



Creators
of Peace



Towards a Living Peace

Annual Report 2015 - 2016



“Without peace, no one will live in peace. So it’s in everyone’s interest to work in this direction.”

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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.

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.

“The Creators of Peace Circle is a place of coming into alignment with your personal convictions, but it does not leave you with nothing to do after ‘venting’ – it empowers you to join in fellowship with other women attempting to play their role in society to combat injustice and take on the issue of inequality – bringing in inspiration towards conflict prevention and management, trust building, peace building, and reconciliation; ultimately equipping women to reflect on their own lives and spheres of influence, engaging with their own abilities, convictions, and passions to make a change in their communities at every level of society.” - Ashley, UK

Creators of Peace is a programme of Initiatives of Change which is a 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.



Letter from our President



In August 2016, we celebrated a long-awaited major event: the commemoration of the Silver Jubilee of Creators of Peace. This event, to which the international co-ordination team of Creators of Peace had concentrated most of its

energies since its inauguration in 2013, concluded our strategic plan of 2012-2016 in a beautiful way.

What have we celebrated? A life story of an international network whose members are body and soul engaged in the promotion of a global peace that begins in oneself and in the transformation of conflicts. With our predominantly feminine touch and sensibility, we gave ourselves an opportunity for encounters and heart-to-heart sharing, for diverse experiences reflecting our worldwide outlook, and as a springboard for an action plan for years to come. Our members from all walks of life came to benefit from this meeting. Together, they chose a new international co-ordination team, taking over from the one that was elected on July 9, 2013, which comes to the end of its mandate.

2016 for Creators of Peace was a year of prospects, a year of assessment and celebrations. The whole year was marked by preparations for our commemorative conference. The task was not easy, with our members scattered around the world, but the conference was held to the satisfaction of the co-ordination team, also guests and any informed observer.

2016 was also a year for all of us to live out peace in the world as it presents itself to us, with its turbulence and divisions. Our world demands us to use all that we can to contribute to the establishment, restoration and preservation of peace, starting from the individual to the global.

Thus, living peace and contributing to shaping a new history is the challenge that calls everyone. Peace is not an achievement, but a daily work, a quest for light in our shadows. The quest for inner peace is a struggle that rages in our global context where we might be tempted to withdraw into self and identity away from conflicts, and the violent extremisms that shake the world. To live peace, is nevertheless to preach by our acts that convey the love and the joy around us. The challenge does not end there.

It is necessary to narrate a new story, out from the history of trauma, into another story of reconciliation, from truth to life, from the secrecy of the taboo to the light of honesty and transparency. To live peace by writing a new story is therefore a double requirement: our action as a peacemaker defines our community and traces the curves of a brighter future.

To live peace we will build a new history in order not to bequeath to future generations the concerns that we did not want to confront or the challenges that we did not have the courage to turn into an opportunity – this is our daily task. What a great communal project for us as women Creators of Peace!

Daphrose Ntarataze Barampama (Switzerland/ Burundi) was President of Creators of Peace 2013-2016 and from August 2016 continues in role of Ambassador for the Creators of Peace network.

We celebrated:

* Twenty-five years, during which an idea that took shape in 1991 at an international conference in Caux under the leadership of Honourable Anna Abdallah Msekwa has grown, evolved and spread to more than 40 countries on all continents.

* Twenty-five years of inviting women to firmly believe in their role as peacemakers at all levels of society starting with their inner strength and stimulating them, particularly through Creators of Peace Circles, to be in the vanguard of peace in our world.

* Twenty-five years of bringing together women of different origins and beliefs to explore what it takes to generate harmonious societies. We have done this through programmes and events in which women have learned from one another, by sharing their experiences and their stories of life.

* Twenty-five years of building bridges in our communities from woman to woman, from human to human, from heart to heart, beyond differences of all kinds... gradually overcoming obstacles of prejudice, hatred, mistrust by understanding the other and respecting each other's dignity.

* Twenty-five years of learning to initiate peace in our own selves, to grow based on solid foundations of moral values, to discover the strength of inner peace, to experience the dynamics and the power of forgiveness, then locating in our own communities the area in which we can bring a solution and enrich one's life with a positive change and fully live one's humanity.

“Living peace is a challenge that calls everyone”

Highlights 2015 - 2016

Creators of Peace Circles have now taken place in 43 different countries. Each has a national co-ordinator and a team of women responding to the needs of their own communities.

* **Australia** Ginn Fourie of the 'Beyond Forgiveness' documentary gave a Q & A at three very successful fundraising events in Adelaide, Melbourne & Sydney with film screenings to help raise funds for women to attend the Living Peace conference, raising more than \$11,000.

* **Brazil** renewed commitments to putting peace in practice and continuing to provide peer support for individual participants in their journeys of empowerment and commitment

* **Burundi** pursued integration of individual healing through the Creators of Peace Circles with development programmes around skills development for cassava processing and dry composting toilet construction, as well as providing the launch pad for social enterprises and community self-help initiatives

* **Canada** has worked with interns from the local university, whilst exploring future Creators of Peace Circles with First Nation women

* **Kenya** has continued to invest heart and soul into one region to support women from two tribes in their journey of forgiveness & reconciliation over land disputes and retaliatory violence

* **Mali** have hosted dialogues to enable women in exile from the civil conflict to heal and plan for future reconciliation journey as part of a collaboration between Creators of Peace, WILDAF / Mali in partnership with IMRAP on funding of the Human Security Division of the Swiss Cooperation and Oxfam

* **New Zealand** and **Fiji** have enjoyed facilitator trainings and working together to host Creators of Peace Circle tasters in a local mosque and with the Multicultural Council



* **South Africa** has designed follow-on programmes to encourage skills development for everyday family and neighbourhood needs dealing with domestic violence, financial management and assertive communication, whilst continuing to support healing post-apartheid

* **Switzerland** has prioritised multicultural hospitality to build friendships between women from different backgrounds and faith traditions

* **Syria** have offered Creators of Peace activities in conjunction with school students and parents, opening up conversations about faith traditions, developing listening skills and sharing about struggles due to the war

* **Taiwan** has linked Creators of Peace Circles with supporting parenting skills for local women through a regular group

* **Uganda** team members have been visiting women prisoners and their children, as well as counselling participants through specific relationship conflicts

* **United Kingdom** have developed new partnerships with specialist peace centres in London, Coventry and Oxford, offering Creators of Peace workshops as part of programmes for women from different communities

* **Zimbabwe** has held a new round of Creators of Peace Circles and dedicated their attention on women in poverty by enabling small projects to help families with school fees and family food provision.

Common themes for participants in Creators of Peace Circles over the last 12 months have included:

- deepening understanding across divides of generation, culture and religion
- healing hurts caused by violent conflict, civil war and land disputes

Story from Sri Lanka

Creators of Peace Circles in Sri Lanka were able to bring together women of different ethnic and religious communities to share and build trust and friendship. In one, women who had been widowed during the war shared moving stories of losing sons, homes and of being displaced several times from conflict zone and having to live in refugee camps. It is only in the last two years that they have been able to build new homes on their restored land.

Minachiamma, alone now, still lives in her tin shed while her house is being constructed. At our first meeting she had said, *"There is no happiness in my life, only pain", but the big smile with which she welcomed us to her home the day after the Circle, with hugs and tea was evidence of a new story in the making. She said, 'I have to leave the past behind to live happily with my children'.*

Stella, their group co-ordinator who lives with her 12 year old daughter shared: *"I need to develop qualities of peace. I never thought of peace in this way. We have to show by example".*



"I feel I am stronger. I can be a creator of peace."



Creators of Peace circles

"The Creators of Peace Circle is like a pilgrimage for me. It cleansed me of all impurities to deal with new directions..."

"Following child abuse and verbal abuse suffered all my orphaned childhood, I had only hatred towards others especially women but also towards myself. With the Creators of Peace Circle, I learned to know myself, to value myself, to love and to love others by finding inner peace."

Creators of Peace Circles are small gatherings of women of different backgrounds within a community, who work together with trained facilitators to understand their peace creating capabilities. They go through specially designed material over a period of time to build bridges of understanding, friendship and trust. Another aim is to identify issues in the community with a potential for conflict, and resolve to take common action to practise their peace-building skills. A special feature of the Creators of Peace Circle is the space for each participant to share something of her life story with others.

New Creators of Peace Circles took place in 2015-2016 in:

- **Afghanistan**
- **Armenia**
- **Fiji**
- **Malaysia**
- **USA and**
- **Zimbabwe.**



Training with Creators of Peace

"The training of facilitators was a new and unique learning experience for me. I have learned not only about how to be a facilitator for Creators of Peace Circles, but also how to empower women by my example by telling my story and by sharing the challenges I have come through. Most of all I liked the fact, that facilitators were equal to participants in the sense that they would share their own stories and do some exercises along with participants. Looking at them and hearing from them gave me hope and power to move on. I have learned how as a facilitator I can contribute to the personal development of other women."

"I felt empowered in terms of having learned new communication skills and practical tools and developed in terms of how to manage a challenging situation that may arise. I also gained precious insight on the importance of co-facilitation."

Between August 2015 and July 2016 we ran Facilitator Trainings in **Australia**, with participants also from **Japan** and **Philippines; Burundi; India**, with participants also from **Afghanistan; Mali; New Zealand**, with participants also from **Fiji; Romania** and **United Kingdom**.

All women who participate in our Facilitator Training process have taken part in at least one Creators of Peace Circle, and thus have experienced the process they will be inviting others to engage in.

Our training process is spelled out in two "Pathways" documents: 1. Becoming a CoP Facilitator and 2. Becoming a Trainer of CoP Facilitators. These documents include the skills and personal qualities that define a CoP Facilitator, and a detailed outline of the curriculum that a Facilitator Trainer would need to be competent to impart.

Facilitators are expected to be in good relationship with the Creators of Peace team in their own country and to be deepening their own practice and values as a Creator of Peace. They also acquire knowledge of the Creators of Peace Circle process and develop specific skills in facilitating conversations, sharing personal stories and accompanying others in taking next steps into forgiveness, reconciliation and in putting peace into practice in their local communities. The training includes a 3 day workshop, plus ongoing support and accountability.

During 2017, we will be prioritising the expansion of our teams of both CoP Circle Facilitators and Trainers of Facilitators so that we can respond to the many requests we have for Peace Circles in new countries and for Facilitator Trainings. The training of trainers will be done through a hands-on apprenticing process with practice and observation. We will also offer Facilitator Refreshers for experienced facilitators to share their learning, get expert input on challenges and build up good practice.

"Through this time I found peace, understanding and freedom in my mind and my heart."

Strategic Plan Progress

2016 saw the conclusion of our 5-year strategic plan which set out our framework for outreach and organisational development. Since 2012, we have worked to...

1. Expand Creators of Peace Circles

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

New Creators of Peace Circles have taken place in Crimea, South Sudan, Germany, Netherlands, Cameroon, Burundi, Nigeria, Egypt, New Zealand, Solomon Islands, Bougainville, Brazil, Lebanon, Syria, Romania, Taiwan, Armenia, Afghanistan, Fiji, Zimbabwe...

We have worked with the Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies, Sydney University, Australia and Calgary University, Canada. CoP has contributed to a community reconciliation programmes at St Ethelburga's Centre for Peace & Reconciliation and Coventry Cathedral in the UK. Our work in Mali has been with WILDAF-Women in Law and Development in Africa and IMRAP.

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

Creators of Peace Circles have taken place in Crimea between pro-Russian, pro-Ukrainian and Tatar women and South Sudanese diaspora women in South Australia have done a CoPC between Dinka factions. CoP colleagues in Romania are reaching to the alienated Roma community.

Refugee communities take part in CoPCs in several places, for example, in Sweden with Somali refugee

women and in Lebanon, a CoPC took place in Beirut with women from one of the Palestinian refugee camps.

c) Train more Creators of Peace Circle facilitators

CoP Facilitator Trainings have taken place in Egypt, Norway, Cameroon, Burundi, New Zealand, Australia, South Sudan, Kenya, UK, Solomon Islands, Malaysia, India, Lebanon, USA...

We have created a "Pathways" framework to guide and CoP women on their facilitation development journey and to ensure that we have recognised and experienced facilitators leading with new ones.

d) Produce a 'Train the Trainer' programme

We have developed a training process to develop and induct new trainers, providing hands on experience and skills development.

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

CoP women from across Africa met in South Africa in September 2014 to refresh their skills, reflect on their practice, deepen their personal commitment and share good practice on building community, securing resources and taking care of their teams.

2. Explore new programmes and partnerships

a) Develop training opportunities designed to support women following their Creators of Peace Circle experience such as leadership development, conflict resolution and mediation

This is an area still for us to develop more formally although several models are emerging. For example,

in Burundi, a programme of consolidation where participants are invited to come back for sessions to enable them to support one another through further learning. In Kenya and South Africa, follow-up skills trainings and visits to localities enables CoP to respond to individual needs.

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

We continue to explore an invitation from South Sudan to empower women.

3. Build and consolidate our team

a) Develop an effective communications strategy

Our newsletter provides updates from CoP women in different countries and our Facebook page has frequent updates about CoP activities and wider women in peace initiatives. In 2016 we launched a 'Living Peace' blog reflection series.

We recognise that internet access is a big problem for many of us in different parts of the world, yet our newly established list of 40+ national co-ordinators provides an increasingly effective way to communicate.

b) Fund a team of staff to serve the work of Creators of Peace

We continue to pursue core funding for this, starting with the appointment of a new Executive Officer in 2016.

c) Establish a mentor programme

We have explored a number of ways to promote self-care, wellbeing and mutual support for colleagues and teams. We have set-up a new role of CoP Elder to help with mentoring.

d) Maintain simplified, responsive and transparent governance

We implemented our international new governance structure after the elections at our AGM in 2013 when 9 women took responsibility to help co-ordinate CoP initiatives and administration. All International Co-ordinators have completed an self-evaluation and we have put in place some new updates to our Articles of Association.

e) Maximise our association and collaboration with Initiatives of Change

We have contributed to the Caux conferences, hosting workshops at the Land & Security and Governance conferences in 2013 & 2014 & 2015 & 2016 and participating in the International Peacebuilders Forum to reach new audiences.

We are also grateful for collaboration with lofC who support our policy outreach, communications and fundraising activities.

4. Develop our resources

a) Actively search for new funding sources

We have built relationships with two new major external grant-making foundations, the Oak Foundation and Fetzer Institute, resulting in a discretionary grant for the regional work in the Great Lakes region and partnership funding for the Living Peace conference.

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

It is now possible to make donations direct to CoP through the lofC website (thanks to lofC).

c) Produce printed and electronic material for Creators of Peace Circles and training programmes

During the last 5 years, we have produced a new brochure, banners, display stands. Short video interviews with CoP are available on YouTube to support CoPC and facilitator trainings.

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

The CoPC manual now exists in Arabic, Portuguese, Kirundi, French... The manual for training facilitators exists in English & French. We plan for the next one to be in Spanish or Portuguese.

e) Produce a documentary film about Creators of Peace

There are a number of short films produced for Give Ten\$ appeal and of the Baringo County Reconciliation.

It is still our aspiration to commission a longer film, maybe an in depth profile of the story of CoP in Kenya or Burundi.

f) Publish a book of Creators of Peace women's stories

Stories from the history of CoP have been collated to present as a small publication.

g) Publish research that evaluates the impact of Creators of Peace

Three academic papers have been written about about CoPC methodology and a lofC case study is available on the development of CoP as a sustainable international network. Graduate Institute of Geneva students used CoP as a Case Study and the Geneva Institute of Peace Research is running an action learning evaluation of the methodology in Burundi.

Directions for 2017

Key elements for our global work that we plan moving forward:

- Encouraging participation in “Second Circles”, a follow on programme to deepen the learning and encourage action
- Developing the skills and experience of new trainers, so there are more trainers available to respond to requests
- More partnership working, especially in areas where we can link CoPCs with development initiatives
- Regional gatherings to support teams with facilitation refreshers and capacity building
- Working with Initiatives of Change to progress their new priorities, including tackling the roots of extremism

Since the 25th anniversary Living Peace Conference in 2016, the following have also emerged with some energy:

- Investing in and mentoring younger women's skills and leadership
- Exploring “advocates for a new story” as a theme for a wider programme shared with IofC



Challenges in 2017

Over the course of the next year, which we have designated as a transitional year to lay the foundations for CoP moving forward into the future, we will prioritise the following cross-cutting themes on all the strategic directions and areas of work below:

- **Capability-building: our skills & teams** - Bringing more experienced CoP women together with newer colleagues intentionally for each project we work on to share knowledge, to help with succession planning and to make our activities more accessible to younger women
- **Capacity-building: our resources & finances** - Increasing our visibility with an update of all our communications resources, improve impact evaluation & shape projects around fundraising to secure finances for a core team
- **Continue to strengthen our links** with IofC International and the Caux Foundation to align our efforts with theirs, both in terms of working relationships with regional co-ordinators and staff teams, as well as Geneva outreach and summer programme

2017 is going to be an exciting and challenging year for Creators of Peace. We will be transitioning from the hands-on leadership of Jean Brown and carrying through the spirit of the Living Peace conference. We want to maintain the friendship and organic grassroots initiatives that are a hallmark of our Creators of Peace global network. At the same time, we need to build a core team to help carry the responsibility for our international programmes and stewardship of our resources.

One way to visualise this is like a tree: the roots of CoP are strong (in our values, in our history, in our friendships and global network) and the branches stretch wide with many peace circles and projects. The work for the year ahead is to strengthen the trunk of the tree to uphold both parts and create a strong support for future growth.

“I found our differences, I found our similarities, and I found that there was a part of me in everyone else and a part of them in me.”

Finance

“It was a huge privilege... to gain experience and wisdom from such extraordinary women.”

Fundraising

All country programmes are self-financed by women locally through personal giving, social enterprise and grants or partnership working. 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. We are grateful for grants to support specific projects in Kenya, South Africa and Burundi in 2015 from:

- Irene Prestwich Trust
- Republique et Canton de Geneve
- Ville de Geneve
- Ville de Meyrin

Income and Expenditure 2015

Opening bank balance	\$7,114
Donations general	\$1,903
Donations restricted	\$106,254
Training income	\$1,724
Operational expenses	-\$10,647
Project expenses	-\$101,163
Closing bank balance	\$5,185

Our financial year runs from January to December. Our Annual General Meeting is usually in July, August or September of the following year. This account summary can be read in conjunction with our Profit & Loss, Balance Sheet and the full 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.

Income and Expenditure 2016

Opening bank balance	\$5,184.81	CHF 0.00
Donations general	\$195.01	CHF 1,445.52
Donations restricted	\$4,711.57	CHF 9,405.10
Grants general	\$0.00	CHF 0.00
Grants restricted	\$186,567.14	CHF 115,299.44
Legacy gift	\$0.00	CHF 29,311.61
Training income	\$0.00	CHF 2,194.95
Conference expenses	\$27,008.87	CHF 68,444.59
Operational expenses	\$2,489.37	CHF 4,628.32
Project expenses	\$86,771.26	CHF 47,526.95
Closing bank balance	\$1,885.27	CHF 109,048.12

Governance

Creators of Peace has a group of elected International Co-ordinators who have the overview of our training, communications, and liaison with the 40+ national co-ordinators.

Serving from 2013-2016, our International Co-ordinators were: 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)

The new international co-ordination team elected in August 2016 and January 2017 are: President – Amina Dikedi-Akajayie (Nigerian/UK), Secretary – Anne-Claire Frank-Seisay (Netherlands/USA), Treasurer – Gabriela Sebestyen (Romania), Vice-President – Diana Damsa (Romania), Luz Stella Camacho Castro (Colombia), Maria Cristiana Munoz (Brazil), Nighat Khursid (Pakistan), Shoshana Faire (Australia), Sylvie Lefrançois (Switzerland), Yara Zgheib (Lebanon/USA).

Our Elders are: Christiane Garin Al Azhari (Switzerland), Jean Brown (Australia) and Vijayalakshmi Subrahmanyam (India)

For more information, contact Kate Monkhouse, Executive Officer: creatorsofpeace@iofc.org





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Images © Creators of Peace / Initiatives of Change 2016, with special thanks to Mike Smith and Shoshana Faire

Design by Laura Jean

Quotes from participants of the Creators of Peace programmes in Burundi, Mali, Syria, Timor Leste and UK