



MARCH 2020

PEACEBUILDERS & PANDEMICS

Thoughts from the Field

Summary of Global
Town Halls and
Practitioner Surveys

THROUGH THE PARTNERSHIP OF

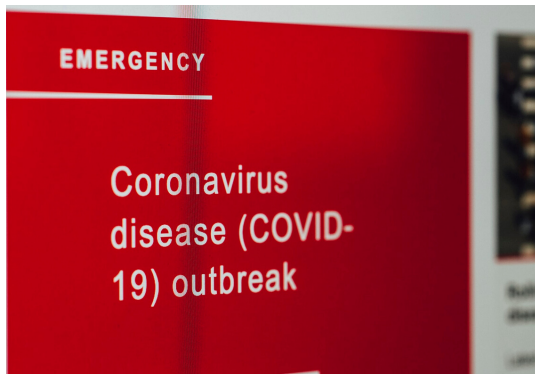
National Association of
Community Mediation

Mediators Beyond
Borders International

THE CRITICAL ROLE OF PEACEBUILDERS

Overview

The Global Town Halls, held March 16-19, 2020 assembled over 300 peacebuilders from 32 countries. Facilitators, mediators, trainers, conflict resolvers, boundary crossers, group creators, bridge-makers shared local experiences and personal reactions; exchanged valuable resources and ideas; and forged critical connections and collaborations to lead positive change in the midst of pandemic.



Four Corners

Conflict professionals possess a unique skillset to address these critical needs:

1. Reduce Panic
2. Minimize Stigma
3. Build Connections
4. Repair Relations

Our Role As Peacebuilders

Our role as is to use this opportunity to reach out to others, use technology to build connections, and learn from other crises.

- Apply Skills At Levels: Personal, Local, Regional, International
- Be a Source of Comfort and Example of Calm
- De-Escalate Public Panic and Anxieties
- Hold Space (Even Digitally) for Dialogue
- Listen to Individual/Community Needs
- Remain Hopeful, Kind, and Present

REFLECTIONS FROM THE FIELD

Impact of Pandemic

The pandemic affects people differently based on location, culture, community, and circumstance.

Education: Cancellation; Access

Emotional: Anxiety; Fear

Financially: Loss of Work

Physically: Sickness, Death

Resources: Scarcity; Limited Access

Socially: Isolation; Events Cancelled

Language Matters

Recommendation: Replace "Social Distancing" with "Physical Distancing". This recognizes the reality of our inter-connectedness.

What People Are Doing

Peacebuilders around the world are working at all levels: family, neighborhoods, local, regional, national, and international.

- Creating online trainings, and connecting via online means
- Offering conflict resolution skills to local institutions
- Reaching out to contacts to identify problems and solutions
- Using this opportunity to slow down, regroup, and reflect
- Working at local level to help neighbors and communities

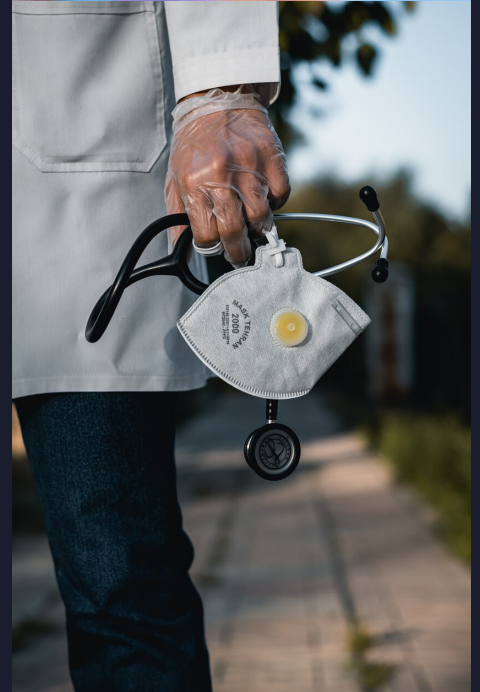
Why This Matters

COVID19 poses a threat to both our individual and community health. Panic, fear, scarcity, and uncertainty rises daily. Our community leaders, in partnership with conflict resolution professionals, must respond in ways that increase social connection and constructive relations in order to reduce the threat of emerging stigmatization and violence.



"We are discovering what we have control over and our power of choice."

- TOWNHALL PARTICIPANT



What You Can Do Now

- Connect with Others to Create Ways Forward
- Create Positive Messaging & Hopeful Stories
- Hold Local Community Townhalls
- Offer Skills to Local Government
- Share Online Facilitation/Mediation Training
- Teach Others to Stay In Touch Using Tech
- Work with Local Mindfulness Community

