

Healing of Memories training – Cotonou 2022

COLLECTIVE WOUNDS

QUESTIONS FOR JOINT REFLECTION (1 April – 30 June 2022)

- within your own group
- with your partner groups
- beyond your usual circle of contacts

There are no right or wrong answers!

It's only your answers and those of the people you meet that matter in this exercise.

The 7 points below are intended as a guide for your conversations. Feel free to expand on them as you wish.

ANSWERS RECEIVED FROM PATRICE DIOUF (Senegal)

1. What are the ancient, old and recent wounds that affect our country, our region, our community?

Draw up a list of those wounds.

Our country suffers from very old wounds such as the harmful consequences of slavery and colonization. The country has also experienced dramatic moments in March 2021 resulting in the death of 14 people. Recently, 11 babies died in a hospital in Tivaouane following a fire.

2. More specifically, what are the events or situations experienced by our nation, or by certain communities within our nation, that are at the root of these wounds? Describe these events and situations, and say in what way they have been painful, and for whom.

Slavery and colonization have impoverished our country, through the trade of the most able-bodied men and the continuous exploitation of natural and mineral resources until now.

3. What social or political attitudes in our country have been, or are still, the cause of wounds?

What groups are discriminated against, marginalized, humiliated?

The negligence of some health care workers and the lack of state-of-the-art infrastructure are causing injuries, as are the relentlessness, unauthorized political demonstrations, calls for violence by opposition leaders, and repression by law enforcement officials.

4. In what ways are these wounds visible in people's lives in our country?

What are the collective wounds in my country that affect me (or us) personally? In what way?

Personally, slavery and colonization affect me as a Senegalese citizen and an African, because such things should not exist or ever happen between human beings or neighbours.

5. What are the areas of silence – the things that cannot be talked about – in our country or in certain communities within it? Why are people silent about these issues?

In our country we talk about everything, whatever happens, voices are raised to discuss the event.

6. Who is “the other” in our context? Who is "us"? Who is "them"?

The other is whoever is not with us and who consider themselves different from us. ‘Us’ means those with whom I identify and who are like me, because we have something in common. ‘Them’ means those who are not in the same group as us and who are different from us.

7. What could be done to heal some of the deep wounds that we have identified? What is our dream for our country, our nation? How can we contribute to realizing this dream?

As regards what needs to be done, we can call on people to show more respect and responsibility in action, to get rid of everything that is against love and caring for one’s neighbour.

My dream for this country is active participation in the integral development of the nation.