



Ambon, Indonesia

Building a culture of peace and justice in communities in need of conflict resolution.

Peacebuilding in Ambon

The peacemaking program in Ambon, known as Maluku Ambassadors for Peace (MAP), works throughout the Maluku Province in Eastern Indonesia. It is based in Ambon City and has a network of six field centres in Ambon City and throughout the islands of Maluku.

MAP, born out of the Young Ambassador for Peace (YAP) program, works through a committed group of Muslim and Christian volunteers and committee members.

The Situation

Major conflict erupted in the Maluku Islands in 1999. While a range of historical, economic and political grievances contributed to the conflict, the community was split along religious lines with those identifying as Muslims on one side, while those identifying as Christians were on the other.

Since 2004, some measure of calm has come to Ambon, the city is slowly being rebuilt, and development efforts have started again. However, there is still underlying mistrust, fear, and suspicion, and many communities that were

once integrated remain separated into Muslim and Christian sectors.

The Project

MAP works with members of the Christian and Muslim communities to encourage and support local efforts to foster a culture of peace. Week-long peacemaking workshops that provide training in conflict transformation are an important part of this work. Each workshop includes people from both faiths and helps people to recognise the layers of fear and mistrust that have blocked the communities' capacity to resolve conflict. Space is provided to allow for the religious observances of both communities. Participants in these workshops include Muslims and Christians, women and men, students and teachers, young and old, and people of varying occupations.

Achievements

Over the last nine years, MAP Ambon has held over 23 peacemaking workshops – initially with women and young people and now including people from right across the community. The MAP workshops have been an important part of the tapestry of peacebuilding efforts in Maluku that have together



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contributed to the development of the more peaceful environment that exists today.

Recently, workshops have also been held that have intentionally brought together important community leaders such as local Rajas (traditional village kings), government district officials, and Muslim and Christian religious leaders. The involvement of these influential groups continues to open up new opportunities to work for sustainable peace in the community.

The network of relationships between Muslims and Christians, and skills in conflict transformation formed through MAP workshops have also played an important role in helping to ease tensions and dispel rumours that have threatened to reignite the conflict.

The Future

While life has slowly returned to normal over the last few years, ensuring that peace is sustainable

remains an important challenge in Maluku. In responding to this challenge, MAP Ambon continues to support the development of peaceful attitudes and behaviours through continuing to engage Muslim and Christian communities in peacemaking workshops.

It is also working to strengthen the network of MAP field centres in order to support, encourage and respond to local peacebuilding efforts throughout Maluku Province.

Contact UnitingWorld

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