

ANNUAL REPORT 2008

APWLD

Asia Pacific Forum on
Women Law and
Development



Advancing women's human rights using law
to achieve equality, justice, peace and development

**ANNUAL
REPORT** **2008**
APWLD



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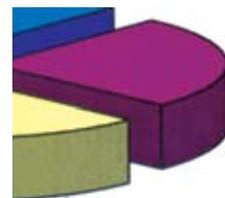
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ACRONYMS

ACWC	ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children
AHRB	ASEAN Human Rights Body
APF	Asia Pacific Forum
APWLD	Asia Pacific Forum on Women Law and Development
ARWC	Asian Rural Women's Coalition
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AWID	Association for Women's Rights in Development
CARAM Asia	Coordination of Action Research on AIDS and Mobility
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women
COD	Coordinating Committee on Development
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
CTUHR	Center for Trade Union and Human Rights
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FFMs	Fact Finding Missions
FLTP	Feminist Legal Theory and Practice
FLTP ToT Plus	Feminist Legal Theory and Practice Training of Trainers
FORUM ASIA	Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development
FTX	Feminist Technology Exchange
FWRM	Fiji Women's Rights Movement
GAATW	Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women
GFMD	Global Forum on Migration and Development
G&P	Gender and Politics
GWP	Gabriela Women's Party
HLP	High Level Panel
HRC	Human Rights Council
IAMR	International Assembly of Migrants and Refugees
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IFIs	International Financial Institutions
ILPS	International League of Peoples' Struggle
IMA	International Migrants Alliance
IWRAW-AP	International Women's Rights Action Watch - Asia Pacific
L&M	Labour and Migration
Malarchi	Malarchi Women's Resource Center
MASUM	Mahila Sarvangeen Utkarsh Mandal
MFMW	Mission for Migrant Workers
MONFEMNET	National Network of Mongolian Women's NGOs
NAFSO	National Fisheries Solidarity Movement
NCAV	National Centre Against Violence
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NHRIs	National Human Rights Institutions
P&M	Programme and Management Committee
ReC	Regional Council
RIW	Rural and Indigenous Women
SEZs	Special Economic Zones
SRED	Society for Rural Education and Development
TNCs	Transnational Corporations
TNDWM	Tamil Nadu Dalit Women's Movement



ToR
UDHR
UN
UNDRIP
UNDHRD
UNIFEM
UFDWRs
UNSR
UNSRVAW

UNSRIP

UNSRHRD
UNSR Migrants
UNSR Slavery

US
VAW
WEN
WHRDs
WHR-WG
WLB
WPPP
WTO

Terms of Reference
Universal Declaration of Human Rights
United Nations
United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Defenders
United Nations Development Fund for Women
United for Foreign Domestic Workers Rights
United Nations Special Rapporteur
United Nations Special Rapporteur on violence against women its causes and consequences
United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people
United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders
United Nations Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants
United Nations Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery including its causes and consequences
United States
Violence against Women
Women and Environment
Women Human Rights Defenders
Women's Human Rights Working Group
Women's League of Burma
Women's Participation in Political Processes
World Trade Organisation



Executive Summary

Creating Synergies Between Programmes

In recognition of the 60th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), APWLD held a consultation in Cambodia for members of the Women Human Rights Working Group (WHR-WG), the Task Forces (TFs) and Regional Council (ReC). The consultation brought them together for the first time ever, in an attempt to create synergies between and across programmes and TFs, to review the gains and achievements made by women, as well as to renew the network's inspiration and activism to face development challenges in light of the current economic and political realities.

The theme of the consultation was Women's Human Rights and the Inter-linkages between Globalisation, Fundamentalism and Militarisation, within APWLD's six programmes. The plenary sessions featured a range of presentations and sharing of women's movements initiatives and responses addressing the joint impacts of these phenomena, including climate change on women's lives in the region, and practical approaches that can contribute to local/global initiatives both within and outside the formal mechanisms of the United Nations (UN).

To assist in linking local to global issues that women continue to face in working for change, panellists shared their experiences and discussed the joint impacts of neo-liberal globalisation, fundamentalism, militarisation and climate change, the latest developments in international law, the social impact of laws on women and disadvantaged peoples and the consequences for women. Throughout the region fundamentalism is interlinked to conservative religious and economic forces that are detrimental to the fulfilment and enjoyment of women's human rights.

Members from a number of countries felt it was indeed an irony for governments to be talking about reducing poverty, when the impact of the

World Trade Organisation (WTO), International Monetary Fund and World Bank policies promoting privatisation, deregulation and trade liberalisation to encourage economic growth, have instead led to a vicious cycle of debt and poverty. Trade liberalisation policies have also resulted in the loss of land by small farmers, destruction of natural resources, agricultural and food production systems and loss of livelihoods of rural and indigenous communities. The result has been a great influx of women in the informal sector where they are not covered by labour laws and therefore subjected to greater exploitation and abuse. The governments of the United States and European Union are the major proponents of free trade and their open access to the resources, wealth and labour of the global south further contributes to the global food and fuel price rises affecting the already struggling countries in the region.

The most critical issues and challenges facing women and their communities throughout the region are oppressive governance systems, military attacks in resource-rich countries human rights violations and impunity, the absence of the rule of law and women's under representation in decision-making processes at all levels. Lessons on strategies ranged from reframing of issues, empowerment of our movement, challenging discriminatory laws and policies and engaging in cultural and religious spaces.

Reality of Aid Chairperson Antonio Tujan, Jr. gave an overview and update on the interconnected challenges of financing for development in the region, including the challenges facing civil society organisations (CSOs) and women's organisations in participating and contributing to the whole process of financing for development. This is to ensure that women's key issues, in particular women's human rights and gender equality, are addressed and understood as development priorities. The amount of development aid reaching impoverished communities is only a fraction of the overall aid required. In contrast, interest for servicing debts paid by developing countries is much more than the aid received. Further, conditionalities are often placed on aid and assistance to developing countries.



The Feminist Legal Theory and Practice Training of Trainers

The WHR-WG lead trainers, Eleanor Conda of the Philippines and Imrana Jalal of Fiji conducted the Feminist Legal Theory and Practice Training of Trainers (FLTP ToT Plus). The training brought together eight lawyers, activists and academics from five countries. As the FLTP is a niche activity of APWLD, the FLTP ToT Plus endeavours to strengthen and expand APWLD's resource pool of trainers, while enabling the trainers to integrate and apply feminist legal theory in all APWLD trainings. As a result of the training, the resource pool of trainers has been strengthened, developed and expanded from three FLTP trainers to 12, with the capacity and commitment to undertake national, sub-regional and regional FLTP trainings. The FLTP Training Resource Manual and Reader is now ready to be published and is a valuable resource to help women and men committed to ending gender discrimination, promoting human rights to bring about change for an equitable society.

Fundamentalisms in Asia Pacific: Trends, Impact, Challenges and Strategies Asserting Women's Rights

APWLD launched the publication *Fundamentalisms in Asia Pacific: Trends, Impact, Challenges and Strategies Asserting Women's Rights*. This publication is part of the ongoing work of the WHR-WG and has evolved through a two-year process of interactive dialogue and discussions within APWLD's programme and governance structures, including network members who developed, contributed and provided information on ground realities of women human rights in their countries in context to various forms and aspects of fundamentalisms. APWLD initiated this paper to develop the movement's understanding of fundamentalisms, their impact on women and their relationship with contemporary political and economic developments. The first part of the paper maps the manifestations of fundamentalisms in the region through country reviews to call attention to the ways in which women's rights and democracy are targeted. The second and third parts take stock of the impact of fundamentalisms on women as well as on democracy and politics

in general. The last part documents the strategies adopted by women's groups and progressive movements to resist these developments.

Regional Consultations with the United Nations Special Rapporteurs

APWLD recognises that the annual regional consultation provides an opportunity for dialogue between the UN Special Rapporteurs (UNSRs) as well as with civil society. The annual Asia Pacific Regional Consultation with the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences (UNSRVAW), Yakin Ertürk and the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people (UNSRIP), S. James Anaya was held in New Delhi, India. The theme 'Violence against Indigenous Women in the Asia Pacific', was in response to the call of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) to the UNSRVAW to hold regional consultations with indigenous women.

A Joint Regional Consultation with the UNSR on the human rights of migrants (UNSR Migrants), Jorge Bustamante and the UNSR on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences (UNSR Slavery), Gulnara Shaninian, was held in the Philippines, in partnership with the Coordination of Action Research of Aids and Mobility (CARAM Asia) and the Global Alliance against Traffic in Women (GAATW). The participants were mostly foreign domestic workers and women migrants who identified and exposed discriminatory laws, policies and practices of human rights violations against them. The ASEAN Task Force on Migrant Workers, the United for Foreign Domestic Workers Rights (UFDWRs) and the Jakarta Process presented efforts being undertaken in the region.

Women's Participation in Political Processes

The Women's Participation in Political Processes (WPPP) TF facilitated an exchange between parliamentarians from Thailand and Philippines. Dr. Rachada Dhnadirek, who is serving her first term in the Thai Parliament, was invited to the



Philippines by the Gabriela Women's Party (GWP) to harness and consolidate the strength and capacities of women's movements and individuals working for the enhancement of women's participation in politics. Cooperation between Thai and Philippine women parliamentarians was established through the programme for mutual support and linkages to address the issues of women in both countries. The process of initialising a caucus of women parliamentarians in Asia Pacific through the WPPP TF will continue as work in progress.

Central Asia Sub-Regional Gender and Politics (G&P) Training Level I was conducted in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan from 17-19 October 2008 which saw the participation of 27 women from four countries of the Central Asia region: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The three-day training of lawyers, activists and women in politics sharpened their understanding of the issues that women face in politics. This training workshop places a special focus on building the capacity of women in politics to incorporate women and women's issues within mainstream decision making processes and political institutions. One participant from the 2006 pilot training in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia won a seat in the Malaysian general elections in March 2008. Haniza Talha, an advocate for women's rights, is now a member of the Selangor State Assembly and will be appointed as the first woman to be Deputy Speaker of the Assembly.

Global Food Crisis – Women and Food Sovereignty

The Rural and Indigenous Women (RIW) TF responded to the global food crisis by advocating for the rights of rural and indigenous women to control and access their land, natural resources and other means of food production which is a core food sovereignty demand. The Don't Globalise Hunger Campaign: Assert Women's Food Sovereignty continues to resist corporate agriculture and to push for policies promoting food sovereignty. The recent escalation in food prices is the latest calamity to hit the poor and marginalised communities in every developing country. Women and children suffer most under these conditions. APWLD members in the

Philippines, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan reported that staple food prices in their countries had increased by 60-70%.

A major activity of the RIW TF included the observance of World Rural Women's Day and World Foodless Day through coordinated local and national actions. APWLD issued a statement and produced advocacy materials for the events which were shared with participants of the Asia-Pacific Regional Women's Consultation with the UNSRVAW and UNSRIP in New Delhi, India. In addition, RIW members participated in the women's workshop on women and the global food crisis during the Third International Assembly of the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS) in Hong Kong in June. Other activities conducted by the TF included exchange of information, website updating, translation of the Food Sovereignty Kit by members in Bangladesh, Cambodia and Mongolia to their local languages. The Food Sovereignty Kit has now been translated into eight languages.

APWLD was part of the organising committee of the 1st Asian Rural Women's Conference. Members of the WEN and RIW TFs actively participated in the event. Society for Rural Education and Development (SRED), India reported that as a result of the awareness created by the conference, the Tamil Nadu state government allocated a budget for the feasibility study on the impact of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) on farmers and the impact of selling land to companies in farming communities. A major outcome of the conference is the formation of the Asian Rural Women's Coalition (ARWC).

Women local leaders from Thailand, Philippines, Cambodia, Mongolia and Indonesia shared various strategies with participants from other Asian countries to advocate for women's participation in natural resource management, among others. As a result, women in Thailand are now actively participating in the drafting process of the National Plan of Human Rights coordinated by the Thai NGO Coordinating Committee on Development (COD) and hosted by the Ministry of Justice.



Women and the Environment

The Women and Environment (WEN) TF continues to address the issue of extractive mining which causes land rights violations for peasant and indigenous peoples, land and river poisoning, siltation and erosion, and dislocation and out-migration of communities. WEN TF held the Asia Workshop on Women and Mining 19-20 July 2008 in Baguio City, Philippines. Concrete cases were presented to highlight the impact of mining on indigenous women, their food sovereignty and health, as well as human rights violations suffered by communities due to the militarised nature of mining projects. Various strategies used by women and their communities and recommendations in confronting the mining issue were discussed. The report of the workshop and the mining fact-finding missions conducted by WEN TF in Thailand and Mongolia have been consolidated in a publication as a tool for advocacy on mining legislation and policies at the national level.

Cross Cutting Initiatives

APWLD continues to participate in international and regional strategic meetings as an opportunity to contribute to movement building, to forge new partnerships and provide a regional perspective on current issues that APWLD is addressing. This report covers APWLD's attendance at the Asia Pacific Judicial Reform Forum, the Gender and Development Pacific Partners Meeting, the ASEAN Women's Caucus, the Asia Pacific Forum (APF) on National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs), the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) International Forum and the Grantmakers without Borders Conference.

Women Human Rights Defenders

APWLD and the Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM ASIA) co-organised the Asia Pacific Regional Consultation on Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs) with the UNSR on the situation of human rights defenders (UNSRHRD), Margaret Sekaggya, in Bangkok on 18 January 2009. Initially scheduled for 2008, the activity was moved to January 2009 due to the political situation in Thailand. The consultation provided a space for both women and men human

rights defenders to share strategies and good practices to fully implement the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders (UNDHRD).

Awareness-raising activities on the issue of WHRDs were carried out at various levels. APWLD collaborated with the WHRD International Coalition through an exhibit of WHRDs at the AWID International Forum. At the local level, a series of small actions on WHRDs were carried out by APWLD member National Network of Mongolian Women's NGOS (MONFEMNET) in Mongolia.

The WHRD website which is hosted by APWLD posted 23 alerts, 20 stories and statements on WHRDs who have been violated or continue to be at risk. The website recorded an average of 60 visits a month in 2008.

Conclusion

The Annual report has been compiled and put together by the Secretariat staff, Programme Officers, the Information and Communications Officer, WG and TFs reflecting the achievements of the network in collaboration with partners in 2008. APWLD acknowledges and appreciates the support of the longstanding partnerships with donors: Sida, Oxfam-Novib, Hivos, The Ford Foundation and Global Fund for Women and collaborative partnerships with other regional and international organisations.

APWLD has evolved over twenty years. In light of the current economic trends and challenges facing both national and regional non-governmental organisations (NGOs), 2009 will see APWLD adapt to new realities and new challenges. This will require the confidence and continuing support of donors and partners.

I thank you all for your support and in solidarity wish you all well in realising the challenges of the coming year.



Lynnsay Rongokea Francis
Regional Coordinator



Women's Human Rights Programme



Women's Human Rights Programme

Objectives:

- 1 To promote the integration of a women's human rights framework into APWLD programmes and among its members and partners, including through institutionalising Feminist Legal Theory and Practice in APWLD;
- 2 To support strategic initiatives and identify strategic fora for the advancement and protection of women's human rights in the Asia Pacific region; and
- 3 To enhance understanding of critical and emerging issues that affect the women's movement in the programmes of APWLD and among members and partners.

The Women's Human Rights Working Group (WHR-WG) plays a key role in generating and integrating a women's human rights framework into APWLD programmes by assisting TFs with feminist analysis and critique of emerging critical issues in the context of fundamentalisms, neo-liberal globalisation and militarisation.

As a part of a longer term strategy, the WHR-WG has taken steps to expand a committed APWLD resource pool of trainers for the FLTP training at national, sub-regional and regional levels and have continued to provide support to the WHRD campaign. The WHR-WG also closely monitors the development of ASEAN human rights mechanisms and provides input on women's human rights concerns.

1. APWLD's involvement in the establishment of ASEAN Human Rights Mechanisms

APWLD through the WHR-WG has been actively engaged in the ASEAN human rights process since 2007. The ASEAN Charter was adopted in November 2007 and the ASEAN High Level Panel (HLP) was set up, with a mandate to draft the terms of reference (ToR) for the establishment of an ASEAN Human Rights Body (AHRB). The HLP met for the first time in July 2008.

In September 2008, a Women's Caucus was formed composed of women's groups based in Southeast Asia to ensure that women's human rights concerns are fully integrated into the AHRB and the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWCP). APWLD together with International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific (IWRAW-AP) serves as focal point of the Women's Caucus.

On 12 September 2008, the Women's Caucus statement on the AHRB was presented to the HLP. Endorsed by 104 international and regional organisations, the statement called for the AHRB to promote, fulfill and realise human rights within the realities of the ASEAN people. The statement confirmed that all member states of ASEAN are parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and emphasised states' obligation to ensure full participation and equal representation of women at all stages of the process from drafting to final adoption of the AHRB.

Recommendations of the Women's Caucus have been incorporated into the documents prepared by the HLP after the September 2008 meeting in Manila, Philippines. The Women's Caucus was recognised as an entity to be included in the ongoing HLP's engagement with relevant ASEAN stakeholders.

On 17 September 2008, a submission on the ACWC and AHRB was drafted, calling for the ACWC to be integrated within the AHRB. The statement also called for member states of ASEAN to ratify without reservations the Optional Protocols for CEDAW and Convention on the Rights of the Child and ensure its implementation and practice. Women with specific vulnerabilities including indigenous women, women and girls affected by HIV/AIDS were recognised in the statement. The statement also emphasised the issues of women's sexual rights and reproductive health.



On 12 November 2008, the Women's Caucus presented to the Indonesian HLP member a briefing paper with recommendations on the ToR of AHRB to integrate women's concerns and promote women's human rights and eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women.

The WHR-WG will continue its engagement with the ASEAN human rights process to ensure that the first sub-regional human rights mechanisms in Asia will be a working system that respects, protects, promotes and fulfills women's human rights.

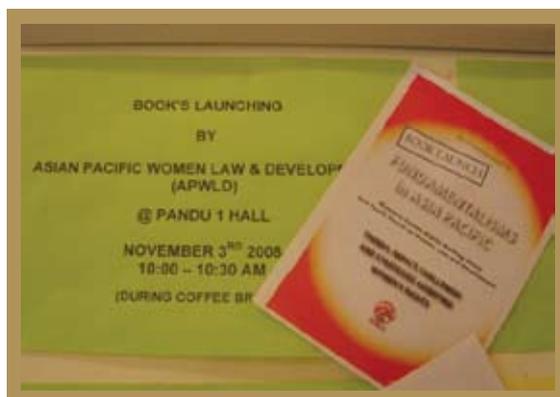
2. APWLD Fundamentalisms Panel at the 2nd Kartini Conference: 'Future Asian Feminism Confronting Fundamentalism, Conflict and Neoliberalism', 2-5 November 2008, Bali, Indonesia



Organised by the Kartini network, an Asian-European network of women academics and activists, the conference was attended by around 200 women from around the world.

The WHR-WG sponsored the first panel on Fundamentalisms and Feminisms. APWLD was represented by three WHR-WG members: Madhu Mehra (Partners for Law in Development, India), Kamala Chandrakirana (Komnas Perempuan, Indonesia), Zainah Anwar (Sisters in Islam, Malaysia); and one Programme and Management Committee (P&M) member Azra Talat Sayeed (Roots for Equity, Pakistan).

The panel aimed to further advance the understanding of fundamentalisms through comparative country overviews in the region, their impact on women and the interconnections with contemporary political and economic developments. Panellists discussed strategies on how feminists can collaborate to ensure the fulfillment of women's rights in Asia and resist the development of fundamentalisms. The panel was a culmination of APWLD's dedicated process of dialogue, discussion and sharing of different forms of fundamentalisms and their specific impacts on women's human rights. Attended by 57 participants (53 female and four male) from 12 countries, the panel was recognised for providing a uniquely comprehensive and clear analysis on the inter-connections of fundamentalisms with globalisation, militarisation and imperialism.



The WHR-WG launched APWLD's fundamentalisms publication *Fundamentalisms in Asia Pacific: Trends, Impacts, Challenges and Strategies Asserting Women's Rights* at the Kartini Conference.

3. Strengthening the mandate of the UNSRVAW, 25 November 2008, New York, USA

On the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, 25 November 2008, a panel to discuss the preliminary findings of '15 Years of the UNSRVAW [1994-2009]: A Review' was co-organised by the UNSRVAW, the Office of the UN Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women,



and the UN Population Fund. The event was held at the UN Headquarters in New York with 100 representatives from the UN, member states and civil society. Madhu Mehra, a WHR-WG member attended and presented preliminary findings of the review she undertook under the supervision of the current UNSRVAW, Yakin Ertürk. Reviewing 15 years of the UNSRVAW mandate, the panel discussion highlighted some of the emerging issues and challenges faced by women and girls around the world to guide the work of the future UNSRVAW to be appointed in 2009.

4. FLTP ToT Plus, 15-20 June 2008, Chiang Mai, Thailand

As a result of the FLTP ToT Plus, APWLD's resource pool of trainers has been strengthened, developed and expanded from three to 12 trainers. The pool of trainers has the capacity and commitment to conduct and sustain enhancement of FLTP trainings at national, sub-regional and regional levels, specifically in the strategic use of legal systems by women.



The training enabled the participants to integrate and apply feminist legal theory to all APWLD trainings. It brought together eight lawyers, activists and academics from five countries (Australia, Fiji Islands, India, Malaysia and Pakistan). Five of the participants were FLTP co-trainers and three were trainers from the Gender and Politics (G&P) Training of APWLD's WPPP Programme. The lead trainers for the training were Imrana Jalal (Fiji) and Eleanor Conda (Philippines).

Participants further deepened and enhanced FLTP concepts, principles and approaches by revisiting FLTP content and methods. The training also addressed emerging critical issues such as fundamentalisms, neoliberal globalisation and militarisation in the region that go beyond the basic FLTP training. The application of FLTP in the political dimensions and understanding women's human rights in the context of legal systems were deepened through interactive discussions. Guidelines were shared and standards were set on the roles and responsibilities of FLTP trainers.

The training created a unique opportunity to pilot test the FLTP Training Resource Manual and Reader. Participants used the manual to conduct substantive sessions of the training. Comments on each session were incorporated into the final version of the manual.

A G&P trainer reported how she was able to apply the learnings from the training. She incorporated FLTP principles in her session on 'Litigation and Advocacy' at the G&P Training in Bishkek Kyrgyzstan, in October 2008, as well as in her university courses on 'Women in Malaysian Politics' and 'Policy Analysis'.

The whole training had been an eye-opener for us in some aspects and issues, and challenged us to incorporate FLTP principles into the G&P Trainings. The workshop gave us much more than we can ever imagine. First, we found that the Substance, Structure and Culture (SSC) Framework used as the backbone for analysis was very insightful. Second, we were able to make better use of the international instruments especially CEDAW. Third, the camaraderie formed between all participants is something that is priceless.



Rashila Ramli



Junaenah Sulehan

WPPP Gender and Politics trainers, Malaysia





APWLD's FLTP ToT Plus trainings have been useful as they have taught us to be more critical and systematic in approaching law reform and advocacy issues from a feminist perspective. After the training, I managed to strengthen existing networks with other young Malaysian women activists working on popularising feminism and on writing for women's rights, and have formed new networks with local gender scholars through the Southeast Asian Gender Studies Association (SAMA) in the course of my work at the Women's Development Research Centre, University of Science Malaysia where I am currently pursuing a Masters degree in Gender Studies. I hope to be able to facilitate a national FLTP training in Malaysia in 2009 with support from APWLD and other FLTP trainers.

Karen Lai Yu Lee, Malaysia

The 2009 regional FLTP training will be held in September in Fiji, in collaboration with the Fiji Women's Rights Movement (FWRM). One national level FLTP training in Malaysia is also planned for 2009.

5. Research and Publications

Feminist Legal Theory and Practice Training Resource Manual and Reader

The FLTP Training Resource Manual and Reader has been developed and finalised. The Manual is a tool serving as basic guidelines for FLTP trainers for them to adopt to specific audiences. It will be updated, enriched and deepened, especially in relation to critical issues being addressed or evolving, relevant theories and frameworks being articulated, and strategies being adopted by women's rights activists and related groups and movements.

The Manual has two sections. The first section contains five 'sessions' that include objectives, notes to the facilitator, background information and suggested activities. The second section contains resources for both facilitator and participants, including suggestions on how to structure FLTP workshops, case studies for participant analysis and suggested follow-up resources. FLTP training materials such as reading materials and audio-visual aids are also included in the manual.

Fundamentalisms in Asia Pacific: Trends, Impacts, Challenges and Strategies Asserting Women's Rights

Launched at the 2nd Kartini Conference, this study on fundamentalisms in Asia Pacific is an initiative of the WHR-WG to identify critical and emerging issues on women's human rights. The publication develops APWLD's understanding of fundamentalisms, their impact on women and their relationship with contemporary political and economic developments, to enable members to strategically enhance and fulfill women's human rights in the region.

The first part of the publication maps the manifestations of fundamentalisms in the region through ten country reviews in Asia Pacific: Bangladesh, Burma, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, and Thailand, to call attention to the ways in which women's human rights and democracy are targeted. The second and third parts take stock of the impact of fundamentalisms on women as well as on democracy and politics in general. The last part documents the strategies adopted by women's groups and progressive movements to resist these developments.



The publication is also available on APWLD website www.apwld.org.



Violence Against Women Programme



Violence against Women Programme

Objectives:

- 1 To strengthen effectiveness of human rights mechanisms to address violence against women, specially through the Special Rapporteur mechanisms and the UN Human Rights Council;
- 2 To build capacity of women's groups to advocate for the elimination of existing and emerging forms of violence against women in the Asia Pacific region;
- 3 To enhance conceptual clarity among NGOs working on violence against women, on feminist and women human rights perspectives towards addressing recognised and unrecognised forms of violence against women, causes and consequences.

Despite developments in international and national legislations and state policies to make women's lives free from violence, women's realities are still far from the fulfillment of women's human rights. Patriarchy and the interconnected forces of neoliberal globalisation, fundamentalisms and militarisation perpetuate an environment in which women's right to live without violence and the full enjoyment of their fundamental human rights are systematically violated.

Enforcing the fulfillment of women's human rights remains a challenge. In many countries in the Asia Pacific region, opportunities for women to access justice are diminishing as they are marginalised at all levels of decision-making. Furthermore, traditional 'informal' justice systems operating in the region often with the endorsement of the states are getting stronger. These parallel legal regimes monitor and control community norms and practices, often reinforcing male dominance over women. Custom, tradition and cultural values are being used by the dominant judicial system to excuse and at times, perpetrate violence against women and girls.

I. Strengthening Human Rights Mechanisms

The Violence against Women (VAW) programme continues to strengthen the UNSR mechanism in demanding state accountability for VAW through regional and national consultations.

The Asia Pacific Regional NGO Consultation with the UNSR VAW Yakin Ertürk and the UNSRIP S. James Anaya, 15-16 October 2008, New Delhi, India

The 'Violence against Indigenous Women in Asia Pacific' theme was in response to the call of the UNPFII to the UNSR VAW to hold regional consultations with indigenous women. The two-day consultation brought together 62 women human rights activists, regional and international NGOs and UN agencies from 23 countries – Bangladesh, Burma, Cambodia, Cook Islands, Fiji, Guam, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, South Africa, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Taiwan and Thailand.



Discussions on current and emerging issues in the region highlighted the concerns of particular indigenous issues within the context of neoliberal globalisation, militarisation and armed conflict and fundamentalisms, and their intersectional impacts on the lives of indigenous women in the region.

The consultation also provided a critical forum for the two UNSRs to engage with Asia Pacific indigenous women and women activists and take



up the issues presented by the participants to be included in their annual reports to the UN Human Rights Council (HRC).

The consultation identified action guidelines for change and redress to better equip the participants to advocate for the promotion and fulfillment of indigenous women's human rights and fundamental freedoms and uphold collective rights of indigenous peoples without sacrificing women's rights under the name of collectivity.

Outputs of the consultation are:

■ Identification of multiple forms of violence, discrimination, inequalities and injustices faced by indigenous women within and outside their communities in Asia Pacific;

■ Identification of existing mechanisms for indigenous women to seek remedies; and

■ Strategies to advance the situation of indigenous women at community, local, national, regional and international levels.

Recommendations to the UNSRVAW and UNSRIP were:

■ To conduct joint thematic reports or studies addressing the intersectionality of discrimination and violence against indigenous women to facilitate bridging the gaps between national and international standards;

■ To respond to individual complaints submitted by indigenous women;

■ To jointly conduct an in-depth study and consultation/workshops with indigenous women on their particular experiences of violence and other forms of human rights violations; and

■ To make concrete recommendations to states and other concerned actors/agencies to effectively address the concerns of indigenous women that were raised at the consultation.

Many of the participants agreed that consultations with the UNSRs should be sustained as it is an effective mechanism for indigenous women to discuss their issues, share and learn effective strategies in advancing their rights and in addressing violence, discrimination and injustice against them in their communities and countries.

I found the entire consultation very informative. Having direct contact with the UNSRs is a powerful agent of change and hope for indigenous women. We were heard, our issues and concerns were tabled in the presence of UNSRs and regional leaders. As a country represented for the first time, we have gained so much. We are now equipped and have established linkages with our friends in Asia Pacific, the UNSRs and the world. Now we know how and where to start in leading and representing our indigenous women and indigenous people. Thank you APWLD.

Keke Loa Reva
Motu Koita Assembly,
Papua New Guinea



The VAW consultation in New Delhi was a powerful and enlightening experience for me personally. As an activist whose passion and commitment is the pursuit of peace and justice, I was humbled with the realisation that as a woman, my fundamental priority is to sustain the human race. Policies, practices and the impact of militarisation have left indigenous groups without a voice. This consultation was a wake up call to consciousness, action and unification. Saina ma'ase!

Lisa Baza
Peace and Justice
Consortium, Guahan



Feedback and reflections on the consultation from the two UNSRs were very positive.

This is the fifth regional consultation on violence against women APWLD has organised since I took up my mandate in 2003, celebrating the thirteen-year engagement with UNSRVAW and women in the Asia Pacific region following the inception of the mandate in 1994. These consultations have provided a unique and important space for me as the SR to meet with women in the Asia Pacific region and discuss key issues pertaining to violence against women, its causes and consequences. The consultations enable me to gain insight into the critical and emerging issues peculiar to and affecting women in the region, and explore effective strategies and good practices to eliminate all forms of violence against women and to uphold women's human rights.

APWLD has been creative in channelling women's voices in establishing the interlinkages of various issues with violence against women. The presence of the UNSRIP, S. James Anaya at the 2008 consultation provided an invaluable opportunity for dialogue between the two rapporteurs as well as with the representatives of civil society. Furthermore, while such an engagement constitutes a new modality for the future consultations that APWLD will organise with the UN special procedures mandate holders, it will also significantly contribute to enriching and strengthening the work of the UNSR.



...the consultation revealed once more that indigenous women are agents of change in building equitable relations within their families, communities and society at large, rather than just passive victims of violence and exclusion.

We must celebrate that the silence of oppression has been broken and that indigenous women are at the forefront in claiming their destiny as women and that of their communities. The insights from the consultation will prove useful inputs to my reports to the HRC.

I thank APWLD once again for organising the consultation and look forward to continuing this fruitful relationship.

Yakin Ertürk
UNSRVAW

Extract from Foreword of APWLD publication "Defending the Rights of Indigenous Women in the Asia Pacific", January 2009.

Having just begun my mandate in May 2008, this consultation was a timely opportunity for me to meet indigenous women and those supporting their causes in the Asia Pacific region and to learn more about their key issues. In this regard, the India national consultation was also particularly useful.

It was also a unique opportunity to collaborate with another mandate holder, one that has been a leader in this field for many years. With UNSRYakin Ertürk's years of experience on the issue, the consultations enabled me to gain insight into the critical and emerging issues peculiar to and affecting indigenous women in the region, and explore effective strategies to address the situation of violence against indigenous women within my mandate. The information that I received will inform my work in the future-whether in the form of communications to governments, country visits, or reports to the HRC.

I was particularly encouraged that APWLD and Mahila Sarvangeen Utkarsh Mandal (MASUM) framed much of the discussion within the consultation around the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), adopted in September 2007.... The demands for the rights of indigenous women specifically have played an instrumental part in this debate, and are thus enshrined in the Declaration.

The participants of the consultation rightly noted major gaps in implementation between the rights envisioned in the document and the role of the states



in addressing these rights through the formation of their laws, policy and practice. I was pleased to engage in a dialogue with the participants on how we might overcome this gap, and will continue to look to them for insight on how various states in the Asia Pacific region are advancing to fulfill their responsibilities.

I once again express my appreciation to APWLD and MASUM for organising the Regional and National Consultation and express my commitment to working together in the future.



S. James Anaya
UNSRIP

Extract from Foreword of APWLD publication “Defending the Rights of Indigenous Women in the Asia Pacific”, January 2009.

The report of the consultation will be published in May 2009 and will also be available on the APWLD website.

Other outcomes of the Regional Consultation with the UNSRVAW and UNSRIP

Individual Complaint to the UNSRVAW:

One participant filed an individual complaint with the UNSRs on the case of a woman being held in detention and currently under threat to life or to grievous harm.

National Consultation with the UNSRIP in Nepal: The National Network of Indigenous Women who participated at the regional consultation held a national consultation with the UNSRIP, S. James Anaya in Kathmandu, Nepal on 25 November 2008 during his official visit to the country. The Nepal consultation highlighted multiple forms of violence and rights violation against indigenous women in Nepal and presented recommendations to the UNSR and to national government officials. In response:

(i) a Task Force is to be set up to develop the re-listing procedure of the communities demanding their distinct identities of indigenous peoples; and

(ii) the Chairperson of the Constituent Assembly will put forward the recommendations from the consultation to the Assembly to make the new constitution more inclusive to indigenous peoples.

Joint Statement on Violence against Indigenous Women based on recommendations from the consultation:

APWLD together with Innabuyog, Philippines, FORUM ASIA, Asian Indigenous Women’s Network (AIWN) and Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact Foundation urged states, non-state actors such as transnational corporations (TNCs) and international financial institutions (IFIs), and UN bodies and agencies to uphold all human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous women in the region and around the world. The strengthened alliance of human rights groups and their joint initiatives to promote, protect and fulfill women’s human rights is one of the critical outcomes of the consultation.

India National Consultation with the UNSRVAW Yakin Ertürk and UNSRIP S. James Anaya, 17 October 2008, New Delhi, India

With the theme “Violence against Indigenous Women in India”, the national consultation was held following the regional consultation. Jointly organised by APWLD and MASUM, the national consultation saw the gathering of 105 participants, including indigenous women, social activists and human rights defenders from 17 different states of India.

Indigenous women in India face three-fold discrimination: because they are women, indigenous and poor. The consultation highlighted violence against indigenous women in India within the context of neoliberal globalisation, militarisation and armed conflict, fundamentalism (culture and customs), climate change and their intersectional impacts on the lives of indigenous women within and outside of their communities.



At the consultation, a number of critical areas of concern were highlighted. These include:

- The impact of the so-called development projects and resource extractive industries which seriously threaten food sovereignty of the people, particularly women, as well as lead to displacement and migration of indigenous peoples;
- Harmful traditional and cultural practices such as 'witch-hunting,' sexual harassment and violence against indigenous women and girls in conflict areas particularly in Northeast India; and
- Discrimination and violence against the lower class and caste perpetrated by the upper class and caste systems.

2. Research and Publications

Access to Justice – Study on Women's Notions of Justice: A Multi-Country Exploration into Women's Notions of Justice and Emergent Concerns on Accessibility

This study developed from the Access to Justice campaign, initiated by the VAW TF in 2005. The study was undertaken with the objectives to understand and reflect women's voices on their own notions of justice. Based on the critical insights into women's notions on justice, the study will provide a framework for women NGOs to approach justice from a women/feminist perspective as well as provide strategies to bridge the gap between existing interventions and women's realities.

Initially in two parts in 2007, the paper has evolved and is now in four parts. The first part of the study focuses on women's perception about justice and injustice based on their personal experience. The second part presents case studies based on its relevance and applicability in specific socio-legal-cultural context in different countries. The third part is a compilation of women's responses to a questionnaire presented with hypothetical but common situations that most women had either personally confronted or with which they could

easily relate given their socio-cultural context. The last part addresses the gap between the approaches of women NGOs who have theoretical and objective understanding of the 'legal' rights of women victims, and women's expectations that signify highly personalised notions of justice.

The research is set to be published in 2009 and will be translated into local languages of the countries that participated in the study: Bangladesh, Burma/Thailand, Fiji, India, Japan, Mongolia, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

Natural Disaster and Violence Against Women

Started in 2008, the research 'Women's Land Rights in the Post Disaster Context' is being conducted by the VAW TF in collaboration with VAW TF member Suriya Women's Development Centre, Sri Lanka. The study aims to identify how government policies are related to women's rights in the post disaster context specifically during the 2004 Tsunami. The results of the research will include: concrete data and case studies on the process of post tsunami land allocation; a gendered analysis of state as well as of international humanitarian organisations policies in context to women's land rights.

The research will result in a report which will be used in various contexts:

- As a tool for lobbying local and national policy and law reforms, advocating women's land ownership in Sri Lanka;
- As a resource material for awareness-raising on women's right to land through consultations and workshops.

3. Other Achievements

APWLD supported the statement 'Human Rights Situation under the State of Emergency, Mongolia' which gained support from 18 regional and international NGOs in the region. VAW TF member National Center Against Violence (NCAV) is a member of a national Coalition which has a mandate to monitor and protect human rights during state of emergencies.



Established on 1 July 2008, the Coalition includes 28 NGOs in Mongolia. Mongolia was put under a state of emergency in July 2008 following the election protests. The Coalition attended the preliminary court investigation process of 59 cases as advocates. Through meetings, interviews and testimonies of 126 relatives and family members, they documented the cases of 71 people arrested without due process during the state of emergency.

APWLD in collaboration with the Coalition represented by the NCAV, will keep monitoring the development of the situation of people in unlawful detention and take necessary actions at regional and international levels.

We express gratitude to all members of APWLD who supported our Coalition during that vulnerable period of human rights violation.



Enkhjargal Davaasuren
NCAV, Mongolia



Labour and Migration Programme



Labour and Migration Programme

Objectives:

1 To enhance the understanding with feminist perspectives of domestic work done by migrant women workers from Asia Pacific through the development of a definition of domestic work using the women's human rights framework to work towards States recognition of domestic work and domestic workers;

2 To identify and expose exploitative and discriminatory policies and laws affecting local and migrant women workers in free trade zones in APWLD member countries in the context of globalisation from a feminist perspective; and

3 To strengthen APWLD national partners' efforts in building alliances at the national, regional, and international levels for the rights of women migrant workers and trafficked women.

Women migrant workers constitute the largest number of 'unskilled' workers in receiving countries, employed primarily as domestic workers, 'entertainers' and factory workers with no protection against abuse and discrimination and with no access to redress. With this context in mind, the Labour and Migration Task Force (L&M TF) continues research on discriminatory policies, laws and practices, and advocates for law reform on non-discrimination and equality issues in the workplace, and for the implementation and enforcement of existing international labour standards.

1. 2008 Joint Regional Consultation with UNSR Migrants Jorge Bustamante and UNSR Slavery Gulnara Shaninian, 24-25 October 2008, Manila, Philippines

Jointly organised by APWLD's L&M TF, CARAM Asia and GAATW, the consultation saw the UNSRs and 61 participants (51 women and 10 men) address the issue of protection for documented and undocumented foreign domestic workers and women migrants.



Participants were from both migrant worker sending and receiving countries: Bahrain, Bangladesh, Burma, Columbia, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, Peru/ Argentina, Singapore and Thailand. They included foreign domestic workers, women migrants, representatives of migrant women's community based organisations, NGOs, CSOs, trade unions, inter-governmental organisations, APWLD's L&M TF members and other partner organisations.

The participants identified and exposed discriminatory laws, policies and practices and human rights violations against migrant workers. Regional mechanisms in place such as the ASEAN Task Force on Migrant Workers, UFDWRs and the Jakarta Process also presented their efforts currently being undertaken in the region.

The consultation resulted in recommendations on promoting and protecting the rights of domestic workers including:

- Domestic workers, documented and undocumented, should be covered by labour laws so they do not fall into situations of debt bondage, passport confiscation, and slavery. Pre-departure trainings must be provided by their governments free of charge for domestic workers opting to work abroad. Domestic workers must be ensured their right to retain their travel and work documents. Employers must bear the burden of recruitment fees.
- All mechanisms available to access the UN Special Procedures including the complaints mechanism should be utilised by migrant





workers. CSOs should assist grassroots organisations in accessing such mechanisms through regular consultations, meetings and workshops.

- Regional mechanisms should be in place to promote, advance and strengthen the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Migrant Workers and Members of their Families. Such mechanisms should have genuine participation and involvement of civil society, especially of migrant workers, and NHRIs in the processes of human rights standard setting at the regional level.

Comments from the UNSRs:



UNSR Slavery Gulnara Shaninian stated that the consultation had provided an opportunity to increase her learning on the issues that foreign domestic workers face. According to her, although there were commonalities

between the issues being addressed by her office and that faced by domestic workers, many issues presented at the consultation were new to her. She suggested to the participants at the consultation to set up a database or registry on migrants and to document the violations of migrants' rights which would help in analysing the root causes of such violations and develop strategies to successfully address them. The UNSR Slavery assured the participants that she will raise the issues of foreign domestic workers voiced at the consultation to the UN.

UNSR Migrants Jorge Bustamante stated that he will incorporate the recommendations from the consultation in his report to the UN HRC. He iterated his call for statistics on undocumented immigrants in the region and if countries could commit to identifying areas of economy and volume of jobs in areas responded to by undocumented immigrants. The UNSR mentioned that there is a lack of recognition for such demand and that this information and statistics will be useful for planning and rational management of a labour market for legal migrants.



Some feedback from the participants:

The consultation was useful in terms of networking with other national, regional and international organisations especially as it is important for building stronger movements, sharing experiences and maintaining contacts to help strengthen our strategies on foreign domestic workers.

Sri Wiyanti Eddyono, Commissioner, Komnas Perempuan, Indonesia.

The consultation has exposed the issues that we domestic workers in Hong Kong face such as the two-week-rule and employer levy to the UNSR.

Soledad Pillas, Filipino foreign domestic worker in Hong Kong.

The UNSR on Slavery has confirmed her participation at the next regional consultation in 2010.

2. United for Foreign Domestic Workers Rights - Regional Campaign for Recognition of Domestic Work as Work

The campaign was initiated in 2007 based on the recognition that foreign domestic workers represented the most vulnerable category of workers, were excluded from legally protected occupations, and that most women domestic workers were isolated from mainstream labour, social and health protection laws and policies. The five core campaign partners are APWLD through the L&M TF, Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants, CARAM Asia, GAATW and Mekong Migration Network.



In 2008, the campaign highlighted the call for the recognition of domestic work as work through the following activities:

Tea towel display: Voicing our Message!

Since most domestic workers cannot take time off work, much less travel to advocate for the protection of their rights, the goal is to give a platform to the voices and demands of foreign domestic workers.

During the year, a hundred tea towels were distributed to foreign domestic workers in Thailand, Hong Kong and Malaysia to write their messages on tea-towels calling on governments to Recognise Domestic Work as Work! A total of 50 messages were received, which is an achievement as most of these domestic workers do not get days off to join other activities. The messages, as part of the activity were taken to the following venues: the Joint Regional Consultation with UNSR Migrants and UNSR Slavery (24-25 October 2008, Manila, Philippines); the International Assembly of Migrants and Refugees (IAMR) (28-30 October 2008, Manila, Philippines); and at the 11th AWID International Forum (14-17 November 2008, Cape Town, South Africa).

The tea towel display received messages of solidarity from across the globe resonating the call for the recognition of domestic work as work.

In 2009, more tea towel messages will be collected and displayed at various events.

The **UFDWRs blogspot**: <http://ufdwrs.blogspot.com/> was created by campaign partners in 2008 to inform campaign members, supporters and the general public about the campaign and the situation of foreign domestic workers in the region.

The comic book - **SAYA MIGRAN: A domestic workers guide to understanding and asserting our rights** - is an educational tool targeting foreign domestic workers.



The comic book educates foreign domestic workers on their rights such as standard working hours, minimum wage and a weekly day off. The prototype is in the English language and will be translated into several languages - Bahasa, Burmese, Thai, Khmer, Mandarin and Tamil.

An **information booklet** is also being developed by the campaign partners to create greater awareness on UFDWRs and the campaign.

3. The Philippine government hosted the second **Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD)** in Manila from 29-30 October. The GFMD is a new initiative of the international community to address the migration and development interconnections and the progressive acknowledgment of the need to address the policy implications and responses in a multilateral framework.

GFMD civil society initiatives 27-28 October 2008, Manila, Philippines

L&MTF member Daisy Arago from the Philippines participated in the official civil society initiatives preceding the GFMD. She joined over 220 delegates from 60 countries from around the world. Participants came together to discuss the rights and protection of migrants, the expansion of legal avenues for migration and the challenge of coherence within nations and across borders. Some recommendations of the civil society initiatives were:

- Urging all governments to consider the benefits of migration and resist restricting the number of migrants going abroad, especially in the current economic circumstances;
- Recognise the need for the development of a global architecture to ensure a rights-based approach to migration;
- and for the UN to bring the GFMD back within its formal mandate.

Governments should re-affirm their commitment to development through realising the Millennium Development Goals, full employment and decent work as the priorities for development.

The participants stressed that although voluntary migration can contribute in important ways to development, migration is not and cannot be used as a substitute for development policy. Migration can carry benefits for both origin and destination countries and governments have an obligation to create a framework of laws, policies and institutions to realise this potential.

Daisy Arago, however, reported the glaring absence of migrants at the civil society discussions. She noted that the very sector under discussion was not there to detail their issues and voice their concerns. Despite this, engagement at the GFMD civil society discussions is a step to better understand and learn about the impact of the GFMD on migrants and migrants' protection.

Education campaign on GFMD for migrant workers, September to October 2008, Hong Kong, SAR

L&M TF member Mission for Migrants Workers (MFMW) based in Hong Kong, held four Migrants Educators' Training Seminars on GFMD for 219 participants which included mostly women from Thailand, Indonesia, Philippines, Nepal and Sri Lanka representing 32 organisations. This campaign was launched to educate migrant workers of Hong Kong on the purpose and mechanisms of the GFMD. There are plans by local Hong Kong organisations to translate the training materials to other Asian languages for wider outreach.

4. **IAMR**, 28-30 October 2008, Manila Philippines

Organised as an alternative activity to the GFMD civil society initiatives, over 130 grassroots migrant workers, refugees, trade unionists and activists from around the world gathered for the IAMR to issue a challenge to the GFMD: End poverty, ensure jobs at home, stop forced migration! Uphold and protect the rights of migrants and refugees!

The L&MTF co-organised and took part in various activities at the IAMR:





Migrants Speak-Out: The Speak-Out, featured a march-rally, followed by cultural performances by more than 20 artists who highlighted various migrant issues such as abuse, exploitation, lack of protection mechanisms, among others. Over 2,700 women, men and children took part in the Speak-Out which was co-organised with Migrante International, CARAM Asia and APWLD.

Women's Workshop on Women's Migration: the Empowerment Myth. Co-organised with GWP as part of the eleven workshops at the IAMR, about 50 individuals, mainly women attended the workshop. Premised on the 'feminisation of migration' which the UN and the International Labour Organization view as having the potential to advance gender equality and women's empowerment, the workshop stressed that migration of women cannot possibly result in empowerment given its current context under globalisation. It was stressed that out-migration of women was a result of desperation for livelihood unavailable in home countries and migration was promoted by governments of sending countries to deflect their failure in providing decent work. The empowerment myth was debunked primarily by the reality that migrant women end up in low-skilled jobs in foreign countries, with low wages, and terrible working conditions. Additionally, women migrant workers are subject to discrimination and are vulnerable to abuse. Recommendations at the workshop included: job creation that could absorb the labour force with enforcement of liveable wages; and governments of sending countries to address their fundamental economic problems. The participants agreed that women migrant workers need to organise and act against globalisation and its resulting export of women.



A panel had been organised for migrant workers to tell their stories of struggle and the situation of women migrants. The panel included a Thai migrant worker in Hong Kong, an Indonesian domestic worker in Hong Kong and a Vietnamese foreign bride in Taiwan. In addition, the panel also included a Latin American activist and L&M TF members Rahela Rabbani (Bangladesh) and Undarya Tumursuhk (Mongolia).

The IAMR was able to generate a commendable level of public awareness on the plight and challenges of migrant workers, particularly women migrants. Media coverage including print, television and radio for the IAMR activities was extensive within Philippines and globally.



5. International Migrants Alliance, 15-16

June 2008, Hong Kong SAR

“For a long time, others spoke on our behalf. Now we speak for ourselves” was the resounding call of the first ever assembly of the global alliance of grassroots migrant organisations and their mass-based advocates. One hundred and sixty seven delegates representing 118 organisations from 25 countries participated in the founding assembly of the first international formation of grassroots migrants. APWLD is an associate member of the International Migrants Alliance (IMA). L&M TF member Asfinawati of Indonesia spoke to the assembly on the work of APWLD’s L&M Programme. The TF also supported the participation of migrant workers Eni Lestari, Feliza Benitez and Josie Pingkhan.

The two-day gathering broadened my insights on the plight and experiences of migrants from various regions, especially the migrant domestic workers, and enriched my knowledge with lessons learnt from their very concrete struggle and resistance. As a domestic worker, it was also significant for me that the IMA resolved to campaign for the recognition of domestic work as work. The members in different regions have agreed to give their commitment in reaching out to the domestic worker’s organisations in their countries and connect them with IMA.

Eni Lestari, IMA Chairperson, Spokesperson for the Asian Migrants Coordinating Body and foreign domestic worker in Hong Kong

IMA has created a new chapter in our solidarity work with different organisations amidst the current political, social, economic and even cultural policies of neoliberal governments which greatly affect migrants, refugees and other minorities. Exploitation and abuse are rampant while protection is denied us. In mingling with different grassroots organisations, I felt that we have common issues and concerns and I thought that certainly through our unity, collective efforts and struggle, we can achieve victories.

Feliza Benitez, acting President of Filipino Migrant Workers Union

The formation of IMA comes at a time when we are tormented with a torrent of woes, hitting every facet of our working lives. Not only do we have the voice but the strength to fend off attacks on our rights and most importantly, the power to actively advance our rights and interests.

Josie Pingkhan, Chairperson of Cordillera Alliance in Hong Kong

6. Local Level Capacity Building

Second National Conference of Service Providers for Migrant Workers in Hong Kong, 12 December 2008, Hong Kong SAR

Organised by L&M TF member MFMW, 30 participants from 10 service-providing NGOs, two local organisations and three grassroots migrants’ organisations took part in the 2nd National Conference of Service Providers. The conference participants gained a deeper understanding of the issues faced by migrant workers in Hong Kong, and drafted a common plan of action.

Cynthia Abdon Tellez, L&M TF Convenor highlighted advocacy and lobbying as areas where service providers played a critical role in popularising the issues and supporting the campaigns of migrant workers. MFMW and other APWLD partners were part of the successful campaigns highlighted including:

Philippines. In early 2008, the government through the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration came out with Memorandum Circular #04 banning direct-hiring of migrant workers. A campaign was launched to veto the memorandum as it limits the chances of migrants to seek employment without approaching recruitment agencies. After a series of forums, petition, pickets and rallies in Hong Kong, the Philippine government abolished the ban by 01 February 2008.

Indonesia. Also in early 2008, the Indonesian Government imposed *Surat Edaran #2258* (Memo Circular #2258) prohibiting Indonesian migrants from changing



recruitment agencies during the first two years of their employment in Hong Kong. This law has particular concerns for women migrants as it prevents them from escaping slavery-like conditions of employment. The recruitment agencies that bring workers to Hong Kong normally charge the workers approximately seven month's salary as placement fee. In most cases, Indonesian domestic workers lose their jobs after seven months practically receiving nothing. If they remain with the same agency, they are charged an equivalent of five months' salary for the second contract, which in essence means that they work for a year without pay. An urgent campaign call was launched consisting of weekly picket protests, petition-signing, and rallies with workers from various countries. The Indonesian Consular officials engaged in dialogues with over 15 Indonesian workers' organisations in Hong Kong resulting in the abolishment of this directive by mid-February 2008.

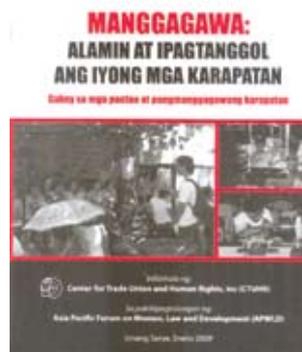
Hong Kong. In 2003, wages of foreign domestic workers in Hong Kong was reduced by HK\$400 in response to the Asian economic crisis. In addition, the Hong Kong government also imposed an equal amount monthly levy on employers of foreign domestic workers. In other words the "Levy for Retraining Local Workers" was an obvious indirect tax to the workers. In response to the levy, the Hong Kong migrant workers groups mobilised and conducted several protest actions. The issue was raised to the CEDAW Committee in 2007. In August 2008, the government, through the Department of Labour initially suspended the levy for two years and then extended the suspension to five years. While this has been a respite for the foreign domestic workers of Hong Kong, a continuing campaign to abolish the levy is ongoing and is gaining support among Hong Kong legislators.

National Consultation on Migration and Development: Harnessing the Role of Migrant Filipinos for Social Change, 16-17 March 2008, Manila, Philippines

MIGRANTE International and the National Council of Churches in the Philippines with

support from L&M TF organised a consultation with 45 representatives (24 women and 21 men) working on migrants issues or providing services for migrant workers. The focus of the consultation was to discuss issues involving and affecting migrant Filipinos and to develop a strategic, collaborative action in response to common issues. Among the recommendations were: to undertake a systematic coordination with the various MIGRANTE chapters and various sectors regarding campaign issues; and to organise consultations and awareness raising activities on the GFMD and the issues surrounding the GFMD.

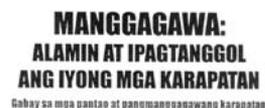
Know Your Rights Booklet is a resource material produced by the Centre for Trade Union and Human Rights, Philippines with assistance from L&M TF. SEZs operate autonomously with their own security systems which also controls the flow of information. Workers access to information on labour rights is almost absent. Similarly, labour rights defenders are banned from entering the zones, thus contact with workers is almost impossible. This lack of information makes the workers more vulnerable to employers' abuse and exploitation. The booklet provides women workers in SEZs in the Philippines with resource materials and information on their rights as workers and on actions that they can take against the violations of their rights.



Ang CTUHR ay isang non-stock, non-profit non-government organization na nagpasadokumento, sumusubaybay at nag-imbestiga ng mga paglabag sa mga karapatang pantao at pangmanggagawa sa loob at labas ng paggawaan at komunidad. Naglalathala din ito ng mga impormasyon at pagpasiuri, naglulunsad ng mga kampanya, nagtataguyod at bumubuo ng mga ugnayan hinggil sa pagkilala sa mga karapatang pantao at pangmanggagawa.

Nagbibigay din ito ng mga serbiyo sa mga manggagawa tulad ng paralegal at documentation trainings, HR and Labor Rights education, labour rights campaign and advocacy trainings. Unagapay din ang CTUHR sa pagtatag ng mga HR committees sa mga organisasyon, unyon at rehiyon at nagkokoordina ng pagpapadala ng Quick Response Teams (QRT).

Ang CTUHR ay kasapi ng Asia Pacific Women, Law and Development (APWLD) Labour and Migration Task Force.



National Assembly of Working People

organised by New Trade Union Initiative, 15-17
December 2008, Tamil Nadu, India

Twenty grassroots women workers and activists representing the Women's Resource Centre (Malarchi) were supported by the L&M TF to attend the National Assembly of Working People. Malarchi, a L&M TF member, joined trade unions in organising the assembly that aimed to create political and social structures that will enable the working class to articulate their needs and develop a framework for negotiating their demands with the government. The assembly provided a space for organisations working on labour issues to dialogue with other groups, women's organisations, trade unions, academics, and activists working in other related fields.



Women's Participation in Political Processes Programme



Women's Participation in Political Processes Programme

Objectives:

- 1 To challenge existing political structures and increase women's representation at the national and local levels through the sharing of experiences and strategies for success;
- 2 To introduce and promote a feminist perspective and agenda in political processes by conducting gender and politics training workshops; and
- 3 To develop and enhance linkages with national and international organisations in promoting greater women's participation in politics and empowerment by identifying and collaborating with appropriate organisations.

The Women's Participation in Political Processes (WPPP TF) focuses on capacity building through the G&P Training workshops. These workshops aim to increase the number of women in decision making positions in the region, via training, networking and empowering women to challenge existing political structures. The TF has also provided support in building platforms for strategy and information sharing amongst different groups of women including women in decision making positions, academics and activists in the region. The experiences and strategies of women NGOs and movements in the electoral processes provide extremely valuable information to assist in the development of women's local programmes.

I. Seethings and Seatings: Asia-Pacific Conference on Women in Politics and Governance, 1-2 June 2008, Bangkok, Thailand

The conference brought together 33 participants (31 women and 2 men) from 15 countries in the region: Bangladesh, Cambodia, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand and Timor Leste. Participants included a diverse range of activists for women's political participation including: 17 representatives of women's NGOs with an outreach of over 10,000

people, women from marginalised communities, parliamentarians, local government officials, members of the judiciary, and women who have contested in national and local elections. Also present were 14 APWLD network members and two regional partners (South Asia Partnership International and UNIFEM).

Participants at the conference highlighted measures to overcome the barriers, and address and face the problems, challenges and opportunities confronting women in politics and governance in the Asia Pacific region.

Keynote speaker Papua New Guinea's Community Development Minister Dame Carol Kidu said "The Pacific region has always had the lowest percentage of women in politics and is the only region that has shown no improvement inspite of almost two decades of global activism." Dame Carol Kidu said that equality, justice and development can only truly be achieved when women take their rightful place in the institutions of power and decision-making and become law-makers themselves.



Dame Carol Kidu,
Papua New Guinea's
Community Development
Minister

Exemplary courage and actions were highlighted by participants from India, Taiwan, Philippines, Nepal and Kyrgyzstan at the conference.



Duraivelu Shanthy is part of the Tamil Nadu Dalit Women's Movement (TNDWM). She was one of the successful 265 Dalit women out of 820 who won at the local level elections in October 2007. Duraivelu Shanthy stood as an independent candidate and she was elected as Councilor for the state of Tamil Nadu, defeating the ruling and opposition state parties. Duraivelu Shanthy has been strongly supported by the Dalit women's movement in Tamil Nadu in the fight to demand greater rights for Dalit people amidst threats to the safety of herself and her family.

Gulnara Derbisheva is part of the successful "50 Women for Parliament Project" by the Forum for Women's NGOs Kyrgyzstan. The project aims to train 50 women to run for office in the Parliament of Kyrgyz Republic or local councils from provinces of Kyrgyzstan. Gulnara Derbisheva, an alumnus of the G&P workshop (2007), is part of the 26% of women parliamentarians following the 2007 elections - a considerable jump after 0% previously. Rife with election fraud and other malpractice, Gulnara with the help of women's groups worked tirelessly for the introduction of temporary special measures in the Elections Code for the Kyrgyz Republic.



Hon. Gulnara Derbisheva
and
Nurgul Djanaeva of Kyrgyzstan

The conference also highlighted experiences of other women in the region. Yi-Chien Chen, Assistant Professor in Gender Graduate School, Shih-Hsin University, shared that Taiwan is not recognised as a sovereign state by many nations noting that "As Taiwan has been excluded from the international community since 1970s, the status of women in Taiwan is not monitored by

the UN and its agencies. There is a lack of institutional support to which women of most UN member nations are entitled. Despite all the setbacks Taiwanese women have struggled to stand their ground and now make up 26% of the Taiwanese cabinet this year."

This conference was an outstanding opportunity for women from across the region to share experiences, network and create new linkages.

A number of activities were identified from the conference and are scheduled for development and implementation including: the creation of a listserve (being used regularly since the conference as an information tool); the publication of conference proceedings in 2009; and a biennial event to foster further discussions, with the next conference scheduled for 2010.

2. Kazakhstan Seminar on Women in Civil Society and in Politics, 1-2 May 2008, Taraz, Kazakhstan

WPPP TF supported TF member Taraz Initiative Centre to organise a seminar for 19 women-leaders from Jambul, Southern Kazakhstanskaya and Kizil-Ordinskaya provinces. The participants were all potential candidates for local government elections. Facilitated by Svetlana Beissova (WPPP TF) and Bodaubekova Fatima, the seminar aimed to: enhance the knowledge of women NGO leaders on gender issues; build their capacity in pre-election techniques in the lead up to the next elections; and build the capacity of participants to carry out similar seminars in their organisations.

In addition to the above, the seminar enabled the participants to form a league of active women to advance gender equality and women's participation in political processes. The seminars will be replicated by the participants in their respective provinces to empower women on political processes and increase the number of women at the local government level.

3. Exchange Programme for Women Members of Parliament, 10-12 August 2008

Thai Member of Parliament Dr. Rachada Dhnadirek visited the Philippines for a two-



day programme hosted by GWP. Dr. Rachada Dhnadirek met with representatives of GWP and alliances, members of the Philippines House of Representatives and Senate, members of various committees on women, youth and children, and members of national NGOs. The exchange visits aim to harness and consolidate the strength and capacities of women's movements and individuals working for the enhancement of women's participation in politics.

Dr. Rachada Dhnadirek and GWP confer that the exchange programme realised the following outcomes:

- Sharing of experiences and extensive discussion among women parliamentarians in advancing and enhancing women's participation in politics and governance; the roles of women parliamentarians and activists; and on building and advancing the women's movements in overcoming gender inequalities.
- Cooperation between Thai and Philippine women parliamentarians was established for mutual support and linkages to address the issues of women in both countries.

4. Central Asia Sub-Regional G&P Training Level I, 17-19 October 2008, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

The training workshop saw the participation of 27 women from four countries of the Central Asia region: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Four members of the G&P training pool and WPPP TF (Rashila Ramli, Junaenah Sulehan, Bermet Stakeeva and Nurgul Djanaeva) led the workshop. They reported that the participants had tremendous experience working on women's issues but were unfamiliar with the academic understanding of issues. By the end of the training the participants relayed that they found the training very relevant to their work. All the resource materials and workshop sessions were translated into the Russian language. Special guest presenter Hon. Gulnara Derbisheva presented her experiences when discussing successful strategies used by women to enter politics.

This training focuses on enabling women in decision making positions to incorporate women



and women's issues within mainstream decision making processes and political institutions. The training is structured to address areas of: advancing conceptual and theoretical knowledge of political systems and their impact on women; identifying barriers to women's political participation; building practical skills and strategies to overcome barriers; developing a women-centred concept of politics and a set of values and ethics to engage in transformative politics.



Outcomes of the WPPP Regional G&P Trainings:

I have to thank APWLD for giving me the opportunity to increase my knowledge on campaign, lobbying and advocacy work for better participation of women in politics. I have used the knowledge in my campaign as a candidate in the last Malaysian general election in March 2008. I'm now an elected representative for a constituency in the Selangor state of Malaysia. I am also being appointed as the first lady to be Deputy Speaker of the Selangor State Assembly. After nine months in office, I am still learning to be a good representative of the people of my constituency. It is a very challenging position and people have high expectations from the newly elected state government. I intend to create an internship programme for aspiring young women who want to be active in politics. I thank APWLD again for its efforts in realising the goal of increasing the participation of women in politics, giving them the skills needed to 'manage' people.



Haniza Talha

Haniza Talha, participant at the 2006 Pilot G&P Training in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

I have used the training modules, case studies and other resource materials provided in the 2007 training to conduct several workshops and seminars on the 'Role and Position of Women in Politics' for up to 200 women and men in the Sindh area in collaboration with other NGOs in the region. The basic idea of those workshops was to identify recommendations for government in order to take strong actions on policy level for maximum participation of women in politics as voters in general and leaders in particular. The trainings were popular and effective and my organisation, Sindh Irrigation and Drainage Authority, was provided funds to run a voter education project for 6 million rural people. In rural Pakistan where the feudal lords influence voting



Shakeela Begum Laghari

trends, we held numerous meetings and campaigns with a large number of women, men, civil society members, NGOs, schools, universities to mobilise people and cast votes and especially encourage women to vote. The result was momentous as we had almost a 100% turnout and it was the first time that a very large number of women turned out to vote. The training tools which were most effective in the trainings were the 'problem tree', 'body mapping' and the 'frog story'. With all this work, I have been recommended by my organisation to carry out analytical work on Women Empowerment and Gender Rights for the Pakistani Planning Commission.

Shakeela Begum Laghari, Pakistan, participant at the 2007 Regional G&P Training in Bangkok, Thailand

5. Kyrgyzstan - Shadow Report to 42nd CEDAW Committee

The Kyrgyz government in October 2008 presented its country report to the 42nd session of the CEDAW Committee. Seizing this as an opportunity to hold their government accountable in implementing CEDAW in Kyrgyzstan, several women's groups coordinated by The Forum of women's NGOs of Kyrgyzstan, came together to write the Shadow Report. The Shadow Report covers the period 2002-2007 and is an analysis of the status of violence against women and women's participation in political processes in Kyrgyzstan.

The WPPP TF supported the participation of Sveta Saiakbaeva, Director of the Tendesh Crisis Centre, who also monitors the situation of women in the province of Naryn on behalf of the Forum, to be part of the delegation of women's representatives from Kyrgyzstan presenting the Shadow Report in Geneva. Prior to leaving for Geneva, she took part in trainings on how to make effective presentations at the CEDAW Session.

While in Geneva, Sveta Saiakbaeva participated actively in formal and informal meetings with the CEDAW Committee members and effectively lobbied the members. She presented to the Committee a case study of a young unemployed woman facing regular brutal domestic violence but





Thailand:

In 2008, the WPPP TF has translated and will publish 'Seethings and Seatings: Strategies for Women's Political Participation in Asia Pacific' in the Thai language in partnership with the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand. This research will directly benefit women, women's NGOs and the academia interested in entering politics, or would like to have more knowledge on the issue of women's participation in political processes in Asia Pacific.

with no intervention from the community or the authorities. Included in the Shadow Report's 18 point recommendation to the Committee were the continued reforms of current legislation and enforcement of existing laws in relation to domestic violence.

This was the first time that a local provincial NGO had participated in the Kyrgyz delegation. Sveta Saiakbaeva related that her participation helped her gain first hand knowledge and skills using international mechanisms such as CEDAW and its monitoring body, and contributed to a better understanding of monitoring of international laws in Kyrgyzstan.

Upon her return Sveta Saiakbaeva assisted in organising roundtable discussions in Bishkek and in Naryn provinces to inform other network members of the Shadow Report presentations and the Concluding Comments from the CEDAW Committee.

Outcomes of WPPP's Publications:

Seethings and Seatings: Strategies for Women's Political Participation in Asia Pacific can now be read in three languages: English, Russian and Bahasa Malaysia. The research is a critical resource for network members and women across the region who challenge existing electoral processes. The publication provides data on country specific forces that prevent women from being able to assert their voices in their respective political institutions and provides methods to incorporate feminist agendas at various levels of government.

WPPP trainer S.K. Priya used the information from the six case studies in the book for her session on 'Gender and Leadership' at a regional workshop in Bangkok. The Regional Leadership Advocacy and Lessons Learned Workshop, organised by the UNDP Regional Center, Bangkok was held on 6-7 November 2008. Participants were 25-30 young and emerging leaders from the region, 13 of which were women. The workshop aimed to bring together leadership development proponents and actors in the region to share and discuss emerging leadership lessons learned; identify practical strategies for understanding and nurturing home-grown, indigenous leadership practices; and recommend strategies for enhancing the role of leadership networks and platforms.

Philippines:

The book has been a valuable resource for GWP, which has shared the information in the book with up to 20 women parliamentarians and women working in politics and governance in Asia, Africa, Latin America, Europe, and the US. It has also been shared in workshops and seminars with at least 30 women's organisations with an outreach of more than 7,000 women.



Malaysia:

The book was used as a text for two graduate courses on international politics at the University Kebangsaan Malaysia with 22 students.

Central Asia:

The book was used as a resource for the Central Asia Sub-Regional G&P Training - Level I held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan from 17-19 October 2008, for 27 women from four countries (Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan) in the Central Asia region.



Women and Environment Programme



Women and Environment Programme

Objectives:

- 1 To carry further the food sovereignty advocacy within a women human rights framework;
- 2 To further the advocacy of food sovereignty among partners and networks primarily through the campaign 'Don't globalise Hunger!' Assert Women's Rights to Food Sovereignty; and
- 3 To contribute in the resistance against corporate control over natural resources, particularly in mining and water sectors, by engaging in policy advocacy at all possible levels.

The Women and Environment (WEN) Programme has always defined and considered "environment" as the source of livelihood and life of communities, both rural and urban. Irreversible damages to the environment brought about by the different large-scale commercial projects of TNCs, have resulted in poverty and hunger, particularly for rural communities with the heaviest impact being faced by women and girl-children.

The environment and the natural resources within it are not a source of profit or a form of capital to be used for profit. This is a key focus of the WEN programme advocating resistance against the forces of globalisation which continue to plunder the environment impacting women's lives and livelihoods. WEN TF members have consolidated efforts in exploring innovative strategies to strengthen their advocacy at national, regional and international levels. The TF also responded to the globally experienced food crisis highlighting that it was a manifestation of the market fundamentalism embedded in neoliberal policies controlled by International Financial Institutions (IFIs), and propagated through various trade agreements including the WTO and other bilateral and multilateral agreements. WEN TF has advocated for women's rights to access and

control their land, natural resources and means of food production as a central concept of food sovereignty.

I. Policy Intervention / Social Dialogue

Violence on environment is violence against women recognised at various levels

Workshop on Women and War, 17 June 2008, Hong Kong, SAR

The WEN TF supports grassroots and civil society movements against rising militarism in the region through research and campaigns. At the Women and War workshop organised by the Asia Pacific Research Network, WEN TF members Vernie Yocogan-Diano from the Philippines, Cynthia Abdon-Tellez from Hong Kong and Appakuti Magimai from India participated in the discussion and analysis on the rising militarism in the region, and its impact on women. One of their topics was the critical impact of the United States (US) military bases across the region in the context of the US-led "War or Terror" on local, natural environment and women's lives. The workshop identified strategies linking different expertise among academics, activists, researchers-analysts from various alternative organisations and institutions to resist rising militarism in the region. Activists and groups at the workshop gave their strong commitment to support campaigns against US military bases and militarism carried out by grassroots groups, by bringing them to regional and international attention.

ILPS Third International Assembly, 18-21 June 2008, Hong Kong, SAR

The theme of the ILPS assembly was "Strengthen the People's Struggle, Unite to Build a New World against Imperialist Aggression, State Terrorism, Plunder and Social Destruction!"





As part of the ILPS, APWLD through WEN and RIW TFs joined the thematic workshops in strengthening women and peoples' actions against imperialist attack and plunder all over the world. The Third International Assembly was attended by 256 participants representing 165 peoples' organisations from 30 countries: Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Burma, Canada, China (including Hong Kong SAR and Taiwan province), Germany, Greece, India, Indonesia, Iran, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand, the Netherlands, Turkey, Korea, Switzerland, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom and the United States (US).

APWLD members took part in the thematic discussions on women, migrants, indigenous peoples, environment and peasant issues, and facilitated the workshop-discussion of the Study Commission on Women with the theme: "Advancing Women's Participation in the People's Struggle Against Imperialist Aggression of the World's Food and Resources".

Asia Pacific Regional NGO Consultation with UNSRVAW and UNSRIP, 15-16 October 2008, New Delhi, India

Given that women's dependence on natural resources is integral to their wellbeing, exploitation and violent use of natural resources and the environment is violence against women. The WEN TF urged the UNSRs to focus on this issue at the Regional NGO Consultation

organised by RIW and VAW TFs. The consultation highlighted the aspects of political economy of violence against women particularly paying attention to the impact of the present neoliberal policies on indigenous women.

Vernie Yocogan-Diano, WEN TF convenor representing Innabuyog from the Cordillera Region, Philippines, emphasised the impact of development aggression and particularly extractive industries, which have resulted in plundering land, polluting water sources and destroying ecosystems on indigenous ancestral land and violating the fundamental rights of indigenous women. She also detailed the adverse and harsh impacts of the neoliberal framework in the context of the Asia Pacific region.

2. Developing Strategies for Advocacy

The 1st Asian Rural Women's Conference: Rights, Empowerment and Liberation, 6-8 March 2008, Tamil Nadu, India

Seven hundred sixteen rural women including supportive activists consolidated their experiences and voiced their concern and struggles on various environmental issues including the environmental degradation and deterioration of rural habitat caused by aggressive pursuit of the so-called development projects.

The WEN TF organised and facilitated the workshop on women and environment, which was attended by 20-25 participants from Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Malaysia



and Thailand. Participants shared the current situation of environmental issues in each country including the negative impacts of TNCs' extraction of natural resources on environment, land and water, all of which are a direct source of livelihood for the local people. Expansion of biofuel plantations in the region, particularly in Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand was identified as one of the key emerging threats to the local ecosystem and water resource. Participants at the workshop agreed on the importance of reliable data collection and documentation to hold the TNCs and governments accountable.

The 1st Asian Rural Women's Conference resulted in the creation of the Asian Rural Women's Coalition (ARWC) which will serve as an additional forum for rural women's empowerment to advance discussions and analysis on environmental issues with wider groups. It will also promote and support rural women's initiatives and actions on emerging environmental issues, including global warming and climate change, which have tremendous adverse impact on rural women's livelihood and survival.

WEN TF members also played a key role in mobilising and supporting rural women from each country to participate at the conference.

Women community leaders in northeast Thailand who participated in the 1st Asian Rural Women's Conference are now actively participating in the drafting process of National Plan of Human Rights. This is coordinated by the Thai NGO COD and hosted by the Ministry of Justice of Thailand. They are advocating for women's participation in natural resource management in the process. They were empowered by sharing various strategies with other participants from other Asian countries.

Suntaree Saeng-ging
WEN TF member
The Northeastern
Women's Network,
Homenet Northeast,
and Thai NGO-COD
Northeast, Thailand



Two community women leaders from Cambodia who participated in the 1st Asian Rural Women's Conference facilitated two workshops with 78 community leaders (62 women) in Siem Reap and 45 (43 women) in Battambang to share the strategies and lessons learned from the conference. The workshops generated a lot of discussion on how they could raise their voices on the issue of natural resource management and protection of natural environment at local and national level. They were inspired and encouraged to continue and strengthen their advocacy as leaders of their communities.



Panha Sok,
Banteay Srei, Cambodia
WEN TF member



Study Session on Women and Mining in Asia: Food Over Gold, 18-19 July 2008, Baguio, Philippines

The WEN TF organised this session for 20 women so that they could learn from each other their experiences in resisting corporate mining operations. Women from the Philippines, Cambodia, Thailand, Mongolia, Bangladesh and Korea developed strategies to strengthen their resistance against TNCs, and to advocate for pro-people, pro-women national legislations and policies on rural development and the environment.

The participants included local leaders from mining communities from Cambodia, Mongolia, and the Philippines. The leaders voiced their anger and grief against the violations of their fundamental human rights. They shared the suffering of their community members as a result of destruction of the natural resources such as agricultural land and water sources which were their sole source of livelihood. They detailed the various health-related impacts on the people as a result of mining operations in their communities. Their stories also disclosed the violent suppression imposed by the mining companies, military and the police in the course of their resistance against the mining operations. Participants also included members of the WEN TF, Luzviminda Ilagan, a woman legislator from GWP and Frances Quimpo, a former member of the TF. Presentations, including the reports of the fact finding missions conducted in Thailand in 2006 and Mongolia in 2007 were informative and inspiring. Women activists renewed their commitment to the protection of local environment and human rights of people in their communities.

The study session was a culmination of the campaign **Don't Globalise Hunger! Assert Women's Right to Food Sovereignty** with the special focus of the WEN TF on "Food over Gold". The campaign was launched by the RIW and WEN TFs, to voice their total rejection of the WTO agreements at the 6th Ministerial meeting of the WTO in 2005.

Participants also exchanged solidarity with the local women and youth groups in the mining communities. They visited several mining sites to learn the history and strength of women's resistance against corporate mining from the Innabuyog women activists in Cordillera, Philippines.

I was impressed with the young people who actively participated in the local movement against mining in Cordillera, Philippines. It confirmed that local people play a key/critical role in the protection of environment such as organising ourselves to resist mining. When I visit the villages affected by the gold mining in Loei, Thailand, I share the various stories and strategies learnt at the study session with the villagers. The villagers said they were encouraged to continue their struggle by knowing that many people in the Asia Pacific region are struggling with pollution of water and land caused by mining.

Watcharapon Wattanakum,
Loei Foundation for Conservation and Sustainable Development, Thailand



3. Research and Publications

Fact Finding Missions, the Impact of Mining on Women in Mongolia 2007 and in Thailand 2006

The follow-up actions taken by local groups and responses from the governments since the Fact Finding Missions (FFMs) were added to the original reports. They were collated and published together with the presentations at the Study Session on Mining as a consolidated report of the study on mining operation and people's resistance against mining in the region. The publication will be a tool for advocacy at the national level. It also aims to inspire further innovative strategies and raise awareness on mining issues among the wider civil society at the regional level.

The concept of food sovereignty has been shared with more than 100 people (of which more than 75% were women) of the Bantay Srei target communities both in Battambang and Siem Reap, Cambodia. The Women and Food Sovereignty Kit published by the WENTF is a very useful resource for strengthening advocacy at the community level.

Panha Sok, Banteay Srei, Cambodia



Rural and Indigenous Women Programme



Rural and Indigenous Women Programme

Objectives:

- 1 To strengthen the rural and indigenous women's movements resisting globalisation;
- 2 To deepen the understanding and application of feminist perspective in rural and indigenous women advocacy work; and
- 3 To further integrate feminist perspective in the agenda of peoples and social movements.

Rural and indigenous communities have rich natural resources which are primary source of livelihood for rural and indigenous women who are mainly farmers and fisherfolk. With the depletion of resources by the so-called development projects, the rural and indigenous communities are almost always in conflict over resources. As corporate-led globalisation policy implementation intensifies, more and more mechanisms are put in place to ensure easy access of TNCs to natural resources, particularly of the developing countries. Apart from the different agreements within the WTO, there are also the increasing numbers of Free Trade Agreements, Bilateral Trade Agreements and Bilateral Investment Treaties. These have accelerated the exploitation of natural resources, not for food, but for profit.

In this context, the Rural and Indigenous Women (RIW) TF focuses on the negative impact of the neoliberal policy on rural and indigenous women's rights and livelihoods; and escalating militarisation in rural and indigenous land suppressing dissent against the operations of TNCs. These forces have always been a consistent threat in the actual lives of people in the areas as well as in movement building.

RIW TF in 2008 supported rural and indigenous women to deepen their understanding of the global and regional economic framework and the gender dimension of its impact. The TF, employing a women's human rights-based approach was successfully able to support women to address their

issues by participation at regional and international human rights mechanisms.

I. Policy Intervention / Social Dialogue

Asia Pacific Regional NGO Consultation with UNSRVAV and UNSRIP, 15-16 October 2008, New Delhi, India

The VAW and RIW TFs organised this regional consultation whereby various forms of violence against indigenous women were recognised at local, regional and international levels. Among the 62 participants, 25 were indigenous women and women working on the issue of violence against indigenous women from Taiwan, Guam Islands, Philippines, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Malaysia, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, Burma, India, Japan, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Bangladesh and Nepal.



Manifestations and causes of violence against indigenous women were analysed within the current socio political and economic contexts in the region. This included the aggressive operations of the so-called development projects as part of the current global neoliberal policies; militarisation of indigenous communities enhanced by foreign corporations exploiting land and natural resources of indigenous peoples; enduring military regimes such as in Burma; and patriarchal cultural norms and practices which have been revived by several fundamentalist forces.

The two UNSRs, UNSRVAW Yakin Ertürk and UNSRIP S. James Anaya, witnessed the testimonies of rural and indigenous women and listened to the analysis of violence against indigenous women, which will be included in their annual reports to the HRC.

There is a need to strengthen the voices of indigenous women, so that they can articulate their concerns and priorities. There is a need to overcome all barriers that prevent them from reaching international fora.

S. James Anaya
UNSRIP

The consultation has empowered us greatly – violence issues have always been around but we didn't really know how to go about addressing them. The knowledge and strategies we have learnt, will definitely equip us to make a start in terms of creating awareness, educating / informing our people. At our level of local governance, we can create policies and laws and even advocate at the national level.

Catherine Goroa Raka, Papua New Guinea

Platform for Collective Action Forum Terra Preta, 1-4 June 2008, Rome, Italy

Rural and indigenous women advocated for food sovereignty in response to the global food crisis. The RIW TF raised critical concerns on the current paradigm of food production and supply controlled by IFIs, TNCs and trade agreements.

Geetha Fernando from National Fisheries Solidarity Movement (NAFSO), Sri Lanka and Azra Talat Sayeed from Roots for Equity, Pakistan, attended the Platform for Collective Action Forum Terra Preta, and strongly voiced their concern on the situation faced by rural women affected by the tremendous increase in food and oil prices, globally. The forum, held parallel to the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the UN High Level Conference on World Food Security, was organised by civil society groups, raising their concerns and voices against the global food crisis. It was highlighted that the neoliberal policies operating through IFIs, TNCs and various trade agreements were the causes of the current crisis impacting more than a million people, most of whom are subsistence farmers, peasants, fisherfolk and urban poor. Amongst these groups women represent much larger numbers than men and are also the most vulnerable as they face multiple forms of discrimination.

Participants advocated for the shift in paradigm from the current market fundamentalism to a human rights based approach to food production, trading and consumption. APWLD's statement was circulated at various levels as well as shared with other participants from more than 100 CSOs. The platform was attended by 150 participants (75 women and 75 men) representing farmers, fisherfolk, peasants, pastoralists, and indigenous peoples coming from five continents.

The forum developed a joint analysis, positions and strategies on the climate change crisis, including agro-fuels in relation to agriculture, livestock, fisheries, forest management and food production as well as the role of various actors (institutions, TNCs, social movements, etc.). It also proposed the potential of small-scale food production (farming, herding, fisheries, forests, etc.) to be part of the solution to the climate change crisis.



One of the major achievements of the forum was that the Sri Lankan President and the Indian Prime Minister strongly rejected expanding the production of biofuel plants, which would compete over land and natural resources with production of food.

Geetha Fernando,
NAFSO, Sri Lanka



APWLD representatives at the forum reflected that the presence of people, particularly women, from Asia was very limited. It will be more important than ever that APWLD, as a regional women's organisation, plays a strong role in networking and ensuring the voices of rural women are heard at the regional and international forums.

Confronting the Global Food Challenge: new approaches to trade and investment that support the right to food, 24-26 November 2008, Geneva, Switzerland

The RIW TF furthered its advocacy for food sovereignty and improvement of rural women's situation at the international level. Tess Vistro from AMIHAN (National Federation of Peasant Women), Philippines, Co-convenor of RIW TF shared the communities' responses to the food crisis at the Global Food Challenge. The meeting was convened by several international human rights organisations and funding organisations under the auspice of the UNSR on the right to food (UNSR Food).

Farmers and peasant associations, food workers unions, environmentalists, urban settlers, consumer groups, development NGOs, human rights organisations, church groups, fair trade organisations, and women's groups came together from around the world. They deepened collective understanding of the impact of trade and investment on the right to food, and explored the impact of climate change and agro-fuels. The experiences of Thai women confronting the negative impact of mining operation in their villages were also shared.

The UNSR Food expressed his concern on the issues raised at the meeting. An invitation was extended to him to attend the proposed regional consultation which the RIW TF was planning in collaboration with the WEN TF in 2009-2010.

I think APWLD is the only regional women's network working extensively on the issue of the right to food from a gender perspective, and reaching out to rural women through its members. APWLD should strengthen its expertise in integrating gender perspectives within the issues of human rights and trade and investments as well as climate change.

Tess Vistro, RIW TF
Co-convenor,
AMIHAN, Philippines



Commemorating the International Day for Rural Women and the World Foodless Day

The analysis of the global food crisis was reiterated in a statement issued by the RIW TF during the International Day for Rural Women and the World Foodless Day. The statement also stressed for an increased recognition of the role of rural and indigenous women in sustainable agriculture and conservation of the environment and natural resources.

2. Movement Building / Community Mobilisation

The 1st Asian Rural Women's Conference - Rights, Empowerment and Liberation, 6-8 March 2008, Tamil Nadu, India

The 716 women attending the conference included over 150 women from across Asia, 200 women from other states within India, and 350 women from within Tamil Nadu state. Representation included peasants, agricultural workers, indigenous women, Dalit women, nomads, fisherfolk, informal and formal





workers, migrants and supportive activists coming together to raise their voices as rural women on various human rights issues. It was the culmination of the processes of several consultations organised at national levels in the Philippines, Sri Lanka and India and the regional level consultation in Manila, Philippines in 2007.

Hosted by the Tamil Nadu Women's Forum, the TNDWM and SRED, the conference aimed to: empower all women in the rural economy to assert and claim their rights; strengthen and consolidate the rural women's movements; and build solidarity and unity through a collective identity in Asia.

The major outcome of the conference was a strengthened and coordinated network through the formation of the Asia Rural Women's Coalition (ARWC). The Coalition as a collective of rural women's voices at regional level has since identified various venues to advocate for rural women's concerns. The RIW TF made a commitment to improve rural women's situation and advocate for their rights as part of the ARWC.

Globalisation, fundamentalisms and militarisation are the current socio political, economic contexts which negatively affect rural women's lives and rights and are APWLD's key issues. These were integrated as a framework to address the situation of rural women. Cases and analysis on situations of rural women were shared through testimonies.

Fifteen thematic workshops were held with themes including: land and livelihood; migration and displacement; violence and health; indigenous issues; environment, labour, trade and economic development; fisheries; and Dalit women. The summary and recommendations/resolutions from each workshop formed the Rural Women's Declaration Rights, Empowerment and Liberation. On the last day of the conference, which coincided with International Women's Day, a public assembly of 10,000 rural women rallied to reclaim their right to speak out, be heard and be seen.

RIW members were actively involved in the process of the conference as part of the steering committee. RIW TF also co-organised and facilitated the workshop on indigenous women with Innabuyog, an alliance of indigenous women's organisation in the Cordillera, Philippines, which was attended by around 14 women from Kyrgyzstan Bangladesh, Philippines and India. The participants shared the major developments of the indigenous peoples' movement and the UNDRIP. They identified the key continuing issues of indigenous women in Asia such as land rights, militarisation and forced migration, and came up with strategies to strengthen the movement of indigenous women. Members from Kyrgyzstan, India and Bangladesh played a key role in providing inputs at the workshop as well as mobilising and supporting rural women from each country.



APWLD members who attended the conference agreed that mobilising more rural women at the community and national levels will be an important process to prepare for the 2nd Rural Women's Conference in 2011. Participation of rural and indigenous women will enable their voices to be heard. Involvement through their organisations in various engagements and processes is important in calling the attention of governments, inter-government and development bodies and the wider civil society.

The Asian Rural Women's Conference created awareness which resulted in the Tamil Nadu state government allocating a budget for a feasibility study on the impact of SEZs on farmers, for instance the impact on farming communities when land is sold to companies. The importance of holding the international and regional conferences in a local community rather than a big hotel in a big city was also appreciated by the participants.

Rosalin Jayaseelan, SRED, India

Don't Globalise Hunger! Assert Women's Right to Food Sovereignty Campaign

In 2008, the TF focused on the campaign to highlight neoliberal market fundamentalism operated through IFIs, TNCs and various trade agreements as root causes of the global food crisis. The campaign advocated for food sovereignty to bring back to farmers the control of their land, natural resources, and all sources of production. The campaign website <http://www.dontglobalisehunger.org> has provided space for members to disseminate their statements as well as a venue for information sharing and furthering the campaign.

3. Capacity Building / Training

Workshop on Food Sovereignty: Situation Analysis, Mechanisms of Protection and Promotion of Rural Women's Rights in Central Asia, 8-12 July 2008, Kyrgyzstan

Rural women's community leadership was strengthened through this workshop organised by Rural Women's NGO "Alga", RIW TF Convenor.

Rural women leaders from Central Asian countries increased their understanding of the concept of food sovereignty, and developed their capacity to facilitate discussions and workshops on globalisation and food sovereignty.

Addressing the worsening influence of the neoliberal policies on rural women in Central Asia and the recent global food crisis, the workshop provided a contextual analysis to the food crisis in the Central Asian situation. The workshop utilised two APWLD publications, *Globalisation and Women: A Discussion Guide for Trainers*; and the *Women and Food Sovereignty Kit*. Information and effective engagement with the UN mechanisms to address right to food was also provided by RIW TF Co-convenor, Tess Vistro.



Twenty seven participants including experts, community leaders and members of people's organisations, youth groups working with rural women in Central Asian countries of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan participated in the workshop. Participants committed to provide advocacy skills reaching out to more than 17,000 villagers and also formed a collaborative network to further develop their advocacy strategies to influence national policies and programmes on rural development and land rights.

Rural Women's Exchange Program Sri Lanka and Thailand

Young women leaders discussed methods and strategies to strengthen women's leadership in small-scale fishing communities and shared the role of women in developing strategies to



mainstream the issue of women's rights in the fisherfolk movement.

The exchange programme was started by RIW TF in 2007. This year, the exchange was hosted by the Sustainable Development Foundation in Thailand from 8-14 October 2008. NAFSO in Sri Lanka hosted the 29 October - 4 November 2008 exchange. The exchange aimed to:

- Contribute in the development of a new generation of young, second-line grassroots women activists;
- Enrich each others' RIW movements by exchanging experiences and contexts;
- Provide an opportunity for sharing information, skills and knowledge on mobilising, organising, networking, and other forms of resistance;
- Deepen the understanding of feminism and gender equality towards sustainable livelihoods among TF members and their partner communities;
- Explore and document alternative sustainable livelihoods being practiced by the host communities.



Five women leaders from fishing communities of Pallivasalpaduwa, Karuvalagaswewa, and Negombo in Sri Lanka visited the women fisherfolk in Phuket, Thailand. While learning the issues and experiences of women leaders in fishing villages, they also joined local rallies and preparatory activities for the Civil Society Preparatory

Workshop. This workshop was organised to consolidate political positions and strategies of small-scale fisheries to engage with the Global Conference on Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries organised by the FAO, on 13-17 October 2008, Bangkok, Thailand. Women leaders from Sri Lanka together with Thai groups advocated for equal participation in resource management between men and women, as well as the need for affirmative actions to improve women's access to resources and opportunities. Their advocacy was incorporated in the statement of the Civil Society Preparatory Workshop.

Women leaders from Sri Lanka brought back and shared what they learnt from this visit with their network members of approximately 2,000 women. NAFSO also prepared a special issue in its journal *Diyawara* based on the experiences gained through the exchange and the forums, which will benefit NAFSO's 12,000 membership.

Participants from Sri Lanka increased their understanding of gender balance in the work of fisherfolks and gained confidence to raise their voices by becoming involved in various activities with Thai groups. They also built new networks with Thai fisherfolk as well as established linkages at the forum to the global level.

Six women leaders in fisheries from Songkla, Kho Muk, and Kho Yao, Southern Thailand visited several fishing communities in Sri Lanka and felt that direct information sharing was a powerful learning tool. They requested that opportunities such as the rural women's exchange should continue and expand to allow more technical exchange.





A woman leader from Sri Lanka, A.A. Jayawathi sharing her experience at the conference

I was impressed that women's group in Pallivasalpaduwa village handle community leadership by taking turns. I learnt the importance of strengthening women's leadership at community level and will share this with my groups to explore how we could implement it in our group.

Kaewta Tamin, participant from Thailand

I recognised that the impact of government's economic development policy on fishing communities, particularly on women, is similar to that in Thailand such as increased production costs, use of destructive fishing tools and equipment, and women working longer hours.

Auaiporn Suthonthanyakorn, participant from Thailand

4. Research and publications

The Journal of Rural Women's Exchange features reports from the exchange between women fisherfolk from Thailand and Sri Lanka in 2008. The journal provides a documentation of alternative sustainable livelihoods as well as a lively, inspiring record of the process of movement building among women in fisheries. The two journals of the exchange visits will be printed in 2009 and translated in the local languages in Thailand and Sri Lanka.

The Young Women Lawyers Research was completed in Bangladesh, India, Indonesia and the Philippines in 2007 as a working paper to raise awareness on the negative impacts of national security laws on rural women's lives and rights. The research is an on-going project of RIV TF and the four research papers will be revised based on the latest development in the relevant laws and information in 2009-2010.



Cross-cutting Initiatives



Cross-cutting Initiatives

Objectives:

- 1 To respond to urgent issues of the day which are within the mandate and general objectives of APWLD; and
- 2 To respond to requests from APWLD members and partners which are within the mandate of APWLD.

Peer Review / Validation Workshop for Asia Pacific Judicial Reform Handbook, 1-2 April 2008, Bangkok, Thailand

APWLD Regional Coordinator Lynnsay Francis was invited to participate in the Peer Review Validation Workshop to review and provide feedback on the Judicial Reform Handbook-Chapter Two Access to Justice through Judicial Reforms. The review provided APWLD the opportunity to forge new partnerships for future initiatives. APWLD contributed to the chapter by sharing examples of the work on Access to Justice, customary laws and practices and advocacy for changes to Family Law legislations undertaken by network members and some of the challenges faced.

Gender and Development Pacific Partners Meeting, 19-21 August 2008, Nadi, Fiji

Organised by the South Pacific Commission, APWLD through Regional Coordinator Lynnsay Francis shared experiences on building women's movements from a regional organisation's perspective, on training, on the consultations with the UNSRs and explored areas of possible collaboration with UNDP/Pacific Centre and UNIFEM Pacific. As a result, the UNDP/Pacific Centre committed to collaborate on APWLD's UNSRVAW Consultation to be held in the Pacific in May 2009. They also requested for a trainer from APWLD to be a resource person for a workshop on International Conventions. Eleanor Conda, one of APWLD's lead FLTP trainers went to the said workshop held in October 2008.

APF on NHRIs, 28-31 July 2008, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

APWLD network members directly involved in monitoring the work of NHRIs in their countries are selected each year (one from Asia and one from the Pacific) to attend the annual meeting of the APF of NHRIs. This year, Heisoo Shin from Korea and Seema Naidu from Fiji, represented APWLD. Heisoo Shin presented "UN Human Rights Treaties and CEDAW" in a session on CEDAW organised by IWRAW-AP.



Among the highlighted human rights violations were the extra-judicial executions in the Philippines, the vulnerability of human rights defenders after the coup in Fiji and the situation of execution, flogging, stoning, censorship and arbitrary detention in Iran. The issue of human rights and corporate accountability was also discussed.

NGOs presented a joint statement calling for NHRIs and APF to further promote the protection of WHRDs and provide support towards the establishment of a regional human rights body in the Pacific. The statement was presented during the NHRIs and NGO dialogue session at the APF.

As a result, in the APF concluding statement paragraph 13, the APF acknowledged the issues raised by NGOs. The APF further committed to consider:

- integrating the issue of human rights defenders into reference topics made to the Advisory Council of Jurists;
- seeking a dialogue with the UNSRHRD on how NHRIs can effectively engage with her mandate;
- including the situation of human rights defenders in the annual activity report taking into account the UNDHRD; and
- strategising to strengthen the role of NHRIs in affording immediate protection against human rights violations at the national level.

I was able to establish new partnerships and strengthen networks with Asia Pacific NGOs and National Human Rights Institutions. Through the Forum, I was able to address the situation in the Pacific particularly focusing on violence against WHRDs and a critical need [for] gender training and establishing networks within the Pacific and the Asia region. The entire week provided me with an opportunity to learn and come up with possible strategies to address the myriad of human rights challenges in the Asia Pacific region.

Seema Naidu, Fiji

AWID 11th International Forum: “The Power of Movements”, 14-17 November, Cape Town, South Africa

A number of APWLD members and secretariat including Fatima Burnad, Asfinawati, Virada Somswasdi, Cristina Palabay, Lynnsay Francis, Nalini Singh and Mae-anne Llanza attended the AWID Forum. The Forum was a vibrant platform for 2,000 women human rights activists and defenders from over 75 countries. Various activities were organised and attended at the forum.



Tok Talk: Nourishing an Asia Pacific Feminist Movement. APWLD and FWRM conducted the session Tok Talk: Nourishing an Asia Pacific Feminist Movement to further the intergenerational dialogue that has been happening in Asia and Pacific. The session addressed the need for continuity of the women’s movement, which can only be ensured by the participation and involvement of young women in the movement. The highly interactive format featured in-house guests Fatima Burnad (India) and Asfinawati (Indonesia) together with Ofa-Ki-Levuka Guttenbeil (Tonga) and Paulini



Turagabeci (Fiji), with talk show host Tara Chetty of FWRM. More than 50 women from across the globe claimed the space to explore questions of women in continuing and strengthening a vibrant feminist movement, where diversity is embraced, participation is ensured and the feminist vision is affirmed with fresh perspectives. In the final AWID evaluation, Tok Talk was listed as top 17 of the 117 sessions.

Tok Talk was the best. I felt workshops need not be in a serious atmosphere. Even though it was not very formal, our workshop brought out many serious and interesting agenda for future work.

Fatima Burnad, India

A Look Inside Our Movements. APWLD Regional Coordinator Lynnsay Rongokea Francis was invited to share her experience in the plenary: *A Look Inside Our Movements*. She spoke of the hierarchy of personalities and small cliques within organisations and movement, the power play among the handful who make decisions and of the need to be more inclusive by opening up spaces for new voices.

One in Nine rally. APWLD members at the AWID Forum joined thousands of other supporters in the 'One in Nine' rally. The One in Nine Campaign: Solidarity with Women Who Speak Out was established in February 2006 at the start of the rape trial of Jacob Zuma, to express solidarity with the woman in that trial as well as with other women who speak out about rape and sexual violence. The Medical Research Council study on sexual violence (2005) indicated that only one out of every nine rape survivors report the attack to the police. This statistic prompted the name: "One In Nine". The One In Nine Campaign works for social justice towards a society where sexual rights of women are respected, upheld and advanced.

Feminist Technology Exchange, 10-13 November 2008, Cape Town, South Africa

Organised by the Association for Progressive Communications a few days before the AWID conference, the Feminist Technology Exchange (FTX) aimed to:

- Build the skills of feminist and women's rights movements in the creative and strategic use of information and communication technologies (ICT);
- Provide a space for discussions on the connections between ICT issues and women's rights agenda, as well as on feminist politics and practices of technology;
- Create partnerships between advocates working on women's rights and feminism with those working in the field of ICT to sustain movement building; and
- Develop a community of trainers who can continue to support knowledge and skills building, even after the exchange.

APWLD's information communications officer Mae-anne Llanza participated in the FTX and has increased the capacity of the secretariat in producing videos for advocacy; enhanced knowledge of developments and discourses in ICTs and women's rights; and established linkages with other women's groups involved in ICTs. A two-minute video segment was produced to be used in the video collaboration with FWRM. The final output will be a DVD advocacy tool to be used in both APWLD and FWRM trainings.



Grantmakers Without Borders, 8-10 June 2008, San Francisco, USA

A philanthropic network dedicated to improving the practice of international grantmaking and increasing funding for international social justice and environmental sustainability, Grantmakers without Borders held its 8th annual conference. APWLD Regional Coordinator Lynnsay Francis was invited by the Global Fund for Women to participate in a panel discussion on the theme Changing the Climate: the Critical Role of Women particularly within the Asia and Oceania region. It was an opportunity to network, share experiences and raise issues and concerns of both Asia and Pacific on the impact of climate change on small island nations. It also was an opportunity to share the findings of the Survey of Women's Human Rights Violations in the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami and the 2005 Pakistan Earthquake Aftermath, which resulted in the publication of the Guidelines for Gender Sensitive Disaster Management.

2008 Gyeongnam World Conference on Women's Human Rights, 25-27 November 2008, Gyeongnam, Korea

The province of Gyeongnam is where the democratic human rights movement of Korea started. The conference was to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the UDHR and the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. An estimated 2,000 delegates from 31 countries, including members of the CEDAW Committee participated in the conference. APWLD member Heisoo Shin, who is also a member of the CEDAW Committee, was one of the organisers. The conference was attended by APWLD Regional Coordinator. The plenary sessions covered a wide range of issues ranging from the elimination of sexual exploitation and violence against women; human rights protection for minority women including in conflict situations; women with disabilities; and the economic empowerment of women. It was an opportunity to network with women and representatives of NGOs from East Asia; to share the Asia Pacific regional perspective on various issues; and to identify individuals and NGOs who might be interested in future membership in APWLD.

Women Human Rights Defenders

Asia Pacific Regional Consultation on Women Human Rights Defenders, 18 January 2009, Bangkok, Thailand

Originally scheduled on the International Day for Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRD), 29 November 2008, the consultation was rescheduled due to the political unrest in Thailand. APWLD and FORUM ASIA co-organised the consultation with the UNSRHRD Margaret Sekaggya. More than 120 women and men human rights defenders from Asia and representatives of NHRIs and UN agencies in the region attended. APWLD supported the participation of nine women, four of whom were network members. The consultation paid tribute to all WHRDs especially those under threat, violence, harassment and attacks due to their human rights work both as human rights defenders and as women. The consultation underscored the importance of having support from mainstream human rights groups and the full implementation of the UNDHRD as well as the recommendations of the previous UNSRHRD Hina Jilani in her last report to the HRC. The consultation also urged NHRIs, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and UN agencies to strengthen the protection of WHRDs. Specific requests were made to regional mechanisms, such as ASEAN and South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation to integrate WHRD issues within the system. Defender expressed their commitment to strengthen mutual cooperation and support amongst each other, especially integrating the issues of WHRDs into their programme of work at all levels, and to engage with governments, NHRIs, regional mechanisms and the UN for the protection and recognition of WHRDs.

WHRD at AWID: APWLD assisted the WHRD International Coalition in holding an exhibit to create awareness on the campaign for WHRDs around the world at the AWID Forum. The exhibit will be taken to other WHRD venues and events.





Small Actions to Raise Awareness on WHRDs and Initiate Development of Security Strategies for WHRDs were organised by MONFEMNET with support from the L&MTF in November 2008.

In Mongolia, human rights NGOs are primarily run by women who increasingly face personal security risks as the political climate deteriorates.

A number of small actions were conducted as part of the national action on the 16 Days to End Gender Violence campaign.

These actions initiated an important process of discussing safety and security of WHRDs in Mongolia, the need to improve NGO mechanisms in taking care of their employees, enhancing public understanding of the work and challenges faced by WHRDs and improving government support to WHRDs. MONFEMNET, in cooperation with APWLD, shall continue its efforts to improve the status and safety of WHRDs in Mongolia and elsewhere.

These activities included: a survey on risks and costs to WHRDs; a roundtable discussion among WHRDs and allies on the development of security strategies for WHRDs; a press conference to inform the public about human rights of WHRDs; and a greeting card campaign to encourage WHRDs.

www.defendingwomen-defendingrights.org

The WHRD website features urgent alerts, statements and information dissemination on WHRD violations, extrajudicial killings, militarisation, and socio-political developments in Asia Pacific particularly in Burma, Fiji, Pakistan and other countries where WHRDs have been violated and or are at risk. For the year, the WHRD website had posted: 23 alerts and 22 stories and statements. Countries that issued alerts are: Bougainville, Burma, India, Iran, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Nicaragua, the Philippines, Russia, Uganda, Uzbekistan and Zimbabwe. The website received an average of 60 visits per month for the period. The website continues to provide a space for WHRDs who need help, and for the public to respond to calls to action on WHRD alerts.



Institutional Development



Institutional Development

Objectives:

- 1 To ensure effective functioning of APWLD as a network at all levels for the full implementation of its programmes;
- 2 To facilitate active sharing of information among APWLD members and partners;
- 3 To stir debate and contribute towards developing a common understanding among APWLD on critical, urgent issues facing women in Asia Pacific; and
- 4 To assist programmes and APWLD members obtain information relevant to their work.

Governance Structures and programmes

APWLD is still in the process of implementing recommendations from the past two external evaluations which include reviewing and assessing structures, programmes, strategic interventions at international fora and partnerships - this continues to be a work in progress. A number of measures have been implemented to address the concerns. Within the Secretariat a number of tools have been developed to assist WG and TFs with the planning, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and budgets and in addressing staff capacity. These include report templates, time management sheets, consultations, meetings and workplan templates aligned with the budget.

APWLD held a combined WG and TF meeting to identify strategic regional and international fora for effective engagement and partnerships, including assessing the organisation's niche programmes, current and emerging critical issues.

APWLD reviewed membership recommendations and criteria to ensure geographical outreach and maintain a balance of lawyers and activists in its membership.

The REC set up a Fundraising Working Group to discuss APWLD's fundraising strategy and long term sustainability.

In December 2008, an external evaluation of APWLD's programme cycle 2006-2008 commenced and will be completed in mid March 2009.

In 2009, APWLD will again review and critically assess its governance structures and programmes, in light of the global economic/ financial crisis.

Strategic Plan

A Strategic Plan for 2009-2011 has been developed as a result of the General Assembly Strategic Planning Meeting, held in December 2007. The WG and TFs and programmes have commenced aligning their activities and positions on key issues at both regional and international levels.

Capacity Building of Working Group / Task Forces

The first combined WG and TFs meeting was held to address the interlinkages of globalisation, fundamentalism and militarisation, including climate change to see how each of the programmes are addressing thematic issues recognising that issues are interconnected and interrelated. The meeting included a review and update on the progress on the Aid Effectiveness Agenda by Antonio Tujan, Jr. Reality of Aid Chairperson.

One of the results of this meeting is that it has created synergy among WG and TFs activities, which in many instances has been weak.

Collation of Programme Papers

Collations of lobbying, advocacy and position papers have been consolidated to provide background information to the WG and TFs to assist them in developing their programme objectives, activities and strategies to be more focused.



International and Regional Representation

APWLD continues to be recognised as a leading regional women's human rights organisation. APWLD has maintained active engagement at regional and international events on specific thematic or cross-cutting issues as represented by members of the REC, P&M and WG and TFs. Participation to regional and international fora ensures that women's regional and national voices are heard and that national as well as local, grassroots issues are brought to regional and international levels.

Operations Manual

The Operations Manual has been completed. The manual outlines management, administrative and financial guidelines and procedures within governance structures, WG and TFs and measures to guide the operations of the Secretariat.

Information and Communications

I. Alerts and Statements: For 2008, APWLD posted 21 statements and 19 action alerts. The country with most statements issued is Burma with five, followed by Fiji with four.

Notable for the period is the Urgent Call for Action to international women's and human rights networks for the immediate release of Burma WHRD Nilar Thein. In close collaboration with APWLD member Women's League of Burma (WLB), APWLD and WLB reported the case to the UNSRVAW and the UNSRHRD. Due also to international demand for the release of Nilar Thein, on 2 October, the UNSRVAW, UNSR on freedom of expression, UNSRHRD and the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention sent an urgent appeal concerning Nilar Thein to the Permanent Mission of Myanmar in Geneva.

Another notable development is the acquittal of Irene Fernandez in November 2008, after a long drawn out court trial. Irene Fernandez of TENAGANITA, an APWLD member was arrested and charged on 18 March 1996 under the Printing Presses and Publication Act 1984. This was in response to her exposing the horrific and inhumane conditions in

Immigration detention centers in Malaysia through a Memorandum to the government in July 1995 entitled 'Abuse, Torture and Dehumanised Conditions of Migrant Workers in Detention Centres'. APWLD joined international networks in sending out alerts for Irene Fernandez's acquittal during the year.

Sign-ons and endorsements of statements from other organisations totalled 26.

2. Websites

APWLD website: www.apwld.org

Through the website, APWLD compels people to take action on Urgent Action Alerts and keeps the public informed on the latest campaigns, events, statements and published works of APWLD. APWLD's homepage receives an average of 400 visits per day. Endorsements and alerts are posted on the website along with programme campaigns and relevant articles from members, partners and networks. The website also features current APWLD publications which are available for download. APWLD continues to receive feedback on the website from the public.

Wednesday, December 17, 2008 1:45 AM

Name: Network Women in the Rural Population in Haiti - OFAT

email: ofathaiti01@yahoo.fr

feedback: Felicitations, you do a good job and your site and messages are good.

Don't Globalise Hunger website: www.dontglobalishunger.org

The Don't Globalise Hunger campaign has been relaunched this year. It features the various campaigns and actions of members from the RIW and WEN TFs and other partners involved in the campaign on Food Sovereignty. The website is in the process of being updated.



Please see the Cross-Cutting initiatives section under WHRD for www.defendingwomen-defendingrights.org report.

3. Publications and Advocacy Materials

Forum News

The quarterly publication Forum News serves as an information tool for members as it features APWLD activities and current and emerging issues within the region. With a circulation of 1,500, Forum News is disseminated widely to APWLD members, partners, networks, school libraries, requesting individuals and organisations and at international, regional events and meetings.

Audio-visual production

To increase awareness and understanding on the existing dialogues and issues within the Asia Pacific feminist movement, APWLD collaborated with FWRM to produce a video to be used as an advocacy tool and during APWLD and FWRM trainings. The production of the video is currently ongoing, and will be completed in 2009.

As an advocacy tool, a three-minute video was produced for the 16 Days of Activism to End Gender Violence, International Women Human Rights Defenders Day, and the World Human Rights Day. It is now available on APWLD and WHRD website.



Financial Report

The Financial Report for the period 2008 has been audited by HMD Consultants Ltd., with head office in Bangkok, in accordance with Thailand Accounting Laws and in compliance with International Accounting Standards.

Political instability in the region and difficulties with airline flights resulted in unspent funds being realigned to other activities. Delays in the completion of some consultation reports and publications have resulted in an accrual of funds.

In 2008, APWLD received funds from The Ford Foundation, Novib, Sida, Hivos Global Fund for Women, and UNIFEM. The total funds for 2008 were US\$ 774,857.31

This amount consisted of:

- Funds carried forward from 2007 US\$ 111,752.82
 - Funds received during the year US\$ 660,469.82
 - Other income (interest and publications) US\$2,634.68
-

The total expenditure in 2008 was US\$ 720,895.72. The spending in 2008 was 7% lower than in 2007. The funds contributed to the following activities:

■ Consultations	25%
■ Network support	12%
■ Training and workshops	12%
■ Advocacy	3%
■ Annual Task Forces/ Working Group meetings	11%
■ Research	4%
■ Salaries	33%

The total expenditure was distributed to the programmes as follows:

■ Woman Human Rights	11%
■ Violence against Women	13%
■ Women's Participation in Political Processes	13%
■ Labour and Migration	8%
■ Women and Environment	8%
■ Rural and Indigenous Women	8%
■ Cross Cutting	14%
■ Resource	11%
■ Administration cost	14%

APWLD has spent 94% of the approved budget in 2008 and has carried forward 6% of the funds to 2009.



ASIA PACIFIC FORUM ON WOMEN, LAW AND DEVELOPMENT
Chiang Mai, Thailand
Fund receipts in 2008

Description	USD (a)
Balance forward from 2007	111,752.82
Funds received in 2008	
- Novib	118,615.59
- Ford Foundation	271,899.64
- Hivos	91,892.17
- Sida	165,058.24
- Global Fund for Women	2,658.07
- UNIFEM	10,346.11
Total funds in 2008	660,469.82
Total funds available	772,222.64
Other Income	
- Exchange Rate Gains	1,212.50
- Advocacy Materials	551.87
- Bank Interest	870.30
Total receipt	774,857.31

(a) Average rate of exchange : USD1 = Baht 33.48

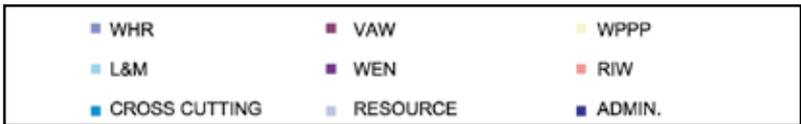
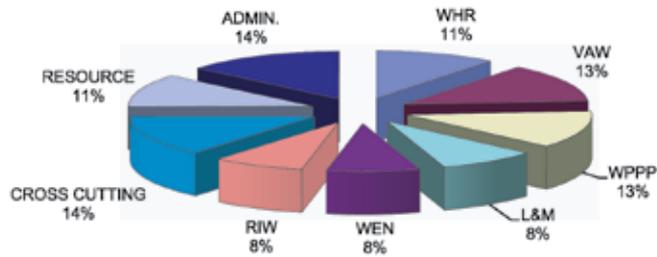


ASIA PACIFIC FORUM ON WOMEN, LAW AND DEVELOPMENT
Chiang Mai, Thailand
Expenditure in 2008

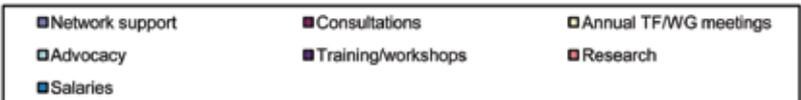
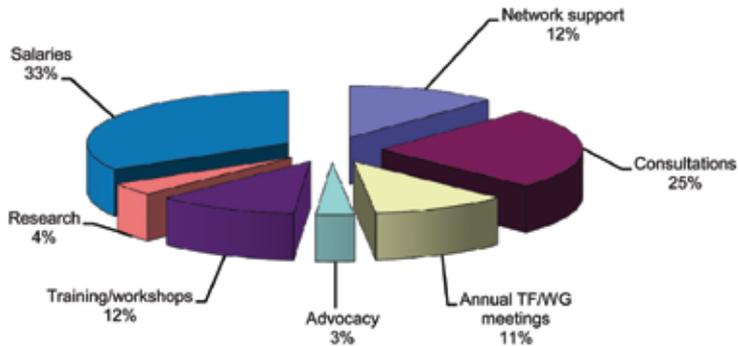
Title	Budget Used
WOMEN HUMAN RIGHT WORKING GROUP (WHRG)	75,639.64
A.1.1 Policy Intervention/Social Dialogue/Mobilisation	18,101.06
A.1.2 Technical Assistance/Training	36,733.49
A.1.3 Secretariat costs	1,444.22
A.1.4 Programme Implementation costs	19,360.87
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (VAW)	93,491.90
A.2.1 Policy Intervention/Social Dialogue/Mobilisation	60,822.50
A.2.2 Technical Assistance/Training	11,070.87
A.2.3 Secretariat costs	2,246.50
A.2.4 Programme Implementation costs	19,352.03
WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL PROCESS (WPPP)	89,938.58
A.3.1 Policy Intervention/Social Dialogue/Mobilisation	41,565.23
A.3.2 Technical Assistance/Training	28,408.40
A.3.3 Secretariat costs	1,242.80
A.3.4 Programme Implementation costs	18,722.15
LABOUR AND MIGRATION (L&M)	60,893.95
A.4.1 Policy Intervention/Social Dialogue/Mobilisation	32,888.23
A.4.2 Technical Assistance/Training	8,092.76
A.4.3 Secretariat costs	1,190.81
A.4.4 Programme Implementation costs	18,722.15
WOMEN AND ENVIRONMENT (WEN)	57,880.95
A.5.1 Policy Intervention/Social Dialogue/Mobilisation	26,462.49
A.5.2 Technical Assistance/Training	11,184.69
A.5.3 Secretariat costs	1,829.89
A.5.4 Programme Implementation costs	18,403.88
RURAL AND INDIGENOUS WOMEN (RIW)	56,833.97
A.6.1 Policy Intervention/Social Dialogue/Mobilisation	24,765.75
A.6.2 Technical Assistance/Training	12,265.83
A.6.3 Secretariat costs	1,395.10
A.6.4 Programme Implementation costs	18,407.29
CROSS CUTTING INITIATIVES	97,931.06
A.7.1 Policy Intervention/Social Dialogue/Mobilisation	88,928.85
A.7.2 Technical Assistance/Training	947.73
A.7.3 Secretariat costs	843.37
A.7.4 Programme Implementation costs	7,211.11
Sub-total A	532,610.05
Institutional Development	
Resource Development and Publications	34,905.24
Network consolidation	6,009.58
Governance/Management Meetings	26,555.68
Staff Development	12,202.21
Sub-total B	79,672.71
Administration	98,644.96
Total Expenditure 2008	710,927.72
Sub - total for special projects funded by UNIFEM	9,968.00
GRAND TOTAL	720,895.72



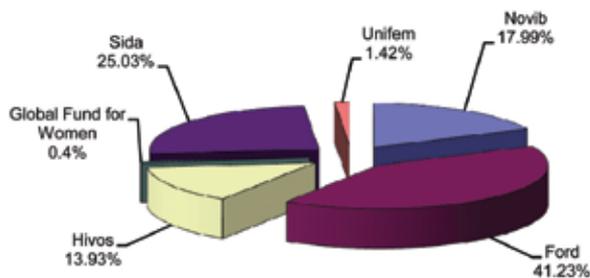
APWLD Expenditure 2008



APWLD 2008 Expenditure by Categories



APWLD Fund received in 2008



REPORT OF INDEPENDENT AUDITOR

To the member of Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development
(Association in Thailand)

I have audited the accompanying balance sheets of **ASIA PACIFIC FORUM ON WOMEN, LAW AND DEVELOPMENT** as of December 31, 2008 and 2007 and the related statements of income and expenses for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Association's management. My responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on my audit.

I conducted my audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that I plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. I believe that my audit provides a reasonable basis for my opinion.

In my opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of **ASIA PACIFIC FORUM ON WOMEN, LAW AND DEVELOPMENT** as of December 31, 2008 and 2007, and the results of its operations for the year then ended in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.



(Mrs. Pihanthana Ketthongsook)

Authorised Auditor No.3650

Bangkok,

February 17, 2009



APWLD Structure

Regional Council 2008-2011

Two Founding Members

1. Noor Farida
2. Virada Somswasdi

Country

Malaysia
Thailand

1 rep from WG and each TF

- | | | |
|-------------------------|--------|-------------|
| 3. Cynthia Abdon-Tellez | L&M | Hong Kong |
| 4. Kamala Chandrakirana | WHR WG | Indonesia |
| 5. Manisha Gupte | VAW | India |
| 6. Sita Pudel | RIW | Nepal |
| 7. Titiek Kartika | WPPP | Indonesia |
| 8. Vernie Yocogan-Diano | WEN | Philippines |

Subregional Representation:

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10. Helen Hakena
11. Virisila Buadromo

Fiji
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EAST ASIA

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------|
| 12. Mikiko Otani | Japan |
| 13. Young Sook Cho | South Korea |
| 14. Zanaa Jurmed | Mongolia |

SOUTH EAST ASIA

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------|
| 15. Elisa Lubi | Philippines |
| 16. Maria Chin | Malaysia |
| 17. Phanomwan Yoodee | Thailand |

SOUTH ASIA

- | | |
|------------------------|------------|
| 18. Azra Sayeed | Pakistan |
| 19. Khushi Kabir | Bangladesh |
| 20. Madhu Mehra | India |
| 21. Sunila Abeyssekera | Sri Lanka |

CENTRAL ASIA

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------|
| 22. Cholpon Akmatova | Kyrgystan |
| 23. Olga Djanaeva | Kyrgystan |
| 24. Yevgenia Kozyreva | Kazakhstan |

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Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD) is an independent, non-government, non-profit organisation in a consultative status at the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

APWLD is a women's human rights network of over 150 lawyers, social scientists, grassroots women and activists from 23 countries of Asia Pacific.



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