



# Peace in Sight

TRANSFORMING THE WORLD'S RESPONSE TO CONFLICT

MAR  
2025



Women's Protection Work Focus Group. Minnesota, U.S. December 2024. ©NP

## Strength in Community



### How Local Women Are Shaping Solutions for the Safety and Protection of Women and Girls in North Minneapolis.

In North Minneapolis, Minnesota, the intersection of socioeconomic stress, marginalization, and systemic inequalities has left women facing heightened vulnerabilities and unique safety challenges. From domestic violence and harassment to a lack of safe public spaces and the dangers of sex trafficking, women in this community continue to navigate distinct and urgent protection needs.

Recognizing these challenges, Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP) has been working to establish a community-centered response that empowers women, fosters resilience, and creates sustainable and dignified safety measures.

On December 4, 2024, NP convened a Women's Focus Group at the Hub for Nonviolence and Safety in North Minneapolis. The gathering provided a space for eight local women to share

their lived experiences, identify key safety concerns, and envision solutions together. Facilitated by Nanyeni Glory, an intern from the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies with extensive experience in women's peace and security initiatives in Cameroon, the discussion was deeply personal and solution-oriented.



**When we heal together, we grow stronger together.**



The session began with grounding exercises, allowing participants to connect with their own sense of safety. They were then asked to illustrate their visions of a safe community. Common themes emerged:

- **Family and Home:** "Peace and safety in the family are everything," said one participant, emphasizing the importance of stable households and intergenerational connection.



- **Nature and Clean Resources:** Clean water, fresh food, and the ability to grow gardens were recurring themes. One participant described nature as “a source of healing and grounding for our families.”
- **Community and Belonging:** Parks, transportation, and spaces for play and gathering were highlighted as essential. “Prayer and love bring peace,” one group shared, combining spiritual and relational elements in their vision of safety.

Participants also emphasized the impact mass incarceration, economic inequality, and welfare policies have had in historically excluding men from households and breaking family structures. **“When you heal the women, you heal the household, but we also need to heal our men,”** one woman shared.

Despite the challenges they face, the participants reflected on the critical role women play in fostering community safety and resilience in North Minneapolis. From nurturing and patience to advocating for change and rebuilding the basics, women described themselves as the “backbone” of the community, providing stability despite significant challenges.

When asked about their hopes for safety in the community, improving public safety was a priority: better lighting at bus stops, trained civilian protectors, and clean public spaces were frequently mentioned. “Walking alone in the dark should not feel like a risk every time,” one woman said.

The women also recognized the importance of building on existing efforts. **“Let’s not recreate the wheel,”** one participant said. **“We need to support what’s already here and make it stronger.”** Suggestions included creating widely distributed lists of current community resources, offering space so more healing circles could occur, and outreach at bus stops and shelters to meet women where they are.

NP has already trained local community members in de-escalation and unarmed civilian protection (UCP) techniques, helping neighbors protect one another without the threat of violence. And healing circles with at-risk area youth are gathering at the Hub for Nonviolence and Safety. Additional applications of UCP to address the protection needs of women may include creating safe spaces for women to escape cycles of addiction and exploitation, engaging the community to develop nonviolent, collective monitoring systems, training women as UCP practitioners, and providing protective accompaniment to survivors.

However, funding for the work NP is already doing is at risk. NP’s community-based program in North Minneapolis is largely funded by the federal government and is set to lose all of its funding by October. This drastic cut means that the very mentors who have kept youth from being pulled into cycles of violence will no longer be there. It means that community leaders trained in de-escalation and mutual protection will have no support to continue their work.

Without immediate support, the progress made in empowering women and ensuring safer neighborhoods will be undone. Now, more than ever, we must stand with the women and communities of North Minneapolis—because safety is not just a privilege; it is something everyone deserves.

**“This is just our starting place,”** one participant said, expressing a strong desire to continue these conversations and take tangible steps toward creating a safer, more resilient North Minneapolis.

## Protecting Civic Spaces

In January, NP provided a safety presence at the People’s March in D.C. days before Trump took office. To ensure everyone’s safety while engaging in civic spaces—including marchers, volunteers, counter-protesters, and bystanders—NP’s U.S. team trained over **200 volunteers** ahead of the march in safety and de-escalation tactics. This training proved essential to support the more than **75,000 people** who peacefully attended the march.



**While I was really excited to participate in the march, I was also scared for my safety... It was so relieving to see the NP safety team—I could see how alert, organized, and invested they were in keeping everyone safe.**

- Cheyenne, People’s March Attendee



# A Call to Protect Lives

## A CAMPAIGN TO TRANSFORM AID TO SOLIDARITY

At the start of 2025, the world shifted. Overnight, the humanitarian and peacebuilding sector was thrown into chaos by abrupt, sweeping cuts to U.S. aid funding. These unprecedented cuts have rippled across the entire sector, endangering lives and dismantling the very programs that offer safety, dignity, and hope. The United States, once the largest donor, has slashed its contributions, and governments in Europe are following suit.

As NP Executive Director Tiffany Easthom put it, these cuts “are strategically and morally self-defeating, and are causing immediate, preventable harm to millions of people.” For NP, this means the communities we work with, faced with the threat of violence and active conflict, will be left unsafe—unprotected.

Like in Myanmar. Until recently, our USAID-funded program was preparing to evacuate 3,000 civilians from a village under attack. Now, with funding slashed, we may only be able to get 10% of those people to safety. Our teams face the impossible—choosing who leaves and who is left behind. And as violence escalates, those choices become more devastating.

But we refuse to let violence win. We refuse to let people be forgotten. **And we need you with us.**

To sustain our critical, life-saving programs through this crisis, Nonviolent Peaceforce is launching a \$4 million emergency campaign—because lives depend on it.

### WHERE YOUR SUPPORT WILL GO

**\$2,000,000 | Protection in South Sudan**  
Without urgent support, all NP field sites will close by April, leaving entire communities without protection as fear of civil war grows.

**\$650,000 | Youth Peacebuilding in Minneapolis**  
Current funding for NP’s mentorship program for young people at risk of being involved in violence ends in September and the Administration has stopped all new funding.

**\$200,000 | Myanmar Program**  
In one of the most complicated conflicts in the world, amidst airstrikes, ground attacks, and constrained access, the Myanmar team works with key actors to ensure everyday civilians caught in the crossfire have a path to safety.

**Will You Stand With Us?** Learn more about the campaign at [nonviolentpeaceforce.org/transform-aid-to-solidarity](https://nonviolentpeaceforce.org/transform-aid-to-solidarity)



# SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT



Dr. Dorothy Lynn Brooks

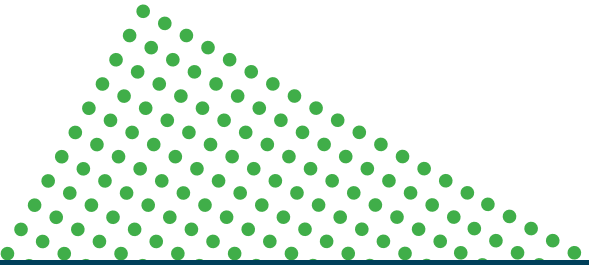
At 89 years old, **Dr. Dorothy Lynn Brooks** has spent a lifetime dedicated to education, teaching math at the University of Texas at Arlington for nearly three decades. A lifelong Texan, she has always believed in the power of service.

“Nonviolence and peace are both words that I cherish,” Dorothy Lynn shared. “I admire the people on the ground, doing the work, accompanying others, helping however they can.” Though she wishes she could do similar work in her community, “I don’t walk as fast or as far as I used to, can’t hear as well, you just can’t do as much over time though I’m in good shape,” she said. “But I can give. You do what you can.”

Dorothy Lynn’s recent gift to Nonviolent Peaceforce was made in honor of her late granddaughter, who was tragically killed in a hit-and-run accident three weeks before her 21st birthday. For Brooks, supporting NP is a way to invest in those most vulnerable to violence, ensuring that peace and protection reach those who need it most.



I just feel sure that there are dedicated people doing really wonderful things for vulnerable people.



## Take Action for Communities Left Behind

Visit [nonviolentpeaceforce.org/make-a-gift](https://nonviolentpeaceforce.org/make-a-gift) to sustain NP’s work to keep people safe.

**Violence is rising, but we refuse to stand by.** NP stays committed to protecting civilians and proving that a world of nonviolence is possible. Right now, the greatest impact we can have is to help people take care of themselves and their communities.

Your generosity fuels this urgent work. By becoming a monthly donor, you’ll help keep our teams on the ground, responding rapidly to shifting protection crises and sustaining the foundation of long-term peace efforts.



For more information on ways to give, go to [NonviolentPeaceforce.org](https://NonviolentPeaceforce.org) or call +1 612-871-0005