Message from the President

Daphrose Nrataze - President, CoP International

To my fellow Peacemakers wherever you are on your journey of peacemaking around the world … I wish each and every one Peace and Prosperity.

This Peace we are helping to build is rooted in us. It is fragile and requires constant practice of absolute values of honesty, unselfishness, purity and love. Being a peacemaker asks us to work on ourselves first, and then help others to evolve, each at their own pace, towards individual and societal transformation. This requires many qualities and our main ally is through the precious moments of silence and listening to the inner voice.

My fellow team of International Coordinators continue to work responsibly and creatively. Among our priorities for the current year are: *Extending the program of CoP Circles; *Exploring new programs and partnerships; *Consolidation of our network, and *Development of our resources (human, financial and educational).

Women’s CoP Circles, the flagship of our association, continues to grow in many countries and on all continents. The latest brought to our attention either occurred, or are in progress, in: Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Burundi, Cameroon, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Nigeria, United Kingdom, Rwanda, Switzerland, South Sudan, and Syria … with many more to follow.

Our question is: "Do we have the means to jointly work on the construction of peace in a world that challenges us?" To address this, our International Coordinators have done a roll call of our Creators of Peace human resources around the world and has established a list of National Coordinators in 40 countries (listed on page 8). We have also developed a global list of qualified CoP Facilitators trained and skilled in facilitating CoP Circles.

We all have a mutual desire to create peace in the world – starting with ourselves. Although occasionally the road is winding, we argue (surely), but together it’s this electronics of the spirit that connects us. The new year is conducive to the realization of this noble task!

Regular Feature Article: "On reflection of my CoP Journey"

Kate Monkhouse, UK
CoP International Treasurer

I first heard about Creators of Peace in 2008 and the following year took part in my first CoP Circle in London. This coincided with an increasing interest in conflict transformation work in both my professional and personal life. I appreciate the mix of community, hospitality, dialogue, spirituality and learning that takes place within the CoP Circle.

Our mission is not just to run Peace Circles, but primarily to empower women to be "creators of peace" in their own situations. So one of the most important aspects of the CoP Circle for me is that it challenges each woman to take responsibility: by looking at her own context, installing a discipline of making time to listen to herself, others and to deeper wisdom, and take steps to put things right. I think the process does not end there, and there are other programmes that help equip women with the skills they need to work in challenging situations, but the CoP Circle can help them on their way. And that means for us as a network, continuing to encourage and support them on that journey.

For me, the important aspect of our work is the solidarity with colleagues from other countries, especially those who are living with war or in a post-conflict situation where people are facing horrors and a very real daily struggle. I have been lucky enough to train and learn from CoP colleagues in Lebanon and Burundi. Through my work with refugees and other marginalised communities, I am interested now to explore what “peace” means to those of us who often find ourselves "on the edge" as women in my city, London.

In terms of my own practice as a facilitator, I will continue to investigate theory and practice around story-sharing and narrative work from a feminist perspective.

I hope as CoP continues to grow we can work on deepening our Peace Circle experience, a gift that we have been given that we share with others and to put into practice day to day: making time to sustain my inner peace, to listen to myself and others, keep clear accounts with friends and colleagues, practise forgiveness in the little things so I am ready when the bigger challenges come along.

What is a Creators of Peace (CoP) Facilitator

by Jean Brown

♦ A CoP Facilitator is not a paragon of peace!
♦ A CoP Facilitator is not an expert
♦ A CoP Facilitator is not a doctor
♦ A CoP Facilitator is not a theorist
♦ A CoP Facilitator is not a teacher
♦ A CoP Facilitator is not aloof
♦ A CoP Facilitator is Engaged
♦ A CoP Facilitator is Human

Creators of Peace “Global Connections” Newsletter - January 2014 edition
Capacity Building consolidates CoP in Burundi
by Kate Monkhouse and Daphrose Ntarataze

"It's very moving when people tell you with tears in their eyes that the
Creators of Peace has changed their lives, after their country's been at
war," says Kate Monkhouse, Treasurer of Creators of Peace
International and member of CoP UK's Advisory Group. She spent 12
days in September 2013 in Burundi, at the invitation of CoP
International President Daphrose Ntarataze, to help train CoP Circle
facilitators.

“They were all highly motivated to build for the future of Burundi,”
says Kate. “The violence of the 1990’s and 2000’s is still very recent
for people. It was incredibly moving to hear their stories. You can see
the scars on the landscape – ruined buildings, and large scale
deforestation because the rebels were thought to be hiding in the
forests. You can see the tiredness in people, and the poverty is huge
– but at the same time there is new life everywhere, babies being
born, children going to school, women working in the fields, new
shops opening, celebrations……”

“The aim isn’t just to deliver CoP Circles, but to support women as
they work for peace in their own communities,” says Kate. After this
course, Daphrose and a colleague went on to deliver the same
training in Cameroon.

Further consolidation of CoP in
Burundi will be a Capacity
Building program due to run
from September 2013 to
September 2014, supported by
the State and by the City of
Geneva and other local and
international partners, including
Terre des hommes.

A residential seminar facilitation training was held in Gitega, in
September 2013. The fact that the 14 people who attended were chosen
to represent their various services and associations gave a
special touch to their individual involvement. “I can easily adapt the
program to myself, and I can also enrich it with techniques according to
the Burundian context, depending on the target group, and time and
circumstances,” said one participant.

Both youth and adults will participate in the Capacity Building
program - the only attendance criteria being that they have to have
participated in a CoP Circle. The program encompasses training to
encourage, co-ordinate and supervise the activities of peacemakers,
including advocacy, planning, logistical and educational
preparations, facilitation of CoP Circles, new perspectives, and other
related sessions.

The following testimony is representative of the many pearls
harvested during the session held from 6-10 January 2014.

‘As for me, the CoP Circle in 2012, there was a strong point that
touched me, this is the ‘power of forgiveness’. My personal
commitment was to do my best to restore peace and confidence in my
native hill because during the 1993 crisis my parents were the only ones
to be killed over the whole of the hill. After the CoP Circle, I felt
extraordinary courage that permeated my whole being and I decided to
bring the killer of my parents into my hometown and welcome him into
my family. My relatives have been disrupted by this approach, until I
explained the reason for requesting his welcome by the family. The
reason was none other than to reconcile with the family even though
they killed one of my family. I wanted to lead by example. The whole
community welcomed the bravery, and from this gesture there is more
cooperation and many initiatives of joint work between the different
ethnic groups emerging.”

Being 'a Light of Change' in
Nigeria by Portia Mosia & Jackie Euvrard

CoP Circles were introduced for the first time in Nigeria mid
September 2013. Two CoP Circles were facilitated in Lagos State
by Portia Mosia, an international coordinator of Creators of Peace,
and Jackie Euvrard. They were invited by the board of MRA/
Initiatives of Change Nigeria, coordinated by Benedicta Ngozi
Opara.

Nine days in Lagos was fairly short when trying to absorb, discover,
understand life’s challenges in a city of 21 million. Travelling on the
highway, one caught sight of the expanse of Lagos housing as far
as the eye could see. Some of the participants who live on the
outsskirts of the city had to leave home at 4.30am to be in time to
start the Peace Circle at 9am!

“The Peace Circle process is transformative and unique”, said one
of the 29 participants who is active in MRA/ Initiatives of Change.

“This is a group of women who could definitely make a difference
wherever they are. Participants went away ready to put into practice decisions they
made, new perspectives they found and to carry out an opportunity
to work together in groups on different projects. A political activist
found it a new experience to put her mobile phone on silent during
the work sessions of the CoP Circle out of respect for those she was
with. She mentioned afterwards how refreshing it was as not many
people had challenged her to be disciplined in this way!

One young participant thought the time together was going to be
about women rights. Then she began to realize it was geared to
assist with personal transformation in order to be a peacemaker.
She expressed how determined she was about wanting her own
way and fought hard to get it. She went away with the thought to
be willing to listen to others and their point of view.

Another said CoP Circles touched an inner core on forgiving that
she did not realize was still there.

An engineer said that she knew she was a bad listener. She wanted
to communicate more effectively with the contractors. The next
day she went to work and met with them. She was able to exercise
the skills she had learnt and the contractors were amazed by the
change in her. She feels she can avoid conflict by listening to them.

An older participant felt the need to apologize to her daughters for
not always being there when they needed her.

On the last day of the CoP Circle each person held a lit candle and
was given an opportunity to blow it out and let go of any hurt or
painful memory that had held them back. Many decisions and
choices were made during this ceremony. “One lady said she
wanted to let go of bitterness and “be a light of change to others”

“For it isn’t enough to talk about peace. One
must believe in it. And it isn’t enough to believe in
it. One must work at it.”

Eleanor Roosevelt

Creators of Peace “Global Connections” Newsletter - January 2014 edition
Deep insights from young women in war torn Syria by Iman Al Ghafari

Thanks to religion teacher Mrs Ghazal from Alboushra Association that runs educational programs to support orphans and the poor, seventeen 15-27 year olds from Dummar area of Damascus gained profound insights from their nine CoP Circle meetings over 3 weeks.

This CoP Circle was different from other ones as these young ladies have been afflicted by loss from war and conflict, and are trying to build their understanding of life experiences (that are so much based on their family’s experiences) seeking fresh expectations and analysis.

Wonderful discussions took place, amazing thoughts were shared and beautiful enthusiasm and honesty were shown by these young brave women. “Every time I looked at them I wanted to cry, seeing in them ‘my hope to be THE SYRIAN CREATORS OF PEACE’.”

We ended each meeting with a work dedicated to the orphans packaging dessert boxes to be sold and the money supports the orphans and the poor.

Here are some of the sharings from out of the mouths of these young orphan women in war torn Syria at the end of their CoP Circle experience:

Q. In what way has the Peace Circle clarified your understanding of being a peace creator?
* It clarified the ‘qualities’ needed to be a creator of peace, and ways we can enhance them in us.
* The name Creators of Peace attracted my attention. For me it is through quietness and not being impulsive. Also we have to be what we want to give.

Q. Have you seen the need for change in any of your attitudes or relationships?
* Yes, there is always a need to improve ourselves because human minds change daily and it is important to find ways to deal with different situations and relationships.
* There is always a need for change everywhere. The more we rationalize matters, the different our perspectives become.
* Yes there is a need to treat fairly the ones I hate. This may help them to become a better person and also help them realize their mistakes.
* In order to be considered a wise person I need to learn how to deal with people. All these encourage me to change my attitudes and relationships.
* I have to start changing myself. I am glad that I can manage my bad attitudes now.
* Before I didn’t realize its consequences and importance. So I think I need to change.
* I wonder if I need to change myself according to the person I am dealing with.

Q. What actual steps will you take to put these insights into practice?
* First I will try to find peace inside me then share it with my friends and the society till forgiveness spreads in the whole society. God is our helper.
* I should be responsible. I have to realize others’ rights. I need to forgive myself and start afresh.
* I should contribute to my society even with simple things.

Q. Should there be further CoP Circles reaching out to others in the community?
* Sure. It is a very influential program that can reach the feelings, mental attitudes that our societies need. Our society needs it to survive this life.
* I do recommend this program because it doesn’t only help the person but also their country and future. It is a great program.

Q. In what way has the Peace Circle changed you?
* I need to cleanse my heart from hatred, I need to control my anger and face my responsibilities.

Q. What do you think the CoP Circle means to you?
* Enhance tolerance, forgiveness, love, unselfishness, confidence, and be a good example.
* I need to follow these steps: Connection, self-confidence, searching for a vision and trying to achieve it and establishing a clear base and perspective that can help me connect with others well.
* My experience with CoP Circle is my helper.

Q. Why should all faiths attend CoP Circles?
* I pray that all spiritual leaders from all faiths attend CoP Circles.

*"The most valuable possession you can own is an open heart. The most powerful weapon you can be is an instrument of peace."

by Carlos Santana
Helena von Arnim reported how happy CoP women in Colombia, we are very happy with the contribution we have made to the international community. We have translated the CoP Circle Facilitation Manual into Spanish and Portuguese. This means that women from Angola, Brazil, Portugal, São Tomé Prince and Mozambique can participate in a CoP Circle in their own language. Portuguese is one of the many official languages of Timor-Leste and Macao, China. Also, Portuguese is largely spoken, in Andorra, Luxembourg, Namibia, Guinea-Bissau, Cabo Verde and Paraguay.

**Columbia:** A very lively Information Night was held in September 2011 which led the ten women in attendance to be interested and ready to start a CoP Circle. The 1st CoP Circle in Latin America took place in Colombia in February 2012 with 7 ladies who are still committed to personal change; 4 of us still gather every week, and 4 more meet once a month in Bogotá, including one who travels for five hours! A great gift was to have amongst us a lady who is a war refugee.

Four of these ladies still desire to become CoP facilitators, and one has already achieved this goal; She is the one who translated the CoP Manual into Portuguese, and who went to Brazil last July; the rest are waiting to find the proper time to go through their training.

The 2nd CoP Circle took place at the end of June 2012; one of the ladies attending this Peace Circle will participate for the first time as a facilitator in the 5th Peace Circle taking place next October. In this experience we went deeper into the Manual, we tried to understand better the call of being responsible for the peace of the world, starting with our own hearts and this has brought changes in the children of two families who have decided, they too want to live a life based on moral standards.

It was planned to give the opportunity to those who want to be facilitators to work within themselves, so we can better understand what happens in the hearts of those women who will participate when we become facilitators while we wait until a trainer of facilitators comes to train us so we can become responsible for our own team to respond to the Spanish speaking community.

The 3rd CoP Circle took place in March 2013, with five ladies plus two facilitators. More than interesting, and such a great gift to all was the presence of a 60 year old guerrilla who was an ex combatant of The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). It was a very impressive way to learn so many things about our history and the reality we only know through the distorted official news. One stays awed by their courage, and the capacity of women to endure and come out liberated and free after such experiences. Also we learned from her the need to forgive, and about the dreams she has for peace in our country as well as her commitment to work hard to make it come true.

**Brazil** July 2013 saw the first CoP Circle in Brazil, with the participation of eight women from different paths of life. Through the working sessions they started discovering the power of forgiveness and its potential to build peace in their environments; also concrete decisions of change were made for their lives as they felt a personal call to work for peace.

**Rio de Janeiro:** A second CoP Circle in Brazil was conducted with the participation of women from different faiths and walks of life: women came from depressed communities, housewives, and professionals working in mental and physical health. The active and enthusiastic work of the CoP facilitators in training helped develop an atmosphere of unity, confidence and friendship, which in turn led to the internalization, openness and honest work of the participants.

"I always said that my husband was my karma but in this CoP I found that my husband is not my karma but the excuse for not doing what I have to do," said one of them. "I have verified the effectiveness of what is simple." concluded a psychologist participant. And for the first time in many years, a grandmother could sleep uninterruptedly without drugs, after sharing with the group her long life of pain, abuse, impotence and death, never told before.

The facilitators are grateful for the close collaboration of the Initiatives of Change team in Brazil, for their active and effective support that has allowed this simple and useful tool for women around the world to be spread throughout our country.
My CoP Circle experience
by Valentina Baú - Sydney, Australia

"When I first walked into what was going to be the place of gathering of our CoP Circle, on 1st October 2013, I felt a bit tense. I immediately realised that none of the participants belonged to my age group and I feared that, as a young woman, I would have found it hard to fit in with the discussion that was about to begin.

Yet, in contrast with my initial doubts, the two and half days I spent with my fellow Peace Circle members have been some of the most intense and meaningful hours I have had in my adult life. The women I have shared this space with have been the greatest ‘teachers’ I could have ever wished for. They taught me the meaning of daily struggle and fearless resistance, of broken relationships and unconditional love for your children; I have learned about the shackles of family ties and cultural oppression, especially on women, and the significance of not letting go of your dreams.

Through my work, I spend a lot of time thinking about conflict. I focus on the impact that mass violence has on communities and how communication can help to re-build the social fabric that was torn by the violence. The CoP Circle helped me realise how little I had thought about the conflicts that go on inside me. Listening to other women’s stories as well as sharing my own has reminded me of the importance of not overlooking those conflicts, as it is only by finding our inner peace that we will truly be able to bring peace to others.

I am grateful for the CoP Circle and its organisers, as I was provided with the precious opportunity to reflect on my life as well as to be inspired by those of other wonderful strong women. This has reinforced my vow to contribute to peace around me."

My Peacemaker Prayer
by Melinda Turner
a CoP Circle participant in Sydney Australia

Perilous is the journey of a Peace Maker. How do I walk the path between submission and dominance? I know that making peace is not about being a doormat, allowing the other to have their way..but maybe I can let them have their say.

In the past I have stood for the truth and justice, where so easily self righteousness holds sway. Then I fall into the trap of beating my fellow with words, opinions and beliefs. So, ...what are the words of a Peace Maker?

To the great bringer of Peace I pray:
May your Wisdom and Love
shine through me
Bring me close to the centre of my heart
Where your balancing forces live
Holding submission and dominance
each at arm’s length
I make the sacred space within
Grounding myself in the
new soil of a Peace Maker
offering my life
For the Tree of Life to flower.

How do you practice self-care as a Creator of Peace?

What works for you could work for someone else!

People with a heart for peace creation often go the extra mile for others, get caught up in activism, and can sometimes ‘burn out’. Do you have any tips or strategies you use to avoid this - or any stories of how you maintain balance and wholeness in your life?

We would love to hear from you!
Send your thoughts to the CoP People Care Team
Email to: creatorsofpeace@iofc.org or tell us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/iofc.creatorsofpeace

A CoP Circle Day at Greencoat Place, London
by Harpreet Kaur

On Sunday 1 December 2013, 16 ladies from across London came together at the IofC Centre for a special Creators of Peace Circle Day. With Christmas fast approaching and the new-year around the corner, the CoP team decided that it would be a good idea to plan a day of activities rather than a full traditional peace circle weekend, to fit into people’s busy diaries.

As well as exploring how to create peace and identifying difficult situations that require solutions, this day was also about reflecting on the year’s achievements.

The women highlighted moments and situations in which they had solved problems and found peace, or simply recognised positive events that made them think and feel peaceful, be it in their own lives, or the community, or the world. The theme of the day was to balance successes with challenges, to share ideas and learnings.

Harpreet Kaur and Catherine Brown facilitated the day, and the participants were a combination of previous CoP attendees and some that were new to the program. It was wonderful to have women living in such a range of places in London, who were born in many different parts of the world. After exploring what peace means to them, they did an activity called ‘Circles of Concern’ and ‘Success’ to highlight the things they are worried about in their personal lives, the community, and the world. Similarly they highlighted the good things that had happened in 2013.

There were many common themes and subjects that came up amongst the group, a particularly larger number of worries about global problems than local; and personal ones.

The ladies bonded over lunch and enjoyed a feast of wonderful food, getting to know each other more. In the afternoon the ladies benefited from Inner Listening, by practicing some meditation to a recording, that included focusing on breathing and slowing down the mind. This was a poignant moment during the day for many, as we often don’t make the time to stop and breathe during the day.

The group continued to work together discussing solutions to some of their concerns for the new-year, sharing ideas and helping each other. The day ended with a glow in everyone’s hearts and a smile on every face.
A most welcoming and hospitable spirit and peaceful ambience was created by our hosts, the Lao Buddhist community in Edensor Park Sydney.

Their was an abundance of foods of all nations brought by guests and embellished by the Lao dishes gorgeously made by members of the Temple community. As guests were seated they were warmly greeted by the President of the Temple community and his wife, and founding members Ramphay & Nith Chittasy, followed by a special performance of Lao dancing. Very quickly a buzz filled the air in anticipation of the rest of the day’s program.

The two MC’s, Kim Honor and Zohra Aly, welcomed everyone in English and then invited guests of other nationalities to say ‘welcome’ in their own language - the more than sixteen welcomes. We were told of the many peace-building initiatives of Sydney CoP over the past 12 months, both locally and globally. Three women shared their personal experience having attended a CoP Circle, and others spoke who have gone on to become CoP facilitators.

A highlight was hearing an interview on Skype with Iman Al Ghafari, a CoP International Coordinator living in Syria who facilitates CoP Circles in war torn Damascus. ‘I am teaching people how to be peace makers in the face of conflict.’ said one guest.

Jean Brown, another international coordinator of Creators of Peace, took us on a journey from its launch in 1991 through to 2001 when she drafted the first CoP Circle for the Diaspora. ‘The first South Sudanese woman to be ordained in the Uniting Church, SA, had asked for these programs to be run to assist in her work of building bridges between various state and ethnic groups now living in Adelaide. Since then CoP Circles have been conducted in over 40 countries, bringing South Sudanese women together in Adelaide by Helen Mills

CoP Circles bring South Sudanese women together in Adelaide by Helen Mills

Against a background of rising tension in South Sudan and then the outbreak of intertribal violence in December 2013, two CoP Circles were held in Adelaide at the request of women from the South Sudanese Diaspora.

The first South Sudanese woman to be ordained in the Uniting Church, SA, had asked for these programs to be run to assist in her work of building bridges between various state and ethnic groups now living in Adelaide.

One group told how they had been praying for two years to find ways towards reconciliation and connection between them. ‘Perhaps the CoP Circles will show us how to be peace builders in our own community.’ As news trickled through of fresh fighting in South Sudan each of the women taking part experienced the fear and anxiety of lack of news from family members, and then for some the sadness as they heard of family deaths. The CoP Circles brought us closer together as we experienced the key message being that “all real social transformation starts in the hearts and lives of individuals – and that individual could be me (you)” She left us with wise food for thought quoting Franciscan monk Richard Rohr: ‘We cannot think ourselves into a new way of living, we have to live ourselves into a new way of thinking’. And paraphrased Gandhi: “Let us therefore live the peace we want to see in the world.”

We were all overwhelmed by a sudden urge to send a ‘wave’ of love and support for Iman in Syria.

Ramphay thanked us and said that hosting this event was like a ‘gift’ to the Lao community. As most of their community aren’t fluent in English, this offered them the opportunity to meet and build trust with people from other walks of life, and to be of service to them, to give freely and support them, which is in keeping with the Buddhist tradition. She said, “It was like a miracle, the whole day’s experience offered us a multi-dimensional experience for our community."

As the day drew to an end there was a sense of connection and deep reflection and gratitude radiating throughout the community hall. The comment by a guest, “I didn’t want the day to end”, is a tribute to what was a truly memorable day.
**Dare to Dream from Syria to Lebanon**

By Iman Al Ghafari

“I dared to dream that CoP Circle participants in Syria would meet other CoP Circle participants in Lebanon. Finally, after much determination and effort my dream came true.”

My goal was to get them out of the box to meet people who had been through the same experiences, people who, while peace building, had been living in war. People who tasted the sweetness of peace and realize the mentality of the fighter.

My family were worried about my taking seven women across the border to Lebanon. Many times I was disappointed and afraid especially when I heard that some people thought I was sent to them by the certain sides to end this war with reconciliation which scared them and shocked me because all I wanted was for all to solve the problems together, to find a peaceful way to communicate for our children and our country.

However, reading the sharings by my CoP Circles participants in war torn Syria gave me the energy and pushed me forward to do this.

I’m so grateful for the assistance of Lina Hamade, Marie Chaftari, our hosts IoF in Lebanon; and to Mr. Ramez Salame for his hospitality and generosity. And to Mr. Chaftari and Muheiddine Shehab for the wisdom they shared with us. We watched the film The Imam & The Pastor, had a workshop about Conflict Resolution and then had sharing time. Then listened to Mr. Assaad Chaftari and Muheiddine Shehab tell us their journey of war and peace.

I am very grateful to the CoP family who were so supportive from the beginning of this journey till the end; and for the funding from members of IoFC Canada. This piece of work couldn’t have been done without the help and support of these great hearts and souls.

Mrs. Rahaf N. wrote: “I liked the title Creators of Peace, it attracted my attention. At the first meeting I kept looking at the door getting ready to leave because I didn’t want to reconcile with the killers of my young people at all. I wouldn’t forgive them for whatever they did. Yes I generalized; I looked at anyone who belonged to them as a killer - but Iman touched our bleeding hearts with her magical hand when she said ‘they are afraid of you EXACTLY the same way you’re afraid of them. They have the same feelings towards you as you have for them. She continued to say ‘ you didn’t hear the man at the security barrier on our way back from Lebanon singing the song that says "we love you, so love us", then he said to us "we know you don’t love us".

Going to Lebanon was amazing. I liked their way of welcoming us, hugging us, and the sign Mr. Salame put on the wall “Welcome our family who came from Sham land (Damascus)”, and the grapes and cake. I liked Marie’s way of expressing hospitality; Lina’s reaction to defend humanity; and everyone’s way of dealing with us as the way it is supposed to be not what their background says. This was the first time I’ve spent time with someone from another denomination. It was the first time I’ve talked with a Christian, Shi’ite and Druz.

We asked a lot of questions and we still have more but we didn’t have enough time. I really suggest more meetings and more workshops.

Carol Bu Abboud from Lebanon writes: “What better than meeting the other side!”

Through Creators of Peace I learned how to respect other participants of CoP from Damascus, and how to listen to their thoughts and share our feelings, about religion and our backgrounds. This program has helped me acknowledge my fear that’s built up since childhood, by being able to open up in front of the participants who listened to my story with respect without commenting or giving their opinions, made me feel relaxed, joyful and peaceful within myself and towards the others. I felt loved and respected by the group. Good listening enhanced good feelings that we all shared.

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**CoP Circles continue in Kenya**

Thanks to Friends of Africa (FoA) for their financial support and to IoF Kenya together with Kenyan CoP members that have contributed in different ways in support of Creators of Peace, the CoP Circles have continued to spread and transform women and their families and friends in Kenya. In the months of June & July 2013 workshops were facilitated and fifty women and seven men had the opportunity to go through the 'simple but transformative' CoP Circle process.

The main facilitator, Annie Gitu from Nakuru, reports on some of the inspiring outcomes on the CoP website at: [http://www.iofc.org/peace-circles-continue-kenya](http://www.iofc.org/peace-circles-continue-kenya)

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**Applications are open for ‘The Caux Scholars Program’**

Program Director of The Caux Scholars Program (CSP), Jitka Hromek-Vaitla, invites young IoFC adults 21 to 35, to register for this selective one month summer academy, to be held July 20-August 16, 2014, at the Institutes of Change conference centre in Caux, Switzerland.

The CSP program is designed to equip young leaders from around the world to make a significant contribution to global peace-building. Students will have a unique opportunity to meet politicians, diplomats, business people, trade unionists, and other leaders from around the world, many with firsthand experience of conflict and peace-building. The group will spend a day in Geneva visiting non-governmental agencies and United Nations. During the month, scholars participate in international conferences and put their learning into practice by offering workshops, making presentations, and assisting with international groups visiting Caux.

**Graduates will become young leaders in a prestigious and powerful group of global change-makers.**

For more information refer to the Website: [http://www.us.iofc.org/caux-scholars-program-iocf](http://www.us.iofc.org/caux-scholars-program-iocf)
### International and National Coordinators and Working Groups currently serving Creators of Peace worldwide

#### 2013-2016 International Coordinators and their Portfolio Working Groups:

**President:** Daphrose Ntarataze (Burundi/Switzerland)

**Secretary:** Pari Sanyü (Australia/Nagaland)

**Treasurer:** Kate Monkhouse (UK)

**Working Group:**
- Valerie Tikkanen (Sweden)
- Mediatrix Masava (Kenya)
- Jude Thomas (Australia)

**Programs:**
- Shoshana Faire (Australia), Working Group:
  - Willemijn Lambert (Netherlands)
  - Regina Morris (Malaysia)
  - Mathilde Kayitesi (Rwanda)
  - Su Riddell (UK)
  - Ros Kennedy (Australia)
  - Joy Mbaabu (Kenya)
  - Harpreet Kaur (UK)

**Communications:**
- Iman Al Ghafari (Syria), Working Group:
  - Zhanna Petrukovich (Russia)
  - Tanya Fox (Australia) - Newsletter
  - Diana Damsa (Romania) - Facebook
  - Zohra Aly (Australia) - Blog

**People Care:**
- Trish McDonald-Harrison (Australia), Working Group:
  - Vijayalakshmi Subrahmanyan (India)
  - Angie Faina Katito (Zimbabwe)
  - Helena Von Arnim (South America)
  - Birte Finken (Denmark)
  - Shoshana Faire (Australia)
  - Nathalie Hayes (Australia)
  - Pari Sanyü (Australia/Nagaland)

**Fundraising:**
- Tanya Fox (Australia), Working Group:
  - Neichu Mayer (Israel)

**National (Regional) Teams Liaisons:**
- Jean Brown (Australia), and Portia Mosia (South Africa), Working Group:
  - Birte Finken (Denmark)
  - Shoshana Faire (Australia)

### National Coordinators:

**Africa**
- South Sudan – Regina Kapa
- Ethiopia – Azeb Girmai
- Kenya – Ann Njeri Mbindiyo
- Uganda – Rachel Ajambo
- Rwanda – Mathilde Kayitesi
- Burundi – Germaine Manirariha
  - Bedina-Bernardine Niyonkuru
- Zimbabwe – Adelaide Mhunduru
- South Africa – Portia Mosia
- Nigeria – Benedicta Opara
- Sierra Leone – Gladys Kpukumu
- Cameroon – Lydia Ebude
- Cote D’Ivoire – Olga Auely

**The Americas**
- Canada – Anne Hartnell
- USA – Kathy Aquilina
- Mexico – Karina Sanchez
- Guatemala – Killy Sanchez
- Colombia – Helena von Arnim
- Brazil – Aline Serpa

**Europe**
- Norway – Torild Aagnalt Østmo
- Sweden – Valerie Tikkanen
- Denmark – Birte Finken
- Romania – Diana Damsa
- Ukraine – Anna Bondarenko
- Netherlands – Willemijn Lambert
- Switzerland – Christiane Garin Al-Azhari
- United Kingdom – Su Riddell
- Germany – Elisabeth Homann

**Middle East**
- Lebanon – Marie Chafftari
- Syria – Iman Al Ghafari

**South and East Asia**
- India – Vijayalakshmi Subramanyan
- Malaysia - Indira Haridas Nair
- Taiwan – Hui-Fang Ou-Yang
- Indonesia – Dewirini Anggraeni
- Timor Leste - Lia Soares

**Pacific**
- Papua New Guinea – Rita Pearson
- Fiji – Suliana Siwatibau
- Solomon Islands – Rachel Abi
- New Zealand – Jennifer Hammond
- Australia – Zohra Aly

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*From Zohra Aly in Australia to Killy Sanchez in Guatemala to Regina Kapa in South Sudan, there are now 40 identified Creators of Peace National Coordinators in 40 countries, each one capable of structuring and facilitating Creators of Peace Circles. They range in age from their late 60’s to their mid 20’s, and for the majority, English is not their mother tongue. Currently they are contributing to an international database of those who facilitate Circles in their countries. Our National Coordinators keep track of CoP activities in their own countries; encourage the teams, and are the channel of communication with the International Coordinating group. They give their time freely and hold the heart of the global family of Creators of Peace. We are deeply grateful to each of them.*

*by Jean Brown, International Coordinator*