



IMPROVING TRAUMA RELIEF & RESILIENCE

IAHV TRAINING AND PROGRAMS

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Background

How we think and behave under the effects of acute, cumulative and post-traumatic stress (PTS) has emerged as an issue at the forefront of a global discussion on conflict transformation and post-war reconstruction. The World Health Organisation suggests that complex emergencies increase the rates of a wide range of mental health problems and at the same time diminish the capacity of infrastructures to provide adequate services, noting, “mental health is crucial to the overall well being and productivity of individuals, communities, and countries recovering from emergencies”.¹

Indeed, an experience of loss, destruction, violence and flight due to conflict can result in detrimental consequences for one’s mental, emotional and physical well-being. In severe cases this can lead to increases in suicide, destructive behavior, burn-out, PTS, depression and illness, while in less severe cases individuals demonstrate the inability to function, decreased motivation and agency, and increased risk of illness and substance abuse. It is now understood that traumas associated with conflict related violence create barriers for, among other peacebuilding objectives, the reintegration of ex-combatants and conflict survivors, the promotion of dialogue and reconciliation between warring parties, the de-escalation of radicalisation in youth populations, and even effective governance.

Furthermore, international humanitarian organisations often lack the resources to offer trauma-and stress-relief programs on a scale that is required in the face of mass atrocities and societal breakdown. The magnitude of affected populations and the destruction of social systems and infrastructure often render standard psychopharmacological and psychotherapeutic services, including one-on-one interventions like EMDR and TFT, inefficient and, in some cases, ineffective. In these contexts it is crucial to offer the best relief possible to address acute

psychological and psycho-somatic needs, and also to prevent and reduce long-term consequences, with the goal of encouraging a peaceful and enabled citizenry during and after violent outbreaks.

“There is a critical need for alternative approaches to the anxiety, trauma, rage, sleeplessness, and other side-effects of war.”

*Dr. Emma Seppala,
Associate Director Center for
Compassion and Altruism
Research and Education at
Stanford University*

¹ World Bank. 2015. World Development Report 2015: Mind, Society, and Behavior. Washington, DC: World Bank. doi:10.1596/978-1-4648-0342-0. License: Creative Commons Attribution CC BY 3.0 IGO; World Health Organization (WHO). Building back better: sustainable mental health care after emergencies. WHO: Geneva, 2013.

IAHV Trauma-relief and Resilience Programs

IAHV delivers measurable, effective and scalable trauma relief and resilience programs, attending to the clear link between trauma relief, resilience and sustainable peacebuilding. Providing **affordable and accessible trauma- and stress-relief tools to large populations and small groups alike in complex emergencies**, IAHV's 8-12 hour programs² produce measurable results, including rapidly and significantly reducing the symptoms of PTSD, depression and anxiety, and improving the quality of life for individuals and communities.³ **New research suggests our approach - a breathing-based stress reduction program (SK&P®, see page 6 for more information) - results in a 60-90% reduction rate in scores across indices for PTSD, major clinical depression, and generalized anxiety disorder.**⁴ In addition, rather than fostering humanitarian dependency and creating long-term resource dilemmas, IAHV trained participants are **able to sustain integrative improvements** with continued practice and skills application.

"I observed many victims of war suffering from PTS in serious post-conflict circumstances in Kosovo. IAHV trainings have significantly helped them in their recovery."

*Vehbi Rafuni, Director,
Association for Disabled Kosovo
Liberation Army Veterans*

IAHV's integrative tools and breathing based techniques not only reduce stress-induced symptoms, but also **increase resilience, fostering critical thinking, empowerment and capacity to cope with conflict**. Participants leave the workshop with keys to stress and trauma management, healthy coping strategies and empowerment and stronger community bonds. A key aspect of the program is ensuring that people do not react out of anger or turn violent and divisive during conflict or in post-war periods, but instead learn to contribute towards the betterment of society, thus reducing the likelihood of a return to violence. With proven tools and techniques, we contribute to relieving trauma and other stress related issues inside peacebuilding programming, to building resilience and **creating a healthy and strong psycho-social foundation for necessary institutional, political and economic efforts to become sustainable**.

IAHV also **provides peacebuilding, humanitarian, development and public health practitioners with trauma relief, personal resilience and stress management training** to assist those who are working in challenging and often traumatic contexts to deal effectively with emotional and physical stresses. The central focus here is on ensuring health and well-being for peace workers in the field, improving awareness of how our context can affect our ability to engage proficiently in peace work, and providing concrete techniques and methods to effectively address accumulated stresses.

² For short-term, emergency relief to large populations, IAHV offers a one-hour programme, delivering stress management skills.

³ Seppälä, E.M., (2014). Breathing-based meditation decreases posttraumatic stress disorder symptoms in U.S. military veterans: a randomized controlled longitudinal study. *J Trauma Stress*. 27(4):397-405.

⁴ Katzman, M.A., Vermani, M., Gerbarg, P.L., Brown, R.P., Iorio, C., Davis, M., Cameron, C., Tsirigelis, D. (2012). A multicomponent yoga-based, breath intervention program as an adjunctive treatment in patients suffering from generalized anxiety disorder with or without comorbidities. *Int J Yoga* 5(1):57-65

Measurable Impact

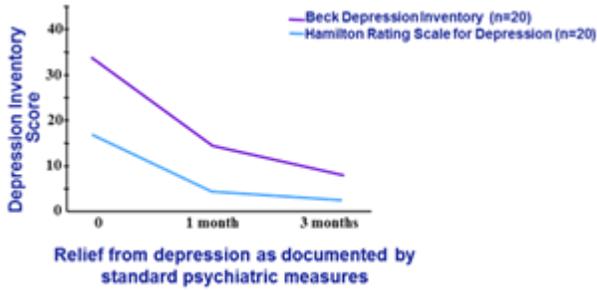
- “In a controlled trial of three comparison refugee groups, from 2004 Southeast Asia tsunami, **an 8-h IAHV workshop resulted in a 60% drop in mean scores on the PTSD checklist (PCL-17) and a 90% drop in mean scores on Beck depression inventory (BDI) in one week.**⁵
- In a controlled study of two groups of U.S. male veterans of the Iraq or Afghanistan war... “the active group showed **reductions in PTSD scores, $d = 1.16$, 95% CI [0.20, 2.04], anxiety symptoms, and respiration rate, but the control group did not. Reductions in startle correlated with reductions in hyperarousal symptoms immediately post-intervention ($r = .93$, $p < .001$) and at 1-year follow-up ($r = .77$, $p = .025$). This longitudinal intervention study suggests there may be clinical utility for [IAHV programming] in cases of PTS.**⁶
- In a controlled study of 50 male Vietnam veterans with PTSD (DSM-IV), the “severity of PTSD symptoms was assessed at pre-intervention, 6-week post-intervention, and 6-month followup for both groups using the CAPS. **The Intervention group showed a significant decrease in CAPS scores 6 weeks following intervention completion, while the Control group had zero decline within this period. At this point, the Control group received the [SK&P] intervention, and also improved significantly on the CAPS. These improvements were maintained in both groups 6 months following receipt of treatment.** The results indicate that multi-component interventions with yoga breath techniques may offer a valuable adjunctive treatment for veterans with PTSD.”⁷
- In a randomized controlled study, Janakiramaiah and colleagues (2000) found that the **level of depression significantly decreased (68-73%) in subjects hospitalized for major clinical depression who were given one week of instruction in [SK&P], followed by 30 min of practice (mean of 4.5 days a week) for three weeks, and this intervention was as effective as imipramine 150 mg/day.** In addition, it may be more effective than standard treatments for preventing relapse, restores health along with personal autonomy, is non-invasive, cost and staff effective, and free from unwanted side effects (yet providing numerous side benefits).⁸ The [SK&P] course has also been used to treat substance abusing populations, military veterans with PTSD, non-military patients with PTSD, and victims of war or mass disasters.

⁵ Descilo, T., Vedamurtachar. A., Gerbarg, P. L., Nagaraja, D., Gangadhar, B. N., Damodaran, B., Adelson, B., Braslow, L. H., Marcus, S., Brown, R. P. (2009). Effects of a yoga breath intervention alone and in combination with an exposure therapy for post-traumatic stress disorder and depression in survivors of the 2004 South-East Asia tsunami. *Acta Psychiatr Scand.*, in press

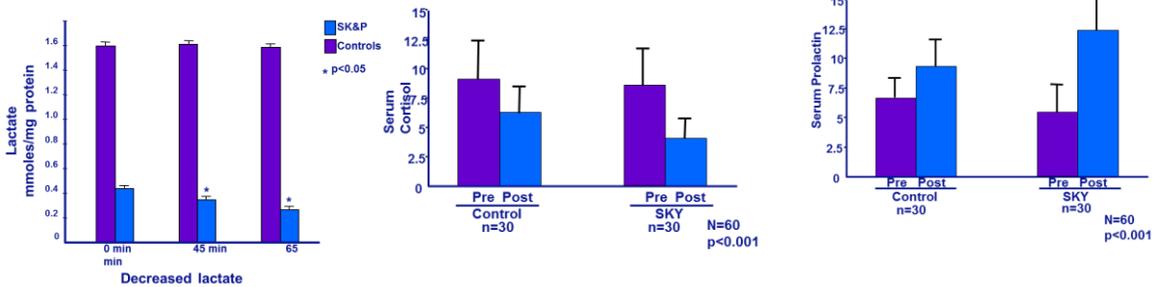
⁶ Seppälä, E.M., Nitschke, J.B., Tudorascu, D.L., Hayes, A., Goldstein, M.R., Nguyen, D.T., Perlman, D., Davidson, R.J. (2014). Breathing-based meditation decreases posttraumatic stress disorder symptoms in U.S. military veterans: a randomized controlled longitudinal study. *J Trauma Stress.* 27(4):397-405.

⁷ Carter, J.J., Gerbarg, P.L., Brown, R.P., Ware, R.S., D'Ambrosio, C., Anand, L., Dirlea, M., Vermani, M., and Katzman, M.A. (2013). Multi-Component Yoga Breath Program for Vietnam Veteran Post Traumatic Stress Disorder: Randomized Controlled Trial. *J Trauma Stress Disor Treat* 2:3

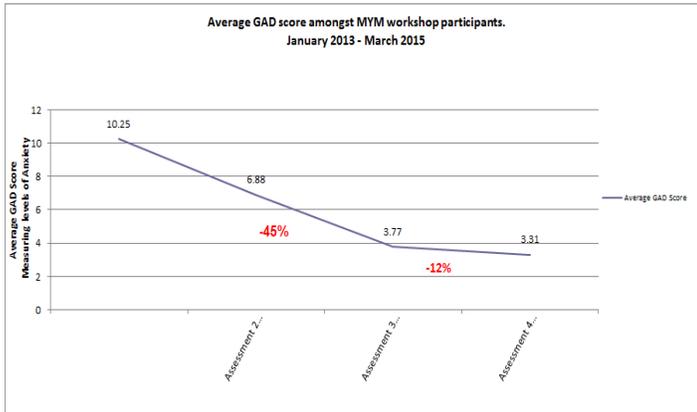
⁸ Katzman, M.A., Vermani, M., Gerbarg, P.L., Brown, R.P., Iorio, C., Davis, M., Cameron, C., Tsirgielis, D. (2012). A multicomponent yoga-based, breath intervention program as an adjunctive treatment in patients suffering from generalized anxiety disorder with or without comorbidities. *Int J Yoga* 5(1):57-65



- SK&P has been shown to reduce the stress hormone cortisol, reduce lactate levels (indicator of stress) and simultaneously increase the well-being hormone prolactin (Nimhans, 2002; Sharma et al, 2003). This suggests that SK&P is an effective method to release stress and enhance resilience against stress.



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Research on the effects of the UK based IAHV Manage Your Mind program for vulnerable communities using internationally validated questionnaires GAD-7 (generalized anxiety disorder, panic and PTSD) and PHQ-9 (depression) show reduction in levels of depression by 71.5% and anxiety by 67.7% in 4 weeks time.

- Statistical evaluation based on a self-administered pre- and post-intervention questionnaire of a 15-hr IAHV Healing and Empowerment Training for refugee youth from Iraq and Syria and vulnerable youth from South Lebanon in May 2015 in Haret Hreik, Beirut, with 19 participants, indicates significant changes on psycho-social indicators relevant for well-being, resilience, healing and empowerment.

I feel energised	+100%
I worry a lot	- 67%
I feel anxious or panic	- 67%
I am relaxed	+ 67%
I feel easily angry or irritated	- 56%
I feel despairing or hopeless	- 50%
I feel able to cope with the challenges	+ 50%
I have problems sleeping	- 43%
I have difficulty concentrating	- 43%

Methodology

Sudarshan Kriya & Accompanying Practices (SK&P)

IAHV interventions relieve trauma and acute emotional symptoms with special breathing techniques that differ from and complement traditional psychotherapy. Provided worldwide, Sudarshan Kriya® and accompanying Practices (SK&P) are time-honored stress management/health promotion techniques whose **health benefits are being validated by modern medical science**. Independent research has shown that SK&P significantly: reduces levels of stress (reduce cortisol - the "stress" hormone); supports the immune system; increases optimism; relieves anxiety and depression (mild, moderate and severe); Increases anti-oxidant protection; enhances brain function (increased mental focus, calmness and recovery from stressful stimuli); and enhances well-being and peace of mind. In conflict and war zones, SK&P are particularly helpful in relieving trauma and helping individuals overcome painful experiences and emotions.

These simple, yet powerful breathing practices have a unique advantage: they are **free from unwanted side-effects, can cut health care costs, and are easy to learn and practice in daily life**.⁹ In addition to advanced and research-tested breathing techniques, other processes and tools are incorporated (depending on the program and target audience) including:

- Physical stretches and exercises to improve health and wellbeing
- Relaxation exercises to encourage a calm state of mind
- Practical knowledge to encourage a positive mental attitude, increase self-confidence and inner strength to handle pressure and make healthy choices when faced with life's challenges

By applying this comprehensive set of tools, IAHV's 8-12 hour Trauma Relief and Resilience workshop relieves PTS and other acute stress related issues as well as positively transforms attitudes, behaviors and relationships. These results **support individuals to develop interpersonally and inside communities, creating more inclusive relationships and greater community resilience to conflict**. These psychosocial tools integrate with and complement the efforts of other strategic peacebuilding initiatives as well, and we welcome collaboration and suggestions from interested parties. The programmes are generally offered over several consecutive days, with sessions lasting 1 to 2 hours per day. Programmes take place indoors and require very little office equipment.

⁹ Brown, Richard P., and Patricia L. Gerbarg. "Sudarshan kriya yogic breathing in the treatment of stress, anxiety, and depression: Part II-clinical applications and guidelines." *Journal of Alternative & Complementary Medicine* 11.4 (2005): 711-717. Additional resources may be found [here](#).

Key Performance Indicators and Case Studies

IAHV's Trainings and Programmes in Trauma Relief and Resilience Demonstrate:

- 1 . A Proven Track Record**, including rehabilitation of survivors and perpetrators of violence, reintegration of ex-combatants, bridging divided communities, prisoner rehabilitation, women's empowerment, and prevention of radicalization. IAHV has worked to reduce stress and trauma for 150,000 trauma-relief workshop beneficiaries in communities ripped apart by conflict, including:
 - Iraq (2003—Present)
 - Kosovo (2004—2008)
 - Israel-Palestine (2004—Present)
 - Sri Lanka (2005 till present)
 - Ivory Coast (2004)
 - Ossetia (August 2008)
 - Bomb Blasts, Mumbai, India (July 2006)
 - War between Lebanon-Israel (July 2006)
 - Afghanistan (Feb. 2002—June 2006)
 - United States (September 2001)
- 2. Measurable Results**, including significant and sustainable reduction in PTS symptoms of US army war veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan; reconciliation among warring tribes in Ivory Coast; renunciation of violence by 1000s of militants and terrorists in India; and 85% suicide reduction rate in Kosovo prisons in 2 years time.
- 3. Systemic Thinking**, whereby our approach complements the efforts of other peacebuilding organisations, including institutional, civil society, and grassroots initiatives and across sectors, creating a comprehensive strategy.
- 4. Cultural Sensitivity**, rooted in universal experiences and integrative responses to trauma in the conflict and post-war context, allowing IAHV to operate in nearly every political, ethnic, cultural or religious context.
- 5. Scalable, Efficient, and Inclusive Outcomes**, reaching large groups across divided societies, including survivors and perpetrators, low income to elite leadership, bridging ethnic, cultural, religious or social backgrounds. While traditional therapeutic work is practiced on a one-to-one basis or in small groups, IAHV's programs allow for working with large groups while still effectuating deeply personal change at the individual level.

"You send people to a workshop for a week and you figure they're going to feel better. But to see something one year after is pretty amazing."
*Dr. Emma Seppala, Associate Director
Center for Compassion and Altruism
Research and Education at Stanford*
- 6. Sustainable, Local Ownership of Peace Work**, as individuals and communities empower themselves to overcome trauma and build local resilience, creating self-sustaining change and reducing dependency on external support.

Case Study 1

Iraq (2003—Present): Healing the Wounds of War



Since September 2003, IAHV has contributed to rebuilding war-torn Iraq. The aftermath of two wars led to civil violence, economic breakdown and infrastructural shortage. The World Health Organisation announced that millions of men, women and children were in need of medical treatment and psychological counseling. One survey suggested heavy addiction to medicines for stress relief. Besides having to cope with individual stress, there was much to be done in terms of rebuilding the nation.

IAHV has benefited thousands of Iraqi citizens with trauma and medical relief programs and women's empowerment projects. Even as most NGOs were compelled to evacuate volunteers from the country in the wake of heightened unrest and kidnapping, IAHV continued its relief efforts. Supplying medicines, replenishing essential facilities in hospitals, helping schools resume classes were but a few of the activities that IAHV undertook to provide immediate relief.

Trauma relief classes began in Baghdad, Basra, Suleimania and Karbala, and several programs were offered benefitting over 8,000 Iraqis during the course of 5 years. Around 80% of the participants experienced relief from trauma, while only 20% required additional counseling after the programme. Those suffering from weeks of insomnia as a result of constant bombings and killings reported good sleep. Programme participants also experienced significant relief from depression, anxiety, high blood pressure, coronary heart disease, asthma, hypertension, migraine and other psychosomatic disorders; symptoms of war related stress.

IAHV found that Iraqi children were among the worst populations affected by the continuing violence and insecurity in the country. "Children in schools break into tears whenever they hear an explosion. They suffer from nightmares," said local IAHV Facilitator, Vinod Kumar. Therefore the children were provided with daily courses, including breathing exercises and play, stress-relieving games. Moved by the efficacy of the techniques implemented, the Iraqi government and several political parties sponsored a group of 150 young Iraqis to complete specialised teacher's training at the organisation's International Centre in Bangalore, India, with a plan to spread these programs more widely across the country for society's benefit.

"It feels like breathing out all the stress of war and breathing in a new life. I felt really relaxed after doing the breathing exercise," said 32-year-old Ahmed Hinoon. Importantly, the Iraqi national government supported the initiative, including a Member of the Iraqi Parliament. "We are so unaware of the importance of our own breath and how it can help us reach a stage where there is absolute clarity and focus," said a Member of the Iraqi Parliament and an ex-advisor to the Iraqi prime minister. "I was so fired up by the experience...and vision of a violence-free and stress-free world that I started teaching...to top politicians in Iraq, and it was a huge success," she recalls.

Case Study 2

Kosovo (2004—2008):



Assessing the effects of war in Kosovo, a Harvard Medical Group found that 80% of Kosovars suffered from PTSD. The most recent conflict in Kosovo ended in June 1999, leaving behind a society wide need for trauma relief and resilience: over 700,000 prisoners, ex-prisoners, disabled veterans and civilians who had been through, among other things, grueling police interrogations, and sexual, military and paramilitary violence.

Exemplifying IAHV's systemic approach to trauma relief and resilience, the organisation coordinated its mission to post-war Kosovo with the support and collaboration of Kosovo's Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and Department of Justice, as well as special and civil police forces and diverse civil society groups throughout the region.

Indeed, IAHV delivered programming to elements from across the spectrum in Kosovo, including to Prisoner Rehabilitation Programs, disabled Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) veterans, Police officers, Women's Empowerment Groups, Public and Mental Health Professionals/Centres and Conflict Resolution specialists. The resulting commendations and testimonials provide evidence of the programme's efficacy in the face of substantial need for trauma relief and resilience in post-war contexts.

IAHV's Prisoner Rehabilitation Program began in November 2004, with a pilot program at Lipljan Prison in Pristina. Since then, hundreds of prison staff and prisoners underwent the program, every week. Reaching out to all ethnicities – Serbs, Albanians, Romas – the programs brought about such positive transformation that the Department of Justice in Kosovo invited IAHV to operate in all of Kosovo's prisons.

In addition, more than 600 UN and civil police officers participated in IAHV's programmes. Addressing harmful stress generated in the line of duty, and its bearing on professionalism and the ability to mediate disputes nonviolently, IAHV provided, in the words of many, activities which avoided stigmatising the officers as patients or people with problems. Likewise, and with the approval of the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, IAHV treated a portion of the 2,500 disabled KLA Veterans community.

Finally, working with the Center for Mothers and Children, IAHV treated a number of women affected by sexual violence, providing women, in the words of Flora Brovina, Parliament Delegate and Director of Center for Mothers and Children, with the empowerment "to rebuild their own lives as well as those of their families and communities...the programme has helped women to alleviate the shame, guilt, numbness, disorientation, sense of isolation, distrust and disconnection..." providing "survivors with a method of treatment and intervention that is self contained, personal, private and learned as a like group of traumatized individuals."

Case Study 3



Ivory Coast (2004): Relief, Resilience and Reconciliation

During the civil war in Ivory Coast, the Guerès and Dioula tribes were involved in a violent conflict over land, identity and economic issues, involving destruction, harassment, looting, beatings and killings. Almost everyone in the area had lost at least one family member. The people had been extremely traumatized by the war, had their houses looted over and over again, seen dead bodies strewn being eaten by dogs, and many had become insomniac, lost all hope in life and had taken to alcohol to forget bad memories.

In 2006, IAHV brought young people from both tribes together for its 10 days Youth Leadership Training Program, combining personal development techniques (stress management tools; physical training for improved health and energy levels; explanations on the functioning of body, mind, emotions and identity; powerful breathing techniques to release negative emotions and increase well being; confidence building exercises; processes to overcome mental limitations) with skills training (leadership development, entrepreneurial skills, communication skills, skills to handle challenging situations), fostering interpersonal relationships and a sense of connectedness across divides, and joint service to the community (team building; responsibility; project development support).

Consequently, 20 young people of both tribes released deep-rooted stress and traumas, were able to recognise each other as brothers and sisters, renounced "senseless" violence, and developed and implemented joint projects for the development of their communities. They rebuilt each other's houses and invited the displaced people back to live in harmony in the same village. Factions within the communities who had never mixed before had come together. Motivated by the youth's initiative, local authorities geared up community development support, the Ministry of Reconciliation of Ivory Coast awarded IAHV and its sister organisation Art of Living for their unique peace work, and the EU provided a grant to the community.

Certified Trainers & Professional Standards

The International Association for Human Values, in partnership with its sister organisation the International Art of Living Foundation, certifies its trainers in three training centers around the world including Germany, Canada and India. IAHV trainers have extensive experience leading workshops for prisoners (Prison SMART), trauma survivors (IAHV Trauma Relief), war veterans (Project Welcome Home Troops), gangs, ex-combatants, refugee populations, international institutions, state officials, security personnel, corporates and students. The trainers go through required, continuing certification every two years and vigorously maintain a balanced personal resilience and empowerment program guided by the organization. IAHV, in partnership with leading peacebuilding professionals and institutions across the world, provides ongoing training in peacebuilding skills and encourages knowledge sharing to ensure high professional standards.

IAHV Peacebuilding Programs

An Integrative Approach to Sustainable Peace



The International Association for Human Values (IAHV) is a non-profit, United Nations-affiliated organisation with consultative status at ECOSOC (UN). Founded in 1997 by Sri Sri Ravi Shankar and other global humanitarian leaders in Geneva, Switzerland, its mission is to build a sustainable and inclusive peace by promoting the development of human values in both the individual and societies on a global scale.

The aim of IAHV's Peacebuilding Program is to increase the impact of peacebuilding and development efforts worldwide by effectively transforming mindsets, attitudes, wellbeing and behaviours of individuals and communities engaged in or affected by conflict. Cooperating with other organisations in a holistic approach, IAHV aims to strengthen the psycho-social foundation in which other peace and development efforts take root, turning personal transformation into greater peacebuilding impact.

IAHV's proven track record includes efforts to provide rehabilitation of victims as well as perpetrators, re-integration of ex-combatants, youth leadership and women's empowerment training, prevention of radicalization and leadership development initiatives in areas beset by conflict, including Iraq, Kosovo, Kashmir, Sri Lanka, Ivory Coast, Israel- Palestine, India and South Africa. Given this expertise, the IAHV Peacebuilding Program focuses on the following program areas: (1) Trauma Relief, Resilience and Empowerment; (2) Preventing and Transforming Violent Extremism – Mobilising Youth for Peace; (3) Bridging Divided Communities, Dialogue and Reconciliation; and (4) Training Professional Peacebuilding and Development Agencies.

Evidence of IAHV's holistic programs include significant and sustainable reduction in PTS symptoms of US army war veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan; significant reduction in PTS, anxiety and depression among survivors of the tsunami in 2003; a 30% reduction of violent incidents in several Los Angeles juvenile detention centres; reconciliation among warring tribes in Ivory Coast; prevention and renunciation of violence by thousands of militants and terrorists in India; and an 85% suicide reduction rate in Kosovo prisons in 2 years time.

Our human-centred approach lends itself to working across sectors and populations, including international organisations (UN, EU, World Bank), governments, managers and CEO's, social and community workers, women's groups, religious leaders, refugees, victims of violence, youth, terrorists and rebels, prisoners and children, bridging religious, ethnic and social divides. Together with our sister organisation, the Art of Living Foundation, our programs have reached over 20 million people in 150 countries.



“I wholeheartedly endorse the IAHV Peacebuilding Program that you are launching. I firmly believe that IAHV has the promise of bringing something unique and impactful to traditional peacebuilding efforts.”
Sanjay Pradhan, Vice-President World Bank Institute



Contact



IAHV Peacebuilding Programs

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