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IFOR nominees for the 1000 Women for the Nobel Peace Prize

"By training women and helping women develop the skills they need in active nonviolence, they will be better equipped to work in their own communities for peace."

Shelley J. Anderson

International Fellowship of Reconciliation's Women Peacemakers Program -
IFOR WPP

At the heart of the Women Peacemakers Program (WPP) and Shelley Anderson's approach is dialogue and listening. "We actively ask the women we work with 'what do you need' and really try to listen," she said. "Our strategy is that especially by training women and helping women develop the skills they need in active nonviolence, they will be better equipped to work in their own communities for peace" Each year requests for nonviolence training increase. Since the WPP began in 1997 they have trained at least 15,000 people.

Stella Tamang, a Buddhist in a Hindu nation, is a determined advocate for the rights of women, religious minorities and indigenous groups. Non-violence is central to her mission.

Stella Tamang

Milijuli Nepal
Bikalpa Gyan Tatha Bikas Kendra Ashram (BGTBKA)

Stella Tamang (born 1948) is a member of the minority indigenous Lama community and, to boot, a Buddhist woman in the world's only Hindu kingdom. Her situation has shaped her life and her values, making her a determined advocate for the rights of women, indigenous peoples, and religious minorities.

The name of her organization, Milijuli Nepal, means "together", and that is her message indeed: that diverse groups in society can work together for their respective rights, with mutual toleration, without violence.

"The methodology of active public education, with a deep understanding and respect for Shona and Ndebele cultures, has benefited the program."

Netsai Mushonga

Fellowship of Reconciliation in Zimbabwe - FOR/Z

Netsai Mushonga was born in 1969 in Bindura, Zimbabwe. She is a media coordinator of Women's Coalition and a member of the International Committee of International Fellowship. She holds a BA in Sociology from the University of Zimbabwe. In 1995 Netsai worked as a social worker for Danhiko, an NGO providing education and job training for young people with disabilities.

In 1996 Netsai joined the Fellowship of Reconciliation in Zimbabwe, and in 1997 she started the women peacemakers program of FOR/Z. She secured funding to raise awareness within churches on the need to confront gender violence.

"We have the capacity to choose against war and so to give peace a chance: to want to do so is a sign of sanity rather than madness; that the first step is to understand that there is a choice."

Diana Francis

Committee for Conflict Transformation Support - CfCTS
International Fellowship of Reconciliation - IFOR
Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament - CfND

Diana Francis has been working on non-violent conflict resolution, mediation and reconciliation, in England and worldwide, for more than 40 years. She is widely involved in training people in community reconciliation and peace work. Through her work has inspired many people to engage in non-violent activism. She has trained women, who have vividly become trainers and peace-workers in their own communities. Diana is the author of two books, both published by Pluto Press: 'People, Peace and Power: Conflict Transformation in Action' (2002) and 'Rethinking War and Peace' (2004).

“In all her years of working with women victims of violence, Beena began to make the larger connection between conflict in the public sphere and violence in the private domain.”

Beena Sebastian

Cultural Academy for Peace - CAP
International Fellowship of Reconciliation - IFOR

Beena Sebastian's (born 1959) life and work illustrate how an ordinary woman with no special qualification can change the lives of so many people around her. Among her most creative efforts are gender sensitivity training for police and lawyers and instituting an annual award for public officials who have done the most to prevent violence against women. These efforts have helped break the silence surrounding sexual violence in Kerala. She has also set up a shelter for abused women, providing them with both protection and a friend to accompany them to the police and the courts.

"The life of every person has an absolute value."

Hildegard Goss-Mayr

International Fellowship of Reconciliation - IFOR
Service for Peace and Justice - SERPAJ, Brazil

For more than 52 years, Hildegard Goss-Mayr has been teaching nonviolent resistance against injustice and repression as part of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation. She was influential in the 1986 nonviolent People Power Revolution in the Philippines, in the liberation theology movement in Latin America and the peaceful overthrow of a tyranny in Madagascar.

The organization Service for Peace and Justice (SERPAJ) that she co-founded, denounced human rights violations during military dictatorships in Brazil, Argentina and Chile, under the most difficult conditions.

“All people are equal, distinct and unique”

Marion Thuswald

Austrian Peace Service
International Fellowship of Reconciliation - IFOR
Youth Peace Group Danube

Marion Thuswald was born in 1978 in Austria. In 1997 and 1998, after completing her training in social education, she worked as an Austrian Peace Service volunteer with a youth

peace project in the war-torn city of Vukovar in Croatia. Back in Austria she became a member of the staff and later the board of the Austrian Peace Service. For a while she also served as managing director. From Vienna she visits and coordinates the team of Austrian Peace Service volunteers in Vukovar. She maintains and strengthens contacts she made in Croatia with people needing help, among others, many Roma.

“The gap between our longings and aspirations and the way we actually live can be hugely painful and disappointing, especially if our spirituality is unnamed, unrecognized and unloved.”

Kathy Galloway

Scottish Churches Council
Church Action on Poverty
Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Kathy Galloway is a distinguished theologian and the leader of the 'Iona Community' who has a long history of academic and community work. Based in Scotland, she has been working to enhance spiritual and cultural development for the last twenty years. She is connected with a wide range of local and global organizations, including Ecumenical Christian Centers and other social justice organizations. She focused the efforts on issues pertaining to gender equality, poverty, and cross-religious and cross-cultural understanding.

“The range of human activity that can be re-tuned to contribute to peace building is vast.”

Elise Boulding

International Peace Research Association
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom - WILPF
U. S. Institute of Peace

For more than 50 years, Elise Boulding has helped to create networks of peace. Her work is founded in her Quaker faith and a spirituality that is grounded in listening and sharing. She has a special gift for envisioning a peaceful future and teaching others how to use envisioning creating peace.

She co-founded the International Peace Research Association with her husband, Kenneth, and served as its secretary-general. Since its beginning, the organization has held 17 conferences in 16 countries. Elise is also former President of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

* The biographies, written by local journalists and authors, have been compiled by the 1000 Peace Women Association. For more information, visit: www.1000peacewomen.org