

Conflict Transformation: Pieces of Peace

The story of some of the remarkable people who made the first full Humanium Metall Collection possible. Sagas of designing and crafting new narratives and opportunities through transforming conflicts across individual, organisational and institutional levels.

Recognizing that conflicts - within ourselves, between individuals, groups and nations - even between humans and the planet - lies as a rootcause to many of the challenges we are facing today, constituted the foundation of the Pieces of Peace project. A (r)evolutionary collaboration effort to discover and co-create overlooked and pioneering ways of turning a downward spiral of polarity and conflict to an upward one of collective transformation and peace buidling. Challenging and shifting the zero sum paradigm, where if one wins the other looses; a state that inevitably leads to exploitation of human and natural resources - to win-win-win systems where the sum is greater than the separate parts.

The project sought greater understanding of the origin and modes of conflicts; to shine a light on what is often overlooked, stigmatized or hidden. Because we cannot address what we do not recognize. Dialogues with youth and community leaders, starting in El Salvador, Gutemala, Colombia and Ecuador, led to further conversations in Nepal, India, Sri Lanka and Nigeria. Though all experiences and perspectives where unique, they also shared and showed common patterns: How conflicts on various levels of society widens gaps of power and inequalities of resources, fueling further violence and discrimination; impacting already vulnerable and marginalized groups the hardest. Intersectional discrimination based in gender, poverty and often amplified through climate change. Fundamental principles that became the focal point for attention in the exploration of relevant and resilient solutions.

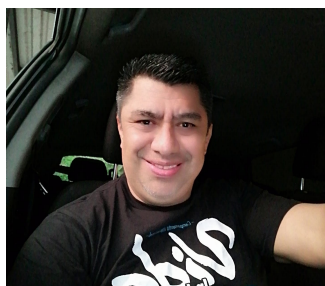
Let's meet the individuals and organisations that broadend our understanding of patterns, not just problems. Diverse perspectives that became pivotal puzzle pieces in seeing the bigger picture. Ultimately, enabling the unlocking - not imposing - of change, through shifting the underlying forces. Here are some of the ways in which they transform conflicts, and many of the leadership leassons they tought us along the way.

THE PIONEERS: Leaders showing a new way forward

AMILCAR DURAN, SAN SALVADOR (EL SALVADOR)

The first step and fundamental force of the Humanium Journey

Any story of Humanium needs to begin with the man who made it all possible to start with. A leader who always persevered and had the most remarkable ability to drive change across all spaces of society. A man who led through who he was; an embodiment of conflict transformation and the opportunity to rise through adwersity. Through governmental and institutional negotiations Amilcar and his organisation Fundación Red de Sobrevivientes secured that the confiscated illegal firearms could be melted down for re-use and repurposing of both symbolic and strategic power under the name and concept of Humanium Metal. Fundación Red de Sobrevivientes also leads the exceptionally important work of supporting victims of armed violence and their families.



Samples from of
the unisex
Pieces of Peace
Humanium Metal
Collection.
Pivotal for
production where

the young female silver smith Nina Sjöberg, who also generously offered knowledge exchange and capacity building insights

AURORA NOHEMI, QUETZALTENANGO (GUATEMALA)

Transforming the conflict between indigenous practices and modern art through advocacy based in the fusion of both.

Aurora Nohemi were one of the first female youth leaders we had the privilege to engage with and learn from. A leader and leadership creating energy, movement and mobilization by bringing together what often is considered antagonists: Combining indigenous practices and modern art. Taking space with radiant integrity on stages often dominated by men. Moreover, honoring her Mayan roots, she always came back to the importance of living With the land, not From it. Her leadership encouraged us to look at the ecosystemic impact of interventions. All projects that followed would look deeply into ensuring that we always reinvest to regenerate the underlying ecosystem. Nourishing the land we come from to create with the ability to go beyond the capacity to sustain.



Left: Capacity Building Workshop, e.g. learning from Aurora and her female team's experience in working with metals. Right: Aurora advocating through one of the many mediums of art she mastered: music.

MONICA VALLE, GUATEMALA CITY (GUATEMALA)

Transforming the conflict of scarcity through turning waste to resources, realizing overlooked value

Recognizing that in order to expand impact, we need look at and expand opportunities throughout the value chain. Pivotal in this is the lowering of thresholds for employment, and making capacity building more inclusive, e.g. through finding new entrypoints. In the context of Humanium, this meant exploring meaningful work opportunities that was less limited to the scarce resources of the metal itself, nor to the complex work of managing it. Together with Monica, the founder of Madre Naturalesa, we explored numerous alternatives and identified overlooked potentials within one of the biggest industries for Guatemala and El Salvador: Coffee. A natural resource and a source of both pride and livelihood. An idea took form and the decision was made: Instead of putting our money for packaging of the Humanium products with western production corporates, we decided to leverage the already existing material from the packaging of the coffee bean sacks, enabling dormant value in the local value chain to be amplified and realized.



Left: Monica together with products and materials from Madre Naturaleza.
 Right: Examples of the upcycled coffee bag envelopes that were developed.

MADHUMITA PURI, NEW DELHI (INDIA)

Transforming the conflict between people and planet - through enabling consumption that reverses climate change.

Under the pressing threat of increasing climate change, we need diverse interventions that are climate change resilient and reversing. The congestion and pollution of rivers across India is a huge challenge, as it prevents the marine ecosystems to absorb carbon effectively, as well as increase risk of water born diseases. In a capitalistic world fuelled by consumption we need to align incentives to unlock change at scale. A key component in this is creating business models and products that can - not only symbolically, but strategically and directly - improve targeted environments. In this intersection of challenges and opportunities, we met Madhumita Purim, who, through the multitude of organisations she works with, spotted and enabled the opportunity to clean the rivers from surplus of seaweed and plastic pollution and turn it to further Humanium packaging. With Madhumita's background of working with persons with disabilities, especially without formal schooling - there was one more opportunity to expand capacity building through inclusive work opportunities. Learning from her experience in developing vertical programs that supports change of perception - e.g. considering previously marginalized groups viable for financial inclusion - also contributed to our understanding of the broader work behind changing narratives.



Left: The raw material of seaweed, being added to the Indian handloom. Middle: Conversations and prototyping in their Factory in New Delhi. Right: Examples of the produced packages.

SELYNA PEIRIS & BHAGA MUNASINGHE, Kurunegala, North and East Regions (SRI LANKA)

Transforming the conflict of different beliefs and religions through conversations, exploration and creation.

That the clash of different perspectives, beliefs and religions can cause conflict is widely acknowledged. Rarely have we though encountered two women who so successfully have managed to transform them; Selyna in challenging her own belief in success and ideas of effective change - leaving prestigious jobs at the UN and the President's Office to shoulder her mother's family business, to drive

the first Fair Trade organization in Sri Lanka. Setting a clear and transparent standard for fair and empowering work conductions. Bhagya was instrumental in enabling meetings and conversations with groups of female representatives of the Tamil minority. Together, we traveled through the North and East regions of Sri Lanka to deepen our understanding of the conflicts between different groups, many with a background in the Civil War, considered one of the longest in Asian history. These two women taught us the importance of challenging our own believes and ideas of success. To lead beyond the ticking of boxes to meet short term and predetermined goals; The ability to both Look up and be Anchored. Inspired by the conversations and work of both, we developed packaging of left over fabric from the historically sacrete sarees in Selyn's factories.

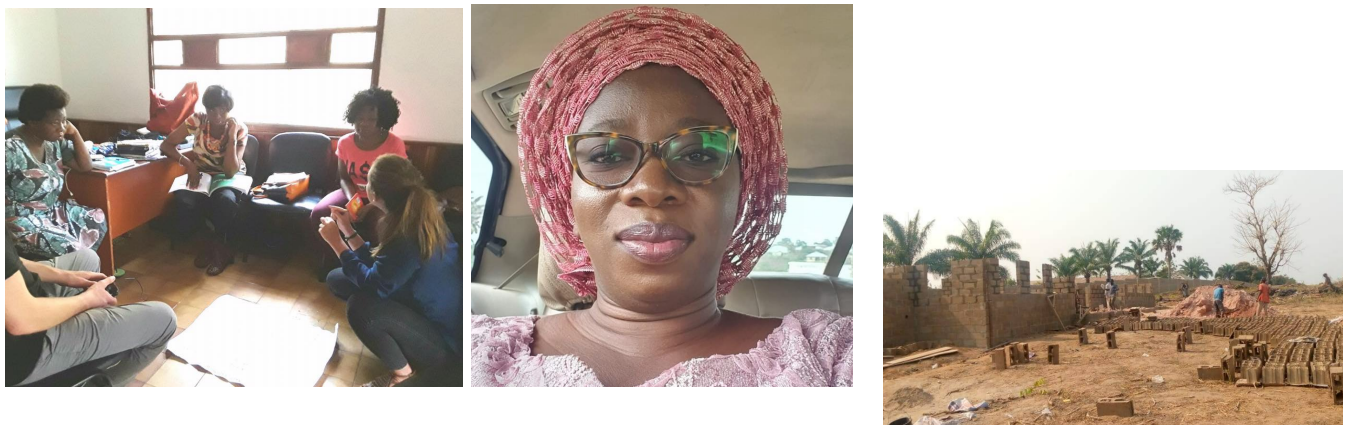


Left: Selyna Peiris, together walking through the production process. Middle Left: Together with Bhagya at a short stop during long travels. Middle Right: Prototypes of the first pouches of saree fabric. Right: Meeting with Tamil groups to hear their perspectives on the current situation.

OLUTOSIN OLADOSU ADEBOWALE, LAGOS (NIGERIA)

Transforming inner conflict of selfdestructive narratives caused by domestic violence and power abuse - through support in trauma healing and increased economic independence in safe spaces of sisterhood

In her own words: Tosin is a self-taught quilter, social entrepreneur, citizen journalist, activist, and feminist. She is also a victim of domestic violence herself. An experience that led her to found Tosin Turns Trash To Treasure; an organisation who creates safe and supportive spaces for women, enabling capacity building and trauma transformation. Support in rewriting their own narratives; one from victim, to survivor, to agent of change. All through dialogue over creating pieces of Art from pieces that others have considered trash. The transformation of trash to treasure symbolizes the journey that the women go on. Tosin and her women depart from blank canvases to create a new story. Therefore, we couldn't be more proud to collectively have created packaging made from the very same fabric - a true testament to the power that lies in a blank canvas and the opportunity to create.



Left: Business Model Innovation Workshop With Tosin and representatives from her skills and trauma groups. Middle: Tosin. Right: Building of Sister Town to protect and rebuild women from domestic violence

THE UMBRELLA ORGANISATIONS: The power of the bigger collective to mobilize

CAMARI, MAQUITA, SAPIA and FTG NEPAL

(QUITO - ECUADOR, BOGOTA - COLOMBIA, KATMANDU - NEPAL)

Sometimes the most powerful thing is the personal meetings two individuals inbetween. At other times, leadership is about taking a step back. To discover and support the structures that are already in place. With Camari, Maquita, Sapia and FTG Nepal, we where shown how local and regional umbrella organisations had formed that did an incredible work in supporting both targeted communities and collective efforts, whilst mobilizing of resources. Though starting in Colombia and Ecuador, the network of Fair Trade organizations soon led us to conversations and connections with their counterparts in Nepal and later Sri Lanka.



The work in Ecuador and Colombia focused on the exploration of how business models can be used to align and create financial incentives to persevere biodiversity through investing in e.g. Tagua nuts; a tree and nut that has played a key role not only in biological ecosystems, but also commercial ones. During the 1800 and 1900 centuries, many communities and small scale family businesses created pieces ranging from sacred symbols, to shirt buttons. But as plastic replaced the tagua nut, product by product, the tagua tree lost its commercial value, risking the replacement with more fast growing crops and monocultures of palm oil plantations. The tagua and other organic materials, such as Acai and Chrillia seeds where used in the creation of e.g. bracelets with Humanium Metal.



Together with FTG (Fair Trade Group) Nepal, we met with several of it's member organizations. In a country still rebuilding itself from the 2015 Earthquake, we where taught the value and importance of building capacity of respective and collective resilience. Navigating challenging, complex and new uncharted terrain requires planing to adopt, not to stay on course.



Top (Katmandu, Nepal) & Middle (Quito, Ecuador): Workshops for increase understand about the potential production processes, materials and methods. Bottom: The organic papers produced by a small family business in Kathmandu that the story of each Piece of Peace were written on.

INSTITUTIONAL: Bilateral, Diplomatic and Commercial Collaborations

A dear friend ones said: "Humans where the ones who built society in the first place - therefore, we are the only ones who can change it". A powerful reminder, when taking on societal and systemic challenges feel overwhelming from time to time. It is you, me - all of us who can and does change society through each action, decision and step we take. The fact that even big institutions are made up of humans becomes extra clear when you meet those who go that extra mile. Who doesn't only do what they have to, are obliged to - but who look for what they can do. For what is possible. To finish this

piece of, let's therefor shine a light on some of the people that made the often impersonal institutions personal; The ones who both enabled impact and inspiration at scale - through turning sparkling cases of social innovation to lighthouse cases that shows potential paths to navigate for others - and who also never hesitated to delve deep and support leveraging themselves and their personal networks. A glance at the Diplomatic and Commercial side;

Monika Kapil Mohta, Ambassador of India; always making time for conversations on the matter of peace - inner as well as multilateral, and eager to share contacts from all walks of life to enable the work and impact to grown organically.

Edgar Narváez, Trade Commissioner Pro Ecuador; always ready to bring on board new partners. Never hesitant to engage in product development, jump on calls with family and friends to find the best solutions and constantly pushing for better working conditions.

Manueala Montoya, at the Colombian Ministry of Commerce; Strategically brilliant, yet the fastest to track down mysteriously lost deliveries, give a ride whenever needed, or just offer her own office space for some extra storage.

Another, perhaps cliché saying: "People won't remember what you said, but how you made them feel." These three individuals represent just that - that even when we are representing institutions, or even nations - change and conflict transformation start with the peace and trust we can build with those closest to us. To Be the Change we want to see.



Left: **Monika Kapil Mohta** Ambassador of India, Middle: **Manuela Montoya** at the Ministry of Commerce and ProColombia, Right: **Edgar Narváez**, Trade Commissioner, Pro Ecuador

POTENTIAL CLOSING WORDS (depeding on how we want to use this piece and if we can have the auction):

> A final word of reflection from a long journey: Looking back, these words are written with both proudness over the journey we went on, and also with recognition of how much we learned and how much there still remains to both unlearn and learn. Many of the insights distilled formed the foundation of MAD (Make A Difference), where Emelie today - every now and then in collaboration with IM and Martin, get the opportunity to continuously evolve.

> In the spirit of turning vision to reality - moving from words to action, the first Humanium Metal Collection will also be auctioned out in Central America (Guatemala or El Salvador TBD) - in memory of Amilcar - where all proceeds will go towards Fundación Red de Sobrevivientes and their work that is perhaps more important now than ever before. This article is written in special memory of Amilcar Duran who recently left us, a force without whom Humanium Metal - the most precious metal in the world - would never have seen the light of day. Let us celebrate him and his work through always seeking to transform - alchemize the conflicts within and around us to be the change we want to see.