



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



Finding Your Inner Strength: Building Emotional Resilience and Social Cohesion in the Face of Adversity

A HANDBOOK FOR LEADERS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS IN TRAUMA-IMPACTED SOCIETIES

This is the expanded, third edition of a previous manual that was originally written for South Sudan, called “Introduction to Trauma Awareness and Resilience.” This publication—*Finding Your Inner Strength: Building Emotional Resilience and Social Cohesion in the Face of Adversity*—is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents are the responsibility of Catholic Relief Services (CRS), recipient of cooperative agreement number 720BHA23GR00177 and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

This manual was written by Lucy Y. Steinitz, CRS Senior Technical Advisor for Protection and Equity, following three trips to South Sudan (2016, 2017 and 2024). The first and second editions were widely used and adapted by multiple CRS South Sudan programs, which provided excellent input for this version. Special appreciation is offered to those staff from South Sudan who offered in-depth guidance and support, especially David Malual, Duot Gideon Dau, Gatluak Daniel Biar, Richard Amute, Pamela Nachebe, Agnes Achayo and Hopewell Zheke. From CRS Headquarters and the East Africa Regional Office (EARO) region, Nell Bolton, Sarah Ford, Hasan Amer, Ashlen Nimmo, Jimmy Awany and Bob Groelsema were particularly helpful.

Pilot testing of the workshops contained herein took place in Chukudum and Kapoeta North in the Eastern Equatoria state of South Sudan (January 2024), with feedback sessions at the end of each day of training. The participants were active and enthusiastic, all of which contributed greatly to this manual.

The Arabic translation and layout were supported and developed under the Insijam (Harmony in Arabic) Project in Sudan, USAID cooperative agreement number 72066722CA00002.

©2024 Catholic Relief Services. All Rights Reserved.

This document is protected by copyright and cannot be completely or partially reproduced in whole without authorization. Any “fair use” under United States rights law must contain the appropriate reference to CRS.



Table of Contents

Table of Contents	i
List of Activities	ii
List of Figures	iii
Abbreviations	iv
Foreword	v
Part One: Overview	1
Introduction	1
Workshop Options	2
Workshop Participation	2
Follow-up Evaluation	3
Part Two: Workshops	4
Community Members Workshop	4
Leaders Workshop	6
Short Course	8
Supplemental Activities	9
Part Three: Workshop Activities	10
Part Four: Facilitator Guidance	48
Guidance 1: What Makes a Good Facilitator?	48
Guidance 2: What is Trauma-Informed Practice?	49
Guidance 3: How to Handle Difficult Situations	55
Appendix	57

List of Activities

Activity 1. Day One Welcome to the Workshop	10
Activity 2. Introductions	11
Activity 3. Resilience Tree	12
Activity 4. Becoming Trauma Sensitive	13
Activity 5. Smelling the Flowers	15
Activity 6. Stories Can Teach Us	16
Activity 7. Hungry Donkeys.....	17
Activity 8. Lion Across the River (Optional).....	18
Activity 9. Memory Basket	18
Activity 10. Day One Wrap-Up	19
Activity 11. Day Two Welcome to the Workshop	20
Activity 12. Smelling the Flowers	21
Activity 13. Applying the 3B's	21
Activity 14. Tree of Life Part 1, Drawing/Binding.....	23
Activity 15. Tree of Life Part 2, Sharing/Bonding	25
Activity 16. Tree of Life Part 3, Supporting/Bridging.....	26
Activity 17. Stages of Conflict	27
Activity 18. Change the Channel	28
Activity 19. Adam and Sara (Optional if There is Time)	29
Activity 20. Understand the Cycle of Conflict	30
Activity 21. Forgiveness Can Break the Cycle of Conflict	31
Activity 22. Forgiveness and Faith	32
Activity 23. Practicing Forgiveness	33
Activity 24. Leadership Styles	34
Activity 25. How to Become A Better Leader	35
Activity 26. Gift Box	36
Activity 27. Key Messages	37
Activity 28. Day Two Wrap-Up.....	38
Activity 29. Supplemental: How to Handle Stress.....	39
Activity 30. Supplemental: What is Most Important in Our Lives?.....	40
Activity 31. Supplemental: Choosing Your Future	41
Activity 32. Supplemental: Hand Massage	42
Activity 33. Supplemental: Big Wind Blows	45
Activity 34. Supplemental: Short Energizers	45
Activity 35. Yoga, Breath Work and Meditation	46

List of Figures

Figure 1. Resilient Tree, Activity 3	58
Figure 2. Hungry Donkeys, Activity 6	59
Figure 3. Women Leaders, Activity 10	60
Figure 4. Tree of Life, Activity 14	61
Figure 5. Stages of Conflict, Activity 17	62
Figure 6. Adam and Sara, Activity 19	63
Figure 7. Forgiveness Can Break the Cycle of Conflict, Activity 21	64
Figure 8. How to Become a Better Leader, Activity 25	65
Figure 9. Key Messages, Activity 27	66
Figure 10. Supplemental: Choosing our Future (Images 1–3)	67

Abbreviations

BHA	Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
EARO	East Africa Regional Office
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
TAR	Trauma Awareness and Resilience
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Foreword

It is with great pleasure that David Malual and I welcome you to this third edition of an “Introduction to Trauma Awareness and Resilience (TAR).” Since 2014, CRS has been conducting TAR workshops in some of the most famine-stricken and conflict-impacted areas of South Sudan—including Greater Pibor Administrative Area, Jonglei, Lakes and Eastern Equatoria States. Homes have been destroyed, lives lost and entire villages displaced. The suffering inflicted on men, women, boys and girls is incalculable.

With generous financial and material support from USAID’s Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) and other donors, CRS has been able to respond to needs. CRS began implementing successive food security and resilience programs with multiple components—like food for assets, internal savings and lending, youth commercial farms, livestock management and clean water and sanitation. While these interventions improved the human condition from a physical standpoint, mental and emotional needs remained unaddressed. Not only were communities traumatized, but CRS project staff also suffered secondary trauma.

To help project staff and community members heal and thrive, the CRS South Sudan Country Program designed a workshop, “An Introduction to Trauma Awareness and Resilience,” which was delivered alongside mainstream resilience components. Four CRS learning reviews (2016–2023) confirmed the efficacy of the approach. Staff and community members who participated in the TAR training reported significant changes in their lives and work. Relationships within families and between peer groups improved. Ordinary disagreements and disputes were settled before they turned violent. Previously idle youth became engaged in productive activities—like farming and beekeeping. Mothers felt less stress caring for their families, and community leaders grew empowered to exercise their civic duties. Overall, people conducted their social, political and economic interactions more peacefully and harmoniously.

This present manual builds on cumulative lessons derived from this experience. Specifically, it encapsulates, consolidates and updates material from multiple tools and training curricula in the *Introduction to Trauma Awareness and Resilience* produced in 2016 and 2018 by Lucy Steinitz and the South Sudan Country Program. By combining these resources into a single, composite guide, this manual makes essential TAR knowledge and practices more readily available to all: facilitators of trauma awareness and resilience, and the leaders and members in isolated, marginalized and underserved communities.

While this rendition of “An Introduction to TAR” (now called, “Finding Your Inner Strength”) draws freely from the South Sudan experience, we are convinced that the concepts and exercises herein have the potential to improve the well-being and living conditions of thousands of ordinary people in similar circumstances. No matter one’s province, country or region, people strive to better their lives and their children’s futures. To this end, we invite you to adapt and apply this manual to your specific contexts and circumstances, and we look forward to learning from your experiences (adaption may include local examples, parables, energizers and language—but not the activities themselves nor the basic flow of the training).

—Robert (Bob) Groelsema, CRS Team Leader of Africa Justice and Peacebuilding Working Group, with David Malual, CRS South Sudan Social Cohesion Program Manager.

Bob and David are co-authors of [Trauma Awareness and Social Cohesion Strengthening in Greater Jonglei, South Sudan](#) (April 2022) and [From a Culture of Revenge to a Garden of Peace](#) (June 2023).

Part One: Overview

Introduction

Building resilience in food-insecure and conflict-impacted environments is a multi-layered people-to-people peace and development process. As research and experience increasingly show, it involves self-healing and transformation within individuals (“Binding”), mutual understanding within families and single identity groups (“Bonding”) and understanding and trust between members of two or more identity groups or communities (“Bridging”). We believe that honoring the wholeness of resilience—its physical, mental, emotional and social dimensions—accelerates and sustains the impacts of resilience programming.

Workshop activities will equip participants with skills to enhance personal, intra-group and inter-group relationships.

The current manual focuses mainly on improving the “Binding” and “Bonding” dimensions of human development and wellbeing. Through the acquisition of basic knowledge and skills, it aims to help participants in their social contexts to expand and strengthen their mental and emotional capacity to acknowledge and go beyond past losses and trauma. In so doing, regardless of circumstances, it frees conflict-impacted people to recognize and seize opportunities. It helps them be more proactive about improving their diets, food security, community sanitation, youth livelihoods, personal and group savings and civic life.

Perhaps most importantly, the workshop activities equip participants with skills to enhance personal, intra-group and inter-group relationships. By partaking in the exercises in this manual, participants hopefully will learn how to cope with shocks and stresses; to envision better lives for themselves, their families and their communities; and ultimately, to chart their personal paths to greater resilience.

This manual is the third edition of CRS’s Introduction to Trauma Awareness and Resilience (2016 and 2018). It is the product of extensive reviews and feedback, and several years of cumulative experience and learning. In particular, this edition benefitted from stakeholder consultations and pilot testing in Eastern Equatoria State, South Sudan (January 2024). The title, “Finding Your Inner Strength” affirms that building a better and more peaceful society is everyone’s responsibility, and that everyone possesses the power within themselves to make a positive difference in their lives and the lives of others.

Theory of Change

IF trauma sensitivity and social cohesion in conflict-affected and food-insecure communities are integrated with mainstream resilience components,

THEN the mental and emotional well-being of individuals will be improved, and in so doing will enhance the ability of individuals and their communities to cope with shocks and stresses,

BECAUSE healthy, productive relationships between and among community members and their leaders produce more stable, peaceful, and resilient societies.

Workshop Options



1. **Community Members Workshop.** This contains four themes: Trauma Awareness and Resilience, Stress Management, Forgiveness and Social Cohesion. The workshop spans 3.5–4 hours on each of two days (7–8 hours of training time, total).



2. **Leaders Workshop.** This also contains these themes to some degree, although it focuses more on leadership skills and less on Forgiveness. The workshop spans 3.5–4 hours on each of two days (7–8 hours of training time, total).



3. **Short Course.** This includes a selection of activities from the Leaders and Community Members workshops. However, because it lasts only two hours, it does not provide the same level of depth. Nevertheless, the Short Course offers participants an introductory understanding of Trauma Awareness and Resilience and Social Cohesion, which are all critical to the success of any development program in conflict-affected societies. The Short Course can easily be integrated into training for other sectors or for time-limited sessions with government leaders and other stakeholders.



4. **Supplemental Activities.** These are also offered and are optional. They can be added whenever there is more time or interest, or as refreshers in other gatherings.

All training is suitable for partner organizations and staff members. Each workshop comes with its own list of materials that should be gathered or prepared in advance. See the agendas below for more information.

Workshop Participation

- These workshops are generally appropriate for conflict-affected environments—for example, for those who have experienced past loss and displacement, but probably not while active fighting is still going on.
- You can expect that everyone who participates in this workshop has personally experienced trauma and loss in some way. It is important to communicate clearly—several times during the workshop—that participation in the workshop is **VOLUNTARY**. **Never force anyone to participate.** Participants can step aside during an activity or remain silent, if they wish. Acknowledging loss and trauma can be difficult, and sometimes participants may experience grief. That is normal. Hence, never force anyone to say or do anything because that can be upsetting. If someone does get upset, follow the facilitator guidance on “[How to Handle Difficult Situations](#)” in this manual. Also, it is best to have two facilitators at every workshop (ideally, one male and one female) to provide support, assist with small groups and address unexpected issues that might arise.
- Workshop organizers should communicate that all people—including **women, youth and people with disabilities**—have value and are welcomed at the workshop (sometimes, separate workshops for women and for youth may be organized). For people with disabilities, in particular, this may require some additional sensitivity—for example, people with disabilities may have special transportation needs that have to be arranged in advance. If possible, avoid locations with steps or uneven surfaces, or else arrange to assist people who need additional support. If there are participants who are hard-of-hearing or have limited eyesight, make sure they can sit near the presenters. It is very important to ask people with disabilities what assistance they need, and they will speak for themselves—for example, someone may ask to have a sign-language interpreter (for the deaf) if one is available. For people with limited sight, the request may be to assign someone to describe images and read materials for them; also help them with any writing that might be required. Making a special effort to include people with disabilities communicates the important message that, “social inclusion means that everyone is accorded equal dignity and respect.”

Follow-up Evaluation

Although it may not be possible to conduct a survey or undertake a formal evaluation after each workshop, there are several ways to determine the workshop's effectiveness during the training (for example, at the end of each day) and after it is completed. The simplest way is to ask for feedback/questions that participants may have. Follow-up discussions, either immediately after the workshop or some months later, can also pose such open-ended questions like:

- As you think back to the workshop,
 - What did you like the most?
 - Did you have a favorite activity or exercise? If yes, please describe, and explain why.
 - What didn't you like, or what do you think should be done differently in future workshops?
- From what you learned and experienced in the workshop,
 - Do you feel differently about yourself, in any way? If so, how?
 - Have you changed your attitude or your behavior to others in any way? If so, how?
 - What (else) will you hope to bring forward in the future?

Be sure to leave time for comments and any "most significant change" stories that anyone would like to tell.

Part Two: Workshops



Community Members Workshop

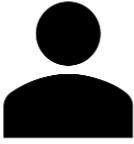
Please note that not all activities are consecutive, and not all activities are used, as detailed in Part Three: Workshop Activities. If using an online version, CTRL/click on the underlined text to toggle between pages; to return, press ALT/left arrow. Page numbers for Workshops, Activities and Figures are found in the Table of Contents/List of Activities/List of Figures. This workshop is a maximum of 3.5–4 hours on each of two days (7–8 hours total). Activity times are approximate. Have the materials below ready in advance:

- One copy per person of “Resilient Tree” ([Appendix, Figure 1](#))
- One copy per person of “Hungry Donkeys” ([Appendix, Figure 2](#)) can be printed on the backside of Resilient Tree, above
- 2 pebbles or small stones per person
- 3–5 baskets or boxes for “Memory Basket” (Activity 9)
- Box of matches (Activity 17)
- Lightweight ball or rolled up paper that is tied with masking tape (Activity 23)

NOTE: All relevant images for the training for both days are in the Appendix at the end of this document.

DAY ONE		
ACTIVITY	MINUTES	THEME
1. Day One Welcome to the Workshop	15	Social cohesion
2. Introductions	15	Social cohesion
3. Resilience Tree	20	Trauma awareness, resilience
5. Smelling the Flowers	3	Stress management
6. Stories Can Teach Us	30	Trauma awareness, resilience
13. Applying the 3B's	20	Trauma awareness, resilience, social cohesion
7. Hungry Donkeys	35	Social cohesion
8. Lion Across the River	10	Social cohesion
9. Memory Basket	45	Trauma awareness, resilience, social cohesion
10. Day One Wrap-Up	10–20	

DAY TWO		
ACTIVITY	MINUTES	THEME
11. Day Two Welcome Back	20	Social cohesion
12. Smelling the Flowers	3	Stress management
17. Stages of Conflict	40	Trauma awareness, resilience
18. Change the Channel	20	Trauma awareness, resilience, stress management
19. Adam and Sara (optional)	15	Trauma awareness, resilience
20. Understanding the Cycle of Conflict	15	Trauma awareness, resilience
21. Forgiveness Can Break the Cycle of Conflict	20	Forgiveness
22. Forgiveness and Faith	15	Forgiveness
23. Practicing Forgiveness	30	Forgiveness
26. Gift Box	40	Trauma awareness, resilience, social cohesion
28. Day Two Wrap-Up and Conclusion	20	



Leaders Workshop

Please note that not all activities are consecutive, and not all activities are used, as detailed in Part Three: Workshop Activities. If using an online version, CTRL/click on the underlined text to toggle between pages; to return, press ALT/left arrow. Page numbers for Workshops, Activities and Figures are found in the Table of Contents/List of Activities/List of Figures. This workshop is a maximum of 3.5–4 hours on each of two days (7–8 hours total). Activity times are approximate. Have the materials below ready in advance:

- A flip chart with large paper and markers
- Blank A-4 paper (1–2 sheets per person)
- A pen or pencil per person
- Wall tape (masking tape for hanging papers on a wall or tree)
- 2 pebbles or small stones per person
- 1 tiny pebble, nut or large seeds per person (Activity 4)
- Several copies (ideally, one per person) of Resilient Tree ([Appendix, Figure 1](#)) as a handout
- Several copies (ideally, one per person) of Hungry Donkeys ([Appendix, Figure 2](#)) as a handout, which can be copied on the reverse side of Resilient Tree, above
- 3–5 baskets or boxes for “Memory Basket” (Activity 9)
- One copy of “Key Messages” cut into strips and translated into local language ([Appendix, Figure 9](#))

NOTE: All relevant images for the training for both days are in the Appendix at the end of this document.

DAY ONE		
ACTIVITY	MINUTES	THEME
1. Day One Welcome to the Workshop	15	Social cohesion
2. Introductions	15	Social cohesion
3. Resilience Tree	20	Trauma awareness, resilience
4. Becoming Trauma-Sensitive	40	Stress management
5. Smelling the Flowers	3	Stress management
6. Stories Can Teach Us	30	Trauma awareness, resilience
7. Hungry Donkeys	35	Social cohesion
9. Memory Basket	45	Trauma awareness, resilience, social cohesion
10. Day One Wrap-Up	10–20	

DAY TWO		
ACTIVITY	MINUTES	THEME
11. Day Two Welcome Back	20	Social cohesion
12. Smelling the Flowers	3	Stress management
13. Applying the 3B's	20	Trauma awareness, resilience, social cohesion
14. Tree of Life, Part 1 (Binding)	35	Trauma awareness, resilience, social cohesion
15. Tree of Life, Part 2 (Bonding)	50	Trauma awareness, resilience, social cohesion
16. Tree of Life, Part 3 (Bridging)	20	Trauma awareness, resilience, social cohesion
24. Leadership Styles	30	Leadership
25. How to Become a Better Leader	20	Leadership
27. Key Messages	45	Trauma awareness, resilience, social cohesion, leadership
28. Day Two Wrap-Up and Conclusion	20	



Short Course

Please note that not all activities are consecutive, and not all activities are used, as detailed in Part Three: Workshop Activities. If using an online version, CTRL/click on the underlined text to toggle between pages; to return, press ALT/left arrow. Page numbers for Workshops, Activities and Figures are found in the Table of Contents/List of Activities/List of Figures. This workshop is approximately two hours total. Activity times are approximate. Have the materials below ready in advance:

- Several copies (ideally, one per person) of “Resilient Tree,” [Appendix, Figure 1](#), as a handout
- Several copies (ideally, one per person) of “Hungry Donkeys,” [Appendix, Figure 2](#), as a handout, which can be copied on the reverse side of Resilient Tree, above
- 3–5 baskets or boxes for “Memory Basket” (Activity 9)

DAY ONE		
ACTIVITY	MINUTES	THEME
1. Day One Welcome to the Workshop	15	Social cohesion
3. Resilience Tree	20	Trauma awareness, resilience
7. Hungry Donkeys	35	Social cohesion
9. Memory Basket	45	Trauma awareness, resilience, social cohesion
12. Smelling the Flowers	3	Stress management



Supplemental Activities

These activities are optional and can be used for follow-up review sessions or added whenever there is more time or interest. They can also be used for other gatherings. **If using an online version, CTRL/click on the underlined text to toggle between pages; to return, press ALT/left arrow. Page numbers for Workshops, Activities and Figures are found in the Table of Contents/List of Activities/List of Figures.**

ACTIVITY	MINUTES	THEME
<u>29. Supplemental: How to Handle Stress</u>	30	Trauma awareness, resilience, stress management
<u>30. Supplemental: What is Most Important in Our Lives</u>	20	Trauma awareness, resilience
<u>31. Supplemental: Choosing Your Future</u>	40	Trauma awareness, resilience, social cohesion, leadership
<u>32. Supplemental: Hand Massage</u>	20	Stress management
<u>33. Supplemental: Big Wind Blows</u>	10–15	Social cohesion
<u>34. Supplemental, Five Energizers</u>	2–5 each	Stress Management
<u>35. Supplemental, Yoga, Breath Work and Meditation</u>	20–30	Stress Management

Part Three: Workshop Activities

NOTE: If using an online version, CTRL/click on the underlined text to toggle between pages; to return, press ALT/left arrow. Page numbers for Workshops, Activities and Figures are found in the Table of Contents/List of Activities/List of Figures. Full-size images are found in the Appendix.

Day One

Activity One

ACTIVITY 1. DAY ONE WELCOME TO THE WORKSHOP

Participants	  
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Make all participants feel welcome ■ Orient participants to the training
Theme	Social cohesion
Time	15 minutes
Materials needed	None
Notes	Religious passages are only an example. Other passages or prayers may be substituted.

Facilitator: Ask someone to offer the prayer options aloud or offer a short prayer of their own. Explain that we should be happy and proud because each of us is made by God/Allah. Working together with God’s/Allah’s blessing, we can build a better, more peaceful future.

PRAYER OPTION ONE

CHRISTIAN: (Psalm 139: 13–14) *For You created my inmost being; You knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise You because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Your works are wonderful, I know that full well.*

ISLAMIC: *In the name of Allah most gracious and merciful, praise be to the Lord of the Universe who has created us and made us into tribes and nations, that we may know each other, not that we may despise each other. If the enemy incline towards peace, do Thou also incline towards peace, and trust in God, for the Lord is the One that heareth and knoweth all things. And the servants of God, Most Gracious are those who walk on the Earth in humility, and when we address them, we say “PEACE.”* —Based on the Koran, 49:13, 8:61

PRAYER OPTION TWO

The late Bishop Paride Taban, one of South Sudan’s most beloved peacemakers, had a daily routine of doing Yoga-like exercises every morning while slowly reciting the following words (one word/phrase per movement). As an introduction to the training, or at any time during the workshop as an energizer, the same can be offered: *Love. Joy. Peace. Patience. Compassion. Sympathy. Kindness. Truthfulness. Gentleness. Self-control. Humility. Poverty. Forgiveness. Mercy. Friendship. Trust. Unity. Purity. Faith. Hope. I love you. I miss you. I thank you. I forgive. We forget. Together. I am wrong. I am sorry. Understanding. Discern. Wisdom.*

Set Ground Rules

NOTE to Facilitator: The workshop deals with some sensitive and difficult topics (stress, trauma, conflict) that may remind participants of their own experiences and trigger various responses during the training session. For example, some participants who have experienced trauma may attempt to share personal information, while others may become quieter or more withdrawn. Having two facilitators (preferably one man and one woman) ensures that one facilitator is always able to assist if someone gets upset.

Participants should help create ground rules, which can also help set the tone for a respectful, thoughtful and safe discussion that maintains clear boundaries—including:

- Being aware of the potentially upsetting nature of some activities and taking care of yourself. Step away if you feel the need.
- Being respectful of others: do not dominate discussions and do not discuss personal comments outside of the training.
- Actively participating in activities when you are present.

Remind participants that a few of the topics and pictures that are shown can trigger personal memories. Participants should be told that they are welcome to leave the room, talk with one of the facilitators, and/or opt out of the discussion at that time. To the extent that local support services are available, facilitators should be prepared to make a referral for a participant, as needed. After a sensitive discussion, facilitators may also insert an energizer—see the examples in [Activity 34](#), or ask participants to come up with one.

Workshop Objectives

1. Understand the meaning of stress and conflict and what causes them
2. Introduce skills to relieve stress and conflict in your life
3. Practice forgiveness
4. Build social cohesion
5. Make a personal commitment based on the teachings of this workshop

- **Community Members Workshop** go to [Activity 2](#)
- **Leaders Workshop** go to [Activity 2](#)
- **Short Course** go to [Activity 3](#)

Activity Two

ACTIVITY 2. INTRODUCTIONS

Participants  	
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Introduce ourselves to one another ■ Create an atmosphere of mutual respect and sharing
Theme	Social cohesion
Time	15 minutes
Materials needed	None

Form pairs of two and within each pair give participants 2–3 minutes to talk to one another. Each member of the pair should ask the other person’s name and where s/he is from. Each member should share one thing they have in common with the other person and one thing that is different. Then each person of that pair introduces the other to another pair—making it into a group of four.

At the end of the introduction, ask: What lessons did you learn from this activity? Explain that, even though we may be different, we are still one group in a strong community with one another. We share a starting point that brings us together.

- **Community Members Workshop go to [Activity 3](#)**
- **Leaders Workshop go to [Activity 3](#)**

Activity Three

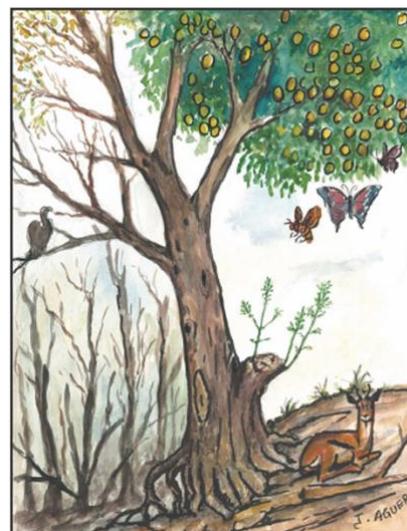
ACTIVITY 3. RESILIENCE TREE

Participants	  
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understand what resilience is ■ Understand that everyone can achieve improved resilience
Theme	Trauma awareness, resilience
Time	20 minutes
Materials needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ One copy per person of Resilience Tree (Appendix, Figure 1) ■ Elastic (rubber) band—optional

Source: Resilience and Food Security Program (RFSP), Transforming Livelihoods: Social Cohesion Visual Aid Training Manual, USAID, CRS, Save the Children, July 2021 (also known as P2R: Pathways to Resilience or RFSP/P2R Visual Aid).

Facilitator: print copies of [Appendix, Figure 1](#) and ask questions from the list below. (*Discuss.*)

1. What do you see in this picture?
2. What does it mean if we say that a person is well-rooted?
3. If the tree roots are weak, what will happen to the tree?
4. What makes you grounded and stable?
5. What makes you weak and unstable?
6. What can we do either as an individual or as a community to strengthen our roots?
7. What type of fruits or successes will we produce?
8. What do the roots, trunks and leaves represent?
9. If you want to plant and grow a tree, what steps must you take?
10. How can we raise our children to be peaceful citizens?



Message to participants: This picture shows a tree with roots. Some branches have leaves and fruits while others do not. The tree is exposed to a variety of events—such as heavy wind, fire, long dry seasons, human activities, soil erosion, actions of insects and birds—among others.

Despite all these adversities, the tree still persists and flourishes. Human beings should also aim to be resilient in the face of challenges, stress and traumatic events.

Facilitator concludes: All of us have been hurt but we are still here, living life. This is resilience—the ability to keep going, despite bad things that happened in the past or are still ongoing. In this workshop, we will address ways to make our lives stronger and more resilient—better able to live in peace, create a more comfortable environment and move forward in a positive way.

(An optional demonstration with an elastic band may be used: **Say**, resilience is when the elastic band can return from being stretched. It may not bounce back to exactly the same shape, but close.)

- **Community Members Workshop go to [Activity 5](#)**
- **Leaders Workshop go to [Activity 4](#)**
- **Short Course go to [Activity 7](#)**

Activity Four

ACTIVITY 4. BECOMING TRAUMA SENSITIVE

Participants 	
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understand that all of us have experienced trauma and that trauma never disappears completely ■ Learn about the different types of trauma and why that is important ■ Identify different ways to cope with trauma and how we can help each other
Theme	Trauma awareness, resilience
Time	40 minutes
Materials needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Small pebble or nut for every person ■ Flip chart/board, markers

PART ONE: Overview (10 minutes)

Facilitator: What do we mean by trauma?

Trauma means **wound**: it can be a physical wound or an emotional one:

- **Physical wound or injury:** e.g., a broken leg caused during a fight
- **Deeply upsetting emotional wound or experience:** e.g., personal trauma like the death of a child

Traumas can occur just one time, or they can be repeated many times—such as domestic violence or the cumulative losses due to climate change.

All of us have experienced trauma. It is part of being human. Although trauma never disappears completely, we can still learn to have a good life.



Pebble in Shoe

- Distribute a small pebble or a nut for all participants to put in their shoe or sandal and then ask them to walk around for a little bit (persons with mobility difficulties can sit on the pebble).
- Ask participants to wiggle the pebble around to lessen the pain or discomfort, but not remove it.
- Ask participants to keep the pebble/nut in place until after the next discussion.

PART TWO: Understanding the Different Types of Trauma (15 minutes)

Using a flip chart or board, identify the three different types of trauma by category. Then ask participants to define and give 1–2 examples for each type (Note that some types of trauma are complex, meaning that they fall into a combination of categories; examples are just suggestive).

TYPE	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE
Acute	A one-time terrible event; i.e., a substantial traumatic experience or loss	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Car accident ■ Death of a husband or child ■ Cattle raid
Chronic	Traumatic experiences you experience that are repeated and/or prolonged; the trauma can be big or small events that occur numerous times	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ War ■ Feud over land between clans that extends many years ■ Repeated droughts ■ Ongoing domestic (gender-based) violence
Historical/ Secondary	Collective trauma experienced by a group of people across many years/generations; it also includes feeling the pain of other people who directly experienced the trauma, even though you didn't—perhaps because you hear about it many times	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Discrimination against a certain ethnic or religious group ■ What a child hears about war and displacement, even though s/he was born after the war ended ■ Hearing about your neighbor's losses, over and over again

Facilitator: Why is it important to know that there are different kinds of trauma? How can we use this information to be more helpful to people in our families and communities?

PART THREE: How Do People Cope with Trauma? (15 minutes)



Pebble in Shoe

Tell people to take out the pebble and comment on the experience. How is the pebble like trauma that doesn't completely go away?

Ask and discuss:

- How did you feel as you tried to cope with the pebble/nut? Did you try to move it out of the way a bit, so it didn't hurt so much?
- Now that you have taken the pebble/nut out of your shoe, do you still some of the pain?
- How is this experience like real trauma?
- What did you learn from this activity?

Say: When we had the pebble/nut in our show (or sandal), we were trying to cope with it the pain. That is also what people do with trauma.

Ask: What are some of the different ways that people react to (cope with) the trauma they have experienced in their lives?

Brainstorm. Facilitator writes down what participants say. Try to evoke both negative (harmful) coping mechanisms and good (positive) ones.

Ask: Which coping mechanisms are good? Which coping skills are harmful (and who do they hurt)?

Put an **x** next to the “harmful” effects and a **+** next to the “good” ones. Emphasize that how you cope is a choice.

Say: Although you may not be able to control the trauma that happened to you, you can control how you respond to it.

Ask: How can we help each other to cope in a good way, when we hear about the trauma we each have experienced?

■ **Leaders Workshop go to [Activity 5](#)**

Activity Five

ACTIVITY 5. SMELLING THE FLOWERS

Participants	 
Purpose	■ Learn a simple breathing exercise for calming down
Theme	Stress management
Time	3 minutes
Materials needed	None

Breathe in the Flowers and Blow Out the Candles

Facilitator explains in a slow, calm voice:

Sit comfortably, both feet on the ground. Slowly breathe in deeply through your nostrils (like you are smelling flowers) and hold. Then breathe out through your lips, pursing them as if you were about to whistle or blow out some candles. Count slowly to three when you breathe in (1, 2, 3) and count to four each time you breathe out (1, 2, 3, 4). Try to lengthen the breathing out (the exhale) so it takes longer than the breathing in. Repeat 3–5 times.

Ask: How do you feel now?

■ **Community Members Workshop go to [Activity 6](#)**

■ **Leaders Workshop go to [Activity 6](#)**

Activity Six

ACTIVITY 6. STORIES CAN TEACH US

Participants	 
Purpose	■ Learn from stories that rewards come to people who forgive and look inside themselves (and to God/Allah), rather than reacting in fear or searching far away
Theme	Trauma awareness, resilience
Time	30 minutes
Materials needed	None

NOTE to Facilitator: *There are two stories below. You may use one or both of them.*

STORY 1: THE LION COMES TO VISIT

Not so long ago, a pack of hyenas chased a lion across the savannah. After some hours, the lion became tired and feared he would be caught and killed. Then the lion saw a small house with an open door. Quickly, he leaped inside, where a family sat around an empty cooking pot and gasped at the lion in terror. They imagined that the lion would eat them alive. Then, to their surprise, the lion started speaking: “Please save my life,” he asked. “Chase the hyenas away from me.”

The family members looked at each other. The parents knew their children were hungry, but if they tried to kill the lion, he might kill them first. “What should we do?” they asked themselves. They also feared the hyenas; there were so many!

What would you do in this situation? After some discussion, continue with the story:

This family was frightened, but they decided to pray about what to do next. After their prayer, they chose to forgive the lion for frightening them, and not cause him any harm. The father took his hunting rifle, went outside, and fired three shots into the air. All the hyenas ran away and, when the area was clear, the lion ran off in a different direction. That night, the family wondered if they had done the right thing.

Do you think the family did the right thing? What do you think will happen next? After some discussion, continue with the story:

The next morning, the family looked outside and saw the lion returning. Only this time, the lion was carrying a dead gazelle in its mouth. The lion approached the house and dropped the gazelle. Then he slowly walked away, leaving the family with enough meat to eat for a whole month.

Discuss: What lessons can we learn from this story? *(This story teaches us that taking a peaceful approach and helping our neighbors is often the best way.)*

STORY 2: THE POOR MAN WHO WANTED GOLD

A poor man left his home in search of gold. He told his family good-bye and said he would return home when he found gold. He looked everywhere—in the villages, over the mountains and across the desert—even inside the cities and the churches/mosques. Along the way, he met many people and he asked, “Where can I find gold?” But no one could tell him.

Why do you think the man could not find the gold he sought? What do you think he should have done? After some discussion, continue with the story:

As the years passed the poor man became very tired and ill, and eventually he died. His family brought him home to be buried, and as was the tradition, they dug a deep grave at the poor man’s home. Digging the grave was hard work, but suddenly a ray of sunshine revealed something bright and shiny. To everyone’s surprise, at the bottom of the grave the family discovered a treasure trove of gold!

Discuss: What do you think about this story? Are there people like this poor man in your community? What would you tell them if you could? What lesson will you take from this story? *(This story teaches us that when you look inside yourself—and in your own family—you will often find the answers you seek.)*

- **Community Members Workshop go to [Activity 13](#)**
- **Leaders Workshop go to [Activity 7](#)**

Activity Seven

ACTIVITY 7. HUNGRY DONKEYS

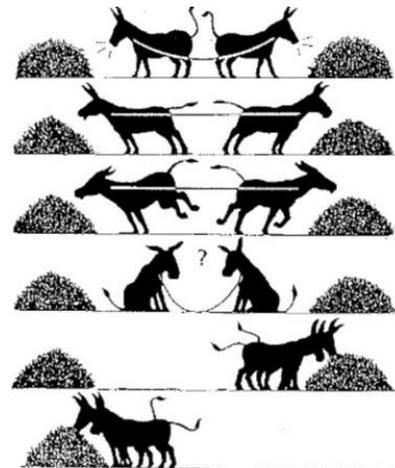
Participants	  
Purpose	■ Open a discussion about dealing with conflict
Theme	Social cohesion
Time	35 minutes
Materials needed	■ One copy per person of Hungry Donkeys (Appendix, Figure 2)

Source: <https://muddaser.com/conflict-management-resolution-strategies-process-steps/>.

Facilitator: Show the picture of the donkeys ([Appendix, Figure 2](#)) that want to eat grass.

Ask participants to describe what is happening, panel by panel. Then **discuss**:

- Which panel best represents how conflicts end up in your community? Why?
- What would help those conflicts in your community resolve, as shown in the last two panels?
- What would need to change? Who should be involved?
- What choices could people make on an everyday basis to help bring more cooperation in disputes?
- What can you do, as Community Members and Leaders, to help make this happen?



- **Community Members Workshop go to [Activity 8](#)**
- **Leaders Workshop go to [Activity 9](#)**
- **Short Course go to [Activity 9](#)**

Activity Eight

ACTIVITY 8. LION ACROSS THE RIVER (OPTIONAL)

Participants	
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Feel more energized ■ Bond with other participants in the workshop in a non-threatening way
Theme	Social cohesion
Time	10 minutes
Materials needed	None

Source: Singing to the Lions, Fire on the Mountain, Jonathan Brakarsh with Lucy Steinitz, Catholic Relief Services.

Facilitator says: I will say “Lion Across the River! Run, run, run!” several times and you will run around in a large circle. When I stop and shout out a number, you must quickly get into groups of that number. To make it more interesting, I will say two numbers and you must get into groups having the number of people I mentioned. For example, if I say “twos and threes” you can either get into a group of two people or three people. Each time I say the two numbers you will get into those groups as fast as you can. Everyone ready?

Action: The facilitator repeats the phrase three times, “Lion Across the River! Run, run, run!” Everyone begins running. The facilitator first shouts out “twos and threes.” Then the facilitator says the phrase and shouts out “fours and fives.” The facilitator repeats the phrase again and shouts out “sixes and sevens.” After saying the phrase again, the facilitator invites the participants to shout out two numbers and everyone runs into groups. Finally, the facilitator shouts out the number “100” and everyone gets together in one group.

Tip: No person should be left out of a group, that is why two numbers are used.

■ **Community Members Workshop go to [Activity 9](#)**

Activity Nine

ACTIVITY 9. MEMORY BASKET

Participants	  
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reinforce positive memories and cultural traditions we want to preserve
Theme	Trauma awareness, resilience, social cohesion
Time	45 minutes
Materials needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ One basket or box for every group of 8–12 people ■ 2 small stones (or equivalent) per person

Source: Lucy Steinitz with Medhanit Wube, Abaynesh Biru and Francesca Stuer. Aunties’ Advice to Young Homemakers on Household and Family Care. Family Health International (now FHI360), 2010.

Facilitator: Explain that this activity is about good events that happened in our past (our memories) and about the traditions or rituals that we like that are part of our culture. **Ask** for examples, such as clothing styles or the naming ceremonies for newborn children. **Put participants into groups** of 8–12 persons. Give each group a basket or box and give two small stones to each person. (Optional: separate groups with men only/women only for easier flow of sharing.) Instruct them that, as they give an example, they should put one stone in the box.

PERSONAL AND FAMILY MEMORIES

Facilitator: Ask everyone to think of at least one happy experience from their past that involves a special person or event they enjoyed—those memories that are a part of them, no matter what else happens in the future.

Give everyone a minute or two to reflect, and then ask each person, one at a time, to share their memory with other members of their small group. When each person finishes sharing, s/he should drop one stone into the basket/box.

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL (RELIGIOUS) TRADITIONS

Facilitator: Next, explain that everyone should also think about their cultural or spiritual traditions that they have learned through family stories, beliefs and customs, which are shared from one generation to the next. These traditions also help us describe who we really are. They can help us feel that our lives have meaning, which gives us inner peace.

Give everyone another minute or two to reflect, and then ask them to share one custom or tradition that they like with other members of their group. When each person finishes sharing, s/he should drop one stone into the basket/box.

If there is time, additional good memories may be offered—perhaps a family gathering or another event. Towards the end of the activity, each group should hold their baskets/boxes up high and repeat after you.

- **These are our personal, family, cultural and spiritual memories.**
- **We have so many of them—many more than fit into this box.**
- **They keep us strong. They help us work together to build peace.**

Facilitator: Conclude with a short debriefing:

- What did people notice with this activity?
- How did it feel?
- Why is it important to focus on positive (good) memories?
- Why is it important to share our cultural rituals or traditions?
- What can they take from this activity?

■ Community Members Workshop go to Activity 10
■ Leaders Workshop go to Activity 10
■ Short Course go to Activity 12

Activity Ten

ACTIVITY 10. DAY ONE WRAP-UP

Participants	 
Purpose	■ Evaluate the day’s events and prepare for the next day
Time	10–20 minutes
Materials needed	■ Optional large poster paper with 3 faces:    

Source: Resilience and Food Security Program (RFSP), Transforming Livelihoods: Social Cohesion Visual Aid Training Manual, USAID, CRS, Save the Children, July 2021 (also known as P2R: Pathways to Resilience or RFSP/P2R Visual Aid).

Facilitator: Show participants the three faces (happy/neutral/disappointed) on large poster paper. 😊 😐 😞 ?

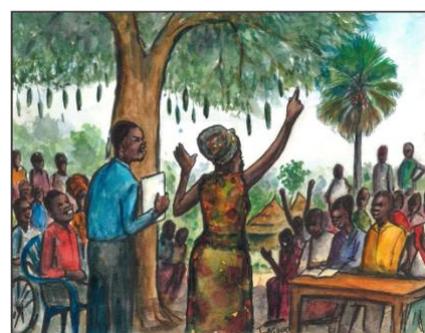
Either ask participants to place a check mark next to the type of face that represents their assessment of the day (questions/recommendations are additional) or ask people to briefly comment on the day and offer any recommendations they may have for Day 2.

OPTIONAL: Ask if someone wants to prepare a very brief (5–10 minute) summary of today’s lessons learned and then share at the beginning of Day 2. *The facilitator should emphasize it is only to include the major lessons learned (take-home messages) and is not to be a description of the activities.* Ask if someone wants to lead the next day’s prayer (see*, Day Two).

OPTIONAL for LEADERS (10 minutes): Facilitator shows the picture below found in [Appendix, Figure 3.](#)

Ask:

- What do you observe here?
- What are some of the things we learned today that will help us develop good leadership skills? *(If no one mentions that the speaker in the image is a woman, point that out, and say that this is an example of gender rights and that women also make excellent leaders.)*



Conclude the day: Ask for questions, comments.

Day Two

Activity Eleven

ACTIVITY 11. DAY TWO WELCOME TO THE WORKSHOP

Participants	 
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Thank participants for returning on the second day ■ Orient participants to the second day of training
Theme	Social cohesion
Time	20 minutes
Materials needed	None
Notes	Religious passages are only examples. Other passages or prayers may be substituted

Ask someone to offer prayer(s) aloud. Explain that each of us has the capacity to make good decisions and avoid bad ones. We should use God’s/Allah’s gifts to us—our intelligence, our minds, our bodies, our talents—to do well.

Suggested prayers:

**CHRISTIAN (James 3:13–14): Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth.*

*ISLAMIC (Quran 2:44): *In the name of Allah most gracious and merciful, you should enjoy right conduct of others but mend your own ways first. Actions speak louder than words. You must first practice good deeds yourself, then preach.*

Summary from yesterday (a person from Day One may have prepared a summary to share):

- Participants briefly review the highlights from yesterday.
- Ask if there are any questions. If time does not allow, put these aside to address at the end of the day.
- Ask participants about their experience sharing the Hungry Donkeys stories, if applicable.
- Reinforce the major lessons learned so far (take-home messages).

- **Community Members Workshop go to [Activity 12](#)**
- **Leaders Workshop go to [Activity 12](#)**

Activity Twelve

ACTIVITY 12. SMELLING THE FLOWERS

Participants	  
Purpose	■ Learn a simple breathing exercise for calming down
Theme	Stress management
Time	3 minutes
Materials needed	None

Facilitator explains in a slow, calm voice:

Sit comfortably, both feet on the ground. Slowly breathe in deeply through your nostrils (like you are smelling flowers) and hold. Then breathe out through your lips, pursing them as if you were about to whistle or blow out some candles. Count slowly to three when you breathe in (1, 2, 3) and count to four each time you breathe out (1, 2, 3, 4). Try to lengthen the breathing out (the exhale) longer than the breathing in. Repeat 3–5 times. **Ask:** how do you feel now?

- **Community Members Workshop go to [Activity 17](#)**
- **Leaders Workshop go to [Activity 13](#)**

Activity Thirteen

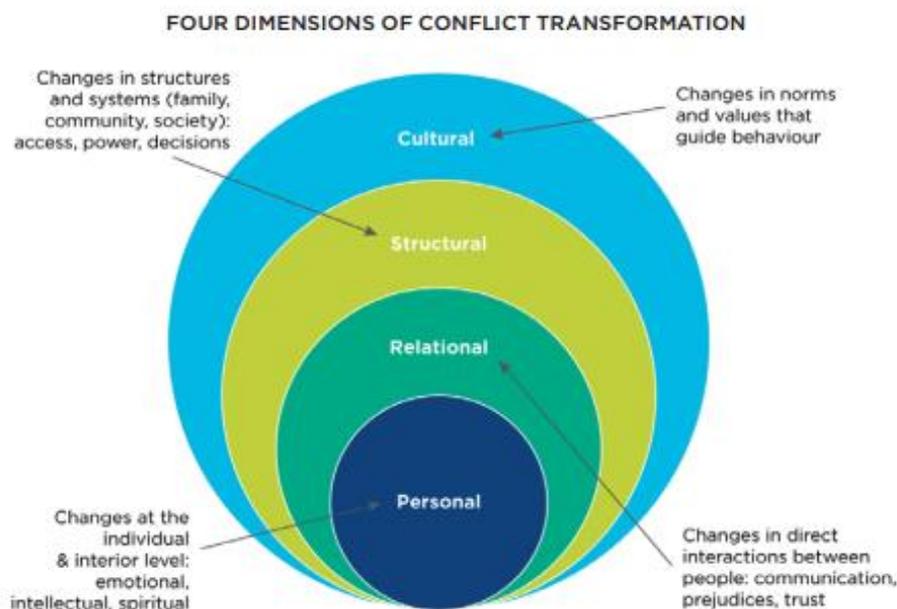
ACTIVITY 13. APPLYING THE 3B's

Participants	 
Purpose	■ Understand how the 3B approach to Peacebuilding applies to Trauma Awareness and Resilience and to building Social Cohesion
Theme	Trauma awareness, resilience, social cohesion
Time	20 minutes

Materials needed	None
Notes	For Community Members Workshop, this activity should be used on Day One, before Hungry Donkeys. For Leaders Workshop, this activity is used now.

Source: Adapted from [The Tree of Life](#), CRS and REPSI: 2020 and [Rising From Resilient Roots](#), CRS: 2020.

NOTE: The illustration below is for the facilitator to study on his/her own.



Source: Lederach, John Paul, Reina Neufeldt, and Hal Culbertson. *Reflective Peacebuilding: A Planning, Monitoring, and Learning Toolkit*. The Joan B. Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies and Catholic Relief Services, 2007 (the original diagram has four quadrants).

Facilitator says: Trauma and conflict occur at the personal level, in our relationships with others, and in the way that we function in the community (structures and systems) and as part of our culture. Our response to trauma and conflict also spans different levels. At CRS, we call this the 3B's (the facilitator should use the hand-gestures below—and ask participants to do the same—to emphasize the 3B's: Binding, Bonding, Bridging). Explain:

- **At the BINDING level, the first B**—we promote self-healing and transformation on an individual level (addressing the intra-personal conflict within oneself)
- **At the BONDING level, the second B**—we strengthen relationships and mutual understanding within our families and our own identity group (addresses intra-group, interpersonal conflict)
- **At the BRIDGING level, the third B**—we develop understanding and trust between two or more identity groups or communities toward the goal of social cohesion (aims to mitigate inter-group, community or inter-community conflict)



Explain that you can build a path to social cohesion—peace and prosperity that is lasting and includes all members of the society—if you include all three B’s.

Where should you begin? The great Indian leader, Mahatma Gandhi, said, “If you want to change the world, begin with yourself.”

Then explain that, with what we learn in this workshop, we can use our experience to:

- improve the way we feel as individuals (= **Binding**); then with
- our relationships with the people with whom we interact every day (= **Bonding**); and finally, with
- how we interact with other groups (= **Bridging**).

This workshop emphasizes **Binding** and **Bonding**. They are the foundation to take us to Bridging (demonstrate arm-gestures once more).

NOTE to Facilitator: As the workshop continues, continue to reinforce the 3B’s—for example, talk about how the different activities in this workshop emphasize Binding, Bonding and/or Bridging.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Community Members Workshop go to Activity 7 (Day One) ■ Leaders Workshop go to Activity 14

Activity Fourteen

ACTIVITY 14. TREE OF LIFE PART 1, DRAWING/BINDING

Participants		
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Helps us understand that each individual is unique and has different strengths and talents ■ Shows us how much stronger we are as a group 	
Theme	Trauma awareness, resilience	
Time	35 minutes	
Materials needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ OPTION 1: Flip chart, 1 sheet of A4 paper for each person, marker or crayons, masking tape (this activity works best if participants know how to read and write, but symbols may be used instead of words) ■ OPTION 2: No materials needed (suitable for a low-literacy group) 	

Source: Adapted from The Tree of Life, CRS and REPSI: 2020 and Rising From Resilient Roots, CRS: 2020.

NOTE: This activity is shown in [Appendix, Figure 4](#).

Facilitator says: This activity, **Tree of Life**, teaches us about our roots, where we come from and who we are. Our trunk, leaves and fruits highlight our past experiences and teach us about our strengths so that we can feel more confident and powerful. Our tree also displays our branches that show us where we are going forward with our lives.

Facilitator continues: Let’s start by discovering more about ourselves because this will help us understand how each of us is unique and special, and how much stronger we are as a group (or

team). The more we know about ourselves and our strengths, the more successful we will be, and the less we can be scared or intimidated by others.

OPTION ONE (preferred):

Give everyone a piece of A-4 paper with pens or markers and follow the instructions below. Remind participants that symbols may be drawn instead of words—they may do whichever they prefer. It is helpful if the facilitator draws the different parts of the tree on a flip-chart paper (not labeled) as each part is highlighted below. Emphasize to participants that there is no requirement to share personal information; they may keep private whatever they want.

OPTION TWO (if there is no paper or people are not able to draw/write)

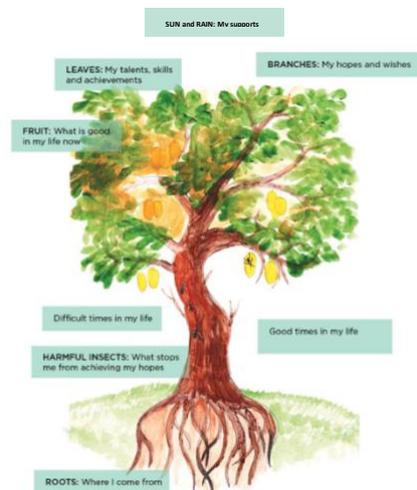
Point to a live tree or to a tree image and ask participants to carefully consider the answers to each question, with some people offering their answer to the overall group, section-by-section of the tree.

Directions for both Option 1 and Option 2.

The facilitator will help everyone draw (or verbally describe) their own tree.

Start from the bottom and work up the tree.

- **Roots:** where I come from
- **Trunk:** Right side of my trunk—good times in my life; left side of trunk—difficult times in my life
- **Branches:** my hopes and wishes
- **Sun and Rain:** my support system
- **Harmful Insects:** what keeps me from achieving my hopes
- **Leaves:** my talents, skills and achievements
- **Fruit:** what is good in my life now



Facilitator says: Your Tree of Life is divided into three main parts: the ROOTS, the TRUNK and the TOP, which consists of the branches with their leaves and fruit.

NOTE to facilitator: You will need to ask specific questions for each part of the tree. Wait until the participants have completed that section of the drawing before moving to the next set of questions. Take your time.

Instruct the participants, as follows.

- **Draw the ROOTS** (starting at the bottom of your paper) and write down where you come from, and where your parents, relatives and ancestors came from. What town or village do you live in, and your parents/grandparents? These are your roots. Roots can also be your clan or tribe and the people who have loved and helped you in your life. No matter where you travel in life, your roots are in this ground, in this place.
- **Draw the TRUNK** and, on the **right** side of the tree, write down some of the good events in your life. What made you happy? What are the times you celebrated? On the **left** side of the tree, write about some of the difficult times in your life (write only as much as you are comfortable sharing).
- **Draw the BRANCHES.** On the branches, write your hopes and wishes for the future. If you had a very difficult time in your life, you could also show it as a scar on the tree or a broken branch.

- **Draw the HARMFUL INSECTS** that are the obstacles in your life. These are the things that stop you from achieving your hopes. They may also be beliefs about yourself, such as thinking you are worthless or stupid. But remember that—like most obstacles— insects are not permanent: they can be picked off and thrown away.
- **Draw the SUN and RAIN around your tree.** Draw symbols or write down examples of your support system—with whom or where you go for support and assistance when you need it.
- **On the LEAVES,** write your talents and skills (what you are able to do) and achievements (what you have accomplished). What are you good at doing? (*Examples: I am strong; I am good at taking care of others; I am a good listener.*)
- **Finally, on each branch draw the FRUIT**—the fruits are the good things in your life right now. The fruit can also be people with whom you are close, your religious community, your family, etc.

NOTE to Facilitator: If there is extra time, let participants know they can decorate their tree or add more things to it. You may also ask if they liked this activity, and why. **Say:** This is your tree; it is special and unique to you. There are some bad things that happened to your tree but you have survived! Look at how many good things that are also part of your tree!

■ **Leaders Workshop go to [Activity 15](#)**

Activity Fifteen

ACTIVITY 15. TREE OF LIFE PART 2, SHARING/BONDING

Participants	
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Helps us understand that each individual is unique and has different strengths and talents ■ Shows us how much stronger we are as a group
Theme	Trauma awareness, resilience, social cohesion
Time	50 minutes
Materials needed	None

NOTE to facilitator: Have the participants pair up in twos to talk about their tree—including all the parts, from the roots up through the fruit. First one person speaks and then the other.

Do this twice—the first pair for at least 14 minutes (7 minutes per person); then get into a different pair and talk together for another 20 minutes (10 minutes per person). This way, each person gets to tell their story twice (the second time more in-depth), which is very important. Remind participants that whatever is shared by another participant should remain private, and not be told to others without permission.

The objective of sharing is for participants to develop a positive view of themselves and to build hope for the future based on their skills, achievements and experiences, despite past hardships or losses.

Another variation is that the first pairing should be with another person who is similar (for example, same ethnic group, same gender), but the second pairing should be with someone who is different. In the discussion afterward, compare the two experiences. (*If this becomes part of a lengthier experience, sharing can be repeated a third time.*)

If there is an odd number of participants, you, as the facilitator, should join as a participant, so it is always two people talking with one other. When participants share, remind them to start

with the roots and work their way upwards. The person who is not sharing should be quiet and just listen attentively.

Keep close track of the time.

After each round of sharing, the **facilitator asks**: How was that experience for you? How did it feel to talk (do the sharing)? How did it feel to listen to the other person?

Allow for a lot of reflection and discussion, if there is time (but without disclosing personal information). You can expect that the first round of sharing is a bit more difficult; hopefully less so the second time.

TIP: If a participant becomes upset at any time, step outside together, and then listen, provide comfort and/or a referral. Refer to the [Supplemental Activities](#) for additional aid. If several people are upset by the experience, have everyone come into a circle. The facilitator should emphasize that in this workshop we are all together. Ask people to share their thoughts and feelings if they want (no pressure). End with a song or prayer(s) for everyone to join in.

■ **Leaders Workshop go to [Activity 16](#)**

Activity Sixteen

ACTIVITY 16. TREE OF LIFE PART 3, SUPPORTING/BRIDGING

Participants	
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Helps us understand that each individual is unique and has different strengths and talents ■ Shows us how much stronger we are as a group
Theme	Trauma awareness, resilience, social cohesion
Time	20 minutes
Materials needed	Masking tape
Notes	The activities of Tree of Life span the 3 B's of Peacebuilding: Binding, Bonding, Bridging

Ask everyone to hang up their tree pictures next to each other on the same wall to make a cluster of trees. Invite them to look at each of the trees. *(If participants did not draw trees, ask everyone to stand alongside one another for their bodies to represent all of the trees).*

Facilitator asks: What do you think would happen if there was just one tree standing alone in a field, with no other trees nearby, and then there was a big storm or flood? *(It might fall over or become damaged.)*

But what do you see now? *(Get answers. For example, many trees, a forest.)* Explain that the trees represent us, as a group or community. **Ask:** How does it feel for your tree to be part of a forest? *(Get answers.)*

Facilitator asks: Now, think about what happens if there is a bad storm or flood and many trees stand together? *(Get answers. For example, the forest is much stronger and protects the individual trees.)* Ask for comments; spend time asking what people observe in the forest.

Facilitator asks: What else do you notice about our cluster of trees? Are all the trees the same? *(Answer: No, they are diverse.)* Our cluster is not a mono-culture *(when all the trees are the same)*. It is diverse and the trees can protect each other; that is what makes us strong.

Facilitator asks: What do our trees tell us about the way we should live our lives? How can we remain strong in the face of the storms and troubles in our lives? (*Discuss. Then let people know that at the end of the training, they can take their trees home.*)

■ Leaders Workshop go to [Activity 24](#)

Activity Seventeen

ACTIVITY 17. STAGES OF CONFLICT

Participants	
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify the Stages of Conflict (and where we are now) ■ Understand why this is important
Theme	Trauma awareness, resilience
Time	40 minutes
Materials needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Kindling wood, matches, water to douse (or otherwise put out a small fire) ■ Several copies of Appendix, Figure 5

Source: CRS, Peacebuilding Fundamentals: Participants’ Manual, 202. p. 34. (<https://www.crs.org/our-work-overseas/research-publications/peacebuilding-fundamentals>).

Facilitator says: Your country has experienced conflict over many years. What does that conflict look like?

Present the diagram (“See Conflict as A Fire”) from [Appendix, Figure 5](#). It is best to have several copies so everyone can see. Briefly explain each stage of the diagram.

STAGE 1: Gathering materials for the fire—at this stage there is no fire. It is equivalent to potential for conflict.

STAGE 2: Igniting the fire—at this stage the fire has been lit. It is equivalent to a trigger event that sets off confrontation.

STAGE 3: Bonfire—at this stage the fire is burning with a lot of energy, consuming the wood/materials that are fueling it. This stage is equivalent to a conflict crisis.

STAGE 4: Coals—at this stage the fire is reducing, having burned out most of the wood/materials, leaving some hot coals. This is equivalent to a stage where conflict either continues to de-escalate or, if there is another trigger and more fuel is added, then there is potential for further conflict.

STAGE 5: Fire out—at this stage, the fire is completely out and there are no flickers of fire in the coals. This is equivalent to a stage where focus is no longer placed on the fire, but on reconstruction and regeneration.

Say: These are like the stages a conflict goes through. It is important to understand what stage (or stages) of conflict you are in now, as that is your context.

Ask: What stage do you think you are in now? Do you also see some of the other stages also present in your environment? (*Discuss.*)

Ask: Is conflict ever an opportunity? (*At what stages? Ask for examples.*)



Ask: How does this knowledge affect economic activities; education; water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), etc.?

Proceed to make the “conflict as a fire” presentation. If it is possible, conduct this activity outdoors. *(The alternative is to act out the experience without an actual fire.)*

Ask participants to go out to an open space you previously identified for the fire exercise. Explain that they will be lighting a fire and each should go gather a small amount of materials to do so. When they re-assemble, ask them to light a small fire (ensure one of them has a match or lighter). Ask them to let the fire burn until it is out. Debrief the exercise by asking some questions and relating their responses to how conflicts start and phase out. Here are some questions that could be asked:

- What do the materials you gathered represent, if this was a conflict?
- What was required to start the fire after the materials were gathered?
- At what stages is it best to intervene in a conflict, and how does your response differ, depending on which stage you are in?
- What did you think or how did you feel or behave at different stages during the exercise

Conclude: It is important to be sensitive to the different stages of conflict, always being aware of what stage you are in (as an individual, within your family and in the community). Each stage presents opportunities for different interventions.

■ **Community Members Workshop go to [Activity 18](#)**

Activity Eighteen

ACTIVITY 18. CHANGE THE CHANNEL

Participants	
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Learn that we can change the way we feel by changing what we think ■ Learn one way to apply the power of positive thinking
Theme	Trauma awareness, resilience, stress management
Time	20 minutes
Materials needed	None

Source: Singing to the Lions: Overcoming Fear and Violence in our Lives by Jonathan Brakarsh with Lucy Steinitz. Catholic Relief Services, USA. 2017. (www.crs.org; <https://www.crs.org/our-work-overseas/research-publications/singing-lions>).

Facilitator explains: One way of healing from trauma is to change the way you think about something that happened to you in the past. The way this works is that our brains are connected to our body, which means that whatever we think in our heads creates a feeling in the rest of our bodies. *(Ask for examples: when you think about something that makes you sad/angry/joyful, where in your body do you feel that?)*

This means that, by using our brain, we have the power to change what we are thinking about, and that can change the way we feel. For example, when someone tries to make us feel bad or very stressed, we can think positive, good thoughts that will make us feel better. What other things can we do? *(Get responses. For example, talking with others, taking a walk, praying).* These are all good things.

We have this power—every one of us. When we feel stressed, we can decide to put that problem aside and deal with it later. When someone tries to make us feel bad, we can learn to

change our thinking. *(Get reactions. Then say, if we think we are worthless, we will feel sad; if we think we are smart or talented, we will feel good.)* This means that if we change our thinking, we can change our feelings. *(For example: If we think happy thoughts, we feel happy and enjoy life.)* Let's look at this in a different way.

Ask: How many of you like listening to a radio or to programs on your phone? *(Get a show of hands.)*

There are many channels. What are your favorite channels or stations? *(Get many responses.)*

Say: Imagine that you are alone in a room or sitting outside with your phone or a radio and there is a program on that you don't like. What do you do? *(Pause to get responses.)* You change the channel. You can do the same thing inside your head, inside your thinking.

Every time we change the channel, we feel different. So, let's do that now. Just change the channel. *(Have all participants do a movement to change the channel, for example raising their arms and waving their hands.)* What channel are you on now? *(Briefly get responses.)*

Now, think of something that makes you feel peaceful. See it in your mind. Feel it with your hands. Hear it. What we think changes how we feel. So, just change the channel. It's the peace channel. We can be the channel of peace by changing our thoughts to positive ones.

Let us summarize: if you like music and you turn the radio/phone on, but it is on a sports channel, what do you do? You change the channel. *(Everyone does the movement.)* Or, when we hear or feel something that makes us angry and that we don't like, we don't have to stay there in our minds. When we are ready to let go of that feeling, what do we do? *(Get responses.)* Just change the channel. *(Everyone does the movement.)*

■ **Community Members Workshop go to [Activity 19](#) (Optional)**

Activity Nineteen

ACTIVITY 19. ADAM AND SARA (OPTIONAL IF THERE IS TIME)

Participants	
Purpose	■ Learn from an example of stress management and personal resilience
Theme	Trauma awareness, resilience, forgiveness
Time	15 minutes
Materials needed	■ Several copies Appendix, Figure 6

Source: Breaking cycles of violence, Building Healthy individuals and Communities, USAID, 2005.



Show the picture of Adam and Sara ([Appendix, Figure 6](#)). Have several copies so everyone can see it, especially Sara's amputated hand. **Ask** what they think has happened to this couple and how they are coping. **Ask** how they feel about the image. They may offer their own stories.

Alternatively, you can tell the story below and ask for reactions.

Facilitator reads/tells:

Adam and Sara used to have a homestead with several thatched mud huts, one child, chickens and a nice little garden. They shared a single room and each lived an independent life with a lot of arguing between them. Sadly, three years ago, everything they owned burned to the ground and they were forced to flee as internally displaced people to another village. Sara was wounded and one hand had to be amputated.

The family now lives together in one tent, where daily life is much more difficult. At first, Adam and Sara felt hopeless and very stressed.

Recently, however, Adam joined the choir at church (or, became active in his Mosque) and learned many new tunes that he often sings to his family. As a result, the mood at home has become better. Sara says that they now talk about their problems together and that has improved their relationship. Sometimes they pray together and help each other in the new garden that they planted. Their difficult situation hasn't changed, but Adam and Sara are now responding in a different way.

Ask: What is different now? (*Get some responses.*) Adam and Sara changed the channel; they changed the way they think about things, and that has made a positive difference in their lives.

Show [Appendix, Figure 6](#) again.

Ask: Can you think of another example from people you know who are rebuilding their lives in a positive way after a lot of trauma and conflict, like Adam and Sara had?

Facilitator says: Often we cannot change our situation, but we can change how we react to it. Like with stations on a radio or phone, we can **change the channel**. (*The facilitator does the change-the-channel movement with everyone.*)

■ **Community Members Workshop go to [Activity 20](#)**

Activity Twenty

ACTIVITY 20. UNDERSTAND THE CYCLE OF CONFLICT

Participants	
Purpose	■ Learn about the Cycle of Conflict and identify some ways to stop it
Theme	Trauma awareness, resilience
Time	15 minutes
Materials needed	None

Source: Singing to the Lions: Overcoming Fear and Violence in our Lives by Jonathan Brakarsh with Lucy Steinitz. Catholic Relief Services, USA. 2017. (www.crs.org; <https://www.crs.org/our-work-overseas/research-publications/singing-lions>).

Facilitator says: This activity is like a “Round and Round” game because it shows us what happens when conflict and violence come into our lives.

Everyone stands in a circle, one behind the person in front of them so they are looking at the back of the person. One person starts by yelling “You!” at the person in front of them. Then the next person does the same until everyone, one at a time, has had a turn to shout “You!” at the person in front of them. The activity concludes when the person who went first gets yelled at by the person behind.

NOTE: *If it is culturally acceptable to put their hand firmly on the shoulder of the person in front of them instead of yelling “You!”, that is also possible.*

Facilitator says: So, what is happening here? (*Get responses.*) Conflict and violence go round and round. The person or group who started the violence has the violence come back to them. This is sometimes called The Cycle of Conflict or the Cycle of Violence.

Have you seen this in your life or someone else’s? The person who is hurt by violence often seeks revenge (hurts that person back) or hurts someone who is weaker than they are. A lot of domestic violence happens this way, and also violence against children.

What we have learned is that violence creates more violence. What can we do to stop it? (*Get responses.*)

We need to start with OURSELVES. If every individual stops being violent to others, then bit by bit, the cycle of violence will stop. Even if a few people will stop, the violence will reduce because the cycle is broken. How do we do make this change? (*Get responses.*)

Facilitator concludes: We already talked about discussing problems with others to find a solution, like the two donkeys. We also learned how to change the channel, to think more positive thoughts. In a few minutes, we will look at forgiveness—forgiving ourselves and forgiving others—as another way to break the cycle of conflict and build peace.

■ **Community Members Workshop go to [Activity 21](#)**

Activity Twenty-One

ACTIVITY 21. FORGIVENESS CAN BREAK THE CYCLE OF CONFLICT

Participants	
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understand that forgiveness can break the cycle of conflict/violence ■ See that forgiveness is possible even in very difficult circumstances
Theme	Forgiveness
Time	20 minutes
Materials needed	■ Appendix, Figure 7

Source: Resilience and Food Security Program (RFSP), Transforming Livelihoods: Social Cohesion Visual Aid Training Manual, USAID, CRS, Save the Children, July 2021 (also known as P2R: Pathways to Resilience or RFSP/P2R Visual Aid).

Ask: What does forgiveness mean?

After some answers are given, offer this:

Forgiveness simply means choosing to let go of your anger, hurt and desire for vengeance. You can accept that what happened is now in the past. You recognize that all people make mistakes. Among the benefits of forgiving someone is that you feel less stress and your own health and well-being improves.

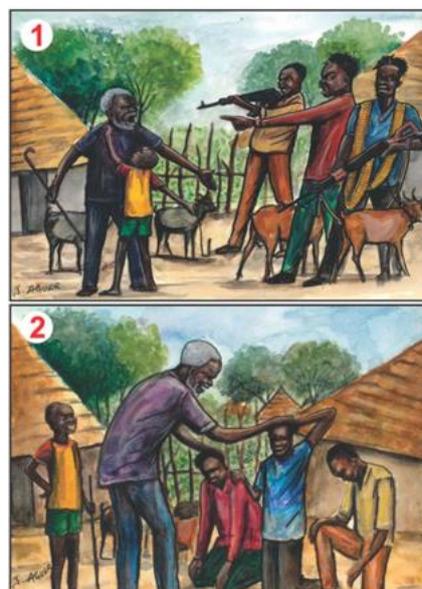
Forgiveness doesn’t mean forgetting or excusing the harm done to you. If a crime was committed, the law should be involved; also, CRS’s safeguarding team should be contacted if a staff member or volunteer is thought to be the perpetrator of harm. Even though you forgive someone, you can still pursue justice. There is no need to make up or become friends with the person who caused the harm.

Forgiveness brings a kind of peace that allows you to focus on yourself and helps you go on with life.

NOTE: Safeguarding concerns should be reported to the Country Program safeguarding designate (if available), by contacting [EthicsPoint](#), or by writing alert@crs.org.

Facilitator: Show the pictures in [Appendix, Figure 7](#) and ask participants some of these questions:

1. What do you see in these pictures?
2. What is the boy in the picture telling the father?
3. What is the father telling the armed youth?
4. How are the armed youth behaving toward the old man?
5. What is happening in the second picture?
6. Does the old man revenge or forgive? How does he do it?
7. What can we do to forgive and reconcile with those people who have hurt us in the past?
8. What does forgiveness mean to you?
9. Have you ever forgiven someone who has wronged you?



Facilitator concludes: One way to break the cycle of conflict is to forgive the other person or group.

■ **Community Members Workshop go to [Activity 22](#)**

Activity Twenty-Two

ACTIVITY 22. FORGIVENESS AND FAITH

Participants	
Purpose	■ Reinforce the importance of forgiveness from a faith perspective
Theme	Forgiveness
Time	15 minutes
Materials needed	None

Facilitator asks: What does your faith say about practicing forgiveness?

Facilitator may draw from the following or ask participants what their religious tradition says about forgiveness.

CHRISTIAN: **Christianity** contains many lessons on forgiveness, including the last words of Christ on the cross before He died (“Father forgive them, for they know not what they do”). Or from The Lord’s Prayer, which says, “**Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.**” “Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.” (Colossians 3:13). Or the passage about turning the other cheek (Matthew 5:38–39).

ISLAM: With **Muslims**, select from the Quran: “Let them pardon and overlook. Would you not love for Allah to forgive you? Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.” (Surah An-Nur 24:22). “Show forgiveness, enjoin what is good, and turn away from the ignorant.” (Surah Al-A’raf 7:199).

“Verily, the Hour is coming, so forgive them with gracious forgiveness.” (Surah Al-Hijr 15:85).
 “The believers are those who spend in charity during ease and hardship and who restrain their anger and pardon the people, for Allah loves the doers of good.” (Surah Ali Imran 3:134).
 “Whoever is patient and forgives, verily, that is among the matters of steadfast determination.” (Surah Ash-Shura 42:43). Prophet Mohammed in Sunna book (Sahih) mentioned, **Be merciful to others and you will receive mercy. Forgive others and Allah will forgive you.** Source: Musnad Ahmad 7001, Grade: Sahih

Facilitator says: What does this mean to you? (*Discuss.*)

- Remind participants that “to forgive” does not mean you should forget what happened.
- Forgiveness allows you to move on with your life, and also lets the other person/group move on with their life/lives.

Participants should recognize that both religions have similar teachings about forgiveness. This also applies to other faith traditions.

■ **Community Members Workshop go to [Activity 23](#)**

Activity Twenty-Three

ACTIVITY 23. PRACTICING FORGIVENESS

Participants	
Purpose	■ Introduce participants to the experience of offering forgiveness to others and also receiving it from the group
Theme	Forgiveness
Time	30 minutes
Materials needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lightweight ball (or rolled up paper that is taped into a ball) ■ Background music—optional

NOTE to Facilitator: *Some people may find it difficult to use the word “forgive” or “forgiveness.” They may use the word “unburden” instead.*

Facilitator asks everyone to stand in a circle.

In this activity, the ball represents a “hot feeling.” Toss it lightly or pass it around the circle while the music plays, letting it go as quickly as you can. (*Alternatively, throw it lightly from one person to another.*) When the music stops, (or when the ball is caught), whoever is holding the “hot feeling” has to keep holding it (still pretending it is very hot) until the rest of the group says collectively (slowly and clearly, all together):

- “We forgive you for whatever you did. We accept you.”
- The person holding the ball says, “I am grateful. Thank you.”

Then that person steps back, and the activity continues until only one player is left. At that moment, the facilitator steps in, takes the ball and says to the remaining player:

- “We forgive you for whatever you did. We accept you.”
- And the remaining player answers, “I am grateful. Thank you.”

After everyone has participated in this activity, read aloud this quote and ask what participants think about it: *Forgiveness liberates the soul. It removes fear. That is why it is such a powerful weapon.*—Nelson Mandela

Reinforce the major lessons learned so far (take-home messages).

■ Community Members Workshop go to [Activity 26](#)

Activity Twenty-Four

ACTIVITY 24. LEADERSHIP STYLES

Participants	
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify different leadership styles ■ Help participants understand what kind of leader they want to be
Theme	Leadership
Time	30 minutes
Materials needed	None

Facilitator explains: Leadership is the ability or act of influencing the behavior of others. Everyone can be a leader at least some of the time—for example, with your family, in the community, with your friends or neighbors and so on. A leader is someone who has the ability to influence the behavior of others and persuade them to have a certain goal or objective.

Facilitator asks: Are there good leaders and bad leaders? (*Pause for answers. Use a flip chart, if available.*)

Briefly brainstorm:

- What makes a bad leader? (3–5 things)
- What makes a good leader (3–5 things)

THREE BOWLS OF PORRIDGE (STORY)

Facilitator explains: I will tell a short story about a smart little hare (rabbit) and three bowls of porridge that represent three styles of leadership:

One morning, when no one was at home, a little hare went inside a house and saw three bowls of porridge on the table.

The hare was hungry, and the porridge looked good, so first the hare tried some of the porridge from the big bowl, but **it was very hot**.

Next the hare tried the porridge from the second bowl, but **it was very cold**.

Then the hare went over to the last bowl. This time the porridge **was just right** and so delicious that the hare ate it all up.

Facilitator continues: Think of leaders that you know as if they are bowls of porridge.

- What does it mean to be a leader who is **too hot**? What types of behavior would be associated with a leader who is “very hot”? Has anybody ever met or heard of this kind of leader?
- What does it mean to be a leader who is **too cold**? What types of behavior would be associated with a leader who is “very cold”? Have you ever met a leader like that?

- What does it mean to be a leader who is **just right**? What types of behavior would be associated with a leader who is “just right”? Have you ever met a leader who is (or was) just right?

Facilitator explains: Every leader—whether a leader in the family or the community—has to make a lot of decisions. But how do they do that? We are now going to look at three styles of leadership.

■ Leaders Workshop go to [Activity 25](#)

Activity Twenty-Five

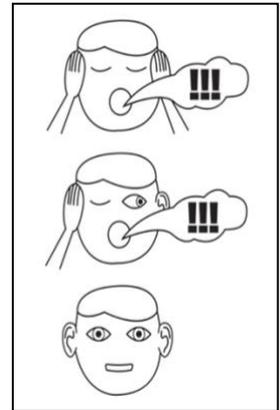
ACTIVITY 25. HOW TO BECOME A BETTER LEADER

Participants	
Purpose	■ Help participants consider their own leadership styles and what they might want to change
Theme	Leadership
Time	20 minutes
Materials needed	■ Multiple copies of Appendix, Figure 8 or a hand-drawn copy of these three faces on flip-chart paper

Facilitator says: Here is another way to think about leaders in your community, and also to think about the kind of leader you want to be:

On the board or flip chart, the facilitator draws/shows three simple faces like those pictured [Appendix, Figure 8](#).

- Draw the first face: Two eyes closed, ears blocked, and talking (mouth wide open). **Ask:** Do you know leaders like this?
- Draw the second face: One eye open, one ear open, and talking (mouth wide open); all attention is on just one side, or for just one opinion. **Ask:** Do you know leaders like this?
- Draw the third face: Two eyes open and two ears open and mouth closed, listening to both sides. **Ask:** Do you know leaders like this?



Then ask:

- What is the best kind of leader, and why?
- How can each of us learn to become a better leader?

(By listening more, by imitating the leadership style of someone we admire, etc.)

Facilitator says: Most leaders are men. But what about women?

Ask:

- When you think about men who are leaders and women who are leaders, what differences do you notice (if any)?
- In what ways or in what situations might women be good leaders—perhaps even better than men?

- What can you do to promote more women/youth/minorities/those with a disability to be leaders in your community/in your country?

■ **Leaders Workshop go to [Activity 26](#) OR [Activity 27](#)**

Activity Twenty-Six

ACTIVITY 26. GIFT BOX

Participants	
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Highlight lessons learned during the workshop ■ Make a commitment for constructive action after the workshop ends
Theme	Trauma awareness, resilience, social cohesion
Time	40 minutes
Materials needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 2 small pebbles per person ■ Basket or box for every group
Notes	Leaders may go through this Activity or go directly to Activity 28

Have everyone sit or stand in a circle. Give each person two pebbles or small stones and have a basket or box for every group. *(Note: if time is short, divide into three separate circles to do the same activity, but simultaneously within each group. No report-back is necessary.)*

Ask every participant to pick up two small stones. Explain that the **first stone** represents something they learned during the workshop—for example, a new insight, idea or skill. This represents the gift of the workshop to you.

The **second stone** represents the gift that you want to give someone else or to a community in the future based on the activities or themes that were raised in the workshop. Make sure to give participants time to think what they want their objects to represent.

Pass the gift box from one participant to another.

When it reaches each participant, s/he should place the first stone into the box and name the “gift” he or she received from the workshop.

Ask participants to repeat the exercise naming the second gift as well. Ask participants to be as specific as possible. *(For example, someone may say, “I will help guard the water pump so that the access will be fair and equitable.”)*

Ask for feedback.

Ask: How did you feel about the activity? What effect has the workshop had within this group? How does that strengthen your mandate to implement what you have learned to others?

Then ask: How can we use what we learned to strengthen relationships and build social cohesion between each other within our own group—and in the community-at-large, across different groups?

■ **Community Members Workshop go to [Activity 28](#)**

■ **Leaders Workshop go to [Activity 27](#)**

Activity Twenty-Seven

ACTIVITY 27. KEY MESSAGES

Participants	
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Help participants identify ways to apply in their communities what they have learned during the workshop
Theme	Trauma awareness, resilience, leadership, social cohesion
Time	45 minutes
Materials needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Cut strips of paper from Appendix, Figure 9 and distribute to each person (make additional copies if they are needed) ■ Add a local translation on the other side of each strip

Source: Messages are adapted from participants in earlier trainings of CRS’s Trauma Awareness and Resilience (2016 and 2018) in South Sudan. <https://www.crs.org/our-work-overseas/research-publications/introduction-trauma-awareness-and-resilience>.

NOTE to facilitator: Divide participants into pairs of two. Cut a copy of the statements below in advance and give one statement to each pair ([Appendix, Figure 9](#)). Add a translation into the local language on the other side of each strip. If there are more than 15 pairs, make more than one copy of the statements; *each statement should be distributed at least once.*

Facilitator: Ask every pair to look at their paper and describe what they have learned that supports each of their statements. After each one speaks, go to the next pair.

1. Everyone has experienced trauma, but trauma **does not last forever**. You can still have a good future.
2. Focus **your attention on the good things in your life** to prevent your trauma from controlling you.
3. Try to **forgive yourself and others**. This will make you feel better, and it will help make your community strong and safe.
4. **You are what you do**, not what you say.
5. To solve your community’s problems, you first need to **discuss different ways to build cooperation**.
6. By **putting God/Allah in the center of your life**, you will feel balanced, centered and strong.
7. **Prayer and songs** can help you recover from trauma.
8. Like a forest, a community is stronger if it includes **people from different backgrounds**.
9. The three **B’s** of building social cohesion within divided communities are **Binding, Bonding, Bridging**.
10. Binding is essential: **You cannot give what you do not have**.
11. Building cooperation requires that **you give something to others in order to get something back**.
12. **Hard is not impossible**.
13. A good leader keeps **two eyes, two ears and one heart open**.
14. No matter what the situation, **you have a choice in how to respond**.
15. **You never know how strong you are** until you try.

■ Leaders Workshop go to [Activity 28](#)

Activity Twenty-Eight

ACTIVITY 28. DAY TWO WRAP-UP

Participants	 
Purpose	■ Evaluate the workshop and say goodbye
Time	20 minutes
Materials needed	■ Optional large poster paper with 3 faces:    

Ask participants to place a check mark next to the type of face (happy, neutral, disappointed) that represents their assessment of the entire workshop. Ask for any additional comments and suggest that everyone stands up and says goodbye to every other person in the room (nodding heads, shaking hands, etc.—whatever is customary.) Incorporate any additional evaluations. Thank everyone for coming.



Supplemental Activities (Optional)

These activities are intended for follow-up or refresher sessions, separate from the Leaders' or Community Members workshops, above. They are suitable for both groups.

ACTIVITY	MINUTES	THEME
29. Supplemental: How to Handle Stress	30	Trauma awareness, resilience, stress management
30. Supplemental: What is Most Important in Our Lives	20	Trauma awareness, resilience
31. Supplemental: Choosing Your Future	40	Trauma awareness, resilience, social cohesion, leadership
32. Supplemental: Hand Massage	20	Stress management
33. Supplemental: Big Wind Blows	10	Social cohesion
34. Supplemental, Five Short Energizers	2–5	Stress management
35. Supplemental, Yoga, Breath Work and Meditation	20–30	Stress management

Activity Twenty-Nine, Supplemental

ACTIVITY 29. SUPPLEMENTAL: HOW TO HANDLE STRESS

Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understand that a little bit of stress is normal but too much stress can be harmful ■ Learn from each other what are some good ways to relieve stress
Theme	Trauma awareness, resilience, stress management
Time	30 minutes
Materials needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Large plastic bottle or container (at least 1 liter in size), water or sand

Facilitator explains: All of us carry a little bit of stress, but too much stress can feel overwhelming. Experiencing too much stress, especially over a long time, can be very harmful.

Ask: What can happen if you do not address this pressure or stress and it keeps building up and getting bigger? (*Get answers, e.g., depression, anger, turning to alcohol or drugs, etc.*)

Say: Too much stress is a bad thing, but is all stress bad? (*Get some answers.*)

Then say: A little bit of stress is normal and can even help us by making us alert when there is danger or when we need to pay close attention to something. The problem is when stress becomes severe. Severe stress can cause trauma (that is, serious injury or damage) and trauma can cause increased stress. It becomes a vicious cycle. We will demonstrate the effects of increased stress with the use of a large plastic bottle or container.

BOTTLE DEMONSTRATION

Take the bottle/container and start filling it with water. As you give the explanation below, add more water until the bottle overflows (sand can be used instead of water).

Facilitator explains: A little bit of stress is not harmful. A body can hold some stress (like the water/sand) and this is okay. A little stress makes us more alert, aware of danger and helps us react quickly. But if stress is not addressed, it becomes overwhelming. Eventually it spills over—like when you put too much water into a bottle/container—and is uncontrolled.

This makes a mess. And if there is another trauma, then the bottle can explode and the damage is far worse, spreading the water much further. We are like the bottle. When there is too much stress, we cannot contain it anymore and then we feel overwhelmed.

Ask one participant to hold the bottle/container at arm’s length (still filled with water or sand). After a few moments, ask if the bottle/container is beginning to feel heavy.

Say: Even if the bottle/container was not overflowing, after a while it can feel very heavy. If you continue to hold it, how does it feel? *(Possible answers: the stress builds up and, if you do not put the water down—that is, if you do not manage the stress—the container will eventually drop, possibly break and spill the water/sand.)*

It is important to find ways to reduce stress. Even simple things that you can do will help.

Say: Now we are going to explore some way we can relieve stress.

WHAT CAN WE DO TO RELIEVE STRESS?

Break into groups of 2 or 3 persons.

Facilitator says: What actions that are not harmful do you do to feel better when you are feeling pressed down or pushed? *(Examples might be, taking a walk, praying, talking to a friend.)*

Explain that in each small group, every person should describe one thing they do to relieve stress. Then the group should pick one example that they want to tell the larger group. After 5–7 minutes, ask each small group to share.

Activity Thirty, Supplemental

ACTIVITY 30. SUPPLEMENTAL: WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT IN OUR LIVES?

Purpose	■ Focus on the people and things that are most important to us
Theme	Trauma awareness, resilience, stress management
Time	20 minutes
Materials needed	■ Large jar or bowl to hold the materials below ■ Pebbles, large rocks, sand, water

Facilitator: Read the story below and demonstrate it in the same way as the teacher did in the story. Ask for comments or questions, after each action.

One day the teacher brings an empty jar to class and puts it down. Her students wonder what it’s about. Then she fills it up with large stones and asks the students if it is full. The students say yes. Then the teacher adds pebbles and asks, “Is it full now?”

The students say, “Yes, YES!” Then the teacher adds sand. Once again, the teacher asks, “Is it full now?” Now the students realize that there is more to come. Sure enough, the teacher adds water. Finally, the container is full.

Then the teacher explains. “The large stones are the people who are most important to us. They are the foundation. The pebbles are other things that are important to us—maybe our work or our house or our bicycles or other things like that. “And what is the sand?” one student

asks. “The sand represents the little things that we enjoy or that we do on an every-day basis,” the teacher explains.

Finally, a student asks, “But what is the water?” and the teachers responds, “Excellent question! What the water shows us is that no matter how full the jar is, there is always room to share a cup of coffee or tea, with other people who are our friends and who we love.”

Ask:

- Did you like this story? Why?
- Who/What are your big stones?
- How can you prioritize what is most important for you?
- What is the meaning of this story for you? How does it help you reflect on your life?
- In this story, where would you put God/Allah? (*Possible answer: Our faith is the jug that holds everything together.*)

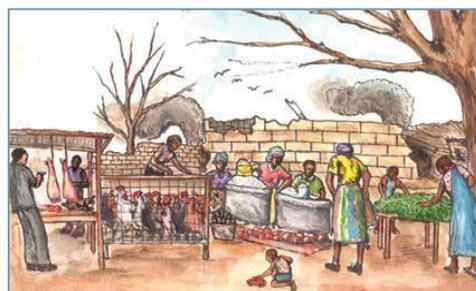
Activity Thirty-One, Supplemental

ACTIVITY 31. SUPPLEMENTAL: CHOOSING YOUR FUTURE

Purpose	■ Highlight the choices that participants have in conceiving and reaching towards the future
Theme	Trauma awareness, resilience, social cohesion, leadership
Time	40 minutes
Materials needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Large paper and markers ■ Drawings in Appendix, Figures 10

NOTE: there are three images for this activity.

Ask: What do we want our future to look like? (*Show pictures sequentially and discuss.*)



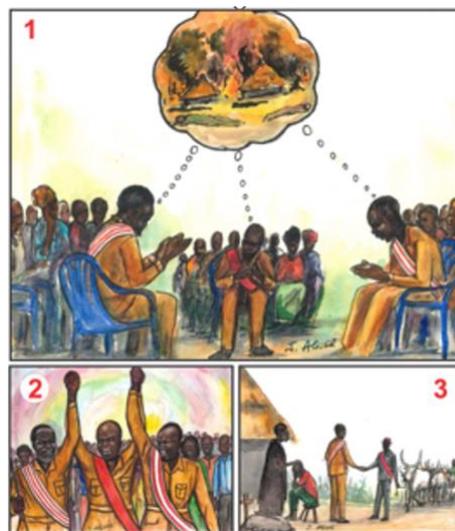
Source: Left image by James Aguer Garang from Morning Star: Breaking cycles of violence, Building Healthy individuals and Communities, USAID, 2005. Both reproduced from Introduction to Trauma Awareness and Resilience, CRS. 2018.

The facilitator shows the **first two drawings** of homestead life in [Appendix, Figures 10](#) and then asks everyone to close their eyes for a few moments and think of what they would like their own future to look like.

Briefly discuss what the participants see in these two images.

Then, show the **third drawing** representing inter-group reconciliation (a set of three images) from [Appendix, Figures 10](#).

1. What do you see in three images?
2. What can we do to unite our people?
3. How do we move from a clan or tribal loyalty to creating a loyalty to our country?
4. What do we have in common with other tribes in our area?
5. How can we accept and tolerate and value the differences between our different clans and tribes?
6. What are the benefits of peaceful coexistence?
7. Who is responsible for resolving conflict among our people?



Then ask: In your community, what can you do to get the future you want, in our families and with our neighbors, and with the people who live in the area?

(Facilitators may note that “sitting down to discuss our problems and find a common solution” is the same idea as in the Hungry Donkeys.)

Discussion: Highlight actions that can be taken, and if there is anyone who offers leadership to take this further.

Activity Thirty-Two, Supplemental

ACTIVITY 32. SUPPLEMENTAL: HAND MASSAGE

Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Step-by-step hand massage that participants can give themselves ■ Experience stress reduction ■ Learn a new skill that can be applied anywhere
Theme	Stress management
Time	20 minutes
Materials needed	■ Hand lotion is optional

The facilitator guides the hand-massage by doing it herself/himself, with participants following the same gestures, step-by-step. Instructions for the facilitator are below.

Afterwards ask: How did this activity feel when you started? *(Get answers. Expect that for many, this felt strange at first.)*

Then ask: How do you feel now? Can you imagine doing this again? When might it be useful?

Now, we can give ourselves a **Hand Massage**

A hand massage can improve your health and well-being in a number of ways. The benefits may include

- reduced hand pain
- less anxiety
- better mood
- improved sleep
- greater grip strength



1

CRS faith. action. results.

Giving yourself a hand-massage - 1

Stretch your hands and fingers to warm them up. Make a tight fist with each hand, and then stretch your fingers out as far as you can. Repeat this 4 or 5 times. Then make a loose fist with each hand and roll your wrists in circles 5 times in each direction.



- You can continue to do any other stretching movements that make your hands feel good, for as long as you like.

2

CRS faith. action. results.

Giving yourself a hand-massage - 2

Apply massage oil or hand lotion to your hands or pretend that this is what you are doing. Use smooth, rapid strokes to warm up the muscles, and massage the oil over every surface of each hand. Don't forget the back of your hands, your wrists, and between each finger.



3

CRS faith. action. results.

Giving yourself a hand-massage - 3

Pinch your fingertips. Beginning with your right hand, pinch the tip of each finger of your left hand firmly between thumb and index finger. Squeeze from front to back, and from side to side. Don't forget your thumb.

- Now switch and use your left hand to pinch the fingers of your right hand in the same fashion.
- Try to relax the hand that is on the receiving end of the massage for best effect.



1

4

Giving yourself a hand-massage - 4

Massage your fingers. Begin with your right hand and massage each finger of your left hand. Start at the base (near the knuckle) and gently twist and pull on your finger, as you massage to the fingertip.

- When finished, massage the fingers of your right hand with your left.



2

5

Giving yourself a hand-massage - 5

Massage between your fingers. Use your right hand to pinch the webbing between your left thumb and index finger. Grip the skin firmly and pull, sliding your fingers down until your skin snaps free from your grasp. Then repeat the process with the rest of the fingers on the left hand.

- When you have finished the left hand, massage your right hand with your left.
- Only use as much pressure as is comfortable.



3

6

Giving yourself a hand-massage - 6

Massage the back of each hand. Hold the palm of your left hand in the palm of your right (it should look like you are shaking hands with yourself.) Then use your right thumb to massage the back of your left hand. Begin at the knuckle of your pinky finger, and using short, firm strokes, massage upwards toward your wrist. Repeat the process for each finger, and your thumb.



- Spend extra time on any areas that need extra attention.
- When you finish with one hand, switch, and repeat with the other.

7

CRS faith. action. results.

Giving yourself a hand-massage - 7

Massage the inside of your wrists. Cradle your left hand in your right, and use your thumb to massage your inner wrist, using a circular motion. Then switch hands and repeat.



8

CRS faith. action. results.

Giving yourself a hand-massage - 8

Massage the palms of your hands. Hold one hand in the other, and massage your palm using small, circular, firm motions. Begin in the center, and work your way to the sides, paying special attention to any sore areas. Finish each hand by pressing firmly on the center of your palm for a few moments. Then switch hands and repeat.



9

CRS faith. action. results.

Giving yourself a hand-massage -9

Stretch your hands once more to complete the massage. When you are done, gently shake out your hands. Swivel your wrists a few times, and then clench your fists and stretch out your fingers. Your hands should feel rejuvenated and refreshed!



Giving yourself a hand-massage -10

Additional tip for CRAMPS. Take the thumb of your other hand and massage directly into the cramp. You can make circular motions and work the entire length of your hand. Even if you only feel the cramp in one area, there is probably a lot of tension in the surrounding area that you can release as well.



How do you feel now?

Activity Thirty-Three, Supplemental

ACTIVITY 33. SUPPLEMENTAL: BIG WIND BLOWS

Purpose	■ Build a sense of community while having fun
Theme	Social cohesion
Time	10–15 minutes
Materials needed	None

Participants sit in a circle with one chair missing. The facilitator stands in the middle of the circle and gives the instruction that the person in the middle says, “The Big Wind blows for everyone who—for example—had breakfast this morning, is wearing red, has an older brother, likes coffee, etc.” (*The choices should be adapted for the local culture.*)

All the people for whom the statement is true stand up and move to another chair. The person who cannot get to a chair is “in” and goes into the center of the circle and calls out the next characteristic for people to move. When the “in” person calls out “Big Storm!” everybody moves. When the activity is finished, the facilitator draws in the extra chair so that everyone is now seated.

Variations: People cannot move to the adjoining chair. The characteristic must be one that the “in” person has.

Activity Thirty-Four, Supplemental

ACTIVITY 34. SUPPLEMENTAL: SHORT ENERGIZERS

Purpose	■ Provide a short “light and lively” activity to lift participants’ mood, if needed
Theme	Stress management
Time	2–5 minutes each
Materials needed	None

(*These suggestions can be inserted when needed. Participants may have their own energizers to contribute.*)

1. MOTORCYCLE RIDE

Facilitator should either stand with his/her back to participants, or reverse left/right sides so they mirror actions of everyone else.

Facilitator says: “We are a motorcycle team. I am the leader and everyone needs to do what I say and do.” Invite everyone to:

- Bend to the right and say “right”
- Bend to the left and say “left”
- Bend forward to go through a tunnel and say “tunnel”
- Go up a steep road and bump over puddles or potholes
- Bob up and down on your seat and say “Bumpy-bump, bump, bump.”

Then lead the group in as many right, left, tunnel and bumps as you like.

2. EVERYONE LIKE ME

One person starts by saying “Everyone like me who” (say something about themselves, e.g., is wearing something blue, likes to eat rice), and then pick an action everybody has to do (for example, a big stretch). That person then points to someone else who takes a turn with a different identification (for example, “everyone like me who has an older brother or sister”) and that person picks a different action (for example, mooing like a cow, jumping up and down, etc.). This continues in order to get people up and moving a bit more. After a few more turns, the facilitator can end this by saying, “Everyone like me who is in this workshop” and come up with a final movement that everyone must do.

3. ONE PLUS ONE

- Facilitator explains “We are going to raise and lower our arms while we add up together.”
 - Say “Copy me!” then as you say “one” raise your arm up high (check everyone is copying you) then lower your arm. (1)
 - Say “Plus” and cross forearms over each other in front of chest. Relax. (+)
 - Say “One” again raise your other arm, then and lower it. (1)
Say “Equal”, holding out both arms parallel to the ground. (=)
 - Say “Two” and raise both arms up. (2)
- A co-facilitator or a volunteer leads by saying: “Two plus two equal four.” This is $2 + 2 = 4$. The 4 is done by crossing one leg over the other at the knee.
- For additional challenge, with the group standing, the facilitator says, “Four plus four equals eight.” This is $4 + 4 = 8$. The 8 is done by swiveling hips like an 8.
- Repeat a second time, faster than before.

4. WAKE UP AS A BIRD

Everyone does this at the same time. The **facilitator instructs**: Stand up, imagine that you are sleeping bird who is slowly waking up gradually making louder and louder bird-noises. Move your body to mimic the bird. Then say that now it is time for the birds to look for food (which should get participants moving around the training area, as if they are flying). **Ask**: what kind of food does your bird eat? Some may fish, others may catch insects, others may eat fruits or seeds. Instruct participants to act this out. After a short time, ask them to return to their nest (their seat), perhaps to feed their baby birds, and then calm down.

5. PUMP BREATH

In this breathing exercise you should act like a water pump. Put your fists next to your shoulders, facing outwards with your arms bent. Breathe in, push arms up straight up over your head, fists into the air. Exhale, pull fists back to shoulder height, saying the word “Ho!” as loudly as you can. Do this five times rapidly (or more) to create laughter.

Activity Thirty-Five, Supplemental

ACTIVITY 35. YOGA, BREATH WORK AND MEDITATION

Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify simple calming techniques from yoga, deep breathing and meditation. These techniques can be applied every day and in high stress, emergency situations. ■ Practice a few of these techniques.
Theme	Stress management

Time	20–30 minutes each
Materials needed	None

Facilitator explains: Following simple Yoga postures and meditation practices can reduce your stress or anxiety from past trauma and high-stress situations, including **post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)**. Many yoga resources are available on the internet, for example from Psychology Today, Art of Living and Teladoc (which includes some yoga postures while you remain sitting in your chair). You can search on the internet for others; many are free. Depending on time, a few yoga postures may be practiced together.

Facilitator continues: Yoga and deep breathing go hand in hand. It is best to practice yoga and deep breathing meditation a few minutes every day, starting small and **gradually** increasing your time. It is also important to breathe correctly. For example, just inhaling deeply is not sufficient, and may not calm you down. Taking **in** a deep breath (inhaling) is linked to the sympathetic nervous system, which controls the fight-or-flight response. But breathing out (exhaling) is linked to the parasympathetic nervous system, which influences our body’s ability to relax and calm down.

Emptying your lungs by fully exhaling your breath can feel very powerful. Your exhaling should take longer (by 1–2 seconds) than your inhaling. But do it slowly. Breathing too quickly can cause you to hyperventilate, which decreases the amount of oxygen-rich blood that flows to your brain. Reference: <https://www.healthline.com/health/breathing-exercises-for-anxiety#abdomen-breathing>.

Facilitator says: To calm yourself down, it is best to start with breathing out (exhaling) like this:

1. Slowly push all the air out of your lungs; then simply let your lungs do their work inhaling air. This will occur naturally.
2. Next, try spending a little bit longer exhaling (breathing out) than you do inhaling (breathing in). For example, try inhaling for four seconds, then exhale for six. The effect is even stronger if you inhale through your nose and exhale through your mouth (like smelling the flowers and blowing out the candles).
3. Try doing this for 2–5 minutes.

This technique can be done in any position that is comfortable for you, including standing, sitting or lying down.

After practicing this a few times, the Facilitator says: You can add a meditation, reciting to yourself when sitting or lying in a comfortable position with your eyes closed. For example, quietly recite and repeat these phrases to yourself: one phrase for each full breath cycle. That is, breathe out, then in, then say the first phrase to yourself; then breathe out, then in, and say the second phrase to yourself, and so on. Repeat the complete meditation (all four phrases, sequentially) 2–3 times.

*May I feel safe.
May I feel grateful.
May I feel strong.
May I live with ease.*

Facilitator leads the people in this meditative breathing practice.

Facilitator asks: How do you feel now? Are there any questions?

To end, practice the meditative breathing one more time.

(Explain that other meditation phrases can be substituted, as long as they are short, positive and easy to remember.)

Part Four: Facilitator Guidance

Guidance 1: What Makes a Good Facilitator?

A good facilitator:

1. Asks open-ended questions. Asks questions that invite participants to reflect and share with the group, like “What do you think about X?” or “How do you feel about X?” rather than closed questions that only require “yes” or “no” answers, such as “Do you like X?”
2. Encourages participation and gives participants equal opportunities. For example, keeps a list of people who want to speak and shares with the group the order in which people will speak to encourage full participation.
3. Allows group members to answer each other’s questions.
4. Summarizes discussions and reviews the main points at the end of a discussion.
5. Acknowledges different viewpoints by tracking the different lines of thought on a particular topic.
6. Is alert to sensitive issues.
7. Recognizes his or her limitations: for example, by not acting like a mental health counselor and by not trying to provide therapy.
8. Tries to encourage everyone to participate, without forcing anyone to speak.
9. Periodically reminds participants that they can opt out (step aside or not share something that makes them uncomfortable).
10. Keeps the group focused on content.
11. Is active and engaging.
12. Encourages participation and gives participants equal opportunities.
13. Uses techniques such as intentional silence to give participants time to reflect before or after speaking. The ability to tolerate five seconds of silence (which seems much longer than it actually is) is the most important element of this skill.
14. Uses body language to help manage the conversation. Body language can be used to encourage people to talk or to discourage them from talking, e.g., turning away from those who talk too much. Eye contact can also be used to make people feel they are being heard, and encourages their participation.

For more information on facilitating gender sensitive and inclusive workshops, see: [Gender Sensitive and Inclusive Training Guide_DRAFT_19.02.24.docx](#).

Guidance 2: What is Trauma-Informed Practice?

Reprinted with permission.

Stuart, G. (2024, 11 January). What is trauma-informed practice? (6 principles). *Sustaining Community*. <https://sustainingcommunity.wordpress.com/2024/01/11/what-is-trauma-informed-practice-6-principles/>.

Trauma can have a large impact on all aspects of a person’s life—including how they interact with community services. (See [What is Trauma?](#) and [The Impact of Trauma.](#))

Trauma-informed practice is thus an important foundation for services and practitioners in a range of settings. The first approaches to “treating” trauma were in response to military personnel who had fought in wars,^[1] but gradually there was a greater recognition of trauma caused by sexual violence, domestic and family violence, childhood abuse/neglect and other forms of trauma. As Judith Herman^[2] demonstrated in her seminal work *Trauma and Recovery* (which explored the trauma many women experience in the home), trauma is not simply the result of rare, extreme events, but is much more common than war.

Psychological trauma is an affliction of the powerless. At the moment of trauma, the victim is rendered helpless by overwhelming force. When the force is that of nature, we speak of disasters. When the force is that of other human beings, we speak of atrocities. Traumatic events overwhelm the ordinary systems of care that give people a sense of control, connection and meaning.

It was once believed that such events were uncommon. Rape, battery and other forms of sexual and domestic violence are so common as part of women’s lives that they can hardly be described as outside the range of ordinary experience.

Traumatic events are extraordinary, not because they occur rarely, but rather because they overwhelm the ordinary human adaptations to life. Unlike commonplace misfortunes, traumatic events generally involved violence and death. They confront human beings with the extremities of helplessness and terror, and evoke the responses of catastrophe (p. 33).

As the nature of trauma became better understood, approaches to supporting people with trauma began to change. Susan Salasin^[3] argues that, rather than clinical treatment of symptoms or psychosocial education and empowerment models, trauma-informed practice now:

Changes the opening question for those seeking services from “What is wrong with you?” (patient or consumer) to “What has happened to you?” (survivor). Trauma-informed care is initiated by the assumption that every person seeking services is a trauma survivor who designs his or her own path to healing, facilitated by support and mentoring from the service provider (p. 18).

According to the Blue Knot Foundation,^[4] trauma-informed practice:

- Rests on the foundation principle of “do no harm.”
- Does not require clinical knowledge and is not “treatment.”
- Understands the effects of stress on the brain and body.
- Considers what has happened to the person (not what is “wrong” with the person).
- Regards “symptoms” as outgrowths of coping strategies.
- Is sensitive to client comfort levels and to THE WAY IN WHICH a service is delivered (not just WHAT the service is).
- Works with (rather than “doing to”) the client (p. 1).

Drawing on Australia’s New South Wales Agency for Clinical Innovation,^[5] the Blue Knot Foundation^[4] and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration^[6] we can identify six broad principles of trauma-informed practice. Each of these six principles are discussed below.

1. Safety: Promote physical and emotional safety

Safety is at the heart of trauma-informed practice because, as identified in the post about [the impact of trauma](#), people who have experienced trauma often feel unsafe and fearful, and live with heightened vulnerability and a sense of danger. Feeling safe is essential in helping to foster trust, build strong relationships and promote open communication between practitioners and people who have experienced trauma. Strategies for building safety^[5-8] include:

- Building trust by being consistent, reliable and transparent in interactions
- Providing clear and straightforward communication about expectations, routines and procedures
- Minimizing surprises and unexpected changes
- Offering choices and allowing individuals to have a sense of control over their environment and decisions
- Respecting personal space and boundaries
- Explaining and gaining permission before doing things that might make people feel unsafe
- Providing a safe and calm physical environment
- Being non-judgmental and avoiding blaming language
- Seeking frequent feedback from individuals about their experiences and acting on this feedback

2. Empowerment and Choice: Empower people and respect their choices

Trauma often leaves individuals feeling powerless and stripped of their sense of control, so it is important that trauma-informed practice is built on empowerment and choice by allowing people to have a say in their lives and ensuring they are not simply passive recipients of care. Providing choice recognizes that each person’s experience of trauma is unique, and means people are less likely to be placed in a situation where they feel powerless, are reminded of their trauma or are retraumatized. Strategies for promoting empowerment and choice^[5, 6, 8-10] include:

- Actively listening to individuals without interruption or judgment
- Making sure you have informed consent, especially for major decisions
- Validating their experiences and emotions, showing that you understand and respect their perspective
- Providing clear information about their options and the limits to their choice
- Operating from a position of [power-with rather than power-over](#)
- Involving people in collaborative decision-making
- Offering choices whenever possible
- Respecting their boundaries and ensuring you do not cross physical and emotional boundaries without consent

- Adopting a strengths-based approach
- Being flexible, recognizing that people’s needs and preferences may change over time and adapting your approach accordingly

3. Collaboration: Share power and decision-making

While collaboration between practitioners is also important, here we focus on collaboration with the people with whom we work. Healing from trauma involves relationships and “the meaningful sharing of power and decision-making”^[6, p. 111] and so collaboration is essential. Collaboration is also important in promoting a sense of safety, empowerment and choice, and demonstrating trustworthiness. Strategies for collaboration^[5, 6, 11] include:

- Recognizing (and valuing) the role of individuals in recovering from trauma, and ensuring they are actively involved in decision-making that affects them
- Creating a safe and non-judgmental environment where individuals feel comfortable sharing their experiences and feelings
- Encouraging people to ask questions and ensuring they fully understand their options before making decisions
- Valuing people’s unique experiences, strengths and preferences
- Actively listening without interrupting
- Working with people in setting their own goals
- Respecting people’s choices, even when you disagree
- Offering choices and alternatives
- Seeking regular feedback from the people with whom you work

4. Trustworthiness: Build trust and be transparent

There is a great deal of interaction between each of the six principles of trauma-informed care, and each of them are reinforced by, and support, the other principles. By prioritizing safety, providing choice/control and collaborating, you will be helping to build trust; being transparent will help you promote safety, provide choice/control and collaborate. Strategies for nurturing trust and transparency^[5, 6, 8, 12, 13] include:

- Clearly explaining your role, expectations and approach
- Discussing options, possibilities and your recommendations
- Listening and incorporating their feedback and suggestions
- Ensuring you have informed consent before proceeding
- Fostering open communication
- Being consistent and predictable in your interactions
- Ensuring your language is respectful and empowering
- Attempting to see things from their perspective
- Making it easy for the people you work with to provide feedback about the service you (and your team) provide

5. Diversity: Acknowledge, respect and embrace diversity

The experience of trauma is shaped by many cultural and social factors. People from different backgrounds may have different coping mechanisms, beliefs and values. There is great variation in the meaning different cultures give to trauma, how people respond to trauma and the type of support wanted and/or provided^[1]. Trauma-informed practice that acknowledges and respects this, and other, diversity can tailor responses to meet the specific needs of each individual, recognizing that a one-size-fits-all approach may not be effective. Strategies for acknowledging, respecting and embracing diversity^[1, 8, 14-16] include:

- Moving past cultural stereotypes assumptions and biases (e.g., based on gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, religion, identity and geography)
- Respecting and building on the healing potential of traditional cultural connections
- Asking about the cultural background, values and beliefs of the people with whom you work
- Using inclusive and respectful language that acknowledges and honors individual identities, experiences and cultural backgrounds
- Fostering open and non-judgmental communication
- Acknowledging that individuals may face multiple forms of oppression or discrimination, and recognizing and addressing intersectionality
- Understanding how trauma may be expressed differently across diverse populations
- Being able to adapt your communication style and ways of working depending on people's experience, values and preferences
- Promoting diversity in your team so that it reflects the diversity of the community
- Focusing on [cultural safety](#) rather than cultural competency

6. Peer Support: Value of peers having had similar experiences

According to [Blanch et al.](#),^[17] speaking in the context of engaging women in trauma-informed peer support: a “peer” is an equal, someone who has faced similar circumstances, such as people who have survived cancer, widows or women who parent adolescents. In peer support, the people involved have had some sort of similar experience, such as being given a psychiatric diagnosis and receiving behavioral health services (p. 13).

We can also consider the peers of people who have experienced trauma (e.g., their friends, work colleagues, families). While there are differences, there are also similarities, and the relationship is quite different than that of a “professional” “working” with a “client.” Both types of peers can play a valuable role in supporting people who have experienced trauma. For organizations want to embrace peer support, strategies^[6, 18] include:

- Incorporating people with lived experience into your service at all levels (including governance structures)
- Offering peer support groups
- Identifying supportive relationships, groups or resources within the existing informal social networks of the people with whom you work
- Providing training to people offering peer support
- Reflecting on ways in which status and power allow staff to control their environment and the recovery process

For peers wanting to support other people strategies^[17, 18] include:

- Building reciprocal relationships based on mutual responsibility and communication

- Creating relations that promote holistic learning and growth (not just focusing on the “problem”)
- Avoiding static roles of “helper” and “helpee”
- Creating a community of equals where everybody has something to offer
- Sharing stories

Trauma-informed practice is now an essential component of many approaches to working with a wide range of people. More information by Graeme Stuart can be found on his blog on “Sustaining Community” by clicking [here](#).

References For Guidance 2

1. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2014b). *Trauma-Informed Care in Behavioral Health Services. Treatment Improvement Protocol (TIP) Series 57*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK207201/pdf/Bookshelf_NBK207201.pdf
2. Herman, J. L. (1994). *Trauma and recovery*. Pandora.
3. Salasin, S. (2011). Sine qua non for public health. *National Council Magazine*, 2, 18.
4. Blue Knot Foundation. (2021). *Becoming trauma-informed – services*. https://professionals.blueknot.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/45_BK_FS_PRF_BecomingTraumaInformed_Services_July21.pdf
5. NSW Agency for Clinical Innovation. (2022). *Trauma-informed care in mental health services across NSW: A framework for change*. NSW Government.
6. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2014a). *SAMHSA’s concept of trauma and guidance for a trauma-informed approach*. <https://store.samhsa.gov/product/SAMHSA-s-Concept-of-Trauma-and-Guidance-for-a-Trauma-Informed-Approach/SMA14-4884>
7. National Child Traumatic Stress Network. (2017). *Creating, supporting, and sustaining trauma-informed schools: A system framework*. https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources//creating_supporting_sustaining_trauma_informed_schools_a_systems_framework.pdf
8. Network of Alcohol and other Drugs Agencies. (2022). *Trauma-informed practices for responding to difficult situations*. <https://nada.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Trauma-informed-practices.pdf>
9. Childhood Trauma Task Force. (n.d.). *Principle 3: Empowerment, voice and choice*. Center on Child Wellbeing & Trauma. <https://childwellbeingandtrauma.org/becoming-trauma-informed-and-responsive/guiding-principles/principle-3-empowerment-voice-and-choice/>
10. National Child Traumatic Stress Network. (2016). *What’s sharing power got to do with trauma-informed practice?* <https://www.nctsn.org/resources/whats-sharing-power-got-do-trauma-informed-practice>
11. National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments. (n.d.). *Strategies for collaboration*. https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/sites/default/files/Building_TSS_Handout_8_collaboration.pdf
12. Levenson, J. (2017). Trauma-informed social work practice. *Social Work*, 62(2), 105-113. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sw/swx001>
13. Levenson, J. (2020). Translating Trauma-Informed Principles into Social Work Practice. *Social Work*, 65(3), 288-298. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sw/swaa020>
14. Curtis, E., Jones, R., Tipene-Leach, D., Walker, C., Loring, B., Paine, S.-J., & Reid, P. (2019). Why cultural safety rather than cultural competency is required to achieve health equity: a

- literature review and recommended definition. *International Journal For Equity In Health*, 18(1), 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12939-019-1082-3>
15. Gopalkrishnan, N. (2018). Cultural diversity and mental health: Considerations for policy and practice. *Frontiers In Public Health*, 6, 179. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2018.00179>
 16. Victorian Government. (2023). Chapter Three: Working with diverse communities. In *Place-based approaches A guide for the Victorian Public Service*. <https://www.vic.gov.au/place-based-approaches-guide-victorian-public-service/chapter-three-working-diverse-communities>
 17. Blanch, A., Filson, B., Penney, D., & Cave, C. (2012). *Engaging women in trauma-informed peer support: A guidebook*. National Center for Trauma-Informed Care. https://www.nasmhpd.org/sites/default/files/PeerEngagementGuide_Color_REVISED_10_2012.pdf
 18. Mead, S., & MacNeil, C. (2005). Peer support: A systemic approach. *Family Therapy Magazine*, 4(5), 28-31.

Guidance 3: How to Handle Difficult Situations

This workshop will likely bring up issues of loss and grief. These are common human emotions that all of us share. Grief keeps us close to our loved ones and to our life-long experiences. If we suppress grief, then we limit our lives and that also limits our ability to experience joy. This applies to you as facilitators as well as to participants.

If issues of loss and grief arise during the workshop, remind participants that we need to slow down and be kind to ourselves. It is okay to feel the loss, deep inside. This is real and it is normal. Don't push it away. Be gentle to yourself, and then share it. Find a friend or a group to listen. You are not alone. Just listen to each other. This is one way we can support each other and sustain our communities. **It is often not necessary to say much; just listen and be present.**

Here are some other situations that may arise:

What should you do if a participant gets upset?

If a participant becomes upset, you may suggest that she or he steps to the side. If there are two facilitators present, one of you should accompany that person, just standing nearby to help them feel secure. If there is only one facilitator, you may suggest the person sits towards the side of the room, but do not leave the person alone. Return to the individual as soon as possible.

Depending on local culture, you may place a hand gently on the participant's hand or shoulder. Be sensitive to the person's sense of safety and protection by not going to a private room—especially if you are of a different gender—and by not adding pressure in any way. It is important to be patient and just listen.

Because it is never clear in advance whether extra support might be needed, facilitators should learn about the availability of local support services (e.g., health clinics, religious leaders, counseling services, local organizations) before conducting a workshop. Based on this knowledge, local participants may be referred for additional support, if needed (with follow-up afterwards by the facilitator to check whether the referral has been helpful).

What should happen if a participant realizes that she or he has been causing harm to others? Guide the participant to:

1. First, stop doing harm.
2. Second, understand the harm that you have been accused of, by listening to the other person.
3. Third, acknowledge the harm. If you can, confess it out loud.
4. Fourth, seek restitution by asking what you can do to make things better.
5. Fifth, ask for forgiveness, even though you may not get it (at least not right away).
6. Sixth, promise not to cause the same harm again—and be sure to keep that promise. (If this is difficult, seek assistance from a friend or counselor.)

What should you do if someone discloses abuse?

If a participant tells a facilitator that she or he has been, or is being, abused or exploited, it is important to immediately offer your support and do what you can to protect the individual's dignity and self-respect.

This means making sure you are fully focusing on the individual, with no distractions. Listen carefully and give the person time to tell their story as completely as they want. Don't interrupt, as s/he might not speak about it again. Be sure to listen, not adding more pressure with too many questions. Be patient and listen with sensitivity. The empathy and sense of caring that you offer can strongly influence the individual's ability to recover from this abuse in the future. Do not make any promises that you cannot keep, including about confidentiality.

Your immediate response can be summarized in five messages that are important to communicate. Although these statements don't need to be said in exactly these words, it is good for you to memorize them so they can be recalled easily if the need arises:

1. I believe you.
2. I am glad you told me.
3. I am sorry this has happened to you.
4. It is not your fault.
5. The fifth message is more complicated, depending on whether the individual was a child or an adult when the abuse happened. In the case of a child, reporting the abuse to the police is may be mandatory in accordance with local laws. Depending on when this happened, he or she may also require medical attention. To a child, you can say either:
 - I need to tell someone else who can help you. This might be someone like a family member, neighbor or police.
 - Let's go together to one of the people or places that can help you.

For adults, you may also encourage reporting to the police, and you should refer the individual for additional support—for example, to the local hospital or clinic for medical assistance, to a traditional or religious leader or to a counselor for psychosocial support. Depending on local resources, there may also be another organization with trained staff who can assist.

If the individual discloses abuse or exploitation by someone from your organization or partner non-governmental organization (NGO), you are obliged to report this via your own organization (e.g., at CRS to the Country Program or via [Ethics Point](#)).

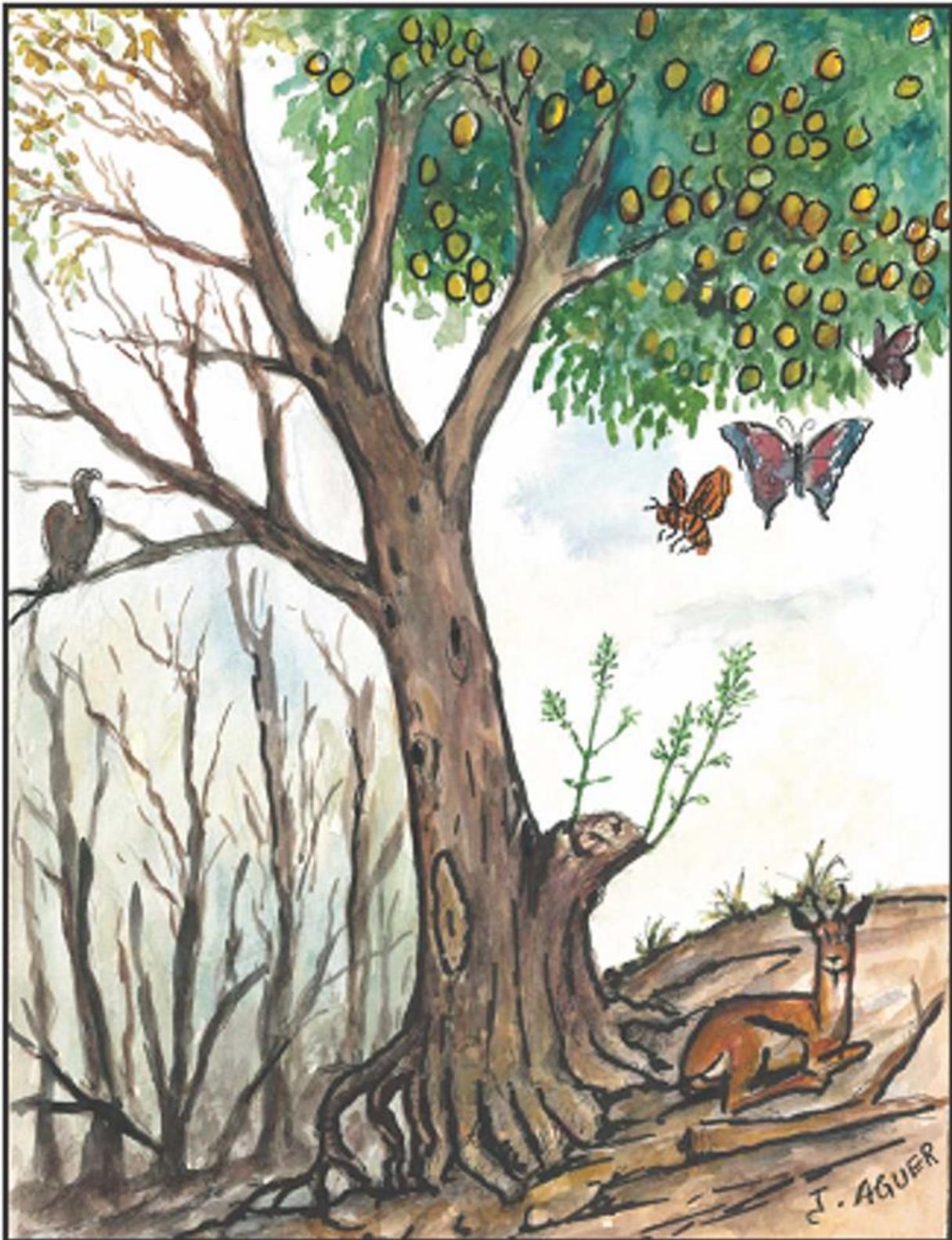
Appendix

The following pages contain figures used for some of the Activities, as noted. **Page numbers for Figures are found in the Table of Contents/List of Figures.**

FIGURE	ACTIVITY
1. Resilience Tree	Three
2. Hungry Donkeys	Six
3. Women Leaders	Ten
4. Tree of Life	Fourteen
5. Stages of Conflict	Seventeen
6. Adam and Sara	Nineteen
7. Forgiveness Can Break the Cycle	Twenty-One
8. How to Become a Better Leader	Twenty-Five
9. Key Messages	Twenty-Seven
10. Supplemental: Choosing Our Future (Images 1–3)	Thirty-One

Figure 1

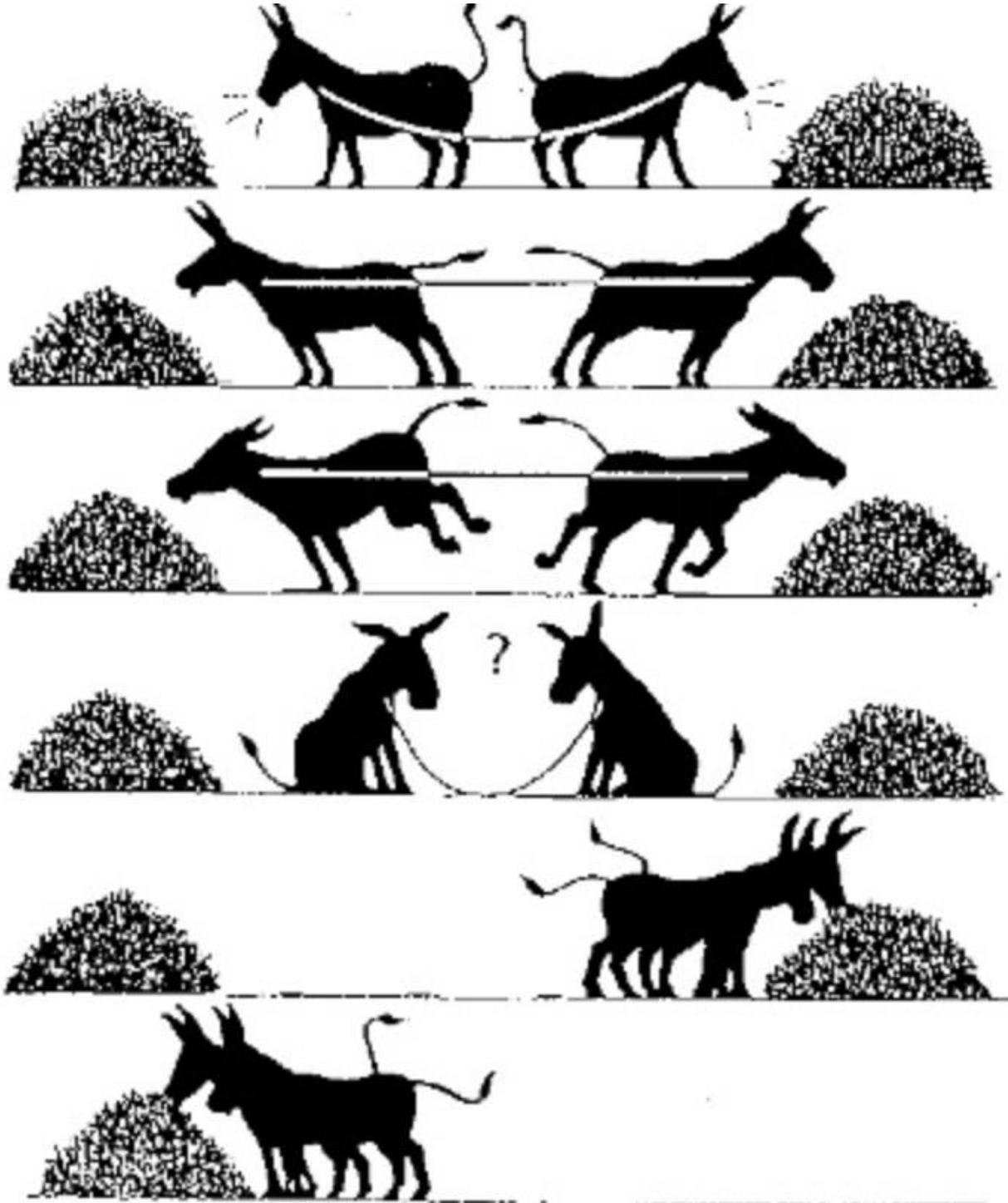
FIGURE 1. RESILIENT TREE, ACTIVITY 3



Source: Resilience and Food Security Program (RFSP), Transforming Livelihoods: Social Cohesion Visual Aid Training Manual, USAID, CRS, Save the Children, July 2021 (also known as P2R: Pathways to Resilience or RFSP/P2R Visual Aid).

Figure 2

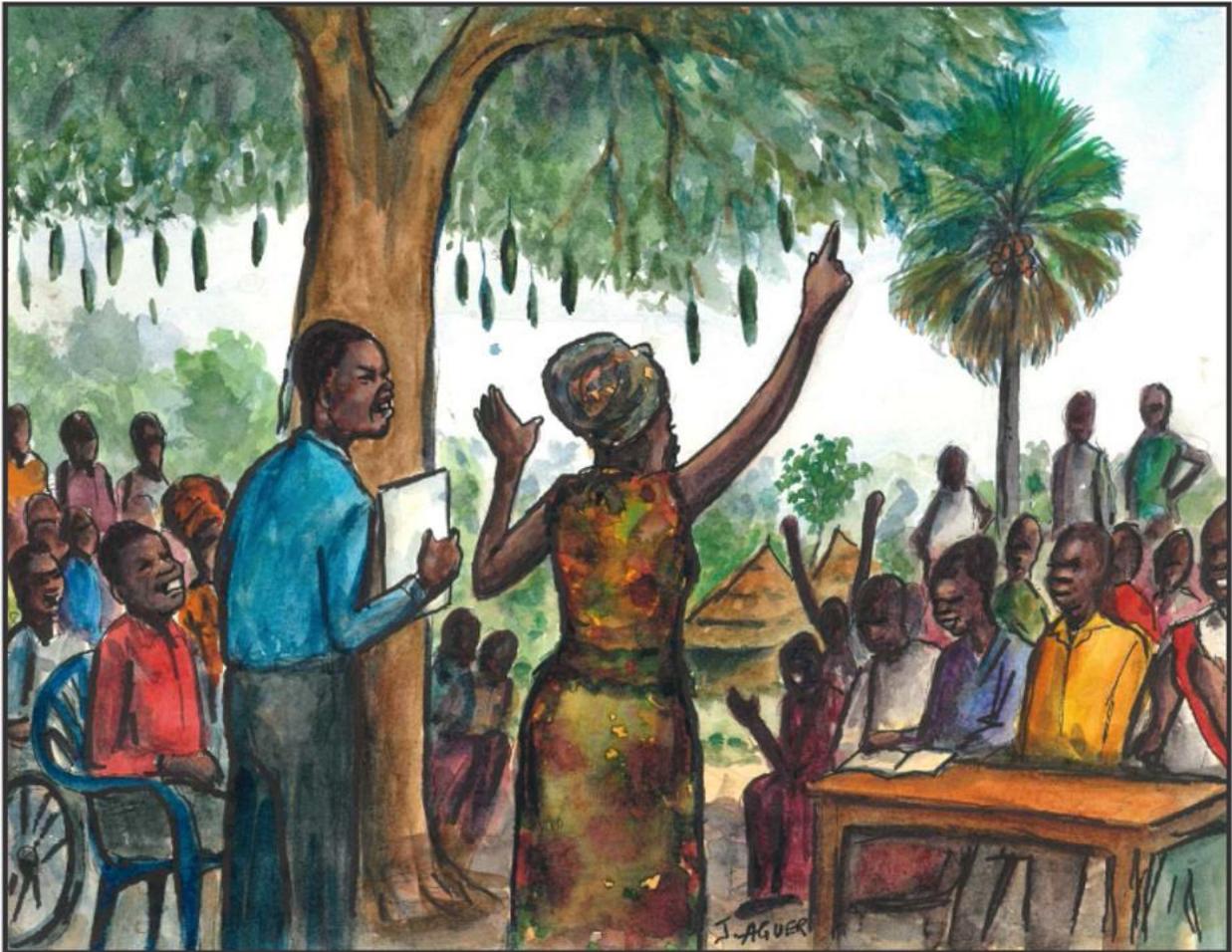
FIGURE 2. HUNGRY DONKEYS, ACTIVITY 6



Source: <https://muddaser.com/conflict-management-resolution-strategies-process-steps/>.

Figure 3

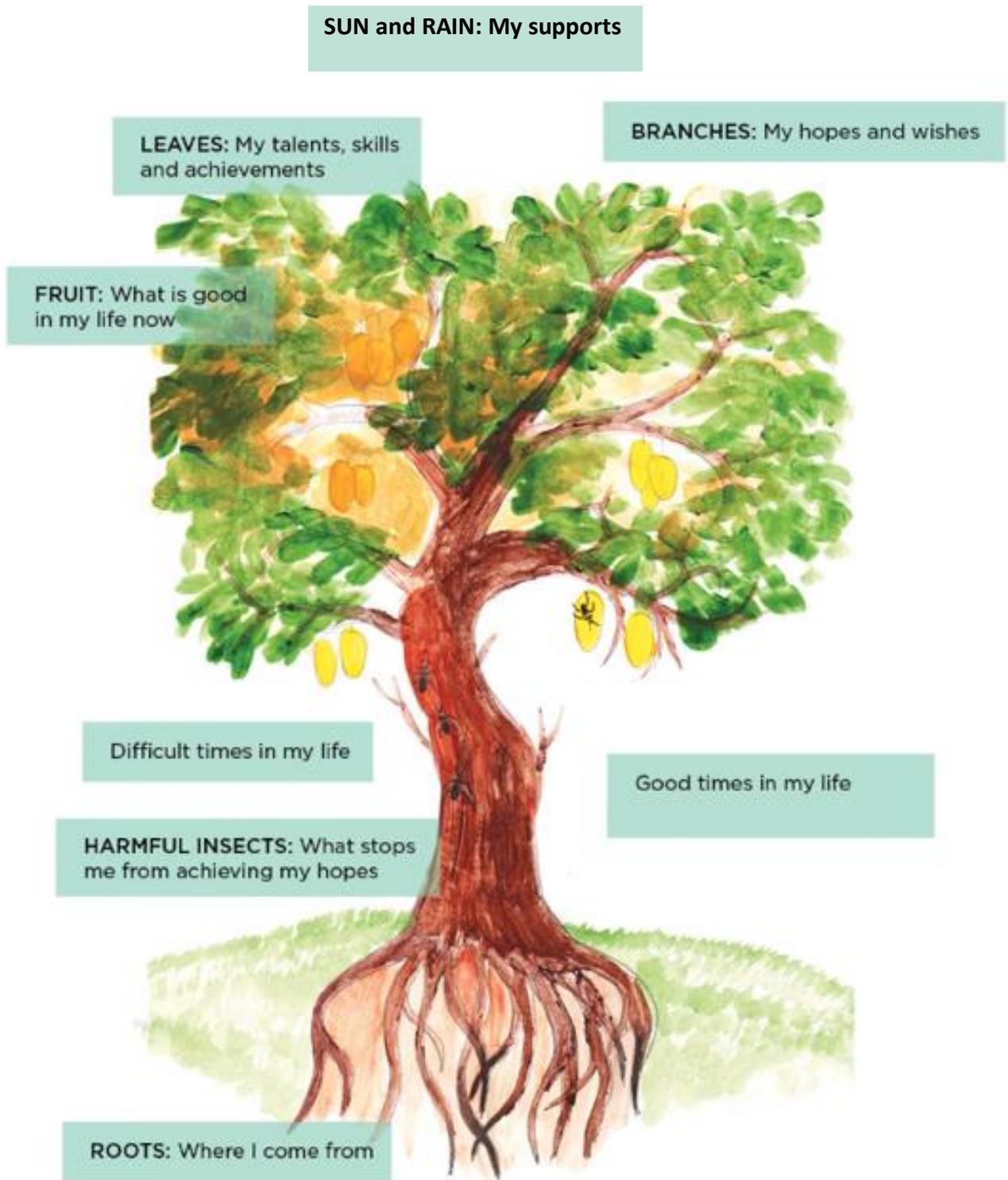
FIGURE 3. WOMEN LEADERS, ACTIVITY 10



Source: Resilience and Food Security Program (RFSP), Transforming Livelihoods: Social Cohesion Visual Aid Training Manual, USAID, CRS, Save the Children, July 2021 (also known as P2R: Pathways to Resilience or RFSP/P2R Visual Aid).

Figure 4

FIGURE 4. TREE OF LIFE, ACTIVITY 14



Source: Adapted from [The Tree of Life](#), CRS and REPSI: 2020 and [Rising From Resilient Roots](#), CRS: 2020.

Figure 5

FIGURE 5. STAGES OF CONFLICT, ACTIVITY 17



Source: CRS, Peacebuilding Fundamentals: Participants' Manual, 202. p. 34. <https://www.crs.org/our-work-overseas/research-publications/peacebuilding-fundamentals>.

Figure 6

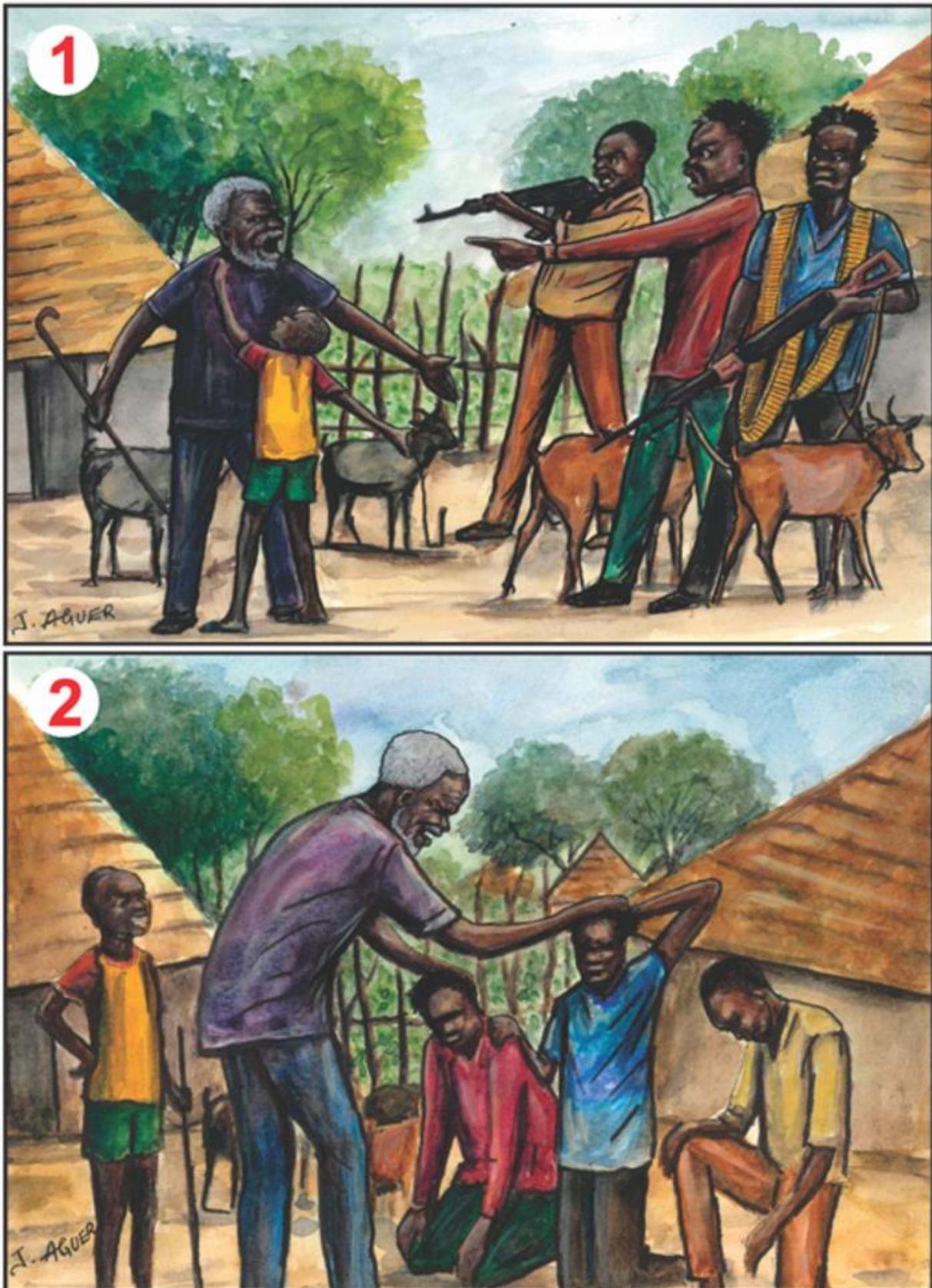
FIGURE 6. ADAM AND SARA, ACTIVITY 19



Source: Image by Deng Majid Chol from Morning Star: Breaking cycles of violence, Building Healthy individuals and Communities, USAID, 2005. Reproduced with permission from Introduction to Trauma Awareness and Resilience, CRS, 2018.

Figure 7

FIGURE 7. FORGIVENESS CAN BREAK THE CYCLE OF CONFLICT, ACTIVITY 21



Source: Resilience and Food Security Program (RFSP), Transforming Livelihoods: Social Cohesion Visual Aid Training Manual, USAID, CRS, Save the Children, July 2021 (also known as P2R: Pathways to Resilience or RFSP/P2R Visual Aid).

Figure 8

FIGURE 8. HOW TO BECOME A BETTER LEADER, ACTIVITY 25

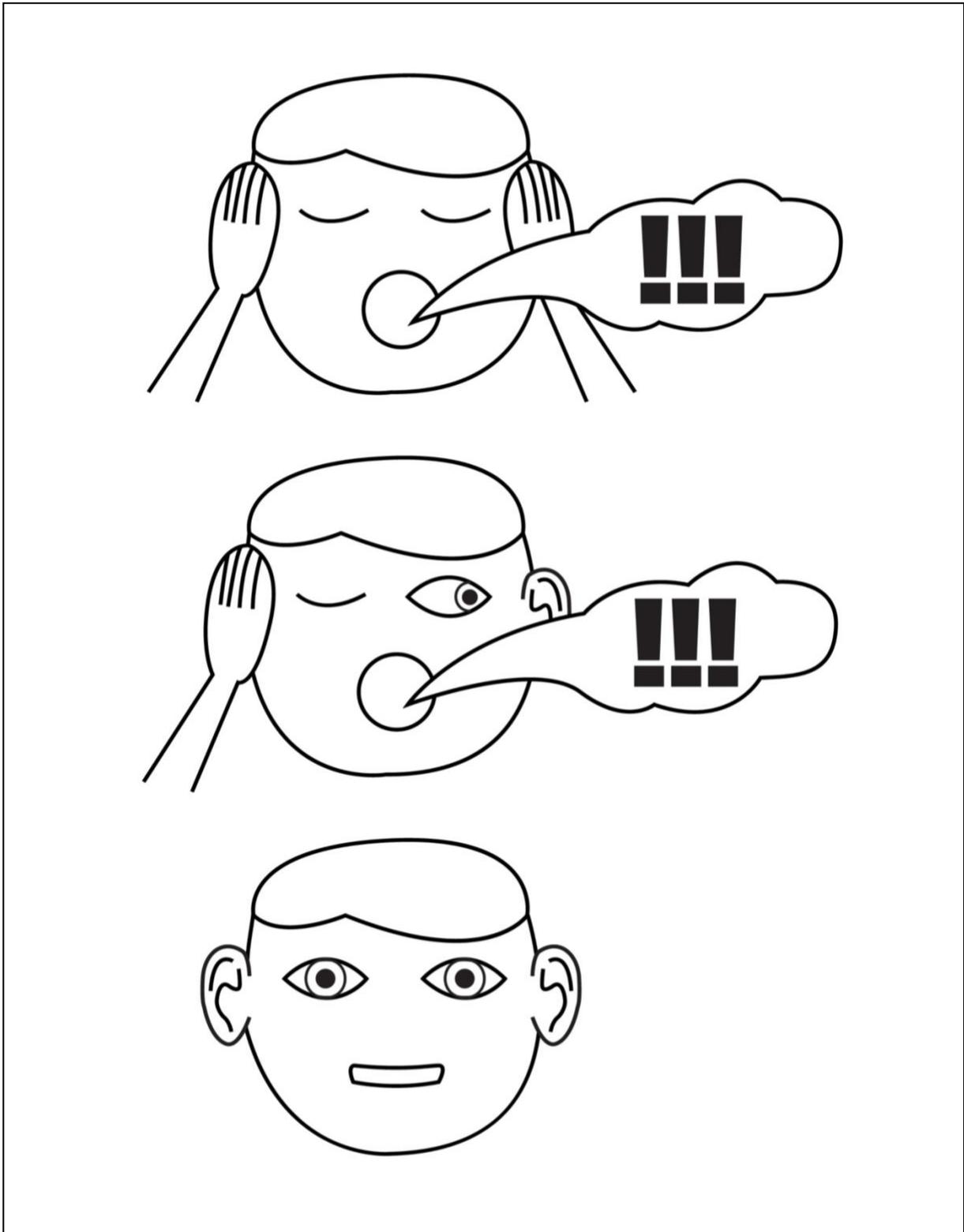


Figure 9

FIGURE 9. KEY MESSAGES, ACTIVITY 27

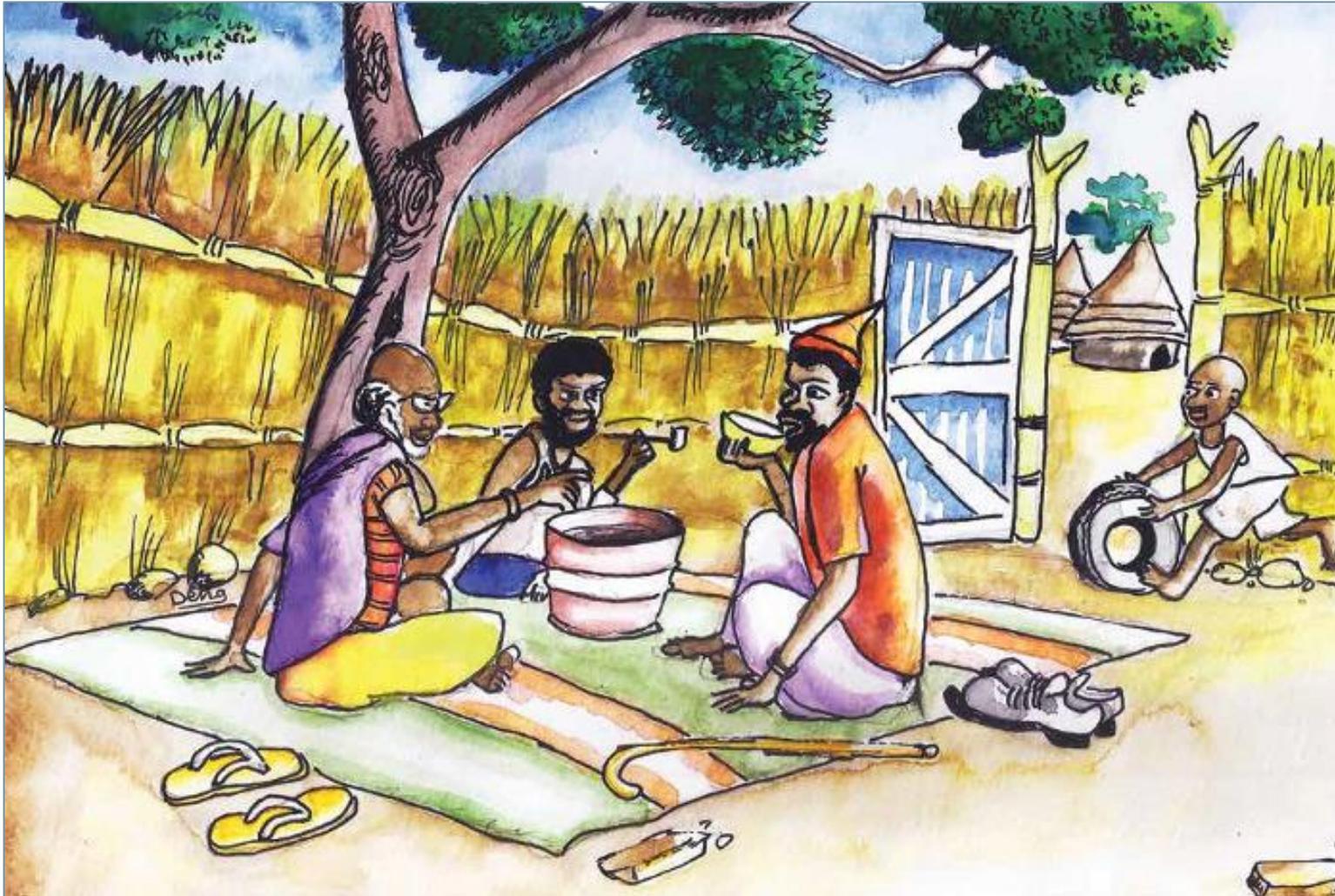
Cut into strips, then translate into local language on the reverse side.

1. Everyone has experienced trauma, but trauma does not last forever . You can still have a good future.
2. Focus your attention on the good things in your life to prevent your trauma from controlling you.
3. Try to forgive yourself and others . This will make you feel better, and it will help make your community strong and safe.
4. You are what you do , not what you say.
5. To solve your community's problems, you first need to discuss different ways to build cooperation .
6. By putting God/Allah in the center of your life , you will feel balanced, centered and strong.
7. Prayer and songs can help you recover from trauma.
8. Like a forest, a community is stronger if it includes people from different backgrounds .
9. The three B's of building social cohesion within divided communities are Binding, Bonding, Bridging .
10. Binding is essential: You cannot give what you do not have .
11. Building cooperation requires that you give something to others in order to get something back .
12. Hard is not impossible .
13. A good leader keeps two eyes, two ears and one heart open .
14. No matter what the situation, you have a choice how to respond .
15. You never know how strong you are until you try.

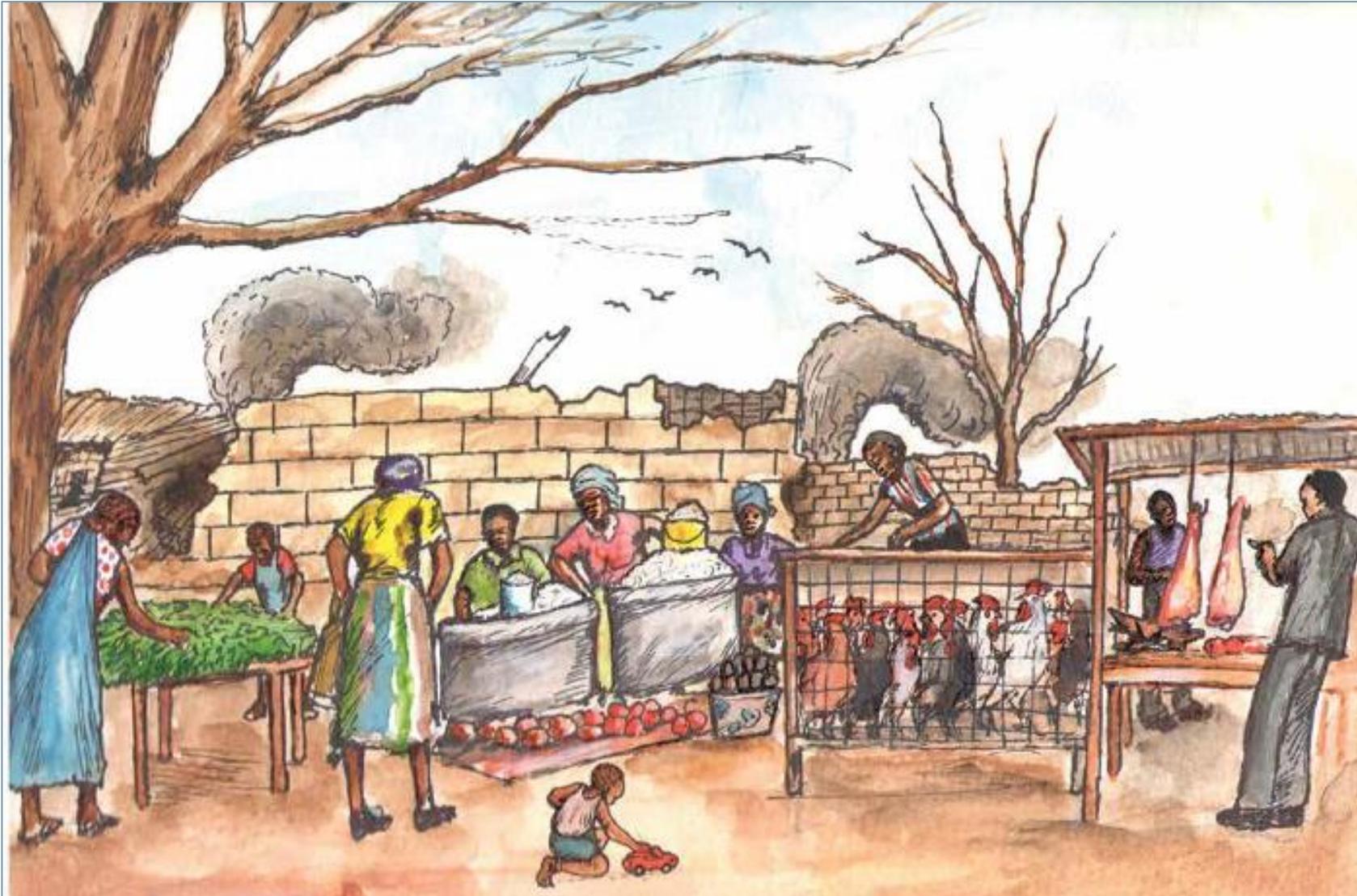
Source: Messages are adapted from participants in earlier trainings of CRS's Trauma Awareness and Resilience (2016 and 2018) in South Sudan. <https://www.crs.org/our-work-overseas/research-publications/introduction-trauma-awareness-and-resilience>.

Figure 10

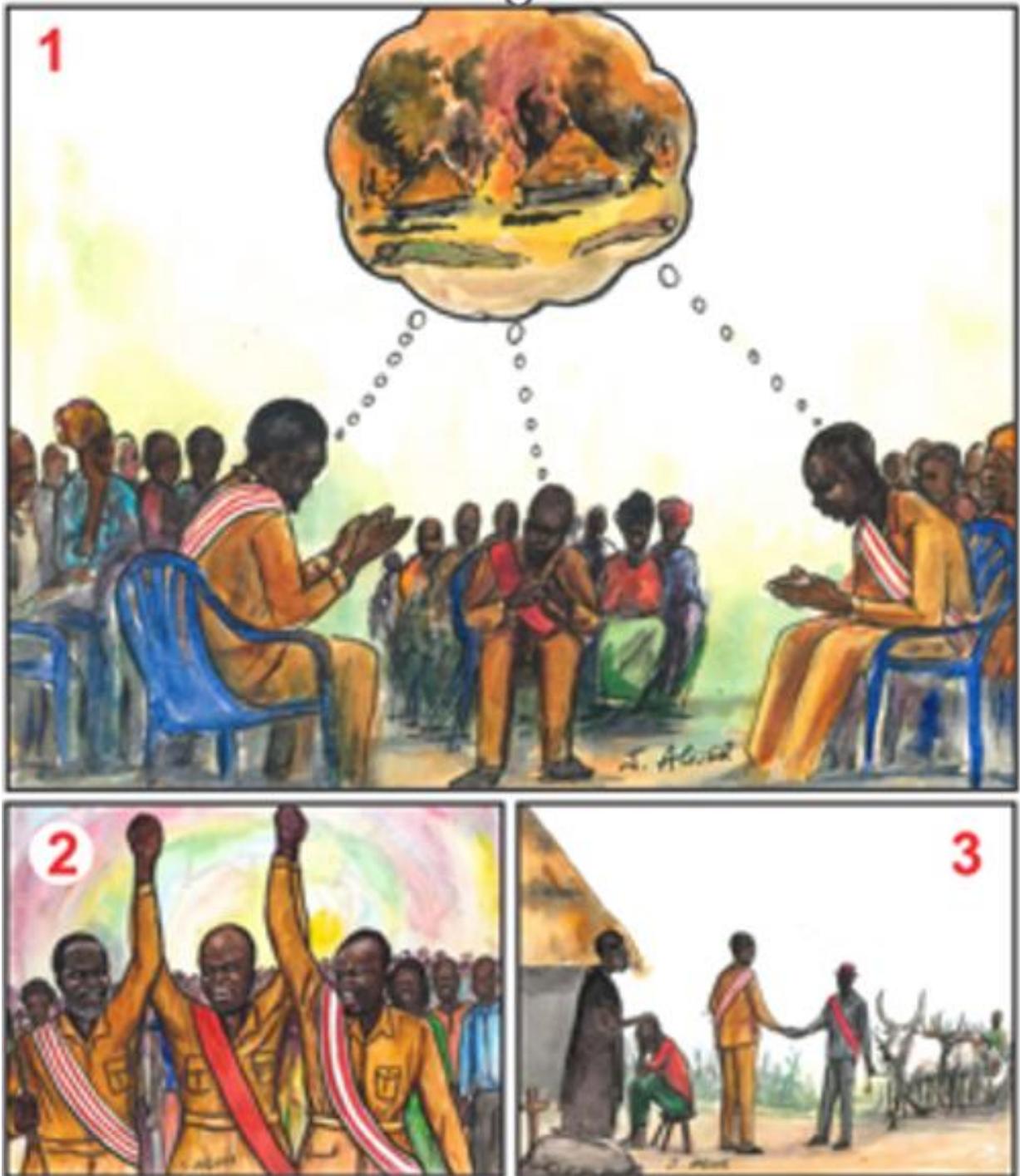
FIGURE 10. SUPPLEMENTAL: CHOOSING OUR FUTURE (IMAGES 1–3)



Source: Image by Deng Majid Chol from Morning Star: Breaking cycles of violence, Building Healthy individuals and Communities, USAID, 2005. Reproduced with permission from Introduction to TAR, CRS. 2018.



Source: Image by James Aguer Garang from Morning Star: Breaking cycles of violence, Building Healthy individuals and Communities, USAID, 2005. Reproduced with permission from Introduction to TAR, CRS, 2018.



Source: Resilience and Food Security Program (RFSP), Transforming Livelihoods: Social Cohesion Visual Aid Training Manual, USAID, CRS, Save the Children, July 2021 (also known as P2R: Pathways to Resilience or RFSP/P2R Visual Aid).