

Gender Reconciliation in South Africa

A New Initiative



**Proposal for three-year initiative
2008 - 2010**

**Satyana Institute in collaboration with Phaphama Initiatives
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Summary of Proposed Initiative



“I have been looking for a long time to find a way to bring healing and reconciliation between women and men . . . This work is the answer. We need much more of this work in South Africa.”

-- Nozizwe Madlala Routledge,
Member of Parliament and
former Deputy Minister of Health
and Defense, South Africa

Stricken by the highest incidence of reported rape and sexual violence in the world, coupled with the worst AIDS crisis on the planet, the nascent Rainbow Republic is in dire need of transforming gender relations between its women and men.

This proposal outlines a three-year initiative to launch a new form of social transformation, called ‘gender reconciliation,’ in several key sectors within South African society. Developed over the past 15 years by the Satyana Institute, the gender reconciliation process has established a proven track record for confronting and reconciling highly challenging issues between women and men in groups, communities, and organizational settings—as documented in a new book entitled *Divine Duality* (Hohm Press, 2007).

Three successful pilot programs in gender reconciliation have been conducted in South Africa by the Satyana Institute in 2003, 2006, and 2007—for diverse groups ranging from Members of Parliament to religious leaders to peace activists to prison inmates. Based on the enthusiastic response from these programs, a steering committee of prominent South African leaders has invited Satyana Institute to launch a three-year initiative on Gender Reconciliation.

The proposed Gender Reconciliation Initiative will be implemented in three phases between 2008 and 2010. In Phase I (2008), introductory gender reconciliation programs will be conducted widely for Members of Parliament, the South African Council of Churches, and other targeted NGO and service sectors. In Phase II (2008 - 2009), a year-long intensive training program in gender reconciliation will be conducted for qualified professional facilitators in South Africa. Finally in Phase III (2010 and beyond), the cadre of newly trained facilitators will begin to introduce gender reconciliation programs broadly within their own constituencies.

By seeding innovative programs in gender reconciliation in strategically targeted sectors—parliamentary, religious, educational, NGO, and health services—the Gender Reconciliation Initiative will help to precipitate a larger transformation in gender relations within South African society.

Building upon the profound legacy of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the young Rainbow Republic is struggling mightily today to fulfill the human rights ideals of its groundbreaking Constitution. Responding to an urgent call, the Gender Reconciliation Initiative holds significant promise for healing and reconciling long-standing gender oppression that has reached catastrophic proportions in South Africa. If successful, this South African example could serve to inspire similar initiatives in other countries afflicted by severe gender injustice.

Introduction and Overview

“We have not even *begun* to deal with the gender issue in South Africa!” exclaims Nomfundo Walaza, Director of the Desmond Tutu Peace Center in Cape Town, South Africa. “We’ve made significant strides forward in terms of racial integration since Apartheid ended,” she continues, “especially through the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, despite its inevitable flaws. But we have barely scratched the surface on the massive issues between women and men in this country.”

Nomfundo’s impassioned words point to an extreme need to transform gender relations between men and women in South Africa. Although this same need also exists in other countries across the globe, South Africa is perhaps unique in combining some of the most egregious symptoms of gender injustice and AIDS epidemic with possibly the greatest political mandate and spiritual precedent for healing and transforming these crises. Given the remarkable legacy of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission for healing racial injustice, coupled with the most advanced Constitution and Bill of Rights on gender justice in the world, South Africa presents a unique opportunity for taking an unprecedented step forward to transform gender injustice in society.

“This workshop had many aspects that would benefit this country greatly. I think it can be used by individuals to reconcile with many different aspects of their lives - racism, sexism and the unfinished business of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.”

Nomfundo Walaza
Executive Director,
Desmond Tutu Peace Center
Cape Town, South Africa



In response to three successful pilot programs conducted by Satyana Institute between 2003 and 2007, a Steering Committee for Gender Reconciliation was formed in South Africa in December, 2007. This Steering Committee is comprised of six prominent political, religious, and NGO leaders, and its purpose is to steward this initiative on gender reconciliation. The Steering Committee invited the Satyana Institute to launch a broad initiative on gender reconciliation in the Rainbow Republic, focusing on specific sectors of the society.

“This work is absolutely relevant for South Africa. It is the only practical tool I have experienced that has a realistic potential to heal and transform gender relations. I commend Gender Reconciliation work in the context of South Africa’s journey to realizing the promise of our Constitution.”

Rev. Keith Vermeulen,
Director,
Parliamentary Office of
South African Council
of Churches



Members of the Steering Committee for Gender Reconciliation include:

- **Nozizwe Madlala Routledge**, Member of Parliament and former Deputy Minister of Health and Defense;
- **Reverend Keith Vermeulen**, Director of the Parliamentary Office of the South African Council of Churches;
- **Nomfundo Walaza**, Director of the Desmond Tutu Peace Center in Cape Town;
- **Lucille Luckhoff** of the Capacitar International project;
- **Jeremy Routledge** of the Alternatives to Violence network in Africa, Phaphama Initiatives, and the Quaker Peace Network,
- **Judy Connors**, Executive Director of Phaphama Initiatives, a South African NGO committed to non-violence and conflict resolution training throughout the country.

The proposed Gender Reconciliation Initiative calls for a phased implementation of gender reconciliation programs over three years beginning in early 2008, targeting specific sectors of South African society including:

- Members of Parliament of South Africa, including the Parliamentary Women’s Caucus, and the ANC Women’s Caucus;
- South African Council of Churches and closely associated religious congregations;
- Members of the Western Cape Provincial Parliament;
- Methodist Church of Southern Africa (which operates in six countries: South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, and Swaziland);

- Trauma Centre for Survivors of Violence and Torture, and related psychotherapeutic and counseling networks;
- Saartjie Baartman Shelter, Carehaven Shelter, and other projects for battered women;
- Gender Awareness Program and related gender activist networks, peacemaker networks (Quaker Peace Network, Alternatives to Violence community);
- Catholic Justice and Peace Commission of the Archdiocese of Cape Town;
- I Arise Foundation (organization of women Protestant ministers);
- Pollsmoor Prison in Cape Town;
- African Gender Institute at the University of Cape Town;
- Cape Town Interfaith Forum and related interfaith networks;
- Satyagraha Center and associated network of Ela Gandhi in Durban; and
- National network of social activists linked to Phaphama Initiatives.

“The workshop opened more doors in my heart, it also brought light within me to ensure that I understand the problems our society is facing. This program should rotate in all South African Provinces.”

Sello Mukhara,
African National Congress (ANC), Parliamentary Caucus of South Africa

Strong interest has been voiced by numerous leaders in South Africa for the Gender Reconciliation Initiative, including the following:

- **Ela Gandhi**, granddaughter of Mahatma Gandhi, is director of the Satyagraha Center in Durban. Ela hosted a gender reconciliation workshop in 2006, and is eager to organize another one for her community in Durban.
- **John Oliver**, Director of the Cape Town Interfaith Forum. John expressed enthusiasm for organizing a special interfaith workshop in gender reconciliation for invited leaders of different religious faiths;
- **Bishop Ivan Abrahams** of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa, who has already raised funds for gender reconciliation programs within the South African Council of Churches; and
- **Vimla Pillay**, Executive Director, Trauma Centre for Survivors of Violence and Torture, Cape Town. Ms. Pillay expressed her intention to send five or six of her clinical staff to attend Satyana Institute’s professional training in gender reconciliation.

“Key to success of gender reconciliation methodology is the skillful application of interfaith spiritual wisdom and practices, which makes the work efficacious across a broad spectrum of religions and cultures.”

The Gender Reconciliation Initiative will be implemented in three phases over three years, with each phase contingent upon successful implementation of the previous phase:

- **Phase I (2008)** A series of intensive workshops and introductory trainings in gender reconciliation will be conducted for Members of Parliament, the South African Council of Churches, Phaphama Initiatives, and other religious and service organizations listed above.
- **Phase II (late 2008 – 2009)** A professional training program will be conducted to train South African professional facilitators in the gender reconciliation process. The format will consist of four week-long training modules, spread over one year. Those who successfully complete this phase will continue on to the final internship phase.
- **Phase III (2010)** The cadre of newly trained candidate facilitators will complete an internship that includes organizing and implementing prototype gender reconciliation programs within their own constituencies. Trainees who successfully complete this internship will be certified as facilitators of Gender Reconciliation. A team of certified facilitators will be created to continue the implementation of gender reconciliation programs in strategically targeted sectors of South African society.

Evaluation of the Project: A thorough interim evaluation will be conducted at the end of each Phase of the project, and only upon favorable results plus formal recommendation by the Steering Committee will the project continue on to the next Phase. Trainees in the professional training program will be evaluated in successive stages to ensure the highest quality control in the subsequent implementation of gender reconciliation in South Africa.

*“The love that unfolded was incredible!!
Thank you for being part of the healing process
of and for Africa!!”*

Karambu Ringera
Director,
International Peace Initiatives
Nairobi, Kenya



Although gender reconciliation is not a panacea, a powerful track record of inspiring breakthroughs has already been achieved in five prototype workshops in South Africa. If properly and widely implemented, gender reconciliation holds significant promise for healing and reconciling long-standing conflicts and embedded tensions between women and men in multiple sectors of South African society.

Need for Gender Reconciliation Initiative in South Africa

Nomfundo Walaza's passionate remarks about the need for gender healing quoted above were made when she was co-facilitating a pilot project with Satyana Institute staff on gender reconciliation for Members of Parliament in Cape Town, in November, 2006. Nomfundo is the Director of the Desmond Tutu Peace Center in Cape Town, and her deep concerns are shared by many colleagues in South Africa, most notably our host, former Deputy Minister of Health Nozizwe Madlala Routledge.

"I was able to cry for the first time in two years... I urge you to organize more of these workshops at a bigger venue, and make sure this message is conveyed throughout the country!"

Bomikazi Mpuma
African National Congress
(ANC)
Parliamentary Caucus of
South Africa

Since 1994, when Apartheid finally collapsed and the new government in South Africa was founded, the young new nation has encountered numerous major stumbling blocks. Chief among these, and surely the most visible, is the AIDS crisis. Today there are more than 600 AIDS deaths in South Africa every day, a tragedy that Archbishop Desmond Tutu recently characterized as equivalent to a mid-air collision between two fully loaded 747 Jumbo Jets every day. Meanwhile there are an estimated 900 new AIDS infections every day in South Africa, resulting in a rapidly growing AIDS population.

Yet until recently, AIDS patients were denied access to anti-retroviral (ARV) drug treatment, due to a backward national AIDS policy. Nozizwe Madlala Routledge played a key leadership role in overturning this policy in 2006, when she was Deputy Minister of Health. Achieving this breakthrough cost Nozizwe her job when she was fired by President Thabo Mbeki in 2007, but Nozizwe has been widely hailed as a national hero. Meanwhile Mbeki recently lost re-election to ANC leadership, so his presidency will terminate in 2009.

Less visible but no less damaging to the fabric of South African society, rape and sexual violence have reached catastrophic proportions since Apartheid ended. United Nations' statistics reveal that South Africa has the highest incidence of

reported rape in the world. Estimates vary, but conservative sources indicate that a woman or girl is raped in South Africa every 26 seconds. This translates into more than 1.2 million rapes per year, a staggering number in a population of some 23 million females. Young girls have been increasingly targeted, partly fueled by the erroneous notion that one can be cured of AIDS by having sex with a virgin. A related factor is that younger girls are perceived as less likely to be contaminated with the HIV virus, and are therefore more desirable targets for rape. Gang rape is common in South Africa.

According to a recent Human Rights Watch report (www.hrw.org/reports/2001/safrika), South Africa has one of the world's highest reported rates of violent crimes committed against women, including rape and murder. In some areas, 77% of surveyed women said that sexual violence was very common, and 68% of these women had personally been subjected to sexual harassment, at least once, at school or at her place of work. Twenty-five percent of the young men in another survey admitted to having had sex with a woman, without her consent, before he was 18 years of age. Some 40 percent of rapes are committed against girls aged 17 and younger. Most South African rapists go unpunished because it is one of the most under-reported crimes, and because it has one of the lowest conviction rates.

Other forms of gender violence and physical abuse are also prevalent. Sexual harassment is rampant in South Africa. Recent high profile cases include the dismissal of ANC Chief Whip Mbuelo Goniwe in 2006 for sexually harassing a parliamentary intern. That same year, the High Court of Pretoria upheld the dismissal of Indonesian Ambassador Norman Mashabane for 21 counts of sexual harassment, following a three-year legal battle. Still pending in a military court is the case of Major General Mxolisi Petane, charged with sexual harassment. According to social analysts, such cases reflect only the tip of the iceberg, because sexual harassment is widely under-reported by victims for fear of reprisals.

Despite these immense violations, the spirit of the South African woman remains very strong, as reflected for example in a popular saying: *Wathinta Abafazi, Wathinta Ibokodo!* -- If you strike a woman, you strike a rock! Gender

"This work is profound. To embark upon the work of Gender Reconciliation is to rattle the very foundations of every major cultural institution in our society, because patriarchy dominates all of them. I didn't believe that gender reconciliation is really possible but now I know that it is."

Jeremy
Routledge
Phaphama
Initiatives,
Alternatives to
Violence,
Former Director of
Quaker Peace
Center
Cape Town,



reconciliation work builds naturally upon this strength, as well as the strength of many men who sincerely yearn to transform the widespread gender injustice. Both Nozizwe and Nomfundo view gender reconciliation as an integral component of a larger, comprehensive strategy to transform sexism and heal AIDS at their roots, rather than merely managing medical and social symptoms. The profound spirit and legacy of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in post-Apartheid South Africa cries out to be applied afresh in the arena of gender relations.

Satyana Institute's Gender Reconciliation Program

Over the past 15 years, the Satyana Institute has designed and organized more than 40 workshops and training programs in "gender reconciliation" in the United States, India, South Africa, Australia, and Croatia. These gatherings provide a unique forum for women and men to jointly confront the realities of gender disharmony, and engage in constructive dialogue and healing work on the some of the most divisive and seemingly intractable gender issues. The process has been found to work equally well both in affluent Western countries, and in societies of severe gender injustice such as India and South Africa.

"This is the first time I have experienced a workshop that truly integrates both "teaching" and spiritual components.... Let's organize Gender Reconciliation in Durban next year!"

Ela Gandhi
Granddaughter
of Mahatma Gandhi
Durban, South Africa



The methodology of gender reconciliation integrates a broad range of psychological, contemplative, dialogical, transpersonal, group process, and therapeutic techniques. These modalities are combined in a carefully designed and facilitated group forum that enables women and men to openly share and grapple with challenging and delicate issues rarely discussed aloud, and frequently achieve unprecedented breakthroughs in mutual understanding, forgiveness, and reconciliation. Key to the success of this methodology is the skillful application of interfaith spiritual wisdom and practices, which makes the work efficacious across a broad spectrum of religions and cultures.

Satyana Institute's gender reconciliation work and the encouraging results achieved in diverse cultures are documented in detail in the new book *Divine Duality: The Power of Reconciliation between Women and Men* (Prescott, AZ: Hohm Press, 2007).

Satyana Institute's Pilot Project in South Africa

When Will Keepin first met Nozizwe in 2003, she explained that unexamined gender dynamics between women and men in the Parliament of South Africa were significantly undermining the efficacy of government service work. Despite the fact that women had come into Parliament in much greater numbers after Apartheid ended, women still had comparatively little voice in Parliament. Men largely ran the show, more out of cultural habit than by intentional exclusion. By inviting in Satyana's gender reconciliation process, Nozizwe hoped to begin developing new ways to address and transform gender relations in government, and by cultural osmosis horizontally and vertically, eventually also in the larger South African society.

The Satyana Institute has conducted five successful prototype workshops on gender reconciliation in South Africa between 2003 and 2007, collaborating with African colleagues, spanning a diverse range of venues as follows:

- **Six-day intensive workshop** on gender reconciliation hosted by Nozizwe Madlala Routledge for Members of Parliament, religious and NGO leaders. Led by team of four Satyana facilitators plus Nomfundo Walaza (Desmond Tutu Peace Center) and Karambu Ringera (Parliamentary candidate, Kenya), Cape Town, Nov. 9-14, 2006;
- **Four-day intensive workshop** for 33 social activists organized by the Quaker Peace Center, April, 2003, led by three Satyana facilitators assisted by Bernedette Muthien (South African gender activist);
- **Introductory workshop** for religious and NGO leaders, December 8, 2007, Cape Town, led by two Satyana facilitators and Jeremy Routledge (Phaphama Initiatives);
- **Introductory two-day training** for Satyagraha community, hosted by Ela Gandhi, Durban, led by Satyana facilitator and Karambu Ringera, Nov. 20-21, 2006;
- **Three day intensive** for 20 male and female prisoners at Pollsmoor Prison near Cape Town, led by two Satyana facilitators and Jeremy Routledge, Nov. 28-30, 2007.

Based on the enthusiastic response from each of these events, a Steering Committee for Gender Reconciliation was created in Cape Town (December, 2007), and this Committee invited Satyana Institute to launch this proposed initiative on gender reconciliation in South Africa.

“By seeding innovative programs in gender reconciliation in strategically targeted sectors - parliamentary, religious, educational, NGO, and health services - the Gender Reconciliation Initiative will help to precipitate a larger transformation in gender relations with South African society.”

Proposed Gender Reconciliation Initiative in South Africa

Phase I - 2008

Introduction of gender reconciliation in multiple sectors of society

In April, July, and November of 2008, Satyana Institute staff Will Keepin and Cynthia Brix will spend several weeks in Cape Town, Johannesburg, and Durban to lead a round of intensive workshops and introductory training programs on Gender Reconciliation, plus one or more introductory workshops on experiential breathwork. Co-facilitating these events will be South African colleagues including Nomfundo Walaza, Jeremy Routledge, Keith Vermeulen, and others still to be identified. Current plans call for at least four five-day intensive workshops in April and July, 2008; two in Cape Town, at least one in Johannesburg, and a third outside Cape Town at the Goeddedacht retreat center. The latter workshop will be for Members of Parliament, both from the national Parliament and the regional Western Cape Parliament.

In addition to these longer workshops, a further round of shorter, introductory workshops ranging from half a day to two days will be conducted for several organizations at their headquarters, including the Catholic Peace and Justice Center, the Trauma Center, the South African Council of Churches, the African Gender Institute at the University of Cape Town, the Quaker Peace Network, the Alternatives to Violence network, the Cape Town Interfaith Forum, and other organizations and groups to be determined. These events will be conducted with an eye toward identifying and recruiting appropriate professional facilitators for the professional training program in Phase II.

Evaluation of Phase I

Satyana Institute will evaluate Phase I according to the criteria below:

1. Number of participants who successfully complete each training or workshop.

2. Responses from each participant in detailed written evaluations about the training events, including: strengths and weaknesses of the program, recommendations for improvement, assessment of healing effects and depth of reconciliation work, and prospects for wider implementation of gender reconciliation in South African society.
3. Responses from the South African co-facilitators in written evaluations and critiques, addressing the same issues,
4. Satyana Institute's staff assessment of Phase I, and suggestions for improvement.

This information will be submitted to the Steering Committee, who will make a recommendation to the project funders as whether to move forward with Phase II or not, or to proceed with a modified plan for Phase II of the project.

Phase II – 2008-2009

Professional Training in Gender Reconciliation

Assuming that Phase I is successful and that the Steering Committee approves going forward with Phase II, Satyana Institute will conduct a professional training program in gender reconciliation in South Africa, to begin in late 2008. The purpose of this program is to provide facilitator training and certification in Satyana Institute's gender reconciliation methodology to qualified South African professional facilitators.

The intermediate-term goal is to develop a highly skilled team of South African facilitators who can implement gender reconciliation work within their own constituencies in the society. The training format will consist of four training modules (each one lasting six days), plus an internship program in the field.

The Satyana Institute has considerable past experience conducting professional training programs. In 2001-2, Satyana Institute conducted a year-long training in gender reconciliation for 33 professionals, and in 2005 the Institute conducted an intensive certification training that produced fifteen certified facilitators of Satyana's introductory gender reconciliation program.

“...great care is taken in the selection, evaluation, and review process for the facilitator training candidates. This helps to ensure the integrity of the gender reconciliation process as it spreads outward into South African society.”

Evaluation of Phase II

The evaluation of Phase II will be conducted within a more comprehensive framework than for Phase I, in order to ensure the highest standards of quality control in the facilitator training program. A committee of Gender Reconciliation Training Staff will be established for this purpose, comprised of Satyana Institute staff and invited South African co-facilitators or guest faculty in the training.

In addition to self-reports in the form of written evaluations and assessments from the trainees themselves, each trainee will be reviewed by the Gender Reconciliation Training Staff at three key junctures:

- at the end of the second training module,
- at the end of the fourth training module, and
- upon completion of the internship project (in Phase III).

Those candidates who successfully pass all three stages of the review process will be certified as facilitators of gender reconciliation.

The Satyana Institute has established a list of competencies, against which the trainees will be evaluated. The nature of gender reconciliation work is inherently deep and delicate, and therefore requires a high degree of self-awareness and personal and professional integrity on the part of facilitators. For this reason, great care will be taken in the selection, evaluation, and review process for the facilitator training candidates. This approach will help to ensure the integrity of the gender reconciliation process as it spreads outward into South African society. It will also enable early detection of any potential problems or weaknesses that trainees may have, so these issues can be addressed in a timely fashion.

Phase III — 2010

Internship and implementation of gender reconciliation programs in the wider society

Again assuming that Phase II is successful and that the Steering Committee approves going forward with Phase III, this final phase of the project will consist of an internship and implementation program for the newly trained facilitators, as they begin testing and honing their skills in the field.

The facilitator trainees will be organized into teams of four—ideally two women and two men—and each team will be required to organize and conduct a

workshop on Gender Reconciliation within their home community or professional constituency. This program will constitute the practical internship component of the training.

Satyana staff will work closely with each team in several capacities: to support and help design their program, to facilitate challenging dynamics that may arise between the facilitator trainees, and to serve as mentors and consultants in all aspects of their programs. Special focus will be given to facilitating the more challenging dimensions of the gender healing and reconciliation process.

Some of the more specific design details for Phase III will naturally emerge from the experiences and insights gleaned from Phases I and II of the project.

In all aspects of this initiative, we are cognizant of the need to pace the initiative appropriately, take one step at a time, and proceed in a manner that is resonant with the cultural rhythms and needs of the South African people and their social and institutional structures. This will serve to foster long-term accountability, harmony, and sustainability in this initiative.

Evaluation of Phase III

Upon completion of their internship program, each trainee will be evaluated by the Gender Reconciliation Training Staff. All those who successfully pass this third review stage will be certified as facilitators of Gender Reconciliation.

Evaluation in this final Phase will also include three additional dimensions:

- detailed feedback and evaluation from the trainees themselves, who will make recommendations for improvements in the training program,
- written evaluations from all participants in the internship programs conducted by the newly certified facilitators, and
- short-and intermediate-term follow up with participants by the certified facilitators to determine the impacts of the gender reconciliation program in participants' personal and professional lives.

Staff for the Initiative

In its initial phases, the project will be directed by Satyana Institute senior staff Will Keepin and Cynthia Brix, who will work in close collaboration with the Steering Committee in South Africa. Over time, the leadership of the project will

gradually expand to include more South African facilitators and colleagues, and as the project grows into Phase III, the leadership for the project will begin to shift away from Satyana staff to those South African staff who are emerging as the key leaders for stewarding the gender reconciliation project within their country. Thus beginning with Phase III of the project and beyond, the role of Satyana Institute and its staff will decline over time, and the newly trained South African leadership and facilitators will take primary responsibility for administering the initiative.

That said, the Satyana Institute and its staff are committed to supporting this initiative for as long as is required for it to take firm root and function efficiently under its own steam, and also to provide on-going support and follow-up as needed and requested by the emerging South African leadership. The goal of eventually withdrawing Satyana Institute leadership and turning the entire project over to South African leadership is an important long-term goal for this initiative. Otherwise the larger potential and effectiveness of the project would be fundamentally limited over the long-term. If the work of gender reconciliation is to develop a strong presence and effectiveness in South African society, it must be adopted and stewarded by South African leadership, who alone will have the capacity and wisdom to make suitable adjustments for large-scale implementation in the Rainbow Republic.

“We have not even begun to deal with the gender issue in South Africa. We’ve made significant strides forward in terms of racial integration since Apartheid ended, especially through the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, despite its inevitable flaws. But we have barely scratched the surface on the massive issues between women and men in this country.”

Nomfundo Walaza
Executive Director,
Desmond Tutu Peace Center
Cape Town, South Africa

Satyana Institute

The Satyana Institute is a non-profit service and training organization founded in 1996, which is tax exempt under section 501 (c) 3 of the tax code of U.S. Internal Revenue Service.

The mission of the Satyana Institute is to support individuals, communities, and organizations to combine inner work of the heart with outer service in the world. The name *satyana* comes from two sanskrit roots: *sat*, which means ‘truth’ but also refers to action aligned with spirit; and *yana*, which means vehicle. Thus "satyana" means a vehicle for action infused with the grace of spirit.

Satyana Institute has two principal program areas: Power of Reconciliation and Leading with Spirit. The Institute has organized more than forty intensive events in Gender Reconciliation in five countries, attended by more than 700 participants. The Institute has also organized three year-long professional training programs entitled Leading with Spirit, and year long training program and certification training program in Gender Reconciliation. Funding comes from philanthropic foundations (75%), individual donors (15%), and consulting sources (10%).

To our knowledge, Satyana Institute is the only non-governmental organization that has ever conducted a sustained and systematic project aimed at experiential healing and gender reconciliation between women and men in multiple cultural settings on an international scale. The track record thus far, as documented in the book *Divine Duality*, suggests that Satyana Institute is well suited to implement the Gender Reconciliation initiative in South Africa.

Phaphama Initiatives

Satyana Institute is entering into a partnership with Phaphama Initiatives in South Africa, for purposes of implementing the initiative in Gender Reconciliation. Phaphama Initiatives is a non-profit training organization in South Africa whose mission is “Building a nonviolent society by connecting people through life skills and conflict resolution training, language and culture learning, and community tourism initiatives.” Phaphama sponsors the Alternatives to Violence Program (AVP) in South Africa, and is part of an international network of AVP trainers.

Phaphama means “Awaken yourself!” in Zulu. Phaphama Initiatives is committed to building a nonviolent society by connecting people through life skills, conflict resolution training, language and cultural learning....

The word *Phaphama* is a Zulu word that means “Awaken yourself.” Phaphama Initiatives conducts educational and training programs throughout South Africa. The organization is headquartered in Johannesburg with a full-time staff of 6, plus a network of 140 part-time colleagues and facilitators throughout South Africa.

Funding the Gender Reconciliation Initiative in South Africa

The budget for the three-year project is presented below. Satyana Institute and our partner organization, Phaphama Initiatives, are sharing the task of fundraising for this project. The project budget for 2008 – 2010 reveals approximately equal shares of funding from U.S. and South African sources, with increasing reliance

on South African sources in the later stages of the project. The funding of each successive phase of the project will be contingent on a favorable report and recommendation from the Steering Committee for Gender Reconciliation in South Africa, and possibly also from a similar committee of U.S. funders who would evaluate the project periodically from a philanthropic standpoint.

Satyana Institute is seeking multi-year funding for its share of the project. The initial pilot project on gender reconciliation in South Africa was funded by a grant from the Kalliopeia Foundation, based in San Rafael, California (see interim report to Kalliopeia Foundation, December 15, 2006).

Satyana Institute seeks to raise funds in the United States to cover the professional time and travel for Satyana staff, co-facilitators, and guest faculty, plus our administrative costs associated with this project. Phaphama Initiatives is seeking to raise funds to cover its share, which include the following costs: all accommodations, meals, facility rental, marketing, workshop expenses, and travel within South Africa for Satyana staff, its co-facilitators, and all training and workshop participants.

“The Gender Reconciliation Initiative holds great promise for healing and reconciling long-standing gender oppression that has reached catastrophic proportions in South Africa... This South African example could serve to inspire similar initiatives in other countries afflicted by severe gender injustice.”

Keith Vermeulen of the South African Council of Churches reports that he has secured initial funding from the Chair of the S.A. Church Leaders' and Religious Leaders Forum, Bishop Ivan Abrahams, for the promotion of gender reconciliation. The Bishop has already raised 34,000 Rand for gender reconciliation programs and pledged to dig into available resources in order to assist where necessary. More importantly, he is putting the gender workshops on the Religious Leaders' agenda for further discussion. Mr. Eddie Makue, who holds Desmond Tutu's former position as General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches (SACC), is also in full support, and has encouraged us to explore a Gender Reconciliation workshop for SACC in 2008.

One possible scenario for funding the Gender Reconciliation Initiative is outlined in the budget below. To fund Satyana Institute's portion would entail continued or increased support from all existing funders of Satyana Institute's Gender Reconciliation project, plus an additional \$75,000 per year in funding from new sources. Satyana Institute's Executive Director Will Keepin and Board Member Linda Cunningham are actively seeking these new funds. Phaphama principals

Judy Connors and Jeremy Routledge are similarly seeking to raise the necessary funds for the South African portion of the funding.

Conclusion

Umntu Ngumntu Ngabantu! This popular vernacular saying in the indigenous Xhosa language, roughly translated, means “A person is a person through other people!”—an eloquent expression of the wisdom and beautiful community spirit of the South African people.

The time is ripe to begin to fulfill what the Constitution of South Africa guarantees to every citizen and community in South Africa: gender justice. Not only does this necessarily entail freedom from sexual violence and exploitation, it also demands a new level of integrity, accountability, and harmony in the diverse communities of women and men across South Africa.

Former Deputy Minister of Health and Defense, Nozizwe Madlala Routledge and several other South African colleagues are convinced that Satyana Institute’s gender reconciliation work offers a significant step forward toward creating a new gender harmony for the people of South Africa. In Nozizwe’s words,

*Umntu Ngumntu
Ngabantu!*
--Xhosa Saying
A person is a
person
Through other
people!

I have been looking for a long time to find a way to bring healing and reconciliation between women and men here in South Africa. This work is the answer. We need much more of this work in South Africa.

This proposed initiative is an answer to the urgent need for unprecedented healing and reconciliation between women and men in South Africa. Indeed, the Rainbow Republic may be called to lead the way in gender reconciliation--fueled by dire necessity, coupled with its explicit Constitutional mandate, as well as the recent success of the TRC in healing from the appalling racism of Apartheid. Although gender reconciliation is still new, and certainly not without limitations, it appears that if properly and widely implemented, gender reconciliation holds great promise for practical transformation and healing of long-standing conflicts and tensions between women and men in South Africa.

Satyana Institute - Staff Bios



William Keepin, Ph.D. is Executive Director of the Satyana Institute, and founder of its Power of Reconciliation project. He has organized facilitated more than forty intensive gatherings in five countries for healing and reconciliation between women and men. His earlier scientific work on global warming and renewable energy influenced environmental policy in many countries, and he was a whistle blower on nuclear science policy. Trained in mathematical physics, transpersonal psychology, and contemplative meditation disciplines from East and West, he leads spiritual retreats and supports women's projects in India. Will is author of *Divine Duality: The Power of Reconciliation between Women and Men* (Hohm Press, 2007) and senior editor of *Song of the Earth: The Emerging Synthesis of Scientific and Spiritual Worldviews* (Permanent Publications, 2007).

Cynthia Brix, M.Div, MA. is Program Director of the Satyana Institute and Co-Director of its Power of Reconciliation project. She is the former Unitarian Universalist campus minister at the University of Colorado-Boulder. Her background is in wellness management and gerontology, and she has held leadership positions in women's organizations including Planned Parenthood of East Central Indiana (PPECI) and the Association for Women in Communications (WIC), for which she won a national award.

Cynthia also co-chaired the Race Relations Committee for the City of Muncie, Indiana. A student of Eknath Easwaran's Passage Meditation, she has led meditation workshops at Unitarian Universalist conferences, and she co-leads spiritual retreats and supports women's projects in India.

Declaration to Our Sisters

**Gender Reconciliation program for Members of Parliament
Cape Town, South Africa
November 9-14, 2006**

Declaration presented by the men to the women:

We have met over the past five days in community as men, and in community with you as men and women. We have listened to each other's stories, some personal, others told on behalf of vulnerable, degraded, hurt, brutalized human beings--all for no other reason than that they are women, sisters, mothers, and girl children.

We have heard, too, that through the social structures of power and decision making, many of our brothers have abused our intended roles of caring and protection--for their own selfish power, personal pleasure, and gain.

The bonds of humanity have been broken.

We acknowledge that we have shared in the unfair and unjust advantage that has upset the Creator's intended balance of human relationships for love, companionship, and cooperation.

We have been complicit in breaking the intended dream of equality.

So now we come forward to say to you: we are sorry. We affirm that we want to start anew. Therefore we now mark our foreheads with ash—the dust from which we have come, and to which we shall return—as an act to symbolize our sorrow, our apology, and our atonement.

And we come with a willingness to express, not our guilt—because guilt weighs us down and gives a burden we cannot bear—but rather, our responsibility. So we ask, will you accept our offer to take responsibility, as we commit ourselves to live out—and challenge and support all men everywhere to live and work for—gender equality, and thereby seek reconciliation?

This group needs to meet again . . . to continue this work. I can organize more [workshops], and practice and preach this work. All South African citizens need this work.

--Reverend Ursula Higgins
Women in Leadership
Cape Town, South Africa

Facilitation was excellent! Caring and sensitivity of facilitators gave a safe space to participate. Keep up this work, and keep working together!

--Rev. Themba Mntambo
Methodist Church

The mix of South African and African co-facilitation was inspired. I appreciate your willingness to share your skills and work alongside those in an African context.

--Keith Vermeulen, Director
Parliamentary office of the
South African Council of Churches

This work makes me a new woman and a new mother. I forgave my husband, and I forgive men . . .

We must have these workshops each year.

--Delores Ismail
The Women's Centre
Cape Town