



cross the lines

franchir les lignes
cruzar las fronteras

25 May / August 2005

“To Be Valued as a Whole Person”: A Training of Trainers

by Shelley Anderson

It was a discussion on nightmares: “He completely dominated the session and silenced the women participants.” “The generator broke down in the middle of the video. We turned on the emergency generator and it broke down!” “We organized the training in a hotel which served us meals. But participants had real problems eating three square meals a day and tea twice a day while their children were starving at home.”

These and other training nightmares were among the challenges shared at this year’s Women Peacemakers Program’s training for women nonviolence trainers, held April 2-14, in the Netherlands. The annual Training of Trainers (TOT) reunited 16 peace activists, who after last year’s TOT conducted two nonviolence trainings upon their return home, thus spreading what they had learned to over 500 women and men. De-mystifying concepts like gender and conflict resolution, participants who dominate discussions, adapting written materials for use with illiterate women—the challenges were many, but all the trainers agreed that their confidence and commitment to finding peaceful solutions had grown.

In addition to exploring solutions to challenges they face, the women learned more about issues such as diversity, marginalization and exclusion; developing successful strategies; and the peace traditions within Christianity and Islam. This latter lively two-day session was led by trainers from the Baptist Peace Fellowship (www.bpfna.org) and the Muslim Peace Fellowship (www.mpfweb.org). During the session the participants were joined by members of the Multicultural Women Peacemakers Netherlands, who were initiating peace programs in their home countries of the Philippines and the Moluccan Islands.

The participants identified improving time management skills and deepening their knowledge about gender, religion and culture as important needs. The information on gender they received was especially appreciated, though



Photo: courtesy A. Shifflette

Women peace activists from across the globe deepened their skills in nonviolence training at this year’s Training of Trainers.

these concepts are sometimes difficult to translate for the grassroots back home. A gender-sensitive approach to training helped everyone “to be valued as a whole person,” said one participant. “You may think you will show your participants’ new things,” agreed another participant, “but at the end of the day you are getting more from them and you are learning from them.”

The WPP’s annual Training of Trainers (TOT) began 2002 in order to increase the number of qualified women nonviolence trainers and to develop gender-sensitive approaches to training. An international group of women peacebuilders is selected to participate in the two-week training, which covers topics such as the theory and history of active nonviolence; conflict analysis; needs and fears mapping; facilitation and group dynamics; participatory teaching methods; conceptualizing gender and diversity; leadership; and religion and women’s human rights.

Upon their return home participants conduct two gender-sensitive nonviolence trainings. The WPP provides materials, seed money and a mentor—an experienced woman nonviolence trainer who is willing to provide feedback and guidance. The next year participants are

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Women's Militarization: Perfumed Bombs?

"FEMilitarization: Trends, Realities and Resistance" was the theme of a panel discussion in Amsterdam held to celebrate May 24, International Women's Day for Peace and Disarmament. Some 70 people participated in the event, which included the showing of the documentary "Texas-Kabul", about women's peace activities in India, Afghanistan, Serbia and the USA after September 11, 2001.

A panel of five experts, moderated by Women Peacemakers Program (WPP) Manager Isabelle Geuskens, debated the question "does women's greater participation in the military contribute to peace and conflict prevention?" The Dutch military, as its contribution towards United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolution 1325, is recruiting more women in to the military, and aims to appoint the first Dutch woman general by the end of the year. UN Resolution 1325 promotes the increased participation of women in all aspects of conflict prevention and management.

Dutch military Major L. Kleinreesink argued that the effectiveness of military peacekeeping missions would increase as the number of women peacekeepers increased. Based on the experiences of US military missions in Somalia, an increase presence of women soldiers also helps to lessen extreme behavior, such as human rights abuses. Judith Koops, a consultant to the Dutch military, noted that modern military missions such as peacekeeping rely more on technical skills, team cooperation and communication, which means the military of the future will be more "feminine".

Human rights activist Saskia Kouwenberg, speaking from a peace movement perspective, formulated a list of questions peace nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) should consider when discussing the issue. These include: who benefits from an increase of women in the military? How does the military benefit, and how do women themselves benefit? She had contacted the main Dutch peace organizations who were confused by her question as to their stand on the issue. Most responded by saying that they had not discussed women's militarization, as they were opposed to militarization per se. Researcher Wendela de Vries spoke on women and the arms trade.

Perfume on Bombs?

WPP Program Officer Shelley Anderson spoke of her experiences in the US military. Despite advertising which shows military women in traditionally male roles, most women remain

in clerical and medical jobs, she said. While women join the military for a job, the unemployment rate for US veterans is twice that of civilians, and most military skills cannot be transferred to civilian jobs. Women inside the military face sexual harassment and are twice as likely to be raped as civilian women. "The money the Dutch military is spending on full-page newspaper ads could be better spent on improving educational and employment opportunities for young women, especially women of color," she said, or on developing an unarmed civilian peacekeeping force. Military training, which is organized violence, is essentially dehumanizing and in no way advances women's rights.

Audience members asked searching questions. One member said that support for UN Resolution 1325 does not mandate support for militarized peacekeeping. Ellen Diederich, of the International Women's Peace Archives, in Oberhausen, Germany, denounced the idea of a more "feminine" military. "What does that mean?" she demanded. "That we spray perfume on a bomb before we drop it? We are still dropping bombs that kill people."

There were exhibits from a variety of groups, including a sampling of the Peace Palace collection of books by Bertha von Suttner. Von Suttner (1843-1914) is credited with founding the modern peace movement and was the first woman Nobel Peace Prize Laureate. This year marks the centenary of her receiving the Prize (for more information on centennial events see www.berthavonsuttner.info or www.ipb.org).

Contact the WPP for the free brochure (in Dutch or English) on women's militarization "Militarization is not liberation" or for copies of the May 24 2005 pack and poster. WPP, Spoorstraat 38, 1815 BK Alkmaar, the Netherlands.

Maj. Kleinreesink (left) and human rights activist Saskia Kouwenberg (right) debate women's militarization at a panel facilitated by WPP Program Manager Isabelle Geuskens (middle).



Photo: B. Hejazi

News

Funding for Women's Nonviolence Training

Twice a year the Women Peacemakers Program (WPP) provides small amounts of funding for women's nonviolence education and training. Earlier this year a record number of 140 grant requests were received. Six grants were awarded to promote women's peacebuilding in Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Nepal, the Netherlands and West Africa (organized by the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding, Ghana). The initiatives include a six-week long nonviolence and Buddhist peacebuilding course for Southeast Asian women activists (organized by the International Women's Partnership for Peace and Justice, Thailand); a series of regional consultations throughout Nepal to build a women's peace agenda (organized by the indigenous women's group Milijuli, Nepal); and training in peacebuilding for migrant women in the Netherlands (organized by the Multicultural Women Peacemakers, Netherlands). *Guidelines and applications forms are available from j.vaneeden@ifor.org. The deadline for applications is 16 December 2005.*

Women's Wins in Bougainville

In June elections, three women won seats in the parliament of the new Autonomous Bougainville Government. They will serve alongside 38 men, and are demanding legislation to stop domestic violence and promote micro-financing for women. Rebuilding Bougainville after a devastating war will not be easy. Francesca Semoso, one of the newly elected officials, said, "We are really starting from scratch...the next five years will be about policy making. If the services come they will be like a light drizzle, the most important thing being that whatever kind of law the women need has to be there. The men will have to give us the respect and say yes, women have to be reckoned with in Bougainville." *Campaign Blong Ol Meri: A women's media initiative from femLINKpacific (Fiji) in partnership with the Leitana Nehan Women's Development Agency (Bougainville), supported by UNIFEM Pacific. Email: femlinkpac@connect.com.fj*

Engendering the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

The Center for Women's Global Leadership (CWGL; email: cwgl@igc.org), Development Alternatives with Women in a New Era (DAWN; email: fgdk@aol.com), Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO; email: june@wedo.org) and the NGO Working Group on Women Peace and Security (ngowgcoordinator@peacewomen.org) are organizing to ensure that women's rights and gender equality are not left out of the Millennium Summit review (MS+5) in September. They are developing gender-sensitive amendments for the Summit's outcome document, and asking supporters to ensure their governments support the amendments. The MDGs, accepted by UN member states in 2000, sets targets towards eliminating poverty and promoting sustainable development throughout the world by 2015. The Goals include eliminating gender disparity in all levels of education, reducing maternal death rates and reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS. *For more information see www.un.org/largerfreedom or www.whrnet.org*

Resources

Centenary of first woman Nobel Peace Prize winner

Bertha von Suttner is most often remembered as the inspiration for the Nobel Peace Prize and as the first woman Nobel Peace Prize Laureate. A new joint IFOR-International Peace Bureau (IPB) publication explores this fascinating woman's life and the heritage she left for contemporary peacemakers. *The Life of Bertha von Suttner and Her Legacy for Women Peacemakers Today* is a 36-page publication, with an introduction by Hague Appeal for Peace President Cora Weiss. *Single copies are USD 5 or • 5; bulk rates available upon request. Contact the WPP, or IPB at 41, rue de Zürich, 1201 Geneva, Switzerland. Fax +41 22 738 9419, to order copies.*



There will be a variety of exhibitions and events this year to celebrate the centenary of von Suttner's being awarded the Noble Peace Prize: for more information on upcoming events see www.berthavonsuttner2005.info or www.ipb.org. These events provide a good opportunity to publicize your peace group and activities. Why not order copies of *The Life of Bertha von Suttner and Her Legacy for Women Peacemakers Today* to sell during your upcoming events? Ask an editor to review the publication in your local newspaper, with an accompanying interview of a local woman peace activist, or order a copy for your school or library!

Justice for Women

A new report highlights how war breaks out because of marginalization and a perception of a lack of justice. Women feel this injustice even more keenly than men both before and after the conflict, states the United Nations Fund for Women (UNIFEM) report *Peace Needs Women and Women Need Justice*. The report, based on a conference with women from Afghanistan, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Haiti, Iraq, Kosovo, Liberia, Namibia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa and Timor-Leste, has been submitted to the UN Security Council. See www.unifem.org

UNIFEM also has published *Getting it right, doing it right: Gender and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration* (available in English, French and Arabic) on the need to include issues of concern to former women and girl combatants. The tool kit on using and implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1325 is now available on-line in Arabic, French, English and Spanish. See www.unifem.org and the UNIFEM portal www.womenwarpeace.org to download the report.

Gender and Peacekeeping

Gender, Conflict, and Peacekeeping, edited by Dyan Mazurana, Angela Raven-Roberts, and Jane Parpart (2005, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. 320 pages, USD 31.95 paperback) looks at how gender has become a central factor in shaping current thinking about the causes and consequences of armed conflict, complex emergencies,

and reconstruction. Includes examples from Angola, East Timor, El Salvador, the former Yugoslavia, Guatemala, Haiti, Kosovo, Liberia, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, and Serbia, and insights for future peacekeeping and humanitarian missions. See www.rowmanlittlefield.com

Newsletter on Muslim Women

The Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR) has launched a free, on-line newsletter called the Women's Reporting and Dialogue Program, which explores the battle women in Islamic countries are waging to define new rights in changing times. The Women's Reporting and Dialogue Program, currently covering non-Arab Muslim regions such as Central Asia, strengthens the capacity of local media and individual journalists to cover gender issues through training and information provision. See www.iwpr.net

Calendar

August 2-9: World conference Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan. *Contact:* intl@antiatom.org

September 15: Deadline for papers for the conference Cities, Communities and Peace: Co-operation and Conflict Resolution, to be held June 21-23, 2006 at the University of Victoria, Canada. *British Columbia Institute for Co-operative Studies, University House 2-Room 109, P.O. Box 3060 STN CSC, Victoria, BC V8W 3R4, Canada. Email:* cooppeace@uvic.ca

October 9-19: Buddhists and Social Equity conference, in Nagaloka, Bhillgaon, Nagpur, Maharashtra, India. *Organized by the International Network of Engaged Buddhists, 666 Charoen Nakorn Road, Klongsan, Bangkok 10600 Thailand. Tel:* +66 2 860 2194; *fax:* +66 2 860 1277. *Email:* ineboffice@yahoo.com or inebindia@jambudvipa.org

October 10-4 November: Regional Program on Human Rights of Women (for Caucasus, Eastern Europe and Central Asia), Lund, Sweden. Part two will take place May 15-19, 2006 in Kiev, Ukraine. Deadline for applications July 29, 2005. *Raoul Wallenberg Institute, P.O. Box 1155, 221 05 Lund, Sweden. Tel:* +46 46 222 12 28. *Fax:* +46 46 222 12 23. *Web:* www.rwi.lu.se

October 20-21: Meeting of the European Network for Peace and Human Rights, Brussels, Belgium. *Email:* elfeuro@compuserve.com or *fax* +44 (0)115 9420 433.

October 23-29: Training On Making Governance Gender Responsive, Manila, Philippines. For government officials and civil society organizations participating in governance reform initiatives. *Center for Asia Pacific Women in Politics, web:* www.capwip.org or www.onlinewomeninpolitics.org

October 27-30: 10th AWID International Forum on Women's Rights and Development, Bangkok, Thailand. *Association for Women's Rights in Development, 215 Spadina Ave, Suite 150, Toronto, Ontario, M5T 2C7, Canada. Tel.* +1 416

Cross the Lines is produced three times a year in English, French, Spanish, Russian and Arabic. A German edition is available on line. A contribution of EURO 10, GBP 5 or USD 10 will help us spread the news about women's initiatives for peace among groups and individuals unable to pay. Cheques may be made out to 'IFOR / Women Peacemakers Program' in British pounds (drawn on a British bank) or in US dollars (drawn on a US bank). Payment may also be made by VISA or Mastercard, or by transfer of Euros to IFOR's Postbank account 2704182 (in the name of 'Stichting IFOR').

For more information about IFOR's Women Peacemakers Program, contact editor Shelley Anderson, IFOR, WPP (address below; email: s.anderson@ifor.org)

The Women Peacemakers Program is an initiative of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR). Since 1919, IFOR has pioneered spiritually-based active nonviolence. For more information about the WPP or for the IFOR branch in your country, please contact the IFOR international secretariat.

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More information about the WPP can be found on the WPP website: www.ifor.org/WPP.

594 3773; fax +1 416 594 0330. *Registration closes October 14. Web:* www.awid.org

November 7-11: Bearing Witness Retreat, Auschwitz, Poland. On the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Nazi concentration camps, the Peacemaker Community Germany offers a time of reflection, discussion and religious ceremonies at Auschwitz and at Buchenwald (Germany) November 13-19. *Peacemaker Gemeinschaft Deutschland, Schellberger Weg 11, 42659 Solingen, Germany. Email:* friedensstifter@aol.com *Web:* www.peacemaker-gemeinschaft.de/Englisch

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invited back to another two weeks of skills development, and to discuss any obstacles they encountered, especially in terms of mainstreaming gender in their organizations.

The highly participatory methodology includes work in pairs and small groups; larger group discussions and reflection; storytelling; role plays; and more. The deadline for applying for the 2006-2007 Training of Trainers is December 16, 2005. Contact s.anderson@ifor.org for