

International Bremen Peace Award 2019 of the *schwelle* Foundation

Crossing Thresholds - Breaking Vicious Circles

Shortlist for the
Award of the Donors



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Filmes, that can change lives
South Africa
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Mexico



schwelle Foundation
Contributions to Peace

International Bremen Peace Award 2019 of the *schwelle* Foundation

Crossing Thresholds - Breaking Vicious Circles



We received 87 applications for the International Bremen Peace Award 2019 from all the different continents. They are fascinating examples of Peace, Justice and Integrity of Creation which give courage to others.

The *schwelle* Foundation's board of trustees has compiled a shortlist from the applications we received for initiatives and organisations. You, as donors, are invited to choose this year's award winner from this list.

Anyone who donated at least 30 € (we are happy to accept more) from 1st June 2018 until 1st June 2019 to the *schwelle* Foundation, may participate in the choice of the award winner.

1. Choose one of the organisations presented to receive the peace award.
2. Send us an email or a postcard by 15th June 2019 with the number AND the name of your favorite organisation.

Important: Make sure you include your name and address so that we can assign your vote to your donation

email: stiftung@dieschwelle.de

mail: *schwelle* Foundation, Wachmannstrasse 79,
28209 Bremen, Germany

The organisation which receives the most votes will be the winner of International Bremen Peace Award in the category „Encouraging Initiatives“. In the event of a draw, the winner will be decided by random selection. The winner will be announced by September 2019.

If you have not yet made a donation, you are more than welcome to do so by the 1st June 2019. You can also encourage friends to join in. Our donation account is: DE45 2903 0400 0000 0942 93

The award winners for the categories Grassroots Peace Worker and Peace Ambassador in Public Life will be decided on by the *schwelle* Foundation's board of trustees.

Proposal

1 STEPS Films, that can change lives South Africa

Fear, violence and terminal illness are topics that no one likes to talk about. Through films and discussions, STEPS encourages people living in regions of Southern Africa to talk about their problems and social taboos, to help themselves and support one another.

A young woman is sitting anxiously in front of a doctor and a psychologist. She is holding a baby in her arms. It looks healthy enough, but is it really? The young woman has HIV and has had her daughter tested. She breaks down in tears when she hears the result - tears of joy. The child is not infected.

The film entitled "Mother to Child" ends with this piece of good news. It aims to give courage to the young women sitting in the audience. It shows that it is not automatically the case that their child has HIV if they are infected themselves. It is possible to prevent the transmission of the infection, and in principle it can even be treated. Many women neither have themselves nor their children tested because they simply do not know what help is available.

It is really very difficult for people to talk and exchange information about these topics. For the people living in the region of Southern Africa, the organisation Social Transformation and Empowerment Projects (STEPS) has found a way to change that. In 2001, the non-profit organisation was founded in Cape Town, and it was awarded

the Teddy Award during the Berlinale (film festival in Berlin) in 2013.

STEPS makes and produces films such as „Mother and Child“ in which young people in particular tell their own stories and speak about taboos, thus making them actors for their own cause. There are meanwhile more than 200 films about illness, drug addiction, poverty, violence and the destruction of the environment, human rights and education. Self-help initiatives and civil societal partner organisations of STEPS show these films publicly, mostly in the village squares or community huts in rural communities or groups. The necessary equipment and screens are brought by jeep or boat. Afterwards, there is a focused discussion. STEPS supports its partners by providing pedagogical training and accompanying material in different languages.

The films are an important door opener. They help people to find a way of talking together because they empathise, understand and recognise themselves in the stories. They often then question their own attitudes, speak with one another and act together. In this way, young mothers in Malawi founded a self-help group to enable all the children in their community to attend school. There are training sessions for opposition parties in Botswana on the topic of democracy. And Zimbabwe has written into the new constitution that the practice of child marriage is illegal.



www.stepsforthefuture.co.za

Proposed by Weltfriedensdienst

Proposal

2 Afghanistan Libre Womens' rights through education Afghanistan

It is usually impossible for women and girls in Afghanistan to live independent lives. They belong to a marginalised group, particularly in rural areas. The organisation Afghanistan Libre aims to change that through education and thus strengthen their rights.



„All people are free and born equal in dignity and rights“. „Everyone has the right to education“. Afghanistan Libre commits itself to upholding both of these articles from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In May 1996, Chekeba Hachemi founded the non-government organisation because the legal situation for the female population had deteriorated under Taliban rule. Since 2005, Afghanistan Libre is recognised as an Afghan NGO.

Education is one of the main topics which concern Afghanistan Libre. The organisation is convinced that knowledge is the key to peace and social progress, and that it prevents young girls from having to work and marry young. However, many schools have been destroyed as a result of the long-lasting conflicts, and there is still a lack of teachers today. According to the NGO, 60% of all girls do not attend school, and in rural areas this number rises to 85%.

Afghanistan Libre has helped to rebuild schools and currently supports more than seven state schools with more than 10,000

pupils, mainly girls. Two of them are in the district of Paghman and two are in the province of Panjshir. Additionally, there are four pre-schools. The pupils take part in projects to learn computer skills and English, are given teacher training and prepare for the university entrance exam.

In cooperation with international partners, they campaign for girls to be given an official Afghan identity card. Without this document, the Tazkira, grammar school education is impossible.

With the motto „A Light, a Tazkira“, the pupils receive solar lamps and an identity card with which they can register for schools and exams. The solar lamps are useful to learn in the evenings when they have no electricity at home. The girls also become legal persons: a first step in the direction of equality and emancipation.

In addition, Afghanistan Libre has also equipped four health and education centres. Here, women and girls have access to free health care with instruction in primary health care, midwifery and psycho-social support. A training project is also planned in 2019 to enable women to develop a job-related perspective as a seamstress.

www.afghanistan-libre.org

Proposed by Martine Brousse



Proposal

3 Centro de los Trabajadores del Campo Enough land for everyone Honduras

In Honduras, farmers are fighting to survive because they do not have enough land. On the other hand, owners of large estates leave areas fallow, land which they have procured illegally. The organisation Centro Nacional de los Trabajadores del Campo wants to change that. They support farmers and their families and campaign for the fair distribution of land.

Shots were fired when the police drove away the small farmers on the 13th January 2017. For seven years, the group „9 de Julio“ had occupied land because it held the opinion that the authorities had illegally privatised and sold it. Several people were seriously injured during the eviction, among them also Victor Vesques, leader of the Indigenous Council of the Simpinula and member of the Lenca Independent Peace Movement.

According to the organisation Centro Nacional de los Trabajadores del Campo (CNTC), this practice of compulsory expropriation occurs on a daily basis in Honduras. More than 5,000 people committed criminal acts in 2017 alone because they defended access to their land. More than 1000 people were intimidated, persecuted or murdered because of their activities.

CNTC has been fighting for decades in Honduras for a fair distribution of land. This farmers, unions and inquiry organisation was the result of the restructuring of five farmers unions in 1985. It is a member of the association of trade unions Confederación Unitaria de Trabajadores de Honduras and part of the international movement of small farmers and land workers, Via Campesina.

The grass roots movement is represented in 14 of the 18 regions of the country and has

currently 10,000 members, including 4,000 women. During a national congress held every year, delegates evaluate the work of the board of directors. Every four years they elect the members of the National Council.

CNTC aims to support farming families so that they can keep their land and can legally use it for forestry and farming. They research and accompany cases for the legalisation of land, help in the case of forced evictions and advise farmers who are legally prosecuted. To date, the affiliated farmer organisations have been able to regain more than 70,000 hectares of land and forest.

In addition, the association organises events such as symbolic marches and provides further training for members in areas such as human rights and food law. The organisation has also initiated various projects, for example in the fields of livestock farming and in the cultivation and processing of sugar cane. Moreover, it has participated in making a law for the solidarity programme “Credimujer”, which was passed in 2015. It is designed to allow women living in rural areas access to loans for agricultural production. According to reports, 80% of the women living in the rural areas of Honduras do not own their own land, and 60% live below the poverty line.

Proposed by Peace Brigades International



Proposal

4 Women Wage Peace

How women contribute to peace

Israel, Palestine

A peace agreement between Israelis and Palestinians that is acceptable for both sides – this is the aim of the movement Women Wage Peace. However, the women do not want to leave the negotiations to the men: They want to be included in the decision-making process.



Enough is enough. This is what many women in Israel thought after the bloody military conflicts in Gaza in the summer of 2014. They founded Women Wage Peace, a grass-roots movement which hundreds of women quickly joined: In November, 1000 participants from Israel set off by train to the border town of Sderot.

It was the first campaign initiated by Women Wage Peace and many have since followed. In this way, women organised peace marches, peacefully demonstrated in front of the Israeli parliament, the Knesset, and created spaces for meeting and encounter, in particular for women from Israel and Palestine. Tens of thousands of women and men support the campaign: In the autumn of 2016, 30,000 people from the whole region took part in a 200 kilometre „Walk of Hope“. For two whole weeks, they walked from the north and from the south to Jerusalem.

Women Wage Peace counts 40,000 members and is thus one of the largest grass-roots movements in Israel. And the women in Palestine are also organising themselves. The movement stands out because of its flat, decentralised and autonomous struc-

ture. There are more than 100 local groups in the whole region that organise events, lectures and workshops on women's movements as well as on national and international women's rights.

At the same time, Women Wage Peace are not closely aligned to any political party. Indeed the organisation aims to appeal to a broad group of women, in particular those who are not politically active in everyday life but who take care of their children and the future generations. Accordingly, the activists belong to diverse groups and communities of Israeli and Palestinian society. They are young and old, have different religions and world views, and come from the centre and from the periphery.

Women Wage Peace does not support one specific solution to the conflict but rather follows two main aims: The Israeli government should sit down at the negotiation table with the Palestinians in order to negotiate a peace agreement acceptable to both sides. In the process, women from the civil society should participate in all aspects of the decision-making process.

Although the political environment and society are hostile towards them, the commitment shown by the women does not wane. During their campaigns they actively seek a dialogue with the elected representatives of the people and demand regular hearings at political committees.

www.womenwagepeace.org.il

Proposed by Ina Darmstädter

Proposal

5 Centro Fray Juan de Larios Against disappearance Mexico

Every day, people in Mexico are brutally kidnapped. According to reports, more than 37,000 people are reported missing. The Centro Diocesano para los Derechos Humanos Fray Juan de Larios support families whose relatives have gone missing.

They just briefly go out shopping, to deliver plants or just step outside their front door – and never return. It is often young women and men, but also children, who suddenly disappear without a trace. According to reports, they are abused or tortured, forced into prostitution and drug smuggling or murdered for their organs. The remains are buried in rural areas, burnt or dissolved in acid.

Coahuila is one of the federal states in Mexico where the greatest number of people disappear. There, in 2001, the archbishop and Dominican brother Raúl Vera López founded the Centro Diocesano para los Derechos Humanos Fray Juan de Larios. The centre sees itself as a middle-class, Christian-Ecumenical inspired organisation. It supports victims, demands support and initiates legislative initiatives.

In order to reach this aim, Fray Juan de Larios documents which people have disappeared, connects affected families and supports their search for missing relatives. The families organise themselves in the group Fuerzas Unidas por Nuestros Desaparecidos en Coahuila y Mexico (FUUNDEC-M), which uses the motto „¡Nos Haces Falta!“ to

search for missing people and thus make the violent disappearance visible.

In July 2017, the documentation of the cases enabled Fray Juan de Larios, in cooperation with other organisations, to demand from the International Criminal Court that an investigation be conducted into the crimes against humanity in Mexico. In addition, Fray Juan de Larios cooperates in making both federal and national laws to address the phenomenon of the missing people in Mexico.

Therefore, at the end of 2017 in Coahuila, the state exhumation plan came into force. It aims to identify all the people buried anonymously as well as all the human remains found in the fields. The exhumation of dead bodies is carried out by the authorities on a monthly basis, documented by the families and accompanied by Fray Juan de Larios.

Furthermore, FUUNDEC-M and Fray Juan de Larios have written a long-term national agenda, in which they demand the creation of a nationwide plan, and a national register for people who have disappeared as well as a public prosecutor to guarantee support for family members. Meanwhile, the request for a General Law on Disappearance is supported by a national movement, the Movimiento por Nuestros Desaparecidos en Mexico, a unique movement in the recent history of the country.

www.frayjuandelarios.org

Proposed by Peace Brigades International



The *schwelle* Foundation and its partners strive for Peace, Justice and Integrity of Creation.

We initiate and support projects that create and shape society and societal change through non-violent means. The work of our projects and project partners support and campaign for social justice, compliance and implementation of human rights as well as environmental sustainability.

Overall, the foundation's work aims to inspire other projects to show support for a social change towards greater justice.

Every two years the *schwelle* Foundation selects nominees for the International Bremen Peace Award.

With this award we honor people and organizations that set a good example in their work for Peace, Justice and the Integrity of Creation. People and organizations involved in peace promotion worldwide nominate individuals and projects for the award. Out of these, the award winners are selected in the following three categories:

Grassroots Peace Worker

Peace Ambassador in Public Life

Award of the Donors for Encouraging Initiatives

The jury of the *schwelle* Foundation will select the first two award winners. The award for encouraging initiatives will be determined by the donors.

With this award we make visible encouraging examples of convincing peace work that have yet remained unknown to the broader public.

Stiftung *die schwelle* | Beiträge zum Frieden
schwelle Foundation | Contributions to Peace

Wachmannstraße 79 | 28209 Bremen | Germany

+49 (0)421 - 30 32 575

stiftung@dieschwelle.de

www.dieschwelle.de

www.facebook.com/dieschwelle

Donation Account Bankhaus Plump
DE 45 2903 0400 0000 0942 93
BIC (SWIFT)-Code: PLUM DE 29

