



# Asia Pacific Forum on Women Law and Development

Asia Pacific Forum  
on Women Law and  
Development

# ANNUAL REPORT 2007

# AP W L D



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

**APWLD**

Girls Guides Association Compound  
189/3 Changklan Road, Amphoe Muang  
Chiag Mai 50100, Thailand  
Telephones: +66-53-284527, 284856  
Fax: +66-53-280847  
Email: [apwld@apwld.org](mailto:apwld@apwld.org)  
website: [www.apwld.org](http://www.apwld.org)

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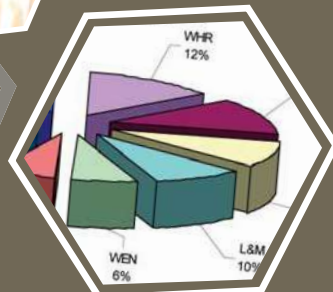


INSTITUTIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT

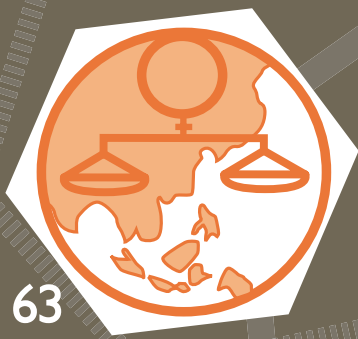
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APWLD Structure

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## ACRONYMS

AMIHAN  
ANWA  
APF  
APRN  
APWLD  
ARROW  
ASEAN  
ATIS  
CAW  
CEDAW

CHRD  
CLADEM

CORALL  
CNCW  
CPR  
CPWP  
CS-TFA  
CSW  
CSOs  
CWLG  
EJK

ESCR  
EU  
FA

FDW  
FLTP  
FORWARD  
FMWU  
FTA

FTZ  
GA

GEAR  
GFMD  
HIVOS

HR  
HRC  
HRD  
HRW

ILO  
IMA  
IMADR

IMF  
INNABUYOG

Women's Peasant Coalition, Philippines  
All Nepal Women Association  
Asia Pacific Forum  
Asia Pacific Research Network  
Asia-Pacific Forum on Women Law and Development  
Asia Pacific Resource and Research Center for Women  
Association of Southeast Asian Nations  
Abra Tingguian Ilocano Society  
Committee for Asian Women  
Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women  
Centre for Human Rights and Development, India  
Comité de América Latina y el Caribe para la Defensa de los Derechos de la Mujer  
Cordillera Alliance, Philippines  
Cambodia National Council for Women  
Civil and Political Rights  
Committees for Promoting Women in Politics  
Civil Society Task-Force on ASEAN  
Commission on the Status of Women  
Civil Society Organizations  
Centre for Women's Global Leadership  
Extra Judicial Killings  
Economic, Social and Cultural Rights  
European Union  
Forum Asia  
Foreign Domestic Workers  
Feminist Legal Theory and Practice  
Foundation for Women, Law and Rural Development, Thailand  
Filipino Migrant Workers' Union  
Free Trade Agreement  
Free Trade Zone  
General Assembly  
Gender Equality and Architecture Reforms  
Global Forum on Migration and Development  
Humanist Institute for Cooperation with Developing Countries  
Human Rights  
Human Rights Council  
Human Rights Defender  
Human Rights Watch  
International Labour Organisation  
International Migrants' Alliance  
International Movement Against All forms of Discrimination and Racism  
International Monetary Fund  
Federation of indigenous women's organizations, Cordillera, Philippines





IP	Indigenous Peoples
ISHR	International Service for Human Rights
IWRAW - AP	International Women's Rights Action Watch - Asia Pacific
KPI	Koalisi Perempuan, Indonesia
L&M	Labor and Migration
LGBTI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender/Transsexual, Intersex
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MFA	Migrant Forum Asia
MoWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoEYS	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
MoP	Ministry of Planning
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MoLV	Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training
MoInf	Ministry of Information
MMN	Mekong Migration Network
NCAV	National Commission on Violence Against Women
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NHRI	National Human Rights Institutions
NKJF	Norske Kvinnelige Jurister Forening/NORAD Norway
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OMCT	World Organisation Against Torture
Oxfam Novib	Netherlands Organisation for International Development Cooperation
P&M	Programme and Management Committee
PAN-AP	Pesticide Action Network-Asia Pacific
PCFS	People's Coalition on Food Sovereignty
PKR	People's Justice Party
RegC	Regional Council
RRRT	Regional Rights Resource Team, Pacific
RIW	Rural and Indigenous Women
SAHRDC	South Asia Human Rights Documentation Centre
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SAPI	South Asia Partnership International
SDF	Sustainable Development Foundation
SRED	Society for Rural Education, India
SP	Solidaritas Perempuan, Indonesia
Tenaganita	Women's Force, Malaysia
TF	Task Force
TNCs	Transnational Corporations
ToT	Training of Trainers
TFZ	Tax Free Zones
TNWF	Tamil Nadu Women's Forum, India
UN	United Nations
UNCERD	UN Committee on Elimination of Racial Discrimination

UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNI	Union Network International
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
U N I F I L -	United Filipinos in Hong Kong
MIGRANTE-HK	
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UPHK	United Pangasinan in Hong Kong
UNSR	United Nations Special Rapporteur
UNSR HRD	United Nations Special Representative on Human Rights Defenders
UNSR VAW	United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women
VAW	Violence Against Women
WE	Women's Exchange
WEN	Women and Environment
WG	Working Group
WHR	Women's Human Rights
WHRD	Women Human Rights Defenders
WHRD ICC	WHRD International Coordinating Committee
WHR WG	Women's Human Rights Working Group
WILDAF	Women in Law and Development Africa
WLD	Women Law and Development
WPPP	Women's Participation in Political Processes
WSC	Women's Studies Center
WSF	World Social Forum



Women Law and Development participants at the 20th anniversary  
28 - 30 November 2007  
Bangkok, Thailand



## Executive Summary

This has been a most productive and enjoyable 12 months, the secretariat and APWLD members have worked well as a collective and accomplished a great deal. This report gives you an overview of our activities in 2007.

2007 saw the launch of the Regional Campaign on the recognition of domestic workers as work demanding for **One paid day off per week** for foreign domestic workers. The campaign is spearheaded by the United for Foreign Domestic Workers Rights, which is comprised of five regional and international organizations. We appreciate the opportunity of partnerships in working together to achieve our common objectives to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and their human rights throughout the region.

APWLD continues to maintain and strengthen its relationship with the UN Special Procedures mechanisms, through its annual national and regional consultations with the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women (UNSRVAW), the UN Special Representative of the Secretary General on Human Rights Defenders and other Rapporteurs. In September, the Mongolian government followed through on its commitment made to the UNSRVAW in 2006 and adopted a national plan of action to implement the Domestic Violence legislation.

APWLD continued its advocacy at the UN Human Rights Council by co-organising and contributing to two NGO panel discussions, the first titled Intersections between Culture and Violence against Women: How the Special Procedures Integrate Culture and the Human Rights of Women in their Mandates and the second panel discussion titled; Integrating Human Rights of women into the

Human Right Council. The Working Group and Task Force members also made three oral interventions. One was to endorse the work of the UNSRVAW emphasizing the need to strengthen the mandate, which was supported by two other regional organisations. Other issues addressed were on the Human Rights and Fundamental freedoms of Indigenous peoples. These included the spate of extrajudicial killings and political disappearances in the Philippines, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Tamil Nadu (India); the displacement of 200,000 indigenous peoples in the Baticoloa District, on the east coast of Sri Lanka and the increasing vulnerability of Indigenous people, to violence and trafficking including rural and migrants in transitional economies throughout the Asia Pacific region. The Philippine government exercised their right to reply to the APWLD statement and reiterated its commitment to addressing complaints related to the rights of indigenous peoples and "unexplained" killings.

APWLD has continued to support the work on women human rights defenders (WHRDs) with its integral role in responding to the call of network members to provide support for country visits by UN Special Representative on Human Rights Defenders and, the UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, and by responding to action alerts to bring recognition and visibility to the situation of WHRDs in the Asia Pacific region. The UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, Philip Alston, in his report to the UN HRC describes the military in the Philippines as: "In a state of total denial, dismissing reported cases of killings as propaganda of the Left, or if ever it happened, it is the handiwork of a few rogue military elements, or the insurgents killing its own members."





WHRDs from Bangladesh, Fiji, Thailand, Pakistan, Burma and Philippines shared their concerns on militarization in the region being a critical threat to the rule of law and human rights. In Fiji and Philippines, APWLD members were unable to attend regional meetings because of a travel ban imposed on them, restricting their freedom of movement, as well as being physically and psychologically harassed. Grassroots movements and national and international networks have been instrumental in bringing to international attention the situations in these countries. APWLD, together with many other NGOs, signed an urgent appeal to Asian governments asking for action at the UN Human Rights Council for a Special Session on Burma which was granted during the 5th Special Session of the Human Rights Council on 2 October, 2007.

The Tamil Nadu Women's Forum (TNWF) submitted an alternative report titled "Unheard Voices - Dalit Women" documenting cases of discrimination and violence against Dalit women in India between 2005-2006, to the UN Committee on Elimination of Racial Discrimination (UNCERD). The committee expressed concern over the reports of "arbitrary arrest, torture and extra-judicial killings" and the alarming number of allegations of acts of sexual violence against Dalit and tribal women in India. They requested the Indian government to establish special courts and task forces to deal with violence against Dalit women.

VAWW Net Japan, a partner of APWLD and part of the WHRD campaign, reported this year that they had won a 5-year legal battle against the Japanese State TV Corporation NHK for misrepresentation and misinformation on the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery held in Tokyo, in December 2000.

They said it was a step forward for promoting democracy in the media by challenging taboo and self censorship in the media and political pressure. The decision has been appealed and the case is now in the supreme court.

APWLD also facilitated and coordinated consultations on the WHRD Resource Book in two countries (Nepal and Indonesia). The Resource book was published in collaboration with 12 other international and regional NGOs and was launched in Geneva during the 6th session of the Human Rights Council in September.

The annual Regional Feminist Legal Theory and Practice training was co-hosted by RRRT/UNDP and the Women's Studies Center of Chiang Mai University and was attended by 26 women and 3 male participants from 12 countries. A Cambodian male participant reported that he conducted two trainings on CEDAW and the MDGs, applying the FLTP principle. A participant from the Ministry of Women's Affairs made an official recommendation to the government of Cambodia to ratify the CEDAW and its Optional Protocol.

The Regional and National Gender and Politics Training Workshops resulted in a number of women in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Chennai, India and the Philippines, being successful in their local and national elections.

All the programmes have completed researches and documentations of laws and policies affecting women. Young women lawyer's of the RIW task force completed the research on the impacts of anti-terror laws and policies on women's access to and control over natural resources and reveals that laws developed as part of the anti-terror efforts do not provide protection to people,

but violate people's basic civil liberties and economic and social rights. Both the Food Sovereignty Kit and the Globalisation Module have been pilot tested in a number of communities, adapted to local context and translated. A number of requests have been received for further trainings.

The research on labour and migration in four countries (Malaysia, Hong Kong, South Korea, and India) to gauge the extent of the implementation of labour laws and the government's policy on labour is ongoing. The findings of the research will be used to create awareness and facilitate advocacy work of APWLD members by enhancing feminist understanding on issues related to foreign domestic workers within specific country contexts. The research findings will be a valuable resource and contribution to the regional campaign for the creation of a new definition of domestic work to protect migrant domestic workers.

APWLD's participation at the Food Forum in Nyeleni, Mali, was instrumental in raising issues such as: conflict and disasters, issues of concern to fisher folk, peasants and small farmers, among others. The concerns are reflected in the Declaration of Nyeleni 2007.

The website continues to provide easy, accessible information on APWLD's programmes, activities and interventions through statements and action alerts, media work and campaigns, among network members, partners and other human rights organisations.

APWLD continued to improve administrative and management systems, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and has been fortunate to have received continued support from partnerships with donors in securing the funds for the 2007-2008 period to enable the implementation of programme activities to achieve its overall objectives.

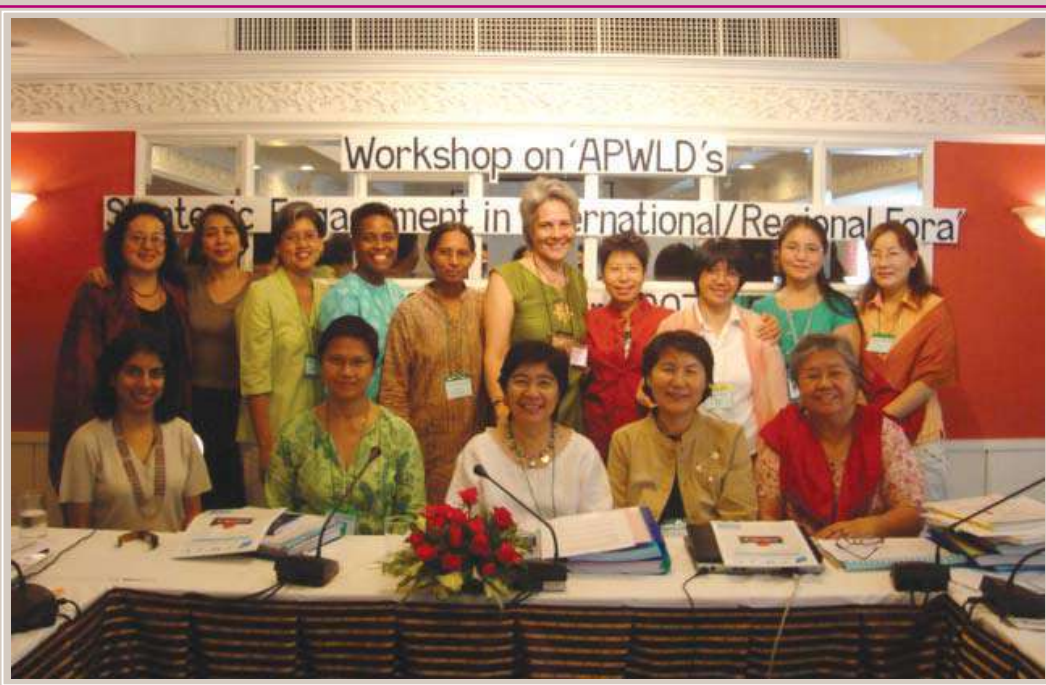
The year culminated in the 20th anniversary International Consultation of the Women Law and Development (WLD) networks, which aptly coincided with International Women's Human Rights Defenders Day, held in Bangkok. Representatives from the WLD networks throughout the three regions Asia and the Pacific, Africa, and the Caribbean and Latin America attended the three-day meeting. The consultation provided an opportunity to review the history of the networks and how it has contributed to promote gender equality and women's empowerment.

I welcome the new Regional Council and P & M members and also express my gratitude and thanks to the outgoing Regional Council and P & M and thank the secretariat, network members and partners, for their support, the sharing of knowledge and for the solidarity that unites us.



Lynnsay Rongokea Francis  
APWLD Regional Coordinator

## WOMEN HUMAN RIGHTS (WHR)



APWLD Task Force Convenors and Co-convenors during the Working Group's Strategic Engagement in International Regional Fora Workshop

## WOMEN HUMAN RIGHTS

Programme Objectives:

- 1 To promote the Women's Human Rights (WHR) framework in APWLD's programme and among its members and partners, including through institutionalizing Feminist Legal Theory and Practice (FLTP) in APWLD;
- 2 To support strategic initiatives for the advancement and protection of women's human rights in the Asia Pacific region;
- 3 To enhance the understanding of emerging issues of women's rights in the programmes of APWLD and among members and partners.

The Working Group (WG) has continued to provide support to the task forces by providing a feminist analysis and critique of critical and emerging issues currently identified as globalisation, militarization and fundamentalism into programmes when requested and through representation at the United Nations (UN) and other regional and international events. The Working Group also considered it was time to assess and review our strategic regional and international engagements and convened a workshop bringing together all task force convenors and co-convenors with the aim of: generating discussion on engaging with the UN and various human rights arena to draw on the different experiences and lessons learned, identify issues relevant to APWLD's strategic interests in international and regional advocacy for the next five years, and; come up with a list of needs and necessary actions to enhance APWLD's future work on international and regional advocacy. As a part of a longer term strategy they have taken steps to create effective focal points for FLTP training at the national, regional

levels in the region and have continued to provide support to the WHRD campaign.

### a) Collaboration with APWLD Task Forces

i. A WG member attended the 4th session of the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) to support and endorse the work of UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women (UNSRVAW) continuing from the 2006 VAW consultation on 'Culture and Violence against Women.' Two panel discussions and two oral interventions were made which reinforced the discussion on the impact of culture and women's full enjoyment of their fundamental rights.

ii. The WG assisted the VAW Task Force in preparation and planning for the Consultation with the UNSRVAW, held in the Philippines and provided significant contributions by providing conceptual clarification on the topic and in-depth analysis of the inter-linkages of violence against women and the two sets of rights, Civil and Political Rights and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CPR and ESCR).

### b) UN Human Rights Council

WG member, Madhu Mehra, attended the 4th session of the HRC, from 12-30 March and reported that NGO participation demanded active engagement at several levels. In particular, for women's rights groups, there were additional demands for advocacy toward ensuring both the retention of the existing spaces for women's rights as well as securing integration of women's human rights within the UN HRC system.

APWLD co-organised two panel discussions





to support the international advocacy to retain, strengthen and support the mechanisms that address women's human rights and the existing spaces for NGOs within the UN system.

**The first panel discussion** was organised in collaboration with World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) and Centre for Women's Global Leadership (CWLG), on 28 March. The panelists included Doudou Diene (UN Special Rapporteur on Racism), Hina Jilani (Special Representative of the UN Secretary General on Human Rights Defenders), Madeline Rees (Head of Women's Rights and Gender Unit, OHCHR) and Jan Arno Heessbruegge (Assistant to the UNSRVAW).

The panel was titled *'Intersections between Culture and Violence Against Women: How the Special Procedures Integrate Culture and the Human Rights of Women in Their Mandates'*. A special recommendation was made to the UN mandate holders to integrate intersections of culture and women's full enjoyment of their fundamental rights in their mandates.

Hina Jilani shared lessons drawn from her work as a women's human rights defender (WHRD) in Pakistan, in the context of combating honour crimes. She said not only is there a greater jeopardy attached to defending women's human rights but also, an assumption in relation to cultural concerns, that social change rather than the law should lead the struggle. Honour crimes have wide support in Pakistan putting WHRDs like her at additional risk.

**The second panel discussion, 'Integrating Human Rights of Women into the Human Rights Council'**, was co-hosted by IWRAW Asia Pacific, Human Rights Watch, CWGL and OMCT, on 22 March. The discussions led by Charlotte Bunch (CWGL),

Tulika Srivastava (IWRAW Asia Pacific), Madhu Mehra (APWLD) and Marianne Mollmann (HRW) focused on Gender Architecture and integration of gender in the HRC structure. Panelists shared their experiences on current developments that require close monitoring. Madhu shared the effectiveness of collaboration with the Special Procedures mechanisms through which gender integration and intersections had been effectively achieved. She also gave examples of APWLD's engagement, collaboration and support to the Special Rapporteurs on adequate housing, migration, internally displaced persons and the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Human Rights Defenders.

#### **Oral Statements in the Interactive Session at the Human Rights Council**

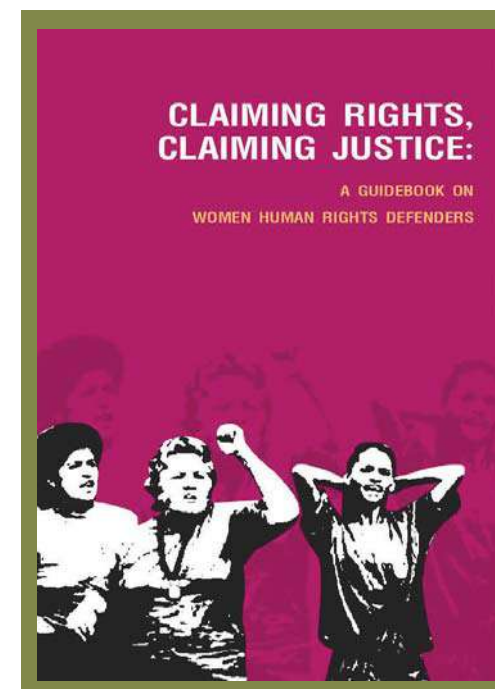
Two oral statements on behalf of the RIW and VAW Task Forces, were presented on 20 and 21 March. The first highlighted the extra judicial killings in the Philippines which attracted a response from the Philippine Government to the HRC, providing an update on the case status. The second statement supported by OMCT and IWRAW-Asia Pacific, endorsed the work of the UNSRVAW and emphasised the need to strengthen the mandate. The UNSRVAW, Yakin Ertürk, in her response to the HRC, acknowledged the role of APWLD's regional consultations, calling it a model that would help make her mandate stronger and more effective. APWLD also endorsed an oral statement together with 27 other organizations led by Cairo Institute of Human Rights Studies, calling attention to the report of the high level mission on Darfur to demand a resolution by the HRC to protect the people of Darfur, including the women.

#### **c) Women Human Rights Defenders Campaign**

APWLD has continued to support the work on WHRDs, with its integral role in responding to the call of network members to provide support for the UN Special Representative of the Secretary General on Human rights Defenders (UNSR HRD) and UN Special Rapporteur on Extra Judicial, Summary or Arbitrary Execution to visit countries in the Asia region to bring recognition and visibility to WHRD issues. APWLD facilitated and coordinated two consultations on the resource book in two countries (Nepal and Indonesia), as well as the production of the Resource Book on WHRDs.

#### **Consultations on the WHRD Resource Book**

Two consultations were held to ensure that the context and realities of different WHRDs experiences around the globe are reflected in the resource book.



**i. The first consultation took place in Kathmandu, Nepal**, in partnership with Women's Rehabilitation Centre (WOREC), from 12-15 January. The four-day consultation was attended by 15 WHRDs from South Asia. Many of the WHRDs have worked on documenting cases of human rights violation in each local area and shared experiences on difficulties they have faced in documenting the cases in specific contexts, such as working on Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transgenders, Intersex (LGBTI) rights in Nepal or women's rights in Dalit communities. This raised awareness on the fact that there can be no guarantee for safety of WHRDs, and on the necessity of identifying strategies to minimise possible repercussions in conducting documentation.

**ii. The second consultation took place in Jakarta, Indonesia**, in partnership with International Service for Human Rights (ISHR) and the National Commission on Violence against Women (Komnas Perempuan), from 1-4 March. The consultation was attended by 15 WHRDs from 8 countries (Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Indonesia, Iraq, Malaysia, Pakistan, Palestine and the Philippines). Given the diverse contexts of Indonesia, important issues discussed during this consultation was the specific experience of WHRDs, living in Muslim communities, indigenous communities and urban poor communities in the context of fundamentalisms, extremism, including armed conflict and Shariah laws.

The discussions were particularly useful in shaping the chapter on typology of violations. One of the most important issues of discussion was that of LGBTI defenders. The initial host organization based in Egypt, felt it was not a current issue that was of priority concern in the Middle East and were mindful of the danger of backlash if they were to take up

this issue at this time. This incident highlighted the critical need for the resource book to include the discussion on the issues faced by the LGBTI activists and identify the specific risks and repercussions of advocating for the rights of LGBTI peoples in different contexts and countries.

### iii. Outcomes of the consultations:

It provided a venue for WHRDs to give direct feedback on the draft resource manual reflecting their experiences and specific contexts.

It also provided a critical venue to build the knowledge and capacity of over 50 WHRDs from around Asia and Middle East regions to recognize and document the specific risks, violations and vulnerabilities of WHRDs and implement these skills in their work.

**iv. Women Human Rights Defenders Resource Book** - entitled **Claiming Rights, Claiming Justice: A Guidebook on Women Human Rights Defenders** was launched in Geneva during the 6th session of the Human Rights Council in September. The book was published in close collaboration with 12 international and regional organizations that were part of the WHRD International Coordinating Committee (WHRD ICC). This book is intended to guide women human rights defenders through a variety of processes defending rights, challenging impunity, and seeking justice and accountability. It is expected that human rights advocates use this resource book to integrate a gender perspective in their existing human rights documentation systems.

APWLD and FORUM-ASIA co-organised a forum-cum-book launch to coincide with International Women Human Rights Defenders Day and as part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations of APWLD. The book was distributed widely to WHRDs and about 70 partner organisations working on human rights defenders issues around the world. The resource book will be translated into Spanish and Arabic by early 2008 with support from Amnesty International.

### d.) ASEAN and the Human Rights Movement

The 1st Regional Consultation on ASEAN and Human Rights was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from 26-28 August. ASEAN will establish a Commission on Women and Children's Rights and APWLD along with IWRAW Asia Pacific were invited to be the thematic/regional focal point on women's rights.

The Civil Society Task-Force on ASEAN (CS-TFA) and Human Rights has been established with the aim of (i) making the ASEAN more accountable regarding the fulfilment of their international and domestic human rights obligations; and (ii) to make ASEAN human rights mechanisms more accountable.

APWLD, together with many other NGOs, signed an urgent appeal to Asian governments asking for action at the UN Human Rights Council for a Special Session on Burma.

As a result, the 5th Special Session of the Human Rights Council on the human rights situation in Burma was held on 2 October, 2007. Thereafter, Mr. Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar paid an official visit to Burma.

**e.) The Regional Feminist Legal Theory and Practice (FLTP) training**, co-hosted by Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT)/United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Women's Studies Center of Chiang Mai University, was held in Chiang Mai, Thailand from 29 September to 6 October. The eight-day training was attended by 26 women and 3 male activists, academics, government officials and members of the L & M Task Force from 12 countries: Cambodia, Laos, Indonesia, India, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Japan, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, and Thailand. The chief trainer was Imrana Jalal from RRRT/UNDP, with two graduates of the 2006 FLTP pool of trainers, Alison Aggarwal (Australia), Mary Jane Real (Philippines), with support from Ivy Josiah (Malaysia) also an FLTP graduate.

The training examines and analyzes how the law can be used as a tool for women's empowerment. It enabled the participants to examine the oppression and systemic discrimination faced by women and how intervention with feminist legal strategies at the national and international level, can contribute to change women's lives for the better.

A number of participants have reported on how they have been able to incorporate the learnings from the training into their work, and apply the FLTP principles into national training and in the drafting of policies.

*Mr My Sambath, gender and development trainer, Cambodia reported after the training that he conducted two, four-day trainings on CEDAW and the MDGs with financial and technical support from UNIFEM, on 13-16 November and on 4-7 December with 24 participants (16 female and 8 male) and 26 participants (14 female and 12 male) respectively. The participants for these trainings are deputy directors, lawyers, programme officers from eight ministries and one governmental institution such as Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA), Ministry of Health (MoH), Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS), Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Ministry of Planning (MoP), Ministry of Justice (MoJ), Ministry of Labor, Ministry of Information (MoInf) and Vocational Training (MoLV), Cambodia National Council for Women (CNCW) and member organizations of NGO CEDAW Committee.*





### Results of the local trainings:

On 26-29 February 2008, a training graduate from Committees for Promoting Women in Politics (CPWP) gathered female commune councillors and requested the Royal Government of Cambodia to ratify the CEDAW and its Optional Protocol. The MoWa supported the recommendation and made an official request for ratification to the government and National Assembly.

One of the training participants, Ms. Peng Sophada, Deputy Chief of the EIA Office and Member of Gender Working Group of MAFF developed a project proposal to organize more trainings on CEDAW and Cambodian MDGs to disseminate the lessons learnt among the staff of the ministry and department at different levels. She has submitted the proposal to the higher authority in the ministry and is seeking financial and technical support from UNIFEM and GAD/C

**f.) APWLD's Strategic Engagement in International Regional Fora,** workshop was held in Bangkok, from 1-2 November. The two-day workshop was attended by 15 members of APWLD's Task Forces, from 15 countries. Since its inception, APWLD promotes and uses international human rights standards and utilizes the UN systems and various international and regional mechanisms as a strategic venue for advancing women's human rights in Asia Pacific regions. After two decades and within today's context and contemporary global struggles, it was felt that it was time to assess and review our strategic regional and international engagements.

The workshop sought to solicit reflections and generate discussion on experiences of engaging with the UN and various human rights arena as individual human rights activists and also as representatives of APWLD.

The objectives of the workshop were to: (i) gain a collective understanding on the lessons learned from APWLD's past engagements in various international fora on human rights and social justice; (ii) identify issues relevant to APWLD's strategic interests in international and regional advocacy for the next five years, and; (iii) come up with a list of needs and necessary actions to enhance APWLD's future work on international and regional advocacy.

A questionnaire for reflection and assessment was developed and circulated amongst network members in advance. The overall assessment of APWLD's engagement at the various levels was very positive, as participants shared practical and diverse views on the various levels of engagement.

The secretariat is now in the process of institutionalising data on current and emerging trends to provide the network with current updated materials for their advocacy.

Members acknowledged that one of the strengths of the organisation lies in the regional perspective it lends to current and emerging issues and the support it provides to national initiatives which connects the networks and communities and have contributed to bringing local issues to the global arena. The findings will be discussed further at the governance and TF meetings during the strategic planning for the next programme cycle.

"The meeting was an eye-opener because it taught me the history of the organisation and why it came to be. That institutional history gave meaning to the sort of work APWLD does for the women of the region as well as the meaning for work I was doing as part of the L&M TF. APWLD's engagement at the national, regional and international levels using the UN mechanisms and instruments made me feel I was part of an organisation that was actually providing a real voice for the issues of women in the Asia-Pacific in areas of migration, environment, rural development, politics and violence at the regional and international fora. That meeting was for me informative and empowering and encouraged me to do more since I am now aware of what APWLD is all about and what it can become and do for Asia Pacific women in the future."



Avelina Rokoduru, Fiji, L & M TF, 2007



Kamala Chandrakirana,  
Komnas Perempuan,  
Indonesia  
WHR WG member,  
2007

"The conversations were a constant flow of remembrances, ideas and plainly much-needed information. The sheer will of each woman in the room to learn from each other meant that, by the end of the one and a half days, we all went home to our respective struggles bringing new confidence gained from our collective wisdom. It was also a space full of laughter and affection, as well as sharings of anxieties and fears - all of which makes our sisterhood in APWLD a place to come home to."

"We, as participants of this productive workshop, have realised that this mechanism of sharing-reflection to draw lessons and insights and setting of direction is indeed valuable. We expanded our views and perspectives wider than the Task Force or Working Group of which we are part of, and wider than the specific issues we are working with. This kind of workshop enables us to look at the synergies, inter-relation and integration of what each Task Force/Working Group is doing. This makes us familiar and grounded on the overall work of APWLD."



Vernie Yocogan-Diano,  
Innabuyog, Philippines,  
WEN TF, 2007

# VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (VAW)



The Violence Against Women Task Force

## 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 new 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 (VAW) in the Asia Pacific region; and

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 and their causes and consequences.

The Asia and Pacific regional consultations with the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, Its Causes and Consequences (UNSR VAW) held annually since 1995, is now institutionalised within APWLD. As a result of the consultations, APWLD engages with other UN agencies in presenting regional overviews on VAW when requested.

a) The Emerging Social Issues Division of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), organized an expert group meeting in Bangkok in April on "Regional Strategies for Implementing the Recommendations from the Secretary-General's Study on Violence Against Women with Particular Emphasis on Harmful Traditional and Cultural Practices and the role of National Machineries". The two-day meeting was attended by UN representatives, academics, human rights NGOs and government officials from Australia, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Thailand and Turkey.

APWLD was invited to give a regional overview on Harmful Traditional and Cultural Practices, from both Asia and Pacific region. The presentation and recommendations were drawn from reports of the national and regional Consultations with the UNSRVAW from 2004-2006.

Some of the central themes emerging from discussions during the meeting were: the discordance between constitutional law, customary law and practice impedes efforts to combat VAW therefore, comprehensive reviews of legislation and measures to harmonize laws are crucial. The importance of working closely and strategically with the various media was also stressed, as the media has a unique capacity to effectively convey messages and influence vast numbers of people, with great potential to significantly impact attitudes and behaviours and promote gender-responsive policies and legislation.

The experts made a number of recommendations and emphasised the need for further research pertaining to harmful traditional and cultural practices - particularly in those lesser-known or undocumented forms - and a thorough review of the laws so that more appropriate responses may be designed.

Partnership-building, strengthening networks and cooperation and coordination among stake holders is needed to send clear, concise and powerful messages to policy makers and the public in bringing about an end to violence against women.



**b) The Study Workshop on 'Political Economy of Violence Against Women'** was held in the Philippines on the 11th September. The one-day workshop was to equip participants attending the regional consultation with a more in-depth understanding on the theme of the consultation. An introduction is given on the UN Human Rights mechanisms, with particular emphasis on the mandate of the UNSRVAW, for participants who are not familiar with the system or mechanism. The interactive discussions and analysis on the political economy of VAW in the context of globalisation, fundamentalisms and militarization provided a wealth of information.



**c) The Annual Asia Pacific Regional NGO Consultation with the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, (UNSRVAW), Dr. Yakin Ertürk,** was held in Manila, Philippines, from 12-13 September. With the theme "Political Economy of Violence Against Women", the two day consultation was attended by 45 women and men from 16 countries; Bangladesh, Cambodia, Fiji Islands, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Korea, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Turkey.

The 'Political Economy of Violence Against Women' is the focus of the UNSRVAW's 2009 thematic report and will highlight the indivisibility of economic, social and cultural rights in addressing women's human rights and VAW. A number of recommendations were drawn up for the 2009 report which include among others:

- i. To redefine established professional terms such as human rights, development, trade, right to work, to properly reflect women's human rights situation and the interconnectedness of political sphere and economic sphere;
- ii. To support regional forums with other Special Rapporteurs as the methodology of civil society's engagement with the UN human rights mechanisms; and
- iii. To put international pressure to domesticate international human rights conventions, in particular CEDAW and CRC to hold states accountable in ending all forms of violence against women and children.

The report of the consultations and proceedings will be published and made available on the APWLD website in 2008.

**d) The Philippines National Consultation with the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women (UNSRVAW) Dr. Yakin Ertürk,** was held on 14 September, following the Regional Consultation. Hosted by the Women's Legal Bureau (WLB), the national consultation was held in coordination with AMIHAN, EnGendeRights, Pagkakaisa ng Kababaihan Para sa Kalayaan (KAISA KA), Pambansang Kongreso ng Kababaihan sa Kanayunan (PKKK), Philippine Alliance of



*"We need to transform our states to be sensitive to our human rights, transform the hegemony that dictates what is to happen. We won't be able to do all that but conscious effort has changed many things. We should not be crushed by the magnitude and identify what we can do. Whatever area of activity, we can make a difference. We have just opened a chapter and congratulations to all for bringing up pertinent issues. This is an unpaid job but I get the reward from my encounters with you and our joint initiative to make a difference."*  
Dr. Yakin Ertürk, UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, Its Causes and Consequences, Philippines, 2007

Human Rights Advocates (PAHRA) and the University of the Philippines-Institute of Human Rights (UP-IHR). The one-day meeting was attended by 40 women's rights activists from different organisations, both rural and urban based; 10 women from remote areas working with indigenous peoples, including female peasants. This was the first time many of them were able to discuss their issues openly and took the opportunity to bring their concerns to the attention of the UNSRVAW.

One of the key outcomes of having the Consultations with the UNSRVAW is the increased capacity of women in the region to access this mechanism.

The national consultation highlighted critical emerging issues in the context of neo-liberal politics, militarism and fundamentalism, including violence against indigenous women, Filipino women migrant workers, lesbians as sexual minorities, the ongoing extra-judicial killings and enforced disappearances against women human rights defenders and the impact of militarism on the local community.

The consultation also drew attention to the Subic Case: the rape of a Filipina woman by an American soldier. The persistence of patriarchal values, the norms of machismo, and the increasing incidences of VAW, the culture of corruption and impunity, are some of the challenges that women in the country are faced with.

The Special Rapporteur (SR) recognised the National Consultation provided a forum for Filipina women's groups to talk to each other openly despite the serious disagreements and political differences they have. The SR emphasized that this kind of dialogue will enable and empower them to move forward, interlinking different causes by focusing on common grounds they share from the fact that they are women. One of the recommendations given by the UNSRVAW to the participants was to utilize UN special procedures more often giving the SR an opportunity to take the issue up with the governments concerned, including inclusion in her reports to the UN Human Rights Council.

#### e) Individual Complaint sent to the UNSRVAW.

An individual complaint, with the support of APWLD, has been filed on trafficking cases following the SR's recommendation and is now waiting for a response from the state concerned.

#### As a result of the 2006 UNSRVAW Consultation in Mongolia: Legislative and Policy Change.

In 2006, following the National Consultation held in Mongolia, the UNSRVAW met with Mongolian government representatives who made a commitment to adopt a *National Action Plan* on combating domestic violence (DV). **This plan was adopted and approved on 12 September 2007.**

The UNSRVAW's visit to Mongolia also had an impact on the Judiciary's implementation and interpretation of the new *Domestic Violence Legislation*. The Supreme Court of Mongolia rendered a decision confirming that it is not the survivor who has to leave the house but the perpetrator.

The National Center Against Violence (NCAV), a member of the VAW Task Force, acknowledged the importance of both the *National and Regional NGO Consultations with the UNSRVAW on Violence against Women* and the contribution of the UNSRVAW and APWLD for progress on DV legislation and policy in Mongolia.



Enkhjargal Davaasuren  
National Center  
Against Violence Mongolia

"We greatly appreciate your valuable support and assistance during the last year's National Consultation meeting in Ulaanbaatar. We believe the quick approval of the *National Action Plan* was due to your influence at the policy level and result of the last year's (2006) consultation meeting in Mongolia with APWLD."

#### f) Research and Publications:

**Access to Justice - Study on Women's Notions of Justice for Violence Against Women**, has been carried out in 9 countries including Bangladesh, Burma, Thailand, Fiji, India, Japan, Mongolia, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The provisional findings of the study show that women's notion of justice and injustice is highly different among women themselves. The study was developed out of recognition that while law is an important mechanism for women's access to justice, it is necessary to look beyond law, as it often fails to deliver to the diverse needs of women and their concepts of justice. The study aims to reflect women's voices on their own notions of justice and how they can best be fulfilled. The paper combines the study results with an overview of barriers to the current legal systems, different concepts of justice and strategies for moving forward.

The report is to be published in the second half of 2008 and follow-up research will be conducted expanding to countries not currently covered by the study.

#### The report will be composed of two sub-sections:

Section I: Domestic Violence (multi-country study on women's notions of justice from Bangladesh, Fiji Islands, India, Mongolia, Pakistan and Sri Lanka);

Section II: Violence in Conflict Situation (multi-country study on women's notions of justice from Japan, and among Burmese women working in Thailand)

## WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL PROCESSES (WPPP)



The WPPP Task Force with Nalini Singh,  
Programme Officer (left back)  
and Lynnsay Francis Regional Coordinator (right back)



### 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;

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 task force plays an important role in capacity building through the gender and politics training programme to empower women to challenge existing political structures; and to create an enabling environment for women to network and to increase the number of women in decision-making positions throughout the region. Another key area of support has been in building and sharing platforms for strategy and information sharing for developing the training module and publications. The exchange of 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.

a) The fifty-first session of the Committee on the Status of Women (CSW), was held in New York, from 26 February to 9 March. The theme was *The Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination and Violence Against the Girl Child*. Tahira Khan represented APWLD on behalf of the WPPP and VAW and organised a panel discussion, on 1 March, in collaboration with Lois Herman, Coordinator of Women's United Nations Report Network. The discussion attracted an estimated 30 participants from around the globe. The panellists included Dr Yakin Ertürk, UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women; Indira Patel (Global Expert on Harmful Cultural, Traditional and Religious Practices and a representative of the Great Britain National Council of Women on NGO Committee); and Denise Scotto, Attorney at Lawyers (NY) (International Federation of Women Lawyers and the Vice Chair of UN NGO Committee on the Status of Women (CSW)).

The theme titled *Male Honour vs. Girls' and Women's Right to Life and Protection* brought the issue to the attention of the UN state parties and highlighted honour crimes as an issue of violation of girls' and women's right to life and security, as well as the nature and impact of honour related to violence against girls and young women across the globe.

This was the first time that a panel was held on the topic of honour crimes at the CSW. Tahira recommended that APWLD continues to support advocacy and campaign efforts at all levels in drawing attention to this issue. APWLD has continued to address issue of Harmful Traditional and Cultural Practices through regional consultations with the UNSRVAV.

b) The Regional Gender and Politics Training Workshop Level 1, was held in Bangkok, Thailand, from 27-29 July.

The training was attended by 16 women politicians, decision-makers and activists from 12 countries. Participants included the newly elected Mayor of Chiang Mai, Thailand; the first Minister for Women, Religion and NGOs from the Autonomous Region of Bougainville, Papua New Guinea; Maoist Member of Parliament from Nepal; candidates for the next parliamentary elections from Kyrgyzstan; various political party members from Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Mongolia; community educators and activists from Bangladesh, Burma, South India, Pakistan, the Philippines; an academic from Thailand; and a parliamentary educator from Sri Lanka.

As a result of the training, the participants from the Philippines, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia and Burmese working in Thailand, on their return to their home countries have conducted in total, eight (8) national WPPP Leadership training workshops with a combined total of an estimated 250 women.



### c) Research, documentation, translations and publications

The task force envisioned that the valuable research data collected and analysed in the publication *Seethings and Seatings: Strategies for Women's Participation in Political Processes* published in December 2005 would facilitate the process of international sharing and thus support and empower national women's groups in their work towards gender equality and participation in the political arena. The manual presents case studies from Fiji, India, Korea, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia and the Philippines identifying the restraining and driving forces for women that helped them to win in elections and to be effective in their elective position.

The publication has been used and distributed in 8 national trainings workshops in four countries. The book has also been translated into four languages.

## Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan

### i. Kyrgyzstan.

The Forum for Women's NGOs of Kyrgyzstan translated *Seethings and Seatings: Strategies for Women's Participation in Political Processes* into the Russian language to facilitate the development of better strategies catering to local situations enabling aspiring women politicians to use the strategies documented.

The book has been used in capacity building training workshops for their '50 women in parliament' project which aims at increasing the representation of women at the highest decision making level in Kyrgyzstan.

### ii. In Kazakhstan,

Svetlana Beissova, from Taraz Initiative Centre, has managed two projects on Women's Participation in Political Processes.

One of the results was the school for elective process and the participation of seven women from her organization in the recent election processes at the local authority level.

Svetlana also participated in the process of creating the second alternative CEDAW report for Kazakhstan.



Gulnara Derbisheva (in picture), Galina Kulikova and Cholpon Abdullaeva are newly elected members of the National Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic. The three have participated in the WPPP regional and national trainings. They are from the Kyrgyzstan Fifty Women in Parliament Project, initiated by Nurgul Djanaeva, a member of the Forum of Women's NGOs Kyrgyzstan, and a member of APWLD.



## Malaysia and Indonesia

i. In Malaysia and Indonesia, *Seethings and Seatings: Strategies for Women's Participation in Political Processes* has been translated into the Bahasa language. It will be of direct benefit to the women, NGOs and academia interested in standing in political elections or would like more knowledge on the issue of women's participation in political processes in Asia Pacific.

The Bahasa translated version of the book is being used for trainings by the Koalisi Perempuan Indonesia (KPI) Intermediate Cadres Training.

ii. *The Gender and Politics, Level 1* training manual has incorporated comments from the participants of the pilot training held in Malaysia, in 2006. The manual is accompanied by a *Participant's Reader* which contains a list of useful reading material and information relevant to the training. The manual review team Rashila Ramli, Tahira Khan, Nurgul Djanaeva and S.K. Priya, were previous task force members and current WPPP trainers.



Rashila, Priya and June

iii. The *Leadership and Capacity building Workshop* was held in Sabah, Malaysia, in December. Twenty five (25) potential women leaders in rural areas, in Sabah, attended the workshop. The newly developed *Gender and Politics Level 1 Training Manual* was the main resource material. The training was led by Rashila Ramli.

iv. Koalisi Perempuan Indonesia, a task force member, organised two trainings on: *the Importance of the Roles of Women's Movement in Social Change*. The workshop held in East Java and Bengkulu, Sumatra was attended by 60 women intermediate cadres. The objectives of the training included developing the leadership capacity of the basic cadres of women leaders at the provincial level and developing the ability to formulate and undertake advocacy strategies with a feminist perspective. A WPPP task force member was the resource person and led discussion on the role of women's movement in social change and feminism, and used the manual as a reference.

## Thailand

i. The Women in Politics research *The Female Politicians of Thailand* commenced in November, with the Thai member of the Task Force, Virada Somsawasdi of the Women's Studies Center of the University of Chiang Mai taking the lead. The study is being undertaken as most female politicians in Thailand are not concerned about women's issues or feminist politics, due to the fact that they are representing their parties' platform which is vehemently patriarchal. Feminism or women's concerns is understood and addressed only by a small number of people while politics of the mainstream politicians dominate discussion and policy formulation.

The main objective of this research is to identify and document feminist political strategies that need to be worked on to win female politicians' support. Forming an alliance with feminist politicians is a positive long-term political empowerment for female political activists. It is necessary to transform female politicians into feminist politicians. The research will be completed in October 2008.







ii. The *Gender Budgeting, Gender Equality* training for newly elected Female Politicians was held on 25 December. The workshop was organised by the Thai member of the task force, Virada Somswasdi, in collaboration with the Women's Studies Center of Chiang Mai University and the Foundation for Women, Law and Rural Development (FORWARD), with support from Norske Kvinnelige Juristers Forening (NKJF)/NORAD Norway.

The one-day workshop was attended by 51 female politicians and women in decision making, including four mayors and presidents of the Sub-District Administration Organizations in the North of Thailand, six female politicians and current members of the Parliament from Bangkok and provinces in the north, north eastern and south of Thailand. This workshop was organized after the results of the December 2007 general elections had been announced.

An added outcome of the workshop was the unique opportunity to establish a network amongst newly elected female parliamentarians and among feminist academics which would serve to support and strengthen them in their work as they serve the people of Thailand.

## Nepal

The country is in a transitional phase and the peace building process, as a result of the multi-party coalition collapse resulting in the postponement of the groundbreaking Constituent Assembly Elections. The new election dates have been set for 10 April 2008.

i. A round table discussion with Nepali Parliamentarians for the Protection of Public Interest was convened by the Nepali network member, with support from APWLD. The Pro Public Forum attracted twenty three (23) parliamentarians, 18 of whom were women, from leading parties. With the Constituent Assembly election date set for 10 April 2008, the forum came together to discuss how to maintain the gains achieved for the 30% seats for women in parliament in the current realm of uncertainty in regards to free and fair elections.

The presence of an estimated 10 media representatives ensured good media coverage.

ii. The South Asia Partnership International's (SAPI) Conference was held in Nepal, from the 18-20 September. Over 150 politicians, activists, academics, NGO representatives from South Asia attended the three-day meeting with the theme the Invisible Faces of Violence on Women in Politics: Breaking the Silence. APWLD was invited to give a presentation on 'Exploring Future Collaborative Actions'.

It provided an opportunity for further networking with like-minded organisations in the region and to share issues and strategies in a common work area addressing the issue of violence against women in politics.

## Outcomes of the WPPP Regional Gender and Politics Training: Testimonies from

### Bougainville - Papua New Guinea

*"The Workshop provided an excellent input into my knowledge and capacity building process even at this late age. The trainers are an example of resource women we need to build networks with, to overcome the concerns of women in Asia Pacific and the world. As I set up a new Ministry of Women, I will use this training to build the role of government to be responsive to the needs of women with input from the women through the Partnership Development Programme."* Hon. Magdalene Toroansi, the first Minister for Women, Religion and NGOs from the Autonomous Region of Bougainville, Papua New Guinea.



Hon. Magdalene Toroansi

## Malaysia

Dr. Zaliha Mustafa from Malaysia, an active member of People Justice Party (PKR), elected party representative of Supreme Council and Vice President of the Woman's Wing, reported that her

organisation had recently held a workshop for women who are potential candidates for the next general election. They also held discussions with a few NGOs on the women's agenda of the 30% women's involvement in politics and decision making.

An output of the meeting was a draft manifesto, focusing on women's needs which will be used in preparing for the next political campaign.

## Philippines

*"The WPPP module was useful and easily applicable to the Judiciary. The module on Patriarchy has been adopted and utilized in one of the trainings conducted for Supreme Court Employees."* Arianne Olegario-Galope, Program



Development Officer IV of the Supreme Court of the Philippines- participant at the 2006 pilot training in Kuala Lumpur.

Two trainings were organised in August on *Understanding Gender and Politics*, using the APWLD training modules. The trainings aimed to increase the capacity of women to project themselves as alternative political leaders in their communities in the coming elections.



Twenty five (25) women who ran for the first time as candidates in a *Barangay* (village) election and Sangguniang Kabataan (Youth Council) attended the training organised by Sheila Algabre, vice chair for Poverty Reduction Programme at the Mindanao Commission on Women, Philippines).



#### Mongolia

Tegshbayar Darambazar from Mongolia reported she has applied knowledge gained from the training to input into the draft *Gender Law for Mongolia*, which has had input from all sectors. The National Committee on Gender Equality of Mongolia will present the draft to Parliament within 2007. Tegshbayar attended the 2007 training.

#### Women's League of Burma

Thin Thin Aung, Program coordinator, Women's Political Empowerment, Women's League of Burma organised a workshop in Sankhaburi, Kanchanaburi, Thailand, from 8-9 August, on *Women and Politics* for Burmese women. The training was very significant to Burmese women as they learned about their political rights, an area rarely tapped into given the volatile situation in Burma. She is looking at doing similar workshops in other areas of Thailand with Burmese women. Thin Thin also attended the 2007 training.



## LABOUR and MIGRATION (L & M)



The Labour and Migration Task Force was warmly welcomed by the Penn Thozhilalar Sangam's (Women Workers Union) members in Thoraipakkam, Chennai, India. The Centre serves women workers, primarily domestic and construction workers who live around the IT



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;

3 To strengthen APWLD's national partner's 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 in factories. Their work goes largely unrecognised and they are more likely to face barriers and discrimination in hiring, wages and other benefits than their male counterparts. These women are particularly vulnerable to trafficking, HIV/AIDS, exploitation and abuse in various forms because of their economic need, lack of employment, the conditions of their work, their relative isolation and temporary status, poor access to training, education, information and their inability to access mechanisms for defending their rights.

The programme continues its research on discriminatory policies, laws and practice and pushing for law reform on non-discrimination and equality issues in the workplace and for the implementation and enforcement of existing international labour standards.

Regional Campaign

The Regional Campaign *Foreign Domestic Workers (FDW)- United for Foreign Domestic Workers Rights* was spearheaded by the United for Foreign Domestic Workers Rights Coalition (UFDWR) comprising of five regional and international organizations: APWLD, CARAM Asia, Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants (APMM), Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW) and Mekong Migration Network (MMN). The initial focus of the regional campaign was the need for *a day off for foreign domestic workers*. Without a day off, these workers cannot organise themselves, nor can they access public health care or services.

The campaign *One paid day off per week for FDWs* was launched during the 3rd ASEAN Civil Society Conference, in Hong Kong, on 4 November 2007, by the UFDWR. It was estimated that around 50 participants attended the launch, the majority of them being foreign domestic workers, who echoed the call of the campaign and relayed messages of appreciation of the work that the regional and international organisations were undertaking on their behalf. FDW are one of the most marginalized groups in the migrant population and are not afforded basic worker's rights and human rights such as rights to leave, standard working hours, days off, rights that are normally enjoyed by other migrant workers.

The importance of organising women migrant workers emerged as central to the success of the campaign. No solution to these problems will be possible if women migrant workers are not united and organised in the fight for their rights. The campaign efforts on the part of FDWs in Hong Kong, and more recently, the whole region only serves to reinforce this point. If successful, this campaign will radically alter the current national labour laws that apply to domestic foreign workers across the Asia Pacific region.



Activists and domestic workers at the campaign launch

a.) **Supporting National, Regional and International Advocacy Efforts** on the precarious situation of women migrant workers and the need for increased recognition and protection of their rights at the national, regional and international levels. Initial moves to demand recognition of "domestic" work at the regional level started at the Colombo Summit, in Sri Lanka in 2003. NGO's from throughout Asia Pacific working towards the advancement of human rights of Foreign Domestic Workers (FDWs) came together to find solutions and strategies to address the growing human rights problems of domestic workers.

APWLD and CARAM-Asia co-convened a meeting with several regional and national organisations to kick start a regional campaign on promoting and protecting the rights of domestic workers with the theme *Foreign Domestic Workers- Unrecognised, Unprotected and Underpaid! -The Need for a Regional Response*. The aim of the meeting was to map and take stock of the different initiatives on Foreign Domestic Workers; to develop an effective strategy in terms of providing more protection; and to build an alliance towards a regional campaign.

i. *The Asian Consultation on the Global Forum on Migration and Development* (GFMD) organised by Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA) was held in Manila, Philippines from the 15-16 June. The event was attended by migrant worker organisations, civil society groups, and trade unions from Asia-Pacific, including APWLD. The consultation was a continuation of previous processes at the Asian level in preparation for the GFMD in Brussels. The consultation deliberated on the priority themes for the GFMD and came up with a common position on migration and development from the Asia region.

ii. APWLD's two task force members Cynthia Abdon-Tellez and Pranom Somwong representing Action Network for Migrants were invited by the organisers of the Civil Society Day at the GFMD in Brussels to attend the civil society organized events, in July. Around 120 migrant rights activists from all over the world attended the forum, which attracted 155 UN Member States and over 800 participants from NGO, civil society groups, trade unions and the business sector. The event provided an informal consultative process to GFMD for migration origin, transit and destinations countries, irrespective of their level of development. Participants were invited to share their national experiences, discuss their specific perspectives and challenges, and develop practical and innovative policies aimed at reinforcing the mutually beneficial relationship between migration and development.

This marked the start of a global process designed to enhance the positive impact of migration on development (and vice versa) by adopting a more consistent policy approach, identifying new instruments and best practices, exchanging know-how and experience about innovative tactics and methods and, establishing cooperative links between the various actors involved.



As a result of the two-day inter-governmental consultations and input provided by civil society, government policy makers have made available a series of policy recommendations that can be used to enhance migration and development policy planning at the national, regional and global levels, as well as a number of concrete proposals for short and medium term follow-up action before the next Global Forum in 2008 to be held in the Philippines.



Cynthia Abdon-Tellez and Pranom Somwong

*"To put it simply, the GFMD is a space created by governments wherein they could talk about "migration" without being limited to their "official parameters" as representatives of governments. Meaning, anything goes, any opinion can be said, and any reactions can be laid and debated. But the "accommodation" of the Civil Society was never in their agenda until the idea of "development" was linked with it. For one, the governments do not want to talk about migration with the civil society because they know that they will only be criticised and they do not want to listen to that."*

Cynthia Abdon-Tellez, Hong Kong.

## ASEAN Migrant Workers Task Force

iii. APWLD as a member of the ASEAN Migrant Workers Task Force (the Task Force)<sup>1</sup>, along with CSOs and trade unions in the ASEAN region has been involved in the consultative process for the development of the Migrant Workers Framework.

The key objective of the Task Force is to support the efforts of the ASEAN Working Group on Human Rights of Migrants in the development of an ASEAN framework instrument on the protection and promotion of the rights of migrant workers as mandated by the Vientiane Action Programme.

iv. APWLD task force members attended three ASEAN Civil Society-Trade Union Consultation Workshops, held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; Jakarta, Indonesia and Bangkok, Thailand, with up to 50 participants present at each workshop.

They provided comments and input on the draft ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers.

The reports and recommendations from the consultations will be channeled to the ASEAN Working Group on Human Rights of Migrants for the formation of a relevant ASEAN Human Rights mechanism.

<sup>1</sup>The Task Force includes APWLD, CARAM Asia, Forum Asia, Migrant Forum Asia (MFA), Mekong Migration Network and trade unions lead by Union Network International (UNI) which forms a mechanism for co-operation among regional organisations, trade unions, migrant workers organisation, human rights and development organisations, and national focal points that participated or are interested in the Consultation process of CSO-TU on the "Draft ASEAN Multi-lateral Framework on the Rights of Migrant Workers".

## v. Jakarta Process for the Review of the National Human Rights Institutions

A representative of APWLD's L & M Task Force, has been a member of the Jakarta Process since 2006. The Jakarta Process was set up to review the National Human Rights Institutions in Asia and to see what protection mechanisms are available for undocumented migrant workers and migrant women domestic workers.

In March 2007 the Steering Committee, finalized the processes and requirements for the review process. The review will study the national human rights commission of Malaysia, South Korea, Indonesia and the Philippines. The final report is to be released by mid 2008.

The report of the review will be a useful document for the national human rights institutions (NHRIs) in the Asia Pacific region; the Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions (APF) and the UN Human Rights Council, governments, NGOs, activists and groups who work with migrant workers. These institutions need to be made aware of their roles and responsibilities on the rights of migrant workers.



## vi. The Second Filipino Women Migrant Workers' Summit was held in Hong Kong, on the 26 August.

The 2007 Summit upheld the 2006 Summit resolutions and unanimously approved a new resolution to support and join in the founding of the *International Migrants' Alliance (IMA)* that is set to have its first assembly in May 2008. The IMA is envisioned to become the first grassroots-based international formation of migrant workers that will carry forward the fight for the rights and wellbeing of migrants all over the world.

An estimated 450 delegates from 110 organizations participated in the event, including four of APWLD's network members, Abra Tingguian Ilocano Society (ATIS), Cordillera Alliance (CORALL), Filipino Migrant Workers' Union (FMWU), United Pangasinan in Hong Kong (UPHK) and the United Filipinos in Hong Kong (UNIFIL-MIGRANTE-HK).



vii. The annual Women's Exchange (WE) Conference was held in Chiang Mai, Thailand, from 5-8 March to coincide with International Women's Day with the theme 'Women in Transit'. This event is an important venue for women from Burma who are living in Thailand or India, either as refugees or migrant workers.

APWLD held sideline workshops over four afternoons, on "Women and Remittances: Migrant Women's Contribution to their Countries of Origin and Destination" attracting an estimated 50 women from different sectors, working as domestic workers, in factories, while others work on construction sites. The dynamic backgrounds of participants featured in the discussions in a positive way as they were able to discuss important issues that affect their lives. They explored the definition of remittances that goes beyond monetary terms, including emotional and moral support from the migrants. Through shared experiences and stories, they realize that the very fact that they survive the harsh conditions proves they are courageous women.

## b.) Capacity Building

A 'Capacity Building Training on UN and International Mechanisms' was held in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India, from 01-03 September, 2007. The three-day training was held back to back with the annual L & M task force meeting and attended by ten members, from ten countries throughout the region. A representative from the local International Labour Organisation (ILO) office and one of APWLD's resource trainers, S.K. Priya, led the sessions. The training was held to: serve as a basis for analysing and re-focusing the work of the programme; enhance the capacity of the participants to have an understanding of the national and international laws regarding labour and migration issues affecting women in the region; and use and engage with the UN instruments and mechanisms, including the ILO in their advocacy for the empowerment of women and social change. Participants mapped out how they could use the knowledge gained from the training in engaging with the UN and ILO systems, at both the national and regional level and how it might contribute to their strategic planning for the next cycle.



## c.) Research, documentation and publications

Research is ongoing in four countries (Malaysia, Hong Kong, South Korea, and Fiji). The aim of the research is to gauge the extent of the implementation of labour laws and the government's policy on labour. The published report on the findings of the research will be used to create awareness and facilitate advocacy work undertaken by APWLD members by enhancing feminist understanding on issues related to foreign domestic workers within the specific context of Malaysia and Hong Kong. It is hoped that the research findings will be a valuable resource and will contribute to the regional campaign for the creation of a new definition of domestic work to protect migrant domestic workers.

### Malaysia and Hong Kong:

**Foreign Domestic Workers Research:** The research is titled "Indispensable help: the valuable contributions of Indonesian domestic workers to the quality of life of employers and their families in Malaysia and Hong Kong and the need for protection for these workers". The research highlights the valuable contribution of the work performed by Indonesian domestic workers to the quality of life of employers and their families as perceived by employers in urban Malaysia and Hong Kong. It also analyses recent developments of measures and initiatives, undertaken by state institutions in rendering better protection to Indonesian migrant domestic workers from exploitative practices in each phase of the migration process.

This research will complement the recent reports published on Indonesian domestic workers in Malaysia and Hong Kong by Human Rights Watch<sup>2</sup> and Asian Migrant Centre<sup>3</sup> which highlight in detail a variety

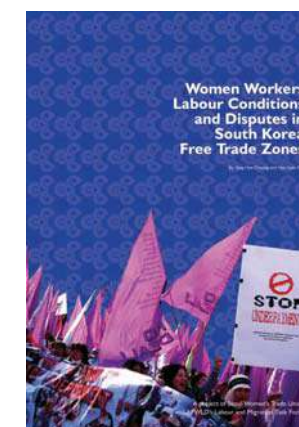
of problems, exploitation and abuses encountered by these workers during recruitment, training, employment and re-integration.

### South Korea and Fiji

*Research and Documentation of laws and policies affecting women working in free trade zones.* The research identifies and exposes exploitative and discriminatory policies and laws affecting local and migrant women workers in special economic zones in the context of globalisation from a feminist perspective.

Research results reveal that the conditions are clearly exploitative whether by laws, policies or practice. Findings of the research enable members and partners to develop strategies to address the exploitation effectively and to lobby for policy and legislative changes.

**Case study of South Korea: Seoul Women's Trade Union** completed their research in 2006 and in 2007 published the study in both the Korean and English languages exposing such discriminatory laws in free trade zones of South Korea.



<sup>2</sup>Human Rights Watch (2004). Help Wanted: Abuses against female migrant domestic workers in Indonesia and Malaysia, Volume 16 (9).

<sup>3</sup>Asian Migrant Centre (2005). Underpayment: Research on Indonesian domestic workers in Hong Kong. Available at [http://www.asianmigrants.org/index.php?option=com\\_docman&task=cat\\_view&gid=59&Itemid=48](http://www.asianmigrants.org/index.php?option=com_docman&task=cat_view&gid=59&Itemid=48)



**Case study of Fiji:** Avelina Rokoduru, from Fiji has completed her study of *Tax Free Zones (TFZ) in Fiji*. The findings of the research indicate that: majority of the women are not aware of their labour, social, and civil rights as workers; Fiji still needs to improve the general working conditions and wages; due to the poor wages most of the women are willing to work overtime and during public holidays; women workers sign a single-page annual agreement that lacks specific provisions on maternity leave, payment of leave and work on public holidays, sexual harassment, addressing grievances, wages, and allowances awards.

The findings of this research will be used by women NGOs, the Ministry of Women and other interested stakeholders to advocate for the ratification of the International Labour conventions on Maternity Protection (2000) and (girl) Child Labour (1999) to which Fiji is a signatory; and as a platform to advocate for better working conditions for women in tax free zones and in other sectors with special focus on maternity protection and rights.

## WOMEN and the ENVIRONMENT (WEN)



The WEN Task Force huddle in a brainstorm.



Programme Objectives:

- 1 To carry further the food sovereignty advocacy within a women's 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 policy advocacy at all possible levels.

The APWLD Women and Environment (WEN) task force continued its efforts to address the issue of environmental degradation and sustainability, the various threats to livelihoods that affect this right including women's access to natural resources and land, better housing, education, health care and services. Climate change, mining and exploration for minerals, large scale-agriculture, the use of chemicals cause damage to the environment and the health of local communities. Global trade, agricultural policies and prevalent discriminatory practices continue to threaten women's efforts to maintain sustainable livelihoods. The food sovereignty campaign initiative not only covers the right to food, a human right that is protected by international law, but also the rights of people to make decisions regarding production and consumption, the rights of local communities to own seeds and other factors of production and determine trade regimes, peoples' rights and access to land and natural resources, with particular recognition of the rights of women to participate in decision-making processes affecting their lives and livelihoods.



a.) Fact Finding Mission to Mongolia

As part of *Food Over Gold* campaign, the second fact finding exchange mission took place in Mongolia from 14-20 August. The seven-day exchange was between 10 women; three WEN TF members, two community representatives from Philippines and Indonesia whose communities are affected by large-scale mining, a mining advocate from International Network on Women and Mining and support staff from Centre for Human Rights and Development (CHRD, Mongolia) and Solidaritas Perempuan (Indonesia) and Innabuyog (Philippines).



The team spent five days on field visits to seven gold mining communities of Uyannga, Bat-Ulzii, Narin Hamar of Arkhangai, Uvurkhangai Province, and Zamar, Khongor of Darkhan-Uul Province.

From the combined visits, they consulted, collected data, and documented information from 200 people and upon returning to Ulaan Bataar, held a live-telecast through TV 5, to present the findings and answer questions from the viewers.

The team also held a public forum, followed by a press conference, on the findings of the field visits to the mining sites to river movements, water, sanitation and supply authorities, the National Human Rights Commission, Authority of Natural Resources and Rehabilitation.

The live coverage and public forum contributed to raising the level of awareness on the issue of food and access to land, water, and natural resources for sustainable livelihoods in Mongolia.

i. The findings of the exchange included the lack of compliance with appropriate legal requirements for public consultations, the lack of consultation and informed consent of herder communities wholly dependent on lands currently mined facing loss of food, clean water and source of livelihood, the lack of compliance with acceptable environmental and labor standards by both the company and government authorities, and communities are not aware of their rights and have not been informed of alternatives to seek redress.

ii. How will the report be used?

Centre for Human Rights and Development (CHRD) will be using the report and information gathered from this visit to assist

the communities through legislative changes to laws and policies, to mobilise and organise with affected communities and ninjas as well as advocate for collective actions and propose alternatives to the national government to ensure appropriate remedial action is taken.

APWLD and its members will be using the report to further its advocacy and Campaign on Food Sovereignty, for collective actions and propose alternatives to the national government to ensure appropriate remedial action is taken.

b.) Research, documentation and publications

i. The Women and Food Sovereignty Kit (the Kit)

APWLD is part of the global *Campaign on Food Sovereignty* and tackles issues such as globalisation, climate change, fundamentalisms and militarisation and its impact on communities and the interlinkages with Food Sovereignty. Published in 2006, the kit provides the framework on agrarian reform and rural development and includes the recognition and enforcement of the right to food, the right to land and natural resources, respecting the right of indigenous peoples to their land and territories, the rights of fisherfolk to their traditional fishing grounds, peasant and family based farm workers, rural workers and others. It can also be used to address issues such as the current food crisis countries within the Asia Pacific region and how the Agreement on Agriculture (AoA) and free trade policies contribute to world hunger.

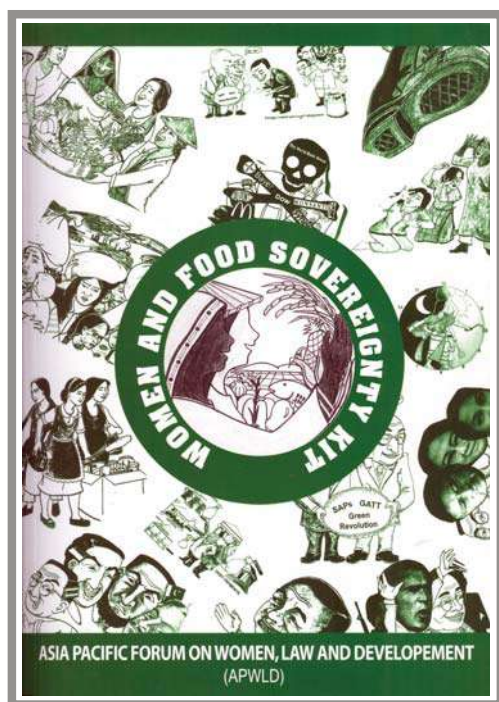
As an advocacy tool, the kit calls for an end to dumping, greater prioritisation of food production for local and national markets, agrarian reform and sustainable agricultural practices.

Requests for the kit were made from eight women leaders from NGO networks in seven countries (Philippines, India, Pakistan, Indonesia, Thailand, Mongolia and Korea).

Translations of the kit commenced in three countries, Mongolia, Korea and Cambodia but they have experienced difficulties with translators and the high cost have caused delays with Banteay Srei (Cambodia). The translations will be completed in 2008.

### c.) Capacity Building using the Food Sovereignty Kit

*"I have read your document [Women and Food Sov Kit] and find it very good and meaningful to be included in our [FOAM] training"* Asha Kachru, International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movement (FOAM).



### Outcomes:

Capacity building, training, distribution and implementation of the translated Kits continued in Indonesia, Mongolia, India, Pakistan, Philippines and Thailand.

The training in Indonesia and Mongolia have resulted in increasing skills and awareness of national community trainers on how the food sovereignty kit can be used in their advocacy towards having the concept incorporated into changes in policy and legislation.

**Indonesia:** Task Force member Solidaritas Perempuan (SP) held one staff training and two community training of trainers with marginalized fisherwomen from Cilincing (West Jakarta) and Karawang (West Java). The three trainings increased the skills of ten women from ten communities who will continue the trainings in their respective communities.

The Bahasa version of the Women and Food Sovereignty Kit was published after the pilot trainings and evaluation. It was distributed to ten local community areas which SP works with.

*The formation of the Food Sovereignty Coalition in Mongolia is an outcome of the national members working on this issue. This is a lobby group specifically set up to lobby the government of Mongolia to introduce food policies and draft laws and regulation on agricultural concepts such as genetically modified foods. The Centre for Human Rights and Development (CHRD) in Mongolia will be using the information gathered from this visit to assist the communities through possible legal and collective action to propose alternatives to the national government.*

**India:** For The Thanal (India), preliminary work commenced but again with high costs involved and lack of capacity to complete the translations and training, work has been delayed and will be completed in 2008.

**Pakistan:** Three workshops were conducted with landless farmers, landless women and NGO staff. An estimated 41 women and 12 men were trained on using the Urdu version of the Kit. One Training of Trainer's workshop was conducted for four NGO staff to increase skills and knowledge for community training.

*According to the evaluation from Pakistan, 'there is no doubt that the Women and Food Sovereignty Kit is a valuable resource, especially the translated version as English comprehension skills of women in the agriculture sector are very limited. The translated version has helped them to read for themselves and enable them to use the exercises effectively without constant help from others....it is an invaluable resource for rural, village-based awareness raising and organizing work.'*

**Philippines:** TF Member INNABUYOG conducted four workshops and one meeting with the Ilocano version of the kit, training a total of 95 (of which six are men) indigenous peasant women and men.

The kit was distributed to 100 indigenous and peasant women and six men in four communities in the Philippines; Sagada, Kalinga, Tubo and Dalicno (outreach 3,000-5,000).

Copies of the kit were also shared to participants in the regions of Ilocos and Cagayan in Northern Luzon.

The food sovereignty kit is a useful tool for social investigation and identification of key issues such as commercial and large-scale mining, imperialist agriculture and human rights in the context of state repression and in organizing and mobilizing indigenous women in the Cordillera to maintain livelihoods and access to land and resources.

**Thailand:** The implementation of the Thai Kit has been completed and former WENTF member, Sustainable Development Foundation (SDF) will be publishing the translated Thai Kit early 2008.

### d.) Collaborations and Movement building

Collaborations continue through the food sovereignty regional campaign networks; Asia Pacific Research Network (APRN) and Pesticide Action Network Asia Pacific (PAN-AP) and eight other national and regional groups working on rural and indigenous women issues. Women's efforts to maintain livelihoods, access to natural resources and land, and national initiatives, are taking the lead in preparation for the *Asian Rural Women's Conference* aimed to strengthen rural struggles for resources and livelihoods through information and research and mobilising rural women's networks. The task force recognises the importance of collaboration, country exchanges and movement building between networks and communities facing common issues of concern so collectively they can develop strategies to address them.

APWLD is part of the *Asia Rural Women's Conference 2008* Steering Committee along with eight other regional and national organizations; PAN-AP, ARROW, CAW, Gabriela and national groups such as IMADR, SRED, ANWA and Tenaganita, who are taking the lead in this consultative process towards the March 2008 Conference.







Press Conference. Manila, Philippines

#### i. Asian Rural Women's Consultation Towards the 2008 Asian Rural Women's Conference

The regional conference held from 31 July - 1 August in the Philippines was attended by 52 women from 14 countries, including APWLD WEN TF and RIW TF members, from Cambodia, Mongolia and Philippines. TF WEN through Innabuyog led the workshops on Environment and Indigenous Women, and contributed to the Manila Declaration. Participants committed towards the realization of the 2008 Rural Women's Conference to be held in Arakonam, India.

An outcome of the conference was the Asian Rural Women's Declaration. A website has been developed [www.asianruralwomen.com](http://www.asianruralwomen.com) as a tool towards the March 2008 Conference.

#### ii. Network collaboration with APRN on the Peoples Sovereignty and Natural Resources Conference held in Bangkok, 23-25 October.

The three-day open conference brought together an estimated 150 grassroots movements, comprising fisherfolk organizations, peasants, indigenous peoples, women, workers, and other sectors including, academia and civil society organizations from the Asia and the Pacific regions.

This activity reflects the importance of recognizing the interlinkages of the thematic issues between programmes and sector-based programmes, hence this collaborative effort between WEN TF's with organizations in the region advocating for women's rights to food. A series of workshops and panel discussions were held to develop forward-looking strategies, and to strengthen partnerships of organisations involved in Peoples Sovereignty and Natural Resources issues.

#### iii. APRN - Women's Stream planning workshop held in Bangkok, Thailand, 20-21 July

was attended by 19 participants representing various organizations working on issues affecting women; FTAs/trade, labour, natural resources, public services. This activity was also a strategic planning exercise for APRN of which APWLD is a member. WENTF member Vernie Yocogan-Diano represented Innabuyog and APWLD at this meeting. The aim of the meeting was to gather data on various issues affecting women, including the right to food.

Outcomes of the meeting included research work and activities on thematic issues relating to rural women, including urban women workers, services, migration and war on terror, which will move forward the agenda on rural women for the women's stream through APRN.

#### iv. The Asia Pacific Indigenous Women & Youth Workshop held in the Philippines from 17-25 April.

An estimated 100 participants attended the workshop from a number of countries including Philippines, Cambodia, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Thailand, Burma, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Oceania region with the aim of reaching out to young indigenous youths especially young women.

The objective was to provide a forum for sharing of common issues on environment, food sovereignty as well as provide leadership training. The conference was a lead up to the activities of the annual Cordillera Day, in the Philippines, as a reminder of the Cordillera's resistance to large-scale mining, militarisation and other forms of development aggression since 1984, and how women had fought and won to retain their lands and natural resources.

Participants came up with Key Issues on Women's Rights and a Plan of Action. Five young leaders then went to the United

Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) in May. They presented two statements on militarisation under the agenda on Human Rights, one on the Future Work of the Forum, The Pacific Youth Statement, and a statement to the special session on Asia to support the lobby of IPs in Taiwan to change the Chinese term for Indigenous Peoples.

#### e.) Solidarity Statements:

i. A statement was issued in March 2007 condemning the massacre of 300 peasant villagers including women in Nandigram at the hands of state agents; and calling on the Indian Government to take remedial steps against the injustices imposed upon Nandigram villagers.

ii. A solidarity statement was issued in April 2007 in support of the Kalinga and Bontoc peoples of Cordillera in their annual celebration of their fight for genuine freedom and calling for the Philippine government to end its abductions, forced disappearances and killings of Cordillera leaders who resist the plunder of their land and oppose the corruption of the current regime.

iii. A solidarity statement was issued in July 2007 in support of the Women's International Solidarity Affairs in the Philippines (WISAP) 2007 gathering in Manila on the various issues affecting human rights defenders and women activists.

iv. A solidarity statement was issued in October 2007 for the communities affected by large corporate mining in Nueva Vizcaya, Philippines.





## RURAL and INDIGENOUS WOMEN (RIW)



## RURAL and INDIGENOUS WOMEN

### Programme Objectives:

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

The members concentrated their efforts this year on strengthening and mobilising rural and grassroots women's groups in empowering processes, through country and community exchanges. This included collaboration with WEN TF and other national and regional organisations in preparing for the Asian Rural Women's Conference 2008. In a number of national and regional meetings, the issue of the increasing struggle against globalisation, fundamentalisms, militarisation and undemocratic governments implementing new repressive legislation, aimed to suppress people's resistance against the destruction of natural resources, homes and livelihoods, have been addressed.

In the guise of security, it was reported that repressive governments in countries in the region are carrying out extrajudicial killings and forced disappearances of men, women and children. The impact of the interlinkages between globalisation, fundamentalisms, militarisation on life experiences of women, in areas of both public and private life is multiple because of their gender and sex, sexual exploitation and rape being used as a weapon of war, loss of life, torture and other violent atrocities that lead to serious mental and physical health problems, environmental

degradation, desecration of indigenous people's communities land and cultures, loss of infrastructure, property, land, access to housing, water, food, other livelihood and resources. Indigenous peoples and other minority groups are being displaced from their lands. Women are trafficked and internally displaced through forced relocation, deprived of their basic human rights.

The women's movement, non-governmental organisations and civil society have been successful with awareness raising campaigns and have used the "special procedures" mechanism calling on governments to account for their actions and to meet their legal obligations to respect, protect and fulfil their commitments to International Human Rights standards to enable people to live a dignified life free from violence.

### Outcomes of the 2006 exchange programme

The 2006 task force advocacy/lobbying and training and exchange visit to the Koathur aqua farm, in Chennai with the SRED network helped raise awareness on the impacts of aqua farming and its effects on the Dalit women and their communities. The training and exchange programme contributed to building the capacity and empowering women from the community to participate in decision-making processes.

As a result, in 2007, 120 Dalit women from Tamil Nadu state, and three Dalit women from the Koathur village were successful in becoming councillors.

SRED endorsed the three women and supported the overall campaign for Dalit women to contest the Punja election in the Panchayat election (local body election) in Kolathur village.





Of the 520 Dalits who stood for elections, 247 were elected. 120 were dalit women from Tamil Nadu state. Three Dalit women were successful in becoming councillors in Koathur village.

#### a.) UN Advocacy

APWLD's Rural and Indigenous Task Force Convenor Olga Djanaeva delivered an oral statement on the rights of indigenous women at the UN HRC. She called for the UN Human Rights Council (UN HRC) to undertake an independent investigation into the political killings of peasant human rights defenders in Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka and India; and urged for immediate intervention to save the lives of Philippine peasant organisers, Angelina Bisuna-Ipong, Leni Robinos Nicerio and Riza Fanilag, persecuted by government.

The Philippine government exercised their right to reply to the APWLD statement and reiterated its commitment to addressing complaints related to the rights of indigenous peoples and "unexplained" killings.

#### b.) CEDAW Shadow Report

Tamil Nadu Women's Forum (TNWF), Chennai, India headed by Fatima Burnad, a member of APWLD, submitted an alternative report to the 15<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> periodic report by the Government of Republic of India for the 70th session of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (UN CERD) in Geneva. The TNWF report "Unheard Voices - Dalit Women" presented documented cases of discrimination and violence against Dalit Women in India in 2005-2006.

The UN CERD expressed concern over an alarming number of allegations of acts of sexual violence against Dalit and tribal women in India, who were being trafficked and forced into prostitution. The Committee asked the Indian Government to establish special courts and task forces to deal with violence against Dalit women.

The Committee also expressed concern about reports of arbitrary arrest, torture and extra-judicial killings of members of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes by police and about frequent failure to protect these groups against communal violence.

c.) World Forum on Food Sovereignty (Nyeleni Forum), was held in Selingue, Mali, from 22-27 February. The conference was convened by La Via Campesina, World March of Women, Friends of the Earth and other social movement organisations. More than 500 participants attended the forum, from African, Asian and South American countries where food insecurity has become a contentious issue. Participants shared strategies and approaches in mobilisation and national campaigns.

The Forum found that women's situation is deteriorating all over the world, especially in developing countries and one of the main contributing factors was the neo-liberal economic policies as one of the root causes of violations of women's rights and the subordination and marginalisation of women in the decision-making processes.

Food policies prioritising profit over people have caused impoverishment to women, increased violence, forced displacement and loss of income, among others. The participants called for Food Sovereignty as

an alternative to neo-liberal economic paradigm in order to overcome hunger and poverty and there is a need for a new policy that protects women's rights to take control of the modes of food production.

The participants reaffirmed their commitment to advocate for gender equity in all policies: development, social justice, and environmental sustainability.

d) Three women from Tamil Nadu Women's Forum (TNWF), Rural Women's Liberation Movement, and Society for Rural Education and Development (SRED), India visited Philippines for the pilot exchange programme of the RIW TF. The exchange programme aims to: contribute in the development of a new generation of young, second-liner grassroots women activists; enrich the RIW movements with other experiences; provide an opportunity to share information, skills and knowledge on mobilizing, organizing, networking, and other forms of resistance; deepen the understanding of feminism and gender equality towards sustainable livelihoods among TF members and their partner communities; and explore and document alternative sustainable livelihoods being practiced by the host communities.



AMIHAN, Philippines hosted the 2007 exchange programme, where participants learned similarities in the culture and living conditions of farmers and fisherfolk and that women's concerns and issues are universal. Among the other learnings noted are: there is no caste discrimination, dowry system, female infanticide or foeticide in the Philippines. The people's movements are stronger in protesting, demonstrating, fighting against the class and patriarchy in their countries and neo-liberal globalisation policies that have negatives impact on women and their livelihood. The participants noted that the exchange program is inspiring and pushes participants to move towards more involvement in the women's movements.

#### e.) Research, documentation and publications

##### i. Completion of Research on anti terror laws and policies

The completion of the research undertaken by young women lawyers from Bangladesh, India, Philippines and Indonesia, on the impacts of anti-terror laws and policies on women's rights of access to and control over natural resources shows that laws developed as part of the anti-terror efforts do not provide protection to people, but violate people's basic civil liberties and economic and social rights.

The current research reflects just how quickly these particular laws are being revised, changed and implemented, in comparison to Domestic Violence and Family Law Bills which take up to ten years to get adopted.

This research will be published in 2008 and will be used as an analytical tool and a resource for future research, on how these laws impact women.

## ii. Translation of the Women and Globalisation Module:

**Tamil Language, India:** SRED in Chennai are currently translating the module, to be completed in 2008. There have been difficulties in finding translators who understand the issues to assist with the translations. The module has been tested in communities and the feedback from the consultations are to be incorporated to adapt to local conditions.

### **Singhale and Tamil Language, Sri Lanka:**

1,000 booklets were printed in Singhale and 500 copies printed in Tamil. 200 copies were distributed to networks in Tamil Nadu, India to facilitate the translation to Tamil in India. The training manuals have been used and trainers have commented on the appropriateness of the manual's participatory methodology which contains a lot of visuals and games for women in the community who lack formal education.

After the training, a survey/research was conducted on whether the concept of *gender and globalisation outlined in the module are applicable to the real life situation of women in Sri Lanka* and addressed local needs.

The research Gender Equality and Social Involvement of Women in Development in Sri Lanka was conducted in six districts: Puttlan, Kurunegala, Gampaha, Kalutara, Galle, Matara, with an estimated 800 families surveyed. The methodology used was participatory approach, discussions, individual dialogues, including the use of secondary data from government officers, booklets published by women's activists and also newspaper articles.



Results of the survey have been compiled in Tamil and Singhalese, which showed that the globalisation module is relevant and applicable to continue with the training in Sri Lanka using the module.

**Russian language:** Five workshops were conducted, in three districts with an estimated 150 participants in total, including 11 men.

The findings of the workshops have been incorporated into the translated document and will be printed and distributed in 2008. Training will also continue.

**Kyrgyz language:** The module has been tested in five villages in three districts in Kyrgyzstan, with an estimated 150 people in total including ten men.

The module will incorporate the comments and feedback from the workshops into the draft module and translate into the Kyrgyz language, to be completed in 2008. Constraints in completing the module have been related to finding a translator that can translate accurately from Russian to Kyrgyz.

## CROSS CUTTING ISSUES



Women Human Rights Defenders during the Women Human Rights Defenders Day.



## CROSS CUTTING ISSUES

### Programme 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

**a.) The 10<sup>th</sup> Triennial Conference of Pacific Women and its linked ministerial meeting, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Pacific Ministers Meeting on Women** was held in Noumea, New Caledonia, from 27 May - 1 June with an attendance of more than 140 representatives from governments, women's ministries and departments, development partners and regional organizations, research institutions, donors and civil society from 26 countries. The theme of the Conference was Pacific Women, Pacific Plan - Stepping up the pace to 2010.

The recommendations and resolutions from the conference recognised the need for gender equality and urge governments to allocate money and human resources to national gender equality programs; noted the current process of United Nations reform and called on UN agencies in particular UNIFEM, to strengthen their presence and programming in the region.

The meeting endorsed the proposal to support the candidacy of a qualified Pacific expert for the UN CEDAW Committee in 2010.

The meeting also recognised the importance of engagement with NGOs and civil society groups working in the area of women's rights and the value of utilizing their expertise to advance gender equality in partnerships with governments.

### **b.) The World Social Forum - World Forum on Food Sovereignty**

The World Social Forum (WSF) was held for the first time in Africa. Azra Talat Sayeed (Roots for Equity, Pakistan) attended the meeting on behalf of APWLD to assess APWLD's future engagement at this event, and as part of networking and movement building of women's groups on the *Food Sovereignty campaign*. Although the WSF provides the space and voice to the anti-globalisation movement and is considered a meeting of progressive structures of people's movements, it is an event which faces a number of criticisms, one being that the WSF Charter does not provide space for groups with militant backgrounds engaged in the struggle against their states or other exploitative forces.

One of the main benefits of the WSF is to network and widen one's global outreach to like-minded groups to work together on achieving common objectives of pushing a pro-people's agenda.

The People's Coalition on Food Sovereignty (PCFS) organised a number of events during the WSF where participating groups developed feasible strategies and approaches in responding to the current food situation towards food sovereignty.

Azra Talat Sayeed as APWLD, co-organised a workshop on women and food sovereignty. The Forum demonstrated that what women's groups have been doing for gender equality in food sovereignty in the Asian region has been in line with efforts in other regions. The Feminist Dialogue meeting enabled Asian women to understand the issues confronting African women and forged solidarity and sisterhood among women across regions.

### **c.) Women Human Rights Defenders Campaign (see also WHR WG)**

APWLD has continued to support the work on women human rights defenders (WHRD), with its integral role in responding to the call of network members to provide support for the UN Special Representative on Human Rights Defenders (UNSRHRD) and UN Special Rapporteur on Extra judicial killings to visit countries in the Asia region to bring recognition and visibility to WHRDs' issues.

**i. The Consultation with Philip Alston, UN Special Rapporteur on Extra-Judicial and Summary Executions, was held in the Philippines in February.** As a part of WHRDs campaign, APWLD collaborated with FORUM ASIA to organize this civil society meeting with Professor Philip Alston, United Nations Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Execution, in Manila during his official visit to the Philippines. This enabled women human rights defenders to give testimonies on the risks and vulnerability to killings which they face in the Philippines. This meeting was a follow up from the workshop on 'Women Human Rights Defender and Protection Mechanisms' which was co-organised with International Service for Human Rights (ISHR) in the Philippines in November, 2006.

In a press statement issued by the Special Rapporteur Prof. Philip Alston in Manila on 21 February 2007, he noted the invaluable contribution of civil society in the form of documentation and detailed testimony from which he learnt a great deal. It was also reported that a significant number of the extrajudicial killings of activist and journalist in the country have been "convincingly attributed" to a military "in a state of almost total denial."

**ii. The Protection of Human Rights Defenders workshop**, coordinated by the Institute of Peace and Democracy, was held in Baku, Azerbaijan from 9-12 February. Twenty human rights defenders (HRDs) from Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan in Central Asia attended the workshop. The aim of the workshop was to provide training on personal security for HRDs and digital security of their electronic mail and websites. The participants appreciated the importance of the training for their work and noted that very often they forget about their own security whilst defending the human rights of others.

This workshop is the first in a series of HRD protection workshops initiated by the International Coalition for Human Rights Defenders in 2005 in Colombo. At the workshop, the three participants from Central Asia announced they were setting up a Central Asian network to promote human rights and solidarity among HRDs in their region.

One of the important outcomes of APWLD's participation in this event was the new alliances forged with the Azeri and Uzbek WHRDs. They plan to launch a Central Asian WHRD Campaign with a workshop to start a documentation project on violations against WHRDs in Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan.

The documentation report will be submitted to the UNSR on Human Rights Defenders in 2008.

**iii. Women Human Rights Defenders Day.** APWLD co-hosted a forum with FORUM-ASIA in Bangkok, on 29 November 2007 the International Women Human Rights Defenders Day. Women human rights defenders and activists from the Asia Pacific (APWLD), Africa (WILDAF) and the Caribbean and Latin America (CLADEM),





came together and shared stories of their experiences and struggle for human rights and activism as women human rights defenders in their countries and their organisations under military regimes and in the climate of fear that prevail in their countries. In many countries in Asia, Pacific, Africa and Latin America, there is growing political repression and governments are adopting repressive legislation and policies that impinge on civil liberties.

The forum affirmed the importance of a democratic system and the rule of law for the protection and promotion of human rights.

The article titled *Speaking out for justice: Female defenders of human rights share their experiences and look at ways to take action against abuse* was published in The Nation, Thailand, on 11 December.

► The WLD network expressed their solidarity with the people of Pakistan, and in particular with the women of that country, as they confronted the crisis created by the repudiation of constitutional democracy and rule of law.

► They also issued a statement urging the government of Sudan to ratify the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and to ensure the security of Sudanese women, in particular the security of women in the Darfur region.

► The Centre for Human Rights and Development (CHRD) Mongolia, together with regional partners in Asia APWLD and FORUM ASIA issued a statement reminding the Mongolian Parliament as a signatory of CEDAW since 1981 that they are legally bound by the provisions of equality and non-discrimination contained in the instrument and expressed their concern about the erasure of women's quota in the parliamentary election in Mongolia.

d.) The 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Asia Pacific Forum (APF) of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) took place in Sydney, Australia from 24-28 September 2007. More than 150 representatives from national human rights institutions (NHRIs), regional governments, NGOs and the UN offices gathered to discuss cooperation and collaboration for the protection and promotion of human rights.



The International Service for Human Rights (ISHR) organised the parallel International Human Rights Defenders Seminar in collaboration with APWLD, IWRAW-Asia Pacific, FORUM-ASIA and SAHRDC. The seminar's objectives were to encourage regional discussion regarding human rights defenders to promote collaboration between NHRIs and NGOs, and identify areas of cooperation and specific steps to improve the protection of defenders in the region.

As a result of the meeting, the view and experiences of women human rights defenders were recognized, acknowledged and included into the Concluding Statement of the Forum.

#### e.) Aid Effectiveness in Asia Pacific

Women's NGOs and civil society organizations (CSOs) have been participating in series of regional consultations on Aid Effectiveness organized by Reality of Aid, AWID, WIDE, Action Aid International and

UNIFEM to raise awareness and promote understanding of the Paris Declaration (PD) and aid effectiveness agenda and related problems.

There is a concern among women's NGOs and civil society that the PD is gender blind and has not incorporated commitments contained in international human rights frameworks and key agreements on women's

rights and development, such as CEDAW and Beijing Platform for Action. Women's organizations for years have been promoting the importance of gender equality, human rights and sustainable development agreements and advocating for governments to honor and deliver their commitments to these agreements. Women's rights perspective in political

relations and development processes are key to democratic and sustainable development in the fight against poverty and inequality. There is a High Level Forum (HLF3), taking place in Accra, Ghana in September 2008, to evaluate the PD implementation. APWLD's network will join with other women's NGOs and CSOs to push to influence the agenda, to ensure that key issues concerning women's rights, gender equality and human rights are taken into account in the discussions and the final document.

#### f.) Gender Equality and Aid Effectiveness in the Asia Pacific Region (UNIFEM)

was held in Jakarta, Indonesia, from 22-24 August. Representatives from government and civil society, including donor agencies from 11 countries in the Asia Pacific region attended the meeting, and shared their experiences and understanding of the principles contained in the Paris Declaration and implementation to date. In their efforts to meet the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, states have agreed to new partnerships and



aid modalities, designed to align aid to nationally determined development priorities, channel diverse aid sources into direct support to national budgets, and ensure greater stability and predictability in aid flows. Representatives from both the Asia and Pacific regions expressed concern that the Paris Declaration was not widely known in a number of countries and there needs to be more sharing of information and capacity building between government line ministries, civil society and other stakeholders on integrating gender equality and human rights into the aid agenda.

**g.) The Civil society Organisations & Aid Effectiveness Regional Workshop**, coordinated by Reality of Aid network, was held in Hanoi, Vietnam, from 9-12 October. The aim of the workshop was to raise awareness regarding aid effectiveness among regional civil society organizations (CSOs) and specifically to discuss the role of CSOs in enhancing Aid Effectiveness, particularly in relation to the Paris Declaration towards the High Level Forum in Accra, Ghana in 2008. Publications by the Reality of Aid network feature the importance of a gender responsive framework in addressing aid effectiveness issues and the consultation provided an opportunity for information exchange, sharing of experiences and good practices and more in-depth discussion, on the role of CSOs. The interests of women and marginalized sectors are missing in the document. The workshop was set to ensure gender equality, human rights, and the commitments under the Beijing Platform, CEDAW, the MDGs and other international instruments are included in future negotiations.

**h.) 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Women Law and Development** was marked by the International Consultation on Women, Law and Development, held in Bangkok, from 28-30 November, which aptly coincided with International Women's Human Rights Day. Seventy six (76) women from 36 countries throughout Asia Pacific, Latin America and

Africa, attended the three-day meeting. Keynote speakers included founding, past and current members from the WLD networks. The consultation provided an opportunity to review the history of the networks, evaluate progress made for and by women in using law as a tool for accessing justice and how it has contributed to social change, women's empowerment and development.

Partnerships, networking and movement-building are important elements of WLD networks. Through collaborations, WLD has effectively influenced the global agenda on women's human rights and gender equality at national, regional and international level, including the UN mechanisms and women's movements.

Members of the network affirmed that the gathering enabled a good introduction between the networks and provided a good platform to begin a dialogue amongst them to determine common issues and priorities, and explore ways of working together in the future.

Among the collaborative work identified was the 2008 AWID Conference to be held in November 2008. Focusing on movement-building and inspired by the Intergenerational Dialogue session during the 20th anniversary, APWLD and the Fiji Women's Rights Movement will work together for one session at the AWID Forum for a venue to continue the dialogue. The session will discuss strategies of collaboration to ensure a sustainable, cohesive and inclusive women's movement and build solidarity among feminists across regions. Taking the format of a chat show, the session will feature footages from the intergenerational dialogue and interviews from the Pacific. The final output will be a DVD advocacy tool. APWLD's sister organisation WILDAF in Africa has indicated interest in participating.

One of the major challenges is to ensure the gains in advancing women's rights and gender equality achieved in the past are sustained, how to accommodate the changing needs of women in today's world to strengthen and build a united feminist movement to end the injustices, gender inequality and discrimination.

## INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Regional Council and General Assembly meetings,  
1 - 2 December 2007, Thailand

## INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### Programme 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.

APWLD is still in the process of implementing recommendations from past external evaluations which include reviewing and assessing structures, programmes, strategic interventions and partnerships. A review of the task forces and governance structure is still in progress and will be completed in time for the 2008 external evaluation.

Capacity building for Task Forces (TFs) in using UN instruments and mechanisms, relative to their programmes and in line with APWLD's overall objectives have been held as well as the development and effective use of monitoring and evaluation tools.

TF members requested that measures be taken to create synergies between task forces and to be more inclusive in programme activities. Collations of lobbying, advocacy and position papers have been consolidated to provide background information to the task forces to assist them in developing their programmes, activities and strategies to be more focused. A combined task force meeting has been scheduled for 2008 to address the interlinkages of globalization, fundamentalism and militarization within and between programmes.

**a.) APWLD Herstory:** APWLD is compiling for publication the history of APWLD in an attempt to consolidate information on the results of its work over the past twenty years from minutes, reports, position papers, statements, publications and information received from individuals, organizations and members of APWLDs network. The publication's purpose is for institutional memory. It will include how the programmes have evolved, strategies and interventions in using law to mobilize for social change and the empowerment of women at all levels. It will focus on each of the programmes' major achievements, constraints, challenges and effective strategies and will include a record of the members, organizations, partners and donors that have supported and been involved in APWLD's work nationally, regionally and internationally.

**b.) The Operations Manual** has been reviewed by the secretariat, task forces and governance bodies. It will be completed at the end of 2008, and will include policy, management, financial and administrative guidelines within governance bodies and various task forces and measures to guide the operations of the secretariat.

**c.) Governance Meetings:** Given the financial crisis of the previous year, two Regional Council meetings were held in 2007 and 4 quarterly Programme and Management Committee (P & M) meetings. The Regional Council (RegC) identified the need to address institutional matters to ensure the long-term sustainability of the organization, to be carried out by the P & M and the Secretariat. Priority areas were: to develop the Operations Manual and review and update the Policy/Financial

Guidelines; review the governance bodies, structures, task forces and capacity of the secretariat staff; to convene the WLD consultation to review and assess our achievements, obstacles and challenges over the past 20 years and the way forward in preparation for the next programme cycle.

The General Assembly in December convened the strategic planning meeting for the new programme 2009-2011 and to elect the new Regional Council and Programme and Management Committee.

A fundraising Working Group has been formed to identify and expand current donor pool.

The membership committee submitted a draft report and recommendations on APWLD's geographical membership criteria for policy decision to the Regional Council for approval.

## INFORMATION and COMMUNICATION

### Highlights of activities for 2007

1. Websites updated
2. Forum News produced and disseminated
3. Publications produced and distributed

### 1. Web updates

#### APWLD website: [www.apwld.org](http://www.apwld.org)

The webpage serves as the immediate source of information on regional and international campaigns, programmes, activities, statements and action alerts. APWLD's homepage receives more than 12,000 visits a month. The website offers a wealth of information on women's human rights issues, programmes, information on regional and international campaigns, updates on UN and Gender Equality and Architecture Reforms, as well as featuring reports, articles, job announcements and the calendar of activities. Current and upcoming events are updated daily.

Some 15 statements, 10 alerts and 20 endorsements were posted on the website and many more disseminated among partners and networks.

Each of the six programmes have regular statements and campaigns on thematic and sector-based issues and continue their advocacies in raising awareness on issues which include the Labour & Migration "*one day paid leave*" campaign; environmental issues including the campaign urging the Mekong River Commission to object to plans of building six dams that will have disastrous socio-environmental impacts on the lives of hundreds of thousands of people; as well as the campaign on the rights of Indigenous Peoples to environmental sustainability and the environmental degradation caused by extractive mining in Philippines, Mongolia and Thailand.

APWLD is currently designing a new interactive website for 2008 that will be thematic and sector-based, more accessible and in a friendly format.

#### WHRD website maintenance:

[www.defendingwomen-defendingrights.org](http://www.defendingwomen-defendingrights.org)

As an offshoot of the international campaign on women human rights defenders, (which includes 14 regional and international human rights organisations); APWLD has continued to maintain the hosting of the WHRD website in terms of human and financial resources for its operations and maintenance.

The website serves as a source of immediate information and advocacy campaign tool for women human rights defenders under attack or threat. About 20 alerts, 18 statements and nine WHRD stories were posted on the website in 2007.

The WHRD website, features urgent alerts, statements and information disseminated on WHRD violations, extrajudicial killings, terrorist acts, militarisation, socio-political developments across the world where women's human rights defenders have been violated and are at risk.





## 2. Forum News produced and circulated periodically

APWLD's newsletter, Forum News, is released three times a year. With a circulation of 1,500, the publication is mainly distributed to APWLD network members, donors, subscribers, requesting individuals, organisations, school libraries and at conferences and meetings. Subscriptions have been received from donors, other organisations and APWLD friends.

Throughout the year, APWLD received letters from subscribers informing us of change in their postal addresses, affirming their continued interest in receiving Forum News.



## 3. Publications and Advocacy Materials

Requests to download publications such as the Claiming Justice, Claiming Rights of the Women's Human Rights Defenders, Forum News, and other publications, indicate specific interests in APWLD publications. Downloadable versions of the publications and the Forum News in PDF format are now made available on the website providing electronic access to readers.

## Publications in e-copy

A compilation of APWLD publications are now available on CD and have been disseminated to members and are freely available to other interested organisations and individuals. There have been a number of requests for publications which are now available in PDF format on the website providing electronic access to readers.



## Three books were released this year:

- Claiming Rights, Claiming Justice: A Guidebook on Women Human Rights Defenders,
- The Russian version of *Seethings and Seatings*,
- The Women Workers Labour Conditions and Disputes in South Korea Free Trade Zones.

## Membership Data base:

APWLD is updating and developing its data base on membership and partner organizations and resource pool of trainers.

**From:** Rosalind Petchesky

**Date:** September 27, 2007 4:21:01 PM EDT

**To:** apwld@apwld.org

**Subject:** An urgent request regarding Guidelines for Gender Sensitive Disaster Management

Dear APWLD Friends,

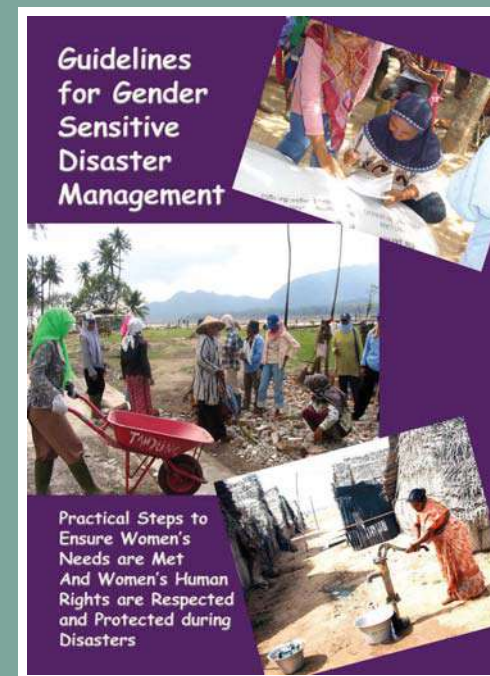
I am currently in the process of guest-editing a special issue of the feminist journal REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH MATTERS (edited by Marge Berer in the UK) on the topic: "Conflict and Crisis Situations: Promoting sexual and reproductive rights" (see attached Call for Papers). We would very much like to reprint an abbreviated version or some relevant excerpts from the fabulous document produced in Chennai, following the tsunami, in December 2006, "Guidelines for Gender Sensitive Disaster Management."

This is one of the best documents of its kind anywhere and would add a very positive note--about what women are trying to do to empower themselves and assure enforcement of their rights in disaster situations--that our readers would surely find very useful and interesting. Probably many people in the region are familiar with APWLD and with these Guidelines, but RHM's readership in other regions across the globe could benefit very much from exposure to the Guidelines. Our issues are not only in print but also available on-line at no cost (see our website: [www.rhmjournal.org.uk](http://www.rhmjournal.org.uk)). In addition, selections from the journals are published now in 6 language editions besides English: Arabic, Chinese, Hindi, French, Spanish, and Portuguese.

Please let me know whom I should contact to discuss this further and secure permission--either for us to take excerpts from the document or for the writer (Shyamala Gomez) or the organization to be involved in selecting portions for publication. I would appreciate hearing back from you as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

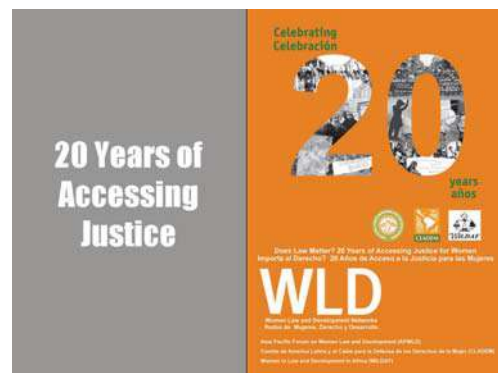
Rosalind Petchesky  
for Reproductive Health Matters



## Resources



APWLD's primer is currently being updated and will be published in 2008. In the interim, a brochure has been updated and printed. A new membership directory will be printed in 2008.



An audio-visual presentation of the WLD networks herstory was produced and shown in celebration of the WLD's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It is now available on the web.

An audio-visual presentation of APWLD is currently being developed to promote and raise awareness on the organisation especially during trainings, events and activities.

A diary was produced to mark APWLD's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of promoting women's human rights in the Asia Pacific region and includes a list of all international UN Human Rights Days. Other materials such as posters, media kit, tags, and vinyl and conference kit were also produced for the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Women, Law and Development networks (WLD).

## Outgoing staff in 2007:

APWLD farewelled four staff members in 2007: Cholpon Akmatova, Valentina Soe, Almah Tararia and Lisa Pusey and acknowledged the invaluable contributions they have made to the organisation. APWLD wishes them well in their future endeavours.

## New Programme Officers at the Secretariat:

**Misun Woo** (left in picture) is the new Programme Officer for both the Violence against Women Programme and Women's Human Rights Working Group. Misun was educated in Seoul, Korea and in New York, USA majoring in international law specializing in human rights law.



**Mary Ann Llanza** (right in picture) brings over

15 years of experience to her new role as information, communications officer of APWLD. In her native Philippines, she has provided research, training, information communications and advocacy support to a wide range of NGOs working in the areas of women's human rights, disaster management, cooperatives, and very recently, in land administration and management.

## APWLD Volunteers

**Louise Vigeant** is a graduate from Cornell University with graduate level training human rights theory, women's rights, international human rights law and public interest law,



She joined APWLD as a volunteer for six months to assist with the research for the 20th anniversary herstory publication on APWLD's achievements and challenges in using law as a tool for social change.

**Felicity Millner** was a Solicitor for Pike, Pike and Fenwick Lawyers specialising in environmental planning, local government and property law where she did



litigation in the Land and Environment Court before volunteering for APWLD. In her three months with APWLD, she contributed to the preparations for the 20th Women Law and Development International Conference, and research on APWLD's engagement with UN mechanisms.



**Sopit Cheevapanich** is currently doing her Masters of Law in Human Rights and International Labour Rights at the University of Lund in Sweden. While writing her thesis on Combatting

Human Trafficking of Migrant Worker in Thailand Towards Safe Migration, she volunteers with APWLD for five months. She provided support in the preparations for the 20th Anniversary and research on APWLD programmes.



**Heidi Bermüller** has a Master of Science in International Development Studies from Utrecht University in the Netherlands. In her brief two-month stint with

APWLD as a volunteer, she provided programme support and editing of publications and preparations for the 20th anniversary.

## 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Coordinating Team:

**Mary Jane Real**, former regional coordinator of APWLD coordinated the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event including the WHRD International Women Human Rights Defenders Day.



**Tomoko Kashiwazaki** joined the Secretariat in 2004 as an Assistant to the Resource Officer and the Programme Officer for VAW and WHR programmes. For 2007,

Tomoko was the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary Project Associate.





## FINANCIAL REPORT

APWLD has had a successful financial year with secured funds for the period 2007-2008. Our auditors HMD Consultant Ltd have audited the 2007 Financial accounts of APWLD in accordance with Thailand Accounting Laws and in compliance with International Accounting Standards. Some programme activities, work in progress on development of resource materials were not completed in 2007 due to political instability in countries where key activities were to be held and resulted in an accrual of funds for next financial year.

For 2007, APWLD received funds from Sida, Oxfam Novib, HIVOS, Ford Foundation, Global Fund, ActionAid. The total funds for the period totalled US\$ 843,683.34.

### This amount consisted of:

The carry forward from 2006 amounted to 22% of the budget US\$ 241,021.50. This was a result of political situations in countries and having to postpone or move venues. Research, translations and publications are also still ongoing, to be completed in early 2008.

2 Other income was from publication sales.

Total Funds available for 2007 amounted to US\$ 846,243.96.

## ASIA PACIFIC FORUM ON WOMEN, LAW AND DEVELOPMENT Chiangmai, Thailand Fund receipts in 2007

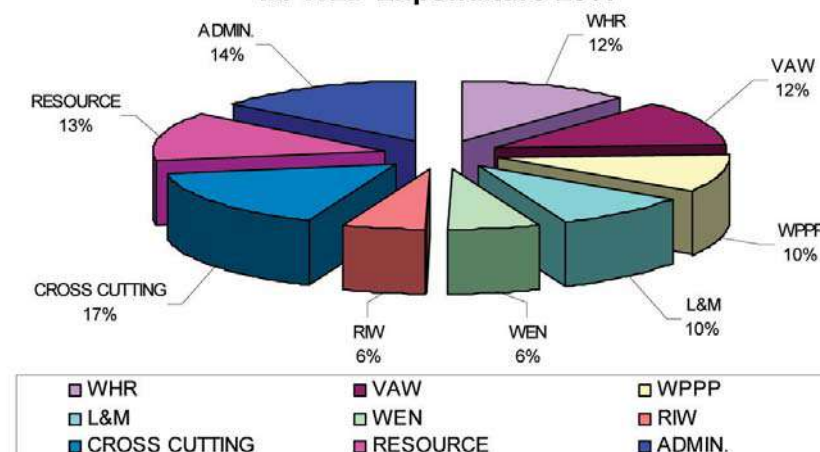
Description	USD (a)
<b>Balance forward from 2006</b>	<b>241,021.50</b>
<b>Fund received in 2007</b>	
- Novib	224,519.56
- Ford Foundation	118,197.28
- Hivos	78,259.64
- Sida	147,507.36
- Global Fund for Women	14,498.30
- Action Aid	19,679.71
<b>Total received fund in 2007</b>	<b>602,661.84</b>
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>843,683.34</b>
<b>Others Income</b>	
- Gain on exchange rate	629.19
- Sales on APWLD Publications and T Shirt	849.65
- Bank interests	1,026.50
- others	55.28
<b>Total funds available</b>	<b>846,243.96</b>

(a) Average rate of exchange : USD1 = Baht 35.28

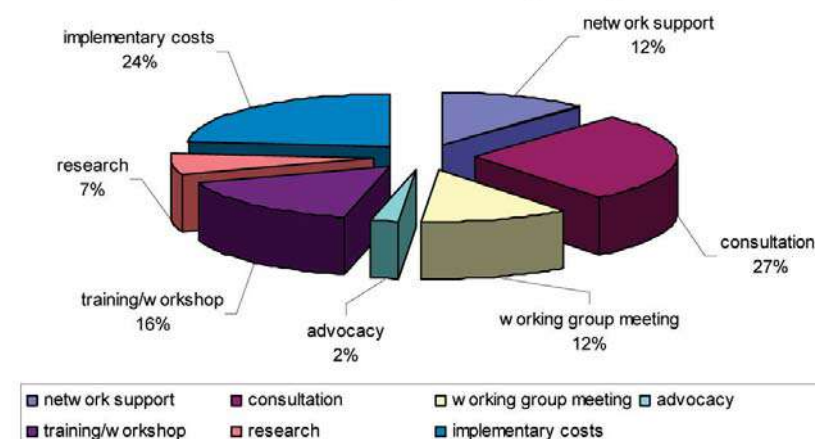
**ASIA PACIC FORUM ON WOMEN, LAW AND DEVELOPMENT**  
Chiangmai, Thailand  
Expenditure in 2007

Title	Budget Used
<b>WOMEN HUMAN RIGHT WORKING GROUP (WHRG)</b>	<b>79,540.30</b>
A.1.1 Policy Intervention/Social Dialogue/Mobilisation	14,802.41
A.1.2 Technical Assistance/Training:	47,200.52
A.1.3 Secretariat costs	1,311.62
A.1.4 Programme Implementation costs	16,225.76
<b>VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (VAW)</b>	<b>81,907.18</b>
A.2.1 Policy Intervention/Social Dialogue/Mobilisation	49,767.71
A.2.2 Technical Assistance/Training:	13,231.16
A.2.3 Secretariat costs	1,667.63
A.2.4 Programme Implementation costs	17,240.68
<b>WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL PROCESS (WPPP)</b>	<b>66,920.34</b>
A.3.1 Policy Intervention/Social Dialogue/Mobilisation	12,659.19
A.3.2 Technical Assistance/Training:	35,506.34
A.3.3 Secretariat costs	847.90
A.3.4 Programme Implementation costs	17,906.92
<b>LABOUR AND MIGRATION (L&amp;M)</b>	<b>65,631.68</b>
A.4.1 Policy Intervention/Social Dialogue/Mobilisation	24,152.07
A.4.2 Technical Assistance/Training:	22,219.69
A.4.3 Secretariat costs	1,353.00
A.4.4 Programme Implementation costs	17,906.92
<b>WOMEN AND ENVIRONMENT (WEN)</b>	<b>40,979.44</b>
A.5.1 Policy Intervention/Social Dialogue/Mobilisation	13,857.20
A.5.2 Technical Assistance/Training:	11,056.54
A.5.3 Secretariat costs	1,046.38
A.5.4 Programme Implementation costs	15,019.32
<b>RURAL AND INDIGENOUS WOMEN (RIW)</b>	<b>40,565.87</b>
A.6.1 Policy Intervention/Social Dialogue/Mobilisation	16,626.69
A.6.2 Technical Assistance/Training:	7,740.75
A.6.3 Secretariat costs	1,174.35
A.6.4 Programme Implementation costs	15,024.07
<b>CROSS CUTTING INITIATIVES</b>	<b>109,386.53</b>
A.7.1 Policy Intervention/Social Dialogue/Mobilisation	99,130.29
A.7.2 Technical Assistance/Training:	1,896.89
A.7.3 Secretariat costs	431.98
A.7.4 Programme Implementation costs	7,927.36
<b>Sub-total A</b>	<b>484,931.33</b>
<b>Institutional Development</b>	
Resource Development and Publications	30,844.17
Network consolidation	36,000.68
Governance/Management Meetings	18,291.87
Staff Development	1,407.81
<b>Sub-total B</b>	<b>86,544.53</b>
<b>Administration</b>	<b>96,395.12</b>
<b>Total Expenditure 2007</b>	<b>667,870.98</b>
<b>Sub - total for special Project (WHRD manual &amp; research)</b>	<b>68,544.79</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>736,415.77</b>

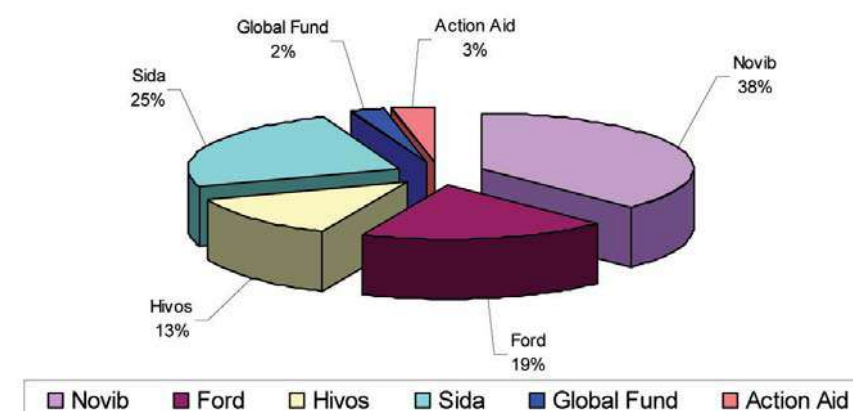
**APWLD Expenditure 2007**



**APWLD 2007 Expenditure by categories**



**APWLD Fund received in 2007**






**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, 2007 and 2006 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, 2007 and 2006, and the results of its operations for the year then ended in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

  
 (Mrs. Pilanthana Ketthongsook)

Authorised Auditor No.3650

Bangkok,  
 March 28, 2008

**APWLD Structure**

**Regional Council (2006 - 2007)**

Two Founding Members:		Country
1. Virada Somswasdi		Thailand
2. Hina Jilani		Pakistan

**One representative from WG and TF**

3. Azra Sayeed		Pakistan
4. Eleanor Conda	WHR WG	Philippines
5. Elisa Tita Lubi	WPPP	Philippines
6. Dwi Astuti	RIW	Indonesia
7. Vernie Yocogan-Diano	WEN	Philippines
8. Nang Lao Liang Won	VAW	Thailand
9. Cythia Abdon-Tellez	L&M	Hong Kong

**Representatives from regions**

**Pacific**

10. Virisila Buadromo		Fiji
11. Alison Aggarwal		Australia
12. Gina Houn Lee		Fiji

**East Asia**

13. Mikiko Otani		Japan
14. Zanaa Jurmed		Mongolia
15. Young Sook Cho		South Korea

**South East Asia**

16. Wanee Thitiprasert		Thailand
17. Zainah Anwar		Malaysia

**South Asia**

18. Sultana Kamal		Bangladesh
19. Fatima Burnad		India
20. Madhu Mehra		India
21. Sunila Abeysekara		Sri Lanka

**Central Asia**

22. Nurgul Djanaeva		Kyrgyzstan
23. Olga Djanaeva		Kyrgyzstan

**Programme & Management Committee (2006 - 2007)**

1. Virada Somswasdi		Thailand
2. Wanee Thitiprasert		Thailand
3. Eleanor Conda		Philippines
4. Azra Sayeed		Pakistan
5. Sultana Kamal		Bangladesh
6. Nurgul Djanaeva		Kyrgyzstan

**Regional Council (2008 - 2011)**

Two Founding Members:		Country
1. Virada Somswasdi		Thailand
2. Noor Farida Ariffin		Malaysia

**One representative from WG and TF**

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

**Representatives from regions**

**Pacific**

9. Virisila Buadromo		Fiji
10. Helen Hakena		Bougainville
11. Edwina Kotoisuva		Fiji

**East Asia**

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

**South East Asia**

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

**South Asia**

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

**Central Asia**

22. Cholpon Akmatova		Kyrgyzstan
23. Olga Djanaeva		Kyrgyzstan
24. Yevgeniya Kozyreva		Kazakhstan

**Programme & Management Committee (2008 - 2011)**

1. Virada Somswasdi		Thailand
2. Wanee Thitiprasert		Thailand
3. Azra Sayeed		Pakistan
4. Young Sook Cho		South Korea
5. Mikiko Otani		Japan
6. Cynthia Abdon-Tellez		Hong Kong



### Women Human Rights Working Group (8)

Eleanor Conda (Convenor)  
Philippines

Madhu Mehra (Co-Convenor)  
Partners for Law in Development, India

Heisoo Shin  
Korean Council for the Women Drafted for  
Military Sexual Slavery by Japan, Seoul Korea

Hina Jilani  
AGHS Legal Aid Centre, Pakistan

Imrana Jalal  
UNDP/ Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT),  
Fiji Islands

Kamala Chandrakirana  
Komnas Perempuan, Indonesia

Sunila Abeysekera  
INFORM Human Rights Documentation Centre,  
Sri Lanka

Zainah Anwar  
Sisters In Islam, Malaysia

### Violence Against Women Programme (11)

Manisha Gupte (Convenor)  
Mahila Sarvangeen Utkarsh Mandal, India

Shahnaz Iqbal (Co-Convenor)  
Shirkat Gah: Women's Resource Centre, Pakistan

Eun Kyung Kim  
Korea Women's Hotline, Seoul, South Korea

Sarala Emmanuel  
Suriya Women's Development Centre, Sri Lanka

Sadaf Saaz Siddiqi  
Naripokkho, Bangladesh

Enkhjargal Davaasuren  
National Center Against Violence, Mongolia

Desti Murdijana  
PIKUL Foundation, Indonesia

Yevgeniya Kozyreva  
Feminist League, Kazakhstan

Edwina Kotoisuva  
Fiji Women's Crisis Centre Suva, Fiji

Nang Lao Liang Won (TayTay)  
Women's League of Burma (WLB) / Shan  
Women's Action Network (SWAN)

Zarizana Abdul Aziz  
Women's Centre for Change, Malaysia

### Women's Participation in Political Processes Programme (10)

Virada Somswasdi (Convenor)  
Women's Studies Center, Chiang Mai  
University, Thailand

Elisa Tita Lubi (Co-convenor)  
Philippines

Titiek Kartika Hendrastiti (Co-convenor)  
The Indonesian Women's Coalition for  
Justice and Democracy / Koalisi Perempuan  
Indonesia (KPI), Indonesia

Beissova Svetlana Kapsultanovna  
Taraz Initiative Centre, Kazakhstan

Nimalka Fernando  
Women's Alliance for Peace and Democracy,  
Sri Lanka

Kabita Pandey  
Forum For Protection of Public Interest - Pro  
Public, Nepal

Kim Ki, Seon Mi  
Korea

Bermet Stakeeva  
Kyrgyzstan

Afu Billy  
Solomon Islands

Dr. Zarina Rahman Khan  
Bangladesh

### Labour and Migration Programme (10)

Cynthia Ca Abdon-Tellez (Convenor)  
Mission for Migrant Workers, Hong Kong

Avelina Rokoduru (Co-convenor)  
Fiji

Fusae Oshita  
National Network in Solidarity with Migrant  
Workers, Japan

Zanaa Jurmed  
Centre for Citizen's Alliance, Mongolia

Jocelyn de Guzman  
Migrante International, Philippines

Pranom Somwong  
MAP Foundation, Thailand

Kim Hye-Seon  
Korea

Sujata Mody  
Malarchi-Women's Resource Centre, India

Rahela Rabbani  
Karmojibi Nari, Bangladesh

Asfinawati  
The Jakarta Legal Aid Institute, Indonesia

### Women and Environment Programme (8)

Vernie Yocogan- Diano (Convenor)  
Innabuyog, Philippines

Ushakumari Jayakumar (Co-Convenor)  
Thanal, India

Khushi Kabir  
Nijera Kori, Bangladesh

Suntaree Saeng-ging  
The Northeastern Women's Network,  
Thailand

Kim Young Ran  
Korean Federation for Environmental  
Movement, Korea

Risma Umar  
Solidaritas Perempuan, Indonesia

Chhooen Thavy  
Banteay Srei, Cambodia

Gombosurenegiin Uranstooj  
Centre for Human rights and Development,  
Mongolia

### Rural and Indigenous Women (8)

Olga Djanaeva (Convenor)  
ALGA, Kyrgyzstan

Tess Vistro (Co-Convenor)  
Amihan Peasant Women's Coalition,  
Philippines

Dwi Astuti  
Bina Desa, Indonesia

Geetha Fernando  
National Fisheries Society, Sri Lanka

Rosalin Jayaseelan  
Society For Rural Education and  
Development  
India

Susmita Chakma  
TAUNGYA, Bangladesh

Sita Poudel  
All Nepal Women's Association, Nepal

Kingkorn Narintarakul  
Northern Development Foundation,  
Thailand



### Secretariat 2007

Regional Coordinator	Lynnsay Francis
Outgoing WHR and VAW Programme Officer	Lisa Pusey
WHR and VAW Programme Officer	Misun Woo
WPPP and L&M Programme Officer	Nalini Singh
Outgoing RIW and WEN Programme Officer	Almah Tararia

Programme Assistants	
RIW/ WEN/ L&M	Valentina Soe
WHR/ VAW/ WPPP	Tomoko Kashiwazaki
Outgoing Information & Communications Officer	Cholpon Akmatova
Information & Communications Officer	Mary Ann Llanza
Liaison Officer	Sachee Vilaithong
Finance Officer	Punika Shinawatra
Finance Assistant	Kornvika Paupratum
Interns and Volunteers	Louise Vigeant
	Felicity Millner
	Sopit Cheevapanich
	Heidi Berk Müller

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.



APWLD

Girls Guide Association Compound  
Amphoe Muang - 189/3 Changklan Road  
Chiang Mai 50100, Thailand  
Telephones: +66-53-284527, 284856  
Fax : +66-53-280847

Email: [apwld@apwld.org](mailto:apwld@apwld.org); website: [www.apwld.org](http://www.apwld.org)

