

Faith-based peacebuilding The need for a gender perspective



What is May 24?

May 24 International Women's Day for Peace and Disarmament began in Europe in the early 1980s, when hundreds of thousands of women organized against nuclear weapons and the arms race. Since the 1995 UN World Conference on Women in Beijing, the International Fellowship of Reconciliation and the International Peace Bureau have published the May 24 package to raise awareness of and increase support for women's peace initiatives. This package accompanies the May 24 event which is organized each year by the Women Peacemakers Program on a different theme, this year in cooperation with Musicians without Borders. This publication and the work of IFOR's Women Peacemakers Program is made possible by a grant from the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



The 2010 May 24 Action Pack 'Faith-Based Peacebuilding: The Need for A Gender Perspective' contains contributions by: Cassandra Balchin, Beate Blatz, Carolyn Boyd Tomasovic, Rabia Terri Harris, Isabelle Geuskens, Merle Gosewinkel, Ouyporn Khuankaew, Maitanur Mahyeddin, Chayanika Shah, Rev. Patricia Sheerattan-Bisnauth, and José de Vries

Editors: Geuskens, Isabelle (IFOR/WPP Program Manager); Gosewinkel, Merle (IFOR/WPP Program Officer) and de Vries, José (IFOR/WPP Information Officer)

Language Editor: Tom Johnston

Lay Out: Trees Vulto

Design logo: Annemarie Bron

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in or introduced into a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise), without the prior written permission of the author, written above each article.

Copies of the information pack from previous years are available from IFOR's Women Peacemakers Program and the International Peace Bureau (contact: j.devries@ifor.org).

Contact:

International Fellowship of Reconciliation

Women Peacemakers Program

Spoorstraat 38, 1815 BK Alkmaar, The Netherlands/Pays-Bas

tel +31 (0)72 512 3014, fax +31 (0)72 515 1102

www.ifor.org/WPP

Without peace, development is impossible, and without women, neither peace nor development can take place.

The Women Peacemakers Program (WPP) supports the empowerment of gender-sensitive women and men for the transformation of conflict through active nonviolence. WPP is a program of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR). Founded in 1919, IFOR is an inter-faith movement committed to active nonviolence, with branches and affiliates in 43 countries. IFOR has consultative status at the United Nations (ECOSOC) and has included six Nobel Peace Prize Laureates among its members.



Table of Contents

Introduction 3

Change Starts with the Recognition of One's Own Role in the Change 5

By IFOR Women Peacemakers Program

The Islam Does Not Forbid Women to Be Leaders 8

By Maitanur Mahyeddin

On Islamic Nonviolence 9

By Rabia Terri Harris

Women in Judaism and Pacifism 12

By José de Vries

Tackling Gender and Sexual Discrimination in Buddhism 15

By Ouyporn Khuankaew

Hindu Fundamentalisms in India 18

Examining the Impact and the Responses by the Women's Movements

By Chayanika Shah

Faith-based Peacebuilding in Nigeria 21

An Interview with Woman Activist Bridget Usifo Osakwe

By IFOR Women Peacemakers Program

Ecumenical Women's Initiative 25

Women's Pathways to Peace

By Carolyn Boyd Tomasovic

Gender, Leadership and Power 28

By Rev. Patricia Sheerattan-Bisnauth

We Should Walk the Road Together 30

By Merle Gosewinkel

Protestantism and Feminism in Germany 33

By Beate Blatz



Religion, Absolutism and Impacts on Women, Peace and Conflict 35

By Cassandra Balchin

Suggestions for Sources of Funding 42

By Merle Gosewinkel

Suggestions for Resources 47

By José de Vries

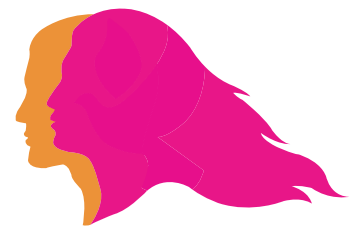
Suggestions for Actions and Solidarity in 2011 52

By José de Vries

2011 International Directory of Organizations 56



Introduction



In September 2010, not long before the 10th anniversary of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325), 35 women activists from 21 countries came together in Nicosia, Cyprus. In the company of fellow activists, those women considered a topic that was so close to many of their hearts: Religion. The meeting was an emotional journey through many layers: from the personal to the political, from oppression to inspiration, from frustration to hope, and from exclusion to creativity. Women from different religious affiliations, coming from so many different corners of the world, discovered they had a lot in common, with one of the participants voicing a dream shared by all: *“My dream is to see religion as playing a role in peace and justice, and no longer being used for destruction.”*

An estimated 70% of the world’s population is a believer in one or another of the world’s major religions. The role of religion in conflict is receiving increasing attention, with most of the focus being on the negative role that religion plays in conflict. The rise of religious fundamentalisms and the threat that poses for the human rights of women are also receiving much attention.

The positive role of religion in peacebuilding is still a relatively new field of academic study and research. Nonetheless, there are many historical examples of the positive role that religion can play in promoting peace and human rights (e.g. the civil rights movement in the US and the role of the Catholic Church in the People’s Power movement against Marcos in the Philippines), as well as that of interfaith cooperation (e.g. the joint peace efforts by Imams and Christian ministers in Nigeria, the cooperation between Hindu and Christian communities in the 2002 strikes in Madagascar, and the joint reconstruction efforts by Muslims, Jews, Orthodox and Roman Catholics in Bosnia).

Whether working within their own faith communities or engaging in multi-faith dialogue, women’s rights activists play an important role as actors of peace in those initiatives. A well-known example of that comes from the Liberian women’s peace movement, where Christian and Mus-

lim women worked together to end the bloody civil war in Liberia (2003). At IFOR/WPP, it is our experience that many women activists become involved in peacebuilding on the basis of values such as tolerance, love and respect for human dignity – values that are present in many religions. Also, many women activists indicate they are sustained in their challenging work by their respective religious beliefs and spirituality.

Nonetheless, religion can also act as a serious obstacle to women’s work for peace. Women peace activists have shared with us how they struggle with the fact that they are often criticized for becoming involved in public debates by male religious leaders whose interpretations of religious texts support the exclusion of women from public life. The patriarchal nature of religion also blocks women from becoming active in faith-based and interfaith peace initiatives on leadership levels, as those levels are generally dominated by male religious leaders. Hence, although the increased attention for religion-based peacebuilding is a good development in itself, we do need to ask ourselves: *“Whose peace are we talking about?”*


Women peace activists all over the world welcomed UNSCR 1325, as it supported their claim that women have a crucial role to play in peacebuilding and are affected by conflict in specific ways.¹ With religious institutions still being dominated by male leadership, religious-led conflict-resolution processes might imply another setback in terms of the high-level involvement of women in peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction processes. This would mean that half of the population’s peacebuilding potential is not being tapped into and that women’s

¹ On October 31, 2000, the United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325), which focuses on women, peace, and security. The Resolution recognizes the specific impact of conflict on women’s lives and the important role that women have to play in conflict-prevention and peacebuilding processes.



voices and perspectives are not being taken on board when reconstructing the fabric of society.

In this regard, it is important to emphasize that any conflict also can provide momentum for transforming restrictive gender roles, as during conflict women often step out of the traditional female gender box. If peacebuilding and reconstruction processes are left mainly in the hands of male religious leaders, there is a risk that women will be pushed back into former – religiously-justified – gender roles, perhaps even more restrictive ones than before the conflict. This is not only a great obstacle for women; it undermines sustainable and effective peacebuilding on the whole and hence affects the entire society. Engendering faith-based peacebuilding is therefore of the utmost importance.

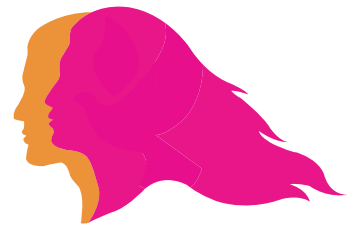


In an effort to contribute towards further opening up this debate, this May 24 Pack will look at the point where religion, women's rights and peacebuilding intersect. Here, the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) shares the outcomes of its research on religious fundamentalism and how that impacts women's rights worldwide. Women peace activists and women religious leaders from different corners of the world share their stories of frustration as well as inspiration, and tell of the need to be creative and patient in terms of changing the patriarchal features of religions. Several of the women featured in this May 24 Pack share how progressive male allies have been crucial in terms of supporting and sustaining them in their work for peace and justice in faith-based settings. This was also an important conclusion of the 2010 Cyprus Consultation. It concerns the importance of building bridges: between secular and religious women activists, between women activists who are working within the different faith traditions, and between women peacemakers and men. The participants of the Consultation made it very clear: they do not want to have to choose between religion and feminism. They want both.

This May 24 Pack is a tribute to the many brave women and men out there who draw on religion's best to work for peace. I wish you inspired reading.

Isabelle Geuskens
IFOR/WPP Program Manager

Change Starts with the Recognition of One's Own Role in the Change



By IFOR Women Peacemakers Program

More than two-thirds of the world's population identifies with a religion.² The role that religion plays in conflict is increasingly acknowledged by those who are involved in peacebuilding and research: as a cause of conflict, but also as a way to overcome conflict, resulting in a rising number of interfaith and faith-based peace initiatives all over the world. People are realizing that religion can be an important entry point in working towards peaceful solutions, and increasingly religious leaders are involved in conflict-resolution processes.

Religious actors often not only have a deep understanding of the local context, but also access to all levels of power – community, national or international – which gives them the ability to address conflicts on multiple levels.³ But engagement with religious leadership for peacebuilding also has consequences in terms of which perspectives are heard – and which ones are not. With religious leadership structures being mostly male-dominated, faith-based peacebuilding initiatives have implications for the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 and the related Resolutions 1820, 1888, 1889, 1960.

Women peace activists all over the world welcomed the adoption of UNSCR 1325 in October 2000. That resolution calls for the full participation of women in peacebuilding processes, attention for the specific protection needs of women, and the incorporation of a gender perspective in peacebuilding. However, in spite of more than ten years of UNSCR 1325, the implementation of that Resolution remains a challenge.

Late in 2010, on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of UNSCR 1325, the IFOR Women Peacemakers Program (WPP) organized an international Consultation – (*Inter*) *faith-based Peacebuilding: The Need for a Gender Perspec-*

tive – in Nicosia, Cyprus. This Consultation sought to investigate the specific triangle of religion, peacebuilding and gender, so as to analyze where those three things intersect and to emphasize the importance of integrating a gender perspective in interfaith and faith-based peacebuilding initiatives. The Consultation brought together 35 women, including representatives of all the five world religions – Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism – but also secular individuals. It included progressive female theologians, women's-rights activists and grassroots peacebuilders from twenty-one countries from all over the world.⁴ The majority of the invitees came from conflict and post-conflict countries, but there were also representatives from global and regional organizations that work directly with activists from those contexts. This brought to the Consultation a wealth of experience and perspectives that helped to generate in-depth and multi-angle discussions.

The main goal of the Consultation was to create a safe space for the women to formulate their own analysis, as well as to come up with recommendations in terms of advancing a gender perspective in faith-based peacebuilding. For many of the women activists whom the WPP works with, their spirituality and faith give them the strength and courage to challenge social injustices and work for peace. After all, all religions have at their core a message of peace. On the other hand, many of those activists are also criticized for their involvement in public debates and women's-rights work by male religious leaders whose interpretations of religious texts support gender discrimination and the exclusion of women from public life. Against this background, the WPP found it important to create a safe space for women activists to discuss

2 USAID report: *Religion, Conflict and Peacebuilding*, 2009, p.5.
3 USAID report: *Religion, Conflict and Peacebuilding*, 2009, p.6.

4 The participants came from Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Canada, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Israel, Kashmir, Kenya, Lebanon, Liberia, Macedonia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Nepal, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Palestine, the Philippines, Sweden, and the United States.



the obstacles they face within their faith traditions, as well as how their spirituality supports them in their work for peace and gender justice.

Structure and program of the Consultation

Prior to the Consultation, participants completed an application form on which they could indicate their expectations of the Consultation. Those included important discussion topics they felt needed to be addressed, as well as what they could offer in terms of workshop sessions. Their input informed the program design of the three-day Consultation. The Consultation days consisted of interactive sessions, with participants sharing insights, expertise and experiences during group discussions, plenary sessions and workshops.

The Consultation was divided into three main parts:

- 1 The first day consisted of mapping out the *positive* and *negative* aspects of religion in relation to gender socialization.
- 2 The second day's focus was on analyzing where religion, gender and peacebuilding intersect, so as to start adding a gender perspective to faith-based peacebuilding.
- 3 The third and final day was devoted to developing a post-consultation strategy, as well as clear recommendations for activists and policy makers in regard to supporting the involvement of women in faith-based and interfaith peacebuilding.

Outcomes

The participants agreed that it is not so much religion that discriminates against women, but rather the interpretation of religion – done mostly by male leaders – that tends to do that. Religious interpretations – no matter where one lives in the world – are also very much intertwined with cultural traditions and practices that few people dare to question or challenge.

During the last day of the Consultation, participants formulated a set of recommendations for activists and policy makers in regard to supporting the involvement of women in faith-based and interfaith peacebuilding. Those recommendations included the following:⁵

Disconnect religion from oppressive cultural practices by reinterpreting the religious texts from a women's perspective as one way to challenge those practices. In relation to that, education and capacity building are important areas of focus – both for religious leaders and for the general public.

For instance, a participant from Palestine shared how women are sidelined in her Church: *"They are allowed to collect the money but may not hold the cross as they are considered unclean."* To challenge that, she started to conduct gender trainings for women inside the Church. In her training sessions, she addresses the interpretations of the scriptures. She notices how women often don't realize that the Holy Bible is interpreted from a male perspective: *"Often, those women are not aware of the fact that they have rights, too."*

During the Consultation, she explained how she addresses the nature of gender oppression in her trainings, and how such oppression continues to exist as long as it remains unchallenged. The work is not easy: she often experiences resistance during her workshops, with women stating that her teaching is against their culture and against the Holy Bible. *"It is not easy to convince them,"* she said, *"for they will mention verses from the Bible to underline their points – although often they don't really know or understand them!"*

Involve progressive male religious leaders as allies in the work for more gender-sensitive, faith-based peacebuilding as well as actively co-operate with and include progressive men within the different faith-based traditions.

For instance, one participant from Macedonia shared how her organization, a women's-rights NGO, had recently started a project that focused on setting up local coordinating bodies to address domestic violence. Male religious leaders were invited to join those bodies because of the influence they have on the public's perceptions. Many of those religious leaders turned out to be very supportive and spoke openly about domestic violence, which, in turn, had an especially positive impact in terms of changing the men's perceptions.

⁵ For the complete overview of the recommendations formulated during the Consultation, see the Consultation report (2011), which can be downloaded via www.ifor.org/WPP.



Ensure that faith-based peacebuilding does not take place in isolation from secular peacebuilding. Women of faith often create their own spaces, also because they may not feel understood or accepted by more secular (women's) NGOs, which tend to perceive religion mainly as a source of oppression for women. That can form an obstacle in terms of ensuring that gender is on the agenda of faith-based peacebuilding. To advance the cause of women, it is important that both faith-based and secular women activists engage with one another in their work for gender justice and gender-sensitive peacebuilding.

For instance, an activist from Nepal shared how the women's network she is part of started seeking co-operation with different religious groups. Currently the network includes Buddhist, Hindu and Muslim religious groups, all of which are involved in the network's awareness-raising work on the need for gender equality in society and the important role for women in peacebuilding.

At first many of the religious groups were not directly involved, as they considered themselves different, yet increasingly they have started to cooperate. One strategy that was used to bring them on board was to publish materials about gender and religion, which empowered them to take part in the discussions. As religion plays such an important role in society, involving religious groups in the work for gender justice is crucial, since their position on gender equality will influence the wider community.

Make sure UNSCR 1325 and related Resolutions are "translated" to fit the local realities and contexts so that the local (religious) communities can make sense of them and internalize them more easily.

For instance, a participant from India shared her experience of bringing religious leaders together in workshops on conflict resolution and peacebuilding, using that opportunity to educate them on UNSCR 1325 and its importance in order to ensure more effective peacebuilding in the community.

Upon the conclusion of the Consultation, the participants emphasized the importance of remaining connected as a group. They had felt safe and supported in each other's company, and they wanted to continue their learning experience once back home, where many of them work in very challenging and dangerous settings. For the immediate term, it was decided to create a Google group that would

serve to support the continued exchange of experiences, resources and updates among the participants. For the longer term, the WPP will further integrate the Consultation network, insights and outcomes in its 2011–2015 program focus.

Besides feeling supported and having gained new ideas, several participants went home feeling more hopeful and encouraged. Working for change within religious traditions can be very challenging, and hearing about others' creative solutions had inspired them to not give up: *"My expectations have been more than fulfilled. I realize now that I need to work more with religious leaders. Before I came here, I had kind of given up on religion to some extent"* as one participant put it.

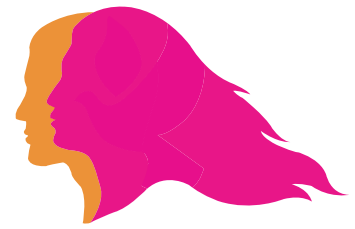
Overall, the lively discussions during the Consultation showed how creative those women were in coming up with approaches to ensure the inclusion of women in faith-based peacebuilding. They did so by confidently redefining their religion and faiths in a gender-sensitive way and by strategically approaching religious leaders in their communities. As one participant concluded: *"We do not want to choose between religion and women's rights. We need to claim our right to redefine religion, bring out its positive aspects in women's lives, and strategize against the negative practices that are being justified on the basis of religion."*

The WPP will publish an extensive report on the Consultation in mid 2011. The report will be made available via www.ifor.org/WPP and will be disseminated through the WPP e-newsletter *Cross the Lines*.



The Islam Does Not Forbid Women to Be Leaders

By *Maitanur Mahyeddin*



In September 2010, I participated in the IFOR/WPP three-day Consultation in Cyprus, “(Inter-)Faith-based Peacebuilding: The Need for a Gender Perspective”, together with 34 other women activists from 21 different countries, representing a variety of religions and faiths. It was greatly inspiring to be among those strong women to discuss religion, peacebuilding and gender. My own organization, the *Lathifa Foundation*, focuses on peacebuilding and social- and gender-justice activities in Aceh, Indonesia, in particular. We always use concepts and methods of nonviolence in our conflict-resolution and peacebuilding activities.



A woman as a district leader

Upon my return from this Consultation in Cyprus, I heard about a statement made by Mr. Ridwan, the chairman of the “Party of Aceh”, a local political party in the Bireuën Regency (a principal administrative district in the province of Aceh, Indonesia), that had been published in the newspaper. He stated that the Islam forbids women to be religious leaders. He wrote this in a response to the election of a woman, Mrs Anisa, as the leader in the Pandrah district, one of the subdistricts of Bireuën.

As a response, we organized a consultation with Muslim scholars to confute such harmful and oppressive opinions towards women. Additionally, we held workshops with members from local and national parties in Aceh, where we also invited religious leaders and Muslim scholars, including female scholars. The scholars stated that the Qur’an does allow women to be leaders.

After the workshop, in cooperation with the media, we invited peace activists, women and religious leaders to share their interpretations of the religious texts with regard to women leaders in Islam. We also distributed an article that I had written about Islamic views on gender among religious and community leaders. We lobbied with the governor of Aceh as well as with other district leaders of Bireuën and local NGOs, religious organizations and local parties in support of Mrs Anisa in her position as a district leader of Pandrah. In the end, the chairman of the

“Party of Aceh” apologized in the media for making the statement.

Islamic religion and cultural practices are very much inter-linked, and although Islam does not talk about patriarchy, the cultural practices that are linked to Islam are inhibiting to the participation of women. Men and women, already from childhood on, have to abide by different sets of rules and restrictions, with the girls facing many more restrictions than boys.

Reinterpretation of religion

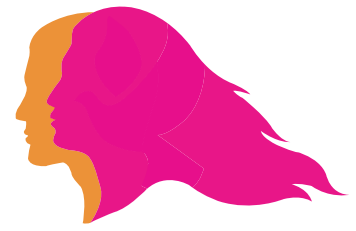
The Islamic religion assigns roles to men and women, but without making any distinctions in terms of the value of each. What is more important is to be a kind person – man or woman – in the eyes of God. But in cultural practices we see how men and women are treated differently. My advice is to address these problems by reinterpreting religion in a way that is inclusive to women and to translate that interpretation into a nondiscriminatory educational system in order to create a change in society at large.

When I see what has happened recently in countries like Egypt, I hope women will be involved in the development of the new constitutions there and that the United Nations will intervene to support the participation of women. This is very important, since here in Aceh the women have lost out in the peace agreement. In Aceh, women were hardly involved on decision-making levels when the peace processes were taking place. And that can never lead to sustainable peace.

» **Maitanur Mahyeddin** is the Executive Director of the Lathifa Foundation, which is based in Aceh Province, Indonesia.

On Islamic Nonviolence

By Rabia Terri Harris



Nonviolence is one of the most misunderstood words in the English language, and one of the most misunderstood ideas in the world. This confusion is not surprising, since the word means two things at the same time. And the one idea behind both meanings, though very simple, is not easy. It goes against the way many people think.

Here are the two different meanings of nonviolence:

1. Nonviolence is the *life decision* to live in harmony with the order of creation by giving up the domination of other people or the planet. Today, when put into community practice, this life decision is called the *culture of peace* or *peacebuilding*.
2. Nonviolence is the *method* of pursuing necessary social change by relying upon the real long-term spiritual power of justice rather than the apparent short-term political power of injustice. Today, when put into community practice, this method is called *unarmed struggle*.

The idea behind both of those meanings is that the universe is a seamless whole from which people are not separate. The order of creation is ethical and spiritual as well as physical. Ethical and spiritual laws have necessary effects, just as physical laws have necessary effects. We can rely on those causes to produce their effects. Reality is not chaos: something is in charge. By understanding, affirming, and *moving with* that which is in charge, we can reach whatever goals we have that are worth having.

So what goals have we got that are worth having? Why aim low? I'll tell you one that I treasure, and that I expect we share: *a world worth living in for everyone*. That goal is one of the highest objects of all religion. Whether we might rationally hope to reach this goal is quite irrelevant. We are summoned to try – and there is no greater adventure.

The Arabic term for nonviolence as a life decision is *islam*. The Arabic term for nonviolence as a method is *jihad*. The

Arabic term for the principle underlying both aspects of nonviolence is *tawhid*, the affirmation of the unity of God. For a Muslim, no principles are more basic – or more contested.

Because of the tremendous influence of Mohandas Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. on the course of 20th-century liberation efforts, many people, especially Muslims, assume that nonviolence must be a Hindu or a Christian concept. That's not true. In fact, it's a kind of a trick that keeps us from thinking clearly about nonviolence. It is true that choosing nonviolence as a method often follows from adopting nonviolence as a life decision, and that adopting nonviolence as a life decision often follows from a strong religious faith. And it is true that Mahatma Gandhi was a Hindu and Dr. King was a Christian.

However, Gandhi's great colleague in the struggle for the freedom of Indian peoples from British colonial rule was Abdul-Ghaffar Khan, who developed his nonviolent understanding independently of Gandhi, through reading the Qur'an in jail. Abdul-Ghaffar Khan raised an army of 100,000 unarmed soldiers, the *Khudai Khidmatgar*, from the same villages that today yield many fewer young men up to the Taliban. (His arguments must have been more convincing than theirs.) We don't hear enough about Abdul-Ghaffar Khan because he opposed the partition of the Indian subcontinent and was vilified for it afterwards. But it is past time to reconsider his work.

Later, the great counterbalance to Dr. King – the “bad cop” to Dr. King's “good cop” in the interrogation of racial injustice in the United States – was Malcolm X. And Malcolm X famously affirmed the potentials of unarmed struggle for the first time as a *result of the hajj*. That al-Hajj Malik al-Shabazz was martyred soon after this affirmation has only increased its power.

The Arabic term for that which is truly in charge in the world, upon which nonviolence depends, is *ALLAH*. You can hear that name in your heartbeat. In English, we gen-



erally refer to God. *The Muslim Peace Fellowship holds that nonviolence is the core social teaching of all the great religious traditions, and has been carried by all of the Messengers of God.*

An Islamic approach to nonviolence will, however, differ in important ways from other understandings. Every religious community takes its distinctive quality from the Messenger who founded it. It follows that the community of Muhammad is perfumed with the perfume of Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him {PBBUH}. And Muhammad {PBBUH}, like all of us, possesses both a worldly and a spiritual dimension.

In the world, Muhammad {PBBUH} was the civilizer of the Arab tribes, and his heart was with all oppressed people everywhere. His historical mission was no more, and no less, than the establishment of peace and justice where cruel custom and tyranny had reigned. He worked in, and with, the substance of his times, toward a goal far beyond the horizons of his times. He used extraordinary spiritual means toward equally extraordinary political ends. Through his labor and insight, a great world culture emerged out of a fractured landscape of petty tribal wars. If we take the trouble to look, we easily find in Muhammad {PBBUH} a master strategist of nonviolence.

In the spirit, Muhammad {PBBUH} has three major characteristics, according to the mystical tradition. The first characteristic is *absolute servanthood*: all his being was fully given over to the presence and work of God. The second, deriving from the first, is *all-encompassing perfection*. This is a special kind of perfection. He was as human as we are, but in him, every single element that constitutes human nature and experience, without exception, found its true balance and rightful place. Nothing was made greater or less than it really is; nothing was excluded. All the most difficult experiences that we tend to reject, were transformed in him. Among those difficult human experiences is warfare. Not all divine messengers have integrated this. His third characteristic is to prefer what God prefers: *all-embracing compassion* for the plight of creatures. Allah said in a non-Qur'anic divine report, "When I created the creation, I inscribed upon the Throne, 'My mercy overpowers My wrath.'" And He said of Muhammad {PBBUH} in the Qur'an, "We have not sent you, save as a mercy to the worlds."

This understanding of the nature of the Prophet provides the theological foundation for Islamic nonviolence. Muhammad {PBBUH} began his mission by alerting his



"Whoever is patient, wins." | Calligraphy by Efdaluddin Kilic

people to an imminent danger more serious than invasion: a massive ethical breakdown that put the whole community at risk. His first hearers were skeptical of this risk. Today, when global ethical failure has led us to the edge of economic and ecological collapse, it should be clearer to us what he was talking about. God willing, there is still time to listen.

The greatest Qur'anic warnings are against tyranny (*zulm*), against spreading corruption in the earth (*fasad*), against willfully obscuring the truth (*kufri*), and against worshiping competing narrow interests (the true meaning of idolatry, or *shirk*). Related to all those is the particular opponent of Prophet Muhammad {PBBUH}, known as *jahiliyyah* – violent ignorance. And wherever violent ignorance manifests, his struggle continues.

Which brings us to *jihad*

Jihad, struggle for justice – and particularly the special form of *jihad* that involves fighting – is too central to the Prophetic example for us to be able to ignore it, no matter how distorted the word has become through centuries of misuse. For it is not just in recent times that low motives have baited traps with high ideals. Whatever the apologists for past empires have said, the great body of prophetic traditions on this topic simply does not apply to struggles for political power, for vengeance, or for glory, whether or not there is Arabic writing on one's flag. Sadly, fighting "for Islam," as it is commonly understood, almost always means nothing more than fighting for political power, vengeance, or glory. *In Qur'anic terms, it does not qualify as jihad.*



Qur'anically, fighting may only be undertaken in self-defense against religious persecution ("in the cause of God") or for the benefit of oppressed people who yearn for assistance. *Were it not that God drives back some people by means of others, cloisters, churches, synagogues, and mosques, wherein God's name is much remembered, would have been pulled down.* (Surah Hajj. 40)

It has nothing to do with who belongs to what group and everything to do with human dignity. In cases of emergency injustice, fighting is *necessary*. But not all forms of fighting are acceptable to Allah. Even if the motive is correct, if the means are abominable, that fighting is *not jihad*. The Prophetic instructions regarding means are strict – and clear. If a manner of fighting slaughters the innocent, ravages the sources of life, and sows corruption in the earth, it is abominable. Such fighting is merely *jahiliyyah*, even if blasphemously undertaken in the name of God.

It has been understood by Muslim scholars for some time that weapons of mass destruction, though in widespread use, violate divine law. But the situation today is more serious even than this. For the ancient noble warrior around whom the laws of war took form, who could learn and practice chivalry while fighting hand to hand, is no longer to be found on any battlefield. The devastation caused by even a simple handgun cannot be limited to the combatant at whom it is aimed. The Muslim Peace Fellowship argues, following the Thai Muslim scholar Chaiwat Satha-Anand, that *all* modern weapons are weapons of mass destruction and therefore religiously unlawful. What "religiously unlawful" means is *intrinsically destructive of human spiritual potential; out of harmony with reality*. There is only one remaining form of fighting that is lawful: the unarmed struggle.

Islam teaches over and over that lasting success is never won by employing the religiously unlawful. Our telling ourselves that the forbidden is permitted does not change the deep structure of creation. What goes around, comes around.

Meanwhile, if we long for the end of injustice so that peace may come, we'll be waiting a very long time. Peace cannot be postponed until after some moment of victory: peace is now. Prophet Abraham {PBBUH}, in Islamic tradition, found a garden in the midst of the fire. His garden is always available. A paradox: until we find peace, we will be unable to make peace.

And that is why the Community of Living Traditions interests me. We are proposing here, on a humble scale, the grandest of experiments: to live together, in each other's presence, as our religions actually advise. This is more than *worth* trying. It's practically the only solution to the world's ills I can think of that hasn't seriously been tried!

Until the end of days, there will always be injustice somewhere, and the struggle with injustice will always be necessary. But though the world cannot be perfect, there is nothing to prevent its being better than it is. The change does not depend on our opponent: to claim that it does, merely hands our opponent our power. The change depends on us.

And we, if we are people of faith, depend on God. "Our God," we Muslims are asked to recite at the end of every formal episode of prayer, "You are peace, and peace is from You." Peace is an intrinsic attribute of the Ultimately Real. *Whoever* serves peace, serves God and will enter the infinite among the servants of God.

The Qur'an relates that longed-for divine call: *O soul at peace, return to your lord well-pleased, well pleasing: Enter among My servants; enter My garden*. If we do not plant that garden in this world, we will not be harvesting it in the next.

I can't tell you how delighted I am at the prospect of gardening with you.

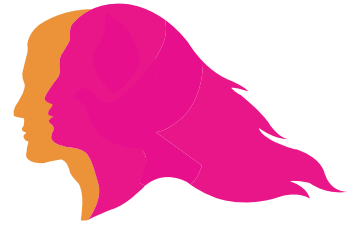
And peace be upon you all.

➤ **Rabia Terri Harris** is the Founder and Director of the Muslim Peace Fellowship (MPF). This article has been published in Fellowship Magazine – edition Spring 2010 (downloadable via: forusa.org/content/islamic-nonviolence). Fellowship Magazine is a publication developed by the Fellowship of Reconciliation–USA. For more information, please visit: forusa.org/. One of a dozen religious peace fellowships affiliated with the Fellowship of Reconciliation, MPF is now based in the Anwâr as-Salâm House at the Community of Living Traditions, an emerging interfaith intentional community hosted at the Stony Point Center in Stony Point, New York. This article is based on an address Harris delivered to the Community of Living Traditions (CLT) in late 2009. For more information about CLT visit www.stonypointcenter.org.



Women in Judaism and Pacifism

By José de Vries



In March 2010, the WPP had the opportunity to interview Rabbi Lynn Gottlieb. Born April 12, 1949, in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, Gottlieb is an American rabbi in the Jewish Renewal movement. She entered pulpit life at the age of 23 in 1973, as leader of Temple Beth Or of the Deaf in New York City. In 1981, she became the first woman ordained as a rabbi in the Jewish Renewal movement. She has been selected as one of America's 50 Top Rabbis. Gottlieb stresses the importance of nonviolence within religious traditions, including Judaism. She underscores the roles of women as religious leaders and strongly encourages women to demand their spaces and emphasizes the importance of working with youth.

Rabbi Gottlieb, thank you for this opportunity to talk with you. Together with Ross Hyman, you founded the Shomer Shalom Institute for Jewish Nonviolence. Could you please explain what the institute is about?

Shomer Shalom is an organization of Jews who follow a path of nonviolence based on Jewish principles of religious engagement. Some of us repeat a daily intention of Jewish nonviolence.

Shomer is a Hebrew word meaning stewardship. Traditionally, the word *shomer* is used in several key expressions, such as *shomer Shabbat*: keeping the Sabbath; *shomer kashrut*: keeping kosher; *shomer lashon*, guarding our tongue from hurtful speech, and more recently *shomer adamah*: keeper of the environment. *Shomer shalom* entails a daily choice not to cause intentional harm and committing oneself to active nonviolence, a transformative pathway of social and spiritual action.

As early as 1981, you were the first woman to be ordained as a rabbi in the Jewish Renewal Movement. Could you share with us some of your experiences of that time?

During that time, there were hardly any female rabbis, yet I didn't realize that back then. I grew up in the reformist tradition, in which women wrote creative liturgies. Throughout my life, elders have called me forward. In 1975, I was

a feminist performing artist. One day, I read a poem on human rights and theology, which Rabbi Everett Gandler heard. He said to me that one day I would become a rabbi. Rabbi Everett Gandler had been actively involved in the civil rights movements in the 1950s. He has always advocated that religious nonviolence is as much part of Judaism as it is of other religions. He became my mentor and ordained me as a rabbi. Currently, he is also on the Shomer Shalom Elders' Council.

Another important mentor for me is Rabbi Zalman M. Schachter-Shalomi. He is committed to feminisms and encourages diversity among his students, urging them to bring their own talents, vision, views and social-justice values to the study and practice of Judaism. He is also committed to active nonviolence. He was among the group of rabbis from a wide range of Jewish denominations who traveled together to India to meet with the Dalai Lama and discuss diaspora survival with him. He is also on the Shomer Shalom Elders' Council.

My background in performing arts, with training in storytelling and theater performances, has been helpful for me. I was not afraid to speak out publicly or to perform ceremonies. Using techniques of the performing arts, I could empower and strengthen women, who could then bring that back to their own communities.

As a female rabbi and a longtime activist and feminist, you have had a unique experience of working with women, within and inspired by your faith. Could you please elaborate on the position of women within Judaism?

When I started out as a rabbi, there were hardly any other female rabbis. It started with some progressive men, who were able to see beyond gender roles and recognize the potential of women. A female rabbi is incredibly important. There are certain issues and concerns that women would rather discuss amongst women and/or with a female rabbi, such as sexual and domestic violence, but



also issues of women's and gender roles in the Bible, and female interpretations of scriptures.

The few female rabbis there have been in the past – their history and achievements – have often remained relatively invisible. We have to document their stories. For instance, I'm currently working on developing a theater piece on Rabbi Regina Jonas. She was born in 1902 in Berlin, Germany. In 1935 she became the first Jewish woman to be ordained as a rabbi. She wrote extensively on women within Judaism. During World War II, she was deported to the Theresienstadt concentration camp. She worked there tirelessly for two years – including giving lectures on different topics – until she was deported to Auschwitz in mid October 1944, where she was murdered two months later. She was 42 years old. A handwritten list of 24 of her lectures entitled "Lectures of the One and Only Woman Rabbi, Regina Jonas," still exists and can still be found in the archives of Theresienstadt in Germany.

In Israel, the overall majority of Jewish people belong to the orthodox movements, with only a small minority belonging to progressive movements. While some women might serve in less conservative congregations, those women will not be included in the rabbinic system that Israel has. The rabbinic system has jurisdiction over many aspects of the life of Jews in Israel. Its jurisdiction includes personal status issues, such as Jewish marriages and Jewish divorce, as well as Jewish burials. The rabbinic courts have exclusive jurisdiction over the marriage and divorce of Jews, and they have parallel competence with district courts in matters of personal status, alimony, child support, custody, and inheritance. The lack of access for women to perform their rabbinic functions on those levels is a major problem, since women's rights, perspectives and needs are not always fully considered by those courts.

Another issue I see as a major problem for women in Israel is the militarization of the society. Women are confronted with (sexual) abuse in the military and are often treated badly in the army. Also, women are confronted with domestic violence at the hands of male partners who are also suffering in the system of militarization and who are incapable of dealing with the traumatic experiences it has brought and still brings them. Men are taught that a way of dealing with challenges and problems is through the use of violence and domination.

In the United States, one major issue I'm dealing with is domestic violence as well. There are not yet enough concentrated efforts from synagogues to address this, such



Muslim Jewish Interfaith Peacewalk in Philadelphia 2003

as the access of women to hotlines and the training of clergy to recognize and constructively deal with signals of domestic violence.

Another issue I see in the US is the growth of the orthodox movements – ironically as a result of an increase in the number of women who have been ordained as rabbis. When more women started to question traditional modalities, those modalities responded by retreating into more conservative modes – out of fear for the leadership of women.

What strategies would you suggest for the empowerment of women within Judaism and do you also see a specific role for men in that regard?

As a female rabbi, I have always used two different strategies for addressing women in Judaism. First of all, I got invited by women's groups within the congregation to address the audience from the pulpit. I shared my knowledge and experiences in public, and my position could serve as a kind of role model for other women. Secondly, I think it's important to create separate spaces for women, in which they can discuss and explore specific issues that which women might feel hesitant discussing in public, such as *bat mitzvahs*, menstruation, women characters in the Bible, and male and female interpretations of the scriptures.

In my experience, men have sometimes supported such spaces for women, and sometimes they haven't. However, I would like to note that for true empowerment, women do not have to wait for men to give them permission. In every social-change process, the less entitled group does not need to wait for permission from the entitled group. I



would encourage all women to claim their rightful space. Create a positive atmosphere and space for women, and strategize together as to in which areas and how one could move forward.

You are strongly committed to nonviolence. Could you please elaborate on how you see pacifism within Judaism?

The vast majority of teachers within our tradition have not been kind to warriors. There are so many hundreds of examples of the Jewish preference for “the book over the sword”, that one can easily argue that pacifism is a majority concept, not a minority one, in the Jewish religion. The few sentences about self-defense in our tradition can hardly compare to the overwhelming preference that “Individuals and entire peoples must order their lives according to what is taught: A human being should concern herself more that she not injure others than that she not be injured.* For when a human tries to KEEP WATCH/shomer that his or her fist not injure others, by that very act she enthrones in the world, the God of truth and righteousness and adds power to the realm of justice. (*Tosafot of B. Kama 23b)

As for those who justify defensive violence on the basis of the Maccabean struggle in 165 BCE that resulted in taking back the Temple in Jerusalem, I believe that then too – just as it is now – militarism was a fatal mistake and did not bring lasting or temporary peace. Roger Kamenitz once commented: “If one is compassionate, then one has a compassionate Torah. If one is angry, one’s Torah is also angry. All the more so if one believes that violence can ever be redemptive.”

Pacifism is a highly rational system of belief with a long historical track record, whose achievements can be measured. My faith is also rooted in the belief that, in the long run, constructive nonviolence is the better road to peace and security than use of arms or violence. While I embrace the “right” to self-defense, it is embraced without resorting to intentionally causing physical, emotional, or structural harm.

I realize there is much more to say on the subject of non-violence. Here is what Rebbe Nachman of Bratislav had to say on the topic: “Many stupid beliefs people once held, such as idol worship that demanded child sacrifice, etc., thank God, have disappeared. But, as of yet, the foolish belief in the pursuit of war... has not disappeared. What great thinkers they must be! What ingenuity they must possess to invent amazing weapons that kill thousands of people at once! Is

there any greater stupidity than this? To murder so many people for nothing?”

And here is what Mariane Pearl, wife of murdered journalist Daniel Pearl, says: “They want to destroy hope, therefore I shall preserve it by any possible means. They want to kill trust. Thus I will reach out to others: Africans, Asians, Arabs, Americans and Jews alike. They want to imprison people in labels and stereotypes. I will strive to maintain a dialogue, always focusing on the individuals rather than the symbol. They want to kill joy in me, thus I will laugh again. They want to paralyze me, therefore I will take action. They want to silence me – therefore I will speak out. ”

Do you have any recommendations in terms of moving the empowerment of women within Judaism forward?

I am strongly committed to cultivating an intergenerational, multicultural and interfaith global community of peace, justice, loving kindness, and solidarity. To achieve this, we need to use a solidarity approach and to reach out, in particular to less entitled groups. You need to go to places where the people you want to work with are. Be intentional and sincere in your approach towards them and get truly involved in what they are doing. If you invite them to your own meetings, make sure that you invite a substantial number of people and set the conditions for the group to feel comfortable enough to share their experiences and needs.

In my experience, training trainers is a very valuable thing to do. I particularly believe it’s important to train and empower young women, to help them feel confident as agents of change. A large part of the work is gaining confidence in one’s own creativity and strength.

Another important aspect is making an analysis of the support one needs in order to make changes and analyzing who might be supportive towards this cause. For instance, in my case, I have gained tremendous support from the elders. I call this “the open-door policy”: analyzing whose door is open for you and working with that.

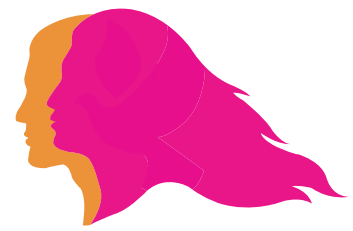
I believe that women who are deeply rooted within their own communities have the best sense of what needs to be done, and they are the agents of change. Therefore, I would like to suggest to people who are in solidarity with women: “Ask them what support they need and want.” An important aspect of the support women often need is protection of violence, for instance through healthcare communities. But again – ask the women what they need!

*
???



Tackling Gender and Sexual Discrimination in Buddhism

By *Ouyporn Khuankaew*



Patriarchy, the context of society since Buddha's time, continues to influence and shape contemporary Buddhism even today; it is the fundamentalism within Buddhism. Buddha's original teachings from over 2,500 years ago did not discriminate against women. However, because his teachings were originally passed down orally and only through male teachers after his death and because they were only first recorded 400 years later, Buddhism as we know it today has been filtered, formed, and designed through patriarchy. We can see this in the belief system about women and men and in some of the religious texts and ceremonies, as well as in the hierarchical and patriarchal structure of the Buddhist institutions in all three major schools of Buddhism.

Some of the ways in which patriarchal views and actions are manifest within Buddhism are the following:

- The misinterpretation that is taught by some influential temples, monks, and scholars that being born a woman is a result of previous bad karma and is a misfortune because women will experience many difficulties in life.
- The teaching that the male body is sacred, higher and more important/superior than the female body. Thus, only male monks can teach and lead Buddhism. In many Buddhist countries, women are not allowed to take full ordination (as a female monk); the reason given by the Buddhist institution is that there is no lineage for female ordination in that country or in that school of Buddhism. Male monks and laymen are also served/seated first in temples and ceremonies.
- The fact that in Thailand and a few other Theravada Buddhist countries, women are not allowed to sit beside or touch monks, being told that they are temptations that could prevent the monks' enlightenment. Women are also not allowed to enter certain sacred sites.

- The idea that women who are abused by their husbands or partners are experiencing the results of a previous life's karma. Thus, they cannot do anything about it except acquire more merit in this lifetime.

None of these actions or teachings can be found in the Tripitika, the Buddhist bible.

The fundamentalist view and practice of male supremacy and heteronormativity⁶ also influence some Buddhist monks and nuns with regard to people who do not conform to gender and sexual norms. In Thailand, for example, some monks and nuns teach that homosexuals and transgendered people are – like women – paying for their previous life's karma because they committed inappropriate sexually behavior. Buddha's original teachings do not see gender or sexual orientation as an issue.⁷

Our response

The International Women's Partnership for Peace and Justice (IWP), a spiritual-based feminist organization working to support grassroots activism in South and Southeast Asia, responds to these issues by working among Buddhists to deconstruct patriarchy and teach women and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people what the Buddha really taught about them.

⁶ The view that the only normal relationship is one between a man and a woman and that other forms of gender and sexual orientation or desires are not right.

⁷ Enlightenment is about transforming the mind, thus the physical male and female forms are not taken into account. As well, one of the basic rules of the monastic life is celibacy; thus, sexuality is out of the question for those who take that path. On the other hand, Buddha's teachings do not see sexual relationships for laypeople – regardless of sexual orientation – in a negative sense. What the Buddha emphasizes is that the attachment to sexual pleasure – as with any other worldly desires, such as wealth or fame – can be a challenge to achieving enlightenment.





Asian women in a Buddhist peace building training of IWP

We run workshops with Buddhist monks, nuns and lay-people, including grassroots women's-rights and LGBT activists, on feminism and the main Buddhist teachings, using those to analyze structural violence – particularly on issues of gender, violence against women (VAW) and LGBT issues – and to create ways to take action.⁸ We use feminist analysis to help bring back the true meaning of the Buddha's teachings and make it relevant to the lived experiences of women. At the same time, we use the Buddha's teaching of mindfulness and compassion to move our feminist intellectual analysis to the "heart" level, to understand gender oppression and violence against women. We incorporate the terms and language of Buddhism when talking about the concepts of activism or feminism. For example, the feminist analysis of structural oppression is collective karma. When we work for social change, it is about practicing wisdom and compassion, which is a core teaching by the Buddha.

We bring back the Buddha's teachings of the Four Noble Truths, which are the core teachings of Buddhism. Largely no longer taught by most monks, they are extremely helpful for understanding gender oppression and other social issues. In naming the first noble truth, that life consists of suffering, we ask participants to identify all forms of gender oppression or violence against women. Then we talk about the second noble truth, the root causes of the violence, which women identify as patriarchy and mis-interpretations of Buddhism. We ask the participants to visualize the third truth, which is the picture and vision

of an enlightened society, one that no longer has gender oppression. This challenges the teaching by most monks that enlightenment is something beyond this life and confined to just the individual experience. Finally, the fourth truth, the Eightfold Noble Path, is about using wisdom and compassion to form concrete ways of working towards the vision of an enlightened, gender-equal society.

IWP debunks the traditional interpretation of karma as being just a personal issue as patriarchal and incorrect, which in turn leads to wrong thinking and action. We share the original teaching of the Buddha that karma means action and that there are two kinds of karma, individual karma and collective/structural karma. While having an abusive husband is an individual karma, believing that it is because of your previous life's karma or because you are not a good wife – a patriarchal teaching – is collective karma. We share with the women that only the Buddha knows people's previous lives and that rather than dwelling on the past, he emphasizes the present life where one can create change and influence future karma.

IWP also uses the Buddha's core teachings to help women reconcile with the conflict and the trauma they experience from gender oppression. We share the new interpretation of the teaching on the Four Abiding Abodes to be the guidelines for a healthy and harmonious relationship. This principle talks about the practice of loving kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity, which means there is no control, no possession and no ownership between couples. We challenge the women to use this teaching to reflect if their partners practice this teaching with them.

Some results

These workshops result in the awakening of the participants to the difference between patriarchal teachings and Buddha's original teachings, as well as in the resolution of personal issues. Most women said it was the first time they had learned about the Four Noble Truths, the core teaching of Buddhism. One woman from Sri Lanka, like others, said that after attending our six-week engaged Buddhism course, she regained her faith in Buddhism. Most women said they go to the temple and hear the chanting but never knew the real meaning of the Buddha's teachings; others were not interested in Buddhism because they did not feel comfortable with the way monks and temples treat women. A gay man said after the course that he no longer

⁸ IWP also produces publications and films that talk about gender oppression and violence against women (VAW).



felt guilty about not going through ordination.⁹ Women who experienced gender-based violence realized that their male partners are also victims of a patriarchal culture and thus need education and support in order to change. While most of these results are at the personal level, the participants are also expected to link Buddhist philosophy and the practice of active nonviolence and peacebuilding, as well as gender and sexual justice, into their community work and activism.

Through our experience, we conclude that feminism and Buddhism work to help transform each other; their integration is the core foundation in our peace activism.

» **Ouyporn Khuankaew** is the Co-Founder and Director of the International Women's Partnership for Peace and Justice (IWP).
Email: ouyporn@womenforpeaceandjustice.org

This article was previously published in *Arrows for Change*, Vol. 14 Bumper Issue Nos. 1 & 2 2008 and is republished here with permission of the author. Arrows for Change is a bulletin of the Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women, an NGO based out of Malaysia. For more information, please visit: www.arrow.org.my/.

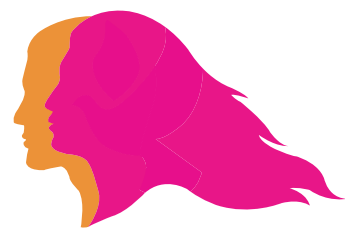


⁹ In the Thai Buddhist tradition, ordination is seen as a way for boys and men to express gratitude to their parents since the merit gained from the act accrues to the parents as well.

Hindu Fundamentalisms in India

Examining the Impact and the Responses by the Women's Movements

By Chayanika Shah



India is supposedly a secular democracy, with a constitution that grants legal equality to women. Over the years, however, India has witnessed the steady growth of Hindu fundamentalist groups and parties, and of their influence and aggression. The last two decades have seen them come to power in many states and also for a term at the Centre. Under the patronage of political parties like the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Shiv Sena, organizations like the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), Bajrang Dal and their various offshoots (referred to as the Sangh Parivar or Family, indicating their close links and connections) have been steadily gaining ground.

These parties and organizations have worked for many decades to create a myth of a hurt Hindu pride through a misinformed rewriting of history, not only in their literature but also in school textbooks in states where they are in power. They have misrepresented facts by posing the Muslims as the outsiders who are responsible for most communal violence (making use of historical tensions between the two communities and the present global Islamophobia). Through informal militarized training and by setting up military schools in their regimes of power, there has been a growing militia that is ready to rise up for the "Hindu cause." Their attacks on the Muslim communities have been innumerable in the last two or three decades, having starting in the late 1980s and culminating in the systematic violence in Mumbai in 1992–93 and in Gujarat in 2002. Due to rising concerns around forced conversions of Hindus to Christianity, of late there have also been attacks on Christian institutions and individuals, which culminated in 2008 in large scale violence in Orissa and Karnataka (both states are ruled by the right-wing Hindu parties).

The presence of a vocal and violent majority fundamentalist ideology has likewise meant a simultaneous escalation of fundamentalisms among minority groups. Further, the fascist ideology and actions of the Hindu right have led to a corrosion of democracy and its mechanisms. This, in

turn, has paved the way for a more militarized and policed state. The worst outcome of the rising influence of such fundamentalism are a growing conservatism in society per se and the general erosion of the democratic and secular mindset, some examples of which I give below.

Most conservatism is seen through direct and indirect controls around gender and sexuality, and this has been a cause of great concern, especially for the women's movements. All women are victims of this increasing control, but the brunt of it is faced particularly by women from marginalized communities, as well as by those who are marginalized due to their genders and sexualities. Recent examples of this control include the carnage in March 2002 against the Muslim community of Gujarat. Led by Hindu fundamentalist organizations with the connivance of the BJP-ruled state government, sexual violence was used as a cruel and brutal tool on many Muslim women. Apart from the torture and fear that all women live with after witnessing such a large scale attack on some, these attacks were also aimed at teaching the Muslim community a lesson: women were seen as symbols, and as the property of Muslim men, and hence violated. Similarly, seeing Hindu women as belonging to the men in Hindu communities, the state, even prior to the violence, had set up cells apparently meant to monitor interreligious marriages (i.e. to prevent Muslim boys from marrying Hindu girls).

Events such as these take all the ongoing struggles of women to assert their right to have control over their own bodies and lives many steps backward. In the climate of such violence, many girls – in Gujarat and elsewhere – are being married off at younger ages, thus stunting their ability to make decisions or choices about their own lives. Violence against intercaste and interreligious heterosexual couples wanting to live with each other or marry each other makes national headlines every few days, from different parts of the country. A recent incident that gathered a lot of public opinion and mobilization was of a Muslim man married to a Hindu woman in Kolkata, where the



woman's family is alleged to have killed her husband and posed it as a suicide with support from the local police. This case is being followed up and is under scrutiny, but for every such high-profile case there are many others that do not even make news.

The increased overall conservatism in society is also seen in the way the powers that be are trying to gain control over the youth. Many states¹⁰ in the last few years have decided to ban sex education in schools. In that respect, even states ruled by the left parties like Kerala have taken the same steps as those ruled by centrist parties, as in Maharashtra, or right-wing-ruled states like Madhya Pradesh. The reason being cited by all of them is that talking about sex will corrupt young, innocent minds and lead to an erosion of the so-called "Indian culture and traditions".

Indian culture and tradition are routinely evoked in the service of an ever-increasing moral policing and a constant reconstructing and reinforcing of the "norm". The rewards for falling in line and living a monogamous, married life with a person from the same caste and community are foregrounded through popular representations in films and other popular culture. At the same time, the price to be paid for transgressing the norm keeps becom-

ing dearer. The moral police swoop down on anything that they find violative of Indian culture and tradition. It could be a film depicting a lesbian relationship, a legal case being filed against the anti-sodomy law of the country, or the expression of a few people wanting to lead their lives according to their chosen genders and sexualities. Each of these examples have faced retaliation from the Hindu right, who claim to have sole power to decide what is "Indian," what is "culture" and what is "tradition"; in their understanding of these things, there is no space for the democratic processes of dialogue, debate and difference. The tragedy is that as the Hindu fundamentalists usurp more and more public space, they are altering the space itself.

As mentioned in the beginning, in all these attacks by the moralists, the price is paid mainly by the marginalized and especially the women. Gaining control over women's sexuality has been one of the multiple ways in which patriarchies have worked in all societies. Women face active sexual violence from the more powerful communities (the Hindu majority in the case of religious conflict, and upper-caste Hindus in instances of caste conflict). Moreover, such an openly aggressive display of control by the more numerous or powerful elicits an equally violent response from within the beleaguered community, further restrict-




"No more Gujarat," women's groups demand at an action initiated by the Forum Against Oppression of Women in Mumbai in 2007 to mark five years since the Gujarat carnage. Photo by Mana Gopal

¹⁰ Most, but not all, ruled by the right-wing parties.

ing the nascent space claimed by women for a growing assertion of their rights, choices and freedoms.

The Indian women's movements have always acknowledged this control while addressing issues of sexual and domestic violence. But in cases of communal violence, while providing immediate relief to victims, striving for justice through legal mechanisms and bringing the issue to international attention have been some of the strategies used by at least some women's groups in the country, highlighting the internal and external politics of communities being played out over women's bodies and acknowledging women's participation in the violence have proved more difficult. Similarly, while there has been some consensus on the necessity for sexuality education, there are a lot of different views about exactly what it should contain.



In a country as diverse and large as India, we cannot speak of the women's movements¹¹ in any other way than in the plural. Strategies of how to deal with issues of community have always varied. But now, in the face of this moralist onslaught, the divisions between women's groups are also growing more visible and irreconcilable on some fronts. The tension has been heightened because the last few years have also seen new organizations of women becoming more active – radical Muslim women's groups fighting fundamentalism in their own communities along with majority fundamentalism; Dalit and other lower-caste women fighting not just against the dominant caste structure but also against the patriarchy within; single women asserting their rights over their own lives and sexuality; lesbian, bisexual and transgender women challenging patriarchy and compulsory heterosexuality; and sex workers' organizations asserting their member's rights as workers.

Each of these movements has challenged multiple fundamentalisms – religious, community, patriarchal, that of binary genders – and sometimes even the tacit moralist stances of the women's movements themselves. For each of these, besides the struggle against heteronormative

patriarchies,¹² one of the major battles is against religious fundamentalisms. The challenge for the more “mainstream” women's movements is of building alliances with these newer women's movements, because within such alliances lies the possibility of posing a real challenge to religious fundamentalism.

» Chayanika Shah is a member of two feminist collectives based in Mumbai: *India – Forum Against Oppression of Women and Lesbians and Bisexuals in Action*. You can contact her via email: chayanikashah@gmail.com.

This article was previously published in *Arrows for Change*, Vol. 14, Issue Nos. 1 & 2 2008 and has been republished with permission of the author. *Arrows for Change* is a bulletin of the Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women, an NGO based out of Malaysia

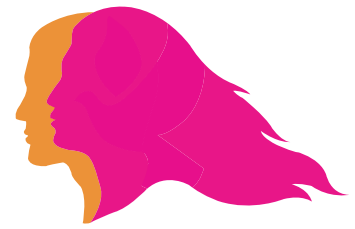
¹¹ In my description, “women's movements” includes only those organisations that recognise and critique the structural nature of patriarchy. Hence I do not include the outright, right-wing women's organisations.

¹² The system maintained by patriarchy that there are only two, complementary genders (male and female), and that heterosexuality is natural and inevitable, while other sexual expressions and orientations are unnatural.

Faith-based Peacebuilding in Nigeria

An Interview with Woman Activist Bridget Usifo Osakwe

By IFOR Women Peacemakers Program



In September 2010, 35 women activists from 21 different countries, representing various different religions and faiths, met during a three-day consultation organized by IFOR/WPP to investigate the triangle of religion, peacebuilding and gender, to analyze where those three things intersect, and to discuss the integration of a gender perspective within current interfaith and faith-based peace initiatives. One of the remarkable women who took part there was Bridget Usifo Osakwe, Program Manager at the Women in Peacebuilding Network (WIPNET) Nigeria. WIPNET Nigeria works on enhancing the role of women in peacebuilding and is part of the regional WIPNET initiative, which was started in 2001 by the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) according to their motto: “Building women, building peace”. The WPP spoke with her about religion, peacebuilding and gender.

You are a Christian. To what extent do you see your faith influencing your work for peace and gender justice? If possible, please give positive examples as well as critical one.

Over the centuries, traditional religious structures have been supported by societal customs and traditions that have fostered the continuous oppression of women in society. In spite of some advances for women over the past years, including the creation of various UN resolutions focusing on the importance of the participation of women in peacebuilding, as well as intense lobbying and advocacy for women’s spaces, women are still excluded from or do not fully participate in peacebuilding and development at the decision-making levels. Overall, women are regarded as subordinate to men, and that idea is justified through religious teachings, for example by stating that women, having been created out of a man’s rib, are “weaker vessels” than men.

This has resulted in men dominating positions of power, while women are denied access to those – both in churches and in societies at large – even though that access is so crucial, since it provides opportunities for women to engage constructively and equally in the issues

affecting them, such as community peace and stability. The few women who have advanced into those arenas are regarded as being privileged rather than as simply enjoying the right that they should have.

According to an assessment that WANEP-Nigeria conducted in 2005, women were recognized as peace-generating factors in every society. This implies that if a gender lens were applied to peacebuilding, more would be accomplished. However, that is not happening... Instead, women are still often misrepresented or absent in peace- and development-related interventions and decision-making processes, and that reinforces persisting conflict issues and developmental gaps.

When implementing projects, women peacebuilders face a lot of challenges as they are expected to act according to the traditions laid-down by the community, which are fuelled by religion. This can even concern matters such as what the women wear. –In Nigeria, for instance, women peacebuilders are expected not to wear trousers – which facilitate free movement – and are expected to wear headgear, even when occasion does not call for that.

Religious groups have been very active in peacebuilding in recent years in Nigeria. In terms of the Christian faith, groups are organized at national, state and local levels, such as the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN), the Justice Development and Peace Commission (JDPC) of the Catholics, and the Women’s wing of the Christian Association of Nigeria (WOWICAN), etc. These Christian groups provide conciliatory and mediatory roles in communal and religious conflicts, offering ethical visions that can motivate believers into taking peaceful actions. In cases where the government is in disarray, religious organizations such as these may be the only institutions with some degree of popular credibility, trust and moral authority. However, in Nigeria, many religious actors have no formal training in conflict resolution.



Peacebuilding in Nigeria requires empowering the weaker and disadvantaged party, addressing the structural sources of inequality, and restructuring and rebuilding relationships.¹³ There is a need to transform violent, destructive conflicts into constructive, peaceful relationships. In facilitating such transformations, religious actors can play an important role – both as mediators and as advocates of peace.

How do you deal with some of the aspects of Christianity that are discriminatory towards women?

As it is now, men and women's roles in Christianity are different – and indeed discriminatory to women. Both sexes should be afforded equal opportunities: women should be free to aspire to be pastors, elders, and overseers and be able to hold any position. It is important to realize that gender roles are assigned and learned – and thus can be re-assigned and re-learned accordingly!

Tradition has been difficult to break through, but ably armed with conflict resolution skills, I have been able to work closely with male leaders within the church and have made them understand that women were created as partners to men. I have made them understand that women should be given equal opportunities so they can deal with issues constructively.

Knowledge of the scriptures is very important when dealing with these issues. For instance, men usually use the biblical story of Adam and Eve as an argument to illustrate how the woman led the man to sin, which eventually resulted in the long suffering for us all. I often use the same story in my peace work, however. But I make women and men realize that while Eve might have brought the apple to Adam, it was Adam – as the direct receiver of God's instructions – who carried the responsibility of refusing the apple.

Or another example, involving the phrase “woman submit”: the scripture says: “Man love your wife as Christ loves the Church and gave His life for it”; my argument is then: Which woman would not “submit” to her husband if he loved her so much as to be ready to give his life for her? It is important to understand that marriage is not a means to an end. Therefore women who feel insecure in a marriage should be free to leave or – if one doesn't want to marry in the first place – to choose not to get married. I myself have broken the barriers: both as a feminist in

a society that perceives feminism as rebellious and by engaging in peace work, which is seen as being something for men. And breaking barriers is something that is frowned at by Christianity in most cases.

Patriarchy is an obstacle for women in developing their potential as peace and community builders. Do you have any suggestions for strategies to challenge this?

The sociocultural milieu in Nigeria reinforces the patriarchal system. It fosters gender insensitivity and the exclusion of women from all formal decision-making processes. For example, the majority of the traditional decision-making systems in all six of the geo-political structures in Nigeria are male-dominated. This leaves very little or no space for the involvement of women. A real challenge lies in redressing this, so as to provide an opportunity for the representation of women in these councils, which would provide a more balanced gender perspective to peace and human-security issues within Nigerian communities. WIPNET's strategy is to first engage these traditional institutions in a series of sensitization and advocacy programs, so as to deepen their understanding and generate interest on the necessity of the inclusion of women within these institutions.

Religion¹⁴ as a factor has enshrined patriarchy in the social system with the bible describing the man as the head and he who has the total authority on the woman. The woman has been admonished in the christian faith to always submit to the husband and to be silent in the church. This has translated to the overall lifestyle that men are seen as the decision makers and women are excluded from decision making on peace issues or community building. To correct this in Nigeria, these are the following suggestions for strategies to effect change.

To address this situation in Nigeria, I have a number of suggestions for strategies for use on various different levels:

- Women should serve as peace educators, starting right at the family level.
- Women should claim their role as mediators and bridge the divides created by conflict, as in the case of Sudan, where the Sudanese Women's Voice for Peace met with military leaders of various rebel groups and secured

¹³ Source: <http://ebooks.iaccp.org/>

¹⁴ Source: www.gppac.net



- access to areas where men were not permitted to venture to deliver humanitarian aid (Hunt & Posa 2005).
- Women must make a determined decision to overcome the many social, religious and political obstacles that hinder their public activities.
 - Cultural boundaries should not function as an excuse to exclude women from peacebuilding processes, particularly given the fact that women are often victims of war themselves.
 - Women who witness atrocities should start documenting incidents of human-rights violations.
 - Women should develop strong networks so as to facilitate relationship-building and information-sharing between the levels of village, city, and national capital. Those networks could contribute to establishing mutual support systems and advocacy strategies, connecting the local, national, and international levels.
 - Since deeply felt bitterness and anger have divided the Muslim and Christian communities in Nigeria, women should set up initiatives and organizations composed of members from both communities so as to meet the practical needs that both have in common. In their efforts to end the ongoing violence and to demand accountability of its perpetrators, the women should build alliances and strategize together for action. They should form a solidarity movement and bring their experiences of building peace in their divided communities to the attention of high-level officials at the central-government level.
 - Embassies and diplomats in conflict zones should ensure that women are included in any peace-negotiation process.
 - The government should guarantee an increase in the representation of women in all spheres of peacebuilding, including the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts.
 - The government should express the will of the United Nations Security Council by incorporating a gender perspective into its peacekeeping operations and should call on all actors involved in peace negotiations to include a gender perspective in that process.
 - The federal government of Nigeria should see to it that states are provided with training materials so as to enable better protection of women and that there be an increase in the provision of resources for such trainings.
- How can Christianity play a positive role in empowering women to become active as peacebuilders in their community? Do you have any examples?*
- The Christian faith supports personal, communal and relational transformation. It allows one to recognize the pains that others go through in society – as men and as women. And in the aftermath of conflict, it can give room for the support of victims through counseling and rehabilitation. Christianity should therefore empower women to play those roles. Hence it is important to create innovative spaces so as to address the distorted image of women within the Christian faith. This would be empowering for women and afford them more responsibility in peacebuilding. Women can be empowered to become active peacebuilders in their communities in the following ways:
- By training civil society organizations in gender awareness – including how men and women experience conflict and violence and how they can work for peace in their communities. These trainings can foster an understanding of the connections between domestic, public and structural violence.
 - By continuing and expanding training programs – specifically for women – so as to increase their knowledge and sense of empowerment in terms of participating in peacebuilding processes. Women-only trainings are important, yet those should be combined with mixed-gender trainings so as to link men and women who are working for peace.
 - By increasing funding for projects that support gender equality and promote a gender analysis of violence and conflict. Women's groups too often lack the necessary financial means to engage meaningfully in peacebuilding processes.
 - By investing in mainstreaming knowledge and awareness of women's roles in peacebuilding rather than focusing solely on separate programs for women.
 - By supporting research on situations where women have used unique methodologies, approaches or thinking to contribute to peacebuilding. Much of the current



knowledge on the contributions by women is anecdotal and lacks the conceptual clarity to inform track-one negotiations and policy formulation. The challenge lies in framing “success stories” at the grassroots and middle levels in ways that will impact policy analysis and reform.

- Build a strong partnership among women working in training, research and peacebuilding practice in a diverse range of areas such as multi-track diplomacy, peace education, mediation, transformative development, coexistence and peace advocacy. This will facilitate a cross-fertilization of ideas, best practices and lessons learned from different regions of conflict. It will also enhance psychosocial support networks, increase knowledge about different approaches to conflict resolution, and most significantly, such a network could provide a context for the generation of financial and human resources that women’s groups need to prevent and transform violent conflict.¹⁵



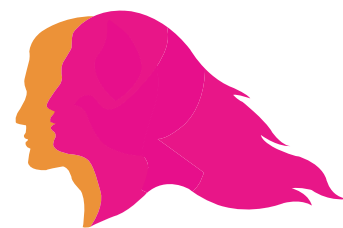
» **Bridget Usifo Osakwe** is the Program Manager of the Women in Peacebuilding – West Africa Network for Peacebuilding in Nigeria.

¹⁵ Source: www.1325mujerestejiendolapaz.org

Ecumenical Women's Initiative

Women's Pathways to Peace

By Carolyn Boyd Tomasovic



Women peace activists are often portrayed as being unpatriotic and given limited public space and recognition. Faith-based women peace activists find themselves further marginalized within the patriarchal structure of the religious communities, where the space to be proactive is even more limited. Also within religious institutions such as theological faculties, where the male leadership fears their “feminization”, opportunities for women are limited.

As a result, women of faith are looking beyond their communities to the civil-society sector, where they are finding alternative spaces in which to act on issues related to peace, religion and justice. Here they are able to take risks, raise issues and offer solutions, that they could not do within their communities. Unfortunately, interaction is limited in a context where religious institutions have considerable mistrust and suspicion towards the NGO sector, and where feminist NGO's are likewise suspicious of women from faith communities who are active in civil society. Not enough bridges exist between faith-based and secular women's groups – a separation that women find to be a significant obstacle in their work.

“Within the Church, everybody is amazed that I'm dealing with the subject of women. They call me a feminist. If I do it on a scientific level, they wonder how I can be a nun and deal with this, but in feminist groups I also face great resistance.” | Sister Rebeka Anic, Franciscan nun and feminist theologian

Our organization works with women believers and women theologians in the fields of peacebuilding and reconciliation, ecumenical and interreligious dialogue and women's rights. Without exception, all the women theologians with whom we have worked have had to form NGOs in order to create alternative spaces in which they are free to address issues that represent the core values of their faith: peace, nonviolence, justice, human rights, and equality. Regarding interreligious peacebuilding, the wall is raised further by the religious communities due to their belief that theirs

alone is the realm of interreligious dialogue and not that of civil society or – even less – that of women.

While this is our reality, it does not mean that interreligious peacebuilding is not taking place. However, beyond the grassroots level, it is quite difficult for women to be heard.

Examples of women's reconciliation efforts

One of our local peace activists, a Muslim woman called Muradija Sehu, saw the need to work on reconciliation within her community in Kosovo. Like most women at the grassroots level, her action was practical and relevant: a Serb woman whose father had been murdered by Kosovo Albanians during the conflict was isolated in a Serb enclave in southern Kosovo where her pain only grew. She felt she had to reclaim her life and decided to walk out of the enclave to the Albanian part of the town below. As she headed towards the town, Muradija joined her. Other Kosovo Albanian women joined as well, forming a ring of protection around her as she walked down the street and into some shops. They talked, they shared, they were seen and a conversation began which tentatively started a process of healing though the establishment of trust and understanding.

Croatian citizens in eastern Croatia fled in 1991 as the Yugoslav army crossed the Danube, which forms the border between Croatia and Serbia. Five years later, following the peaceful reintegration of the area, those who had been expelled found themselves once again living beside their Serb neighbors in divided communities which the state termed “reconciled areas”. A Croatian Catholic peace activist named Dragica Aleksa, who is from the village of Berak, which is located within this “reconciled area”, made contact with a women's group in a Serbian town on the other side of the Danube. At the initiative of the Serb women, they came to Berak and laid a wreath on the site of the civilian massacre perpetrated by Serb paramilitaries. Women from both sides met, and together they confronted the past. There was a mutual acknowledgement





Muradija
with her
Kosovo Serb
neighbour

of loss and a commitment to reconcile relationships and to invest in building a culture of peace and communication in their communities in. At the community level, the event had a profound effect on the local population, while at the council level, the gesture was boycotted by officials. Despite ongoing difficulties and countless obstacles – through one-on-one communication – a pathway has been laid and a dialogue was started. In 2010, women from opposite sides of the border came together again for a two-day peace training workshop supported by IFOR's Women Peacemakers Program in preparation for cross-border peacebuilding activities planned in 2011.

Amra Pandzo, a Muslim woman, was dissatisfied with the way her children were being taught religious education at school in Sarajevo. She felt they were not being taught to discuss their faith and to respect the religious beliefs of others, which merely strengthened the existing sectarianism in the city. As she was interested in the peacebuilding dimensions of Islam that were being taught, she worked together with peace activists and Christian and Muslim theologians to create an alternative teaching manual which promoted interreligious tolerance and addressed the peacebuilding dimensions of Islam. However, without the permission of the Reis-ul-lema (the head of the Islamic community), the manual could not be used in schools. The Reis refused to meet with her. Later she heard that his office staff had looked up her name on the Internet and had concluded that she was a feminist! She called his office and threatened to contact the media. The following day she was invited for a meeting. He was impressed with the manual and unexpectedly gave his permission for it to be used, saying he was amazed to see ordinary believers, particularly women, taking such an interest and being so active in matters of faith. The result was revolutionary and, to date, 91 schools in the city are now using this manual. An interesting postscript was that a year or so later, the Reis contacted Amra out of the blue and invited her

to repeat the project in three other Bosnian cities where he had recommended the project to the Islamic clergy in those cities, requesting their full cooperation.

Bringing together faith-based and secular groups

In the 1990s there were many interreligious roundtables with the male religious leadership of the region. The meetings took place on neutral soil, because none of the participants would compromise to meet in one of the other's countries. Walls were erected before the dialogue even began, and the declarations that were signed never filtered down to the believers at the grassroots level, where the real ecumenical and interreligious struggles were taking place.

EWI supports grassroots initiatives with women believers and nonbelievers and with women theologians whom we consider to have a huge potential to bring about change. We create opportunities to bring together faith-based and secular grassroots women peace activists: women from religious orders, women theologians, and women ex-soldiers. At our regional conference in 2009, we discussed the theological basis and challenges for women's engagement with theologians from the main religions. We then brought in women activists from the field. While the believers found that the theological basis validated their actions, the women with a secular background saw those values as being common to all. The result was electrifying, inspiring, motivating and real.

Such opportunities create precious meeting points for communication that does not build walls but rather open windows. Opportunities that bring together the religious and the secular create the potential for building bridges between faith-based and secular women's peace groups and initiatives – a dynamic and underestimated force for healing and positive change. After one such meeting, a Catholic nun from Croatia commented that she had experienced a turning point when she wrote down her priorities and concerns and beliefs on a piece of paper, and discovered they were exactly the same as what the Muslim woman sitting next to her had written down.

A group of women teachers from a school in Bosnia were frustrated by the increasing religious intolerance among pupils. They work in a school that is part of the "two schools under one roof" system of segregated state schooling, in which Bosnjak (Muslim) and Bosnian Croat (Catholic) pupils are educated separately in different shifts within the same school building – a status quo that is supported by the parents of the two communities. (Some schools even have a red line drawn down the center of



the corridors to keep the two shifts of pupils apart). Being aware that they could not change the system overnight, the women decided to create an interreligious manual for secondary schools that would at least allow the pupils to be better informed about the different religions present in their community. They succeeded and distributed the handbook to all of the pupils during a joint school period. Some of the responses to the book included:

“Following this project, we were all in the same classroom. If somebody had opened the door, he would never have noticed that students of two different religions were sitting together in one classroom.” | Admir Šupić, pupil

“The guide helped us to learn more and we now realize that our religions have more similarities than differences.” | Benjamin Jusufspahić, pupil

“I caught my dad reading it in secret!” | Čizmo Harun, pupil

Following the close of that project, the group has continued to facilitate meeting opportunities. It is their hope that this might be the first step in dismantling segregated schooling. In 2010, we organized a two-day peace training workshop supported by IFOR’s Women’s Peacemakers Program for this group of Bosnjak teachers. Participating with them was a group of Catholic teachers from a nearby town that also has segregated schooling. It was the first time they had ever met.

Increasing Understanding

There are numerous accounts of how women have re-established contact with the “others” as part of peacebuilding processes in which communication is at the core. What they all have in common is a crossing of the barrier between “us and them” created by past conflict and sustained by its legacy of mistrust, fear and prejudice. In this region we frequently hear the term “increasing tolerance”. Goethe said that “tolerance is a temporary attitude which must lead to recognition”. In this spirit we need to increase our understanding of one another’s past, spirituality and religious identity. Communication is at its most potent when we meet with each other, and it is through the creation of meeting points that we confront not only the other but also ourselves.

Azra Ibrahimovic, a Muslim woman theologian from Bosnia with whom the EWI works, commented: *“In the power*

to change myself lies the power to change the world around me. I need to reach deep into my own faith in order to find the right way to be with other people.” Another EWI partner, Julijana Tesija, a Protestant theologian from Croatia, added that she saw: *“personal change as a way to teach myself to recognize change in the other”.*

By having been denied space within formal religious structures, women have had to be creative in forming their own pathways to peace – pathways that often move through the backdoors of institutions that are otherwise closed to women. We come together, listen, and learn, and as we establish our common values, we begin to understand. It takes time to build confidence and raise trust – one action will not accomplish that. A long-term grassroots approach speaks of the local activists’ credibility and commitment, and therefore also of its sustainability – this is where we need to invest our support and solidarity.

“Women peacemakers are not a vision. They are a reality, and being a woman peacemaker is one of my important identities. The lowest levels of society, globally recognized as the ‘grassroots’, are generally made up of women who overcome the difficult consequences of world conflicts to work on reconciliation, truth and justice. I am sorry to say that in our region, the word ‘reconciliation’ is sometimes seen as a bad word, but here women have initiated actions, meetings... They have taken the small pieces of their microcosms that have been ripped apart and they have brought them together once again.” | Amra Pandzo

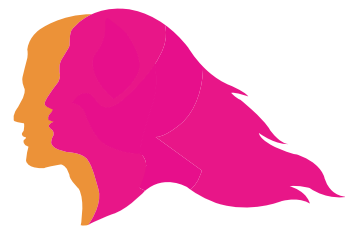


We have seen that when women interreligious peace activists create an environment of understanding and common values at the grassroots, the “bridges” that are built between the fractured communities are less likely to fall. The tools (the learning, the mechanisms, the scriptural base) given to the community to use such a “bridge” will remain. And in this common understanding and these common goals of peace, justice, nonviolence, and equality, the community will gain the courage to cross the “bridge”.

➤ **Carolyn Boyd Tomasovic** is the Managing Director of the Ecumenical Women’s Initiative, a Croatian NGO that supports women’s initiatives that promote peacebuilding and reconciliation and enables women, regardless of their ethnicity, religion or origin, to rebuild their lives and communities and to take a role as active players in their societies.

Gender, Leadership and Power

By Rev. Patricia Sheerattan-Bisnauth



Unequal power relations

There is little doubt that the current ethics of dominance and control, in which today's leaders prosper and find their power, are not only detrimental to the quality of life of women, but also for the majority of men and communities as a whole. Patterns of domination and control can be found in all types of relationships and in all areas of life – whether it is men over women, leaders over followers, large nations over small ones or in different forms of gender, age, race, tribe, caste, or class supremacy. The impact of unequal power relations has resulted in widening inequality in relationships between women and men and between young and middle-aged/older people, and it has been a major force in societal conflict. Even with all the advancements made in the world today, the status of the majority of women is still characterized by economic and political marginalization, poverty, violence and their lack of power to make their own life choices.

Patriarchal power, which sustains sexism, racism, tribalism, caste-ism, xenophobia, homophobia and other related forms of intolerance, continues to persist in pernicious ways. Poverty, HIV and AIDS, gender-based violence and a whole range of societal issues are rooted in or affected by power relations between women and men. It must be noted that while patriarchy manifests itself in the power of men over women, some men have more privileges than others, based on their sociopolitical and economic power, race, ethnicity and geopolitical location. The disparities between rich and poor, North and South, black and white, Christian and Muslim, rural and urban and older and younger generations must be considered in understanding gender and power.

Current leadership models in church and society are limiting and erect barriers to fostering justice and peace, to sharing resources and building just and humane societies. They fail to model patterns of ministry that foster the partnership of women and men and the inclusion of young people. There is a need to seek new models of leadership built on the life and ministry of Jesus Christ and his resis-

tance to the ethics of domination and control. The word “leadership” can be found in Paul's list about the gifts of the church (Romans 12:8), and referring to Moses and Aaron (Numbers 33) and Miriam (Exodus 15:19–21). The biblical understanding of leadership is not individualistic. On the contrary: it is closely related to the gifts of the Spirit for the good of the community.

Models of leadership

It is important for leadership and power to be critically analyzed with gender justice perspectives. Most churches are constrained by current hierarchical structural models that mirror authoritative and political leadership styles. These models usually promote male leadership and exclude women and young people. However, it is important to note that hierarchy is not confined to male-female relations alone. Women can also inhabit and imbibe models of leadership and power in ways that undermine other women. To assume that only men use dominant power is to overlook the consequences of power. Women are also known to exert control, based on their race, ethnicity, or class or based on their husband's position of authority in church or society. Differences in status, education, economic resources and even denominational heritage become steps in the ladder of hierarchy.

Breaking barriers of customs, traditional beliefs and theology, which debilitate and limit participation in leadership, is a challenge for most churches. The “glass ceiling” in churches and also in the ecumenical movement is still very much intact as women are significantly missing from the ordained ministry and in other leadership positions. Women are sometimes dismissed and intimidated in synods, presbyteries and seminaries. For the few women who succeed in reaching positions of power and decision-making, surviving in what is seen as a “man's world” can be extremely stressful and sometimes impossible without a network of support. Women are usually relegated to roles and responsibilities within the private sphere of their home, where their contributions are undervalued and largely unrecognized. Despite the fact that they make sig-



nificant contributions to family, church and society, they are considered to have little value or ability to hold leadership and decision-making positions in the public sphere, including churches.

Power based on patriarchy needs to be reconceived and reconstructed. There is need for analysis that digs into the fundamental bases of power relations that are inherent in leadership. The vision of critical principles of caring, sharing, consensus-building, creativity and partnership are important in unraveling power based on patriarchy and in dismantling its systems and structures. Building partnership of women and men requires an examination of issues of power as they are understood and practiced in the church. Many churches (as well as the ecumenical movement) have failed to address gender, power and leadership in prophetic ways, because this is deemed as “dangerous ground” that can have negative effects on church unity. Yet, avoiding or hesitating to deal with this issue results in the continuous marginalization and dehumanization of women.

Moving forward

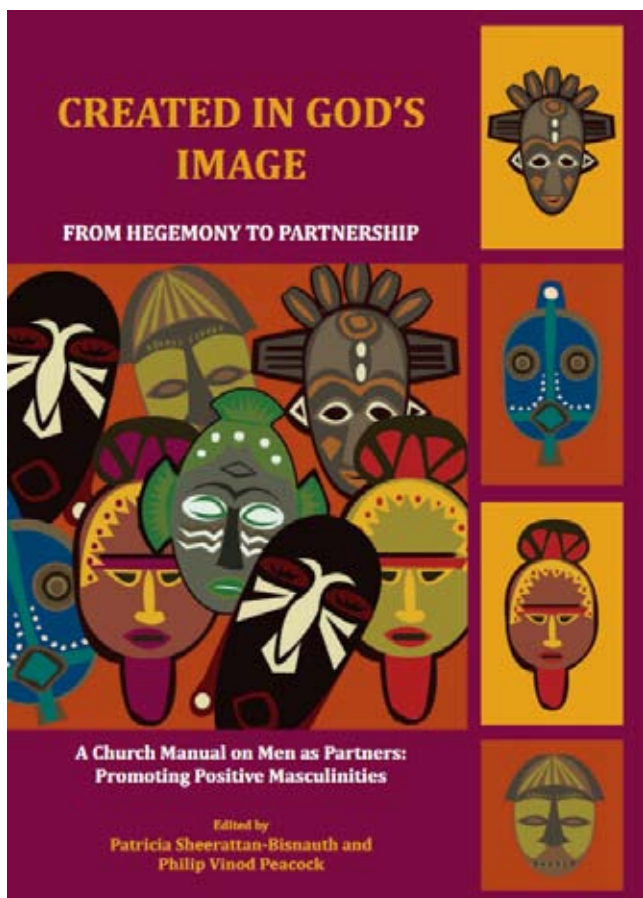
So, how do we move from the current models of human relationships and their accompanying limitations? How can leadership be valued and honored so that it truly serves people?

Building the capacity of leaders to model patterns of ministry that foster partnerships based on principles of justice calls for a fundamental shift in how we view leadership. The church has an important role to play in building the partnership of women and men and in finding ways that further peacebuilding and create a valuable contribution to bring about social justice. The church must begin from the very basis of socializing processes, such as how to respond to boys and girls within its community, the roles it assigns to them and teachings that show examples of both boys and girls as equal and worthy. The messages and practice of the church through ministry must demonstrate the equality and partnership of women and men as a model for society to follow.

➤ **Rev. Patricia Sheerattan-Bisnauth** is the Executive Secretary of the Gender Justice & Partnership Program of the World Communion of Reformed Churches. For more information, please visit: www.wcrc.ch

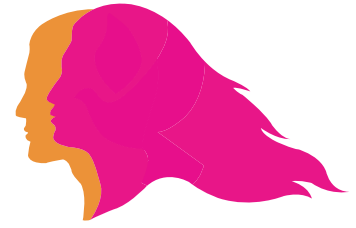
This article was published in the anthology *Created in God's Image: From Hegemony to Partnership: A Church Manual on Men as Partners Promoting Positive Masculinities*. Editors: Patricia Sheerattan-Bisnauth and Philip Vinod-Peacock, published November 2010 (reprinted with permission). This gender-training manual is the product of a collaborative process of the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) since 2007. The modules of this manual examine gender, masculinity, identity and the sense of self, sexuality, gender-based violence, leadership, power and partnership. Discussion of the content can open a space where both men and women may explore their relationships to one another in the face of the social construction of gender roles, values and responsibilities that are imposed by contextual assumptions in church and society. Activities described in the manual are designed in creative ways that invite participants to consciously examine the processes of socialization of men and boys, and how social, cultural, religious, economic and political contexts influence such processes.

The manual is downloadable via: www.wcrc.ch/sites/default/files/PositiveMasculinitiesGenderManual_o.pdf.



We Should Walk the Road Together

By Merle Gosewinkel



In April 2011, the WPP spoke with Mrs. Carolyn Boyd Tomasovic, Managing Director of the Ecumenical Women's Initiative (EWI) on men's role in empowerment processes for women.

Carolyn, thank you for this opportunity to talk with you. You are the Managing Director of the Ecumenical Women's Initiative. Could you please explain what your organization is working on?

The Ecumenical Women's Initiative (EWI) is a Croatian-based regional women's NGO active in Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. We support women as initiators and agents of change in faith communities and in society by supporting and connecting individuals and groups working in the fields of women's rights, peacebuilding and reconciliation, belief-based ecumenical and interreligious dialogue and cooperation.

In September 2010, the WPP brought together 35 women activists from 21 different countries, representing a variety of religious-inspired and secular organizations, to discuss gender, religion and faith-based peacebuilding. One of the recommendations from that Consultation in terms of supporting the involvement of women in faith-based and interfaith peacebuilding included "involving progressive religious male leaders as allies in the work for more gender-sensitive, faith-based peacebuilding, as well as actively co-operating and including progressive men's groups within the different faith traditions". How would you define a "male ally"?

My idea of a male ally in the empowerment of women is somebody who understands the importance of women's work and advocates the meaningful involvement of women in faith-based peacebuilding amongst other men. A male ally can help us in opening doors that are otherwise closed for women. I think such a person needs to have a strong commitment to listening to the voices and perspectives of women.

For me, a true male ally is "an accompanier": *a man who walks side by side with women.* What I find important is that he does that on an equal basis with women. It's important that he doesn't "run off" with the concept of the empowerment of women, without consulting women themselves. Also, it's important that he doesn't encourage the stereotypical images of women and men, in which women are portrayed as "helpless victims" who need to be protected and saved by men. Being a male ally is not an easy role, and therefore he needs to be courageous enough to assume that role fully.

From your work in faith-based peacebuilding, do you have an example of a male ally?

In our work at EWI, we work with men and women from different faiths, and for many projects we contact religious institutions for support or ask them to participate in our work in one way or another. As a women's organization, we often find ourselves confronted with closed doors at very patriarchal institutions to which women have no access.

We have one male member on the board of EWI: Ivo Markovic, a Franciscan monk. He is what I would call a male ally. As a monk of the Roman Catholic Church, he knows the key people within the Catholic institutions and he advocates our work. Indeed, he was one of the founders of EWI three years back. He is quite unique: he has always advocated both the participation of women within ecumenical and interreligious religious peacebuilding and a feminist theology.

For example, a while back we organized a project on interreligious peacebuilding among women in northern Bosnia. The women wanted to include key speakers from the different religious institutions. While the Muslim community we approached welcomed our project and agreed to participate, the Catholic institutions didn't want to. When we contacted them regarding our project, we literally stood in front of closed doors. As a way of dealing with this, Ivo suggested that we contact people at the parish level.



In the Roman Catholic Church, the parish is at the heart of communities, and often they are more open-minded and approachable than the higher decision-making levels within the Church are. He connected us with a few representatives from the parish. They were quite excited about our project and were willing to work with us. It takes courage to do that!

Especially here in Southern Europe, the Roman Catholic church is very patriarchal. We have actually had the experienced several times that the Muslim religious leaders were easier to establish contact with and cooperate with than the Catholic institutions. For our work in the region I therefore find it very important to have male allies who are respected and have contacts within the Catholic Church.

What kind of challenges do you see for women's organizations in working with men?

As an ecumenical women's group, we have always thought that gender issues are key, so we wanted to have a mixed board in terms of gender. When we started up the organization, we were clear that we wanted to work with female theologians, with women's groups, but also with mixed-gender groups. Yet, from the start we also felt it was important that women should be in the leading and decision-making positions within the organization and that men should never outnumber women in the board. That is also the criteria that we have set for the local partners we work with inasmuch as they are mixed-gender groups.

Society as a whole is very patriarchal, which causes great challenges in our work. On the parish level, we hardly face any challenges when cooperating with men. However, I do have to say we carefully select the people we work with. Also, the men at the community levels are closer to the day-to-day reality of women, while men at higher decision-making levels within the Church are relatively far removed from that. It's more difficult to cooperate with them. They are also quite caught up in the political structures within the institutions. For instance, some female theologians we work with informed us about the pressure they experienced when they spoke about women's rights or engaged with those men in feminist theological discussions. Some of them were told they might lose their jobs!

At the community level, men often hold quite a different perspective. For example, in many communities in our region, the schoolchildren are separated by religion. They never even meet. This is part of the big gap between the religious groups. Within our work at EWI, we brought

together leaders from the different faiths in those communities: the Orthodox Church, Islam and the Catholic Church. For many of kids it was the first time they had seen religious leaders sitting together and discussing things. While religious leaders at the higher decision-making levels objected to this project, those at the community levels were open to it. Another example of the challenges caused by patriarchal institutions involves the media, since they often insufficiently present or comment on women's events. It would be very valuable for women's organizations to connect with male allies within the media as well.

We also see that a lot could be improved in the perceptions that government representatives have of women's organizations and their work and value. For instance, when we organize an event or conference, we invite somebody from the municipality to deliver an opening speech. However, they often convey their message in quite a patronizing way: they address the women who are present with a top-down approach, which doesn't convey the message that their work is valued or respected.

Do you think it's important for women's organizations to have male allies?

Yes, I think the concept of a male ally is very important and needed, because we live in a mixed world, with women *and* men. Working with men can provide healthy input for our work, making it more inclusive, also because the beneficiaries of our projects should also be *men as well as women*. As women we want to be in an *equal* partnership with men. To establish that, it's important to get men involved as well. We need to change men, and we need to move wisely in doing so. In my experience, when men are involved in the work, the relationship between women and men changes as well. When they sit together side by side at the table and become equal partners in their work, both sides can only gain from the cooperation.

For instance, at EWI we are happy to have one man as board member. It was a very conscious decision to also include men on the board, and within the organization that idea was never opposed. The responses towards our male board member's participation are still quite mixed, however. Other organizations, especially donors, often ask why a women's organization has a male board member. We find this question interesting, since that was never an issue within the ecumenical network. Considering the existing gender hierarchy and differences on all levels of society, we do understand the critical questions, however.



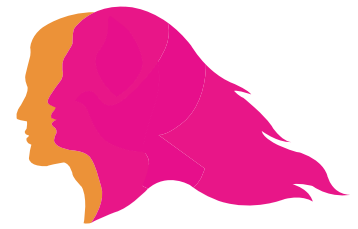
Thus far, we mainly had positive experiences when cooperating with men on a local level. I think working with male allies makes the advocacy much stronger, and it challenges prejudices on both sides. From my personal experience, I can also say that working with male allies really dismantles stereotypes.

» Mrs. Carolyn Boyd Tomasovic is Managing Director of the Ecumenical Women's Initiative (EWI) on men's role in empowerment processes for women.



Protestantism and Feminism in Germany

By Beate Blatz



“I am good. I am whole. I am beautiful.”

This motto, created by one of Germany’s most famous Protestant feminists, Elisabeth Moltmann, inspired the movement of Protestant women in 1981. It was a signal that Protestant women in Germany had finally arrived in the world of feminist thought and self-awareness. It was a long road to that point, and it all began about 100 years ago...

Most Protestant women’s associations have their origins in the last years of the 19th and the first years of the 20th century. Some of those associations or their immediate successor organizations, such as the Evangelische Frauen in Deutschland, are still in existence today.

Besides propagating Christian ethics and supporting Bible study groups, the Protestant women’s associations at the turn of the 19th/20th century had two main aims: they strongly supported adequate education for girls and women, and they were involved in fighting poverty and initiating social projects in times of fast social and economic changes caused by industrialization and rapidly growing cities.

The Protestant women’s movement and the secular women’s movement

An active relationship soon developed between the Protestant women’s movement and the secular women’s movement of that time. Although there was mutual understanding concerning social issues and the “woman question”, the concepts regarding how to tackle pending issues differed. So it is not surprising that there were tensions between the “church” women and the secular women’s movement. One of the critical points was the idea and concept of gender and, as a consequence, the idea about the extent to which women should take an active part in political life. While the more conservative Protestant women strongly rejected the right of women to vote, women’s suffrage was one of the main issues that con-

cerned the secular women’s organizations. In 1918, when a measure to give women the right to vote had passed through parliament, the Protestant women changed their mind and organized preparatory courses about voting for women all over Germany.

Within Protestant churches in Germany – in the German Democratic Republic (GDR – East Germany) as well as in the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG – West Germany) – the fight for equal rights for women manifested itself in the long struggle for the ordination of women. The debate about whether or not to admit women to the study of theology began immediately after the World War II. By the early ’60s, the issue of the right of women to be ordained finally reached the synods of the Protestant churches. It was only in the late ’70s that the last Protestant churches agreed to ordain women.

In the 20th century, the alliances between secular and Protestant women’s movements were rebuilt and fed the feeling of a mutual feminist identity of women during the passionate and occasionally even violent social debates about sexual self-determination and especially about abortion in Germany during the ’70s.

Another gauge for the success of the feminist movement in Protestantism in Germany was the rapid development of feminist theologies during the ’80s. Protestant women, Protestant women’s organizations and Protestant theological faculties strongly supported this new contextual theological approach. Since then, Protestant women have continued their efforts and their fight for equal rights for women, a just society, and the fair distribution of and access to natural, economic and political resources and a sustainable concept of gender. They did this by

- implementing feminist theologies within the universities,
- implementing feminism and feminist theologies within the corporate identity of Protestant women’s organizations and transferring it “down” through Protestant women’s education, and – last but not least



- promoting equal rights and chances for women and men within the Protestant churches in Germany.

Structures maintaining injustice

It would be unrealistic to state that feminism is a dominant movement within the Protestant Church. Women have not gained the paradise of equality, although much has been achieved up to now. However, the worldwide backlash on women's questions has affected the churches as well. In 1989, the Synod of the Protestant Church in Germany launched a new concept, putting into action gender mainstreaming, gender budgeting and gender-related concepts of liturgy, theology and spirituality. Meanwhile, the guidelines of this concept have to be defended. While women's rights are formally accepted, in reality there are still countless structures – within churches as well as within the German society – that ensure injustice between women and men, between indigenous and migrant people, between generations, and between social classes.

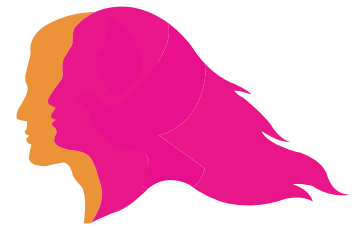
There is still a lot to do.



» Dr. Beate Blatz is the Director of Evangelische Frauen in Deutschland e.V. (Protestant Women in Germany). For more information, please visit:
www.evangelischefrauen-deutschland.de/.

Religion, Absolutism and Impacts on Women, Peace and Conflict

By Cassandra Balchin



AWID's research and resources

What are religious fundamentalisms and how do they affect women in the areas of conflict and peacebuilding? Some answers to these questions are provided by the experiences and analysis of women's-rights activists collected through a four-year strategic action-research initiative, *Resisting and Challenging Religious Fundamentalisms*, launched by the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID, www.awid.org).

This research is based on more than 50 in-depth interviews and 18 case studies from around the world and on additional desk research and consultations, as well as on the responses from over 1,600 women's-rights activists to an online survey. More than one in ten of the survey respondents identified themselves as working on in the areas of militarization, conflict or peacebuilding. The analysis based on this collective experience is available online as well as in hard copy, in some cases in multiple languages. This includes a report on the question of defining religious fundamentalisms;¹⁶ an exposé on the myths about religious fundamentalisms;¹⁷ a report on the growth of religious fundamentalisms and their impact on the human rights of women;¹⁸ a report on the causes of fundamentalisms, their strategies and the feminist strate-

gies of resistance to them;¹⁹ a summary of the research findings;²⁰ and a collection of case studies²¹ and the key lessons from those studies. In 2011, AWID will also be producing a series of information sheets that will be formed into a toolkit that rights activists can use to talk about religious fundamentalisms with their own constituencies and audiences. These materials share numerous examples of violations of human rights and violence justified in the name of all the world's major and minor religions.

Conflict has many causes and diverse solutions, but at all levels of conflict – whether within the family or within or between communities and nations – religion can be used to justify violence and mobilize antagonists. Alternatively, by promoting rights-based interpretations, religion can also be one of the frameworks for supporting human rights and peace. Thus for most of the activists AWID has engaged with, the issue is not religion itself but the rights-violating agendas it is sometimes used to support.

Identifying fundamentalisms

What then does a religious fundamentalist agenda look like? It seems counterproductive to try to develop one definition of religious fundamentalisms that would apply to all the complex and diverse local manifestations of this phenomenon. Instead, we noticed that despite these local diversities, there are certain characteristics that women's-rights activists associate with fundamentalisms: across

16 *Shared Insights: Women's Rights Activists Define Religious Fundamentalisms*, www.awid.org/eng/About-AWID/AWID-News/Shared-Insights-Women-s-rights-activists-define-religious-fundamentalisms
17 *Exposed: Ten Myths about Religious Fundamentalisms*, www.awid.org/About-AWID/AWID-News/Ten-myths-about-religious-fundamentalisms
18 *Religious Fundamentalisms on the Rise: A Case for Action*, www.awid.org/eng/About-AWID/AWID-Initiatives/Resisting-and-Challenging-Religious-Fundamentalisms/What-s-new-from-this-initiative/Religious-Fundamentalisms-on-the-Rise-A-case-for-action

19 *Towards a Future without Fundamentalisms: Analysing Religious Fundamentalist Strategies and Feminist Responses*, awid.org/eng/About-AWID/AWID-News/Towards-a-Future-without-Fundamentalisms-New-Report-Analyzes-Religious-Fundamentalist-Strategies-and-Feminist-Responses
20 Source: www.awid.org/eng/About-AWID/AWID-Initiatives/Resisting-and-Challenging-Religious-Fundamentalisms/What-s-new-from-this-initiative/New-Insights-on-Religious-Fundamentalisms-Research-Highlights
21 Source: http://secure1.awid.org/eng/About-AWID/AWID-Initiatives/Resisting-and-Challenging-Religious-Fundamentalisms/CF-Case_Studies



Common religious fundamentalist strategies across regions/religions

- Emphasize rigid gender roles, a patriarchal vision of the family, and heterosexuality
- Combine religion with ethnicity, culture, caste, or nationality
- Promote violence towards dissent and diversity (internal + external)
- Offer absolute truths and simple messages
- Play upon hopes and dreams and meet immediate needs
- Selectively use human rights, democracy, and pluralism
- Exploit religion's privileged social and political role
- Subvert formal state secularity
- Forge strategic alliances (including with secular forces)
- Engage in strategic recruitment (especially among the elite and youths)
- Use the mass media strategically



regions and religions, women's-rights activists most commonly characterize religious fundamentalisms as being "absolutist and intolerant".

As one rights activist from Central Asia noted, "Fundamentalisms are usually very aggressive because it is not only just "my thinking" vs. "your thinking" but rather it is trying to impose upon other people some way of thinking as the only true way of understanding things." This analysis mirrored another activist's experience among Christian communities in Nigeria: "Christian extremists, what we call fundamentalists, believe there is only one way of doing things, and they interpret it that way for their followers." This was repeated in Canada: "People who are fundamentalist need to feel that they have the truth; and that they are the only ones who have the truth."

The second most commonly mentioned characteristic was that fundamentalisms are "anti-women and patriarchal". Across the world, women's-rights activists find that a major strategy fundamentalists use to increase their social and political power is to blame social problems on a "decline in the family" and to insist instead on promoting rigid gender roles. Hence they should be of interest in the work of all those who seek to advance women's rights.

But apart from a shared absolutism and patriarchal approach, there is no "typical" fundamentalist actor.

Those who promote and pursue fundamentalist agendas can be individuals or groups. They can be visibly working from within the framework of religion or from within apparently secular such as charities and NGOs, focused on local issues or working globally. They can be either elites or followers.

AWID concluded that "It may be more effective to label *agendas* rather than actors as "fundamentalist"; it may at times be strategic to 'name and shame' a fundamentalist leadership or organization, but the advantages of labeling followers is far less certain."²² The continuing uncertainty within some activists' minds over who or what is a "fundamentalist" means on the one hand that the label may be applied too widely in some instances: to anyone and everyone who is "religious", which means that potential rights-promoting allies from within religious frameworks and organizations are overlooked. Or alternatively, the label may be applied too narrowly: for instance only to those who are visibly violent extremists, thus failing to unmask a range of apparently "moderate" actors who are pursuing an agenda that in fact supports absolutism and intolerance and the consequent psychological and physical violence that those can lead to.

Although there is no "typical" fundamentalist, and labeling people is usually unhelpful, it remains critical to be able to identify religious fundamentalist agendas, especially for those working in the area of conflict, post-conflict reconstruction and humanitarian relief. In such situations, peace activists may find themselves faced with the question of whether or not to enter into an alliance with a religious group. Being able to assess whether they promote a fundamentalist agenda may be vital to the long-term effectiveness of efforts to build a pluralistic, non-discriminatory and therefore more stable society.

In many regions, identifying religious fundamentalist agendas is complicated by the fact that they operate in combination with other identities, such as nationalism and ethnicity. In all regions of the world except sub-Saharan Africa, one of the top five strategies of religious fundamentalisms, in the experience of women's-rights activists,

²² See Conclusion: *Towards a Future Without Fundamentalisms: Analysing Religious Fundamentalist Strategies and Feminist Responses*, www.awid.org/eng/About-AWID/AWID-News/Towards-a-Future-without-Fundamentalisms-New-Report-Analyzes-Religious-Fundamentalist-Strategies-and-Feminist-Responses

is to emphasize religion as a feature of national identity. This clearly impacts conflict. And since women are seen as the bearers of collective identities, religious-ethnic conflict is often waged through their bodies, as demonstrated by the raping of women in the 1990s Yugoslav conflict.

Fundamentalisms and violence

Fundamentalisms are an important matter for peace activists to consider, because all too often absolutism and intolerance lead to verbal violence such as hate-speech, which then results in actual physical violence and conflict at all levels of society. The fundamentalists' intolerance of pluralism affects not only people of other cultures, communities and views, but also internal dissidents.

Two out of three women's-rights activists reported that religious fundamentalists target members of other religions for verbal and physical attacks. For instance, one Indian women's-rights activist recalled newspaper reports on how "armed Bajrang Dal (a Hindu fundamentalist organization) activists (went) on the rampage, driving out about 25 Muslim families from their homes, ransacking their houses and setting them on fire,"²³ with the aim of making the village "Muslim-free".

In the Algerian conflict in the 1990s, Muslim fundamentalist groups systematically murdered local intellectuals, journalists and popular artists, both as a means of silencing the outspoken opposition and to create an overall

atmosphere of fear and despondency. Dawn Cavanagh of the Committee of African Lesbians has noted how homophobic hate-speech, including by Church figures, leads to violence such as "corrective rapes" of lesbians in South Africa and the recent murder of LGBT activist David Kato in Uganda.

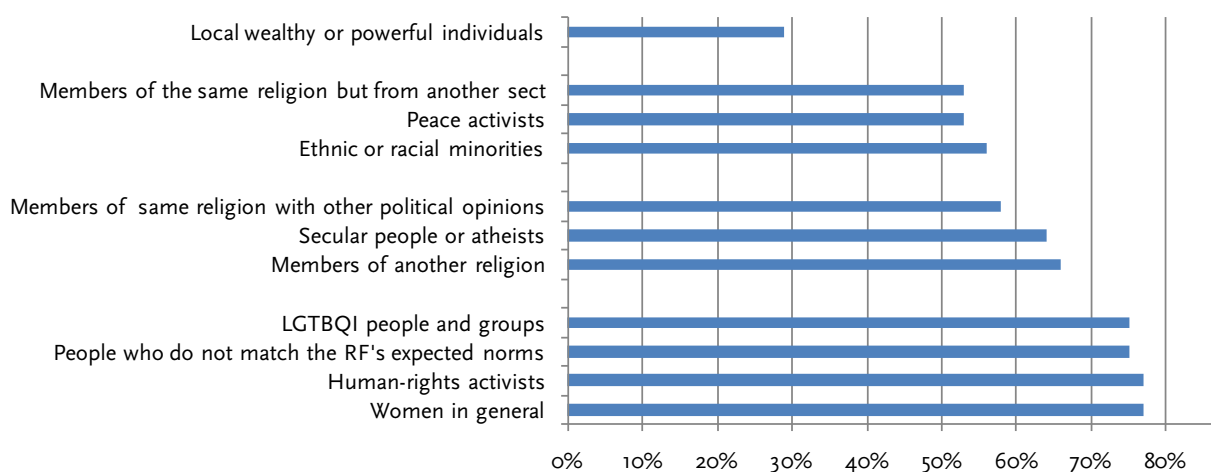
Survey question: "Thinking about your work over the past ten years, which of the following people or groups have been targeted by fundamentalists for attack (verbal or physical)?" Percentages reflect those reporting "frequently" or "sometimes" attacked. Base: 1,230 to 1,380 women's-rights activists.

While religion is often used by fundamentalists to promote a sacred status for "the family", they do not see the families of women's-rights activists as being "sacred" at all; nearly one in five reported intimidation of their friends and relatives by fundamentalists on account of their work for the human rights of women. Peace activists are also on the receiving end of this violence. AWID's survey found that roughly half of women's-rights advocates regarded fundamentalists as targeting peace advocates for violence.

The relationship between religious fundamentalisms and the military also underscores the violent nature of fundamentalist agendas in many contexts. In Pakistan, for example, the military and the military intelligence services



Targets of Attack by Religious Fundamentalists



²³ Source: www.countercurrents.org/comm-nagaraj290903.htm

The issues that religious fundamentalists actively campaign on

	Campaigned strongly or somewhat in favor	Did not campaign	Campaigned strongly against or somewhat against
Abstinence/No pre-marital sex	59%	16%	14%
Reproductive rights	16%	25%	47%
Reducing military spending	12%	49%	13%

have played major institutional roles in the promotion of religious fundamentalisms both nationally and regionally. In Burma, the military actively sought support from Buddhist monks as a means of confusing political opposition, since people found it hard to speak out against the socially respected monks.

Just looking at the issues that religious fundamentalists actively campaign on also helps understand their relationship with violence and conflict. The table above shows the extent to which religious fundamentalist actors campaign on certain issues. Notice the focus on women’s bodies and family laws and the comparative silence on reducing military expenditures. Indeed, some women’s-rights advocates reported active support for militarism and military expenditures by North American Jewish fundamentalists and by Christian fundamentalists in the USA.

Survey question: “In your work, how have the most influential religious fundamentalists campaigned on laws and/or policies regarding the following issues in the past ten years?”

But in the experience of women’s-rights activists, religious fundamentalisms are not always visibly violent; for women the psychological violence they promote can also have lasting and profound impacts. For instance, women who resist or challenge fundamentalist norms may be excluded from their community, lose their families, homes or livelihoods after being labeled as blasphemers, western, un-African, etc. As one women’s-rights activist from Argentina notes, “Speaking with the support of God is something very different from speaking without it; [the latter] puts you on the side of sin and the Devil.”

Sometimes religious concepts are also used to prevent people from challenging violence in society. For instance, Ouyporn Khuankaew from the International Women’s Partnership for Peace and Justice in Thailand comments

that “The concept of Karma has been wrongly interpreted by so many people who are marginalized like poor people or women, who think that ‘Because of my previous life, that is why I am suffering.’ This stops people taking action for change or challenging the institutions or systems.”

Religious fundamentalisms as cause and effect of conflict

So far we have been considering religious fundamentalisms as the causes of conflict. However, fundamentalisms can be both a *cause of war* and conflict and a *result of conflict*, sometimes in a seemingly never-ending cycle. For example, national conflict in the Congo, Kenya, Lebanon and the Former Yugoslavia has both promoted and been promoted by religious fundamentalisms.

The “war on terror” is another example. Since the 9/11 attacks, religion has been routinely used as a justification for aggression, both on the part of the United States and its allies on one hand and their opponents in the form of al-Qaida, the Taliban and parts of the Iraqi opposition on the other.²⁴ As a backlash to the US-led invasion of Afghanistan, fundamentalist coalitions gained unprecedented strength and won provincial elections in Pakistan in 2002 (although defeated in later elections), and reformists in Iran lost out to conservatives as the conflict in neighboring Iraq worsened in 2004. The “war on terror” has also increased racism and prejudice, especially impacting migrant Muslims communities in Europe and North America. This, in turn, has exacerbated religious identity politics and fuelled a cycle of local and global violence. This has had a particular impact on women: they

²⁴ Michael Dickinson, “Blessed Are the Warmakers: Billy Graham’s Final Crusade,” CounterPunch, 6 July 2005. <http://www.counterpunch.org/dickinson07062005.html>; Jim Lobe, “Conservative Christians Biggest Backers of Iraq War,” InterPress Service, republished by Common Dreams, 10 October 2002, www.commondreams.org/headlines02/1010-02.htm



are often singled out for racist attacks (for example for wearing the veil) but at the same time are also increasingly policed to conform to certain behaviors (for example being pressured to wear the veil) by their own “community leaders”.

Fundamentalism in one religion undoubtedly fuels fundamentalism in others. This pattern is visible in the case of majority-minority tensions such as those in Chechnya, in Israel and Palestine, and between Hindu, Muslim and Christian fundamentalisms in India. It is also visible in Chiapas, Mexico, where both Evangelical and Catholic fundamentalisms fuel each other in the midst of the on-going conflict.

Building a collective response to religious fundamentalisms

More than three-quarters of women’s-rights activists surveyed by AWID felt that the strength of religious fundamentalisms has increased globally in the past ten years. This has serious implications for the human rights of women, since fundamentalist agendas reduce rights in the areas of health and reproductive rights, sexual rights and freedoms, the participation of women in the public sphere, family laws, and economic rights, in addition to a general reduction in the autonomy of women and increased violence against women.

But it is not just women who feel the impact; there is a shared impact on all human rights. Civil and political rights are undermined for instance by violence against human-rights defenders and political opponents, and by intolerance of pluralism. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex people (LGBTQI) experience inequality before the law and threats to their livelihood

when they live openly. There is reduced freedom of religion and belief for religious dissidents, minorities and atheists. Broad areas of rights with regard to such as areas as education, health, employment, and cultural rights are threatened by fundamentalist agendas. This broad impact of fundamentalisms on all areas of human rights and development, including peace work, mean that a wide range of social movements have a stake in challenging fundamentalist power and influence.

For 2011, and leading up to AWID’s 2012 Forum, one of AWID’s priorities is the strengthening of strategic alliances between women’s-rights activists and activists in other social movements in order to strengthen resistance to the use of religion as a means of violating human rights. Towards this end, AWID would warmly welcome suggestions from peace activists on how to strengthen those alliances and how AWID’s work could contribute to their own engagement in building a future without fundamentalisms that would instead have positive space for plurality.

» **Cassandra Balchin** is a Consultant for AWID’s Resisting and Challenging Fundamentalisms Initiative



Women’s strategies of resistance

- **Promote pluralism, secularity and citizenship**
- **Provide alternative information**
- **Unmask agendas, especially those of “secular” actors and organizations**
- **Unmask the actual impact, especially on poverty and development**
- **Promote rights-based interpretations of religion**
- **Challenge dichotomies, especially “women’s rights vs culture”**
- **Hold the state, politicians and NGOs accountable**

The Charter for Compassion

The principle of compassion lies at the heart of all religious, ethical and spiritual traditions, calling us always to treat all others as we wish to be treated ourselves. Compassion impels us to work tirelessly to alleviate the suffering of our fellow creatures, to dethrone ourselves from the centre of our world and put another there, and to honour the inviolable sanctity of every single human being, treating everybody, without exception, with absolute justice, equity and respect.

It is also necessary in both public and private life to refrain consistently and empathically from inflicting pain. To act or speak violently out of spite, chauvinism, or self-interest, to impoverish, exploit or deny basic rights to anybody, and to incite hatred by denigrating others – even our enemies – is a denial of our common humanity. We acknowledge that we have failed to live compassionately and that some have even increased the sum of human misery in the name of religion.

We therefore call upon all men and women ~ to restore compassion to the centre of morality and religion ~ to return to the ancient principle that any interpretation of scripture that breeds violence, hatred or disdain is illegitimate ~ to ensure that youth are given accurate and respectful information about other traditions, religions and cultures ~ to encourage a positive appreciation of cultural and religious diversity ~ to cultivate an informed empathy with the suffering of all human beings – even those regarded as enemies.

We urgently need to make compassion a clear, luminous and dynamic force in our polarized world. Rooted in a principled determination to transcend selfishness, compassion can break down political, dogmatic, ideological and religious boundaries. Born of our deep interdependence, compassion is essential to human relationships and to a fulfilled humanity. It is the path to enlightenment, and indispensable to the creation of a just economy and a peaceful global community.

The Charter of Compassion was revealed to the world in November 2009. The journey to that point started 1.5 years earlier: on February 28, 2008, Karen Armstrong won the TED Prize and made a wish: to help in creating, launching and propagating a Charter for Compassion. People of all faiths, all nations, and all backgrounds were invited to

submit their ideas in their own words to be included in the Charter. The period for submitting contributions for the Charter closed in December 2008. Well over 150,000 people from over 180 countries had participated over the course of those six weeks.



The Charter for Compassion is an extraordinary example of a multi-faith response to the current challenges that confront the world. The website clearly describes the vision behind this project:

“*The Charter of Compassion* is a cooperative effort to restore not only compassionate thinking but, more importantly, compassionate action to the center of religious, moral and political life. Compassion is the principled determination to put ourselves in the shoes of the other, and lies at the heart of all religious and ethical systems. One of the most urgent tasks of our generation is to build a global community where men and women of all races, nations and ideologies can live together in peace. In our globalized world, everybody has become our neighbour, and the Golden Rule has become an urgent necessity.

***The Charter*, crafted by people all over the world and drafted by a multi-faith, multi-national council of thinkers and leaders, seeks to change the conversation so that compassion becomes a key word in public and private discourse, making it clear that any ideology that breeds hatred or contempt – be it religious or secular – has failed the test of our time. It is not simply a statement of principle; it is above all a summons to creative, practical and sustained action to meet the political, moral, religious, social and cultural problems of our time.”**

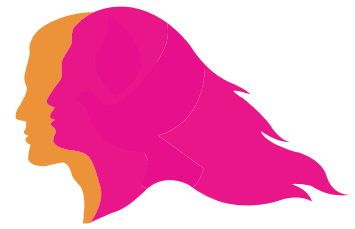
» **Karen Armstrong** is a former Roman Catholic nun who left a British convent to pursue a degree in modern literature at Oxford. She has written more than 20 books on Islam, Judaism and Christianity, on what they have in common and on the effect they have had on world events. They include titles such as: *A History of God*, *Holy War: The Crusades and Their Impact on Today's World*, *Islam: A Short History*, *Buddha*, and *The Great Transformation: The Beginning of Our Religious Traditions*, and *The Case for God*.

For more information on the Charter for Compassion, please visit: <http://charterforcompassion.org/>.



Suggestions for Sources of Funding

By Merle Gosewinkel



African Women's Development Fund

Supports African women's groups working on the issues of women's rights, peace, HIV/AIDS and women's economic empowerment in Africa. Grants range from USD 1,000 to USD 25,000.

- ▶▶ Contact: Plot Number 78, AWDF House, Ambassadorial Enclave, East Legon, Accra, Ghana
(postal address:) PMB CT 89 Cantonments, Accra, Ghana.
Tel: +233 302 521257/923626 or +233 302 28 722006
Email: grants@awdf.org or awdf@awdf.org
Web: www.awdf.org

A.J. Muste Institute

Accepts proposals for grassroots nonviolence projects (up to USD 2,000) from groups anywhere in the world that have small budgets and little or no access to mainstream funding sources.

- ▶▶ Contact: 339 Lafayette St., New York, NY 10012, USA
Tel: +1 212 533 4335, Fax: +1 212 228 6193
Email: info@ajmuste.org
Web: www.ajmuste.org

Astraea International Fund for Sexual Minorities

Accepts proposals for projects to defend and promote the human rights of lesbians and other sexual minorities. It has funded over 168 organizations in 42 countries, for projects including labor organizing in Chile and job training in Namibia.

- ▶▶ Contact: 116 East 16th St., 7th floor, New York, NY 10003, USA
Tel: +1 212 529 8021, Fax: +1 212 982 3321
Email: info@astraeafoundation.org
Web: www.astraeafoundation.org

Cordaid

Has four program sectors, namely Participation, Emergency Aid and Reconstruction, Health and Well-being, and Entrepreneurship. The Participation sector has a program on Women and Violence.

- ▶▶ Contact (postal address): P.O. Box 16440, 2500 BK The Hague, Netherlands
Tel: +31 70 313 6300, Fax: +31 70 313 6301
Email: cordaid@cordaid.nl
Web: www.cordaid.nl

Ford Foundation

Is a resource for innovative people and institutions worldwide. Its goals are to strengthen democratic values, reduce poverty and injustice, promote international cooperation and advance human achievement.

- ▶▶ Contact: 320 East 43rd Street, New York, NY 10017, USA
Tel: +1 212 573 5000, Fax: +1 212 351 3677
Email: office-of-communications@fordfound.org
Web: www.fordfound.org

Global Fund for Women

Funds women's groups that advance the human rights of women and girls. Grants range from USD 500 to USD 20,000.

- ▶▶ Contact: 222 Sutter Street, Suite 500, San Francisco, CA 94108, USA
Tel: +1 415 248 4800, Fax: +1 415 248 4801
Email: gfw@globalfundforwomen.org
Web: www.globalfundforwomen.org

Heinrich Böll Foundation

Supports work on ecology, democracy, solidarity and nonviolence. The foundation's Feminism and Gender Democracy Institute organizes events around women, peace and security, and the implementation of UNSCR 1325.

- ▶▶ Contact: Schumannstr. 8, 10117 Berlin, Germany
Tel: +49 30 285 34-0, Fax: +49 30 285 34-109
Email: info@boell.de
Web: www.boell.de



HIVOS

Is a Dutch donor organization that does not have a specific focus on UNSCR 1325, although projects from Uganda, Sri Lanka and East Timor that had a focus on UNSCR 1325 did receive some funding. HIVOS does have a specific women's program.

- ▶▶ Contact: Raamweg 16, 2596 HL The Hague, Netherlands
(postal address): P.O. Box 85565, 2508 CG The Hague, Netherlands
Tel: +31 70 376 5500; Fax: +31 70 362 4600;
Email: info@hivos.nl
Web: www.hivos.nl and www.hivos.org

International Fellowship of Reconciliation's (IFOR) Women Peacemakers Program (WPP)

Supports women's peace initiatives and nonviolence training by providing financial support, linking women's peace groups to trainers and resource people, and/or providing training materials. The WPP also provides small travel grants to enable women peace activists to attend trainings, courses and conferences abroad. Please note that the WPP's headquarters in the Netherlands supports initiatives from the following regions: Asia, the Balkans, the Caucasus, the Middle East, the Pacific, and Latin America.

- ▶▶ Contact: Spoorstraat 38, 1815 BK Alkmaar, Netherlands.
Tel: +31 72 512 3014, Fax: +31 72 515 1102
Web: www.ifor.org/WPP/education_nonviolence.htm

WPP Africa Regional Desk

Hosted by the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) and based in Ghana, supports initiatives from the Africa region. Contact the Africa Regional Desk Coordinator of the Women Peacemakers Program – West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP).

- ▶▶ Contact: P.O. Box CT 4434, Cantonments, Accra, Ghana.
Tel: +233 21 221 318, Fax: +233 21 221 735
Email: edzathor@wanep.org
Web: www.wanep.org/wpp/index.html

ICCO

Has "Democratization and Peacebuilding" as one of its three focus areas. The ICCO's public campaign in the Netherlands and its lobby and advocacy projects also support UNSCR 1325.

- ▶▶ Contact: Joseph Haydnlaan 2a, 3533 AE Utrecht, Netherlands
(postal address): P.O. Box 8190, 3503 RD Utrecht, Netherlands
Tel: +31 30 692 7811; Fax: +31 30 692 5614
Email: info@icco.nl
Web: www.icco.nl

IKV/Pax Christi

Focuses on the following themes: Security and Disarmament, Protecting Civilians, the Economic Dimensions of Conflict, Religion and Conflict, Democracy and Peacebuilding, and Terrorism.

- ▶▶ Contact: Godebaldkwartier 74, 3511 DZ Utrecht, Netherlands
(postal address): P.O. Box 19318, 3501 DH Utrecht, Netherlands
Tel: +31 30 233 3346; Fax: +31 30 236 8199
Email: info@ikvpaxchristi.nl
Web: www.ikvpaxchristi.nl

International Women's Development Agency (IWDA)

Supports women's groups throughout Asia, the Pacific and indigenous Australia, working on issues of women's economic empowerment and access to decision-making (including issues of peace and security and the implementation of UNSCR 1325). Grants may be up to AUD 15,000.

- ▶▶ Contact: P.O. Box 64, Flinders Lane, VIC 8009, Australia
Tel: +61 396 505 574
Email: iwda@iwda.org
Web: www.iwda.org.au/

Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust

Accepts proposals from groups in the United Kingdom and Europe, Northern Ireland and South Africa (KwaZulu Natal only). Proposals may deal with issues promoting racial equality, nonviolent conflict resolution, the culture of peace, or conscientious objection to military service.

- ▶▶ Contact: The Garden House, Water End, York YO30 6WQ, United Kingdom
Tel: +44 190 462 7810, Fax: +44 190 465 1990
Web: www.jrct.org.uk



Kvinna till Kvinna

Supports the organizing of women in conflict regions. They collaborate with women's organizations that play an active part in peace and rebuilding processes.

» Web: www.kvinnatillkvinna.se/en/

Mama Cash

Supports pioneering women's groups around the world that are fighting for the human rights of women, peace and economic justice. No micro-credit services or loans are possible.

» Contact: Eerste Helmersstraat 17 III, 1054 CX Amsterdam, Netherlands
(postal address): P.O. Box 15686, 1001 ND Amsterdam, Netherlands
Tel: +31 20 515 8700, Fax: +31 20 515 8799
Email: info@mamacash.nl
Web: www.mamacash.org



One World Action

Supports women's organizations and movements to remove barriers that exclude women from political participation. In partnership with institutions and networks, One World Action supports action research to develop tools for women and men to monitor government and international commitments to gender equity and equality.

It has partners in Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand, Bolivia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua.

» Contact: Bradley's Close, White Lion Street, London N1 9PF, United Kingdom
Tel: +44 20 7833 4075, Fax: +44 20 7833 4102
Email: info@oneworldaction.org
Web: www.oneworldaction.org

Open Society Institute (OSI)

Aims to shape public policy to promote democratic governance, human rights and economic, legal and social reform. Its International Women's Program (IWP) also uses grant-making to promote and protect the rights of women and girls around the globe by supporting organizations that are active in the area of reducing discrimination and violence against women, strengthening women's access to justice and increasing women's role as decision-makers and leaders.

» Contact: 400 West 59th Street, New York, NY 10019, USA
Tel: +1 212 548 0600, Fax: +1 212 548 4600
Web: www.soros.org/initiatives/women

Oxfam NOVIB

Will be working in 34 countries (as of 2011) and focusing on poor and fragile states where democracy has developed little, such as Somalia, Burma, Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Yemen or Sudan.

» Contact (Postal address): P.O. Box 30919, 2500 GX The Hague, Netherlands
Tel: +31 70 342 1777
Fax: +31 70 361 4461
Web: www.oxfamnovib.nl/

PeaceFund Canada

Supports groups around the world that are working for nonviolence and peace education.

» Contact: 145 Spruce St., Suite 206, Ottawa, ON K1R 6P1, Canada
Tel: +1 613 230 0860, Fax: +1 613 563 0017
Email: pfcana@web.ca
Web: www.peacebuildingportal.org/index.asp?pgid=9&org=2562

Tewa

Funds projects in Nepal that work for sustainable development and the empowerment of women.

» Contact: Tel: +977 1 557 2654/557 2659
Email: info@tewa.org.np or tewa@mail.com.np
Web: www.tewa.org.np

Rights & Democracy (International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development)

Established the Women's Rights in Afghanistan Fund In the summer of 2002. This fund focuses on capacity building and support for Afghan organizations engaged in the defense of human rights, with particular attention to women's rights. The fund seeks to encourage and support family law reform processes in order to ensure that fair attention is given to women within Afghanistan.

» Contact: 1001 de Maisonneuve Blvd. East, Suite 1100, Montreal, Quebec H2L 4P9 Canada
Tel: +1 514 283 6073
Fax: +1 514 283 3792
Email: info@dd-rd.af
Web: www.dd-rd.ca

Sister Fund

Is a private foundation that supports and gives a voice to women who are working for justice from a religious framework. The Sister Fund's belief that women can transform faith, and faith can transform feminism, is the inspiration for our funding and programmatic work. The Sister Fund does not accept unsolicited proposals.

- » Contact: 79 Fifth Avenue, 4th Floor, New York, NY 10003, USA
Tel: +1 212 260 4446, Fax: +1 212 260 4633
Web: www.sisterfund.org

Sasakawa Peace Foundation

The Sasakawa Peace Foundation contributes to the welfare of humankind and the sound development of the international community – and thus to world peace – by conducting activities that foster international understanding, exchange, and cooperation, as well as efforts to promote these activities.

- » Web: www.spf.org/e/profile/

Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency International (Sida)

Advises CSOs that are interested in entering into a partnership with a Swedish CSO to contact that organization first, as Sida's support to CSOs in development countries is always channeled through a Swedish CSO. The local CSO can present their project proposal to a relevant Swedish organization and apply for funding.

- » Web: www.sida.se/English/Partners/Civil-Society-/Funding-support-to-civil-society-organisations--/How-to-apply-for-funding-1/

United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

Supports projects in the following areas: Economic growth, agriculture and trade, Global health, and Democracy, conflict prevention and humanitarian assistance. They provide assistance in *Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe and Eurasia, and the Middle East.*

- » Web: www.usaid.gov

UN WOMEN

Provides financial and technical assistance in four areas: Reducing women's poverty, Ending violence against women, Reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS among women and girls, and Gender equality. UN WOMEN has 15 regional offices and two country programs.

- » Contact: 304 East 45th St., 15th floor, New York, NY 10017, USA
Tel: +1 212 906 6400, Fax: +1 212 906 6705
Web: www.unwomen.org/

Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights

Supports women's human rights defenders with rapid response grants and participates in advocacy and research.

- » Contact: 3100 Arapahoe Ave., Suite 201, Boulder, CO 80303, USA
Tel: +1 303 442 2388, Fax: +1 303 442 2370
Email: urgentact@urgentactionfund.org
Web: www.urgentactionfund.org

- » Note: Requests from Africa may go directly to Urgent Action Fund – Africa, P.O. Box 53841-00200, Nairobi, Kenya.
Tel: +254 20 2731 095, Fax: +254 20 2731 094
Email: info@urgentactionfund-africa.or.ke

V-Day

Provides funding and organizes fundraising events for women's groups across the world that are working to stop violence against women. The organization co-sponsors an international anti-violence resource guide on www.feminist.com.

- » Web: www.vday.org

Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion

Seeks to fund projects that promote a sustained conversation about pedagogy through the improvement of practical applications of teaching and learning methods, the encouragement of research and study of pedagogical issues, and the creation of a supportive environment for teaching.

- » Address: 301 W. Wabash Ave., Crawfordsville, IN 47933, USA
Email: wabashcenter@wabash.edu
Web: www.wabashcenter.wabash.edu/home/default.aspx



WomanKind Worldwide

Works with partners in 14 countries to empower women. It does not accept unsolicited proposals. Inside the UK, it campaigns to stop sexual bullying in schools.

- » Contact: Development House, 56-64 Leonard St., London EC2A 4JX, United Kingdom
Tel: +44 20 7549 0360, Fax: +44 20 7549 0361
Email: info@womankind.org.uk
Web: www.womankind.org.uk

Women's Hope Education and Training Trust (WHEAT)

Is a national women's fund to support grassroots women's groups that are working on community development through education in South Africa.

- » Contact: P.O. Box 13641, Mowbray 7705, Cape Town, South Africa
Tel: +27 21 762 6214, Fax: +27 21 797 2876
Email: info@wheattrust.co.za
Web: www.wheattrust.co.za



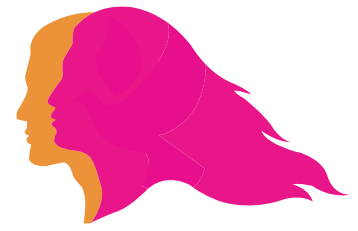
XminusY Solidarity Fund

Provides financial support for social movements and grassroots groups all over the world in their struggle for social justice and political emancipation. Currently, XminusY has no specific focus on gender and peacebuilding or UNSCR 1325. Project proposals can be submitted throughout the year (grants up to €1,500 per project).

- » Address: De Wittenstraat 43-45; 1052 AL Amsterdam, Netherlands
Tel: +31 20 627 9661
Email: xminy@xminy.nl
Web: www.xminy.nl/

Suggestions for Resources

By José de Vries



VIDEOS

The Imam and the Pastor

This 39-minute documentary film brings to life the astonishing reconciliation between Imam Muhammad Ashafa and Pastor James Wuye, and their peacemaking initiatives that have since ensued. They had been leaders of militant groups involved in the conflict between Muslims and Christians in Kaduna, in northern Nigeria. Narrated by Rageh Omaar, the film shows that it is possible for the perpetrators of interreligious violence to become instigators of peace. It is a story of forgiveness and a case study of a grassroots initiative to rebuild communities torn apart by conflict. Imam Ashafa and Pastor Wuye are the joint founders and directors of the Inter-Faith Mediation Centre in Kaduna.

►► For more information, please visit:
www.ftfilms.org.uk/imam.html

Acting on Faith: Women's New Religious Activism

This documentary film offers an intimate look at the lives and work of three American women – one Buddhist, one Hindu, and one Muslim – for whom faith, activism, and identity are deeply intertwined.

►► To read more, please visit:
www.pluralism.org/affiliates/antell/

Aung San Suu Kyi on nonviolence

In this video, Suu Kyi explains how a nonviolent approach is the best way to resolve problems. She cites India as the perfect example: Gandhi's use of nonviolent protest sowed the seeds for a peaceful, civilian government after India gained independence in 1947. If men and women do not have weapons in their hands, Suu Kyi explains, they will try harder to use their minds.

►► To view the video, please visit:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=jiZLLd1fnxU

ARTICLES AND BOOKS

Analyzing Religious Fundamentalist Strategies and Feminist Responses

In response to the request for more information about religious fundamentalisms and women's strategies of resistance in other countries, this report concentrates both on the strategies that various fundamentalist movements use to influence society and politics and on the strategies that feminists use to resist and challenge those.

►► To download the report, please visit:
awid.org/Library/Towards-a-Future-without-Fundamentalisms2

Rapporteur's Digest on Freedom of Religion or Belief: Excerpts of the Reports from 1986 to 2011 by the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief

The Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief is an independent expert appointed by the United Nations Human Rights Council. The mandate holder has been invited to identify existing and emerging obstacles to the enjoyment of the right to freedom of religion or belief and to present recommendations on ways and means to overcome such obstacles.

►► To read the report, please visit:
www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/religion/docs/Rapporteurs-DigestFreedomReligionBelief.pdf

Resisting and Challenging Religious Fundamentalism

Religious fundamentalisms are on the rise around the world and across religions, with negative consequences for women's rights. AWID launched the Challenging Fundamentalism (CF) initiative in 2007 to strengthen the responses of women's-rights activists to this growing global threat. The CF team conducts groundbreaking research to contribute to greater strategic thinking, dialogue and advocacy on religious fundamentalisms by women's-rights groups. The research has identified the characteristics of religious fundamentalisms, examined



the factors that help them grow, and detailed how they impact women's rights across regions and religions.

Research reports include:

- *Towards a Future without Fundamentalisms* (February 2011)
- *Shared Insights: Women's-rights Activists Define Religious Fundamentalisms* (March 2011)
- *Exposed: Ten Myths about Religious Fundamentalisms* (March 2011)
- *Feminists on the Frontline: Case Studies of Resisting and Challenging Fundamentalisms* (March 2011)
- *New Insights on Religious Fundamentalisms: Research Highlights* (September 2009)
- *Religious Fundamentalisms on the Rise: A Case for Action* (October 2007)

» To read the above-mentioned research reports from this initiative, please visit:

www.awid.org/AWID-s-Publications/Religious-Fundamentalisms.



Called to Speak: Six Strategies That Encourage Women's Political Activism

Called to Speak outlines six successful strategies used by interfaith community groups to encourage women's political activism and leadership. These programs provide women with something both simple and profound: the resources and opportunities they need to claim a voice of political and religious authority. The successful strategies described in the report include providing role models for women's political and religious leadership, creating space for women to address their discomfort with the public voice, developing opportunities for women to cross lines of race, religion, and class, providing opportunities that ease women into leadership roles, developing mentoring programs, and making engagement easy and appealing based on the needs and concerns of women's lives. The report includes in-depth examples of how organizations have used these strategies to successfully encourage women's political activism.

» To read more, please visit:

www.onlinewomeninpolitics.org/Six%20Strategies%20That%20Encourage%20Women's%20Political%20Activism-IWPR.pdf.

World Interfaith Harmony week

The two common fundamental religious Commandments; Love of God, and Love of the Neighbour, are at the heart of the three Monotheistic religions. The World Interfaith Harmony Week extends the Two Commandments by adding 'Love of the Good, and Love of the Neighbour'. This formula includes all people of goodwill. It includes those of other faiths, and those with no faith.

The World Interfaith Harmony Week provides a platform – one week in a year – when all interfaith groups and other groups of goodwill can show the world what a powerful movement they are.

» To read more, please visit:

worldinterfaithharmonyweek.com/.

Religions for Peace: A Guide for Building Women of Faith Networks

The resources within this guide offer the tools and ideas to support women of faith in gathering together, establishing a collective vision for social transformation, and creating change at all levels. The issues these networks choose to address are not confined to problems that involve women: they are problems that impact society as a whole. The powerful contributions that a Women of Faith Network can make in any single community are deeply interconnected with the well-being of all.

» To read the guide, please visit:

religionsforpeace.org/file/resources/toolkits/building-and-equipping.pdf.

Silent No More: The Untapped Potential of the Church in Addressing Sexual Violence

This report calls all churches to account and to action. It paints a painfully honest picture of the way churches have perpetuated a culture of silence around sexual violence and have largely failed to respond to the crisis and may even worsen the impact by reinforcing the stigma and discrimination experienced by survivors.

» To download the report, please visit:

tilz.tearfund.org/Topics/HIV+and+AIDS/Silent+No+More+Report+and+Event.htm

A Discussion with Farida Vahedi, Executive Director of the Department of External Affairs, National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of India

In this interview between Michael Bodakowski and Farida Vahedi, Ms. Vahedi describes the diverse programs, teachings, and initiatives of the Bahá'í community in India and South Asia. She plays leading roles on many fronts, of which education and women's equality particularly stand out. She highlights work on the intersection of religion, science, and development and on the significance of that for the Bahá'í community's education programming. Ms. Vahedi is engaged with the government of India on several initiatives, including gender and education. She highlights gender inequalities in India and their complex economic and social causes. The Bahá'í community's interfaith work is a continuing focus, as are efforts to measure the spiritual attributes of development.

►► To read the interview, please visit:

berkleycenter.georgetown.edu/interviews/a-discussion-with-farida-vahedi-executive-director-of-the-department-of-external-affairs-national-spiritual-assembly-of-the-bahais-of-india.

Sexual Ethics & Islam: Feminist Reflections on Qur'an, Hadith, and Jurisprudence, by Kecia Ali

Dr. Kecia Ali presents eight chapters, each of which contains an issue that typically generates discussion in the context of gender relations among Muslims (or "in Islam"). In each case, she shows how the conservative tradition, as exemplified in the *fiqh* (the intellectual process to discover *shariah*, Muslim moral law) and *tafsir* (the exegesis of the Qur'an) books from the 4th through the 13th century AH, the neotraditionalist apologists and piecemeal reformers do not address the fundamental assumptions of patriarchy and hierarchy which undergird the laws and practice relating to gender issues.

►► To read a review (by Ayman H. Fadel) of this book, please visit:

www.altmuslimah.com/a/b/r/3997/.

Islam Beyond Patriarchy Through Gender Inclusive Qur'anic Analysis

This paper by Amina Wadud – Islamic feminist, imam, and scholar with a progressive, feminist focus on Qur'an exegesis – presents an interpretation of Islam that offers a vision of an active partnership of equals between women and men. This partnership will move human society towards equality and justice, which are the twin intentions of the "revelation".

►► To read the paper, please visit:

www.musawah.org/docs/pubs/wanted/Wanted-AW-EN.pdf.

Gender and Nationalism: The Masculinization of Hinduism and Female Political Participation in India

Feminist analysis has revealed the gendered nature of nations and nationalism. Adopting such a perspective, this paper analyzes the relationship between the masculinization of Hindu nationalism and the political participation of females. The image of an aggressive male warrior is central to certain versions of Hindu nationalism or *Hindutva* in contemporary India. This image is embedded within a political narrative, which declares its affinity for ideas of resolute masculinity through an array of symbols, historic icons, and myths. Given that Indian women are very visible in the politics of *Hindutva*, this paper examines how women have created a political space for themselves in a very masculinist narrative. This study focuses on the historical and cultural processes that have enabled this masculinization, certain ideals of femininity implicit within this narrative that open the door for female participation, and women's use of images and icons drawn from a common cultural milieu to enter the political landscape of *Hindutva*.

►► To download the paper, please use:

jan.ucc.nau.edu/sj6/BanerjeeGenderandnationalism.pdf.



Feminism and Religion

In this illuminating work, Prof. Rita M. Gross (Professor of Philosophy and Religion at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire) traces the historical role of women in religion, including the impact of feminist scholarship on the study of religion and theology. Gross does not limit her explorations to the roles of women in Judaism and Christianity but ranges over the roles of women in Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam. She also examines feminist spirituality, which has developed the contours of an organized religion. The author points out that all religions, including Christianity and Judaism, have not always been patriarchal, and she notes some groundbreaking work done by American Christian feminists in the 1800s that had been mostly forgotten by the 1950s. Historians of religion and theologians are in debt to Gross for casting a bright light on the relationship between women and religion.

- Information on the paperback version (288 pages):
Publisher: Beacon Press; 2nd edition (October 31, 1996)
Language: English
ISBN-10: 0807067857
ISBN-13: 978-0807067857

Created in God's Image: From Hegemony to Partnership

This gender-training manual is the product of a collaborative process that has been going on between the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) since 2007. The modules of this manual examine gender, masculinity, identity and the sense of self, sexuality, gender-based violence, leadership, power and partnership. Discussion of the content can open a space where both men and women may explore their relationships to one another in the face of the social construction of gender roles, values and responsibilities that are imposed by contextual assumptions in church and society. Activities described in the manual are designed in creative ways that invite participants to consciously examine the processes of socialization of men and boys and how social, cultural, religious, economic and political contexts influence such processes.

- The manual is downloadable via:
www.wcrc.ch/sites/default/files/PositiveMasculinitiesGenderManual_o.pdf.

The Ties That Bind: Women's Public Vision for Politics, Religion, and Civil Society

This book describes the motivations, values, and experiences with public leadership of women who work as activists and leaders of social-justice-oriented religious organizations. Based on a series of interviews, it documents the passion and unique approaches that these women bring to their work, including a focus on shared responsibility and interconnectedness that redefines the language of morality and politics.

- Information:
June 2004 | IWPR No. I914 | ISBN 1-933161-05-1 | 142 pages
- For more information, please visit:
www.iwpr.org/initiatives/womens-public-vision/publications-commentary/ties-that-bind.

Women, Religion and Peace: Experience, Perspectives and Policy Implications

The United States Institute of Peace, the Berkley Center, and the World Faiths Development Dialogue jointly organized a symposium on Women, Religion and Peace in July 2010. This event brought together an invited group of practitioners, academics, and policy analysts. Together, this group explored conflict situations in which women with ties to religious traditions and institutions play active parts. Women's stories and perspectives formed the focus. The group sought to draw conclusions from this experience in terms of distinctive women's contributions both to process and to agendas, and considered implications for the theory and practice of religious peacemaking.

- To read the report, please visit:
www.usip.org/programs/projects/women-religion-and-peace.



UN Study on Freedom of Religion or Belief and the Status of Women from the Viewpoint of Religion and Traditions

This is the official United Nations Study on Freedom of Religion or Belief and the Status of Women from the Viewpoint of Religion and Traditions (E/CN.4/2002) by Mr. Abdelfattah Amor, the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief (E/CN.4/1999/58) that led to his Study on Freedom of Religion or Belief and the Status of Women From the Viewpoint of Religion and Traditions (E/CN.4/2002/73/Add.2). The original is available only in the French language. An unofficial translation in English has been made by Dr. John Taylor, Secretary, Geneva U.N. CONGO Committee on Freedom of Religion or Belief.

»» To download the document, go to:
www.wunrn.com/un_study/english.pdf

Conflict Resolution, Culture, and Religion: Toward a Training Model of Interreligious Peacebuilding

This article aims first of all at bridging conflict resolution and intercultural training concepts through the presentation of a training model in interreligious peacebuilding. Second, it examines the dynamics and participants' responses in an interreligious context to the intercultural sensitivity model, which is used in an intercultural communication training setting.

»» Information: Mohammed Abu-Nimer, *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 38, No. 6. (Nov. 2001), pp. 685–704.

Faith Communities as Potential Agents for Peace Building in the Balkans:

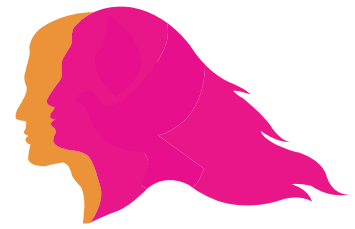
An analysis of faith-based interventions towards conflict transformation and lasting reconciliation in post-conflict countries of the former Yugoslavia.

»» To read the report, please visit:
www.kirkensnodhjelp.no/Documents/Kirkens%20N%C3%B8dhjelp/Publikasjoner/Temahefter/Faith%20Communities%20Balkans.pdf



Suggestions for Actions and Solidarity in 2011

By José de Vries



Share, listen, discuss and learn, getting to know needs, struggles and strategies!

- Invite religious scholars and leaders from your community to engage in dialogue with the women in your community. Invite the women to share their challenges due to the patriarchal structures and practices in their specific faith. Discuss these challenges. Showcase positive examples of (male) religious leaders and scholars constructively dealing with the challenges that women experience.
- Talk with girls and boys from your faith community and listen to the challenges they face in shaping their identity. How do they feel about societal expectations of “proper” behavior for girls and boys and women and men, and how are religious practices related to those? How do they deal with it? Talk with teachers and youth and religious leaders about ways you can support them in creating a safe and empowering environment for all.
- Invite women of different religious beliefs (and potentially form different sides of a conflict) to come together and share their experiences, successes and challenges. Ask them what kind of obstacles and violence they experience and how they deal with those. Explore the similarities and differences.
- Invite women (from different sides of a conflict) in your community to come together in order to explore ways of reducing tensions within the community or neighborhood and of working together on peacebuilding and gender justice.
- Ask the women in your community how they are participating on various decision-making levels (e.g. local, national, regional levels). Ask them what support they need, in particular from male (religious) leaders, to facilitate their empowerment process.
- Talk with the men in your community on their experiences of violence. Ask them how they would like to contribute to the eradication of that. Invite them to start or participate in a (faith-based) men’s group working on the eradication of violence, including violence against women. Encourage them to link with other men’s groups to exchange strategies and lessons learned in terms of working for gender justice (find these groups online!)
- Invite local, national, regional or international women religious leaders to speak about their faith, including their views on feminist and female (re)interpretations of scriptures and religious texts, the empowerment of women, and women’s leadership. Be sure to document their stories and disseminate those.
- Invite (a) male and/or female speaker(s) from an organization working on the eradication of violence and/or for gender justice in your community to talk about their work. Ask how you could contribute to their work in specific and concrete ways.
- Visit (religious) minority groups in your community or invite a substantial number of representatives of those groups and talk with them about the struggles and challenges they face in their daily lives. Discuss concrete obstacles as well as challenges that play on more subtle levels. Reflect with them on strategies to address those.
- Follow-up with the beneficiaries of your various campaigns and programs. Listen to their experiences and reflect on how you could improve your work and program. Were there (positive or negative) consequences of your work that you had not foreseen?
- Build alliances and collaborate with strategic leaders (e.g. religious, tribal and local leaders, government officials). Engage them positively in your work and keep them informed on the developments of your work. Ask them to speak out openly against violence against women and gender injustice. Remind them of their position as role models for gender justice and peacebuilding.
- When speaking out on a subject, you will notice there are many women and men who think in the same way you do and who are willing to contribute and work together for a good cause: share your thoughts, ideas and challenges, and don’t be afraid to ask, listen and learn.



Educate and encourage others: Work together!

- Educate women and men activists and traditional and religious leaders on UNSCR 1325, 1820, 1888, 1889 and 1960. Distribute copies of those Resolutions during meetings and events. Translations of the UNSCR 1325 are available in several languages and can be downloaded from www.peacewomen.org/1325inTranslation/index.html. Discuss with them the importance of the meaningful inclusion of women in peacebuilding processes and raise awareness about how that will benefit society as a whole.
 - Invite male and female religious leaders in your community to speak out about their perspectives and experiences in relation to violence in your community. Talk about the consequences for everyone in your community and discuss concrete strategies to address the violence. Talk about the role of gender (masculinities and femininities) in relation to the violence and inequalities in your community.
 - Use positive messages to get your message across: don't blame lay the blame on individual perpetrators of violence or individual religious leaders. Create understanding about the systems that enable and perpetuate inequalities and injustice to continue within your religious tradition and within society as a whole. Raise awareness about the responsibility that everyone carries to challenge this.
 - Encourage male religious leaders and men in your community to speak out on their refusal to use violent, dominant behavior and to perpetuate gender inequalities between women and men. Encourage them to discuss these topics with other men and to work together on the eradication of violence and injustice in your community. Encourage them to speak out in support of peace, women's rights and gender justice.
 - Encourage your school and community libraries to display (e.g. on May 24) books that deal with female religious leaders, feminist interpretations of the scriptures, women peacemakers, violence against women, women as decision makers, male religious leaders as positive role models advocating for spaces for women to become religious leaders as well, and men speaking out against violence against women and men, etc.
 - Make a special effort to reach out to young girls and boys: talk with (faith -based) youth groups about gender roles within their religious tradition and about how violence, war and peace affect girls and boys differently. Engage them in action, for example byhaving them write a letter to a government official or to women and girls in one of the groups listed in this pack.
- Join a faith-based support group (in your community or online) that focuses on peacebuilding, gender justice and/or the eradication of violence, whether that be in your community, nation, or region or internationally. Discuss concretely how you can contribute to the work.
 - Share resources (e.g. books, magazines, newspaper articles and videos) on female religious leaders, feminist interpretations of the scriptures and violence against women and men with others, whether in your immediate community or via online discussion forums.
 - Translate and reprint articles from this pack to educate others about the issues (please credit the pack and don't forget to send us a copy!). You can find more articles under the resource section.
 - Encourage groups to include the topics of gender inequality within religious traditions and ending violence against women in their agendas and events, and encourage them to increase their support for women who are working for women's rights and peace in the world.
 - Create awareness in your community by holding marches and demonstrations for gender justice and women's rights within the religious traditions. Call for public commitments to end gender inequality and violence, also where justification for those is claimed on religious grounds. Carry posters, banners, etc. that contain clear messages and demands for your local or national government. Wear a symbol that shows you are against inequality within your religious traditions (for instance a statement printed on a T-shirt).
 - Ride public transportation (on May 24) and distribute information to passengers about the work of women peacemakers within your religious tradition. Include the telephone numbers of organizations that work for the empowerment of women and girls within faith tradi-



tions, for gender justice, and for inclusive peacebuilding in your community.

- Inform your networks (your organization, place of worship, school, labor union or work place) about May 24 and possible solidarity actions for women peace activists.
- Educate yourself and the groups you belong to about militarization and the military recruitment of girls and boys, as well as its link with the use of violence in communities and societies. Educate yourself and others on the continuum of violence in public and private spheres and gain understanding about the link between them. Order the leaflet *Make Our Schools Military-Free Zones* from the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) at: www.afsc.org. Find other organizations that are working on demilitarization (e.g. War Resisters International and New Profile) via the directory in this Pack or via the Internet.

Organize something!



- Gather men and women from various faiths and beliefs in your community. Organize a protest march against the violence against women specific to your area or region, such as acid attacks, widow burning, child marriages, female genital mutilation, forced virginity testing or the lack of citizenship rights for women.
 - Organize a “reading and sharing-evening” to which you invite men and religious scholars to read the scriptures and books from your faith from a female perspective. How would they experience it as a woman? Do they perceive the dominant interpretations differently? Invite a few strong women activists to share some of their experiences in terms of the (re)interpretations of the scriptures.
 - Organize “study afternoons” to which you invite women to discuss specific religious texts. Discuss and analyze the behavior of the male and female characters in the texts, as well as the mainstream male-biased interpretations of those texts. Discuss how the texts could be interpreted differently from a feminist perspective. Organize a follow-up session to which you invite male and female religious scholars to discuss the observations.
 - Organize a special compassion worship service with representatives from different faiths where people can dedicate prayers, each from her or his own faith, for the eradication of violence against women and men. Ensure that there is sufficient time to share about and gain understanding on the meaning of the prayers.
 - Hold a gathering to write religious leaders and legislators on topics that your community is concerned about such as ending violence against women, supporting women’s sexual and reproductive rights or promoting the participation of women in leadership positions.
- Encourage others to reflect by organizing an essay or poetry contest. Try to inform a wider audience by posting it online, sending it to your local newspaper or asking a local TV station to broadcast it, for example. Themes could include: male and female interpretations of scriptures, the symbolic meanings of rituals in your faith tradition, an analysis of the male and female characters in the scriptures, the role of religious leaders in de-radicalization, the eradication of violence within the religious tradition and/or in communities, women and men working in partnership for peacebuilding, men supporting women and women’s empowerment, violence against men, or the steps that governments should take to ensure the participation of women in decision making on peace and security issues. Specifically request essayists to include recommendations as to how your city, state or national government and religious leadership can further promote a culture of peace and gender justice that is inclusive to both women and men.
 - Organize solidarity actions on religious days. Invite representatives of other faiths to join in your religious celebration of your specific tradition. For example: invite Christian friends to your Iftar celebration.
 - Organize a gathering to write letters of support to female and male victims of violence.
 - Organize a festive celebration for (inter-) faith-based peacebuilding on important dates such as March 8 (International Women’s Day), May 24 (International Women’s Day for Peace and Disarmament), September 21 (International Peace Day), October 2 (International Day of Nonviolence) or during the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence (November 25 – December 10). For more info, please visit: 16dayscwgl.rutgers.edu/) or the World Interfaith Harmony Week (first week of February; for more info please visit: worldinterfaithharmonyweek.com/).
 - Hold a fundraising event to support a local faith-based peace, women’s or gender-justice group.
 - Organize a public panel, a demonstration, a festival or a film viewing to highlight the role of women within your religious tradition. Highlight women who work for peace, while gaining strength from their faith in doing so. Discuss with women and men activists the work they are doing in collaboration with others and individually. Invite women decision makers and women leaders from different ethnic and religious groups as well as women entrepreneurs to speak about the role

- of women in stopping violence. Invite male speakers to talk about gender justice and what they are doing to support women's empowerment and gender justice.
- Organize a dinner for May 24 and invite women and men from your religious tradition in your community to share their experiences.
 - If you are working on (inter)faith-based peacebuilding, women's rights or gender justice, consider inviting a young person to come and work on your project for six months as an intern. Look for a grant to provide them with a stipend and housing. Consider sending someone from your group to live and work with an organization abroad that is working on those issues in order to learn and gain experience. Think especially about the learning experience this would create for young women and men activists.
 - Issue a statement or press release or write a letter to the editor of your favorite newspaper or magazine, to mark May 24, the International Women's Day for Peace and Disarmament. Call for more attention to be given to what women (of faith) are doing for peace.
 - Issue a press release rating your legislators on their efforts to implement UNSCR 1325, 1820, 1888 and 1889, and 1960.

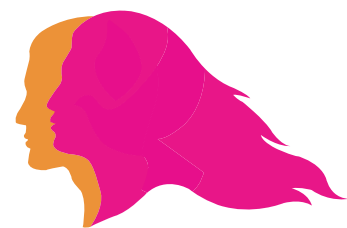
Make use of interactive media and communication!

- Use Internet search engines such as Google or Scroogle to find more resources on feminist interpretations of scriptures, female religious leaders, peacebuilding, active nonviolence, and gender justice.
- Register for online discussion forums on feminist interpretations of scriptures, female religious leaders, peacebuilding, active nonviolence, and gender justice. Find them for instance via Google or Yahoo Groups.
- Start a group or cause on Facebook to raise awareness about the issues in your community. Always remind the members in your group or cause to consider issues of confidentiality or security when being on or becoming part of Facebook. Information that is posted online, remains online.
- Create your own online discussion, social networking forum or support group, for instance via *www.ning.com*. Women and men faith-based peace activists could share their stories there, and exchange best practices on their work. Do not forget to include clear rules on proper engagement on your forum.
- Share important issues that play in your community via Twitter. Again, remind people of confidentiality issues.
- Write letters and emails of support to the groups profiled in this year's Pack on May 24, to express your solidarity for their work. Ask others to join you via email.

- Twin your group or network with a women's, men's or faith-based gender-justice and/or peace group somewhere else in the world. Exchange emails or talk to them via Skype to learn more about what they are doing for peace in their countries. Inform your own networks and/or the media about their work.
- Create a website about what women, men and faith-based gender-justice activists are doing for peace and gender justice in your community. Link your website to ones listed in this Pack.
- Develop songs, exhibitions or forms of drama or theater to visualize the issues you are working on. Make a film/video documentary about faith-based peacebuilding and gender justice. Pay attention to what the women and men activists are doing (both as individual groups and in collaboration with others) about those issues and share it, for example via YouTube.



2011 International Directory of Organizations



The following includes a global list of organizations specifically working for (faith-based and interfaith-based) peacebuilding and gender justice. It is not fully comprehensive: we are aware that there are many more groups and organizations that are working on peacebuilding, on the eradication of violence and on gender justice. Please contact IFOR's WPP Information Officer, José de Vries (j.devries@ifor.org), for additions or corrections.

INTERNATIONAL



IFOR Women Peacemakers Program (WPP)

Spoorstraat 38
1815 BK Alkmaar, Netherlands
Tel: +31 72 512 3014
Fax: +31 72 515 1102
Email: j.devries@ifor.org
Web: www.ifor.org/WPP

International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA)

Development House
56-64, Leonard Street
London, EC2A 4LT, United Kingdom
Tel: + 44 207 065 0870
Fax: + 44 207 065 0871
Web: www.iansa.org/

International Peace Bureau

41, rue de Zurich
1201 Geneva, Switzerland
Tel: +41 22 731 6429
Fax: +41 22 738 9419
Email: mailbox@ipb.org
Web: www.ipb.org

International Women's Tribune Centre

777 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017, USA
Tel: +1 212 687 8633
Fax: +1 212 661 2704
Email: iwtc@iwtc.org
Web: www.iwtc.org/

Nobel Women's Initiative

1 Nicholas St. Suite 430
Ottawa, ON, K1N 7B7, Canada
Tel: +1 613 569 8400
Fax: +1 613 691 1419
Email: info@nobelwomensinitiative.org
Web: www.nobelwomensinitiative.org/

NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security

777 UN Plaza, 7th floor
New York, NY 10017, USA
Tel: +1 212 557 7298
Email: info@womenpeacesecurity.org
Web: www.womenpeacesecurity.org

MenEngage Alliance

Tel/Fax: +55 21 2544 3114
Email: menengage@menengage.org
Web: www.menengage.org/

Men's Story Project

Email: josie@mensstoryproject.org
Web: www.mensstoryproject.org/

War Resisters' International Women's Working Group

5 Caledonian Rd.
London, N1 9DX, United Kingdom
Tel: +44 20 7278 4040
Fax: +44 20 7278 0444
Email: info@wri-irg.org
Web: www.wri-irg.org/wwghome.htm

Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP)

NP International Office
205 Rue Belliard
1040 Brussels, Belgium
Tel: +32 2 648 0076
Email: Europe@nonviolentpeaceforce.org

Promundo

Rua México, 31/1502
Centro Rio de Janeiro
RJ Cep. 20031-904 Brazil
Tel/Fax: +55 (21) 2544 3114
Email: promundo@promundo.org.br
Web: www.promundo.org.br/

The Global Network of Women Peacebuilders

Email: gnwp@gnwp.org
Web: www.gnwp.org/

White Ribbon Campaign

365 Bloor St. East, Suite 203
Toronto, ON M4W 3L4, Canada
Tel: +1 416 920 6684
Fax: +1 416 920 1678
Email: info@whiteribbon.ca
Web: www.whiteribbon.ca/

Women for Women International

Women for Women International, US Office
4455 Connecticut Ave NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20008, USA
Tel: +1 202 737 7705
Fax: +1 202 737 7709
Web: www.womenforwomen.org/

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)

1, rue de Varembe,
C.P. 28
1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland
Tel: +41 22 919 70 80
Fax: +41 22 919 70 81
Email: inforequest@wilpf.ch
Web: www.wilpf.int.ch
(Contact WILPF for a complete list of national sections)

Women Living under Muslim Laws – Africa & Middle East Coordination Office

Groupe de Recherche sur les Femmes et les Lois au
Senegal (GREFELS)
P.O. Box 5330
Fann, Dakar, Senegal
Email: codou.bop@gmail.com

Women Living under Muslim Laws – Asia Coordination Office

Shirkat Gah Women's Resource Centre
P.O. Box 5192
Lahore, Pakistan
Email: sgah@sgah.org.pk
Web: www.shirkatgah.org

Women Living under Muslim Laws – International Coordination Office

P.O. Box 28445
London, N19 5NZ, United Kingdom
Email: wluml@wluml.org
Web: www.wluml.org



AFGHANISTAN

Afghan Women's Network

House#22, Street#1, 2nd part of kartai parwan,
Kabul, Afghanistan
Tel: +93 700 28 65 98
Email: awn.kabul@gmail.com

Revolutionary Association of Women of Afghanistan

P.O. Box 374
Quetta, Pakistan
Tel: +92 30055 41258
Email: rawa@rawa.org
Web: www.rawa.org

ARGENTINA

Madres de Plaza de Mayo

Hipólito Yrigoyen 1584
1089 Buenos Aires, Argentina
Tel: +54 4383 0377/6430
Fax: +54 4954 0381
Web: www.madres.org

AUSTRALIA

Women for Peace

P.O. Box 2111
Lygon Street North, Brunswick East,
Melbourne 3057, Australia
Tel: +61 3 9387 6490,
Email: womenforpeace@live.com.au
Web: www.womenforpeace.org.au

AUSTRIA

Frauen für den Frieden

Luis Zuegg Str. 14
6020 Innsbruck, Austria

BARBADOS

Women and Development Unit

Elaine Hewitt
c/o University of West Indies
Cave Hill Campus, St. Michael, Barbados
Tel: +1 809 436 6312
Fax: +1 809 436 3006

BELGIUM

Rassemblement des Femmes pour la Paix (RFP)

Coordination Femmes OSCE
Rue Antoine Dansaert 101
BP 15, 1000 Brussels, Belgium
Tel: +32 2 512 6498
Fax: +32 2 502 3290

BOUGAINVILLE

Bougainville Inter Church Women's Forum

P.O. Box 209,
Buka, Bougainville
Tel: +675 973 9983/9157
Email: bicwif@dg.com.pg

BURMA

Burmese Women's Union

P.O. Box 42
Mae Hong Son 58000, Burma
Tel/Fax: +66 53 611 146/612 361
Email: bwumain@cscoms.com

Shan Women's Action Network

P.O. Box 120, Phrasing Post Office
50250 Chiang Mai, Thailand
Web: www.shanwomen.org

Women's League of Burma

Email: wlb@womenofburma.org
Web: www.womenofburma.org

BURUNDI

Association des Femmes Burundaises pour la Paix

Deputé à l'Assemblée Nationale
P.O. Box 5721,
Bujumbura, Burundi
Tel: +257 223 619
Fax: +257 223 775

Fontaine-ISOKO

Boulevard de l'UPRONA, N° 12,
Tel: +257 22 24 76 67; +257 79 958 551/582 885
Email: fontaine_isoko@yahoo.fr
Web: www.fontaine-isoko.webs.com

CAMBODIA

Alliance for Conflict Transformation

#69 Sothearos Blvd, Tonle Bassac, Chamkarmorn
(postal address): P.O. Box 2552,
Phnom Penh 3, Cambodia
Tel/Fax: +855 23 217 830
Email: info@act.org.kh
Web: www.act.org.kh/

Cambodian Men's Network

Facilitated by the male staff of Gender and Development
for Cambodia
#89, Street 288, Sangkat Olympic, Khan Chamkarmorn
P.O. Box 2684,
Phnom Penh, Cambodia
Tel: +855 (23) 215 137
Fax: +855 (23) 996 934
Email: gad@online.com.kh
Web: www.gad.org.kh



SILAKA

P.O. Box 821,
#6S, Street 21, Sangkat Tonle Bassac, Khan Chamkarmon,
Phnom Penh, Cambodia
Tel: +855 23 217 872/210 902
Fax: +855 23 213 108
Email: silaka@silaka.org
Web: www.silaka.org

CANADA

Gender and Peacebuilding Working Group

c/o Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee
1 Nicholas St., no. 1216
Ottawa, ON, K1N 7B7, Canada
Tel: +1 613 241 3446
Fax: +1 613 241 4846
Web: www.peacebuild.ca/work-groups-gender-pb-e.php

Voice of Women for Peace

761 Queen St. W, Suite 203
Toronto, ON, M6J 1G1, Canada
Tel: +1 416 603 7915
Fax: +1 416 603 7916
Email: info@vowpeace.org
Web: vowpeace.org/cms/Home.aspx

CHAD

Union des Femmes pour la Paix

BP 1298, N'Djamena, Chad
Tel: +235 514 925

COLOMBIA

Fundacion Mujer Arte y Vida

“Escuela Política de Mujeres Pazíficas”
Carrera 24 A, No. 3-17
Barrio Miraflores, Cali, Colombia
Tel: +572 556 4378
Fax: +572 556 8428
Email: contacto@aullemosmujeres.org
Web: www.aullemosmujeres.org

Organización Femenina Popular

Carrera 22, No. 52B - 36
Barrancabermeja, Santander, Colombia
Tel: +7 6226625/6214501
Email: femenina@colnodo.apc.org Este e-mail está protegido contra robots de spam, necesita habilitar el Javascript de su navegador para poder verlo.
Web: www.ofp.org.co/

Ruta Pacifica

Web: <http://www.rutapacificafica.org.co/home.html>

CONGO

Comité National des Femmes pour la Paix

BP 2041, Brazzaville, Congo
Tel: +242 831 201
Fax: +242 833 421

CROATIA

Ecumenical Women's Initiative EWI

Poljicki trg 2a
21310 Omis, Croatia
Tel: + 385 21 862 599
Fax: + 385 21 757 085
Email: ewsf@ewsf.hr

CYPRUS

Women's Research Centre

19, Necmi Avkiran Street
Lefkosa, Nicosia, Cyprus
Tel: +90 392 22 75407
Fax: +90 392 22 83823
Email: sevgululudag@hotmail.com

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Mouvement des Femmes pour la Justice et la Paix

BP 724 Limete,
Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo

Perex-C

Address: Avenue Masisi N°2, commune Kimemi
Ville de Butembo
Province du Nord Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo
Tel: +243 39977 87925
Email: duniakatembo@yahoo.fr



DENMARK

Fonden Kvinder for Fred

c/o Vibeke Aagaard
Slippen 3 st
2791 Dragør, Denmark
Tel: +45 3253 4002

Kvindemes Internationale Liga for Fred og Frihed (WILPF)

Vesterbrogade 10, 2.
1620 Copenhagen V, Denmark
Tel: +45 3623 1097
Fax: +45 3623 1097
Email: wilpf-dk@wilpf.dk
Web: www.kvindefredsliga.dk

EAST TIMOR

Forum Komunikasi Perempuan Loro Sae (Communication Forum for East Timorese Women)

Rua Governador Celestino da Silva, Jl. Sevpa Rosa No. 27,
Farol Dili, East Timor (via Darwin, Australia)
Tel: +670 390 32 15 34
Email: fokupers@fokupers.minihub.org

EL SALVADOR

Conamus (National Coordinating Committee of Women in El Salvador)

Postal 3262, Centro de Gobierno
San Salvador, El Salvador
Tel/Fax: +503 274 0080

FIJI

Media Initiatives for Women

P.O. Box 2439 Government Buildings
Suva, Fiji Islands
Tel. +679 331 6290
Email: femlinkpac@connect.com.fj
Web: www.womensmediapool.org/grupos/femlink.htm

Pacific Centre for Peacebuilding (PCP)

17 Komo Street, Samabula,
G.P.O. Box 18167,
Suva, Fiji Islands
Tel: +679 368 1219
Fax: +679 368128 1146
Email: info@pcpfiji.com
Web: www.pcpfiji.org/

FINLAND

Women for Peace

Metsäpolku 10,
02460 Kantvik, Finland
Tel: +358 9 298 5324
Fax: +358 9 298 2301
Email: lea.rantanen@jopiarvio.fi

GHANA

Mothers for Active Nonviolence (MOFAN)

P.O. Box AC302,
Arts Centre, Accra, Ghana
Tel: +233 21 853 342
Email: mothersforactivenonviolenceghana@yahoo.co.uk
Web: www.mofanv.org/index.php

WPP Africa Regional Desk

West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP)
P. O. Box CT 4434
Cantonments, Accra, Ghana
Tel. +233 21 221 318
Fax +233 21 221 735
Email: edzathor@wanep.org
Web: www.wanep.org/wpp/

GERMANY

Arbeitsgemeinschaft Friedenspädagogik

Waltherstr. 22
80337 München, Germany
Tel: +49 89 6 51 82 22
Fax: +49 89 66 86 51
Email: info@agfp.de
Web: www.agfp.de

Frauennetzwerk für Frieden e.V.

Dr. Werner-Schuster-Haus
Kaiserstr. 201
53113 Bonn, Germany
Tel: +49 228 62 67 30
Fax: +49 228 62 67 80
Email: fn.frieden@t-online.de or
info@frauennetzwerk-fuer-frieden.de
Web: www.frauennetzwerk-fuer-frieden.de

International Women's Peace Archive

Lothringer Str. 64
46045 Oberhausen, Germany



GREECE

Women for Mutual Security

1, Romilias Str.
14671 Kastri, Athens, Greece
Tel: +30 1 62 30830
Fax: +30 1 80 12850

GUATEMALA

Conavigua

8a. Avenida 2-29 Zona 1
Guatemala Ciudad, Guatemala
Tel: +502 232 5642
Email: conavigua@guate.net
Web: www.members.tripod.com/conavigua

ICELAND

Women for Peace

Hofsvallagata 17,
101 Reykjavik, Iceland

INDIA

AAKAR

A-19, Gulmohar park,
New Delhi, India
Tel: +91 11 26515161/41640681
Email: rahulroy63@gmail.com

EKTA

Bethel Nagar, Bible Bhawan Street
Ponmeni, Bypass Road
Madurai 625010, India
Tel: +91 452 238 1309
Email: bimla_ekta@yahoo.com

Forum To Engage Men (FEM)

Facilitation Offices:
CHSJ
3C, H Block, Saket,
New Delhi, India
Tel: +91 11 4051 7478/2651 1425
Email: satish@chsj.org

Men's Action for Stopping Violence against Women (MASVAW)

MASVAW Secretariat
C/o SAHAYOG
A-240 Indira Nagar,
Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, 226016, India
Tel: +91 522 234 1319; +91 522 231 0747/0860
Fax: +91 522 234 1319
Email: masvaw@sahayogindia.org or
satish@sahayogindia.org

SAHAYOG

A-240 Indira Nagar
Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, 226016, India
Phone: +91 522 234 1319; +91 522 231 0747/0860
Fax: +91 522 234 1319
Email: kritirc@sahayogindia.org
Web: www.sahayogindia.org/

SAMYAK Communication and Resource Centre

B 3/14, Damodar Nagar
Hingne Khurd, Singhgad Road,
Pune, Maharashtra 411051, India
Tel: +91 985 051 6237
Web: www.samyakindia.org

Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace

Core 4 A, UGF
India Habitat Centre
Lodhi Road, New Delhi 110 003
Tel: +91 11 2464 8450
Fax: +91 11 2464 8451
Email: wiscomp2006@gmail.com
Web: www.wiscomp.org

INDONESIA

Lathifa Foundation

Jln. Gunung Leuser
Blok B no. 05 Perumahan
persahabatan
Indonesia-Tiongkok
Aceh Besar 23381, Indonesia
Tel: +62 651 32231
Fax: +62 651 32231
Email: metalathifa@yahoo.com
Web: www.lathifafoundation.org



LBH APIK

Jl. Raya Tengah No.31 Rt. 01/09, Kramatjati,
Jakarta Timur 13540, Indonesia
Tel: +21 8779 7289
Fax: +21 8779 3300
Email: apiknet@centrin.net.id
Web: www.lbh-apik.or.id/

ISRAEL

Bat Shalom

P.O. Box Bat Shalom 2426
Jerusalem 91023, Israel
Tel: +972 2 624 5699/+972 77 344 366
Fax: +972 77 344 3660
Email: info@batshalom.org
Web: www.batshalom.org

New Profile

P.O. Box 3454
Ramat Hasharon 47100, Israel
Tel: +972 3 516 0119
Email: info@newprofile.org
Web: www.newprofile.org/

Parents Circle Families Forum

Israeli Office:
Hayasmin 1 St.
Ramat-Efal 52960, Israel
Tel: +972 3 535 5089 +972(3)5355089 end_of_the_skype_...
highlighting
Fax: +972 3 635 8367
Email: contact@theparentscircle.org

ITALY

Donne per la Pace e il Disarmo

Casella postale 713
36100 Vicenza, Italy
Tel: +39 444 500 457

JAPAN

Okinawa Women Act Against Military Violence

3-29-41-402 Kumoji, Naha shi
Okinawa 900-0015, Japan
Tel/Fax: +81 98 864 1539
Email: space-yui@nirai.ne.jp

Violence Against Women in War-Network, Japan

poste restante, Bunkyo-Kasuga Post Office
1-16-21, Kasuga, Bunkyo-ku
Tokyo 112-0003, Japan
Tel/Fax: +81 3 3818 5903
Email: vaww-net-japan@jca.apc.org
Web: www.jca.apc.org/vaww-net-japan

KENYA

Chemchemi Ya Ukweli (CYU)

P.O. Box 14370
Nairobi 00800, Kenya
Tel: +254 20 444 6970/444 2294
Fax: +254 20 444 4023
Web: www.chemichemi.org/

Men for Gender Equality Now

Web: www.megenkenya.org/

KOREA (SOUTH)

Korean Council for Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan

Email: wnw@womenandwar.net
Web: www.womenandwar.net/index.php

KYRGYZSTAN

Women's Association for Environmental Safety and Nuclear Peace

ul. Turusbekova, d. 89,
720001, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
Tel: +3312 218 335
Fax: +3312 219 615
Email: chopon@dyikan.Bishkek.su

LEBANON

Permanent Peace Movement

7th Floor Salibi Tower, Mkalles,
P.O. Box 166492
Beirut, Lebanon
Tel/Fax: +961 1 501 516
Email: info@ppm-lebanon.org
Web: www.ppm-lebanon.org/



The Forum for Development, Culture & Dialogue (FDCD)

170 Al-Alam St., Khayat Building, 7th floor
Herch Kfoury, Badaro
Beirut, Lebanon
Tel: 961 1 390 133
Fax: +961 1 399 608
Email: fdcd@cyberia.net.lb

LIBERIA

Liberian Women's Initiative

11 Broad Street, P.O. Box 1063,
Monrovia, Liberia
Tel: +231 227 095

MACEDONIA

Journalist for children's and women's rights and the environment

JCWE Venjamin Macukovski 2A-3/16,
1000 Skopje, Macedonia
Tel/Fax: +3892 461 322/246 1308
Email: detstvo@detstvo.org.mk
Web: www.detstvo.org.mk/

Union of Women's Organizations of Republic of Macedonia (UWOM)

str. Vasil Gjorkov bb, P.O. Box 571,
1000 Skopje, Macedonia
Tel: +389 2 3134 390
Fax: +389 2 3238 184
Email: sozm@mt.net.mk
Web: www.sozm.org.mk

MALAYSIA

The Asian-Pacific Resource & Research Centre for Women (ARROW)

No. 1 & 2, Jalan Scott
50470 Brickfields,
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Tel: 603 2273 9913/9914
Fax: 603 2273 9916
Email: arrow@arrow.org.my

Sisters in Islam

No. 7, Jalan 6/10,
46000 Petaling Jaya
Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia
Tel: +603 7785 6121
Fax: +603 7785 8737
Email: sistersinislam@pd.jaring.my
Web: www.sistersinislam.org.my

MALI

Mouvement National des Femmes pour la Sauvegarde de la Paix et de l'Unité Nationale

B.P.E 879, Bamako, Mali
Tel: +22 68 91
Fax: +22 47 31

MOZAMBIQUE

Muherez Mocambicanas

pela Paz
C.P. 257, Maputo, Mozambique
Tel/Fax: +258 1 428 140

NAMIBIA

Sister Namibia Collective

P.O. Box 40092
Windhoek, Namibia
Tel: +264 61 230 618
Fax: +264 61 236 371
Email: sister@iafrica.com.na

NEPAL

Institute of Human Rights Communication Nepal (IHRICON)

P.O. Box 5188,
Thapathali, Kathmandu, Nepal
Phone: +977 1 425 3943
Fax: +977 1 421 6148
Email: ihricon@mos.com.np
Web: www.ihricon.org.np

Mahila Bikash Samaj (Women Development Society)

P.O. Box 5840, Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel: +977 1 271 794
Fax: +977 1 270 396
Email: wodes@shova.mos.com.np



NETHERLANDS

Multicultural Women Peacemakers Network

Wibautstraat 150-III,
1091 GR Amsterdam, Netherlands
Tel: +31 35 685 7000
Email: mcwpm@chello.nl

Platform Vrouwen en Duurzame Vrede (VDV)

Web: www.nederlandsevrouwenraad.nl/html/index.php?alinealD=461

Vrouwen voor Vrede

Leusderweg 215
3818 AD Amersfoort
(postal address): Postbus 963,
3800 AZ Amersfoort, Netherlands
Email: vrouwenvoorvrede@antenna.nl
Web: www.vrouwenvoorvrede.nl

WO=MEN, Dutch Gender Platform

Plein 9
2511 CR The Hague, Netherlands
Tel: +31 70 311 88 07
Fax: +31 70 356 14 96
Email: info@wo-men.nl
Web: www.wo-men.nl

NEW ZEALAND/AOTEAROA

Women's Peace Network

c/o Peace Movement Aotearoa
P.O. Box 9314,
Wellington, New Zealand
Tel. +64 4 382 8129
Fax +64 4 382 8173
Email: pma@xtra.co.nz

NICARAGUA

Puntos de Encuentro

Rotonda de Plaza España
4 cuadras al Oeste y 1 cuadra al Norte
Managua, Nicaragua
Tel: +505 2268 1227
Fax: +505 2266 6305
Email: puntos@puntos.org.ni
Web: www.puntos.org.ni

NORTHERN IRELAND

Women Together for Peace
62 Lisburn Rd
Belfast BT9, Northern Ireland
Tel: +44 1232 315 100
Fax: +44 1232 314 864

NORWAY

Kvinner for Fred

v/Bergljot Haave
Romolslia 12c
7029 Trondheim, Norway
Tel/fax: Tulle Elster +47 33 47 38 75
Email: kvinnerforfred@peacelink.nu
Web: www.peacelink.nu/KFF/index.html

PAKISTAN

Just Peace International

Hassan Street, House # T 772 (Near V.I.P Guest house)
Old Bara Road
Peshawar, Pakistan
Tel: +92 91 5703786
Email: justpeacemail@gmail.com
Web: www.justpeaceint.org

Rozan

Plot 11, Street 15, APWA Building, Sector G-7/2
P.O. Box 2237
Islamabad 44000, Pakistan
Tel: +92 51 2890505-7
Fax: +92 51 2890508
Email: info@rozan.org
Web: www.rozan.org

PALESTINE

Jerusalem Center for Women

Sbeih Building, 2nd floor,
P.O. Box 21929
Beit Hanina; Main Street
East Jerusalem 51630, Palestine
Tel: +972 2 656 8532/4
Fax: +972 2 656 8291
Email: info@j-c-w.org
Web: www.j-c-w.org



Palestinian Centre for Peace and Democracy

Tel: +972 2 296 5981
Fax: +972 2 296 5983
Email: info@pcpd.org

Wi'am Palestinian Conflict Resolution Center

Jerusalem Hebron Road,
Old Sansour Bldg.
P.O. Box 1039
Bethlehem, Palestine
Tel: +970 2 277 0513
Fax: +970 2 277 7333
Email: hope@alastah.org
Web: www.alastah.org/

Parents Circle Families Forum

(Palestinian Office)

Jamal Abed Al-Nasser St. # 13

Jerusalem - Al-Ram, Palestine
Tel: +2 2344554, +2 2344774
Fax: 02-2344553
Email: alquds@theparentscircle.org
Web: www.theparentscircle.com

RUSSIA

Committee of Soldiers' Mothers

4 Luchnikov per 4, entr. 3, rm. 5
Moscow 101000, Russia
Tel: +7 95 928 2506
Fax: +7 95 206 0923
Email: ucsmr1989@yahoo.com
Web: www.ucsmr.ru

Soldiers' Mothers of St. Petersburg

Ul. Razjzaya 9
191002 Saint Petersburg, Russia
Tel/Fax +7 812 112 4199/5058
Email: soldiersmothers@yandex.ru

RWANDA

Pro-Femmes Twese Hamwe

28, rue Député Kayuku, P.O. Box 2362,
Kigali, Rwanda
Tel/Fax: +250 72750
Email: profemme@rwanda1.com
Web: www.profemme.org.rw

Rwanda Men's Resource Centre

Avenue de la Justice, P.O. Box 4743
Kigali, Rwanda
Email: info@rwamrec.org
Web: www.rwamrec.org/

SIERRA LEONE

Women's Movement for Peace

P.O. Box 220, 18 Gloucester St.
Freetown, Sierra Leone
Tel: +232 222283

SOMALIA

Save Somali Women and Children

ABC Building, 2nd & 3rd Floor
Via Aden Adde, Hawl-Wadaag
Mogadishu, Somalia
Tel: +252 1 655199
Email: sswc@iconnect.co.ke

SOUTH AFRICA

African Women's Anti-War Coalition

P.O. Box 30653
Braamfontein, Johannesburg 2107, South Africa
Tel: +27 11 403 3910
Email: anu@sn.apc.org

All Africa Women for Peace

P.O. Box 11002
Maroelana 0161, Pretoria, South Africa
Tel: +27 12 346 4659
Fax: +27 12 460 3962
Email: aawp@sn.apc.org

Sonke Gender Justice | Cape Town

4th Floor Westminster House
122 Longmarket Street,
Cape Town 8001, South Africa
Tel: +27 21 423 7088
Fax: + 27 21 424 5645



Sonke Gender Justice | Johannesburg

Sabel Centre, 16th floor, 41 De Korte Street
P.O. Box 31166
Braamfontein, Johannesburg 2017, South Africa
Tel: + 27 11 339 3589
Fax: +27 11 339 6503
Email: info@genderjustice.org.za
Web: www.genderjustice.org.za

SPAIN

Dones X Dones

Ca la Dona
Casp, 38, pral.
08010 Barcelona, Spain
Tel: + 934127161

Red Mujeres de Negro (Women in Black)

Nodo50. Apdo. 7299
28080 Madrid, Spain
Email: ayuda@nodo50.org
Web: www.nodo50.org

SWEDEN

Kvinna till Kvinna

Slakthusplan 3
SE-12162 Johanneshov, Sweden
Tel: +46 8 588 89100
Email: info@kvinnatillkvinna.se
Web: www.iktk.se

The Swedish Ecumenical Women's Council (SEK)

Operation 1325
Hammarby allé 93 4 tr
SE-12063 Stockholm, Sweden
Tel: +46 8 676 0509
Email: info@operation1325.se
Web: www.operation1325.se/en

Men for Gender Equality

National Office
Klara Södra Kyrkogata 20
SE-11152 Stockholm, Sweden
Tel: +46 8 178 200
Web: www.mfj.se

SWITZERLAND

Christlicher Friedensdienst

Falkenhöheweg 8
P.O. Box 5761
CH 3001 Bern, Switzerland
Tel: +41 31 300 5060
Fax: +41 31 300 5069
Email: info@cf-d.ch
Web: www.cf-d.ch

Femmes Africa Solidarité

8 rue du Vieux-Billard
P.O. Box 5037
CH 1211 Geneva 11, Switzerland
Tel: +41 22 328 8050
Fax: +41 22 328 8052
Email: info@fasngo.org
Web: www.fasngo.org

Frauen für den Frieden

Huzlenstrasse 34
CH 8604 Volketswil, Switzerland
Tel.: +41 44 945 0725
Fax: +41 44 945 0726
Email: sekretariat@frauenfuerdenfrieden.ch
Web: www.frauenfuerdenfrieden.ch

World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC)

150 route de Ferney,
P.O. Box 2100
CH 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland
Tel: +41 22 791 6240
Fax: +41 22 791 6505
Email: wrcr@wrcr.ch
Web: www.oikoumene.org/en/home.html

World Council of Churches

150 route de Ferney
P.O. Box 2100
CH 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland
Tel: +41 22 791 6111
Fax: +41 22 791 0361



THAILAND

International women's Partnership for Peace and Justice (IWP)

PO Box 3,
Mae Rim,
Chiang Mai 50180, Thailand
Tel: +66 53 376 103
Email: info@womenforpeaceandjustice.org
Web: www.womenforpeaceandjustice.org/

TIBET

Tibetan Women's Association

Bhagsunath Road
P.O. McLeod Ganj
Dharamsala 176219,
Dist. Kangra (HP), India
Tel: +91 1892 221 527/198
Fax: +91 1892 221 528
Email: twat@tibetanwomen.org
Web: www.tibetanwomen.org

UGANDA

Teso Women Peace Activists (TEWPA)

Plot 47 Alanyu Road
P.O. Box 558
Soroti, Uganda
Tel: +256 45 263 387
Email: tesowomen@yahoo.com

UNITED KINGDOM

Widows for Peace through Democracy

36 Faroe Road
Shepherds Bush
London W14 OEP, United Kingdom
Email: info@widowsforpeace.org.uk

Women in Black UK

c/o Maypole Fund
P.O. Box 14072
London N16 5WB, United Kingdom
Email: WiBinfo@gn.apc.org
Web: www.womeninblack.org.uk

Women in Black Research on Feminist Antimilitarism:

Web: www.cynthiacockburn.org

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Berkley Center for Religion, Peace & World Affairs

3307 M Street, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20007, USA
Tel: +1 202 687 5119
Email: berkeleycenter@georgetown.edu
Web: www.berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/

Center for Religious Tolerance

520 Ralph Street,
Sarasota FL, 34242, USA
Tel: +1 941 312 9795
Email: info@c-r-t.org
Web: www.c-r-t.org/

Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions

70 East Lake Street, Suite 205
Chicago, IL 60601, USA
Tel: +1 312 629 2990
Fax: +1 312 629 2991
Web: <http://www.parliamentofreligions.org/>

Institute for Inclusive Security

625 Mount Auburn Street
Cambridge, MA 02138, USA
Tel: +1 617 995 1900
Fax: +1 617 995 1982
Email: information@huntalternatives.org

MADRE

121 West 27th St., no. 301
New York, NY 10001, USA
Email: madre@madre.org
Web: www.madre.org

Muslim Peace Fellowship

Email: mpfrth@gmail.com
Web: mpf21.wordpress.com

Religions for Peace – Global Women of Faith Network

777 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017, USA
Tel: +1 212 687 2163
Fax: +1 212 983 0098
Email: info@wcrp.org
Web: www.religionsforpeace.org/initiatives/women/



Shomer Shalom Institute for Jewish Nonviolence

17 Cricketown Road
Stonypoint, NY 10980, USA
Email: shomershalom@gmail.com
Web: shomershalom.org/

Tanenbaum Center for Interreligious Understanding

254 W. 31st Street, 7th floor
New York, NY 10001, USA
Tel: +1 212 967 7707
Fax: +1 212 967 9001
Email: info@tanenbaum.org
Web: www.tanenbaum.org/

Zimbabwe Council of Churches

128 Mbuyanehanda Street
P.O. Box 3566
Harare, Zimbabwe
Tel: +263 4 773 654
Fax: +263 4 773 650
Email: zccfin@africaonline.co.zw
Web: www.zcc.co.zw/

URUGUAY

SERPJA Uruguay

Joaquin Requina 1642
11200 Montevideo, Uruguay
Tel: + 598 2 408 5301
Web: www.serpaj.org.uy



ZIMBABWE

Padare/Enkundleni/Men's Forum on Gender

Number 6 Winchester Road,
P.O. Box 1524
Belvedere, Harare, Zimbabwe
Tel: +263 4 741498/778424; +263 913 022830
Email: padare.padare@gmail.com
or padareinfor@gmail.com
Web: www.padare.org.zw/

Women of Zimbabwe Arise

P.O. Box FM701
Famona, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe
Tel: +263 91 300 456
Email: info@wozazimbabwe.org
Web: www.wozazimbabwe.org

Women's Coalition Zimbabwe

9 Edmond Avenue,
Belvedere, Harare, Zimbabwe
Tel: +263 4 775 675; +263 912 295764/764668/966930
Email: coalition@zol.co.zw





IFOR WOMEN PEACEMAKERS PROGRAM

SPOORSTRAAT 38
1815 BK ALKMAAR
THE NETHERLANDS
WWW.IFOR.ORG/WPP

