GenderStrat Workshop 28 June 2016

Remaining challenges, creative think tank

Generating ideas for the future with activists, scientists and researchers, about gender equality.

Inputs by Birgit Wolf, Johanniter ambulance service/refugee assistance, Vienna and Sofia Vaz Serra, Platforma Portuguesa para os Direitos das Mulheres, Lisbon

‘Old’ challenges: One important question remaining is how to include more men into gender equality discussion and programmes, what can be done? Most men don’t want to be involved in gender equality discussions. Talking about masculinity might be a solution, in positive or even in a negative context, but sharing personal experiences will be crucial. Other questions remaining: What is needed in training, what is the aim of men’s training, how to get to different target groups of men? Female solidarity still has to become first; after that involving more men remains to be important. Also the opinion emerged if we spend too much time to bring men in our troops a lot of energy might get lost. In most of the countries men are in decision making positions and deciding about the live of women. Women have to get better opportunities leading to decision making positions; that means fighting the system – we know it, it has to be done.

New challenges: The growth of right wing parties and conservative politics can be noticed in Europe, not being helpful for the implementation of gender equality. On one hand women have to defend their rights and on the other hand masculinity research is needed, new knowledge is crucial. The biggest problem seems to be that women are not economically independent. In times of crisis people tend to trust conservative options. NGOs sometimes lose the goal for what they are fighting for.

Future: Pushing forward from many different directions might be a solution – even starting again with a peace movement in times of crises, wars and growing poverty.