

Nurturing Fresh Inspiration



Annual Review
2014 -15



Initiatives of Change in the UK

Vision, mission and values

Initiatives of Change (IofC) is a world-wide movement of people of diverse cultures and backgrounds, who are committed to the transformation of society through changes in human motives and behaviour, starting with their own.

"Nothing lasting can be built without a desire by people to live differently and exemplify the changes they want to see in society"

Omnia Marzouk,
President, IofC International



Omnia Marzouk

Our vision is of a transformed society founded on personal change, in which everyone can find and follow their vocation.

Our mission is:

- to live by our values and inspire others to do the same
- to equip people to play their part in building a better society
- to take focused action alongside others who share our vision locally, nationally and around the world

Nurturing fresh inspiration

In the run-up to the General Election the Church of England's Bishops called for 'better ways of talking about many fundamental questions... Most of all, we need an honest account of how we must live in the future if generations yet to come are not to inherit a denuded and exhausted planet.'

The Bishops maintain that 'decent answers to the questions facing the nation will only emerge when politicians start to promote a dialogue with the people about a worthwhile society, how individuals, communities and the nation relate to each other, and the limitations of politics in achieving such ends.'

lofC welcomes this lead from the Bishops. There has been a lack of a uniting vision for all the diverse members of our society. As the Bible warns, where there is no vision the people perish. This is particularly urgent at a time of tension between the different nations within the UK.

The vision that lofC stands for is that all of us are equally loved by God, whether or not we believe in him, and have the potential to play a constructive part in changing the world for the better – providing that we are willing to start the process of change in our own lives.

Frank Buchman, who started Initiatives of Change, said that 'before a God-led unity every last problem will be solved'. The fundamental problem is division – person from person; person from the natural world; and person from God. Where people find an answer to division, usually by taking the first step towards putting things right, a new spirit can come in and, indeed, problems will be solved.

Examples of how this works in practice can be found in the following pages.



Philip Boobyer
Chair of Trustees

Contents

4 - 5

Beyond Forgiving UK
Speaking Tour

6 - 7

New Leadership and
Accompaniment

8 - 9

Trust and Integrity in the
Global Economy

10 - 15

Sustainable Communities

16 - 17

Creators of Peace

18

Finances

19

Talia's Story

A year that went Beyond Forgiving

Initiatives of Change produces documentary films and training video packages that inspire change in human motives and behaviour. Our films focus on life changing experiences through personal decisions, forgiveness, reconciliation and peace-building. Our latest film, *Beyond Forgiving*, depicts the journey of two South Africans, Ginn Fourie and Letlapa Mphahlele, bringing healing and reconciliation to their country. One has suffered directly from actions of the other, but both have been victims - and risen beyond their pain. What brings them together is a profound story of tragedy, forgiveness and hope.

Marking 20 years since the end of Apartheid, Initiatives of Change, in partnership with The Forgiveness Project and The Wilderness Foundation, hosted Fourie and Mphahlele on a speaking tour of the UK.

Beyond Forgiving's story of forgiveness inspired over 800 people in the UK as a moving example of 'tragedy and hope' and how it is possible to break the cycle of vengeance.

Touring the UK from 18 – 30 May 2014, Fourie and Mphahlele visited universities and



schools; and took part in community outreach programmes in Belfast, Bradford, Durham, Liverpool, London and Oxford.



The pair spoke at The High Commission of South Africa and, at an event hosted by Stephen Timms MP, in the Houses of Parliament. All the tour events began with a screening of the film, followed by questions and answers and a general debate.

At each location Fourie and Mphahlele hosted the event with special guests. The highlight of the tour was the London public evening held at the Royal Geographical Society, chaired by



Terry Waite CBE with an audience of over 400. The tour was the catalyst for creating an on-going national outreach and educational programme. It was also featured as part of

Desmond Tutu's Global Forgiveness Challenge raising awareness of the issues of forgiveness to an international audience.

The *Beyond Forgiving* Initiative and its message is now an established tool to complement existing reconciliation and peace building projects and studies.

New forgiveness stories have been found to continue to stir many hearts, create conversations on forgiveness and stimulate change across the world.

'The film is utterly inspiring and when I've shown it at school there is not a pupil left unmoved. I think it is one of the most powerfully positive resources I have ever had and I can't imagine ever taking it out of circulation from my teaching.'

Anne Ostrowicz. Religious Studies & Philosophy Department, King Edward's School, Birmingham



New Leadership and Accompaniment



'School for Changemakers crystallises the connection between changing the self and changing society. However large your aspirations, the seeds of success lie dormant in your soul.'

Alex Nunn, SfCM participant

Developing ethical Leadership is one of the key aims of the New Leadership and Accompaniment programme. The main vehicle is its School for Changemakers (SfCM) initiative for 18-35 year olds.

SfCM is an annual residential leadership development initiative for high potential people who want to explore inner and outer dimensions of change.

SfCM brought together more than 60 young British people at Liverpool Hope University in the summer of 2014 to address the personal, professional, social and spiritual dimensions of change. This focused on helping young people



grow and develop their leadership skills; to find their vocation and a sense of moral and spiritual responsibility.

Jo Berry, the daughter of Sir Anthony Berry MP who died in the Brighton Bombing of 1984, and Pat Magee, who recieved multiple life sentences for his role in the attack, inspired the young people with a moving dialogue and exploration of the theme of forgiveness.

'It was a pleasure and a blessing to meet the School for Changemakers and to witness their organisers' wise and respectful facilitation after our talk. The whole event was very inspiring and drew the most remarkable young people.'

Jo Berry.

All the participants are now part of the SfCM Alumni Association, which aims to offer a peer-support system as the alumni begin to make changes in their lives. Follow-up programmes and further training, as well as one-to-one mentoring, were also provided. Also five reunions were held at Greencoat Place, the IofC centre in London, in Sheffield and Manchester.

Trust and Integrity in the Global Economy (TIGE)

Encouraging business leaders to contribute to social stability and an equitable society.

'A tool can bring people together but it does not necessarily provide the vision, the leadership and direction we have to go in. That is extremely important because a revolution without vision and leadership can be as problematic as the situation one wants to change.'

Kofi Annan, former Secretary General of the United Nations, speaking at the TIGE conference, in Caux, Switzerland.



Promoting trust, ethics and integrity in the workplace was a major theme of a TIGERoadshow in Edinburgh. Participants heard from Lady Susan Rice, Managing Director of Lloyds Banking Group in Scotland who said trust and values should be at the core of business. A roadshow in London focused on the topic of resilience in organizations, structures and the human spirit. Participants were encouraged to reflect on why resilience is so important and how it empowers and encourages people to challenge the existing paradigms in business and finance.

The Roadshows are one-day events that draw together high profile presenters, corporate delegates, social entrepreneurs and other business stakeholders around the topic of restoring trust and integrity in business and economic life.

At the heart of TIGE is the role of the individual in changing business behaviour in corporate culture. The purpose is to explore people's journey of personal transformation – that leads to organisational and global transformation based on 'conscience-based' decision making.

TIGE recognises that businesses exist to meet the needs of all people in society and not just the shareholders. The notion is that profit is the consequence of doing the right thing rather than the primary aim of



economic activity. This was explored in the eighth annual International TIGE conference in Caux, Switzerland in 2014. The conference delved into how to bring humanity into business to address people's needs and create wealth in an equal and sustainable manner. Over 150 participants from around the world took part in the five-day conference.

A series of TIGETalks in London focused on whistleblowing and the role of business in the new world economy. Mark Goyder, Founding Director of the think-tank Tomorrow's Company, led an evening on rediscovering the human purpose of business.





Sustainable Communities

The Sustainable Communities programme was developed after the riots which affected cities across the UK in 2011. IofC held a public forum to discuss what had led up to the rioting and what steps we could take as individuals and communities to deal with the underlying issues. At the forum, Bishop Peter Selby, former Bishop of Winchester, said, 'The most important thing is to recognise that we live in a moral universe. We live in a universe where if you propagate a system of disregard, you are acting against the plan. Therefore, what you need to do is recognise what is the morality that is built into the universe.'

This has come to haunt us every time we failed to notice that we have intended to live in a system of regard. In a system that takes account of those people whom other people don't take account of. If we live by systems of disregard the moral, the spiritual, the physical, the economic foundations of the world will be shaken.'

The Sustainable Communities programme supports and mobilises individuals and community groups to create a better environment around them. The following section gives an idea of the kind of projects the programme supports.

Women in Leadership

Women leading change for a sustainable world

A leadership training programme took place for women who are from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities from 25 March - 6 May.

Part-funded by Muslim Hands, the programme empowered women and promoted gender equality. The sessions were designed to encourage women to take steps to build their capacity and to maximise their potential.

Twenty women, mainly London-based, took part. They represented a rich ethnic mix: Somali, Eritrean, Pakistani, Afghani, Bengali, African Caribbean, Egyptian, Filipino and Ethiopian.

The workshop sessions offered a holistic approach to many of the issues faced by women in BAME communities, especially 'hard-to-reach' groups.

The focus was on how to tackle such issues as gender, political and cultural barriers; the gaps in skills, lack of leadership skills, language barriers, training, volunteering, networking and upgrading of existing knowledge.

'There are many obstacles women of colour confront, such as racism and sexism, which in many ways is institutional and must be challenged... these obstacles are not women's issues, they affect and impact everyone collectively. This course has highlighted the importance of communities and progressive thinkers galvanising their skills to work collectively to make a change and that this is the only way real change can happen.'

Donna, a participant in the leadership training workshops



United Estates of Wythenshawe

Wythenshawe is one of the largest and most deprived council housing estates in Europe. In 1996 Greg Davis, a former nightclub doorman and Wythenshawe resident, saw the deterioration of his home town and the rise in gang culture. The chapel, which he had attended since he was a boy, had become home to drug dealers and teenage street gangs. Greg turned the church into a community social cultural centre. It is now a successful social enterprise and home to a professional gym, dance and performing arts studio, sound recording suites, therapy rooms, community shop and cinema. The UEW also provides a base for a number of social enterprises all owned and managed by local people living in the Wythenshawe area.

In 2014, 30 youngsters from the Wythenshawe, Hulme and Moss Side estates with Music for Cities performed at the IofC centre in Caux, Switzerland.

With help from IofC, UEW was able to develop their first website and also record their first full commercial album in the recording studio.

'Although gangs are prevalent in many inner-city areas throughout Britain - Manchester seemed to pioneer the youth gang in an attempt to claim it as its own.' - Greg Davis, CEO of United Estates of Wythenshawe

'We take the toughest kids from the estate - include local community leaders - and together have developed the biggest community enterprise in the North West.'



'UEW is about building youth clubs for kids who don't go to youth clubs.'

'We have gangs in our building - gangs of gardeners, window cleaners, car washers and painters - that's the type of gangs we have.'





UEW is working to raise some £500,000 for their community development project. New developments at UEW include a tennis court, climbing wall and outdoor gymnasium.

They are also seeking to build and develop the UK's first full combative arts centre with street-based conflict resolution and mediation services.

Their focus is the evolution of UEW into a working inner-city cultural centre.

To learn more, visit
www.unitedestates.org
or email
greg.uew@gmail.com



**Turning the energy of
street gang culture into
positive social enterprise**

Agenda for Reconciliation



'The only way out of these few dark decades in our history is to be truthful in our conversation and accept things that had come to pass. We must be genuine in our forgiving also, for our children's sake, for the future and for humanity.'

Somali training in Dialogue Facilitation

Agenda for Reconciliation (AfR) represents a network of peacemakers from war-torn countries. Currently the network consists largely of people from the Greater Horn of Africa - Somalia, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Uganda, Sudan and South Sudan.

Based on lofC's values, the AfR network nurtures personal change for wider societal impact and fosters trust-building within and between communities and nations. The network members are people who believe dialogue is vital to ending conflict. The network is coordinated through weekly meetings at lofC's London centre.

The Eritrean community in Britain is estimated at some 40,000 and growing. AfR has supported work led by Eritreans to build resilience in their community. One track has involved creating opportunities for communication between community leaders.

Another initiative has been to start a series of one-day training workshops for Eritrean

students and young professionals on the theme of Dialogue, Trust-Building and Reconciliation. The first two took place in Manchester and Birmingham.

2014 saw the beginning of a Training of Trainers in Dialogue Facilitation (ToT) programme in partnership with the Institute of Cultural Affairs to provide an accredited training for diaspora communities from conflict-affected states.

The aim is to create a pool of Dialogue Facilitators who are willing to return to their countries of origin to train local dialogue facilitators in areas of tension. Each ToT will consist of one weekend per month for six months. The participants in the first series are of Somali and Eritrean origin.

In November, members of AfR addressed a meeting on the theme 'Countering Disintegration'. They explored why people are fleeing from the Horn of Africa, and what refugees are doing to contribute to their own communities, their home countries, and also to the wider society in their adopted countries.



'The stick of the truth might get thinner but it will never break'

Eritrean recalling a distressing experience back home.



'Discussing things like ethnicity, religion and language were things we (as ordinary people) regarded [as] beyond civic domain; and that now we started talking about them it's no longer a taboo. We should have done this dialogue a long time ago because we may have been less bitter about each other.'

Eritrean Elder

Creators of Peace



Women exploring peace issues in the community

Creators of Peace (CoP) enables women to host Peace Circle workshops exploring ways to find inner peace, creating trust across social divides, and engaging in the mission to provide food, shelter, opportunities and respect for the world. One aim of these Peace Circles is to identify issues in the community with a potential for conflict and then resolve to take common action.

CoP in the UK ran a Peace Circle series that took place from 24 January to 21 March 2014. Five mothers of young children living in Oxford found themselves united in their concerns: to bring peace into their lives as women; to consider and act on global peace issues. The women came from Russia, El Salvador, South Africa and West Papua.

In February 2014, two of the CoP UK team helped plant Peace Circles in Egypt - while another team member took part in facilitation training for women in South Africa and Romania.

'I met some extraordinary women. During the Peace Circle we had first-hand accounts of other peace circles operating in war zones – a web of connections that are never reported in the press. I learnt that peace is not flabby or wishy-washy. It's muscular and assertive and messy.'

Mary, Participant





In October the UK team held a fundraising occasion in London, bringing together previous participants and new friends for an evening exploring 'well-being for women'.

At each Peace Circle, the group talked about a personal area of concern or engagement including environmental activism, the Women's Movement and the ongoing Palestinian/Israel conflict situation.

Two Peace Circles are planned for 2015, as well as a public event in March in Oxford. Their aim is to continue offering women an empowering voice and an understanding of how peace-making starts in ourselves, making us more effective in bringing peace to the world.

'It was a unique opportunity to be able to look at your own life and at your own self from a different perspective and to try to find peace within yourself. I have found particularly useful one of the exercises which helped me with my family management.'

Anastasia, Participant

'It is important to look after yourself to top up your inner peace. But also, by caring for other people, our own inner peace is strengthened.'

Su Riddell, Peace Circle Organiser

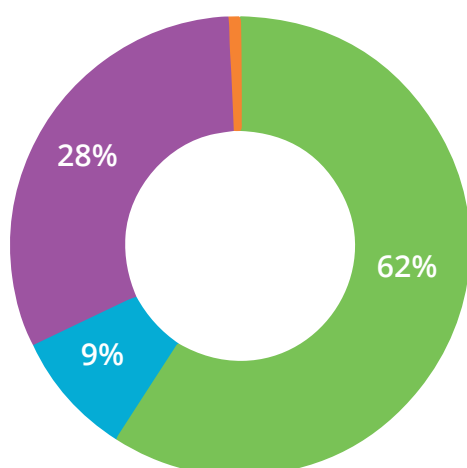


Finances

As a charity, Initiatives of Change depends on voluntary donations to be able to do its vital work of trust building, strengthening communities and helping young people find a purpose in life.

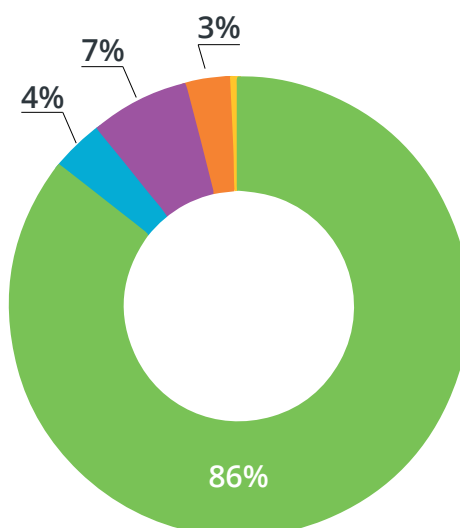
The generosity of previous donors has enabled the charity to build up an endowment fund, the income from which covers our administration costs. This means that every pound donated contributes in full to the activities described in this review. In 2014, our

Income 2014



- Voluntary income
- Letting and catering
- Investment income
- Other

Expenditure 2014



- Outreach activities
- Letting and catering
- Films
- Governance costs
- Other

Would you consider donating a regular monthly amount to Initiatives of Change? Just £10 per month makes a significant difference. For those who pay income tax, this gift is worth £150 per year to the charity (and higher-rate taxpayers can claim an additional rebate). To set up a donation, please visit www.uk.iofc.org/donate or get in touch using one of the addresses on the back cover to find out more.

Please note that the summaries of income and expenditure on this page are for illustration only. They are derived from the audited accounts to 31 December 2014 of The Oxford Group operating as Initiatives of Change, charity number 226334 registered in England and Wales. The Report and Accounts for 2014 are available to download from our website.

Talia's Story



It was only until working for Initiatives of Change that I fully grasped Ghandi's dictum of 'be the change you want to see in this world'. Through learning about lofC's unique approach, I realised that we cannot change the world without changing ourselves first. This was quite a revelation for me; realising that it will take more than commitment, ability and action to make the world a better place. It all starts with personal transformation - an angle I hadn't fully considered before. Of course, this individual change is no easy task. It requires deep reflection and spiritual inspiration, a commitment to wanting to be a better person and then action. I've also learnt that this is no quick task!

The moral standards were the first step for me. These values, which are found in many cultural and religious traditions around the world, help me in my everyday life by acting as a guide. I use them to help me make decisions and reminding myself daily of them helps me be honest, unselfish, helps me love and have purity in my motives. I see them as a straightforward

yet profound way for me to be a better person for my family, neighbours and community. This is one of the ways that lofC makes the vital link between individual and global change.

Quiet time has also been an invaluable tool for me. I've attempted to practise meditation on and off for a number of years but this part of my life really improved when I was introduced to quiet time. This type of reflection took away the feeling of 'am I meditating correctly' and the pressure of the techniques etc. It is simply me listening to my inner voice in silence. I now mixed 'quiet time', meditation, breathing and sometimes writing - my personal approach to reflection thanks to lofC! It has had a significant impact on my life. When I do it daily, I notice I am generally a more balanced, grounded, mindful and collected being. It helps me gain strength in challenging times, when I have to make a decision, and helps me to keep focused on my aspirations and dreams. I also notice it in my work - the time in quiet allows space for me to source insights, inner wisdom and inspiration.

Keep in touch...



www.uk.iofc.org



info@uk.iofc.org



[InitiativesOfChangeUK](https://www.facebook.com/InitiativesOfChangeUK)



[@iofc_uk](https://twitter.com/iofc_uk)



www.uk.iofc.org/donate



www.greencoatplace.org



24 Greencoat Place, London SW1P 1RD • 020 7798 6000 • reception@london.iofc.org

Initiatives of Change is a company registered in England and Wales number 355987 and a registered charity number 226334. Copies of the full Annual Report and Accounts are available on request from the address above or online at www.uk.iofc.org/annual-report