

Overcoming Violence

Exploring Masculinities, Violence, and Peacebuilding



**Pilot Training of Trainers Cycle 2009–2010
Final Report of the First Training Block (2009)**



This publication, and the work of IFOR's Women Peacemakers Program in general, is made possible by a grant from the Netherlands' Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

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The Women Peacemakers Program (WPP) empowers women world-wide through gender-sensitive nonviolence training and education. 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 UN (Economic and Social Council) and has (had) six Nobel Peace Prize Laureates among its members.



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

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1 Executive Summary

This is the report of the first block of the 2009–2010 pilot Training of Trainers (ToT) cycle, entitled “Overcoming Violence: Exploring Masculinities, Violence, and Peacebuilding”. Organized by the Women Peacemakers Program (WPP) of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR), that first training block, which took place in early December 2009, brought together an international group of male peace activists.

Founded in 1919, IFOR is a 90-year-old international and interfaith peace movement of socially engaged citizens who commit themselves to active nonviolence as a way of life and as a means of transformation: personal, social, economic and political. Established in 1997 the WPP works to support and empower women peace activists and actively advocates the recognition of women’s experiences of war and conflict and the integration of a gender perspective in peacebuilding processes.

The WPP has been organizing Training-of-Trainers cycles for female peace activists since 2002. Women activists in the field repeatedly indicated that they lacked male supporters for their local peace work. In response, the WPP initiated a pilot ToT cycle for 19 male peace activists from 17 different countries in 2009. The first block of this pilot ToT took place from November 30 through December 11, 2009 in the Netherlands.

That first training block focused on the theory and practice of active nonviolence;¹ facilitation and group dynamics; participatory teaching methods; conceptualizing gender and diversity; leadership; women’s rights; important international instruments such as UN Security Council

Resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888 and 1889; an introduction to and analysis of masculinities; and lobbying and advocacy.

Upon returning home, each of the male participants was linked to a female support person (“ally”) from his own region and/or country who supports him in the development and implementation of his follow-up plan. The follow-up activity is meant as an opportunity to practice the skills and knowledge acquired during the first training block and to spread the vision of the ToT within the participant’s own network. It also serves as an opportunity for cross-gender dialogue and collaboration in which the complexities of gender inequalities and differences between male and female experiences and realities in a specific context can be exposed, challenged and transformed. Both the male trainee and the female ally receive continuous support from the WPP throughout this process.

The evaluation of the first block of training (2009) revealed that the participants highly valued the:

- connection to and sharing within an international male-only group;
- theories on active nonviolence (ANV) and gender-sensitive active nonviolence;
- theories on positive masculinities and their link to socialization processes;
- sharing of training tools and facilitation methodologies.

Overall the atmosphere in the group was rated as very good, with participants finding it easy to open up to each other and the trainers. The participants appreciated the opportunity to share and analyze issues (such as masculinities) in an almost all-male and multi-cultural setting. It was a unique opportunity for the majority of the participants. The participants emphasized the excellent teamwork between the trainers and the sensitivity of both for group dynamics.

¹ Nonviolence training looks at skills such as effective social mobilization, conflict analysis models, and case studies of successful counter movements such as the Gandhian movement in India and the civil rights movement in the USA.



In July 2010, the participants will return for the second training of this pilot ToT to consolidate their learning and to address further their training needs. This report will give an overview of the first block of the 2009–2010 pilot ToT cycle.



2 Introduction

IFOR's Women Peacemakers Program

Founded in 1919, the International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR) is a ninety-year-old international and interfaith peace movement of socially engaged citizens who commit themselves to active nonviolence as a way of life and as a means of transformation: personal, social, economic and political. IFOR's mission is to empower civil society through active nonviolence to promote cultures of peace based upon the values of tolerance, inclusion, cooperation and equality.

IFOR currently has 82 branches, groups and affiliates (BGA) in over 48 countries. The IFOR International Secretariat (IS) is based in Alkmaar, in the Netherlands, and serves to support the IFOR movement.

Established in 1997, IFOR's Women Peacemakers Program (WPP) works to support and empower women peace activists and actively advocates the recognition of women's experiences of war and conflict and the integration of a gender perspective in peacebuilding processes.

The WPP strongly believes that truly democratic structures and sustainable peace can only be achieved when women are equal partners in decision-making: "Without peace, development is impossible – and without women, neither peace nor development can take place."

The commitment of IFOR/WPP is to confront cultures of violence and build cultures of peace by:

- increasing women's involvement in peacebuilding and nonviolent conflict resolution through the provision of training and support for women's peace initiatives;
- actively contributing to self-reliant and sustainable women's peace CSOs;
- making women peace activists' voices heard by documenting their work;
- engendering the peace movement by mainstreaming gender within IFOR and providing gender training to organizations working for peace and reconciliation.

Through its activities, the WPP strives for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000), which reaffirms the importance of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and peacebuilding and stresses the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security.

The WPP advocates a gender perspective in peacebuilding and recognizes that it is crucial to consider ideas about masculinities and femininities when taking a gender perspective on peacebuilding.

Since 2002, the WPP has been training women activists in gender-sensitive active nonviolence, through its Training of Trainers Program (ToT). In 2003, the WPP started including sessions on "Masculinities" in its annual ToTs for women peacemakers, and those have been met with much enthusiasm.

Over the years, women trainees informed the WPP that while training and empowering women in the area of gender-sensitive peacebuilding was very important, it would not be enough on its own to change the practice of peacebuilding altogether. They repeatedly indicated that they lacked male supporters for their local peace work, as well as support from male colleagues within their own peace organizations and networks. In order to truly transform cultures of war and violence, they felt they needed to start working with male allies.

The WPP believes that training male peace activists in gender-sensitive active nonviolence is important to increase the involvement of men both in gender-sensitive peacebuilding and as allies with women in the fight against gender-based violence and gender inequality. Gender-sensitive male trainers can act as powerful role models for gender equality and are in a good position to reach out to other men.



The WPP also believes that awareness-raising about how people's ideas of masculinities and femininities play a role in war and violence is crucial to bring about transformative change in peacebuilding.

Therefore, the WPP has initiated a pilot ToT cycle entitled "Overcoming Violence: Exploring Masculinities, Violence, and Peacebuilding" for male peace activists. The first block of this pilot ToT cycle took place from November 30 through December 11, 2009 in the Netherlands and brought together 19 men from 17 different countries. In July 2010, the participants will return for the second training of this pilot ToT to consolidate their learning and to address further their training needs. This is a report on that first block of the pilot ToT cycle.



3 IFOR/WPP Training of Trainers

Lessons Learned

The WPP has been organizing Training of Trainers (ToT) cycles, for female activists since 2002. In general, the structure of the ToT cycles has always remained the same. The first training block brings together 14 women activists from various parts of the world and focuses on the following topics: the theory and practice of active nonviolence;² facilitation and group dynamics; participatory teaching methods; conceptualizing gender and diversity; leadership; women's rights; important international instruments such as UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325; an introduction to and analysis of masculinities; and lobbying and advocacy.

Upon returning home, the participants are expected to conduct a follow-up activity in which they implement the skills and knowledge they learned during the first block of the ToT. The WPP supports the implementation of those follow-up plans by providing seed funding as well as a support person who can give advice and feedback on the follow-up activity. After that, the participants return for the second block of the ToT training to consolidate their learning and address any further training needs.

Lessons Learned from the WPP's ToT Programs

In 2008, after it had been in existence for ten years, the WPP decided to organize a three-day expert consultation³ for a selection of fifteen ToT participants. The goals of that event were to deepen the understanding of the longer-term impact of the WPP's ToT cycle on women's work for peace and to strengthen the participants' analysis of the

impact of their own local work for peace. This consultation revealed that the ToT Program:

- increased the number of women who were active in peacebuilding;
- increased the number of female nonviolence trainers;
- contributed to the integration of a gender perspective in peacebuilding;
- increased the number of female role models;
- contributed to awareness-raising about UNSCR 1325.

It also highlighted a number of strong points of the WPP's ToT Program, such as the needs-based approach of the WPP's work, the framework of the ToT that requires the implementation of a follow-up plan, the participatory nature of the training sessions, and the provision of training materials and resources. It also noted the need for improved monitoring and evaluation in terms of the impact of activities that focus on women's empowerment for peace. Monitoring enhances the documentation and visibility of successes, which in turn can serve as inspiration for others working in this field.



² Nonviolence training looks at skills such as effective social mobilization, conflict analysis models, and case studies of successful counter movements such as the Gandhian movement in India and the civil rights movement in the USA.

³ The three-day consultation was documented in the activity report *Measuring the Impact of Women's Empowerment Training for Peace* and is available upon request.

4 Preparation and Development of the 2009–2010 Pilot ToT Cycle for Male Peace Activists

4.1 Rationale and objectives

Over the years, women participants had informed the WPP that while training and empowering women in the area of gender-sensitive peacebuilding was very important, it would not be enough on its own to transform the practice of peacebuilding altogether. They repeatedly indicated that they lacked male supporters for their local peace work, as well as support from male colleagues within their own peace organizations and networks and that they needed male supporters to be able to change cultures, policies and laws that discriminated against women at all levels. When those participants would raise the topic of gender, women from their communities would show interest, yet male interest was often lacking. In order to truly transform cultures of war and violence, they felt they needed to start working with male allies, who would support and advocate their work.

At the same time, however, women activists have also raised various concerns about involving men in women's empowerment work. Those revolve around the fear (sometimes backed-up by actual experience) of men taking over or hijacking the gender-equality agenda, leading to a decrease in the attention for women's rights and needs. There is also concern about increased competition for the scarce available resources and funding opportunities, with the risk of those resources being channeled away from women's organizations and women's rights work. Women activists also mention that male gender-justice activists might end up dominating the political spaces and professional positions that focus on gender-equality issues, for instance through the appointment of men as gender specialists at higher decision-making levels – where they would then take over the few spaces that are accessible to women. Some women activists fear that by appointing a man, women's voices and concerns will be silenced, forgotten or depoliticized at those levels. Concerns regarding the differences in recognition, respect and

status that women's and men's organizations receive for their gender-justice work are sometimes raised as well. Some feel that male activists acquire a higher status for the work they are doing than women activists.

The WPP also believes that awareness-raising about how people's ideas of masculinities and femininities play a role in war and violence is crucial to bring about transformative change in peacebuilding.

Considering both the risks and the potential benefits that involving men in its work could have, the WPP conducted a thorough analysis at the level of the objectives, input, output, outcome and impact of this ToT project. The overall objectives of the 2009–2010 pilot ToT cycle for male peace activists were defined as follows:

- to explore the concept of masculinities in relation to issues of violence and peace;
- to train male peacebuilders in gender-sensitive nonviolent peace-building;
- to create a pool of male gender-sensitive active nonviolence trainers who work together with women peacemakers on peacebuilding through gender-sensitive active nonviolence.

4.2 Framework of the pilot ToT cycle 2009 – 2010

In general, the pilot Training of Trainers cycle for male peace activists follows a structure similar to that of WPP's previous ToT cycles. Upon returning home from the first block of the ToT cycle, the male participant is linked to a female support person from his own region and/or country who will support him in the development and implementation of his follow-up plan. After a few months, the participant returns for the second block of the ToT cycle. Overall, the framework aims to support the creation of a pool of women and men working together as allies in



peacebuilding, through gender-sensitive active nonviolence.

The follow-up activity is meant as an opportunity to practice the skills and knowledge acquired during the first training block and to spread the vision of the ToT within the participant's own network. It also serves as an opportunity for cross-gender dialogue and collaboration, in which the complexities of gender inequalities and the differences between male and female experiences and realities in a specific context can be exposed, challenged and transformed.

WPP team members support both the female ally and the male participant with input and resources during the development and implementation of the follow-up plans.

4.3 Selection process for trainers

In the preparation phase of this pilot ToT cycle, the WPP made a thorough analysis of the expected advantages and disadvantages of different possible group settings (male only / female only / mixed) for the training team.

Considering a variety of factors, such as the expected role modeling of power sharing between a woman and a man, the expected role modeling of a male trainer, and the women's perspectives that the female trainer would be able to contribute within the pre-dominantly male training setting, the WPP decided to aim for selecting a male/female co-trainer team.

In early April 2009, the WPP sent out a Call for Applications for trainers. That confirmed the unique niche of the pilot project, as it proved quite challenging to find one trainer with expertise in all four key areas: peacebuilding, active nonviolence (ANV), gender, and masculinities. From the approximately 150 applications, we selected two trainers who, in combination, had the experience and skills required: Patricia Ackerman and Steven Botkin.

Patricia Ackerman has over 25 years' experience as an ANV activist and advocate in the areas of gender, anti-racism, and LGBTQ justice and has directed social-justice projects at the Fellowship of Reconciliation⁴ (FoR) in New York. Steven Botkin is the executive director of Men's Resources

International⁵ and has over 20 years of experience in leading workshops and training programs on masculinities and gender-based violence.

4.4 Selection process for participants

Just as it had done with an eye to the training team when preparing for the pilot ToT cycle, the WPP also made a thorough analysis of the expected advantages and disadvantages of different possible group settings (male only / female only / mixed) for the participant group.

As for the participants, the WPP decided to work with a male-only group whose members came from diverse backgrounds – in terms of religion, age, country and cultural background – and were expected to be in a position to spread the skills, knowledge and vision of the ToT within their own respective networks. One of the reasons the WPP opted for a male-only group was the expected “safe space” that such a group would form for the prospective participants – a space in which they would feel free to learn, develop and reflect, just as the various women trainees had had over the years of training that the WPP had carried out.

Considering that there would be participants from so many different cultures and backgrounds, the WPP realized that it could never be a “one-size-fits-all” ToT program. Some parts of the training would fit some of the participants and their particular backgrounds better than others. The WPP has therefore encouraged all the participants to share their feedback and ideas and contribute towards the development of the ToT process.

The WPP has always worked to support the empowerment of women as actors of change. This not only does justice to women but it also makes peacebuilding itself more sustainable and effective. Therefore, it was clear that the men we would be working with in the framework of the pilot ToT cycle would need to recognize, understand and value this as well.

Alongside the selection process of the trainers, a Call for Applications for male participants was distributed widely. An overwhelming response of approximately 300 high-quality applications from all over the world confirmed the

⁴ For more information, please visit: www.forusa.org/.

⁵ For more information, please visit: www.mensresourcesinternational.org/.



growing interest in the topic of masculinities and peacebuilding. Only complete applications – which besides the application form also included a one-page personal statement on how the applicant sees gender impacting the building of a culture of peace and the role of men in this process – were considered. Based on strict selection criteria – including existing skills, knowledge and experience in terms of peacebuilding, active nonviolence and gender, an indication of follow-up plans after the training, and the network the applicant is embedded in – 30 candidates were selected for further review. Since the WPP was aiming to work with a diverse group of men, their region of work and living, their age and their religious affiliation were also taken into account.

After a telephone interview – which included a further check of their motivation and their command of the English language – and a double reference check, 20 male participants were selected on the basis of their ability to spread the skills, knowledge and spirit of the ToT further within their own networks. All the selected participants are trainers themselves – some have expertise mainly in the area of gender, while others have more experience in the field of peacebuilding and/or active nonviolence.

Due to challenges in obtaining a visa, one man was unable to come to the Netherlands. In total, 19 men from 17 different countries and five different continents participated in this ToT: Burundi, Cambodia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Fiji Islands, Ghana, India, Ireland, Kenya, Lebanon, Liberia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

Nineteen men from 17 countries participated in WPP's ToT. Co-facilitators were Steven Botkin, front row, on left and Patricia Ackerman, second row, seated left. WPP Program Manager Isabelle Geuskens is seated in front row, far right; WPP Information Officer José de Vries is in front row, second from right.



5 Overview of the First Block of the ToT Cycle (2009)

5.1 Development of the curriculum

After the trainers were selected, telephone meetings and face-to-face meetings were scheduled to explain the WPP's ideas and exchange expectations about the pilot ToT cycle and to share the lessons learned from previous ToT cycles. A meeting also was set up between the new trainers for the 2009–2010 pilot ToT cycle and trainers from the previous ToT's so that the latter could share their experiences from those earlier ToT's, from a trainer's perspective.

Based on a needs assessment questionnaire that the selected participants filled in, the trainers – in close cooperation with the WPP team – developed the curriculum for the first block of the pilot ToT cycle.

The application form for the participants that the WPP had developed included various questions addressing the notion of diversity and the different ways of dealing with this on various levels. The diversity among the selected participants, and potential group dynamics as a consequence of that, were taken into account while developing the curriculum. Resource material was selected to guide the training and the participants' learning process.

To avoid working two weeks in a predominantly male-only setting, it was considered crucial to include women's experiences and perspectives related to peacebuilding various ways within the training. For instance, the male participants were asked to engage in a conversation with a group of women, prior to the training, to understand the women's situation in their communities better and to see in what ways women feel men could become better allies. The results of the surveys that the participants conducted with the women's groups were shared and discussed during the training.

Also during the training, awareness was raised about women's experiences in various ways, for instance through the

use of resource material, a visit to a conference focusing on women in war zones, the organization of a cross-gender dialogue session and by means of various exercises and discussions.

5.2 Monitoring, evaluation and documentation

The trainers developed – in close cooperation with the WPP – the following form of monitoring and evaluation for this first training block:

- Daily impression and feedback form
- Personal indicators of change
- Pre- and post-training survey
- Mid-training survey
- Final evaluation form.

The WPP decided to document this first training block cycle in various ways as well. Those included:

- having someone take notes during the training sessions;
- creating a space for the participants to share their individual experiences via the Internet and a blog (the blog can be read via: womenpeacemakers.blogspot.com/);
- creating a space for the participants to share on videotape their understanding of what it means to be a gender-sensitive male ally of women.

Guidelines for each method of documentation were developed by the WPP and shared with the participants and trainers before the pilot ToT began.

5.3 Resources

Upon arriving at the first training block of this ToT, all participants were provided with WPP training packages containing:



The WPP Training Handbook

This handbook was designed particularly for this training block and contained material on gender; introductions to and analyses of masculinities, male and female socialization processes, power and control, and feminisms; the theory and practice of active nonviolence; conflict resolution; facilitation and group dynamics; participatory teaching methods; women's rights; and important international instruments such as UN Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888 and 1889.

The handbook also included guidelines on the follow-up project, the male participant / female support person relationship, the use of the blog during the training, and IFOR's Gender Policy.

The WPP's ToT resource USB stick – Training Block 1

This tool contained relevant articles and publications relating to gender, women and peacebuilding in conflict and post-conflict situations, active nonviolence, the inclusion of men in fighting violence against women, militarism, sexual violence, and international human rights instruments.

Audiovisual material and books on gender, women, peace and security and active nonviolence

This material included: *Handbook for Nonviolent Campaigns* (published by War Resisters' International), *The Power of the Media: A Handbook for Peacebuilders* (edited by Ross Howard, Francis Rolt, Hans van de Veen and Juliette Verhoeven) and the DVD *Tough Guise: Violence, Media & the Crisis in Masculinity* by Jackson Katz.

5.4 Overview Training Days

The program for the first block of the pilot ToT cycle (2009) was developed by the trainers in close cooperation with the WPP staff. Please find below an overview of each training day.

5.4.1 November 30: Introductions

Summary of the 1st training day:

The 1st training day was used for introductions of IFOR's WPP, the trainers and the participants, as well as the content of the 12-day training block. Guidelines for group interactions were agreed upon and key concepts were briefly discussed.

All but a few of the participants arrived in the Netherlands on November 29. Upon arrival, the participants were provided with the training packages containing the ToT handbook to guide the training, a USB stick containing relevant articles and publications, a number of books on women, peace and security and active nonviolence, and audiovisual materials.

On the first training day, the WPP formally welcomed all the participants and explained the WPP's reasons for organizing this ToT for male activists only. It was shared that the development of the ToT had been and would continue to be a process of ongoing reflection and sharing of perspectives and experiences, aimed at meeting the each participant's training needs. The participants were encouraged to shape the ToT content according to their own context and to share critical feedback, daring ideas and innovative approaches with the trainers and the WPP.

After the introductions, an overview of the training program, its methodologies, and the evaluation and documentation methods was discussed, with specific attention given to including women's experiences within the training.



The group agreed on guidelines for group interactions including: listening, having respect for different opinions, trying to understand the other and creating space to be able to disagree, maintaining confidentiality, keeping time, respecting diversities, being sensitive to different cultures and manners of dealing with things across those different cultures, avoiding stereotyping and the use of terminology that is blaming, showing compassion and support towards the other group members, maintaining a sense of humor, and practicing self-care.

Key concepts such as identity, gender, sex, transgender, intersectionalities, gender-based violence, and violence and nonviolence were introduced and briefly discussed.

5.4.2 December 1: Gender and masculinities

Summary of the 2nd training day:

The 2nd training day focused on the cross-cultural perspectives on what it means to be a “real man”, on masculinities and on the socialization processes through which boys and girls, men and women learn that. The consequences of living up (or not) to societal expectations as to how men should behave were analyzed, cross-culturally. The complexities of men – including the need for recognition of dominant as well as vulnerable aspects of male behavior, power issues and men’s relationship to violence were discussed. The training day concluded with a focus on positive aspects of masculinities. In the evening, participants who were interested could view the documentary “Pray the Devil back to Hell”.

Active nonviolence and common ground

The 2nd training day started with an opening session led by one of the participants. The theme was suffering, in relation to the Christian theology, which led to a discussion on the cultural and religious diversity present within the group.

The participant leading the session explained that he had chosen this exercise for two reasons:

- 1 The basis of active nonviolence is speaking and acting out the truth, even when that is difficult, considering the context or community one is in. That is a dilemma that activists who are committed to active nonviolence as a way of life have to accept and deal with every day.
- 2 To practice active nonviolence as a way of life and to use it as a means of transformation, one has to be willing to suffer sometimes.

The discussion following the exercise revolved around encouragement and discouragement in one’s activism. The challenges one sometimes faces and overcomes can be a source of encouragement in work and life.

Being a ‘real man’

The training session started with an exercise dealing with different communication styles between women and men and how those styles vary cross-culturally (e.g. looking into someone’s eyes is considered respectful in one culture but disrespectful in another).

This training session revealed that, across cultures, definitions of and expectations about what it means to be “real man” include aspects of being dominant (including more overt but also covert forms of dominance). The participants compiled a list of associations with the expected proper behavior of “a real man”, including:

- Independence
- Responsible
- Strong
- Take risks
- Be violent
- Be (very) sexually active
- Be a protector
- Endurance
- Don’t be childish
- Don’t cry
- Don’t be afraid
- Breadwinner
- Honor
- Stubborn.

Though there are some examples of differences across cultures, overall it was acknowledged that a man who doesn’t conform to those “appropriate” male behaviors (and who doesn’t fit inside that “box of expectations”) will face negative consequences, including bullying, name calling, or violence. Their fear for the negative consequences, along with their need to be accepted by society, encourages boys and girls growing up to conform with and fit in the box of culturally appropriate male or female behavior, respectively.

It was discussed that there are positive aspects of that behavior (such as being a breadwinner) that of themselves are not harmful, wrong or destructive. However, it’s important to expose the disadvantages that those characteristics can also bring along and the messages that are conveyed when assigning value to them. It’s crucial in that respect to expose the disadvantages for both women and





men (e.g. an emphasis on having a man assume the role of the breadwinner limits the opportunities for women).

The socialization processes: Learning to be dominant

The “Story of a Boy” exercise and the “Cycle of Male and Female Socialization” diagram⁶ were used to facilitate a discussion on the overall socialization processes that young boys and girls go through, in which they learn what it means to be a respected man or a woman in a given society. The participants shared their experiences of and reflected on their own socialization processes and were invited to analyze if and how they could use the “The Story of a Boy” exercise in their own culture and context in a manner that would make sense and be understood.

Parts of the documentary *Tough Guise: Violence, Media & the Crisis in Masculinity* (by Jackson Katz⁷) were used to introduce the discussion on the various ways in which men relate to violence: as perpetrators, as victims, as bystanders and as agents of change. The advantages and disadvantages of having or lacking (any) access to power were discussed as well, on the personal and societal levels. Some participants noted how having society expect them to behave dominantly actually makes them feel powerless in some ways.

Participants noted that it’s crucial, through critical and open analysis, to make aspects of dominance and violence in behavior visible, to raise awareness about that and to discuss those aspects with other men. That often involves a discussion on the question whether men are violent by nature or whether they are taught to behave like

that (nature vs. nurture). Some men shared how they consciously take the stance that men are naturally loving and not violent by nature.

While it was discussed that we need to start recognizing dominant and vulnerable aspects within men, concern was also raised that the emphasis on the victimization of men in socialization processes might encourage men to excuse themselves for their use of violence, rather than taking responsibility for being violent or dominant.

Some also noted the role that women play in maintaining the current gender discourse (e.g. through expressing their expectations concerning the behavior of men). That supports the idea that men and women need to work together to challenge traditional gender notions.

Upon finalizing the discussion, it was emphasized that gender is not the only defining factor in shaping identities and feelings of power and powerlessness. Other factors such as age and sexual orientation also play a role.

Closure: Maintaining positive aspects of masculinities

As a closure of this training day, the participants were invited to write down one aspect of masculinities that they would like to let go of, as well as one positive aspect that they wanted to reclaim. The characteristics that the participants valued and wanted to reclaim included:

- Inner strength
- Responsible
- Supportive
- Connection and understanding
- Caring and kindness
- Protective
- Being positive
- Being a father.

Documentary: *Pray the Devil back to Hell*

In the evening, the documentary *Pray the Devil back to Hell*⁸ was shown and discussed. *Pray the Devil back to Hell* chronicles the remarkable story of the courageous Liberian women who came together to end a bloody civil war and bring peace to their shattered country. Thousands of women – ordinary mothers, grandmothers, aunts and daughters, both Christian and Muslim – came together to pray for peace and then staged a silent protest outside the Presidential Palace. Armed only with white T-shirts and

⁶ Both exercises were developed by Men’s Resources International.

⁷ For more information, please visit: www.jacksonkatz.com.

⁸ For more information, please visit: www.praythediabacktohell.com.

the courage of their convictions, they demanded a resolution to the country's civil war. Their actions were a critical element in bringing about an agreement during the stalled peace talks.

The participant from Liberia shared his views and experiences in relation to this example of women's activism.

5.4.3 December 2: Women, feminisms, gender

Summary of the 3rd training day:

The 3rd training day included a focus on women's experiences and perspectives, including the concerns within the women's movement surrounding men's engagement in gender-equality work. The nature of gender-based violence and gender oppression for women were discussed as well. Feminisms, militarism, gender mainstreaming and the UN mechanisms for gender parity were also addressed. In the evening, participants could view the documentary "Weapon of War".

Challenging the boxes – concerns within the women's movement

In this session, it was noted that to establish real gender equality, the limited notions of what it means to be a woman and of what it means to be a man should both be challenged. What people consider appropriate or respected male or female behavior in a given society needs to be changed and broadened. Doing that implies challenging the existing "masculinities" and "femininities boxes" in a society.

In that regard, one participant noted:

"I don't like the idea of talking about either women or men. Yesterday, we spoke about being inside or outside the box. People are not in the box by choice. They are there due to socialization processes. Getting out of the box is not an easy process. There are victims of structural violence. I think only wanting to promote women is not good either. We need to work on both sides and meet in the middle. I think we have to work as human beings and as allies."

Feminist movements have struggled for women's human rights and women's empowerment and challenged traditional limited notions of what it means to be a woman. It was noted that men who are getting involved in gender equality and empowerment work need to make sure that their involvement does not set back women and the work they have been doing over the years. Working for the

empowerment of marginalized groups in general should never be at the expense of other groups.

Women activists have raised concerns about involving men in women's empowerment work that need to be acknowledged. One such concern involves the fear (sometimes backed up by actual experience) of men taking over or hijacking the gender-equality agenda, leading to a decrease in attention for women's rights and needs. Another concern is about increased competition for the scarce available resources and funding opportunities, with the risk of those resources being channeled away from women's organizations and women's rights work.

The session closed with a discussion on why men in general and the participants in particular are involved in this work and what kind of women the participants are doing this work for.

Feminisms and (subtle forms of) gender oppression in one's culture

In this session, the participants took a closer look at feminisms and what those mean in their own culture. Their understanding of feminisms ranged from a more theoretical approach ("it's a framework for analysis") to a practical one ("it's a movement of women aimed at getting equal rights to men").

The work and thought of feminists such as Betty Reardon,⁹ Kamala Bhasin,¹⁰ those involved in Code Pink,¹¹ Michelle LeBaron,¹² Jane Addams,¹³ Aletta Jacobs¹⁴ and Bertha von Suttner¹⁵ were discussed. The participants were invited to reflect on their own work, the work of those women and peacebuilding in general from a gender and feminist perspective and to analyze if and how feminist thinking fits into their own context.

9 For more information, please visit: www.tc.columbia.edu/peaceed/staff/index.htm.

10 For more information, please visit: www.cddc.vt.edu/feminism/Bhasin.html.

11 For more information, please visit: www.codepink4peace.org/.

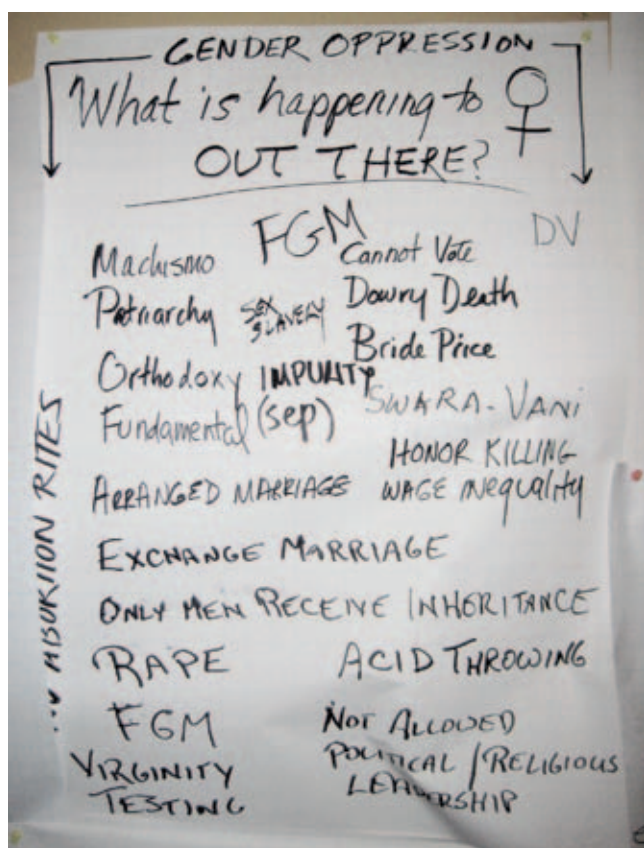
12 For more information, please visit: www.law.ubc.ca/faculty/Lebaron/.

13 For more information, please visit: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jane_Addams.

14 For more information, please visit: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aletta_Jacobs.

15 For more information, please visit: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bertha_von_Suttner.





A discussion on the differences between in the position of women and and that of men in societies led to a variety of examples of gender oppression being given for the women in the participants' contexts. Those included:

- giving away a girl to another family for reconciliation efforts
- child and arranged marriages, burning of women
- women not being allowed to vote
- honor killings
- daughter exchanges
- wife inheritance
- domestic violence
- rape
- female genital mutilation
- lack of inheritance and property rights for women
- acid attacks
- women not being allowed to go to court
- women not being allowed to be a traditional chief
- the lack of political leadership
- virginity testing
- sexual slavery
- trafficking
- women being perceived as being impure while menstruating
- women carrying the burden of contraception
- denial of abortion rights

- women's restriction of mobility
- women being depicted as sexual objects
- the lack of social status of single women
- women without a husband being denied travel documents
- women's lack of citizenship rights
- insults and mental abuse
- the shaming of raped women
- stereotyping of feminisms
- blaming women for violence that is used against them
- sexual harassment.

The participants briefly discussed the meanings of feminisms in their own context, patriarchy and gender oppression, and how that patriarchy in societies could be challenged. It was noted that patriarchy is reflected on various levels in societies, for instance through language. One participant noted that in his culture, words for equal relationships between women and men are nonexistent.

There was also a discussion on subtle forms of gender oppression for women, including sexual harassment and the objectification of women. The subtle ways in which women are harassed or objectified, e.g. in jokes or comments, are often not understood or recognized as such. To challenge that, it's crucial to establish and maintain dialogue between women and men and to find ways to share and talk about how women and men have related differently to certain experiences.

Gender and militarism

WPP Program Manager Isabelle Geuskens led the session on gender and militarism. War and preparations for war are gendered activities and socially defined ideas about masculinity and femininity are used to promote and sustain violence. She shared the WPP's perception of the need to review the practice of war itself from a radical gender perspective. That involves asking critical questions about the way societies socialize their boys and men into militarism and recognizing that men also suffer during war. Men and boys suffer at the hands of (mostly) other men and boys, since societies expect them to assume violent roles during conflict.

The WPP believes that we will have to go to the root of the problem and start addressing the construction of a male gender identity that supports men's violence and militarization. Isabelle emphasized that there is a need to truly transform war and peacebuilding, through the application of a gender and masculinities perspective, in which space

is created to enable constructive and positive masculinities to take root.

She elaborated on the specific gender roles of women and men in war situations, referring to some of her experiences in Northern Ireland and Bosnia Herzegovina. In Ireland, for instance, many young boys who had been confronted with violence from an early age on became affiliated with paramilitary organizations. Boys as young as 16 years were seen as role models in terms of becoming a man, gaining respect through the use of violence and instilling fear in other people. The high poverty levels and the lack of employment opportunities, as well as the narrow definitions in terms of how to be and become a “real man”, facilitated that process. For many, carrying a gun was equivalent to being a man and feeling a sense of belonging. Within the paramilitary organizations, the boys were taught to be tough.

Within the discussion that followed, the participants shared various examples of how young people are recruited to join militias or the military, for instance after being drugged or given alcohol, or after being promised the chance to study for free.

One person shared how he served in the military, although not as a fighting soldier. In spite of his conscious choice to refuse to fight and use violence, he still felt awkward about it, since he somehow it felt he wasn’t serving “as a real man”.

Gender mainstreaming

WPP staff member Cristina Reyna facilitated a session on gender mainstreaming. Practical examples from the pilot study that the WPP conducted on the incorporation of a gender perspective in civilian-based peacekeeping served as illustrations for the discussion.¹⁶ The discussion focused on the complexities, meaning and implications of gender mainstreaming within organizational management, such as the development and implementation of gender policies (which take into account the different gendered concerns and needs of women and men) on all levels of an organization (including the meaningful participation of women on management levels). The inclusion and implementation of gender issues in project-cycle manage-

¹⁶ The publication *Engendering Peace: Incorporating a Gender Perspective in Civilian Peace Teams* is downloadable via: www.ifor.org/WPP/mainstreaming_pilot.htm.



The session on gender and militarism was led by IFOR/WPP Program Manager Isabelle Geuskens

ment (including the allocation of budget) also received special attention.

The participants were asked to study UN Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888, and 1889, which were included in the WPP Training Handbook.

Closure: Talk to your adversary

To train the participants in addressing potential adversaries, the participants closed the day with an exercise to work on dealing with and talking to potential antagonists back home.

Documentary: *Weapon of War*

In the evening, those participants who were interested could view the documentary *Weapon of War*,¹⁷ which focuses on the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). In that conflict, large numbers of women and girls are brutally raped.

In *Weapon of War*, military perpetrators unveil what lies behind the strategies of rape as a means of warfare. An rebel describes how he used to rape women. In an attempt to reconcile with his past, he decides to meet one of his victims, asking her for forgiveness. The film also features an army captain who is now working as a priest in Congo’s army, confronting perpetrators of rape.

¹⁷ For more information, please visit: www.weaponofwar.nl/.



The documentary led to much discussion but also raised many concerns within the group, in particular how viewers who are not familiar with the cultural meanings of reconciliation in the context of the DRC might interpret certain images shown, such as the meeting that was established between the victim and the perpetrator. The participant from the DRC was able to share some of the cultural background on the reconciliation efforts taking place within his country.

5.4.4 December 3: Conference on Gender Equality: Women in War Zones

Summary of the 4th training day:

On the 4th training day, the participants, trainers and WPP staff members participated in a conference in The Hague.

On this training day, the participants, trainers and WPP staff members participated in the Second Swedish-Dutch Conference on Gender Equality: Women in War Zones¹⁸ in the Peace Palace in The Hague, the Netherlands. The event was organized by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Embassy of Sweden in The Hague, the Swedish Institute and the WPP.

Experts representing the governments and armed forces of Sweden and the Netherlands as well as international organizations, NGOs and women's networks active in conflict and post-conflict areas met and discussed concrete examples and best practices, taking stock of the current implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820.

The speakers included Bert Koenders (at that time the Dutch Minister for Development Cooperation), Eimert van Middelkoop (at that time the Dutch Minister of Defense), Dr Dennis Mukwege (a Congolese gynecologist working in Bukavu, where he specializes in the treatment of female victims of sexual violence in the conflict in the DRC) and Colonel Jan Blacquièrre (Head of Current Operations with the Dutch Ministry of Defense and a former military advisor in EUSEC in the Democratic Republic of Congo).

Having viewed *Pray the Devil back to Hell*, the participants were particularly pleased that Leymah Gbowee, the central character in that documentary, also spoke at the con-

ference. Leymah is the executive director of the Women Peace and Security Network Africa (WIPSEN), based in Accra, Ghana. She is a founding member and former coordinator of the Women in Peacebuilding Program/West African Network for Peacebuilding (WIPNET/WANEP).

She started her speech by honoring the strength of the Liberian women:

*"The words of the great African American slave freedom fighter, Harriet Tubman: 'If you are tired, keep going; if you are hungry, keep going; if you are scared; keep going; if you want a taste of freedom, keep going,' has been the theme and the driving force for the peacebuilding work of the Liberian women."*¹⁹

She spoke about the role of women in peacebuilding and about UNSCR 1325. And recognizing the potential of that Security Council Resolution, she concluded by recommending that:

- 1 consultations be held with various stakeholders with the aim of ensuring that women are included at the negotiation table not as observers but as parties to the conflict. That will ensure that the needs and roles of women will be clearly addressed in peace agreements, not as "a cross-cutting issue".
- 2 the UN increase their investment in peacebuilding and related training for women's groups. In particular, community level peacebuilding activities need to be invested in. Women at the community level feel the pinch of the conflict more than any others. They know exactly what actions and strategies are needed to solve the problem.
- 3 national governments be held accountable for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 and that benchmarks be set to measure visible results. In particular, more national action plans and implementation strategies need to be developed and funding needs to be secured.

In response to a question from one of the participants about what kind of role men can and should play in that regard, she encouraged those men who are eager to be involved in and truly work to promote women's empowerment and gender justice to learn to step back as well. Explaining that gender equality is about equally sharing power, she noted that it's crucial for men to be willing and able to give up power and to ensure that they are not taking things over by "doing the work for the women".

¹⁸ For more information, please visit: [www.swedenabroad.com/](http://www.swedenabroad.com/Page_____96663.aspx)
Page_____96663.aspx.

¹⁹ Her speech can be downloaded via: [www.swedenabroad.com/](http://www.swedenabroad.com/SelectImageX/193006/LeymahGboweePresentation.pdf)
SelectImageX/193006/LeymahGboweePresentation.pdf.



Meeting with the producer of *Weapon of War* and some of the ToT participants

A meeting was arranged with the producers of the documentary *Weapon of War*, Ilse and Femke van Velzen, to share and further discuss the concerns that had been raised in the discussion the previous evening. That meeting was greatly appreciated by all and provided insight into the development of the documentary.

5.4.5 December 4: Gender-Sensitive Active Nonviolence

Summary of the 5th training day:

After participants had reflected on the conference and entered into dialogue with the UN Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, the 5th training day focused on the theory and practice of active nonviolent resistance. The notion of men being gender-sensitive allies of women nonviolent activists was discussed as well. In the evening, the documentary “A Force More Powerful” was shown and discussed.

Reflections on the conference and a meeting with a female UN Special Rapporteur

The 5th training day started with reflections on things that had struck the participants during the conference of the day before, for instance on the differences between a patriarchal, militaristic definition of peace and security vs. a relatively broader feminist definition of those concepts.

Gulnara Shahinian, who had been a guest speaker at the conference the day before, joined the training to share some of her work experiences and to listen to participants telling about the work they are involved in. She elaborated on her work as a Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, in which she investigates, monitors and recommends solutions within that field.

Shahinian is Vice Chair of the State Commission on the Status of Women and a member of the Armenian Anti-Trafficking Commission. In 2005, she was also selected to chair the Expert Group meeting on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and Violence in the Family for the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.

Involved in local government for the past 18 years, she has been chair of the All-Armenian Union of Women, heading “Armenian Women at the Doorstep of the Twenty-First Century”, the first international women’s issues conference in her country. She also served as the head of the Department of Foreign Affairs for the Yerevan City Council. As founder of the NGO “Democracy Today”, she works to establish an open, independent, and accessible library and resource center and to promote democracy and gender sensitivity in Armenian society.

Shahinian spoke about the development of her work, the resistance and dangers she has encountered as an activist and her strong belief in the need to create dialogue and understanding between different groups. That led to a discussion on various challenges that activists face in their work (e.g. misrepresentation in the media) and how to deal with those (e.g. by training media and journalists).

The discussion evolved from the nature and consequences of slavery, bonded labor, trafficking, and prostitution to what that means for women and how men relate to women in general. Ideas and feelings about the objectification and depiction of women as sexual objects were shared and discussed. Some practical examples were analyzed and used to clarify and discuss how women are confronted with objectification in their daily lives, both on more apparent levels (for instance in the sexual harassment by UN personnel or military) and on more subtle levels (for instance in the degrading treatment of women in caring or serving roles and in the kinds of jokes or comments made).

Active nonviolence as a means of transformation

To introduce the topic of active nonviolence, WPP Regional Development Officer Dorothy Attema, shared the stories of two women activists with whom the WPP collaborates – one from Kenya and one from Zimbabwe.²⁰

In Zimbabwe, the Women’s Coalition of Zimbabwe (WCoZ) had called upon women civic leaders to strategize on nonviolence civic protest in the face of the crisis in 2008. That action was planned to take place on October 28 at the hotel where the Southern African Development Community (SADC) heads of state were meeting. Netsai Mushonga and Margaret Mavhudzi of the Women Peace-

makers Program provided them with technical support on how to organize a successful nonviolent action.

For that action, women were mobilized and encouraged to wear black (symbolizing suffering) and white (symbolizing peace and hope) and to bring along empty plates and pots to symbolize their hunger. During the protest, approximately 1000 women marched and shouted: “Conclude the Talks! We are Starving!” When the women were being deliberately targeted by the police, the WCoZ staff tried to mobilize its members to support and hide the activist women. The arrested women were finally released at 7:00 PM on the same day.

Principles of active nonviolence

Nonviolence is a way of life. It is also a means to bring about social, political and economic change. Exploring nonviolence begins by looking at power. Many people define power as the opportunity to control other people or resources. In that definition, power is assumed to be based on violence: gaining more power over people or resources means using more violence.

Nonviolence offers another definition of power. Nonviolence seeks to empower communities and individuals. It works to help people find power within themselves, and to share that power. It concerns power inside and power with people, not power over others. Nonviolence assumes that power derives from cooperation. All systems of injustice depend on people’s cooperation to continue. A change in the power relationship can occur when that cooperation is denied or withdrawn.

Nonviolence can be used creatively and strategically to challenge power structures and inequalities. Nonviolence does not imply passive resistance; in contrast, it takes courage and strength to be a nonviolent activist.

The group discussed what it is about a certain action makes it “active nonviolent” and which cultural aspects play a role in that. For instance, in an Islamic context, threatening to take off one’s veil could constitute an active nonviolence action.

The six principles of nonviolence of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.²¹ served as a guideline for the discussion on the principles and steps involved in active nonviolence

²⁰ To read some more stories, please visit: www.ifor.org/WPP/stories.htm.

²¹ For more information on Martin Luther King, Jr. please visit: www.thekingcenter.org/.



The group was encouraged to reflect on what Dr. King's six principles of nonviolence mean in their own context and work



actions. The participants first considered Dr. King's six steps of nonviolent social change:

- 1 Information gathering and research to get the facts straight
- 2 Education of adversaries and the public about the facts of the dispute
- 3 Personal commitment to nonviolent attitudes and action
- 4 Negotiation with the adversary in a spirit of goodwill to correct injustice
- 5 Nonviolent direct action, such as marches, boycotts, mass demonstrations, picketing, sit-ins etc., to help persuade or compel the adversary to work toward dispute resolution
- 6 Reconciliation of adversaries in a win-win outcome in establishing a sense of community.

The participants were encouraged to reflect on what those six steps, in connection with Dr. King's six principals of nonviolence, mean in their own context and work. The six principles are as follows:

1 Nonviolence is a way of life for courageous people

The discussion focused on the meaning of courage and its relationship with masculinities: Does that principle imply that nonviolence activists affirm dominant and hegemonic forms of masculinities in their behavior and

attitude? The group did not think so. The concept of courage implies having the strength of mind and inner commitment to live an active nonviolent life and to face the potential consequences that that might bring along with it, e.g. adversaries who respond with violence.

2 Nonviolence seeks to win friendship and understanding

The end result of nonviolence is redemption and reconciliation, and the purpose of nonviolence is, as Martin Luther King Jr. called it, the creation of the "Beloved Community".

Nonviolence seeks to empower communities and individuals. Nonviolence does not seek to dehumanize any person or to defeat people. It seeks to challenge systems of injustice, which depend on people's cooperation in order to continue. It works to help people find power within themselves and to share that power. That is power inside and power with people, not power over others.

The social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, but also the relations between women and those between men, are influenced by power. They are socially constructed and learned through socialization processes. In most societies there are differences and inequalities between women and men

in terms of the responsibilities assigned, the activities undertaken, the access to and control over resources, as well as the decision-making opportunities.

Gender justice implies that the interests, needs, and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration while recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men. It refers to the equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys.

The group discussed how nonviolence could be used to challenge unjust power structures, including gender injustice, in societies. Men and women should work together in creating a space for increased understanding between women and men and their experiences within the system. That can facilitate working together to challenge the systems that perpetuate gender injustice in societies.

3 Nonviolence seeks to defeat injustice, not people

In nonviolent action, it's crucial to truly make a distinction between the problem or power structure that is being challenged on the one hand and the people that are involved in that on the other. Nonviolent action is never directed against people. It recognizes that people are socialized within and form part of the oppressive system. The oppressor is not only and solely gaining from his place in the system, but he is also suffering in it. Nonviolence recognizes that and acknowledges that the oppressor is also the one being oppressed. Hence, nonviolent action is not directed at the oppressor, but at the oppressive system.

In terms of challenging gender injustice, men will need to work together with women on challenging patriarchy in societies and challenging the socialization processes that encourage boys to assume dominant and violent roles and girls to assume submissive roles.

The participants discussed how the analysis of the oppressor as also being the oppressed should not be misused to excuse the violence that is being inflicted. One participant noted how he could use these principles of active nonviolence in restorative justice work.

4 A willingness to accept suffering for the cause, if necessary, but never to inflict it. Nonviolence holds that suffering can educate and transform

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. noted a couple of aspects of this principle that stirred some discussion.

- Nonviolence accepts suffering without retaliation.

- Nonviolence accepts violence if necessary, but will never inflict it.
- Nonviolence willingly accepts the consequences of its acts. Unearned suffering is redemptive and has tremendous educational and transforming possibilities.
- Suffering has the power to convert the enemy when reason fails.

The group discussed forms of nonviolent action and its potential consequences in terms of suffering. Various forms of nonviolent action have been identified and described in the reading material, such as marches, boycotts, picketing, sit-ins and prayer vigils.

It was discussed to what extent nonviolent action requires openly disobeying an unjust, immoral or unconstitutional law and accepting the consequences, including submitting to imprisonment if necessary or being exposed to violence, to protest an injustice.

Some noted that an activist should be able to clearly define for him- or herself the amount of suffering that (s) he might be confronted with and could handle. Others noted, however, that when taking up arms, one would also be confronted with violence and suffering. It was noted that the acceptance of the fact that suffering might occur could be seen as the empowerment factor within nonviolent action: "If you can truly accept that you might suffer, or even die, this opens up many possibilities as well."

Nonviolent action sends a very powerful message to the world, as reflected in the overthrow of various regimes through nonviolent action and the responses to that on an international level.

5 Nonviolence chooses love instead of hate. It is a rejection of hatred, animosity or violence of the spirit, as well as a refusal to commit physical violence

For conflict resolution and nonviolent action, an overflowing unconditional love for all – including one's adversaries – is needed. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. called this "*love in action...love seeking to preserve and create community...love which is purely spontaneous, unmotivated, groundless and creative.*"

There was a heated discussion on the meaning and nature of the love and hatred that this principle is referring to. It was noted that the concept of love could be misused or misinterpreted by some when inflicting violence. For instance, one of the examples discussed was domestic violence, in which some perpetrators claim to love their



wives, while nevertheless behaving violently against them; what kind of love is that? Some examples of perpetrator-care programs, for instance in India, where the perpetrators of violence are included in the overall dealing with domestic violence issues, were discussed in connection with this topic. The rationale behind those programs is to understand better why men are using that violence and to analyze if and how the situation can improve, without disrupting the overall structure of the family. Counseling for both women and men is crucial in those programs.

The group discussed in general terms how Dr. King meant this principle:

- Nonviolence resists violence of the spirit and the body.
- Nonviolent love is spontaneous, unmotivated, unselfish and creative.
- Nonviolent love gives willingly, knowing that the return might be hostility.
- Nonviolent love is active, not passive.
- Nonviolent love is unending in its ability to forgive in order to restore the community.
- Nonviolent love does not sink to the level of the hater.
- Love for the enemy is how we demonstrate love for ourselves.
- Love restores community and resists injustice.
- Nonviolence recognizes that the fact that all life is inter-related.

6 Nonviolence believes that the universe is on the side of justice

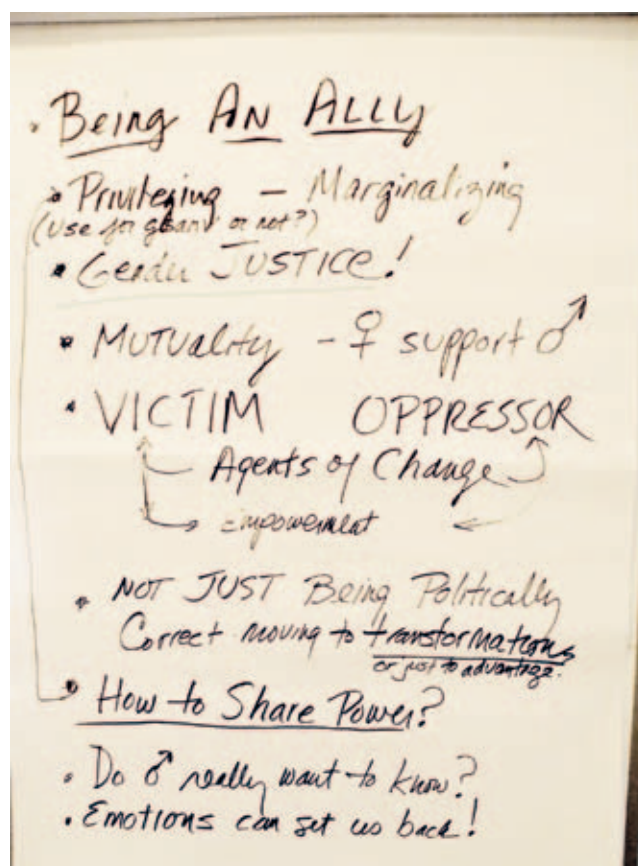
The nonviolent activist has a deep faith that justice will eventually prevail and that the universe is on justice's side.

The discussion on King's six principles concluded with the general recognition that developing and maintaining non-violent action requires training, discipline and support.

Men as gender-sensitive allies

It was noted that, over the years, women activists in the WPP's network had pointed out that they lacked male supporters for their local peace work, as well as support from male colleagues within their peace organizations and networks. In that connection, a discussion began about how men could be involved in women's nonviolence activism and – in that process – act as allies of women.

Famous examples of women's nonviolent activists such as Máiread Maguire and Betty Williams (from Northern Ireland) and Wangari Maathai (from Kenya), but also less known examples from the participant's backgrounds, were shared and discussed. Emphasizing the need for



men to support women on political levels, the participant from Liberia elaborated on the history of women's activism and resistance through active nonviolence in his country. He explained that some men on higher decision-making levels had supported women activists by sharing crucial information.

For a man, acting as an ally of women sometimes means stepping back and making sure that women will take the lead in a certain action – and supporting them in doing so. That requires a thorough gender analysis of what that means for the (gendered) roles of women and men in society. The idea of men assuming supportive roles and women assuming leadership roles does not fit within the current gender discourse, and that fact will influence the responses that societies have to such actions. It also requires a thorough analysis of the different risks that the women and men involved in such actions might be running (e.g. being stigmatized or physically harmed during the action) and an analysis of how to deal with those. Others emphasized that it's also crucial for men to support existing women's initiatives and to ask the women in one's community how they would like the men to be involved and to provide support.

Hence, being a gender-sensitive male ally of women also implies considering how women might experience certain situations, how men relate to that experience, and what kind of support women might need. To understand this, one has to learn to perceive a situation from a woman's perspective ("to wear 'gender glasses'"), which requires a willingness to be open to listening to women's experiences, to validating those and to learning (how) to recognize and become aware of any insensitivities in exchanges between men and women. Some aspects of communication might complicate that, however. For instance, non-verbal behavior (e.g. body language) might be interpreted differently by women and men or by people from different contexts.

Closure: Preparation for tomorrow

The day came to a close with a brief description of the following day, which would include a tour through Amsterdam. After the extensive discussions that had taken place earlier on the objectification of women, trafficking, prostitution and sexual harassment, it was decided to arrange a visit to the Amsterdam Prostitution Information (PIC) Centre for those participants who were interested. The PIC is a resource center that provides information on prostitution.

Documentary: *A Force More Powerful*

In the evening, for the participants who were interested, the documentary *A Force More Powerful* was shown and discussed. This documentary explores how nonviolent power has been effective in overcoming oppression and authoritarian rule in different parts of the world.²²

5.4.6 December 5: Mid-training evaluation

Summary of the 6th training day:

The 6th training day involved a review of the skills, techniques and activities used in the first training week. A tour in Amsterdam was organized.

Mid-training evaluation

On December 5, the participants were invited to share some of their thoughts, observations and experiences regarding the ToT thus far. Many comments were made on the excellent co-facilitation of the male and female training team and the overall atmosphere in which there was

an opportunity for everyone to share and contribute. As one participant noted:

"Gender-sensitive active nonviolence, it's quite diverse. I really think you do well as facilitators; you have a lot of knowledge and skills. It's cross-cutting and we all add the global perspective. Usually in these trainings, the facilitators think they know it all. However, we are here together to build a better understanding of what it means."

Overall, the training content was highly regarded, yet it was also noted that it was quite packed and intense. An analysis of the Mid-Term Training Evaluation revealed that at least two-thirds of the participants felt:

- the training was meeting their expectations
- the sessions were supporting their individually defined goals for the training
- there was an adequate explanation of techniques
- there was enough discussion on theory
- the trainers were allowing enough time for discussion
- comfortable during the course of the training
- the group was moving towards becoming a community
- prepared to engage in collaboration with women on gender-sensitive active nonviolence
- prepared conduct a presentation or workshop on gender-sensitive active nonviolence
- prepared to organize a community activity related to gender-sensitive active nonviolence.

Suggestions for topics to be included or further discussed during the second block of the pilot ToT cycle included more reading on conceptual theories and concepts like active nonviolence, masculinities, and the women's movement.

Amsterdam tour

In the afternoon, the group visited Amsterdam. After a canal tour, those who were interested visited the Prostitution Information Centre (PIC). Within the PIC, the group raised and discussed their concerns about the status of prostitution in the Netherlands. Prostitution in the Netherlands is legal and regulated. Nonetheless, the majority of women working in that business are foreigners. In the last few years, a significant number of brothels and "shop windows" have been closed because of suspected criminal activity and trafficking.

²² For more information, please visit: www.aforcemorepowerful.org/films/index.php.

5.4.7 December 6: Participant-led workshops

Summary of the 7th training day:

The 7th training day was focused on sharing exercises and examples of the kind of work the participants are doing in their home countries. In the evening the documentary “Dangerous Lives: Coming Out in the Developing World” was shown and discussed.

Participant-led workshops

After the opening session on Sunday, December 6, half of the participant group gave presentations on some of the work they are doing at home. After each presentation, a short discussion followed in which audience shared its reactions to the presentation and to the topics introduced. An impression of the presentations and discussions will be shared below.

Masculinities and femininities

The participant from Nepal used a role-play to illustrate his perception that human beings are not just masculine or feminine, but that each person carries both aspects within him- or herself: “the differences between people can be categorized as being on a continuous line, rather than being just one or the other”. It was suggested to try to “engender” the role-play by switching the roles and discuss the implications of that.

Violations impact women and men differently

Another participant presented the background and development of human rights (violations) in Sri Lanka. A short discussion followed on how human rights violations affect women and men differently.

Power relations

To reflect on the issue of power and how we deal with power, the participant from Nicaragua introduced a sculpture exercise to the group. He asked one person (person A) from a participant pair to express a feeling of superiority by sculpturing that in the other person (person B). Physically creating that expression in the other person often invokes feelings of superiority in that person as well: person B may feel superior to person A.

The exercise resulted in a short discussion on the importance of feelings and the consequences of that. One person’s feelings of superiority often invoke feelings of inferiority in another person. Such an exercise can be used to illustrate and discuss gender and power relations between women and men.

Intended and unintended use of violence

The participant from Kenya facilitated a discussion on the use of violence and how violence has the tendency to limit a person’s potential and injure people. It is challenging in that regard, however, that violent behavior is not recognized as such anymore, since it’s socially accepted. There is a difference between an intended, deliberate use of violence (e.g. starting a fight) and an unintended use of violence (e.g. stepping on one’s foot). Violence has the tendency of turning persons into objects.

Understanding sexuality and linkages with gender

The multidimensional aspects of sexuality and sex were brought up for discussion by the participant from India. It was proposed that sexuality is more than the experience of sex on a physical level. In education about and discussions on sexuality, dimensions such as identity, social and cultural norms and expectations, desires and fantasies should be taken into account as well. Education about reproductive health is often limited to a discussion on the existence and use of reproductive organs). Notions of gender and gender roles are reflected in sexuality and sexual behavior.

Two components of peace

Using his own country (Mindanao, Philippines) as an illustration, one participant elaborated on two components of peace: personal and communal peace. He spoke about the interrelatedness of those two components and community building. To truly build democratic structures, it’s crucial to be as inclusive as possible. Gender discrimination, cultural oppression, and discrimination of indigenous groups are obstacles to building sustainable peace. He explained how the demand for the right to self-determination and access to resources has worked as unifying factors within his community.

The sexual abuse of children and the use of video to challenge that

One of the participants from Pakistan showed a video his organization had made to raise awareness about sexual violence against and the abuse of children. The video is shown to children, their parents and teachers, and the script for the video was written by a woman.

The participant from Lebanon noted that the children in the video were not wearing a hijab. That re-affirmed the need for adapting training tools and materials to fit one’s own context. Diversities within and between countries sometimes complicate the use of certain training materials.





An energizer exercise



Peace and violence in one’s own context: meanings from a gender perspective

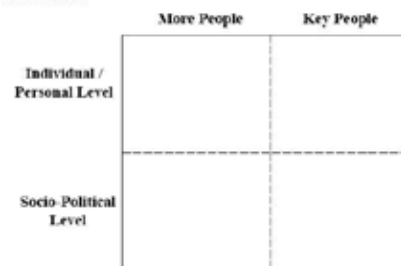
One of the participants from Zimbabwe invited his colleagues to write down an association they each had with the concept of peace and another association they had with the concept of violence, from their respective contexts – both considering gender and gender issues. He noted how peace can be perceived as a state in which violence is absent (negative definition) but also as one in which positive aspects are emphasized (positive definition). In the positive definition, we are building on positive content, such as acceptance, and the creation of social and constructive systems. He spoke about the need to challenge patriarchal structures and build gender just societies in which peace can be enjoyed by all and power is not used in destructive ways.

Restorative justice

The other participant from Pakistan spoke about his work in restorative justice and about human needs, rights and the human soul. He encouraged his colleagues to identify aspects of their own religious and traditional values that they could build on to support his work, for instance a factor of shame (e.g. being ashamed when violating the rights of women).

Effectiveness of peacebuilding

The participant from Lebanon elaborated on the effectiveness of peacebuilding²³ and encouraged his colleagues to reflect on what the inherent theories of changes are in their own organizations and programs. He discussed the diagram below, which was developed by the Reflecting on Peace Practice Project.²⁴ That project has involved over two hundred international, national, and local peace agencies around the world. Through a collaborative learning effort, those agencies have pooled their experience and their wisdom to reflect on, assess, and learn more about the practice of peace. The Lebanese participant encouraged all to analyze the tool from a gender perspective.



²³ As reading material, he suggested the document “Confronting War: Critical Lessons for Peace Practitioners” by Mary B. Anderson & Lara Olson, which is downloadable via: www.cdainc.com/cdawww/pdf/book/confrontingwar_Pdf1.pdf.

²⁴ Idem, p. 48.

Men of quality are not afraid of equality

The participant from Zimbabwe spoke about his organization: Padare / Enkundleni – The Men’s Forum on Gender. Padare seeks to create a forum for men to question and reject gender stereotypes and roles that privilege men and oppress women, to create a support group for men who are committed to change, and to enable men to identify and challenge structures and institutions that perpetuate gender injustice and inequality in their society.

Padare’s chief strategy uses traditional men’s gatherings (*dare*) to mobilize men. In addition to organizing workshops that focus on positive masculinities, Padare encourages and supports men who speak out publicly against gender stereotypes and risky sexual behavior.

The lessons Padare has learned thus far include:

- 1 If you want to work on fighting violence against women, then start doing it!
- 2 Start small: nobody became big over one day.
- 3 Respect indigenous knowledge.
- 4 Do baseline research (to keep yourself from working on a problem that is not actually present in a certain area) and know which issues are a problem in that area.
- 5 Develop structures and ensure that those structures are inclusive (considering issues such as gender, class and educational level).
- 6 Involve women! Women are involved as mentors in the work of Padare.
- 7 Make use of male role models to encourage positive behavior.
- 8 Be patient and use the structural model of behavior change: Don’t accuse men but rather help men to change by reflecting on their behavior.
- 9 Repeated involvement works better than one-off involvement.
- 10 Expose your target group to new ideas (e.g. through the Internet, inviting them to meetings).
- 11 Challenge existing assumptions and structures.
- 12 Ensure a holistic approach and understand that men might join your work for different reasons; get to know their reasons.

Awareness of needs when working on gender mainstreaming

The participant from Burundi divided the group in two, with one of them representing a group of women returning from exile and the other representing a group of men and women who are residents and haven’t been in exile. He asked the first group to identify specific needs and

the other to identify cross-cutting needs for both women and men. That led into a discussion on the specific needs women and men have in the context of war and peacebuilding and the need to include a gender perspective in that.

Documentary: *Dangerous Lives: Coming out in the Developing World*

In the evening, for those who were interested, the documentary *Dangerous Lives: Coming out in the Developing World* was shown and discussed. Centering on the 2001 police raid of an Egyptian disco, the film explores several global instances of mistreatment of homosexuals. Through interviews and personal accounts, the director of this film, John Scagliotti, discovers human rights violations and other dire conditions in Honduras, Samoa, India, Namibia, Pakistan, and Vietnam. This film also includes a discussion of pop culture images, the Internet, and the progression of changing attitudes in some countries.²⁵

5.4.8 December 7: Men and women as allies



Summary of the 8th training day:
Training day number eight focused on relational aspects of masculinities and femininities and on how women and men can work together as allies. Visits by Netherlands-based women’s as well as men’s groups facilitated cross-gender dialogue and sharing of experiences.

Drawings about masculinities and femininities

After the opening session, the participants were invited to make a drawing about what it means for a man to be socialized to conform to hegemonic, dominant forms of masculinities (“to be in the ‘masculinities’ box”) and how that relates to women and femininities. The drawings were discussed in small groups, as well as in plenary.

Some of the results included:

“I have drawn a frog in a well. The frog in the well doesn’t know that there is something bigger outside and stays in the well. Before we blame men who are trapped in the box of dominant masculinities, we should realize that they don’t know there is something outside the box and that it’s pos-

²⁵ For more information, visit for instance: movies.nytimes.com/movie/290094/Dangerous-Living-Coming-Out-in-the-Developing-World/overview.

sible to step out. They need someone to guide them. Therefore, I have also drawn a ladder, which shows them how to get out. The ladder represents the women who are showing men the way to change and to step out of the ‘masculinities’ box. Men can’t really do that on their own.”

“I have drawn myself in this box, and I’m crying. The moustache I drew represents my masculinity. I am crying since this box is going to be closed and what can I do then? The crying represents my feminine side. I have drawn my hand and finger up in the air, as a sign of asking for help to get me out of this box.”

“In my drawing, I wanted to show something about the initiation into manhood, when a boy is made ready to fight and to defend the tribe against invaders. This is represented in the traditional clothing that is being put on, as you can see here. The earrings and the long hair for the woman represent her femininity. I drew the man bigger than the woman to symbolize the dominant position of the man.”



“I drew a man, a woman and a bell. The man has muscles, to show that he is powerful and strong. However, I also wanted to make him look like he feels confused. The bell symbolizes the consistent noise that women are making to raise awareness and fight violence against women. However, the man in my drawing doesn’t seem to hear it, or doesn’t want to hear it and ignores it. As you can see, the connection is not smooth, which symbolizes the current lack of a smooth connection and of working in partnership between women and men.”

“I drew a man, who is a strong, military man, represented by a big moustache and weapons. He is a macho man. As you can also see, he is wearing a ballet skirt, since secretly he likes ballet. The only way he can compensate for that, and keep up his macho appearance, is to stand on women, and to say that he is more powerful than them.”

Men and women as allies: Expectations and implications

That exercise led into a discussion on how to raise awareness among men about the socialization processes, which provide men with certain privileges but also disadvantages. That then evolved into a discussion on what it means for men and women to work together as allies, without perpetuating gender inequalities in the relationship. Working as allies requires an investment from both men and women.

One participant emphasized that it’s crucial for men to learn to use broader and more inclusive language and to

recognize the message behind language. He illustrated that with the example of some men in his country who are learning to be gender sensitive. Those men emphasize that they don’t have any problem with their wives going somewhere. However, they don’t reflect on why they are actually pointing that out: “Who are you in the first place not to have a problem with that?”

Some men shared about how they find it difficult to be allies with women: “*What sort of allies do we need to be?*”

A summary of the results of the surveys that the male participants conducted with the women’s groups in their communities, prior to the ToT, was discussed as well. Overall, the surveys revealed that women feel that:

- 1 men want to take the leading role and not listen to the women’s point of view
- 2 men needn’t see women as competitors
- 3 men need to practice what they preach
- 4 women’s rights are human rights
- 5 women and men need to work together as allies
- 6 the stereotype that women are weak needs to be changed
- 7 men need to work against gender-based violence (GBV) and not be violent.

Some participants shared how they feel that part of being an ally is “being a witness, and being part of the process to validate, recognize and understand women’s experiences as well”. For that to happen, it’s crucial not to devalue the emotional experience of women.

Others noted also the role women play in the process of working together as allies. One participant noted: “*I think it’s important that women also recognize and value the positive aspects of masculine behavior.*”

Some men face challenges in approaching or trying to work with women, in spite of their good intentions. One participant shared how he feels the anger or distrust women have towards men and how he finds it difficult to deal with that. He considers it crucial that both men and women share their struggles through nonviolent communication, which sometimes doesn’t happen: “*I walked into a meeting where somebody told me that I was stupid since I am a man. But I’m also a human being, and there is also such a thing as nonviolent communication.*” He was encouraged to share his struggles in that with the women’s groups he is working with, and to avoid reacting defensively in such a situation.

Cross-gender dialogues: Meeting with Dutch women's groups

In the afternoon, women's groups from the Netherlands joined the training to engage in dialogue with the male participants. This cross-gender dialogue session aimed to increase the participants' understanding of women's experiences. It also provided an opportunity for activist women in the Netherlands to dialogue with men from different countries and cultures.

After the introductions and the establishment of ground rules for discussion, the women's groups and the participants were invited to sit together in two groups (a male and a female group) to prepare questions for each other.

Upon their return, the women's groups started the discussion with a question about the participants' perceptions of the use of rape as a weapon of war. Rape as a weapon of war is related to power and dominance. Men fight other men by raping their wives, who in turn are degraded to the status of property through that. Some men feel more powerful, while others are made powerless. Taking revenge and humiliating the other group or tribe are related factors. One of the problems with rape is that it is often portrayed as being the fault of the woman.

The discussion initiated by the men started with their question about how men can make women's voices heard in a respected manner when there are no women in certain spaces. The women activists responded by encouraging the men to reflect on the reasons for the absence of women in certain meetings, and to ensure that women's voices are being listened to (e.g. by demanding spaces for them) wherever they are present. It was also suggested to find out from women's groups – before such a meeting takes place – how they would like to be represented: what does gender equality mean for the women in one's own context? The participants were also advised to reflect with other men on women's issues from a male perspective.

Other points discussed included the diversion of funding towards men as a result of their involvement in gender-equality issues, the risk of men – while claiming (to want) to work together with women as allies – dominating spaces that women might feel that men shouldn't enter, and a woman's definition of a gender-sensitive man.

The discussion on the need to create spaces for women on political levels touched upon the gendered nature of politics itself. To create political space for women, it's crucial that political systems themselves change as well.

Including women on political decision-making levels without changing the system that encourages dominant masculine behavior and devalues feminine qualities within decision making will not lead to true gender justice in societies.

Cross-gender dialogues: Meeting with Dutch men's groups

After dinner, the training group welcomed male gender activists working in the Netherlands. The discussion revolved around the various motivations (personal, professional, political) that men have for being engaged in the struggle for women's rights, what gender justice means for men and what men can gain from changing gender relations.

The kinds of gains that were mentioned included: more stable and peaceful societies, no injustice in societies, healthier and happier relationships with women, a better sexual relationship with one's wife, feeling emotionally and mentally more stable, enjoying more freedom since one is less restricted by how one is expected to behave, enjoying a better family life with the absence of violence, being socially accepted without having to be "perfect", feeling less of a burden from being labeled as the oppressor or as sexist or violent men, being able to be better fathers, and enjoying improved and less violent relationships between men.

5.4.9 December 8: Transformation

Summary of the 9th training day:

The 9th training day included a focus on the participants' home context. Their ideas, thoughts and feelings surrounding their upcoming return home were discussed, including the ways in which this training and what they have learned from it might affect their work and perspectives in life. This training day also focused on positive aspects of masculinities and what it means in one's own context. The need for positive male role models for gender justice, and the role that the participants themselves could play in that, was underlined.

Opening session: Reflections on the training

The participants reflected on the various issues that had been discussed thus far in the training. One participant emphasized the need for men to recognize and be sincere in their manner of relating to women, for instance in terms of the issue of the objectification of women. As he



saw it, some men would claim they would never portray women in a sexualized way, but he argued that it's crucial for people to understand, recognize and acknowledge the way some men perceive and portray women, rather than denying certain aspects. That makes it possible for people to challenge the objectification of women in societies. Within that process, it is crucial to continually reflect on how one relates to women and how women perceive and experience that.

Another subject for discussion was how the lessons learned from this training might be perceived back home. As the program had been organized by a European-based organization, it might be perceived as a "Western training". The participants nevertheless noted that it's crucial that each participant clearly analyze the training content and reflect on whether and how he can use certain topics in his own context.

As one participant noted:

"We need to analyze our own culture from a gender perspective. We need to recognize and analyze the patriarchal and discriminatory aspects in it and challenge those. It doesn't mean we have copy Western culture."

Another participant commented that change needs to happen from within a given country or context:

"Where I am from, if you talk about human rights, they will shoot you the next day. You will be killed. I work in a very challenging context. We have to find our own ways of communicating and strategies to convey the message. It's never going to work if an outsider comes in and tells you how you should do it. Change involves a long process. Sometimes, outside interference will only just complicate things more."

Positive masculinities: Bringing it back to one's culture

After having discussed the negative aspects of dominant and hegemonic masculinities for the past few days, the participants were invited to reflect on ways of breaking the cycle of male socialization and on alternative and positive masculinities. The participant group came up with a list of characteristics of positive aspects of masculinities, including:

- being open to dialogue and negotiation
- valuing one's own emotions and those of others and admitting that there is a true validity in emotions and truth in emotional experience
- being nurturing
- being loving and caring
- being supportive and understanding
- listening

- accepting oneself and others
- having respect and being collaborative
- valuing nature
- constantly examining one self
- giving space to others and connecting with others
- using power in a positive way. For instance: you can use power to share power. Hence, if a man has power in an organization, he can use it to change the organization so that it will become more gender sensitive and inclusive
- problem solving, not creating problems
- acknowledging what women are saying and allowing space for listen to what their experience is. Doing this might be a relief for men as well, since they might feel less pressured to solve a problem for women
- being consultative
- being patient
- asking questions
- being okay with not performing
- affirming one's own vulnerability and acknowledging that as a strength.

Role Models

The participants were invited, in smaller groups, to list male role models of positive masculinities and gender equality from their own culture – role models they could refer to when discussing the deconstruction of violent aspects of masculinities and reconstructing this with positive aspects. Among the reflections that were shared was this:

"I've been part of a study that wanted to interview 20 men who had non-traditional roles, for instance as care givers, as someone who has a female boss or who takes care of the household full time. It turned out to be very difficult to find such men; we only found 17! When I interviewed them about various issues related to masculinities and alternative masculinities, I realized that they had still internalized parts of the ticket of dominant masculinities [as explained in the 'Story of a Boy' exercise]. Yet, they also expressed many positive aspects of masculinities. In any case, though, they are quite invisible in society."

This example was used to encourage the men to make the invisible visible and to document and share the stories of positive male role models (as well as the need to document female role models). That includes realizing that the participants themselves can act as positive role models for gender justice in their society: "*We have to be the creators of the positive stories ourselves as well.*"





Discussions in smaller groups



Role play: an encounter with a woman activist back home

Closure: An encounter with a woman activist back home

To prepare the participants for some of the responses from their communities that they might be confronted with upon their return home from this ToT, they were invited to role-play an encounter with a woman activist in their home country. A few of those role-plays are described here:

Example 1:

Participant

“Hi. You know I’ve been in this training with many other men. And I remember you were always telling me that you don’t completely trust men and that you always have doubts and reservations about that. I can tell you that I now know many men who are trying to make changes in their lives, and who are committed to working for gender justice. I feel there is hope for us. And I want to share this hope with you.”

Participant representing the voice of the woman activist back home

“Well, it’s good to hear what you are saying. You know how I am: I am not easy to convince. You and I have come a long way. I trust your hope that things can change.”

Example 2:

Participant

“Hello, I’m ready to tell you that I went through a personal transformation process. Remember when you said those things to me about respecting myself and being an example? You mean a lot to me and I want to thank you for what you said to me.”

Participant representing the voice of the woman activist back home

“Welcome back. I hope you didn’t do anything bad, all you men. I will tell you: never trust the men. I’m glad you learned something. But I know you men; after a while you will go back to being your selves. I hope this time you are serious. Go and evaluate yourself and help the other men as well in doing that.”

Example 3:

Participant

“I’m back. Thank you so much. It was a wonderful experience for me. The most interesting thing for me was the relationship-building among men, my transformation, and the belief that men can change. I’m happy to share this with you. I have built a connection with people and now we have allies around the world. My listening has improved. There are so many more things I want to share with you.”

Participant representing the voice of the woman activist back home

“Good that you’re back! Wow, how was it? I know it will be good for you. We are facing many challenges here in terms of including men in women’s organizations. I hope with this understanding that we will both be able to convince people, that this is a way to reach women’s and gender equality, rather than a way to distract people from the women’s agenda.”



Example 4:

Participant

“Thank you for telling me about that training. I’m back. We have been working together for two years. I receive quarterly reports from you, and when I go to meetings, I always talk about how gender sensitive we are, since we have a women’s program. However, this training has opened my eyes, I understand that it’s not just about having a program. No, it’s about myself, about what I do as a man, in the community and through my work. I’ve brought you a gift: it’s a pen. That symbolizes enlightenment, since that’s the challenge we have in our community. We have to deal with that. And I want to tell you that I’m convinced of the values and your work. You have an ally in me for your work and I believe we can work together as people who can make a change, work as role models and help others to change.”

Participant representing the voice of the woman activist back home

“Thank you, I’m proud to have supported you for this training. I look forward to working with you and seeing how we can work together to promote gender justice.”

Example 5:

Participant

“Hi, I’m back. I’ve learned many skills that I can use in my daily work. I learned from my colleagues from other countries and cultures, and especially from the different contexts in which we are all working. I can’t say I’ve changed yet. I hope to involve more women in peacebuilding. The only thing I want to ask you is to remind me about it if I am not working on this anymore, or if I am misbehaving. I want to achieve good results.”

Participant representing the voice of the woman activist back home

“Thank you. As you said, we need to see you changing your behavior. We need to see your commitment for the interest of the whole community. You have to work for the common interest. The future of this community is in your hands: in the hands of those who accept that they can be equal rather than simply conform to traditional roles. I wish you all the best. Keep your target in mind and work towards it.”

5.4.10 December 9: Participant-led workshops and action planning**Summary of the 10th training day:**

The 10th training day was used for further sharing about the participants’ work back home. The WPP also shared its vision and thinking behind the ToT framework, and in particular the idea of linking the male participant to a female ally to support the participant in the development and implementation of a follow-up plan.

Opening session: Reflections on the training

As an opening session, the participants were invited to share some of their reflections on the training. There was widespread appreciation for the sense of network building with colleagues from various parts of the world, and that led to reflections on ways to maintain that network and to continue supporting each other’s work. As one participant shared:

“How can I remain committed to this when I leave the group and go back to my community? I don’t know what it will be like and whether I will be accepted or rejected. What will that do with my motivation? When those difficult moments come, how will I be able to reconnect with this group of people to get back my motivation and strength?”

The group decided to create a Google Group to ensure that communication, sharing and support would continue, even after their return home.

Participant-led workshops

Those participants who had not yet given a presentation on their work were invited to do that today.

History of armed conflict in Uganda

The participant from Uganda elaborated on the history of armed conflict in Uganda. He spoke about the periods from 1963–1970 (early independence) and 1971–1979, and he addressed the effects of war on women in particular, touching upon the topic of rape in war times. Using examples such as Betty Bigombe, a former Ugandan government minister and chief mediator between the LRA and the government of Uganda, and Isis-WICCE,²⁶ he addressed the role of women in peacebuilding in as well.

²⁶ For more information on this organization, please visit: www.isis.or.ug/.



The gender tree exercise

Conflict in Cambodia

Having shared something about the history of the conflict in his country, the Cambodian participant reflected on the impact that conflict has had on male socialization processes within his country. In general, men are expected to serve in the military and to protect the country. As a result of those socialization processes, which affect the way men there relate to the world, there is a high rate of domestic violence in Cambodia.

The Cambodian participant finds it difficult to challenge men and to educate them about positive aspects of masculinities. For instance, in order to make a living, some women are forced to work in a beer garden, their parents having been killed in the war. He finds it challenging to educate the men who harass those women and to advocate women's rights. He shared: *"If you don't drink, you are often not considered to be a 'real man'"*. One of the other participants suggested working together with other men and getting those men to speak out against the sexual harassment of women working in restaurants or bars.

Gender-based Violence: Protection and Prevention

The participant from Liberia spoke about gender-based violence (GBV) in his own context. The key point for the prevention of GBV is the identification of its causes. Understanding and analyzing contextual factors that contribute to GBV is crucial. Those include things like the cultural practices of tribes, the role of patriarchy, religion, statutory laws and traditional laws. Having done that analysis, one should design prevention strategies that address

those contributing factors in relation to the different areas one is working in. The participant from Liberia briefly discussed some of the challenges currently confronting his country such as poverty, unemployment, the lack of psycho-social support systems, and economic instability.

Violence against women in the Democratic Republic of Congo

The participant from the DRC elaborated on the conflict in his country, focusing on ethnic and regional aspects of the conflict. A lack of political leadership, impunity for those who break the laws and the failure to implement laws protecting women have resulted in an enormous amount of sexual violence in his country. The exact number of cases of women having been raped is unknown, since many cases go unreported. He identified the need for political will, regional support and trauma support (on personal and societal levels) as important factors to be included in programs that work on violence prevention.

Role-play: Victim and perpetrator

The participant from Northern Ireland asked three colleagues each to role-play a certain character: the attacker, the victim and the intervenor. While the role of the attacker remained the same in each case, the role of the victim and the intervenor changed over the course of three situations:

- 1 The victim was told to run away.
- 2 The victim was told to stand his ground and make non-verbal contact with the attacker.
- 3 The intervenor was asked to undertake three different interventions: a) polite intervention, b) physical intervention, and c) creative NV intervention.

While doing this exercise, it is crucial to take enough time to support the people involved and to ensure that all participants feel comfortable before, during and after the exercise. Afterwards, it is important to take considerable time to de-role and to bring the participants back to their own context and situation again.

Gender oppression – gender tree

After an energizer exercise, the participant from Fiji introduced his fellow participants to the concept of gender oppression through an exercise called the gender tree. The aim of this exercise was to understand the root causes of gender oppression better from one's own culture. He explained how the tree is drawn with the roots representing the invisible causes of gender oppression. The results of gender oppression are drawn in the trunk, while the impact of the oppression is located in the branches.



Using the example of rape, there was a discussion about where patriarchy should be drawn and what exactly the roots, trunk and branches are supposed to represent. After some of the root causes of rape (patriarchy, the disempowerment of men, impunity, and masculinities) were addressed, some of the factors that aggravate the system (“people who water and nurture the tree”) were discussed. When analyzing gender oppression using the gender tree, it’s also important to consider external factors that help perpetuate the system.

After that, the participant facilitated a short discussion on what such an analysis can mean when designing a project that aims to address rape issues. When designing a strategic plan, one should take into account intervention strategies on different levels.

Creating allies within the framework of the WPP’s ToT

After the presentations of the participants, the WPP Program Manager, Isabelle Geuskens, shared with the participants the WPP’s vision and the rationale behind the ToT framework.

Upon his return home from the first block of the pilot ToT cycle (2009), each male participant, is linked to a female support person from his own region and/or country who will support him in the development and implementation of his follow-up plan. The follow-up activity is to be used as an opportunity to practice the skills and knowledge gained from the first training and to spread the vision of the ToT within the participant’s network. It also serves as an opportunity for cross-gender dialogue and collaboration in which the complexities of gender inequalities and the differences between male and female experiences and realities in a specific context can be exposed, challenged and transformed. The WPP believes that awareness-raising about how ideas of masculinities and femininities play a role in war and violence is crucial to bring about transformative change in peacebuilding.

WPP team members support the female ally and the male participant with input and resources during the development and implementation of the follow-up plans. Overall, the framework aims to support partnership building and to facilitate the creation of a pool of women and men working together as allies in peacebuilding through gender-sensitive active nonviolence.

The participants’ individual expectations and needs in terms of their women allies and the support they will receive from the WPP were shared and discussed.

5.4.11 December 10: Action plans

Summary of the 11th training day:

After taking a moment to honor International Human Rights Day, this training day began with a focus on the roles that people have and assume in their lives, and the need for male role models to actively speak out against gender-based violence and in favor of gender equality. The rest of the day, the group focused on developing ideas for the follow-up plan in the framework of the WPP’s ToT cycle. Participants wrote a letter to home as a way of reflecting on the process of learning and personal transformation that had taken place during the training.

Opening session: Commemoration of Human Rights Day

The day started with the commemoration of and reflections on International Human Rights Day, followed by reflections on the training. It was noted that the drafting of two statements during the course of the week (one on the massacre in Maguindanao, on Mindanao, Philippines, and the other one, entitled “Together for Transformation: A Call to Men and Boys”, to affirm the participants’ commitment to gender-sensitive active nonviolence and ending violence against women) had brought about a sense of solidarity within the group as well.

Male role models

Trainer Steven Botkin from Men’s Resources International²⁷ shared some of his experiences on working with men and boys in Africa. He elaborated on his work in Zambia, Nigeria, Liberia and Rwanda and on the establishment of the Rwanda Men’s Resource Centre.²⁸ Some of the challenges Steven has encountered in his work in engaging men and boys, and in working together with women as allies, include:

- Balancing being supportive towards men and challenging them. Men often have the tendency to close down or go away when they are being challenged. However, men need to be challenged, since the establishment of a safe environment without feeling challenged is not enough to encourage change.

²⁷ For more information on the work of Men’s Resources International, please visit: www.mensresourcesinternational.org/.

²⁸ For more information on the Rwanda Men’s Resource Centre, please visit: www.rwamrec.org/.

- Women's perceptions about the process of engaging men. It's crucial for men to be considerate in that regard and to be accountable to the women's movement in the work they do.
- The risk of reaffirming traditional notions of gender in meetings between women and men. Be aware of the risk of men taking over or being dominant at those meetings (e.g. dominating discussions, assuming leadership roles).
- The issue of dealing with perpetrators and how a community can hold perpetrators accountable.

In a response to that, one of the participants shared the need to start from your own perspective when engaging with men and to share with them your own experience of using violence and dominance in your own life (as well as ways of recognizing and dealing with that). That enables the establishment of a safe environment and creates an opportunity for men to identify with you, rather than to respond defensively.

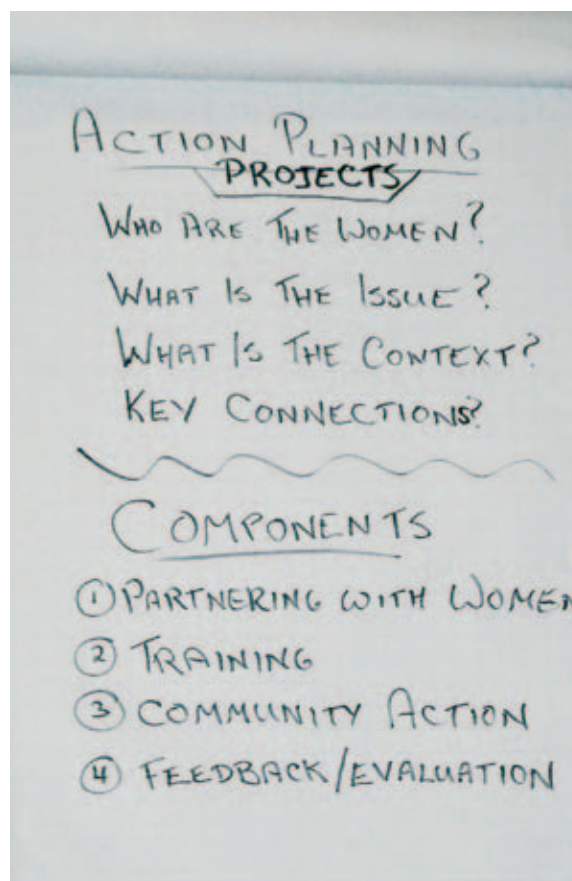
- Maintaining and sustaining motivation and engagement.

After briefly touching upon the different stages of male involvement, the trainers spoke about the need for male role models to speak out on violence against women. That also included the need for the participants to act as role models for gender justice and as advocates of social change in their communities. Other examples of role models included Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the South African Nobel Peace Laureate, who publicly affirms his commitment to ending violence against women:

“You are a weak man if you use your physical superiority to assault and brutalize women. I will continue fighting until the end of my days for the right of women and girls to live a life free from violence and abuse.”

Another example of male role models in terms of working to end violence against women was the UN's Network of Men Leaders, initiated by Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon.²⁹ The leaders in that expanding network – current and former politicians, civil society and youth activists, religious and community leaders, cultural figures and other prominent individuals – work in their respective spheres of influence to undertake specific actions to end violence against women, ranging from raising public

²⁹ For more information, please visit: www.un.org/en/women/endviolence/.



awareness and advocating for adequate laws, to meeting with young men and boys and holding governments accountable.

It was also suggested to look for more visible role models via the Internet, such as Desmond Tutu's YouTube message on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women: www.youtube.com/watch?v=10Q2vYXZw3A.

Personal roles and the creation of a social diagram

After that introduction, the trainers invited the participants to take a closer look at the roles they assume in their lives and the positive and negative (institutional) factors that facilitate their assuming those roles. It was noted that while there are always positive roles that people play, there might also be some negative roles people might want to distance themselves from.

After listing some of the roles they play (e.g. peacebuilder, church member, singer, single, consumer), the participants drew a diagram depicting the people, groups, and institutional systems they feel they have some relationship with, resulting in a diagram of the environment the participant lives in.



For instance, one participant explained his diagram and the people and groups he associates with as follows:

“Look, there is me in the middle in the circle. Then I drew other circles that are connected to me: my friends, my boss, my mum, my teacher, my uncle, the friend of my uncle who is a police official and rescued me when I was jailed. Since that day we have strong relationship. I also have a very positive relationship with my mother. Here is the church elder; I don't have a very positive relationship with him, since he thinks I am overly liberal. Then I drew the militias outside the circle, since I don't want to be affiliated with them.”

The diagram can be used to reflect on people with whom one could work upon returning home (e.g. the female ally, the WPP, women's groups in one's community, and men's groups in one's community) and to analyze who or what might be less supportive of one's work (e.g. businesses, military, militias, traditional and community leaders, government officials, media and journalists, and patriarchal privileges).



Action plans

WPP Program Manager Isabelle Geuskens shared with the participants the timeline for the pilot ToT cycle as a whole. After brainstorming in smaller groups, the participants discussed in plenary the potential follow-up activities they would be undertaking to spread the skills, knowledge and vision they gained from this training further within their respective networks.

For instance, the members of one group elaborated on their idea to target people in their respective communities (university and college students / traditional leaders / representatives of NGOs and CSOs) to explain more about gender-based violence, linking that to masculinities and ways of challenging violence in their communities.

Another group introduced their ideas of working on awareness-raising (using psychodrama techniques) and on lobbying and advocacy of women's rights (with reference to e.g. the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women [CEDAW], UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820), and gender roles and gender-based violence in their societies, by educating people in their communities (e.g. journalists, rural people, students and youth).

Extensive discussion and brainstorming followed on the different ideas presented in the plenary as to how to use their skills and knowledge from the ToT within their respective communities and contexts. Those ideas

included using solidarity messages, establishing men's and/or women's (resource) groups and organizing cross-gender dialogue sessions.

Writing a letter for home

In the evening, each of the participants wrote a letter to a specific woman back home to inform her of his experiences of the training and the learning process he went through. It was agreed that the WPP would send those letters to the individual participants three months later.

5.4.12 December 11: Closure

Summary of the 12th training day:

The focus of this last training day (day 12) was on the participants' and the trainers' reflections about the training, the closing activities, and the sharing of their expectations about the development and implementation of the follow-up plans, as well as their expectations for the second block of training.

This final day started with people reflecting on the past 11 training days: on some of the lessons the participants learned, but perhaps also on some of the challenges they experienced. After that, some suggestions for topics that could be covered in the second block of training in the pilot ToT cycle were shared.

A variety of closing exercises marked the official conclusion of the 12 intensive training days of the first block of this pilot ToT cycle before everyone returned home.

Celebration and music



6 Evaluation

The first block of the pilot ToT cycle (2009) was evaluated using a variety of monitoring and evaluation tools developed by the trainers in cooperation with the WPP Staff. Those included:

- a “daily impressions” feedback system
- a pre training survey and a post-training survey
- mid-term and final evaluation forms
- testimonies on video and in writing by participants, documenting the impact of the ToT cycle (women-peacemakers.blogspot.com/).

Evaluation revealed the following, in terms of:

1 Training dynamics

The overall atmosphere in the group was rated as being very good, with participants easily opening up to each

other and to the trainers. The participants appreciated having the opportunity to share and analyze issues (such as masculinities) in an almost all-male and multi-cultural setting –an opportunity that was unique for the majority of the participants. The participants emphasized the excellent teamwork between the trainers and the sensitivity of both for group dynamics. Several participants emphasized how the two trainers served as inspiring role models who had managed to encourage and motivate the group throughout the learning process, but also to create an atmosphere where the participants felt comfortable.

2 Training Content

The participants highly valued:

- the connection they felt with and the sharing within an international male-only group

Percentage of participants who indicated feeling (ranging from “somewhat” to “a lot”):	Pre-training survey	Post-training survey
knowledgeable about peacebuilding	68%	100%
knowledgeable about gender relations and gender equality	74%	89%
knowledgeable about gender-sensitive active nonviolence (GSANV)	26%	89%
knowledgeable about positive masculinity	37%	95%
comfortable about talking to others about peacebuilding	89%	95%
comfortable about talking to others about gender relations and gender equality	74%	100%
comfortable about talking to others about gender-sensitive active nonviolence (GSANV)	63%	95%
comfortable about talking to others about positive masculinity	58%	95%
prepared to engage in collaboration with women	95%	100%
prepared to conduct a presentation or workshop about GSANV	74%	100%
prepared to organize a community activity related to GSANV	68%	95%

- the theories on active nonviolence (ANV) and gender-sensitive active nonviolence
- the theories on positive masculinities and its link to socialization processes
- the sharing of training tools and facilitation methodologies.
- the theory of gender-sensitive active nonviolence (GSANV), as illustrated by means of concrete examples
- how to put gender-sensitive active nonviolence into practice.

Overall, the participants indicated that the first training block (2009) had contributed to an increase in their knowledge about ANV, peacebuilding and gender issues, as well as an increased feeling of confidence and preparedness to address those issues.

Overall, the first block of the pilot ToT cycle (2009) received a score of 80+ out of a possible 100. The main challenge experienced during the ToT included the overfull training schedule, which interfered with the in-depth coverage of training topics. The evaluation also revealed that the participants would like to further deepen their understanding on:

The second block of the ToT (2010) will incorporate these topics. In late 2009, the WPP and ToT trainers concluded that generally speaking, the ToT had resulted in a high level of personal commitment among the ToT participants. It was concluded that the second block of the pilot ToT cycle (2010) would:

- focus on the participants' engagement as gender-sensitive allies on political levels
- include in-depth sessions on the following topics: gender and militarism, masculinities, the UN Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888, and 1889, and gender-sensitive active nonviolent training techniques and actions
- further clarify the WPP's overall strategic objectives in relation to the ToT cycle, and its future involvement with the pool of male participants.



Preparation group working on the development of the draft statement



7 Together for Transformation

A Call to Men and Boys

A direct *powerful outcome* of the first block of the pilot ToT cycle (2009) was the collective statement “Together for Transformation”, drawn up by the participants in the framework of the “16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence” campaign. The statement was drafted to publicly affirm their commitment to promoting gender-sensitive active nonviolence and ending violence against women, and it was disseminated widely. Please find the statement below.

Together for Transformation: A Call to Men and Boys

On the occasion of International Human Rights Day, December 10, 2009, we, the 19 men from 17 countries in Africa, Asia, Europe, America, the Middle East and the Pacific who are gathered here in Egmond aan Zee in the Netherlands for a Training of Trainers on Gender-Sensitive Active Nonviolence, organized by the International Fellowship of Reconciliation’s Women Peacemakers Program, do collectively draft this document and express our commitment towards this statement/call.

We understand that men and women are socialized in a patriarchal system that legitimizes the use of different forms of violence to gain, restore and control power affecting powerless and marginalized sections of society. We fully acknowledge that women suffer far more than men from gender oppression.

We understand and recognize that women have always been active agents of change. Women worldwide are standing up against all forms of discrimination and violence to bring social and gender justice and peace to the world. Some men are standing as allies of women’s struggles, but notions of dominant masculinities across cultures have posed challenges for gender equality and social justice. Both men and women are suffering in that system

and they need to join hands to bring about transformative change. Men also have much to gain in terms of health, general wellbeing and safety through that change.

We believe that all individuals have equal human rights, irrespective of their gender, origin, nationality, age, religion, caste, class, race, color, occupation, physical and mental abilities, or sexualities. All human beings have a right to live a dignified life free of threats and discrimination. We assert our commitments to all international conventions and declarations, especially the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and UN Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888 and 1889. Those need to be fully implemented in their true spirit, and further steps need to be taken to improve policies and programs pertaining to women and gender justice.

We strongly speak out against gender inequality and the discrimination of women in all forms, and we show our deep commitment to gender-sensitive active nonviolence as a way of life. We are inspired by and committed to this work and to the prospect of change in our lives and in our societies. We believe in people’s capacity to bring transformative change in nonviolent ways.

Therefore we call on all men and boys to:

- adopt gender-sensitive active nonviolence as a way of solving problems
- end violence against women in any form
- engage in constructive dialogue with women
- provide space for the equal and meaningful participation of women in private and public spheres, including peacebuilding processes
- stop militarizing resistance and peace processes
- promote policies that bring dignity to all people.



We call on men and boys to join us on this journey.

Signed,
*Gender-Sensitive Active Nonviolent Men
 Women Peacemakers Program Training of Trainers*
Egmond aan Zee, The Netherlands
 December 10, 2009

Ali Gohar
 Just Peace International
 Peshawar, Pakistan

Alimou Diallo
 West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP)
 Ghana

Alphonse Ilot Muthaka
 PEREXC
 Mentoring Program and Socio Economic
 Reinsertion of Former Combatants
 Democratic Republic of Congo

Anand Pawar
 SAMYAK – A Communication and Resource Center
 India

Babar Bashir
 ROZAN
 Pakistan

Christian Ngendahimana
 Fountain-Isoko for Good Governance and
 Integrated Development
 Burundi

Kapil Kafle
 Institute of Human Rights Communication
 Nepal

Nixon Nembaware
 Zimbabwe

Oluoch Dola
 CHEMCHEMI YA UKWELI
 Active Non Violent Movement in Kenya
 Kenya

Otim Tonny
 Teso Women Peace Activists
 Uganda

Owen Murozvi
 Zimbabwe Council of Churches
 Harare, Zimbabwe

Paulo Baleinakorodawa
 Pacific Center for Peacebuilding
 Fiji Islands

Rob Fairmichael
 INNATE
 Ireland

Ruben Reyes Jiron
 The Masculinity and Gender Equality Network
 Nicaragua

Samuel D. Darpolor
 West Africa Network for Peace Building/
 WANEP-Liberia
 Liberia

Siad Darwish
 Permanent Peace Movement
 Beirut, Lebanon

Sivarajah Bagerathan
 Sri Lanka

Sothea Sak
 SILAKA
 Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Valtimore B. Fenis
 Mindanao Peoples Peace Movement (MPPM)
 Alyansa ng Kabataang Mindanao para sa
 Kapayapaan (AKMK)
 Mindanao, Philippines



8 Recommendations for Engaging Men in Women's Empowerment Work³⁰

Based on the first experiences with our pilot project, the WPP has formulated 15 *Recommendations*³⁰ for women's organizations that are planning to engage men in their work:

1 Consult with the women you work with

Spend sufficient time analyzing if and why you think it is important to collaborate with men and men's organizations in the work you are doing for women's empowerment and gender justice. Make sure to consult with the women you are working with during that process. The collaboration with men and men's organizations in your work needs to be understood and supported by those women. How could such collaboration contribute to the work you are already doing with and for women? How is that work addressing the needs of the women you are working with? How will that approach lead to a concrete impact in terms of advancing women's rights and increasing gender justice in society?

³⁰ The original article "Recommendations for Engaging Men in Women's Empowerment Work" was published in *Together for Transformation: Men, Masculinities and Peacebuilding* (May 2010). That article elaborates further on the background of each recommendation. That publication is downloadable via: www.ifor.org/WPP/wppmaterials_newsletters.html

³¹ The WPP documented its observations on the development and process of its ToT process in detail. Based on those observations, the WPP has produced a list of recommendations. Feedback on the first draft of the recommendations was provided by the WPP's ToT trainers and the participant pool, as well as by Gary Barker, Co-chair of MenEngage. We highly appreciate their valuable contributions that have resulted in the list in this article. The current list of recommendations will be discussed further during the second block of the ToT, which will take place in July 2010.

2 Define as concretely as possible your goals and expectations for partnering with men and men's organizations, and use those to monitor your approach – and to see whether it needs adjusting – along the way

It is crucial to spend sufficient preparation and reflection time on the development phase of your work on engaging men. Besides analyzing and defining your expectations and the expected outcomes in terms of positive impact, it is also important to reflect on the risks and challenges involved.

3 Be strategic in terms of who you consider working with

It is important to know in advance what kind of men and men's organizations will make the best possible supporters of your work. It is important to collaborate with men who can serve as role models for other men. Role models are needed to speak out against gender injustices and to affirm that it is acceptable not to conform to dominant and violent forms of masculinities. Therefore, make sure to define a profile of the kind of men and men's organizations you would want to engage with in order to advance your women's rights work. It is important to develop clear selection criteria in advance.

4 Ask the men's organizations / networks you plan to work with about their concrete goals and expectations in terms of working with women's organizations

Do not assume that others' reasons and motivations for becoming involved in your work will be similar to your own expectations. There needs to be clarity on the motives of engagement and on what the men's organizations concretely want to achieve through their collaboration. Try to understand why the men's organizations you are planning to work with are involved. In establishing closer contact with the men's organizations, it is important to listen to the (subtle) messages being conveyed regarding their reasons for wanting to be involved and their objectives. It is also important to discuss what the men's organizations



expect from you and to share your own expectations in that regard.

5 Work together towards a common goal

Spend sufficient time on clarifying the goals and expectations of each one of the stakeholders involved. Once those are clear, it is crucial to analyze how stakeholders can complement each other. Analyze if and how the goals and expectations overlap, and define any commonalities. You will need to define and agree on a strategy on how to work towards that.

Different strategies are required when different goals are defined. For instance, a collaboration focusing on getting men to stop abusive and violent behavior will require a different intervention strategy than one that focuses on engaging men as allies in the empowerment of women. Continue to analyze and reflect on whether you are both still on the same track with regard to the common objective you have defined. It might be that all the organizations involved will agree on fine-tuning or even re-defining the objectives, based on their experiences thus far. That could be very valuable, as long as it is clear for all the stakeholders involved.

6 Define in concrete terms your strategy on how you would like to engage men in your work

Specify which parts of your work you would like to collaborate on with men (and perhaps also which parts you would rather not yet collaborate on with men). Define concrete steps and phases in that process, establish a timeline, and allocate budget for each step. Make a clear division of roles and responsibilities, including agreements on who will be responsible for bringing in which part of the human and financial resources. Make sure to develop a proper monitoring-and-evaluation system with clear indicators to be able to measure the progress you are making towards your objectives and goals.

7 Monitor and address power issues

Be aware of both unintended and intended uses and abuses of (implied) power in the process of engaging men and men's organizations in your work and in the relationship with the men you work with. Continuous reflection on the power dynamics among all those involved is essential, both in formal and informal settings. For men and women to be true and real allies in their work, power issues need to be discussed and put on the table so that they can be dealt with within the relationship in a balanced and just way. If that is not done, you run the risk of affirming a power imbalance in the relationship with the men

you engage with. That includes being aware of what power in that relationship means. The sharing of power includes sharing of access to and control over information, knowledge, resources and (informal and formal) decision-making levels. The systems that put and keep men in power positions (in both formal and informal settings) need to be revealed and challenged constantly, and that needs to be done by both men and women. Playing out dominance or "victim power" can stand in the way of true partnership and cooperation.

8 Raise personal awareness to bring about transformation

Women and men need to work together to change the traditional notions of how women and men are expected to behave. The deconstruction of hegemonic, dominant and violent masculinities in favor of positive masculinities needs to be encouraged by both men and women. Don't be afraid as a women's organization to voice your position unambiguously to men or men's organizations if you do not experience them as partners cooperating in a true and respectful manner, or if they are not really sharing power equally. It is important to be clear with them, while at the same time supporting them by making them conscious of their own behavior that affirms hegemonic masculinities, such as dominant, violent or oppressive behavior. Pointing that out in a clear but constructive and compassionate manner will be beneficial for all in the partnership.

9 Reflect on attitudes

As a women's organization, you will need to ask yourself whether you are willing and able to work with men and men's organizations. That includes reflecting on your own attitude towards men as well. If, as a women's organization, you hold the belief that men are not able or willing to change, and if you reflect and encourage that belief in your verbal and nonverbal communication with men (and with other women's organizations), it will be impossible to establish a climate of working together as true partners with men and men's organizations.

When a situation arises in which you feel mistreated or not recognized, take time to analyze and reflect on the factual situation without "jumping to conclusions". Ask yourself whether the situation stems from the man's lack of motivation to change or from his unawareness of what the consequences of his behavior are for women and other men. Reflecting on that is essential in the process of building partnerships. Realize that your response to the situation will influence that partnership building as well. In the same way, it is also important to reflect on the kind of



attitude that the men's organizations with which you are engaging has towards women: do they see women as vulnerable victims in need of support or as powerful actors of change? That attitude will influence the way the men interact with you, even if they are not aware of that.

10 Establish a climate for constructive communication and learning

When engaging men in your work as a women's organization, the relationship between your organization and the men and men's organizations will need to be built. In the initial phase, time and spaces are needed for getting to know each other, building trust and exchanging ideas, values, and expectations. Ground rules that all actors involved can agree upon could serve as guidelines for communication, such as careful listening, offering possible solutions without passing judgments, providing constructive feedback, and respect for each other. There needs to be a commitment of time and energy for the period of cooperation. It is important for both sides to be open to constructive feedback and to create room for learning. It is important to spend sufficient time on creating a safe space where everybody feels (s)he can discuss any challenges one might experience during the cooperation. Building partnerships takes trust, courage, patience, time, energy, and a willingness to be and remain open and to share.

11 Be sensitive in your use of language

Engaging men in your work as a women's organization might require you to have a look at the language you use in your work, in the reports you produce and in the overall communication within your organization: is it inclusive and does it also address men? The efforts to work together should be reflected in the overall language used and in the (implicit) messages it conveys.

Be conscious of the kind of language you use in your communication with men's organizations. Try to avoid language that is mainly blaming and instills guilt. Generally speaking, people tend to listen better and be more open to messages that are conveyed in a positive manner ("rewards") rather than in a negative manner ("punishment").

12 Be aware of the "dominance trap"

Working as allies implies working together in a process in which the contributions from all persons are equally valued. That involves creating an atmosphere in which everybody involved has an opportunity to share and contribute to the work, without one group dominating the other. If one group is dominant, that means there is another

group that has been pushed into a submissive position from which the members of the latter group are unable to share their views, perspectives, experiences, needs, and feelings. As the submissive group is unable to participate meaningfully, the partnership does not serve all groups. Meaningful participation implies that the various views are not just shared, but also actually listened to and (if possible) incorporated into the partnership. That could happen on subtle levels as well.

Due to the privileges provided to men in patriarchal societies, men often tend to be in a position where it is socially accepted if not expected that they dominate. Male activists working in the field of gender justice remain men who have also been socialized by patriarchal societies. Be aware of that when engaging men and men's organizations in your work. Make sure that you do not affirm the notion that some men might know how to work better than women, or might be more equipped or knowledgeable to make decisions, simply because they are men. Don't encourage men to feel special or superior to others for being involved in this field. Make sure to point it out to the men and men's organizations you are working with if you observe some of them tending to act in such a manner. Without being aware of it, some could have a tendency to "take over" or "run away with" your project. Even though that might stem from good intentions (e.g. supporting women), it is disempowering to the work of your organization and the women you work with. It reinforces traditional power relations between women and men and undermines real equality.

The "dominance trap" is also related to the ideas and notions that women and men have of each other. Do the men and men's organizations see women as vulnerable victims in need of support or rescue or rather as actors of change? Their attitude will influence the way the men interact with you, even if they are unaware of that.

13 Maintain a continuous process of ongoing reflection and of sharing experiences and perspectives

Ensure that the process of engaging men in your work is and remains a continuous process of ongoing reflection and of sharing experiences and perspectives, for all actors involved. Continue to analyze if and how the collaboration with men's organizations is also contributing to the work you are doing with and for women. Holding both yourself and the organizations you work with accountable for any commitments made and any actions undertaken is crucial.



14 Include young men as well

Ensure that the collaboration with men and men's organizations includes young men as well. It is important to create spaces and opportunities for young people to work side by side with experienced activists, to learn from them, and to exchange ideas. Young people are also the ones who can carry the development of partnerships between women and men into their own and the next generations.

15 Ensure engagement on political levels

In order to truly transform patriarchal societies and to empower women on all levels, it is essential to work constructively together with men and men's organizations on political levels. That includes advocacy and lobbying for the formulation, adoption and implementation of policies and laws on women's empowerment and gender justice. The support of men for women's rights and the inclusion of women on higher decision-making levels are crucial for true gender justice in societies. That also includes the creation of political will and commitment to policies and laws on gender equality that serve both women and men. What is important in that respect is an awareness of the need to monitor and evaluate the implementation of those policies to make sure it does not lead to any kind of backlash.



9 Some Experiences after the First Block of the Pilot ToT Cycle

9.1 Online sharing

Upon the conclusion of the first block of this ToT cycle, a Google Group was created to facilitate the further networking and communication within the group of participants. The online group is being used for asking and sharing advice on facilitation skills, resources and news items related to the peacebuilding work the men are working on. Updates on the individual members' own work are provided through the list and compiled by the WPP. The WPP sends a monthly overview newsletter, containing news items on its work as well as the compiled updates from the participant's work.

Via the online group, the participants share examples of how they use the skills and knowledge they learned during the ToT cycle – including the gender-sensitive facilitation skills – in their work in their home context, and how they are sharing it within their own networks. Some of those examples are shared below.

The participant from the *Democratic Republic of Congo* informed us of how he recognized that, in his country, gender is perceived as being related to women but not yet to men. He noticed how mainly women are engaged in the struggle to end violence against women. He considers involving men in that to be crucial. Inspired by the ToT, he has established the Congo Men's Network, which aims to prevent and fight against gender-based violence in the DRC.

Several weeks after returning home, the participant from *India* shared this:

“Some of the facilitation methods and techniques I learned during the ToT are really helping me in my various training programs with men and boys. Since then I have incorporated psychodrama and personal reflections into the pedagogy of my training programs. I've also used the 'child's story' to explain the model of male socialization and I have

been using lot of music and games in my trainings since I returned from the Netherlands. These methods are working amazingly!

I shared details of IFOR/WPP's ToT in the Netherlands and the follow-up plans with many of the friends and colleagues in South Asia and Southeast Asia during that program. People are really looking forward to the outcomes of this process. It gave me a sense of having more responsibility for working towards gender-sensitive active nonviolence.”

Another example came from the participant from *Liberia*:

“After I returned home from the training there was a capacity-building retreat organized by my organization. Since we were reviewing our staff policy manual, this retreat focused on gender as well. I showed the first part of the documentary that was shown during the ToT. I divided the participants into groups of four to discuss their own impressions of the gender analysis in the documentary and to relate it to our society. I also asked them to identify some of the factors that contribute to gender-based violence. They were all very interested in the topic and requested that a separate session be held on this topic and that further resource material be made available. Since I only had one copy of the DVD, we agreed that each staff member would take it home for three days to view it, and then return it and come up with points for discussion. I also encouraged them to share it with their family members and friends. I informed them that I would be available as well to give more clarity if somebody would need that.”

The participant from *Ghana* (born in Guinea) shared some of his experiences after the ToT as follows:

“I apologize for the silence and for not reporting immediately on the work I am doing to promote our commitment for gender justice and active nonviolence. I am presently in my own country, Guinea, where I participated in a high-level UN Solidarity Mission to Guinea. The mission was coordinated by Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS) in solidarity of the victims of the September 28 military crackdown on peaceful



demonstrators.³¹ As a matter of recall, in that unfortunate incident, according to the UN, women were gang-raped in broad daylight and 157 people killed.”

The participant from *Lebanon* shared this:

“I was in East Timor for the first global meeting of the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding in Dili, Timor-Leste. The meeting brought together more than a hundred participants from over 40 countries and international organizations, as well as representatives from civil society. During the discussions I lobbied to include gender mainstreaming in the workings. And the final declaration recognizes the status of women and girls, both in conflicts and their transformation. A real success.”³²

The participant from *Burundi* shared this:

“Some days ago, I facilitated a round table on how former combatants from different armed political movements are living with citizens in their communities after 13 years of violence: how are they engaging with the people and what kind of relationship do they develop with their victims in the different areas surrounding Bujumbura? Participants included former combatants, local authorities and victims of gender-based violence. I was able to use some of the tools that I learned during the ToT, for instance the cycle of male socialization. Also, the facilitation skills we learned were very helpful. I invited the victims to share in the meeting what had happened to them during the war in Bujumbura Rural. Obviously, that was difficult for them and some of them were crying while sharing. After that, I invited the participants to say something to these victims as a sign of compassion. Two former combatants promised material and moral support to the victims, after having heard their stories.”

The participant from *Fiji* shared about how encouraging he finds the support and exchanges via the Google Group. He noted:

“It’s exciting to continue to share our work with men and masculinities. I am running my training and a cross-gender dialogue for 30 men on the 16th and 17th of next month. I have also started a men’s support group in my parish and will start working with young people on nonviolence. My nonviolence work in the prison has also started.”

Several of the participants shared as well how they celebrated March 8, International Women’s Day. For instance:

³¹ For more information, please visit: www.iansa-women.org/node/366.

³² For more information, please visit: www.pbsbdialogue.org.

The participant from *Nepal* shared this:

“The Institute of Human Rights Communication Nepal (IHRICON) served free drinking water to all the participants of International Working Women’s Day on March 8. Two stalls of the water were established at the side of the main gates at the premises of the mass meetings and the fair in the capital on the auspicious occasion of the Centenary International Working Women’s Day 2010. The stalls were open throughout the day from 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM at the door step of Tundikhel and Bhrikuti Mandap so far.”

One of the participants from *Zimbabwe* shared this:

“We have just had the national commemorations of International Women’s Day. The president and the prime minister and their deputies were all there. Our organization was key in organizing this year’s version of the commemorations and I think it was a success.”

9.2 Follow-up plans

At the time of writing this report, the male participants were developing follow-up plans with the support of a female peace activist from their own region. The trainers, in close consultation with the WPP, were developing the curriculum for the second block of the ToT, which is planned to take place in the Philippines in July 2010. Some of those follow-up plans are shared below.

The male participant from *Burundi* is planning to organize a training on gender mainstreaming in Bujumbura, Burundi. The training’s goal is to increase the capacity of the organization’s staff and partners to support a gender-mainstreaming approach within the organization and its partners’ programs.

The participant from the *Democratic Republic of Congo* is planning a three-day training and a radio show, both entitled “Gender Mainstreaming and Its Role in Peacebuilding”. The aim of this project is to strengthen the gender approach efforts in the eastern region of the DRC.

The participant from *Kenya* is planning a three-day training on gender-sensitive active nonviolence, followed by two days of community theatre performances by the same participants in Molo, a small town in the Rift Valley Province in Kenya. The goal of the activity is to enhance women’s participation in the healing process in the region, as well as to foster a working relationship between men and women in order to bridge the gap that exists between them.



One of the participants from *Pakistan* is planning a two-day training on masculinities and active nonviolence. He is aiming to introduce and highlight the importance of gender-sensitive active nonviolence among CSOs in the region.

One of the participants of *Zimbabwe* is planning a training on gender-sensitive active nonviolence for student leaders. He is aiming to increase their understanding of the nature and practice of the gender-sensitive active nonviolence method and to initiate a dialogue about masculinities and socialization processes.

The participant from *Fiji* organized the training “Non-violence: Exploring Masculinity, Violence, Gender and Peace” for men to raise awareness about the relationship between masculinities and violence and to discover which nonviolent ways men can be involved in to promote gender equality and eliminate gender-based violence.

The participant from *Liberia* is planning to organize a capacity-building training on gender mainstreaming and active nonviolence for organizations focusing on advocacy, human rights, media and peacebuilding.

The participant from *Cambodia* is planning a training on gender-sensitive active nonviolence with the aim to increase the capacity of key community leaders on basic gender concepts and to enable them to deal with violence through nonviolent means.



