

**EVALUATION REPORT
WOMEN- ART AND PART OF PEACE IN COLOMBIA
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CCT (COLOMBIAN THEATRE COORPORATION) - MAGDALENA NORWAY

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BACKGROUND

1) Origins of the Project

The Project arises as an initiative from the Colombian Theatre Corporation (CCT, by its Spanish Acronym) with Patricia Ariza as the Director, and women linked to the Grenland Friater, particularly Geddy Aniksdal, who subsequently fostered the formation of Magdalena Norway. As Women Artists, they had met before at the headquarters of Magdalena Project, a global network that supports Women in the contemporary performing arts. The Magdalena Pacifica Festival allowed Norwegian women to visit Colombia, meet some directors linked to the CCT and to fine-tune the idea of joining hands in a single project. They agreed in the importance of the political dimension of the Performing Arts, and its undeniable contribution in building-up culture. Theatre is both a space for creation and a tool for transformation. Colombian and Norwegian women have a shared interest in making an instrument out of the performing arts so as Women can regain their voices and strengthen their prominence in the transformation of their lives and the lives of those making up their environments. They are also keen on building-up both the social fabric and a Peace that can respond to their needs and rights.

The choice is for women from poor areas, whose rights have been particularly violated by the warlike situation. This take place within a cultural and social context of a sexist society, where discrimination and exclusion have been strengthened as the result of the armed conflict. Women that are referred to as "from the outskirts" by the powers that be, who deserve to be supported and empowered in their effort to build up Peace.

Originally, the initiative included Peru as well, and particularly the Yuyaxkani group. The proposal development and the support offered by FOKUS led to place the Project in Colombia. However the communication with the Peruvian artists is still maintained. Peruvian women have participated in the *Festival Mujeres en Escena* (Women on Stage Festival), and in turn, they organise in Lima the *Festival de Mujeres Creadoras* (Women Creators Festival) attended by women from Magdalena Norway, CCT as well as women from the Project.

CCT stem out from the *Movimiento del Nuevo Teatro Colombiano* (New Colombian Theatre Movement) organisation, which brought together more than 98% of the groups around the country. 20 years ago there was an extremely hard repression against the theatre movement taking place, and the CCT almost disappeared. This period coincides with the emergence of the commercial performing arts, supported by lots of money and political power. Patricia Ariza and Santiago García decided to strengthen the CCT and in order to accomplish this other minds joined in as well. Nowadays this association among its most important projects is in charge of the organisation of the *Festival de Teatro Alternativo* (Alternative Theatre Festival), which during its last version was attended by more than 140 groups and is also in charge of the *Festival Mujeres en Escena* (Women on Stage Festival). Additionally, the playhouse of the CCT is an open space for groups that lack a venue to work in. Its board of directors is composed by Patricia Ariza, Lucy Bolaños (Teatro La

Máscara – Cali), Jaime Diaz (Cartagena), William Fortich (Teatro Kábala) and Santiago García (Teatro La Candelaria).

Among other reasons, Magdalena Norway was created at the suggestion of FOKUS, because the funding of projects required a Norwegian counterpart, in this case, CCT in Colombia. This is a network of more than 50 women involved in Arts and Culture, directed by a board of 7 people working in collective coordination. This is the first project coordinated by them; implemented through communication with Patricia, project coordinator at CCT, and through the participation of several of its participants in the Project activities in Colombia.

The environment in which the Project is carried out is a complex one. "This is a torn country" says Patricia Ariza, meaning that there is a weak and broken up social movement, which lacks meeting places and coordination spaces, something she takes as a result from the Colombian warlike situation. Several initiatives and processes of rebuilding the social fabric have arisen from different organisations and social entities, all of them aimed at strengthening specific individuals. There is, however, not much communication among them.

The Women's Social Movement has different voices and organisations, each one working from their specific points of views onto their demand for recognition and respect for Women's Rights within the framework of the internal armed conflict and their efforts to achieve Peace. There are spaces for integration among organisations and also dialogue spaces with Human Rights organisations and Victims of War and Repression support groups. However, there are other missing conversations, among them, the dialog about the relationships with the cultural world and, specifically with Women from the Arts and Culture world, which are few and in between.

In 2006 FOKUS provided funding for three years by making annual payments prior to the presentation of the corresponding narrative and financial reports as well as the continuity proposal. In 2009 there were still available resources and it was possible to carry out the Project during that one additional year. Currently, the Project continuity is under development, and its objectives and activities come from the discussion among FOKUS, Magdalena Norway and CCT. The present evaluation aims to accurately contribute to the identification of potential leverages for future works that can respond to the current challenges observed from the results of four-year of the Women in Art and Peace process in Colombia.

2) The Project

The evaluation period cover the four years of Project implementation from 2006 until October 2009. Below, you will find the general objectives, expected results and plan of activities. In general terms, these have remained unchanged same during the course of the Project, although the pace of the process has contributed in defining the activities as well as the results.

Objectives:

General objective: The Project aims to contribute to the mobilisation of Women in Colombia assisting them from the cultural angle in the building-up of a democratic and lasting Peace, where they are both included and involved, both in number and gender perspective.

Specific Objectives:

- Women achieve a clearer voice and a more focused approach, reinforcing public opinion on the work for Peace.
- Linking group's participants with Social Movements in general and to the Women's Social Movement in particular. Strengthening links among cultural work and Women's Social Movement.
- Establishing in Colombia a community of more than 100 women working together and being communicated through a concrete project.
- Consolidating the groups and providing stability for the women involved in the Project.
- Fostering the inclusion of artistic expressions in the pro-Peace movement.

Expected results and activities:

Expected results	Activities
12 formed and consolidated Women Theatre groups.	Composition of the groups, creation of plays, preparation, rehearsals and yearly staging of plays (every year).
Women from the groups have learnt performance techniques and skills, have achieved more gender-awareness and are more knowledgeable about gender issues.	Training: Workshops on artistic and performing techniques, yearly seminars and talks on different subjects (every year). Cultural exchange program with Yuyaskani from Peru (2006 and 2007).
Widespread performances with the groups having a close and organic relationship with their local environment and with the Women's Movement in the cities.	Promotion of the plays by means of posters and banners (every year). Performance of the plays in neighbourhoods and towns, at <i>Festival de Mujeres en Escena</i> (Women on Stage Festival) and at appropriate seasons. (Every year). Encounters and dialogues with the Women's Social Movement (every year).
The groups have created a network and a supportive community around the Project both at regional and national level and have learnt from one another.	Regional encounters for purposes of communication and cultural exchange among the groups (every year). The building-up of a network among the groups involved in the Project (2008).
The experience of the Project has been documented and disseminated.	Videos about the groups, its participants and the plays performed, as well as the production and promotion of a book on the Project, its main characters and plays (2007, 2008 and 2009).

3) The Groups and their Directors

Even during the Project formulation process, Patricia Ariza had already called the directors which could contribute to the proposal. Some of them are participants from CCT (Namely, Lucy Bolaños, Nohra Gonzalez, William Fortich and Rafael Giraldo), and others keep in permanent communication with this organisation or with some of its participants. In all cases there was a previous knowledge, confidence, and sharing of visions and interests.

The Project has achieved the creation and up keeping of 12 theatre groups formed by women. Only two of them were unsuccessful: one in Cartagena that only operated during 2006 and later broke up due to a flood in the neighbourhood and to increasing violence in the sector. The other one in Bogotá, Huitaca group, composed by young feminist puppeteer women who had been a long time in the artistic field and decided to follow their own path.

The groups are located in Bogotá (7), Cali (2), Medellín (1), Villa de Leyva (1) and Barranquilla (1). Most of its participants have been part of their groups since year 2006 and throughout the years new women have been incorporated. The most recently formed group is *Mujeres de Engativá* (Women of Engativá) which started to operate two years ago.

The groups and their directors¹

Abrazadas (Hugged, Medellin). Women among 45 and 60 years old, except for one young girl, who is 19. All of them are either direct victims of the violence, or displaced or persecuted, and many of them have their relatives murdered. Among them there are female leaders and participants of organisations such as *De Víctimas a Ciudadanas* (From Victims to Citizens), and *Mujeres de la Cultura* (Women from Culture). They have staged four plays, two of which are collective creation and the rest are Enrique Buenaventura's creation. Director: Inés Salazar.

Alas de Libertad (Wings of Freedom, Barranquilla): this group is composed by young (twenty-something) and adult women, most of them living in precarious situations. Among them there are displaced women and victims of repression. Their plays deal with women's problems in the community, the lack of housing, water and safety. They have ventured into the forum-theatre and now they want to explore performing arts in the open air, filling parks and the like. Director: Ana María Linares.

Aves del Paraíso (Birds of Paradise, Cali): They are displaced women from different places of the Pacific Coast, whose ages range between 15 and 60 years old and represent three generations (grandmother, mother and daughters). They started as a group of 9 and now they are 14. These women are head of households living in poverty and for whom surviving is a daily struggle. All their plays relate to war, displacement, their distrust and the racism which welcomed them at their arriving to the city. They express their feelings through dance and music. Director, Susana Uribe.

¹ Find attached a detailed description of the groups, its participants, plays and the audiences which they have attended to.

Diafragma (Diaphragm, Bogotá): it is composed by 8 young women between 16 and 30 years old, all of them from poor neighbourhoods. The way in which they came to the group differs from each other in many ways: some were already connected to the world of the street arts (stilts), another participant saw an invitation at Teatro Kabala to join a performing group formed by women and others joined in because they had friends in the group and became interested. Their theatre is one of social criticism in which the body has a central role, in fact, in their last play they only used body language, and no one single word is spoken. William Fortich is the director.

Flores de Otoño (Autumn flowers, Bogotá). This group is composed by 7 elderly women; recently one of them passed away. They are artisans who began taking to the stage 10 years ago and have been part of the Project since 2006. For them, Peace should reach every corner of the country, since conflict is also everywhere. Patricia Ariza directs them.

Engativá (Bogotá). This group was formed one and half year ago by means of an invitation made by the local *Casa de Igualdad de Oportunidades* (Equal Opportunity House). They are 14 women from poor neighbourhoods, who belong to three generations (granddaughter, mother and grandmother) and see in the performing arts the possibility of giving voice to their own history. The first play they staged was about Resolution 1325. Rafael Giraldo is their director.

Inés Elvira (Bogotá). Currently it is composed by 13 girls and an older woman; all of them stay in a very poor and precarious area in Ciudad Bolívar. The request to organising the group was put to the community mothers, and since the subsistence of their families forced them to work they sent their daughters instead. From an ethnic point of view, they are a mixed group; most of them being the second generation of displaced people. The permanence of the participants in the projects highly depends on their parents' willingness to support them. Their audience is children. Alexandra Escobar is their director.

La Pola (Bogotá): the group was formed as a result of the invitation made by *La Casa de Igualdad de Oportunidades de Las Cruces* (Equal Opportunity House of Las Cruces). It is composed by 13 adult women; most of them from very impoverished neighbourhoods. Some of its participants are linked to Women's organisational spaces and this is precisely what allowed them to reach wide sectors of Women through their plays. This is one of the groups with the highest number of performances; all of their plays are collective creations. They aim to get into the comedy field, using the laugh as a tool for transformation and hope. Nohra Gonzalez is the director.

Mujeres Creadoras (Creator Women, Villa de Leyva). The participants have been part of the Project since 2006 while two of its participants have been there since 2008. Many of them were linked to the *Casa de los Abuelos* (The Grandparent's House) of the community, and therefore they are mostly elderly women. The number of the participants has varied from 10 to 15. Their work is made up of collective creations about their own stories and about Women's reality in the area, and the music (*guabina*, a typical dance) is an important part of the staging. Its director is Beatriz Camargo (Cántara) in close collaboration with Emilce Gonzalez.

Mujeres en el Asfalto (Women on the Asphalt, Bogotá): this group is composed by 7 women (in their fifties, one of them in her forties). Most of them have been in the group since its beginning. Its participants have a higher educational background and a greater connection with the formal labour market than the rest of the Project participants. Their plays deal with the reality of the country and with how women are living it through. Its director is Fanny Baena.

Sueños de Juventud (Dreams of Youth, Bogotá). They are 9 women who stay in the Kennedy and Bosa neighbourhoods, which originally were squatter zones of illegal settlements. Many of them are linked to a Women's organisation with a steady presence in the area. Their plays talk about the emergence of the neighbourhood, the struggle for a dignified living and the central role of Women in the achievements obtained. Its director is Sandra Parra.

Tejedoras de Sueños (Dreams Knitters, Cali): all of them are adult women between 50 and 60 years old, many of them linked to the *Casa Tejiendo Sororidades* (Knitting Sororities House) where they had already gained awareness about their rights. Their plays talk about missing people and Women's Resistance. Its Director is Lucy Bolaños.

METHODOLOGY AND STRATEGY

The evaluation followed the methodological proposal stated in the Terms of Reference: reviewing the Project documentation (projects, annual reports and visual material) and the fieldwork in Colombia, interviewing Project participants and people related to it.

Regarding the desk study, the evaluation had access to agreements and annual reports, publications and videos. Part of them was sent by Magdalena Norway and other documents were kindly provided by CCT in Bogotá. There were difficulties in order to access the director's reports; In general terms, the Project documentation (reports, manuscript of plays, etc) is partially in some people's hands and there is no central data collection where all the material can be filed and kept at hand to make it available whenever is needed.

The field work was jointly coordinated by Patricia and Celene on the basis of the evaluator's initial timetable which was adjusted to the agendas and the timings of the groups². All directors as well as the groups were interviewed in their cities and neighbourhoods. Each one of them performed a play, being it a new one, a current one, or just a play in preparation. This enabled them to show their work. It was possible to spend part of the day, or at least a morning or an afternoon with each group, so as to talk with them and learn about the life of the participants as well as to know their insights about the Project. Some of them attended to individual interviews.

In regard to the people linked to the Project, some women linked to gender local policy making bodies in Bogotá and one participant of an NGO that works on Citizenship and Peace Building-up issues in Medellín who has had a direct connection with the setting up of

² A timetable is enclosed.

one of the groups in the Project were interviewed. In Cali and Bogotá informal discussions were held with two directors from some Women's organisations closely related to the group *Casa de Sororidades* (Sorority house) and FASOL (Solidarity in Action Fund).

Interviewed people³:

Patricia Ariza, Project Coordinator and Celene Mahecha, in charge of the accounting and administrative work.

Directors: Susana Uribe, Inés Salazar, Ana María Linares, Nohra González, Sandra Parra, Fanny Baena, Alexandra Escobar, Beatriz Camargo – Cántara-, Lucy Bolaños, William Fortich and Rafael Giraldo

We travelled to Villa de Leyva and Medellín with Karen Roa in her capacity as documentalist of the Project. This made possible to compare notes about the Project and appreciate the work they do.

The groups: *Abrazadas, Alas de Libertad, Aves del Paraíso, Diafragma, Flores de Otoño, Inés Elvira, La Pola, Mujeres en el Asfalto, Mujeres Creadoras, Sueños de Juventud, Tejedoras de Sueños and Mujeres de Engativá.*

Groups Participants:

Leonor is a woman of about 60 years old from Inés Elvira.

Hermelinda, an elderly woman from *Mujeres Creadoras*.

Nidia, a woman in her fifties, from *Mujeres en el Asfalto*

Paola, a young woman from *Diafragma*

Hidalid, an adult woman from *La Pola*

Rocío, a woman in her thirties from *Engativá*

The initial proposal considered to carry out interviews in the homes of women. This could not be achieved considering the tight deadlines and in order not to invade their privacy. The verification of their precarious conditions has been documented in videos, and Magdalena Norway's visitors have had the opportunity of sharing with them at their own homes.

At Magdalena Norway:

Grethe Knudsen, in charge of accounting-administrative tasks and Project monitoring from Norway.

Geddy Anikdal, in charge of the artist relations

Anette Rode, music and voice, responsible for accounts and wire transfers

Katharina Barbosa, photographer and in charge of costumes

People from Institutions and organisations linked with the Project:

Alba Cecilia Pineda, director, *Política Pública de Mujer y Género*, in the Bogotá City Hall.

³ All the interviews were recorded.

María Elena Ordoñez, Coordinator of *La Casa de Igualdad de Oportunidades at La Candelaria* (Bogotá)

Beatriz Montoya, Director of *Conciudadana*, an NGO devoted to the Citizenship Building-up and to the work with victims from the riots in Medellín.

The content of the interviews was put together on the basis of the Questions established on the Terms of Reference and defined after an introductory meeting with Patricia Ariza. The investigation fields were:

1) Project Impact: Contributions of the Project to the Process of Peace in Colombia, from the perspective of Women, Directors, bodies and organisations connected to the Project, CTT and Magdalena Project.

2) Assessment of the results obtained; the allocation of resources, management and the Project organisation.

The aim was to achieve a participatory evaluation, with the sharing of opinions and points of views based on the experience of the participants in order to further analyse the Project proposal beyond what was shown by reports, publications and videos. The impact evaluation is always a challenge when the objectives are mainly qualitative: e.g. raising awareness in Women as an excluded sector, whose rights have been particularly violated by social conflicts, and the strengthening of their condition as Citizens, of their ability to transform (their reality) and their main role in the process of building Peace.

From the proposal of Performing Arts as a creative and change instrument, the evaluation was aimed to review how the process has contributed to the transformation of Women's reality and environment, and also how it has contributed to Peace building efforts:

- The insights of Women on their own transformation and on the transformation of their families.
- The insights of Directors regarding the processes of Women and Groups.
- Consolidation of the groups (participation, plays, performances, management)
- Sense of belonging to a collective political challenge from the pro-Peace perspective of Theatre and Arts and from the Women's outlook
- Insights of Women and Directors on the impact of the Project and the plays presented over the audiences they reach.
- Link with pro-Peace Women's Social Movement.

The evaluation is expected to provide suggestions on the work and the strategies for the future. It is also expected to suggest new indicators to follow-up Project results.

MAIN FINDINGS OF THE EVALUATION

Women's transformation

The Project impact on Women through the groups and through theatre plays is clear. It occurred what in feminist terms is called processes of self-awareness regarding their subordinated condition and also regarding their ability to transform this reality. They are the first ones in assuming that their own change, putting their experience in words among them and the reflection of each other in their peer's history has been the means to raise awareness on the place that society has assigned to Women, the postponement of their life's ambitions and the sacrifice made for others: -husband and children. Change is produced by recognising similar problems that have a common origin: subordination and gender discrimination.

The groups of women have been fundamental; women refer to them as a space for healing and catharsis for their grief. The process lived therein has allowed them to "create confidence", "break the indifference", and "place upon the table those taboo issues for discussion". The group is perceived as a place for learning, solidarity and affection; it offers the possibility of understanding and appreciating one another, a teamwork leading to collective power.

There are individual processes to recover self-esteem, self confidence and personal reassurance. "I know what I am capable of and what I am able to achieve" says one woman, whose life, until arriving to the performing arts and to the group, was restricted to her home. For some of them, the process allowed them to stop violence coming from their partners, or to put an end to relationships in which they did not have a life of their own, and they have had the solidarity of the groups regarding those decisions. "Since I am in the performing arts I do not allow injustices anymore", says one of the participants of La Pola, "I got divorced and here I am, says another. The reassurance and self-awareness are expressed in the sentence "the performing arts have helped me not to be afraid of making decisions".

Self assurance as female individuals can be also appreciated in the defence of Performing Arts and rehearsals as their own space which is not subjected to negotiation. Both the participants of the groups and the directors say that they had to face the continuous intervention of men during the first years, since they wanted to decide whether the women came to the rehearsal or not or to decide whether the activities were taking out time that should be better devoted to their chores and to spend it with the family. These situations do not longer exist, and the partners as well as daughters and sons, granddaughters and grandsons now show appreciation and pride for what women are doing. These are no exceptions; stories of this kind were heard in most of the groups. Therefore, the process has also transformed familiar spaces by giving Women greater possibilities which are no longer limited to women's role in reproduction.

Working in the stages has allowed them to take control of their bodies and to be able to express themselves, to remember "good and bad things", says one woman, and to connect

with their own sorrows and capabilities. This element was referred to in several groups and constitutes an important dimension in Women's self-assurance, it is appropriate to remember that in what refers to the body subordination has a privileged place: the feminine body must be disciplined and Women do not have autonomy of decision over it⁴.

They recognise in Performing Arts and in the process they have lived through, the facts that they have been gaining spaces, learning about their rights and learning not to be afraid. Not only they are no longer afraid of speaking in public but they are even getting their own stories and experiences on stage: domestic violence coming from their partners, sexual abuse and even rape, the trading in girls for a piece of land, maternity, abortion, the struggle for a dignified living, war and political persecution. Those are the main characters of their plays they are *able to link* directly with audiences during the post-performance forums.

The directors have also been part of this process. As women, this experience has resulted in a confrontation and reflection putting them in front of a mirror. The directors had not previously experienced the work with Women except for Patricia Ariza and Lucy Bolaños. They have also experienced self-awareness processes. "When meeting with other women we find our own stories. The stories repeat themselves", says Emilce of *Mujeres Creadoras*; Fanny states that "the Project went beyond the technical, broke away towards new ways of life, and came to our defence"; Ana María, director of *Alas de Libertad*, points out that the process within the group forced her to think of her "both as a woman and as an artist, and I intend to free others"; Sandra used to think of feminism as an extreme position, and nowadays she believes that "it fell short of considering all the sorrows of Women". Confrontation has been very important for men as well. William, director of *Diafragma*, points out that questions have to be made about "the sexism that is projected on our actions and how deep have we internalised within ourselves the patriarch, the messiah, the positivist humanist". In turn, Rafael, the director of *Mujeres de Engativá* made known that there is not an egalitarian society, thus modifying some of his perceptions about Women.

From the coordination of the Project it has been sought to educate Women with respect to gender issues in workshops through talks from feminists linked to the Women's Movement; particularly the speeches of Gloria Cuartas and Florence Thomas are mentioned. There are observations coming from both participants and directors regarding the methodology used which does not allow women to connect with what has been exposed nor can they relate it to their reality. During the evaluation the need of further analysing training was strongly put forward.

Group's Consolidation

Many women responded to the invitation to setting up the groups, or more exactly, to the fact of being part of a Performing Arts Women's initiative. In Patricia's words, this is an appealing invitation for Women. The initial number, 25 participants in the case of *La Pola*, 40 in the case of *Engativá*, changed throughout the time and the final composition of the

⁴ The control over the capacity of reproduction and maternity as fate are expressions of this reality.

groups suffered changes until reaching the current number of participants. Those who did not stay faced in general problems with regard to the necessary regularity in the attendance to the rehearsals and creative work, due to the priority that had to be given to income-generation for their families.

The permanence of the groups is steady: In most of them, women have been present since the beginning of the Project, except for the younger groups such as *Mujeres de Engativá*, in which the lengths of time that they have been in the Project has been shorter. The groups are not static, since processes are not either, and during the last four years new women have been involved and have remained until today. This could have resulted in more work for the directors; however it does not seem to affect the pace of the groups. In fact, this is an indicator that all groups without exception will set out that in case of a possible end of the economic support from Fokus, they would keep on working because theatre is already part of their lives, though at the same time they think that maintaining the support is fundamental since "we still have short wings". This metaphor on the part of one of the participants of "*Aves del Paraíso*" is an indication that the need of autonomy and self-management has become clearer, however there are still some capabilities that have to be strengthened and in order to do so resources and support are required.

Each group has prepared at least one play per year; and most of them have been collectively developed. There is a unanimous recognition of the work developed by the directors. Their commitment is enhanced as well as the transmission of knowledge, perseverance and support. The directors also appreciate the contributions of the group to their conditions of artistic facilitators. Only a few had the experience of having worked in the artistic creation area with people who had no link whatsoever to that field, therefore it was a challenge to provide performing tools, voice and teachings on body language. Susana, director of *Aves del Paraíso*, points out that she did recognise the art in them and that the direction of the group helped her to break the stiffness of the academic and classic plays; Inés, director of *Abrazadas* pointed out that the group has given her back the theatre about commitment and awareness and she also says "I though I was going to teach but it turned out I did not know anything" "each staging is a challenge and a new experience as a director", says Lucy, director of the "*Tejedoras de Sueños*."

Work activities include a weekly rehearsal, which in some occasions, especially when the debut of a play in preparation is coming up, change to a more frequent one. "We promote collective, supportive work and the Stage as the place of convergence for all women", says William director of *Diafragma*. After the rehearsal, we all share a little snack, an almost ritual moment for being this a space to share life and plan future activities, among other things. The Project covers the snacks and participants' transport expenses, which given the poverty in which many of the women of the group live, results to be an important contribution. Participants, particularly the ones staying in Bogotá, made reference to the need of having more appropriate spaces to rehearse as well as resources to improve the costumes and props. In fact most of the groups use locations at the *Casas de Igualdad de Oportunidades* which do not have the appropriate conditions and there is no guarantee that they can be used for extended periods of time either. The participants of *La Pola* explored the possibility of getting a space that can be owned by the groups which would solve the

problems of space and props and under efficient management could provide groups with a source of income.

During the four years of Project implementation the groups have attended to workshops in order to strengthen among others, their performing skills: voice, approaching to the subject, drama, portraying of others, music, and lighting are mentioned among others. Among the facilitators there are the artists of Magdalena Norway and the ones of the *Yuyaxkany* group in Peru. They make the most out of national gatherings and/or of *Festival de Mujeres en Escena*, and also each group manages its own gatherings according to their needs and characteristics. From the reports and interviews it is not possible to state the total number of workshops the groups have attended to⁵.

Among Project activities there are group meetings and gatherings that seek to strengthen collective action as well as the bonds between groups and Women and to facilitate feedback and exchange of experiences. During 2006 and 2007 the Project managed to gather all groups in Bogotá, though in subsequent two years the resources allowed to invite only a few, namely *Abrazadas* from Medellín and *Mujeres Creadoras* from Villa de Leyva in 2008, *Tejedoras de Sueños and Aves del Paraíso* of Cali and *Alas de Libertad* of Barranquilla⁶. The format of the encounters consisted on each group performing their plays during 15 minutes and receiving feedback from women and directors. This allowed the feedback and renourishing about the staging, characters and subject matters as well. These sessions are recorded in order to be a useful tool both for groups as well as for Directors.

The encounters are highly appreciated by women; they mentioned in all the interviews that they enjoyed the opportunity to interacting in the diversity, learning from one another, knowing other perspectives or to recognise similar artistic quests, that is encouraged network building-up among groups. At the same time, it would appear that encounters have not been totally taken advantage of due to the short time available in order to further reflect on the relationship among groups as well as on the political and artistic sharing. The yearning for maintaining and broaden-up those encounters both at a national and regional level or among the groups is expressly stated, e.g., the visit made by *La Pola* and *Flores de Otoño* to *Mujeres Creadoras* at Villa de Leyva was highly appreciated.

The directors in Bogotá meet up with certain frequency, on a monthly basis whenever possible; to their understanding those meetings are useful due to the opportunity to receive feedback and discuss about the plots of the plays, the groups' status, and to share experiences as a way to strengthen the progress achieved and face the difficulties encountered. This is also the moment to make decisions and plan the joint pro-Peace activities in which the Bogotá groups also participate. Patricia Ariza keeps in contact and does the follow-up in other cities jointly with the Directors and travel a number of times each year to attend to the plays and to make feedback process easier. Within the framework

⁵ In 2006 10 groups are mentioned, 19 in 2007 and more than 12 in 2008. However during the interviews with the directors many more were mentioned.

⁶ It was not possible to identify the groups that moved to Bogotá in the last two years, perhaps there are some groups missing. The displacement of the groups is partially financed by Fokus and partially by CCT.

of National Encounters and Festivals organised by CCT, said activities are made the most of in terms of Directors meetings. It was not possible to state in the Project documentation how many of them have been held a year, however there is an interest and a need on the part of the directors from other cities to keep a closer contact and to strengthen the work and meetings among directors. Reference is made to the fact of having a greater number of groups in some specific geographical areas: Ana María, Director of *Alas de Libertad* in Barranquilla, expresses her interest in promoting contacts with Women's theatre groups at the Atlantic Coast, something that would strengthen work in that area and would facilitate exchange and support processes.

All groups are involved in cultural management activities, that is, they look for contacts in their localities as well as plays promotion possibilities. In order to accomplish the above, contacts have been made with local authorities and municipalities, schools and colleges, social organisations that take care of victims of the internal armed conflict and cultural centres, among others. This has been a process fostered within the groups. A relevant indicator is the percentage of self-managed performances which in 2008 reached the 70% of the total (117 out of 198). However, in terms of management there is still a strong dependence on the Directors, even though this is not the same for all groups since the conditions are not the same either for all women. In those groups where they have had previous organisational experiences there is a more formal training or connections are made with institutional networks, their self management possibilities are higher and the level of dependence regarding the operations handled by the director seems to be smaller. In the interviews, these women mentioned the need of management training and also the need to consider, in top of the time spent, other expenses, namely transport Information Technology access, stationary, photocopies etc.

Another management related issue that has notwithstanding a particular dimension, is the self-sustenance of the groups. The interviews showed the different alternatives developed by women; such as the case of Bogotá, which due to the fact that resources are concentrated in larger cities, their closer connection with the institutional network made more feasible for some groups to submit projects and apply to those public funds aimed to cultural development. Besides, there is the selling of the performances or of tickets for the plays. It came out clearly that the possibility of getting resources from the performances is not the same for all groups, due to their dependence on the available funds from public institutions in specific neighbourhoods, or their dependence on resources from social organisations or NGOs and other entities having an interest in showing the plays during their own activities or in particular events, and it also will depend on the management participants' skills.

Many different perspectives overlap in the self-sustenance of the groups. On the one hand there is the vision in which artistic work aimed at rising awareness should not be charged for, but rather it should stress the possibility of reaching the biggest possible number of audiences, taking into consideration that most of them come from poor neighbourhoods where money is in short supply. And on the other hand there is the need of having their own resources so as to mobilise the plays, buy costumes, props, and other required materials.

The evaluation could confirm that the criteria to charge an admission fee to attend the plays -how much and whom must pay or get free tickets- seeks to be in correspondence with the principles of solidarity and with the objectives of committed cultural action. The interest in reaching specific sectors of the population through the plays does not depend on the gains from the performances, since most of the time only the basic expenses are charged for: namely transportation and food, and in many cases the groups perform absolutely for free. *La Pola* developed an interesting methodology: after each paid performance they share the money earned among the participants, plus an extra one. That “extra one” share goes to a fund which may be used to solve some economic issues or to finance a performance when the audience requesting it shows a special interest and cannot afford it, not even the transportation expenses of the group.

The money collected from the ticket sale has another dimension which despite its great importance is not normally evident, if only in a few groups: it is taken as a reward both to the effort made by the women as well as to their artistic work. No matter how small the amount can be, it has an impact on her subjectivity since it strengthens their autonomy and their abilities to make decisions. Nohra, director of *La Pola*, is proud to say that one of the group participants, a housewife that devoted her whole life to take care of her husband and children, thanks to the money received from a performance could financially help her family to make an important payment. Their awareness about the fact that Women's work is not rewarded or that is poorly rewarded, unlike men's work, is an important dimension in the Women's empowerment. The existing pressure which has to be carefully managed is the expectation of some of groups, particularly from *Aves del Paraíso*, on earning by means of artistic activity enough money to take care of their wants as well as those of their families.

This evaluation considers that the groups, regardless their diverse nature, composition and capabilities, are already stable and consolidated. *Inés Elvira* seems to be the weakest one, since it is composed by girls and young women and the decision of whether they stay or leave is up to others. The challenge that real life places on the groups is rather their own diversity in all its expressions, as well as the inequality of conditions under which the women who take part on the groups are. As Patricia Ariza says “each group operates within different contexts”.

The groups themselves show great diversity in terms of age, moments of life, ethnic background, resources, poverty and ability to plan their lives. The wants and possibilities between *Inés Elvira*, made up of girls and teenagers and *Mujeres Creadoras* mainly grandmothers, show the dimension of this diversity. In Cali, the poverty of the participants of *Aves del Paraíso*, a group of resettled black women, is more pressing than that of the participants of *Tejedoras de Sueños*. There are also differences in their levels of political involvement and wants regarding their particular experiences. The political demand from the young girls of *Diafragma* is different than that of *Mujeres en el Asfalto*, and this is a challenge both for the Project as an action thrust and for the CCT as the coordinator organisation.

Performing Arts as a Transformation, Women and Peace tool

The “*Mujeres Arte y Parte de la Paz en Colombia*” Project is driven by the CCT which recognises Performing Arts as a space for creation and transformation, with Women as its main characters in this case. On this basis they were invited to join this project and the groups were then formed. For some, especially those linked to organisational spaces, the thrust of the proposed work was clear from the very beginnings, though for most of them this represented a discovery. "Women and Peace are the most difficult part, the easiest one is identifying the exclusion" points out Patricia Ariza. This has been a learning process that became apparent throughout the processes within the group: the impact of the plays on the audiences, especially from what audiences have expressed on the post-performance forums, and also from the participation in pro-Peace activities jointly with other actors and actresses.

"We, Women lack peace in this context of historical burdens and forced submission to religion as well as to husbands and children..." points out a participant of *La Pola*. This statement expresses the unanimous feeling of the groups with respect to Women and Peace; it reveals the importance of the day-to-day, the transformation of relationships in their private world as a necessary space for the Peace building. Household chores, which Women have been historically relegated to, are identified by the participants of the groups as a space marked by subordination and by the lack of realization of their life-time ambitions. Theatre, says Lucy Bolaños, "is a recreational space in which people can "relive, redefine and accept their traumatic experiences that have been poorly appreciated by others".

The plays, mostly based on their own stories, have an impact on other women, giving them a voice to express their own experiences. A participant of *Mujeres en el Asfalto* says that in the post-performance forums women use to say "what you tell us is what we have been living, it is exactly what we have experienced". For Beatriz and Emilce, directors of *Mujeres Creadoras* it opens the possibility of "breaking the violence chains" against Women within the space of affective and family relationships, enabling us to undertake a major role in the transformation of these realities: "we are the creators of our own freedom, straight away and right here".

In the interviews, the participants pointed out that the fact of seeing on stage "ordinary women" giving voice to a common reality has led many of them to think that "if they can do it, so can we!". In fact, in many neighbourhoods there is a need of forming new groups. There have been references to the impact of watching adult women, even grandmothers, talking about sex, bringing up issues that used to be taboo within the intimacy of families. The participants of the groups have become a reference for other women and have fostered the organisation of others. The commitment and level of awareness acquired through the Project has been an incentive for many of them in terms of opening new spaces for Women in their own surroundings or to support those already existing initiatives. Some of the participants of *La Pola* and *Mujeres en el Asfalto* pointed out that they were developing those activities in these spaces based on what they have learnt through the Project.

The plays made apparent another dimension of Peace, which is the recovery of the community memory and their struggle to get a dignified livelihood. “*Sueños de Juventud*” tackles in one of its creations the story of the neighbourhood since the invasion and land sub-division into lots until basic services were provided and the importance of the Women’s participation in this process. *Mujeres Creadoras* did something similar by narrating the life of women in the neighbourhood of Villa de Leyva, for instance, which talks about the need to migrate to the city due to the lack jobs and development opportunities, and *Alas de Libertad* is currently working on a play about rural Women.

The third relation between Women and Peace appears in the plays on war, repression, missing persons and forced resettlements. They emphasize Women’s prominent role in the recovery of their lives, the reconstruction of the social fabric, and the quest for justice and compensation. Some of the creations dealing with these topics have been already staged by *Aves del Paraíso*, *Abrazadas*, *La Pola* and *Mujeres de Engativá*, the latter did it in a play about Resolution 1325 at the United Nations, others have collected experiences from women in Latin America who have lived in countries in warlike situations such as *Madres de la Plaza de Mayo* and Guatemalan women. The plays have given the opportunity to different audiences, neighbourhoods, colleges and primary school students, to attend to cultural activities promoted by Municipalities, among others, to provide them with opportunities to learn and raise their awareness on the violation of the basic rights of people during war, the realities of the direct victims of political persecution or that of the forced resettlements. In Medellín, the play of *Abrazadas*, which tackle these kinds of problems, was presented at the *Cabildos Abiertos (open Town Council meetings)* as an introduction to debate and definition of community plans. The play had an impact in the inclusion of compensation policies for the victims of the conflict.

Both participants of the groups and directors agree that the Performing Arts allow them to send clearer messages about the reality of Women and Peace since it has an impact that is greater than a speech. Nohra Gonzalez, director of *La Pola*, rescues the sense of collective political participation through Arts and Culture, and stresses the importance of making “something poetic out of the political speech without losing its political strength”. An important indicator of the effort made by the groups in order to increasingly reach other audiences is given by the increase of the number of performances and attendance throughout the years: from 35 en year 2006 to 168 in year 2009 and from 3.500 people to 19.200 respectively during the same period.

The Project approaches this cultural proposal from the performing arts and Women as a part of a bigger effort of the social movement for the building-up of peace. Therefore, every year they encourage the participation of the groups in those events where they can collaborate with other entities in relation to these efforts. Some of the events are promoted by the CCT itself, such as this year collective performance at Plaza Bolívar *I was not Born to Share Hate*, which enjoyed the participation of groups from Bogotá, as well as women artists, dancers, mothers of "false positives" and relatives of missing people from the Unión Patriótica, or other events such as Siembra y Canto which took place at the Plaza in 2007 and sought to honour the relocated men and women. For many participants of the groups of Bogotá this were their first steps in getting involved in community issues and allowed them to *put themselves into the victims’ shoes*: “holding hands with a friend I was running around

Plaza Bolivar and screaming: 'Where are they?' And I really felt like someone I love would have gone missing", says one of the participants of *Mujeres en el Asfalto*.

Based on the aforementioned this evaluation considers that the participants of the groups have reached clarity about the sense of the Project thrust of making out of the Performing Arts a contribution to Peace by means of strengthening their voice and their main role as Women. Performing Arts generate alternative spaces such as groups and their plays, and the forums, among others, where Women have a saying. The very own process of each group, the presentation of the plays, the interaction with the public in the forums, and the participation in cultural events pro-Peace organised by the CCT or other institutions has contributed to that. The CCT managed to gather more than a hundred women around the common purpose of contributing from the Performing Arts to a more substantive Peace process that consider their dignity and respect for their rights. The levels of understanding of this goal that the group achieved differ from group to group, though in all of them it is evident that there is a process in this perspective throughout the four years of Project implementation.

This evaluation seeks to reflect on three aspects. The first one refers to the need of further analysing Peace issues as a topic by itself jointly with women from the discussion groups. The relations between Women and Peace, previously exposed in their most day to day and collective dimension, as well as the aim of putting an end to war, and the issues of justice and compensation to victim population do not forcefully appear, except maybe in the aspect related to Women's day-to-day life. As an example, the reports provided the possibility to know that since the beginning of the Project coordination talks and meetings about Resolution 1325 have been promoted however the participants of the groups did not mention them. The most direct or conscious relationship about Women and Peace, or the notion that the cultural action being developed by the Project is a political one, is just a perception of some of the groups, particularly *La Pola*, *Abrazadas*, *Tejedoras de Sueños* and *Diafragma*.

The second one has to do with the strengthening of the perception of a pro-Peace collective work from the Performing Arts and Culture side. The groups recognise themselves as part of the Fokus Project which has a common purpose with respect to Women and Peace, though they have not acquired the common vision. Maybe except for the case of Bogotá in which the groups have had the opportunity of being in public events and festivals organised by the CCT, in other cities is perceived only the particular dimension of the work -each group by itself, supported from the CCT and the coordination of the Project- which is connected from this place with local efforts of Women's and/or Social movement to raise a common voice for Peace.

The third element deals with the diversity of places that present the groups in the way they relate to the Performing Arts activity as a political issue. Even though this is not visible for all of them due to the particularities of their composition and process, it is possible to distinguish at least three approaches: the participants of *Diafragma* group have an evident interest in being a more active part of the movement pro-Peace, by being in touch with women who have been direct victims of the conflict and with other excluded and discriminated sectors as well. The women of *La Pola* are aware and part and parcel of a

common effort and that they find in their own work, that is, through their plays, the best way to contribute to the Peace process. *Mujeres en el Asfalto*, on the contrary, focuses particularly on the artistic development and observes their contribution from the world of Culture. This diversity is one of the richest assets of the movement, which through the formational process and meetings may be visualised from the understanding and conviction of the importance of keeping united.

Relations with Social and Women Movements and their environments

The relation with the gender institution Casas de Igualdad de Oportunidades, and to a lesser extent with organisations of Women's and pro-Peace NGOs made possible to organize some of the groups in Bogotá, Cali and Medellín, respectively. These connections have been maintained and widened during the Project implementation. In addition, Patricia Ariza keeps in touch with the artistic and cultural spheres, with human rights and pro-defence of victims of war organizations, etc., which allows the organisation and participation in pro-Peace events where many entities converge.

The Casas de Igualdad de Oportunidades in Bogotá make part of the Public Policy on Women and Gender of the Bogotá Municipality. The relationship between Patricia Ariza and Alba Cecilia Pineda, director of this line of work made possible a relation between the public policy and the Project since its inception. Alba Cecilia points out that one of the rights being promoted from the municipal policy is the right to the culture and to a sexism-free communication. Within this framework she places collaboration between *Las Casas* and the Project by promoting the artistic practice of Women. This relationship has allowed the groups to have spaces for rehearsal, participating in the events of *Las Casas* (e.g. March 8 and November 25) and has given them the possibility of performing in Women's organisations and in other community organisational spaces with which *Las Casas* is connected.

The connection with the Women's Movement organisations is not clear. In the case of Cali, Lucy and Susana have a link to the *Casa Cultural Tejiendo Sororidades*, an organization of ecumenical feminists which have been working for years with women from poor sectors and through which is possible to interact and plan joint actions. In Bogotá, there are participants of *La Pola* linked to Women's organisations which has favoured the presentation of plays and the participation in specific events; in turn, *Sueños de Juventud* has a close relationship with FASOL, a Women's organisation which has worked for many years in the area. The aforementioned are the spaces of sustained interaction appearing in the interviews; other contacts developed by the groups with the help of the Women's Movement and other organisations are occasional, and usually set up around special dates and in order to participate in specific events.

Another example of an interaction place is Medellín, where many of the participants of *Abrazadas* belong to Victims Support organisations – *De Víctimas a Ciudadanos Provincial* Association – and the group is linked to the actions in the sphere of accusation against political assassinations, missing people and relocation. In Barranquilla, *Alas de Libertad* is linked to *Asociación Pro Defensa de los Desplazados* and to *Asociación de Artistas por la Vida*.

Having said that it seems that the relationships developed between the groups and the Social Movement, the organisations of the civil society and those linked to Peace is scarce. However, from the interviews and from the list provided by the directors about the places in which the plays have been performed as well as the audiences that have been reached, it is apparent that a permanent action towards citizenship and participation is being done on the part of different organisations, schools, colleges and cultural centres, etc., which are opening themselves towards the community. The initiatives and connections are varied, depending on the localities. This potential is hidden behind quantitative indicators of the number of performances or the number of people that have attended the plays.

The difficulty to see this potential that has been developed by the Project throughout the years maybe due to the fact that each group develop their own initiatives by itself, in isolation, without taking into account that they are not just part of a project, but of a larger thrust that is articulated from the culture as a way to contribute to Peace. To continue in this perspective, which is already developed above in this report, would allow providing higher power and outreaching to the cultural action of the groups and probably would widen the range of interaction and meeting opportunities with Social Movement, as well as with organisations and entities who share the common goal of contributing to Peace.

It became apparent that one relationship that needs to be further developed is the one with the Women's Social Movement. In the opinion of many directors, the meeting places have failed to overcome a practical vision of the artistic work, the potential of the Performing Arts and of Artistic Creation in the transformation of Women's Reality have not been completely envisioned as yet. Patricia Ariza puts forward a strategy in order to strengthen the dialogue and widen collaboration by creating meeting spaces from within the Project, thus overcoming the dependence on the invitations made by other organisations to participate in specific events where the plays can be showed.

Financial management and administration of the Project

Patricia Ariza is in charge of the coordination and is responsible for the running of the Project. There is a work plan, there are monthly meetings with the directors in Bogotá, and there is a follow-up of the groups in other cities with the help of their directors. The events to which they attend in Bogotá are taken advantage of as well as the visits of Patricia to other cities. It is important to clarify that the meetings with the directors deal with the development of the groups and the plays, and the general agreements that have to do with the contents of the Project. The directors do not get involved in the administrative and financial procedures of the Project; their responsibility is to quarterly report on each group and to produce a yearly report as well as to manage the resources which are periodically provided for the operations of the groups (namely, snacks and transportation).

The financial and administrative management of the Project is responsibility of Patricia as the director of the Project, and Celene as the administrative and accounting assistant. They are in contact on a daily basis and meet up once a week, usually on Saturdays, in order to do the financial and administrative follow-up. The support team is composed by Octavio, accounting assistant who helps to do the daily accounting follow-up and Joaquín Jiménez,

external auditor who audits the accounts on a monthly basis. Celene keeps in touch with the directors for logistic purposes (e.g. how to organise a particular activity) or for financial purposes. Also on a monthly basis, they are paid for their contribution to the Project and the money for the snacks of the groups is also settled. Together with the quarterly reports, transport expenses are presented and paid for.

In March the CCT presents an Annual Narrative and Financial Report to Magdalena Norway and Fokus. During the year new continuity proposals are also developed and specific requests for activities are put forward. This task is performed totally by Patricia with the assistance of Celene. Regarding the difficulties of having these reports on time, they always arrive after a lot of follow-up and insistence from the side of the Norwegian counterpart. From Magdalena Norway, this point has been sorted out. The reason for those delays has been mainly due to Patricia's overload of work. She is responsible for all the queries and decisions of the Project and Celene does her part with respect to the financial and administrative field. This turned out to work properly, however resulting in a work overload for both of them. It is important to point out that Patricia is also the director of the CCT and that with the assistance of Celene, she is also in charge of the institutional management, the management of the CCT house itself which besides has a playhouse, and the organisation of the Theatre Festivals (Mujeres en Escena and Festival Alternativo de Teatro) even though special teams are hired for the organising of those events.

The Project files are distributed among three people and locations. Patricia keeps the entire project documentation as well as its reports and management documentation. Celene keeps the administrative files and in collaboration with Joaquín, she also keeps financial documentation. Karen, Project documentalist handles all visual material. This practice puts at risk the documentation since it depends on individuals and not on the CCT. These procedures do not work and explain why documents are not at hand when needed.

At Magdalena Norway Grethe, Annete and Geddy do the follow-up of the Project. The first two carry out accounting and administrative follow-up as well as communications with Fokus, and Geddy keeps links with the artistic side. Katharina Barbosa and Zoe, who have experience in costumes and staging and photography and documentaries respectively, also collaborate. The Board of Magdalena Norway meets 3 times a year to do the follow-up of the Project, and this is the opportunity for the decision making process to take place. Once a year, some of them travel to Colombia and support the work of the groups through workshops, participate in festivals or performances and/or do the follow-up of the Project management.

For Magdalena Norway, the management of the administrative and financial aspects has also been a learning experience. Only Grethe had prior experience in project management due to her participation in the Latin Amerika Gruppene i Norge LAG; the other participants are women from art and culture. They suggest the strengthening of the group in Norway, by involving other women knowledgeable of the Colombian reality.

Both the CCT and Magdalena Norway have positively evaluated the work and the collaborative relationship that has been established. The differences that have arisen have

been solved along the way. The CCT has complete autonomy in the running of the Project, not in a vertical way but in close cooperation with Magdalena Norway.

Along its four years and until now the Project maintained its dynamics, Patricia handling the main responsibilities both in the internal operation and in front of the donor organization. Given the achievements and the current status of the initiative it becomes necessary to adapt its coordination procedures in order to be able to meet the new challenges.

ANSWERS TO THE EVALUATION QUESTIONS

Hva slags kvinner startet i gruppene? Bakgrunn, geografisk opprinnelsessted, grunn til å bli med. Hvor har gruppene opptrådt?⁷

Women arrived to the groups through following different path ways. Some of them were invited through the CCT networks or by some of the directors and by Patricia Ariza (*Diafragma, Flores de Otoño*). Others, particularly in Bogotá, arrived through public institutions that work in the promotion of equal opportunities (*La Pola, Mujeres en el Asfalto, Mujeres de Engativá, Inés Elvira*) or through the municipalities (*Mujeres Creadoras*), pro-Peace NGOs working in support of resettled populations or victims from the internal conflict in Colombia, and Culture and Women centres (*Abrazadas, Sueños de Juventud, Alas de Libertad, Aves del Paraíso, Tejedoras de Sueños*).

On top of the first ones others joined in because as a usual practice among Women, information find always its way by word of mouth.

They are women from poor areas, among which there are resettled women and direct victims of war. A great part of them live in enormous uncertainty and among them there are housewives, heads of households working on their own (artisans, hawkers etc) and students. Only a few have had formal educational and work experiences. Many of them only have primary studies and others have finished high school. The younger ones are in high school or getting technical or college education.

Regarding women from the groups, only a few of them have had previous organisational experience: among them, some of the participants of *La Pola, Sueños de Juventud* and *Abrazadas* had participated in Women's organisations, or in Victims or Resettled Populations support groups. Only the participants of *Flores de Otoño* and *Diafragma* have certain experience in the performing arts or in any other artistic expressions.

In the interviews many adult women indicated that they wanted to perform in theatre since they were little girls or teenagers. However, household chores and survival needs did not allow them and they did not even imagine this possibility in their lives. "It was like a dream on hold", says one of the participants of *Mujeres en el Asfalto*.

⁷As an appendix is included a basic description of the groups provided by the directors

The groups have performed at the CCT, Kábala, *La Máscara*, and *La Maloca* playhouses, at the Festival de Mujeres en Escena, in cultural centres, community facilities and social organisations, as well as centres for the youth and elderly persons, colleges, squares and parks.

Har prosjektet oppnådd de mål som ble avtalt? Identifiser også uforutsette resultater, så vel positive som negative I hvilken grad er prosjektet i tråd med FOKUS prosjektstrategi, og er det relevant for å endre kvinners rolle i samfunnet? Hvordan tenker kvinnene seg situasjonen uten Mujeres Art and y Part of Colombian Peace?

The Project has accomplished its goals. They have organised and consolidated 12 Women's theatre groups which annually stage plays and performs in front of different kinds of audiences. Regarding artistic creation, Women make use of cultural elements from their own environments such as music, dance and *guabinas* (a Colombian typical dance). Throughout these four years, the participants have learnt performing skills, voice projection, and characters creation, among others. Nowadays, some groups have suggested getting involved in areas such as comedy or body language as a means of expression.

The participants have experienced self-awareness processes that have made them able to identify gender discrimination and exclusion, and through their plays they are now able to convey this awareness to others. Most of these plays are collective creations, they speak about Women's reality and how their Rights have been violated and also deal with the war issue and its consequences. The post-performance forums ascertain the impact of the plays on the audiences as well as the information provided raising their awareness when facing situations which are either not known or not visible.

Women's voice in the peace building has been strengthened through the Project thrust. From the performing arts, the participants are able to have a glimpse on the importance of the day-to-day, the rebuilding of the social fabric and also the truth and justice in the building of a substantive Peace that honour their rights and take their needs into account. During this process, the groups have been in contact with different actors of the Social Movement, such as Women's organisations, Victims support groups, NGOs and cultural centres. They have been also linked to the public institution in charge of the gender and culture in Bogotá and to local entities in other places of the country.

During the first four years there have been some outstanding issues regarding expected results: namely, the groups' independent work and a stronger link to the Women's Social Movement. Regarding the first one, the Project itself suggested creating a network among the groups which can strengthen collective work, that is, the cultural action out of a Women's Popular Theatre as well as management in order to support its sustenance and outreach. This has been taken as a challenge for the next period and not for the last one, since nowadays there are groups and women who have grown up in the art of theatre and may rely on their growth as well as on their main role and gender awareness. One of the strategies to be maintained and strengthened is the formation and reflection upon Women, Peace and Cultural Action and thereby the current recognition of the contribution and main role of Women in Peace building, as well as their awareness of their rights are being reinforced and consolidated. At the same time, differences among the groups as to their

composition, abilities and possibilities should be taken into account, and also solidarity strategies should be developed to allow everybody to keep on growing and projecting themselves.

Regarding Women's Social Movement the difficulties in order to develop a steady relationship with the Project led to try out different alternatives, such as public gender institutions in the case of Bogotá, some director's relationship with the Movement's organisations and the participation of some women of the groups in Women's organisations. Due to the aforementioned the groups were able to reach Women through their plays and take part in activities during special dates of the Women's Social Movement such as March 8 and November 25. It is suggested that in a new phase the Project should explore strategies to make possible a close dialogue among groups and Women's organisations. The coordination of the Project has conceived the creation of spaces to allow building-up this relationship in different neighbourhoods and cities where the groups have been present.

The groups' participants intend to continue performing even in case of an end of the financial support for the Project. In this direction they seek to develop their own cultural management. Obviously, this is a fledgling skill that still needs learning and support, but regarding to which they are completely aware.

Hva har prosjektet betydd for gruppelederne? Hva tenker gruppelederne om kjønns- og fredsspørsmål i gruppa/i arbeidet? Hvilke refleksjoner gjør gruppelederne og deltakerne seg om solidaritet?

Women have lived an intense process in the same way as directors have. It is detailed at the beginning of this report the impact that the Project has had both on their personal lives, the levels of awareness of gender reached, and the challenges faced by them as facilitators of a process of artistic creation with people without previous experience. Just like it happened with the participants, the needs to further develop their own instruction regarding gender issues and their reflections on culture and peace became apparent.

Har teaterarbeidet bidratt til å bedre deltakernes liv? Hvordan har det påvirket dem? Har de fått en ny bevissthet om kjønsspørsmål og fredsspørsmål? Kvinnes vurdering av seg selv? Selvtillit? kompetanse? Hvordan viser dette seg i praksis? I forhold til kjønsspørsmål, politisk deltakelse? Hvordan tenker kvinnene om deres eget teaterverktøy, teaterbevissthet

Performing Arts have changed the life of the women, have strengthened their self-esteem and confidence in themselves, have given them a space of their own, and enhanced their status with respect to the family and community. The recognition of their strength and their capabilities is one of the big contributions from the Project. The indicators of this process are evident: Performing Arts and rehearsals are not negotiable, they are part and parcel of their day-to-day and so they have told it to their families; Partners, sons and daughters have changed their perceptions about them, and they appreciate their artistic activity and collaborate in the task. Some of them were able to stop the violence from their partners thanks to the performing arts.

Women have acquired performing skills under the direction of their directors and during *ad hoc* workshops; other sources of learning have been festivals and encounters of the groups in Bogotá. They have the idea of further exploring what they have learnt, experiencing new genres (for instance, comedy and street theatre). For all of them, the performing arts have come to their lives to stay, in fact they are thinking about maintaining the activity even with a small external support. At the same time, they acknowledge that they need another period of implementation to gain autonomy and greater skills on project management.

The political involvement of women have different levels: some of them suggest closer connections with the public action regarding Peace; others see their biggest contribution in their plays or at the forums. The common point within the diversity is that they have been able to confirm that their artistic work, the plays and their contents effectively reach the audiences and make them reflect, and besides, they have opened new opportunities for the transformation of the discourse and practices regarding Women, War and Peace.

Hvordan har kvinnes stilling og status og deltakelse i de lokale samfunnene blitt endret som følge av prosjektet? Hvilke ringvirkninger har prosjektet hatt? Hvilken effekt har de 12 gruppene arbeid hatt på andre kvinneorganisasjoner lokalt? Hvilke samarbeidsprosjekter med andre organisasjoner? Hva slags publikum har gruppene hatt?

The participants of the groups are role-models for other Women in their localities. They are ordinary women who have had the strength to stand on a stage, perform and raise their voice on realities that most of the times remain hidden or kept in denial. This has a great impact on others that have seen in these women a role model. In fact, in many places there is a request for the opening of new groups and many of them have been motivated to support processes taking place with the women in their communities.

In some cities, such as in Medellín, the performances in open Town Council meetings aimed at the definition of local policies that have led to the incorporation of programs aimed at the collective care of victims of the internal conflicts. In Bogotá and in Cali, the groups have participated in political-cultural pro-Peace events converging with other artistic groups and with Victims Support organizations.

The plays are presented to audiences composed by the local people, especially women. These plays have also been performed at schools, colleges, cultural centres and in activities promoted by Women's and pro-Peace organisations, Victims of the War support institutions and by public institutions aimed at Women and/or Cultural Development. Besides, there is the general public attending the Festival de Mujeres en Escena organised by the CCT.

Forvaltning:

Hva er CCTs oppfatning av kravene og begrensningene som et Fokus-støttet prosjekt innebærer?

Er CCTs prosjektadministrasjon effektiv? Er organisasjonsstrukturen og CCTs administrative rutiner tilstrekkelige for å forvalte pengene i henhold til kontrakten? Er rutinene gode nok for å avdekke eventuell korrupsjon?

Foregår prosjektgjennomføringen på kvinnes premisser?

Hvordan er den indre strukturen og dialogen i prosjektet i Colombia?

Hva er de økonomiske perspektivene for framtidig drift (andre donorer, bærekraft).

The Project is of great importance within the CCT; it brings a refreshing atmosphere to its work, goes to the neighbourhoods and interact with other citizens circles. This is a clear gain of the Project.

From the coordination side of the project at the CCT no requirements or limits regarding the support of Fokus have been identified, therefore the development of the project is not affected. The only observation that arose during the evaluation was the difficulty in dealing with the annual funding; something that will stand in the way of the further planning once this specific period has elapsed.

The Project financial and administrative management have improved along the four years of Project implementation. It has an external auditor who reviews the appropriateness of the allocation of Project funds according to the budget and contract. However, it is necessary to improve the internal procedures and the work allocation among the people involved in this area within the CCT to gain efficiency and quality, and reduce the work overload for Patricia and Celene.

The CCT has not sought other donors for the project, the proposal has been implemented with the support of Fokus only, and local funds have been arranged for specific activities. This is an issue to be explored in the near future; among other alternatives, encouraging self management of the groups given the possibility of public and private funds to be allocated for cultural activities.

Organisering:

Hvordan har samarbeidet og organisering av arbeidet (tidsaspekt i arbeidet og beslutningsprosesser) fungert mellom målgruppen, CCT og Magdalena Norway og hva har de tilført hverandre? På hvilken måte har Magdalena Norway bidratt til å styrke CCT og motsatt?

The project has its coordination focused on Patricia Ariza, on a team of 12 directors and on monthly group follow-up, feedback and planning meetings attended by the directors from Bogotá. The follow-up and exchange with other cities is done through Patricia travelling with that purpose. At the same time, the Project fosters annual meetings among the groups and directors. Both of them foresee the need of bigger encounters at a national and regional level as well as visits among the groups.

The relationship between the CCT and Magdalena Norway after four years working together have been strengthened, there is an earned trust among both organisations and the shared interests on the performing arts and cultural action with Women for Peace building and solidarity have been also strengthened. Through the follow-up of the Project and the participation in workshops in Colombia, the participants of Magdalena Project have been able to closely collaborate with its unfolding and results. For Norwegian women this project has been the most important experience in a concrete solidarity work.

Hvordan kan CCT styrkes for at de skal kunne møte utfordringene i framtidig prosjektdrift? Drøft hvilke former for organisering som er mest hensiktsmessig ved en videre støtte til prosjektene.

It is required to widen the coordination of the Project into a team where the responsibilities may be shared for the follow-up of the different lines of work and to closely support the financial and administrative process.

The groups must gain autonomy, that is, they have to feel they are able to keep contact among them, to plan encounters and common activities on their own initiative, in collaboration with those in charge of the promotion and coordination of the Project. To accomplish that, it is necessary to strengthen the network among the groups as well as the vision of being part of a collective effort.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROPOSALS OF INDICATORS

The general recommendation to the CCT, to the groups and to Magdalena Norway is to transfer the achievements of the project towards the strengthening of a Women's Popular Theatre Movement; all in all, it is about overcoming the perspective of the project itself to obtain a vision, a collective bet, an identity as *Mujeres, Arte y Parte de la Paz* (Women, Art and part of Peace) in Colombia which from the women of poor areas in the culture may contribute to a Peace building that honour their rights and attend to their needs.

The network strengthening among groups from the standpoint of a Performing Arts movement of Women from poor sectors

The project allowed the consolidation of Women Performing Groups and the prospects are to make this work in a more coordinated fashion. The *Festivales* and national encounters are privileged spaces but they are still not enough for the building-up of a network among the groups, apart from the fact that it is not always possible to warrant the attendance of each one of them due to the costs involved. It also came up in the interviews the chance of holding regional meetings, chances that should be explored, and which even the groups themselves may examine different alternatives for self-management as a way to cover the transport expenses and reduce their board and lodging costs. The important thing is perhaps the fact that the groups should feel that they are able to foster and organise encounters even though these initiatives might not come from the coordination of the project.

The groups and the proposal would get a lot of strength if an identity is built around "*Mujeres Arte y Parte de la Paz* in Colombia" according to what Lucy Bolaños calls "a Women's Popular Theatre Movement ". This is a place from which to speak loud and clear in the world of culture, as part of the Social Movement that would allow the further projection of the groups on the activities, not as part of a project but as developers of a movement. The fact of going further into this perspective implies to encourage communication spaces and collaborative places among the groups, reinforcing the network and the exchange as actors and main characters of their processes and perhaps to put into perspective the preparation of a Woman's Popular Performing Arts Meeting.

The evaluation has showed that the relationship with Women`s pro-Peace Movement and with different social organisations has been set up through initiatives and connections developed by each group in their locations. This potential has become invisible given that each group develops its own initiatives without envisioning that they are part not of a project but of a common thrust which is articulated from the culture to contribute to peace.

In that perspective, the spread of the proposal by means of videos and a book could be widened, including among its tools a Web page for “*Mujeres Arte y Parte de la Paz*”, where the groups and their plays could be advertised. The role of CCT as a sponsor of this project is fundamental due to its knowledge and experience in the promotion of a theatre that has the potential of transforming realities and is committed to the popular causes.

The needs of diversity

It is advisable to make a review of the needs and projections of each group, to produce a mapping with said information in order to identify what can be done from the Project proposal side, which are the tasks that the group can assume on its own and which ones would have to be faced through other means. This recommendation relates to the needs of artistic formation, awareness and rights, management and also to other needs posed by the diversity of ages, life situation, local resources, to name just but a few.

This mapping can give a more accurate perspective on the needs, both common and specific. For the common needs, efficient alternatives may be defined in terms of resources management, making the most of, for instance, the National and Regional encounters as well as visits among groups in search of common formative processes which would also reinforce the bonds between them. The suggested mapping would be a good asset to achieve a better development of the Formative Line of the Project, thus contributing to a common projection and allowing overcoming the specific need and/or progress upon a homogenous answer.

Regarding the diversity of ages, this evaluation does not intend to make specific recommendations for each one of the groups, even though there are some exceptions that came up during the evaluation process regarding the *Inés Elvira* group and those of mixed composition and it would not harm to place the realities of specific individuals within the perspective of the whole we call “Women”. As to the *Inés Elvira* group, the situation of the girls and teenagers is just too much for the possibilities of the project; its director, Alexandra, stresses the need to work with their families, and in fact she has been in touch with them to make easier the permanence of the girls in the group. Perhaps it would be a good decision to explore a stronger connection with a public institution and with some civil society initiative focused on childhood and adolescence issues in Bolivar City, in order to get the girls supported by these networks. In this way the effort of the projects may link up with other efforts in order to provide answers to the needs of these girls and teenagers who live under the violence directly affecting them in their surroundings.

The other insight has to do with the mixed groups where there are grandmothers and granddaughters. Particularly in *Aves del Paraíso*, there is a group of young girls who show

great talent for rap. Perhaps encouraging them in the development of their own processes as young women would be appropriate due to their reality that is different from that of their mothers since they have to deal with urban issues in exercising their abilities in a different way. This is not about dividing up the group -though eventually it is something that may happen – but it is about providing them with a space of their own.

The evaluation shows the cross-cutting nature of this diversity through the groups in terms of the place that they want to hold from the performing arts as a political tool for transformation and change. As mentioned before, it is one of the Movement's assets which may be envisioned through the organisational and meeting processes in the common understanding of the importance of holding out together.

Gender and Peace, Formation Axes

-It is advisable to make of the gender development a permanent issue to work with among the groups and their directors, including gender topics at the planning of the Project workshops. Knowledge on these matters can be found in the Women's Social and Feminist Movements, which might as well be invited to support the formation of groups and would also help to strengthen the dialogue and exchange at the Project. In a conversation with Patricia Ariza, we thought that one of the courses of action in setting up this lines of work was to invite activists to an event in which plays are performed and that they may also strengthen the dialogue with women from the groups on those topics addressed, thus taking the chance of transmitting their knowledge and provide a more complex approach to these matters. Their attendance may also be intended in the performances of the plays in the localities as a way to contribute to the post-performance forums.

- The Project should try out participatory methodologies on workshops about gender that would allow women to link contents to their own realities.

- The Project should actively trigger political debate on topics that are part of Women's reality. In those groups showing more political awareness, which is the case of Diafragma, the need of a deeper knowledge about Women's struggle and to strengthen the political debate about discrimination and exclusion was clearly stated. The lacks of debate depolitize the content of workshops. Among their concerns they raise issues that are always present in the debate among Feminists, such as the need of bridging the gaps with men, particularly with young men who are more aware of gender discrimination and exclusion issues as well as of that of the other excluded sectors.

- It is advisable to deal in depth with the relation Women-Peace. To do that, this issue would have to be addressed in the Formative and Workshop-creation Lines held by the Project, opening dialog spaces with others, e.g., Women's Social Movement and pro-Peace organisations.

Intend interaction spaces with the Women's Movement

Liaisons can be built from the spaces of dialog and exchange in order to lead the project towards the Women's Movement. That is not just responding to the organisation's invitations to take part in specific events, but the project itself suggesting activities where the dialogue is encouraged and enriched. A field to develop in this direction is the formation of the groups, and the other one which has been mentioned above in this report, has to do with the invitation to watch the plays and further analyse their contents, with feedback taking place between the audience and the artists. A third one is them taking part on the post-performance forums. These initiatives may be explored in each location or city where the groups are.

Strengthening cultural management

- It is advisable to make a goal of the project out of the cultural management, as well as to develop a plan involving each group, which should include not just training on management tools, but also the allocation of resources to make it happen as well as the creation of a *participatory management*. From this same outlook it is possible to think about creating a similar fund as the one that *La Pola* already has as a way to jointly support and severally the spreading of the plays with places for those groups that are less likely to have the resources for transport, fund that also would allow staging performances in front of audiences that cannot even afford transport for the women. As an example, in words of Lucy Bolaño, issue transport the was addressed by *Aves del Paraíso* by stressing the importance of performing in as many places of the country as possible as a way to make people understand what is the Movement all about and be more aware of the realities faced by the ones that have suffered from it.

The self-sustenance of the groups also requires a set of strategies since it is apparent that it won't come about by means of charging for the plays performances. Cultural management plan could include strategies aimed at boosting participation in the contests as a way to be eligible for public funds allocated to culture.

On the Management of the Project

-The Project should broaden the Project coordination towards a collective organisation, that is, put together a team of three people in which, besides Patricia, two more directors are linked to the Project implementation. This kind of coordination would allow the distribution of tasks among the participants by reinforcing their abilities and experience, releasing Patricia to focus on the political outreach and among others, to the Project's relations with the Peace and Women's Social Movement circles. Without going into details about the coordination tasks, which are eventually defined by the team, it is clear that there is need to define at least one field of the external world of political relationships (Social, Human Rights, pro-Peace, Culture, among others), and another one related to the Formative Line, and perhaps one more aimed at the keeping track of the meetings and exchanges among groups by means of cultural management.

- This Evaluation recommends to reorganise the administrative-financial team, including a clear definition of duties and tasks. Fortnightly meetings of this team should be held, with or without the attendance of Patricia. Doing this will make possible the adoption of a more productive rate of work and also give the chance to discuss and settle adjustments or changes on the administrative systems.

- The Project should improve CCT management through the use of Information Technology and other facilities so as to make easier the cooperation and project follow-up processes, as well as the project management itself. Some office facilities are considered for refurbishing, getting rid of the old and non-functional furniture and acquiring new IT technology, etc. It is advisable to allocate specific resources for these items in future funding.

Indicators of the follow-up

This evaluation considers that the difficulties in the definition of process and impact indicators found by the project are mostly due to the soft spots in the stating of objectives and expected results. There is a great disparity regarding its purposes, which range from the Women's voice strengthening in the pro-Peace to specific issues such as the transference of creative or performing skills.

Given the fact that the Project proposal is going into a new phase on the basis of its achievements obtained during its 4 years of Project implementation covered by the present evaluation, we suggest that the follow-up project proposal should be further justified by making use of the logical framework tools, a methodology that allows to distinguish the differences among the long term aims -the utopia if you wish- the objectives, expected results and activities. This methodology is usually applied to the formulation of project proposals and makes it easier to clearly identify and differentiate what corresponds to means of verification, sources of data of the quantitative and qualitative processes and impact indicators.

This evaluator suggest to revisit these aspects in the evaluation results devolution meeting and to contribute therein some elements towards the definition of indicators based on the continuity proposal formulated by CCT and Magdalena Norway.