



**WORKSHOP ON VALUES-BASED EDUCATION FOR EDUCATORS,
IPAJA, LAGOS, NIGERIA, MARCH 13-15, 2007**
Summary report

A workshop on values-based education, coordinated by Ipaja Community Link (ICL), generously sponsored by the UK based Development Impact for Nigeria (DIFN) and facilitated by Helen Sayers from the Swiss Association for Living Values (SALV), brought together educators who were to be equipped with the skills, knowledge and tools to create values-based learning environments in which children can develop their full potential and lead a purposeful life, hence contributing to the well being of society.

The three-day event which had in attendance 54 participants was flagged off with an introduction of participants and facilitators, after which Pastor Bode Omokaro*, workshop coordinator, introduced the aims of the workshop:

- To help individuals think about and reflect on different values and the practical implications of expressing them in relation to themselves, others, the community and the world at large;
- To promote understanding, motivation, and responsibility with regard to making personal and social choices;
- To inspire individuals to choose their own personal, social, moral and spiritual values and be aware of practical methods for developing them; and
- To encourage educators to view education as providing students with a philosophy of living, thus facilitating their overall growth, development and choices so that they may integrate themselves into the community with respect, confidence and purpose.

In her introductory remarks, Helen Sayers expressed how delighted she was to be in Nigeria. She was quick to announce that the programme was to be participatory in nature, adding that Living Values is all about sharing values and ideas. She emphasized the need for teaching to be regarded again as the Noble Profession, where teachers are highly esteemed as role models in the community, and whose primary aim is to build good character in the future generation. She commented that *Living Values* means that values are "Living, alive and enjoyable", expressed not only in words but through action. She illustrated the point with an activity which challenged the participants to be role models, noting that children copy what we do, not only what we say.

** Sadly, Pastor Bode passed away in June, leaving behind a legacy of the great work he had started, a vision of a world where positive values are the norm, and through his example the inspiration for us all to be true to the best that is within us.*

Helen then presented Living Value Education and how it had developed and grown in the world, with particular reference to Africa. It was “born” 11 years ago when a international nongovernmental organization, carried out a project “Global Cooperation for a Better World” for people of all backgrounds throughout the world. In the course of their survey, they recognized the universal need for values. The most popular 12 values were: **co-operation, honesty, love, respect, responsibility, freedom, humility, peace, happiness, simplicity, tolerance and unity.**



Coordinators, facilitators and support staff



Participants discuss the values of Nigeria

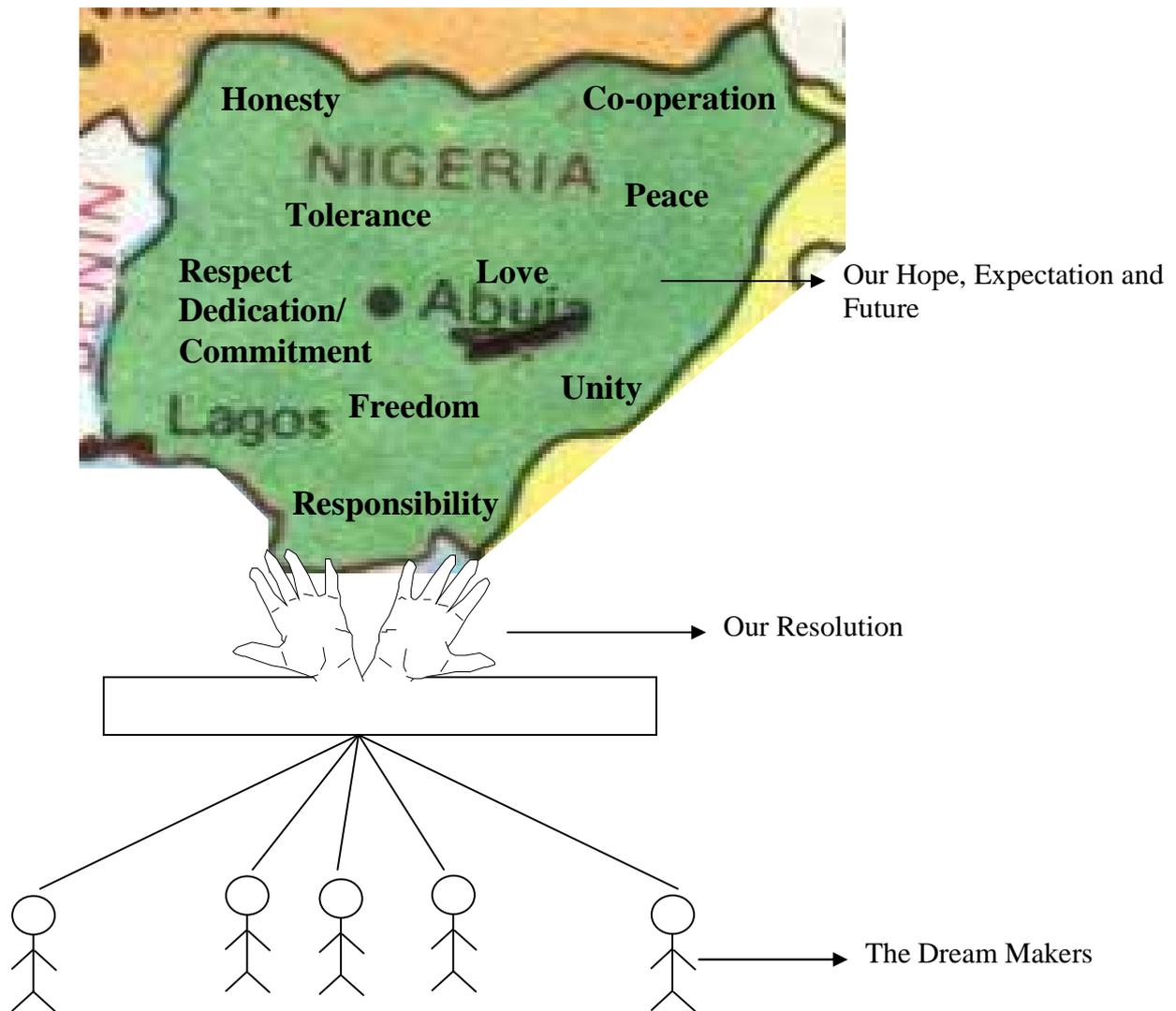
A participant raised a question as to the practicability of Living Values in Nigeria, given the devastating level of poverty in the country. She responded to this, observing that the causes of poverty are numerous, but where the values of hope, determination, self-respect and dignity are revived, a person is much better able to improve his or her economic situation. She added that no part of the world is without its problems, and that such problems are varied and relative. For instance, she noted the alarming rate of suicide among adolescents in some parts of Europe and America, which is generating great concern. Values-based education could help address this problem through aiding young people to develop self-esteem and a sense of purpose in life.

The first activity was a reflection on personal values. After a few moments in silence, participants were asked to note two qualities relating to each of the following: a relaxing place in nature such as a forest; a person who has influenced your life positively; music or artwork that appeals to you; and a special moment in your life. The lesson drawn from this was that each one of us already possesses a wealth of values and if we were to only live them, our world would be a better place.

Participants were then asked to reflect on the values cherished by their ancestors – those values that made them proud to be Nigerian; modern day Nigerian values; the values of the Nigeria of their dreams; and what they would do to make Nigeria better. The participants broke into 5 groups after which each made their presentations. This session was not only interesting, creative and scintillating, it was also all revealing. While some groups chose to develop poetry for the Nigeria of their dreams, others chose to make their presentation pictorial.

The following are some of the presentations:

a. **NIGERIA OF OUR DREAMS**



ANALYSIS: The group leader explained that the picture represents the Nigeria of their dreams. The “Dream Makers” are those who are ready to build a better Nigeria. “Our Resolution” signifies consensus building, and “Our hope, expectation and future” depicts the values that Nigeria must embrace if she is to move forward.

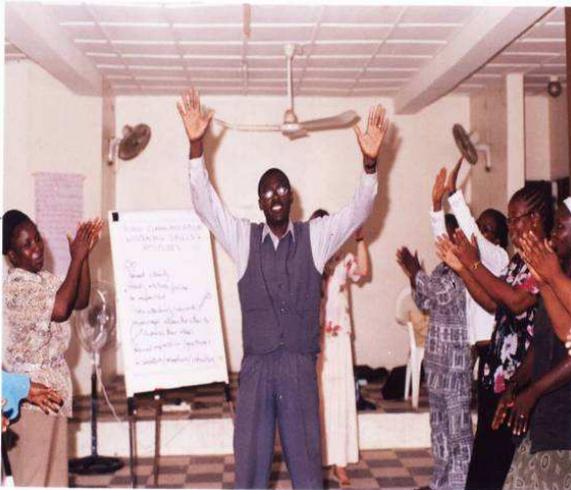
b. **A SONG FOR A BETTER NIGERIA**

This Nigeria belongs to us all
She must not be split
We can't go elsewhere
There is no place like home
Let us join hands together in one spirit
Lift her up; I too will lift her up
(This song was sung in the local dialect)

c. **POETRY FOR MY COUNTRY NIGERIA**

My home, my home, a peaceful country
My home, my home, an admirable country
You have stood the test of time
Though rain storms and thunder storms
My home can never be washed off
What's my home, it's NIGERIA
To see you succeed makes me pledge an honest zeal
To be an ambassador of my country
To teach the future leaders of my country
The Living Values

Other groups chose to give a verbal presentation. They identified values such as peace, co-operation, love, as some of the values in Nigeria and that for the Nigeria of their dreams to be realized, virtues such as sincerity, honesty, trust, dignity, hard work, unity, co-operation, integrity, tolerance, need be imbibed.



Pastor Bode leading a light & lively exercise

Participants were taught a song accompanied by energetic movements, enjoyed in LVE workshops worldwide, “alive, awake, alert, enthusiastic”. It created a lot of laughter!

Rounding off the day's activity with a visualization exercise, Helen encouraged the participants to help children to use their imagination; to dream and to realize their dreams. The closing prayer was taken by Pastor Bode.

The second day commenced with a welcome from Pastor Bode. Helen then asked who the neighbours of Nigeria are. Chad, Niger Republic, Republic of Benin, and Cameroon were listed, all largely French speaking countries. She cheered up the participants, most of whom admitted lacking in the use of French, with an easy-to-learn song with which to greet their neighbours in future, as follows:

« Bonjour, bonjour, bonjour à tout le monde, Bonjour, bonjour! » *(repeat many times!)*

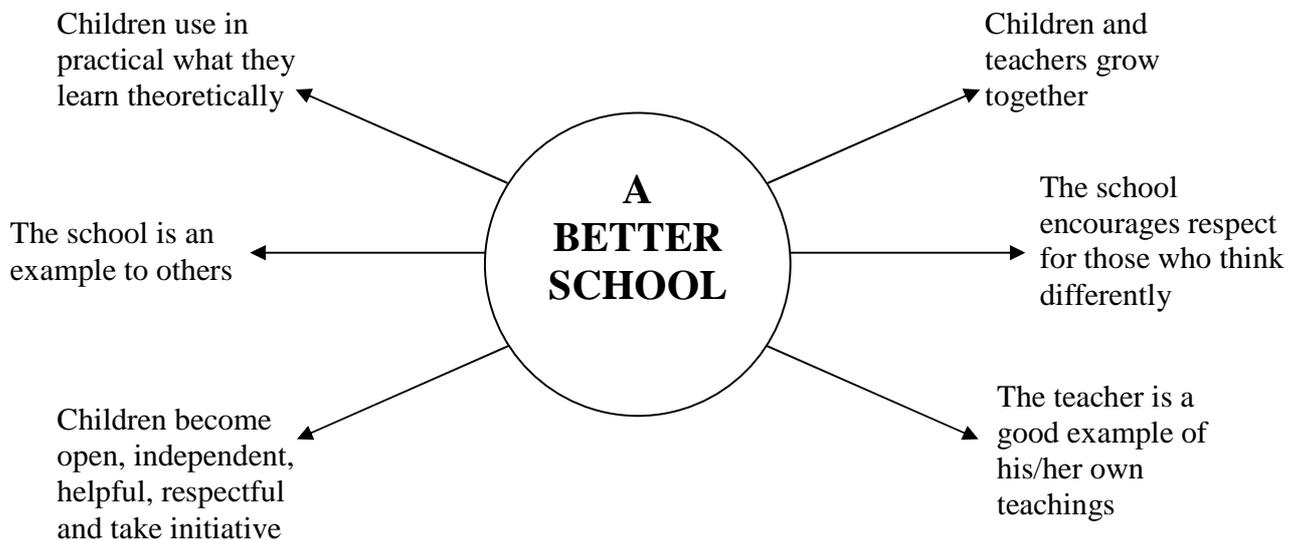
Sequel to this was a reflection on the activities of the first day.

Helen later stressed that the internalization of values is important – that they are treasures that need to be cherished. She challenged the teachers on the need to be inventive and creative with their students, that values come from their example, not only from activity books!

An important activity followed: The Qualities of a Teacher. After reflection the following values were listed: Boldness, Love, Active Listening, Tolerance, Discipline, Commitment, Honesty, Observance, Intelligence, Calmness, Good Health, Resourcefulness, Generosity, Integrity, Good Dressing, Simplicity, Trust, Flexibility, Positivity and Punctuality. Thereafter, Helen suggested that those who really live these values are nothing short of heroes and heroines, that we should congratulate ourselves!

Furthermore, each participant, having been given a little blank card, was asked to choose one of the 12 living values and to express on the card an artwork design together with a few words on their understating of the picked value, after which there was a “mobile exhibition” of their cards, participants exchanging them among the group. Helen encouraged the trainees to put a set of cards in a box for their students, out of which they would be required to pick one each day. This she recommended as useful especially for primary school teachers.

A visualization / imagination exercise followed. Participants were asked to remember what life was like in their childhood. Then, in groups they were asked to imagine they were a child, and to visualize/ imagine a school of their dreams, with particular attention to how they would like the teachers to be and in what manner should the child be treated. The groups agreed that their ideal teacher would be exemplary, bold, loving, trustworthy, positive, generous, flexible and caring; and that the child needs to be loved, valued, respected, understood and safe. Notably, a group came up with the diagram below:



Helen gave a presentation on the Association for Living Values International (ALIVE) - a non-profit association supported by UNESCO among others organizations. The presentation included reports on similar workshops held in Ghana and described the work in Africa of the Swiss Association for Living Values. Living Values Education was

conceived in response to the global call for quality education and offers a wide variety of experiential values activities and practical methodologies to educators, facilitators, parents and care givers that enable children and young adults to explore and develop twelve universal values. In addition to materials for classrooms and parents groups, LVE also aims at offering special materials for children in difficult situations such as street children, children affected by war, and children affected by earthquakes.

Helen emphasized that LVE does not seek to impose values - it can be easily adapted according to different cultures. It is being implemented in over 80 countries, including Senegal, Ghana and Togo in West Africa. It is relevant in formal and informal settings. She summarized the aims and objectives of LVE: helping children and teachers to develop a values-based learning environment where the child feels loved, safe, respected and valued and where the teachers serve as role models.

One teacher wanted to know if the use of cane could be removed from the African way of education. Helen said that this practice only makes the child fearful and intimidated, and does not encourage true respect. She added that teachers attending recent LVE workshops in Togo and Ghana agreed they would no longer use the cane.



Participants in group activity



Creative exercise

Thereafter an exercise on active listening was conducted. Participants sat in pairs with individuals facing each other: “Angels” on the right and “Stars” on the left.



Active listening exercise

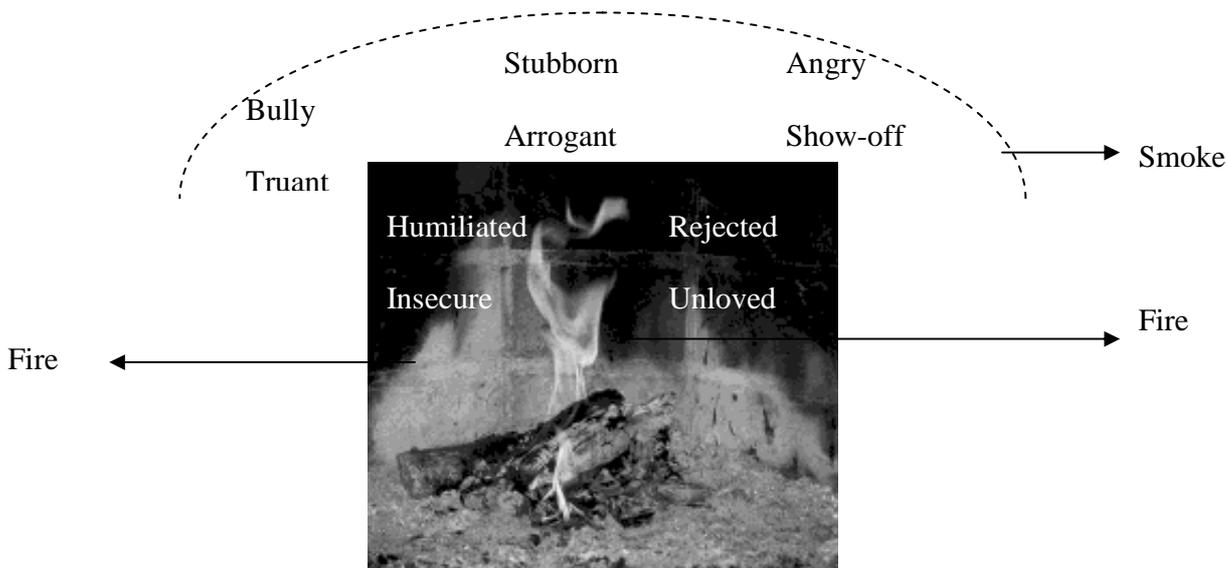


Pastor Bode & Ekanem co-facilitate exercise

The participants were then given instructions to communicate with their partners on themes such as Nigerian animals, all they knew about angels and stars, imaginary problems of teachers, and finally, how both would start implementing Living Values henceforth. While this was going on, instructions were being passed around at different periods. The “angels” were told to *interrupt* while the “stars” spoke. Then the “stars” were told to *ignore* the “angels” when it was their turn to speak. Other instructions such as *criticize, give too much advice, listen and talk with respect*, were also passed around. This activity enabled the group to draw out ideas on good communication and listening skills and attitudes. Hence, certain “do’s” and “don’ts” were agreed upon.

“Do’s”: an individual should be friendly, speak clearly, politely and with respect; listen attentively, give advice based on the issue at hand, encourage, allow others to express their own ideas. Other suggestions were given on the importance of facial expression, gestures, sensitivity to the other person’s feelings, receptiveness, being open etc. Participants then drew up a list of “don’ts” ... don’t interrupt, ignore, criticize, argue, insult, use foul language, over repeat, shout, and give too much advice.

According to a LVE trainer in Senegal, teachers are sometimes guilty of committing “infanticide” in the way they act towards children. Helen painted the picture using a diagram similar to the one below. The essence of the message: There is no smoke (negative attitudes/behaviour of the child, e.g. arrogance, anger, truancy) without fire (feelings of rejection, humiliation, insecurity etc.). Thus, educators need to understand and address the root causes of the problems (sometime this could be the insensitive attitude of the teacher) and find compassionate, sensitive ways to help children change their behaviour, keeping in mind every child’s need to feel loved, respected, valued, understood and safe.



A session on “tools for teachers” was coordinated by Pastor Bode. Participants were asked to contemplate ways in which educators can remain effective and stress-free. The following were recommended:

- ✓ To tolerate obstacles they encounter on their duty post and deal with them in a positive manner.
- ✓ To be flexible in difficult situations.
- ✓ The ability to find inner strength when there is tension.
- ✓ To be able to put aside worries, troubles, and concerns and put up a smiling face.
- ✓ To see the diamond in every child i.e. to recognize his or her special qualities
- ✓ To be impartial in dealing with children while judging fairly and without favoritism
- ✓ To be able to face challenges (such as large classes, lack of teaching aids!)
- ✓ The willingness to co-operate in lifting up the fallen standards of education.

A participant then asked if teachers are meant to suffer and that given the working conditions in Nigeria, will the Living Values Education programme be practicable? Responding to this, Helen encouraged the participants to see beyond the immediate and that better rewards in other forms other than monetary and physical terms await them. It was added that the value of tolerance would have to come in here and that teachers should be creative, do less of blaming and criticizing and be more resourceful.



Paper towers activity



“Paper Towers”, an activity that brought much laughter, consists of designing and constructing a building using only 10 pieces of paper and a short length of sticky tape. It should be tall, beautiful and stable. In groups of 5 participants worked for about 15 minutes, after which they forwarded their assignment. All the groups, and each member, received a prize.

Lessons on how to be creative, co-operative, hard working, using love, courage, and simplicity were drawn from this activity. Similarly, the uniqueness and contribution of each “child” was appreciated. Thus the teachers were encouraged to find good in everything their students do, value them and to allow the other person discover for themselves their fault and not to do so on their behalf.

To round off day two, Pastor Bode asked participants to join their hands and reflect on what has been done so far with an aim to proceed and live by all they had been taught.

On the last day of the participants were asked to create a lesson plan in which Living Values would be reflected. Those in primary school were given the option of the value of peace or respect and those teaching in secondary schools were given a topic or lesson on the environment, language, or sports, music and art. The task was to see how the participants would integrate values in their lesson after the three day workshop.

The group was then encouraged to enjoy learning French. Helen, having previously distributed some virtue cards written in French, to participants to take home, took time to help explain what the values meant in English. Values such as being constant, humble, humorous, tolerant, free, sweet, joyful, were evaluated.

Values Development: The Living Values Method. Participants were introduced to the 3E's of Living Values - to Explore, Experience and Express our values. The trainees were challenged to help children to realize their dreams, help them in creating a vision and achieving it. The teachers were also advised to learn to value themselves even if no one else did! They were then asked to reflect and then discuss how they could help themselves as teachers. Some of their suggestions were: self appreciation and encouragement, self-improvement, research, attending workshops and seminars, making lessons interesting, and taking time-out for oneself.

An activity followed, conducted in silence - the "rain dance" which required co-operation, unity, coordination, observation, discipline and love. The teachers were encouraged to deal with their colleagues and students in a like manner. They were also encouraged to be inventive - to come up with their own games through which values can be "explored, experienced and expressed".

In a session on conflict resolution, participants were divided into 7 groups and asked to reflect on a time when they experienced conflict in their career, how they managed to resolve it, which values they used etc. Each group was to discuss this. The aim was to discover best practices to resolve conflict. When they re-converged, the following practices were discovered: impartiality, good counseling, good listening, observing, the need not to blame, to understand others' points of view, love, calm, invitation of a third party to help mediate, patience, helping the child to take responsibility for their actions and in some cases, praying and sending out good wishes.

The session was graced and crowned with a wonderful presentation from pupils of St. Andrew's Anglican Primary School, Ipaja, Lagos. They presented a dance/drama playlet which revealed how a teacher could resolve conflict among students. It also emphasized the need to be united. The children and their tutors, who were also members of the organizing committee, were congratulated on their dynamic performance, which they put together in less than half an hour.



Primary school pupils presenting dance drama on conflict resolution

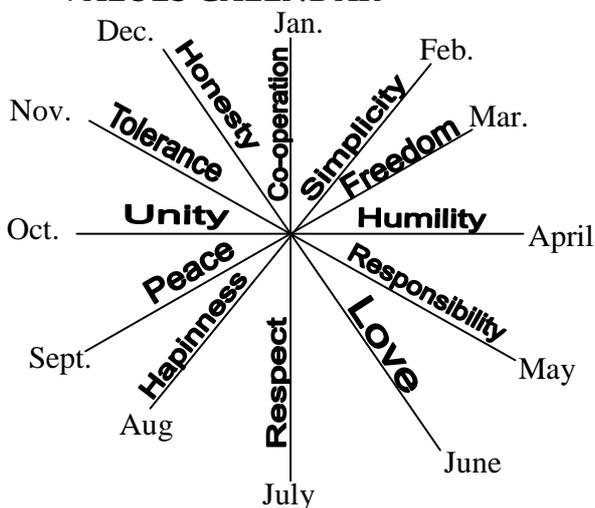
Values-based discipline. The group came up with the following recommendations:

- ✓ The golden rule of giving students a choice rather than giving an order
- ✓ Give children responsibility to set the rules of the class.
- ✓ Avoid conflict of power between the teacher and the child
- ✓ Learn to exercise self-control so as not to get angry
- ✓ Learn to apologize when a teacher is wrong
- ✓ Give the students time-out when they are feeling upset or agitated

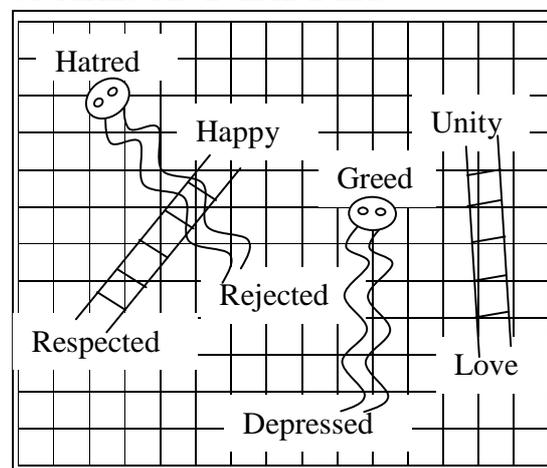
Creative expression. In groups, participants presented a sketch on a particular given value to the whole house. The first group acted on responsibility while the second took on humility. Helen chipped in that humility does not mean being subservient as often thought, but it is a great strength that embraces dignity and self-respect. Other groups acted out honesty, cooperation, respect, freedom, and simplicity. The question how to balance freedom with responsibility, elicited a vivid debate.

Values-based games. These encourage creativity in the teacher as well as the student. A Values Calendar can be designed and pasted in the classroom or at home. One of the 12 living values could be picked at random by a child as a focus for each month of the year. Discussion, classroom activities, assemblies etc. would focus on the value of the month (or day, or week), with reflection / feedback at the end of the given period.

VALUES CALENDAR



SNAKES AND LADDERS



As another example, children could be treated to a game of snakes and ladders as shown above, to show how a certain action or attitude leads to an outcome or consequence (older children could be encouraged to create their own version). She also mentioned that the use of puppets can help children to express themselves more easily.

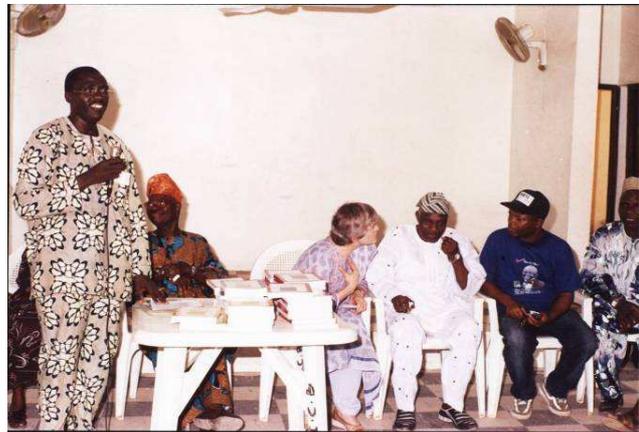
Ultimately, it is recommended to incorporate values throughout the school curriculum, making all subjects more interesting and creative. In many cases where a whole-school approach has been adopted, not only has the atmosphere become more friendly and conducive to learning, but a marked increase in academic standards has been observed.

At one point participants were asked “what is education?” A rich variety of definitions were elicited following a minute of silent reflection. Helen explained that we often run to the dictionary to find definitions instead of thinking creatively. Teachers used to be considered as philosophers, but today’s world encourages the habit of “copy and paste” transfer of knowledge and information. She noted that in defining *education*, four pillars should be taken into account: learning to do, learning to be, learning to know and learning to live together (ref: UNESCO - *The Treasure Within* - report by Jaques Delors).

The trainees were then asked to reflect on “me in 6 months time”, that is, to imagine how they would like to be. They were then requested to identify any obstacles that they are likely to face in the next 6 months and how these could be overcome using values. They then made action plans for personal development.



Participant receives certificate



Pastor Bode gives vote of thanks during closing ceremony

Pastor Bode facilitated the evaluation process. He asked the participants to consider the way forward. Here are some of their submissions:

- the need to put to practice all that has been learnt;
- the request for more training;
- emphasis on cooperation and team work to guarantee the success of LVE;
- trainees to meet once per term, with an appointed supervisor to monitor such.

It was agreed that the meetings would be held from school to school and that Ipaja Community Link could sponsor the meetings while the schools would provide suitable environments for them.

Pastor Bode stated that Living Values has been temporarily approved by the Lagos state government but that the implementation is yet to commence. He also noted the existence of Child-to-Child Health Clubs in some schools in the locality which could perhaps incorporate LVE in their activities.



Helen Sayers presents LVE Ghana report to Prince Ayinde Adeniyi

Evaluation of the Workshop.

When asked to comment on the organization of the workshop, the participants said it was good and that content was excellent. They suggested some improvement in the area of having more facilitators, tables for writing, more participation from schools.

Commenting on how they had benefited from the workshop, some of the participants said they have been made to believe in a better Nigeria, and that the courage to press on to become better persons and to create a better nation had been instilled in them.

Others said that they had learnt to show more love to their students, ensuring moral and academic compliance with less coercion.

They noted that they are now aware that they should not allow the non-conducive teaching environment to dictate how they fulfill their responsibilities.

Additionally they have been encouraged to adopt the philosophy of not asking for what could be done for them, but what *they* can do to make the nation great.

Some recognized that they needed to be more creative in their teaching via the arts etc. They also agreed that since LVE was all about giving, they would do their best to give the best to their students.

Closing ceremony

Vice Chairman of the Ayobo-Ipaja Local Government Development Area, Prince Ayinde Adeniyi, who represented the LG chairman Alhaji Bisi Yusuf, came with other dignitaries such as the secretary to the local government, the CDC Chairman, and the Supervisory Counsellor for works. He thanked the organizers of the programme and challenged the participants to live all they had been taught. He particularly praised Helen for her wonderful facilitation. He was later presented with a copy of the report of the LVE workshop held recently in Ghana.

Vice Chairman of the local council, Prince Ayinde Adeniyi presented certificates to the participants. He was joined by Helen and a member of the Board of Trustees, Ipaja Community Link, who is also the CDC Chairman for the LGA Alhaji A.A.A Onasanya. Living Values Activities books were given to everyone, as a gift from the Swiss Association for Living Values. The most punctual participant also received a gift. The high point was when Pastor Bode on behalf of Living Values Nigeria, presented Helen with a certificate of appreciation.

Rounding off the seminar, Pastor Bode appreciated all, including the organizing committee, special guests, Helen, Ekanem who is the joint Nigerian Coordinator for Living Values, DIFN for its sponsorship, and finally the participants, who would be going out into the community to put it all into practice!



Distinguished guests, participants, facilitators and organizing committee

Report by the late Pastor Bode Omokaro