Creators of Peace Annual Report 2019 - 2022

Celebrating Resilience

Creators of Peace

Initiatives of Change International

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A Note from Amina Dikedi-Ajakaiye, President of Creators of Peace International

Creators of Peace (CoP) International has always upheld the belief that peace starts with oneself, and extends from personal peace to global peace.

For our volunteers and teams across the board, these values are often challenged as our communities and countries face a myriad of devastating issues.

The pandemic introduced technology and possibilities to meet online. Zoom was widely used, and this revolution has kept our global movement resilient, and we moved on confidently managing the challenges.

In 2022, we saw humanitarian crises that left people in despair and hopelessness in countries such as Ukraine, Ethiopia and Afghanistan; environmental challenges resulting in melting glaciers, spiking heat and monsoons with loss of lives, livelihood and properties in its wake; and stunted economic growth that has triggered fear, suspicion and desperation never seen before.

In 2022, we also experienced grief with the death of Vinitika Lal, a beloved member of the International Committee of Creators of Peace. This sent a shock throughout the network as we were trying to cope with the passing of Marianne Spreng, in 2021. They both have left legacies that will be cherished for a long time.

I am grateful for the tenacity of our teams and numerous volunteers, who despite these daunting realities, bring hope and camaraderie to their communities by creating spaces for dialogue and seeking solutions. Apart from physical spaces, we created virtual spaces, bridging communication and cultural gaps. I remain grateful to those who, by simply paying the costs of cellular data, have enabled these forums to continue.

The launch of our CoP website brought a lot of joy and pride! Thanks to all who made this possible. I pray that facilitators are utilising the bank of resources available within the facilitator's page.

Our regional groups in Africa, Americas, Asia, Australia and Middle East are steaming on! I appreciate each team for creating a support framework and peer group accompaniment in the various regions. I hope that friends in Europe will be encouraged to find their path too.

Finally, I want to thank the new International Committee for their hands-on approach to acquainting themselves with the various portfolios. With their combined skills, experiences, and generosity of heart, they make a superb leadership team for Creators of Peace.

Asante Sana (Thank you),
Amina Dikedi-Ajakaiye
President of CoP International

Creators of Peace is...

An Initiative of Change

Creators of Peace (CoP) is a programme of Initiatives of Change International (IofC) and an Associate Member of the Initiatives of Change International Association. As such, Creators of Peace operates under the auspices of IofC's International Association. IofC is a long-standing global organisation dedicated to building trust across the world's divides.

Launched in 1991

Creators of Peace was launched in 1991 at the Initiatives of Change conference centre in Caux, Switzerland by the Honourable Anna Abdallah Msekwa of Tanzania, a respected politician and champion of women's rights.

Transforming, Empowering, and Inspiring

We develop peace-building programmes, exercises and events within our organisation and in partnership with others, and will continue to offer new programmes as the network expands worldwide.

Across the World's Divides

Creators of Peace is an international NGO practising peace in 50+ countries on 6 continents through workshops, personal encounters, community building activities and conferences.

About Us

Creators of Peace International

Creators of Peace (CoP) International is a global network, working to build resilient and hospitable communities one person at a time. Meaningful peace is inclusive, and inclusion means giving equal voice to women — this is why CoP has been a women-led initiative since 1991. Creators of Peace International continues to be an Associate Member and programme of Initiatives of Change International.

Intiatives of Change

Initiatives of Change (IofC) International is a community-based initiative of people from around the world, belonging to diverse cultures and backgrounds, and who are committed to the transformation of society beginning with their own behaviour and motive.

Creators of Peace was launched in 1991 at the Initiatives of Change conference centre in Caux, Switzerland. Through our programmes, conferences and community-building activities we aim to transform, empower and engage women and others in peace creation for all.

Our Vision: Peacemakers at every level of society

We Believe

Every person has a part to play and something to contribute.
Every person can start the process of transformation in their own heart and life.
Every person has a story to tell and a need to be heard.
Every person can be a compassionate listener to the truth within, to the truths of others and to the needs of the wider community.

Creators of Peace (CoP) is a programme of Initiatives of Change International (IofC)and an Associate Member of the Initiatives of Change International Association. As such, Creators of Peace operates under the auspices of IofC's International Association.

Programmes

Creators of Peace's initiatives to build global peace at the grassroots level are constantly evolving. We have developed many different programmes, exercises and events over the years within our organisation and in partnership with others and will continue to offer new programmes and resources as the network expands worldwide.

Creators of Peace Circles

Creators of Peace Circles are small gatherings of (usually) women who meet weekly or over a weekend with trained facilitators to explore what it means to create peace in the heart, home and community. It is a series of deep conversations that build community and connection, develop resilience and ignite our capacities to build peace.

See pg. 6

Advocating for a New Story of our Shared Humanity (ANS)

"Advocating for a New Story of our Shared Humanity" (ANS) is a self-hosted, 5-session conversation for small groups designed to explore the dominant and emerging narratives in the world and in our lives. It can also be used as a tool for individual reflection. The free guide to self-host small group discussions can be downloaded from the website directly.

Engaging Constructively in Challenging Conversations (ECCC)

"Engaging Constructively in Challenging Conversations" (ECCC) is an online, facilitated course designed to give you the insights, skills and confidence to have constructive conversations in the midst of differences and conflicts. The programme consists of five 2-hour online sessions over 5 weeks, which includes participants gaining access to extensive supportive written materials.

See pg. 7

Creators of Peace Circles

Adapting to a Changing World

Creators of Peace Circles are designed to adapt to the needs of the community they are facilitated for. In recent years, this has meant mixed gender peace circles in some areas and since the COVID-19 pandemic, virtual or hybrid peace circles have helped us continue our impact. This format offers many possibilities, and we hope to utilise technology to reach new communities and futher unite people across divides.

This hybrid peace circle, facilitated virtually and in-person, was organised for a group of women in Tunisia in 2022.

2022

66	841	7	71
Peace Circles	Participants	Facilitator Trainings	Facilitators Trained

2021

84	796
Peace Circles	Participants

2020

30	296
Peace Circles	Participants

2019

145	1,940
Peace Circles	Participants

While the pandemic interrupted our ability to lead Creators of Peace Circles, these numbers show that we're overcoming it by our adaptability and flexibility.

We're initiating improved reporting methods — a Peace Circle Reporting Form — for our facilitators.

The form can be found in the Facilitators Space on our new website:

www.CreatorsofPeace.org

Advocating for a New Story of our Shared Humanity (ANS)

Advocating for a New Story of our Shared Humanity" (ANS) was launched in 2021. This new programme is a self-hosted, 5-session conversation for small groups designed to explore the dominant and emerging narratives in the world and in our lives. It can also be used as a tool for individual reflection.

The guide is available for download on our website for anyone who wishes to host an ANS dialogue. These conversations help highlight where we are stuck, whether in nations, communities or in our own hearts — freeing us to craft new, more life-giving stories of our shared humanity.

20

Documented groups to complete all conversations

Many group gatherings go unreported due to individuals who organise their gatherings independently.

"I am asking myself, how unconscious am I of the stories that justify my privilege and power as a white, educated male. My story comes at the expense of many other people's sacrifices and sufferings."

"The idea is that we can build a new narrative and not remain victims to narratives that were imposed on us."

— ANS participants, 2022

Engaging Constructively in Challenging Conversations (ECCC)

"Engaging Constructively in Challenging Conversations" (ECCC) was launched in 2020 in response to a request from a Peace Circle in Sydney many of whom were struggling with handling clashing views about issues that were current at the time.

In 2022 the first ECCC for Trainers was delivered. It included eight CoP women from around the world. Three of those women have since facilitated an ECCC course.

The online facilitated course is designed to give individuals insights, skills and confidence to have constructive conversations in the midst of differences and conflicts. The programme consists of five 2-hour online sessions over 5 weeks, which includes participants gaining access to extensive supportive written materials.

8

Participants in first ECCC in 2022

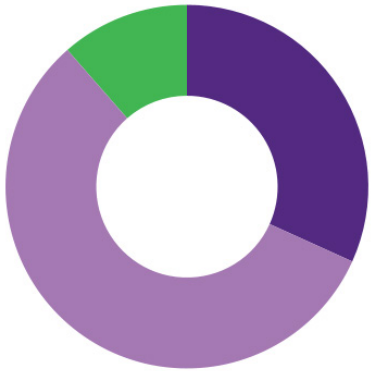
51

Participants by end of 2022

Finances

2019

- Income 70,601.77
- Expenses 126,274.07
- Balance 25,473.59



2020

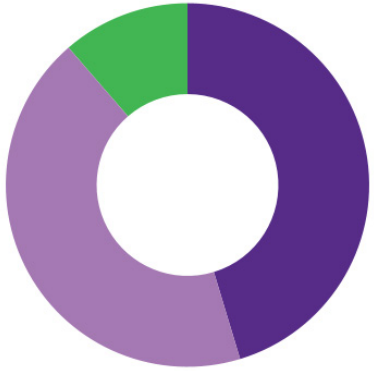
- Income 20,615.10
- Expenses 24,276.83
- Balance 20,785.60

2021

- Income 20,846.76
- Expenses 10,989.13
- Balance 31,343.23

2022

- Income 155,021.49
- Expenses 148,148.39
- Balance 38,873.72



WOW!

We got a grant of 250,000 Euros from the Belgian Government to support CoP Burundi in the incredible work they are doing with the Peace Circle programme to be received over a two-year project 2022-2023.

" I have learnt that cooperation and forgiveness not only bring inner peace but can free the entire world from turmoil."

— Uganda Peace Circle participant, Feb. 2022

What's New?

International Committee

In 2022, a new International Committee was elected with some new and familiar faces. It was a period of transition.
See their bios on pg. 19

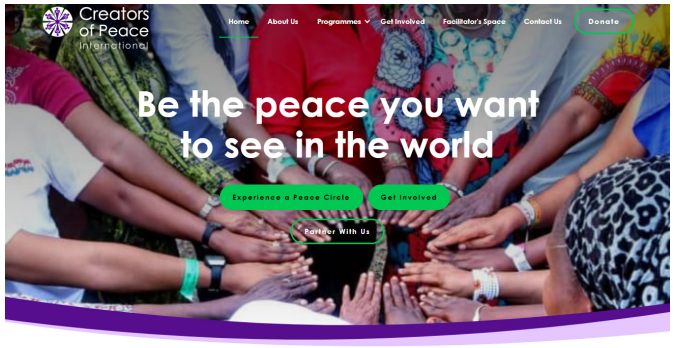
Updated Peace Circles

As the world evolves, so do we. Creators of Peace Circles has had an increase in virtual and hybrid peace circles, and more mixed gender peace circles.

CoPdate Newsletter

CoPdate, our bi-monthly newsletter was launched in 2021. With exclusive stories from CoP network, this online newsletter is for internal circulation only. The editorial team is run by volunteers, and the design and layout is managed by Renu Nauriyal.

Our Own Website!



In 2022, we created our own website, dedicated to CoP International. It also has a password protected page called the "Facilitator's Space" filled with organised resources for CoP Facillitators. Our team involved Lauren Hatvany, Dexter Kim and Sarah Carpenter.

Case for Support

In 2020, the Case for Support was developed for CoP international by Sunny Side Up, a professional Australian marketing agency; and with the support of a private donor. More recently, this has become the official reference and a guiding document for fundraising, collaborations and partnerships.

What's New? (continued)

Two New Programmes

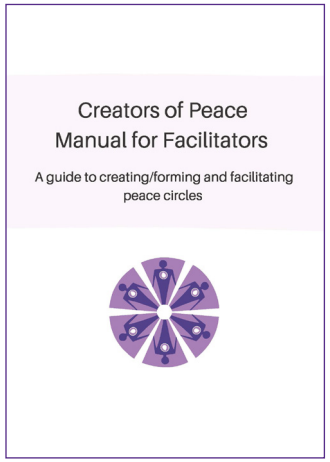
Advocating for a New Story for our Shared Humanity launched in 2021 & Engaging Constructively in Challenging Conversations was created in 2020.
See pg. 7

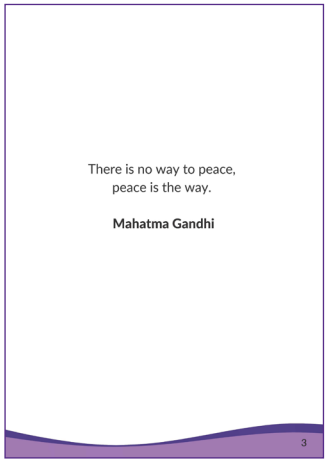
Social Media

We introduced our network to a new Instagram handle in 2022.
Follow us at:
@creatorsofpeace_official

New Partnerships

CoP is exploring new ways to bring the practise of peace to different organisations. In 2020, we ran a second Peace Circle for the City of Johannesburg City Council, and considered prospects of partnering with the United Nations Development Program.





Third Edition of Peace Circle Manual

In 2022, the third edition of the manual was written and edited, by professionals and volunteers within the network. It was released online, mid-year through the new facilitator's page on the website. Contributors to the manual included Kirsty Aegento (Australia), Jean Brown (Australia), Shoshana Faire (Australia), Vinitika Lal (India), Elizabeth Laskar (UK), Mary Lean (UK), Cleopadia Mohlaodi (South Africa), Kate Monkhouse (UK), Mayuree Pandit (India), Miranda Shaw (UK) and Meena Shama (Nepal). Layout and design of the new manual was completed by Isabella Stanley (Australia).

Regional Updates

Moving to a zoom revolution and organising online Peace Circles during the pandemic has presented opportunity to go beyond the borders. It was a slow start for many countries.

Asia
Since the Regional Gathering at Asia Plateau in 2020, in Asia region, CoP networks of India and Nepal have become active.

Nepal

The Creators of Peace community of Nepal participated in an online International Peace Circle. During the COVID break, CoP Nepal consolidated a team, stated rules and responsibilities, discussed the Peace Circle Manual and focused on reframing 'peace' from one's own context. Between 2021 and 2022, a total of seven Peace Circle gatherings and participation in two ANS conversations has been reported.

India

CoP India had their first online Peace Circle in 2020, and **2** more the following year (2021), along with a team retreat held in November 2021. In 2022, **3** Peace Circles, one with a mixed gender group involving embodied practices, one with youth volunteers engaged with an NGO working in slums in Mumbai (India), and one with women in leadership from across the country were reported. This was followed up with a consultative meet and facilitator´s training. The work with women leaders led into a conscious listening workshop with an NGO team in November 2022.

Regional Updates (continued)

Middle East

The first Peace Circle in Arabic took place in 2021, uniting women in the Arab region by focusing on peace. The goal was to bring the Arab countries together, share their hopes and sorrows, listen to each other, build bridges in the regions and between the countries.
Following on from the previous year, an online Peace Circle in Arabic was organised for Egyptian youth, and it helped them learn about inner peace. In the same year, a facilitator from Syria led an online Peace Circle in Arabic with women in Qabes and Tunisia. A Peace Circle was facilitated by new trainees from Egypt, Tunisia and Syria who are being trained to become future facilitators. They were invited to participate in the facilitation along with the two Egyptian and Syrian facilitators.

Europe

There's not been much activity since the pandemic in European countries outside the United Kingdom and Creators of Peace UK's (CoP UK) strategy is to support the network to begin Peace Circles again.

UK

CoP UK ran their first online 'Next Generation Peace Circle' in collaboration with the Guerrand-Hermès Foundation for Peace (GHFP) in 2021. Two staff members act as the programme leads for CoP UK. Facilitator training and accompaniment is offered to those who are called to deliver Peace Circles. Social events, tasters, workshops and talks are also offered throughout the year.
A total of **5** Peace Circles and **2** Peace Circle tasters were delivered successfully. All cultures were welcomed, and the UK diaspora included women from Egypt, Germany, Ukraine, Belarus, South Africa, Bangladesh, South Sudan, Iran, Somalia, Yemen, Nigeria and Colombia.
CoP UK continued to welcome new and strengthened relationships with organisations that align with their values and work. Since 2016, the Geurrand Hermes Foundation for Peace (GHFP) in Brighton has offered its venue and catering for Peace Circles, Facilitator Training and events. This friendship with GHFP has also resulted in opportunities for Creators of Peace youth, women and facilitators to engage in work with UNESCO.
In 2022, CoP UK delivered **6** outreach events, reaching approximately **400** people. Events included the Oxford International Women's Festival hosted at the IofC UK house in Oxford. On International Friendship Day, Greencoat Place hosted CoP UK's first hybrid event. Also, **8** new CoP UK facilitators, from different nationalities, were trained.

Regional Updates (continued)

Africa

A Working Group, from CoP Africa Emerging Leaders, was constituted in December 2020 to reflect and identify strategies that will help sustain Creators of Peace in Africa. After many working sessions throughout 2021, the roadmap was launched on December 4, 2021 with **44** participants from different countries. The roadmap was built around four main topics: Sustainability, Communication, Fundraising and Evaluation. 2022 was marked with more concrete activities. Besides the monthly meetings, activities organised included: a session of ANS and capacity building sessions in 'Partnering and Partnership' and 'Conflict Resolution'. Also, the celebration of the International Day of African Women and an end-of-the-year celebration were other reported events. The CoP African teams that stood out in their activities were Burundi, South Africa, Mali, Democratic Republic of Congo and Kenya.

Americas

The first online Peace Circle in Spanish took place in the Spring of 2022, provided by facilitators from Colombia and Mexico. The women from Mexico, Guatemala, Panama, Brazil, and Colombia were invited to experience a Peace Circle that focused on peace and personal healing.
Women from the Americas (Colombia, USA, Canada and the Caribbean) continue to meet for a bi-monthly Zoom (started in 2020).

Australia

The move to online Peace Circles was an important transition for the Creators of Peace Australia (CoPA) community and provided a space for people from interstate and internationally to connect. Between 2021 and 2022, **3** online Peace Circles and **2** in-person Peace Circles were held, including one in partnership with the University of Sydney's Department of Peace and Conflict Studies.
The New South Wales (NSW) CoP Community of Practice continued to gather in-person and online to discuss 'Peace in Practice'.
The other reported activities included fundraising to support CoP facilitators from Afghanistan; CoPA Outreach Team in NSW organising Cultural Exchange Reunion; and CoPA as one of the presenters at online Raising Peace Festival — in the lead up to the United Nations Day of Peace.

Stories from CoP

Be Inspired

Creators of Peace, Kenya team was invited to Kegoya village in Vihiga County in Kenya to conduct Peace Circles in October 2020. The community was riddled with distrust and disharmony that had snowballed over the years. It was a challenge that Mumbi W, Annie G, Rose K, and Anastacia M accepted. They set out with a target of addressing 20 women but ended up conducting Peace Circles for **72** men and women.
During three days, the participants shared stories, laughed, cried and played games, building new bridges of trust and cooperation. Today the village has a registered Community Based Organization that conducts programs for economic development and harmony.

Hybrid Peace Circle in Arabic

Iman Al Ghafari of Syria facilitated an online CoP Peace Circle in Arabic with 12 women in Qabes, Tunisia. Dhuha BuAbdallah, the president of the Tunisian Women's Association, organized the physical meetings in Qabes and Iman zoomed in from Syria.

A participant said, "The program equipped me with the skills that will make my inner peace, live it, and spread it. I feel like changing things inside me which have ever been responsible for annoying behavior."

Then, Peace is that I love you
Peace, is when I give you
the roses of my heart
And the keys to my soul.
May I invite you to a duet dance
My hand in yours
We kiss the forehead of the moon
We hug the stars in the sky
Before they set

— An extract from a participant's poem about the war in Syria

Stories from CoP (continued)

Refugees Find Threads of Peace

Pamoja Twaweza (Together We Can) is a group of refugees and asylum seekers from various African countries based in Kenya. They engage in economic empowerment projects, growing food, and running sporting and cultural events, for 200 beneficiaries.
One of their members went as a translator to a forum in Burundi run by Creators of Peace. Fascinated by what he heard, he eventually joined CoP events in Kenya, and requested a Peace Circle for his group. Nothing could have diluted the impact of this Peace Circle that happened in Kitengela, September 26 to 28, 2022 comprising **7** men and **9** women, refugees, and asylum seekers living in Kenya from Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, and DRC (Congo).

Quotes from refugees and asylum seekers

"Sitting in a circle made me feel included with a sense of belonging. We are all from different countries, genders and tribes but were knitted together with the thread of peace."

"The magic of the gathering point, Forgiveness, amazed us. It was like pouring ice on burnt skin. The time spent on it was worth so much. The power of forgiveness manifested its real power... It is a sensitive topic to approach as some have become refugees due to life circumstances that they feel are very hard to forgive."

"Noting that it is a process, not condoning the wrongs done and that it does not mean that one cannot seek justice, forgiveness helps in personal healing and attaining inner peace."

"We left our countries not because we wanted to, but because circumstances forced us out. Now we have to stay here and build a life in very challenging circumstances. Lack of peace and feeling at risk all the time is a path we know well, but our stories will change one day."

What's Next?

Overcoming Obstacles

Organisational Structure

CoP has been powered by volunteers. Their dedication has taken this organisation so far already, but there is a need for a more structured internal governance to support our global network of volunteers and propel CoP forward.

Spreading Peace

Reaching communities that would benefit from Creators of Peace programmes and engaging the network we've already developed are central challenges of our organisation.

Fundraising

Raising funds and attracting donors is a consistent challenge for any NGO. Our network has supported CoP for so many years, but we need to reach new donors to continue to expand our impact and strengthen our organisation.

Achieving New Goals

Salaried Core Staff

The Strategic Report for 2018-2020 identified a need for a salaried core staff to support our global network of volunteers. As we overcome the global pandemic years, this remains a goal and priority for Creators of Peace International.

Effective Communications

CoP's newest newsletter is part of a larger goal to not only keep the global network engaged in the Creators of Peace International community, but to reach outward and increase visibility to grow our impact and empower the next generation of peace creators.

Launch Donor Programme

CoP will strive to create a community of support for donors and fundraisers, improve its organisational capacity for impact evaluation and explore membership subscriptions, along with exploring new partnerships and potential revenue streams.

"So much of life is about processing, and since learning from CoP I have become a better and happier person. My transformation has been noticed and has improved relationships with children, friends and work colleagues."

— Participant from Nigeria, June 2022

Donate

With your support, we can accelerate our impact in the world.

Peace is more than the absence of conflict — peace needs to be created. Help Creators of Peace grow the global network of people practising peace in their hearts, homes, and communities to build trust across social divides. Donations are accepted in any amount via PayPal or direct wire transfer.

Support grassroots change: $1 – $10,000.

Fund on-the-ground activity, so we can continue to build resilience at a grassroots level and expand our reach in more communities around the world.

Support national change: $10,000 – $50,000.

Invest in training, education, research and development. So we can find new and better ways to empower people to become peace creators in their homes, schools, workplaces, community groups and councils.

Support global change: $50,000 upwards.

Fast-track our global presence. So we can shift the global dialogue to include everyone in peace creation at every level of society.

Creators of Peace (CoP) is a charitable association (a donation and grant-funded NGO) ruled by Articles 60-79 of Swiss Civil Code. CoP is a programme of Initiatives of Change International (IofC) and operates under the auspices of its International Association. Address: Creators of Peace International La LOGE Route de Ferney 106 CH-1202 - Geneva

The Global CoP Network

Creators of Peace is governed by an **International Committee**, which consists of 6-10 members. The International Committee works closely with international coordinators, international working groups, and regional and national coordinators.

The **Advisory Group**, a team of Elders and former International Committee members, provides support, guidance and expertise across the organisation as younger generations take on leadership roles.

Regional and national coordinators provide leadership and support to local teams in the Americas, Africa, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, Europe, New Zealand and Australia.

Creators of Peace is made possible by the work of **valued, dedicated volunteers**, and is funded by private foundations, philanthropists, partnerships with not-for-profits, other organisations and international **donors**. At the local level, CoP communities in different countries have received grants and private donations, and from working in partnership with local NGOs and institutions.

International Committee 2019-2022

The International Committee worked diligently to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic and keep the Creators of Peace Circle alive and active during challenging times. Their strategic plan propelled the organisation forward and their impact has been immeasurable.

Amina Dikedi-Ajakaiye
UK/Nigeria
President

Diana Damsa
Romania
Vice President

Gabriela Pop
Romania
Treasurer

Anne Claire Frank-Seisay
USA/Netherlands
Secretary

Vinitika Lal
India
Committee Member
(12.12.1973 - 28.12.2022)

Luz Stella Camacho Castro
Colombia
Committee Member

Marianne Makoudem
Cameroon
Committee Member

Serena Rix Tripathee
Australia
Committee Member

Birte Finken
Denmark/Norway
Committee Member

International Committee 2023

At the end of 2022, the committee stepped aside for the next iteration of dedicated volunteers. Meet the new lineup of peace creators who are helping Creators of Peace International thrive and prepare for the future.

Jean Brown
Australia
President

The role of president was left open until Jean Brown agreed to fulfill the role. She will be elected formally in the Annual General Meeting (AGM) 2023.

Miranda Shaw
United Kingdom
Treasurer

Deeya Nambiar
India & Germany
Communications

Elizabeth Laskar
United Kingdom
Secretary

Marienne Makoudem
Cameroon
Capacity Building

Erika Vega Anaya
Mexico & India
Project Management & Accountability

Rukmini Ayer
India
Internal Governance

Conclusion

People care is integrated into all aspects of CoP work. It is a core foundation of the culture at Creators of Peace - expressed through accompaniment, self-care, care of network, and care for each other, and those one connects with.

Accompaniment is one of the pillars of Creators of Peace. It involves reaching out and accompanying each other, participants, and people in CoP communities. This manifests in different ways — with elders accompanying the committee members, committee members accompanying others in the network, and each one, as part of CoP, finding ways to accompany each other. It is embedded in CoP gatherings, both in person and online, and continues to be developed as a portfolio that finds ways to expand how one cares for oneself, one another, and everyone in CoP communities.

In Conclusion

Creators of Peace has an unaccounted number of members, making themselves voluntarily available to meet peace needs within and around them. It is a lifetime commitment for many. However, sometimes the CoP activities go unreported because they are either lost in translations or left unsaid in the inability to express in numbers and words. This is a continual process. With the new portfolios and challenges, the elected members of the International Committee (2022-25) are assimilating, absorbing and finding their way in working towards peacebuilding. The spirit of Creators of Peace is upheld by the friendships, gratitude and resilience experienced.

Contact Us

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La LOGE, Route de Ferney 106, CH-1202 - Geneva.

Instagram: @creatorsofpeace_international
Facebook: facebook.com/iofc.creatorsofpeace
Creators of Peace International

Annual Report
Design: Sarah Carpenter
Support: Lauren Hatvany

Creators of Peace International
www.CreatorsofPeace.org