

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP FOR PEACE BUILDING IN DARFUR, SUDAN (LEAP)

REPORT OF THE PILOT PROJECT IN 2013



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During second workshop, women are busy working on their future projects stating what they actually want to do

The Hague, January 7, 2014
Mekka Abdelgabar, project director
Joke Oranje, international trainer

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Stichting VOND has been active for nearly two decades in Sudan and in the Netherlands, preparing the ground for the engagement of women from Darfur in peace building. VOND has engaged in projects in Khartoum in 2007 to organize grass root organizations from Darfur (45 women out of 22 women organizations were invited for a 4-day workshop in Khartoum); around issues of peace and reconciliation. Members of VOND were instrumental in bringing Darfuri women from these organizations to The Netherlands to participate in the NAP 1325 conference in 2008 with women from other (post-) conflict areas. VOND supported the network of women organisations in the different states of Darfur and engaged through small projects for health, education and various trainings, with the support of some Dutch organisations. In the Netherlands, even before the National Action Plan 1325 was launched, VOND was one of the organizing members of the learning conference for women in situations of armed conflict, in cooperation with the Nederlandse Vrouwenraad. Later on, VOND became a member of the Sudan working group in NAP 1325, taking the lead in the formulation of a project for Sudan in which Darfur would be given priority. This effort did not result in a common agreement, but it became the start of the 4 year project on Women's Leadership for Peace Building in Darfur (LEAP). LEAP's first phase is a pilot program which meant to empower and work with a number of 16 civil society organizations working in five states of Darfur; their activities are directed towards communities in the villages, towns and IDP camps in Darfur.

The key role of women in promoting peace and their energy and experience in reconstructing society has been the mayor asset for initiating this project. The mayor challenge identified is to increase the leverage of the initiatives that women leaders in Darfur can take – and are already taking – to promote peace and security and to participate in the peace negotiations. VOND intends to mobilize Darfuri women leaders of civil society organizations who work for and support other women who are being community leaders in IDP camps, farmers and petty traders, who need support to defend their rights, to benefit from projects negotiated in the Doha agreement and for activities related to community organising, food production, health, education and trade. LEAP aims at raising gender equality and strengthening agency of women in a male dominated society, as well as sensitivity to the plight of young men, both as perpetrators and victims of the current war. LEAP aims, further to disseminate the UNSCR1325 and other resolutions and laws that envisage participation of women and combating violence against women in cooperation between government and civil society.

This option of VOND to establish a partnership with these women leaders in Darfur to work for peace seemed quite challenging in the beginning, since the Sudanese government did not sign or ratify UNSC-Resolution 1325. But the long established relations of trust with civil society in Darfur made it possible to gather women from 16 organisations to start the LEAP project. The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs allowed the project to start with their funding, for which we are very grateful.

This report covers the first phase of the project, a pilot of joint learning through action and reflection in two shifts, alternated with implementation of actions in the field. The pilot was meant to clarify the learning needs of women leaders in Darfur who are actively involved in peace building and to prepare them for 1325 manifestations in their own environment.

The specific objectives of the project as a whole were established in the project proposal:

- ♀ An intensive learning process among women leaders in Darfur on what they need to guide local women in promoting peace and security together.
- ♀ Increased cooperation between women leaders in Sudan and Darfur on a common local agenda for peace and security in Darfur.
- ♀ Increased women's participation in public and political activities for promoting peace and security in each of the 5 regions of Darfur.
- ♀ Increased visibility at national level of the peace building initiatives and proposals of women's organisations in Darfur.

The project started with preparations in the Netherlands: as required by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the organisational basis of VOND was strengthened and a planning was made for the evaluation and monitoring of the project. Furthermore, criteria were developed to select the participants to the first phase of the project. Terms of Reference were formulated to identify, select, contract and instruct adequate Sudanese and international trainers. The project's budget was carefully reviewed and some additional needs were identified. A change in the budget distribution was proposed to the Ministry, and this was accepted.

In Sudan, the office in Khartoum was prepared to be able to administrate the project and arrange all the logistic details such as catering, tickets, translations, payments, etc. The identification and selection of participants was done. A local trainer and 10 Young journalists were identified to participate in the training.

The representative of the Netherlands Embassy opened the first manifestation of WAP-Darfur



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The actual implementation started with a first learning round of one week in Khartoum. The learning involved knowledge of the UNSCR 1325, of Sudanese law, customary law, and Abuja and Doha peace agreements. Another element was women's rights and gender mainstreaming in social policies. The third element was about nonviolent action, security issues in public action, and how to deal with conflict situations. The methodology of the training was a combination of theoretical knowledge with sharing experiences and strengthening the commitment of each participant.

An additional learning event was the weblog training for the women journalists who participated in the first learning round. Ten sessions were organized on social media and blogging by an experienced blogger. The participants created their own blogs in which they used the experiences of the Darfuri women leaders to strengthen their visibility and broader recognition.

During the first learning round, each participant formulated an own practical action plan in their own home town. The director of LEAP travelled to the 5 regions of Darfur to coach the participants in the implementation of the small projects they formulated. Most of the projects dealt with workshops to build broad awareness on the UNSCR1325, explaining the laws and rights involved in it. It was impressive to find out that the Sudanese government had actually created committees in all of the five states of Darfur, within the Ministries of Social Affairs Women and Children, called “UNSCR1325 committees”. The Sudan government, for that reason, allows public activities in Darfur on the application of the UNSCR1325 and the following resolutions. Even so, in one state, Nyala, the Security Services mistakenly withhold the realization of workshops and banned three organisations; which was an act against their own government decision. Apart from this set back, tangible results came out of the workshops, such as increase of constituencies (members) for some of the organizations. Many women organizations in Darfur expressed their willingness to join this network. A provision was created to add other organisations as associates of the network.

The second learning round of 5 days was in Khartoum again. The objectives of intensive learning, cooperation, participation and visibility were guiding subjects for the programme. The methodology was a combination of reflection on past experiences in peace work with theory on best practices and identification of learning needs for the years to come. Besides an international and national trainer, external speakers were invited. The pilot learning project was evaluated by the participants as very valuable. Especially the action-reflection methodology, that helped to awaken and structure their own knowledge and experience, to be applied in practical situations, was praised as very useful. By the end of this learning round, the participants created a platform of their 16 organisations, under the name: Women’s Alliance for Peace in Darfur (WAP-Darfur). The first and second training rounds are complementary in nature; they share the same methodology. Besides providing the opportunity for exchanging the participants’ rich experiences on the field, the first training round provides extensive theoretical exploration. On the other hand, the second training round built upon the first one; it elaborated

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The participants prepared an Open-Day event held two days after the training, in which influential people and organizations were invited to attend. The event was opened by Mrs. Esther Verloeff from the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Sudan. Representatives from the Swiss embassy, the Sudanese Ministry of Social Affairs Women and Children, the Sudanese Women Union, Oxfam USA, ESCOM, USAID, UNAMID, UNICEF, UNWOMEN, the Sudanese Legislative Council, as well as leaders from Sudanese NGO’s. The president of WAP-Darfur read a Charter for Trust and Diligent Work for Peace, signed by all participants. After hearing the Charter and the explanation given by representatives of all different Darfur regions, the participants asked the word one by one to congratulate the newly formed alliance WAP-Darfur with their quest for peace, and promised their support. The well-known journalist Mr. Abdalla Adam Khatir expressed his deep appreciation for this initiative, the impact of which he compared with the first Sudanese girl going to school, namely his own grandmother.

The Charter for Trust and Diligent Work for Peace was signed and handed over on the spot to Mrs. Fatima Sidiq from Khartoum Legislative Council; another copy was submitted to the Minister of Social Affairs, Women and Children in Khartoum later on. Both entities expressed their content on the event and the creation of this network, they promise to partner with, to support, and to work with the Alliance.

For the next three years a partnership between VOND and WAP-Darfur will be signed, in which VOND will provide the organisation coaching and the facilitation of further learning rounds and small projects in the 5 regions of Darfur.

2. THE SITUATION IN DARFUR

Due to the serious repercussions of the destructive war in Darfur which never escaped one household without claiming some lives, people are living in deep sorrow, agony, sadness and anger. The war started in 2003 with a simple claim for basic rights to be respected, by two groups of movements towards the Sudan central government. Very quickly it turned into ethnic cleansing and tribal conflict. The Sudanese policy was to divide the movements into more than 20, in order to weaken their impact. In this way, tribalism was triggered between the Darfuri people, starting from the ethnic differences between two major groups, the Zourga and the Arabs. The difference is easily manipulated, like the Hutu-Tutsi ethnic division, in discrimination that tends to escalate through deep rooted anger, frustration and propensity to revenge. Shortly after the fractioning of the armed movements, tribal conflict started to multiply as well. Even people from the same tribe started fighting each other, neighbours kill neighbours, and even families who are quietly at home are killed in cold blood. The region is overwhelmed with a great variety of weapons, becoming cheaper every day. Also the ammunition is flooding to the region in huge quantities and varieties; ammunition is bought by filling buckets instead of selling them in small boxes. In this way, the war continues up to the present day. While Darfur is turned into chaos, the international community becomes tired. Darfur runs the risk of being forgotten and gradually erased from the international agenda.

Confronted with this situation, Darfuri people feel they should do something. They start to become aware of the dirty games, and they want to reconcile and unite around peace as one goal. For that purpose they seek help from national and international community, they are eager to receive support from peace loving people everywhere to help them to build peace and develop their region.

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Women of Assalam County in Gineena attending the workshop and listening desperitely to hear about the opportunity of commencing their small irrigated farms demanded

International support has been provided, but it stagnated because of a lack of capacity or willingness of the government to solve the primary problems of health, education, economic opportunities and democratic governance. Some more advantaged beneficiaries tend to make use of the situation in their own interest. As they are fishing in dirty water they do not promote peaceful solutions. Those who obtain political and/or financial gains are holding tight to maintain their positions and gains, and they don't confront perpetrators of violent and armed attacks. On the contrary, to achieve their goals through exploitation of young combatants to continue the killing raids. The young combatants are perpetrators and victims at the same time. They are uneducated, unemployed and desperate; therefore easy to be manipulated and misused. Those leaders give them false information and tell them that together they should not

forgive nor reconcile with the enemy. Many young men are misused as war machineries, joining the armed movements, or the pro-government militiamen called Janjaweed, or the government army.

Having this reality in mind VOND studied the situation during the past years while working for the UNSCR1325, leading the Sudan country group. Together with some prominent Darfuri women leaders, VOND analysed that Darfuri women are the ones who can bring peace to Darfur. The women are an untapped potential power for peace making. The women leaders are respected by the community; they can reach to the tribal leaders and to the war lords to talk peace, of course they might succeed or not at that certain moment, but with repetition, determination and consistency they will be able to break through and make difference towards reconciliation and peace. The power of women can be canalized through mediation. Women can bring people together and challenge another mind-set, using mediation, advocacy and negotiation as tools to defend legitimate rights. With those powerful tools, and the right people helping them, they can turn the people's minds from aggression to peaceful thinking, and hence to waging peace instead of war.



*The people in Darfur are tired of violence and in their hearts they want peace by all means.
Group of men attending the workshop in Dar-Essalam – North Darfur interested to hear any words
leading to peace and give them hope*

The women approached by VOND have a firm believe that there is always a good side in every person; and that it is possible to change the social reality through constant advocacy and promotion of peace; by appealing to the sub-conscious minds of the people; by approaching community leaders, traditional governments, the Hakkamat and Sheikhat; by referring to poetry and traditional stories. Even the war lords and the young men who are combatants can be challenged to care for peace. The people in Darfur are, actually, tired of violence and in their hearts they want peace by all means. And many officers in the local government in Darfur are also tired of this war with no gain. The Darfur war has inflicted upon the state and huge amounts of money from its budget are wasted to contain it; the economy is broken-down due to the economic blockade. Accordingly the government is gradually becoming ready, willing and seeking ways to welcome peace – even if they don't yet know how.

3. PROJECT PREPARATIONS

3.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE LEARNING

After making an analysis of the situation, the objectives for the project were carefully designed. The overall objective of the project is to mobilize and strengthen women leadership in lobbying for peace in Darfur. This objective is supported by 4 specific objectives that guide the present project:

- ♀ An intensive learning process among women leaders in Darfur on what they need to guide local women in promoting peace and security together.
- ♀ Increased cooperation between women leaders in Sudan and Darfur on a common local agenda for peace and security in Darfur.
- ♀ Increased women's participation in public and political activities for promoting peace and security in each of the 5 regions of Darfur.
- ♀ Increased visibility at national level of the peace building initiatives and proposals of women's organisations in Darfur.

The activities of the pilot phase were planned according to these objectives. They consisted in preparations, a first learning round, and blogging sessions for journalists, coaching of small projects implemented by the participants on the field, a second learning round, and a presentation to a wider public in Sudan. In the second learning round the learning needs for the future would be identified, and a new project would be formulated to consolidate the cooperation between VOND and the Darfuri Women's organisations.

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Together with a monitoring and evaluation consultant, a logical framework was made for the project to check the correspondence between the objectives and the planned activities.

3.2 RESTRUCTURING OF VOND'S BOARD

For reasons of accountability the board of VOND was strengthened with a new president, Karin Willemse. Two new members were elected as board member: Edzo Tonkes, as financial advisor; and Annette Bool, as member. The coordinator of the LEAP project, Mekka Abdelgabar, temporarily stepped down as president of the board, to avoid a possible conflict of interest. On the first board meeting agreements were made on the responsibilities of the board and of each board member.

The implementation of the project is realized through a team, in which each member was assigned a specific task:

PROJECT TEAM LEAP				
No	Name	Task	State	City
1	Mekka Abdelgabar	Coordinator and coach	NL	The Hague
2	Joke Oranje	Advisor and international trainer	NL	The Hague
3	Janine Tijhoff	International Trainer	NL	The Hague
4	Awatif Nihar	National Trainer	Sudan	Khartoum
5	Salwa Abdullah	Finance Control	NL	The Hague
6	Edzo Tonkes	Finance Advisor	NL	The Hague
7	Annette Evertzen	Monitoring and Evaluation expert	NL	Borne
8	Amira Beshir	Secretary/treasurer	Sudan	Khartoum
9	Reem Osman Gaafar	Blogger and national trainer	Sudan	Khartoum

Members of the LEAP team in the Netherlands: Mekka Abdelgabar and Salwa Mergani



3.3 SELECTING THE PARTICIPANTS

Women leaders from 16 organizations, from the five states of Darfur were carefully selected. They had to represent different tribes and different backgrounds. The women were selected as activists in peace making and re-weaving of the social fabric. During the selection process the common goal was discussed and trust was build focussing on that goal. We shared our dreams and hopes.

At the start of the identification phase of the organizations and the participants, VOND established criteria for the selection: (1) each organization should be registered and renewed its registration for the year 2013 by Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC); (2) the organization should have an office and a number of working staff; (3) the organization should have implemented considerable work in the past as a track record; and (4) fluency in the English language. Accordingly, some organizations were identified and selected during a previous visit of VOND's chair to Sudan. The Sudan team continued further to contact the organizations in their effort to make right choices. Some organizations were registered as committees; this type of registration does not allow them to do this kind of activities; therefore we apologized to them and replaced them with others.

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The preparations of LEAP in Sudan were supported by the local VOND officer Amira Beshir



It has been a long and labour-intensive process especially due to technical communication difficulties: most of the participants had no email of their own in the beginning; those with emails did not always check it because of poor internet connectivity in Darfur. It was necessary to use the telephone frequently, and luckily all active ladies have a mobile phone; even so, mobile networks fail regularly and therefore calls had to be repeated many times before getting the right information in place. At the end, the work resulted in a list of 16 representatives of 16 organisations from the different regions of Darfur, who participated in the pilot phase. All participants filled in an application form, and gave their commitment to work with VOND during this pilot phase of the project on

joint learning and action for peace in Darfur. At the same time, 10 young journalists from Khartoum, with roots in Darfur were invited to participate in the learning rounds.

4. THE FIRST LEARNING ROUND

The learning round started on September the 22nd with a meeting meant to welcome the 16 women arrived from Darfur, to introduce each other and to get acquainted. The meeting took longer than expected; the women were overwhelmed and emotional about the situation in Darfur. While Darfur is in turmoil at this very moment, it is forgotten by the national and international community. The security situation is fragile in various parts of Darfur, South Darfur in particular is witnessing dangerous armed conflicts. Security is insufficient even in the capital city Nyala. Individuals are killed without reason, armed robberies and killing of innocent people are common, curfew is from 7 p.m.. In East Darfur a war between the big tribes, Rizeigat and Ma-alia is crushing hundreds of lives from both tribes. A young Rizeigat participant told us, with tears in her eyes, that more than 150 young men from the smallest clan of her tribe are killed during the last few days; the oldest from the victims was only 28 years of age. Another participant from the other side of the conflict, the Ma-alia, also told us similar stories. The two ladies started hugging each other in tears to comfort each other. Everybody was touched by the scene; it was indeed recognized as a symbol of reconciliation and networking.



Mrs. Mahjouba from Daeen and Suwsan listening during the second training session

A questionnaire was handed over to the participants to assessing their learning needs to be filled in and returned by the following day. On Monday the 23rd the training started with full capacity, i.e. the majority of the journalists also joined the training. Unfortunately, due to the eruption of an uprising in Khartoum, triggered by the high prices of basic consumer commodities, most of the journalists were called by their newspapers to start covering the events and therefore some of them were unable to attend the whole training.

The language of communication was mainly Arabic and occasionally English. Even if English fluency was one of the criteria for selecting the participants, communicating fluently in English proved to be problematic. The women demanded the trainers to use Arabic in order for them to

obtain full benefit of the training. Mekka and Salwa helped with interpretation of Janine's lectures to the group and vice versa.

The training was hosted by the gender department of the institute of development studies of Khartoum University. This centre was very convenient with well-organized catering and services, which greatly facilitated the easy flow of the processes during the training. The major purpose for choosing this location is for security reasons; the university premise use to be safe from the national security investigations.

4.1 DAY 1: GETTING ACQUAINTED

The learning round started the first day with short introductions and mapping of expectations. All participants are indeed leaders and have expertise in peace building. Most of them are aware of the UNSCR1325. We discovered that this resolution is far more popular among the women of Darfur than among their counterparts in Khartoum. The Sudanese government did not sign and/or ratified the resolution, yet the women of Darfur disseminated it among themselves and started implementing it thanks to the support by the international NGO's working in Darfur. At the same time, the participants are not satisfied with the interaction of these NGO's with the women at the grassroots level. From the questionnaire it became clear, that most participants are leaders of organisations that represent a mixture of tribes, who are trying hard to re-weave the broken fabric of their communities.

Programme Day One

- * Registration
- * Introduction and getting acquainted with each other
- * Introduction on the learning methodology
- * Trust building games
- * Sharing experiences
- * Concepts of team building
- * Introduction on the concepts of war and conflict
- * Examples of de-escalating conflict and ways to promote peace
- * Examples of solidarity with grass roots women
- * Introduction on gender concepts, genders mainstreaming, and the link between these issues and the peace building.

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4.2 DAY 2: DARFUR PEACE AGREEMENTS

The Darfur Peace Agreements were analysed by mapping participant's experiences and/or perception in relation to two peace agreements; i.e. Abuja and Doha agreements. A number of participants attended peace negotiations and shared their experiences with the group. The group proceeded in mapping tribal agreements, reconciliations and mediation. The majority of participants are actively engaged in the so-called Joudiat, i.e. mediations and reconciliation among the conflicting tribes.

Programme Day 2

- * Various nonviolent and mediation techniques from the international experiences: Janine Tjihoff.
- * Sudan's legislation and customary laws: Awatif Nihar.
- * Analysis of the opportunities for inclusion of women, youth and gender issues in the Darfur Peace Agreements: participants

4.3 DAY 3: UNSCR1325 AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL RESOLUTIONS

Programme on day 3:

- * Definition of peace building
- * The role of CSO in bridging the gap between conflicting parties and in re-weaving the social fabric of the society.
- * Participant's observation on the on-going war in Darfur.
- * Personal resilience and personal gender awareness
- * Analysis of the UNSCR1325 and other additional resolutions
- * The Dutch NAPII as example of cooperation between government and civil society.
- * International commitments concerning gender equality and UNSCR1325.
- * Getting local communities to take part in transforming wider systems of conflict and war into peace and reconciliation
- * Promoting and building bottom up peace, top down and middle out peace

4.4 DAY 4: POWER AND CONFLICTS

On the 4th day the participants explored issues of gender equality and gender mainstreaming. They analysed the link between these issues and the peace building. They reflected on nonviolent coexistence in situations of different cultures/beliefs and in conflicts of interest.



One of the group works during the first training round.

The importance of networking and working together in harmony was discussed, but the term “network” proved to be forbidden by the government, so the participants agree to call it “cooperation”.

Another issue was the importance of being a team and communicating effectively to increase security during public actions. An analysis was made of security and types of security, insecure situations and strategies to avoid them or to counteract. Possibilities for lobbying were shown and how to create an united front against those who used violence to promote their cause or position.

4.5 DAY 5: WOMEN AS AGENTS OF PEACE:

On the last day, the question was what actions, activities and alternative perspectives can be articulated on the basis of a gendered perspective of the peace agreements. The concept of short and long term goals was explained, and how to be aware of concrete results to be reached. It was

understood that peace-making goes far beyond reaching a political agreement between the main parties. It is necessary to make peace between those who live side by side and have nowhere else to go.



Fatima Kanjom - Nyala, Thuria Ibrahim Salih - Kebkabya, and Ghalia Mahomud Musa – Daeen busy during group works preparing their presentation

After these introductions, the participants worked at their personal action plan in their own environment. After formulating the plans, they were shared with the others and commented. The expected impact of each plan was assessed. Along with the plan, the participants were challenged to map the main groups who would be interested in cooperating with their plans.

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Programme on day 5:

- * Action plans, networks, results
- * Participation in the peace negotiations for grass root communities
- * Methods and strategies for shaping the negotiating agenda
- * Importance of communication and media.
- * Seeking consensus
- * Find issues that are within our capacity to address

4.6 CONCLUSION ON THE FIRST LEARNING ROUND

The participants showed great satisfaction with the learning round. It was practical, profound and it helped to form a strong network. The atmosphere was filled with true reconciliation and broad cooperation. The learning content was relevant to the participants, and the methodology was stimulating. All participants were present during the whole training and committed themselves again at the end to work together for peace and share their experience with each other on regular basis.

The main challenges of this period were operational. For example:

- * As English was not really the dominant language during the training, everything had to be translated, slowing down the pace and limiting the possibilities for interactive training; this issue did not impact negatively on the budget, as many volunteers helped with translation. But it did caused some gaps and delays in the paper trail of the project.

- * It was cumbersome to reach all potential participants and to register them, it costed much more time than foreseen; this extra time was not paid from the budget.
- * The training venue was a bit too small for interactive exercises, and during the turmoil it was not independent enough to be safe. For the second learning round another venue was chosen.
- * There were also serious visa problems caused by the cooperation with ICCO, wrongly identified as a missionary organisation. After being interrogated for two days by the security services, the LEAP director had to call for the intervention of some influential family members to solve the issue.
- * A set back was that the invited journalists were not able to attend the training the whole time, because of the turmoil on the streets of Khartoum exactly at the time of the training.
- *

Mrs. Salwa Haroun listening to the lecture during the second training round



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5. THE BLOGGING SESSIONS

The training on blogging started on Monday the 1st of October led by an experienced blogger; Mrs. Reem Osman Gaafar; (<http://reemgaafar.blogspot.nl>). We used VOND's office to accommodate the training; there is sufficient equipment to facilitate the training: 10 computers, laptops, a beamer and a network.

The journalist's participants are:

Journalists who participated in LEAP			
No	Name	News Paper	From City
1	Amani Khamis	Alyaoum Eltali	M/Zalingei
2	Hanim Adam	El-Khartoum	W/Gineena
3	Asma Michael Istanbool	El-Akhbar	S/Nyala
4	Ibtisam El-Sheikh	El-Akhbar	S/Nyala
5	Inaam Adam	El-Akhbar	N/Fasher
6	Mawda Hamad	El-Akhbar	E/Daen
7	Najat Ahmed Mohamed	Sudan vision	S/Nyala
8	Raheel Ibrahim Suliman	El-Intibaha	N/Fasher
9	Thuria Ibrahim	El-Intibaha	N/Fasher

In their work these young journalists use to write content and give it to an IT specialist working for that specific newspaper to upload summary of their work, in case that is required by the newspaper. This isn't happening most of the time because the work is published directly into the daily newspaper. Because the participants are experienced journalists working for national newspapers they have no problem in creating content. All they need is mastering the techniques of blogging, design, uploading and maintenance of their blogs.

The training started by some refreshment on the use of the social media, some of the journalists know more than others, yet no body have an idea on how to create blogs.

According to the trainer, the most important is the name of your blog; choose the name carefully because you don't want to change it after creating group of audience and followers. It is also important to determine from the beginning which line you want to follow in your blogging; in that sense that every blogger is working on the activities of the Darfuri women leaders and on peace and reconciliation initiatives in Darfur. And that is the start; it is actually an easy job.

It is essential to have an email account in Gmail; we are using it in this domain; BlogSpot. We are using BlogSpot to host our blogs that is for the ease and freedom of working. Some do not have accounts in Gmail and therefore they created their accounts before the start of the training.

The first question asked and answered was to create blogs as means of visibility and to take your work a step ahead. Newspapers are read by Sudanese community, even not all of them because of the hard living conditions, most of the people do not afford to buy newspapers. The international community on the other hand read English blogs, Arabic is read by some countries, yet we want to create visibility on international level. Moreover there is a great deal of Sudanese who have accessibility to the internet, forming considerable group of audiences.

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The journalists struggling with creating their blogs – Asma Michael and Thuria Ibrahim



The group learned how to set up their blogs, already during the second session. It was simple and straightforward process. The design proved to be a little harder it took them longer; two sessions and yet some of them were unable to master it in a good way. This resulted in pulling the trainer back every time. Adding content and publishing was easier, the journalists started adding variety of stories and statements, and it seemed to be more fun. Then how to reach your audience proved to be easier than anticipated; the use of other social media is key in this regard. Mrs. Gaafar asked everybody to make accounts in Face book,

Twitter and other social media because you inform your audience via these means to read your blog. The most important is your Email. Each one was asked to make account in Gmail in case she doesn't have one, we add the blog URL to the signature of our Gmail, whoever receives email from the journalists will see the address of her blog and go directly to read it. Because blogging is personal Mrs. Gaafar taught the journalists the importance of protecting your blog; it is vulnerable to intruders and internet abusers' who can use your blog to claim various rights and advertisements. This process is a bit complicated but with repetition the women were able to work it out.

Finally, the participants created their individual blogs after the training, they published articles written by them on the training and some articles resulted from interviewing the Darfuri women leaders. The journalists are ready to form partnerships with the Darfur women leaders and start launching the contents to be received from the Darfur women leaders in order to create visibility after the second round of the training.

These are some examples of the blogs:

<http://mawadahamad.blogspot.nl/>, by Mawada Hamad,
<http://asmamichael.blogspot.com> by Asma Michael,
<http://thareyeribrahim345.blogspot.com> by Thuria Ibrahim,
<http://najata44.blogspot.com> by Najat Ahmed Mohamed, and
<http://mekkaharoun.blogspot.nl>; by Mekka
<http://hanimadam.blogspot.nl/> by Hanim Adam
<http://raheelibrahim.blogspot.nl> by Raheel Ibrahim

The major constrain of this work is the language; we discovered that English is rarely spoken or used as writing language. All the contents in these blogs are written in Arabic. This shall take another effort for studying and mastering English language in order to reach wider range of audience especially on international level.



Blogger Reem monitoring and correcting blogs created by the participants – Najat explaining her blog

Some journalists conducted interviews with the participants and publish these interviews in their newspapers. Mrs. Inaam Adam interview the chair of LEAP about the project and published the interview in El-Akhbar which was disseminated on 4th October 2013, Mrs. Rahiel Ibrahim Suliman also interviewed the chair of LEAP and published it in El-Intibaha on

6 October 2013. Mrs. Hanim Adam published story by Mrs. Fatima Fadl from Gineena on El-Khartoum newspaper on the 30th of September 2013. And the journalist published the nice judia story told by Mrs. Fatima Kanjom in El-Akhbar newspaper on the 1st of October 2013. This is the start, the link is created and the journalists are trying to work together, yet they need more motivation to upload these articles on their blogs.

Blogger Reem, Amani Khamis and Thuria laughing at the way Hanim is explaining her blog



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Teaming up between the journalist Asma Micheal the team of Gineena she is interviewing them: From links Asma, Amna, Somia and Fatma

6. COACHING OF ACTIONS IN THE FIELD

The participants drafted their action plans and promised to implement them as small projects after the Eid period (14th to 20th of October); most of the plans concern workshops for disseminating the UNSCR1325 among their constituencies and the women at the grassroots level, some of them intend to use the opportunity to increase their constituencies. A maximum of € 200 per organisation was made available to organize the actions.

The LEAP director stayed in Sudan to travel to Darfur after the Eid days, to coach and monitor the small projects; the project secretary accompanied the coach, to divide the work. The project was designed travelling between the 16 different places in which the actions took place seemed to be too much for one person. Some places were visited by the two members of VOND others by one person; Mekka and Amira visited Gineena, Fasher and Nyala together. Mrs. Amira suppose to visit Kebkabiya while Mekka was busy in Fasher but due finally they decided not to do that because the distance to Kebkabiya is too far (six hours by car). Moreover, some organizations in North Darfur are situated in Counties far from Fasher, the road is either bad or unsafe therefore the two members travelled to these counties together. In Nyala Mekka stayed to take care of the problems created by HAC's security officers and Amira travelled to Daeen to coach the two organizations in Daeen.

The participants delivered a report on their work, as well as a financial report and a list of attendees. A separate coaching report is available at VOND, containing all the details. In this chapter a summary is given of this most exiting experience, in which the first LEAP learning

round was multiplied by a factor of around 50 persons per participant, including women leaders from grassroots, government authorities, traditional leaders and other interested people.

6.1 EL FASHER (NORTH DARFUR)

Altigana for Empowerment of Women



Women in Fasher listening to the lecture on UNSCR1325 by Mrs. Halima from the UNAMID

The organisation planned for a one-day workshop in Fasher (the capital of the Northern Darfur region), intended to introduce the UNSCR1325 and create a communication circle among the women participating in the workshop and the women at the grassroots level. The intended outcome was also a working plan for further cooperation among the women. The action was targeted at 50 women, including the members of the organization and other women leaders of the community.

The workshop was the first event to be organized by the newly established foundation. The workshop took place on the 30th of October at the premise of the foundation in the Jawamia neighbourhood. The objective was to raise awareness on the UNSCR1325 for the women of Fasher. The executive officer of the area, members of the general assembly of the foundation, women leaders from various institutions, women from the IDP camps and chairs from different associations from various counties such as Korma and suburbs of Fasher were invited. The total number of attendees was 45. The UNSCR1325 and all following resolutions were thoroughly explained by an experienced woman, she is the head of the UNCR1325 committee of the UNAMID. Various recommendations are result from the workshop, such as increasing workshops on UNSCRs and on women's rights. VOND's team attended the workshop, and participated in the presentation.

On the outcome, the following can be mentioned:

- * 10 women decided to join the newly born organization immediately,
- * Foundation El-Tigana was recommended by the gender advisor of the UNAMID to act as coordinator linking the work among the UNSCR1325 unit of North Darfur let by the governors' officers¹, the gender unit of the UNAMID and the women of the civil, and community-based organizations.
- * The media covered the event: it was broadcasted the following day on the local radio, the local television and the newspapers. That was great promotion for the newly created foundation Altigana.

Dar-Essalam Association for Women & Development



Pushing the taxi on our way to Dar-essalam – the road is rough and sandy, the taxi stuck in sand some places along the road. We used to push while the driver tried his best to get out and resumes the journey



Mrs. Aziza Kinain opening the workshop in Dar-essalam County

¹ Sudan government created UNSCR1325 units in the five states of Darfur

The organisation planned a one-day workshop in on dissemination of the UNSCR1325, in which the resolution will be translated and explained. 30 women members of the association and 50 women from grassroots in the Dar-Essalam County in North Darfur will be invited.



VOND's team visiting Dar-essalam: Ibtisam, Aziza, Mekka and Amira

The workshop was organized in Dar-Essalam on the 31st of October. It started late, around 11:30, because the participants were waiting for VOND's team to arrive from Fasher². The workshop was honoured by the presence of the Mayor of the city, the head of the security and some of his colleagues, representatives from the local government, from the Sudanese Women Union, and from HAC. A number of around 120 women attended the workshop. A considerable number of men were also present. The workshop was held inside a large tent in the middle of the premises of the foundation. The place was crowded by women, many women sat under the shadow of a tree to listen to the presentations. The chair, Mrs. Aziza Kinain, opened the workshop and gave the word to the Mayor. He praised the organization for their good work and outreaching to the women in this remote county. Then the chair of VOND was given the word; she talked about the consequences of war and how it leaves everyone in a lose situation, she urged the crowd to work for peace, to live in harmony. Darfur should be large enough for everyone, even one state of Darfur could accommodate the whole population which is estimated by 8 million. The Mayor stated that Dar-Essalam is safe now, thanks to the effort of its inhabitants and the work of organizations such as this foundation: they worked hard to combat their differences. They tried hard to live in harmony with the rebels when they occupied Dar-Essalam, and finally as a result of tolerance and peaceful negotiations the rebels left Dar-Essalam peacefully. An experienced woman from the Sudanese Women Union explained the UNSCR1325 and handed an Arabic copy to the group. Other issues such as women rights granted in Doha agreement, the legal aid and women rights were discussed.

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The outcome was:

- * Nearly hundred women became aware of UNSCR1325 as an essential tool in peace making.
- * Many organisations connected with each other in a positive way, and show a positive example to other places in Darfur
- * The participants urged the organizers to hold more of such workshops to spread the message and consolidate peace within the international framework.
- * A number of 22 women joined the association immediately.

² Dar-Essalam is 80 kilometres from Fasher and the road was not clear



Women from Dar-essalam sitting on the ground, outside the tent to listen to the workshop – the tent was full of women

El-Arjoon

The plan was to hold a one-day workshop on the dissemination of the UNSCR1325 in El Kooma town, to translate and explain the resolution and distribute copies to the audience. 50 women from different levels in El Kooma would be invited, among them directors of girls schools, associations and unions.



Zahra Zariaba opening the workshop, the mayor and some men from different backgrounds attended the workshop

Al-Arjoon works in Al-Kooma County which is about 80 kilometres East of Fasher. It is inhabited by different tribes living in peace and harmony, the majority are Zayadia: camel-herders and nomads. The workshop was organized on the 1st of November 2013 in the premises of the

organization. Besides the targeted women, the opening of the workshop was honoured by the presence of a number of guests like the Mayor of the municipality, the Zaydia Nazir (Highest traditional leader), a number of security officers, the HAC commissioner, representatives of the youth and representatives from the children's network. The facilitator was Mrs. Rabia Adam Sharif, a high ranking officer and head of the UNSCR13215 unit in the Ministry of Social affairs, Women and Children from Fasher. The workshop raised many discussions and recommendations such as further dissemination of the UNSCR1325 and the importance of the political and social participation of women. LEAP's coordinator participated and was given the word: she addressed the audience about the spirit and practice of peace making and peace building. Peace can only be made by all members of the community including men and women, governments, rebels, CSOs and the people at the grassroots.

The recommendations from this workshop were:

- * Continue to organize workshops on women issues and on capacity building of women leaders;
- * Support Al-Arjoon by funding development projects to the women in rural areas;
- * Continue and intensify the partnership with VOND, who bring the message that is needed in Darfur.

Kebkabiya Women Association

The plan was to disseminate the UNSCR1325 in Kebkabiya town, inviting members of the association and other women such as teachers, nurses and other leaders in Kebkabiya.

The workshop was organized on the 25th of October 2013 in the premises of the organization. A large number of women leaders and women from different backgrounds attended the workshop, up to 125. Three presentations were given: the first on the role of educated women within the community; the second on the details of the UNSCR1325, followed by discussion; and the third on the violence against women and how to combat it. The understanding among the women was high and the discussions very enlightening and fruitful. VOND was not able to attend to the workshop, because Kebkabiya is too far from Fasher, and the time does not allow the coach to travel.

From the report of Kebkabiya Women's Association, it became clear that there is a high demand for such workshops informing a variety of people and raising their awareness together. Especially the connection between women's rights and effective tools like the UN resolutions is praised. There is a great willingness of women to gain knowledge and education, and the conditions are positive (a large, equipped hall and skilled trainers).

As outcome, the following it is mentioned that many more women leaders (125) are now aware of the UNSCR1325, which was copied and handed to them. The women attendees were very convinced, they promised to work diligently for peace and use all valuable clauses of the resolution for their benefit. Some recommendations were added:

- * Increase the participation of women on the grassroots through open workshops
- * Increase the participation of men and women in combating violence against women.
- * Organize workshops on ways and nonviolent techniques of peace making and peace building.



Thuraya Ibrahim Salih



During the second training round, Ibtisal, Thuriaya and Zahra

6.2 NYALA (SOUTH DARFUR)

In Nyala, the coach was kept by the Security Services during three days, obliged to explain the work again and again to different departments. Eventually three workshops were stopped from implementation by these services. It was a very hard learning experience. Yet three workshops were implemented before the arrival of the coach and her assistant to Nyala. The Humanitarian Aid commission is a government entity; they are controlling the work of CSOs both national and international. They are very strict in doing that for the national organizations. They have different departments, one these departments called Regulation, this belongs to the security officers who monitor and control all activities of the organizations. Sometimes their task interfere with the task of the head of HAC, and that is what happened in the case of Nyala where the security men stopped the implementation of the workshops despite the fact that these organizations obtained permission from the head of HAC following the normal procedures. This incident created misunderstanding among them which took them intensive discussion before solving it.

El-Trabut Charitable

The plan of this organisation was to raise women's awareness on the UNSCR1325 and ways of combating violence against women applying the laws on human rights. They intended to invite 40 women, 20 for IDP camp (Direig) and 20 from the middle leadership of women.

The workshop was implemented before the arrival of coach, but afterwards the organisation itself was suspended by the Security Services. In their report, the events are explained. The workshop on women empowerment was organized on the 29th of October in the IDP camp Direig at the suburb of Nyala. 41 participants attended the workshop, among them women leaders, government officials, representatives of NGOs and even some officials from the HAC.

The workshop was opened by a welcoming word of Trabut, followed by a presentation of the representative from the Ministry of Social Affairs, Women and Children and another presentation by one of Trabut team members. The workshop had two sessions: the first was an introduction of UNSCR1325 and the second on gender and the rights of women. The sessions were closed by extensive discussion by the participants.



VOND's team with the team of Al-Trabut for Charity – during site visit to the office of the organization

As a result of this workshop, it is clear that the women in this IDP camp have more information about their rights now; it makes them stronger and able to defend themselves.

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Dar Bakhita for Charity

The plan was to organize a one-day workshop called “Boushat Hariem” inviting 50 women from grassroots, and introducing the UNSCR1325. The idea was to talk about laws, human rights, customary laws and violence against women with emphasis on culture as a reflection of humanity and humanitarian values.

The foundation Dar Bakhita for Charity organized the workshop on the 18th of October with the name of “Boushat Hariem”; i.e. A Crowd of Women. They invited 50 women from the grassroots in the premises of the organization in the Eastern Wadi neighbourhood of Nyala. The workshop consisted of three presentations, exhibition of cultural items and a discussion: the first session on the UNSCR1325 and other resolutions enhancing it and the benefits which can be gained from its implementation. The second session was on the laws, human rights, customary laws and how to combat violence against women using these laws. The third session was on how to build the broken social fabric of the community as a consequence of the ongoing war through cultural cooperation and practise. The workshop ended with a cultural exhibition and discussion on how to identify co-benefits for women and men. A thorough discussion followed the presentations and exhibition on how to deal with the broken fabric of the society the various repercussions such as the rampant cases of violence against women, the exploitation of women for criminal purposes, and the decrease of women’s participation in social activities. At the end, 150 copies of the UNSCR1325 in Arab were distributed to the participants to hand it out to their relatives and neighbours, especially to the men around them, and to the men who believe in and support the women rights and women issues.

The workshop was implemented before the arrival of coach, and unfortunately, the organisation was suspended by the Security Services afterwards.

Development of Sudanese Women

The organisation planned a one day workshop giving information on the UNSCR1325, and explaining the laws on women rights and how they can be used to protect them and present their cases (about 40 women who are convicted in prison and victims of rape).

This foundation is one of the pioneering organizations concerning advocacy on women issues, women rights and women affairs especially the empowerment of women on various ways such as health, education, law and the legal aid for the women, in particular those who escaped the war. The chair is a lawyer, Mrs. Majda Ali Amin. The workshop on awareness on the UNSCR1325 was organized on the 12th of October 2013. 45 women attended the workshop, from the 50 invited: 10 as layers working for the community, 10 women leaders at IDP camps, 10 officials of the Sudanese Women Union, and 20 from the Union of Working Women. The purpose was to disseminate the resolution, especially at the grassroots level. The workshop was also meant to establish the principle that this resolution is an effective way to activate the laws, and to confirm the participation of women and raise their awareness on the importance of the UNSCR1325. An experienced lecturer presented the resolution with these explanations, and a hard copy was given to the participants. The workshop was followed by extensive discussion on legal aid and ways for women to report violence to the police and to seek assistance from the women lawyers who attended the workshop.

The outcome of the workshop was that the 10 women lawyers who attended the workshop offered their legal assistance free of charge in order for the other women participating in this workshop and especially the women prisoners who are mothers of young children, for as long as they continue to live in Nyala. The organization itself was suspended by HAC after the workshop.

Suspended workshops

Three other workshops were fully prepared and the participants invited, but the Security Services prohibited their implementation.

El-Shorooq prepared a one-day workshop for disseminating the UNSCR1325 especially for teachers, students and school employees. ***El Ruhma for Development & Humanitarian Aid*** prepared a one-day workshop for disseminating the UNSCR1325 about women rights, especially for women who participate in decision making institutions on issues related to women affairs. 50 women from the different villages surrounding Nyala and different groups, such as teachers, student's women leaders of the community were invited. ***Riaheen Elsalam For Maternity and Childhood Organization (REMCO)*** prepared a workshop for young women for empowerment & raising of their awareness on the UNSCR1325 in order to see them as leaders not as victims and also to encourage their participation. 30 young student leaders from 5 high schools in Nyala town and IDP camp surrounding Nyala were invited.

After three days of negotiation with the security services, it was agreed that one combined workshop would get permission to be realized. This workshop started under the auspices of Her Excellency the Minister of Social Affairs Women and Children in Nyala. Immediately after the opening by the chair, the LEAP director was given the word. She started presenting briefly, being careful because of the presence of the security people. Yet they interfered almost immediately and asked her to stop. Then the Minister insisted to talk, and they also stopped her before finishing her presentation. The security men stopped the program and ordered the attendees to leave the hall immediately. The LEAP director was asked to re-visit the security officials of HAC once again, under threat of not being allowed to leave Nyala. The coaching team left Nyala with regret.

6.3 GINEENA (WEST DARFUR)

Goloup El-Rahma

The organisation planned a one-day workshop to raise the awareness of women on UNSCR1325. The target was to reach 40 women from different neighbourhoods.



Somia from Goloup El-Rahma during the workshop in Gineena

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The workshop was realized on the 29th of October in Assalam County. Assalam includes eight neighbourhoods; it is considered one of the poorest counties in Gineena, a mixture of tribes living side by side in poor conditions. The workshop was about awareness raising, dissemination of UNSCR1325 and legal awareness in general. The venue was the Women Training Centre, in a girls' primary school. The workshop targets 40 women, the attendance are 45 most of them from an IDP camp in the county. VOND's team attended this workshop and delivered a presentation on peace and the need for peaceful co-existence.

The response of the attendees on the resolution 1325 was very strong, they promise to disseminate it further on the grassroots level, creating a network. Gloub Alrahma agreed with these women to start an Agricultural Association for them to secure their livelihoods. In Gineena, the government showed positive interest in the 1325 activities.

The coach could observe that the outcomes of the workshop are already emerging:

- * Awareness on their rights was raised among the women in IDP camps: it was the first time they ever heard about UNSCR1325.
- * There is an increase in the organization's constituency; 12 women registered immediately to become members of Gloub Alrahama.
- * Immediately after the workshop, Gloub Alrahama formed agricultural cooperatives from the women who attended the workshop to develop that project.
- * The team of Gloub Alrahama committed itself to search diligently for fund to finance the agricultural project demanded by the women for irrigated farms. Because this area, around the valley, is high fertile with enough water; people use to dig water by hands; all they need is pumps to get more water to irrigate their small farms for growing vegetables, which can be sold in Gineena market.

El-Badreen for Charity

The organisation planned a workshop on dissemination of the UNSCR1325 for 60 women, 5 from each of the 6 neighbourhoods in Gineena plus 10 women from the IDPs, 10 young graduates and 5 women from the Sudanese Women Union. VOND's team was unable to attend this workshop.

According to their report, the foundation implemented its workshop called Salaam Darfur Salaam on the 5th of November 2013. The objective of the workshop was to establish general concepts for understanding the women rights, to support and consolidate the concepts of social, economic and cultural values and to bridge the gap among women. Mrs. Fatima Mohamed ElHilo moderated the workshop. The UNSCR1325 was explained thoroughly to the audience. The discussion included other issues such as the positive role that women can play in peace making and peace building, the various ways of peaceful co-existence, accepting each other and how to grow children in that spirit. The discussion also included the right of citizenship and the right of decent living, micro-finance and how women can utilize it in a useful way. The workshop lasted for three hours. All 60 women targeted attended the workshop and were satisfied on the results. El Badreen promised to keep on providing such workshops in the future.

Unfortunately, information on the outcomes cannot be given, as the communication between VOND and El Badreen is suspended at the moment.

El-Bir Wa-El-Twasul

The plan was to have a one-day workshop for dissemination of the UNSCR1325, for 50 women from 8 neighbourhoods in Gineena and some women from IDP camps. VOND's team was unable to attend this workshop.

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The workshop was organized on the 4nd of November 2013, on dissemination of UNSCR1325; the venue was the premise of the foundation, in the hall of women and children. 50 women attended the event. The team of Al Birr distributed Arabic copies of the UNSCR1325, which was discussed thoroughly. The objective was to enhance the role of women in peace building within the area of decision making, guarding the rights of women and raising their awareness. Some recommendations were:

- * awareness raising among the whole community on the resolution,
- * enhancing the programs on health and re-production,
- * economic empowerment of women to reduce poverty,
- * awareness for women about religion and reduction of dowries,
- * supporting women with seeds and agricultural tools,
- * combating drugs abuse within the IDP camps,
- * establishment of women associations for Gineena neighbourhoods,
- * execution of peace building projects,
- * seeking support for projects for girls.



Fatima Fadul – Chair of Bir & Tawasul with Amira VODN's secretary

6.4 DAEEN (EAST DARFUR)

Sudan Peace Humanitarian and Massai for Human Service

The organisations planned a one-day workshop together on raising the awareness of the women especially on the effective tool of UNSCR1325 also giving information on law of Human Rights, Women rights and the Rights of the Child. They planned to invite 100 women of different ages and occupations.

The two organizations organized one workshop together about the role of women in peace-building, democratization, good governance and a strategic vision for gender mainstreaming to achieve gender equity. The workshop was held on the 4th of November in the large hall of the municipality of Daeen, and 64 people attended. Daeen local government is cooperating with both organizations and both chair women are well-known because they are working for the local government. During that period the war between Rizeigat and Ma-alia was active, making transport to Daeen difficult and dangerous. Therefor the LEAP coaching team, trying to travel to Daeen, could not reach it, as the road was not secure and traffic was withhold. The workshop started by welcoming the participants. Mrs. Sitana Adam Musa introduced the program and the objectives. Mrs. Galia Mahmoud and Mrs. Hikmat Adam were keynote speakers. They discussed the UNSCR1325 thoroughly, and issues such as gender mainstreaming, violence against women, ways of cooperation and working together. They talked about how to make and build peace, and the essential role of the women in making peace. The speakers also discussed the challenges facing women, factors and opportunities available for the women etc. They called the

participants to unite the Darfuri women to form strong alliance to take care of women affairs and gender mainstreaming.



Khadija from Nyala, Ghalia from Daeen, Aziza from Dar-essala, and behind Samira and Asma from Nyala

The recommendations of the participants were:

- * Support security and stability; they are essential for any work to succeed
- * Unite the women of Darfur to re-weaving the broken social fabric of the communities
- * Mend fences between the two tribes who are killing each other; i.e. Maalia and Rizeigat, and spread the culture of peace among them.
- * Organize more workshops on the UNSCR1325 and the other relevant resolutions and laws
- * Establishing training centres for women and train them for job opportunities
- * Demand from the decision makers to increase women participation in politics and social work in all levels of local and state governments
- * Organize peace conferences among the conflicting tribes
- * Organize vocational education for the youth to combat un-employment

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Outcomes: 15 new women joined the foundation Sudan Peace Humanitarian and 12 joined the foundation Massai.

Salama from foundation Tasamuh - Zalengei

6.5 ZALENGEI (CENTRAL DARFUR)

Tasamouh for Women development

This organisation planned a one-day workshop on disseminating the UNSCR1325, with the purpose of creating a network for working together in the future. 60 women from the different neighbourhoods and from different backgrounds and age were to be invited.

Al-Tasamouh organized a one-day workshop under the motto: "10 years backward and 10 years forward". The idea was to evaluate the status of the women in this newly created



state within the past 10 years and decide what should be done to improve the status of women during the coming 10 years. The workshop introduced the UNSCR1325 and emphasized the need for its dissemination. 55 people attended: 10 women farmers, 15 grassroots community leaders, 10 men, 10 women teachers, 5 women from the health sector, and 5 women from university. The participation of the attendees was active and positive, yet we discovered that about 50% of the women never had heard of the UNSCR1325. Mrs. Amira from VOND attended this workshop as coach.

Recommendations were:

- * Give women priority for participation in the committees that work for tribal reconciliation of the Darfur states.
- * Organize a comprehensive conference including all women's organizations from the five states of Darfur to discuss the status of women within the states of Darfur.
- * Organize a meeting for leaders of political parties, the parliamentarian, and civil society organizations to discuss the status and participation of women in the various institutions with percentage not less than 30%.
- * Lobby for the implementation of the clauses on women in the Doha document of the peace agreement.

6.6 RESULTS AND CHALLENGES

The small projects formulated by the organisations that participated in the first learning round were implemented accordingly. In this section we summarize the result and some of the challenges met.

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Results

The most important result was that the participants were directly encouraged taking leadership in their own county and initiating a public action, which succeeded very well in most cases, and on which they can further exchange learning points with each other. Another result was that the workshops met a very positive response from the carefully selected audiences: they answered positively on the invitations, the practical peace building message fell in a fertile ground and they were eager to hear more about it. A third result is the cooperation with both grassroots community leaders and with government officers. This opens a whole range of opportunities for peace building initiatives. Finally, a remarkable result was that in most cases, the peace building message was connected to a gender analysis and to interesting discussions on the role of women as peace builders – not in general, theoretically, but in that very place, in the harsh reality of armed raids and tight security measures.

Finally many organizations in Khartoum showed great interest, they expressed their willingness to support this work. Some organizations started immediately to implement activities for these Darfuri women leaders. Mrs. Hidayat El-Taib from the World Bank approached the coach to give the list of women's names; they organized a 4-day workshop for them hiring the same trainer; Mrs. Awatif Ahmed Nihar to give the training on human rights and peace building after the finishing of the second round of LEAP's training. They used same methods and ideas, the women discussed further the importance and ways of creating a solid network. The trainer, the organizer and the German facilitator Mrs. Christine Pauly of that workshop assisted them further with these ideas. Then the Regional centre for training and development of civil society; where VOND's team rented the hall in their premises (second learning round) showed great interest in this group of Darfuri women leaders. They organized a one-day workshop immediate after the end of the WB's workshop for the group. Further, both of the institute for peace studies (part of

Khartoum's Ministry of social Affairs, Women and Children) and the Legislative Council decided to make partnership with the Darfur platform immediately after its registration.

Challenges

A major challenge, mainly in Nyala, was the defensive attitude of the national security officers who mistakenly considered the workshops as a threat to national security. At the same time, this set back provided a good learning experience for the whole group on how to take security matters into account during the preparation of public activities. Especially, because some participants started their activities without having received prior permission from the HAC and without informing the HAC sufficiently about the nature of the initiative. They suspected that there was a large amount of money to be spent, which was not the case. This was not well taken. The whole group suffered consequences from that, and VOND had to remove, on insistence of the HAC, three organisations from the list and replace them with others.

Another challenge was transport. Road blocks due to armed raids, bumpy roads and mud roads caused delays and sometimes the impossibility to coach all the activities. A challenge related to that was the quantity of action plans, 15 in total, which was more than expected. It was impossible to visit all of them.

As the work developed with success, some internal challenges appeared as well. One major challenge is that many of the registered organisations are connected to larger units with headquarters in Khartoum. These national NGO's are implementing agents for international donors or INGOs, and the women leaders are their agents. As a by-product, there is competition among them, love and greed about funding, lack of trust and suspicions for any new organization entering humanitarian work. The approach of LEAP is concentrated on the local women leaders themselves, helping them to believe in themselves and in their own capacity to create impact on peace based on networking, cooperation and understanding of the local situation. For that matter, VOND is not a donor and doesn't choose to become one.

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7. THE SECOND LEARNING ROUND

The second learning round of 5 days was held in Khartoum from November 11-15. The LEAP director and the national and international trainer met on the day before the start of the training to agree on the programme and the approach. The second training was attended by the women from 17 organizations; including the ones invited as replacement and 7 of the nine journalists who attended the first round and the blogging sessions. For the program, the four objectives of the LEAP programme were taken as a lead to identify the challenges for this training:

- * What was learned and which learning needs are still to be given attention to guide local women in promoting peace and security together?
- * How can we create the conditions for stronger cooperation between women leaders in Sudan and Darfur for a common local agenda for peace and security in Darfur?
- * How can we stimulate the participants to increase their participation in public and political activities for promoting peace and security in each of the 5 regions of Darfur?
- * What can be done to increase their visibility at national level of the peace building initiatives and proposals of women's organisations in Darfur?
- * How can we assist them in team building and effectiveness in organizing an open day for women's organisations, university, government representatives, and international agencies?

On the approach, the decision was made to take one issue each day, and develop it through different approaches: a theoretical introduction, group work, plenary sessions and exercises. Our aim was to stimulate the recognition of and the ownership of the participants on the subject.



Team from Nyala – Fama Kanjom, Nahala Yousif and her baby from Al-Shroog, and Amna Daif from foundation Gaya on the first day of the second round of the training

7.1 DAY ONE: LEARNING

After a short introduction round, we started analysing the experience of the participants in the activities they implemented in their region; first in small groups, with the help of a questionnaire, and then presenting it to the plenary. The negative experience in Nyala with the security services was used, who kept the coach to answer questions during three days and still prohibited three workshops and suspended the three organizations who implement their work. The participants discussed extensively how to deal with such security issues. Also the experiences in other regions were analysed. The participants came to the conclusion, analysing the weak performance of regional governments and the dominance of Security Services, that civil society has to step in with more energy and cooperate with them. The experience with nonviolent actions throughout history in other countries was taken as a point of reference.

The triangle method was used in small groups to explore each other's learning needs. The mind map drawn as a result of the reports of these groups showed 4 main directions for further learning:

- * Leadership issues, convincing others, especially men
- * Fundraising for projects, especially (a) organizational and technical support for women farmers, (b) organizational support on awareness raising for 1325 with female community leaders also in the IDP camps and (c) training in 1325 for female parliamentarians (including male colleagues).
- * Institutional linking, networking, coordination with other organizations
- * Assuring security through transparency and networking and nonviolent techniques.

7.2 DAY 2: COORDINATION

An extensive introduction was given on cooperation between government and civil society. It was analyzed which civil society organizations can be important to coordinate with. In many cases, the law supports cooperation. Coordination involves identification of relevant issues, mobilization of communities, networking with other organizations, and cooperation with authorities for application of good laws. After the introduction, the participants did stakeholders analysis in groups. It was reported that in Darfur the networking is too limited because of security problems. If there are broad conferences with important stakeholders, women are often not invited. The Doha Peace Agreement should be part of the Sudanese constitution to be more effective; it is still transitional. The participants decided that the number of women who are active in peace building activities should increase, but also the number of motivated and educated women councillors in the regions.

The participants came to a list of the most important stakeholders (with positive or negative influence) for this issue to coordinate with: government representatives for 1325 or 1325 Committees in each region; ministers for Social and Gender issues; Councillors, especially women; Sheiks and Hakkamat; Humanitarian Aid Committees and Security Officers; Police; Religious leaders; TV and radio; Institute for Peace Studies at Nyala University; Lawyers; Female entrepreneurs; UNDP.

7.3 DAY 3: PARTICIPATION



Mrs. Um-Salama Mohamed Ismail from the Sudanese Women Union explaining to the group about the problems facing the union and how to bridge the gap between them and the women organizations of civil society

The subject of the day was political participation of women. Two guest speakers were invited: Mrs. Um-Salama Mohamed Ismail from the Sudanese Women's Union; and Mr. Abdalla Adam Khatir, well-known journalists in Sudan.



Mrs. Ibtisam El-Douma Shomain in action

The first guest spoke about the right to participate and equal rights between men and women. She stressed that women have to protect their rights and be responsible; for that purpose, they have to be organized and they can advocate their rights based on the constitution. The participants criticized the way the Sudanese Women's Union behaves in Darfur and asked for clarifications. Three proposals for cooperation were given to Mrs. Ismail which she promised to discuss in her organization.

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Mr. Abdall Adam Khatir addressed the meeting referring to the international agreement of 2004 to give humanitarian help to Darfur. It is essential to understand that there are leaders in Sudan who really want change, and to make sure that the women's actions are visible to them. The media should be given content on the work of women, both locally and on national and international level. Media should be stimulated to publish features about all kinds of people and not only about representatives. For that person it is essential to build confidence relationship with the right persons in the media. An important point of departure is the awareness that the Doha document has not been made in Doha; it was based on discussions and negotiations in Darfur itself. On an inquiry of Mr. Khatir it came out that only 4 of the 16 participants read the document and only 1 participated in the making of it. So Mr. Khatir advised to write a letter to the Head of the Transitional Office of Darfur to insist to participate in the implementation and amendment of the Doha agreement.

In the afternoon, the film "Pray the devil back to hell" was shown. It is about the struggle of women in Liberia to make an end to the violence and constitute a new government. The participants were impressed and commented:

"We can do this. They overcame their differences and united for one cause, they had one common goal. We have to start and participate in the peace conference in December".

In the afternoon an exercise was done on good, bad and ugly practices concerning (a) participation, (b) inclusive leadership and (c) convincing (men). From the exercise some pieces of good advice were produced by the participants themselves and commented by the trainers.

On participation it was stressed that women in Darfur need to enforce vertical participation, meaning:

- * filling the gap between grass roots and government
- * get more women to participate at all different levels of governance (ministries, commissions, police, management of schools and health care facilities, security committees)
- * communicate with each other in different levels on common priorities.

A special outcome was the description of inclusive leadership for Darfur:

"inclusive leadership is to set priorities and organize; communicate; include different people, accept diversity to have a broad basis; build trust; have courage to go on; make the organization sustainable; learn from others; evaluate progress."

Zahra Zarieba from Al-arjoon in action



The risks of bad leadership were also named: lack of focus, fragmentation, the best people leave, laziness and frustration, stereotyping of others, following donor requirements blindly. And when you don't correct that, you will find selfishness, self-centred management, greedy people, intimidation, slender.

The theme of convincing men triggered some discussion. The women from the group opted for an obedient and non-aggressive style of communication with men, confirming their role as protectors. The trainers reminded the group that men, in general, tend to be

challenged more on clear targets, authority of law and chance of success, if you really want them at your side with their added value. All of us were aware that support of men for increased women's participation is a crucial issue to be worked at.

7.4 DAY 4: VISIBILITY AND IDENTITY

On day four the trainers and participants decided together that the best way to tackle visibility, apart from technical skills in communication, English and ICT, would be to show a strong identity in the first place. We decided to work on that issue first, and postpone training in technical skills to a next, specialized training, preferably in the towns in Darfur itself.

After a short introduction on how to present a project, the participants worked in groups and after presenting their ideas, they agreed on the following proposal for their identity:

IDENTITY OF WOMEN'S ACTIONS FOR PEACE IN DARFUR	
VISION	Darfur becoming safe and stable, as it has been peaceful in the past
MISSION	Founding and maintaining a women's peace building community where everyone is responsible and everyone wants to learn from each other.
GOAL	<p>Unite the greatest possible number of people from civil society and humanitarian groups to support peace.</p> <p>Specific objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * reduction of the number of armed clashes; * women participate in peace building, showing their role; * local government is enforced and supported by civil society including grass roots.
STRATEGY	Make a union including all kinds of local groups; train them to work for peace; ask for outside help to support them; develop trainings of trainers per category of local groups (farmers, petty traders, IDP camps, etc)
APPROACH	Develop the program connecting all society's components, learning from other experiences worldwide; discourage violent "solutions"; appeal women to join the movement as affiliates to a Covenant or Manifest for Peace.
ACTIVITIES	<p>Make a covenant (words of moral obligation)</p> <p>Meet with security committees to show them our constitutional rights and the Doha agreements on which we base our activities</p> <p>Use local resources to implement a training program on 1325 for all categories of local groups</p> <p>Raise awareness through public actions on important peace moments and issues, increasing our power</p> <p>Communicate to encourage affiliation of women VIP's and women community leaders</p> <p>Meet with important stakeholders to strengthen the network and protect ourselves</p>
STAKEHOLDERS	Security officers; elderly village women (Hakkamat); communities; teachers; farmers; religious sectors; youth; Sudanese Women's Union; UNAMID; refugees from Tjaad; women parliamentarians;
ORGANISATION	<p>One organization representing all and strengthening the communication with media and authorities.</p> <p>The organization needs a president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer.</p> <p>Division of labour between regional member organizations for the main tasks of acquisition of resources, information and documentation, communication and public relations and training.</p>
PLANNING	It is a process that cannot be finished in one year
RISKS	<p>External risks: interventions of national security in our actions; attitude changes in local governments due to pressure; harassment of allies; lack of funds; unexpected raids and explosions of violence; pressure on women to remain silent.</p> <p>Internal risks: fear; trust in ourselves (capacity); trust in people around us; betrayal; differences in short term goals; internal struggles and hidden agendas.</p> <p>Risk mitigation: believe in our mission; gradual development; presence in all 5 regions and support to each other; training for internal peace; training for consensus and respect for diversity; capacity building for quality in communication and transparency.</p>
BUDGET	Interested donors could be: UNWomen, Oxfam USA, Oxfam Canada, ESCOM USAID, SGPM, UNAMID, Common Humanitarian Fund, UNICEF.

The following session was on forms of organization. The trainers showed the advantages and disadvantages of a few legal forms of organization: union, cooperation, foundation, association, platform and joint venture. The participants decided to choose for a platform firmly based on the 16 organizations from the 5 regions of Darfur. The platform was baptized "Women's Alliance for Peace in Darfur". After that, in a secret voting, the participants voted for a president, a vice-president/secretary, and a treasurer.

7.5 DAY 5: EVALUATION AND PREPARATIONS FOR THE OPEN DAY

The day started with a round of personal evaluations of the whole training. It was asked to concentrate on what each person learned and what could be improved. The following comments were collected:

- * I learned most from the exchange, from what others did, and the stories they told. The training helps us to achieve our own goal. The film on Liberia was very impressive and important, because it shows us what we can do together. The Muslim saying is that we are one body, if one feels pain, everyone feels it. The training helped to see how to do things and improve our practices. As our practices will develop, we need continued training to guide these practices.
- * I think the training could be improved in the following aspects: the knowledge of the trainers on our situation is limited; the information we give is not protected, we need confidentiality; the presence of the journalists was not as strong as expected.
- * I was happy to be able to meet sisters from other states of Darfur. Now we can find them whenever we travel. The newly formed Alliance needs to be legalized to avoid problems. It is sad that Mekka is not always there to help us. The saying goes that "security is not our own father, but as he is married to our mother, we have to accept him".
- * I am grateful that the trainers helped us to form our organization. We want to help the president and vice-president of the Alliance to be honest, organized and building trust. We should be united in all states, working together.
- * I want to thank the trainers. The training was well focused on what we need and it helps us to act. We need more of it to keep our vision and quality on standard with the challenges we face.
- * I want to congratulate you and I wish God will bless you. Please, visit our place. Thank you for the training, it helped us to organize ourselves and it brought us together.
- * I learned a lot, I learned also on how to train others. In some training it is so specialized, that you cannot apply it. This training has been very practical.
- * I thank you for your support in building peace and support for our leadership. We learned a lot. You were open minded and allowed people to teach each other what to do, and in this way our actions became linked to each other. This is an important step forwards. I am happy that media people have been present in the training. We can be strong and sustainable as long as we stay together. What is needed is training in risk management and crisis management.
- * I agree that all subjects expected were treated and it helped us to work ourselves and to tackle our problems
- * The most important is that relations between us were facilitated and now we belong together independently from our tribal origin.
- * Former participants said what I want to say. I am happy with this training. I have learned a lot, I will travel to meet the other participants in their place.
- * God bless the soul of Mekka's brother, who died yesterday. The training is unique, different from all trainings we know. The group has a strong bond. We didn't receive information, we worked with information. The door to cooperation was opened and so was the door to practice, even practice in our own communities. Everyone had to participate.
- * I thank the Netherlands and Mekka for this training. It is effective, you can be assured. We have to support the president and vice president of our alliance, especially when we work with women and children. I also want to thank the coach for her visit to our area during our training.
- * (this participant is present, but feels ill and is not speaking)
- * The training is part of humanitarian work. It is honest with people. If you want peace in Darfur, you have to cooperate with other international initiatives. I think the Netherlands, and I promise to God that I will do everything for unity in Darfur. I want to do away with the misery of women and children. If someone wants to stop us, we will shout it to everyone to hear. We respect differences of vision. The training was unique, we learned how to cooperate, so I don't want to be a president on my own, but to represent you and I ask you to inspire me.
- * May God enlighten our ways. We need respect for women, women are peace makers. Water, soul, live – this is all female and given by God. All religions honour women, and so we can act in confidence. The training has been valuable teaching us many new things, I agree with the others that we have to be honest and transparent – that lasts longer.



After this round, the training needs for the future were summarized: training in communication, especially convincing security officers and religious leaders; crisis management and security training specifically for women; English and advanced internet communication techniques.

Then, having finished with the evaluation, the trainer handed the lead to the president and vice-president of the Alliance to guide the elections of a treasurer and to prepare the Charter to be presented to external invitees in a special meeting in the week to come.

8. THE FUTURE OF THE ALLIANCE

8.1 THE OPEN DAY

At the end of the second training, WAP-Darfur organized an open day; they invited various organizations and individuals from different areas, who attended: the Dutch Embassy, the Swiss embassy, the Ministry of Social Affairs, Women and Children, the Sudanese Women Union, Oxfam USA, ESCOM USAID, UNAMID, UNICEF, UNWOMEN, The Legislative Council, and some leaders from NGO's.

The event was opened by the representative of the Royal Netherlands Embassy, Mrs. Esther Verloeff. After that, the chair gave the word to representatives from each state of Darfur, who shortly introduced their organizations, the circumstances in her state and the small projects implemented by the group. The chair read a strong Manifest as a Charter for Trust and Diligent work for peace. The women signed it to submit it to the officials as a binding document. It was submitted to two entities: it was handed on spot to Mrs. Fatima Sidiq from Khartoum Legislative Council, another copy was submitted later to the Minister of Social Affairs, Women and Children in Khartoum. Both entities expressed their content on the event and the creation of this network, they promise to partner with, to support, and to work with the Alliance.



The well-known journalist Mr. Abdalla Adam Khatir expressed his deep appreciation for this initiative, the impact of which he compared with the first Sudanese girl going to school, namely his own grandmother. Later on Mr. Khatir organized a meeting in honor of VOND's chair and to discuss the way forward and future cooperation. He invited members of the alliance and group of prominent women from Darfur; there was an intensive discussion about how to make peace and how and where to start. Mr. Khatir thinks we are starting in the right time and there is hope. He promised to keep working with the alliance to enhance the visibility of their work.

The Open Day – Mr. Abdalla Adam Khatir the journalist, Nawal Hassan Osman from ESCOM –USAID and her daughter, Abubakar from Darfur Network and the lady from UNWOMEN

8.2 CONSOLIDATION

After the Open Day, WAP-Darfur started to have meetings on the consolidation and registration of the newly formed platform. The board of WAP-Darfur was re-arranged and is now constituted as follows:

- ♀ Chair person: Mrs. Fatima Kanjom from Nyala
- ♀ Vice Chair: Mrs. Thouria Ibrahim Salih, from Kebkabya
- ♀ Secretary: Mrs. Ibtisam Adoma Shomain from Fasher
- ♀ Treasurer: Mrs. Majda Abdelwahab Khatir from Zalingei
- ♀ Projects: Mrs. Galia Mahmoud Abdelhamid from Daeen

Unfortunately, the organisations in Nyala banned by the authorities could not be taken aboard as members, but they will continue as associates. They were replaced by other organisations. One organisation that participated in the project, failed to comply with the democratic procedures and had to be excluded. This was done through a consultation with all the members, and a written consent from 2/3 majority to proceed like that.

The member organisations who accepted full responsibility for the objectives of WAP-Darfur and agreed to watch its democratic procedures and give their name to the official registration, are the following:

Members of WAP-Darfur			
No	Organization	Contact Person	City
1	El-Wathba for peace and development	Fatima Tahir Kanjom	S/Nyala
2	Riaheen Elsalam for Maternity & Childhood	Asma Abakar Taha	S/Nyala
3	Gaya for Development	Amna Daif-Allah	S/Nyala
4	Al-Amal for community Development	Salwa Haroun Imam	S/Nyala
5	El-Shorooq	Sabrin Adam Ibrahim	S/Nyala
6	El-Ruhama for Development	Mariam Moh. Adam Hamid	S/Nyala
7	El-Ruhal & Rural Development	Mahasin Ali Abdelgadir	S/Nyala
8	El-Tagana Empowerment Women	Ibtisam Adoma Shomain	N/Fasher
9	Ass. DarEssalam Women & Dev.	Aziza Mohamed kinain	N/Dar-Essalam
10	El-Arjoon for Development	Zahra Musa Zariba	N/El-Kooma
11	Kebkabiya Women Association	Thouria Ibrahim Salih	N/Kebkabya
12	El-Bir Wa-El-Twasul	Fatima Fadul Abdalla	W/Gineena
13	Gouloup El-Rahma	Sumia Moh. Abdalla	W/Gineena
14	Tasamouh for Women develop.	Majda Abdelwahab Khatir	M/Zalingei
15	Salam El-Sudan Humanitarian	Galia Mahm. Abdelhamid	E/Daeen
16	Massai for Human Service	Mahjouba Hassan Musa	E/Daeen

8.3 PARTNERSHIP

An analysis has been made on the learning needs identified through the pilot phase of the LEAP project. At the same time, the relationship between WAP-Darfur and VOND has changed into a partnership, in which WAP-Darfur is an independent organisation with own decision making. VOND will assist WAP-Darfur during the coming three years with coaching, mutual learning, international exposure and facilitation of resources for small peace building activities. For this purpose, VOND will formulate a three year project to be financed through the Dutch NAP1325.



The last day of the training – Amna Fasher – Gineena, Fatma Kanjom – Nyala, Ibtisam Eldouma – Fasher, Amna Daif Alla – Nyala, Joke Oranje – The Netherlands, Asma Abakar Taha – Nyala, Ghalia Mahmoud – Daeen, and behind: Khadija – Nyala and Salma from Zalingei