

SAVE

SISTERS AGAINST VIOLENT EXTREMISM



The Way Out: Women Know How SAVE Train-the-Trainers Workshops

May 2010, Maria Wörth



WOMEN WITHOUT BORDERS
CHANGE THE WORLD.





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Workshop Purposes

During the week of workshops, we had high hopes and high expectations for the trainers and participants. This is a critical time for the *Mothers for Change!* global campaign, and both the skills learned and the network created will sustain the campaign through its first year of implementation. We have no doubt that women can and will make the difference in preventing the spread of deradicalization and intervening in the lives of their family members and friends before radical ideologies are expressed through violence. *Mothers for Change!* is the first program from SAVE to empower and enable women to take a positive stance against violent extremism, and all of our participants as well as the women who were unable to attend play important roles in transforming that vision into reality.

Over the course of the week, we achieved the following goals:

- ❖ To **UNITE** a global network of women united with a common vision of women's role in counterterrorism that they will adapt to fit their own countries' cultural contexts.
- ❖ To **BUILD** a toolbox of strategies for practical interventions.
- ❖ To **LEARN** to utilize Storytelling as a method for lasting conflict resolution.
- ❖ To **DEVELOP** our individual strengths as leaders, and to learn how to help others develop their strengths as well.
- ❖ To **DISCOVER** new media tools that can help maintain our network and make it easier to reach out to new women.

Mothers for Change!



Participants

Indonesia



Lily Zakiyah Munir is the Director and co-founder of the Center for Pesantren and Democracy Studies (CePDeS), the founding member of SAVE Indonesia, and a scholar specializing in Islamic feminism. Lily has organized youth retreats for hundreds of high school age students to empower them to pursue non-violent conflict resolution as well as to build self-confidence and friendship.

Pakistan

Arshi Saleem Hashmi is a Senior Research Analyst at the Institute of Regional Studies in Islamabad and an Assistant Adjunct Professor at the National Defense University in Islamabad. Her specialty is in Religion and Politics of Violent Conflicts.



Mossarat Qadeem is the Executive Director of the PAIMAN Trust in Islamabad, an organization that seeks to empower women politically and economically, improve educational resources throughout Pakistan, and implement programs to advance conflict resolution and security.

Falahnaz Asfandyar became an activist for the Swat Valley in Pakistan after her husband, Amirzeb Asfandyar, a prominent politician, was assassinated in a roadside bombing, allegedly by a Taliban warlord. She works to bring attention to the plight of the Swat Valley and also assists in distributing aid and raising awareness about internally displaced persons in the region.





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Yemen



Fahmia al Fotih is the coordinator of *SAVE* Yemen and a freelance journalist for the *Yemen Times*. Previously, she has worked as a consultant for USAID and UNIFEM. She is responsible for managing the ongoing operations for *SAVE* Yemen and facilitating the implementation of the *Mothers for Change!* program.

Fatima Al Zuhairi is the principal of the Rabi'a al-Adawiyya School in Sana'a, where she sees her mission as raising the next generation of Yemenis to be healthier, better educated, and more connected with the world beyond Yemen's borders.

Noor Baabad is the Assistant Deputy Minister for Social Care and a member of the Higher Council for Women. Noor has advocated for women's legal rights in Yemen, reconciliation between northern and southern Yemen, and an end to revenge killing.



India



Archana Kapoor is the founder of SMART, an NGO working with marginalized communities in northern India, the editor and publisher of the political magazine "Hardnews," and the founder of *SAVE* India. She has been the driving force behind our ongoing operations in India, including our recent workshops for victims of the 26/11 terror attacks "Swimming to the Future" and "Our Stories, Our Futures."

Israel

Robi Damelin is a spokesperson for the Parents Circle—Families Forum, an organization that supports bereaved Israeli and Palestinian family and advocates for reconciliation between Israel and Palestine. Robi speaks to universities, governments, and independent groups worldwide. In the coming year, she will formally establish a *SAVE* Israel chapter and will move towards implementation of the *Mothers for Change!* program.





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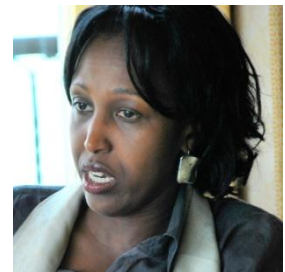
Palestine



Asma Asfour was the first elected woman to join the Sinjel Municipality in the Ramallah District in 2005. As a council member, she advocates for gender equality, greater female participation in Palestinian politics, and improved educational resources in Palestine.

Somalia

Qoran Noor has worked with the United Nations Development Programme and with Islamic Relief as a Gender and Human Rights consultant. Over the last five years, she has been working in Kenya and other areas of Africa as a Program Manager for projects related to women's rights, public health, and gender issues.



Bosnia



Memnuna Zvizdic is the Executive Director of Žene Ženama, an organization that bridges the divide between religious and ethnic communities in Bosnia. Memnuna has played a critical role as an advocate for democracy, human rights, security, and gender equality. Memnuna continues to advocate for greater female political participation as a fundamental element of democratization.





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Trainers

Northern Ireland

Anne Carr is a Dialogue Practitioner and has been leading Storytelling exercises for conflict resolution for 25 years in Northern Ireland. She was the founder of the first integrated school in Northern Ireland and is now a private consultant and a member of the board at Women Into Politics, where she encourages women to share their experiences of the conflicts in Northern Ireland as a way to foster community and lasting stability.



May de Silva is the Director of “Women into Politics,” an NGO that works to increase the number of women in decision making roles. Women into Politics provides courses to develop political leadership skills, networking and mentoring opportunities, and a forum to discuss women’s roles in grassroots organizations and individuals.

Catherine McCartney is a Dialogue Co-ordinator for Women Into Politics, and she has been leading training workshops for women in grassroots organizations for the last 15 years. She also acts as a representative for Women Into Politics to the Human Rights Consortium.





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Conference Summary

On May 24, 15 women from Pakistan, Yemen, Northern Ireland, Palestine, Israel, Bosnia, Indonesia, India, and Somalia came together to start a week of intensive workshops to launch *SAVE's* first global campaign: *Mothers for Change!*, which seeks to empower and enable women to fight violent extremism on the front lines—in their homes and communities, where people may be hijacked by radical ideologies. In this training camp, the participating women—*SAVE* leaders and future facilitators—had the chance to learn about and model a variety of strategies for forming mothers groups in their home countries and to start dialogue processes to initiate understanding and conflict resolution.

The *SAVE* team and the workshop participants traveled to Maria Wörth in Carinthia, a southern state of Austria, where the participants had the chance to create a shared group identity and develop a coordinated plan for the implementation of *Mothers for Change!* Despite the range of educational and professional backgrounds and the variety of ethnic and religious affiliations represented within the group, the determination of these women to transform their societies has brought them together in a common purpose. Once we arrived, the true workshops started.

The first half of the week was focused on Storytelling processes for conflict resolution and reconciliation, and in the second half of the week the emphasis of the training moved from dialogue to action-oriented strategy sessions. May de Silva, Executive Director of Women into Politics, met with chapter groups to develop long-term strategic plans to create a clearer overview of what *Mothers for Change!* will look like in each of the countries. The chapter groups discussed everything from program structure to resource needs, and as a group, they worked together to plan how to transform the vision into reality.

The *SAVE* participants also had a chance to experience regional Austrian culture when they were honored by the Carinthian state government's Minister for Gender Affairs. *SAVE's* work was recognized, as was the continued need for greater women's participation in politics and security affairs throughout the world.



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At the conclusion of the conference, each chapter had developed a three month pilot project to implement the program through its initial phases and committed to producing tangible results within that time period. As a group, we also learned New Social Media and Technology skills that we can also use to sustain the momentum for the *Mothers for Change!* campaign and facilitate better inter-group communication. Once the chapter coordinators return home, they will be moving immediately into action with their individual outreach initiatives and developing the foundations of Mothers networks in their countries.



Robi Damelin of the Parents Circle (Israel), Nuna Zvizdic of Zene Zenema (Bosnia), and independent gender and human rights consultant Qoran Noor (Kenya/Somalia) discuss plans to launch SAVE Chapters in their countries for the first time and move towards implementation of the *Mothers for Change!* campaign.



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Mothers for Change! SAVE Global Campaign

Mothers for Change! is a global campaign to empower and enable mothers to prevent the spread of violent extremism, targeting the young generation and at-risk populations in particular. Because women are situated at the critical nexus between family and society, they must be well equipped to advocate for alternatives to violent extremism and to challenge radical ideologies before they take root.

Mothers for Change! optimizes the potential of the as-yet neglected relationship between female empowerment and the deradicalization of youth. Women are strategically positioned for this role at the center of the family, where they are the first to recognize signs of resignation and anger in their children. They build an ideal early-warning system when their sons, daughters, or husbands exhibit tell-tale signs of violent ideologies. Young people growing up in countries marked by ongoing instability and violence often receive conflicting messages from radicalized forces within society, and women's voices are regularly muted within the family. Strengthening women's position in civil society will enhance their communities to overcome the growing climate of fear and paranoia. Women are critical to transmitting ideas and mores to the next generation, but we must encourage them so that they can challenge entrenched social views that lead to extremist ideologies.

This groundbreaking campaign has three objectives: to empower mothers around the world to make use of their central role in the family for the fight against terrorism, to prevent members of the young generation in their families and communities from being radicalized, and to provide them with the tools to steer them back on the right path.



Edit Schlaffer (Women without Borders / SAVE), Lily Munir (Indonesia) and Robi Damelin, (Israel)

Stability and security are the central social and political issues of our era, and mothers are the key to connecting state-wide preventative measures to the individual level. The inclusion of women will help us to create a new vision, to include new voices, and to open new



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avenues of action. *SAVE* recognizes that in many communities, women are the driving forces of everyday life, and we are committed to entrusting security issues into their safe hands.

Mothers for Change! is an innovative project that will have broad effects beyond promoting safety and preventing crime. Above all, the program deals extensively with an under-acknowledged group—mothers across a spectrum of communities. Although the critical importance of women is being increasingly acknowledged within the financial and educational sectors, their input has been neglected in the security realm. This program thus gives a much-needed voice to a segment that holds true potential for effecting change.



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Building Bridges, Exchanging Best Practices

Anne Carr, an independent Dialogue Practitioner and May de Silva, and Catherine McCartney of Women Into Politics, a leading NGO in Northern Ireland, held workshops to share the community-based strategies that they have developed to help bring together Catholic and Protestant groups in their country along with Robi Damelin from Israel, who brings her strategies from the Parents Circle—Families Forum in Israel, an organization of bereaved Israeli and Palestinian families. Activists from Yemen and Pakistan found commonalities in the challenges they face in societies with restricted women’s rights and low literacy rates, and they have been able to learn from each other and exchange ideas for the future. Other activists from Bosnia, Somalia, and Palestine were able to discuss crucial implementation strategies with their peers, such as reaching out to target groups, defining a clear mission, and building momentum on the ground.

These workshops also allowed women the ability to offer fellowship and support across boundaries through both shared grief and hope. The participants took part in Storytelling workshops, which are process-oriented dialogue sessions for conflict resolution and reconciliation. The SAVE Sisters were trained to be Storytelling facilitators, and they learned how they can foster constructive dialogue in their countries and reach out to vulnerable female populations through community education. In these ways, concerns about social, economic, and political stability were paired with issues in the security realm in order to re-envision lasting solutions to global security problems.

These voices from around the world are critical to the development of alternative security solutions and giving these women a chance to learn from each other and exchange best practices was an incredible opportunity to gain new insight to the challenges on the ground in some of today’s most conflict-ridden areas in the world, from the Swat Valley to rural Yemen to Israel-Palestine and more. Learning from them and sharing their perspectives is a crucial step towards moving from ideological discourse on a theoretical level to tangible policy solutions that create change at the community level, utilizing female “Know How” and women’s central role in the family and civil society.



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Storytelling for Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation

Anne Carr, an independent Dialogue Practitioner from Northern Ireland, and Robi Damelin, spokesperson for the Parents Circle from Israel, co-led the Storytelling sessions for the week.

Storytelling is a process that is designed to work on both the individual and group levels, to promote both personal healing from past trauma as well as uniting the group for constructive future change. Storytelling facilitators must use a variety of techniques to promote a trusting atmosphere to enable participants to share their stories in ways that will result in healing and not reliving a traumatic experience, and they must also build the group into a cohesive unit so that they continue the process of reconciliation after the Storytelling sessions are completed.

For me, this was a really enlightening process. I can't believe that I was doing something similar in Swat Valley, in my own way, because now I realize that the training has made me more focused and more channeled. The women of Swat are women who have suffered and who have been victimized. I'm going to take the trainings from here and adapt it to my own country.

Falaknaz Asfandyar, Swat Valley, Pakistan



The foundations of Storytelling as a participatory, flexible group process are built upon the principles of building trust, acknowledging and recognizing the other, compassion and empathy (moving beyond sympathy), narrative as meaning-making, and promoting inclusion, empowerment, and equality.



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Social Media Solutions for International Activism

In the second half of the conference, *SAVE* Program Manager Kate Wiseman led workshops on using Social Media and Technology to improve intergroup communication and facilitate outreach beyond the *SAVE* network. Participants were presented with a range of ideas and led through a brainstorming workshop to see what activities they were already doing in their home countries that could be shared more easily and to a wider audience through social media and technology. Together, the group learned about platforms for sharing photo and video documentation of programs, and the *SAVE* group decided to start an internal forum to facilitate the cross-border exchange of knowledge and ideas.



Kate Wiseman working with (back row) Arshi Saleem Hashmi, Robi Damelin, Archana Kapoor, (front row) Mossarat Qadim, Edit Schlaffer, and Falaknaz Asfandyar

Individuals and country groups met with Kate (*SAVE* Global) in small groups to discuss their needs and interests more specifically, and she assisted them in a range of activities from setting up Facebook fan pages to leading a tutorial in blogging. She also guided everyone through the process of finding and using the forum.



Conference Outcomes

Each SAVE Chapter left the conference with a three-month plan for their role in the implementation of the global *Mothers for Change!* campaign, whether it was moving directly towards building mother's groups and training Storytelling facilitators or returning to a new area without a previous SAVE presence and reaching out to existing women's organizations and assessing interest in *Mothers for Change!*

Pakistan

SAVE Pakistan delegates Mossarat Qadeem, Executive Director of the PAIMAN Trust, Falaknaz Asfandvar, an activist for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the Swat Valley, and Arshi Saleem Hashmi, a Research Analyst and Professor, will work in conjunction with other SAVE Pakistan Sisters to implement the *Mothers for Change!* campaign in the North West Frontier Provinces (NWFP) and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). They will identify educated women from these



Members of SAVE Pakistan from back to front: Mossarat Qadeem, Arshi Saleem Hashmi, and Falaknaz Asfandvar

regions and bring them to Islamabad to train them in the skills they learned at the conference as well as in Pakistan-specific strategies developed through their collective experiences. When these women have been trained, they will return to FATA and the NWFP to start Mothers' Storytelling groups. At the end of the three month pilot period, all the Mothers' groups will meet in Islamabad to share their experiences and develop a manual of best practices. They will also produce a documentary film to share the impact of the program and arrange a press conference to raise awareness about the ongoing *Mothers for Change!* campaign in Pakistan.

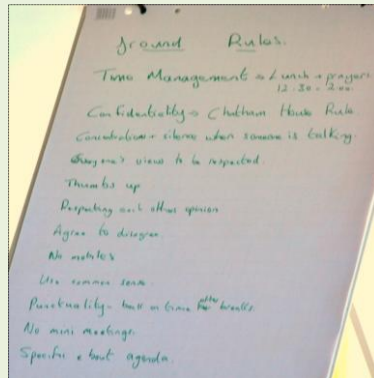


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Yemen

Fahmia al-Fotih', Fatima al Zuhairi, and Noor Baabad pledged to work together to use their different resources and experiences in the most effective way possible. Fahmia al-Fotih' is the SAVE Yemen Coordinator, Fatima al Zuhairi is the principal of the prestigious Rabia al Adawea girls' school, and Noor Baabad is a Minister in the Department of Social Affairs.

Fatima is leading the implementation of *Mothers for Change!* in Rabia al Adawea school by drawing mothers from the school's Parents' Council. Fahmia will work with Fatima in facilitating Storytelling sessions, and together they will reach out to educated and uneducated women in Sana'a. After they have run successful pilot programs, Fahmia and



At left, Arshi Saleem Hashmi and Mossarat Qadeem (both from Pakistan) being honored at the Bundespapament in Klagenfurt. Above, ground rules established for the workshops. At right, Robi Damelin (Israel) leads a workshop.



Fatima will lead Train-the-Trainers' sessions with young educated women who will bring the *Mothers for Change!* campaign to the rural areas outside of Sana'a and begin the process of transforming small groups into a far-reaching social movement.

Fahmia, Fatima, and Noor are going to collaborate in developing a list of Storytelling discussion topics that will be both relevant and sensitive to Yemen. Fahmia will be working to customize the SAVE manual to Yemen, and she will refine it through her first few pilot groups. This manual will also be a resource for the next group of trainers who will bring the *Mothers for Change!* campaign to rural areas. Noor, Fatima, and Fahmia together are also going to work to establish partnerships with existing women's organizations like the Women's



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Media Center and Women Journalists Without Chains to explore how SAVE Yemen can further its outreach and maximize its exposure in Yemen.

Indonesia

Lily Zakiyah Munir, Founder and Chair of the Center for Pesantren and Democracy Studies (CePDs) in Jakarta, will implement *Mothers for Change!* Storytelling sessions in Jakarta. After running successful pilot programs, Lily will identify and train women from Solo, East Java, Pontianak, and Bandung to become Storytelling facilitators. These women will spread the *Mothers for Change!* campaign to different Indonesian islands, and they will use SAVE dialogue practices to sensitize women to violent extremism and prepare them to challenge the spread of radical ideologies in the vulnerable youth populations.

Bosnia

Memnuna Zvizdic, Executive Director of Žene Ženama (Women to Women) in Sarajevo, will be promoting awareness of SAVE's mission and working with other women's rights organizations throughout Bosnia Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Croatia, Slovenia, and other areas to identify target areas for implementation throughout the Balkans. Memnuna will also assess interest and identify women to work as SAVE trainers and leaders in Sarajevo through Žene Ženama.



From left to right: Fahmia al-Fotih', Asma Asfour, and Falaknaz Asfandiyar listen during a workshop session.

Somalia

The political situation in Somalia is fragile, and all SAVE activities will be based in Nairobi, Kenya and implemented through a SAVE Coordinator who travels into the country from the Kenya base. SAVE is partnering with Asha Hagi Elmi, Founder and Executive Director of SAVE Somali Women and Children, to identify mothers in Kenya who would become part of the initial pilot group. Currently, Independent Human Rights and Gender Consultant Qoran Noor is advising SAVE on strategies for implementing *Mothers for Change!* in Mogadishu,



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and SAVE will continue to work to promote awareness of the campaign in Kenya and Somalia.

Palestine

Council Member Asma Asfour of the Ramallah District in Palestine is an activist for greater women's political participation and for educational improvement throughout Palestine. She will reach out through her networks and the organizations she is affiliated with to raise awareness about SAVE's mission and to identify women to be part of the SAVE Palestine *Mothers for Change!* pilot project. Asma will facilitate Storytelling sessions with mothers and combine it with political leadership skills courses in order to empower women to be part of the solution in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Israel

In Israel, Robi Damelin, spokesperson for the Parents Circle—Families Forum, will reach out to the Women's Forum of the Parents Circle to raise awareness about SAVE. In 2010, Robi will establish the first SAVE Israel chapter emphasizing Storytelling practices as a way to know the other and to begin the process of bridging deep rift between Israelis and Palestinians.



Noor Baabad (Yemen) and SAVE Global Program Manager Elaine Hargrove work together in a workshop.

Northern Ireland

Dialogue Practitioner Anne Carr, Women Into Politics Executive Director May de Silva, and Political Leadership Skills Trainer Catherine McCartney from Northern Ireland will be sharing their expertise and their materials with the SAVE Global Network, and they will move forward with plans to host a working conference in Belfast. Women's leadership has an established role in reconciliation and political conflict resolution in Ireland, and their experiences will provide a large portion of the body of the training materials SAVE Global will produce.





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India

SAVE India will be work in Mumbai with WorldKids, an international NGO, who are already in consultation to take on the SAVE work in schools where they already work. Archana Kapoor of SAVE India is the Founder and Director of SMART, an NGO working with vulnerable populations in Northern India, and a longtime Women without Borders / SAVE partner in Delhi. She will partner with Manju Singh, Executive Director of WorldKids, which promotes values-based, socially minded entertainment for children. Together, SAVE India and WorldKids will approach mothers from the Parent-Teachers' Association of five different schools and lead workshops for the *Mothers for Change!* campaign. These mothers will then start new Mothers' groups in each of their own schools.



The *SAVE* Declaration

The participants of the first Global SAVE Conference developed and signed the SAVE Declaration, which has shaped the growth of SAVE through its first years.

1. I, as a woman, will use the local and global networks of women to stop the killing.
2. I will inspire a new response to prevent terror, violence and discrimination.
3. I will create awareness for not stigmatizing the families of the extremists/terrorists.
4. I will support the young generation with non-violent alternatives in their search for a better life.
5. I will engage all forms of media for spreading the message of non-violence.
6. I will insist on peaceful resolutions to prevent escalation of conflict and violence.
7. I will promote a global dialogue for a future without fear.
8. I will raise my voice against all hostile states and politics that cause suffering.
9. I recognize the urgency to create “*SAVE*” spaces for a peaceful coexistence.
10. I will always remember those affected by violent extremism.

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