

STRATEGY FOR INTER-RELIGIOUS ENGAGEMENT AND PROMOTION OF FREEDOM OF RELIGION & BELIEF (FORB)

By the Da'wah Institute (DIN) and the Development Initiative
of West Africa (DIWA)



The Da'wah Institute (DIN) is a faith-based internationally recognized institute which specializes in the research, training, and development of resources and methods for clearing misconceptions about Islam and promoting intrafaith and interfaith harmony, amongst other activities. At the Da'wah Institute, while we sometimes tell you WHAT ISLAM IS, our specialty is in making clear WHAT ISLAM IS NOT!



The Development Initiative of West Africa (DIWA) addresses critical long-term issues affecting vulnerable communities in the areas of access to education, health and nutrition, water, capacity-building, good governance, emergency relief, other social services, and peaceful co-existence in a multi-religious and multi-cultural environment.

OUR OBJECTIVES

- *Addressing the assumed “religious constraints and inhibitions” to intra-religious dialogue and harmonious inter-religious relations.*
- *Addressing the obstacles to harmony building resulting from misconceptions, stereotypes, and specific interpretations of religious texts and contexts.*
- *Bridge building and better understanding of “the other”.*
- *Promoting Freedom of Religion and Belief (FoRB) for all.*

■ MUSLIMS AND OTHER MUSLIMS



■ MUSLIMS AND PEOPLE OF OTHER FAITHS



gettyimages
YURI CORTEZ

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“Build to Adapt”
rather than
“Build to Last”

Choluteca bridge, Central America

GOOD
DESIGN
=
FUNCTION
+
AESTHETICS

DIN MODEL FOR FoRB INTERVENTION

ADDRESSING INTRA-FAITH BRIDGE-BURNERS (BB) AND RIGHT DENIERS (RD)



ADDRESSING INTERFAITH BRIDGE-BURNERS (BB) AND RIGHT DENIERS (RD)



AGENDA SETTING FOR FoRB THROUGH ADVOCACY



JOINT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND HUMANITARIAN ACTION



Peaceful and Just Societies Where All Enjoy Freedom of Religion and Belief

BUILDING BRIDGES...where they are needed











BRIDGE BUILDING BASICS

- **Solid Foundation:** Like a bridge, it is important to have a solid foundation built on both sides of the divide before engaging in an inter-religious action, i.e. intrafaith before interfaith.
 - *Deradicalizing individuals with extremist tendencies*
 - *Managing Misconceptions*
- **Know Your Terrain:**
 - *Wrong diagnosis = Wrong Prescription (Religion, Ethnic/Cultural, Minority, Indigene/Settler etc.)*



TTXON



BRIDGE BUILDING BASICS

- Experienced Engineers: Facilitators' Expertise on both sides
- Relevant Materials: Quality and Suitability of Training Content
- Maintenance: Follow-up – Research – New/Improved Content.



KEY PILLARS OF THE BRIDGE



KEY PILLARS OF THE BRIDGE

- Adequate Intra-religious engagement before Inter-religious engagement.



DEEP AND WIDE INTRA-RELIGIOUS ENGAGEMENT



KEY PILLARS OF THE BRIDGE

- Intrafaith: Critical Thinking Tools of Islamic Jurisprudence (*Shari'ah* Intelligence) before Alternative Narratives
 - *“Shari'ah Intelligence” is an introduction to the basic principles and objectives of Islamic Jurisprudence which helps to handle religious interpretations regarding bridge-burning interfaith concepts thus making participants more egalitarian, pluralistic and accommodating.*



KEY PILLARS OF THE BRIDGE

- Interfaith: Intellectual (theology) before emotional (grievances and differences)



DIN STRATEGIC STEPS AND OUTREACH MODE

SURVEYS AND ANALYSIS

Identification of Extremist/Bridge-Burning Arguments and Narratives

Classification into IDEOLOGICAL THEMES

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNING RESOURCES

Alternative Narratives

Counter Offers (Civic Engagement, Social Reform & Alternatives to Violence)

RELIGIOUS INTELLECTUALS (GATEKEEPERS): Academics, Imams, Scholars, Religious Leaders And Youth Leaders & Community Influencers (YLCI)

Training (ToT)

Step-Down Trainings (SDT)

Literature

Audio Resources (MP3)

"RECRUITMENT FIELD" (Students, Youth, Masses)

Literature

Radio

Social Media

Website

School Curriculum

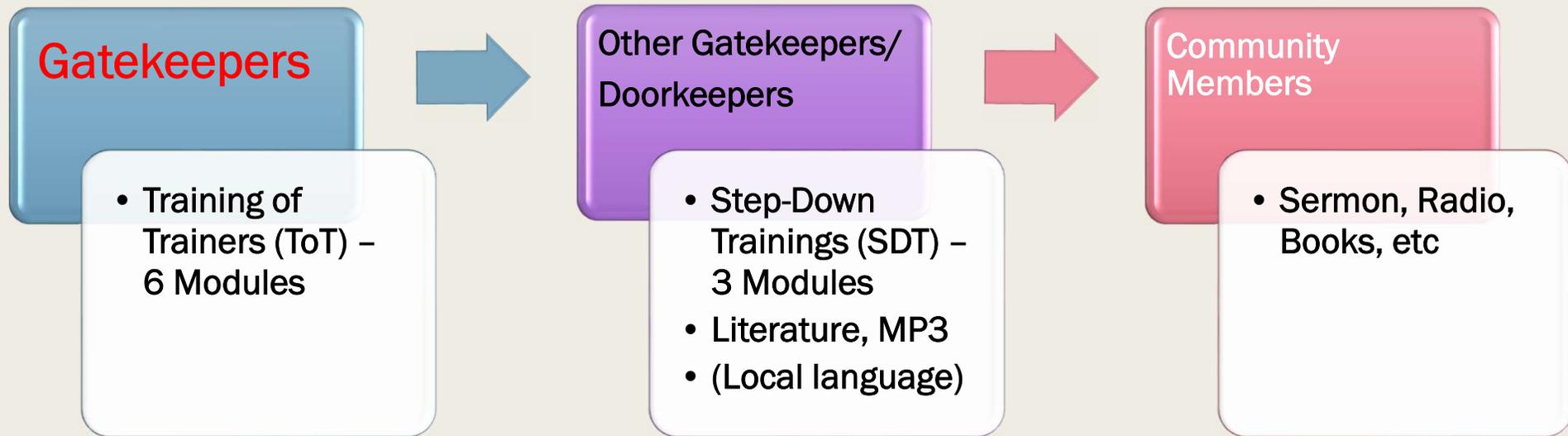
Television

Libraries

Sermons

Talks

Peaceful and Just Societies Where All Enjoy Freedom of Religion and Belief



- Helps the gatekeepers to pre-empt criticism from their peers who could see them as being “compromised” and therefore discredit what they are doing
- Helps them to be recognized within the community as the go-to person for such issues
- Helps them to get more community buy-in through the ‘recruitment’ of more intellectuals
- Helps the doorkeepers retain their dignity within the community

DIN/DIWA MODEL FOR FORB INTERVENTION

ADDRESSING INTRA-FAITH BRIDGE-BURNERS (BB) AND RIGHT DENIERS (RD)



ADDRESSING INTERFAITH BRIDGE-BURNERS (BB) AND RIGHT DENIERS (RD)



AGENDA SETTING FOR FoRB THROUGH ADVOCACY



JOINT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND HUMANITARIAN ACTION



Peaceful and Just Societies Where All Enjoy Freedom of Religion and Belief

ADDRESSING INTRA-FAITH BRIDGE-BURNERS (BB) AND RIGHT DENIERS (RD)

Importance of etiquettes (Adab) – non-offensive or defensive approach

WITHIN RELIGIOUS “GATEKEEPERS” – Imams, Activists, and Religious Scholars

BUILDING FAITH – BASED CRITICAL THINKING TOOLS

Demonstrate application of each 10

REALITY CHECK THROUGH SEERAH

COUNTER / ALTERNATIVE NARRATIVES

HOW?

WHY?

Not “NEW”

Authoritative & Factual

Simple & Sticky

Present Seerah Cases of Peacebuilding

Countering Counter Cases through Details

IDEOLOGICAL THEMES

1. Interfaith Relations (Al-Wala wa al Bara)
2. *Jihad*, Terrorism and Insurgency
3. Islamic State, *Khilafa* & Politics
4. Education (*‘Boko’*)

1. Specialization & Scholar’s limits.
2. Certainty – Qati & Zanni.
3. Secondary sources of shariah – ijthad schools & methodology
4. Prophetic intent & context
5. Maxim of permissibility
6. The 5 maxims
7. Maqasid.
8. Abrogation & interfaith relations
9. When scholars differ – what next.
10. Seerah reality check

ADDRESSING INTER-FAITH BRIDGE-BURNERS (BB) AND RIGHT DENIERS (RD)

Inter-Religious Dialogue (IRD)

Personal Development & Leadership (PDL)

Realistic Alternatives to Violence (RAV)

Human and Community Resource Management

Promotes Understanding of the “other”; and Addresses common stereotypes and concerns

Clarifies values-driven strategies for increasing our sphere of influence and emphasizes the importance of self-development to successful leaders and followers.

Realistic and peaceful alternatives to addressing the genuine grievances that adherents of a faith community may have; featuring case studies of approaches that have worked in the past.

Capacity building for the effective utilization of the various human, financial, and physical resources at their disposal for improved advocacy and action.



**AGENDA SETTING FOR
FoRB THROUGH
ADVOCACY**

- **Advocacy Visits - politicians, policy makers, traditional rulers and other community gatekeepers**
- **Advocacy Talks - Secondary Schools and Tertiary Institutions**
- **Public Forums (PF)/Opinion Leaders Seminars (OLS)**
- **Media Engagement**

**JOINT COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT AND
HUMANITARIAN ACTION**

- **Tree Planting**
- **Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) projects**
- **Clothing for the destitute**
- **Soup Kitchen Project for IDP and other vulnerable persons**
- **Medical Caravan**
- **Facility support for orphanages and homes for the elderly, etc.**

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

■ Visibility

- *Intervention should be viewed as internal reform, not externally motivated. Hence, there should be zero to minimum visibility of international donor organization for maximum ownership by the community*

■ Sensitivity in M&E

- *People should not feel they are being monitored or evaluated; so they do not feel instrumentalized.*

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

■ Pedagogy

- *An array of pedagogical tools is utilized, such as panel presentation, lecture, group discussion, reading assignments, audio materials, texts, workbook, drills, film show, excursion, edutainment & games, etc.*

■ Inclusivity

- *Nothing for/about us without us : Bring all partners on board right from the planning stage, and avoid proposals from one side 'for' the other side.*

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

- Neutrality
 - *Try as much as possible to maintain a balance with regards to number and quality of participants and facilitators, event moderation, speaking time, etc.*
- Sharpening the Saw (Actors/Facilitators/Implementers).
- Do No Harm (DNH) Principle.

- For enquires, collaboration, or suggestions, please reach out to:

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