

Report to Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association at yearly meeting, June 11 - 14, 2015

After more than 20 years of providing nurturing care for Friends engaged in grassroots peace work in communities riddled with severe violence around the world, we are pleased to report that we continue to abide by our Quaker beliefs, to live into our values, and to use the very peace tools we offer in all our workshops to govern the organization in the manner of Friends. We are working on increasing publicity and our outreach to Friends communities, on enhancing our communications to share news of our work more widely, on bolstering our infrastructure without increasing “non-program” expenses, and on seeking and welcoming new members to the FPT Council, our governing body. We are especially pleased to welcome Kirsten Mandala from Portland OR as our new communications specialist to work on our websites and opportunities via social media. Adrienne Weir is the SAYMA representative to Friends Peace Teams.

The major happening with the African Great Lakes Initiative of Friends Peace Teams (AGLI) this past year has been great interest from other larger organizations in using the Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities (HROC) program in other settings. Catholic Relief Services in the Central African Republic (CAR) invited two AVLI HROC delegations to introduce the program there. They were so pleased with the program that they hired our HROC-Burundi program manager, Florence Ntakutimana, full time to put the HROC program in CAR on a firm footing. Then the Church of the Brethren in Northern Nigeria where Boko Haram is creating chaos, sent four people to our August HROC International Training in Rwanda and then three more for the February Training. The Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) (which is four times the size of AFSC) has taken up the program with the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria, while a MCC volunteer has received a nice grant from MCC to introduce and expand the program in eastern Congo. In Kenya great progress has been made in reconciliation on Mt Elgon after the conflict there and the introduction of AVP in the Kakuma Refugee camp. HROC-Burundi has received a number of grants towards making the upcoming Burundi elections to be peaceful. After 12 years, AVP in Rwanda has finally received permission to do AVP in their prisons and 10 workshops have been done so far. David Zarembka visited SAYMA monthly meetings in April. Most recently, we have been working hard to prevent or reduce election related violence in Burundi.

Peacebuilding *en las Américas (PLA)* supports Alternatives to Violence Project and Community Based Trauma Healing workshops with nine programs: five in Colombia; two in Honduras; and one each in Guatemala and El Salvador. The programs reach many young people, and people who have been or are resisting becoming forcibly displaced by violence, domestic abuse victims, and the large numbers of people struggling to survive in an atmosphere of insecurity and violence caused by criminal and drug gangs, and political instability. In Honduras the group in La Ceiba have trained the first inmate AVP facilitators who will work alongside Mennonite and other volunteers to live more nonviolently inside the El Porvenir National Prison. The three Central American programs are working with AVP International to do pilot workshops with personnel from Plan International a huge international child sponsorship program—if

these workshops become integrated in Plan's work, it could extend AVP to 68 countries. (Other pilots are being held in Nigeria and Rwanda.) Colombian programs now include AVP work with a congregation of Franciscan nuns who work throughout the country. PLA has hired a Communications Editor to help us develop web and print materials for information and outreach.

The Asia/West Pacific Initiative (AWP) has been very active with grassroots peacebuilding in Indonesia (Aceh), Nepal, Philippines, Palestine and Israel, and South Korea. Mew and active Friends in Australia have been supportive with energy and generous with resources. There is a powerful new video created about the power of visiting (Silaturahmi) and the value of being a listening presence in communities struggling with decades of common violence. Nadine Hoover visited Quaker AVPers in South Korea and served on a team for a trauma healing workshop that was well received. Nick Rozard's work on inexpensive, locally produced water filters is going well. An invitation to exhibit the artwork from ***The Power of Goodness***, a book of 25 stories of nonviolence and reconciliation around the world, was sent to selected prominent museums worldwide inviting them to schedule a premier exhibition of this children's artwork from Chechnya, Russia, Europe and North America. Joe Di Garbo and Nadine will support Miriam Abu Turk in Hebron and her team in apprentice facilitating the AVP Trauma Healing Workshop in Ramallah. A team of AVP facilitators have just returned from Palestine where they worked with Israeli and Palestinians on AVP and Trauma Awareness.

[A team was in Kathmandu, Nepal during the first earthquake, and stayed a few extra days assessing with local partners what we could do to help. We decided to take relief supplies to some remote village that were not getting other assistance and to plan on doing Trauma Healing work when the communities enter the rebuilding period, typically around 90 days after the disaster. A special relief fund is accepting donations to support this work.]