

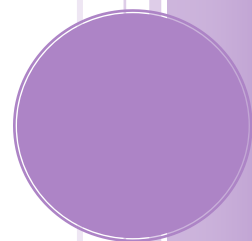


CREATORS OF PEACE

ANNUAL REPORT 2015

July 2014 - August 2015

Reconciliation and Forgiveness; Women in Leadership; Trustbuilding Across Divides;
Country Updates; Strategic Direction Report; Future Goals & Challenges; Governance,
Finance and Fundraising



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Daphrose Ntarataze Barampama



The mission and the vocation of our Association is *peace*. The peace within us and around us. It is this mission that we have been engaged in building for nearly 25 years since the launch of Creators of Peace. May we, in this our Jubilee Year ahead, continue to contribute to writing an authentic history of peace for our world today, a world which has so much need of it, a world driven by a quest for truth, justice and reconciliation. May this motivation propel each one of us to spread through every wind that blows seeds of hope: at every occasion and every opportunity, every day and every meeting, without giving up. By gestures and moments of empathy or communion with another person, another member of humanity, may we naturally and without self-interest, play our part as a gift to future generations.

OUR WORLD AND OUR RESPONSE

The work of Creators of Peace (CoP) is becoming increasingly relevant and in demand. As conflicts break out or lengthen across the world; governments, organisations and communities are beginning to understand the deep need for healing, for moral and spiritual direction; the need for human beings to look inside themselves and recognise the seeds of hate and conflict and transform them before they take root. Whilst the struggle for the inclusion of women as active and equal members at negotiating tables, in governance and peace-building processes continues, Creators of Peace maintains a complementary focus on empowering women respond to local needs, as the creators of their own personalised initiatives in their local contexts - their homes, communities and nations.

We are creating a new society of trained women pulling the world back to its roots, one apology, one friendship, one reconciliation at a time, to genuinely rebuild communities and create a firm foundation for development. We are creating the new heart and mindsets which will enable women to be able to respond to the many challenges that confront them in daily life and to free up their imaginations to creativity address issues of concern within their communities. In 43 countries, over 70 trained and active facilitators have reached thousands of women through Creators of Peace Circles (CoPCs) to date. The work undertaken is entirely voluntary, often with minimal funding, proving that empowering women to work towards a better world is not only deeply satisfying but something the CoP women hold with great responsibility and passion.

ABOUT US

Creators of Peace was launched in 1991 at the Initiatives of Change conference centre in Caux, Switzerland by the Hon. Anna Abdallah Msekwa of Tanzania, a respected politician and leader of her country's women's organizations. In her inaugural speech, she urged everyone to 'create peace wherever we are, in our hearts, our homes, our workplace and our community. We all pretend that someone else is the stumbling block...Could that someone be myself?'. Creators of Peace is now a global network of people working on different continents through Creators of Peace Circles, workshops, personal encounters, community building activities and international conferences.

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OUR AIMS

- To engage women in their role as creators of peace at every level of society
- To promote the transforming dynamic of a change of heart, starting with oneself
- To pre-empt violence & despair by addressing the roots of conflict, in & around us
- To encourage & connect existing practitioners of peace building
- To raise awareness of the moral & spiritual prerequisite for effective social action
- To build just, caring & inclusive communities for all.



Reconciliation and Forgiveness



KENYA

"I want God to be a witness of what we shall say today. The Creators of Peace Circles training that we went through is now bearing fruit. Today, I stand here as a Pokot woman and speak on behalf of the Pokot women. We are very sorry for all the pain that our sons have caused to your people - please forgive us. We are sorry for all the deaths caused by our sons - sons that we gave birth to - please forgive us. We are sorry for all the people who have been displaced by violence caused by our people - please forgive us. You are widows because of us. Your children are not going to school because of us. You are living in the forest because of us. You are dying of hunger because we took all that you had - please forgive us. We are also tired of violence and killings. We want peace and we are working hard to bring peace. Please forgive us. I realise that we have different ethnic communities, but all of us fall under one community called 'the women community'. If we as women hold hands together, we will make a difference in this county."

These words above are just a few given by Ms. Mary Kuket. She spoke on behalf of women from her region to the women from the Ilchamus, Tugen and Endorois communities who have suffered a lot due to the actions of some people from the Pokot Community. The reconciliation meeting is a result of CoPCs which took place in Marigat town, Baringo County in May, 2015, witnessed by 75 people.

"Creators of Peace healed me from the disease of tribalism that I had suffered from for quite some time after the post-election violence of 2007 in Kenya," shared another participant. "Together with other women that took part in the training, we were able to forgive and reach out to people from the ethnic group that had attacked us," she said.

The Governor of Baringo County, Kenya has supported the CoPCs programme ever since he was told of its effectiveness. Thirty-four leaders from Baringo County honoured the invitation to take part in a consultative meeting organized by the CoP team in Kenya on 22 June. "This was the most successful meeting with leaders that I have ever been part of", said Ann Njeri, CoP Co-ordinator. "We had politicians in the house....but there was no politics...it was all in the spirit of searching for peace in Baringo County."



BRAZIL

"Peace is the spiritual state in to which we enter when we accept our own story, let go of our pride and of our desire for revenge and walk towards forgiveness to heal wounds." This is the definition of peace made by the participants of a CoPC held in Brazil, May 2015.

During the CoPC in Brazil, the theme *forgiveness for the sake of peace* led to an outpouring of personal stories and awakened in every woman a desire to explore the nature of forgiveness in their lives and look at alternative ways to resolve conflicts and vendettas by transforming their hearts and minds. Preparing and implementing each CoPC has also been a deep experience for the facilitators. It has improved personal honesty so each facilitator can recognize and work on her own shortcomings and share honestly their process with the participants, this has helped to build confidence and stimulate processes of change.

Honesty, purity, unselfishness and love – the CoPC is based on these four core values of Initiatives of Change (IofC). It is also born out of the awareness of the tears, blood and pain of many women, who sowed hatred and taught their children from a young age to cultivate hate, even though they didn't want war, because they did not know how to pass on peace within their families especially amidst issues such as domestic violence and civil unrest that Brazilian women continue to face today.

"I learned that in all languages the word 'forgive' is a word made up of 'give or 'donate'. So 'forgive' is not to fight evil by committing another evil to the offender. Holding grievances and resentment is like taking poison and hoping the other person dies. Forgiveness is the ultimate test of perfect harmony," shared one of the participants.

Women in Leadership



INDIA

Kashmir has been at the heart of a bitter and violent divide between India and Pakistan for nearly 70 years. The women who came for the Creators of Peace Circle work with NGOs meeting the needs of impoverished women, helping their children access education and addressing the ongoing trauma of missing persons, an instrument of terror used in their situation.

Two Indian airline companies, Spice Jet and Jet Star, flew five Kashmiri women free of charge to and from the capital Delhi for them to take part in a CoPC and Facilitators' Training in August 2015, they said this was their contribution to 'women's empowerment'.

Almost all women committed themselves to further widen CoPCs in India, and went on to join the Facilitators' Training which immediately followed. By the end they were making plans for CoPCs for isolated women and widows in Kabul and for villagers in rural India. Later in the year this became a reality, the first CoPCs in Indian rural villages are now being trialled in the State of Maharashtra, taking CoPCs to 5 villages, where inequality between sexes is a major concern for women's rights, governance and sustainable development.



AFGHANISTAN

Two Afghan women, university students from Kabul, one Hazara and one Uzbek, who received CoP Facilitators Training in Delhi have now begun CoPCs in a refugee camp in Kabul aiming to help isolated women and widows, despite spasmodic violence in the area. Participants were from different parts of Afghanistan and the border of Pakistan. Refugee camps are filling as many prepare to leave, fearing Afghanistan will end up like Syria.

"We started our first Creators of Peace Circle in a refugee camp with ladies who have never experienced the real meaning of peace in their lives, nor their parents, their husbands, their children or their communities. They live in this camp with family members, having escaped from war in various provinces of the country. They were very interested indeed, and that helped us to facilitate well. The 10 women were from the same camp with different characters, life styles and problems... Sharing their stories was very important for them because for some of them it was the first time they could share some painful experiences from their lives and the many difficulties they are facing still. This brought us even closer than family members. In the closing ceremony they promised us that they would try to practice what they have learned from this Creators of Peace Circle, so we said that after two weeks we would come back and ask what changes have come to their lives. We waited two weeks and finally we went back to camp to ask that question. We heard unbelievable answers from them, the lives of three women were really changed, they told us. An old lady with two sons, whose husband had married another woman, told how she was always fighting with him and the other wife. After the Creators of Peace Circle she started to change, to want to live in peace. She spoke to her husband and suggested that they could all live in peace from now on. We were surprised and we feel really optimistic about how Peace Circles can help Afghan women. We plan to run many more." said the facilitator.



MALI

Invited by 'Women in Law and Development in Africa-Mali' (WILDAF-Mali), CoP President, Daphrose Ntarataze and Burundian colleague Marthe Mukerabirori, made two visits to Mali in June and August to facilitate CoPCs for 52 women from the north and south of the country. The theme under which the CoPCs were held was, 'Space for dialogue and inclusive exchanges between women from Mali'. In November, they facilitated a significant conference in Nouakchott, Mauritania, for 43 women leaders from inner Mali based in different refugee camps from Burkina Faso and Mauritania. In recent years the north especially has experienced much violence and massive displacement of peoples and the country is diverse and divided. The CoPCs, invited in recognition of the influential role of women in bridging those divides, were seen as one step in a longer process of women's re-empowerment and re-engagement. These CoPCs were particularly successful due to the willingness of the participants to listen to each other, to acknowledge the validity of each other's feelings and then the ability to reach out to the other in her pain and together find a way out.



Trust-building Across Divides



SYRIA



LEBANON

Creators of Peace women in Lebanon invited a first group of 6 Syrian women to meet the CoP andIofC teams in Lebanon. This CoPC allowed these neighbours to understand each other and build bridges between their countries, especially after Syria's oppression of Lebanon more than 25 years ago. One participant explained: *"These meetings have had a very positive influence on us all. Your readiness to help us understand the importance of peace and dialogue has created a new image about countries and neighbors that is so different from politics and their agendas - you are so full of humanity, love, respect and honesty. These meetings will create a new history, God willing."*

"I was surprised the way we were received by the Lebanese team and international. I was in awe of the way they showed love and compassion. The media and a few experiences during the war got us to think that Lebanese didn't like Syrians. In fact it was amazing to see the good way we were treated by our neighbours." said another Syrian woman.

"We connected fast with our Lebanese friends and the international team. I didn't feel the differences which broke the barriers I had felt in me. The day after when I came back home, I got a phone call from a Christian colleague telling me about the loss of her close relative and I felt that I could support her and be there for her. It was amazing that God Almighty used me first to support my Christian colleague right after the meeting in Lebanon. I believe our task is to bridge more and build more good relationships with others in my country." shared one Muslim woman.

"Everyone has a touch of cruelty and passion but we need to be inspired. We need inspiration that frees us from hatred, stereotypes and anger. As Dr. Omnia (Marzouk, President of Initiatives of Change) said, 'Everyone is unique'. This can really only be achieved by listening to our inner voice. I am going to commit to CoP meetings and be one of the facilitators in the future." added another.

The Lebanese Creators of Peace women continue to be a source of support to their neighbours in Syria with a safe space for workshops and retreats across the border, while continuing to work with Palestinian refugees and young people in their country still affected by community divides.



AUSTRALIA

"The Creators of Peace Circle is cutting edge peacebuilding training where participants explore how personal transformation and conflict resolution skills connects with and can support activism on wider global human rights issues that many of us are concerned about. With Shoshana's invaluable assistance I have already applied insights to design a new class on human rights and conflict resolution at the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies." Paul Duffill, Visiting Scholar, Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies

"The Creators of Peace Circle was one of the practical peace making experiences. Thanks to the amazing facilitators, we instantly created a heart-warming atmosphere in the group. It was an absolutely safe place that allowed all of us to be truly open without being judged. I really enjoyed the storytelling and exercises for active listening. I felt humanity and harmony with the participants. I am still keeping in touch with them after the workshop!" Ayaka Kawashiri, MPACS student, Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies

Creators of Peace has touched over 400 women in Australia and continues to focus on the quiet work of friendship, often bringing women together to learn from our shared multicultural backgrounds. CoPCs have created a space for deeper relationships – often those we might meet in the workplace but would not create bonds with – these deep bonds grow to sustain and supports bigger initiatives within the community and overseas.

In addition, differing factions and tribal groups from the South Sudanese Diaspora have come together in a CoPC in Australia this year. As conflict continues in South Sudan, the Australian diaspora has mirrored the increasing divides between conflicting groups. The Creators of Peace approach has enabled the women to understand the shared pain and suffering and to build bridges among their communities.

Country Updates

Snapshots of what Creators of Peace women have been doing around the world this last year



Romania

The CoPCs respond to the alienation of the Roma people as well as the generational divide between those coming out of the Soviet era and younger contemporary society. In the last 12 months, a Facilitators Training has been held and the CoPCs have been run in English, in order to involve women from different neighbouring countries in Eastern Europe. Most recently, the issue of accepting and caring for refugees from war torn countries has become a focus. The local CoP team will focus on preparing the local population to have an open attitude to new-comers, go beyond fear, suspicion and stereotyping and be ready to establish personal relationships through dialogue and personal encounters. CoP aims to involve traditional ethnic groups in this work (Roma, Hungarians), as an opportunity of working together with this common goal of making others welcome.



South Africa

As well as running CoPCs, CoP colleagues in South Africa have innovated an entire follow-up programme that designed how to support women with their local 'action plans' in their communities. They have identified areas where women need particular support and now run trainings in assertiveness, household financial management and domestic violence reduction. They have been invited by Johannesburg City Council to run CoPCs in at-risk neighbourhoods. CoP South Africa now runs new longer Facilitator Trainings to deepen the skills and capacity of participants and identify emerging leaders to join the team. They are working on a database in order to match skills and experience, to respond to the mentoring needs of individual women within their network.



Sweden

This year, following a period of trust building and relationship building, there was a very intense CoPC with great impact on the life of the participants from the Somali diaspora. They are planning to do a follow up to involve more people from the community in their programmes and activities. They are aiming to involve Syrian women in the CoPC during the year ahead.



Burundi

From October to April up to the period before the elections, 112 people (80 % of women and 20 % of men) benefitted from participation in a CoPC. At the end of the CoPC, each group decided to continue gathering together to support each other and take action, including asking and giving forgiveness, taking the time for silence and inner reflection, becoming models of transformation, becoming facilitators. Nine groups have been created in different regions across the country, each with a specific community outreach: raising chickens, dance, breeding goats, monthly peer support in violent areas, healing meetings as women who have survived trauma. CoP Burundi continues to support people through this current period of political instability and violence.



Switzerland

Following on from two CoPCs at Caux Conference Centre in 2015, they have just trained a group of French speaking facilitators to create a Swiss team who can represent CoP in the region. They are planning work with diaspora communities in Switzerland and Belgium. Local colleagues will be supporting outreach work in Geneva connecting with peace-building agencies during the preparation of Creators of Peace's 25th anniversary conference in 2016.



New Zealand

CoP women have hosted and facilitated two CoPCs in the last year and a new facilitator has been trained. CoPCs are developing in Christchurch, Wellington and Auckland. New Zealand has built on its partnership neighbouring countries in the Pacific, specifically assisting a CoPC in Fiji this November. They have enjoyed the participation of all ages, sharing together and learning from each. Everyone finds their unique part in building trust, finding hope in the future, and a sense of belonging in a challenging world.



USA

CoP USA hosted internships for two women from The Netherlands and Cameroon, and with their help, held a CoPC for 14 women, some workshops for young professionals and a Facilitators Training program for ten more. The team went on to facilitate a CoPC with a newly established team in Barbados, bringing together women from different women's societies and charitable networks. CoP USA also ran a CoPC with young women and girls which is a new development for CoP. CoP women in the US are aiming to set up CoPCs for women from the Abrahamic faith traditions and are in the process of securing grants to support a new programme. Like many CoP teams around the world, they will find a way to proceed even if we do not get grant funds.



Strategic Plan Report 2015

Creators of Peace's current 5 year plan runs from 2011 to 2016. Here is a summary of how we are progressing at the end of Year 4 in terms of our outreach and organisational development.

1: Expand Creators of Peace Circles

Provide Creators of Peace Circles in new countries and areas where they are requested, including in educational and other institutions

- For the first time, in 2015, Creators of Peace Circles have taken place in **Zimbabwe, Afghanistan, Mali, Fiji and Barbados**. Collaborations include the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, **Sydney University, Australia**, and **Calgary University, Canada**. A partnership with Johannesburg City Council is currently developing in South Africa. In Switzerland, the team is building on a previous exercise with the Graduate Institute to undertake an evaluation led by the Geneva Institute of Peace Research.

Encourage the strategic expansion of Creators of Peace Circles in areas of religious and cultural diversity, especially where dialogue and reconciliation are needed

- This year alone requests have come from 13 countries to assist with building bridges, trust and reconciliation across divided communities.
- The first Peace Circle took place in Crimea between pro-Russian, pro-Ukrainian and Tatar women.
- In Mali the first CoPCs between "Sisters" from different tribes of South and North took place.
- Romania are using CoPC's to reach out to the alienated Roma community.
- The Syrian team are using CoP material to support women in the ongoing conflict.
- CoPC's in refugee communities are promoting reconciliation between tribal and religious divides we have seen this in Sweden with Somali women and in Australia with conflicting Dinka factions of the South Sudanese diaspora.
- The Kenyan team continues to work across tribal divides reaching over 1000 women through PC's to date, combatting conflict and creating reconciliation most notably in Baringo County
- Syrian and Lebanese CoP women came together in Lebanon to build trust and reconciliation from a conflicted history between these nations.
- Ongoing monthly programme takes place with the Auburn Centre for Community in Australia, with CoP women working to address issues of diversity in the Australian community.

Train more Creators of Peace Circle facilitators

- As of July 2015 there are 280 trained CoP facilitators on record; 117 are active and 71 hold a Level 3 certificate.
- In 2014-2015, CoP held 7 Facilitator Trainings: in the USA, Australia, Norway, Switzerland, UK, India and South Africa. This included women participating from: Solomon Islands, Sweden, Denmark, The Netherlands, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Belgium, Italy, France, Afghanistan, Tibet, Kashmir and Indonesia.

Support regional Creators of Peace gatherings and facilitator retreats, refresher courses and international conferences

- 24 CoP women from across 9 African states met in South Africa in September 2014 to refresh their facilitation skills, share knowledge and grow community. Teams from South Africa, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Burundi, South Sudan, Cote D'Ivoire, Nigeria, Cameroun, and Egypt were joined by trainers and International Co-ordinators from Australia, UK, South Africa and Kenya
- A refresher training course was held in Sydney in 2014 and CoP has continued to develop the training modules to include a "Pathways" framework to guide CoP women on developing their facilitation capabilities.

2: Explore new programmes and partnerships

Support the use of Creators of Peace tools and methods as a strategic intervention for creating peace and building trust in divided communities

- CoP South Sudan is exploring further training with a follow-up country-wide programme to empower women to overcome the conflict in the region.
- Received invitations from Armenia, France, Cote d'Ivoire, Senegal, Chad, Niger and Tunisia over the year.

3: Build and consolidate the team

Develop an effective communications strategy

- National Coordinators have been established in 43 countries who communicate effectively with the International Co-ordination Team to receive key updates and to share them in their respective countries.
- Increased social media outreach that feeds into and highlights regular newsletter and website news.

Maintain simplified, responsive and transparent governance

- Current International Co-ordinators will complete their term and a new team will be voted on in 2016.

Maximise our association and collaboration with Initiatives of Change

- The International Co-ordination Committee have represented CoP at plenary panel discussions, lectures, workshops and public forums in Annual IofCCaux Conferences: 'Just Governance', 'Land and Security' and as part of the International Peacebuilders' Forum (IPF).

4: Develop our resources

Actively search for new funding sources

- A promotional fundraising-appeal film was launched, 'Give Ten\$' to celebrate the past 10 years of CoPCs
- CoP has identified a shortlist of international grant-making foundations and are currently in application processes for cross-country programmes, facilitation trainings, refresher courses, 2016 conferences and the launch of a new action plan for the future work of CoP.

Maintain an interactive website, which includes a mechanism for on-line donations

- It is now possible to make donations direct to CoP through the Initiatives of Change website.

Translate the Creators of Peace Circle manual into the languages of all the communities using it

- Created new translations of the facilitation manual in Arabic, Portuguese and Kirundi.

Produce a documentary film about Creators of Peace

- A short presentation about CoP women's work in Africa is in progress.

Publish research that evaluates the impact of Creators of Peace

- A case study exploring what characteristics have enabled CoP to grow into a sustainable international network is underway. Also The Graduate Institute of Geneva chose CoP as a Case Study for students' post-graduate research. This together with an internal workshop defining our 'Theory of Change' is helping us to evaluate our community impact.

CoP Direction for 2016

GOALS

- Celebrate 25 years of Creators of Peace at the Initiatives of Change Caux Conference Centre in Switzerland in August 2016 to gather 250 Creators of Peace women from around the world
- Launch a common action that embodies a "Living Peace" through a programme of regional gatherings to promote a new story for peace
- Develop skill refreshers and training opportunities designed to support women following their Creators of Peace Circle experience such as leadership development, conflict resolution and mediation
- Produce a 'Train the Trainer' programme to enable us to respond to further requests
- Elect a new International Co-ordination Team ready to serve the global CoP network for the next 3-5 years
- Secure the necessary ongoing financial resources required to take CoP into the future with a core staff team to support our network
- Commission a longer film with an in-depth profile about one or two CoP women working for transformation in their own communities
- Publish a collection of Creators of Peace women's stories to inspire and encourage women in courageous actions for peace

CHALLENGES

- Over the next year, we will seek to secure core funding to establish a staff team to better support our network across 43 countries, set-up a panel of elders and induct a new International Co-ordination team and continue to develop an evaluation framework that can be used by all women at grassroots.

Creators of Peace Governance, Finance & Fundraising

GOVERNANCE

A team of International Co-ordinators facilitating the training, communications, care for teams and national liaison, with a President, Secretary and Treasurer supporting our network of 40+ volunteer National Co-ordinators give their time and expertise voluntarily.

Serving from 2013-2016, our International Co-ordinators are:

President – Daphrose Ntarataze (Burundi), Secretary – Tanya Fox (Australia), Treasurer – Kate Monkhouse (United Kingdom), National Liaison – Jean Brown (Australia), National Liaison – Portia Mosia (South Africa), Training & Programmes – Shoshana Faire (Australia), Communications – Iman Al-Ghafari (Syria)

FINANCE

Creators of Peace Account Summary 2014

01/01/2014	Opening bank balance	<u>\$53,727</u>
2014	Donations general	\$1,541
2014	Donations restricted	\$2,384
2014	Grant	\$27,230
2014	Operational expenses	-\$5,755
2014	Project expenses*	-\$72,013
31/12/2014	Closing bank balance	<u>\$7,114</u>

Our financial year runs from January to December. Our Annual General Meeting is usually in July, August or September of the following year.

* This includes restricted grant funding carried over from the previous financial year.

N.B. This account summary can be read in conjunction with our CoP Profit & Loss, Balance Sheet and the IofC Audited Accounts which are available on request. Initiatives of Change audit the accounts of CoP which are passed by the IofC General Assembly.

CoP has a bank account in Switzerland.

Fundraising

All country programmes are self-financed by women locally and these projects responding to local teams are not reflected within the figures above which include only the core running costs and one major programme.

CoP fundraising comes from individual donors who give personally to support the work of Creators of Peace.

Grants in 2014 came from the Irene Prestwich Trust and from the Canton de Geneve and the Ville de Geneve for the work in Burundi.

CONTACT

www.iofc.org/creators-of-peace

@creatorsofpeace

www.facebook.com/creatorsofpeace

creatorsofpeace@iofc.org

Rue de Varembe 1, CH-1202, Geneva 20 Switzerland



Creators of Peace is a programme of Initiatives of Change which is worldwide movement of people of diverse cultures and backgrounds who are committed to the transformation of society, through changes in human motives and behaviour, starting with their own: www.iofc.org