

The Institute for
Healing of Memories

Annual Report

2021

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President's Report

Fr. Michael Lapsley SSM

Dear Friends,

Thank you for the opportunity to reflect with you on last year as well as plans, hopes and dreams for the future.

I have continued to work full time for the Institute for Healing of Memories.

I am ever more conscious of wounded humanity and wounded Mother Earth. Whilst I have deep hope for the future I am conscious that in some respects South Africa is in a precarious position, which is perhaps is true of much of the world.

As many have commented, living with Covid has become the new normal.

When I look back on the last year, I realise that in the midst of all the death and dying, ironically it is gratitude which provides such a helpful pair of spectacles.

I had the privilege of writing an essay for a book entitled *Ecumenical Encounters with Desmond Mpilo Tutu*, which came out in time for his 90th birthday on October 7. This led me to reflect on my relationship with him since 1976.

From the time of his passing on 26 December, I was invited to comment by South African and international media. In so doing, I was able to make referenceto Archbishop Tutu as Patron of the Institute for Healing of Memories and my own relationship with him. For those who may be interested, here are the links to just two of the interviews; the second includes quite a long interview in a piece about the funeral.

<https://youtu.be/IE2b7HghjyY>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/w172xv5j7x0mb2y>

I am wondering what kind of things we can do to honour his memory.



The Institute

All things considered, it was a very productive year on several fronts especially training, writing and speaking.

Training

As in past years, together with our program director, Fatima Swartz, I led an international training programme. Because of Covid, it was twice postponed and limited to participants from the African continent, coming from eight different countries.

The Institute now has offices in Gauteng as well as in Durban and Cape Town. With Fatima Swartz, I assisted in an upskilling programme in all three provinces as well as a training programme for military veterans. This programme included both the liberation forces and the SADF. This is part of our focus on healing the wounds of history.

Like many across the world, I have lost count of how many webinars I have attended as a participant or as a speaker and sometimes feel zoomed out.



Speaking, Preaching, and Media Interviews

An address to the YMCA nationally on the *Emotional and spiritual struggles caused by the pandemic*.

We held two very successful webinars on Healing as a Revolutionary Act, the first under the auspices of All Saints Church in Pasadena in California and the second under the auspices of Healing of Memories, North America.

I preached virtually at All Saints Cathedral in Montreal and held a dialogue with two different congregations as a lead-up to a zoom HOM workshop in partnership with CSJR, the Centre for Restorative Justice. There were two Inuit participants at the workshop and it is hoped that this will lead to further engagement with the Inuit people. This was shortly before participating in a workshop involving the cathedral community and members of the Inuit nation.

On 8 May I was the keynote speaker at a SADCC German network conference on *Our losses and gains because of Covid*.

On 22 June I delivered the Paddy Kearney Memorial Lecture on *Healing old wounds of women and men to end gender-based violence and femicide*. Paddy was for many years Director of Diakonia in Durban and had shortly before his death agreed to be on our Advisory Board in KZN. It also provided an opportunity to highlight IHOM's, The Hands of Men campaign, including our very evocative posters.

Following the unrest in KZN, we held a debriefing with the facilitators to share what they had been going through and offer each other support. This also formed part of our facilitator healing and learning sessions in KZN.

In the immediate aftermath of the attempted insurrection, I was called upon for interventions on social media and the electronic media including a mediated conversation on SAFM.

On 25 June, thanks to Madoda Gcwadi, I had a conversation with the learners of Zisukhanyo Secondary School in Cape Town.

As Covid hit and there were repeated lockdowns, it was necessary for the Institute to be innovative and find new ways of doing our work. The breakthrough was the discovery that it was possible to not only do online HOM workshops but even to create emotional intimacy. Also the online workshop meant that we could have participants from several different countries. For example, we had a Canadian workshop including facilitators from Luxembourg and South Africa. Before Covid we would not even have considered such a possibility.

Healing of Memories with the Roman Catholic Church

The Institute was approached by the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission to offer HOM processes across South Africa and even possibly in Botswana and Swaziland. This was stymied to some degree by Covid but we did manage to have two workshops for the Dioceses of Kimberly and Aliwal North. It is expected that there will be more workshops in other dioceses in 2022.

Together with Brother Max, I led an introductory HOM process with 46 Franciscan sisters at Assisi on 3 January. In March there was another workshop with another congregation of sisters headquartered in Soweto.

Michigan

I had a Sunday morning dialogue with Fr Drew as part of a series of Sacred Conversations with Christ Church, Grosse Point in Michigan.

AJAR – Asia Justice and Rights

Fatima and I had a session with a group of participants from Timor Leste focused on *Learning for transformation to end violence against women and girls*.

Germany and Southern Africa Network of the Lutheran Church

I was the keynote speaker at a Conference on the *Losses and gains during Covid-19*.

Limpopo Methodist Synod

I was asked to present on *Reimagining healing of church and society*.

On 7 October the world celebrated the 90th birthday of the Institute's patron, Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

In November I was a speaker at a National Workshop of the more than 60 chaplains of the Department of Correctional Service on the *The Chaplain's pain, Healing the wounded healer*, which took place in KZN.

On my way back from KZN, the news broke of the passing of FW de Klerk. This led to a deluge of interviews from national and international media, perhaps unsurprisingly, given that I am on record as saying that he was politically and morally responsible for my bombing. I tried in different interviews, with varying success, to focus on other deaths where there are unanswered questions involving de Klerk, especially the Craddock Four, our woundedness as a nation, the content of apology, the importance of white people accepting that apartheid was a crime against humanity. and dealing with our guilt and shame with a commitment to redress and reparations.

I received hate mail from someone who regretted that I had only lost one eye. While I was digesting this and contemplating whether, and how, to respond, I opened another message from a friend expressing love and gratitude for the leadership I was offering to the nation. I corresponded with the man who sent me hate mail and he then told me that he admired me and would like to share his story.

At the beginning of December, Ronnie Kasrils and others published *International Brigade against Apartheid*, for which I also wrote a piece, and they included an obituary I penned for Bishop John Osmers.

International programme

As some of you know, we are part of a Healing of Memories Global Network. It includes participants from Zimbabwe, Namibia, Lesotho, South Africa, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, the US, Canada and Luxembourg. It meets every month or two and has enabled increasing collaboration, support and information sharing. Brother Max represents Lesotho in these meetings.

I was elected as President of the Healing of Memories Global Network.

Whereas in past years the Institute's Annual Report covered all our international work, last year for the first time the Network produced its own report, including individual national reports.



Together we have developed an online Introduction to Healing of Memories which we are still piloting.

For me there were two striking aspects of the reports from different parts of the world during our global meetings. We heard about the dominant role of the military not just in Myanmar but also in Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe. The other disturbing feature was the omnipresent violence and oppression of women at the hands of men. It underscores the importance of our own work focusing on the violence by men against women, including our media campaign.

USA

The Institute is also a legal structure in the United States and I am a Board Member. For many years, I spent several months a year in the US but of course Covid brought these visits to an abrupt halt. I have also been involved in the debriefings with online workshops in the US programme and hopefully will be able to visit later in the year.

Myanmar

One of our partner organisations is in Myanmar, where they live under military occupation, and they have been with us in the Global Network. Brother Max and I have participated in an online meeting with the healing of memories community who are all experiencing war and trauma in many different ways, including arbitrary detentions and killings.

Tigray

A few months back, an old friend of IHOM, Horst Kleinschmidt, asked me to meet with a small group of Tigrayans living in the Cape. While the world looks away, genocide and crimes against humanity are being carried out by the Ethiopian and Eritrean Governments aided by drones from the UAE. I was able to arrange for Archbishop Thabo to meet the delegation, after which he spoke out. Later in the year I co-signed an open letter with Former N.Z. Prime Minister Helen Clark about the increasing signs of genocide and the need for the UN Security Council to act but with no sign that they will do so. Meanwhile the war continues with immense suffering.

Germany

We are collaborating with previous participants in our Annual International Introduction to Healing of Memories to develop further workshops in Germany, beginning with a virtual workshop in December, my visit in January (now postponed until April) and a workshop in March.

Africa Programme

I also spoke at the Institute's Africa Day programme, which focused on how to overcome the obstacles to greater unity, cohesion and solidarity between African countries.

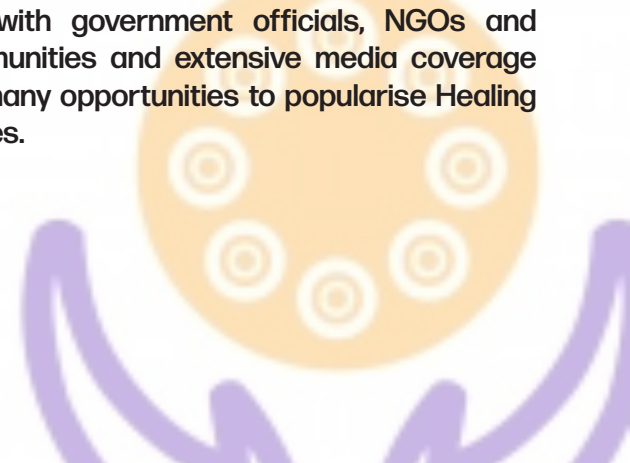
However, the great highlight of August was a 10-day visit to Ghana with Tumo Bopape as part of the Africa programme. As well as some facilitator training, we held two very successful workshops building on previous visits to Ghana.

Abidjan and Dakar

From 14 October to 5 November I visited Abidjan and Dakar in francophone West Africa. I was accompanied by Philani Dlamini, one of our KZN facilitators, together with Patrick Byrne and Javier Garcia from Luxembourg. Our principal partner in both countries was ACAT - Action by Christians for the Abolition of Torture.

We offered an introductory HOM workshop as pre-training for a francophone training programme taking place in Cotonou in July 2022. There were also participants from Burkina Faso and Mali.

In both countries we held book launches for *Guerir du passé*, the French edition of my memoir. Meetings with government officials, NGOs and faith communities and extensive media coverage provided many opportunities to popularise Healing of Memories.



In Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal we were well received by the South African ambassadors and their staff. Our Ambassador in Abidjan, Zolani Mtshothisa, encouraged us to apply for financial support from our Foreign Ministry's African Renaissance Fund. We have agreed to ask for a meeting with Naledi Pandor to speak about our work across the continent

These visits, in conjunction with the rest of the Africa programme, form part of the francophone outreach funded by Partage in Luxembourg and spearheaded by Healing of Memories Luxembourg.

The work with ongoing training, including with veterans, will be covered in Fatima's report.

Our last Global Network meeting had to be postponed till December because of load shedding.

I have been involved in zoom calls with facilitators and workshop participants in Sri Lanka and Myanmar, a zoom workshop in Montreal and ongoing training at three levels in Luxembourg.

At the end of September, I visited Lesotho for ongoing training and their Annual Healing of Memories fun walk with a focus on combatting gender-based violence.

The Sustainability Subcommittee meeting was also postponed and will report at the next meeting.

Luxembourg

Healing of Memories is also a legal entity in Luxembourg.

We have had ongoing training with an introductory training, more advanced training and training for lead facilitators.

Although all based in Luxembourg, we were thirteen different nationalities at the entry level. We also meet from time to time with a group from France and Spain.

Zoom also enabled us to have simultaneous interpretation, with participants and facilitators from different countries.

All being well, I was due to visit Luxembourg, France and Germany in January 2022, which due to Covid was postponed to April.

Writing

Apart from the Tutu essay mentioned above, my writings in 2020 included the following:

1. *Wounded Humanity and Wounded Earth* for the Pontifical Commission on Interfaith Dialogue (unpublished)
2. *Apology and the Restoration of the Moral Order* for the International Journal for Social Research produced by the New School for Social Research in New York
3. *The Role of Faith Communities in Moral Regeneration: A Time for Introspection* for Leadership Magazine
4. *Healing Old Wounds of Women and Men to End Gender-based Violence and Femicide* for Leadership Magazine
5. *The Pain Caused by the Demonisation of African Culture at the Altar of Apartheid and Colonisation* for Leadership Magazine
6. *The ANC's Church Front*, an essay in International Brigade Against Apartheid: Secrets of the People's War that Liberated South Africa



Keynote Speeches including:

1. *Caring for self and others: the role of leadership in the time of Covid-19 for the Leadership Conference of Consecrated life (South Africa)*
2. *Pain and hope...the long struggle for racial justice and healing at the Conference on Building bridges: Dismantling racism for the Common Good at the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma.* It was part of the 100th commemoration of the Tulsa race massacres in 1921. For those who may be interested here is the link to the presentation on YouTube <https://youtu.be/xmt6Fwfv9Lo>
3. *Eulogy for Bishop John Osmers (also included in International Brigade against Apartheid)*
4. *Brave New World: with Jesus into an unknown world at the Conference of the Centre for Training for Ministry*

The articles and speeches and a couple of homilies have been compiled under the title *Reflections in the age of Covid-19*. We are exploring how to publish it in the US and South Africa.

Travel Plans for 2022

As well as the ongoing work of the Institute, if Covid allows, I expect to be in Angola in March, Germany in April, Japan in June, Benin in July, and Canada and the US in October and November.

Thank you to each of you for your prayers, love and support.

Fr Michael Lapsley SSM

President of the Healing of Memories
Global Network

Founder of the Institute for Healing of Memories



South Africa

Introduction

Like all countries around the world, South Africa continues to experience the impact of Covid-19 on the emotional well-being and mental health of individuals, communities, and as a country. A great number of people are still feeling fearful and anxious. These feelings continue to trigger other unhealed memories from the past. Gender-based violence continues to rise specifically in South Africa, which affects women and children. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, more than 13 million children across South Africa were impacted by school closures. Children from disadvantaged communities have been most affected.

In addition to the rise in gender-based violence, the issue of violence, crime, and organised violent strikes continues to increase. The drug problem in South African communities is very serious, especially among youth. In the article Drug abuse is damaging South Africa's Youth, Fedhealth (2013) argues that 15% of South Africa's population has a drug problem.

South Africa continues to experience incidents of xenophobic violence against black non-nationals. In 2019 the government responded by launching the National Action Plan to Combat Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Intolerance (NAP) in 2019. Racism and inequality continue to affect individuals and communities at different levels. "It is impossible to promote unity and social cohesion when inequality persists according to racial lines" (South Africa Human Rights Commission Chairperson, 22 June 2021).

"I feel different after a Healing of Memories workshop because I shared my story that I kept inside me for many years. It was like a burden that I was carrying in my life. I learned that I have to forgive and move forward. Listening to other participants' stories encouraged me to begin my journey toward healing. I realized that healing must begin with me then it will impact all people around me."

- Military veteran

HOM workshops

Covid protocols had a huge impact on our programme implementation plan. Despite this and the increased cost of hosting HOM workshops, we managed to host six military veterans' workshops attended by 134 participants; three for people affected by drugs and violence with 75 participants; four for men and women with 100 and 83 participants respectively; two for people living with disability with 50 participants; three for people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS with 75 participants; two with refugees with 50 participants; four interfaith workshops with 118 participants; one LGBTQI+ workshop with 25 participants and four youth workshops with 99 young people. A total of 33 workshops were held in three provinces (Gauteng, Western Cape, and KwaZulu-Natal) impacting 809 lives directly and countless others who benefit from the attitudinal and behavioural change in participants at the workshops.

“For many years, I have been blaming myself and everyone for my disabilities. I have been an angry person towards myself, my family and friends. I did not realize the level of trauma and pain inside of me until I came to this workshop. Sharing my story in the small group allowed me to see my story in a different context. I was involved in an accident that left me paralyzed and I have been angry since then. So today’s workshop helped me to realize that this anger is killing me inside and I can’t change anything about what happened to me. I learned to forgive because this has also been my struggle. After sharing my story, I felt relieved. I want to continue the journey that I started today, not going back where I have been before.”

- Participant

Support groups and psychosocial support

HOM workshops’ follow-up meetings (reunions, second-phase workshops, support groups and psychosocial support) have been contributing in a very positive way to participants’ journeys towards healing. The second-phase workshop is a full-day workshop that focuses on dealing with anger and hatred and struggling with forgiveness, while the reunion brings together participants who attended the HOM workshops to reflect on how they feel since the workshop they attended, what they have done since then for themselves, in their families/communities in their healing journey and any immediate changes in their lives as a result of the workshop. Furthermore, psychosocial support (online and face-to-face counselling sessions) continues to be offered to those participants who require special follow-ups after the healing of memories processes.

Between KwaZulu Natal and the Western Cape, seven second-phase workshops were offered and attended by 115 individuals. The two provinces also managed to organise 15 reunions that benefited 245 individuals. 295 people were referred for additional support and counselling, resulting in 1598 sessions. This additional support intervention is a direct outcome of the Covid pandemic. The Institute has limited resources and capacity to provide direct support to people in communities that do not have the resources to access psychosocial support through the largely dysfunctional public health

system or privately. Seven psycho-educational workshops were held with 119 members of social justice community-based organisations to provide them with the knowledge and skills to address issues of stress, anxiety and depression.

“I tried to commit suicide several times because of living with HIV/Aids. I have been a depressed and angry person. Thank you to the Institute for creating this space for me to share my story with other people. I realized that I am not the only one who suffered, others also have similar feelings even though our experiences differ. I feel relieved and I am going to join HIV/Aids women support in my community.”

- Participant

“I have learned to be responsible with my feelings and my choices. I have realized that I have been carrying anger and hatred inside me for many years. These negative feelings have been destroying me, my family, and my community. I have learned to let them go and I gained the skills on how to deal with my daily trauma.”

- Participant

“What touched me most at the Healing of Memories Workshop was sharing my story with other young people my age. It helped me to start looking at my life differently.

Even though I did not experience apartheid, I now experience the effect of apartheid in terms of my identity, geographical area where I live and lack of opportunity. I was able to understand what other young people go through, similar to my story in many ways. The workshop helped us as young people to deal with our pain and trauma because often we don't share our personal stories with anybody. The workshop created a safe space for me to share my story without being judged.”

- Youth facilitator

“Sharing my story in the small group helped me to see the impact of the apartheid in my life. The apartheid affected us as South Africans in many ways and it left us with scars and trauma that will stay with me for many years. The Healing of Memories Workshop allows us to share our pain and trauma and have a person who can listen to our stories. I felt relieved after I shared my story in the small group. I realized that I am not the only one who suffered. I cannot continue to be bitter and angry for the rest of my life. The workshop helped me to identify unresolved emotions that I am still struggling with and I need to deal with them.”

- Participant

Community Healing Dialogues

Healing the wounds of history and IHOM's response to the July unrest

During the period 9 to 17 July 2021, South Africa experienced violent protests and socio-political unrest characterised by widespread looting of shops and businesses, as well as burning and destruction of public facilities and private properties, mostly in the provinces of KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) and Gauteng.

The cause of the July 2021 socio-political unrest was a combination of political, social and economic factors. The protests resulted in the loss of properties, business stock, employment, livelihoods, essential services such as medical and pharmaceutical supplies (in hospitals and clinics), farming, financial services facilities, telecommunication facilities, food distribution centres, and seaports.

In KwaZulu-Natal, communal violence and racial tensions between black South Africans and Indians erupted, particularly in communities such as the Phoenix community in Durban, where 36 people lost their lives, with allegations of racial profiling and 'race-targeted' attacks on suspected looters and pillagers. The protests resulted in the deaths of 337 people in KZN and Gauteng as of 22 July 2021, with over 3 400 people arrested on allegations of inciting public violence, murder, arson and looting (Article of 10 December 2021 by Clayton Vhumbunu, July 2021 protest and socio-political unrest in South Africa). Thirteen dialogues took place in Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal and were attended by 470 community members.



Restoring Humanity HOM Workshop, Gauteng

In response to the above challenges, the Institute increased its community dialogues on healing the wounds of history, hosting 15 dialogues that were attended by 686 participants. The healing of history is not about the past, but about how the past affects both the present and the future. The dialogues brought people together from all race groups (Indians and black) to talk to each other and share their pain and concerns. These dialogues are considered one of the Institute's healing activities that promote understanding of human rights, peacebuilding and transformative justice and that address the well-being of individuals within communities. The dialogues also assisted community members to develop strategies for rebuilding and moving forward from the violent unrest.

“It is not time that we fight against each other. Each one of us is struggling to get food. This violence brought back unhealed memories from the past, between Indians and black- Zulus. It is this reason that we are having tensions between us.”

“We need to treat each other with dignity and respect. If we don't stop it now, it might escalate as racism. Let us build one another in this difficult time. Thank you for this space that was created for us to dialogue with one another.”

We also increased the number of dialogues focusing on gender-based violence, hosting 22 sessions and reaching 805 individuals. In addition, we had seven intergenerational dialogues with 284 people attending; five dialogues focusing on xenophobia attended by 201 community leaders; two interfaith and one healing and justice dialogue with 70 and 35 participants respectively. The dialogue space creates opportunity for healing, learning, unlearning and imagining and dreaming about a better world.



Above: Military Veterans Training



#thehandsofmen workshop

“Like man, I normally do not share my personal life and pain. However, the safe space that was created allowed me to share my story because I trusted the process and the facilitator. I feel relieved because I was able to share the pain, anger and feelings that I have been carrying for many years.”

Facilitator Training

The Institute offered the first healing of memories facilitator training for military veterans. It brought together military veterans from three provinces in a weeklong training that included a dialogue and forging pathways for reconciliation.

Three ongoing facilitator trainings were implemented with our facilitator teams in the three provinces where we have offices. In addition, we hosted online facilitator training in Gauteng focused on the role of triggers in HOM workshops.

Restoring Humanity Project

The restoring humanity activities bring the young people together to learn from each other and to share experiences. These take various formats: workshops, youth platforms, storytelling circles and site visits. The project aims to develop their awareness and understanding of social, political, economic and spiritual issues that affect them, their communities and the world. It also provides the space for them to develop leadership skills and creates opportunities for them to contribute to building a better world. These learning journeys are carefully developed and supported by relevant resource materials that draw from the experiences of the participants and make the linkage between the past and present in a meaningful way.

The Restoring Humanity Project activities were implemented in the following communities in three provinces: Western Cape: Masiphumelele, Delft, Mfuleni, Mamre, Bishop Lavis, Phillipi, Behlar and Khayelitsha. Gauteng: Tembisa, Alexandra and Mamelodi. KwaZulu Natal: Inanda, Ntuzuma, KwaMashu, Lamontville, Chesterville, Chatsworth, Mariannridge and Durban Central. The project managed to reach 41 000 youth in 2021.

“I was happy for the safe space that was created for me. For the first time, I felt extremely safe and free to be the real me without being judged. I managed to share my pain and personal experience.”

“I am grateful for today because I learned that bullying someone is not just about hitting them, you can bully a person in a lot of ways.”

In Gauteng Province the project focused on a Boys2Men programme. They hosted a number of workshops focusing on the journey of boys becoming men, the role of culture and religion in shaping the male identity. In addition, it hosted three radio shows on a local radio station with an audience of approximately 40 000 listeners. In the Western Cape a three-day psycho-educational workshop was held supporting the Boys2Men programme in that province.

Using different visual and performance art methodologies a number of workshops were held addressing pressing issues of human rights, bullying, human trafficking, gender-based violence and identity, among other issues.

Ongoing youth facilitator training continued in all three provinces. Youth facilitators and community youth members attended HOM workshops in all three provinces. A significant number of young people were referred for further support. Interventions included removing young people from harmful environments.

“The workshops and dialogues on gender-based violence helped me to feel confident to speak out against gender-based violence among young people in my community. I received knowledge and tools that I can use to address this issue. I am now involved in activities against gender-based violence in my community.”

“Gender-based violence and gender roles have always been something almost taboo to talk about in our society. To see how as youth we can put our ideas together to better this problem has been an amazing experience for me.”



Left: #thehandsofmen
Restoring Humanity online exhibition

Below: Restoring Humanity Mamelodi
Healing the Wounds of History
after the 1985 Mamelodi massacre



Left: Facilitator training in KwaZulu-Natal

Africa Programme

Despite Covid-19 challenges and restrictions, the next two HOM workshops were implemented in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, and Burundi with three workshops in Malawi and Zambia and one in Namibia. We also managed to implement a reunion in Zimbabwe and a second-phase workshop in Malawi.

Zambia

The workshops in Zambia were organised and facilitated in partnership with the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of Assisi-Zambia. They took place at Francisdale Pastoral Centre Ndola. Participants were from the Bemba and Nyanja tribes and most of them belonged to the Catholic Church. Some issues shared at the workshops included harmful cultural practices, tribalism, injustice within churches, gender-based violence, specifically violence by men towards women, abuse of women, drugs, HIV/Aids and sexual abuse. For many participants, it was the first time sharing their painful stories. The issues of homosexuality and gender-based violence came up strongly during storytelling in the small groups. Many participants had been carrying negative feelings for many years.

“I am very different. I have learnt to deal with situations and let out my emotions. I have also learnt the importance of forgiveness and I feel at peace and more than willing to let go of my past and start a new life.”

- Zambian participant

“I have learnt I am not alone facing bad memories and I have accepted whatever I went through and let myself be aware of the things that happened to me so that they may not repeat.”

- Zambian participant

“I am feeling different in a positive way and wish to take along this positivity even to the community. In life, just as much as we are different, we are also unique and we have to appreciate that. I appreciate this workshop; it has changed me.”

- Zambian participant



Healing of Memories Workshop, Zambia

Malawi

The HOM workshops in Malawi were organised and facilitated in partnership with ACT Alliance, the Lydia Foundation and Evangelism Lutheran Church Services. Participants came from different regions of Malawi such as Blantyre, Lilongwe, Dzeleka, and Mzuzu. Participants belonged to different churches: Lutheran, Moravians, Anglican, Baptist, Catholic, Christ for the Nations Ministry and Central African Presbyterian - Blantyre Synod. Some of the issues that came up at the workshops were trauma related to the history of slavery, colonialism, dictatorial political regime, political violence, tribalism and violation of human rights in Malawi. During the storytelling in small groups, many participants spoke about the absence of fathers in the family, which is a very serious issue in Malawi. Children who grow up without fathers are often discriminated against and marginalised in communities.



Community Dialogue with men

“Much delighted to have had time to share my story and related it to what other people were sharing or passing through. I came to discover that God had done a lot for me. I am now determined to face tomorrow with hope and share love, peace and forgiveness with others.”

“The workshop is another greatest level of knowledge about healing. This is so good and helpful. I will love to partner with the partners’ organisers on how to implement this programme at the department of theology at the university and colleges.”

“I am an indeed different person after attending this workshop. This is because after hearing different stories and experiences that my fellow participants had gone through, I came to realise that life is not easy. There are times that we go through tough situations and these things can change us in the way we think and in the way we see things.”

“Yes, I am very different now because I came here full of anger, regret and very blameful. My heart was heavy with unshared stories I had. However, after sharing, I felt relieved and free and I was able to control my anger. I started a process of forgiveness and that made me different.”

“I attended the Healing of Memories workshop and I am a new person. I got a new way of understanding. The workshop brought a big change in me. I finally realise telling your story to people is bigger healing than the hospital.”

Democratic Republic of Congo

The HOM workshops in the Democratic Republic of Congo were organised and facilitated in partnership with the United Nations Association of DRC. The workshops took place in Goma. Many civilians have been affected by the ongoing war in the region. Government security forces continue to kill many civilians in Goma's surrounding communities. The humanitarian situation remained alarming with 4.5 million people displaced from their homes and more than 130,000 refugees who fled to neighbouring countries.



Solidarity Community Dialogue with participants from DRC, South Africa, Burundi, and Zimbabwe

“Through this workshop, I gain new insight on the Healing of Memories in building peace. Blaming others does not solve the problem.”

“This workshop helped me to overcome destructive feelings that were bothering me and keeping me from moving forward. I also learned to take responsibility for my healing journey.”

“I feel relieved and I am willing now to reconcile with my siblings.”

Zimbabwe Workshops Follow-Up and Reunion

“My experience at the Healing of Memories workshop in Harare was tremendous and encouraging. The workshop was very great in permitting me to do an introspection on the traumatic experiences that have damaged my life. Sometimes as a person, I choose to let go of the trauma without going through the healing process. This workshop made me realize how important it is to face up to my past and find a safe space to let out my feelings. In letting out feelings it makes one realize what they need to deal with. Sometimes we feel healed and yet we are becoming the worst possible person in society because of our traumas. This has taught me to clear my mind; because trauma has affected my thinking, my behaviour and my character. The process helped me deal with my fears and start a new life afresh with a new perspective.”

-Participant

“The workshops had a great impression on the participants who were able to open up and share their stories. It is always difficult to share one’s hates/deep-seated personal stories, especially to people you have met for the first time but this happened. The fact of being able to share is a big step on the journey toward the healing of one’s memories.”

- Facilitator

“The HOM workshop also helped me to process my fears and my pains in life and my ministry. No wonder it’s a good mechanism in one’s life and mission. It made me think about the impact that I can also bring in people’s lives in my ministry and it made me be resolved to continue helping people in this regard.”

- Facilitator

*Healing of Memories
Workshop participants
Zimbabwe*



Africa Programme Facilitators' Training

The training was held from 12 to 18 April 2021 in Cape Town. Participants came from South Africa, Angola, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Ghana, Lesotho and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The training focused on understanding the HOM methodology and facilitation of the HOM workshop. It covered the following areas: exploring personal healing and how it relates to wider communities and the history of nations; discussing notions of forgiveness, restorative justice and trauma and community healing and introducing participants to the fundamentals of HOM facilitation practice.

Some of the outcomes of the training included:

- (i) reflection on the concepts of healing and trauma; deeper awareness of the potential role of the healing of memories facilitator as a wounded healer in their countries of origin; and insight into the dynamics, concepts and various approaches of healing and transformation tailored to their specific context;
- (ii) practical tools that can contribute to the process of healing and trauma transformation;
- (iii) building partnerships and networks for effective peacebuilding in the region; and
- (iv) sharing experiences and strengthening the capacity of the Healing of Memories facilitators in the region.



Healing of Memories Workshop, KwaZulu-Natal

Online dialogues and workshops

Beyond the in-person workshops we continued to offer the online dialogues and workshops that were initiated in 2020. The themes of the workshops were : Healing and peacebuilding (72 participants); Human trafficking (58 participants); Tribalism and inclusivity (42 participants); and an introductory healing of memories (28 participants) was decided on by the African partnership collective. Partner organisations in the different countries facilitated and hosted the workshops. In addition, a psychosocial training (60 participants), facilitated by Bongiwe Mavuya from the Lutheran Development Service in Zimbabwe, was also offered to our partner organisations. The training covered different topics such as intercultural and religious learning for enhancing wellbeing, psychosocial first aid, normal reactions to difficult situations and community mobilisation.



Psychoeducation workshop

In conclusion, despite Covid-19 challenges, the Institute for Healing of Memories continues to open doors for individuals, groups and communities to reach down to the essence of their humanity and strive for the life-giving way in dealing with challenges through the healing of memories workshops, community healing dialogues, restoring humanity activities with youth.

Canada (East)

Montreal

In 2021 we offered two HOM Zoom workshops, one in English in May and the other in French in October. Both weekend workshops were full. Twenty-four people from different regions of Quebec and Nunavik participated. Follow-up meetings, three months after the workshops, showed us the impact of these workshops on the lives of the participants. As in the past, we realized how it is possible to bring together people from distant regions with a virtual workshop.

The English workshop was organized in partnership with the Anglican Cathedral of Montreal, which helped us to include participants from the Inuit (the indigenous people of northern Canada) community of Quebec. It was also a wonderful collaboration within the international network of Healing of Memories with facilitators coming from Montreal (Catherine Ego), Edmonton (Stephanie London), Luxembourg (Patrick Byrne) and South Africa (Michael Lapsley).

The French workshop was organized by the Montreal HOM team (Estelle Drouvin, Catherine Ego and Raoul Lincourt) and Patrick Byrne from Luxembourg. Two facilitators in training also participated in this workshop.

Canada (West)

Edmonton

Healing of Memories (Edmonton) began as a ministry associated with the Anglican Diocese of Edmonton. Before the pandemic, the diocese hosted Fr Michael on several visits to offer workshops and facilitator training, and to build a small core team. We were disappointed to have to delay partnerships and workshops due to Covid-19.

We are pleased to be able to return to building a western Canadian Healing of Memories community this year. We anticipate that Fr Michael will return in September 2022, allowing us to train more facilitators and expand the reach of Healing of Memories. We have also begun establishing partnerships with several organizations involved in healing and reconciliation with Indigenous people.

We continue to focus on the wounds of our context relating to colonial projects that destroyed language and culture, separated children from their families, and often exposed them to abuse.



Pre-pandemic workshop in Edmonton, Canada (2019)

Lesotho

Warm greetings from Lesotho Healing of Memories team. 2021 was the second year of Covid-19. We planned the year like other years, we planned to visit churches, children with disabilities and people in prison. Unfortunately, none of these happened because of Covid-19. In spite of Covid, we improvised and made new plans, and the year proved to be very fruitful since we actually had more workshops than in previous years.

We started the year with a facilitators' and co-facilitators' retreat on 20 - 21 March 2021. In our retreat, we reflected and prayed for ourselves as we started this journey together as a team. We reflected on our work/ministry and asked God for guidance, protection and wisdom through this process of healing.



Activities

We planned for three workshops, two for adults and one for young people, but we in fact managed to have three workshops for adults and two for young people.

The first was on 23-25 April, with four facilitators, one co-facilitator and 15 participants, which was followed by a reunion on 30 May.

The second adult workshop was on 20-22 August, with three facilitators, three co-facilitators and 10 participants. This was followed by a reunion on 17 October, where unfortunately the attendance was poor, with fewer than five people.

The last workshop was on 26 - 28 November, with three facilitators, three co-facilitators and 12 participants. The reunion will be on 6 February 2022. For the youth we had our first workshop on 25-27 June, with three facilitators, three co-facilitators but a poor attendance of nine participants. We believe the cold weather was the cause. The reunion was on 25 July.

The second youth workshop was on 17-19 September, with four facilitators, two co-facilitators and 20 participants. The reunion was on 7 November.

Training new co-facilitators

We planned to train new facilitators and due to Covid the training was done online. We had four Zoom meetings and started the training with five participants and ended with four. The last training was a face-to-face with Fr Michael. This increased the number of co-facilitators from six to 10, thus opening the door to having more facilitators.

International training

There was an international training in Cape Town and we had two lady representatives from our team. They came with fruitful feedback from that training with the following points:

1. gender-based violence (GBV) as an outreach to the community
2. visit to Robben Island; the topic was intergenerational trauma.

The experience that they gave back was timely for our plans.

Our members attended the Africa Programme. We also attended a webinar with facilitators from California in the USA on Healing as a revolutionary act. One person from our team is a member of the Healing of Memories Global Steering Committee. He attends the Zoom meetings and gives feedback after each meeting.

Fun walk

Healing of Memories also held a fun walk on 3 October. The fun walk started at SSM premises and went to Durham Link. We expected to have 50 participants but ended up with 68, most of whom were young people. We did not have T-shirts for 18 people, which was a bit of a challenge. After the fun walk we had three activities and braai. The walk was a success, with positive feedback and an impact on some participants. We also had a guest speaker from the NGO, REPSI, who taught people about GBV. Fr Michael also spoke about healing and GBV.

Closing party

We planned to have our closing party on 4 December but it was raining and we postponed it to 11 December. It was still raining but we nevertheless continued with our party, which was a success with lots of fun.

Achievements

We had positive feedback from all our participants throughout the year on how healing of memories changed their lives. Our most encouraging feedback was from the youth. Some had attempted suicide, some were still on the verge of killing themselves but after the Healing of Memories workshops, they saw light at the end of the tunnel and saw life in a positive way. One of the fun walk participants who never attended our workshops gave a very positive and heartfelt comment on how being surrounded by healing of memories members gave her hope and she wanted to attend our workshops.

Personal reflection

One of the participants said "being part of Healing of Memories as an invited participant or co-facilitator helped me in being mentally stable under hostile circumstances and environment that might trigger anger, frustrations, revenge, etc. and also continue living with a positive hope while dealing with pain from within."

A young person wrote this poem after the workshop:

In H.O.M there is a place, home of nature,
true love and peace

Home where all dark hearts are washed,

Where we all stand a chance to a new life.

The safe space with supervisions

And a man-made place with passion and
patience

Oh, Healing of Memories

It is somehow a secretive place

Never mind the secret in it, I will explain
later

A place, a yard, a house, a room

With doors and gates all wide open

For us to enter and see the bright shining

Light of life, to get our souls attached

Its walls to purify our spirit

To me away from the dark".

Plans for 2022

One of our goals is to give participants who were interested training as facilitators. There are 23 adults and 18 youths who wanted to be trained. For some time, we have wanted to do more workshops with young people. We would like to introduce a Restoring Humanity programme with support from the institute in Cape Town.

We also plan to have three workshops for adults and two workshops for young people. We would like to do a pastoral visit to our participants. We will be open to working with organisations on gender-based violence and we will continue with our reunions.

- a) Participants training to become co-facilitators
- b) Workshops (retreats): three for adults, two for young people
- c) Pastoral visit to our past workshop participants and our members
- d) Taking part in the fight against GBV through partnering with other organisations
- e) Reunions are still to continue
- f) Introduction of Restoring Humanity programme (target is young people) with support from the Institute in Cape Town.

Khotso,
pula,
nala.



Luxembourg

Facilitator training

In 2021, our new organisation, Healing of Memories Luxembourg, started the year full of ambition and with lots of plans for the future. The Covid situation significantly dampened those ambitions, causing us to postpone Michael Lapsley's visit to Luxembourg and all the activities related to that visit: workshops, meetings, conferences, a training session and even the celebrations we had planned to mark the launch of the organisation.

However, times of crisis also tend to stimulate creativity, and so we managed to turn certain handicaps to our advantage. We have continued to train our facilitators on a very regular basis through videoconferencing.

We also ran our first Zoom mini-workshop, the very first such workshop in the global network to be conducted in two languages, with simultaneous interpretation.

And, most importantly, despite the difficult context, we managed to start up a major project with our partners - a five-year training programme for facilitators in French-speaking Africa.

We have three training groups, split up on the basis of the facilitators' levels of experience. The lead facilitators' group has five members, the core group seven facilitators and the third group nine co-facilitators. It is worth noting that some of these facilitators live in countries other than Luxembourg but have joined our training network over the years either by coming to our in-person sessions or by joining us for online sessions.

Videoconference sessions were held regularly in 2021 for each of the training groups, mostly with Michael Lapsley as trainer, but also with Fatima Swartz, IHOM-South Africa's Director of Programmes, and Gloria Hage, Director of IHOM-North America, who shared their experiences of HOM work in their respective countries. These meetings would obviously have been impossible without videoconferencing.

The training sessions enabled us to prepare our teams for the upcoming workshops, and to strengthen the links between facilitators despite social distancing rules and the geographical remoteness of some. It must be recognised that this mode of distance learning has allowed us to expand the narrow borders of our country!



July 2021: some members of Healing of Memories Luxembourg at their 2021 Annual General Meeting

Online mini-workshop

On 3 and 4 July, we offered eight participants the opportunity to participate in our first bilingual (French-English) online mini-workshop. Encouraged and guided by the relevant experiences of the Institute in South Africa and North America and the CSJR in Montreal, we were able to conduct a seven-hour workshop, which both the participants and the organisers felt had been a success. Of course, the mini-workshop format has certain drawbacks compared to the residential type, but all agreed that it still enabled participants to engage fully in the process and that it was felt to have a very positive impact.

We were also able to realise the value of this format, especially in terms of allowing people living in remote areas to gain access to workshops.

Website

During this first year, HOM-Luxembourg has set up and developed its own website - a very valuable means not only of keeping in touch with members and partner organisations in Luxembourg, but also of reaching out to the wider world and engaging in networking activities. It is fully accessible in two languages, French and English, with a significant proportion of material also available in German.

You are most welcome to visit the website!
(<https://healing-memories.lu>)

High Patronage of H.R.H. the Grand Duchess of Luxembourg

Grand Duchess Maria-Teresa of Luxembourg, who is already one of the patrons of the IHOM in South Africa, has agreed to grant her 'High Patronage' to our newly established organisation in Luxembourg. We are extremely grateful for this support, particularly in view of her well-known advocacy work on social justice issues and proactive involvement in the campaign in support of survivors of sexual violence, especially in conflict zones.



Francophone Africa Project: “Healing the wounds of the past to build a lasting peace”

The project to promote Healing of Memories in French-speaking Africa by training local facilitators began to be devised in 2020 as a complement to the IHOM's existing Africa programme, which is run mainly in English. It is being run in partnership with the Institute in South Africa and supported by the Luxembourg Government (through the 'Partage Luxembourg' Foundation) and the Grand-Duke Henri and Grand-Duchess Maria Teresa Foundation.

In autumn 2021, two members of our Africa project team travelled with Father Michael Lapsley and Philani Dlamini, from the Institute, to Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal, and then separately to Togo and Benin. The purpose of the visit was to meet candidates from those four West African countries, as well as Burkina Faso and Mali, and help them prepare for the first facilitator training session to be held in Cotonou (Benin) in July 2022. The 28 participants in this session will also include three delegates from Eastern Congo. The programme, which is planned for a minimum period of five years, will combine theoretical training in the Cotonou sessions with practical training on the ground in each of the countries concerned.

The months leading up to the Cotonou session are a period of reflection during which participants have been asked to discuss among themselves and with other local groups what are the main collective wounds - ancient, old and new - in their individual countries and in what ways people are affected by them.



Above: Cotonou, December 2021: the HOM Benin group at the end of their preparatory session for the July facilitator training

Centre: Abidjan, October 2021: Wenceslas Assohou and Yves N'guettia, from the HOM Côte d'Ivoire group, at pre-training session with Fr Michael, Philani Dlamini (IHOM South Africa) and the HOM Luxembourg team, Javier Garcia Alves and Patrick Byrne



Below: Cotonou, December 2021: student actors from the Benin International Drama School rehearse a short drama for the July inter-African HOM facilitator training session





INSTITUTE FOR HEALING OF MEMORIES

HEALING OF MEMORIES LUXEMBOURG

Chacun a une histoire, digne d'être écoutée ...

Every story needs a listener

Session de formation de facilitateurs de guérison des mémoires pour l'Afrique francophone

du 15 au 25 juillet 2022

Hôtel Les Orchidées, Cotonou (Bénin)

Sous le patronage de :

- S.E. Mme Robina Marks, Ambassadrice d'Afrique du Sud au Bénin et au Togo
- Mgr Roger Houngbedji, Archevêque de Cotonou
- M. Pascal Essou, Médiateur de la République du Bénin

Guérison des mémoires

« Des expériences douloureuses, tant individuelles que collectives, laissent en chacun de nous des "souvenirs empoisonnés". Et ce poison – composé de sentiments de colère, de haine, de désir de vengeance – risque de nous envahir, de nous détruire, si nous le gardons enfoui au fond de nous. Il s'agit, dans le travail de guérison des mémoires, d'offrir un cadre sécurisé à ceux qui portent en eux de telles traces d'un passé douloureux, afin de pouvoir le revisiter en laissant derrière eux ce qui risque de les détruire, et en retenant ce qui est porteur de vie. » (Michael Lapsley, fondateur de l'Institut pour la guérison des mémoires (IHOM), Afrique du Sud)

Le projet de formation (2022-2023)

En juillet 2022, le centre sud-africain *Institute for Healing of Memories* (IHOM), en collaboration avec son association sœur *Healing of Memories Luxembourg* (HOM-Luxembourg), lance pour la première fois un programme de formation d'animateurs (appelés « facilitateurs ») d'ateliers de guérison des mémoires pour les pays d'Afrique francophone.

28 stagiaires de 7 pays différents – Bénin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, République démocratique du Congo, Sénégal et Togo – participeront à ce programme, dont le premier volet est une session de 10 jours se déroulant à Cotonou. Ces participants sont envoyés par des associations partenaires souhaitant intégrer la guérison des mémoires dans leurs activités.

Une fois rentrés chez eux, ils participeront au second volet, cette fois pratique, de la formation en organisant un premier atelier sur le terrain et en contribuant à la mise en place d'une équipe « guérison des mémoires » dans leur région.

Organisateurs

- **Institute for Healing of Memories (IHOM)**

Le Cap (Afrique du Sud)

www.healing-memories.org/

- **Healing of Memories Luxembourg (HOM-Luxembourg)**

Luxembourg

<https://healing-memories.lu>

Association d'accueil et de coordination locale :

ACAT-Bénin



Programme de la session

(animée par Michael Lapsley, fondateur IHOM, Fatima Swartz, directrice IHOM, et une équipe de collaborateurs d'Afrique du Sud et du Luxembourg)

Vendredi 15 juillet

Cérémonie d'ouverture et séance d'introduction

Samedi 16 juillet

Pourquoi ce projet en Afrique francophone ?

Blessures anciennes et récentes, chemins de guérison

Comment se préparer à un atelier de guérison des mémoires

Dimanche 17 juillet et lundi 18 juillet

Atelier de guérison des mémoires : expérience concrète

Mardi 19 juillet

Guérison des mémoires, histoire et philosophie

Qu'est-ce qu'un facilitateur de guérison des mémoires ?

Mercredi 20 juillet

Apprentissage du rôle du facilitateur (exercices pratiques)

Jeudi 21 juillet

Excursion thématique et de loisir

Vendredi 22 juillet

Réflexion sur la thématique de la veille

Exercices pratiques (suite)

Samedi 23 juillet

Atelier de 2^e phase

Soirée culturelle

Dimanche 24 juillet

Perspectives 2023, préparation de la formation sur le terrain

Lundi 25 juillet

Conclusions, évaluation, envoi



Training session for healing of memories facilitators in francophone Africa

15 - 25 July 2022

Hôtel Les Orchidées, Cotonou (Benin)

Under the patronage of:

- H.E. Ms Robina Marks, Ambassador of South Africa in Benin and Togo
- Msgr Roger Houngbedji, Archbishop of Cotonou
- Mr Pascal Essou, Ombudsman of the Republic of Benin

Healing of memories

'When horrible things happen to us, individually or collectively, they leave "poisonous memories" in each of us. And that poison – anger, hatred and revenge – is liable to take control of us, to destroy us, if we keep it inside us. Healing of memories is about providing a safe space for people to tell their stories of painful memories, enabling them to acknowledge and lay to rest those things in the past which would destroy them and to take from the past that which is life-giving.' (Michael Lapsley, founder of the Institute for Healing of Memories, South Africa)

The training project (2022-2023)

In July 2022, the Institute for Healing of Memories (IHOM) in South Africa, in cooperation with its sister organisation Healing of Memories Luxembourg (HOM-Luxembourg), is for the first time launching a training programme for healing of memories facilitators in French-speaking African countries. 28 trainees from 7 different countries – Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Democratic Republic of Congo, Senegal and Togo – will take part in this programme, the first element of which is a 10-day session taking place in Cotonou. The participants will be from partner organisations wishing to incorporate healing of memories work into their activities. On return to their respective countries after the session, they will start the second, more practical, part of the training there by organising an initial workshop and helping to set up a local healing of memories team.

Organisers

- Institute for Healing of Memories (IHOM)

Cape Town (South Africa)

www.healing-memories.org/

- Healing of Memories Luxembourg (HOM-Luxembourg)

Luxembourg

<https://healing-memories.lu>

Local host and coordination association:

ACAT-Benin



Session programme

(led by Michael Lapsley, IHOM founder, Fatima Swartz, IHOM director, and a team of collaborators from South Africa and Luxembourg)

Friday 15 July

Opening ceremony and introductory session

Saturday 16 July

Why this training project in francophone Africa?
Ancient, old and recent wounds, healing journeys
How to prepare for a healing of memories workshop

Sunday 17 July and Monday 18 July

Healing of memories workshop: practical experience as a participant

Tuesday 19 July

Healing of memories: history and philosophy
What is a healing of memories facilitator?

Wednesday 20 July

Learning to be a facilitator (practical exercises)

Thursday 21 July

Thematic and leisure outing

Friday 22 July

Reflecting on the theme of the previous day
Practical exercises (continued)

Saturday 23 July

Phase 2 workshop
Cultural evening

Sunday 24 July

Looking forward to 2023, preparing for training on the ground

Monday 25 July

Conclusions, evaluation, closing message

Myanmar

Since the first visit of Fr Michael Lapsley SSM in February 2018, religious groups, civil society organisations (CSOs) and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Kachin and Northern Shan have started initiation into the Healing of Memories (HOM) journey. Since the Covid-19 pandemic, the alumni HOM alumni have been trying to be in touch online with the accompaniment of the Institute for Healing of Memories.

In Myanmar, the Covid-19 pandemic has made the lives of vulnerable communities more challenging. Public health emergencies, economic consequences, livelihood and food security issues have become critical for the general population, leading to stress and growing fear and anxiety. In 2021, the people across Myanmar have been suffering the worsening impact of the humanitarian crisis following the military coup on 1 February. The people have been suffering from mass atrocities and severe human rights violations. There are more than one million IDPs across Myanmar a year after the coup.

In the midst of challenges and crisis during 2021, HOM alumni supported and accompanied each other.

1. Myanmar HOM alumni met regularly by sharing experiences since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Fr Michael and Brother Max joined one of the meetings, on 23 January. The HOM alumni are keeping in touch through the online platform, giving encouragement through sharing articles, short videos, songs, poems, letters, including the encouragement letter from Fr Michael after the coup in Myanmar, and providing care to those around them.

2. HOM alumni organised 12 sessions every two weeks with the IDPs' leaders and volunteers from Kachin and Northern Shan States and conducted these activities: meditation, yoga sessions, special topic regarding psycho-social support and small-group experience-sharing sessions. Fr Michael and Brother Max also accompanied and joined one session to have a dialogue with the IDPs.



3. HOM alumni conducted psychosocial support (PSS) and accompaniment sessions with Christian church leaders in Kachin and Northern Shan states who are also HOM alumni; they held eight sessions at the end of 2020 and early 2021. The sessions were intended to support and accompany the church leaders so that they could continue to provide care to the church members including IDPs who are the most vulnerable to the impact of the pandemic. Meditation, doing yoga exercise, small-group experience-sharing and PSS-related sharing on inputs such as stress, social stigma, person-centred counselling, active/deep listening, non-violent communication, oppression and violence, trauma healing, spirituality of care giving, etc. Fr Michael and Brother Max joined one of the sessions and had dialogue with the participants based on their life experience.

4. At the same time, alumni from the Christian Theological Institute initiated a storytelling and dialogue session for the institute faculty staff as well as Christian leaders from across the country during this challenging time and context. Stress release, self-care and psycho-social support topics were covered during this dialogue session in order to be able to build resilience in this given context.

5. HOM alumni also created a podcast called *The Healing Path* and used it to share with the general public on healing-related topics, including The book of joy, a dialogue between the Dalai Lama and Desmond Tutu, Fr Michael's book on "my journey from freedom fighter to healer" (https://anchor.fm/the_healing_path). This has been very helpful for people during this challenging time. HOM alumni also conducted a dialogue session with Buddha Sangha on healing during the Covid period.

Namibia

At the end of 2020, late in December, five of our facilitators received certificates having completed a Zoom course Acting Justly for Advocacy Awareness. The course was offered by Edmund Rice International, which is based in Geneva, Switzerland. It was part of our ongoing training and capacity building and it was intended to help us in our ongoing relationship with the Namibian Government and with our local civil society groups.

During 2021 we managed to hold five in-person first-phase workshops and three second-phase workshops. Our first workshop in February attracted a very large group and even though we asked some people to return home and await the next workshop we ended up with 47. Our second workshop at the same venue in May attracted 57 people and as a result we divided into two groups and held two workshops simultaneously. This was possible because we had the space and the facilities to do so. We anticipated having a big group and so we made sure that there were enough facilitators present. Fr Michael advised us not to take more than thirty for a workshop and we are now following his good advice.

In August we held two workshops on the same weekend but in two different places and in each case we had +- 20 people present.

Our first second-phase workshop in March attracted 40 participants but we have noticed that in subsequent workshops fewer people sign up for the second phase.

We sent seven people to Cape Town for the International Training Course from 11 to 19 April.

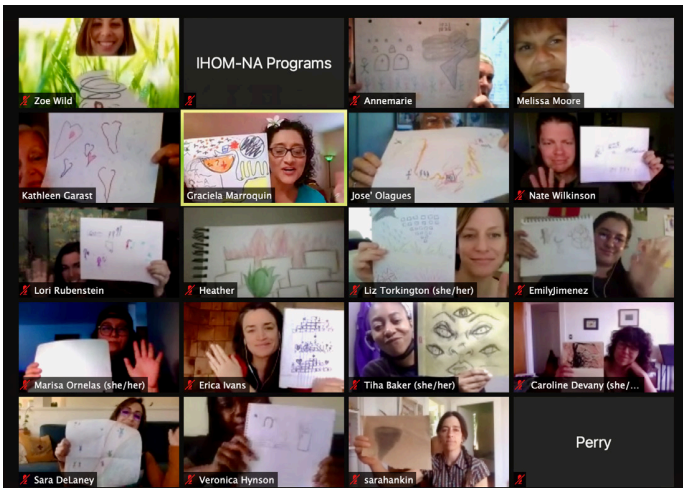
The team from the Africa desk of the Institute visited us in the person of Loret Loumouamou from late August until early September. She travelled with Lizette Louis and Sr Emeresiana Hawanga to Rundu from 25 August to 1 September and while there, conducted some workshops with the people of Kavango. Rundu is 750 kilometres from Windhoek. The feedback we have received is that the people in Kavango were very happy with her visit and with the workshops. Before her return to South Africa she held some meetings with our team in Windhoek during which she shared some very useful advice and teaching.



International Training, April 2021

North America

Due to the ongoing challenge of Covid, we continued to facilitate Zoom workshops through early July 2021, for healthcare workers and veterans. In September we had our first in-person workshop since COVID began. We facilitated three in-person workshops in the fall, safely and successfully for women veterans, all veterans, and veterans and first responders. We will continue to offer Healing of Memories workshops over Zoom and in-person for the long term. Zoom provides a unique opportunity to bring people together from many places and contexts, allowing a connectedness and opportunity to acknowledge our shared humanity across borders and ideologies.



Zoom workshop

Throughout the year we offered learning opportunities for our facilitators with two sessions run by a Native American educator, Kristine Hill, where we went through a process of learning more about this community and their challenges and how we might best serve. We presented a talk and Q&A with Tonnia L. Anderson, PhD, Associate Professor of History and American Studies and Founder and Director of the Dr. Ada Lois Sipuel Center for Social Justice and Racial Healing at the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma. Tonnia spoke about the Sipuel Center's work, her areas of professorship and her experience as a woman of color. We continue to expand our social justice and racial healing work in the United States and learning opportunities like this one help us grow individually and collectively, so that we can best show up in this space.

Feedback from Veterans

“I felt connected and grounded.”

“It was a healing experience.”

“Listening to others share their struggles, concerns, and hopes made me feel I am not alone.”

“I found hope through others. I found peace on the sacred ground where the workshop was held.”

“I felt the purge that I wanted when I told my story.”

“I was amazed at how fast the camaraderie developed.”

“One of the stories by another participant really strengthened my faith.”

Feedback from Woman Veterans

“Being able to tell the truth! I had pretended for years to make people comfortable or so they wouldn't think I was odd or bad.”

“Being with other women vets.”

“The breakout groups were very useful.”

“Loved the fact that only women veterans were there.”

HOM Zoom workshops

We facilitated six HOM Zoom workshops this year, four for veterans and two for healthcare workers. The feedback from participants continues to support the capacity for deep healing and connectedness via Zoom.

In partnership with Spirit in the Desert Retreat Center in Carefree and the Franciscan Renewal Center in Arizona we offered one Zoom workshop for all veterans, two for women veterans and one open for all.

We initiated this extension of our partnership so that we, together, could offer these Zoom workshops and help both organizations thrive in this most challenging time.

We on our own offered two Healing of Memories Zoom workshops for healthcare workers. We had participants from California who work with the homeless, and in underserved communities, as well as participants from Europe, US Territories such as Guam and Puerto Rico.

“I enjoyed drawing my life story and working with clay.”

“It was peaceful, organized, and facilitated in a loving way.”

“Sharing with the other ladies who are now my sisters!”

“The whole thing was absolutely beautiful!”

“Beyond comparison!”

“Being able to meet other women veterans and start new relationships with them.”



Clay work from the woman veterans' workshop

Workshops for Health Care Workers

We are committed to the healing of healthcare workers for the long-term. Like veterans of war, they are experiencing PTSD and moral injury. We provide these workshops for any healthcare workers, no matter their position, who are:

- feeling fear, depression, shame, guilt, anger, remorse, grief, frustration, and/or a deep moral/ethical dilemma over what they had been unable to do, or what they personally witnessed;
- making decisions and taking actions that were morally challenging to them;
- witnessing people dying alone and not being able to help, or having to be a surrogate holding space for people to die without loved ones;
- living with decisions they had to make or could not make on behalf of patients;
- losing patients, friends, colleagues, loved ones;
- living in fear of being infected or infecting loved ones;
- feeling betrayed by the system that was designed to protect them;
- feeling hurt by the actions of their community in not taking the needs of healthcare workers into consideration.

The grief they are forced to bear may leave them vulnerable to emotional and psychological harm if not dealt with now. That is why we have showed up in the middle of the Covid-19 crisis but are committed to serving the healing needs of healthcare workers for the long term.



Participants in a workshop for healthcare workers

Feedback from Healthcare Workers

“It was extremely helpful and different than what I expected.”

“I found the exercises to be very helpful and gained a great deal from this workshop.”

“The highlight was the breakout groups and the art project and meaning behind it.”

“I found the small group sessions to be very helpful for voicing my own stressors and the facilitator did a great job of affirming my experiences and making me feel heard.”

“Getting to speak in the small groups and being able to listen and provide reassurance to others.”

“Being able to share with colleagues I trust.”

“The facilitators, all of them were wonderful, empathetic, and allowed adequate time for us to tell our story and not feel rushed, which helped.”

“Very good facilitators, so compassionate, kind, caring and listened so well, able to hold the space for people’s pain to come up. It really helped me notice what I felt when I told my story as they would stop and ask you what you are feeling, which is immensely helpful in understanding the emotions we have shoved away most of our lives that need to be expressed.”

“Excellent facilitators, they were very welcoming and warm.”

Facilitator Training

In preparation for the conference on *Building Bridges: Dismantling Racism for the Common Good*, our facilitators went through a rigorous training process to prepare them to work in this very difficult space. We also trained for facilitation of dialogs, which was new for us. We developed a dialog format and training, which included our own healing work related to racism and social justice. These growth and learning experiences are ongoing so that we can best show up in this space. The workshops and dialogs were very successful due to the time, commitment and learning done beforehand.



We also did our first online training for new facilitators. This training was three sessions and focused primarily on facilitating Zoom workshops, as many in the group had only attended an on-line workshop through Covid. With offering Zoom and in-person workshops, we now have a training program that focuses on each person, with a progression of skill building to eventually facilitate in-person workshops.



In-person workshop for healthcare workers

Partnerships

Dr. Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher Center for Social Justice and Racial Healing at the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma

We worked with Professor Tonnia Anderson, Director of the Center and Professor of History and American Studies in developing and implementing a virtual conference, *Building Bridges/Dismantling Racism for the Common Good*, 9-11 June 2021, as part of the Centennial of the Tulsa OK race massacre, which has been called the single worst incident of racial violence in American history.

The conference examined the characteristics of systemic racism and its impact on everyday life by exploring the interrelated themes of diversity, alienation (anomie), entitlement, and community.

Fr Michael gave the keynote address and we facilitated two HOM Zoom workshops and two dialogs to help participants process their feelings, experiences, and general understanding of the topics covered.

The objective was to:

- 1) begin the process of building bridges through fostering authentic dialog with and between participants;
- 2) move what has been learned into the heart space where personal transformation is possible;
- 3) provide a space to begin the process of healing.

We are partnering on the next *Building Bridges* conference which will be in 2023, focusing on what makes a healthy democracy.

Spirit in the Desert. Carefree, AZ

We continue to work closely with Spirit and offered Zoom veteran workshops throughout spring. We also facilitated two in-person workshops in the fall for veterans and first responders and women veterans. As well, we are working with them to offer HOM workshops to other constituents, such as refugees, racial justice groups etc. They are also very interested in supporting our work with healthcare workers. They have a grants team specifically to support Healing of Memories workshops.

Franciscan Renewal Center, Phoenix, AZ

We continued to work closely together and offered veteran Zoom workshops in Spring, and one in-person for veterans in the fall. They have raised funds for three in-person HOM workshops for healthcare workers, which are scheduled for January, April and September 2022. They have a grants team specifically to support HOM workshops.

Looking ahead

In 2022 we are working with partners, offering Zoom and in-person workshops, serving veterans, healthcare workers, re-entry programs for those who have been incarcerated, and with a multi-faith group working to end mass incarceration.

We have a request to facilitate Zoom workshops for Ukrainian refugees, aide workers, and for the funding organization which has both Ukrainian and Russian employees.

We are facilitating a HOM workshop and facilitator training for the University of Science and Arts Oklahoma for faculty, students and staff. Tonnia Anderson, Director of the Dr. Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher Center at the university wants HOM to be imbedded in the work of the center and at the university, and this will be a major step in ensuring this partnership flourishes.



#thursdaysinblack, a global movement to end gender-based violence

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka, like the rest of the world during the Covid-19 pandemic, was running in 'on again-off again' mode. We had planned to do six workshops during 2021 but we did only two, in November and December, owing to the Covid situation in the country. The logistics were organised to allow for the best possible safe health environment. Mostly we avoided running workshops as it was not allowed and no residential facilities were open.

One workshop was held in Anuradhapura at the beginning of November 2021 with 30 participants from Mullaitivu, Anuradhapura and Vavunya. The majority were women - leaders from among the farmers and victims of the war, leaders working for justice and peace, and Manoj, who was a political prisoner for a long time.

Even though we were unable to have a reunion to see how the workshop impacted the participants, we did meet some of them a couple of months later and they told us that the workshop had impacted their lives very significantly.

A case in point was *Manoj, who was a political prisoner for an extended period of time and had been released just a short while prior to the workshop. He still had no plan regarding his life and his future. He repeatedly tells us that the healing brought about through his participation helped him to think of his future life and integration into society.

Similarly, *Chandra from Nochchiyagama is a woman who has been taking on leadership and working for peace for a long time. Despite this long experience in peace work, she said that the workshop was very useful and that she was amazed she had never actually thought about the pain that was within her own self before. She claims that this experience added a different lens to the work for peace that she continues to do.

Several young women who came from Mullaitivu said they were grateful for the opportunity to share the extremely painful stories of their past and move forward in their journey of healing. We will be having a reunion soon to look at the impact of the workshop on the participants.



The second workshop was held in Jaffna with students from different parts of Sri Lanka studying at the University of Jaffna. They were from Badulla, Kegalle, Kandy, Anuradhapura, Vavunya, Jaffna and various other parts of Sri Lanka. There were Sinhalese, Muslims and Tamils from urban backgrounds like Colombo, the plantations and the post-war North and East.

The HOM team was invited by a professor in the university to conduct a workshop because he had noticed a sharp rise in suicide within the community and also a lack of connection between the Sinhala and Tamil students. One of our facilitators, Mr Paul Anbalagan, was instrumental in arranging the workshop. After the workshop we noticed that the students had a sense of freedom and joy and had built friendships among themselves. The participants themselves realised many things about their own life after this workshop, with the opportunity to think and express themselves in the context of the workshop and its unique process.



Context in terms of the political situation in Sri Lanka

This report is not in any way complete in terms of describing the context, nor do we even claim to touch on the most important matters. However, we hope it will give the casual reader a feel for what the backdrop to the work of our HOM workshops might be.

The current government was elected with a landslide victory (over two-thirds majority in parliament). The background to obtaining this victory was that the government in power before 2019 was unable to prevent the Easter bombings (eight bombs in churches and hotels on one day) and the opposition used this to create a huge case for “racism as a result of fear” among the majority Sinhala (mostly Buddhist) community. They saw Gotabhaya Rajapakse - the current President who was the Defence Secretary when the civil war was ended in 2009 - as someone who would uphold the “Sinhala Buddhist aspirations”. In his speech as the newly elected President he alluded to the fact that he was elected by the Sinhala Buddhists and that it was possible to have such a landslide victory because of that.



Even though they were already young adults, they spoke of many pain-filled events initiated against them by the older generation, including parents. Many spoke of the alcohol addiction of their fathers and the devastating impact it had on the family and themselves. Some spoke of the huge amounts of debt that resulted in sudden collapse of life as they knew it when it was not possible to pay it back. Several young people spoke of being separated from their parents or not having parents and the difficulties experienced because of that. It is with these traumas that the children have somehow managed to enter the University. Admittance to a University in Sri Lanka is a difficult thing to achieve as there are very few free state-run universities and the places are very limited. As such it was a great joy to be able to support these young people to build their lives with a strong emotional base.

However, today - arguably - there is a very small number of people still supporting the regime, which over these two years became extremely unpopular. The vast majority reject the President today. Our reading of the reasons for the failure of President Gotabaya is that he has no idea of governance and as a result made a string of ridiculous decisions which caused the country to fall into a huge crisis. Today the country has a whopping US\$ 50 bn external debt and no foreign exchange reserves that would last more than two weeks. The reason for this debt - in addition to ridiculous decisions - is the huge amount of US\$ allegedly stolen by the Rajapaksa family. After his appointment as President, he brought in his brother (previously ousted President) as Prime Minister, another brother as Finance Minister, a nephew as Sports Minister and many others in the family into government positions. It is said that the family controlled 70% of the island nation's budget.

Why did the President become so very unpopular? (apart from bringing his family members into the government)

1. Militarisation

President Gotabaya Rajapaksa has a military mindset. He appointed many retired military people to the post of chairman or secretary of many government ministries and institutions and he seemed to think that a military style of management was suitable for running a country. He even appointed a military officer into the administration of every district. He did not appreciate that a civil community cannot be brought into a military discipline. For example, the management of the Covid-19 pandemic was not handed over to health experts but to the military. Sri Lanka claims that we managed Covid well, which is true health-wise and vaccine-wise. But the economic and political deterioration of the people and the government was irreversible, one major issue being the uncontrolled printing of currency resulting in horrendous inflation. Furthermore, the historical way in which Sri Lanka has been governed and the general mindset of the people are in no way aligned to a military style of government. People did not realise this at once, but at a certain point in time they did understand and reject it.

2. Advice from corrupt intellectuals?

Another reason for this President to lose popularity is the group of professionals - "Viyathmaga", actually very respected, educated intellectuals - who were appointed to 'advise' the President. They were businessmen, lawyers, professionals and experts in different fields. We recognise that this seems a strange argument to make in a country where we keep saying "we should send educated people to parliament". But the truth of the matter is that the advice of these intellectuals and experts was what led to this country having no food to eat. For example, we are all in favour of organic farming and do understand the environmental and health benefits of organic food production and consumption. However, when you stop chemical fertiliser imports overnight, the farmers have no yield and the country has no food. This extremely stupid decision was taken on the advice of these intellectuals - the horrific result is the country has no food to consume. So with hindsight, these intellectuals are the people who actually brought this President down.

3. Tax reduction

The tax on these same businesses and professionals was reduced, resulting in Sri Lanka having one of the lowest taxation rates in the world, no doubt as advised by the professionals who were close to the President and who stood to gain themselves. Taxation was reduced to suit these professionals and not according to what is needed for the country. It made a tiny minority of rich happy and worked against the vast majority of the population who were not rich. To add to the horror, the same businesses started stealing in many creative and devious ways. Whether it be oil, onions, sugar, medicine, chemicals, everything was being used to scam the public. But because these big-ticket scams and robberies were committed by the friendly professionals, intellectuals and Rajapakse family members, they were "allowed" to happen and again and again people suffered. These robberies are a huge subject for discussion and we are not attempting that conversation in this short report. But the President got caught in this trap because they were the people who were seen as those who brought him into power and because they were seen as 'professionals and intellectuals'.

4. All court cases against the President, his family and friends withdrawn

Shattering the independence of the judiciary, President Gotabhaya used various types of influence to have all cases against himself, his family and the armed forces which were pending in the courts withdrawn in an instant. Many of these cases were instituted by the previous government and the subject of many were the atrocities committed when the Rajapakses were in power prior to 2015.

The important point we are raising here is this: an intellectual or professional cannot advise or help run a country unless they have honesty, integrity and a compassion for others. This is something we have to understand when we ask for intelligent or educated people - the most important qualities are integrity and compassion.

The Gota Go Home Protests

Today, a huge number of middle-class or upper-middle-class youth have taken the leadership in a protest asking for the resignation of this President, his family and his government. What are their reasons? No food, no gas, no fuel, no electricity. In January a gas cylinder cost Rs. 1260, today it is Rs. 5,300 but there is no gas available even at this price. Dhal was Rs 160, today it is Rs 500; the increase is over 300% for many normal foodstuffs. Nobody has received a pay-rise to compensate. No-one. Those who had investments in the banks are still surviving, but the poor who lived from hand to mouth in the best of times have no respite. Even those who have savings - who have cars for which they cannot get petrol, who have to wait in long queues or not have gas - they find it difficult to tolerate these hardships. The protest started by the middle classes spread many times faster than any protest commenced by the poor. The occupy-Galle-face-green protest, which has spread to other parts of the country, is primarily propelled by urban middle class youth with creative new ideas. This is very dangerous. We have over many years been involved in many struggles for justice. We have seen how every struggle ends - we saw in 89/90 and in 1971 how the JVP insurrections ended, we saw how the ethnic war ended and we are still suffering the traumas of those bitter experiences.

9 May 2022, over a month after the protest spread from opposite the President's house to the area opposite the Prime Minister's house, around 5000 people were bussed in from various parts of the country to attack the peaceful protests in Colombo. Prisoners had also been brought to participate in this attack. Video footage is being reported showing that they were unarmed when they went into the Prime Minister's house for a meeting and they all wielded poles and large sticks when they came out. The police were seen allowing the attack to take place without stopping it. When the attack started there were only around 1000 protesters at the protest site. But Facebook live videos of the attack soon drew out thousands upon thousands - apparently around 50,000 from the government and corporate offices in the area. The attackers were also beaten and some thrown in a river and some stripped and some wheeled off in a garbage barrow and others forced to chant "Gota Go Home".



This then triggered some very unfortunate incidents of arson at the homes of the politicians and supporters of the government. Many conspiracy theories accompany these incidents. None of these attacks have video footage of how they started and the police have not been seen trying to stop anything. Using curfew (we are still under curfew as we write this) the violence was brought under control. The protest site was rebuilt within hours. The protest site - by the way - has been erected in stages by different individuals and groups and is a beautiful concept with tents with open mic, drama, library, university where professors and young people discuss, free food donated by the community, a kitchen cooking food, sculptures - kept clean by the protesters themselves - tents by various groups, a tent space for fasting and so on.

We can in no way allow blood to flow on our streets again, or an internal war situation to emerge. We may be on the verge of reaching that situation and the person responsible is the President with his militarised ways of management. Those who have been involved in the struggles of years gone by are worried and are reiterating the need to win this and not lose this struggle which if lost will not end well at all. The successes of the protest so far are many. We need to hold on for the long haul. There are obvious challenges in this - people have to go back to doing productive work and feeding their families.

We have been thinking about how generational trauma and behaviour patterns may affect our communities more and more during these times. How is it that even when people are starving, politicians and their parties and their families can continue to focus only on power? Some studies say that 40% of Sri Lankans cannot afford three meals a day. How is it that when one wears a uniform and carries a gun one loses the capacity to think for oneself and can only carry out orders?

We believe that whatever we do in the work of healing must bring hope. And hope is what Sri Lanka needs right now.



Zimbabwe

Comment on issues raised in the workshops

We held two weeks of activities, in February and October. HOM workshops were held at Rockwood Spiritual Centre in February and at Daisy Hotel & Lodges in October. One group of 20 completed the three stages of training.

Summary of Rockwood workshop

Participants' organisation	male	female
Aqua Healing	2	2
Order of St Luke	3	3
I am Zim*	4	4

* I am Zimbabwe is a social action organisation, formed by youth beneficiaries of Aqua Healing's counselling.

Issues arising in this workshop:

- political violence
- marital problems; bereavement, abuse of power and economic issues

Participants' ages were spread over a wide range.

Summary of Daisy Lodges workshop:

Participants' organisation	male	female
Aqua Healing	2	2
Order of St Luke	5	5
I am Zim	3	3

Issues arising in this workshop:

- political, abuse of rights
- rape, violence
- divorce
- HIV/AIDS

Here too the age groups were mixed.



Life in Zimbabwe, as in many countries, was disrupted throughout this year by enforced anti-COVID-19 precautions. Figures from government never indicated a level of infection that would justify the disruption of every aspect of life. Most of our participants, coming from Harare's poorer suburbs, probably suffered more from hunger than from the infection. The markets where they both earn their income and buy food and provisions were closed for a couple of long periods. We were able to mobilise some relief food from local sources and from institutional donors, which our active youth distributed to the neediest households; most included AIDS orphans, usually in the care of elderly grandparents. We also included households with handicapped members. The food, soap, masks and sanitiser were appreciated, but the simple human contact was obviously very important for many.

These restrictions put great stress on families under lock-down and this expressed itself in a higher incidence of domestic violence.

Politically-motivated violence also increased. Although the next elections were still two years away, ZANU-PF went into their traditional campaign mode, characterised by coercion rather than any attempt to woo voters.

Mismanagement of the economy and almost universal corruption in government ministries and agencies aggravate the decline of the economy. No more than 10% of breadwinners are in formal employment and inflation has been accelerating since the beginning of 2021; the street value of the Zimbabwe dollar, which is not officially accepted anywhere outside the country, dropped from about 50 to the US dollar in January to 200 in December and at the time of writing has halved again in the new year.

Plans for the coming year

Two workshops in May. We hope to be able to send one or two people to the next training course in Cape Town.