling.

The participants were very much interested and they were punctual. All the ethnic groups found in Nasarawa State particularly in Karu Local Government were very hospitable and welcoming. All the communities leaders gave us the go ahead.

The adventurous part that I enjoyed most is the Literacy Circle Formation which made us go to many villages in the five districts of Gurku, Kabusu, Karu, Aso and Kodope. We had five participants from each district. Well if I don't mention the bridge along Gurku/Kabusu road then I've not stated one very great adventurous zone. Each time we got to that bridge, my heart was in my mouth until we crossed over. Anyway, all the villagers said that was their major priority for community development, to see that the road as a whole is put in order. Lastly, I appreciate the Community Development Officer of Karu Local Government, Mr. Simon Iya who participated very actively. He showed us all the villages we needed to set up literacy circles in. In fact, now I know Karu Local Government Area better than I know my own Local Government.

## A Chief Who Lives By Example 'Mongoose' Shines at REFLECT T-O-T

*REFLECT trainers*

Example, they say is the best teacher. This is no less the case with the Village head of Ado-Maichibi who was one of the 27 volunteers at the just concluded REFLECT (Train-the-Trainer) workshop held at the Karu Local Government headquarters between the 21<sup>st</sup> October and 2<sup>nd</sup> November, 2002. Cheerful committed and friendly, the Chief exhibited the qualities of a good leader with a very teachable spirit. Mongoose, as the workshop name goes, mixed freely with all. He distinguished himself as one leader that is anxious to get the best of REFLECT not only for himself but also his community he hopes to get transformed by the instrumentality of the literacy circles.

He was so anxious to get classes started that he had to come very early to wait for us at the Local Government Area office the day we visited. Ado-Maichibi personally led us to the village. He promised to immediately set the machinery in motion for the communal efforts at constructing a bridge over the river that has cut the community off from Karu. This is to be their number one project. We sincerely wish the Chief the very best as he continues to lead his people by example. ●



*'Mongoose' receiving the best participant award from the Deputy Chairman of Karu Local Government, Mr Mark Auta Iyah, during the closing ceremony, with the AAPW ED Looking on in admiration*

# Conflict Management Training In Karu Well Received

*Kaneng Ja, NYSC Youth Corper to AAPW*



*Small group discussions in the fresh air, during community leaders' workshop. Gurku, November 2002*

AAPW organized conflict management training in the months of October through December 2002 in different communities in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. This initiative wasn't as a result of any conflict but AAPW realized that as the F.C.T. Abuja is expanding so is the Karu Local Government Area which is close to the F.C.T. and most of the civil servants and company workers reside there. It is essential to note that a lot of businesses are also springing up in Karu and there are people from different ethnic groups in almost every community in the Local Government Area. We have the Gbagyi, Gwandara, Igbo, Yoruba, Tiv, Birom, Eggon, Mada, Fulani, Hausa, Jaba, Agatu, Gade etc. It was therefore imperative to train these people on how to have peaceful co-existence and how to develop their various communities through community efforts.

The communities we visited were Masaka, Kodope (Auta ba laifi), Gurku, Kabusu, New Nyanya, Mararaba, Ado. The reception we got from most of these communities was warm and we found out that most of them were teachable i.e listening attentively and making meaningful contributions. We hope however that these workshops will have a positive impact at the end of the day. It is also interesting that in these communities, the participants respond very well especially the women.

AAPW was able to unravel some problems that are being pushed under the carpet and might escalate someday and reach a crisis level. In a particular village one of the problems the participants brought to our notice was that the youths have been selling the farmlands and in fact most times sell a particular piece of land to more than three persons. And again people especially settlers after obtaining a piece of land go an extra mile to build access roads to the different parts of the community. At the end of that workshop they had established a peace and development committee and also a land committee which is to have an office where people can come to enquire about accommodation and also act as a go-between when a piece of land is going to be sold.

The reverse was the case in another village because the youths had

grudges against the elders for selling off their lands indiscriminately. They also responded by setting a peace and development, land and education committee.

Similarly, other areas of the Local Government have the land 'palavar' and in a particular village, the tussle between the two chiefs was visible. We were glad when on the next day during the recap which I facilitated, one of the Chiefs confessed that he had gone to school but had never come across what AAPW was trying to impart to them and promised that they would try to apply all that they have learnt in the community.

The various conflict management trainings held in Karu were successful because most of the issues that were hiding were brought to light and action was taken by setting up the various committees, which I have been going round during their meetings to see what they have been doing and I am truly impressed with the efforts they are making at the end of a particular workshop. One of the Chiefs promised to help any student financially who has a genuine need for anything in school. Others volunteered to help the unemployed who want to learn skills and have no money to pay. The various Chiefs are worth commending because they sent good representation from the various ethnic groups that are settlers.

Some of the highlights of the workshops includes brain storming, conflict handling styles, conflict analysis, mediation, rights and responsibilities, etc.

In conclusion the conflict management training held in Karu Local Government is a success story because AAPW was able to establish that it is better to prevent a conflict than to let it reach a crisis level before coming in to intervene. Some communities had burning issues that no one bothered to raise until AAPW had the workshops and the communities started talking. Also, the establishment of the various committees and the projects they are embarking on is a plus. ●

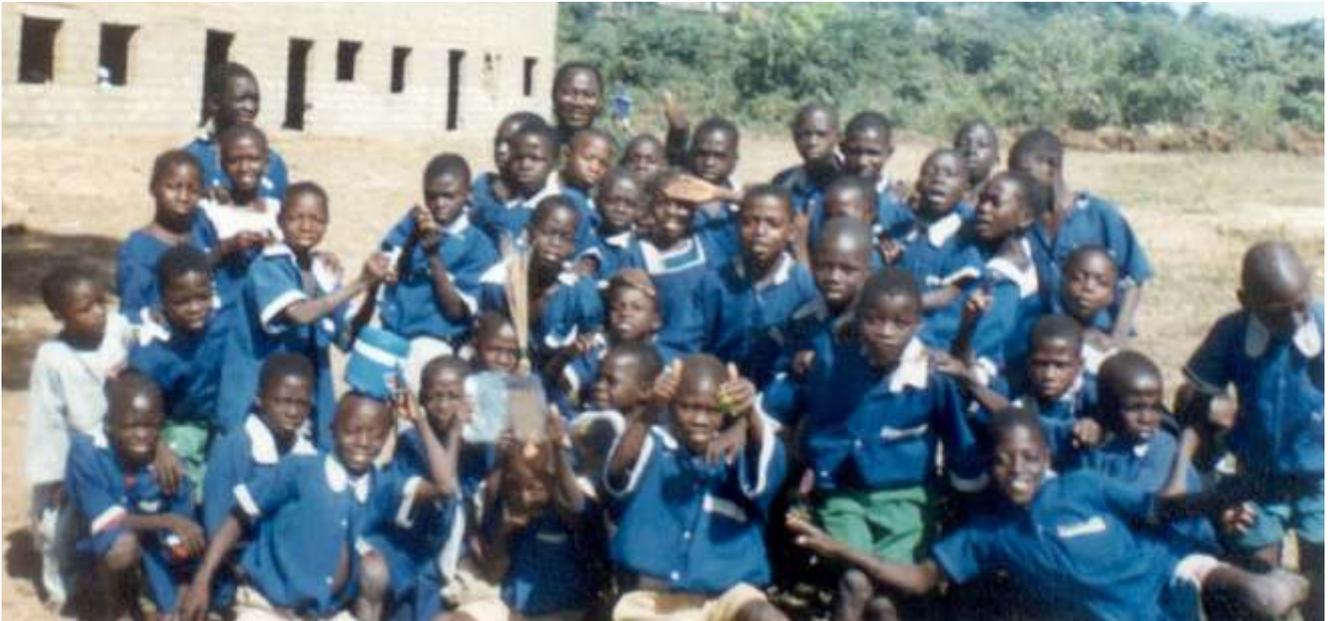


*Conflict Management training of community leaders, Esu's Palace, Karu Local Government, Nasarawa State, October 2002. From left: Imam Mohammed Nurayn Ashafa, Ms. Rosmarie McBean, HRH The Esu Karu, Dr. Judith Burdin Asuni, Pastor James Movel Wuye, Mr Moses Aba.*

# Peace Education

## A Vision For A Peaceable Society

*Danjuma Saidu*



*The future generation of Nigerians learning to live together through peace education*

Families and schools are the two most important institutions influencing the developing child's predispositions to hate and to love. Although the influence of the family comes earlier and is often more profound, there is good reason to believe that the child's subsequent experiences in school can modify or strengthen the child's earlier acquired dispositions. However, many schools do not provide much constructive social experience for their students. Too often schools are structured so that students are pitted against one another. They compete for the teacher's attention, for grades, for status. Being put down and putting down others are pervasive occurrences.

Let us therefore imagine a school or community where members manage and resolve their own conflicts with or without interference from authorities, a place where diversity and individuality are celebrated, a situation where people listen to each other in order to understand the other's point of view and a place where people perceive conflicts as an opportunity to grow. We can also for a moment perceive a place where adults and children cooperate and do things in common, rather than act aggressively towards one another. That is why in recent years, it had been increasingly recognized that our schools have to change in basic ways if we are to educate children so that they are for rather than against one another, so that they develop the ability to resolve their conflicts constructively rather than

destructively, so that they are prepared to live in a peaceful world.

Peace Education programme was first initiated by Academic Associates PeaceWorks (AAPW) for Secondary schools all over Nigeria, based on pilot projects on Peace Education at Queen's College, Lagos; Mayflower Secondary and Junior Schools, Ikenne; and Igbinedion Secondary School, Benin City

The concept Peace Education refers to an experience where participants generate ideas, feelings and practices oriented to deal with conflict. Peace Education programme is guided by the view that students and teachers as participants, need to have continuing experiences of constructive conflict resolutions as they learn different subject-matters as well as an immersion in a school environment which, by the way it functions provides daily experience of cooperative relations and of constructive resolution of conflicts. This pervasive and extended experience, combined with training in the concepts and principles of cooperation work and of conflict resolution, should enable participants to develop generalizable attitudes and skills which would be strong enough to resist the countervailing influences that are so prevalent in their non-school environment. Hopefully, by

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# A Karu Local Government Without Aids

*Dr. Ngozi Odocha, HIV/AIDS Consultant to AAPW*

I woke up this morning thinking about the numerous problems we have in this world, especially in this our beloved country called Nigeria. I just came back from Lagos where I spent a hot, humid weekend. Electricity must have fled Lagos as I got there and taken refuge somewhere else, probably in Abuja, I thought. Someone then told me that in Lagos, electricity is on permanent vacation. The taps were dry as usual and the water I got from a nearby borehole was brown. I had a wedding to attend at Ikeja. It took almost eternity to get from Surulere to Ikeja. What with the grinding 'go-slow', we barely made it before the church service ended.

As we came out of the church to take photographs, I saw many gaily dressed men and women, beautiful young ladies and young men. I looked at these young people, the girls showing off their bodies in off-shoulder and spaghetti-strap dresses and the men admiring them unashamedly. I wished the contents of the minds of everybody present could be on display. My mind drifted to AIDS. I became oblivious of the beauty around me; I was only seeing highly emaciated, sick and dying people. I began to wonder what these people know about HIV/AIDS. How do they hope to protect themselves from it? Do they even know that they are at risk of contracting it? This has become a burden to me, to make sure that we preserve these beautiful young people in Lagos and throughout Nigeria.

So you can imagine my enthusiasm when Academic Associates PeaceWorks (AAPW) invited me to conduct HIV/AIDS awareness workshops in the Karu Local Government of Nasarawa State as part of their peace and development programme. Karu LGA has a special status because of its proximity to the FCT. It is the fastest growing LG in the area with a 40% yearly population growth, the majority of whom are migrants. It also has a large hospitality sector, that caters to the many travelers to the FCT. With the mobility of so many people HIV/AIDS awareness is a necessity.

Is it possible today to have 'A world without AIDS or more specifically a Karu LG without AIDS?' I doubt it very much. I say this because, AIDS has spread to almost everywhere in the world. The fact that AIDS is spreading at a rapid rate is alarming, with some of the hardest hit countries having high rates of infection at about 30% among their adult population. In the year 2000, an estimated 3.8 million became infected with HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa and 2.4 million have died. HIV/AIDS has now become a human tragedy. The HIV/AIDS situation in Nigeria is worsening each day. Since the first case of AIDS was diagnosed in Nigeria in 1986, there has been a steady rise from 1.8% prevalence in 1993 to 3.8% in 1994, 4.5% in 1996, 5.4% in 1999 to 5.8% in 2001. The

majority of those who die of AIDS are youths and adults in their productive, sexual and reproductive prime. For this reason, the impact of HIV/AIDS on the work force as well as other sectors of the economy will become very severe if left unchecked.

AAPW is doing its part to combat HIV/AIDS in Karu LG, by conducting 3-hour workshops over 3-day periods in four communities. These workshops target traders, women, civil servants and other professionals. The first community visited was Masaka where participants were invited to voice what they knew about HIV/AIDS and to ask questions. All of them had heard about AIDS and most seemed to be aware of the effects of HIV/AIDS. When asked if they knew people who had died of AIDS they responded "Yes, many!" But, has this changed anything? Are people still not exposing themselves to the virus? This proves that hearing is not the same as doing or acting on what one has heard. The participants in Masaka were encouraged to not only listen very well but to apply what they learned in their daily lives. It is only when our behavior changes as a result of what we hear that we know that learning has taken place. It is my hope that these workshops in Karu will result in a behavior change in the participants, as well as the people they share their new knowledge with.

If it is impossible to have a Karu LG without HIV/AIDS then together with AAPW I will work to have a Karu LG with as few HIV/AIDS cases as possible.



*HIV/AIDS awareness team planning their activities:  
from left to right Sam Amade, Kaneng Ja,  
Dr. Mrs. Ngozi Odocha, Simon Iya, Binta Wokocha*

## From the Desk of the Executive Director

Dear Readers -

Welcome to another edition of the PeaceWorks News. We're writing to you from a new location, with a number of new staff members. In April 2002, we moved our head office from Lagos to Abuja. This transition reflects the increasing centrality of Abuja as the Federal Capital, as well as our attempts to constructively engage the Federal Government of Nigeria in a proactive peace building approach. In the past year we have also opened an office in Port Harcourt, Rivers State - the center of the oil-rich Niger Delta, as well as a small branch office in Ife/Modakeke, Osun State. These locations show our interest in specific conflict-prone areas. The Lagos office will become the hub for our increasing emphasis on use of radio and television to disseminate messages of peace.

This diversification has meant a lot of travel and long-distance management for me, personally. However it has also meant that our staff members not only work in various parts of Nigeria but also represent the cultural diversity of this big country. I enjoy dinner on our balcony in Abuja with Kate from the Niger Delta office together with Ademola from Lagos, Danjuma from Jos, and Rosemarie from the US/Jamaica. We are modeling the peaceful co-existence which we teach in conflict management activities.

This is an exciting era for Nigeria. Coming out of decades of repressive military rule, the country has been faced with a number of challenges. There is a whole generation of young Nigerians who have no experience, little understanding or appreciation of how to run a democratic government. Many think of their rights or "dividends of democracy", without thinking of their responsibilities. Others see the new democratic space as an opportunity to redress former social injustices and we have seen groups such as the Sayawa in Tafawa Balewa, Bauchi State; or the Urhobo in Warri, Delta State; or the Hausa in Jos, Plateau State try to claim what they think is rightfully theirs. This has led to pockets of violent communal conflict. While the process may be painful, I believe that it is necessary to address these injustices and find real solutions to them. As we look forward to new elections in 2003, we are all concerned that the varying group interests not lead to further violence that in turn causes the downfall of the fledgling democracy.

I'm now celebrating my 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of working in the field of conflict management in Nigeria. In 1992 General Obasanjo of the Africa Leadership Forum and we at Academic Associates started our first conflict management workshops, with everyone volunteering their time and resources. Now conflict management is a well-established field in this country. Obasanjo is President of Nigeria. AAPW has worked in many parts of the country, having conducted over 150 workshops and

almost a dozen long-term interventions. A lot has happened in the past 10 years and we look forward to the next 10+!

Judith Burdin Asuni, Ph.D.  
Executive Director

## Lights, Camera,....Action!

Bassey Okon and Frank Monkom  
*PeaceWorks Productions*

Academic Associates PeaceWorks and *PeaceWorks Productions* partnered with Search for Common Ground's *Common Ground Productions* on a radio drama called "Peace House" in 2001. Based on the good reception of that pilot project, we are now moving forward on a television drama, scheduled for 2003. Jonathan Oglesby and Phil Bob Hellmich from the Search office in Washington, D.C., Simon Lawson from Search in Congo, as well as Laura Davis of the European Center for Common Ground visited Nigeria in October 2002. The Search and PeaceWorks teams spent a week with a number of professionals in the fields of writing, acting and production in Lagos, followed by a week in Abuja, with visits to President Obasanjo and the Honourable Minister of Information, Radio Nigeria, Voice of Nigeria, NTA, and various foreign donors.

The visitors were very impressed with the high standards of professionalism in the Nigerian television and radio industry. They were also encouraged by the high level of interest and support from both Nigerian government officials and members of the international community. Look forward to the television drama in 2003! ●



*The Search for Common Ground and Academic Associates Peace Works joint team, visit Radio House, Abuja with the Honourable Minister of Information Prof. Jerry Gana (3rd left) and Mr. Taiwo Allimi, Director General of Voice of Nigeria (center)*

## Peace and Development: The Success Story of Academic Associates Peaceworks' Ife/Modakeke Post Crisis Intervention

Comrade Biyi Odunlade

As a follow-up to the earlier peace intervention of Academic Associates PeaceWorks, which brought former sworn enemies and combatants together in a difficult-to-believe circumstance, AAPW introduced CEFE Business Improvement Course to Ife/Modakeke widows and youths entrepreneurs whose businesses needed re-awakening.

The training took place at the Conference Centre of the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife in May 2001 with 10 participants from each of the two groups (Ife and Modakeke) making 20 participants in all. 10 of the participants are widows who lost their husbands during the fratricidal communal clash while the remaining 10 are youths and former combatants of Ife/Modakeke in Ile-Ife, Osun State. The two-weeks training organized by the AAPW was funded by the Irish Embassy in Nigeria with the technical input of the German Technical Cooperation (the GTZ).

After this CEFE BIC training, two youth leaders, Comrade Biyi Odunlade from Ife and Mr Wole Animashaun from Modakeke, Chairman and Secretary respectively of Ife/Modakeke Youth Peace Movement were nominated and sponsored for the CEFE TOT training programme organized by the GTZ in Lagos in July, 2001. This training saw the two youth leaders becoming CEFE Trainers on Entrepreneurship Development towards the eradication of poverty in Nigeria.

To ensure the survival, sustenance and monitoring of its peace initiative efforts in Ife/Modakeke, the AAPW opened a peace office on the Ife/Ibadan Express Road. This office serves as a meeting point for members of the newly-formed Osun State CEFE club comprising of CEFE trained widows and Youths. The office is also a rallying point for youth and community leaders who meet there regularly to exchange



*Danjuma Saidu, AAPW REFLECT facilitator with one of the participants, Subugat, during a REFLECT training for Ife/Modakeke, June 2002*

ideas on peace and development. This provides a natural bridge of communication between the two groups, which engaged in violent conflict in 1997 and 2000. The Training-of-Trainers, establishment of the office, as well as revolving loans for the entrepreneurs were all sponsored by the Embassy of Ireland.

The REFLECT programme organized by the AAPW in the year 2002 is another landmark in the history of Ife/Modakeke communities in Ile-Ife. While it focused on adult literacy and awareness, it also serves as a unifying force for the community.

Despite efforts by other agencies to be involved in the peace process in Ife/Modakeke, AAPW stands out as the only organization which genuinely came, saw and conquered (veni, vedix, vici). AAPW under the able leadership of its dynamic Executive Director, Dr. Judith Burdin Asuni has become a household name in Ile-Ife and posterity will continue to acknowledge the noble contributions of this NGO (AAPW). ●

# AAPW and the Niger Delta

*Kate Ekaette Onuoha,  
Port Harcourt Office*



*Kofo & Judy Asuni with Kate Ekaette Onuoha of the AA PW Port Harcourt office during a visit to vigilante groups in Okrika and the Rivers State Governor.. August 2002.*

The Niger Delta region of Nigeria is the South South region of the country surrounded by rivers, in a swampy terrain, predominantly occupied by the Ijaw ethnic group and smaller groups like the Ogoni, Okrika, Kalabari, Ekpeye, Ibibio, Anang, Urhobo, Itsekiri etc. It is richly blessed with the major foreign exchange earning natural resources of the country: crude oil and gas. The problems experienced in the Niger Delta today are anchored in the discovery and subsequent exploration and exploitation of this crude oil.

## The Nature of Conflicts In The Niger Delta

The deprivations and environmental devastation of the Niger Delta which have continued for years unabated gave rise to the conflicts experienced today in the Niger Delta. There is virtually no community in the Niger Delta today that has not recorded one form of crisis or the other. These include the Warri crises; the Oluasiri/Elem Sangama/Soku crises; the Eleme/Okrika crises; the Eket - Mobil crises, the Odi crisis, Ogoni crises etc.

The conflict between Oluasiri, Elem Sangama and Soku has to do with ownership of the NLNG Gas supply plant. These three communities claim ownership of the location of the gas plant based on various criteria. The gas plant was called "Soku gas plant" for over 30 years, so the village of Soku claims ownerships, though it is farthest from the plant. Elem Sangama, the nearest neighbour to the plant also claims ownership. The Oluasiri people of Bayelsa State claim ownership of the whole area, including the plant and Elem Sangama. There is also a more complex dispute which is the outstanding boundary adjustment case of the Rivers

and Bayelsa States which runs down through the area of the gas plant.

There are so much effects of conflicts ranging from economic, social, psychological to political effects which have destabilized the peace of these three communities. As a result of the complete destruction of the Elem Sangama town by Oluasiri in the early morning raid of June 1993, the economic, social life of the area was stilted for years.

However, the conflict between the towns of Eleme and Okirika is also similar to that of Soku/Elem Sangama/Oluasiri. The conflict between these 2 communities is based on the ownership of the NNPC refinery. There have been series of crises in this area for years.

A major problem flared up October 1999 when Okrika and Eleme youths clashed near the refinery; another crisis erupted again in March 2000. As at then no Okrika traveled by road through Eleme territory and no Eleme came to the waterside through Okirika territory talk less of fishing. Consequently the economic and social life of these areas was also stilted.

## The Role Of AAPW In The Niger Delta.

Academic Associates PeaceWorks came into Niger Delta in the year 1996 in response to so many requests for training and intervention in the volatile Niger Delta. We started our work with peace education programmes for secondary schools in 1996 and conflict management training at the University of Port Harcourt in 1997. This was followed by several peace and development projects for NLNG and Shell, as well as conflict management training for staff of Shell and Chevron. In 2001 we also developed a proactive Community Engagement Plan for a new Shell project in Bayelsa State.

The AAPW Executive Director, Judy Asuni spent 5 months on a GTZ peace and development project from October 2000 - February 2001, living in the communities of Oluasiri, Elem Sangama, and Soku. Mr. Blessing Abam and Mr. Isu Menidin served as facilitators for the conflict management and community development workshops conducted in the communities. By July 2001, the youths

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## AAPW and the Niger Delta

from the 3 communities were ready to meet and try to resolve their problems. A strategy building workshop was held in July 2001, in conjunction with the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution with funding from the Federal Government of Nigeria. A similar programme was held for elders in October 2001, this time with funding from the Rivers State Government. A planned joint workshop of elders and youths from the 3 communities has been delayed due to internal problems in one of the communities. However we hope that this will hold before the end of 2002.

Though the peacebuilding process has not been concluded, it has created awareness of the impact of the conflicts and damages to the communities. Today in Soku, Elem Sangama and Oluasiri, there is communication link, free entry and exit through these communities, where none existed two years ago.

This same peace building process has been followed with the Eleme/Okrika people. The first workshop was held in April 2000 under USAID/OTI funding. It took another two years to find funding to continue the peace process. However in March 2002, the Rivers State

Government gave a grant to continue this effort. In spite of a successful training of the Eleme/Okrika Joint Peace Committee and continued efforts by the co-chairmen, Elder Gomba Osarollor (Eleme) and Mr. Blessing Abam (Okrika), the peace process has again been stalled by internal problems within the Okrika kingdom.

The communal conflicts in the Niger Delta are extremely complex, often with issues which only surface after some time. The sheer magnitude of resources and money involved, as well as upcoming elections during this political era, complicate community dynamics.

Even when the original goal is only partly achieved, conflict management and peace building can have unexpected results. We were delighted to learn that Mr. Boma Kaladokubo, a community leader from Elem Sangama, has voluntarily used his conflict management skills in bringing together leaders from about 6 neighbouring towns experiencing potential communal conflict. It is wonderful to see participants from our programmes applying these new skills in their everyday lives.

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## Conflict in the Niger Delta

### - the Warri Case

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A second publication from Academic Associates PeaceWorks is soon to hit the market. The book, entitled "Conflict and Instability in the Niger Delta: the Warri Case" addresses the underlying issues in the long-standing tensions among the three ethnic groups which make counterclaims to ownership of Warri, in Delta State: the Itsekiri, Urhobo and Ijaw. This conflict peaked in 1997, after the Federal Government shifted a Local Government headquarters between Itsekiri and Ijaw areas. Another crisis occurred in 1999, just after the newly elected democratic government was sworn in, this time predominantly between the Itsekiri and Urhobo.

The book documents the two year intervention

by AAPW with funding from the United States Institute of Peace, in which 6 new members of the National Corps of Mediators were trained and played an active role in the intervention: Chief Dr. Mrs. P.E.B. Uku and Mr. Eni Umuko (Itsekiri), Chief E.E. Ebimami and Prof. Rev. C.A. Dime, (Ijaw) and Chief W.A. Digbori and Chief Wilson Eboh (Urhobo).

The Warri book, which is written by Prof. Thomas Imobighe (Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Edo State), Prof. Celestine Bassey (formerly of Delta State University, Abraka, Delta State) and Dr. Judith Burdin Asuni (of AAPW), is published by Spectrum Books Ltd. We plan to launch the book early in 2003. Keep your eyes open for the date!

# The Perils of Peacebuilding

*Imam M.N. Ashafa  
Muslim Christian Dialogue Forum, Kaduna  
Conflict Management Consultant*

Peace making is like sorting the honey from the honeycomb or like digging for gold in a mountain top or searching for diamonds beneath the ocean.

Indeed honey is sweet and a basic need in every household, without which majority of our drugs would be imperfect. Also, gold and diamond are valuable precious stones, which serve as ornaments that perfect our ladies. However, neither of the above is easy to achieve; gold digging and diamond digging are not without risks. The same goes for a peacemaker.

The risk in peacemaking, the danger and the challenges which the peacemaker faces are more dreadful than the gold digger or the politician canvassing for votes. This is because the peacemaker is unveiling the power of positive thinking, the evil of negative mind control, the consequences of avoidance, the use of confrontation and violence as a means of achieving a set goal.

My practical experience in this field, confirms my assertion. As a soldier of non-violence, I was called to duty by Academic Associates PeaceWorks in collaboration with National Commission for Refugees in Nigeria to go on a Peacemaking mission, with the objective of assessing the internally displaced persons in the unfortunate Plateau State crisis within Langtang and Wase Local Government Areas. Our readers need to remember that Langtang and Wase Local Government Areas are the areas in which two security personnel were killed by unknown persons from the two disputant communities and their weapons/arms were missing. The Military Commandant in-charge of Plateau State gave an ultimatum that if the weapons were not returned within a stipulated time the soldiers would deal with the inhabitants of the area. Therefore, many inhabitants remembering Odi, and the Benue military vengeance started on their heels running for their lives out of the areas, about 12 hours prior to the expiration of the military deadline.



*Cars and buildings destroyed in the July 2002 crisis  
in southern Plateau State*

As a peacemaker, full of dedication, behind me is my colleague, our strong and dynamic mother of peace in West Africa, Dr. Judith Burdin Asuni and at the other side is the Federal Commissioner for Refugees and his entourage, we worked our way to Langtang, the conflict spot. Out of all I looked like an unwanted guest, with faces looking at me with suspicion, one could easily read vengeance on their faces. The Chairman of the Langtang North Local Government, as if reading my mind on why I'm seeing no welcome signals in

the faces of the Tarok people in Langtang, said to our team that "there is no single Muslim now in Langtang town", and he cannot guarantee my security from outside his office. Before I could ask why, he said, "Because you are a Muslim." Therefore, some other members of our team went to inspect the Tarok Christian victims who were internally displaced.

The mother of peace and the Executive Director of AAPW, moved the motion that there was a need for me to go to Wase Local

Government Area, which had a Muslim majority and assess the internally displaced persons. The Chairman of Langtang North Local Government Area voiced out; "I cannot guarantee your safety, you need an armored tank to safeguard you in passing through the Fulani bandit". Then there came divided opinion, the Federal Commissioner of Refugees and his team said "don't go anywhere, don't risk your life". The professional team of AAPW said we need to carry out on the spot assessment of victims and damages, likewise meeting the Emir of Wase to hear their version. Therefore, myself and Pastor James Movel Wuye, Danjuma Saidu, Muhammed Ghalli made-up our minds, informed the Chairman of Langtang North to give us just one or two security. Reluctantly he led us to the Military Peace Enforcement post, who gave us two soldiers to lead us to Wase. Along the road, we saw dead bodies and burnt buildings and vandalized NEPA equipment.

At Wase Local Government entrance, we were handed over

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to one Captain Fagge, the city was quiet with Igbos, Yorubas and other Nigerians opening their shops surprisingly. Of course we saw some few houses burnt at the outskirts of the town.

The greatest risk of my life as a peacemaker, came when I suggested that we visit Kadarko, a predominant Tarok Christian town with a Muslim chief, a town that was attacked the previous night by about 1,500 bandits. On getting close to the city, we started seeing smoke and fires from burnt down houses, then dead bodies littering the road.

The town of Kadarko looked like a ghost town, we only saw old people, few women and children refugees lying under the trees with soldiers and mobile policemen parading the town. Suddenly, we saw youth coming in one by one from the nearby bush and behind their houses with daggers and local guns. I was busy trying to help a young boy of about 13 years, while James was busy praying for the sick and wounded. I moved to the other side to buy some food I saw with an old woman for the refugees, unknowingly, the youths were watching and planning how best to attack and kill

me because they suspected me to be a spy for the Muslims. The military officer realizing the game, gave me back up and body protection, with his gun and that of his men in strategic locations to save me. When he saw the situation that there was no more safety, he signaled me that I should go into the Inter-Faith Mediation Centre Bus and Ghalli be ready to drive out. However, we were technically held as "hostage" because they had surrounded the bus. I thought I would be killed with no way to escape. Pastor James took the youth militia leader in another direction with others, he was subjected to interrogation, that as a Christian leader, why did he come with Imam Ashafa. All explanations by Pastor James for them to see me as a peacemaker fell on deaf ears. The previous night the Muslim leader of the town, his wife and six children were killed and burnt beyond recognition. We zoomed out, but with a souvenir of bullet shield used the night before between the combatants that Danjuma Saidu found.



*Mohammed Nurayn, Ashafa showing where the bridge broke and he dropped into the river. Fieldwork has its hazards!  
Karu Local Government, November 2002*

## Gurku Experience

Passing through the shadow of death is one of the most dangerous risks that ever happened to me as a peacemaker. The incident happened while I was taking a proactive measure in conflict prevention at Gurku town, a sub-urban town of Karu Local Government Area. The closest Local Government Area to the Federal Capital of Nigeria. It is the fastest growing Local Government Area in Nigeria with 40% increase annually. At Gurku there exist potential ethnic conflict with the issue of power tussles, which if not properly managed could lead to unnecessary loss of lives and destruction of properties.

Therefore, AAPW in collaboration with GTZ invited me and Pastor James Movel Wuye as resource persons to facilitate the community base conflict management program. However, the odds are enormous. The majority of the people cannot communicate in English, so we had to use the indigenous language. There is no good access road, the bridges are extremely bad. We have to drop from the bus for it to pass across, while we

walked across the bridges. It was during one of our returning journeys from the field. We all dropped out of the bus for it to cross, this time the bus was heavier with yams and oranges and grape fruits we bought from the village as "Baba Oyoyo" for our family. I moved forward with a Corper named Kaneng Ja attached to us by AAPW walking behind me, each of us watching our step on about 25 feet deep bridge made with wood, of which most are rotten.

I was deep in thought about the last session of the workshop in which I was trying to analyze the issues, sorting out the differences between their positions, interests and needs and how to encourage them to adopt joint problem solving methods. Suddenly, I found my foot slipping off the rotten bridge and I went straight down into the bridge, falling down about 25 feet on the rocky water. I crumbled, but thanks to Allah Almighty, I have no fractures just bruises.

However I am happy to pay the price and make the sacrifices a peacemaker has to make to create an enabling environment, irrespective of religion, ethnic and racial differences.

# Why not Nigeria?

*Rosemarie McBean, Project Officer  
Abuja Office*

As the end of my final semester in graduate school drew to a close I was asked regularly what my plans for the future were going to be. "I am looking for a conflict management internship in West Africa," I would say. Inevitably the next question would be, "what country?" My answer tended to be "preferably Senegal but if an opportunity arose in Nigeria I would accept." I had previously worked in Senegal on short-term assignments and felt comfortable there despite my lack of French fluency. In the case of Nigeria I had an aunt as well as one of my best friends living here so knew I would have familiar faces around me while I adjusted.



*Rosemarie McBean with Kate Ekaette Onuoha  
& Chief Maikasawa Auta the Danmasani of Karu  
at the wedding of the son of the E su Karu*

"Why on earth would you want to go to Nigeria?" they would ask? This response always made me laugh. I would then ask "why not Nigeria?" I knew what points they would argue even before they uttered a word. Nigeria is unstable - around every corner is a possible coup; there is still religious and ethnic violence, and infrastructure and healthcare are poor. The week before I departed a well-intentioned friend cautioned me about traveling to the Northern area of Nigeria because they were killing Christians there.

I would then surprise my friends by agreeing with some of their points regarding Nigeria and then patiently point out that these reasons were exactly why I was going to work in Nigeria. My goal was to work in a developing African country that had not had 200 years to perfect its idea of democracy and one that was interested in conflict practitioners working together with community and religious leaders to resolve conflict. I assured them as much as I could that I would be safe in Abuja in sha Allah. Unfortunately not many of them were reassured by my words. You see in general the American public's scope of knowledge of Nigeria is limited by what the media decides to communicate to it. Although strides have been made in the accuracy and objectivity of American media coverage of Nigerian events, there is still much room for improvement.

Even my Nigerian friends joined the bandwagon. Most of them could not understand why I wanted to live in the country they had happily emigrated from.

Well eventually an opportunity in Nigeria did arise and I

arrived in Abuja five months ago. I had been warned that it would be unbearably hot so was preparing myself for the blast of heat upon disembarking in Abuja. I was pleasantly surprised. Instead it was a cool morning. I realized a few days later that I had arrived at the start of the rainy season, which in Abuja can be compared to springtime on the East Coast of the U.S. I loved it! "Just wait," everyone kept telling me. The hot season is coming.

Settling into my new environment kept me busy for the first few weeks. Having lived in Jamaica for six years there were some elements of the Nigerian culture that were familiar to

me but there were many new ones as well. Becoming familiar with "NEPA taking light" and "no water coming from the mains" were at times frustrating. Acclimatizing to the various Nigerian accents took some months. It is still sometimes difficult. Who knew there was so much diversity in Nigeria? I have read about this multi-ethnism and have had numerous discussions on it but hearing about it and experiencing it are two different things. I was fascinated by the history of the Hausa - Fulani of the North and the spread of Islam, the migrations of the Gbagyis and other ethnic groups of the Middle Belt and the effects of the discovery of crude oil in the South - South region, predominantly occupied by the Ijaw people. Luckily for me there is no shortage of Nigerians willing and eager to discuss Nigerian culture and diversity and its impact on the current economic and political environment. New friends have graciously lent me books and patiently answered my many questions.

After the recent riots in Kaduna I received an email from a very concerned friend. I readily admitted that yes while Nigeria is on the path to sustainable democracy, there are no guarantees that there will be a smooth and violent free election; after all this is a very young democracy. Nor will religious conflicts cease immediately. It is an evolutionary process and Nigeria is only at the beginning stages.

Even so I have no regrets about coming to Nigeria. In fact I am very much interested in remaining for a few years. After all where better can I have such colorful experiences with such diverse people? ●

◀ ● Contd from Page 5

## Peace Education (contd)

the time they become adults, they would have developed the attitudes, the knowledge and the skills which would enable them to cooperate with others in resolving constructively the inevitable conflict that will occur among and within nations, ethnic groups, communities and families.

In June of 1997, AAPW conducted a Peace Education Programme for teachers and students from 15 Secondary schools in the Wukari area of Taraba State. The participants were drawn from the Jukun and Tiv ethnic groups who were in conflict at the time. The principal aim of the peace education initiative in Wukari was to enter the community and gain the people's cooperation in the most non-threatening way possible. For AAPW, the fact that the schools and local authority cooperated in the education programme smoothed the way for them to begin a tentative exploration of the conflict and opportunities for its resolution. In December 1997, another series of workshops on peace education for teachers of secondary schools, community leaders and community based organization (CBOs) from two conflict areas of Mangu and Bokkos were conducted. The schools were deliberately chosen to represent the areas most affected by the conflict. In April of 1998, an outward bound-type leadership camp was also organized by AAPW for the teachers, students and women CBOs from the two conflict areas where they learned communal living and carried out activities that included the formation of Peace Education and Peer Mediation Committee as well as the setting up of Peace Clubs in the selected secondary schools.

In July 1998, AAPW in collaboration with Action Aid Ghana organized a major activity to enhance peace building in Tamale, the Northern Region of Ghana, where a ten-day Peace Education was conducted for teachers of secondary schools. The Northern Region has witnessed several bloody clashes over the past years.

In December 2001, AAPW again conducted a ten-day Peace Education workshop for Peace Builders of the Nigeria Opportunities Industrialization Centre (NOIC) from Lagos and Delta. A follow up workshop was carried out that included PeaceBuilders from the Kano centre of the NOIC. A Peace Education curriculum was developed to assist the PeaceBuilders in their peace building activities in their various centres.

As part of a peace and development project recently implemented in Karu Local Government Area, Nasarawa State, a Peace Education curriculum is being designed for teachers of secondary schools. Karu, because of its

proximity to the FCT is experiencing a 40% population growth per year. This growth can be attributed to the large number of migrants relocating to the area. Karu LGA schools are no longer populated with only indigenes but are now a multicultural reflection of Nigeria itself, as students originate from various parts of Nigeria. With this new tool secondary school teachers will be better equipped to recognize early warning signs of conflict as well as teach their students how to celebrate their diversity by viewing it as an advantage rather than a source of conflict. The Peace Education Programme in secondary schools, is being reinforced by Conflict Management and Leadership Training for Traditional and Community Leaders in all the communities in Karu. ●

## A True Confluence of People

*Rev. James Movel Wuye  
Muslim Christian Dialogue Forum, Kaduna  
Conflict Management Facilitator*

Another peace landmark has been set by Academic Associates PeaceWorks in collaboration with National Orientation Agency as they organized a capacity building Train-the-Trainer workshop for the National and State Directors of the National Orientation Agency from the 36 States and Abuja from 21- 23 June, 2002.

A special highlight of the occasion was an elaborate opening ceremony graced by a representative of His Excellency, Governor Abubakar Audu of Kogi State and the Director-General, Mr. Tony Iredia who admonished his officers to maximize the opportunity the occasion offers as the task ahead of them is enormous and urgent. He however lamented the inadequacy of funds for the Agency to operate full capacity, hence his advise to this august gathering was for them to exploit in their States, every available willing structures to ensure that the message is carried to the grassroot.

This training workshop is part of the package planned by National Orientation Agency to ensure that the Nigerian population is conscientized toward the forthcoming election with the purpose of making it free and fair, in addition to using their structure to address various conflicts that are prevalent in almost all the states in the Federation.

The pragmatic workshop exposed the participants to several methods of conflict management skills by the team of experience resource persons of the Academic Associates PeaceWorks led by the Executive Director, Judith Burdin Asuni (Ph.D.), others include Prof Imobighe of Edo State University, Ekpoma; Rev. James Movel Wuye and Imam Mohammed N. Ashafa of Muslim Christian Dialogue Forum, Kaduna; Danjuma Saidu, Binta Wokocha and Fred Ogola of Academic Associates PeaceWorks. ●

## Collaboration In Action

*Rev. James Movei Wuye  
Muslim Christian Dialogue Forum, Kaduna  
Conflict Management Facilitator*

True to their words and in the spirit of proactivism the National Orientation Agency in collaboration with Academic Associates PeaceWorks organized a conflict prevention workshop for grassroots traditional rulers and Chairmen of Local Government Transition Committees from seven States of the North Western Nigeria at the Trade Fair Complex in Kaduna.

As early as 8.00 a.m. November 4, the venue of the training was besieged by praise singers and traditional palace guards in the colourful regalia accompanying their Chiefs and district heads; it was like a special durbar occasion. Without doubt the opening ceremony was elaborate with the Executive Governor of Kaduna State and the Sultan of Sokoto adequately represented. The Director-General of the Agency, Mr. Tonnie Iredia used the occasion to advise the royal participants to make good use of the opportunity the training provides to acquire skills that will help them in their domains to administer their office more effectively to prevent violent conflicts as the country moves towards electioneering campaign.

Five hundred participants were expected to attend this interactive informal workshop. The Herculean task remained how this number could be managed, but the able resource persons, divided the participants into three groups and made what look insurmountable an easy task. Workshops were held in three venues running concurrently while the mobile resource persons shuttled to these venues to facilitate the mandated responsibilities.

This down to earth training was majorly facilitated in Hausa to encourage full and active participation of all and sundry.

Thorny issues of leadership were deliberated upon along with contemporary matters related to polity and policies of government. Participants were later commissioned to go back to their domain to ensure that peace culture is preached and practiced during this political electioneering period.

Resource persons were drawn among the empowered National Orientation Agency Staff and Academic Associate PeaceWorks team. ●



*NOA Directors explain a point to AAPW Executive Director Judith Asuni and AAPW Research and Intervention officer, Shedrack Best at a workshop for Traditional Rulers and Chairmen of Local Government Transition committees in Kaduna*

◀ ● [Contd from Cover](#)

## Peace & Development Work in Karu

Following a series of workshops organized under the World Bank's Cities Alliances project, a group of business people in Karu Local Government formed the Business and Economic Development Committee. This group has met several times with input from Goodluck Onyegbule, the business consultant to AAPW and our own Rosemarie McBean. Some of the BEDC members also attended the CEFE entrepreneurial training programme, sponsored by GTZ and facilitated by Nneka Iyke-Enemo, Ishaku Bature and Biyi Odunlade. Dr. Ngozi Odocha and Sam Amade are conducting our HIV/AIDS awareness programmes. We plan conflict management training for police officers, headed by Mr. Blessing Abam of our Port Harcourt office, and a technical skills needs assessment by staff of the Nigerian Opportunities Industrialization Centres (NOIC) in Lagos. We are also working with staff of the National Orientation Agency in political and civic education.

With various teams from about 18 different ethnic groups, I believe that we are reflecting the multicultural diversity of Karu itself! The Executive Governor of Nasarawa State, Alhaji Abdullahi Adamu, and the staff of Karu Local Government have been extremely supportive of this peace and development project. We hope that Karu will be a model for the positive collaboration of all ethnic, religious, and economic groups in other growing metropolitan areas of Nigeria. ●

# Eureka!

## A Gold-mine In Karu

*Goodluck Onyegbule, Business Consultant to AAPW*

A group of micro-enterprises have discovered that there exists a gold mine in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. This discovery was made in the course of a brainstorming session initiated for the group by foremost NGO Academic Associates PeaceWorks in conjunction with the World Bank as part of a conflict management (via economic empowerment) training programme.

According to the participants, the gold mine exists in the form of enormous socio-economic opportunities that abound in Karu by virtue of its proximity to the seat of Federal Government. The terrestrial proximity and yet distinctive administration makes Karu a haven for any investor with an eye on the Abuja market and beyond.

The fertile and arable land is a delight to commercial farming especially soya beans while the multiplier effect of de-regulated land makes rent and startup costs very conducive for any discerning entrepreneur whether local or international. Indeed, the only rural land within the vicinity of the Federal Capital Territory is in Karu Local Government Area. This is more so, because of the Court of Appeal's decision in the case of Joseph Ona Vs Alhaji Diga Atenda (2000) NWLR (Pt 656) 244 where it decided inter alia that there is no rural land in the FCT. In effect no Area Council can on its own allocate any land including cornershops except perhaps on temporary basis with no legality. Ironically, the only Council of FCT nearer to the metropolis than Karu Local Government is AMAC. It means that an investor who obtains a customary right of occupancy from Karu Local Government is better off than one who goes through much effort to acquire a statutory right of occupancy from the Minister acting on behalf of the President. He is the only person qualified to give a certificate of occupancy in the FCT.

Besides the ease and proximity of land, Karu Local Government is a melting - pot of cultures and thereby an energizing metropolis among the satellite towns. It also has the potential of serving as the commercial capital of Nasarawa State. The locus of power and influence favours it, as Governor Adamu is an influential member of the Presidents' Forum.

All in all, Karu is indisputably a gold mine of crude economic opportunities! No wonder that a Business and Economic Development Committee being nurtured by the World Bank/AAPW initiative is already aiming to transform into a Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

## Academics Associates PeaceWorks

### Mission Statement

“Building capacities for managing conflict through studies, intervention and peace awareness in society”

### Objectives of AAPW

- To build awareness of the need and possibilities of peace in society.
- To empower individuals and groups in building peace, through training and networking.
- To develop the framework for the peace process through action-oriented research and intervention in current or potential conflicts.

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*AAPW Staff (from left to right)*

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