



IMPACT STORIES



NORWAY: VOICES FROM THE FIELD

Haiti



“We know that isolation...tends to increase violence.”

– Emanuela Paul

Emanuela Paul is the Rethinking Power Program Coordinator with Beyond Borders/Depase Fwontyè yo, a grantee of the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women. Beyond Borders focuses on preventing violence against women and girls, including women and girls with disabilities. The COVID-19 pandemic has worsened the situation of women and girls with disabilities and impacted how Beyond Borders deliver their services and mobilize communities.

Ms. Paul notes, “we have had to stop a lot of our normal, daily activities. Instead, we are using our close relationships and strong networks in communities for some alternate activities to support girls and women with disabilities, and all women and girls in our communities and beyond.”

Syria



“It is time for women with disabilities to receive equal opportunities and to be included.”

– Batool Abuali

Batool Abuali is a young peacebuilder from Syria. Both as a young woman and a disabled person she works to promote equality and inclusion and is the founder of a non-profit voluntary-based organization supporting people with visual disabilities to access education opportunities and materials in Syria.

Even two decades after the adoption of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, women are still excluded from participation in peace and security processes. Ms. Abuali notes that “women with disabilities face unique challenges during and after conflict, which means they can offer unique perspectives and contributions to the peacebuilding process.”

Kenya



“The most urgent issues of my generation are comprehensive sexuality information and access to services.”

— Faith Fao Opiyo

Faith Fao Opiyo is a Gender and Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights Specialist. In identifying the urgent issues of her generation she notes that the lack of information and access to sexual health services is “catalyzed by statutory and customary laws that also prohibit information and services.”

Ms. Opiyo believes that knowledge is important to end harmful practices against women and girls, and as a key factor in advocating for and amplifying change. As a Generation Equality activist she sees men’s engagement as partners and agents of change as critical to breaking down the barriers of gender inequalities. Noting that, “everyone should be a women’s right activist... to ensure a woman is healthy in all aspects in order for them to be empowered to contribute to the development of our economies and the society.”

Colombia



“...the conflict hasn’t ended for us. We have a peace agreement, but look around you...”

— Mila Rodriguez

Mila Rodriguez is a young member of the *Cantadora Network* which uses traditional Afro-Colombian music to promote peace. In the port city of Tumaco, the impact of decades of armed conflict are still relevant. The *Cantadora Network* provides a safe space and opportunities to join in a peaceful pastime, creating music and preserving their culture. Rodriguez explains that “through the lyrics of the songs we sing, we are telling the real stories of our lives. When we sing, we feel free.”

Photos: above left: UN Women/Tabitha Icuja; above right: UN Women/Ryan Brown