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Initiatives of Change
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Bandung Peace Week 2026:
Every Person and Group Has a Story and Wisdom

September felt like an invitation to grow, from childhood in kindergarten to chasing dreams to getting married. As we believe at IofC, “Change Starts with Me”: change in the world will not happen without individuals who change. As more individuals change, that change spreads to groups, then to nations, and, we hope, to the world.

From 14 to 18 September 2026, Bandung Peace Week (BPW) returned with the theme “Healing Communities, Rebuilding Trust: From Wounds to Wisdom.” Changing does not mean being free of wounds. Some people's experiences have been so heavy and harrowing that they are hard to imagine. Yet with love, they are able to move beyond those wounds.

Three of IofC Indonesia's main programs took part, bringing unspoken voices from many walks of life.

The Trustbuilding Program (TBP) focused on decolonization, memory, and healing. This focus grew out of the team's journey of looking at the nation's history, in which emotions and feelings were often silenced by the colonial system. The impact can be seen in individuals and also in society at large, through various conflicts. That is why it matters for all of us to look at the history that shaped individuals and groups, so that we can write a new history for the future.



Sekolah Rekonsiliasi (SR) took up the theme “Unspoken Voices from Childhood.” SR invited participants to understand themselves through childhood stories, their relationships with their parents, and even pain in the body that holds wounds and stories often left unspoken. In this way, the family, as the smallest institution, plays an important role in peace.



Women Creators of Peace (CoP) took up the theme “Stories That Connect Us.” The session brought together women who revisited their old stories and dared to build new ones. Every woman has her own story and is often expected to be strong and capable of everything. Yet one thing brings change: listening, to the stories of others and also to our own.



BPW is an annual IofC Indonesia event that carries forward the message of the 1955 Asian-African Bandung Conference. Drawing on the Dasasila Bandung (the Ten Principles of Bandung), IofC Indonesia seeks to carry forward the spirit of world peace, international cooperation, and the right of nations to self-determination. This spirit is in line with IofC's values, which pursue world peace by inviting each person to look within.

At the opening of BPW 2026, the speakers shared their reflections. Prof. Greg Barton saw this journey as a calling from God. Neng Hannah stressed that listening needs to go beyond labels so that a space for healing can emerge. Al Rantisi framed the present moment as a time of reflection: if war and colonization come to an end, what kind of generation will build the future?

BPW 2026 also marked the second year that BPW held in-person sessions. In partnership with PT Jodamo/Heritage, the IofC Indonesia team ran four workshops:

- **Sensitivity Workshop**
- **Zine Workshop**
- **Mengurai Dilema (Untangling Dilemmas)**
- **Men's Learning Circle**

Most workshop participants were employees of PT Jodamo, which has worked with IofC Indonesia for years, followed by participants from the general public.

Another highlight of BPW 2026 was the screening of a film by Imad Karam, a friend of IofC from Palestine. The film, The Hardest Bridge, was watched by people from many backgrounds, including interfaith activists in Bandung. Telling the story of two people from England and Ireland on a journey toward reconciliation, the film brought new hope and encouragement amid the turmoil in the world. Our hope is that together we can connect with our wounds, connect with ourselves, and find the courage to move beyond them to build a better civilization and world.

The online sessions of BPW were attended by 290 people from 15 countries, while the in-person sessions drew around 30 people. BPW became a space for all of us to open our hearts, open ourselves, and open new relationships. Through BPW 2026, we could see more deeply the personal and collective journey of each individual in polishing the gem within and letting its light shine outward.







Marriage: Taking On Our Roles as Adults and Building a Life Together



September: a month of a million stories. Mike has returned to Australia, and IofC Indonesia continues its work. Yes, our journey goes on.

Kuping Haya, one of the flagship activities of the Sekolah Rekonsiliasi (School of Reconciliation) program, held a storytelling and practice session on the theme “Marriage: The Heaven We Hope For or the Hell We Never Imagined?” The theme was provocative, yet it drew many people to attend.

This session's storyteller was Faza Rahim, a Sekolah Rekonsiliasi student who is currently taking the Face to Face with Fear class. Faza is married and has a son. She shared her story of growing up, getting married and becoming a mother.

She also spoke of her journey of understanding her place as a wife, a daughter, a mother, and an individual. She learned to know the difference between what is her responsibility and what is not. She also came to realize that a partner is not someone whose job is to heal the wounds of the past.

For her, a healthy family does not have to be free of problems. It is a family that can return to each member's own role, admit mistakes, ask for help, give space, and keep learning to repair the relationship. Faza sees marriage as a home that does not need to be perfect, but is safe enough for everyone in it to be human and keep growing.
In this Kuping Haya session, Nenden led a Family System Audit exercise. Participants were invited to look back at themselves and their roles. Many felt disconnected from their families, many felt connected to only one parent, and some even felt disconnected from their partners.

The session offered new perspectives for young people today. Some are not very interested in marriage, while others are looking for a partner but have yet to find one. Data from Statistics Indonesia (BPS) also show that the number of marriages in Indonesia keeps falling, while divorce remains high even though it has declined since its 2022 peak. Marriage is no small matter. Its story needs to be lived by two adults who know themselves and consciously choose to share a life together through all its ups and downs.



Engaging Educators for Change: Visiting Liliput School

Before we knew it, September had arrived. The monsoon breeze blew and many things happened, yet the bustle of daily life carried on.

This September, Mike Lowe, a senior trainer with IofC Australia, visited Yogyakarta. By happy coincidence, Pak Chris, founder of Liliput Kindergarten (TK Liliput) in Yogyakarta, had connected with IofC and invited the IofC Indonesia team to visit. That is how life works. We never know who we will meet, but kindness finds kindness.

During the visit to TK Liliput on 4 September 2026, the IofC Indonesia team in Yogyakarta and Mike were struck by how the school prepares the next generation: by bringing children face to face with problems that are as real as possible. The teachers believe children learn best when the challenges of everyday life are brought into the classroom, rather than kept out and separate. The classroom tables, chairs, and all the equipment are made to fit kindergarten kids.

One thing that stood out was a room set aside for calming down and taking a pause. In a fast-paced world, teachers also need to show that pausing and reflecting are an important part of growing up and being human.

This practice, which echoes IofC's Quiet Time and values, is what drew Pak Chris to the IofC movement. We are glad to have a new support system for making the world a better place, especially alongside the children who will one day lead the nation.

The Purple Team’s Journey to the Land of Kangaroos

Since the change of coordinator in August 2026, the CoP Indonesia team has been busy preparing for a trip to Australia. The mission is full of challenges, and it comes with many stories too.

These preparations mark the start of the team's commitment to becoming facilitators and carrying CoP's work forward for women in Indonesia, so that more circles can become safe spaces for women to share their stories. Selling organic soap and applying for various grants are among the ways they are raising funds.





CoP is also working creatively through Zine Kolektif (Collective Zine), which documents peace through stories and visuals. All of this is in preparation for the Creators of Peace Exchange Program (CoPEX) 2027, and to keep speaking up that women need to be heard and that safe spaces for women are vital.

The CoP Indonesia team currently has several focus areas:

- A run-through of the various CoP modules
- Zine Kolektif volume 1: A little zine about feelings
- A Circle of Peace in Bandung
- A Circle of Peace in Madura
- Collaborations with brands and communities that share similar values
- Continuing to build spaces to listen, reflect, create, and connect

This journey is certainly not easy, but faith, effort, and prayer will surely bear fruit. The CoP Indonesia team deserves full support and appreciation for its efforts to keep growing and to open more spaces for Indonesian women to listen to themselves. May their journey to the Land of Kangaroos go smoothly, and may they come home with plenty of new knowledge!

Personal Growth Needs Safe Spaces and Collective Support!

Sekolah Rekonsiliasi classes started again this September. A new semester, new students, and of course new modules for returning students. Some felt excited, some felt afraid, and many other feelings came up. Yet in the healing process, the courage to take a step can bring change. Like a drop of water, it creates ripples that reach others.

Those ripples began with one person and continue today, with two facilitators, Nenden Prawira and Rinni Meir, and hundreds of students. Everyone is learning to heal and face their wounds. There is even one class with only two students left. Their supportive seniors stepped in to join them and grow together. Everything has unfolded organically, driven by heart and a commitment to heal and move beyond the wounds.

“This is my second year as a full-timer at SR. I am so happy to have these classes, both on weekends and weekdays. When I help others heal, I as a facilitator am actually healing too,” said Nenden Prawira.

“There is an awareness slowly growing: I am not learning alone, I am learning together with others. That is why every delay and every schedule change also involves other people's learning processes,” said Rinni Meir.

That is what healing looks like. It means working on ourselves and also opening up to other people's growth. Healing does not happen in a vacuum. It happens through being present in relationships with others. Sekolah Rekonsiliasi exists to build that safe relational space, so that every individual can process their wounds with a sense of safety and mutual trust.





Web of Relationships:
Mapping Assets and Actors to Stay Connected

Nine months of 2026 have gone by. “Hmm, who should we collaborate with?” is a question that often comes up for the TBP Indonesia team, since social issues keep changing and so does the team's understanding.

Real, meaningful change needs a solid strategy. That is why this September, the TBP team worked on strategies to carry out its mission, “Heal the Past for the Future.” The first step was asset and actor mapping, from team members' personal connections to institutions. “Wow, that's a lot!” was roughly the team's reaction after two hours of discussion. This step matters so that future activities hit the mark.

Besides taking part in Bandung Peace Week, the TBP team is also preparing to follow up on the results of the Training of Facilitators (ToF) held in August. Stay tuned for what these young people do next!

Closing

Before we know it, 2026 is almost over. Yet the spirit of change never fades: the spirit of healing; of moving beyond our wounds, and of togetherness. Borrowing the title of Vina Panduwinata's 1982 classic, “September Ceria” (Cheerful September), may September keep bringing cheer to all of us.

For some of us, September may have left a wound. Yet behind that wound there is surely a deep message. You are not walking alone. IofC Indonesia is here to walk with you as you grow, return to yourself, and move forward to share with others.

Goodbye, September, thanks for the lessons! Welcome, October, we embrace you with love and openness!



Ruang SANUBARI is a monthly newsletter featuring brief updates, stories, reflections, and highlights from IofC Indonesia.

Each edition brings together moments from our programmes, community activities, and initiatives, offering a glimpse into our journey of building trust, nurturing connections, and creating positive change.

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