



A project of Antioch University Seattle

Barbara Spraker, Project Director

Patricia Hughes, Lead Editor

Authors:

Brittany Blondino, Molly Breyse Cox, Roslyn Ericksen, Heather Goodwin, Patricia Hughes,
Patricia Julio, Kristie McLean, Danielle Prince, Barbara Spraker, Kathleen Swirski,
Nicole Theberge, Laura Veith, Wendi Walsh

Copyright Information

Developing Women's Leadership ~ Around the Globe (c) August 2013

This Capacity Building Guide is the property of Antioch University Seattle and the product of the Developing Women's Leadership ~ Around the Globe Kitchen Cabinet and Country Conveners. It not to be changed or altered in any way.

Users are invited and empowered to utilize all or parts of this work for educational purposes and to advance the intention of the Project, which is: “to empower women around the globe to appreciate their skills, to value the contributions they make to their communities, and to expand their influence and impact.”

For information on the project, visit: <http://www.womenleadingtheway.com/womens-leadership-project.html>.



Table of Contents

Dedication and Gratitude	4
Introduction	7
Executive Summary	14
Part I. Country Backgrounds	17
Burkina Faso	18
Ethiopia	24
Guatemala	29
Nicaragua	38
Uganda	42
Vietnam	47
Muckleshoot Nation	52
USA Antioch University Seattle students	57
Part II. Four Questions Synthesis	61
Question One	62
Question Two	68
Question Three	75
Question Four	81
Part III. Tools And Processes	87
Self Care	89
Group Processes	99
Task and Practical Management	114
Conclusion	127
References	129



Dedication

by Barbara Spraker

This Capacity-Building Guide is dedicated to the women who participated in the Conversations, which revealed the many ways women lead in nine very different cultures. Many of the strategies, tools and processes in the Guide were shared by them, and additional information was added in response to their sense of how they wanted to enhance their influence and impact.

With Gratitude

The very fabric of this Project demonstrates a feminine leadership model that connects, relates, collaborates, heals and celebrates. From the conception of the vision for the Project, collaboration fueled the process.

To Betsy Geist, Dean of the Center for Creative Change, Shana Hormann, Dean of Students and Rebecca McColl, Grants Writer, all at Antioch University Seattle, thank you for your belief in the vision and your support to make the Project real. We want to express special gratitude to the C. Charles Jackson Foundation for the seed grant that propelled us to make the vision reality.

This Capacity Building Guide reflects the core of the Project. It exists because nine women stepped up to convene and facilitate local conversations about the grass-roots ways women lead. To them we extend special appreciation and thanks: Weubamlak Eshetu Mengistu in Ethiopia, Nguyen Thi Thanh Tam in Vietnam, Mabilia Carolina Joj in Guatemala, Claudine Zongo in Burkina Faso, Betty Kagoro in Uganda, Lidieth Alvarez in Nicaragua, Rocío González in Guatemala, Romajeane Thomas in Muckleshoot Nation, Washington state, and Roslyn Ericksen at Antioch University Seattle. Your leadership in your community and your ability to

create a safe space where women could have meaningful dialogue about what is important to them enabled these Conversations.

Over a dozen women studied the information from the various Conversations, creating the content of this Guide – key ideas that emerged from each Conversation, synthesis across cultures of ways women lead, skills they use and wish to develop and strategies for leadership development. To you authors we appreciate your sensitivity and receptivity to the information that was shared from the Conversations: Wendi Walsh, Laura Veith, Nicole Theberge, Kathleen Swirski, Barbara Spraker, Danielle Prince, Kristie McLean, Patricia Julio, Patricia Hughes, Heather Goodwin, Roslyn Ericksen, Molly Breyse Cox and Brittany Blondino. Jackie Dagger and Linda Caswell, thanks for translating information from some of the Conversations. A very special thank you to Pat Hughes who served as lead editor for the entire guide. Special appreciation also goes to Myrna Schlegel who provided additional editing oversight, and to Nicole Theberge who helped format the Guide in the final stages.

On-going work of the Project benefitted from the strong support of colleagues at Antioch University Seattle. Thanks to Mike Johnson, Facilities Director, Bet Dolo, Director Campus and Administrative Services, Brigid Mercer, Vice President of Institutional Advancement and her team, including: Rebecca McColl, Michelle Wilkinson, Sarah Guthrie, Suzy Knutson, Linda James and Glenn Girlando. Rosy Hower, your summer internship came at a strategic time and facilitated our use of technology for communicating with the Country Conveners. Samantha Novak, thank you for jumping in to help with final Project details and the Summit!

Finally and most gratefully, we thank the Kitchen Cabinet, who worked, laughed dreamed and planned side by side for nearly two years to make this Project a reality: Barbara Spraker, Wendi Walsh, Kathleen Swirski, Roslyn Ericksen, Patricia Hughes, Jennifer LeMarte, Nicole Theberge, and Laura Veith.





Introduction

by Barbara Spraker and Patricia Hughes

Welcome to Developing Women's Leadership ~ Around the Globe! This has been a two-year project all about learning and building relationship, and we are eager to share our learnings and passions with you, and extend the relationship across time and space to include all those who are champions for women's ways of leading change.

Intention

The intention of this project is to empower women around the globe to appreciate their skills, to value the contributions they make to their communities, and to expand their influence and impact. Women around the globe are leading change in their families, towns, villages, and cities. Their powerful impact will not only benefit their local communities, but the larger global community as well. The need and the opportunity have never been greater to support and nurture this leadership. By tapping into the insight and wisdom of women from different cultures, and creating a strong network across cultures, the Project nourishes and amplifies collective impact.

"The hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world."

- William Ross Wallace

Methodology

This Project supports women and organizations engaged in developing leadership competence by identifying cross-cultural leadership development needs and sharing effective strategies. The Project first engaged key women coordinators (Country Conveners) in a variety of countries who could speak to the leadership needs of women in their country, and could identify and convene a small group of women in Conversation Circles - a process of guided conversation focusing on addressing leadership challenges as group members experience them. These Conversations provided data and created interest and readiness among participants for utilizing the leadership strategies developed.

The results of these first Conversations form the basis for this Capacity Guide, designed for use by individuals, groups of women, or trainers of women around the globe. We refer to this workbook as a Capacity Building Guide because the skills and strategies needed for shared leadership inevitably lead to both increased capacity to perform on the part of the individuals who participate as well as increased capacity to get things done by the community at large.

The Country Conveners will call the original group together and use this Guide to facilitate a second Conversation in their countries about developing leadership skill among women. They will discuss ways they can use this Capacity Building Guide to enhance their influence and impact as leaders. The intention of this action research approach is that the women who participate in these Conversations will experience *being heard* and will *see themselves as part of a global energy field of solidarity*, as women world-wide are stepping up to lead change where they see a need.

Lastly, the Kitchen Cabinet (more about this group of women later) and Antioch University Seattle (AUS) students co-designed and co-facilitated a Women's Leadership Summit on the AUS campus September 28-29, 2013.

The First Conversations

The local women leaders, known as the Country Conveners, convened a Conversation Circle of six to ten women in their villages or cities who are interested in enhancing their leadership competence. The Conveners facilitated a Conversation with these women – creating a safe space to talk about what really matters to them. The focus of the first Conversation was to talk together about ways they are contributing to their communities, about leadership abilities they have developed and wish to develop.

1) What do you care about in your community and in what projects have you participated?

The intention of this initial question was to draw out the ways that those in the Conversation Circle have engaged in their community (or organization, family, etc.), *affirming that they have contributed to the greater good* in important ways, whether or not they consider themselves “leaders.” This question also opened up the diversity of ways that women have contributed to issues around the world.

2) As you have engaged in this work, what skills have you used?

This question provided the opportunity for the Country Convener to engage the group in recognizing and naming the skills these women possess and have used. As we remind ourselves

often in our Kitchen Cabinet work - this project is all about learning, and that learning happens at every step of the way for every individual.

3) What additional skills or knowledge would you like to gain?

This next question builds on the recognition that every woman in the circle has skills - and perhaps wants to develop more skills or more knowledge or more confidence. The purpose of this question was to elicit ideas from the women about the skills they wish to build on and improve, so that they could further serve their community and increase their influence on the projects that are meaningful to them.

4) How do you imagine you might develop these skills?

Inherent in this question is the need for each woman to create a vision for how she will move forward on her leadership journey. It is a reminder that, while some learning may be gained from outside the culture, these women - alone, together and within their culture - can access resources and strategies that best enhance their leadership skills.



The Women and Wisdom Guiding the Project

Barbara Spraker, faculty member in the Center for Creative Change at Antioch University Seattle (AUS) is the director of this Project, and has been passionately assisted by a Kitchen Cabinet (volunteer board) of Antioch University alumnae including Roslyn Ericksen, Jennifer Etchison, Patricia Hughes, Laura Vieth, Kathleen Swirski, Wendi Walsh, and Graduate Assistant Nicole Theberge.



THE KITCHEN CABINET: (from top left, clockwise)

Patricia Hughes, Wendi Walsh (sunglasses), Jennifer LaMarte, Roslyn Ericksen, Barbara Spraker, Kathleen Swirski, Nicole Theberge, Laura Veith

Local women leaders in Ethiopia, Uganda, Burkina Faso, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Vietnam, the Muckleshoot Nation, and at Antioch University Seattle participated in the Project conversations. These women were selected as Country Conveners because they are respected leaders in their local areas. They called together six to ten other women and engaged them in dialogue on projects and passions, leadership strengths and skills, and a consideration of what more they want to do to enhance their leadership influence and impact. Each of these groups will have the opportunity to learn from one another and build community across the globe. We know that we amplify our influence and our impact as we connect with one another.



From top left, clockwise: **Lidieth** (Nicaragua), **Weub** (Ethiopia), **Tam** (Vietnam), **Mabilia** (Guatemala), **Roslyn Ericksen**, (Antioch University Seattle), **Betty** (Uganda), **Rocio** (with group, Guatemala), **Romajeane** (Muckleshoot), **Claudine** (Burkina Faso).

As Kofi Annan highlighted when he was Secretary General of the United Nations, the 21st Century is the Century of Women. From the Learning Journeys led by Margaret Wheatley, to the leadership of Jean Shinoda Bolen urging a United Nations-sponsored 5th World Conference on Women, significant efforts have been aimed at supporting the leadership of women around the globe (Spraker, 2011, p.3).

This project adds to these efforts in important ways. Barbara Spraker, through her role as an Antioch University Seattle faculty member and as an organizational development professional, has focused her efforts on nurturing women's leadership. Over the past decade, she has convened groups of women in Conversation Circles around the question, "What is the role of women in global leadership?" In Shanghai, Beijing, Johannesburg, Cuenca (Ecuador) and at AUS, these conversations have revealed the need for women to have a safe space where they can

share their accomplishments and concerns, and where they can support and challenge one another.

This project is designed on the premise that women already possess the knowledge they need to succeed as leaders; they do not need to be told. The Project honors women's inherent leadership skills by using Conversation Circles as a vehicle for women to identify their unfolding needs as leaders as they experience them in a small group setting and to share what they perceive to be effective strategies for leadership development. The information collected and synthesized through this Project is provided back to each of the Conversation Circle participants, through this Capacity Guide.

This Guide will empower local groups and AUS students to see themselves in solidarity with women from other parts of the world, and with men who lead similarly. As one participant in Uganda recognized, a good women's leadership project should make a difference by empowering women without disempowering men. Finally, the Project will capture and expand the impact of each Conversation Circle process by formally documenting and sharing Project learning outcomes with other organizations.

Informed by Kurt Lewin's (1976) Field Theory, the Project assumes that women's leadership is both enabled and constrained by multiple, interdependent forces. These Conversations create a container in which women can shift the balance of forces in their field. To use Lewin's language, "unfreezing" occurs as they express their concerns and lack of voice; "movement" occurs as they acknowledge the contributions they actually are making to their communities; and "freezing" occurs as they collectively embrace a new norm of empowerment (p. 228-229).

Margaret Mead and Lewin conducted experiments together that revealed the power of working with groups to create social change. From these studies they learned that groups of people "can do a thing better when they themselves decide upon it, and also how they themselves can elect to reduce the gap between their attitudes and actions." (Marrow, 1969, p. 131).

The Conversations that comprise the essence of this Project illustrate this power. They are far from opportunities to "just talk." The Conversations create a safe space where a small group of women can talk about matters that are important to them. That this Constructionist way of knowing is particularly resonant with women is powerfully affirmed by the research of Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1986). "All knowledge is constructed and the knower is an intimate part of the known" (p. 137). The Conversations create a context where women can be comfortable communicating in what Carol Gilligan (1982) calls their "ethic of care" without needing to defend themselves to an ethic of logic that may dominate their culture (p. 30).

Further theoretical underpinning of this Project comes from current studies in leadership and community development. The power of relationship and conversation as a powerful strategy for change is supported by on-going research on leadership and complexity theory by Janet Shaw (2002) and Ralph Stacey (2012) at the University of Herfordshire. Additionally, Margaret Wheatley and Deborah Frieze (2011) illustrate practical examples of the power of local groups to generate feasible, creative strategies for positive change in their communities.

The Project was seeded by a grant from the C. Charles Jackson Foundation, whose mission supports institutions of higher learning in developing human potential in the area of leadership for diverse populations.

If you are interested in participating in the Project in any way, or would like more information about the Summit, or other aspects of the Project, please contact Barbara Spraker at bspraker@antioch.edu.

Executive Summary

by Patricia Hughes

These days, we are hearing more about the plight of women and girls globally, and also the role of women in creating a better future for their children and their communities. Two years ago UN Women Executive Director Michelle Bachelet said “The 21st Century will be the century of girls and women,” and called on both women and men to take part in the “social, economic and political revolution” for gender equality and women's empowerment. (U.N. Women, 2011, ¶ 1).

The **Developing Women's Leadership ~ Around the Globe Project** also cares about unleashing women's potential. We set out to learn about women's ways of leading by supporting nine conversations around four key questions in eight cultures in the fall of 2012.

These Conversations serve as a reminder that when women come together to harness the potential of the collective creation of power and influence, anything is possible. “It is commonly said that when you train a woman, you have trained the nation, hence, it is essential for institutions to pay particular attention to women and girls,” Betty Kagoro, Convener from Uganda says.

What do you care about in your community? The Conveners and the Conversation participants are mothers, friends, sisters, wives, daughters, professional employees, counselors, mentors, teachers, cheerleaders and life-long learners. They are involved in a wide range of issues that challenge their communities and families, including education, children and youth, health, microcredit, overcoming poverty, and the environment. While they have paid professions, the majority of their leadership work occurs in unpaid positions within their communities, churches, and families.

What skills do you use? The skills these women use in their work are diverse. Many of them would not call themselves leaders, but the skill sets they employ in their efforts are those that any leader will recognize: visioning, communication, patience, perseverance, acting on personal values, mentoring, planning, organizing, delegating, decision-making, mobilizing and many more.

They are helping women to gain confidence and prominence in their communities, in cultures where women are often raped, sold, silenced, not allowed to handle money or venture outside the home. “It's so important to promote gender equality, to change the culture of ignorance and promote the values,” says Mabilia in Guatemala. “You have to answer when women are being raped by their husbands,” says Lidieth in Nicaragua.

What skills would you like to learn? The skills they would like to learn are those that will help them do their work with more effectiveness. They want to improve their written and verbal communication, especially public speaking. They want to be able to facilitate and lead groups, to be able to handle the practical tasks of management. They seek expertise in technology and look for ways they can modernize their communities. They want skills that help them identify and claim shared values and skills that will increase their personal confidence. In the midst of all this, they seek ways to give themselves the self-care needed to do the work they so passionately believe in. “We seek educational opportunities, management scholarships and gender equity participation in working together and contributing ideas to achieve this,” Lidieth says.

How do you imagine you will gain these skills? This Project, in addition to being collaborative, is grounded in the belief that the first role of leadership is to recognize that everyone is a leader and that everyone has inherent talents and gifts to share. It is not an activity reserved for a chosen few, but one that must be spread widely to be most effective. “Many efforts to advance women’s capacity to create change and leadership have been elitist, and do not necessarily include a lot of grassroots involvement,” says Betty. Claudine from Burkina Faso imagines that the long results of her work and that of other women leaders are nothing short of a “new generation of human beings, being born within a transformed community with strong values which protect them from poverty, discrimination, exclusion, not iniquity but solidarity, tolerance, peace, and wealth.”

One of our hopes for this Project is that the women involved will see themselves reflected as leaders, and that they will gain strength by seeing that they are unified around the world in their efforts to give women greater voice and opportunities. Leadership is not about position, title, or rank. Leadership is about being, knowing, and doing. Rocío from Guatemala summarizes well when she says, “I think the multiplier effect when these women have the opportunity to participate, learn and share is large, since several of them participate in their religious or social communities, this makes them have impact on more women in their own families.”

Roz and Romajeau's conversations in the United States remind us that women need to care for themselves before, during, and after their giving work with others. In fact, one of a leader’s strongest assets is her ability to authentically care, to recognize that she is an individual who has much to offer, and who must remain resilient by taking care of herself.

Working together is a theme that is repeated throughout this Guide. Collaboration is about cultivating strength, leveraging difference and being supportive of each other's gifts, individually and collectively. Through collaboration, any woman can work toward co-creating a healthy, inclusive community where everyone has the ability to be heard and impact the course of events.

“I believe changing the attitude of women and equipping them with skills and knowledge will help the society to get out of poverty because it is the women who are mostly related with their children,” Weub in Ethiopia says. “If women build their confidence, they can make a difference.” And Tam in Vietnam, brings it all back to the ultimate purpose of this work, to eradicate poverty and make their worlds more compassionate and just for all who live there.

“Poverty derives from many reasons,” she says, “but, you know, women play an important role in their family and society in finding the solution to poverty. Their leadership influences on every process in their lives. If they can learn how to live a better life, how to train themselves and others, how to change, difficulties become opportunities, how to call for help, how to link in together... all of these skills are priceless to help women overcome any challenges.”

Part I. Country Backgrounds

This next section features background information about each of the countries or regions where a Conversation took place, including general statistics, the history of the country, as well as the cultural role of women and why women's leadership is important. The background also introduces the nine women who convened the Conversations, including the projects the Convener is involved in and her work. The Conversation of the groups are summarized here.

The authors of these Country Backgrounds are all affiliated with the Project and volunteered their time to summarize the comments and research each of the countries.

Each Country Convener was partnered with a member of the Kitchen Cabinet, for communication and support purposes. The Kitchen Cabinet partners wrote letters to the Country Convener as a concluding portion of the Country Backgrounds.

The photographs, in most cases, were supplied by the Country Convener.

Burkina Faso

by Patricia Julio



Central Intelligence Agency, Images retrieved on June 4, 2013, from <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/uv.html>

Burkina Faso is in West Africa, surrounded by six countries: Mali, Niger, Benin, Togo, Ghana and the Ivory Coast. Formerly called the Republic of Upper Volta, the country was renamed Burkina Faso in 1984 by then-President Thomas Sankara, using a word from each of the country's two major native languages, Mòoré and Dioula. “Burkina,” from Mòoré, is translated as “men of integrity,” while “Faso” means “fatherland” in Dioula. “Burkino Faso” is the “land of upright people” or “land of honest people.” The 16 million inhabitants of Burkina Faso are known as Burkinabé. The official language is French, while Mòoré, Mandinka and Bambara are recognized regional languages (Burkina Faso, *n.d.*).

The area became a French protectorate in 1896. After gaining independence from France in 1960, the country underwent many governmental changes and is now a semi-presidential republic. Political freedoms are severely restricted, with human rights organizations noting numerous acts of state-sponsored violence against journalists and other politically active members of society (Burkina Faso, *n.d.*).

There are more than 60 different ethnicities in the country, and hundreds of thousands of Burkinabé migrate to Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, many for seasonal agricultural work. Islam and Christianity are often practiced in tandem with indigenous religious beliefs. Even among Muslims and Christians, ancient animist rites are still highly valued (Burkina Faso, *n.d.*).

Burkina Faso is one of the poorest countries in the world with an average income per

capita of \$300 USD. More than 80 % of the population relies on subsistence agriculture, with only a small fraction directly involved in industry and services. Highly variable rainfall, poor soils, lack of adequate communications and other infrastructure, a low literacy rate, and a stagnant economy are all long-standing problems of this landlocked country. The export economy is subject to fluctuations in world prices, and a large portion of economic activity is funded by international aid. Gold production increased in 2011 at six gold mine sites, making Burkina Faso the fourth largest gold producer in Africa, after South Africa, Mali and Ghana. As of 2004, it was estimated that there were as few as six physicians, 41 nurses and 13 midwives per 100,000 people. Even though the hospital at Ouagadougou is one of the most modern in Africa, in 2007 the mortality rate from HIV/AIDS was 62 per 100,000 (Burkina Faso, *n.d.*).

With a cost of nearly \$100 USD per year, attending school in Burkina Faso is out of reach for most Burkinabé families. Boys receive preference in schooling, but recently more girls have been attending school due to a government policy that makes school cheaper for girls and provides scholarships. The UN Development Program ranks Burkina Faso as having the lowest literacy rate of any country in the world, despite an 18-year effort that doubled the literacy rate to 25 % by 2008 (Burkina Faso, *n.d.*).

Why Women's Leadership is Important to Burkina Faso

Country Convener Claudine Zongo acknowledges that Burkina Faso is one of the least-developed countries in the world. Poverty is pervasive, with about 45% of the population living below the poverty line. Feminization of poverty is on the increase: more than 50% of women are among the ultra poor, and about 16 percent of all households are headed by women, while only six percent of farms are owned by women. Two of the main objectives of the Government's policies relating to women's empowerment are the reduction of women in poverty by 35 percent over a 20-year period and increased women's participation in the economy.

Women's access to microfinance is very limited, and households headed by women depend mainly on moneylenders. Most credit funds go to non-poor households with collateral. There is a need to institute, coordinate and streamline the delivery mechanisms for micro credit in a financially viable and sustainable way, as well as to increase and strengthen the availability of loans to very poor people and rural entrepreneurs – two groups that are mainly composed of women.

Biography of Country Convener Claudine Zongo

As a young girl, Claudine was sent to live with her grandmother who was elderly and needed help. “I learned many lessons through that relationship which have continued to serve me as I embarked on my professional career,” Claudine says. “Yaba,” as Claudine affectionately remembers her grandmother, was the only surviving child of ten children. At an early age, Yaba

gained social and cultural responsibilities typically granted to boys and men of the village. Yaba's father decided to provide educational and leadership opportunities for his only child, which resulted in her being chosen to serve on the council of the village and participate in decision making. Yaba's role on the council was an important one. Her voice was always heard and she developed many skills, which "common" women would never have gained. Some of the lessons Claudine remembers from her grandmother include, "A woman should learn how to do something with her ten fingers," and as an example, Yaba developed income-generating activities such as shea butter production and distribution. Another key lesson that Claudine remembers from Yaba is, "Communities feed themselves with forgiveness. Never refuse to forgive."

Claudine was a Hubert Humphrey Fellow at the University of Washington in 2009, where she studied leadership and government policy. She now works with the World Health Organization as Assistant to the Coordinator of the Inter-country Support Team for West Africa.



Along with several other professional women, in 2004 Claudine founded and now leads AProFEn (Action Promo Femme et Enfant), an association that allows professional women to give back to their larger community. These women had the opportunity and benefit of education and training, and through this association, they now provide literacy classes and income generation through microenterprise training to village women who have not had their same opportunities. The association aims to intervene in five sectors:

- education, with the objective of aiding scholarship for young girls and acting towards the elimination of adult illiteracy;
- health, with the goal of improving health of all people, especially reducing infant and maternity mortality rates and fighting the HIV/AIDS epidemic, malaria, and other diseases;
- economic sector, with the goal of reducing extreme poverty and hunger through productive income activities and the self-sufficiency to provide food;
- socio-cultural sector, with the objective of eradicating forced marriage, excision, child labor, and child trafficking;

- environmental and water resource sector, with the objective of protecting and promoting a healthy and sustainable environment.

The Association is fully recognized by the government, and is unique in that its formation did not alienate the men of the village where they have been working, but gained their support. “The Association made intentional time to learn about the critical ways men communicated and made decisions in the village,” Claudine says. Among these were respectful salutations, appropriate attitudes, the use of conventional expressions and the ability to anticipate feedback from specific inquiries. The Association gained the partnership of one young man who was held



in great respect and had a track record of leadership in the village, to assist them in navigating communication among the village men. “Some of the key messages that AProFEn was able to relay included empowering the entire village community by focusing on women and their needs, ensuring men that they are a critical partner in achieving the Association’s goals, and describing success stories and best practices and gently requesting feedback from the men thereby indirectly soliciting their support for

the Association’s work.”

The result is that AProFEn gained the confidence of the Village Chief and the Association was granted three hectares of land. The women envision building a headquarters and training center on the land, which will include leadership training for women and education for young girls. The center will also provide support for women to develop and expand businesses with products such as soap, shea butter, woven materials and preserved fruit. According to Claudine, “This project contributes to the assumption of responsibility for women and children in difficulty, primarily the orphans, widows, women victims of social exclusion as well as the infected and affected of AIDS, and also creates the conditions for the socio-economic empowerment of the recipients.”

Conversation Circle

In the Conversation Circles, we asked the Convener to explore these four questions:

1. What do you care about in your community and in what projects have you participated?
2. As you engaged in this work, what skills have you used?
3. What additional skills or knowledge would you like to gain?
4. How do imagine you might develop these skills?

1. The participants of Claudine's conversation circle are women who work in different sectors, from health care to the office setting. They all have personal and professional passions that inspire and motivate them to action, to improve the livelihoods of girls and women in Burkina Faso. These participants care about the rights of women and children, education, literacy and keeping girls in school.

2. The participants are very thoughtful about the skills they use in their work and utilize a broad array of values and skills to make positive change happen, including teaching, mentoring and not just "doing for," perseverance and commitment, observing and identifying an issue, visioning, organizational skills, compassion and use of metaphor.

3. The participants would like to gain both individual skills and skills that will help them in community work. Individual skills focus on self-care, developing personal stamina and motivation to continue their vision, team building and people management. Community focused skills include identifying resources and connecting with those who need it, working within cultural norms or working at the edges of boundaries to expand them, helping women become financially independent, project management, resource mobilization, mutual win strategies and partnership development, evaluation and monitoring, and helping those who suffer from a lack of rights, access to education and living with dignity.

4. The participants will seek to develop these skills by strongly advocating for capacity building work through the results of programs and projects, such as combating women's illiteracy by increasing literacy by 10%. Sharing experiences and best practices learned with other communities and building a collective of learners as well as motivating people to commit around and across common objectives, will assist in the development of these skills. Most importantly, taking an approach of mutual respect, humility, consideration and open-mindedness, without imposing dominating views, rather providing suggestions, will build their own capacity.

Kitchen Cabinet Letter to Claudine:

Chère Claudine,

It has been a pleasure to partner and learn with you. As I was reading the stories you shared with us from your first conversation I couldn't help but notice your passion and that of the women you work with. I wanted to know more and learn how the stories continue to cheer you on or lend you a shoulder and helping hand. Your conversation was a starting point to bring your stories together with those of women around the world and to see that underneath it all, we are all alike. And we are working to make this world a better place than we found it.

You are all doing incredible work and I am very excited about the connection we have started to create. You are an inspiring and courageous woman, to not only see where obstacles are, but to provide a way for your community to get past those barriers and become self sufficient and thrive rather than just to survive. Thank you for all that you do and being part of this conversation and to expand my personal horizon of what is possible and what is needed. I look forward to long and lasting partnership and friendship.

Ton amie,

Laura

Ethiopia

by Kathleen Swirski



Central Intelligence Agency, Images retrieved on June 4, 2013, from <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/et.html>

Ethiopia, officially known as the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, is a country located in the Horn of Africa. With over 91 million inhabitants, Ethiopia is the most populous landlocked country in the world and the second-most populated nation on the African continent (Ethiopia, *n.d.*). Its capital and largest city is Addis Ababa. At 437,600 square miles (1,133,380 km), it is the tenth largest country in Africa and is the world's 27th-largest country.

Ethiopia is a multilingual and multiethnic society of more than 80 groups. Languages spoken in Ethiopia include Amharic, Tigrinya, Orominga, Guaraginga, Somali, Arabic, English, and more than 70 others. The main religions practiced are Muslim, Ethiopian Orthodox, and animist. The government is led by the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) and Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn.

Ethiopia is the continent's oldest independent country, originally called Abyssinia 2,000 years ago. (Infoplease, 2005). Most Ethiopians are farmers and herders. Hunger and war, as well as many environmental issues such as deforestation, drought, and soil degradation have led to widespread famine in the last few decades (National Geographic, 2013). The country has lost 98% of its forested regions in the last 50 years.

Ethiopia's main health problems include communicable diseases, caused by poor sanitation and malnutrition, and the spread of AIDS, which has mainly affected poor communities and women due to the lack of health education, empowerment and awareness (Ethiopia, *n.d.*).

Ethiopia is ranked as the second poorest country in the world by the United Nations. GDP per capita in 2012 was estimated to be \$1,541 USD. Ethiopia's chief exports include sugarcane, beeswax, coffee, hides, livestock, qat (a mildly narcotic plant that is chewed and enjoyed socially), cut flowers, cereals, and oilseeds. Natural resources include small reserves of gold, platinum, copper, potash, natural gas, and hydropower. Ethiopia has the greatest water reserves in Africa, but few irrigation systems in place; just 1% is used for power production and 1.5% for irrigation. With the construction of new dams and hydroelectric power projects, Ethiopia plans to export electric power to its neighbors in the future. Most regard Ethiopia's large water resources and potential as its "white oil" and its coffee resources as "black gold" (Infoplease, 2005).

Why Women's Leadership is Important in Ethiopia

The Government of Ethiopia has signed many international conventions and treaties that protect the rights of women and children. Historically, Ethiopia was headed only by female rulers. A legend says that even Alexander the Great stopped at the borders of Ethiopia because he did not want to risk being defeated by a woman (U.S. Dept. of State, 2013). The constitution provides for the fundamental rights and freedoms for women, but many legal and customary practices hinder women's equal participation in society and undermine their social status.

Weub (Weubamlak Eshetu Mengistu, the Country Convener) says that traditional bias around gender roles is a major obstacle for women. Men are considered the wage-earners, so most families prefer boys over girls. When girls are able to attend school, they must still help with the housework, while boys are encouraged to study.

Even women who are educated and work professionally in organizations face many challenges to be successful in this male dominated society. Weub believes Ethiopian women need to learn to value their own contributions to their families and communities, to ensure that their daughters are educated, and to increase their own skills of communication and working together in order to become more self-sufficient. Women need to demonstrate the power to change attitudes in the culture so that women and girls are equally valued with men and boys.

Biography of Convener Weubamlak Eshetu Mengistu

Weub is a consultant and trainer in the Ethiopian Management Institute. Her main responsibilities include training, consulting and coaching leaders, managers and employees of government, NGOs and private organizations. This work has helped her realize the potential that women have in the development of their society and has enabled her to meet many women in various leadership capacities, from the grassroots level to the higher leadership positions. These women have come from many different socioeconomic sectors and from around the country. Weub noticed that few women get the chance to learn and update their skills, and even fewer

women climb to high positions of organizational leadership. These discoveries convinced her to try to change the reality of women in her country.



Today she helps women by giving advice, sharing ideas, and providing training on managing projects and developing themselves. She believes women have the capacity to lead but usually lack the opportunity to exercise that skill, or don't recognize their abilities when a leadership situation arises.

"I believe that if we give them opportunity women can change their community, their country and even the world," Weub says. "I believe in the power of women, and that by changing the attitude of women and equipping them with confidence, skills and knowledge, they will help the society out of poverty. They will create new initiatives and new ways to support their

families, send their children to school, have enough food to feed their children, and so many other benefits."

In 2011, Weub won a Hubert Humphrey Fellowship, a program supported by the U.S. Department of State. Weub engaged in graduate-level academic courses at the University of Washington, including participating in professional development and community activities.

Conversation Circle

In the Conversation Circles, we asked the Convener to explore these four questions:

1. What do you care about in your community and in what projects have you participated?
2. As you engaged in this work, what skills have you used?
3. What additional skills or knowledge would you like to gain?
4. How do imagine you might develop these skills?

1. Weub convened six women and conducted two discussions. Participants included a waitress and project coordinators in professional positions. The women in the Ethiopian Conversation Circle value family above all, focusing on taking care of their families and educating their children to become "good citizens." They feel responsible for their families' well-being. Selflessness in ensuring family happiness is a recurring theme: they will do whatever it takes to keep their family happy and living peacefully. They are dedicated to excellence, always striving to do the highest quality work in and outside the home.

The projects in which these women have engaged are frequently within church groups, such as teaching children religion and values, and helping children and elderly people. One project called “Eder” is a hospice-like program that provides support for terminally ill patients and their families. Women involved in this program lead health care projects that serve orphans of AIDS parents or women with AIDS, by collecting food donations and raising money for homeless shelters. Some in this group of women also work on electricity, water and road construction and other infrastructure projects professionally.



2. The skills the women of Ethiopia have used include patience, balancing family and work, positive thinking and believing in one’s power and own qualities, listening to family and colleagues, flexibility, accommodating other people’s opinions, assimilating situationally with different people and groups, doing whatever is necessary to be successful, open-mindedness to learn from every one, truthfulness, transparency in communications, self-confidence, persistence, and believing in the power of openly discussing issues and sharing ideas.

One woman frequently teaches another, who passes on her knowledge until hundreds of women are encouraged to claim their leadership and their strengths, find new ways of thinking and feel empowered to make positive changes in their families, communities and country.

3. Skills the women would like to acquire include leadership beyond the family for work teams, decision-making, coordination, continuous learning, work/family balance, managing their own and others’ emotions, helping others without judging, filtering information, taking social responsibility and engaging in the society.

4. They felt they might gain these skills by asking family for opinions and sharing with other people, taking training, joining and participating in associations (business, family and community), participating and leading community gatherings and discussions, and reflection.



Kitchen Cabinet Letter to Weub:

Weub and my sisters in Ethiopia, your conversation stories are so inspiring to me! Thank you for your courage, tenacity, and openness in sharing your joys and sadness, and your commitment to build your capacity to lead families and communities under most difficult circumstances. So many of the themes in your writing resonate with me – the challenge of balancing work and family, of finding the self-confidence within ourselves to stand up and do what feels right and true despite being in less equal positions in society. The leadership qualities of your Circle shine through clearly as innate talents present and strong in each and every woman in the dialogue and in the stories you've shared with us. I look forward to a time, as in Ethiopia's past, when women again are the leaders of your beautiful country, so full of positive potential for the future of its people.

from Kathleen Swirski

Guatemala

by Wendi Walsh and Nicole Theberge



Central Intelligence Agency, Images retrieved on June 4, 2013, from
<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gt.html>

The Republic of Guatemala is a country in Central America that is bordered by Mexico, Belize, Honduras, El Salvador, the Caribbean Sea and the Pacific Ocean. Guatemala was part of the Mayan civilization that was conquered by the Spanish. After independence, Guatemala was led by several dictators, experienced several civil wars, and today has a representative democracy.

Guatemala has a diversity of biology and is viewed by many as a biodiversity hotspot, and multiple ethnicities, which are represented by Mestizo, Mayan populations, Garifunas, and Xincas. Guatemala has a population of nearly 14 million (2011 estimate) people. According to the CIA World Factbook (2013), Guatemala's gross domestic product per capita is \$5,200 (USD) making it one of the poorest countries in Latin America. The distribution of income is highly unequal with more than half the population below the poverty line and approximately 574,000 unemployed. The Factbook considers 56.2% of Guatemala to be living in poverty (Central Intelligence Agency).

The capital, Guatemala City, is home to libraries, universities and museums. While Spanish is the official country language, at least 25 dialects (including 22 Mayan dialects) are spoken in Guatemala. About 50-60% of the population is Catholic with 40% Protestant, 3% Eastern Orthodox and 1% indigenous Mayan. Cultural protections have been established for traditional Mayan religions and the government has established a policy of providing altars at every Mayan ruin so that traditional ceremonies may be performed there.

While public elementary and secondary schools are free, families pay the cost of books, uniforms, supplies and transportation. These costs can put education out of the reach of many Guatemalans. There are private schools that appeal to middle and upper class families. Just over 74% of the population aged 15 and above are literate, which is one of the lowest literacy rates in Central America (Guatemala, *n.d.*).

Why Women's Leadership is Important to Guatemala

Poverty and lack of education make decent employment opportunities difficult for people, especially women. Few women have professional jobs and most women who work out of the home sell food and crafts. The infrastructure (power, roads, and factories) does not provide adequate access to several towns, and many people have to leave their hometowns to work or to sell their products. There is poor access to basic health services, and when people are very sick it is unlikely they can afford a particular doctor. A high percentage of the population, especially women, are illiterate. For example, in some of the indigenous communities of San Juan Sacatepéquez, 90% of adult women are illiterate. Although some girls have the opportunity to complete primary school, the tasks of the house and family take many girls out of school, leaving them with few opportunities to prepare for a professional job.

Guatemala has two Country Conveners, Mabilia Carolina Joi Ojer (Mabilia) and Rocío Gonzalez. First, we will learn from Mabilia and then Rocío.

Biography of Convener Mabilia Carolina Joi Ojer



At 19, Mabilia began to work with women. She was passionate about women becoming self-sufficient and saw microcredit as a key resource to achieve that self-sufficiency. For seven years Mabilia worked as a loan officer with FAPE (Fundación de Asistencia para la pequeña Empresa)

<http://www.fundacionfape.org/home.html>. Now she is a Coordinator in this organization, a position that allows her to influence policy and continue her strong push to help women develop savings accounts.

“People, especially women, do not have easy access to credit, and institutions (such) as FAPE provide micro-credit starting from \$125 as an initial credit,” Mabilia explains. “The lack of preparation in business makes women vulnerable to the failure of their businesses, so it is important for us to continue to encourage the leadership of village banks to empower

entrepreneurial women so they can grow and improve their business and improve the quality of life for themselves and their families.”

While deeply aware that micro-loans enable women to provide for their families, Mabilia and her organization also recognize that the loans themselves are not an adequate single solution to a better life. The organization’s staff continually seek to work holistically with the women they serve. They provide training in business topics such as how to make a plan for their business. They seek ways to provide health service and health education. They help women recognize how much of their own energy and skill they invest in creating their products. “I didn’t know my own value,” women often say to Mabilia. “Yes,” Mabilia observes, “these women empower themselves and one another.” They learn to support each other. They learn to work together. They experience a great sense of solidarity.

Mabilia is seen as a leader, an example of a woman who knows her own value, and contributes in a meaningful way to her community. At one point, a mother confided to Mabilia, “I want my daughter to get an education and have a job like you, not just get married.” Mabilia was honored by that comment and sees it as a joyful responsibility to be a positive, good leader.

Mabilia was an iLEAP Fellow in 2010, which has enhanced her leadership skills. iLEAP is an international nonprofit organization that seeks to inspire and renew social leaders and global citizens through values-based leadership programs. The programs are conducted in Seattle, Washington, and collaborate with social change leaders in Asia, Africa, and Latin America to build regional networks of change leaders who are committed to building strong global partnerships for social change.

Mabilia’s Work at FAPE

Through her work at FAPE, Mabilia serves a rural area that has a majority population of indigenous Kaqchiquel people. FAPE’s loans are focused on the indigenous and non-indigenous women with activities in trade, agriculture, crafts, clothing, sale of food and vegetables, animal husbandry and basket making. FAPE has served more than 3,000 women, providing them with microcredit services, and these women work in at least 20 different towns. Mabilia’s team of seven indigenous women attends to approximately 1,400 women.



Mabilia and her family

Over the last two years, FAPE has conducted a pilot program for approximately 450 indigenous and non-indigenous women, training them in business subjects, mentoring, technical

training and credit. During this time, FAPE has also participated in a health project that has trained approximately 400 women in the areas of self-esteem, preventative health, family planning, hygiene, nutrition and first aid.

Conversation Circle

In the Conversation Circles, we asked the Convener to explore these four questions:

1. What do you care about in your community and in what projects have you participated?
2. As you engaged in this work, what skills have you used?
3. What additional skills or knowledge would you like to gain?
4. How do imagine you might develop these skills?

1. The participants of Mabilia's Conversation included eleven participants who are loan officers, village bankers, microcredit program coordinators and leaders from the banking community. They have personal and professional passions that help them improve community, especially related to schooling and literacy for women and girls, business training, employment training and the minimization of domestic violence and abuse. They have seen firsthand the challenges that women and children in particular face to improve their lives, and the women work to remove those challenges.

2. All the participants named their best skills and some skills they have learned as they have engaged in this work, including listening, sharing life experiences, building trust, being a good example, giving space and opportunity to participate, overcoming selfishness, encouraging participation and teaching other women so that they can participate. The participants seem to be looking at longer term and systemic solutions instead of transactional changes and quick fixes.

3. The participants offered both tactical and holistic responses to the skills and knowledge they would like to gain. Tactical skills included public speaking, giving presentations and negotiation. Holistic skills included redefining teaching and acknowledging the experience and wisdom inside the individual, instead of looking for "external experts."

4. The participants took a longer term and broad view of how they might develop these skills. They suggested learning skills that would help them better teach others, to be open to being influenced and to continue their practice of women teaching women.

Kitchen Cabinet Letter to Mabilia:

My dearest Mabilia,

It has been deeply rewarding and humbling to get to know you and understand your leadership challenges. The leadership challenges and how you address them are not so different from my own leadership challenges and how I address them. I have learned the most from other women – where we have been able to share our challenges and successes. Your experience is similar to mine. The women in your micro-credit organization do more than just lend money to women's businesses; they also strive to improve women's lives by educating them in accounting, business, health, self-esteem, and first aid. They feel responsible to do more. You understand that women need to improve their education level in order to improve their lives and their family's life. I seek to do similar work at a corporate level in America.

When I read the summary of your conversation circle, what resonated most deeply with me is that what I consider basic education is not common worldwide. I believe education is the cornerstone of why I have been successful. I hope this education will become more prevalent so that women and men will be able to share their gifts for the benefit of all.

Mabilia, I truly appreciate all the work you are doing on behalf of your community and hope we can find a way to help each other with our journeys. Hugs, Wendi

Mi queridísima Mabilia,

Ha sido gratificante conocerte, entender tus obstáculos de liderazgo y como tú los diriges, no son tan diferentes de mis propios desafíos de liderazgo y como yo los manejo. Yo he aprendido mucho de otras mujeres-donde nosotras hemos sido capaces de compartir nuestros desafíos y éxitos.

Tu experiencia es similar a la mía. Las mujeres en tu organización de micro-crédito hacen más que solo prestar dinero para los negocios de las mujeres; ellas también se esfuerzan por mejorar las vidas de las mujeres, educándolas en negocios, salud, autoestima y primeros auxilios. Ellas se sienten responsables de hacer más. Tú entiendes que las mujeres necesitan mejorar su nivel de educación para mejorar sus vidas y las de sus familias. Yo busco hacer algo similar, trabajar en un nivel corporativo en América.

Cuando yo leo el sumario de la conversación de tu círculo, el cual ha resonado más profundamente conmigo, es que yo considero que la educación básica no es común en el mundo entero. Yo creo que esta educación es la piedra angular de por qué yo he sido exitosa. Espero que esta educación se vuelva más común para que mujeres y hombres sean capaces de compartir sus talentos o regalos para el beneficio de todos.

Mabilia, sinceramente aprecio todo el trabajo que tu estas haciendo en nombre de tu comunidad y espero que nosotras podamos encontrar la forma de ayudarnos todos con nuestros trayectos. Abrazos, Wendi

Biography of Convener Rocío Gonzalez



Rocío worked for ten years as legal adviser, social worker and satellite coordinator for Common Hope in San Rafael, Guatemala. This organization partners with over 2,700 children and their families in 17 villages outside of Antigua and Guatemala City, to sustain and improve health care, housing, education and family development. Rocío developed partnerships between Common Hope and local communities to help families gain access to those programs and empower family members. She uses the power of story to illustrate the hope and inspiration that grows from the challenging conditions in which many dwell.

Rocío is continuing her path in the development community with a new organization through which she will manage youth programs in different parts of Guatemala. Along with this, Rocío is collaborating with leaders in Seattle to develop a Leadership Initiative that will provide a program for local leaders to receive an inspired reflective training on leadership and collaboration.

Rocío was an iLEAP Fellow in 2010 and participated in their training program in Seattle, Washington to enhance her leadership skills. iLEAP is an international nonprofit organization that seeks to inspire and renew social leaders and global citizens through values-based leadership programs. The program fosters collaboration with social change leaders in Asia, Africa and Latin America to build regional networks of change leaders who are committed to building strong global partnerships for social change. After she received this training, Rocío translated some of her reflections into Spanish, so that she could spread the learning to co-workers at her organization. She offered sessions focused on leadership, collaboration and communication, and called the workshop iSHARE from iLEAP.

Rocío's Work at Common Hope



Dave and Betty Huebsch established Common Hope (CH) in 1986. They focused their attention on the remote village of Santiago Atitlán, where 40,000 people lived in stark poverty. When they asked parents in the village how they could best be helped, parents expressed a great yearning to educate their children to have a path to a better future. The early years focused on helping educate the children by finding US sponsors to help bear the

cost of this education. At the height of the civil war in Guatemala the Huebsch's had to relocate to the Antigua valley, where it was safer to work. In the 1990s, Common Hope expanded its programs to include health care, housing and social work support for students and their families. They understood that a child's success in school depends on their family's health, safety, and stability.

As part of this organization, Rocío has worked with over 100 families in Guatemala on issues of environmental sustainability, healthcare, education, and legal support. She has established important partnerships between CH and local communities, which further enhances the effectiveness of CH's programs. Rocío often acts as a translator between the rural families and donors; this has been one of her more difficult challenges. During these times she focuses on the relationships she has with the families, and the power of story to illustrate the hope and inspiration that grows within the challenging conditions in which many dwell.

Rocío is part of a group of women who gather regularly outside of their regular routine and commitments to talk, laugh and support each other. The group is diverse in age and interests, yet they share a common bond in leveraging their strengths to support each other.

The women were surprised when they were asked to share experiences and opinions regarding women's leadership. They weren't sure that they had anything to share; yet as they ventured into the Conversation, they found that they had much to share and they expanded their normal conversation to include additional voices.

Conversation Circle

In the Conversation Circle, the Conveners explored four questions:

1. What do you care about in your community and in what projects have you participated?
2. As you engaged in this work, what skills have you used?
3. What additional skills or knowledge would you like to gain?
4. How do imagine you might develop these skills?

1. The participants of Rocío's conversation are passionate about their service to the greater community, especially related to health, rural development, environmentalism, gender equity and education. They are strong advocates for children, and are working in areas of family planning, children's advocacy, population growth, domestic violence and reducing negative stereotypes toward women. In their work they often take initiative to undertake projects and sometimes feel that they are not doing enough (even though they are doing much). They have focused on belonging, serving as counsel for friends and having respect for morals and values.

2. This group offered a long list of internal and external skills they utilize in their

work. They realized that to be in service to others there is some self-work needed. The internal self-work skills include self-care, tolerance, self-esteem, humility, patience, being positive and taking responsibility. The external skills they noted included visioning and working toward goals, taking on responsibility and motivating others.

3. Many of these women were educated late in their lives, and they are hungry to continue learning and to keep the door open to learning for others. Some of the skills they identified are related to overcoming gender roles in their country, including being proactive and straightforward, breaking shyness and silence, taking initiative, daring to think and do big things, learning a new language, setting personal boundaries, becoming better group leaders and acknowledging the skills they already have. Other identified skills are related to using women's strengths more frequently, including listening, teaching children well, practicing patience and helping others work through stressful situations, making connections, and communicating.

4. The Conversation participants identified a few hurdles to gaining the desired skills, such as domestic violence, that need to be overcome before skills might be improved. Many of the skill development ideas focus on educating children (as they are the future), creating support groups for women's leadership conversations, training women to be confident, honest and compassionate, continuing to meet together, listening to others, looking for mentors and listening to women from different generations. There was a sense that they are already doing many of these items and that they are on a good path to develop their skills. The women also focused on more formal means of learning including study, reading books, vocational training and direct practice.

Kitchen Cabinet Letter to Rocío:

Dear Rocío,

It is clear that you care deeply about women and families! You recognize the importance for women to come together, as you say, to talk and laugh and become good friends despite differences in age and interests.

All of us in the Kitchen Cabinet were profoundly touched when the women you convened expressed surprise that others would be interested in their thoughts. This is the essence of this Project ~ as women come together they deepen their appreciation for their importance, individually and collectively. This is how women affirm their value.

We treasure each of the women who participated in the conversation you convened, and we are inspired by how they contribute to their community. We are indeed very

interested in what they are thinking, and hope that they will remain connected to one another and to the larger network of women in other countries who share common concerns, energy and creativity. Together we can create changes that make a better world for everyone.

With much love and good wishes in all that you do,

Barbara

Nicaragua

by Nicole Theberge



Central Intelligence Agency, Images retrieved on June 4, 2013, from <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/nu.html>

Nicaragua is the largest country in Central America, and is bordered by Honduras, Costa Rica, the Caribbean Sea, and in Pacific Ocean. After gaining independence from Spain in 1821, Nicaragua officially became an independent republic in 1838. A civil war in 1978, widespread damage from Hurricane Mitch in 1998, and disruptions in fair elections have caused economic and infrastructural instability. Nicaraguans often emigrate to Costa Rica for seasonal or permanent work, which has led to approximately 300,000 Nicaraguans living in Costa Rica (Central Intelligence Agency, 2013).

The official language of Nicaragua is Spanish, although a small minority (1.7%) speaks Miskito. Nicaragua is home to the largest freshwater lake in Central America (Lake Nicaragua) and many active volcanoes. Deforestation, soil erosion, and water pollution are major environmental issues faced by Nicaragua. Most people in Nicaragua identify as Christian (Roman Catholic, 58.5%; Protestant, 23.2%). According to the CIA World Factbook (2013), Nicaragua is the second poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, with 46.2% of Nicaraguans living below the poverty line as of 2005 (Central Intelligence Agency).

Why Women's Leadership is Important to Nicaragua

Lidieth (Country Covener Lidieth Alvarez Guzman) identifies many challenges faced by the Nicaraguan people, including poverty, lack of jobs, illiteracy, environmental degradation and lack of youth engagement. Traditional values that allow only men to work, and the cultural norm

of male machismo (overly masculine and aggressive tendencies), place women at a disadvantage when it comes to facing these challenges and leading their communities and children towards brighter futures. In addition to these challenges, Lideith also notes that, “The biggest problem we have is the lack of jobs and education for women who are isolated by their lack of preparation, and by not being physically beautiful.”

Women’s leadership development is key to building healthy and strong communities. Lidieth has wisely stated that, “A good leader must embrace change and see it as an opportunity, and be able to use their skills without fear of failure.” The increased ability of women to honor the skills and abilities they already possess, and develop their leadership in community with one another, will no doubt aid in facing the previously mentioned challenges.

Biography of Convener Lidieth Alvarez Guzman

Lidieth Alvarez Guzman lives in the community of Limon 2, Tola Municipality, Department of Rivas, in the country of Nicaragua. When she is not working, she enjoys singing and playing the guitar, and is involved in her church. In 2011 Lidieth was selected as an iLEAP Fellow and participated in its training program in Seattle, Washington. iLEAP is an international nonprofit organization that seeks to inspire and renew social leaders and global citizens through values-based leadership programs. The program fosters collaboration with social change leaders in Asia, Africa and Latin America to build regional networks of change leaders who are committed to building strong global partnerships for social change.



Through sharing experience with other iLEAP Fellows participating in the program and engaging with others in the Seattle area who share her passion, Lidieth deepened her competence to lead in her community. She says of her experience with iLEAP, “I can see the need that exists within my community and help them solve daily challenges seen within it” (iLEAP, 2013, ¶ 1).

Lidieth’s Work at Genesis

Lidieth is the founder and director of the cooperative Genesis. In 2008 Lidieth led a group of community members to learn about and reflect on the idea of forming a cooperative. This led to a decision by the group to form Genesis, a cooperative that produces homemade bread, which uses their knowledge and taps into the unlimited demand for local bread products. A group of 10 people, consisting of mostly women, prepare bread to sell on the streets, at hotels and restaurants, and to visitors in their city. Lidieth and coworkers provide training on how to

build the participants' capacity for cooperation and business planning, marketing, construction company operations, baking and sewing, knowledge of sustainable development, equality at work, sexual and reproductive health and women's leadership.

In 2010, Genesis formed a youth group called Phoenix Formation (Formacion Fenix). This group provides young single women with education and employment opportunities. The Cooperative also provides a small revolving fund that offers opportunities for women to start their own businesses. The Phoenix Formation is part of Casa Verde, an organization that works on a wide range of community development issues. Lidieth is also a local program coordinator for Casa Verde.



Conversation Circle

In the Conversation Circle, the conveners explored four questions:

1. What do you care about in your community and in what projects have you participated?
2. As you engaged in this work, what skills have you used?
3. What additional skills or knowledge would you like to gain?
4. How do imagine you might develop these skills?

1. Lidieth's conversation group consisted of six women leaders in the community of Rivas, Nicaragua. Many Conversation participants work in the areas of youth and environmental protection. The passions of these women revolve around education, engaging youth in the community in meaningful ways, women's equality, literacy, women's employment, and creating a clean and healthy environment. These women have served as leaders for youth empowerment, trained physically and verbally battered women, organized "literacy day," and participated in a community garden.

2. The skills that the women identified as using in their work included communication, collaboration skills and social/emotional skills. Specifically in the category of communication, two of the skills identified were listening and communicating in a group. Skills for working in groups included discussion about distributing responsibilities, influencing other leaders, organizing groups, managing projects, motivational skills, teaching, understanding confrontations, and building relationships. Social/emotional skills that were discussed included patience, perseverance, optimism skills for providing service to others, love and care and respecting the opinions of young people.

3. This group discussed many skills they would like to develop further. Some of these skills are the same as those identified in question two, such as project management, influencing others, communication, social relations and motivation. Other skills for development include self-confidence, breaking silence and shyness, language (English) skills, punctuality, self-expression without fear and growing organizations.

4. Many of these skills were recognized as useful for leadership at work, but also for life in general. The discussion of how to develop these skills involved putting them to use in daily life as well as in projects, by convening people and communicating with people about these skills, and making things happen in the community, home, and family life.

Kitchen Cabinet Letter to Lidieth:

Dear Lidieth,

It is so clear to me that you care deeply about the present and future of your community. The thoughtful and honest way that you talk about the challenges faced by women and youth in Nicaragua, and the wonderful ways you are facing these challenges are incredibly inspiring to me. You seem to follow your passions and go where your skills are called for, and that is admirable. I have cherished our conversations, however brief.

When I first read the summary of your first conversation I was taken by the honesty of the information presented. The ability to discuss difficult issues and witness the realities of situations faced by people is a gift that you and the women in your conversation noticeably have. I was struck by how what you discussed about youth empowerment and engagement is so in line with the work that I see needs to be done with youth here in the United States.

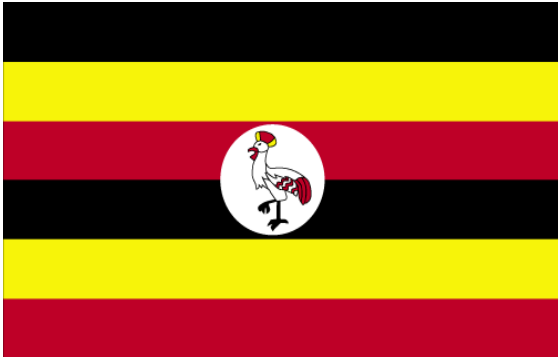
The ways that you are helping to solve the issues you see as important by building community and engagement shows recognition that the issues and solutions are all connected. You, along with the women in your conversation, are making a positive difference in the world. Keep it up!

With love,

Nicole

Uganda

by Patricia Hughes and Wendi Walsh



Central Intelligence Agency, Images retrieved on June 4, 2013, from <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ug.html>

The Republic of Uganda is in central east Africa and bounded by Kenya, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and Tanzania. Many groups have tried to exert control over Uganda including Africans, Arab traders, British explorers and business people, and Christian missionaries. The British ruled beginning in the late 1800s and Uganda gained their independence in 1962. The period since then has been marked by intermittent conflicts, military coups, and most recently a civil war against the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) (Uganda, *n.d.*).

More than forty languages are spoken in Uganda, although the official language is English. Luganda, a central language, is widely spoken across the country. A largely Christian country, 12% of the population is Muslim, and traditional indigenous beliefs are sometimes practiced alongside Christianity or Islam. The country is home to over 30 different ethnic groups and tribes, which have their own music styles dating back to the 18th century.

For decades, Uganda's economy suffered from devastating economic policies and instability, contributing to Uganda's status as one of the world's poorest countries. Thirty-eight percent of the population lives on less than \$1.25 USD a day. Uganda has substantial natural resources, including fertile soils, regular rainfall, sizable deposits of copper and cobalt, and largely untapped reserves of crude oil and natural gas. Agriculture and the service industry provide for most of the country's GDP and exports (Uganda, *n.d.*).

Rural Ugandans, including 90% of all rural women, use farming as their main source of income. Rural women are also responsible for caretaking within their families. The average Ugandan woman spends nine hours a day on domestic tasks such as preparing food and clothing,

fetching water and firewood, and caring for the elderly and orphans. Adding work in the fields, women work between 12 and 18 hours per day, compared to men, who work between eight and ten hours a day. Some rural women engage in small-scale entrepreneurial activities such as rearing and selling animals, but these efforts are often thwarted by their heavy workloads.

Uganda's literacy rate at the 2002 census was 67 percent (77% male and 58% female). Although some primary education is mandatory under law, in many rural communities this is not observed as many families cannot afford uniforms and scholastic materials. Girls often drop out of school to help at home or to get married; other girls engage in sex work. As a result, young women tend to have older and more sexually experienced partners and this puts women at a disproportionate risk of getting infected by HIV. Maternal health in rural Uganda lags behind national goals, with geographical inaccessibility, lack of transport and financial burdens posing key constraints to accessing maternal health services (Uganda, *n.d.*).

Women have a lower social status than men, which reduces their power to act independently, participate in community life, become educated or escape reliance on abusive men. Uganda has realized that the lack of women's rights is a major cause of poverty, and policies such as the National Gender Policy in 1997 and the National Action Plan on Women (NAPW) have been enacted to improve the social, legal/civic, political, economic and cultural conditions of women (Uganda, *n.d.*).

Why Women's Leadership is Important to Uganda

Being a woman in Uganda makes one vulnerable to issues related to HIV/AIDS, a male-dominated culture, less education, sexual violence and sex trafficking. "We know that women have to be empowered to find solutions to these vulnerabilities," says Betty Kagoro, Country Convener for this Project. "Women in Uganda, like elsewhere in the world, are much more than victims. They play an active role in nurturing, providing, educating, leading, managing, supporting interventions at different levels in society."

Betty stresses that the importance of women's leadership has long been recognized, but without building their capacity to identify their strengths, abilities and competencies, women won't achieve much. "In order to achieve sustainable empowerment of women, it is essential to involve women at all levels of social economic development processes," she says. "Experiences across the globe show the same unforgettable lessons – when women's capacity is enhanced, the entire community is enhanced. Enhancing women's leadership competencies will lead to social justice, income generating projects like craft making and poultry farming, making healthy decisions like accessing HIV care, prenatal care, and family planning services, and serving as role models to younger women."

It is important to recognize women's efforts to promote leadership and social justice among Ugandan women, such as the Action for Women in Development, the Forum for Women in Development, and the Forum for Women Educationalists. These groups have played a tremendous role in bringing women's plight to the forefront. Sadly, Betty observes, these passionate efforts on many occasions have been confrontational as opposed to practical, and have not always yielded the much-desired results. "These efforts are often elitist and have not opened up constructive engagement with women at grass roots levels, who most need the knowledge and skills to improve their lives."

Biography of Convener Betty Kagoro



"I have always loved young people," says Betty. Indeed, she worked at an adolescent health communications non-governmental organization (NGO) for seven years where she established youth initiatives in Liberia, Kenya and India. While she recognizes the good that these programs did, Betty was also aware that in Uganda, many young people were dropping out of school due to early pregnancy, forced marriage, drug abuse, infection with HIV/AIDS, indulging in antisocial behavior – all of which continued to impact them negatively the rest of their lives. Betty believed that agencies serving teens needed to revisit their strategies, that these agencies needed to collaborate more and involve the young people in the design of programs to make them more meaningful and impactful.

Betty became an iLEAP Fellow in Seattle in 2009. iLEAP is an international nonprofit organization that seeks to inspire and renew social leaders and global citizens through values-based leadership programs. The program fosters collaboration with social change leaders in Asia, Africa and Latin America to build regional networks of change leaders who are committed to building strong global partnerships for social change. Following her iLEAP experience, Betty returned to Uganda with renewed passion to empower and positively influence teenagers to deal with life challenges. She worked for a year to gain NGO certification for Teen Empowerment Uganda (TEU), a certification that has just been renewed for three years.

Betty's Work at Teen Empowerment Uganda

Currently, Betty works for the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Uganda Country Office as a Communications Specialist.



She supports TEU from her own income as she, board members and volunteers seek additional funding. The TEU program concentrates on building strengths in teen programs. “We intend to develop teen potential by focusing on individual assets through mentoring, coaching, skills development and service learning,” Betty says. “We concentrate our efforts away from just fixing problem teens, towards creating positive opportunities to develop teen potential for lifelong success.”

TEU’s activities focus on social skills, stress management, puberty and sexual health especially for girls, service learning and social action, self esteem development, school success and safety, goal setting, gifts and talents, friendship formation, parent-teen relationships, leadership skills, civics roles and responsibilities, respect for self and others, decision-making and doing right. For more information on TEU, go to <http://teenempowermentug.blogspot.com>.

Conversation Circle

In the Conversation Circles, the group explored the following four questions:

1. What do you care about in your community and in what projects have you participated?
2. As you engaged in this work, what skills have you used?
3. What additional skills or knowledge would you like to gain?
4. How do imagine you might develop these skills?

1. Betty convened five educated, professional women who are very active in their careers, churches, families and communities. The projects they are engaged in focus on helping new mothers and newly married women become more connected with each other and economically independent, providing leadership and communication skills to young women leaders and adolescents, doing peace and justice work with refugees, leading women's circles to organize service, sharing experiences and providing inter-religious communication among women at church, and providing adult cross-cultural education.

2. The skills the women identified were categorized by personal and project management. Personal skills included empathy, consulting with and learning from parents and their faith traditions, self-belief and self esteem, learning from peers, coping with emotions, positive energy and giving others compliments, ambition, being visionary, being non-judgmental, modeling and being available to each other without meddling, and being good communicators including listening, counseling and being assertive. Some of the project management skills they use in their leadership approach include mentoring, organization, decision making and mobilizing others – which includes many skills such as participation, consultation, dialogue, ownership, consensus building and evaluation. Other management skills noted include negotiation, facilitation, human resource management, supervision, debate, recording successes and celebrating achievements.

3. The skills the women would like to gain include networking with positive role models and making friends, communication and public speaking, giving inspirational talks, practical management and organizational development, advocacy, self belief and confidence, assertiveness, mobilization, speaking up in a culture, mentoring, writing records and staying close to the people who have the skills they want to learn. Many of the women have specific continuing education goals such as how to run a business, learning more about microfinance, expanding their knowledge about such issues as maternal health, treating or ending malaria, early child development, modernizing the village and how to get scholarships to pursue this training.

4. Many of the women said they can practice and learn these new skills within their church groups where they are already active. They also wish to learn from each other. “Being a more advantaged woman than the members of my group, I always feel the urge to pass on skills to enable them improve their social and financial status,” said one participant. They also said they could learn through formal education and training, and in new jobs.

Kitchen Cabinet Letter to Betty:

Dear Betty,

Reading the stories and seeing the photographs of the women you convened helped me feel connected to all of you! I was struck by some similar patterns to women in the U.S., such as how some of the women came naturally to leadership positions due to their family experiences, while others came reluctantly and only after being coaxed by a mentor or friendly person on their journey. I think the same is true for women leaders in this country. I believe every human being has gifts to share, and it is a social and moral injustice when we are not allowed to share these gifts on behalf of the common good.

I was also struck by the frequent mentions of the women being inspired by their parents and through their faith. It takes courage to stand up for what we believe in, and we each find courage in different places, whether through community, our values, our faith or through previous experiences. I wish you and your colleagues heartfelt best wishes and resilience to continue your very important work.

Warmly, Pat Hughes

Vietnam

by Roslyn Ericksen



Central Intelligence Agency, Images retrieved on June 4, 2013, from <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/vn.html>



Vietnam is the easternmost country on the Indochina Peninsula in Southeast Asia, bordered by China, Laos, Cambodia and the South China Sea. With an estimated population of 90.3 million, Vietnam is the world's 13th most populous country.

The Vietnamese became independent from Imperial China in 938 AD. The nation expanded geographically and politically until the mid-19th century, when the Indochina Peninsula was colonized by the French. The First Indochina War eventually led to the expulsion of the French in 1954, leaving Vietnam divided politically into two states, North and South Vietnam. Conflict between the two sides intensified, with heavy foreign intervention, during the Vietnam War, which ended with a North Vietnamese victory in 1975.

Vietnam was then unified under a Communist government, but was politically isolated and impoverished. In 1986, the government initiated a series of economic and political reforms, which began Vietnam's path towards integration into the world economy. Vietnam's economic growth has been among the highest in the world since 2000. However, the country still suffers from relatively high levels of income inequality, disparities in healthcare provision, and poor gender equality.

Why Women's Leadership is Important to Vietnam

Women in Vietnam played a significant role in defending Vietnam from 1945 to 1975. They took roles such as village patrol guards, intelligence agents, propagandists, and military recruiters. By becoming active participants in the struggle to liberate their country from foreign occupation, Vietnamese women were able to free themselves from centuries of Confucian influence that had made them second-class citizens. Historically, this character and spirit of Vietnamese women were first exemplified by the conduct of the Trung sisters, the first figures in the history of Vietnam who revolted against Chinese control. These traits are also epitomized in the Vietnamese saying: "When war comes, even women have to fight," and its variation: "When the enemy is at the gate, the woman goes out fighting" (Vietnam, *n.d.*, ¶ 1).

Vietnam's political system consists of the unique Party, the Government and other social organizations such as Vietnam Youth Union, Vietnam Farmers Association and The Vietnam Women's Union, which play a vital role in contributing to the country's development strategy. Most of the projects regarding poverty reduction in Vietnam are addressed in grassroots ways by the Women's Union because women know how to work effectively with their communities.

"In Vietnam, if you ask someone to hold the leadership role of women throughout the country, the answer is the Women's Union," says Tam (Nguyen Thi Thanh Tam), the Country Convener for this Project. "In the Vietnamese village, if you ask anyone who has leadership abilities of women, the answer is (a) representative of the Women's Union."

The Vietnam Women's Union (VWU) was founded in 1930, and is closely aligned with the country's pursuit of national independence and development. VWU is mandated to protect women's legitimate rights and strive for gender equality. The Union has a network that operates at four administrative levels of central, provincial, district and commune, with a total membership of over 13 million women. The VWU has contributed to the achievement of National Renovation in the area of socio-economic development. The current areas of focus are "mutual assistance among women in household economic development, thrift for national construction and women actively study, creatively work and nurture happy families," Tam says. The VWU is also involved in spreading propaganda and educating women to preserve and promote moral values and cultural traditions of Vietnamese women. Vietnamese women have a significant role in the development, formation and maintenance of Vietnam's ethical values. One of the mottos in Vietnam is: "Where there is a woman, there is a unit of the union." Women also play an important role in their family and society in finding the solution to poverty.

Biography of Convener Nguyen Thi Thanh Tam

Tam is a lecturer of public administration at the Ben Tre School of Politics, which trains key officials, managers and leaders who work for governmental agencies, political and social

organizations in Ben Tre province, Vietnam. In this role, she has also cooperated with the Vietnam Women's Union in the province to organize training courses for hundreds of female managers and leaders in the local area.



“It’s important that women have conversations about leadership and develop their leadership skills,” Tam says. “Women need to open their minds to the world. They should learn how women around the world develop their leadership in practice. I believe when women gain knowledge and skills, they will find the way to transfer it in their real life.”

Working in the school for seven years, Tam has trained provincial government staff to share scientific research regarding public administration with those working at the grassroots level. She also directed the Information and Foreign Languages Department and created a project called Applying Information Technology in Public Administration. She has volunteered to teach English for free to many civil servants.

In addition to her desire to be an excellent teacher and to work for public policy reform, Tam has a passion for community service. As a youth leader in the Vietnam Student Association in her university, she organized activities for youth in the Mekong River Delta in South Vietnam. In 2006, she was among outstanding young leaders selected to participate in the Ship for South East Asia Youth Program supported by the Government of Japan, which contributed to promoting and strengthening mutual understanding and friendship among the youth of South East Asian countries and Japan. “This program changed my world view and broadened my vision,” Tam notes.

In 2011, she was accepted as a Hubert Humphrey Fellow, a program supported by the U.S. Department of State. During this fellowship year, Tam engaged in graduate-level academic courses at the University of Washington, professional development activities, participation in many community activities and forums. She also had a successful professional affiliation at the Center for Creative Change at Antioch University in Seattle, which is how she came in contact with the Women's Leadership Project.

Conversation Circle

In the Conversation Circles, the groups explored four questions:

1. What do you care about in your community and in what projects have you participated?
2. As you engaged in this work, what skills have you used?
3. What additional skills or knowledge would you like to gain?

4. How do imagine you might develop these skills?

1. Tam convened eight women ranging in age from 33 to 46, all of them having roles within the Women's Union at the commune level of Ben Tre Province. The women in Tam's conversation talked a lot about the roles and responsibilities of women to their families, communities, the workplace and as Vietnamese women representing the country's political and cultural values. There are several movements and governmental groups promoting the expected role of women in Vietnam. The intention of these movements is to enhance the role of Vietnamese women in the modern era, aiming to raise awareness, change behaviors of people, communities and society, and highlight women's role in preserving, promoting and building good ethics of Vietnamese people.

One of these movements is “Giỏi việc nước, Đảm việc nhà” which requires women to fulfill their three-fold responsibilities as worker, housewife and loyal Vietnamese citizen. The conversation highlighted the women's desires to follow this movement, and be successful in career and excellent in family care. The newest campaign of VWU says that women should not have five things: poverty; violations against the law and social ills; domestic violence; more than two children; malnutrition in children. They should focus on these three things: a clean house, a clean kitchen and a clean environment.



2. Tam's group highlighted the skills that enable women to be the foundation for preserving and nurturing the Vietnamese family, community, country and culture. Some of these skills are self esteem, self confidence, a concept of “dam dang” which is translated to mean “good arrangement,” and honesty. They also mentioned skills such as making decisions by consensus, asking for help, maintaining optimism, ensuring family happiness, learning well and teaching children well, being of service and project management. They also mentioned several skills related to economic health, such as creating jobs especially in rural areas for middle-aged or ethnic minority women, earning well, vocational training such as cooking and stringing beads and other crafts.

3. Personal skills the women would like to develop further include mentoring, remaining calm in situations, autonomy and self-reliance, selflessness, kindness, love and honesty. They also want to improve in their ability to serve their country as exemplary women, which includes cooking well, taking care of the family, preserving the dignity, status and honor of social ethics, remaining loyal to the country, community and to friendships, and to providing support for the development of other women.

4. Tam's group sees several opportunities to fulfill these goals, including education, travel, on-the-job training or new jobs, and taking advantage of modeling clubs, community services and social welfare. They also mentioned being mindful of their self esteem, staying in good health, remaining flexible, and learning within family, community relationships and party committees. They also said they could increase their awareness of the law, by saving money and increasing their income, and by using technology, free medicine and medical treatments.

Kitchen Cabinet Letter to Tam:

Dear Tam,

I enjoyed reading the historical information and conversation summaries you sent us. It's clear that these women are very involved in the political realm and in many grass root initiatives on behalf of the development of women in their communities. More so than any of the other countries, the women in your country seem to rely on and partner with the government, formal agencies and associations to set and communicate values and direct practices for developing women.

It's clear to me that women are viewed as an integral part of the whole community and that their leadership and participation contributes greatly to the development of the Vietnamese family, community, culture and country. I was impressed by the enormous responsibility that you and other women hold to preserve and promote the values of the Vietnamese culture. Reading your notes makes me wonder how you and the other women feel about these responsibilities, and I wonder if men have the same or different responsibilities, for preserving the family and country.

Lastly, I realized again how different cultural lenses can create different perceptions. Initially I had a strong reaction to the word "propaganda," and I was reminded that this word has a very different meaning, and is viewed quite positively in your culture. I've been reminded how much our own personal and cultural filters determines how we perceive our roles, values and responsibilities to ourselves and community.

From,

Roslyn Ericksen

United States: The Muckleshoot Nation

by Heather Goodwin



The Muckleshoot nation is a Federally recognized Indian tribe in the Pacific Northwest region of what is now known as Washington State. The Tribe's name is derived from the native name for the prairie on which the Reservation was established in 1857. This nation historically lived alongside other native tribes in and around Seattle for thousands of years prior to non-Indian settlement. Their ancestry is a mixture of the Duwamish and Upper Puyallup tribes who migrated seasonally to follow fish, animal, and foliage resources along the waterways of this region (History of the Muckleshoot, 2013). Like many other tribes in the area, the land of the Muckleshoot nation has a clear view of their sacred mountain, Tahoma, also known as Mount Rainier. The nation values family and land as important cornerstones to their way of life, and they hold land and everything connected to it in high reverence (S. Hormann, personal communication, 2013). The Muckleshoot also have a strong sense of culture and community.

The language of the nation is a dialect of Puget Salish descending from the tribes who resided in eastern Puget Sound. Like most native Indian tribes, the Muckleshoot language was orally passed down through the generations, but had no written history. However, beginning in 1962 University of Victoria, Canada, linguist Thom Hess collaborated with a team of other linguists to document the oral language into a written form to help preserve the language of the Muckleshoot (Language and Culture, 2013).

Today, the Muckleshoot Reservation is located in southeast Auburn, Washington near the White River. The tribe has over 3,000 registered members, making the Muckleshoot nation among the largest tribes within the state of Washington (Muckleshoot people, 2013). According to Alan Stein in his article, *Muckleshoot Indian Tribe*, the Muckleshoot nation is responsible for overseeing governmental relationships with other Indian tribes within the state of Washington, as well as maintaining relationships with local and federal governments. Stein mentions how the Muckleshoot nation was able to provide King County with 1,400 jobs in 1999, which generated

an annual payroll of \$31 million. Stein also notes that the Muckleshoot have a strong sense of community, charity and social engagement, as was demonstrated when the nation awarded \$1.5 million dollars to nonprofit organizations and other charity organizations in 1999. The tribe has continued to be a major contributor to the local economy and community, providing resources to other governments, schools, nonprofits and churches throughout Washington. The benefits of their economic success reach beyond jobs to reaching agreements to protect fish and wildlife habitat, to innovate educational programming, and to forming hundreds of partnerships with organizations that serve those in need.

According to Shauna Hormann, a friend of the tribe who attends many events on the Reservation, the Muckleshoot nation has a diversified economy that has allowed them to make these contributions to their local community. The nation has a casino to attract income, and their prowess with salmon fishing enables them to sell fish to establishments throughout King County, such as the grocery store chain Safeway. In addition, the tradition of making and selling artisan baskets, and other crafts, is still a valuable segment of their economy. Shauna mentioned that a current cultural issue for the nation is how to create pathways to teach Muckleshoot youth about their heritage.

Why Women's Leadership is Important to the Muckleshoot nation

Romajeane Thomas, the Convener for this Conversation, notes that matriarchal forms of leadership are traditional within the Muckleshoot culture. “Women are regarded as the bringers of new life and as mothers,” she says. These roles have given the Muckleshoot women a high status within their society. In addition, Muckleshoot women approach work and leadership with a perspective that often differs from that of men. This diversity in perspectives allows healthy communities to grow and emerge. Because prevailing issues of racism and gender inequality prevent some Muckleshoot from reaching their full potential, providing support and encouragement for women within the nation is very important. By sharing knowledge within the community and providing support for one another, Romajeane and other Tribal women hope that these issues will diminish over time.



Biography of Convener Romajeane Thomas

Romajeane Thomas is a community activist and a member of the Community Leadership Team for a Healthy Communities campaign funded by the Center for Disease Control. As a member of this team, Romajeane creates policies that influence the use of traditional foods in cooking by tribal members. She does this by partnering with local community kitchens to reintroduce them to traditional Native foods, and she seeks to revitalize the relationship the Muckleshoot have with their food.

Romajeane also works as a foster parent, educator and volunteer. Currently she is finishing a Master's degree in Strategic Communications at Antioch University in Seattle. Romajeane has a Bachelor's degree in Human Services, and has utilized this undergraduate education to work in youth advocacy and case management programs. To advance her work in food activism, Romajeane has partnered with five other Antioch students to form the Team Full Bowl initiative. This initiative works to address the issue of food insecurity around the world. The team recently submitted a proposal to the Hult Competition to gain awareness for their cause.

In the future, Romajeane hopes to reintroduce more traditional foods into the kitchens of the Muckleshoot nation as a way to preserve the culture and values of her people. She also wants to work with individuals to help them realize their innate gifts and talents. Her goal is to help them find the path and work that they were meant to do in this life. Her dream is to help others realize their abilities, which, over time, will enable everyone to make the world better for all people.

Romajeane sees this project of Developing Women's Leadership Around the Globe as a first step towards realizing her dream, and hopes that her group will continue to gather to learn and support one another. When asked about the group's experience, Romajeane said, "We have come to the realization that we do work daily that is investing in our community, and with the support of each other we can further our network, resources, and skills to broaden the scope of work possible."

Conversation Circle

In the Conversation Circle, the conveners explored four questions:

1. What do you care about in your community and in what projects have you participated?
2. As you engaged in this work, what skills have you used?
3. What additional skills or knowledge would you like to gain?
4. How do imagine you might develop these skills?

1. Romajeane gathered eight women from her nation and facilitated the Conversation. The women were concerned with the themes of connection and increased communication with one another, and with enhancing the feeling of community within their nation. They felt that staying connected through social media sites would allow them to use technology to increase their communication. Some of the themes that emerged during their conversation were being support pillars for family and community, creating spaces, youth as resources, youth empowerment and collaboration. The group focused on collaboration among tribal members, including finding ways to encourage younger tribe members to become more involved with the tribe community and subsequently, feel more empowered by this involvement. Other issues

were how to provide community spaces that could support Muckleshoot values of family and community ties.

2. The themes that emerged in response to this question were being support pillars for family and community, and being teachers, or what they call “knowledge carriers.” The group also discussed the skills of staying faithful and positive, and of emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence, briefly, is a body of work in the leadership development field that explores an individual's ability to identify, assess and manage the emotions of oneself, of others and of groups. The group also called attention to the skills of working in teams, respecting opinions of the young people and stimulating youth participation. The women said their work helped them gained valuable teamwork skills and a fresh perspective on the values of young people. Some women reported an increase in their levels of emotional intelligence when engaging with others and a change in their sense of self. These women viewed themselves as vessels of knowledge and wisdom who were capable of providing hope to their families and communities.

3. This question opened up a dialogue on how to address the issues within their community. They spoke of some tactical skills they'd like to develop, such as public speaking and gaining more computer skills and information on using social media such as a Facebook page to connect women. The women identified a need to begin a dialogue with teens in order to decrease the likelihood of young women becoming pregnant. The skills to do this included speaking up to share their ideas, creating a space to include youth in leadership and empowering youth in leadership conversations. Others pointed out a need to overcome the obstacles that fear of change or of the unknown can create, and to pay attention to self care.

4. This conversation led to a decision to create classes on using social media so that women could connect and communicate with greater ease. One of the young group members volunteered to lead these classes. The conversation also led to a greater sense of teamwork, and the women said they were willing to combine their skills, resources and expertise, and use this synergy at future gatherings to better the group as a whole.

Kitchen Cabinet Letter to Romajeau:

Dear Romajeau,

It warms my heart when I think about the variety of ways women lead that your Conversation group talked about! Many of the comments brought to mind ways you all lead your children – fostering gifts, creating positive spaces, teaching and being an example of moral character. This is a clear reminder of how being a mother prepares us

for leading in other places as well – at our schools, where we work or worship, in our communities. All of these places need leaders who can nurture the gifts of others, who can create positive space for being and working together, who can provide examples of people who live their values.

Reading the report of your Conversation reminded me again of the importance of this Project. As local and global communities we need leaders like this. We need leaders who are good communicators and good collaborators, who realize that it is not just the tasks we accomplish, but the ways we go about achieving those tasks that is also important. We need leaders who demonstrate respect and appreciation and know how to build meaningful relationships.

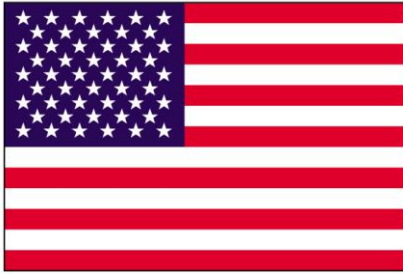
We also need leaders who are knowledge carriers, who remember and teach the wisdom of our cultures. At the same time, we need leaders who can engage in the world as it exists today, who can learn and utilize technology in service to people and planet. Collectively, your Conversation participants represent all of these aspects of leadership. May you continue to inspire, challenge, and support one another.

With love and respect to you and each of the participants in your Conversation,

Barbara

United States: Antioch University Seattle

by Brittany Blondino



Central Intelligence Agency, Images retrieved on June 4, 2013, from <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/us.html>

The United States of America is a country that occupies most of central North America. It is bordered by Canada, Mexico, the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans. The United States also includes Alaska, Hawaii, and several U.S. Territories throughout the Pacific and Caribbean. It is the third largest country in the world, both in terms of land and population, with approximately 315 million citizens (United States, *n.d.*).

European colonization began in the 1600s and with it came the spread of diseases that adversely affected many of the indigenous populations. By the late 1700s, the British colonies grew dissatisfied with their ties to England, and they fought for independence during the American Revolution (United States, *n.d.*).

The United States are considered a federal constitutional republic with a system of checks and balances to ensure the voice of the people is heard. The Declaration of Independence, which declared independence from Britain, is used as a standard for human rights on behalf of disenfranchised people across the world. Equality is one of the highest ideals of the United States and has attracted immigrants from other countries for centuries. Though the constitution provided voting rights only to white, property-owning males, the country has worked to become more inclusive over time, abolishing slavery in the late 1800s and allowing women to vote in 1920 (United States, *n.d.*).

Antioch University was founded in 1852, and from its beginning held social justice issues of paramount importance. Antioch University was the first university in the United States to appoint a woman as a full professor in 1852, and formed a policy in 1863 that no applicant should be rejected on the basis of race. The university is also unique in the way it approaches

learning. The students are not graded, but rather encouraged to pursue their passions, read about topics that interest them, and prepare presentations on that material (Antioch, *n.d.*).

Antioch's Seattle campus (AUS) was opened in 1975 and serves approximately 900 students per year. AUS programs focus on empowering students to become leaders for positive change in psychology, education, creative change and liberal arts. The students and faculty combine theoretical frameworks with work in the community to forward the university's mission of environmental, economic and social justice.

Why Women's Leadership is Important to the United States

Although the United States is one of the largest and wealthiest countries of the world, inequality still exists between genders, and shows up in issues such as women having less access to healthcare, unequal financial compensation for the same work, and gender-based violence. For many years the United States has valued "masculine" leadership qualities, such as problem-solving, assertiveness, and task focus, because those qualities helped the country rise to an industrial and global power. Many women have had to rely on the same masculine qualities to obtain and maintain leadership roles.

Increasingly, the conditions exist for women to have an equal seat at the table. Women of the United States, a country that has worked so hard for equal rights, are in a unique position to step into their inherent leadership qualities and encourage women around the world to step into their power. The feminine side of leadership qualities, such as relationship building, caring, and thinking about the long-term effects of collective actions, are increasingly recognized as essential qualities to move toward a thriving future for all citizens and for the earth's inhabitants. Antioch University Seattle supports leadership development by focusing on teaching students about making sustainable choices for themselves, their communities, organizations and the global community.



Biography of Convener Roslyn Ericksen

Roslyn is a Senior Account Manager with The Hartford, a national insurance agency. She has been in the insurance industry for over 15 years, working with large employers to provide health and welfare benefit programs. Roz became intrigued by the impact a company's culture and "personality" had on productivity, morale and the use of benefits. In particular, she is drawn to the issues of absenteeism, happiness in the workplace, and how these

issues enhance or hinder an employee's connection to the company and to other employees.

In December 2011, Roz graduated from Antioch University Seattle with a Masters in Organizational Psychology. Her focus of study was the power of the feminine, especially in western corporate environments. She studied the gifts of the feminine such as cooperation, collaboration, relationships, nurturing, and intuition, and how these gifts could be better supported, accessed, utilized, integrated and incorporated within the corporate world. Roz also works with human service groups in Seattle, including Northwest Center, Provail, United Way and Plymouth Housing Group.

Conversation Circle

In the Conversation Circles, the group explored following four questions:

1. What do you care about in your community and in what projects have you participated?
2. As you engaged in this work, what skills have you used?
3. What additional skills or knowledge would you like to gain?
4. How do imagine you might develop these skills?

1. Roz convened a dozen female Antioch students for two conversations. The AUS women care about and participate in activities that affect their local and global communities including, social justice, homelessness, tribal food autonomy, birth support services, education, abuse, mental health, environmental health, healing, how gender inequality poses challenges for men, healthcare, and leadership. The group also explored what it means to engage with their communities, how to support other women, how to balance careers and motherhood, and the importance of the caregiving professions and how the monetary fiscal reward for those professions is out of balance in proportion to the value given.

2. A beautiful picture of women's leadership emerged from this conversation. The skills claimed were listening, accountability, ability to see connections, maintaining awareness of the group intention and purpose, supporting others to solve their own problems, reframing circumstances, holding the space for others to move through difficulties, sharing stories, being genuine, vulnerable and authentic, mentorship, fairness, and consensus building. These skills highlight the many facets of relationship, for those in communities, among individuals, or by individuals with themselves. These skills also help to strengthen those relationships and facilitate the movement from what exists to what is emerging.

3. The additional skills they would like to have focused on qualities that facilitate connection. Self-awareness was a big theme, including honesty with themselves about the skills they bring, what they enjoy and have energy for, and accessing their intuition and that of other women. Another major theme was the ability to set boundaries, including knowing what they can and cannot handle and being able to hold others accountable for their actions. Many

participants also expressed a desire to learn how to effectively handle or mediate conflict, in service to deepening connections between those in disagreement.

4. To develop the additional skills the participants desired, the women acknowledged the need to practice, practice, and practice! They also must be willing to make mistakes and learn from them, take risks, surround themselves with people who are supportive and caring, and keep learning. They acknowledged there is much to learn by approaching daily life as learning opportunities, or traveling and being open to different cultures. The participants were energized by these conversations and glad to be a part of a project supporting Women's Leadership around the globe.

Part II. Four Questions Synthesis

This section of the Capacity Building Guide provides a synthesis and summary of each of the four key questions that Conveners discussed in their Conversations, across all of the Conversations. We were interested in similarities and differences, and have tried to incorporate examples and direct quotes to give readers a deeper and more personal understanding of the issues these women are taking on.

The graphic shown at the beginning of each Question is a word picture that summarizes the key words that were used in the responses to the question. In the photograph below, the Kitchen Cabinet plus friends of the Project synthesize the comments in a learning-filled evening session where we were able to recognize some of the significant patterns.



Question One: What do you care about in your community and what in projects have you participated?

By Nicole Theberge



Each Conversation began with the question “What do you care about in your community and in what projects have you participated?” This question was meant to set the stage for participants to recall their passions and provide a context for the work they do. Whether or not they consider themselves leaders, the intention behind this question was for women to recognize how they contribute greatly to their communities. This question was also intended to reveal the diversity of the work in which women around the world are involved.

Similarities

It is clear from the responses to this question that a remarkable amount of passion, similarity, and diversity exists in the type of work that the women do and the issues they care about. From starting women's support groups and day care centers, to restoring the environment, to education and microfinance, to taking care of their neighbors and families, the participants in these conversations clearly have passion for all aspects of their lives and work. The wide range of responses points to evidence that when women speak about leadership, they are not only

referring to formal leadership positions in work-related endeavors, but also to a broader understanding that leadership flows into all areas of their lives at home, at work and in their communities.

There are two parts to this question. The women's responses are interwoven and the answers to each part play off one another. Several key themes emerge, including children and youth, the environment, education, health, overcoming poverty, and family. Each Conversation touched upon nearly all of these categories.

Children and Youth

Children and youth were two of the most discussed topics in these Conversations. A powerful passion for helping youth engage in their communities, prepare for healthy lives and become empowered individuals is shared by many of the women involved in this Project. One Nicaraguan participant said, "We seek education opportunities for youth, management scholarships, and gender equity participation in working together and contributing ideas to achieve this." The women in Nicaragua also discussed the importance of providing youth with positive activities to keep them healthy and productive. Winnie, a participant in the Uganda conversation, discussed her passion for "facilitating progress of other young women to exploit their leadership potential." Irene, also from Uganda, works for Straight Talk Foundation, an NGO that centers on adolescent communication. Youth were also at the heart of Romajean's conversation at the Muckleshoot Nation in Washington State, where the women discussed youth as resources for the community and ways to empower them.

It is evident from the discussion of youth and children in each Conversation, that women see children and youth as vital assets to their communities and the world. This passion for youth feeds into the theme of family.

Family

Family was central in all of the conversations. In Vietnam, excellence in providing for one's family is one of the top duties of women, and there are many movements to support women in this role. One Ethiopian participant noted, "My first priority is to take care of my family. If I am okay with my family, I can do better things in my work." This sentiment represents succinctly what was present in all discussions. Women are passionate about their families, and see taking care of their families as essential to bettering their communities as a whole.

Some discussions took the conversation about family further, and discussed the often-difficult job of balancing work life and family life. Women at the Antioch University Seattle (AUS) Conversation expressed the pull between family life and work life, and wanting to be passionate and successful in both areas. Women in Guatemala and Vietnam echoed this

challenge. In Rocío's Guatemala conversation, participants talked about how they need to attend to housework as well as work outside the home. Tam reported that the Vietnamese women in her Conversation discussed how women have more opportunities to be respected and successful in society than they did previously, but that reaching this potential while fulfilling the role of taking care of a family is not easy.

A key thread throughout the Conversations is an acknowledgment that positive change starts in the home, and that women's roles are not only important, but are a very powerful form of leadership. This was most clearly exemplified in Weub's Conversation in Ethiopia, where participants actively chose to practice and advance their leadership skills by stepping up to the responsibilities of raising siblings and helping to ensure their good positions in life.

Environment

The environment is another common area of passion. A woman in Rocío's Conversation in Guatemala says, "All over the world my biggest worry is the environment and the plastic waste..." and she went on to describe a local environmental issue regarding contamination of a sweet, orange fruit called the "nispero," which is important to the economy. Many women also named the strong relationship between protecting the larger environment and creating a clean and hospitable home environment. In Nicaragua, women are engaged in youth projects that connect youth to their communities, provide them education, and aid the environment by engaging youth in art made from collected garbage and by participating in community gardens.

Education

Education is another area of significance for Conversation participants. The issue of what education will look like and how people will be educated varies from culture to culture, but the underlying value of education as a tool to empower people and lift them out of poverty is evident across the conversations. In Romajeán's Conversation at the Muckleshoot Nation, women in leadership were described as teachers and "carriers of knowledge." A participant in Claudine's Conversation in Burkina Faso stated: "My country is making a lot of efforts to educate girls and keep them in school. But, the needs are great and there is still a lot to do. I would like to be someone who works every day to help young girls be educated and to reach their full potential."

School was recognized by a participant in Rocío's Conversation as a way to stay connected to the community. With seven children, she attends school meetings as a way to stay involved. In the neighboring country of Nicaragua, participants lead youth in education activities to ensure their futures. The women in the second Guatemalan Conversation named the cultural tradition of "machismo" as giving priority to men and boys to go to school, leaving women and girls with a high rate of illiteracy.

In Vietnam, women discussed the importance of vocational training and education for children and adult women. The women in Tam's discussion talked about educating women to have confidence, communication skills, autonomy, initiative, and to integrate into the community. Much of this education work is done through the Vietnam Women's Union, which is a central way for women to get involved in their communities in Vietnam.



One Nicaraguan participant organizes a group of girls for free sewing and life-skills classes. Her story demonstrates the importance of not just education in the classroom, but education in all of life wherever people, particularly young people, show up. Education is seen as something that affects many other aspects of life. For example, one Ugandan woman, Winnie, discusses how she would like to start a daycare center, partly because she knows that women who can leave their children with someone they trust will be better able to work and rise to more formal leadership positions.

Overcoming Poverty

It is evident that women play a crucial and central role in ending poverty for their own generations and future generations as well. Women in all of the cultures represented in this project are affected by and working to end poverty. Roz's participants at Antioch University discussed their passion to end income inequality; women in Claudine's conversation in Burkina Faso told stories about being motivated by extreme poverty to end it; Josephine, in Burkina Faso, told the story of two women who live on \$1-\$2 USD a day, each with four children to support. She said at the end of this story, "Struck by their courage and willpower to act and succeed, I am determined to fight with them."

Many participants discussed the need for increased job skills for women to provide them with opportunities to lift themselves and their families out of poverty. In Vietnam, women helped to start training courses on a multitude of topics such as livestock, business, crime prevention, and health related issues. Part of the mission of the Vietnam Women's Union (of which participants were members) is "Participating actively in the programs of socio-economic development of the country."

Micro-finance programs were discussed as vitally important in several conversations. Namely in Guatemala and Uganda, women come together to create sustainable systems of

money lending to help one another start businesses and support themselves and their families.

Health

Another common theme throughout the Conversations was health. The women are engaged in a wide variety of programs and address the issues of health in very diverse ways. For women in Weub's Conversation in Ethiopia, helping those affected by HIV/AIDS as well as preventing the further spread of the disease was a point of passion. Visiting with and helping care for people who are sick or dying was discussed in several Conversations. The previously mentioned youth programs in Nicaragua include sexual health education, as well as prevention of drinking at very young ages. One woman from the Antioch University Seattle Conversation discussed her work supporting women during the birthing process.

The topic of health also encompasses the violence and discrimination that women face around the world. This topic emerged in many Conversations. In the words of one woman in Nicaragua, "You have to answer when women are being raped by their husbands." In Burkina Faso, the women discussed their passion for the health and wellbeing of other women, and mothers in particular, as being very important in a culture of extreme discrimination against women. The organization founded by Claudine (AProFEn), began due to witnessing the painful events of young women in childbirth. Today, AProFEn "...works to unite energy, resources, knowledge and know-how to rapidly promote change."

Differences

Amidst all of the similarities and themes represented in all of the Conversations, some differences are worth noting. The work of the women in Vietnam is done largely if not exclusively through the Vietnam Women's Union. No other country's Conversation discussed an umbrella organization that directly supports women's advancement in the comprehensive manner of the Vietnam Women's Union. The Antioch University Seattle Conversations were unique in that they emphasized a global community. The topics discussed included such phrases as "the world is my community" and incorporated a broad look at how women are leading.

Some differences presented themselves through the specificity of the Conversation. For example, while caring for people who are sick was a common theme throughout all of the conversations, Weub's Conversation in Ethiopia emphasized caring for those affected specifically by HIV, as well as prevention of HIV. This is an indication of what is most prominently on the minds of the women in that Conversation.

Conclusion

The women's responses to the first question point to a fundamental truth: that the leadership women provide, the projects they work for and their work on behalf of their families and neighbors, are valid and important. Each of the topics discussed – children and youth, family, environment, education, overcoming poverty, and health – are interrelated. The focus of their work is this interconnectedness. That women from such diverse cultures find these topics to be the core issues for them demonstrates that these issues are faced by people around the world.

Underlying all of the women's comments and work is an unmistakable desire to honor and empower women and girls, as well as help people in general. The compelling answers to this first question serve as proof of the remarkable leadership abilities of women. These Conversations demonstrate how women worldwide recognize the value of working both inside and outside the home, and that working inside the home generates safer and healthier communities overall. Paid work projects were important in these discussions, but without fail, all the Conversations highlighted passion for unpaid work such as taking care of family and friends. It seems this passion for family and caring for others drives the leadership endeavors of women.



Question Two: As you have engaged in this work, what skills have you used?

By Danielle Prince



The Women's Leadership Project takes a snapshot of women around the world to look at what they are already doing to forge a path towards leadership. This question provided an opportunity for the Country Conveners to engage their groups in drawing out and naming the skills the women have and have used. One universal theme that has already emerged is the tendency for women to discount or dismiss innate skills and competencies. Women are often too humble in owning the skills they have, and in most cultures around the world, the leadership skills and competencies that come naturally to women are not recognized.

From the United States to Ethiopia, and from Guatemala to Vietnam, the women participating in this unique Project have had to remind themselves of their power, their presence, and hold high a mirror to reflect the reality that not only *can they lead*, but that they *are already leading*. This Project is all about learning, and the women's responses to Question Two demonstrate that learning happens at every step of the way for every individual. Their responses also demonstrate a clear sense that women are intent on using skill sets to benefit themselves, their families and their communities. The nature of women's leadership is inclusive and lifts everyone higher; indeed, 92% of the responses in this question align with this premise.

Common Responses

A theme that clearly emerged from all nine Conversations is an emphasis on clear, frequent and transparent communication: communication within families, with communities and with oneself. Communication is foundational for all relationships and women typically take a relational approach to each other and to the world around them. Communication is the medium through which other skills operate, such as sharing life experiences, mentoring or teaching others, listening and working together. Behind the skill of communication is a value of inclusivity. The women resonate a deep sense of partnership and prefer to move forward in unison, where a collective voice is amplified toward issues they care about. There is also recognition that being in clear communication with oneself is the basis for self-confidence and a belief in oneself, two skills named frequently by the women.

The theme of participation was mentioned as often as communication, but in fewer countries. Participation as a skill was specifically described around stimulating youth engagement, engaging other women, and having opportunities to participate in community projects. That these two leadership qualities – communication and participation – showed up most often is not surprising given the direct link between them. In order to participate one first needs to communicate. Likewise, participation is the foundation for communication, both of which are needed for the active pursuit of working together, connecting, and creating relationship. Unmistakably, communication and participation are key skills in women's leadership.

Another common thread emerging from the collective answers was the use of the words “family” and “self.” These words occurred in equal numbers, which exemplifies the groups' collective statement that women must constantly balance the well-being of their families with their own well-being. Even in countries that place more emphasis on the group rather than the individual, this distinction arose in the expression of the women's belief in self and self-confidence. Even though the words were mentioned regularly and equally, many of the women reported struggling to maintain a strong sense of self while balancing their respective families' or communities' expectations.

Patterns

Patterns that emerged across the nine Conversations and countries highlight skills used to care for the people and the environment in each group's community. All the skills listed are affirming: family-, group-, and community-oriented, with none of the women reflecting a competitive nature or a need to get ahead in a way that leaves anyone else behind. There is clearly a collective desire to work on oneself, continue learning, continue giving, but from a standpoint that equally benefits the individual, her family and her community.

Personal Values

One of the most noticeable patterns to emerge is the focus on personal values and behaviors as a leadership skill. The values of positive thinking, energy and optimism are qualities shared in Ethiopia, Guatemala, Uganda, Vietnam and Muckleshoot. Each of these countries holds historical trauma in the forms of colonialism, imperial oppression, war, and stark experiences of violence against women. From the backdrop of such enduring hardship, placing an emphasis on positive thinking and optimism is a deliberate way to move beyond the pain and suffering that is still so close, so palatable, and so lived. This is active coping, turning victimhood on its head by choosing survivorship and the "hero's journey" (Storytech, *n.d.*).

Other values of being truthful, building trust, being honest and faithful to each other in relationships emerges in Ethiopia, Guatemala, Vietnam and Muckleshoot. Trust and faithfulness are necessary components to strong communication and relationships. They also keep one's own integrity aligned with one's self. The way these women describe truth and trust are like spokes that emerge from the hub of self and connect directly with family and community; the stronger the spokes, the stronger will be each component of self, family and community.

Soft Leadership Skills

Many skills fit under an umbrella we will call "soft" leadership skills. These include the skills of compassion, emotional intelligence (briefly defined as being able to perceive, understand and successfully manage one's emotions), and believing everyone has talents and strengths. These skills were named in Ethiopia, Burkina Faso,



Nicaragua, and Muckleshoot, and in countries where they were not directly named, this skill set was still given importance. For example, in Uganda the women listed "peer support and interaction" and "solidarity." Those specific skills imply compassion, emotional intelligence and the belief that everyone has a role to play in their community. Compassion and emotional intelligence are natural competencies women, and many men, typically possess the world over. Women tend to be care-takers, nurturers, healers and community-builders fueled by compassion and a deep knowing of how to heal pain, right wrongs and celebrate life.

Patience and listening were named as important skills in Ethiopia, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Uganda. These skills are also critical to building and maintaining strong families and communities. Listening is often an under-valued skill as, at first glance, it appears to be passive. But listening is one of the most powerful tools in leadership. It gives the speaker the gift of attention and understanding. It births the process of helping, healing, hearing, finding harmony, pursuing plans and demonstrating compassion and caring. To truly listen, one needs patience.

The naming of counseling, mentoring and peer support as skills the women possessed emerged as a pattern from Uganda, Muckleshoot, Guatemala, and Burkina Faso. Working closely with others is a very natural way for women to connect and communicate with each other, and is a primary way to foster learning. Women naturally take leadership by using these skills. They form strong bonds with others, communities become tighter and people feel cared for and heard.

Perseverance and persistence showed up in Ethiopia and Burkina Faso. Knowing and doing what it takes to accomplish something requires both of these skills. To be responsible for the wellbeing of the family, to feed the children, to find the means to send them to school, all the while under the societal quilt of gender discrimination which places a higher value on boys and men, women must persevere. Women know this and are cultivating these skills to continue to unravel the quilt of patriarchy and breathe more freely into the rights and respect due them.

Practical Management Skills

Education and teaching are critical skills noted by women in Burkina Faso, Guatemala, and Vietnam. As women frequently have fewer opportunities to pursue education due to son preference, poverty, and traditional gender roles, women tend to value this resource very highly. Education can unlock doors and provide a clear path toward leadership; teachers are highly respected people in most societies. Teaching is a skill that can elevate others and benefit whole communities. Both of these skills resonate with the overarching theme of helping one's self while helping one's community. Claudine from Burkina Faso passionately reports, after seeing a heart-breaking situation, that "I searched within myself for the strength that would permit me to bring about a solution, to promote and especially to safeguard the human rights that had been so flouted here; in short, to encourage change."

Planning and organizing are skills mentioned in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, and Uganda. These skills are needed in management and leadership around the world. For example, in Uganda when Irene got married she found that the women in her village had formed a group to support each other during times of bereavement. Each member contributes a small amount of money towards the fund and when they lose someone they draw from it to meet funeral expenses. When Irene joined she used this opportunity to share her thoughts on how the women could benefit more from their group by using this money more profitably instead of waiting for

someone to die. Today, the group's purpose has evolved into a savings scheme where members can save and borrow money to pay fees, start up small income-generating businesses. Additionally, the members use the group as a forum to discuss other issues.

The combination of delegation, decision-making, being assertive and mobilizing clearly emerged as a skill set from Uganda and Nicaragua. These skills rely on other hard skills such as planning and organization. For example Julie, a participant in the Uganda Conversation who does peace and justice work with refugees, noted that mobilizing encompasses many other skills, including participation, consultation, dialogue, decision-making, ownership, planning, consensus-building and evaluation.

Visioning and goal-setting are named in Burkina Faso, Guatemala and Uganda. Leaders everywhere practice these competencies. For example, healthy communities are important to Cecilia in Guatemala. She is a loan officer working with over 150 women in her community. She has participated in many youth group activities that seek to engage young people in positive activities, such as organizing women's soccer teams, organizing a group of youths who perform costume dancing. She has also participated in activities to raise money for children with disabilities.

All of these practical leadership skills stem from a solid base of self-confidence and belief in one's self. Susan from Uganda draws the connection between self-confidence and leadership stating that "among the skills or things that have enhanced [my] leadership potential [is] believing in myself as a person."

Differences

The differences between the women's responses are relatively few despite coming from eight completely different cultures.

Interestingly, only in Uganda was active pursuit of faith and belief in God mentioned as a leadership skill. The women in the Uganda Conversation said that God and reading the Bible have guided them in their leadership skill development – especially in their self-belief – and that doing projects in their church is a natural way for them to use and develop their leadership skills.

Mention of God and faith emerged in other contexts in response to this question, but to a lesser degree. In all of the Conversations, the pursuit of faith and spirituality were viewed as a way to communicate, bond and engage in one's community. Belief in God appeared as a way for individuals to gain the strength to pursue any of the skills listed above, especially through prayer and searching for guidance and direction.

Vietnam brought up three skills not mentioned by any other group for Question Two: project management, service, and a women's club specifically dedicated to assisting survivors of domestic violence. Variations of these skills also arose in responses to project Questions One and Three, respectfully. Also unique to Vietnam is the quality or skill called “dam dang.” A general interpretation seems to be that women are taught to embody cultural traditions and high ethical and moral character while being honest, brave, hard-working and exceptional both in building families and in any professional pursuits.

Only in Guatemala was overcoming selfishness mentioned, as was being responsible. Variations of responsibility came up elsewhere, as it is a proficiency held by countless women and an expectation of women that exists in all patriarchal societies. Overcoming selfishness is intriguing and evokes curiosity to know more. It also sounds more like a desired way of being than an actual skill. Conversation leader Mabila said, “These women expressed that they felt committed to the work that each does for the experience of working with other women...” It seems that perhaps overcoming selfishness means moving beyond their own challenges and engaging with others in the community, and it's a reminder that they are working together to lift themselves up. Women in Guatemala face many challenges such as poverty, no or limited access to education, healthcare, family planning and a machismo culture that endorses acts of violence against women. Women in Guatemala are selflessly pursuing betterment in themselves, their families and their communities.

Love and humility showed up specifically in Nicaragua. Lidieth expresses these qualities in the following way, “I have worked in the vegetable garden of the community to provide the best nutrition and lead a group to defend the integrity of women, youth and children.” The undercurrent of love can be assumed in other skills listed such as compassion, communication, participation and patience, but the actual naming happened only with the women of Nicaragua. Likewise, humility is interwoven in many of the soft skills listed as the participants remain modest about their strengths and contributions to their communities.

Lastly, women as knowledge carriers showed up in Muckleshoot. This expression brilliantly captures women as sources of wisdom, healing and nurturing, as holders of ancient knowing in present times.

Conclusion

The women in these Conversations stress that communication and participation are intrinsic components in how women lead, emphasizing the affirmative and inclusive nature to women's leadership. Particular to each of these are related skills such as being truthful, compassionate, engaging in supportive relationships (mentoring, teaching), persevering despite hardship and intentionally cultivating positive thinking. Listening, an undervalued yet powerful piece to women's leadership was also frequently mentioned, as was self-confidence. The

majority of skills listed by participants fell into the categories of personal behavior and soft leadership skills. Too often, these skills are overlooked because they do not match the dominant leadership style presented in most countries, which emphasize more "masculine" and task focused skill sets.

Women's leadership skills offer the way to a deeply needed paradigm shift for both women and men and communities worldwide. Women's ways of leading are affirmative and nurturing, and women as knowledge carriers in positions of power can be relied upon to make inclusive decisions that uphold and value the whole community.



Initial skills plus new ones dovetail into a fuller, broader palette with which to bring about lasting, positive change for the women's families, communities, and livelihoods.

After the participants took the time to name the topics and projects they most cared about and in which they wanted to participate or initiate, and named the skills they are already using, they were able to identify additional skills they wanted to learn or improve. Interestingly, while many women in the Conversations already possess typically “feminine” skills such as listening, patience, mentoring, and setting aside time for self-care, these same skills show up at the top of the lists for desired attributes in the future.

For millennia, women have foraged and cooked together and helped one another through childbirth and daily labors. Women understand the value of relationship, and frequently collaborate in order to serve the common good. This pattern of collective effort showed up in all of the Conversations through the women's attention to their own needs and as well as those of their families and communities.

Like most women, participants in the Conversations understand the value of tapping into their own wisdom as well as seeking to grow and develop new aptitudes and talents. Rather than setting these skills in the background and focusing purely on more “masculine” leadership skills to succeed, the women seem to feel that honing and leveraging existing strengths, and perhaps utilizing them in new ways, is the best way to propel themselves and their communities forward. For example Romajeau, from the Muckleshoot Nation in the USA says, “We have come to the realization that we do work daily that is investing in our community, and with the support of each other we can further our network, resources and skills to broaden the scope of work possible.”

Common Themes

Clear themes emerge from the women's Conversations around which leadership skills they would like to develop further. These themes include care and support of self, building and strengthening relationships, improving communication, developing practical management skills, and modernizing communities. We will explore all of these themes, and the similarities and differences in the responses, in this section.

Care and support of self is a prevalent topic across all of the nine Conversations. By self care and support, the women refer to being able to accept their successes and failures, grow in self-confidence, fail with grace, set boundaries, take care of themselves, balance work and family, look inside instead of outside for answers, manage their own emotions, love those who love them, listen, dare to think and do new things, overcome fear of the unknown, learn self-reliance and trust their own choices.

In the Conversation at Antioch University in the USA, Roz's group discussed the importance of feeling their emotions and having the confidence to speak and share their passions. Women in that group want to learn skills around staying motivated, healing, finding support, and dealing with hopelessness through reframing their thinking. They also seek to admit their limitations and honor their own capacities, which are naturally fluid and changing depending on life's circumstances.

Women from the group in Burkina Faso similarly recognize that only by "developing personal stamina" can they continue to strive toward their vision. In each of the Conversations women emphasized that in order to continue to support their families and communities they must remain strong themselves. Nurturing their own minds, bodies, and spirits need not come at the expense of those they love. Rather, by recognizing their own needs and finding creative ways to answer their own concerns, women can achieve greater balance between nurturing themselves and others.

Illustrating this point is Winnie from Uganda whose dream is to start a day care center where career women can leave their babies and go to work. "If a working mother can leave her baby in the hands of someone she trusts, she will be more productive at her job, her performance level will soar, and she will rise in the ranks," Winnie says. Winnie understands that women are required to balance many responsibilities at once but that creative solutions are possible and can bring about increased peace of mind, ease, and efficiency!



Building and strengthening relationships is another skill women in the Conversations wish to develop further. Relationship skills include mentoring, taking care of family, networking, helping others, empowering children and youth, supporting co-workers and making friends. The stories of these women indicate that when their relationships are strong, they have an expanded capacity to give and to grow. One of the women in Weub's Conversation in Ethiopia remarks, "I lead my family, but I want to know what it takes to lead a work team."

One illustration of building and strengthening relationships that is unique among the conversations comes from Tam's group in Vietnam. In that country over 13 million women (roughly 90% of females) belong to the Vietnam Women's Union, founded in 1930. The VWU is mandated to "protect women's legitimate rights and strive for gender equality." This campaign includes making sure that women know how to "build happy and harmonious families, have loyalty to one's country and community, friendship, love, and colleagues." Women seek to

preserve the dignity, status, and honor of social ethics. Right relationships are not only something to strive for in Vietnam; they are mandated as part of the VWU charter.

Another pattern that emerged around desired skill development is improving communication, both verbal and written. This skill is broken into many aspects, including speaking English and other languages, public speaking, giving presentations, learning computer skills and improving digital fluency, documenting successes, overcoming shyness, and speaking up with their own ideas.

Women in Lidieth's conversation in Nicaragua commented that with an increased ability to influence and inspire others it would be possible for women to break the pattern of "silence and shyness" and to express themselves positively without fear. Additionally, the development of networking and social relations would allow greater openness in building connections with others. Mabilia in Guatemala agrees, and says that improved public speaking and the ability to articulate will exponentially expand the power of conveying ideas with strategy and intention. Learning not just the content of presentations is important, the Guatemalan women realize, but also the skills of dealing with and comforting people with sensitive issues and at difficult times.

Julie, a peace and justice worker for refugees in Uganda, talks about the benefit of learning how to control emotions. "As a leader you must be resilient, bounce back and carry on because you are dealing with people who have lost themselves and look up to you as the source of direction. As a leader you must be in control so that you are able to handle the different emotions – your interpersonal skills can make you or break you under such traumatic circumstances."

Improving comfort with and access to technology also plays a role in relationship building. Romajeau's conversation at the Muckleshoot Nation in the USA seeks a social media class for their women's leadership group and the creation of a Facebook page so that the women can connect with each other. They realize that connections are built not just face-to-face, but also through technological devices like cell phones and the Internet.

Women in the Conversations also spoke frequently about developing practical management skills. This includes project management, organization, decision-making, documenting records, group facilitation, leadership and event planning. Irene in Uganda believes she is successful due to her communication skills, yet wants more practical skills in organizational development and management so she does not limit her ability to meet the needs of others. "Many women have studied these issues in school but they cannot easily apply them practically," she said. Irene also appreciates the step-by-step, incremental approach of change rather than focusing on achieving "very big strides." Learning to manage these steps will ultimately yield positive change. "With this in mind, I know the women I work with can make small but positive achievements in their lives," she says.

Like Irene, most of the women want to improve their practical management skills so they can broaden and deepen their impact across communities and with more people. In Mabilia's group in Guatemala for example, the women want to improve their practical management skills so they can maximize their own abilities and grow as leaders. For them that includes learning how to cope and thrive at different levels socially, economically and in the public sector. Rocío's conversation, also in Guatemala, said that when women guide groups they raise productivity for everyone. They noticed that the skills women use are "more detailed and teaching by example," and that "we are capable of doing multiple things at once." They shared an example of mobilizing and organizing resources after the 2010 tropical storm Agatha, which left a 200-foot deep sinkhole in Guatemala City and killed 146 people across Central America. Rocío's group organized themselves and took materials and items to the people who had been most affected.

Modernizing communities is a final key topic that emerged across the Conversations. This very practical skill set includes improving roads, improving access to clean water, learning about childhood development, schools, better health care (especially with maternal health and disease prevention,) micro-finance, and other opportunities that promote financial independence.

Rocío's group in Guatemala stressed the importance of infrastructure. They want to learn how to modernize their village with access to water and roads, how to develop healthy children, and ways to contribute to better health. Similarly, Susan from Uganda would like to work in the public health sector, such as maternal health or malaria prevention, and she seeks skills in those areas. Not surprisingly, improved skills in one area can cause positive change in another. Stella, also from Uganda, says that she needs to "build skills in communication, especially public speaking," and that they will help her "be able to mobilize more people" to join and participate together. Being assertive, networking, and being able to link up with positive role models (people who have made it to the top) will help her learn how to be more like them.

For many women in the Conversations, moving into modernity means making sure that basic human services like health-care and access to right livelihoods are available to all. They wish to develop the skills to support this process, including speaking up with creative solutions, knowing they are a critical part of being a leader in their communities and a global citizen.

Differences

Unlike some Conversations that emphasized harmony within existing and accepted frameworks, women from Burkina Faso called out the need for working within cultural norms *and* pushing boundaries. This desire to expand a cultural paradigm is an interesting difference from a country like Vietnam that places enormous value on maintaining the social and political fabric. Hanh, from the Vietnam conversation, explains it this way: "Educating a Vietnamese woman in self-esteem is realizing her responsibilities to respect, preserve the dignity, status, and

honor, not to have violated the law, social ethics... using the legal framework in all her actions, striving for self-improvement, positive living, self-confidence.” Just as women around the world are unique, so too are their attitudes around the “right way” of living.

Conclusion

The women who participated in the nine international Conversations are committed to noticing and valuing their talents and building upon them for even greater capacity and resilience. From caring and supporting themselves, building and strengthening current and future relationships, improving communication with clarity, courage, inclusion, and ease with technology; developing practical management skills, and by modernizing their communities through fundamental access to clean water, education, health, and financial opportunity, the women of this global network are taking a stand.

A tree with deep roots provides grounding and draws nourishment from the soil. Simultaneously it reaches upward toward the light, the soothing rains, the open sky. Like that tree, the women in these Conversations recognize and celebrate their inherent worth. They also realize that the only way to move forward is to keep deepening their roots, keep unfurling their leaves in fresh directions, and continuing to bloom and to grow wherever they may be.

Question Four: How do you imagine you might develop these skills?

By Molly Breysse Cox



The purpose of this question is to galvanize thinking towards how the women might develop the desired skills mentioned in Question Three. They may consider initiating a local discussion circle to support each others' development, participating in activities or exercises, or learning from wise men and women in their communities. Inherent in this question is the need for each woman to create a vision for how she will move forward on her leadership journey, alone and together, and within her culture; in short, how each of these women can best enhance their leadership skills?

Common Themes

These nine Conversations support evidence that women seek and value positive ways to harness the potential of working together to create change. Coming together with intention to support, encourage and provide confidence to other women serves each woman, family and community. This section is devoted to highlighting the enablers for women to further develop their own leadership, and more generally, to accelerate behavior and conditions for women's leadership development taking place all over the globe. As each of these women share their story, readers will bear witness to the power of listening as an amplifier for positive progress and change and we too will become part of this wave.

The insights that unfolded when Question Four was discussed fell into four core categories of ideas on how to continue learning about leadership while maintaining a focus on positive group structure and dynamics. These categories are: building a safe environment, taking care of

self, creating opportunities to learn, and finding opportunities to practice skills and grow in experience.

Creating a Safe Environment

The Country Conveners prioritized the need to create a safe space when participating in the Women's Leadership Project. Safety was a consideration in developing the processes, engaging in conversations and building an environment for activating change. Based on the feedback from each country, these considerations prove to be an enabler for activating conversation and change. The challenge is to consider trust as a key dynamic in designing a foundation for a positive and safe Conversation experience, knowing that each country has a different safety dynamic.

For instance, in Guatemala, enabling safety included prioritizing the prevention of domestic violence; in Vietnam it included strengthening the relationship between community and government; for Uganda it included spiritual practices; in Nicaragua, having the safety of the Conversation Circles enabled discussion with family members, creating a culture where women can ask questions.

Taking Care of Self

A universal theme in all the Conversations is the need to take care of oneself and practice positive self-esteem and confidence. Many women told personal stories that confirmed that building confidence will build personal power and influence. Almost 20% of ideas for current and future learning focused on building practices that facilitate personal motivation and self-worth. These include centering, building self-esteem, being open to learning, reflecting, validating what is already known, and increasing capacity for confidence, honesty and compassion.

In the Antioch U.S. Conversation, women discussed the role of understanding one's own limitations and boundaries in taking care of self. They pointed out that the art of saying no is required to honor boundaries and this capability requires practice, role models and knowing who you are.

Conversations in Vietnam, AUS and Uganda discussed the importance of relationships between family and community for building a supportive environment. In these Conversations, personal stories unfolded and it became clear that self-confidence is tied closely with willingness to take risks and participate in change. Winnie in Uganda shared her story about the relationship between family and care of self. Her dad was very supportive, “gave her all the love, attention and always had all the answers” while her mum was always at home and “everything was always there, so I grew up feeling important.” In addition, her education qualification helped her to open up and develop self-belief. Winnie went on to describe, however, that when she married

into a culture where women were not allowed to say anything, her self-esteem was lowered.

Each group reinforced the enabling impact they felt by having the support of the Conversation group and the role this support has in building a positive self-image and self-esteem. Susan in Uganda called out her appreciation for the Conversation as “a great platform for women to tell and share their stories as leaders.”

Learning



Once an open, inclusive environment is created, then fostering the ideas of learning from each other becomes a possibility. Over 20% of the responses mentioned the opportunity to learn and grow from others in the Circle, from the Kitchen Cabinet members and from other associations or community groups. These women discussed surrounding themselves with supportive people, learning from and with family, learning from role models and teaching other women about topics they know well. These Conversations held stories of women who understood the value of learning and lifting other women up in the process.

For example, Irene in Uganda said: “Being a more advantaged woman than the members of my group, I always feel the urge to pass on the skills to the group to enable them improve their social and financial status. I feel that women are capable of improving but they are only disadvantaged in that they lack information and guidance and having someone like me take on this role will not only help them individually but their families as well.”

Susan in Uganda shared that both her parents have been very inspiring. Her mum inspired her to be a go-getter and always endeavor to be on top of things. Her dad inspired her career-wise since he is a highly learned man. Her siblings are all scientists except herself – so she had to work harder to prove herself. This support had a ripple effect creating positive impact for the members of the group, the group as a collective as well as across family and community. In Uganda, the women told how important the love and support from family is for building confidence and inspiring leadership behavior.

In Guatemala each of the women shared stories of learning and gaining experience so as to pass along and empower other women. For example, Noelia is a loan officer and is sharing her experience in village banks. Elida is a leader of a group of women in the church community, who, along with other women, travels to other villages to learn new information which she then shares with her own local community of women.

The ideas for learning from each other include sharing education and training on basic skills that are held among the women in the group. In Guatemala, Conversation participants are Village Bank leaders who have invited women to learn about finances, banking and credit. These women see opportunity for building and running their own businesses and they continue to look for ways to improve their teaching, communication and public speaking skills to be even more effective.

Practice and Experience

The opportunity to practice skills and grow from experience was a strong theme across all of the Conversation Circles. The feedback from the women highlights the importance of practice for building skills, confidence and effectiveness. In particular, the opportunity to practice in a group setting was called out as important to personal development. In Nicaragua, for example, women shared the need to continue to convene as women helping women, along with the importance of gaining the experience of working with others to implement ideas.

The Muckleshoot Nation Conversation in the United States discussed how to continue to share skills, potentially pooling resources for improving group development. In Ethiopia the participants discussed ways to keep momentum going and build more skills. They focused on their roles as parents and community members as direct opportunities for learning.

There is a strong appetite for making specific leadership development opportunities more available to enhance and grow skills. Over 20% of the comments and feedback suggested formal training and coursework as ways to improve leadership skills. These include vocational training, skills to build a business, obtaining a college or master's degree, working with mentors, learning more about technology and social media, and learning from new jobs. A great example of this is again from Irene in Uganda. Irene is currently helping the group to get legally registered as a

savings and credit scheme community group. She is trying to identify micro-finance training opportunities and resources for her group members. The group has 30 members currently and their target is 50 members.

Differences

Levels of Safety, Injustice and Illiteracy

The above discussion is based on the common themes of safety, self, learning and practice that were consistent across each Conversation Circle that took place. There were also differences that emerged during this project. A key distinction between the Conversations was the varying degree of safety and the level of injustice that women in different countries experienced. In Nicaragua, the women said preventing domestic violence is a key ingredient for enabling women to develop their leadership. In Guatemala women noted their challenges of low literacy rates, especially in rural areas, and the prevalence of violence that hinder women's leadership and empowerment.



“Many women don't know their rights, suffer from different types of violence – physical, psychological, economic,” the women said. Their Conversation also called out the high rate of illiteracy among women and girls, “because of machismo, opportunity is given to the man for him to go to school while women are left behind.” The women also said that working parents have no time for their children and “that makes them vulnerable to social media...with cases of kidnapping, rape and murder of girls.” The Guatemalan participants made the direct connection between education and training for women and the positive impact their collective knowledge could have on basic needs like getting clean water to their villages.

Ugandan participants also called out the challenges of sexual violence and sex trafficking, but noted that women are more than victims. “They play an active role in nurturing, providing, educating, leading, managing, supporting interventions at different levels in society,” said Betty Kagoro, Country Convener for this project. In truth, though the variations are real, the issue of violence seems a shared concern, a case where the format (in this case a discussion of differences) might best be abandoned.

Advocacy

Another area of difference is the prevalence of organized advocacy by women. In the US, where women experience more political rights and education, change is often focused on

advocacy. Similarly, the Vietnam Women's Union plays a major role in fostering women and women's rights and formal education and training play a major role for learning and gaining experience. Thirteen million women are involved in the Women's Union, out of a country population of 90 million people. "In Vietnam, if you ask someone to hold the leadership role of women throughout the country, the answer is the Women's Union," says Tam, the Country Convener. "In the Vietnamese village, if you ask anyone who has leadership abilities of women, the answer is representative of the Women's Union."

Conclusion

Question Four posed how to develop women's leadership, and responses highlighted universal truths and conditions across each of these countries for accelerating and amplifying women in leadership. These truths include the importance of building a safe environment, honoring self-esteem, creating an environment to learn and finding opportunity to practice skills for activating change. These all require leadership intention and active participation in building trust, collaboration and an understanding of others in order to foster positive change.

This Project highlights the phenomena that knowledge can be socially constructed, as was demonstrated by the stories and ideas shared in each Conversation. The Muckleshoot Conversation, along with those in Guatemala, Ethiopia and Uganda, highlighted the importance of role models for inspiration, along with the importance of engaging in strong listening skills for creating an environment for learning and growth.

These Conversations serve as a reminder that when women come together to harness the potential of the collective creation of power and influence, anything is possible. Power is infinite and good leaders know that power, like trust, can provide a strong and compelling foundation for leading change. Winnie in Uganda expressed these possibilities best when she shared her "wildest dream" to modernize the village where she plans to retire. She envisions piped water, schools and programs for women in the neighborhood so that they can develop together.

By joining together and participating in Conversations about women's contribution to our own learning, our families, communities and nations, we can honor where each of us stands and support how each of us longs to go forward.

Part III. Tools and Processes

The purpose of the first two parts of this Capacity Guide was to identify the key ideas that emerged from the first conversation of Country Conveners. All the women who participated in Conversations, plus readers and partners, will see that their input has been heard, and all will realize that these women – and thousands more like them – are part of a global energy field created by women who are stepping up to lead.

Women around the world know that if we have a chance to get ahead, we often have to work twice as hard, and endure layers of discrimination and attacks on our rights, our bodies and our liberty, to achieve results. Too often women must take on hierarchical and traditional leadership models to vie for power, even while most women – and many men – know there are other ways to lead.

In this final part of the Capacity Guide, we offer Tools and Processes for this other type of leadership. These tools and processes are intended to demonstrate a feminine leadership model that connects, relates, collaborates, heals and celebrates, as it provides for deeper conversations and continues to move real work forward in measureable ways. These tools and approaches can be used by groups to further their work on any issue – specifically here on behalf of women and children for social and economic equity, access to medical care and education, engagement and empowerment, sustainable income and meaningful roles in community.

“It is commonly said that when you train a woman, you have trained the nation, hence it is essential for institutions to pay particular attention to women and girls ”

- Betty Kagoro,
Uganda Country Convener

“Women play an active role in nurturing, providing, educating, leading, managing and supporting interventions at different levels in society,” says Betty Kagoro, Country Convener in Uganda. “But without building their capacity to identify their strengths, abilities and competencies we won’t achieve much. Ensuring that women develop their leadership potential at all levels is a preserve of all those who believe in the potential of women to create social justice in their communities. The primary responsibility lies with all of us.”

Women in nine Conversations and eight different cultures shared strategies, tools, and processes by which they nurture trust, increase their leadership skills and expand their influence. The women also indicated what they most want to learn and know in order to fully reach their own potential as leaders, and to encourage the potential of those they work with. These

strategies and tools are ways to create power! These tools fall into three major categories of leadership skills, which will be described here in ways that readers may use them to enhance your own capacity as a leader. They are:

- Self-Care
- Group Process
- Task or Practical Management

SELF CARE

by Barbara Spraker

Women are caregivers. This message was repeated over and over by the women participating in the nine Conversations. Their families are central to their lives. They sacrifice. “I was a good student when I was in school,” one participant explained, but “I give care to my family even more than what I give to myself. I have grown in a family where we were orphans and I was the one responsible to raise four of my sisters. I even managed to cancel early marriage of my sister and now she is in a good position and I am very proud of that.”

Outside the home, they work with children who lost parents due to AIDS. They work with the elderly, women HIV victims, and the homeless. They comfort those who have lost family members, provide support for women giving birth, and help women who have experienced domestic abuse. They collect money and organize community shelters. They involve youth in community activities to help them avoid drugs and alcohol and to help them realize they are needed and important in their communities. They help women understand their rights and teach them to read.

These women also care about their greater communities. A participant in Ethiopia commented, “As a communal society I give much care about the community. Even if we women are burdened a lot more than men in our society, it is us who are involved in the society.”

Between all of this giving, the women who participated in the Conversations highlighted the necessity for self-care. They are clear that if they are to continue in these caring roles, and even expand their work, they need to take responsibility for their own physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health. A Conversation participant at Antioch University Seattle summed it up, “We can’t do it without taking care of ourselves.”

This section explores three aspects of self care: nurturing inner strength, opening ourselves to learning, and gaining support from others. Within each of these aspects of self care, we highlight several tools and approaches to help leaders develop from the inside out.

Nurturing Inner Strength

“Where does the support to be a leader come from?” asked one Conversation participant. As women, most of us have been reminded in many ways that we are *not* leaders. The Conversation participants in Burkina Faso vividly express this. Speaking of the ways our societies are structured so that some people are under the influence of others or are dependent on others, they comment, “This phenomenon seems to be universal because societies have proven extremely creative when it comes to designing ways of oppressing women and girls.”

Many women have internalized that message. To overcome that, the support to be a leader must begin inside ourselves. This means recognizing that contributing to our families and communities is leadership. As the participants in the Muckleshoot Conversation remind us, “We have come to the realization that we do work daily that is investing in our community, and with the support of each other we can further our network, resources, and skills to broaden the scope of work possible.” We can all recall a time when something good happened because of something we did or said, a time that we were role models for someone else. These are all acts of leadership!

As we begin to recognize the importance of what we do, we can begin to also recognize the importance of loving one’s self and of developing our inner resources. This includes nourishing our motivation and skill in opening ourselves to new learning and creating diverse ways to engage the support of others. This nurturing then multiplies our energy.

Because women are habitually concerned about others, it takes intention and resolve to focus on self. It is not selfish to love oneself! Instead, it is our first responsibility. It is not possible to care for others or pursue one’s vision when physically exhausted or emotionally drained.

“To lead as I want to, I need to be more confident to be myself.”

- participant in the AUS Conversation

Loving self

To love one’s self is to appreciate, accept, and honor self. It means realizing that each of us is unique, and celebrating the qualities and strengths that creates who we are. It is being gentle with ourselves, accepting failures with grace, valuing the learning gained, and respecting the willingness to try in the first place. It is standing up for self, honoring one's wisdom and

perspective. It is affirming, deep inside, the value we bring to the world. As we take seriously what it means to love self, we understand more fully how to love others.

It is not enough to think about this once in awhile. Rather, it is necessary to create a ritual or practice whereby in each day there is time to appreciate self. Perhaps we welcome the day by saying aloud, “I welcome this new day by acknowledging and appreciating how creative I am!” Perhaps in the evening we take time to identify and affirm one thing we did that pleases us. “Today, though I was busy, I took time to really listen to my colleague, Julia. She was grateful and seemed more confident about her decision.”

Create your own ritual, and commit to it. This is a gift to yourself and to the world. Loving self is a foundational building block to developing such confidence.

Centering and grounding

Loving self deepens appreciation for who you are and invites practices that support you in being fully who you are. One of the most effective ways of caring for self is engaging in some type of meditation practice. Standing Meditation is one powerful way of centering and grounding. It enables us to go to a quiet space inside and BE present in the moment.

To begin Standing Meditation, select a quiet space. Stand with feet firmly on the ground, arms loosely at the side. Stand erect, but not rigid, head up, as though suspended by a string. Your eyes should be closed or gently open, not focusing on anything. Feel the earth through the soles of your feet. Imagine that roots extend from your feet deep into the earth. These roots provide stability and also nourishment from the earth. This is not a time for thinking; it is a time for being. Let your mind relax and focus on your breathing. Notice that, although you are rooted, you also can sway. Feel yourself standing up for who you are and what you cherish. Holding your body erect, gently sway from side to side, front to back. Feel the roots providing stability that enables movement. When you are ready, gently shake your arms and bring your mind back to your surroundings. Practicing Standing Meditation for five minutes a day will calm your body and mind, help you gather your energy, and feel alert and relaxed.

Identifying personal strengths and values

In nurturing inner strength, it is also important to honestly identify and acknowledge the qualities and skills that are yours. Some of these are natural gifts you have been given, and others are skills you have worked hard to develop. Both of them are the means by which you achieve your goals and contribute to your world. It is important to acknowledge the best of who we are.

What descriptive words come to mind as you reflect about who you are? Are you creative? Responsible? A good listener? An organizer? Musically talented? Skilled at numbers and math? A caring friend? Thoughtful? Persuasive? A good cook? Think about how your good friends would describe you. Often we take for granted those qualities or skills that seem easy to us, when actually they may be our biggest assets.

“Each person has a social responsibility to bring her or his gifts to the world.”

- Jasmine Keel, a coach and consultant in Beijing

Now write down at least 25 personal strengths. Think about how significant these qualities are to your family and your community. Understand the value you bring to the world. As author and activist Marianne Williamson reminds us, our playing small does not serve the

world. Remind yourself to remove the words "I'm just a" from your speech. Own your strengths and leverage them. They are what you were given, and they are how you contribute to the world.

From your list of 25 strengths, select the five to ten that are most important and central to you. Then focus on these five to ten, and ask: How do these strengths show up in my life right now? In other words, how are you using your strengths? How do these strengths contribute to your family, community and professional work? Noticing the link between our strengths and our daily choices and decisions enables us to live into our full potential.

Next, consider these questions: How else do I want to use my strengths? In what other ways might I contribute my gifts? How do I want to enhance my strengths? The importance of this reflection is to notice any gaps where our strengths are not being fully used, or where we are undermining our abilities. Once noted we can commit ourselves to finding ways to bring voice to our strengths and to claim them more powerfully and more often in those areas.

In addition to having unique personal strengths, we each embrace important values that guide our decision-making and influence how we invest our time and energy. What is most important to you? Is it being an honest, authentic person? Is it family? Security? The opportunity to serve others? Autonomy? Perhaps it is survival.

The most accurate reflection of our values is revealed when we examine our actions – how we spend our time, our energy and our resources. We may say that we value diversity, for example, but if we've spent most of our time in the past year with the same people and engaged in the same kinds of activities, is diversity truly an important value? We may say we value independence, but if we lean on someone else every time we are challenged, or blame others when things "go wrong," we should question whether or not we really value independence. Aligning these two elements – values and action – is what makes us a person of integrity.

Review the following list of values and add others that come to mind. Then select the three that seem most important to you. Write them down, and think about what the words means to you. Did you bundle some meaning into each word?

Put your list away and go on about your life. In a month or six months, take the list out again and consider how each of these values guided you. Do you still feel that each of your top three is important? How can you make choices in the future to a life more in alignment with those values? As you reflect, adjust your list of values as needed, or envision different actions that honor the values you've chosen.

Achievement	Service to Others
Honesty	Belonging
Integrity	Personal Relationships
Education	Recognition
Wisdom	Independence
Status	Creativity
Security	Love
Self-Development	Happiness

Our personal strengths and values are the source of our energy, our confidence and our influence. When we are struggling to develop strengths because someone else thinks we should be able to do something, our motivation lags. When we say we value something, but it really isn't what we resonate with most deeply, our energy is not fully called forth. However, when we are using strengths that are our own, that we love using, and in service to values that are most important to us, we speak and act with confidence and enthusiasm, and others are drawn to our energy. Life becomes joyful. This is the “juice” of our lives!

Opening to Learning

As leaders who want to make a difference, one of our first commitments must be to our own development. We are the instruments of our work in the world. As our confidence grows, our vision of what we can accomplish expands and we seek to learn and to develop new skills. Our desire to be “all that we can be” becomes strong. We want to increase our effectiveness and expand our influence. How do we proceed?

We must keep ourselves finely tuned. The way to do this is through continuous learning. Before we start exploring potential resources, we need to reflect on who we are as learners. We need to pay attention to how we learn best, what we are most deeply curious about, and how we deal with inner resistance when we are out of our comfort zones.

How do I learn best?

You've acknowledged your strengths and values. As you look at these, do they suggest how you learn? Think about a practical skill you may have – like knowing how to use a computer or how to conduct a meeting or how to bake a cake, and reflect on how you came to “own” this knowledge. Did you learn by:

- Reading and studying a manual?
- Watching someone else?
- Participating in a group where you could help each other?
- Having hands-on help from a teacher?
- Trying your ideas and seeing what works best for you?

While you may have used all of these methods, most of us have preferred ways of learning. Knowing what that is provides an important clue about how to approach learning any new skill. So, if you want to become more skilled at mobilizing a group to take action, you may decide to "shadow" someone who does it well, or to read about people who have successfully mobilized others, or join an effort and just dive in and do it. After you consider how you best learn, write out three specific first steps you can take to enhance your ability to learn more and take action.

Nurturing deep curiosity

Some teachers believe that the most important gift we can give our children is nurturing their curiosity. Curiosity fuels our desire to learn.

When you consider what matters to you and how you want to move forward toward a goal, engage your curiosity. Begin to write down every question that comes up for you about your goal. Here are some that may jump-start your curiosity.

- What have I already done that prompts this new vision/goal?
- What about this vision/goal is most important to me?
- How will it benefit the community?
- What skills do I have that I can depend on to get started?
- Who else is interested in this vision?
- What else do I need to know before I can move ahead?
- Who can help me make this vision a success?
- What do I need to let go of before I can move on?

The notion of “deep curiosity” means that we are not simply interested on a superficial or cursory level, but that we are so deeply desirous of learning and being more, that we let in “the other” – whether this is a person or a set of ideas different from our own – and that we are willing to be changed by the other. Allowing new information or experiences to change how we



see and interact with the world is a powerful, and sometimes vulnerable, position to take. Yet this deep curiosity guarantees that we will become more, and be able to give more, as a result.

Dealing with inner resistance

As we engage in deep curiosity, we may encounter inner resistance. As we learn new ideas, visualize a change or get specific about a goal, we may find ourselves unexpectedly feeling resistant to the new reality, or feeling “stuck” about how to move forward.

Otto Scharmer, in his book, *Theory U: Leading from the Future as it Emerges*, identifies three barriers that get in the way of being open to a new reality:

- Voice of judgment – old patterns of thinking about what is and is not possible. This is the opposite of engaging our curiosity.
- Voice of cynicism – old emotional patterns of skepticism and distrust. This causes us to stay disconnected from others, rather than to build relationships with others.
- Voice of fear – holding on to what is familiar, being unwilling to step into the space of the unknown. Fear keeps us shut down, holding on to the past, reacting, rather than taking the initiative.

Perhaps these barriers feel familiar. When others demand, or you ask yourself, What makes you think you can do that? you are listening to old messages. In order to silence those messages and move to a place of empowerment, write the old, negative message down on the left hand side of a sheet of paper. On the right hand side, write the message that empowers you to move ahead toward your goal. Read your new messages aloud, every day. Feel the difference in your body – as you open to possibility. Feel how you are changing as a leader as you affirm your strengths and as you acknowledge the power of connecting with others who share concern for the greater good.

Example:

<i>This belief no longer serves me:</i>	<i>What is true for me:</i>
You will never change his mind.	As I listen to the concerns and desires of another, I can share my own views in ways he can understand. Our mutual respect will enable us to work together.

You do not have the skills to achieve that goal.	I have excellent skills and I know others who share my goal. As we work together we have all the skills we need.
There is no money to do that.	We live in an abundant universe. Working together creatively, we have all the resources we need.

Attracting the Support of Others

In examining what self-care means and how necessary it is for us to be effective in our work in the world, we began at the center – nurturing our inner strength, and then moved outward to opening ourselves to learning. It is also important to attract the support of others. As Mabilia in Guatemala pointed out, “Alone I am good. Together we are great!” She and several of her participants spoke of the importance of teaching one another. This is a key strategy for generating energy around a goal. It is a key strategy for increasing our skills and our impact as leaders in our communities.

Part of self-care is knowing we need not be alone. Isolation steals our power. Leaders who want to increase their influence must take responsibility for reaching out to others and for identifying and using other resources that are readily available. The model below demonstrates a cyclical approach to attracting supportive people and forming your own circle of support.



One of the Conversation participants from Antioch University notes that she enhances her confidence as a leader by “surrounding myself with people who care and who are supportive.” A participant from Uganda notes, “Interaction with peers through experience sharing and having people who can listen is a form of support.”

Identifying supportive people is where we begin to amplify personal power. These may be family members, trusted friends or professional colleagues – but they must be people who are able to support you. They must be willing to encourage, challenge, and provide helpful feedback. Take leadership here and invite this small group to gather. Be clear about what you want from this group. Share your goal or vision and ask for their commitment to meet with you on a regular basis to listen, question, encourage. It is especially powerful when this group provides mutual support. A small group of women who are committed to supporting one another is a powerful force!

Create your own circle of support

Participants have seen how the creating and nurturing of Conversation Circles has helped them give ongoing support to one another as they pursue their individual or collective visions. Action Circles, Circles of Discernment, and Trust Circles are further described at this link: <http://www.womenleadingtheway.com/conversation-circles.html>

Identifying and connecting with trusted advisors, sometimes called mentors, enables you to build on the knowledge, experience and wisdom of others. Often, these are older individuals whose life experience allows them to nurture others and to provide referrals to others who are important in achieving a given vision. (More information about mentoring is in the Tools and Processes section under Practical Management).

You can practice your own leadership by reaching out to an individual identified as a potential supporter. Briefly describe your vision or goal and ask this person if you can talk with her or him to get that person's perspective on a specific aspect of your vision or goal. Realize that your experiences, strengths, values and perspectives have much to contribute to this conversation as well. Become familiar with the interests and contributions of this person and consider what you can share with her or him that could be useful. Know that simply by sharing your vision, you may be inspiring. People like to help others who are helping themselves.

It may be that the Support Circle will become a group of peer mentors. Peer mentors are small groups that meet regularly to support each other's goals and personal leadership development. Through the accumulated knowledge, wisdom and relationships of the members of the Circle, you may serve as mentors to one another.

Conclusion

Self care is the first responsibility of a leader. With it we grow in our personal power and do not become burned out, resentful or exhausted. There are many ways to approach self care, but it is helpful to begin by looking inward, nurturing our inner strength through self-love, centering and grounding and identifying personal strengths and values. Opening oneself to curiosity and to learning from and gaining the support of helpful people are also key elements of self care.



GROUP PROCESSES

by Molly Breysse Cox and Patricia Hughes

Paying attention to group process and design has a big payoff for constructing collaboration. Positive group interaction and sustainability doesn't just happen. An important element of this Project has been raising the participants' awareness of that. For the women involved in this Project, paying attention to positive group process enables them to focus energy and effort on learning from each other, building new collectives and having new conversations.

In this section we will cover the importance of group process and building trust, creating group identity, which includes shared group values and Gracious Space, processes for learning together, which includes Mind Mapping, World Cafe, Circle Process and Networking, and tools to help groups stay on the path, including Appreciative Inquiry, SWOT Analysis and the ORID Discussion Method.

Coming Together and Building Trust

As the women came together in nine conversations, it became evident that building trust is vital for healthy group dynamics. Trust is a vital ingredient in group life and its presence creates the conditions that allow us to lower our defenses and wholeheartedly enter the space of learning and leadership. However, the trust experience can be very abstract, and can have emotional implications, so it is important to ground it in ritual, practice or verbal and physical reminders that it exists and is real.

We each have different levels of willingness and capacity to trust others — on one end of the spectrum are people who give others their trust immediately and on the other end are people for whom trust must be earned over time.

Regardless of where we fall on the spectrum, trust is transforming — if we include it in our processes and structures.

Trust has the power to impact every relationship and experience in our lives. It is a cocreated experience with a big — often invisible — impact on collaboration. Evidence of trust exists everywhere in our daily lives, and can be measured by how much we can do with others, how open and honest we are, how reliant we are upon others, and they upon us.



Building trust as a foundation requires examining values, norms and principles for guidance and direction. This process includes setting expectations, addressing biases and barriers to collaboration, and finding tangible ways to focus energy on the change we have come together to make.

Along with awareness of values, norms and principles, groups need a shared understanding of how these principles show up in behaviors. It is not sufficient to say that your organizational values are, for example, accountability and integrity; the team also needs to see how these values are replicated in behaviors, systems and procedures, every day. Spelling out values in terms of behavior will make it less risky to have a conversation where trust is an issue, because it will be evident whether the behaviors are being done, or not. And, just as it is important to identify the behaviors of others that enhance or impinge upon trust, so must we be vigilant to our own behaviors that can enhance or get in the way of our own trustworthiness. The challenge for leaders is often shifting from a focus on how others are draining the trust to seeing how we are impacting the ability of others to trust us, and therefore our actions and vision as a leader.

One way to build trust in groups is to share stories about ourselves. Sharing information builds trust; the more we know about others, the less we tend to make up or distrust their motivations. Stories can be as simple as responding to a question, such as: What drew you to this project? Or, What is a skill or gift that you want to contribute to this effort? Or, What is a time when you experienced joy in community? Stories are ageless, and humans have been using them to connect for centuries.

Another way to establish trust is by thinking about three specific elements that affect trust: character, competence, and consistency. Character is a person or group's basic personality and way of being in the world. Do the individuals possess a good, true character? Competence is the degree to which the person or group is capable of doing a designated part or job. Do the individuals have the right skills and expertise? Do they have relevant and good ideas about the work? Can they plan and implement the work in a way that gets good results? Consistency is the reliability of a person or group in regularly achieving good results. Is this person or group reliable and accountable? Do they follow through on good ideas? Are they consistently present and competent?

Using these criteria, group participants can identify the areas in which a person or group is or is not trustworthy (this can be done anonymously). Assign a numerical value, such as 1-5, for the amount of trust present. If the trust level is 4 or above, it is probably safe to proceed. If the level of trust is 3 or below, this indicates more inquiry and trust building activities are needed.

The importance of trust was mentioned numerous times in the conversations, with specific examples in the AUS, Uganda and Guatemala conversations. Trust is vital to building relationships, to working together and to believing in others. And, “delegating to other women is how we demonstrate trust and confidence that other women can do many things,” said a participant in Mabilia's Guatemala Conversation.

Group Identity

Think of your group as a container where you set the direction for the kind of change and outcome you desire. Early focus on establishing collective values, norms and guiding principles will play an important role in creating a space where the group feels enabled to learn and work together. From here, there are a number of methodologies, processes, and practices that can help further identify and sustain the collective group. The key is to use processes and practices that include everyone and enhance collective participation.

“Although none of the women knew each other they were comfortable sharing and when one woman commented that she didn't have any friends, the other women chimed in with 'Yes you do!' really making it clear bonding had occurred in the two hours we spent together.”

- Romajeau, Muckleshoot
Convener

Creating Gracious Space

Gracious Space is a methodology and practice developed by the Center for Ethical Leadership in Seattle, Washington that helps develop group identity and facilitates change with integrity. This method focuses on bringing one's best self, inviting diversity of thought and approach, and learning together. When undertaken with openness and trust, the methodology reliably builds an environment for positive group process. It provides a way to achieve the solid foundation needed to work well together.

The *Gracious Space* methodology ***introduces four main elements*** for creating a strong group process. These are: ***a spirit, a setting, inviting the 'stranger' and learning in public.***

The ***spirit*** of Gracious Space refers to intentionally creating a supportive environment for the work. This means individuals need to pay attention to how we show up, our manner, and our outlook. We each carry many qualities that enable us to create supportive environments, such as compassion, honesty, curiosity and humor. When we intentionally bring these attributes to life with others, we activate the spirit of Gracious Space. Groups, by extension, possess a collective spirit. The group's spirit of Gracious Space shows up in how group members relate to each other, interact with others outside the group, and get work done. Too often groups assume that getting down to business is the most effective use of their time, and they give little time or

attention to how they *are* together. Groups can intentionally create a positive environment for their work together by focusing on and naming their group's spirit of Gracious Space.

The ***setting*** of Gracious Space is simply the physical environment where the work takes place. The physical arrangement of the room needs to match the goal of the meeting. For example, if we want participants to interact, we set the chairs in a circle or around a table rather than in classroom or lecture format. Pay attention to simple hospitality (food, drink, room temperature) and provide items that augment the energy and reflect the personality of the group (art, music, natural beauty). Setting also has an aspect of time to it. Often meetings come to a close just as the real discussion starts. Plan meetings with adequate time available so the group can productively engage each other.

Inviting the 'stranger' means we invite the other, whether that is a person or idea. Inviting the stranger is a strategic and assertive posture that requires us to be open to learning from difference, not simply tolerating it, and that we see difference as valuable information that can add to our understanding of the issue. And, while difference can often feel like conflict, wise leaders can help groups use difference as an opportunity to learn and open up more possibilities. We need the stranger when we are considering complex and new ideas, lest we make narrow-minded decisions or take actions with only short-term benefits.

Learning in public means judging less, listening more, and being willing to change our minds – while we are in conversation with others. It means letting go and opening up to possibility. If we want our groups to innovate and collaborate better, participants need to learn from each other. When we hold tightly to viewpoints, we crowd out the ability to be influenced by others. When we hold closely to expertise, we stop listening to the insights in others' experiences. Our judgments and assumptions about others lock them (and us) into a rigid box.

Gracious Space creates the space to engage in deep listening – with a commitment to learning – with the diverse group we have gathered. These four elements of Gracious Space create conditions for people to be fully alive, fully engaged and fully present. Creativity and break-through solutions emerge when people come together with different perspectives and gifts, into a safe space of joy and connectedness, with the intent of learning and being their best together. For more information on benefits, use and activities on Gracious Space visit the website at <http://ethicalleadership.org/programs/gracious-space>.

Shared group values

Another methodology to identify group identity is to take a group through a values clarification exercise. In the self-care section, we described a way to identify personal values. Groups can replicate that same exercise. Using the same initial values list, add a few values that are important to the work of the group. These could include justice, spirituality, friendship,

accountability, results, collaboration, care, service, joy, respect, or any other value. With this larger list, ask each individual to choose their top eight, then from that set choose five, then three, then finally narrow their individual selection to two core values. Ask individuals to share their top two core values aloud with each other, and keep track of how many times each value is mentioned.

When every participant has shared, go back and see how many people have indicated the same value words in their top two. Ask people to stand for the value that was most often mentioned. For example, if five people said the value "love" is one of their top two, ask people to stand for love. Five people will stand. Then figure out which value was the second most mentioned and ask people to stand for that one, and so on, until all people in the group are standing. These values that the group stands for (literally!) then become the shared values of the group. When these values are discovered, the group can have conversations about what these values mean, how the values show up in behaviors, decisions, actions and policies, and how these values contribute to their group identity.

Learning Together

When groups engage in learning openly together, everyone gets smarter and the work becomes more beneficial to participants and recipients alike. The women in the Conversations collectively made over 40 references to the desire for increased training. This Project is all about learning, so it is appropriate to share some tools for helping groups learn together.

Mind mapping

The Kitchen Cabinet used this tool quite a bit in its work to design the conversations, to record the results of the Conversations, to imagine the design of the Summit, and to learn together. Mind mapping is a transparent, inclusive way to generate and arrange a large variety of ideas or information in a non-linear visualization.

"It's so important to promote gender equality, to change the culture of ignorance and promote the values."

- Mabilia, Guatemala
Convener

It can hold a list of steps, issues, trends or baseline information. It can help groups name and see relationships between complex ideas or situations. Sometimes having a graphic representations of our concerns helps us get appropriate distance so we can think more clearly. Mind mapping is best used when your purpose is to engage everyone in building a collective map of what they individually believe to be the issues. The outcome is a visual pattern of relationships and linkages between ideas, and

ownership of the information because everyone participated in creating the map. A mind map is not useful if you want to generate a single solution to a specific issue, nor is it a useful technology for hiding or hoarding information!

The following are the *basic steps for mind mapping*:

1. ***Prepare a central question.*** This question is prepared in advance based on what the group needs to think about. Write the question in the middle of a large sheet of paper and circle it. Describe the technique to the group. Begin by sharing some guidelines, such as:

- All ideas are valid
- Person who names issue says where it goes
- Opposing ideas are okay
- Give concrete examples
- Similar or same ideas okay

2. ***Invite and record ideas.*** Write ideas either as a “trunk” that comes off the central question or as a “branch” off the trunk idea. Have the person who initiated the idea tell you where it goes and how it is phrased. Invite group members to say ideas while you write on the “map.” If two of you can do the writing the process goes faster. Try using different colors for each trunk, and use the same color for branches off the main trunk. Make sure you get concrete examples and writing them next to the idea. It’s okay to have similar or the same ideas in two or more places. You might want to circle and connect them.

3. ***Stop and reflect on the map.*** Depending upon the purpose of the mind mapping session, you might want to ask the group to prioritize or sequence the information on the mind map, using dot voting. You may also want to assist the group in reflecting on or interpreting the mind map through discussion and questions. Some sample questions might be:

- What stands out for you?
- What patterns are you seeing?
- How do you feel when you scan the mind map?
- What seems most significant?

Circle process

Circle is another methodology that was used as a primary means of sharing and learning in this Project. Circle processes bring people together for conflict resolution, healing, support,

decision making or other collective goals. Circles are ideal for addressing issues where honest communication, relationship development, and community building are valued and desired. Circles are guided by values and principles. Each circle develops its own values and principles, and, according to internationally recognized circle keeper Kay Pranis, all circles:

- are designed by those who use them
- are guided by a shared vision
- call participants to act on their personal values
- encourage exploring instead of conquering differences
- make space for each participant's interests
- offer everyone an equal, and voluntary, opportunity to participate
- maintain respect for all participants
- invite accountability to each other and to the process

In the circle, all participants, regardless of role or status, age or experience, are considered of equal importance, with equal voice. Everyone in the circle is invited to speak and listen from the heart, or to initiate silence. No one sits above or below others, or outside of the circle. The circle is inclusive. Even the circle keeper participates in the circle, in addition to facilitating the process. A circular seating arrangement and the use of a talking piece help define the process. While circles vary somewhat in style and structure, they all seek to cultivate a climate of mutual respect and caring that is value-oriented and heart-based, that engages the emotions as well as the mind.

The *basic steps of circle* are as follows:

- *Welcome & Introductions*
- *Opening & Orientation*
- *Narratives/Storytelling*
- *Exploring Options & Creating Agreements*
- *Closing*

World Café

The challenges of life require us to find new ways to access the wisdom and intelligence inherent in groups. World Café Conversations are an intentional way to create an inclusive, living network of conversation around questions that matter to the group. Café Conversations can enable participants to create a common purpose, share knowledge, make more intelligent decisions, and call forth life-affirming action together. A Café Conversation is a creative process for individual and group learning, collaborative dialogue, sharing knowledge and creating possibilities for action in groups of all sizes.

The *methodology of the World Café* is simple: *you create a gathering place that has the feel of a café and let participants break into small continually changing groups to discuss a given issue.* The work space is set up like a café, with tables for four to eight people, tablecloths or simply flip charts or butcher paper, colored pens and, if desired, candles, quiet music and refreshments (like a real café). People are invited to go to different tables during (typically) three rounds for a series of conversations, each round lasting 20-45 minutes.

One person remains at each table as the host, while the others travel to different tables for the three rounds. Participants engage in the central question, capturing their key ideas in words or pictures on the flip chart paper on the table. At the end of the round, participants move randomly to a new table for a second round of the same question. Table hosts welcome newcomers and share the essence of that tables' conversation so far. The newcomers relate any conversational threads that they are carrying – and then the conversation continues, deepening as the round progresses. This process repeats a third time.

At the end of the third round, participants return to their original table to review the information that has emerged on the large pieces of paper. With the group's help, the table host prepares a summary of key emerging themes, insights, and learnings. These are shared with the whole group, during a harvest, captured on flipcharts or other means for making the collective intelligence and patterns visible to everyone. At this point the Café may end, or continue with another round.

One of the keys to a successful World Café is finding the right questions. In World Café, the formulation of powerful questions is a fundamental art and skill. Some questions that open up possibility include: “What's important to you about this situation, and why do you care?” and “What are we not seeing (or talking about) that is vital to our progress?” If you (as planner or host) don't know what question(s) are right for a particular Café, you can first ask: “What question, if answered, could make the greatest difference to the future of the situation we're exploring here?”

Working in Networks

Many of the groups participating in this Project spoke about networking and the importance of connecting with current allies as well as meeting new people who could help in their work. The Vietnam Women's Union in particular, is a complex and deliberate network of relationships and roles. And in the Muckleshoot Conversation, “We have come to the realization that we do work daily to invest in our community, and with the support of each other we can further our network, resources, and skills to broaden the scope of work possible. All of us want to meet again and are excited to see the work book.”

Many women recognize networking as a valuable leadership tool, and see it as essential in mobilizing community action. Some felt networking was difficult for them to do, partly because of the time-consuming nature of meeting new people, partly because they feel shy or introverted in public.

Loosely defined as “a social structure of individuals and groups,” human networks are how humans have related and organized themselves since ancient times. In many ways networking is a very natural skill for women. We lead through relationships and it is common for us to reach out to others – whether asking our friends how they make delicious cakes or asking a co-worker to help us use a new computer program. However, reaching out to those we do not know, is, for some of us, more challenging. (Meehan and Reihelt, 2012).

The good news is that networking can be about connecting more intentionally with those you already know. Networking is a process that starts with the known and moves gently to the unknown. If you are concerned about the litter on the school yard where your child goes to school, and you know that it will be important to engage people who are leaders in the community, you do not go to those leaders at first. At first, you go to your friend who also has a child at the school. You talk together about creating a clean, inviting environment around the school. You identify other people who might be interested and talk with them about your idea. Before you end the conversation, ask this person who else in the community she or he knows that would be interested in this project. When you contact this person, you tell her that your mutual friend suggested you contact her. You are continually connecting with others – who may be new to you – but with whom you have a mutual friend or acquaintance.

In the academic world, network principles have begun to gain attention among leadership scholars and practitioners interested in methods for shared leadership, where power, information and decisions are shared by the group which cares most about the work. Defined in this way, ***a network is a set of relationships characterized by high levels of trust, reciprocity, and sense of community.*** These networks feature strong ties with others who care about the same issues, and weak ties with people across boundaries, from different perspectives, regions or organizations, who are a rich source of new ideas, information, and resources. (Meehan and Reihelt, 2012).

The traditional leadership models define the currency, or the way things get done, as the professional staff, the “fuel” as cash, and the accountability as a hierarchal process. By comparison, network approaches are grounded in the currency of relationships, the fuel for getting work done is people's passion, and the accountability is to others in the network. Networking enables leaders to bring people together who care about the work, who want to get things done in relationship with others, and who share accountability because they are passionate about the work. Networking approaches are particularly useful when:

- the problem is big, involving many individuals and organizations

- we need new ideas and strategies from innovators and connectors
- the solution is not clear and we need to build a new system, through experiments, partnerships and self-organized solutions
- we need to engage people from different backgrounds

Networking fully supports our self-care by expanding our relationships in ways that build our confidence rather than finding ourselves in situations where we feel insecure or uncomfortable. It helps us skillfully use group process by connecting people who share a common interest, increasing energy for potential action. It helps us achieve tasks by discovering others who share our passion or concern about a situation.

Staying on the Path

Many of the Conversations highlight ways the women persevere in the face of disappointment, conflict or the slowness of change. Staying on the path is an important aspect of leadership. For example, Edith in Burkina Faso told of a girl in high school whose parents could no longer afford to send her to school, so she migrated, alone, to a neighboring country, causing her family much worry. “Many girls often abandon school at a young age because of ignorance, customs, and because their parents lack of financial means,” she said. “My country is making efforts to keep girls in school. But, the needs are great and there is still a lot to do. I would like to be someone who works every day to help girls be educated and to reach their full potential.” Edith demonstrates the quality of resilience, being able to recover from misfortune or adjust to change over time, with hope and determination. Like Edith, all of the women in these Conversations are finding ways to stay on the path. This section addresses some tools and approaches for helping groups to stay on the path.

Approaching conflict through inquiry

The fact that we are all different creates potential for conflict in any group experience. The challenge is to use conflict as an opportunity to build understanding and to broaden possibilities for positive change, rather than allowing differences of opinion to become a destructive influence. The group needs to hold an appreciation for diversity along with developing listening skills to understand others' points of view. Groups need tools to help us understand each other, make decisions to move forward, and have difficult conversations on things that matter, respectfully. How we communicate and participate as members and leaders of these conversations has as much impact on effectiveness of the collective group as personal motivation.

A powerful, but often overlooked, leadership tool is asking good questions. Questions generate power. When we make statements, we express a perspective, an understanding or an

idea. Each statement is limited to the particular perspective expressed. Questions, on the other hand, open us to possibilities. The word question derives from the root word, “quest,” means that we literally are on a search. We are exploring. Questions enable us to explore what's possible, and to create power by engaging others, by inviting additional perspectives and different ways of seeing a situation, the different possibilities and new opportunities.

Leadership by asking powerful questions is a valuable skill and tool that can be developed through practice. The first step is to recognize there are several types of questions. First, there are questions that end in a question mark, but really they are disguised statements or judgments: You're not going to do that, are you? Other questions satisfy our own curiosity or understanding: What do you mean by that? And others try to lead people to a pre-determined conclusion or our own point of view: Isn't there a way to do this that costs half as much? Many of these type of questions begin with do, can, will and result in a yes/no answer.

In this Project, one of the significant influencers on the Conversation process and design taken by the Kitchen Cabinet is Appreciative Inquiry. Developed by David Cooperrider of Case Western Reserve University, Appreciative Inquiry is a process that can be used by groups to generate emergent insights that deepen and gain power as they are revisited in ever widening circles.

Appreciative Inquiry finds out what's working and fans the flame! This approach takes the position of starting from a positive point of view versus focusing on what is deficient or broken. Questions in Appreciative Inquiry would include: What is working well on this project? Who cares about what we are doing? When are times that we are collaborating well? What are examples for how we have successfully managed difficulty in the past? Appreciative Inquiry avoids the downward spiral that often accompanies a problem-solving approach. Effort and attention are shifted to identifying desirable outcomes and designing a more energizing and motivating experience. This model uses the art of asking questions as a means to foster positive relationships and build on the present potential. ***The Appreciative Inquiry process consists of four stages:***

- **Discovery:** *The best of what is...* gather learning about positive images & actions, and identify organizational processes that work well;
- **Dream:** *What might be...* generalize learning into envisioning processes that would work well in the future;
- **Design:** *What should be...* “translate,” plan and prioritize processes into actions & social capital;

- ***Destiny or Deliver:*** *What will be...* implement the proposed design, innovating and creatively adapting as the path unfolds.

The basic set-up for Appreciate Inquiry begins by putting people into pairs to share a story about the key question. This pair then merges with another pair, and they introduce each other by means of re-telling their partner's stories. They also listen for themes, patterns and conditions that made the story possible. The group of four then joins another group of four, and shares insights about the themes and patterns in the conditions and assets that made the stories possible. The "top" stories and repeating patterns are shared with the whole group. An overall pattern of assets and condition that support the key question and movement forward are generated during the large-group session.

This is a great tool when faced with differences of opinion, and when working with a group to shift from a blaming, negative conversation cycle into a positive, celebratory conversation. It reinforces the power of what works versus the power of criticism.

SWOT analysis

SWOT stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Originated by Albert S. Humphrey in the 1960's, SWOT was traditionally used for strategic planning for businesses. More recently it has been used as a tool to focus on the internal strengths and weaknesses of a group, as well as the external opportunities and threats provided by the world at large. Focused on group work and mission, it has proven to be a flexible tool for identifying group strategy with wisdom and intention.

Internal	Strengths What advantages do we have? What can we do better than anyone else?	Weaknesses What could we improve? What should we avoid?
External	Opportunities What trends are we aware of? What good opportunities do we see?	Threats What obstacles are in our way? What barriers are impeding us?

Strengths and weaknesses take an internal perspective on the interpersonal dynamics, organizational climate, brand, reputation with constituents, generation of ideas and access to resources. Opportunities and threats may reveal things "out there" that can be leveraged for growth or may result in less business or ease of operation, such as new technology, changes in markets or governmental regulations in the field, changes in social patterns, population profiles, lifestyle changes or local events.

The SWOT provides information that helps match the resources and capabilities of the organization to the environment in which it operates, and is instrumental in strategic prioritization and direction. The SWOT can become a strategic approach to turn weaknesses into strengths, leverage opportunities and mitigate potential threats. Groups can use it at different times to realistically assess how they are doing and what factors may help or hinder their work.

This points to the usefulness of the SWOT analysis as a tool for determining a group's plans for training. The analysis can help the group members gain insight into the skills and capabilities already present in the group as well as what possible opportunities or threats might exist, enabling the group to form a big picture for building strategy and determining activities to further their own learning.

ICA communication model: ORID

The Discussion Method by the Institute of Cultural Affairs is an approach used around the world by NGO's and community groups for maximizing participation, clear communication and group effectiveness. *The Discussion Method is called ORID, referring to a process that is sequentially Objective, Reflective, Interpretive and Decisional.* ORID is based on a natural thinking process that mimics the way the mind functions, moving from sensory stimuli to action. For this reason, people adapt to it very quickly, and readily see how their thinking can become action. (Spencer, 1989).

The facilitator asks a series of four questions that help move the group from the "what," to the "so what" of making meaning, to the "now what" of taking action. The first question gathers **Objective** facts of people's experiences. What did you see, hear, touch, smell, taste? What word, phrase, or image stands out for you as you think about this? What happened? If you could make a movie of it, what would the main plot be? Each person responds with a short sentence.

The second question asks participants to **Reflect** on the emotions, feelings and associations. When did you get emotionally engaged? What angered, excited, intrigued or frightened you? What past associations do you have to this particular issue?

Through the first two questions, each person has been listening quietly to each of the others in the group. At this point every person in your group has spoken twice. Each person has had the opportunity to “listen inside” to her own insight or experience, and to share that with the group. The group, as a whole, has access to both the images or words held in the minds of each person, and the emotions that have been ignited and shared. At this point more meaningful interaction with one another can occur.

The third question asks for ***Interpretation***, to make meaning and purpose and assign value. What is the meaning of this experience/goal/concern for us? How does it relate to what we know about our community? What is the significance that people attach to the subject? The conversation now flows without constraint, with persons sharing their thoughts and feelings, listening to one another, building on what others say. This process of creating shared meaning is the essence of emergence. It is what enables a group of individuals to generate common understanding. It helps a group to engage collectively and prepares the way for taking action.

The final question asks for a ***Decision***. What action might we want to take individually or collectively about this experience, goal or concern? What is our relationship to the topic and the discussion, and where do we go from here? At this point a group may find it possible to create a shared vision or goal that members can support. Or it may become clear that certain individuals have clear goals they want to pursue and that others can support them in those individual efforts.

A sample of questions could look like this:

Objective	Reflective	Interpretive	Decisional
What scenes do you recall?	What was your response?	What is this movie about?	What would you say about this event to someone who was not here?
What bits of conversation?	Where do you remember the whole group reacting?	What were the most significant events?	How does this event affect tomorrow?
How many people were there?	How did you feel when that happened?	How was this important to you/us?	What change is needed?
What did you observe?		Which action would be first priority?	What is the resolve of this group?

Conclusion

We have outlined several general processes for holding, creating and activating change within an intentional group process. These include coming together and building trust, learning together and staying on the path. There are many tools to support groups as they move through these stages of working collaboratively, including Gracious Space, shared values clarification, circle process, Mind Mapping, World Café, Appreciative Inquiry, SWOT and the ORID Discussion Method. We can see the benefit of adopting these tools and processes to build predictability, enable collaboration and build a collective consciousness that integrates safety, integrity and trust into the life of the group.

TASK AND PRACTICAL MANAGEMENT

by **Laura Veith with Wendi Walsh, Kathleen Swirski and Pat Hughes**

The women in the nine Conversations frequently mentioned the need for basic project management and fundraising skills. For example, Winnie in Uganda has a dream to start a day care center. “If a working mother leaves her baby in the hands of someone she trusts, she will be more productive at work!” she says. Although Winnie is currently helping women, she has no formal training in these areas. She would love to get tailored trainings to enhance her skills, including Early Childhood Development skills. Winnie’s other wildest dream is to modernize the village where she plans to retire. She plans to have piped water, schools and programs for women in the neighborhood so that they can develop together. Some of these are very technical skills that are beyond the scope of this Capacity Guide, but the lessons contained here will hopefully help women like Winnie get the education they need to be successful.

This chapter offers some hands-on suggestions for becoming more effective at certain tasks of practical management, for example, fund-raising, public speaking, mentoring, using social media and goal-setting. Other sections are offered more as starting points. The sections on project management, mobilizing and entrepreneurial strategies provide brief introductions to lengthy subjects. They are included here to give readers an overview of the subject and to point you in a direction to go if you wish to pursue these subjects in more depth. As Irene in Uganda points out, “many women have studied these subjects but they cannot easily apply them practically.” She believes this forum is a good opportunity to network and share skills in these areas.

Fundraising (also known as Friend-raising)

Fundraising is not really about raising money; rather, fundraising is about raising awareness of the mission and need, and asking people to participate in meeting that need and accomplishing that goal. Participation can take the form of money, in-kind services, and volunteer hours. What is important to remember is that it is easier to get a donation when the donor is connected to you (a family member or friend) and/or the mission of what you want to accomplish.

Two key points to remember about friend-raising: (1) Remember that “no” is always an acceptable answer and not an indication of your relationship or their belief in the mission. “No” usually means not at this time. You can always ask again later. ***(2) Start with a circle of those closest to you and your organization*** and continue to increase the size of that circle by having those friends and family start telling your organization’s story. It becomes the friend-of-a-friend model where the friend circle keeps enlarging. Described ***below are few tools you might use in your friend-raising campaign.***

Case Statement – The case statement is a single page document that tells the "what" and "why" parts of your story in a simple format with some images. The case statement helps you be clear about what your organization wants to do and what it will take to accomplish it, and typically includes sections describing:

- who we are, what we do
- in the process of doing our job, we learned about a situation in our community
- here's what we think we can do about it
- here's how much it will cost
- we have a plan for meeting that cost, and here's how you can help

The **Developing Women's Leadership ~ Around the Globe** Case Statement is below.



Purchased from a local vendor in Romania in 2000, the design of this small rug symbolizes the power of women's leadership, connected across cultures and united in creating a healthy world.

Developing Women's Leadership Around the Globe

■ This project:

- Collects data and stories from women's conversations in seven countries
- Creates and publishes a capacity building guide to identify, share and develop cross-cultural leadership needs and strategies
- Designs and hosts a Women's Leadership Summit, September 28-29, 2013
- Brings conversation hosts (Conveners) to Seattle to join with local women leaders to participate in teaching and learning about women's ways of leading
- Shares findings with partner organizations and women leaders around the world.

■ We need to raise \$40K in donations for this project .

- Convener travel, visas and lodging
- Food and beverages
- Videography, production and editing
- Publishing, printing and distribution of the capacity building guide



Empowering women around the world to appreciate, value and expand their influence and impact



Donor List – It is important to think about whom you will ask, for what and for how much. This may feel a bit calculated, but it will help you focus your limited resources on the conversations that are most likely to produce a donation. You cannot be everywhere and ask everyone, so it is helpful to become specific about whom you approach.

Tell Everyone – When people ask you what’s new, tell them about the amazing project you are working on. Do not immediately ask them to donate, but see if they respond with interest. If it looks like they are interested, set up another time to discuss the mission and needs of the project. Then you can do an ask. If it does not look like they are interested, ask if they might know anyone interested in this work. Opening a door to a potential donor is just as valuable as receiving a donation. It’s all about raising awareness.

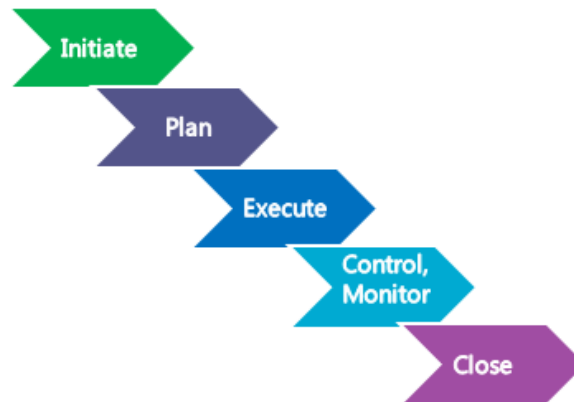
Energy and Encouragement – It takes much energy to friend-raise. You may feel discouraged because the donations do not just pour in and your goal seems unattainable. Remember that you are doing great things, and, sometimes, great things take a long time. You may need to implement your goal over time to match the way donations are actually raised. In the end, you have still accomplished the goal, so it does not matter how long it took, only that the goal was accomplished. Patience and persistence are critical.

Project Management Basics

The logistics of project management can be daunting but it helps to understand what is meant by the term “project,” and to be aware that there is an internationally accepted guidebook available to assist in the project management process.

A project is “a temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product, service or result, with a definite beginning and end. The end of the project is reached when the project objectives are met, or when the project is terminated because its objectives will not or cannot be met, or the need for the project no longer exists” (The Project Management Body Of Knowledge (PMBOK) Guide, p. 1). A project can have social, economic, and environmental impacts that far outlive the project, itself. Its temporary nature does not necessarily mean the project has a short duration. Projects vary in length, influence, and complexity and engage teams of people, with other resources, to accomplish project objectives.

Project Management is the “application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to meet the project requirements...and is accomplished through the appropriate application and integration of ... logically grouped project management processes.” (PMBOK, p. 2). ***Briefly, Project Management can be considered a process by which we manage projects from beginning to end within these five phases:***



Project Management can be used at work and at home. Its methodology and vocabulary helps us “speak the same language” globally as we work on projects together in virtual (not co-located) teams and provides us insights into the people connections we may need to get our work done.

The Project Management Body Of Knowledge (PMBOK) Guide is published by the Project Management Institute (www.pmi.org), a globally recognized project management standards, best practices, professional code and educational organization. The Guide “provides guidelines for managing individual projects and defines project management related concepts.” Project management practitioners can become certified in project management standards, code of ethics and professional conduct, which apply globally. A couple of helpful websites on this topic include <http://management.about.com/cs/projectmanagement/a/PM101.htm> and on the Wikipedia website at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Project_management.

Effective Communication

In this section we'll look at the tools of public speaking, mentoring and use of the social media to enhance communication on behalf of the many important projects in which women are involved. In one particularly special story, Claudine of Burkina Faso, explains how she got the permission and approval of the village chief to pursue her work with on behalf of women and girls. Her communication approach is what made her successful. Below is the story in her words.

Men have the full power on all humankind in the village. Mostly, they proudly argue that they have the power in deciding everything relating to women and girls in the village. We had to pass by what we called “Men Road” so that we could reach easily and frankly women.

Otherwise, as all women are aware of the probable evictions she could face, no one would have had the courage to pay attention to the Association even if they

profoundly aspire to adhere and to be an active member, since they know the great benefits they could gain from it.

The women of my group made a friendship with a young man who helped us learn appropriate ways to converse with the chiefs. At the time of the meeting, the chief was assisted by all his advisers. As guests, we were supposed to be the first to introduce the subject of our visit. But only after the drinking water we were served, a sign of acceptance and welcoming, and also only after the chief authorized that we could speak.

As the leader of our group, I left my chair to sit down on the ground, a sign of humility and respect to the elders. This was a very surprising but appreciated action, since none of the group believed that, "women from the town" would accept to sit down directly on the ground and get dirty. But this was the ultimate and fundamental behavior we needed to adopt to immediately mark points, and it was done.



We stated our aims are to empower the whole village even if women are our main targets. We ensured that we are aware that women could not do anything if men don't agree and are not opened to be of help. We ensured also that men help would be critical tool for us to reach our objectives. We ensured that working with women doesn't mean to work against men. It rather means empowering men through women.

We argued that when best practices from women of the village will be recognized and widespread, every man from the village would feel proud of being from that village.

We related success stories and gently requested men points of view. Finally, we clearly stated that, "we seek for the comprehension, strong commitment, protection and opened support of men in the village to have our work be successful, and concluded that our current approach is to seek for authorization and recognition of who has the incontestable right and power. Because, like a well-known proverb in our settings: "No stranger should show up without authorization or permission of whom may give it."

This conclusion touched the sensibility of the chief who promptly expressed his joy. He was proud to hear those things from women.

Then, he stated: "I feel proud since women have decided to grow our village and to introduce new thoughts and projects that will benefit the whole components of the village. As a flexible, equal and progressive Chief, I urge you, my advisers to pass on and widespread the information to the whole village and to be the first model in supporting the association."

Public Speaking

Stella in Uganda is passionate about her involvement in church work where the group engages in community service such as painting a nursery school and sponsoring children each month. Stella feels the church group is a great place to continue to enhance her leadership abilities. In order to be more effective and assertive in this work, Stella wants to build skills in communication, especially public speaking. Similarly, the women in Guatemala want to learn how to present projects and “know how to negotiate or reach agreements that benefit their communities.” They also mentioned the need to improve their ability in public speaking, to “articulate very well the power to convey ideas.”

Many people say that speaking in front of a group makes them more afraid than anything else. The reasons for improving public speaking skills are diverse: some people want to overcome their anxiety, others want to learn how to organize their thoughts better, and others are looking to inspire people to action. *A few tips to help leaders become more comfortable speaking in public follow:*

Know the topic inside and out. This means doing research, talking to people, and considering stories and experiences that can help make your point. Even if you have a script you will be more convincing if you can speak naturally rather than using the voice that goes with reciting a speech. Knowing the topic well will also make it easier to answer questions and to refer back to ideas. Rehearsal is the key to success, whether you're speaking to a large or small group, or preparing for a critical conversation with just one other person. Think about what you want to say and how you want to say it. Think about how you want the person to feel after you are done, and what action, if any, you want them to take. There are several ways you can rehearse:

- Rehearse in front of the mirror. It will feel awkward at first, but after a while you'll get used to it and you can see your body language which might be distracting from your message.
- Record yourself with a video camera and watch yourself. Pay attention to your body

language and how you talk. Most of us need to slow down. Many of us have distracting mannerisms such as flipping hair or fidgeting with our fingers. There may be unnecessary breaks in your speech, such as "um" or "ah" that take away from your message. Are you speaking clearly? If you were in the audience would you follow or would you lose interest?

- Practice in front of friends. Ask them for feedback (based on the same questions as if you were video recording yourself). Have them ask questions about your subject, starting with easy questions and building up to more difficult ones. This will help you have a conversation about your topic and sound knowledgeable and confident.

One of the keys to a successful speech or presentation is to know to whom you are talking and to anticipate how they might react to the way you present your message. Who is your audience? What do they need or want? Are they more likely to be convinced based on the logic of an idea, on the emotion conveyed in a story, or by your credibility?

Another important reminder is to *relax*, which is probably easier said than done. But once you remember that you are talking about your passion, or your creation, you will settle down. Focus on what you love about your project, not your nervousness. Your audience wants you to succeed, they want to hear what you have to say, and they will pick up on your emotions, so even if you are nervous try not to show it. Share the kind of energy that you would like to see and most likely that is what will emerge. If you do something you wish you hadn't, don't apologize – you are probably the only one who noticed your mistake. Your audience is much less critical of you than you are of yourself.

Finally, *remember the more you do it, the easier it will come*. If an opportunity arises for you to speak publicly take advantage of it, it will make you a better speaker. A good resource for practicing public speaking is Toastmaster's International, which has tips and free resources at <http://www.toastmasters.org/>. You could also start your own speaking practice club, or include small presentations at team meetings or at future gatherings of the Conversation Circles.

Mentoring

Mentoring is included in this section on effective communication because *mentoring is about one caring person conveying her knowledge to another, giving that “student” direction and feedback on emerging skills, and helping that person to grow in her abilities*. Formal mentoring is an intentional learning relationship focused on meeting mentee learning goals. A mentor acts as an advisor, teacher, sponsor, or confidant. Mentoring is a relationship based on mutual respect and support. With the mentee, the mentor helps create a guiding map filled with

processes, tools and questions that will help her mentee know how to approach new situations as they arise and help her move in the direction she wants to go.

Irene in Uganda views mentoring as a part of her duty to other women striving to become more engaged and effective in their communities. “Being a more advantaged woman than the members of my group, I feel the urge to pass on skills to enable them to improve their social and financial status,” she says. Elida in Guatemala travels to another village to learn new subjects, and returns to her community to share with other women what she has learned.

We can think of mentoring as having three stages. The beginning stage is about preparation and negotiation. Mentors and mentees need to reflect on what they want out of the mentoring relationship, what the expectations are, learning goals of the mentee, criteria for success, coming up with a process and structure for meeting times and locations, agreements about confidentiality and boundaries, and figuring out the responsibilities of each person.

The middle ground is the space of goals, action and learning. Mentors and mentees build a learning relationship to nurture mentee growth. Together, they set up a safe, supportive, accepting environment. The mentee is generally in charge of deciding her goals and desired learning, and the mentor can share her gifts of perspective, experience, feedback, and passion for learning, without expecting anything in return. Mentors should help mentees become self-directed, independent learners beyond the mentoring relationship.

The end stage is about bringing closure to the mentoring relationship. This usually includes a meeting to reflect on the primary lessons learned, celebration of the relationship, and making agreements about follow-up or future check-ins.

Mentors often are hesitant about knowing how to behave in a mentoring relationship. How much advice should they give? How much responsibility should they take on? Briefly stated, the responsibility belongs with the mentee, and the mentor is there to guide, but not to take any assignments nor to do the work for the mentee. You are there to help the mentee find solutions to their own problems and challenges. Mentors can model a love for learning and improving, and can help cultivate courage and risk taking in the mentee. As a mentor you will want to share your stories when they fit the conversation and give support as well as challenge to help mentees stretch. Show curiosity, and ask questions that seek a deeper level of understanding and reflection, such as:

- If you could handle that situation again, what would you do differently?
- What have you learned about... that you didn't expect to learn?
- What was the most challenging part of the task?
- What were your reasons for doing...?

Avoid asking questions that suggest you already have the answer, such as: Wouldn't it be more effective if you did...? And be sure to ask questions to check on the effectiveness of the mentoring process, such as: What would make our next meeting better?

The most important characteristic of a good mentor is listening. When you are deeply listening, you will find that you don't know what to say next, because you were so focused on listening! Deeply listening means you are trying to learn, not instructing or pushing your own agenda, and that you give undivided attention and set aside other demands and distractions. Learn to be comfortable with silence, and allow your mentee to form her own thoughts rather than jumping in with a solution. Be patient and allow your mentee to make mistakes.

Social Media Basics

Social media offers a relatively new and ever-evolving set of tools. Some of the most popular services today are facebook, twitter, pinterest, google+, youtube, Wordpress and LinkedIn. Each service has different purposes, opportunities and audiences. This guide will not go into how to use these specific services, rather, we will focus on some basic principles that apply to any tool that is currently available or may be developed in the near future.

Social networks take conversations online. They are not always happening real time, but they leave a record of all that has been said. When used effectively they are very powerful tools for marketing, raising awareness, creating new connections and maintaining existing connections across time and space.

There are several ways one can be involved in this social network conversation. Creators are the people who start conversations. They write about their topic, create images and share their own creations with their network. They invite conversation, ask questions and move the conversation forward. Participants actively participate in the conversations that the Creators start. Collectors look for content and organize it by themes, which makes it easy for others to find and process information. And Spectators observe. They do not participate in the conversation, but simply listen, and are aware and informed of what is happening in the social media sphere. Knowing what type of participant you are or would like to be will help you choose the services that are right for you.

While there are significant differences between online and in-person communication, knowing your audience is important no matter where you communicate. Following are some ***general rules to keep in mind when social networking***:

- ***Social networking is all about sharing information.*** Eighty per cent of content should be sharing information (this can be information that you created), but only 20% should be self-promotion. By sharing information you add value to the conversation and you come across

as credible, knowledgeable and trustworthy.

- ***Everything you share online creates a record***, even if you delete it. So before you post, ask yourself if you really want to post and what value it offers. If you have any doubt, it is a good idea to wait or to rephrase the post.
- ***Build a list of your connections*** by looking for people and organizations that are doing similar work, as well as those who are geographically close. Start sharing their posts, tag them and start a conversation. That is the best way to get noticed and start a relationship.
- ***Pick one network to start with***. Once you understand that you can add another. The social media sphere can be daunting, so start small and have a plan. What are you trying to accomplish by using these tools? What are you communicating and to whom? Being organized and having a clear vision can save time and help you be more effective in your communication.
- ***Reuse and recycle your content***. Think about how you can reuse content you've already written, such as a mission statement or article, and repurpose it for a different medium.
- ***Test and analyze communication strategies***. See what types of posts get the most response. Mix it up and learn from your audience.

Organizing

Many women in the Conversations discussed ways they have organized themselves and others to accomplish their projects, and said that more skill in this area is needed by all groups they work with. This section covers some basics of mobilizing and entrepreneurial strategies.

Mobilizing

Julie in Uganda is a well-educated woman who works for an inter-religious council in the arenas of justice and peace. She has a lot of experience trying to bring about conflict transformation and peace building, and says that mobilization skills are key to her work. “One needs to mobilize key people to rally behind the cause,” she says. “Through mobilization you help the stakeholders to see what was, what is and what should be, so that everyone is brought on the same page.” Julie says mobilization requires the use of many skills, including participation, consultation, dialogue, decision-making, ownership, planning, consensus building and evaluation. Equally important are resource mobilization skills, so groups can gain the resources they need to do their work.

One definition of mobilization offered by the Community Empowerment Collective is “getting the group to take action and organizing itself to increase their capacity and strength.” Simply setting up structures, such as a committee with officers and volunteers, is not action.

Mobilizing means moving and getting something done. Along the way leaders need to engage others in deciding what actions to take, who will take them, how to document and communicate the actions, and how to keep moving forward.

In resource mobilization, often a core professional group works to bring in money, supporters, attention of the media, alliances with those in power, and to refine the organizational structure to optimize its effectiveness. Social movements need resource mobilization to be effective, because experience has shown that dissent and grievances alone will not generate the desired social change.

Entrepreneurial Strategies

In the Conversations these women had, the qualities of entrepreneurship thinking came up frequently. Weub in Ethiopia said, “For those who are working in organizations the main issue is to update oneself and manage to be competitive. So lack of training, new knowledge and modern thinking are the main issues.”

“... Having the ability to influence others and make them move in a particular direction is a very important skill in leadership. Leadership is often defined as the ability to persuade or influence others to do something they could not have done without the leader’s persuasion.”

Lidieth, Nicaragua Convener

There are many definitions of an entrepreneur, but the one that resonates for this Project is Peter Drucker's 1964 definition: “An entrepreneur searches for change, responds to it and exploits opportunities. Innovation is a specific tool of an entrepreneur hence an effective entrepreneur converts a source into a resource.” (source: Wikipedia) By that definition all of us, and all of you involved in this Project, are entrepreneurs. Presented here as a part of entrepreneurial strategies, this list of traits can serve as a helpful checklist for staying on track when undertaking new projects.

Entrepreneurs start by seeing a gap, an issue or a problem, and instead of accepting what is, they look for solutions, which includes reframing the problem into an opportunity.

- ***Passionate and compassionate*** – You will spend a lot of time on your selected topic, so you better love it and feel really excited about it! Remember that others care, too, and be empathetic toward those you want to help. They know their situation best, and they may have some great ideas.

- ***Resourceful self-starter*** – Things won't get done unless someone does them. Look for a natural place to start, a point that's easy and makes sense. Focus on the what, and the

how will follow. You may not have access to all the resources you need, so you will need to be resourceful. Think differently and come up with innovative solutions. Instead of asking, What do I need? Ask, What do I need this to do and what are the ways I can accomplish this? Who do I know who might know how to do this (or knows someone who does)?

- ***See and recognize patterns*** – This is an analytical part of being an entrepreneur, where we must be observant and understand relationships.
- ***Able to connect with diverse groups of people, build a great team*** – You can't do everything, and you can't do it alone. You will need support and you will need a team of people with different strengths that can work together.
- ***Self-honesty and integrity*** – Be true to yourself. You will make many decisions in your journey as a self-starter and entrepreneur. There are times when you may be uncertain about a decision. One way to evaluate whether you should do something is to ask yourself, When making this decision, do I feel heavy or do I feel light? This is a pretty good indicator of whether your decision aligns with your core beliefs.
- ***Learn from failure, be persistent*** – A common saying among entrepreneurs is "Fail early, fail often." We don't learn nearly as much from success as we do from failure. The key is to keep trying. When trying to invent the light bulb, Thomas Edison is quoted as saying, "I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work." Filter out the pieces that don't work and collect the pieces that do work, and slowly you will succeed in your own way.
- ***Creative*** – Creativity is how we show up in the world and how we solve problems – two key ingredients of entrepreneurship. Diverse experiences become fodder for finding creative solutions and possibilities. Inspiration often comes from the most unexpected sources, so when looking for a solution, look to nature and different industries and organizations who may have already tackled your problem.

Goal-setting

The magic of goal-setting is that it helps us get really clear about that which we want to accomplish. When we are abundantly clear in our intention, it is as if the universe conspires to help us. Clear goals focus our energy. ***One way to ensure that goals are powerful is by using the acronym SMART: Specific, Measureable, Acceptable, Realistic, Time-bound.***

Specific – A goal is specific when you provide enough detail so that there is no indecision. A goal of “collaborate better” is non-specific. A more specific goal is: “ensure that core staff share planning time to collaborate on the XXX project.”

Measurable – Your goal should include tangible measurement of completion. It feels good to see something accomplished. Equally important, you will be able to prove to yourself (and others) that you were successful and your time wasn't wasted. For example, a goal of “collaborate better” is not easily measured. A more measureable goal is “ensure that core staff share planning and discussion time *twice per week* to collaborate on the XXX project.”

Acceptable – Your goal should be acceptable to you and the people who are living with it. You know best your strengths and weaknesses, and can use this information to maximize your chances of success.

Realistic – Goals should have a reasonable likelihood they can be accomplished. Don't set goals that you are unlikely to follow through, that will only create disappointment. It's better to set fewer realistic goals where you can be successful than it is to set unattainable goals. Success breeds success! Start small with what you can do, experience the joys of meeting your goal, and gradually increase the amount of work that you ask of yourself.

Time bound – Say when you plan to complete your goal, i.e., by next Tuesday, by the end of first quarter, etc. Anything that will take more than a year should be broken into smaller timeframes.

Conclusion

The practical skills of fundraising, “friend-raising,” project management, public speaking, mentoring others, implementing social media basics, being entrepreneurial, mobilizing, as well as using goal-setting to be clear and stay focused, can help leaders succeed with their projects. Combined with the skills previously described in the self-care and group process sections, these skills compose the bulk of the skills the women in the Conversations indicated they want to improve, so they can better serve their families and communities. There are many places to gain these skills including community colleges, watching and working with friends and other leaders who do it well, and taking on volunteer work.

Conclusion

by Kristie McClean and Pat Hughes

There is an African proverb that says, “When you pray, move your feet.” To this, these women might add, “And link arms, join hands and share a meal!” Ugandan Country Convener Betty Kagoro sums up the potential for women's leadership: “Experiences across the globe show the same unforgettable lessons – when women’s capacity is enhanced, the entire community is enhanced. Enhancing women’s leadership competencies will lead to social justice, income generating projects, making healthy decisions, and serving as role models to younger women.”

This Project has shown us that anything is possible when we reconnect with our inner strengths and instincts, and point those toward something we care about. When we embody our own power and strength and give ourselves the credit and confidence we deserve, we will discover additional reservoirs of grace. With this inner strength we can show up more wholly and fully to support the needs of those around us.

This Project has also shown that when our relationships are strong we have a greatly expanded capacity. Many hands make light work! All relationships need nurturing and maintenance – some more than others – and it requires a conscious effort on our part to network, listen, and be willing to learn from others who think and act differently than we do. By making the effort to reach out to those whom we don’t know well or to those whose viewpoints we don’t understand, we can re-shape our own perspectives and build bridges with new friends and advocates that can open up whole new realms of possibility.

This Project has shown that when we have the courage to birth the ideas in our heads and hearts out into the light of day, marvelous things can happen. Each of us has a unique perspective, and communicating our visions clearly and effectively – and making the effort to listen and seek to understand the ideas and visions of others – allows many more thoughts and voices to come to the table. We as women realize that when our communications are easy, our hearts are lighter.

Finally, this Project has shown that when we realize the universality of our strengths and our struggles it bonds us together. We can sense that others are more alike than different, and, regardless of our geography or circumstance, we’re each programmed to seek happiness and possibility for our families and communities. By joining together and participating in our women’s circles we can honor where each of us stands and where each of us longs to be going. Someone’s need is another person’s strength or area of expertise. And we celebrate, like gems strung on a necklace, our individual and shared triumphs and the tools we use to keep moving forward.

We invite Project participants and readers to reflect on what you have gained and learned from the conversations offered in this Capacity Building Guide. We invite you to reflect on what you learn from others when you are in conversation about what matters. We invite you to form conversation circles of your own, to discover what you can learn from your friends and neighbors about the challenges you could tackle together and the changes for good you can accomplish, here and now.

We hope that you have been inspired by the stories of the women who Convened and who participated in the Conversations that formed the basis of this Project and this Capacity Building Guide.

We hope that you will utilize the strategies and practices the Guide contains as you lead, and as you continue to enhance your leadership skills.

Through the website, **www.womenleadingtheway.com** you can access additional stories of women who are leading and influencing positive change. You are also invited to **contact us** to share your own experiences and leadership strategies and practices that you have found useful.

References

- Antioch University Seattle. (2013). *About AUS*. Retrieved on February 25, 2013, from <http://www.antiochseattle.edu/>
- Antioch University. (n.d.) In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved on February 25, 2013, from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antioch_University
- Arrien, A. (1993). *The four-fold way*. New York: HarperOne Publishing.
- Belenky, M.F., Clinchy, B.M., Goldberger, N.R. & Tarule, J.M. (1986). *Women's ways of knowing: The development of self, voice, and mind*. New York, NY: Basic Books
- Brown, J. & Isaacs, D. (2005). *The world café: Shaping our future through conversations that matter*. San Francisco, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.
- Burkina Faso. (n.d.). In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved January, 20, 2013, from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Burkina_faso
- Central Intelligence Agency. (2013). *The World Factbook: Guatemala*. Retrieved on March 7, 2013, from <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gt.html>
- Central Intelligence Agency. (2013). *The World Factbook: Nicaragua*. Retrieved on March 6, 2013 from, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/nu.html>
- Cooperrider, D., Whitney, D. & Stavros, M. J. (2008). *The appreciative inquiry handbook for leaders of change*. San Francisco: Berrett-Kochler Publishers Inc.
- Drucker, P. (1986). *Innovation and Entrepreneurship*. New York: Harper Business.
- Ethiopia. (n.d.). In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved on February 24, 2013, from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethiopia>
- Gilligan, C. (1982). *In a different voice: Psychological theory and women's development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Guatemala. (n.d.) In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved on March, 8, 2013 from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guatemala>
- History of the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe and its Reservation. (2013). Retrieved Feb 25, 2013 from <http://www.muckleshoot.nsn.us/about-us/overview.aspx>.
- Hughes, P. & Grace, B. (2004, 2010). *Gracious space: A practical guide for working better together*. Seattle, WA: Center for Ethical Leadership.
- iLEAP: The Center for Critical Service. (2013). *Lidieth Alvarez*. Retrieved on March 6, 2013, from <http://www.ileap.org/about/ileap-international-fellows/lidieth-alvarez-11-nicaragua/>

- Infopease. (2005). *More Facts & Figures*. Retrieved February 25, 2013, <http://www.infopease.com/ipa/A0107505.html?pageno=6>
- Language & Culture.(2013). Retrieved Feb 25, 2013 from <http://www.muckleshoot.nsn.us/about-us/language--culture.aspx>.
- Lewin, K. (1976). *Field theory in social science: Selected theoretical papers*. (D. Cartwright, Ed.). Chicago,: TheUniversity of Chicago Press. (Original work published 1951).
- Margulies, N. & Maal, N. (2001). Mapping inner space: Learning and teaching visual mapping. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Marrow, A.J. (1969). *The practical theorist: The life and work of Kurt Lewin*. New York, NY: Basic Books Inc.
- Meehan, D. & Reinelt, C. (2012). Leadership & networks: New ways of developing leadership in a highly connected world. San Francisco: Creative Commons.
- Muckleshoot people (2013). Retrieved Feb 25, 2013 from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muckleshoot_people.
- Muckleshoot Tribal Health Center. (2013). *About the Tribe: Geography*. Retrieved Feb 25, 2013 from http://www.npaihb.org/member_tribes/tribe/muckleshoot_tribe/.
- National Geographic. (2013). *Ethiopia Facts*. Retrieved February 23, 2013, from <http://travel.nationalgeographic.com/travel/countries/ethiopia-facts/>
- Pranis, K. (2005). The little book of circle processes: A new/old approach to peacemaking. Intercourse, PA: Good Books.
- Project Management Institute. (2013). A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge: PMBOK GUIDE (5th ed.). Newtown Square, PA: Project Management Institute, Inc.
- Scharmer, O. (2007). *Theory U: Leading from the future as it emerges*. Cambridge, MA: The Society for Organizational Learning, Inc.
- Shaw, P. (2002). *Changing conversation s in organizations: A complexity approach to change (Complexity and Emergence in Organizations)*. London: Routledge.
- Spencer, L. J. (1989). *Winning through participation: Meeting the challenge of corporate change with the technology of participation*. Debuque, IA: Kendall Hunt Publishing Co.
- Spraker, B. (2011). *CCJF Grant request form: 2011*. Unpublished manuscript.

- Stein, Alan J. (2001). Muckleshoot Indian Tribe. Retrieved Feb 25, 2013 from http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&File_Id=3636.
- Stacey, R. (2012). *Tools and techniques of leadership and management: Meeting the challenge of complexity*. New York: Routledge.
- Storytech. (n.d.). Hero's Journey. Retrieved on March 2, 2013, from http://www.thewritersjourney.com/hero's_journey.htm.
- SWOT Analysis. (n.d.) In Wikipedia. Retrieved on June 3, 2013, from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SWOT_analysis
- Uganda. (n.d.) In Wikipedia. Retrieved on March 8, 2013, from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uganda>
- U.N. Women. (2011). *Annual commencement: LaGuardia Community College*. Retrieved June 1, 2013, from <http://www.unwomen.org/2011/09/keynote-address-at-39th-commencement-of-laguardia-community-college/>
- United States. (n.d.) In Wikipedia. Retrieved on February 25, 2013, from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States
- U.S. Department of State. (2013). *Country description*. Retrieved February 22, 2013, from http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1113.html
- Vietnam. (n.d.). In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved on February 25, 2013, from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vietnam>
- Webgeekly. (2010). The six different types of social media users: Which one are you? Retrieved on May 6, 2013, from <http://www.webgeekly.com/lessons/social-media/the-6-different-types-of-social-media-users-which-one-are-you/>
- Wheatley, M. and Frieze, D. (2011). *Walk out walk on: A learning journey into communities daring to live the future now*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers Inc.