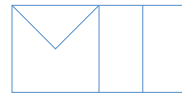


FACING
Difference
CHALLENGE



Nigeria

Middle School & High School

STUDENTS REBUILD DISCUSSION GUIDE



students
rebuild



Note to teachers: Thank you for participating in the Students Rebuild Challenge! Below are suggestions to help introduce *Mariya and Juliana's Story* as well as discussion questions you might use or adapt. As there may be some unfamiliar words or locations represented in this video, we recommend that you (a) pre-watch the video or read the transcript below, noting any vocabulary that may be unfamiliar to your students before showing the video, (b) review the unfamiliar vocabulary with your students, (c) locate Nigeria on a map.



Framing

When children are born, they come into a world full of pre-existing historical, social, economic and political conflict. These conflicts shape how children are taught to interact with others, those who look and sound like them and those who do not; those who are taught the same beliefs as them, and those who are not; those who live in the countries where they were born, and those who do not. While all children are taught a set of attitudes and beliefs about those the same and different from them, some are taught to embrace differences and some are taught to fear differences. The attitudes and beliefs that we learn ultimately affect the actions we take, the world in which we live, and the possibility for safety and peace.

In *Mariya and Juliana's Story*, we learn about the conflict between Muslims and Christians in Jos, Nigeria a country located in West Africa. Nigeria has about 188 million inhabitants, 58% practice Christianity, like Juliana. The next largest religion is Islam; Muslims, like Mariya, comprise approximately 41% of the population.

The conflict between Christians and Muslims in Nigeria dates back to the 1950s, but for Mariya and Juliana, the conflict in 2008 directly affected their lives.



Discussion Questions

1. Based on the stories Mariya and Juliana share, what kinds of contact did Muslims and Christians have before the conflict in 2008?

2. What do you think Mariya had learned about Christian people before, during, and after the crisis? What do you think Juliana had learned about Muslim people before, during, and after the crisis?

3. What have you learned about people from different religious backgrounds? Where did you learn that? How have conflicts between groups contributed to what you've learned?

4. Juliana explains that she and Mariya met at a camp organized by Search for Common Ground. How did Mariya and Juliana become friends at the camp? How did building a friendship affect how Mariya and Juliana saw each other's religions and communities?

5. "These people are bad." Later, after going to camp with Mariya, she said she hopes to see her country, "where no Christian will see his fellow Muslim as bad." What helped her change her thinking?

6. The mission of Search for Common Ground is to end violent conflict. How could a friendship between teens from two different religious backgrounds help end violent conflict? Do you have any friendships that you think of contributing to peace and the end of violent conflict?

7. Both teens make reference to the "crisis" in 2008 but do not explain what sparked it. If you wanted to learn more about the specific causes of the 2008 crisis, how would you go about researching it? What sources would you trust? Would the things you have been taught about Christians and Muslims influence how you interpret the crisis in Jos, Nigeria?

8. What is courageous about building friendships across different religions? What is risky? What is rewarding?

9. What are the religious groups in your community? How do they relate to each other? Have religious groups in your community had any conflicts in the past or present?

10. How do you relate to people your age from other religious backgrounds? Do you have friends from other religions? What makes those friendships strong? What makes those friendships worthwhile?

11. How does Mariya and Juliana's Story make you think about the power of friendships across differences? About friendships in your community? About your impact on the world?

12. If Mariya and Juliana become mothers one day, how do you think they will teach their children about Muslims and Christians? How will their teaching influence the next generation?



Additional Activity Options

Venn diagram:

As a class, create a Venn diagram noting what Mariya and Juliana have in common and what are their differences. Students then pair with “the most different person from me in this room” and create a similar diagram.

Behind the eyes:

Each student will think of a person from a group in their country or community that they are not part of. From the perspective of that person, they will free-write their perceptions of the group they are a part of. (e.g., Juliana would write from her imagined perspective of a Muslim about Christians and Mariya would write from her imagined perspective of a Christian about Muslims).

Get more information on Nigeria:

Find more information on studentsrebuild.org

Designing Peace Camp Activities:

In groups, students will design an activity for children their age in Peace Camp. Together, the whole class will organize a Day of Peace Camp activities. (Students can research activities from Search For Common Ground, CARE, Seeds of Peace, Peace First, or design their own).

Go deeper:

After September 11th, conflicts between Christians and Muslims in the United States grew. Efforts to curtail violence against members of either group included local community organizing, as well as religious outreach among clergy. A Common Word Between Us and You (download for free at this site) is an effort on the part of Muslim and Christian clergy to build bonds, resolve differences and work toward peace. Students will read the letter and responses and discuss the ways in which clergy attempted to face difference and build peace.

Virtual Reality:

Participate in the Facing Difference Virtual Reality experience. Find out more on www.studentsrebuild.org



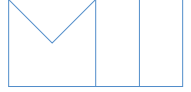
Transcript

| TIME | SPEAKER | DIALOGUE |
|----------|---------|--|
| 00:00:24 | Mariya | My name is Mariya Shuab Sulemen. I am 17 years old and I am from Jos, Nigeria. |
| 00:00:32 | Mariya | My family are Muslim people. I have ten siblings. And I was the sixth born in the family. |
| 00:00:42 | Mariya | I finished my secondary school in 2016. And I'm still waiting for admission into University. |
| 00:00:51 | Mariya | I am hoping to go Bayero University Kano. |
| 00:00:56 | Mariya | I want to study mass comm so that I can become a broadcaster. |
| 00:01:02 | Mariya | In 2008 there was a crisis between Muslims and Christians here in Jos. |
| 00:01:09 | Mariya | Many local governments were affected. It's not only Jos. But Jos is the worst one. It lasted two years. |
| 00:01:19 | Mariya | I was 7 years old when the conflict started. |
| 00:01:24 | Mariya | I have never seen a dead body before. I was really traumatized. |
| 00:01:33 | Juliana | My name is Juliana Nya. I am 19 years old. I live in Jos, Nigeria. |
| 00:01:38 | Juliana | I belong to a family of five. |
| 00:01:44 | Juliana | We are a Christian family. |
| 00:01:47 | Juliana | I am planning to further my education. I would love to study medicine and surgery because I would love to save lives. |
| 00:01:58 | Juliana | My mom is a tailor, so I do assist her in the shop. Before the crisis, she was having about six apprentices who were Muslim. She was teaching them how to sew. But after the crisis, they entered my mom's shop and then destroyed one of her machines. So I was saying, "These people are bad." |



Transcript (cont.)

| TIME | SPEAKER | DIALOGUE |
|----------|---------|---|
| 00:02:20 | Mariya | Before the crisis we were living peacefully. Both the Muslims and Christians are one. There is no issues of segregation or discrimination or anything like that. But after the crisis, things have changed. |
| 00:02:35 | Mariya | We live in a Christian community. But during the crisis they set our house on fire. We lost everything. Everybody is affected. |
| 00:02:53 | Juliana | I met Mariya in the camp organized by Search for Common Ground. We had 11 Christian girls and 11 Muslim girls. Brought together under a single umbrella to learn about peace. |
| 00:03:08 | Mariya | Juliana was my roommate. I didn't know we would ever be friends. We shared experiences. We chat, we eat, we pray. We did a lot of things together. |
| 00:03:20 | Mariya | I seek advice from her. Sometimes she do seek at advice from me. |
| 00:03:25 | Mariya | Sometimes it's like, Juliana will ask you, "Why are you wearing this hijab?" I say it's because I'm a Muslim girl and I need to wear it. Then after that she will even lend the hijab from me and wear it. |
| 00:03:44 | Mariya | Initially, I thought to be friends with Christians is not going to be easy because there is a religion difference. I didn't think that these people should be friendly to me. But after then, I understand that it's actually easy to be friends with Christian children. Especially Juliana. |
| 00:04:05 | Juliana | I hope to see a changed Nigeria. Where there will be no discrimination. Where no Christian will see his fellow Muslim as bad. And where there will be peace. Where there will be love. |
| 00:04:20 | Juliana | When we are in peace there is unity and togetherness. |



Take Action

Make a self-portrait:

Support your students in creating a self-portrait that reflects their identity and experiences. Each portrait sent to Students Rebuild generates a \$3 matching donation from the Bezos Family Foundation—up to \$600,000—to support peace building programs in Nigeria, Sri Lanka, and the South Caucasus region of Eastern Europe.

Join the conversation:

As part of the Facing Difference Challenge, Global Nomads Group will be hosting virtual town hall dialogues on topics around our differences ranging from religion, race, and immigration. These webcasts will feature a live conversation between youth involved in CARE and Search for Common Ground's peacebuilding programs as well as other Students Rebuild participants. These virtual town halls will be lived streamed; your team can send questions to on-air participants as well as participate in a facilitated chat room. All you need to join is an internet connection. Go to www.studentsrebuild.org to register.