



# CONDUCTIVE SPACE · FOR PEACE

## ADVISORS

**ADVISORS ROLE:** Advisors will provide tailored feedback for each team's unique project based on their knowledge and experience, help focus the cohort's challenges, and offer support from a place of service.

### **CHRIS SPIES:**

Chris Spies has over 35 years of experience in peacebuilding in various national and international settings as a facilitator, accompanier and peacebuilder. He has founded and co-founded two companies respectively: Dynamic Stability, an independent conflict transformation and dialogue company, and the Unyoke Foundation, an African based global foundation. Unyoke Foundation (UF) focuses on growing, supporting and accompanying the next generation peacebuilders (women in particular) in Africa and across the world.

Chris is currently working on several projects in Africa and Asia. He accompanies young peace leaders in South Africa, Kenya, South Sudan and Liberia, conducts action research with mediators and dialogue facilitators in Nepal. For the last 6 years Chris and his partner have been co-facilitators of intergenerational dialogues and Unyoke Reflective Practice Retreats with international and local peacebuilders

Chris has served as the Regional Organizer of the Western Cape Regional Peace Committee and later as a Senior Trainer and Researcher at the Cape Town-based Centre for Conflict Resolution. He served as the Peace and Development Advisor for the UNDP in Guyana from 2003-2006, and has been a facilitator of the Folke Bernadotte Academy courses in dialogue and mediation since 2006.

Chris and his fellow co-director of Unyoke Nomfundo Walaza received the "Waging Peace" award.

### **GAY ROSENBLUM-KUMAR:**

Gay Rosenblum-Kumar is a conflict transformation and peace building practitioner with thirty years of experience designing and managing conflict prevention and peace building projects with the UN and other international NGOs. In the early 2000's Gay co-founded the UN's first cadre of Peace and Development Advisors (PDA) and then managed and expanded the programme for a decade. Prior to that, she administered anti-apartheid capacity-building projects for refugees and exiles in southern Africa.

As an independent consultant, Gay has worked as a Peace and Development Advisor and undertaken evaluations and re-designs of peace building projects. Currently, she is the UN Representative for two NGOs: Nonviolent Peaceforce which deploys unarmed civilian protection teams in conflict-affected countries, and for Peace Direct which strengthens and advocates for local peace building partners working to mitigate violence and conflict in ten countries.

Gay is on the board of the New York Peace Institute and the Free Yezidi Foundation.

### **GEORGE VARUGHESE:**

George Varughese has experience of 20 years in international development and 4 years in academia, with expertise in thought leadership/facilitation in governance with a political economy & conflict specialization and skills in strategic analysis & advice, fundraising, program design & delivery, and policy development & navigation.

He is currently Senior Advisor for Niti Foundation and convenes its Strategic Advisory Group that



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makes broadly available analysis, guidance, and recommendations on challenges to implementing federalism in Nepal. Most recently, Dr. Varughese was Country Representative of The Asia Foundation in Nepal (2009-2018) and Afghanistan (2005-2009), managing all aspects of the Foundation's work in those countries on transitional political processes and constitutional development; capacity-building initiatives in the center of government; subnational governance; conflict-transformation and peace building; women's advancement & security; and public education and discourse on democratic political processes and rule of law.

Dr. Varughese has written about and made presentations on post-conflict development management, peacebuilding, local governance, and civic engagement. With recent work experience in Afghanistan and Nepal, and technical assistance provided in Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Timor Leste, he is knowledgeable of program design, development, and management in conflict-affected contexts.

### *MIE ROESDAHL:*

Mie Roesdahl has for the past 25 years worked as a peacebuilding and human rights practitioner in countries in Africa, Asia and Europe. As an entrepreneur, change agent, and leader in the field, Mie founded the Conducive Space for Peace initiative in 2016. Engaging with grass-root and international NGOs, policy-makers, bureaucrats, and other stakeholders, Mie pursues an ambitious agenda of creating linkages where they do not exist, of promoting transformation where no one thinks it possible, of developing innovative ideas and processes, together with others, that can strengthen collaboration on peacebuilding and human rights at the local and global level.

Mie Roesdahl has served as Secretary General of Oxfam IBIS, Department Director and Senior Adviser at the Danish Institute for Human Rights, and co-director of a four year research project on human rights and peacebuilding. She has also served as a Conflict Transformation and Human Rights Senior Adviser for the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nepal where she worked with local and international partners on peacebuilding and human rights and served as adviser to the Office of the Prime Minister in Nepal.

### *SWETA VELPILLAY:*

Sweta Velpillay specializes in systems analysis, conflict sensitivity and collective impact model for peacebuilding, strategic program development and policy effectiveness. Sweta is a Senior Advisor for Conflict Sensitivity and Peacebuilding Effectiveness at CDA Collaborative Learning Projects. At present she is primarily supporting the Conflict Sensitivity Resource Facility (CSRf) in South Sudan to improve the integration of conflict sensitivity in donor strategies and programmes, and examining the role and effectiveness of peacebuilding networks and coalitions towards achieving greater impact on country conflict systems.

Prior to joining CDA, Sweta worked in a regional capacity for Oxfam GB in Asia to improve program quality through the integration conflict sensitivity into policies and programmes. At the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies (CPCS) she worked with the government, non-state armed groups and civil society on conflict analysis, negotiation support and capacity building, as well on influencing peacebuilding policies of conflict actors and the international community. While working at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO, UK) and subsequently AusAID, she managed peacebuilding and post-war recovery and governance programme with a focus on improving peacebuilding outcomes. Sweta has worked in and supported teams in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Lebanon, Myanmar, Nigeria, U.K (Northern Ireland), South Sudan, Sri Lanka, the Philippines and Pakistan, and is an Advisory Council member of the Knowledge Platform on Security & Rule of Law.