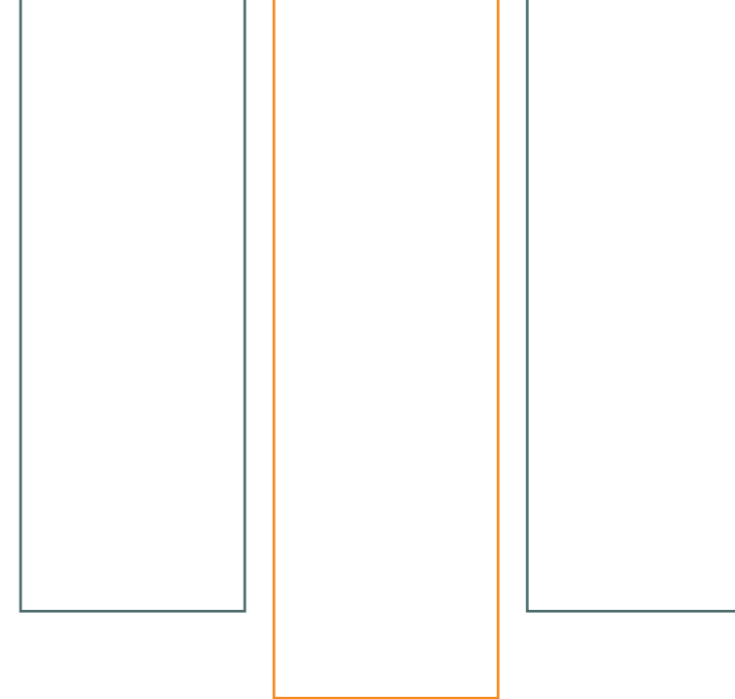


APWLD

Herstory 1986-2017



APWLD HERSTORY

1986-2017

2019
CHIANG MAI, THAILAND

ISBN

**CELEBRATING OVER 30 YEARS OF
ADVOCACY, ACTIVISM AND MOVEMENT
BUILDING TO ADVANCE WOMEN'S HUMAN
RIGHTS IN THE ASIA PACIFIC REGION**

ASIA PACIFIC FORUM ON WOMEN, LAW AND DEVELOPMENT



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([HTTPS://WWW.WLD-HISTORY.NET](https://www.wld-history.net)) AND APWLD ARCHIVE.

Foreword from APWLD Regional Coordinator



As I read through the publication, I could not stop picturing the very first meeting of our founding members. I felt like I could feel their breath, hear their voices and see their facial expressions as they critically understand, analyse and envision a new feminist future for women in Asia Pacific, and collectively chart out feminist strategies to realise that vision. It is very clear that APWLD was founded based on the firm feminist principles and the trust in the power of grassroots, people's movements and solidarity. I have never realised how radical APWLD's founding commitment to use law as a tool to achieve equality, human rights, peace, development and justice was in the political, socio-economic contexts nearly 35 years ago. And that resolution to use, challenge and transform law and systems remains more than ever relevant today, when laws are used as tactics by state and non-state actors to suppress women's human rights, peoples' organising and the movements.

This project started with the request from APWLD members to document the stories of our founding members, their engagement and contribution to APWLD, and what APWLD have meant in their own and collective struggles. Along the few years time as these efforts progressed, we faced with pain to lose some more of our founding members; and with some lost contacts. Simultaneously, a conversation also started to include more members' stories included, for instance members from the first and second waves who played integral role in APWLD's institutional and programme building; as well as a suggestion to include stories of our younger, diverse members.

It needs to be made clear that this publication will not be the only one that talks about APWLD's herstory and members' stories, but just a beginning. We wish to continue with a series of our herstory publications to remember, learn from and celebrate our diverse, powerful members who have made, and continue to write APWLD's story.

This process gave me a chance for deep learning of our own self - the passionate and powerful initiation, struggles we have gone through, ups and downs of our own stories; which all gave me a very strong conviction to continue my journey with APWLD with a renewed commitment to being part of the making of a new feminist, just world. I dearly hope these narratives of APWLD's herstory will give immense joy and deep feminist solidarity and sisterhoods to all readers.

Deep appreciation to all our members, my colleagues at the Secretariat and our consultant who made this historical documentation possible.

In solidarity and with respect to all our members,

Misun Woo

April 2019

Notes from the Editors

Judy Taguiwalo

APWLD Member and consultant

APWLD's Herstory was initially about documenting the stories of the organisation's founding members in time for its 30th anniversary in 2016. But it took almost five years for the project to be completed and the story has expanded beyond the stories of the founding mothers.

This is the story of the growth of APWLD as the leading feminist, women's rights organisation in the Asia Pacific and the stories of some of the brave women who steered it through challenging times and limited resources.

While working on the stories, I reflected on the resilience and sustainability of APWLD. Here are some of my reflections:

The Asia Pacific region is a diverse and complex one. While almost all countries in the region went through a history of colonialism under Western powers, differing natural resources, varied economic, political, religious and cultural systems characterise the countries in the region.

APWLD's journey is admirable. Its 32 years of existence has been marked by internal challenges, several global economic crises, and repression and suppression in many of the countries where its members are located. But it has not only survived these challenges, it has grown to be the region's leading women's human rights organisation which proudly identifies itself as feminist.

APWLD successfully navigated the complexity and diversity of the Asia Pacific region to build, sustain and strengthen a women's human rights movement in the region. It has grown from 12 countries in 1986 to 27 countries at the start of 2018 covering five sub-regions of Asia Pacific. It has brought together Asia Pacific women of diverse backgrounds, political persuasion and religious and cultural beliefs, united by the commitment to end women's oppression using law as an instrument to advance women's human rights and empowerment. It is recognised regionally and internationally not only for its geographic and membership reach but for its analyses which link feminism and gender issues to geo-economic and political power relations.

What made this possible?

1. A firm grasp of the oppressed situation of Asia Pacific women and its objective of using law as an instrument for advancing women's human rights and empowerment.
2. Anchoring its analyses of patriarchy with the realities of globalisation, fundamentalisms and militarism as the source of women's subordination.
3. With the overarching framework of women's rights as human rights, developing alternatives such as the feminist legal theory and practice and more recently the Feminist Development Justice framework.
4. An organisation which from the beginning ensured that it should be a network of lawyers, academics and activists with a strong standpoint for grassroots women in the region.



5. A membership-driven organisation with democratic and representative governance processes utilising consensus as a means of arriving at decisions and availing of voting only as a last resort.
6. A continuing concern for ensuring a combination of old and young, experienced and new members in its governance bodies and in its Secretariat.
7. A learning and flexible organisation which has through the years reviewed, refined and revised its governance structure, programmes and programme implementation mechanism to adapt to changing conditions and to implement relevant recommendations from members and external evaluators.
8. Addressing through various means the communications requirement of a diverse membership.
9. Strong partnership with other regional and international networks, which share the vision and values of APWLD and in the main sustained support from donors organisations.
10. A sense of history of the organisation, of the contribution of its founding members and others in the birth, blossoming and continued growth of APWLD.

The completion of this project was made possible by the collaborative efforts of many women. I would like to thank Kate Lappin (APWLD's Regional Coordinator when this project was initiated) for supporting the initiation and continuation of this project, Misun Woo (the current APWLD Regional Coordinator) for ensuring that this is completed; Trimita Chakma for co-editing this document, Marion Cabrera for the valuable assistance in putting together the references, Prisana Booth for compiling the first draft of the stories, and Aileen Familara who made this document reader-friendly through her layout and illustration.

Margaret Schuler's website, *The Story of Women, Law and Development* (<https://www.wld-history.net>) is a valuable firsthand account of the founding of the three regional women and law networks and provided insightful information on the early years of APWLD. Thanks to Madhu Mehra and Nalini Singh for their comments and suggestions many of which I have tried to incorporate in this final narrative. Thanks too to other APWLD members who contributed to making this story possible.

This account was made without the direct participation of founding members and were based on stories some of them had written previously and a review of documents of the early and later years of APWLD. Given the long history of APWLD and its dynamism, this documentation is not and does not pretend to be the definitive story of the organisation.

I look forward to a follow up publication of the stories of more APWLD members who have contributed to the organisation's growth and to those who continue to do so. Upon sharing the first draft of this herstory at the Regional Council meeting in May 2018, members suggested that the organisation come up with a documentation and analyses of the impact of APWLD in the region and a project on tracing the evolution of the feminist standpoint, viewpoint and method of APWLD. It is up to the governance bodies of APWLD to adopt and implement these recommendations.

Finally, I would like to underscore the truth that the women's movements associated with APWLD are grounded in the members' national location but are made stronger by APWLD's regional and global networks, links and advocacy. And so long as the national movements continue to grow, involve both old and young women and strengthen their advocacy for grassroots and marginalised women to advance a Feminist Development Justice framework, APWLD will remain strong and relevant.

Trimita Chakma

Research and Publications Officer, APWLD

The task of coordinating the Herstory Project was handed down to me from the previous Information Communications Officer when she left APWLD at the end of 2016. Initially, the Programme and Management Committee (P&M) had provided a list of selected founding members for compiling their profiles. With the then Regional Coordinator Kate Lappin's suggestion, we hired an external consultant, Prisana Booth, to reach out to those members for interviews but several of the members were unreachable. The consultant submitted a working draft of the profiles in April 2017, which was then presented to the P&M. The P&M wanted to expand the draft to include more profiles of members in addition to including a narrative of APWLD's organisational journey. At the November 2017 meeting, P&M member Judy Taguiwalo volunteered to take on this work, and was later hired as a consultant to prepare the first draft. The first draft of the APWLD herstory was then presented to the Regional Council (ReC) in May 2018. However, further inputs and expectations from the APWLD members added another round of heavy work to this project. Members not only wanted us to include more interviews and profiles, but they also wanted us to do further fact-checking and expand on APWLD's achievements and challenges in the last three decades. The P&M decided to extend the deadline for collecting the additional information to September 2018.



Judy and I divided up the additional work for the final round of edits. Judy took on the task of updating the first draft based on the additional information from the members, while I worked on compiling a 63-page document containing historical lists of our members (presented in Chapter Five) who have served between 1986-2018 in our various governing bodies (e.g. Steering Committee, Task Forces, Working Groups, Programme and Management Committee, Regional Council, Secretariat etc.). To accomplish this task, I went through APWLD's massive archives of unorganised physical and digital files, and to my surprise, discovered reports from 1988 to 1997 which were previously missing. In addition, I also went through our quarterly newsletter 'Forum News' starting from the 1990s, our old publications from the first two decades, various meeting minutes, and six external evaluation reports. With this new information I was able to expand on Chapter One - Three Waves of APWLD, providing a contextual analysis of our key priorities, challenges, and impacts for the last three decades, while cross-checking facts as per the reference documents mentioned above. In the meantime, my colleagues Sanam Amin and Ya Gan voluntarily assisted in gathering additional information and updating some of the profiles in Chapter Three.

As a third wave APWLD feminist, working on this project has been an inspiring and invigorating experience. APWLD's agenda has always been rooted in the needs of the marginalised women, and in protecting women's human rights in the region. Our leadership has demonstrated uncompromising integrity even during times of difficulty when the organisation struggled to sustain itself. I feel proud to be a part of this herstory, and humbled to have had the opportunity to work on this document. Let this be a testament that women of today are in fact standing on the shoulders of the feisty, fierce, passionate and compassionate feminists of the previous generations. We must continue the work for generations to come.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACMW	ASEAN Committee on the Implementation of the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers
ACWC	ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children
AHRB	ASEAN Human Rights Body
AICHR	ASEAN Inter-Governmental Commission on Human Rights
AoA	Agreement on Agriculture
APEC	Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation
APF	ASEAN People's Forum
APFF	Asia Pacific Feminist Forum
AP-RCEM	The Asia Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism
APWLD	Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AWID	Association for Women's Rights in Development
BOOM	Breaking out of Marginalisation
BPfA	Beijing Platform for Action
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CLADEM	Comité de América Latina y El Caribe para la Defensa de los Derechos de la Mujer
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council of the United Nations
FLP	Feminist Law and Practice
FLTP	Feminist Legal Theory and Practice
FPAR	Feminist Participatory Action Research
FTAs	Free Trade Agreements
GA	General Assembly
GATT	General Agreement on Trade and Tariff
HR	Human Rights
HRD	Human Rights Defender
ICC	International Coordinating Committee
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	The International Monetary Fund
IWRAW-AP	International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OC	Organising Committee
P&M	Programme and Management Committee
RC	Regional Coordinator
RCEP	Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership
ReC	Regional Council
RIMUP	Rural, indigenous, migrant and urban poor
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programmes
SC	Steering Committee
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals

Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
TF	Task Force
TNCs	Transnational Corporations
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
ToT	Training of Trainers
TPP	Trans Pacific Partnership
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UFDWR	United for Foreign Domestic Worker Rights
UN	United Nations
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia Pacific
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNHRC	United Nations Human Rights Council
UNSR	United Nations Special Rapporteur
UNSRVAW	United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women
VAW	Violence against Women
WB	The World Bank
WC	Women's Caucus
WCAR	The World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Intolerance
WHRD	Women Human Rights Defender
WHRDIC	Women Human Rights Defenders International Coalition
WILDAF	Women in Law and Development Africa
WLD	Women, Law and Development
WTO	World Trade Organisation

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Three Waves of APWLD

Introduction

The origin of the Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development or APWLD can be traced back to the Third World Conference on Women in Nairobi in 1985, where around 1,900 delegates from 157 Member States and 12,000 NGO delegates participated to review and appraise the achievements of the ‘United Nations Decade for Women.’¹ At the conference, hundreds of women from Asia, Africa and Latin America came together to discuss the need for developing a network of women’s organisations across the Global South to clarify the role of law, and to identify how the law could serve as an instrument to raise women’s legal, and therefore, social, economic and political status. This network was named the Women, Law and Development (WLD) Forum. APWLD emerged as part of the WLD Forum, through dialogues among women lawyers, social scientists, academics and activists from Asia and the Pacific.²

Chapter one of this document explores APWLD’s organisational journey through three different phases or ‘waves’, as termed by APWLD’s founding member Virada Somswasdi in her ‘Institutional memories and advocacy work of APWLD’ for the proceedings of the 20th anniversary of WLD network in 2007:

The First APWLD Wave: 1986 – 1997. Groundbreaking, building a house, and moving in with the women’s movement.

The Second APWLD Wave: 1997 – 2007. Tackling new challenges, growing and building cross movement solidarity.

The Third APWLD Wave: 2008 – 2017. Adapting, transitioning and expanding women’s movements.

This chapter describes for each of the APWLD waves, the general socio-political context, APWLD’s programme priorities and key impacts within that context, and institutional development during the period to sustain the network. The information for this part has primarily been gathered from APWLD’s status/progress/annual reports, the quarterly newsletter ‘Forum News’, various APWLD publications, interviews conducted with members, and six external evaluation reports written between 1988 and 2017.

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¹World Conferences on Women. Retrieved from <http://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/intergovernmental-support/world-conferences-on-women> Documents related to the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace are available on <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/nairobi.html>

² APWLD and OEF (1990). *The Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development: Its Origins, Issues and Vision*.



The First APWLD Wave: 1986-1997

Groundbreaking, building a house, and moving in with the women's movement

Overview and context: The birth of APWLD in the post-colonial era

At the time of APWLD's founding in the mid-80's, many countries in the Asia and the Pacific underwent massive public and private external debts due to the rapid industrialisation in the post-colonial era, which created severe social inequalities and power imbalances between the Northern countries and the South. As a way out of the debt burden, southern countries had to turn to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank for assistance, and underwent Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP) characterised by economic programmes propagating exports, the reduction of government subsidies for food security, and the reduction in social spending, prescribed by these lending institutions.³

This profit-oriented approach to development led to appropriation of farmlands for industrial production, and resulted in the degradation of the environment, deforestation and destruction of traditional subsistence farming and livelihoods, the impoverishment and marginalisation of rural people and the exploitation of labour. Politically, Asia Pacific saw centralisation of power and repression in the name of economic development with its resulting violations of basic human rights and democratic space.⁴

Women were at the front-line casualties of such 'development' initiatives. Women had to work harder and longer, had the lowest wages, had the least access to food and resources, and were subject to violence both in the family, and by the state, particularly in times of conflict. This growth-driven development approach combined with existing patriarchal values placed the majority of women in extremely vulnerable situations. Women of the South recognised that law, as a resource, does not benefit women equally not only due to their lack of knowledge and access to the law, but also due to discriminatory legislative provisions in different spheres. Many laws discriminate women in terms of nationality, inheritance, ownership and control of property, freedom of movement, and the custody and nationality of children.

These urgent issues of development, women rights and law were discussed and deliberated by women from the South at the 1985 Third World Conference on Women in Nairobi.⁵ The Nairobi Conference marked the end of the United Nations Decade for Women (1976-1985) and produced by consensus the Forward Looking Strategies for Women designed to improve the status of women and integrate them into all aspects of development. It called on women to unite and help each other, and become a more effective political force in decision-making bodies at various levels:

'To promote their interests effectively, women must be able to enjoy their right to take part in national and international decision-making processes, including the right to dissent publicly and peacefully from their Government's policies, and to mobilize to increase their participation in the promotion of peace within and between nations.'

33. *There is no doubt that, unless major measures are taken, numerous obstacles will continue to exist which retard the participation of women in political life, in the formulation of policies that affect them and in the formulation of national women's policies. Success will depend in large*

3 APWLD external evaluation report 1989-1996

4 ibid

5 Following the First World Conference on Women in Mexico in 1975 and the Second World Conference on Women in Copenhagen in 1980.

*measure upon whether or not women can unite to help each other to change their poor material circumstances and secondary status and to obtain the time, energy and experience required to participate in political life. At the same time, improvements in health and educational status, legal and constitutional provisions and networking will increase the effectiveness of the political action taken by women so that they can obtain a much greater share in political decision-making than before.'*⁶

It is at this conference, the women of the Global South decided to create a network of women's organisations to share information and mobilise women's action on women's rights, and to work on pro-women legislation. Three regional Women, Law and Development (WLD) networks were formed: The Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD) in 1986, the Latin American and Caribbean Committee for the Defense of Women's Rights (CLADEM) in 1987 and Women in Law and Development in Africa (WILDAF) in 1990.

Following the 1985 Nairobi conference, an interim Regional Planning Committee from Asia and the Pacific met in Delhi in July 1986 to discuss the priority areas of a regional programme and plan a regional conference. The planning group included: Radhika Coomaraswamy (Sri Lanka), Savitri Goonesekere (Sri Lanka), Noor Farida Ariffin (Malaysia), Virada Somswasdi (Thailand), Irene Santiago (Philippines), Mere Pulea (Fiji), Ranjana Kumari (India), Rani Jethmalani (India), Lotika Sarkar (India) and Margaret Schuler of Overseas Education Fund International (OEF)/WLD. In designing the regional conference, the planning committee determined three major themes of particular relevance to the Asia Pacific Region: 1) The effects of law, religion, and custom on women; 2) The role of law in promoting or combating violence toward and exploitation of women; and 3) Women's economic rights.⁷



A panel with Farida Ariffin, Savitri Goonesekere, Malee Pruekpongawalee, Tagaytay, December 1986

6 Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies. Introduction. Retrieved from <http://www.un-documents.net/nfl-intr.htm#D>. Accessed December 2018.

7 APWLD and Overseas Education Fund International (1990). The Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development: Its Origins, Issues and Vision. (p. 6).

The planning committee also identified potential list of members and sent invitations to 60 possible participants for the regional conference set for December 1986.

On 9-15 December 1986, 52 women-delegates from 10 Asian and two Pacific nations met in Tagaytay, Philippines to discuss the most pressing socio-legal issues facing women and to explore possible areas of collaborative action.⁸ The three thematic issues identified by the planning committee were discussed in depth.

The outcome of the meeting was the formation of the Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development or APWLD with the primary goal of 'empowering women in the Asia Pacific region in the use of law as an instrument of social change for equality and development, enabling women to use law and legal institutions in furtherance of the Forum's objectives, and promoting the basic concept of human rights in the region as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.'⁹

To fulfil this goal, the assembly also formulated several specific objectives:

- To work towards the development of a model code of values which reflects women's quest for equality and justice;
- To urge national governments to ratify and effectively implement the U.N. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1981);
- To work towards the realisation of the full potential of women and their position of equality within the family structure and society;
- To promote women's economic rights to ensure that they have equal access to all productive resources;
- To enhance women's participation and capacity to shape macroeconomic development strategies in their own country and in the region;
- To promote processes which will ensure women's equality in political participation;
- To facilitate and strengthen interaction among individuals, groups, and countries committed to the overall objectives;
- To share information, expertise, experiences, and resources to develop and strengthen individual and collective action; and
- To express solidarity and to mobilise members of the Forum and public opinion in cases of exploitation of women and violations of their rights.

At this meeting, a seven-woman Steering Committee (Steering Committee) was elected based on geographic representation¹⁰, and given the mandate to set up the APWLD Secretariat and develop a programme to implement the objectives. They were: Mere Pulea (Fiji), Rani Jethmalani (India), Noor Farida Ariffin (Malaysia), Emelina Quintillan (Philippines), Asma Jahangir (Pakistan), Radhika Coomaraswamy (Sri Lanka), and Virada Somswasdi (Thailand).

The assembly also unanimously decided the APWLD Secretariat would be located in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, because of its central location, its cultural and religious diversity, and available support from the Women's Programme of the Asia Pacific Development Centre (APDC).

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⁸ APWLD and OEF (1990). *The Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development: Its Origins, Issues and Vision*.

⁹ *ibid*

¹⁰ Three from South Asia, three from Southeast Asia, and one from the Pacific



The first APWLD Steering Committee (Steering Committee) members in 1986, Tagaytay, Philippines. From L-R: Emelina Quintillan, Asma Jahangir, Noor Farida Ariffin, Rani Jethmalani, Virada Somswasdi, & Mere Pulea (Missing: Radhika Coomaraswamy)

At their first meeting in December 1986, the Steering Committee discussed and designated the tasks that needed to be done. Margaret Schuler, the then Director of the WLD Programmes of OEF, and the convener 1985 Third World Conference on Women in Nairobi, agreed to assist in the development of the APWLD Programme.



Tagaytay, Philippines, 1986

At their second meeting held in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania on 24-25 July 1988, the Steering Committee discussed APWLD's first project proposal to the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) prepared by Noor Farida Ariffin, and the first draft constitution prepared by Rani Jethmalani. The Steering Committee created the Programme and Management Committee (P&M) with the mandate to oversee the implementation of the APWLD programme, and with whom the Regional Coordinator would

consult. The position of the Regional Coordinator was offered to Emelina Quintillan, who accepted the position in October 1987. A local Board of Directors consisting of four members was set up in the effort to legitimise APWLD in Malaysia. They were: Noor Farida Ariffin, Emelina Quintillan, Irene Fernandez, and Chiam Sou Hong. APWLD came into legal existence as a non-stock, non-profit company registered under the Malaysian Companies Act on 9 January 1988 and the Secretariat began its work.

Key programme priorities and impacts

Conceptualisation of programme priorities

At its inception in 1988, the Secretariat focused its work around establishing the Kuala Lumpur office and outreach to develop membership. In the first year, the Regional Coordinator traveled to eight countries in South Asia and Southeast Asia and held meetings with member organisations. During meetings, all members expressed the need for 'developing a regional mechanism to respond to emergency situations and to critical issues that constitute an imminent threat to women's rights'.¹¹ Therefore, APWLD in response needed to provide a forum for dialogues, workshops, and seminars for its members with the goal of developing effective strategies for the regional network to act in order to counter the threats to women's rights.¹² APWLD initiated programmes to systematise the understanding about how the law (formal and customary) affects women and their empowerment, and develop a dialogue to search for strategies to improve women's legal status, and strengthen women's participation in development as equal partners. APWLD relied on the following programme components to achieve the above programme goals:¹³

- Regional meetings and workshops
- Research
- Advocacy and campaigns
- Training
- Publication and information dissemination

Through a process of consultation and multiple decentralised programme development mechanisms, APWLD conceptualised the priority issues of the region, thus developing its programme focus. In 1991, a working committee identified four 'Task Force' areas to carry out the programmes.

- Women and Democracy
- Women and Religion
- Economic Rights
- Violence Against Women



Creation of the Rural and Indigenous Women's Rights Task Force

In the early 1990s there were rapid pressures and changes in the region from industrialisation and neoliberalism. The region experienced a paradigm shift in development, from development through aid to development through trade and investment, which was captured through the establishment of Asia Pacific Regional Cooperation (APEC) in 1989, and its expansion in the region in the subsequent years. The World Trade Organisation (WTO) was founded in 1995 to facilitate cross border trade. These institutions aggressively pushed for neo-liberal policies in the region, eventually gaining the power to influence the economic, financial and trade policies in Asia Pacific. Some of these policies, such as the Agreement on Agriculture (AoA) had devastating impact on the livelihoods of rural and indigenous women.



Rural and Indigenous Womens Rights Forum, Madras India, July 1993

Recognising the challenges faced by the rural and indigenous women in the region by this emerging development paradigm, APWLD organised a Regional Conference on Rural and Indigenous Women's Rights in July 1993 in Madras, India with a particular focus on ecology and development. This conference was key in identifying land rights as a priority and developing analysis on the impacts of neoliberal trade policies facilitated by international institutions such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, on agriculture and rural indigenous women with an emphasis on food security issues. Following up on the Rural and Indigenous Women's Rights forum in Madras, a working group meeting was held on 18-19 June 1994, where a fifth Task Force on Rural and Indigenous Women's Rights was created. Fatima Burnad from India took the position of the convener.¹⁴

Lobbying for recognition of women's rights and violence against women at the global level

In the mid 1990's, APWLD took lead in preparing for and participating in two major global conferences - The United Nations World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna 1993, and the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing 1995.

In preparation for the 1993 Vienna Conference, APWLD organised a regional meeting in Bangkok inviting 240 participants from 110 NGOs representing women, children, indigenous peoples, workers to review and formulate strategies for future promotion and protection of human rights. This resulted in the publication Human Rights in Asia: the Struggle for Human Dignity, recommendations from which were incorporated into the lobbying efforts in Vienna to recognise the issue of women's rights within the human rights framework. The 1993 Bangkok NGO Declaration on Human Rights stated, 'crimes against

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¹¹ First issue of the Forum News, July 1988.

¹² Emelina Quintillan (1990), 'The Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development'. Series on Women, Law and Development: Issues and Strategies for Change. Number 2.

¹³ APWLD External Evaluation Report 1989-1996.

¹⁴ Forum News (1994, August). Volume 7, Number 2. (p. 5).

women are crimes against humanity, and the failure of governments to prosecute those responsible for such crimes implies complicity'.¹⁵

At the conference, APWLD organised a forum on Violence Against Women highlighting different forms of oppression against women in Asian countries. Among the issues shared were the plight of the comfort women, the cultural and religious hegemony in the caste and dowry system, the trend of Islamisation of laws and its effects of women's participation in the public sphere, and the struggle for democracy in Cambodia and women's participation.

UNIVERSALITY AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS
Excerpt of Oral Intervention by APWLD at the 1993 United Nations World Conference On Human Rights in Vienna

We, in the Women's Movement, strongly and unequivocally affirm that all human rights are universal and are equally applicable in different social, cultural, political and legal traditions. Human rights must be based on equality and the principle of universal application to all. We affirm the basis of universality of human rights which protects all of humanity including women.

We condemn the onslaught of religious obscurantism and fundamentalism by governments or other forces which invariably leads to intolerance and violates various human rights and freedoms of people, particularly women. Culture and religion cannot be used to discriminate against women in the family. The institution of the family need to be democratised in order to ensure women's equality and decision making.

Culture and religion has also been used to deny women access to land and economic opportunities. There has been an increase of violence against women through female infanticide, genital mutilation, dowry deaths, domestic violence etc. Culture and religion have been used to deny women of their reproductive rights. Women have been denied access to education.

Irene Fernandez, Steering Committee member of APWLD, read out the statement in conjunction with the Women's Caucus presentation in the government assembly on Friday 18th June 1993.

Furthermore, many governments have used culture and religion as an excuse either for their non-ratification of the Convention of Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and other international instruments. We call on governments to recognise and affirm the universality of women's rights through the ratification of the CEDAW. We call upon the Geneva based Treaty Body to review the situation and make necessary recommendations to the General Assembly as using of reservations is a negation of accepted international standards.

Governments cannot use the shield of national sovereignty or assurance of internal security to reject universality. This argument is used to deny rights by enforcing measures which are claimed to be necessary for national or internal security or deterrence against terrorism activities or to justify discrimination against women and other social groups. Nation states must be accountable to the international community for the protection of human rights of the people.

The UN after all belongs to the people and we call upon the UN and its members to recognise and commit in action the universality of human rights in order to ensure the protection of women's human rights and the rights of all peoples.

Source: Forum News 1993 Volume 6, Number 2-3

The joint lobbying efforts by APWLD and other women's rights organisations resulted in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action of June 1993 to affirm equal status and human rights of women, and the UN Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) consider the creation of a new special rapporteur mechanism to address the root causes and consequences of violence against women. One year later on 4 March 1994 the UNCHR appointed APWLD founding member, Radhika Coomaraswamy of Sri Lanka to the newly created position of UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women (UNSRVAW).¹⁶ Given the existing close working relationship between Radhika Coomaraswamy and APWLD, this

15 Forum News (1993, April). Volume 6, Number 1.
16 Forum News (1995, February). Volume 8, Number 1.

placed APWLD in an ideal position to facilitate annual consultations between women's groups and the UNSRVAW in the subsequent years. APWLD conducted Asia Pacific NGO consultations with the UNSRVAW from 1995 onward, which was perceived as unique to the region.

Human Rights Desk in Colombo

Following the successful engagement in Vienna in influencing the language of the declaration, and realising the importance of developing institutional capacity for emergency mobilisation to 'express solidarity and mobilise members of the Forum and public opinion in cases of exploitation of women and violations of their rights'¹⁷, the Steering Committee decided in December 1993 to establish a Human Rights Desk in Colombo. APWLD's then Regional Coordinator Nimalka Fernando from Sri Lanka took on the position as the Coordinator for the Human Rights Mobilisation Project and relocated to Colombo in February 1994. Salbiah Ahmad from Singapore, who had been with the Secretariat since July 1991, was appointed as the Acting Regional Coordinator.¹⁸

The Fourth UN World Conference on Women in Beijing

1994 was a busy year for APWLD as the members prepared three big international conferences, namely, the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo in September 1994, the World Summit on Social Development (WSSD) in Copenhagen in March 1995, and the Fourth UN World Conference on Women in Beijing in September 1995. With regards to preparations for Beijing, APWLD formed a working committee to draft the APWLD statement on Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA)¹⁹ and partnered with the Asia Pacific Women's Action Network (APWAN) for joint lobbying efforts at the conference. The 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing marked a significant turning point for the global agenda for gender equality, as 189 governments unanimously adopted the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action (BPfA), a historic consensus document that called for action on twelve critical areas of concern.

As of 2019, this is considered as the key policy document on gender equality and women's empowerment.

Asian Women's Tribunal

In December 1995, APWLD organised an Asian Women's Tribunal at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok documenting testimonies on human rights violations of rural and indigenous communities, women workers, migrant workers, and women in trafficking. The findings from this tribunal were submitted to the UNSRVAW in the following year.

17 APWLD External Evaluation Report 1989-1996.
18 Forum News (1992, January). Volume 5, Number 1.
19 This statement was published in Forum News (1994, December). Volume 7, Number 3.



Feminist Legal Theory and Practice (FLTP) training

Due to popular demand from its membership, APWLD regularly conducted 'legal literacy' trainings between 1989 and 1993. In 1994, APWLD introduced the 'Beyond Law' training exploring the roles, usefulness and the limitations of legal strategies that went beyond law. In 1995, APWLD's flagship training programme - Feminist Legal Theory and Practice (FLTP) emerged from the five 'Beyond Law' trainings conducted during 1994 and 1995.



Lawyers and activists at Legal Literacy Training Workshop in Manila, 1989

Institutional development

Between January 1988 and September 1997, the Secretariat was housed in the building of Asian Pacific Development Center (APDC), Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia with the assistance of Noleen Heyzer (Director of the Women's programme APDC), Noor Farida Ariffin and Zainah Anwar. The first staff were Emelina Quintillan as Regional Coordinator, Shanthi Dairiam as Programme Associate and Sherine Abdullah as Secretary.²⁰

In December 1988, to facilitate a network formation based on programme activities, APWLD established contact with about 55 women's groups in the region.²¹

In 1991, the Steering Committee decided to add the Regional Council as an institutional structure in deliberation to introduce an election process for replacing the Steering Committee members. The first proposed Regional Council met in August 1991 for one day in Colombo. The Regional Council was formalised at a meeting held in July 1992 in Kuala Lumpur and became active in 1994. The mandate of the Regional Council was to formulate policy, develop programme, and review and approve institutional changes, such as restructuring of the organisation and constitutional amendments.

In 1993, the Steering Committee adopted the first constitution of APWLD and decided to establish a Human Rights/ Emergency Mobilisation Desk (HRD) in Colombo to develop institutional capacity for mobilising APWLD members and allies in the event of emergencies.

In 1994, in view of the increasing tasks/functions at implementation level, a programme committee was set up to provide support to programme staff in concretising the broad policy decision taken at Steering Committee meetings.²²

20 Forum News (1988, July). Volume 1, Number 1.

21 APWLD's Programme Development and Institutional Structure. (p. 12 & 13) and Forum News (1994, August). Volume 7, Number 2.

22 Ibid

In 1995, APWLD underwent its first external evaluation covering the period of 1989 to 1995. The report evaluated that the two-dimensional diagram of its institutional framework under the 1993 constitution failed to capture the organisation dynamics that had developed within APWLD.²³ In 1996, the Regional Council decided to review and amend the 1993 Constitution to clarify membership, decision-making authority and line of responsibility, which was adopted at the July 1997 Regional Council meeting.²⁴ At a Regional Forum held in Bangkok on 29 July – 01 August 1996, the APWLD Task Forces consolidated into the following five areas²⁵:

- Violence Against Women
- Rural and Indigenous Women
- Women's Participation in Political Processes
- Labour and Migration
- Women's Rights Human Rights

These Task Forces were perceived as the key mechanisms for planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluation of APWLD programmes.

The Steering Committee considered the idea of relocating Secretariat at a meeting held in December 1995 on the basis of the following:²⁶

- Not to be permanently stationed in one particular country in order to ensure regional perspective;
- Proximity to other international and regional organisations; and
- Easier immigration access for expatriate staff and overseas networking partners.

APWLD founding member from Thailand Virada Somsasdi proposed to relocate the Secretariat to Chiang Mai and offered her support for the registration and administrative process. At the December 1996 meeting, the Steering Committee selected Chiang Mai as the new home of the Secretariat for the following reasons:²⁷

- Presence of Steering Committee member and the support system of the Women's Studies Centre, Chiang Mai University;
- Lower infrastructure and living costs; and
- More conducive working environment.

This decision required major restructuring of the organisation including reviewing of the staff positions. Following the resignation of the Coordinator for the Human Rights Mobilisation Project in June, the Steering Committee made the decision to close down the Human Rights Desk in Colombo, primarily due to the financial and human resources constraints, and reverted the Human Rights Mobilisation Project to the Secretariat.

The staff of the Kuala Lumpur office was invited to relocate on the same employment terms. In March 1997, the staff informed the Steering Committee in writing of their inability to relocate to Chiang Mai and was offered a generous compensation package in lieu of relocation. APWLD Secretariat relocated to Chiang Mai in October 1997.

23 APWLD External Evaluation Report 1989-1995. (p. 21).

24 Forum News (1996, December). Volume 9, Number 4.

25 Forum News (1997, July). Volume 10, Number 2. (p. 12) and Annual Report 1997. (p. 15).

26 Forum News (1997, December). Volume 10, Numbers 3-4.

27 Ibid.

The First APWLD Wave

1986-1997

1985

Third World Conference on Women in Nairobi in July

1986

- A 10-member Regional Planning Committee meeting held in Delhi in July in preparation for the Asia Pacific Regional Conference in December
- Founding of The Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development at the regional conference in Tagaytay in December. A seven-member steering committee formed. 1st Steering Committee meeting held

1987

- 2nd Steering Committee meeting held in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania in July. Creation of the Programme & Management Committee and the position of the Regional Coordinator
- Emelina Quintillan joined as Regional Coordinator in Kuala Lumpur in October

1988

- APWLD officially registered as a non-stock, non-profit company under the Malaysian Companies Act on 9 January. Secretary began work in Kuala Lumpur
- The first issue of the quarterly newsletter 'Forum News' published

1989

Nimalka Fernando appointed as the Regional Coordinator in January

1990

APWLD jointly published its first major framework document with the Overseas Education Fund International (OEF) in March - The Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development: Its Origins, Issues and Vision

1991

- Creation of Four Task Forces by a working committee
- The Regional Council added to the institutional framework. The first proposed Regional Council met in August for one day in Colombo

1992

- The Regional Council formalised at a meeting held in Kuala Lumpur
- Human Rights/ Emergency Mobilisation Desk established in July in Colombo, Sri Lanka¹

1993

- Adoption of 1993 APWLD Constitution and By-Laws by Regional Council
- Nimalka Fernando appointed as the Coordinator for the Human Rights Mobilisation Project in Colombo Sri Lanka by the Steering Committee in December

1985

- APWLD Founding Member Radhika Coomaraswamy appointed as the UNSRVAV
- Nimalka Fernando assumed her new post in Colombo in February. Salbiah Ahmad appointed as an Acting Regional Coordinator
- A fifth Task Force on Rural and Indigenous Women's Rights created at working group meeting on 18-19 June. Fatima Burnad took the position of the convener²
- An 18-member APWLD Working Committee for Beijing formed and partnership with Asia Pacific Women's Action Network (APWAN) established

1986

- Task forces were consolidated into five areas:³
- Violence Against Women
 - Rural and Indigenous Women
 - Women's Participation in Political Processes
 - Labour and Migration
 - Women's Rights Human Rights

1987

Adoption of 1997 APWLD Constitution and By-Laws (amendment of 1993 Constitution and By-Laws) by Regional Council on 23 July



1 The desk was closed in 1996 and the activities were consolidated at the Secretariat
 2 Forum News (1994, August). Volume7, Number 2.
 3 Forum News (1997, July). Volume10, No. 2. (p. 12).

The Second APWLD Wave: 1997-2007

Tackling new challenges, growing and building cross-movement solidarity

Overview and context: The rise of neoliberal globalisation

1997 was a year of transition for APWLD. It was also the year when dramatic changes were taking place in the region, and globally. While the Secretariat was busy relocating its office from Malaysia to Thailand, the Thai economy was crumbling. As the Thai property market became unsustainable due to over-investment in real estate, the Thai currency significantly depreciated against the U.S. dollar. Soon the Thai financial crisis spread to several other countries in Southeast Asia, spawning the unprecedented Asian Crisis of 1997-1998. The solutions offered by the IMF to these countries were on the condition of imposing neoliberal trade policies of deregulation, privatisation and liberalisation, which compelled many Asian governments to eliminate subsidies, cut tax, and open their markets to foreign investment and ownership.



Women Resist Globalisation, Chiang Mai, 1998

By the end of 2000, economic and cultural globalisation was going full speed where collaborations were taking place between the lead global institutions like the WTO, the World Bank and the IMF in partnership with Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and countries and their transnational corporations. But the promise of prosperity from globalisation did not happen. Five years after the birth of the WTO in 1995, there was more poverty and inequity within countries and between countries. Wealth and power were being concentrated in the hands of a few countries, corporations and individuals.²⁸

The harmful impacts of globalisation was described in APWLD External Evaluation Report 1997-2000 as follows, ‘...the world saw increasing disparity between the rich and the poor, the exacerbation of poverty, social injustice and inequalities along the lines of gender, class, race and ethnicity. Massive environmental destruction has taken place due to increase in the extractive activities of corporations and government. The richest 225 persons in the world today control \$1 trillion which is equal to the annual income of the poorest 47% of the world’s population.’

28 APWLD External Evaluation Report 1997-2000.

Women bore the worst effects of this crisis as their jobs and traditional livelihoods were the ones which had to go first. Trafficking of women from the rural areas to brothels in urban centers within and outside of countries increased in Thailand, Myanmar/Burma, India, Nepal, Philippines, Cambodia, Vietnam and Laos. Conflict situation erupted and worsened in Indonesia, the Philippines, India, Sri Lanka, Fiji, The Solomon Islands, Afghanistan and Kashmir. Religious fundamentalism was on the upsurge in various countries in the region.²⁹ This situation was made more difficult by the continuing existence of elitist, patriarchal, militarist and non-democratic governments in the region.

However, on the opposite side, the grassroots women in the region were organising and taking collective actions to challenge the notion of neoliberal globalisation, as described by a member of the Steering Committee, Elisa Tita Lubi at the end of 1998.³⁰

‘But this bleak picture is brightened by the courageous struggles that Asian women continue to wage to emancipate themselves. Women, especially among the workers, peasants and indigenous peoples organise and take action. They relentlessly resist imperialist globalisation and feudal patriarchal structures to throw off the yoke of poverty and oppression. They confront the IMF/World Bank/WTO, the multinational and transnational corporations (MNCs/TNCs) and the centers of global power, the US, Japan and the European Union. They challenge their governments to stop anti-women and anti-people policies and programmes such as liberalization, deregulation and privatization. Women continue to strive to end their displacement, commodification and modern day slavery.’

In the mid 2000’s the region was hit by devastating natural disasters, namely the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami and the 2005 earthquake in Pakistan. 2005 ended with a human-made disaster created by the WTO deals in Hong Kong as debt, trade, tied-aids and globalisation policies were imposed on the countries affected by natural disasters in the name of assisting the tsunami and earthquake survivors³¹. Throughout the decade, the region saw a rise of state militarism compounded by growing fundamentalisms. The US-led ‘war on terror’ was adopted by many governments in the region to legitimise the repression of dissent, and criminalisation of human rights work. Demands for State accountability for human rights were increasingly labeled as ‘subversive acts’ meriting militaristic responses from the state³². In some parts of the region, states were codifying fundamentalist values into the formal legal system, privileging culture and religion over women in constitutions and laws as political concessions to powerful sectors of the community.³³

With the forces of patriarchy, globalisation and increasing militarism and fundamentalisms in the region, enforceability of women’s human rights in the region was diminishing. Violence against women and attacks against women human rights defenders at the hands of both state and non-state actors were on the rise. During this period, APWLD’s mandate to uphold women’s human rights was challenged by the realities described above.

Key programme priorities and impacts

In light of the above developments in the region, APWLD continued to work on its programme priorities through its five Task Forces.

29 APWLD External Evaluation Report 1997-2000.

30 Forum News (1998, December). Volume 11, Number 3.

31 APWLD Annual Report 2004. Introduction by Regional Coordinator, Titi Soentoro.

32 APWLD Annual Report 2004. Executive summary.

33 APWLD Annual Report 2005. Executive summary.

Anti-WTO movement building

APWLD continued to deepen its analysis against neoliberal globalisation in relation to women's human rights. APWLD joined the anti-WTO movement in 1999 and documented the disastrous effects of the Agreement on Agriculture (AoA) on the livelihoods of many rural and indigenous women in Asia and the Pacific. The AoA was negotiated during the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT), which eventually resulted in establishment of the WTO.



Women's March against WTO, Hong Kong 2005

In 2002, APWLD organised the Asian Fisherfolk Conference: Cut Away the Net of Globalisation in Hat Yai, Thailand. With 72 participants representing 11 countries, the conference sought to analyse the impact of globalisation, particularly liberalisation and privatisation, on the small-scale fisheries sector.

In 2005, APWLD launched the 'Don't Globalise Hunger! Assert Women's Rights to Food Sovereignty' campaign, and sent 86 women to the WTO 6th Ministerial Meeting in Hong Kong in December to protest the effects of globalisation on their communities and lives. In Hong Kong, APWLD organised the first Women's Tribunal against the WTO.

Support to grassroots women mobilisation

In 1998, APWLD supported Tamil Nadu Women's Forum to organise a ten-day peace march and rally against religious extremist activities, and caste and gender violence throughout the state. In 2003, APWLD sponsored the attendance of 200 Dalit women at the Asian Social Forum: People's Movements Encounters in Hyderabad, India, contributing to building the capacity of rural and indigenous women's groups to organise and mobilise on the issue of globalisation. In 2004, APWLD co-organised the Asian Conference on Women Land Rights and Globalisation with AMIHAN (National Federation of Peasant Women) and the Asian Peasant Women Network in Manila, Philippines. The exposure trip for indigenous women from Thailand to Cordillera indigenous communities in the Philippines started the process of establishing an Ethnic Women Network in Thailand. In 2007, APWLD launched a regional campaign on Foreign Domestic Workers (FDW) spearheaded by United for Foreign Domestic Workers Rights – a coalition of five regional and international organisations.

Beijing +5 Review

Following up on the BPfA adopted in 1995, APWLD organised and participated in Beijing +5 Review processes between 1999 and 2000 to formulate recommendations on how to carry further the implication of BPfA. In 2000, APWLD assisted in the formation of Asia Pacific Women's Watch (APWW), consolidating the regional network of women's groups involved in monitoring and implementing the BPfA.

Recognise, support and protect Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs)

In 2003, APWLD co-organised a consultation on WHRDs in Bangkok in partnership with Amnesty International UK and International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific (IWRAP-AP), which

helped develop an in-depth perspective on the work of WHRDs, highlighting the risks and vulnerabilities they face as women. The following year, APWLD co-organised a planning meeting in partnership with World Organisation against Torture (OMCT) for launching a campaign to defend WHRDs at the 60th Session of UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva. This meeting led to the creation of the International Coordinating Committee³⁴ with the objective to bring international attention to the concerns of WHRDs and their need for protection. In recognition of the issue, 29 November was declared as the International Women Human Rights Defenders Day³⁵

In 2005, APWLD co-organised a conference that brought together over 200 women's rights and human rights activists from approximately 70 countries worldwide in Colombo. This meeting was a historic gathering, marking the first time women's rights and human rights groups came together on a global level to address gender-specific concerns and experiences of women as human rights defenders. In 2006, 180 participants shared challenges facing human rights defenders in the region with the first UN Special Representative on Human Rights Defenders and APWLD member Hina Jilani, at the Asia Regional Human Rights Defenders Forum in Bangkok. The following year APWLD published the WHRD Resource Book in collaboration with 12 other international and regional NGOs which was launched in Geneva during the 6th session of the Human Rights Council in September.

Support to 2004 Tsunami survivors

Horried by the monumental damage of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, which affected several countries where APWLD members are based, the Regional Council issued a resolution to act as a regional focal point of advocacy for women's human rights in the tsunami affected countries with focal points in the affected countries: Titi Soentoro in Indonesia, Nimalka Fernando and Sunila Abeysekera in Sri Lanka, Ravadee Prasertcharoensuk in Thailand and Fatima Burnad in India.

In terms of immediate financial assistance, APWLD was able to raise USD 10,000. The funds were divided between six member organisations: Society for Rural Education and Development (India), Solidaritas Perempuan (Indonesia), Sustainable Development Foundation (Thailand), International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination (Sri Lanka), INFORM (Sri Lanka), and the Women's Studies Center, Chiang Mai University (Thailand).

In 2005, APWLD published a report 'Why are Women More Vulnerable During Disasters?' – which was translated into Japanese and French and submitted to the Representative of the United Nations Secretary General on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons. The following year APWLD published 'Guidelines for Gender Sensitive Disaster Management' documenting practical steps to ensuring a gendered response to natural disasters based on the experience in working with women survivors of the 2004 Tsunami in Indonesia, India, Sri Lanka, Thailand and the 2005 earthquake in Pakistan.

Engagement with international mechanisms

APWLD continued to maintain and strengthen its relationship with the UN Special Procedures mechanism, through organising consultations. During this period, APWLD organised annual consultations with the UNSRVAW, the UN Special Representative of the Secretary General on Human rights Defenders, UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing (UNSRRAH), the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights of Migrants (UNSRHRM) and UNSR on Extra-Judicial and Summary Executions.

APWLD continued to participate at the CSW, UNCHR and other regional and international fora to

³⁴ This became a formal coalition in 2008 known as The Women Human Rights Defenders International Coalition (WHRDIC)

³⁵ APWLD Annual Report 2009. (p. 30).

advocate for the women's issues from the region at the global level. At UN CSW 43 in 1999, APWLD joined other women's groups in lobbying the delegates of the member states to adopt the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (OP-CEDAW). At the 57th Session of the UNCHR in 2001, APWLD delegation brought international attention to the issues of violence against women during war and in armed conflict, such as the case of Japanese military slavery during WWII, the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal, and the situation of women in the armed conflict in Burma. APWLD's intense preparations for the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Intolerance (WCAR) in Durban resulted in the creation of a substantially more gender aware Durban Declaration and Programme of Action.

Combating Violence Against Women

The consultations with UNSRVAW organised by APWLD since 1995 provided an opportunity for collective engagement and analysis that encouraged the critiquing and reexamining of current strategies.³⁶ Following the recommendations from these consultations, APWLD began to develop a gendered understanding of fundamentalism and identity-based politics in the Asia Pacific region in 2002. In the same year, APWLD supported and facilitated the Shan Women's Action Network (SWAN) and the Shan Human Rights Foundation's release of the report License to Rape, which documents the Burmese military's campaign of terror against Shan women. APWLD also assisted in the lobbying of governments and United Nations representatives and agencies in conjunction with ALTSEAN-Burma, Forum Asia, and Friends without Borders. APWLD's support was crucial in raising awareness of the report's findings both regionally and internationally.



2002 SRVAW Consultation

APWLD published a guideline for feminist counselling for counsellors working with women victims and survivors of violence in 2003 which was developed based on the learnings from two workshops on feminist counselling held in 1998 (Korea) and 1999 (Bali). In the same year, APWLD also launched a publication on guidelines for engaging with the UNSRVAW stock taking on the benefits and challenges of the consultations held over the previous eight years.

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³⁶ APWLD (2003). Standpoint Viewpoint Guidelines for Regional Consultations with the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women

Capacity building through training

Due to its earlier success, APWLD continued to deliver its flagship training on Feminist Legal Theory and Practice (FLTP) on national, sub-regional, and regional levels. Pole Atanroi from the Attorney General's Department in Kiribati attended the 1998 FLTP training in Fiji, who subsequently challenged the corroboration practice in rape before the Kiribati high Court on 6 August 1998. In the later years of the period, APWLD focused on conducting FLTP trainers training at the regional level with an aim to expand APWLD's FLTP resource pool of trainers.

In 1998, APWLD also co-convened a human rights documentation training on VAW for Women's NGOs with HURIDOCS and Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW) in Manila. In 2000, APWLD co-organised a regional workshop in Chiang Mai to build capacity of migrant workers in monitoring violations and accessing remedies with the Canadian Human Rights Foundation, the Asian Migrant Centre, and the Ateneo Human Rights Center.

In 2003, APWLD launched a pilot training workshop on Gender and Politics for women political leaders in Sri Lanka, which later was replicated in other countries. 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.

In 2006, APWLD piloted a training using the Women and Food Sovereignty Trainer's Kit in Indonesia, Philippines, Pakistan, India and Thailand focusing on theoretical framework on land rights and practical solutions on how to go about claiming land rights.

Celebration of 20th anniversary of APWLD

Toward the end of the second wave, APWLD celebrated the 20th anniversary of the WLD networks on the International Women Rights Defenders Day on 29 November 2007 in Bangkok. WHRDs and activists from WLD networks from Asia Pacific (APWLD), Africa (WILDAF) and the Caribbean and Latin America (CLADEM) came together in this forum to share stories of their experiences and struggle for human rights. The forum noted the growing political repression as governments in the Global South



20th Anniversary of WLD Networks, Bangkok Thailand, 2007

adopted repressive legislation and policies that impinge on civil liberties and affirmed the importance of a democratic system and the rule of law for the protection and promotion of human rights.³⁷

Institutional development

In 1997, the Steering Committee appointed one of its members Virada Somswasdi of Thailand as the interim Regional Coordinator to oversee the tedious task of relocating and setting up Chiang Mai Secretariat, and chose Noor Farida Ariffin of Malaysia to oversee the closure of the office in Kuala Lumpur.³⁸

Sachee Vilaithong was hired in the Chiang Mai office as the 'liaison officer' to help coordinate the setting up of the Thai Association consisting of six board members to prepare the legal documents to formalise APWLD's existence in Thailand. They were:

- President - Virada Somswasdi, Law Professor, Director of Women Studies Center, Chiang Mai University
- Vice-President - Krongkaew Asavachin, Senator
- Secretary - Nuttamon Kongcharoen, Law Lecturer, Chiang Mai University
- Registrar - Nittaya Wangpaiboon, Advocate
- Treasurer - Panomwan Yoodee, Director of Women Development Institute
- Receptionist - Sachee Volaitong, APWLD

The legal documents were prepared by advocate Nittaya Wangpaiboon and submitted to the Thai Government for final approval.

The Chiang Mai Secretariat officially began its operation on 1 October 1997 with two new staff working as accountant and administrative officers at the Y.M.C.A. Santitham Building. Finance Officer Mei Yun Leong and Administrative Officer Saira Shameem from the Kuala Lumpur office came to Chiang Mai office to hand over the financial and administrative system.³⁹ By the end of 1997 the Secretariat had five staff members.

After relocation of the Secretariat to Chiang Mai, the programme of activities could not be resumed immediately due to the requirement of re-establishing communication with network partners, and other administrative requirements.

The challenges of the new Secretariat in Chiang Mai, and the experience of overcoming them were later reminisced by Virada in the proceedings of the 20th Anniversary of APWLD in 2007:

'Challenges were on how to patch and clear a misunderstanding with network organisations that resulted from the postponed activities prior to and while relocating from Kuala Lumpur to Chiang Mai. It was also about how-to explain to funders and bring back trust and thrust of monitoring structure and guidelines to avoid any further mismanagement. Nonetheless, we were brave to go through and overcome challenges. Evidently, we did not only survive the turbulence but also stood high and flew far, with the guidance from the Steering Committee members whom I recollected vividly with their clear vision - the loud voice of Sultana Kamal

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³⁷ APWLD Annual Report 2007. (p. 47-48).

³⁸ Report on activities and setting up Chiang Mai Secretariat October-November 1997. Meeting kit of joint Steering Committee and Programme and Management Committee meeting on 29-30 November 1997.

³⁹ Forum News (1997, December). Editorial. Volume 10, Number 3-4.

of Bangladesh, Fatima Burnad whose passion and commitment centred around grassroots Dalit women, the dedicated Nandhini Samarasinghe of Sri Lanka and Nurgul Djanaeva whose passion is on women's participation in political processes.'

The following year, 1998 marked a period of network consolidation and expansion, both in terms of geographical coverage and membership outreach. APWLD worked on establishing contacts in Mekong region, Central Asia and in the Pacific and strengthened links with other regional and international organisations such as ISIS, IWRAW Asia Pacific, the Asian Women's Caucus and WLD networks in Africa (WILDAF), Latin America and the Caribbean (CLADEM).⁴⁰ The Office of National Commission on Culture in Bangkok, Thailand officially approved the registration of APWLD as an association in Thailand on 29 June 1998. In the same year, APWLD was granted consultative status in UN ECOSOC as an NGO.



2004 Regional Council meeting

In 1999, due to emerging issues relating to the impact of the degradation of environment in the region, APWLD decided to set up a sixth Task Force on Women and Environment with Virada as the Convener. Jennifer S. Thambayah of Sri Lanka joined as the Secretariat as Regional Coordinator in November 1999 as Virada's successor, who retired from her post in January 2000.⁴¹ Virada remained an active member through her engagement in APWLD's Task Forces, Programme and Management Committee and the Regional Council in the following years. In November 1999, APWLD launched its website www.apwld.org. In October 2000, Regional Coordinator Jennifer S. Thambayah resigned due to personal health reasons and Programme Officer Mary Jane N. Real, was appointed as the Acting Regional Coordinator, who was officially appointed as the Regional Coordinator effective 1 January 2001.

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⁴⁰ APWLD Annual Report 1997-1998. (p. 3).

⁴¹ Forum News (1999, December). Volume 2, Number 3.

APWLD underwent its second external evaluation in 2001 covering the period of 1997 to 2000, following which a strategic planning meeting took place at the beginning of 2002. One important outcome of this meeting was streamlining of programmes to establish the six programmes below:

- Violence against Women (VAW)
- Women's Human Rights (WHR)
- Labour & Migration (L&M)
- Women's Participation in Political Processes (WPPP)
- Women and Environment (WEN)
- Rural and Indigenous Women (RIW)

In light of the recommendations of APWLD's External Evaluation in 2001 and the concerns raised at the 2002 strategic planning meeting, the Regional Council decided to review and amend the 1997 APWLD Constitution to improve internal democracy and accountability in APWLD's structure and decision-making processes, and incorporate the new programme approach in 2003.⁴²

In 2004, the Regional Council was adopted as the main policy making body. The Steering Committee was dissolved and the Steering Committee members became part of the Regional Council. The new Regional Council decided to convene a General Assembly every three years where members would elect the Regional Council.

Followed by the Tsunami disaster in December 2004, the newly appointed Regional Coordinator, Titi Soentoro of Indonesia requested for a deferral for six months to continue her efforts in post-tsunami relief and rehabilitation in Aceh. Lynnsay Rongokea Francis from Cook Islands was appointed as an interim Regional Coordinator in the meantime. In 2005, APWLD underwent its third external evaluation covering the period of 2003 and 2005.

The evaluation described APWLD as '*...without doubt, the leading feminist network of organisations and individuals in the region*' and '*a very strong and dynamic regional network that outlines and takes on women's issues into its programmes. Even as APWLD works at the regional and international levels with various decision-making levels and personalities, APWLD is very grassroots oriented and its activities can be adjusted to the members' needs. The network is accessible to grassroots women and encourages them to learn about international issues that affect their lives.*'

The evaluation also noted that '*it takes up a large variety of issues and concerns of women from different backgrounds, political persuasions, and religious backgrounds. This diversity is a great strength but sometimes this diversity of concerns has been perceived as diffusing the cohesiveness of ideas.*'

The 2005 APWLD Annual Report noted in response that, '*Although running a big network organisation with members based in different countries is a challenge it was most admiring to see how in the face of disasters such as the Indian Ocean tsunami and the Kashmir earthquake APWLD members showed solidarity and responded with financial and programmatic assistance.*'

At the start of 2006, APWLD experienced serious financial constraints, as sufficient funds had not been secured for the year due to a transition period with changes of the Regional Coordinator and secretariat staff, and not having a fundraising strategy in place.⁴³ Lynnsay Rongokea Francis again joined

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⁴² APWLD Annual Report 2002. (p. 62).
⁴³ APWLD Annual Report 2006. Introduction.

as an interim Regional Coordinator who organised a donor roundtable to address the situation, and successfully secured funds for the period of 2006-2008.

In December 2007, the first General Assembly took place and a Strategic Plan for 2009-2011 was developed. The Regional Council set up a Fundraising Working Group to discuss APWLD's fundraising strategy for the 2009-2011 cycle and long-term sustainability. A Working Group on Expansion of APWLD Membership and the Membership Review Team was also formed to address the issue on the rationalisation of geographical focus and scope.⁴⁴ This Working Group recommended expanding the geographic outreach of APWLD's membership to the Pacific Islands (excluding Australia and New Zealand, which are developed countries based on the recommendation from members in the Pacific) and the Mekong region. A general rule was also adopted to maintain a ratio of individual and organisational membership to 30 to 70.

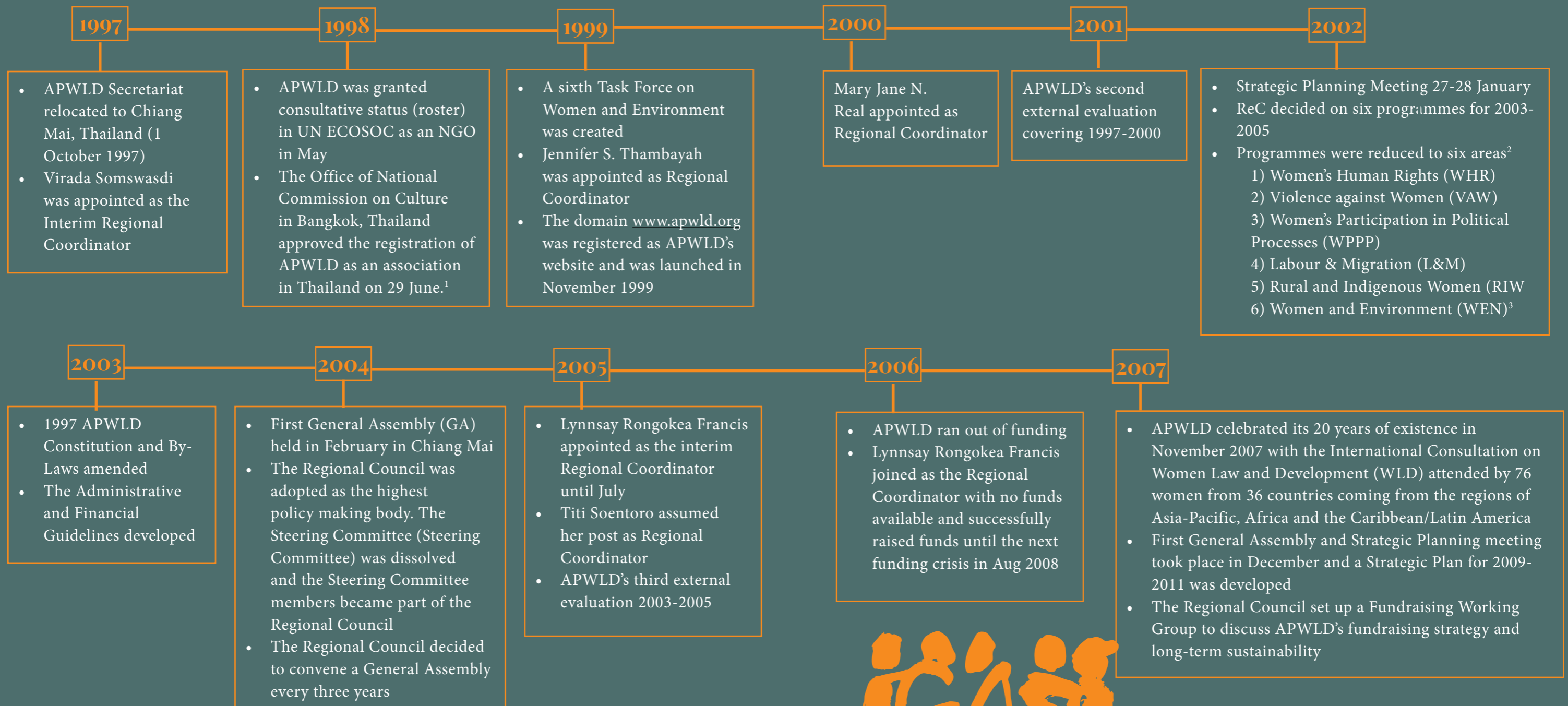
Towards the end of the second wave, with over 150 members in 23 countries, APWLD built its reputation as not only as a reliable voice of Asia Pacific women in its network, but also an important source of feminist critical thinking on women's human rights in the region.



APWLD Secretariat at the World Social Forum, Mumbai, India 2004

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⁴⁴ APWLD External Evaluation Report 2006-2008. (p.7).

The Second APWLD Wave: 1997-2007



1 APWLD Annual Report 1997-1998.
 2 Minutes of Strategic Planning Meeting January 2002.
 3 APWLD Annual Report 2003.

The Third APWLD Wave: 2008-2017

Adapting, transitioning and expanding women's movements

Overview and context: The era of authoritarian, patriarchal, late capitalism

In early 2008, the world faced a global financial crisis triggered by a proliferation of financial products linked to risky mortgage loans in the United States. The 2008 financial meltdown affected many countries simultaneously and led to a global economic crisis unseen since the Great Depression in 1929.⁴⁵ According to the US government's official report⁴⁶, the financial crisis was caused by a combination of historic deregulation of finance by politicians, and unnecessary risk-taking by greedy and incompetent bank executives. This crisis led to economists to question the dominant narrative that financial globalisation was beneficial for the growth of the global economy. Further studies revealed how the unprecedented interconnectedness of activities of global banks and financial markets also dispersed the risks around the world and created imbalances in capital flows between emerging countries and developed countries.⁴⁷

A decade after the 1997 Asian financial crisis, the region was once again faced with the prospect of another devastating crisis. This crisis also affected the donor-funding environment in the development sector. Donor countries reassessed the aid allocations and shifted funding priorities toward the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), to Africa from Asia, and to national organisations rather than regional organisations. In the meantime, APWLD structure was growing, and members were tenacious on their stance on globalisation, and were critical of the MDGs which found limiting as an accountability mechanism. A combination of these internal and external issues made it difficult for the Regional Coordinator to raise funds. By November 2008, APWLD ran out of sufficient funding to run the Secretariat.⁴⁸ APWLD had to undergo a major restructuring of its governance in the following year for minimising costs to sustain the organisation. The transition process is detailed under the Institutional Development section later.

In the following years, many feminist organisations struggled to secure funds to continue their rights based work. APWLD members experienced threats, harassment and prosecution because of their women's rights activism. However, at the same time social movements prospered and grew across the region, and women were at the forefront in many. For example, the Malaysian movement for free and fair elections or 'BERSIH 2.0' (2011) was very much sustained by women's rights activists and organisations who see the link between a transparent and inclusive democratic processes and the enjoyment of women's rights.⁴⁹

ASEAN regional integration continued its rapid expansion during this phase. In 2009, the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) was established with representatives appointed, and the terms of references (ToR) for the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) was finalised. However, in 2012 the long waited ASEAN Human Rights Declaration included clauses allowing for limitations of rights, thus backsliding on international standards.

45 Huwart, Jean-Yves and Loic Verdier (2013). "The 2008 financial crisis – A crisis of globalisation?", in *Economic Globalisation: Origins and consequences*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

46 Dominic Rushe (2011, January 26). Financial crisis was caused by corporate mismanagement, says US government. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2011/jan/26/financial-crisis-us-commission>

47 Joel Havemann (2009). The Financial Crisis of 2008. Retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Financial-Crisis-of-2008-The-1484264>

48 Based on meeting notes from Regional Council Plus meeting held on 18-19 May 2009 in Chiang Mai, Thailand

49 APWLD Annual Report 2011. Reflections on 2011 by APWLD Regional Coordinator.

Consequences of the neoliberal development model focused on economic growth in the region became glaringly obvious. The year 2013 saw the devastating Rana Plaza collapse in Bangladesh killing over 1,100 workers, and forced evictions and arrests of grassroots women leaders in Cambodia.

As the era of the MDGs ended in 2015, the global recognition of deepening inequalities of wealth, resources and power grew. The world leaders adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for the 2030 Agenda promising much more than the MDGs. 2015 was also the 20th anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) where governments were invited to renew their commitments for establishing gender equality. The Financing for Development agenda was revisited in Addis Ababa and governments agreed to keep global warming below 2°C in Paris. Despite the advances made in these global frameworks, both the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement combat climate change less than ideal, negotiated results. As globalisation intensified, the civil society also noted increasing signs of fragility of the UN's influence and effectiveness in this wave. There was growing influence of the international financial institutions and the private sector on the governance of the UN, as well as erosion of political space for civil society to participate in the UN as an equal partner of the member states. Despite these challenges, APWLD acknowledged that the UN provided the opportunity for civil society to engage governments and build new alliances around shared demands, and continued its activism to reforming, refocusing and strengthening this global governance.

Towards the end of the third wave, the region continued to witness the growth of authoritarian governments promoting neoliberal patriarchal order across the region, while restricting freedom of the press, freedom of association and participatory democracy. Although the broader environment for women's human rights is not improving, the women of APWLD stand strong together to hold their ground to advance women's human rights, and build a feminist future in the region, and globally.

Key programme priorities and impacts

Following the fundraising challenges in 2008, APWLD worked to take a close look at its strength and restructure its programmes for maximum impact with governance minimal costs. As a result, APWLD programmes were modified at the beginning of 2009 in the themes of strengthened knowledge, strengthened voice, strengthened participation and a stronger institution.

Deepening analysis on the nexus of patriarchy with globalisation, fundamentalisms and militarism and women's human rights

In recognition of the 60th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), APWLD held a joined consultation with members of Women Human Rights Working Group (WHR-WG), the Task Forces (TFs) and Regional Council in an attempt to create synergies between and across APWLD's programmes. Discussions arising from this consultation initiated APWLD's analysis on the joint impacts of neo-liberal globalisation, fundamentalisms, militarism, and climate change on women's human rights. During this wave, APWLD deepened its feminist analysis on how the nexus of patriarchy with militarism, fundamentalisms and neo-liberal economic globalisation is responsible for gross violations of women's human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Producing the Feminist Legal Theory and Practice (FLTP) Training of Trainers (ToT)

Between 1998 and 2009 more than 500 women lawyers, social activists, academics, grassroots organisers and human rights defenders have shaped and participated in APWLD's long standing FLTP training. In 2008, APWLD published a Training Resource Manual and Reader on FLTP outlining how litigation, law drafting and legal literacy can enable women to make systematic transformations in their communities

and lives. One such example would be when for the first time CEDAW was determined to have force of law in Malaysia. When a woman was denied employment as a temporary relief teacher by district education office because she was pregnant, APWLD member and FTLP trainer Honey Tan represented her in a suit which sought definition of 'gender discrimination', since a definition had yet to be adopted by the Malaysian judiciary, nor had CEDAW been applied for this purpose.

Strengthening support to Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs)

The International Coordinating Committee (ICC) formed in 2004 to organise international consultations concerning WHRDs became a formal coalition in 2008 known as the Women Human Rights Defenders International Coalition (WHRD-IC) comprising of 35 organisations⁵⁰ that support and protect WHRDs worldwide. In 2010, APWLD held its first workshop with Chinese WHRDs, and supported a large gathering of rural women in Tamil Nadu, India. APWLD also took part in a trial observation mission in Fiji which contributed to dropping charges against an APWLD member.

Influencing regional and international human rights mechanisms and normative standards

During this wave APWLD made coordinated efforts to amplify diverse women's voices at key regional and global decision making processes such as CSW, Rio+20 – UN Conference on Sustainable Development, UN Conference on Aid Effectiveness, UN HRC, UNFCCC, consultation with UN SRs.

In 2011, APWLD's input into the HRC Resolution A/HRC/17/L.6., 'Accelerating efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women: ensuring due diligence in protection', was included in the final text adopted by the Council in June 2011. APWLD's submission particularly addressed regional efforts in eliminating violence against women (VAW) in Southeast Asia. APWLD also played an active role to inform the drafting process of the General Recommendations of the HRC on the right to sexual and reproductive health⁵¹ to ensure the concerns and voices of Asia Pacific women are integrated.

In the same year APWLD member and nominee Kamala Chandrakirana of Indonesia was elected Chair to the UN Working Group on the issue of discrimination on against women in law and in practice.

'APWLD is the one to congratulate on this! The whole nomination has been APWLD's work and the final list speaks of its leadership and effectiveness. As for me, I will do my best to fulfill the mandate of the position and the trust of those who supported my nomination.' - Kamala Chandrakirana, UN Working Group on the issue of discrimination on against women in law and in practice, 2011

APWLD as co-facilitator of the United for Foreign Domestic Worker Rights (UFDWR) coalition, which was formed in 2007, has been lobbying for recognition and protection of domestic workers' rights. In 2010, the ILO produced a draft Convention and Recommendation on decent work for domestic workers, which was supported by a majority of governments. APWLD took the first campaigning steps to shift the positions of the governments not supportive of the convention namely Malaysia, Indonesia, India and Bangladesh. Late in 2010, India unofficially changed its position, potentially signaling a regional shift leading Bangladesh to do the same. The ILO Convention on domestic workers (C189) was adopted in June 2011. Strong domestic worker advocacy also resulted in the adoption of a 'General Comment' on domestic workers by the UN Committee on Migrant Workers which included the rights to organise and to collective bargaining as well as including comments specific to undocumented domestic workers and recognition of gender as key consideration in the protection and promotion of migrant workers' rights. In 2012, APWLD started campaigning for a new development agenda addressing the structural causes

⁵⁰ As of 2018
⁵¹ Of CEDAW and the CESC

of inequality and fulfil promises to secure women's rights. During the 2012 Rio Earth Summit, governments agreed to develop Sustainable Development Goals and the process merged with the post-2015 agenda to replace the Millennium Development Goals in 2015. APWLD's campaign prioritised four key demands which were shaped at the 2012 Rio Earth Summit which were framed as 'Development Justice' in 2013:

- Access to and Control over Land and Resources
- Decent Work and a Living Wage
- Peace at home, in the community and internationally
- Voice – making decisions over our own lives, at home, in the community and internationally



APWLD members and the Secretariat actively engaged in shaping the post-2015 agenda through advocacy, mobilising, analysis and movement building, such as at the UN, lobbying governments, organising a People's General Assembly, and formation of new civil society networks.

In 2014, several APWLD members were selected to speak at various UN meetings on the Sustainable Development agenda. APWLD was successful in shaping elements of the UN regional ministerial declaration on Gender Equality in the regional preparatory meeting for the Beijing +20 review. Through its FPAR programme, APWLD supported rural, indigenous, migrant and urban poor women in building their capacity to address issues of climate change in their communities, and engage in the regional and international climate change talks to demand Climate Justice. For example, Alina Saba, as a young researcher conducting FPAR with Mugal indigenous women of Nepal was selected out of hundreds of applicants as a panel member for 'Voices from Climate Frontlines' at the UN Climate Summit in New York in September 2014. She was also nominated to be on a panel on the Gender Day at the 20th Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP20) in Lima in December 2014 where her voice was heard by many to bring forward the plight of the Mugal Indigenous women in adapting to climate change. In 2016, APWLD launched a concept 'Feminist Fossil Fuel Free Future' calling for alternative development model to ensure new, gender-just, economic, political and social relationships in a world free from climate change.

At the CSW in 2017, APWLD contributed to governments recognising the link between trade union density and gender equality. For the first time governments recognised that the commitment to a ‘just transition’ articulated in the Paris Agreement should be developed in a way that advances women’s human rights, which made its way into the UNFCCC Gender Action Plan.

Founding of the South East Asia Women’s Caucus on ASEAN

In September 2008, APWLD and IRAW-AP as co-conveners founded a Southeast Asia Women’s Caucus on ASEAN (WC). The Women’s Caucus aimed to build the capacity and movements of women’s rights organisations in Southeast Asia to influence ASEAN and ensure women’s human rights concerns are fully integrated into the body’s structures, policies and processes, including ASEAN Human Rights Body (AHRB). APWLD facilitated important strategy meetings of the Women’s Caucus and was at the forefront of high-level meetings with senior ASEAN politicians and bureaucrats influencing the terms of reference of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) and the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) in an effort to make the bodies more effective for women. During this period, the work of the WC transformed the ASEAN People’s Forum, a conference organised by ASEAN civil society, to include a much stronger focus on women’s rights, women’s leadership and gained widespread recognition as the platform for women’s rights advocacy to ASEAN.

Asia Pacific Feminist Forum (APFF)

The concept of APFF was born in 2009, when a number of APWLD members decided to create a space for feminists from the Asia Pacific region to come together and share, strategise, learn, mobilise and enjoy each other’s solidarity. It was strategically decided to be held back-to-back with APWLD’s General Assembly to ensure the strategic thinking and recommendations from the Forum inform APWLD’s multi-year planning as well as for maximising the presence of the number of APWLD members.

The 1st APFF themed ‘This is What Feminism Looks Like’ was held in December 2011 at the same time with APWLD’s 25th anniversary celebration gathering 130 women activists from the region. It was an occasion to celebrate APWLD’s collective achievements, reflect on challenges and political climates, deepen feminist knowledge and analysis, strengthen sisterhood, solidarity and collaboration, and reaffirm APWLD’s resolve to advance women’s rights. This space provided an opportunity to women with disabilities to create a new network, and young women activists to take new skills and ideas to put into action at home.

‘This space is important as we look at global political and social movements and their implications for women across the world. It’s important as a space to collectively identify the challenges to our movement and strategise to address them. It’s important as a space to nurture young feminists and the women’s movement struggling in countries where repression of WHRDs is common.’ – Kate Lappin, APWLD Regional Coordinator, 2011⁵²

The 2nd APFF themed ‘Creating Waves, Fostering Movements’ was held in May 2014 and gathered over 300 delegates across the five sub-regions. APFF 2014 included art-activism-performances, workshops, as well as a strategy plenary on the final day. The event generated media coverage of specific issues, such as the participation of Burmese women campaigning against an interfaith marriage bill, the challenges for achieving gender justice and the escalating campaign for Development Justice.⁵³ The idea of creating a Pacific Feminist Forum was conceived in the 2nd APFF.

52 Source: Asia Pacific Feminists Gather to Share, Strategize, Learn and Mobilize, 22 December 2011. <https://www.awid.org/news-and-analysis/asia-pacific-feminists-gather-share-strategize-learn-and-mobilize>

53 Forum News (2014, June to October). Volume 27, Number 1.

The 3rd APFF themed ‘ReSisters, PerSisters, Sisters - Mobilising in the era of authoritarian, patriarchal, late capitalism’ was held in September 2017 which brought together 320 APWLD members and allies from 43 countries to strengthen APWLD’s movements, solidarity and resolve to dismantle economic, social and political systems that produce obscene levels of inequality, drive climate change and necessitate violations of women’s human rights.



3rd Asia Pacific Feminist Forum, Chiang Mai, Thailand 2017

Adoption of Feminist Participatory Action Research (FPAR) for structural change

A major innovation during this period was the introduction and adoption of the Feminist Participatory Action Research or FPAR framework. In 2010, APWLD introduced its first community led participatory research initiative on climate change to Rural, Indigenous and Migrant women. The training modules for this initiative were developed combining materials from FLTP training, existing human rights documentation training, campaigning tools adapted from The Change Agency, and new methods developed by APWLD. This later became APWLD’s flagship framework for evidence based advocacy namely, Feminist Participatory Action Research (FPAR). The FPAR framework was developed from APWLD’s deeply held belief that all knowledge is political, and that local feminist movements must author their own knowledge and utilise it to bring about the changes they determine. The 2015 mid-term evaluation called APWLD’s FPAR approach ‘impressive’ and found that it ‘allows local women to ‘own’ their own research agendas as well as solutions, and it firmly galvanises social movements based on changes that marginalised women across the region identify’. Based on the recommendations from the evaluation, APWLD expanded the FPAR programme across other APWLD programmes and new themes. Between 2012 and 2018, APWLD launched six rounds of FPAR, each round consisting of eight to twelve partner organisations, working with 60 communities across 18 countries.

Organising CSOs and framing an alternative development model: Development Justice

As early as the 2005, the APWLD external evaluation noted that while APWLD has come up with grounded analyses and critiques of issues affecting women, there was an absence of alternative development strategies. In 2013, APWLD along with civil society groups representing 92 organisations from 21 countries and representing various major groups and stakeholders collectively developed a series of key demands for lobbying in the post-2015 process – which was framed as ‘Development Justice’.⁵⁴ Grounded

54 Bangkok Civil Society Declaration: From Inclusive to Just Development (2013). Retrieved from: <http://apwld.org/bangkok-civil-society-declaration-from-inclusive-to-just-development/>

in five transformational shifts, 'Development Justice' is a transformative development architecture that aims to reduce inequalities of wealth, power, and resources between countries, between rich and poor, and between men and women. This new development framework seeks to build upon the Rio principles (1992) and other international agreements in the area of development and human rights, including the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (1994) and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995), among others. Further, this framework is based on the principles of common but differentiated responsibility and respective capacity and the right to development; embraces a holistic rights-based approach; is grounded in international human rights obligations and peoples' sovereignty; and ensures that the human rights principles of equality, equity, non-discrimination, inclusive participation and decision-making, non-retrogression, and respect for universal and indivisible human rights underpin its policies and practices. Such an approach ensures that the most marginalised both benefit from development and become active agents of change.⁵⁵



In its evolution, Development Justice became the framework for political unity of the Asia Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism (AP-RCEM), an Asia and Pacific CSO platform with 620 members from 17 constituencies and five subregions, which derived from engagement experiences in processes leading up to the 2012 Rio+20 conference on sustainable development. AP-RCEM organises civil society across the region under this platform and shapes a coherent civil society voice, underpinned by the political commitment to Development Justice, which is the basis of AP-RCEM's political unity. AP-RCEM continues engage on development with the regional commission for Asia Pacific, or the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia Pacific (UNESCAP), and is the first such recognised civil society platform. Due to its success in the Asia Pacific region, civil society in Latin America and in Europe are replicating the model to engage with their own regional processes and connect together at the global ones.⁵⁶

To advance the collective political agenda around this concept of an alternative development model at UN meetings, APWLD hosted the Asia Pacific CSO Forum on Sustainable Development prior to the UNESCAP Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD), and also organised the Ground

⁵⁵ AP-RCEM (2014). *Advancing People's Agenda for Development Justice*, here: http://www.asiapacificrcem.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/FSD_Outcome_CivSociety.pdf

⁵⁶ APWLD (2019). *Right to Development - Case Studies from Asia Pacific*.

Level Political Forum (GLPF) to challenge the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) in New York which had been increasingly limiting the voice of civil society, despite the recognition that CSOs are important partners in development.

Building movement against harmful trade agreements

Building up on the movement against WTO during the second wave, APWLD strengthened its feminist analysis on the detrimental impacts of trade agreements on women's human rights in the region, which was translated and used to build people's movement against the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) beyond the region. The 2015 Mid-Term Evaluation recognised that 'APWLD is one of the only women's rights groups globally analysing the gendered implications of trade, finance and investment rules'⁵⁷. Out of movement against the TPP emerged a new APWLD programme 'Women Interrogating Trade and Corporate Hegemony' or WITCH in 2016 which has been focusing on organising against new generation of mega Foreign Trade Agreements (FTAs) such as the Regional Economic Comprehensive Partnership (RCEP). APWLD's work in this area shifted the perspective of governments to recognise the potentially adverse relationship between neoliberal trade and women's human rights. A number of governments decided to include gender equality, culture (to address IPs rights), and labour chapters in their trade agreements.

Despite the accomplishments described above, women's economic, social and cultural rights in the region remained threatened under the entrenchment of neoliberal economic globalisation. But at the same time, APWLD's commitment to build autonomous feminist movements to advance women's human rights in the Asia Pacific Region also remained strong.

Institutional development

The Working Group on Fundraising that was set up at the end of the second wave was dissolved in April 2008 based on the Regional Coordinator's suggestion, who informed the Regional Council that she was confident in securing funding. However, due to both internal external challenges, APWLD faced with critical financial emergency by the next P&M meeting in August 2008. Donor funds had dried up after the 2008 global financial crisis, and donors were changing funding priorities with a focus on MDGs. On the other hand, APWLD members remained highly critical of the neoliberal development model and the limitation of the MDGs in addressing women's human rights in the region. Donors had also expressed concern about APWLD's large governance structure. By November 2008, APWLD ran out of funding to pay salaries and to pay rent and bills. However, two of the programmes, Women's Human Rights and Women's Participation in Political Processes still had some funding, for which the work continued. Azra Talat Syeed of Pakistan and Tita Elisa Lubi of Philippines, both P&M members during the period, were appointed as the interim Regional Coordinators until a new Regional Coordinator was appointed.

In May 2009, a crucial ReC Plus meeting was held with 12 members⁵⁸ to discuss response to the financial challenge, possible structural changes in light of the 2008 external evaluation recommendations, and strategies to keep the network alive with less resources.

While there were suggestions to do away with the General Assembly as part of the cost-cutting, the meeting decided to retain the governance structure but to organise a 'convention' of feminists and women activists in the Asia Pacific including those who are not members of APWLD at around the time of holding the General Assembly. Such a convention would open spaces to discussing cutting edge issues

⁵⁷ APWLD Annual Report 2015. (pp.16)

⁵⁸ Participants included members of the Regional Council, six representatives from the five Task Forces and one Working Group and a representative of the Thai Association

in the women's movements in the region, bring together diverse groups and individuals interested in advancing women's causes and demands and further energise the reach and focus of APWLD.⁵⁹ The most contentious debate during this meeting was the proposal to dissolve the Task Forces/Working Group which have been the key mechanism for involving APWLD members in the work of APWLD through various concerns and advocacies. The proposal was based on the following arguments⁶⁰:

- Task Forces have operated for past 13 years and have served their purpose;
- Task Forces are too institutionalised, bureaucratic, it is not dynamic or flexible enough;
- Task Forces have operational problems: uneven delivery of outputs (some members are active, and some are not active), internal problems; and
- High financial cost of operation.

Eventually, after debates and discussions of pros and cons, the meeting agreed to dissolve the Task Forces/Working Group and in their place focus on APWLD niche, and create programmes identified as most relevant for the women's movements to be implemented through a 'Programme Organising Committee' or POC structure. Instead of Task Force conveners and members, focal persons and members of the POCs comprise the implementing arm of the programmes. Activity Organising Committees or AOCs for specific activities can also be created and can involve not only members but also non-members of APWLD which then serve as an introduction to the organisation.⁶¹

Thus, four programmes were created based on APWLD's niche areas:

- Breaking out of Marginalisation – to increase activism and advocacy of rural and indigenous women around the impacts of development projects
- Feminist Law and Practice – to continue to deliver and grow the FLTP training programme
- Grounding the Global – to continue engaging with UN SRs, ASEAN and the SEA Women's Caucus
- Women in Power – to increase women's participation in politics

In October 2009, Kate Lappin of Australia was appointed as the Regional Coordinator who successfully raised and secured funds for the subsequent years. By the end of 2010, the APWLD Secretariat grew from eight to 16 staff.

In 2011, APWLD trialed and adopted an M&E framework based on feminist principles developed earlier with an aim to document the impacts of APWLD's programmes. This became APWLD's groundbreaking M&E framework 'APWLD Theory of Change' which encapsulates the key elements in creating and sustaining a strong feminist movement, while promoting a culture of solidarity and accountability. These elements or the 'Four Domains of Change' are: strong capacities; production of new knowledge, tools and resources; engaging in advocacy spaces and opportunities; and strengthening alliances, coalitions, and networks.

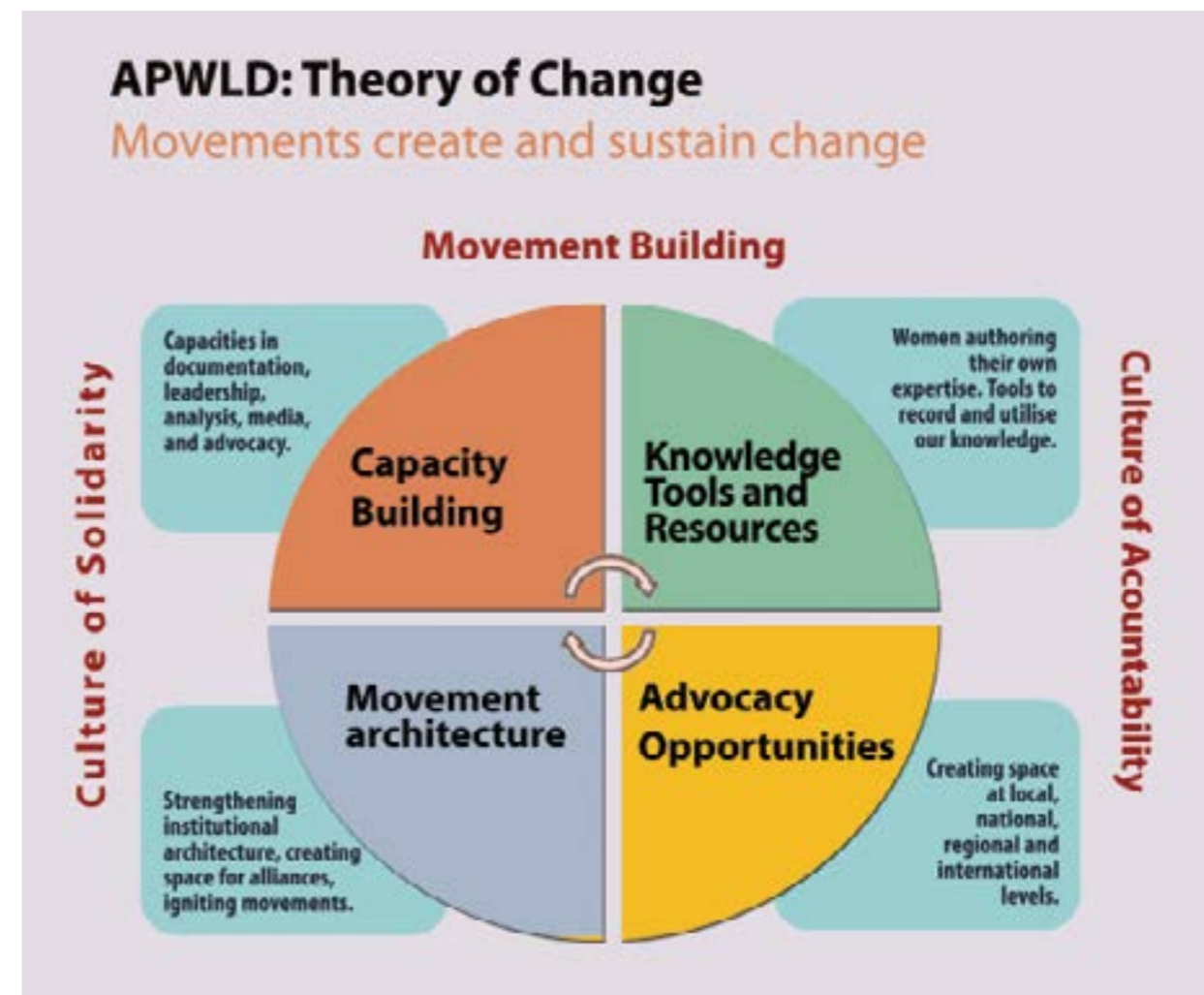
At the end of 2012, APWLD underwent another external evaluation assessing the impact of APWLD's work for the period of 2010 to 2012. The evaluators concluded that APWLD

'...is undoubtedly the region's leading network of feminist organisations in the Asia Pacific and currently sits at the cross-roads of many historical changes both in Asia Pacific and internationally, when it comes to issues that are meaningful to today's women's movement.'

⁵⁹ This convention would become the Asia Pacific Feminist Forum or APFF.

⁶⁰ Minutes of the Regional Council Plus Meeting, May 18-19, 2009, Chiang Mai, Thailand.

⁶¹ The guidelines for POC/AOC formation as APWLD programme structure is detailed in Chapter Two of this document.



Source: APWLD Annual Report 2011

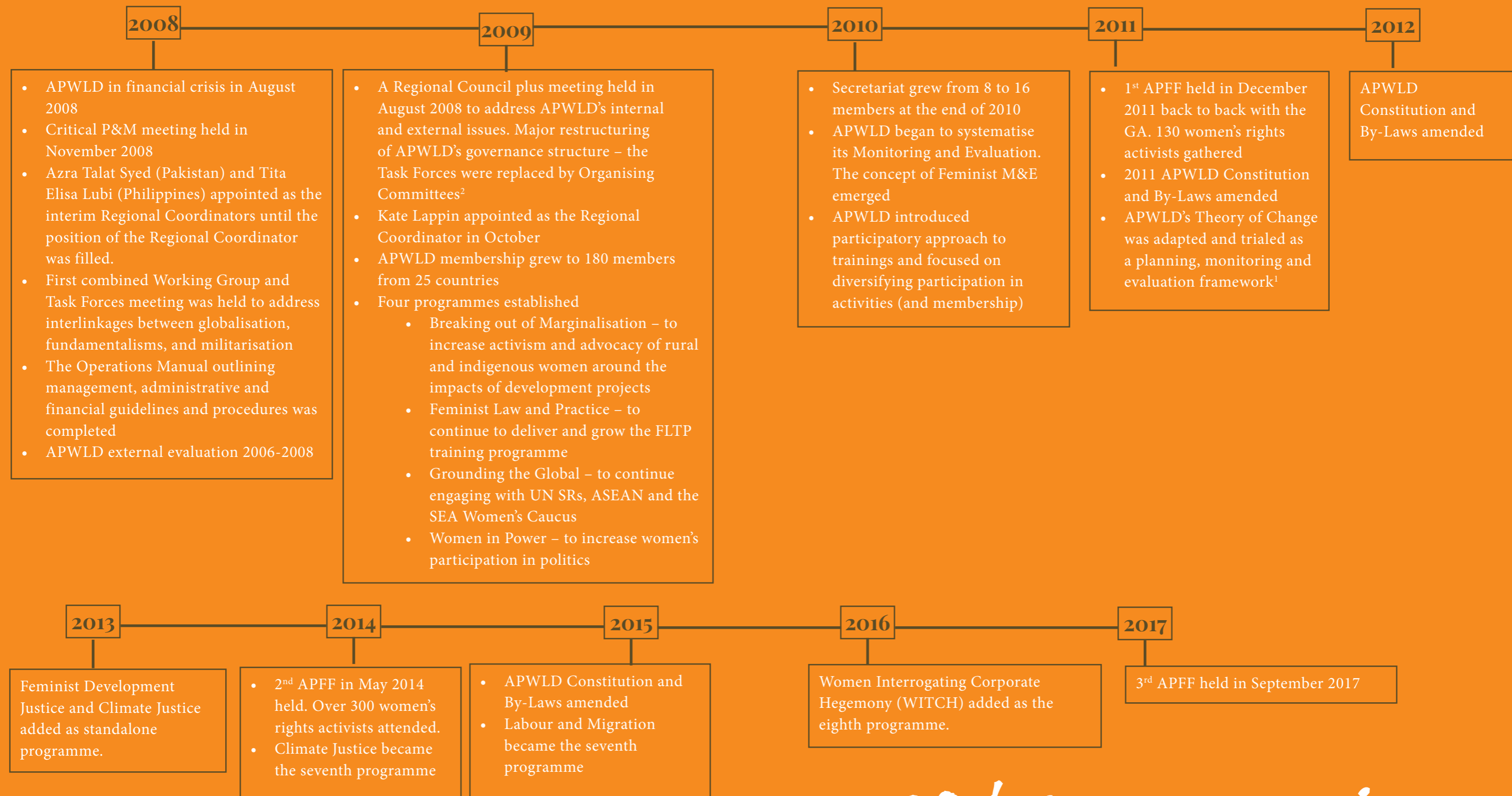
In 2013 APWLD embarked on a new five year plan with expanding to six Programmes with the addition of Feminist Development Justice and Climate Justice programmes and increasing secretariat staff to 21. In 2015, Labour & Migration became a standalone programme and in 2016 Women Interrogating Trade and Corporate Hegemony was added a new sub-programme to continue APWLD's work on trade and investment agreement, expanding APWLD programmes to total eight programmes.

In 2017, APWLD faced challenges regarding continuing its operation in Thailand. The organisation faced challenges in sustaining its registration in Thailand, and the expatriate staff faced visa challenges as the military regime in Thailand took increasingly restrictive measures for human rights organisations in the country.

Despite the existential threats, APWLD was able to thrive toward the end of the third APWLD wave. APWLD not only successfully secured registration in Thailand as well as completed its second registration in Malaysia with a small satellite office in operation.

In 2017, just over 30 years after its founding, APWLD stood as the leading feminist network of the region, and the most dynamic of the WLD networks formed after the Nairobi Conference in 1985. Active in 27 countries in Asia Pacific, APWLD had in its third decade doubled its staff, quadrupled its membership and budget, and most importantly built strong relationships between women of diverse identities across the region.

The Third APWLD Wave: 2008-2017



1 APWLD Annual Report 2003.
2 Organogram in APWLD Annual Report 2009



Evolution of APWLD's Orientation and Structure



Roles of bodies of APWLD's institutional structure

Founding Members – The participants of the December 1986 regional meeting in Tagaytay, Philippines, who made the decision to establish the Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development. 38 founding members were listed in Appendix II of 'The Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development: Its Origins, Issues and Vision' jointly published by APWLD and OEF in 1990.

Steering Committee – The first Steering Committee was elected at the 1986 regional meeting in Tagaytay with the mandate to oversee the development of the APWLD Secretariat and programme by reviewing accomplishments, setting policies and deciding on priorities. It was dissolved and merged with the Regional Council in 2003.

Malaysian Board of Directors – The Malaysian Board of Directors was set up in 1987 to assist in legitimising APWLD's presence in Malaysia. APWLD came into legal existence as a non-stock, non-profit company registered under the Malaysian Companies Act on 9th January 1988. The role of the Malaysian Board of Directors was to ensure the Secretariat's compliance with Malaysian laws. The Board was dissolved when the APWLD Secretariat relocated to Chiang Mai in 1997.

Programme and Management Committee (P&M) – The P&M oversees policy and programme implementation, guides and monitors the operation of the APWLD Staff and is responsible for recruitment of staff and fulfilling local legal requirements. The P&M and the position of the Regional Coordinator was created in 1988.

Task Forces – The Task Forces were created in 1991 as key mechanisms to look into themes/issues and formulate recommendations for acting along different APWLD programme components (i.e. research, training, policy recommendations, advocacy, publications etc.) and simultaneously strengthening of ongoing initiatives undertaken by partner organisations.¹

Regional Council (ReC) – The ReC is responsible for policy formulation, programme development, and institutional changes including restructuring of the organisation and constitutional changes. The ReC was created in 1991.

APWLD Secretariat – APWLD Secretariat is headed by the Regional Coordinator, and supported by programme and administrative staff to carry out programme implementation and other activities.

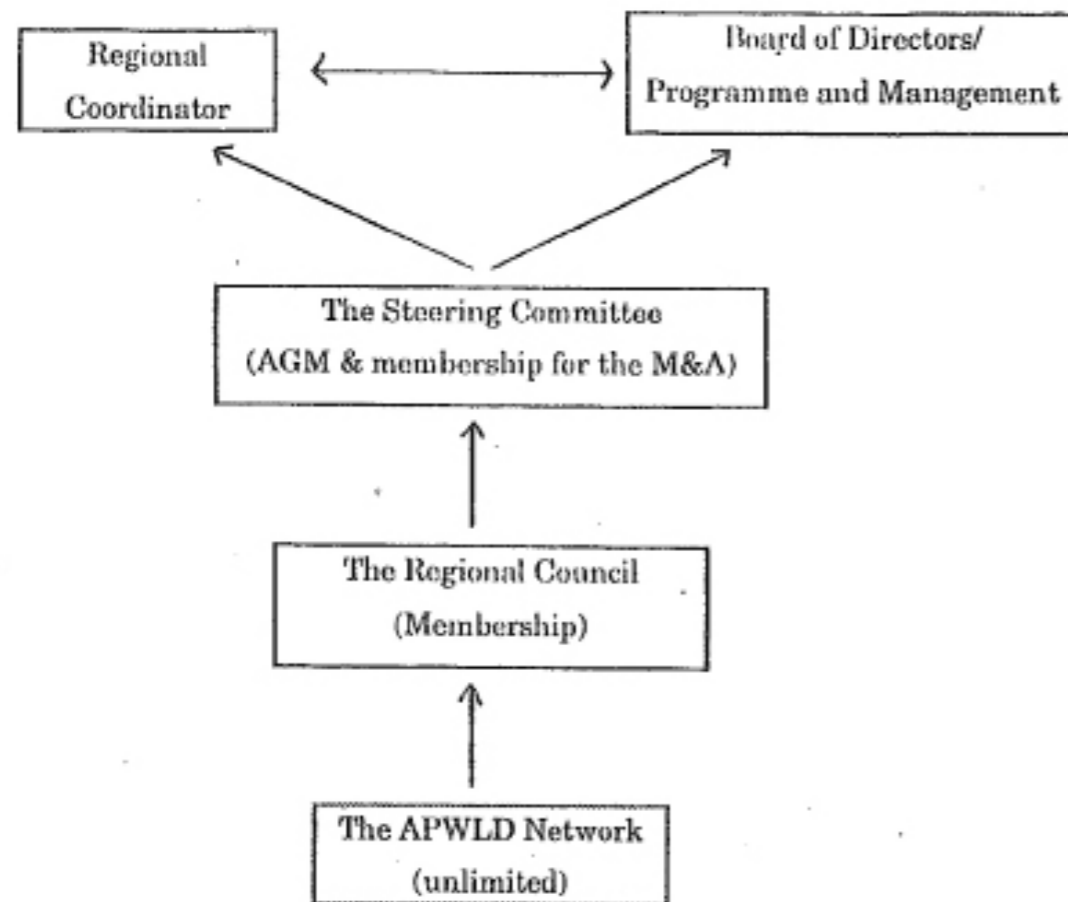
The Thai Association – The Thai Association was set up in 1997 consisting of six board members to prepare the legal documents to formalise APWLD's existence in Thailand. The Office of National Commission on Culture in Bangkok, Thailand officially approved the registration of APWLD as an association in Thailand on 29 June 1998.

Introduction

The task of preparing the first draft of APWLD's constitution was assigned to APWLD Founding Member and First Steering Committee member Rani Jethmalani of India at a meeting in 1988.

In 1993, the Steering Committee adopted the first constitution of APWLD.

In 1995, APWLD underwent its first external evaluation covering the period of 1989 to 1995. The report evaluated that the two-dimensional diagram of its institutional framework under the 1993 constitution failed to capture the organisation dynamics that had developed within APWLD.¹ In 1996, the Regional Council decided to review and amend the 1993 Constitution to clarify membership, decision-making authority and line of responsibility, which was adopted at the July 1997 Regional Council meeting.²



But the two-dimensional diagram fails to capture the organisational dynamics that have developed within APWLD.

Source: APWLD External Evaluation Report 1989 – 1995

The following description of the evolution of APWLD's orientation and structure is primarily based on a comparative review of the 1993³ 1997, 2003, 2011 and 2015 Constitutions. The current programme structure description is based on the document 'OC Selection Process' adopted by the Regional Council in its May 27-28, 2014 meeting.

1 APWLD External Evaluation Report 1989-1995. (p. 21).

2 Forum News (1996, December). Volume 9, Number 4.

3 A comparison of the 1993 and 1997 constitution was found inside the contents of a Steering Committee meeting kit held on 23 July 1997 at the Heritage Station Hotel in Kuala Lumpur.

APWLD's orientation

The 1993 Constitution did not include a preamble, which was added to the 1997 version. The Preamble of the APWLD Constitution states the premise for the establishment of the organisation and the principles guiding it. From the 1997 Constitution to the 2003, 2011 and 2015, all versions realise 'that the concept of law is not limited to legislation but includes the legal system and customary practices, which do not always dispense justice' and emphasise 'that law can only become an agent of change where it is instrumental in providing social and economic justice, in consonance with the internationally accepted standards of human rights'.



APWLD Strategic Planning Meeting 2002

From its founding, 'the women of the APWLD commit us to use law as an instrument of social change for equality, justice, peace and development'. This formulation would be refined into 'commit ourselves to promote women's human rights and use law as an instrument of social transformation for equality, justice, peace and development....' in the 2003, 2011 and 2015 Constitution stressing the adoption of women's rights as human rights approach by APWLD.

All versions of the Constitution recognise 'that women have been historically oppressed through economic, political, cultural and religious structures and traditions which have shaped patriarchal values and structures'.

The decision to include the language of feminism was made by the Regional Council in 2015:

- In its Preamble: Affirming that feminist and women's movements are drivers of genuine and lasting social transformation and justice and are enriched by their diverse social, economic, political and cultural struggles and experiences.
- In its Purpose of the Organisation: To strengthen, women's rights movements and feminist activism across the Asia Pacific region.
- In its the Goals of the Organisation: To develop a network and strengthen feminist movements and the capacity of organisations, groups, and individuals committed to the pursuit of APWLD's purpose and goals.

Membership

The 1993 Constitution did not include a category of charter members. From 1997 onward, membership through the years has been of three types: founding members, organisations and individuals who share APWLD's purpose and vision. Later amendments would introduce refinements on these categories. Founding members are considered members if they 'continue to adhere to APWLD's purpose and goals and are actively involved in the women's movement and/or APWLD activities'. Individual and organisational membership require not merely adherence to APWLD's goals and vision but also involvement in APWLD's activities, and a process of application and acceptance.

In terms of geographic scope, APWLD covers the Asia-Pacific region comprised of South Asia, Southeast Asia, East Asia, Central Asia and the Pacific. In 2007, based on the recommendations of members from the Pacific, the Regional Council decided to exclude Australia and New Zealand from APWLD membership. The Regional Council also decided that countries west of Pakistan (including countries in the Middle East) would not be included as potential APWLD members because of resource constraints.⁴ The challenge to have more members from Mekong countries such as Vietnam, Cambodia, Myanmar and Laos remain even though efforts have been exerted to reach out to women and organisations in these countries.

Membership: 61 member organisations and 62 individual members in 2007, involving more Pacific women in APWLD but deciding that Australia and New Zealand should not be part of APWLD. Bringing in members from Mongolia and Central Asia.

Expansion: In line with expanding the outreach of APWLD, activists have been invited from Taiwan, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Lao PDR where APWLD had very limited contacts. Some have expressed their interest to become members of TFs/WGs which will be forwarded to the Regional Council (ReC) for final approval.

In order to attain greater outreach, there is a general rule that not more than 30 per cent of membership should be individual and no less than 70 per cent should be group or organisational members. It was recommended that all Task Forces and the Working Group should implement this rule.

Membership has grown from the 1986 founding meeting in Tagaytay of 52 participants from 10 Asian and two Pacific countries to the 2018 roster of 236 members in 27 countries.

Structure

APWLD's structure has continually evolved to address the need for democratic representation on the basis of sectors (lawyers, activists, and academics), geography (South Asia, Southeast Asia, East Asia, Central Asia, and the Pacific), and accountability and to consider the growth in geographic reach and membership. The impetus for the changes has been internal (an assessment by the governing body) and external (findings and recommendations of the organisation).

.....
⁴ The Regional Council in 2007 approved the recommendation from the Pacific Islands members to exclude Australia and New Zealand from APWLD membership. "On the issue of Pacific Island States' representation and on the inclusion of Australia and New Zealand in APWLD, the Working Group supports and recommends to the ReC a paper written by Imrana Jalal which has been endorsed by other Pacific Islands members (founding member: Shamima Ali (Fiji/FWCC), Marilyn Tahi (Vanuatu/VNCW), Virisila Buadromo (Fiji/FWRM), and Gina Hong Lee (Fiji/RRRT)). The paper outlined why the Pacific Islands representatives should come from Pacific Islands States and not from Australia or New Zealand. Reasons for this were that Australia and New Zealand were developed countries and that limited resources of APWLD should be used in facilitating participation of those from Pacific Islands which were considered part of the developing countries. The recommendation that membership from Australia and New Zealand be withdrawn has been implemented.

The original structure at the founding meeting in 1986 was an elected Steering Committee composed of three representatives from South Asia (India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka), three from Southeast Asia (Indonesia, Philippines and Thailand) and one from the Pacific (Fiji). A Regional Coordinator, who was also part of the Steering Committee, and a Secretariat comprise the organisation.



The APWLD Steering Committee members, immediately after their election in December 1986

By 2002, a three-tier governance structure was in place: a Regional Council (ReC), a Steering Committee (SC) and a Programme and Management Committee (P&M).

The Regional Council (ReC) was the agenda-setting body which also approves institutional and structural changes. Its members were selected by a Steering Committee (SC) whose selection was guided by the need for geographic representation as well as task force representation. The SC was the highest policy making body. It formulated and approved work plans based on the agenda set by the ReC. Its members were selected by the ReC from among its members. A smaller body, a P&M assisted the SC in providing guidance to the Secretariat.

The criticism to this structure is its self-generating character: The SC chose the members of the ReC which in turn selects the members of the SC from among its members.

The 2003 Constitution introduced major changes in the structure

A General Assembly (GA) was convened every three years to elect members of the Regional Council and to provide the strategic direction of the organisation. The GA's composition was the following:

- Two representatives of individual members referred to in Article 4, Section 1, Paragraph 4 of APWLD's Constitution;
- Two women representatives of organisational members referred to in Article 4, Section 1, Paragraph 5 of APWLD's Constitution;
- All members of the Regional Council, Programme and Management Committee and Secretariat;
- Two representatives from each Task Force; and
- One representative from the Board of Directors.

The Regional Council was the highest policy making body whose composition included two founding members, representatives from Central Asia, South Asia, South East Asia, North and East Asia and the Pacific and at least one representative from each Task Force.

The Steering Committee (SC) was dissolved in 2003 and the Programme and Management Committee (P&M), whose number was increased, took over the functions of the SC including supervision of the Secretariat.

The first General Assembly (GA) was held in 2004 and the new structure in the 2003 Constitution was implemented.

This basic structure of GA is every three years, a ReC meeting every year (whose term spans three years), and a P&M selected by the ReC from among its members has remained up to the present.

There have been refinements on certain aspects of the structure.

The composition of the General Assembly has been expanded as per the 2014 Constitution:

All APWLD members are eligible to attend the General Assembly.

(2) The General Assembly shall be composed of:

- a. (a) All members of the Regional Council and Programme and Management Committee,*
- b. (b) Women representatives of APWLD members who are present at the General Assembly*
- c. (c) Twelve members actively engaged in programme planning and implementation.*
- d. (d) Any member of APWLD represented by a woman (“as observers”) who chooses to attend the General Assembly meeting.*

(3) Where funding support is made available to facilitate membership attendance at the General Assembly, priority support shall be given to ensuring a balanced representation of grassroots activists, sub-regions and countries, programmes of APWLD and the different perspectives of activists, lawyers and academics.

In the current Constitution (2015), the composition of the Regional Council does not include Task Force representation as this mechanism was dissolved in 2009. Membership in the Regional Council is based on geographic representation and a balance of lawyers, academics and activists. The original provision of two founding members as part of the Regional Council is retained but is now dependent on whether there are founding members willing to serve in the Council. (Two seats shall be reserved for founding members where (1) founding members agree to sit on the Regional Council. These seats may remain vacant.)

Another change was from ‘Number country shall have more than two representatives on the Regional Council. The founding members selected to the Regional Council shall also be deemed to be representatives of their country and organisation’ in the 2003 and 2011 Constitution to ‘Number Country shall have more than two representatives on the Regional Council. The founding members selected to the Regional Council shall not be deemed to be representative of their country. They will be considered as founding members regardless of country or organisation’ in the 2014 Constitution.

Programme Organising Committee

With the dissolution of the Task Force system, Regional Council approved a new programme structure in September 2009. The guidelines for APWLD’s new programme structure were approved by the Regional Council in its 27-28 May 2014 meeting. Currently, each of APWLD programmes are guided by respective **Programme Organising Committee (POC)** with the following orientation:

- further give flesh to the membership character of APWLD as members are involved in specific programme and activities of the organisation;
- together with the Programme Officer (PO), is responsible for planning, monitoring, implementing, evaluating and reporting on specific programme work plans based on the Strategic Plan of APWLD;
- provide guidance and expertise on programme strategies to enable the PO to develop concept note, draft programme and activity report; and

OC/ Focal Persons (FP) structure operates through collective discussion and consultation to reach agreements preferably by consensus.

Programme Activity Organising Committees (PAOC) can be created by a POC (subject to P&M approval) to implement and evaluate a specific programme activity as indicated in the POC work plan. Membership to the PAOC may include prospective members of APWLD who can contribute to the successful execution of the activity.

The **Cross Programme Organising committee (CPOC)** can be constituted for an activity involving two or more programmes such as a training, organising a conference, creation of an APWLD training module or participation in international or regional conference. The CPOC is an AOC and shall cease to exist once the activity is completed. The creation and composition of the CPOC shall be decided upon by the ReC or P&M upon the recommendation of the involved POCs or by the Regional Coordinator. A member of APWLD can be a member of only one POC. However, in addition to membership in the POC, she may also be involved in at most one activity OC.

Space for member-recommended potential Activity Organising Committee

The current POC/PAOC/CPAOC structure is based on the strategic plan of APWLD. To allow flexibility in terms of emerging concerns or member initiatives, which are not encompassed by the Strategic Plan and Programme Work Plans, space is provided for member recommended pre-Activity Organising Committee. If an APWLD member sees the need for regional collaboration around an issue they could request the Secretariat to put out a notice on-line to APWLD members to see if there are others who would like to collaborate. While initially it may not be a programme of work that the Secretariat can fully support, it would allow members to organise a conversation under the banner of APWLD and if there was a proposed strategy it could be considered by the P&M / ReC for a possible creation of an AOC of a Programme or a Cross Programme initiative or an incubation activity.

Feisty, Fierce, Passionate and Compassionate Women of APWLD

There were 38 women from nine Asian and two Pacific countries who attended the founding meeting of the Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development on December 15-18, 1986 in Tagaytay, Philippines.¹

The Herstory Project, started in 2014, is an attempt to document the lives of the women who were involved in the genesis of APWLD which aimed to use law to empower women and generate social transformation. The idea was to get their perspectives on the history of the network and its continuing growth. The initial plan was for the publication to come out in time for the 30th anniversary of APWLD in 2016. Due to various factors, we have been able to put together the stories (in varying details) of 17 of the 38 founding members in Chapter Five. Of this number, seven have passed away.

For this part of the narrative, we originally included four members of the 'second wave' of APWLD who took on leadership roles in the organisation as mentioned in Virada Somswasdi's, 'Institutional Memories and Advocacy Work', presentation to the conference 'Celebrating 20 Years. Does Law Matter? 20 Years of Accessing Justice for Women', 28-30 November 2007, Bangkok. They were Hameeda Hossain of Bangladesh, Zohra Yusuf of Pakistan, Tita Elisa Lubi of the Philippines and Heisoo Shin of Korea.

In May 2018, after feedback from Regional Council and P&M members and with an extended deadline for the project, several members who played significant roles in APWLD after it relocated to Thailand, were asked to send their reflections on APWLD.

Fatima Burnad, Madhu Mehra and Govind Kelkar, all from India responded. Fatima is a long-time grassroots organiser working on the issue of Dalit women, Madhu is a feminist lawyer and activist who was one of the key drafters and facilitators of the Feminist Legal Theory Practice (FLTP) module of APWLD, and Govind Kelkar who is a feminist professor and activist whose interest includes rural women, food sovereignty and the environment, among others.

Azra Talad Sayeed, a rural development organiser with a doctorate in pharmacy from Pakistan; Mikiko Otani, a human rights lawyer from Japan, Ivy Josiah, Malaysian feminist activist involved in working with victims of violence against women and Judy Taguiwalo, a grassroots women organiser and women's studies professor and unionist from the Philippines also provided their reflections on their engagement with APWLD. Their reflections are included in this collection.

The accounts are diverse in terms of depth and breadth. Some of the founding members were interviewed and were able to reminisce on their involvement with APWLD. Others were not available or have passed

¹ APWLD and OEF (1990). *The Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development: Its Origins, Issues and Vision*. Appendix II.



on. Hence vignettes of their stories from published accounts were tapped. The contributors from the second wave of the organisation themselves told their APWLD stories and these are rich with details of APWLD's activities during the second decade of the network and the personal impact of the organisation on their lives.

The stories reveal what amazing APWLD women are: feisty and fierce; passionate and compassionate. The lawyers litigate for the marginalised and vulnerable in courts but also march to bring the issues to the streets and to parliament. In many instances, the academics are lawyers and activists. Their involvement goes beyond research or teaching. They are in the communities learning from grassroots women and helping bring their concerns to national, regional and international fora. They were/are involved in organising migrant workers, prostituted women/sex workers, women workers, Dalit women, peasant women, survivors of violence such as the 'comfort women' or survivors of rape and domestic violence. They pioneered in challenging discriminatory laws and in crafting laws directed towards ending gender discrimination and criminalising violence against women. And they learned from each other and supported one another as many of them experienced threats and actual repression because of their commitment to the cause of women's human rights, gender equality and social justice.

Here are some of the key themes emerging from their stories.



APWLD is sisterhood and solidarity

Hina Jilani of Pakistan captures the sisterhood among Asian women fighting for human rights in APWLD:

'A lot of women who participated in APWLD activities have contributed to the sense of solidarity among Asian women for human rights. It is also important to remember that many of us who participated in the APWLD events went back home with enriched experience, a stronger sense of our own value and worth and with much more capacity to pursue our various human rights interests and to be able to confront and grapple with particular issues that we faced in our different national contexts.'

Shamima Ali of Fiji recalls the founding of APWLD and how it embraced Pacific feminists into the network:

'APWLD introduced me to strong Asian women from whom I learnt so much. APWLD was the first feminist network where the Pacific feminists were recognised and included. And many Pacific feminists have been and are part of the network.'

The appreciation of the sisterhood created by APWLD is echoed by Radhika Coomaraswamy of Sri Lanka:

'I think the most important contribution that the Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development has made, is to create a very vibrant network of women and women's organisations in Asia that deal with issues, share experiences and provide a great sense of solidarity. I think solidarity is really the word that comes to mind when I think of APWLD.'

She adds:

'... it has given a great sense of solidarity for women in Asia and a sense of an Asian identity in fighting for a lot of these issues at the global level and some of the issues that are of concern for Asia to come out very strongly at the global level as well.'

For Hina Jilani of Pakistan, the sisterhood and support of APWLD strengthens its members and is the reason why contributing to the growth of the organisation remains a commitment of founding members:

'The kind of work I do frequently puts me at risk. I feel a sense of protection in many ways because I have colleagues outside my country who have the confidence to speak out if I was in trouble, just as I would speak out when anyone from the movement in the region was in trouble. So these were lessons that we learned and the experience of not just creating APWLD but developing it, making it grow was very important for many of us working in the field of human rights. We may have diverse responsibilities in our own countries or at the international level but I'm sure, like me, many of the colleagues who were with me when we formed APWLD still have a special commitment for the growth and development of APWLD as an institution.'

For Judy Taguiwalo of the Philippines:

'Being part of APWLD means being part of a sisterhood bound by a common vision of and aspiration for a just, equitable and peaceful world. It is a sisterhood of brave Asia Pacific women, young and old, committed to changing the world.'

Madhu Mehra of India:

'APWLD's gift of sisterhood, its vibrant political discourse, democratic participatory processes of functioning enabled women to flourish, grow into leaders, a quality that made for enduring associations with the network – and lifelong friendships.'



Sandra Torrijos

Legal advocacy and women's empowerment

From its inception, APWLD wanted to use law to advance the rights and welfare of women but recognised that such is possible only if it is 'instrumental in providing social and economic justice, in consonance with internationally accepted standards of human rights.' (Preamble, 1997 APWLD Constitution).

Many of the founding members and succeeding members created institutions and centers to advance the rights of women and advocated for legislative changes favourable to women. They did so by combining legislative advocacies with lobbying and public actions.

Rani Jethmalani of India exemplified the legal advocacy and assistance provided by the pioneering women of APWLD to women in crisis. She established in Delhi the NGO Women's Action Research & Legal Action for Women (WARLAW), examining factors responsible for inferior status of women; providing access to general justice; enabling women in India to make laws effective; promoting the concept of human rights and aware about the rights of women in remote areas. WARLAW provided dowry victims with free legal assistance.

Tita Elisa Lubi of the Philippines recalls her experience in legal advocacy:

'APWLD's advocacy to use law to change the situation of women for the better and to contribute to women's emancipation eroded my hard stand. My attitude has changed to the extent that I am now actively involved in the use of legal struggle in court in our defence of human rights in the Philippines and in the work in the Philippine legislature to enact legislations that benefit the marginalised majority especially those in the basic sectors and push for onsite hearings to investigate and expose human rights violations. However, it is also clear to me that legal advocacy cannot be separated from the mobilisation of women and the public outside the courts and parliament to generate public opinion to support the cases or law being advocated.'

Madhu Mehra of India points to the valuable contribution of APWLD's Feminist Legal Theory and Practice (FLTP) module:

it created 'an affirming space for feminist lawyers, offering tools by which to critically review domestic laws in relation to gender justice and its intersections with a wide range of issues – the programme also defined 'practice' to reflect the range of feminist engagement with the law – from legislative advocacy to capacity development, to litigation.'



Linking the national with the regional and the global

APWLD brought to the regional and global venues the plight of Asia Pacific women at the local and national levels and in the process expanded the viewpoints of its members.

Emelina Quintillan of the Philippines recollects:

'APWLD was also represented at the international scene and dialogues that moved forward the women's issues of the region such as 'bride burning' or Sati, human rights violations of women, particularly in predominantly Islamic societies, the politicalisation of religion, (that led to discussions about women's rights in secular societies or under Sharia law), violence against women, and other issues. Personally, it expanded my horizons on women's issues - from country-specific issues to global issues. It also enabled me to touch base with other women globally and extended my help, or shared my insights.'

Hina Jilani of Pakistan notes:

'I think in that sense APWLD was instrumental in taking national movements and putting them together as regional movement for women's human rights. When we initiated the creation of APWLD the group of women who became APWLD's founding members were themselves in the initial stages of their struggle for human rights.'

We were trying to build our own capacity. I think in many ways I benefited greatly from my experience of creating an organisation, it gave me confidence that women can not only come together to talk about their issues but that women can go beyond just talking and can create institutions.'

Mikiko Otani of Japan:

The name of the programme Grounding the Global comes from the concept of using global norms and mechanisms such as the UN human rights mechanisms on the ground, closer to women in the region rather than our going to the UN or other global platforms. Discussions at the international forum often get disconnected from the reality on the ground. APWLD's annual regional consultations with UN mandate holders provide critically important platform connecting the real women's lives, issues and challenges with the discussions at the UN or other international forum.'

This APWLD strategy of grounding the global with the local with the use of international instruments and mechanism is illustrated by Heisoo Shin's advocacy to gain justice for 'comfort women':

'Regarding the "comfort women" issue, I think we achieved a lot. Two excellent reports came out of the UN system. We succeeded in raising the issue as a women's human rights issue to Treaty Bodies. Out of nine Treaty Bodies, five came up with recommendations to Japan. I think I learned how to use the international human rights system through this 'comfort women' issue and I consider that an achievement.'

I can tell other women activists that you have to use the existing UN human rights mechanisms for the good of women's human rights.'

Grassroots activism to push issues of human rights

A strong standpoint for grassroots women and communities characterises APWLD's positions and its members' advocacy.

Irene Fernandez of Malaysia who left behind a career as a teacher to work in solidarity with rubber plantation workers and migrant workers, majority of whom are women, was found guilty and sentenced to prison for publishing the results of a research on plantation workers and the oppression and sexual harassment they experienced. In spite of this, she remained steadfast in her activism up to her death.

The source of her steadfastness lies in her empathy for the workers:

'When I see the migrant workers' bodies and eyes without hope, I want to embrace and wipe away their fears. It makes me angry and helps me to keep fighting the oppressive system.'

Nandini Azad of India as early as the 1985 Nairobi conference noted the lower visibility of grassroots and human rights organisations in the conference activities:

'At Nairobi, one of the major frustrations for many of us was the high visibility of only researchers and academicians, with the mass grassroots and human rights organisations being left out of the plenaries and salient panels, denying them space to share their challenges and limitations.'

This marginalisation that Nandini observed gave her stronger impetus to ensure grassroots participation in international arenas:

'But working at the regional level is very important for Asia, especially because the Asian region is often seen, state wise, to be the least supportive of human rights at the international level. Asian states tend to be more skeptical about human rights so I think it is very important to have grassroots activists coming together in solidarity and working together to push issues of the human rights.'

Azra Sayeed of Pakistan:

'It was the clarity, determination and absolute commitment to the grass roots that defined the spirit of APWLD. A key achievement of the WEN (Women and the Environment) Task Force was the development of the Food Sovereignty Kit for Women, which was translated into more than eight languages across Asia, from Mongolia to Pakistan.'

APWLD as a school and interactive learning space for women activists

Many of the APWLD women are strong women whose commitment to women's empowerment and community development has been nurtured through years of participation in local and national struggles or has been developed by formal higher education. But APWLD brought new learnings and new perspectives to them.

Fatima Burnad of India says:

'So, joining APWLD for me shaped me with clear perspectives, perspectives that are very important, and I like it. I think people also like it wherever I go, wherever I express my views. It's women for me, women focus and grassroot focus, APWLD shaped me that way. And they allowed me to express according to my situation, they did not say it's not the forum, you should not talk about this or that, it has allowed me to share my ideas, allowed me to develop.'

Mikiko Otani of Japan joined APWLD in 1999 fresh from her human rights legal studies in the US. Her experience in the US made her keenly aware of her Asian identity and the importance of working on human rights issues in the region particularly women's human rights.. For Mikiko

'APWLD was the place of all learning and training on women's movement, women's issues, feminism, justice, development, etc.'

Govind Kelkar of India who was professor of women's studies at the Asian Institute of Technology in Bangkok acknowledges APWLD's help in bringing about change in the institute's culture:

'My association with APWLD gave me strength to struggle and change indecent representation of women in posters and calendars spread across AIT campus, and establish a field of gender studies with academic parity and dignity for women.'



Women of courage in the context of globalisation, fundamentalisms and militarism

Advocating for women's human rights in the Asia Pacific region is not an easy task. Economic policies and programmes detrimental to traditional livelihood of the poor and destructive of the environment have been imposed, usually accompanied by militarisation and authoritarianism. Extremist movements, many in the guise of religious fundamentalism, have exacerbated patriarchal norms that discriminate against women and justify the violence against them.

To go against these programmes and policies invites repression. But this threat of and actual repression have not stopped APWLD women from moving forward.

Asma Jahangir of Pakistan:

'faced death threats, beatings and imprisonment to win landmark human rights cases while standing up to dictators. A lawyer by background, the rights commission which she helped create made its name defending religious minorities and tackling highly charged blasphemy accusations along with cases of "honour" killings in which victims, normally women, are murdered by a relative for bringing shame on the family.'

Asma was brave although not without fear:

'It has been difficult in terms of social conventions. And it is not just about women's issues. Even when we talked about child labor, we were frowned upon. But then you know that you have to speak the truth, irrespective of the repercussions. I had to face imprisonment and house arrests, but it made me tougher. As a lawyer, many a time I took up difficult and sensitive cases dealing with minorities and women's rights. Yes, I constantly receive threats and to be very honest, at times it is very scary. But I have to continue my work.'



Irene Fernandez of Malaysia was tried and found guilty of spreading fake news after she published the results of her research on the plight of plantation workers in Malaysia. It took over eight years for her to be acquitted of those charges. The trials that Irene went through did not weaken her resolve. She is quoted as saying:

'We must change the rules of the global economy, for it is the logic of global capitalism that is the source of the disruption of society and of the environment. The challenge is that even as we deconstruct the old, we dare to imagine and win over people to our visions and programs for the new.'

Noor Farida of Malaysia, APWLD founding member and a former Malaysian ambassador to the Netherlands received death threats and cases of sedition were filed against her when she spoke against racial and religious extremism.

Virada Somswadi of Thailand recognised the persistence of the APWLD women in standing up against all systems that render women as least human:

'They joined hands and expanded their fight in new areas on environmental issues. They fight against globalisation, fundamentalism, militarism and defend human rights defenders and women affected by natural disaster while keeping alive feminist perspectives in issues on culture, religion, politics and economics.'

Sr. Soledad Perpinan of the Philippines is cited as:

'...calling attention to globalisation's crushing effect in two-thirds of the world. ...and describes the impact of industrialisation on women and children, particularly as rights to land are lost which ultimately leads to marginalization and wage slavery.'

Azra Sayeed of Pakistan helped APWLD hurdle an organisational challenge sometime in the closing years of the first decade of 2000. She describes the courage of the membership that saw the organisation through that difficult period:

'No doubt those months of APWLD going through another metamorphosis show the mettle of APWLD's membership; its fearless willing to embrace change in its dedication to fighting for women's rights; to serve its constituency, the oppressed and marginalized women across many sectors ranging from women suffering at the hand of imperialist globalisation, patriarchy, class-based discriminations, religious atrocities, and climate change disasters, among others.'

Moving forward

Several of the APWLD women in this compilation forward recommendations on how APWLD could continue to assist national movements and what needs to be done to ensure the network's growth and development.

Zora Yusuf of Pakistan calls on APWLD to strengthen the protection of human rights defenders:

'Our countries are increasingly seeing greater challenges to fundamental freedoms - from internet censorship to attacks on NGOs and human rights defenders. APWLD needs to be responsive to these developments.'

Chantawipa Apisuk of Thailand suggests more support for sex workers and for more women lawyers to assist them:

'I wish to see APWLD include more sex workers in their movement. Also, that women lawyers could further support those women with limited education, and commit to taking more poor women as their clients. They could strive to better understand all the issues surrounding sex work and the hidden facts around it. These women are often the head of the family and have to provide for them. Women are smart no matter what profession they are in, and the law can be an instrument to back them up.'

Emelina Quintillan of the Philippines calls on APWLD to nurture younger members and to build the next line of women leaders:

'I think APWLD has grown and progressed. It has become more popular and has connected with a bigger population, both regionally and internationally. My advice to the younger members is for them to continue to grow as they continue to expand their horizon and vision. They need to be conscious of their personal development as well as the development of women regionally and globally. To remain on track, they must often ask themselves where they are going. Most of all, they should not forget to build their second-liners or the ones who will take over after them.'

Heisoo Shin of Korea shares a similar point of developing young women leaders but emphasises the crucial need of supporting grassroots movements in APWLD member countries:

'I think it makes a big difference when women's activism pays attention on any issue of women's human rights and pushes it through. The world is changing. There is a conservatism, or a backlash. Those women's human rights that have been secured are unstable. You never know when the backlash, the conservatism or fundamentalism will take over, and then whatever human rights that we have secured so far will be shattered. So it is very important for women's activism to keep going, as well as introducing more young women into the movement. I think APWLD should play that kind of role, building and supporting the grassroots movements in the member countries, so that our next generation of women will not suffer the same discrimination and violence. ...I hope APWLD lasts 100 years, but then I would be really happy if we lived in a society where women's organisations are not needed because we have achieved gender equality. In 100 years, I will be dead of course.'

Ivy Josiah of Malaysia notes that

'What makes APWLD different is that this organisation is committed to movement building'. And at present and in the future, 'APWLD fired up, led and shaped by feminists who came together in solidarity and purpose(will) still (be) igniting movements for women's equality and justice.'

Madhu Mehra calls on APWLD to strengthen its critical analyses of the law:

'Given that despite normative gains the law has over the years inevitably leaned in favour of the powerful - resistance has become centre stage in APWLD's mobilising and expression. At a time when the law appears to be in crisis, I would hope that attention is once again turned critically unpacking the 'law' and our engagement with it - not just within FLTP but also as a cross cutting area for developing new analysis, tools of assessment and understandings.'

The final words are from founding member Nandini Azad of India who lauds APWLD for what it has accomplished since and wishes it 'to grow from strength to strength':

'APWLD's understanding of the new international realities does not seem to deter it from undertaking tough positions or in seeking solutions. I am amazed at its growth, which is indeed, beyond any imagination, an institution that has fully developed, going beyond the vision of its founders in the service of women's rights in the Asian region. I salute the courage of APWLD, and wish you grow from strength to strength with success, higher level resources to support you to counter (with the pen and activism) the many rights violations and development challenges that women face in the region.'



Profiles and Stories of APWLD's Pioneering Women

Introduction

The original intent of this publication was to document the stories of the founding members of APWLD. However, after the 1986 regional meeting in Tagaytay, not all 38 founding members remained in touch with APWLD; we were only able to collect profiles of 16 founding members from various sources. During the May 2018 Regional Council meeting, suggestions were made to include voices of more members outside of the founding members. Based on responses received within the extended timeline, we were able to add reflections from some of our leading members who contributed to shaping APWLD during the first two waves.



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Salma Sobhan (1937- 2003), Bangladesh

Founding Member, APWLD
Member, APWLD Regional Council 2000-2003
Co-Founder, Ain-O-Salish Kendra (ASK)



Salma Sobhan (Bangladesh) with APWLD members Rashila Ramli (Malaysia) and Sultana Kamal (Bangladesh) and Alison Aggarwal (Australia) at the 2002 Strategic Planning Meeting in Chiang Mai

A prominent academic, lawyer and human rights activist for women, Salma is also fondly remembered by many as a beloved friend, and family member. Her contributions to the advancement of women’s human rights in Bangladesh made her a public icon, although she had always longed for a quiet and private life.

Born into a family of diplomats, Salma finished her education in Law at Cambridge and returned to Pakistan to a promising career as the first women barrister in the country in 1959. She moved to Dhaka with her husband in 1962 and started teaching Jurisprudence in Dhaka University. In the year 1986, she co-founded APWLD and Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK) which had, since then, been a strong and active member of APWLD¹. Between 2000 and 2003, she served as a member of the Regional Council at APWLD. She was also the designer of BRAC’s legal literacy programme and played an active role in Women Living under Muslim Laws (WLUML).²



In the intersecting area of women, law and development, Salma devoted herself to tireless work on supporting women’s struggle for their rights through various means, including legal aid and legal literacy training. In a hostile environment of conservative politics and religious fundamentalism providing grounds for oppressive patriarchal practices, she was not afraid to speak up and take strong stances³ in both eloquent and grounded ways.

As legal aid work at ASK gained momentum in the late 1980s and early 1990s, it became obvious that systematic violence towards women could not be fully addressed by band-aid solutions. In fact, Salma had always been clear about structural issues, and the importance of treating problems from the root.

One good example is the legal literacy program in BRAC which she took the lead in designing. Not only did it identify power as front and centre in women’s struggle for their fundamental freedom and rights, but it also remained mindful of the fact that the simple acquisition of knowledge itself would not be sufficient in achieving empowerment; instead, the ability to effectively use and even reform the law in ensuring people’s rights and developing communities should be an integral part of the program. Further, the participation of, and solidarity with, groups at the grassroots were prioritised from selection processes to program design, implementation, and evaluation stages.⁴ This sound analysis of law as an

1 Siddiqi, Dina M. (2006). Ain o Salish Kendra: Twenty years on the Frontline. ASK 20th Anniversary Commemorative Report. Retrieved from http://www.askbd.org/ask/wp-content/uploads/2006/12/20_Years.pdf

2 Sobhan, Rehman. (2014). Salma’s Paradox. In ASK (Ed.), Salma Sobhan (p. 77-83). Dhaka: Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK).

3 Hossain, Hameeda. (2014). A Note for Salma. In ASK (Ed.), Salma Sobhan (p. 77-83). Dhaka: Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK).

4 Sobhan, Salma. (1992). Legal literacy and community development in Bangladesh: Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee. In Legal literacy: a tool for women’s empowerment. New York: NY WIDBOOKS

instrument of oppression and its potential of being used as a tool to and for empowerment remains relevant in the articulation of Asia Pacific women's struggle for equality and the advancement of their human rights.

Salma had a reputation of being the universal 'Apa' or elder sister who was always ready to offer help regardless of people's backgrounds, partly due to her compassionate nature. She passed away in 2003 at the age of 66, but her story and ideas will be remembered for long by APWLD, so will the inspirations she brings to generations of women human rights activists to follow.

Mere Pulea, Fiji

Founding Member, APWLD

Member, APWLD Steering Committee 1986-1988, Task Force on Women and the Environment 1999 - 2003

Mere has worked as a legal advisor and consultant on environmental law in the Pacific and contributed to reviewing the environmental laws in Fiji, Cook Islands, Tonga, Palau, Kiribati and Tuvalu. The reviews included the analysis of environmental laws in term of their effectiveness in addressing the major environmental issues existing in each country and recommendations for new and improved administrative frameworks and environmental legislation.⁵



Having written or edited over 20 publications including Pacific courts and legal systems and The Family, Law and Population in the Pacific Islands⁶, she has developed a strong and comprehensive analysis of women and law in the region. With regard to the issues of domestic violence, she emphasises the importance of shifting norms in making effective changes happen for women apart from legislative efforts:

*'Putting in place laws against domestic violence in 11 Pacific Island countries is a major achievement which will have profound impacts on the lives of victims of violence. However, legislation in itself is only part of the solution...There is much more to be done to effectively implement these laws, a challenge that is rivalled only by our underestimation of the difficulty of bringing about attitudinal and systemic changes.'*⁷

Mere was appointed as a Judge in High Court of Fiji in 2004 and then a Judge of the Family Division of the High Court in 2005.⁸ Prior, she was the Director of the Institute of Justice and Applied Legal Studies at the University of the South Pacific from where she received an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws (LLD).⁹

5 Forum News (1999, April). Volume2, Number 1.
 6 WorldCat. (2019). Pulea, Mere. Retrieved from <http://worldcat.org/identities/lccn-n87902252/>
 7 The Pacific Community. (2016). Ending family violence in Pacific: law is not enough. Retrieved from <https://www.spc.int/updates/news/2016/06/ending-family-violence-in-pacific-law-is-not-enough>
 8 Nature Fiji. (2017). Mere Pulea. Retrieved from <https://naturefiji.org/profile/mere-pulea/>
 9 University of the South Pacific. (2018). USP Honours Five with Honorary Doctorates. Retrieved from <https://www.usp.ac.fj/news/story.php?id=2981>

Shamima Ali, Fiji

Founding Member, APWLD

Member, APWLD Task Force on Violence Against Women 1998 -2003

Founding Member, Pacific Women's Network Against Violence Against Women

Serving as the Coordinator for Fiji Women's Crisis Centre (FWCC) since 1985, Shamima Ali is a dedicated women's rights advocate combating Violence Against Women (VAW) in the Pacific region. She has also worked as a Human Rights Commissioner in the country from 2004 to 2006¹⁰, and was one of the founding organisers of Fiji Women's Rights Movement (FWRM)¹¹.



Shamima (second from left) and some of the other founders of FWRM preparing for its first major anti-rape campaign in 1986

It has not been an easy journey; FWCC experienced funding difficulties in the 'hard years of the eighties', and Fiji went through several coups d'état over the years since the centre's establishment, which Shamima has actively opposed.¹² Despite adversities, Shamima and her organisation worked relentlessly on providing support services to survivors, and raising awareness and implementing preventative methods, for instance, gender sensitising police officers for them to better handle cases of gender-based violence¹³, and leveraging media resources to educate the public.¹⁴

With her strong leadership, she was able to build the organisation's institutional capacity to grow as one of the leading support service providers for women and children who are sufferers and survivors of violence in Fiji.

Reflecting on her times with APWLD in an interview, Shamima expressed the following:

'I was at the inaugural APWLD meeting in Tagaytay, Philippines in 1986. That was my first ever international conference and formal exposure to feminism and women's rights. APWLD introduced me to strong Asian women from whom I learnt so much. APWLD was the first feminist network where the Pacific feminists were recognised and included. And many Pacific feminists have been and are part of the network. ... I believe it (APWLD) is working and has survived so long (31 years) and has benefited so many Pacific women in our development as feminists and activists through the research and training'

10 UN women. (2017). Take five: "The most effective solutions come from listening to women". Retrived from <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/10/take-five-shamima-ali>
 11 Fiji Women's Rights Movement. (2017). 25 Years of Balancing the Scales. Retrieved from http://www.fwrms.org.fj/images/fwrms2017/PDFs/fwrmsstory1984_2011final.pdf
 12 Howes, Stephen. (2017). The Fiji Women's Crisis Centre: three decades of Australian support. Retrieved from <http://devpolicy.org/aidprofiles/2017/10/19/the-fiji-womens-crisis-centre-three-decades-of-australian-support/>
 13 Fiji Women's Crisis Centre. (2017). "When You Don't Understand The Dynamics Of Violence Against Women – You Do More Harm Than Good:" Shamima Ali. Retrieved from <http://www.fijiwomen.com/news/media-coverage/dont-understand-dynamics-violence-women-harm-good-shamima-ali/>
 14 Ibid.

Nandini Azad, India

Founding Member, APWLD

President, Indian Co-operative Network for Women (ICNW)
Chairperson, The Independent Commission for People's Rights and Development (ICPRD)

Nandini Azad is President of the Indian Co-operative Network for Women (ICNW) and the Vice-Chairperson of the ICA-AP Committee on Women. In September 2018, she was elected to the board of the International Raiffeisen Union (IRU), a worldwide association of national cooperative organisations with 52 members in 33 countries. Nandini was the first Indian woman to be elected to the board.¹⁵



Reflecting on Nairobi conference in 1985 Nandini wrote:

'At Nairobi, one of the major frustrations for many of us was the high visibility of only researchers and academicians, with the mass grassroots and human rights organisations being left out of the plenaries and salient panels, denying them space to share their challenges and limitations. This resentment channeled itself into multi-continent partnerships that led, for example, into the founding of GROOTS that spans over 8 million people the world over. (i.e. Grassroots organisations operating in sisterhood). I was one of the co-founders of this movement along with Jan Paterson (a very dynamic grassroots organiser from the United States), and three other women. Therefore, at the Beijing Conference in 1995, GROOTS INTL focused on issues such as housing, microfinance, environment, health, etc. through community based organisations and mobilisation of women at the grassroots. Many of the founders of APWLD at Nairobi were part of such a thought process and it is these stirrings that laid the seed for its founding, moving away from purely theoretical thinking to ground level issues for women's rights and development.'

Reflecting on APWLD's recent work, she said:

'The advocacy issues on gender that it has taken up, its manner of advocacy, the right mix of partnerships i.e. activist, human rights, development partnerships is an indication that it is rooted in a multi-faceted but real context. The quality of writing, the conscientiousness of the team leader, team, partners, board, advisors all bring back memories of the old feminist movement. But with new skills, creativity, countering the new emerging challenges. APWLD's understanding of the new international realities does not seem to deter it from undertaking tough positions or in seeking solutions. I am amazed at its growth, which is indeed, beyond any imagination, an institution that has fully developed, going beyond the vision of its founders in the service of women's rights in the Asian region.'

¹⁵ The Hindu. "Nandini Azad elected to IRU board". September 29, 2018
<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Delhi/nandini-azad-elected-to-iru-board/article25075757.ece>

Rani Advani (1952 – 2001), India

Founding Member, APWLD

Founder, Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA)

Noted lawyer and women's rights activist Rani Advani was one of the founders of SEWA (Self-employed Women's Association). Upon her death in 2001 at the age of 49, the Times of India memorialised her as a 'fiery lawyer who had waged many a legal battle for the underprivileged and disadvantaged in the society'.¹⁶ She was known for fighting several battles in the courts of law for 'securing justice to the underprivileged and downtrodden women of India'.¹⁷ At a Tribute for Rani, SEWA members recalled how 'Raniben' rescued them from being beaten up by police and harassed by municipal corporation staff for selling vegetables in the city.¹⁸

Her colleague and co-founder of SEWA described her as a very efficient lawyer, totally committed to the cause of helping those in the society who didn't have access to legal rights. She added by reminiscing:

*'Way back in 1977, when no advocate here was ready to take up the case of women vendors on street, it was Rani led by her senior, who took up the challenge....Her death will be an indescribable loss to the cause of legal rights of women.'*¹⁹

Rani Jethmalani (1945 – 2011), India

Founding Member, APWLD

Member, APWLD Steering Committee 1986-1988, Regional Council 1994-1995, Task Force on Women's Participation in Political Processes 1998

Founder, Mahila Dakshata Sumit

Founder, Women's Action Research and Legal Action for Women (WARLAW)

A noted Supreme Court lawyer, a distinguished advocate for women's rights, and a social activist, Rani Jethmalani advanced the rights of married women in the family which were recognised by the government of India in 2005 with the Domestic Violence Act.



She established in Delhi the NGO Women's Action Research & Legal Action for Women (WARLAW), examining the root causes of women's subordination and oppression; providing women access to general justice; enabling women in India make laws effective; promoting the concept of human rights and aware about the rights of women in remote areas. WARLAW provided dowry victims with free legal assistance. She founded Mahila Dakshata Sumiti that campaigns against the social evil of the dowry, and also

¹⁶ Times of India (2001, 4 November). 'Activist-Lawyer Rani Advani dead'. Retrieved from http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/1420917896.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst
¹⁷ Times of India (2001, 8 November). 'SEWA pays tributes to Rani Advani'. Retrieved from <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/ahmedabad/SEWA-pays-tributes-to-Rani-Advani/articleshow/471513143.cms>
¹⁸ ibid.
¹⁹ Times of India (2001, 4 November). 'Activist-Lawyer Rani Advani dead'. Retrieved from http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/1420917896.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst

provides dowry victims with free legal assistance. She tirelessly worked for the implementation of CEDAW and wrote several articles in the field of human rights. Her advocacy to end gender discrimination is synthesised in her following statement:

*'The regime of personal laws which are gender discriminatory and violate article 14 of CEDAW have reduced women to second class citizens. Unless these laws are amended women cannot be empowered to combat violence and cultural practices that frustrate and deny them equality and dignity. It is futile to empower women by giving them decisive voices in decision-making bodies where those voices are feeble and unequal without at the same time changing the laws—if each one's voice including the voices of women is to have significance and meaning then those voices must be the voices of free persons and not slaves.'*²⁰

Irene Fernandez (1946 –2014), Malaysia

Founding Member, APWLD

Member, APWLD Steering Committee 1988, Regional Council 1994-1995, Task Force on Labour and Migration 1998 -1999 & 2001

Founder, Tenaganita

Irene Fernandez was a prominent human rights activist from Malaysia who championed migrant workers' and refugees' rights throughout her career. Irene set up the NGO, Tenaganita (Women's Force), a human rights organisation dedicated to assisting, building, advocating and protecting migrants, refugees, women and children from exploitation, abuse, discrimination, slavery and human trafficking.



Herself a daughter of migrants, she came to prominence in 1995 when she interviewed more than 300 migrant workers who spoke of the systematic abuse during incarceration in detention centres. She was accused by the Malaysian government of 'maliciously publishing false news' and was convicted in 2003. After long court battles, she was acquitted in 2008. Irene was also a founding member of the opposition People's Justice Party (PKR) and served on the leadership committee for 12 years.²¹

Irene represented APWLD in the First International Assembly of the International League of People's Struggles (ILPS) held in Zutphen, Netherlands in May 2001. She was



Irene Fernandez in the foreground at the launch of Women Human Rights Defenders Network 2004

elected a member of the ILPS' Coordinating Committee. In 2005, she chaired the Presidium of Judges

²⁰ 'Lunch Meeting with Rani Jethmalani'. Brussels. May 26, 2000. Retrieved from http://users.skynet.be/fa103362/indiahuis/Home/Dowry/Rani_Jethmalani/rani_jethmalani.html. Accessed April 2018.

²¹ <https://www.hrw.org/news/2014/03/31/tribute-irene-fernandez>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2014/04/02/world/asia/irene-fernandez-champion-of-oppressed-dies-at-67.html>

in the Women's Tribunal to try the World Trade Organisation (WTO), which was organised by APWLD, GABRIELA and AMIHAN parallel to the Hong Kong meeting of the WTO. The tribunal found the WTO guilty of crimes committed against women's livelihood and lives.²²

An excerpt of the verdict read by Irene stated:

'The WTO has pushed thousands of rural women and their daughters to the flesh trade as they are driven out of the land. Furthermore, the WTO exacerbated the existing discrimination suffered by women producers in the sphere of employment, wages and conditions of work; women have less rates of participation in the labor force, are unpaid and if they enter paid employment, they receive wages lower than men. WTO has worsened this discrimination.'

An indefatigable activist who stood with the marginalised women and workers of the world, Irene lived a life of meaning and purpose. Her empathy for the workers and her determination are reflected in these words:

'When I see the migrant workers' bodies and eyes without hope, I want to embrace and wipe away their fears. It makes me angry and helps me to keep fighting the oppressive system.'

Noor Farida Ariffin, Malaysia

Founding Member, APWLD

Member, APWLD Steering Committee 1886-1987 & 1996-1999, Regional Council 1996-1997 & 2012-2014, Programme and Management Committee 1996-1999, APWLD Task Force on Violence Against Women 1997-2000, Programme Organising Committee Feminist Law and Practice 2014



Noor Farida Ariffin is a prominent lawyer who has had a long and distinguished career spanning more than 40 years. She joined the Malaysian judicial and legal service in 1971 serving in various capacities including as a magistrate, senior assistant registrar in the High Courts of Kuala Lumpur and Penang, Sessions Court judge, legal officer with the Economic Planning Unit of the Prime Minister's Department and Director of the Legal Aid Bureau. Noor Farida previously held a number of key positions, including Special Advisor on Maritime Issues to the Minister of Foreign Affairs Malaysia, an Alternate Director at the Maritime Institute of Malaysia (MIMA), Director-General of the Research, Treaties and International Law Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador-At-Large for the High-Level Group on Follow-up to the ASEAN Charter (HLEG), Director of the Women and Development Programme, Human Resource and Development Group at the Commonwealth Secretariat in London. She headed the newly established Legal Division of the Ministry in 1993 and in 1996 was appointed the Under-Secretary of the newly formed Territorial and Maritime Division of the Foreign Ministry. Between 2000 and 2007, she was the Ambassador of Malaysia to the Kingdom of the Netherlands. She is currently an Independent Non-Executive Director of Eco World Development Group.²³

²² Judy Pasimio. Don't Globalise Hunger. "WTO Guilty as Charged by Women." http://www.dontglobalisehunger.org/wto_guiltyascharged.php. Accessed April 2018

²³ Noor Farida Binti Mohd Ariffin. Independent Non Executive Director, Eco World Development Group Berhad. Retrieved from <https://www.bloomberg.com/research/stocks/people/person.asp?personId=60411850&privcapId=8087265>

As a member of G-25, a group of 25 prominent Malaysians comprised of former diplomats and civil servants, Noor Farida is passionate about 'reclaiming Malaysia from racial and religious extremism'. She gave a very well-received lecture on the subject in 2015 at the London School of Economics and continues to speak vehemently on the subject in Malaysia and abroad. In 2015 sedition investigation on her was initiated following her call to review Islamic laws governing khalwat. She said criminalizing personal sins and intruding into a person's privacy was not Islamic.²⁴

Noor Farida assisted in the founding of Sisters in Islam, an organisation which work for ending discrimination against women in the name of Islam by 'promoting understanding of Islam that recognises the principles of justice, freedom and dignity within a democratic nation state'.²⁵

Shanta Thapaliya (1945 –2011), Nepal

Founding Member, APWLD

Founder, Legal Aid and Consultancy Center (LACC)

A human rights activist and an advocate of women's rights, Shanta was also the first Nepali woman to hold a PhD in Law. She was a professor of family law at the University of Kathmandu.

Shanta was the founder of Legal Aid and Consultancy Center (LACC) established in 1987. She provided legal advices to thousands of helpless and needy women and children throughout the country with this organisation. She was also awarded the Ashoka Fellowship for her lifetime contribution towards women's human rights. She also served as a member of the National Judicial Academy, Police Reform and Recommendation Commission and Academic Council of the Tribhuvan University (TU) and many more. She had dedicated her life to serve the women who are not aware of their rights and who are being discriminated.²⁶



A tribute to her described Shanta's personal sacrifice to advance the rights of women:

*'She had sacrificed her dream of being the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court in order to assure the rights of the women. It all happened when she went to the Far Western Region for her PhD research, after completing her postgraduate degree in law. The condition of the women there changed her mind and she decided to dedicate her life and utilize her education and capability in providing the rights of the women so that generations and generations of women would have the opportunity to make a positive difference. She has spent years fighting and advocating for women's rights and she believed that not only women but all the members of the family should be equally aware of the existing laws.'*²⁷

24 Malaysia Today (2015, 18 December). 'Threatened With Rape, G25'S Noor Farida Now Under Sedition Probe For Khalwat Criticism'. Retrieved from <http://www.malaysia-today.net/2015/12/18/threatened-with-rape-g25s-noor-farida-now-under-sedition-probe-for-khalwat-criticism/>

25 Retrieved from <https://www.sistersinislam.org.my/page.php?35>

26 Retrieved from <http://bossnepal.com/prof-dr-shanta-thapaliya>

27 ibid

Asma Jahangir (1952- 2018), Pakistan

Founding Member, APWLD

Member, APWLD Steering Committee 1986-1988, Regional Council 1994-1997, Task Force/Working Group on Women Rights Human Rights 1998-2007

Founder, AGHS Legal Aid Cell and Women's Action Forum (WAF), Human Rights Commission of Pakistan

Asma Jahangir, Pakistan's leading feminist and human rights lawyer, was only 34 years old when she became one of the founding members of APWLD in 1986. Her participation in the creation of APWLD was a continuation of her commitment to advancing women's human rights.

Asma's earlier legal career began with defending the rights of battered women of Pakistan. In 1980, she, along with her sister Hina Jilani and two other women lawyers co-founded the first centre offering legal aid in Pakistan - the AGHS Legal Aid Cell, and took on complicated cases to defend the most underprivileged against injustices, that no other lawyer would dare to touch. Relentlessly campaigning against Pakistan's discriminatory laws against women, Asma helped set up the Women's Action Forum (WAF), and challenged the 'Proposed Law of Evidence', where the value of a woman's testimony would be reduced to half that of a man's testimony, and the 'Hudood Ordinances', where victims of rape had to prove their innocence or else face punishment themselves.

During the military regime in 1983 and 2007 in Pakistan, she participated in the movement for restoration of political and fundamental rights. Due to her continuously speaking truth to power to institutional reform and societal change, she faced death threats, public assault, house arrest and imprisonment, but nonetheless remained indomitable.

In 1987 she co-founded the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, an independent NGO promoting and defending human rights in Pakistan, as well as monitoring human rights violations, and later served as its Chairperson till 2011. Since its establishment, the Commission worked on contentious issues



Asma Jahangir, with some of the ninety bonded brick kiln workers in Lahore, Pakistan whom she had released from detention by their employers through Habeas Corpus proceedings last May, 1988.

Source: APWLD Forum News (1995, August). Volume8, Number 2.



APWLD Founding Member Asma Jahangir introducing the regional conference in 1986, Tagaytay

including violence against women, honour-killing, abolishment of capital punishment and religious violence. She was the first woman to serve as the President of the Supreme Court Bar Association in Pakistan in 2010.

In addition to her work in Pakistan, Asma promoted human rights internationally through her long service with the United Nations. She was UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Arbitrary or Summary Executions from 1998 to 2004, UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion and Belief from 2004 to 2010, and UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human

rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran from 2016 to 2018.²⁸

'We will remember Asma for her activism in the court in her own country, in international platforms and her contributions to regional fora. In recognition of her work she has received several awards and accolades during her life, including the 2014 Sweden's Right to Livelihood Award and France's Officier de la Légion d'honneur in 2014. We will continue to respect Asma for her undaunted courage and perseverance in the defence of human rights. The best tribute to her is to continue our collective struggles for human rights, democracy and justice. And to do so without fear or favour.' described Hameeda Hossain in a tribute For Asma Jahangir when she passed away on 11 February 2018 at the age of 66.

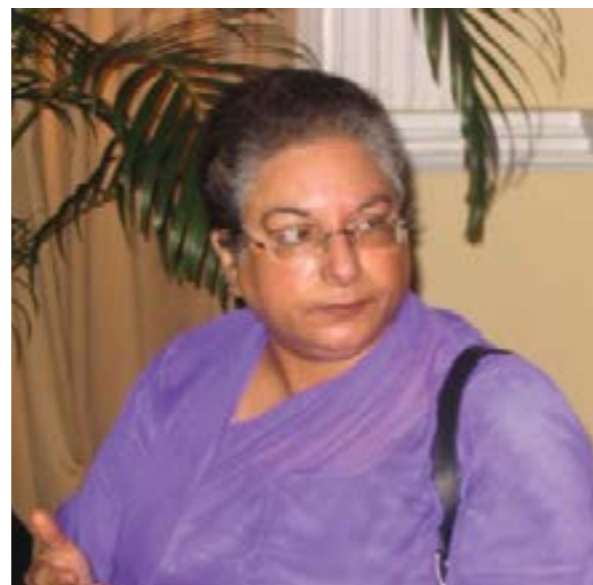
Asma was awarded the prestigious UN Human Rights Award posthumously in December 2018.²⁹ Asma's story is illustrative of the courage, commitment and persistence of APWLD women and she will always remain as an inspiration to many women in the region, and globally.

Hina Jilani, Pakistan

Founding Member, APWLD

Member, APWLD Steering Committee 1994 – 1999, Regional Council 1996-1997 & 2001-2007, Task Force/ Working Group on Women Rights Human Rights 1998 - 2007 President of the World Organisation Against Torture

Specialised in human rights litigation and the human rights of women, children, minorities, and prisoners, Hina Jilani is prominent lawyer and a leading activist in Pakistan's women's movement, as well as an international champion of human rights.



Along with her late sister, Asma Jahangir, she co-founded Pakistan's first all-female legal practice in 1980 - AGHS Legal Aid Cell and the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan and the Women's Action Forum, a pressure group campaigning against Pakistan's discriminatory legislation. In 1991, she helped set up a shelter for women fleeing violence and abuse, called Dastak, providing free legal counsel and support to victims of gender-based violence, and organising workshops to create awareness of human rights and the protection of women.

Hina was the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General on the situation of Human rights Defenders from 2000 to 2008. In 2001, she was jointly awarded the Millennium Peace Prize for Women along with her late sister Asma Jahangir, the first award of its kind to recognise women who have made outstanding contributions to building peace. In 2006, she was appointed to the UN International Fact-Finding Commission on Darfur and has served as the President of the World Organisation Against Torture since 2016. She continues to advocate for women's and human rights around the world.

As a founding member and through her engagement in APWLD's governance bodies during its first two waves, Hina played a key role in creating and shaping APWLD. Below is her reflection on the

²⁸ Asma Jahangir (2014, Pakistan). Retrieved from <https://www.rightlivelivelihoodaward.org/laureates/asma-jahangir/>

²⁹ Asma Jahangir, winner, 2018 UN Human Rights Prize. Retrieved from <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/HumanRightsPrize2018.aspx>

significance of APWLD's creation from an interview in 2005.

'The creation of APWLD must be looked at more with regards to its significance in giving a new dimension to promoting the work of defending women's human rights. APWLD perhaps was the first regional organisation which was set up by women activists in the Asian region. In that context we have elevated ourselves from the national movement to the regional movement. I think that is the contribution of APWLD that must always be remembered.'

A lot of women who participated in APWLD activities have contributed to the sense of solidarity among Asian women for human rights. It is also important to remember that many of us who participated in the APWLD events went back home with enriched experience, a stronger sense of our own value and worth and with much more capacity to pursue our various human rights interests and to be able to confront and grapple with particular issues that we faced in our different national contexts. I think in that sense APWLD was instrumental in taking national movements and putting them together as regional movement for women's human rights.'

When we initiated the creation of APWLD the group of women who became APWLD's founding members were themselves in the initial stages of their struggle for human rights. We were trying to build our own capacity. I think in many ways I benefited greatly from my experience of creating an organisation, it gave me confidence that women can not only come together to talk about their issues but that women can go beyond just talking and can create institutions.'

*The kind of work I do frequently puts me at risk. I feel a sense of protection in many ways because I have colleagues outside my country who have the confidence to speak out if I was in trouble, just as I would speak out when anyone from the movement in the region was in trouble. So these were lessons that we learned and the experience of not just creating APWLD but developing it, making it grow was very important for many of us working in the field of human rights. We may have diverse responsibilities in our own countries or at the international level but I'm sure, like me, many of the colleagues who were with me when we formed APWLD still have a special commitment for the growth and development of APWLD as an institution.'*³⁰

Emelina Quintillan, Philippines

Founding member, APWLD

Member, APWLD Steering Committee 1986-1988, Regional Council 1994

First Regional Coordinator of APWLD serving from 1988 to 1989

Emelina Quintillan, a lawyer from the Philippines could not attend the Nairobi World Conference on Women in 1985; however she mentioned in an interview,

'but my paper on using the law for human and women's development was read at a forum on Women, Law & Development. That paper is now part of the book, "Empowerment & the Law: Strategies of Third World Women",

³⁰ Excerpts from an interview done at the International Consultation on Women Human Rights Defenders, Sri Lanka, December 2005



edited by Margaret Schuler. That was one of the bases for the establishment of APWLD. It showed that the law, and knowledge of it, was a strategic instrument in moving forward women's agenda and rights. It was, and still is, an instrument that bridges the personal, the public and the political.'

Emelina was elected as a member of the first APWLD Steering Committee at the Asia Pacific regional conference on WLD in Tagaytay in 1986 and served as APWLD's first Regional Coordinator between 1988 and 1989. She recalls her greatest achievement as APWLD's Regional Coordinator was

'the establishment of the APWLD Secretariat and the initiation of its network programme. APWLD was also represented at the international scene and dialogues that moved forward the women's issues of the region such as "bride burning" or Sati, human rights violations of women, particularly in predominantly Islamic societies, the politicalisation of religion, (that led to discussions about women's rights in secular societies or under Sharia law), violence against women, and other issues. Personally, it expanded my horizons on women's issues - from country-specific issues to global issues. It also enabled me to touch base with other women globally and extended my help or shared my insights. The APWLD Steering Committee members also expanded their international scope. Radhika Coomaraswamy became a UN Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, Asma Jahangir became a UN Rapporteur on extrajudicial killings and so forth.'

Addressing to the next generation of APWLD feminists she said,

'I think APWLD has grown and progressed. It has become more popular and has connected with a bigger population, both regionally and internationally. My advice to the younger members is for them to continue to grow as they continue to expand their horizon and vision. They need to be conscious of their personal development as well as the development of women regionally and globally. To remain on track, they must often ask themselves where they are going. Most of all, they should not forget to build their second-liners or the ones who will take over after them.'

Soledad Perpinan (1937 –2011), Philippines

Founding Member, APWLD

Known as Sister Sol, by her colleagues at Good Shepherd Sisters, Soledad Perpinan devoted her time to advocacy work against the sexual exploitation and trafficking in women. In 1980 she founded the Third World Movement against the Exploitation of Women (TWM-MAE-W), which operates residential rehabilitation on services and drop-in centres in 12 sites in the major islands of the Philippines. For several years she worked for the rights of abused women and children, people living with HIV/AIDS, exploited labourers, indigenous peoples and other marginalised groups.

In 1987 she started direct services with drop-in centres in areas known for sex tourism, military and ship prostitution and street slum prostitution. With these centres she was able to provide an alternative for these women – jobs, training centres and hostels for HIV positive women and children.



Sister Soledad served as the Secretary General of the Asia-Pacific Peace Research Association (APPRA) and a council member of the International Peace Research Association (IPRA). Sister Soledad's description of 'the impact of industrialisation on women and children, particularly as rights to land are lost which ultimately leads to marginalisation and wage slavery' was included in 'Peace Studies From a Global Perspective', an important book for the international peace studies community. In a review of this book Sister Soledad was described as 'IPRA's most articulate scholar-activists in calling attention to globalization's crushing effect in two-thirds of the world'³¹.

Radhika Coomaraswamy, Sri Lanka

Founding Member, APWLD

Member, APWLD Steering Committee 1988 – 1995, APWLD Regional Council 1997 – 2002

Former Chairperson, Sri Lanka Human Rights Commission

First UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women

Radhika Coomaraswamy has worked tirelessly for many years as a defender of women's rights and children's rights. From 1994-2003 she served as the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women and from 2006-2012 as Under-Secretary-General and Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict. In her native Sri Lanka she held the position of chairperson for the Sri Lankan Human Rights Commission. In 2014, she was appointed by UN Secretary General Ban-Ki-Moon as lead author on the Global Study on the Implementation of UNSC Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. A lawyer by training, she has achieved outstanding work in her reports on violence in the family, violence in the community, violence against women in armed conflict and the problems of international trafficking. She has intervened on behalf of countless women throughout the world seeking clarification from governments in cases involving violence against women.³²



'Dr. Radhika Coomaraswamy, as the Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women has worked to set new international standards on women's rights. She has always been accessible and supportive for all women who are in trouble. For those suffering, it is a lifetime to know that someone with influence is out there, listening, understanding and speaking out.' - Heisoo Shin, APWLD member from the Republic of Korea, 20 September 2003

Reflecting on APWLD's contribution in the region, Radhika said the following in an interview³³ conducted in 2005:

'I think the most important contribution that the Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development has made, is to create a very vibrant network of women and women's organisations in Asia that deal with issues, share experiences and provide a great sense of solidarity. I think solidarity is really the word that comes to mind when I think of APWLD. In addition,

³¹ Elise Boulding's review of Peace Studies from a Global Perspective: Human Needs in a Cooperative World. Edited by Ursula Oswald Spring. Delhi: Maadhyam Book Services (2000) in the International Journal of Peace Studies, n.d. Retrieved from http://www.gmu.edu/programs/icar/ijps/vol7_1/Review_Boulding.html

³² Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict. Retrieved from <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/about-us/special-representative/radhika-coomaraswamy/>

³³ Excerpts from an interview done at the International Consultation on Women Human Rights Defenders, Sri Lanka, December 2005

of course, they have been doing a lot of good work like training and having seminars and discussions for conceptual clarity on many issues. They had a briefing every year with me, as UN Special Rapporteur, with regards to Asian issues on violence against women, which has to be appreciated. But more that it has given a great sense of solidarity for women in Asia and a sense of an Asian identity in fighting for a lot of these issues at the global level and some of the issues that are of concern for Asia to come out very strongly at the global level as well. So, all in all it has been a very successful time for APWLD and I think there are a lot of challenges ahead. But working at the regional level is very important for Asia, especially because the Asian region is often seen, state wise, to be the least supportive of human rights at the international level. Asian states tend to be more skeptical about human rights, so I think it is very important to have grassroots activists coming together in solidarity and working together to push issues of the human rights.'

Chantawipa Apisuk, Thailand

Founding Member, APWLD

Founder and Director, Empower Foundation

Chantawipa Apisuk founded 'Empower' in 1984, an NGO which promotes the human rights of sex workers and provides a space for sex workers in Thailand own, belong, organise and assert their rights to education, health, access to justice and political participation. More recently, through Empower, she opened a museum in Bangkok dedicated to Thai sex workers, which displays a collection of project materials as well as reflections from the 30 years journey of Empower.



'The main message is that "sex work" is a global issue. It cannot be solved by morality, or legality. It is a collection of missing documentation on women's history. The exhibits create a different way of looking at the sex work issue and how it should be more than one sided.' said Chantawipa.

'The museum has been very successful in running workshops and discussions on sex work issues, which take place after the museum tour,' she added.

When asked whether laws to protect sex workers have improved in the past 30 years her response was:

'Laws are better, but bad and unjust laws are still everywhere. Local laws are worse now than years ago. The first prostitution laws of 1960 were revised in 1996, and stated that 18 year olds must be rehabilitated. It is disrespectful to the International Children's Rights Protection. The Human Trafficking Laws still have a lot of protection articles that have never been enforced. Furthermore, the US influence in the Prostitution Pledge Policy is disastrous and means that there is no financial support for individual sex workers or project programmes. The pledge effectively means that cuts are made to health programmes, education programmes etc... Migrant sex workers need legal support. They come to Empower to learn to read and write Thai. We believe in giving education to people.'

When asked about her plan she said,

'I am a 69-year-old woman...I will be 70 very soon. I wish to see some changes. I've been learning from Empower for many years and lived through 14 governments. Now I want to retire but still help Empower. I run the sex worker's museum in Bangkok and I still enjoy meeting with (young) friends and supporters from both the local and international community.'

She wishes APWLD to

'include more sex workers in their movement. Also, that women lawyers could further support those women with limited education and commit to taking more poor women as their clients They could strive to better understand all the issues surrounding sex work and the hidden facts around it. These women are often the head of the family and have to provide for them. Women are smart no matter what profession they are in, and the law can be an instrument to back them up.'

Virada Somswasdi, Thailand

Founding Member, APWLD

Member, APWLD Steering Committee 1986 - 1995, 1997-1999, 2011-2003, Regional Council 1997, 2000, 2004 - 2014, Programme and Management Committee 1997-2014, Task Force on Women and the Environment 2000-2004, Task Force on Women's Participation in Political Processes 2005-2007, POC Grounding the Global International Mechanism 2009-2012, POC Women in Power Programme 2013

Founder and former Director, Women's Studies program, Chiang Mai University

President, Foundation for Women, Law and Rural Development (FORWARD)



Virada Somswasdi is a dedicated feminist academic, lawyer and activist from Thailand who has been involved in the women's movement for over four decades.

After completing her LL.B. degree from Chulalongkorn University and an LL.M. from Cornell University, USA she started teaching law at Chiang Mai University in 1973 at the time when the student movement for democracy has been strong in Thailand.³⁴ While working as an associate professor of law, she established the Women's Studies Centre at Chiang Mai University in 1986. Her teaching subjects included Family Law, Feminist Jurisprudence; Law and Society; Women's Movement; Sex Crimes and Women's Human Rights.³⁵

Virada has been directly associated with APWLD since its founding in 1986 and played an instrumental role in the transfer of APWLD Secretariat to Chiang Mai in 1997. She served as the organisation's interim

34 Forum News (1999, April). Volume 12, Number 1.

35 Retrieved from <https://www.chiangmaicitylife.com/citylife-articles/where-thai-women-stand-the-status-of-thai-women-today/>



Regional Coordinator from 1997 to 1999. After stepping down from her position as the Regional Coordinator, she served in various governance bodies of APWLD until 2015.

Virada worked relentlessly to raise the status of women in Thailand. She served as the president of the Foundation for Women, Law and Rural Development (FORWARD) and sat on the board of the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women Asia Pacific and Worldwide Association of Women's Studies. She has written and edited many books and articles in the areas of

trafficking in women, sexual exploitation of women, pornography, gender and aids, family law, domestic violence, feminist jurisprudence, women's human rights and women's movements.³⁶ She is a recipient of the 'Woman of Courage' award by the US Department of State, and various other prestigious national awards in recognition of her contribution in gender equality work including 'Woman of the Year' by the prime minister's office in 2002.

Reflections from leading APWLD members from the first and second waves

Hameeda Hossain, Bangladesh

*Member, APWLD Steering Committee 1996-1999, Regional Council 1994-1998, Task Force on Labour and Migration 1997-1998
Co-founder, Ain o Salish Kendra*

APWLD was set up to examine the discrimination faced by women in their own countries, and to document their experiences of violence. Its aim was to develop a consensus for advocacy at international and regional forums for equality and non-discrimination within the family, at the workplace and in citizen state relations. It located development within a human rights framework and prioritised the need for legal reform and promoted state responsibility in addressing inequalities. It had a fairly wide representation from different countries, and regional programmes were promoted within each country as well. Its feminist legal training was very popular amongst women activists.



Sultana Kamal, Bangladesh

Member, APWLD Steering Committee 2000-2003, Regional Council 1996-1997, 1999 & 2017-2020, APLD Programme and Management Committee 2004 - 2007, Task Force on Labour and Migration 2002-2006

I wasn't involved in the beginning of the network but heard [about APWLD] from my senior colleagues - Asma Jahangir, Hina Jilani from Pakistan, Nimalka Fernando from Sri Lanka and Salma Sobhan and Roushan Jahan from Bangladesh.

APWLD became instrumental in arguing that women's life had to be seen from a holistic view and their development related integrally with recognition of their rights as individuals. It also showed the important commonalities and specificities of lives of women in different regions, situations, classes to be able to efficiently decide on intervention strategies. The world witnessed the rise of women as united force despite geographical divides.

People and concerned groups including the policy makers became aware of the institutional discrimination against women and many International, Regional and National Networks took up the issue for research, reform movements, campaigns and advocacy.

The very basic goal of including the grassroots groups, especially women in the research, dissemination of information and activities gave APWLD a special character. The structure of APWLD was inclusive with the task forces in various areas. Women at the grassroots levels could participate equally in formulating recommendations for change. APWLD's links with other regional and international networks, UN mechanisms like the Special Rapporteurs proved to be particularly effective.



Fatima Nateson Burnad, India

Member, APWLD Steering Committee 1994-1995, Regional Council 2004-2007 & 2017-2020, Task Force on Rural and Indigenous Women 1997-2000, POC Women in Power Programme 2009-2012, POC Women Interrogating Trade and Corporate Hegemony 2017-2018
Founder and Director of Society for Rural Education and Development/
Tamil Nadu
Dalit Women's Movement, India



It is very important to have a regional organisation like APWLD: it has been educating grassroots workers about regional perspectives. I appreciate its efforts on coordination and network building with other movements.

APWLD is the only network that supports grassroots women to participate at regional conferences which helps grassroots movements to grow with other movements.

I joined APWLD in 1989. APWLD gave me orientation on International Conventions such as CEDAW, UN instruments, which I carried back to my groups. APWLD has taught me about food security, land rights, political rights, issues of culture and religion. APWLD has also campaigned on caste discrimination and supported the Dalit movement to bring up the issue of caste discrimination to the international level whilst there are not many regional and international organisations advocating for Dalits' rights.

So, joining APWLD for me shaped me with clear perspectives, perspectives that are very important, and I like it. I think people also like it wherever I go, wherever I express my views. It's women for me, women focus and grassroot focus, APWLD shaped me that way. And they allowed me to express according to my situation, they did not say it's not the forum, you should not talk about this or that, it has allowed me to share my ideas, allowed me to develop.

APWLD changed my views on certain things: I was against lobbying and advocacy before I joined APWLD. I used to believe in militant action by women but APWLD tamed me in that respect. I was very much against the UN system. I thought: I cannot reach them, they are in Geneva, they don't care about grassroots people. Now I believe we must take our issues to the regional and international levels. We cannot fight alone on the issues such as imperialist globalisation. APWLD was initiated by mainly lawyers. As an activist, I used to dislike lawyers. For me lawyers mean 5,000 rupees. Poor women cannot afford them but APWLD changed my perception of them, for an activist it is important to know the legal aspect of the issues we are working on to be able change the discriminatory laws.

APWLD supports not only materially, but ideologically. We learned a lot. Why we address RCEP, we learned that. So this will continue with other women also. More and more grassroots women will come in, participate, provide perspectives, it's necessary. I would like our sisterhood to develop and grow. Let us continue to be a powerful network. If our sisterhood is powerful then APWLD is powerful. Other networks I am in, not much focus on women, whereas APWLD focuses on women, and my heart is there.

Madhu Mehra, India

Member, APWLD Steering Committee 1997-2000, Regional Council 1996-1997 & 2007-2011, Programme and Management Committee 2000, APWLD Task Force on Women's Human Rights 1997-2007, POC Feminist Law and Practice 2009-2012
Founding member and the Executive Director of Partners for Law in Development (PLD)



My association with APWLD began through its feminist Legal Theory and Practice (FLTP) programme in 1994, continuing well over a decade of active engagement. It was exhilarating to have the space to develop curricula, resource packages and pedagogy innovatively in ways that were not possible either within formal educational spaces, or indeed, in women's organisations, which at the time did not view law as an aspect of their work. Soon after, I also joined the governance body, the Steering Committee (later replaced by the Regional Council), a space that was as heavy as it was nurturing, learning about the struggles that APWLD was part of, as well as those that its members were within different spheres of activism. APWLD's gift of sisterhood, its vibrant political discourse, democratic participatory processes of functioning enabled women to flourish, grow into leaders, a quality that made for enduring associations with the network – and lifelong friendships.

The second decade of APWLD, (when my involvement started), APWLD institutionalised regional consultations to root the evolving standards on VAW in experiences of women in the region. Annual regional consultations helped ensure that the mandate's themes were informed by regional experiences, and simultaneously, facilitated submission of complaints from the region. From the inception of the mandate, held by Radhika Coomaraswamy, through Yakin Erutuk's tenure till the beginning of Rashida Manjoo's term in 2010, the annual consultations provided a strategic interface between activists and victims with the SRVAW, which Yakin Ertuk observed was worth emulating across regions. A space of vibrant debates and learning, it covered issues of rape as war crime in relation to comfort women, Sri Lankan civil war; of elements that constitute holistic responses to domestic and intimate partner violence with a focus on shelters and restoration, as part of the worldwide impetus for adoption of domestic violence laws. There were highly polarised debates on criminalisation and de-criminalisation of sex work; of intersections between fundamentalism, cultural essentialism and relativism and its impact on women; of women's oppression under militarisation; of accounts of migrant and indigenous women that pieced together the political economy of displacement and impoverishment.

Another institutionalised response to engender human rights standards, was in relation to women human rights defenders (WHRD), following the appointment of founding member, Hina Jilani as the Special Representative to the UN Secretary General on Human Rights Defenders in 2000. APWLD initiated a cross cutting campaign involving all its programme task forces on WHRDs, held extensive consultations and took on the responsibility of coordinating and hosting the secretariat of the then newly formed Women Human Rights Defenders International Coalition for several years, of which it was and remains a part.

Spurring in-country activism on law, was the Feminist Legal Theory and Practice programme (FLTP). Begun by Ratna Kapur in early 1990s, the programme focussed on 'theory', growing on to incorporated 'legal practice' and 'international human rights law'. I joined the programme in about 1996-97, and soon after, did Eleanor Conda. Successive evaluations of the initial and

later phase of FLTP found it to be one of the most valuable contributions of APWLD to regional feminist mobilisation on human rights in the 1990s and early 2000s. Creating an affirming space for feminist lawyers, offering tools by which to critically review domestic laws in relation to gender justice and its intersections with a wide range of issues – the programme also defined ‘practice’ to reflect the range of feminist engagement with the law – from legislative advocacy to capacity development, to litigation. The FLTP approach kept women’s lived realities across different forms of marginalisations at its centre, in its scrutiny and application of the law. Beginning with women’s rights violations in the private domain, an area shielded from legal intervention across jurisdictions – the FLTP expanded its coverage to issues of development, migration, displacement and caste/ race discrimination. The ability to politically claim feminism (a much stigmatised term in many countries) as lawyers and be part of a community, allowed for solidarities and nurturance that catalysed activism of FLTP graduates, many of whom are today the second generation of trainers: Honey Tan, Sanaiyya Ansari, Albertina Almeida, Seema Naidu amongst others, to name a few.

To contextualise the critical contribution of FLTP, one must recall that in early 90s, the approach to legal education across Asia and the Pacific was purely formalistic, in terms of accepting the black letter law without tools to question its claims to objectivity and impartiality. Legal education focussed on ‘knowing’ the black letter of the law as it existed, rather than on examining the law from the vantage point of women’s realities to question its biases and neglect. To create an FLTP community regionally in such a context, was to make available feminist political tools and lens to young and mid-level lawyers for whom this was far from accessible. Beyond the learning, it was the fostering of community of FLTP alumni and the creation of rights resources that was transformatory for many, and remains unique contribution in the region till today.

Inevitably, there are ways in which movement building and organising – as well as its key thematic concerns have evolved in response to changing times. What started out as a sisterhood of frontline leaders, of national acclaim when NGOs had not yet emerged – the membership has grown diverse as it should be, with NGOs, individual activists and movements all playing a role. It’s a space where younger women leadership and activism is visibly nurtured, as is the representation from those working with the most marginalised constituencies of women – Dalits, the indigenous, the workers, to name a few. Given that despite normative gains, the law has over the years inevitably leaned in favour of the powerful – resistance has become centre stage in APWLD’s mobilising and expression. At a time when the law appears to be in crisis, I would hope that attention is once again turned critically unpacking the ‘law’ and our engagement with it – not just within FLTP but also as a cross cutting area for developing new analysis, tools of assessment and understandings.

Govind Kelkar, India

Member, APWLD Regional Council 2014-2020, APWLD Programme and Management Committee 2014-2020, Task Force on Rural and Indigenous Women 1998-2001, POC Breaking Out Of Marginalisation 2009-2018, Cross-POC Feminist Learning Institute 2017-2018



The institutionalisation of women’s development in the form of Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD) is not simply an outcome of technical change or of individual or collective choice. It reflects the impact of change in the complex forms of a structure of constraints based on gender relations and patriarchal ideologies, particularly in the production of knowledge and action for women’s freedom that would facilitate and advance in women’s economic agency and gender equality.

Clearly women’s movements and human rights activists provided for the setting of the stage for APWLD. In the mid-1980s, I was a professor in the Centre for Women’s Development Studies, New Delhi and subsequently had accepted a research fellowship at Nehru Memorial Museum and Library to work on women’s role in peasant movements in India and China. More importantly I was very much a part of women’s movement in India and in discussions on a secular change of gendered social norms that uphold that certain jobs and resources are appropriate for only men, as they are enshrined in the traditional culture. However, if social cost of these norms increases (in terms of women’s exclusion from certain resources and work) there is likely to be women-specific secular change in the social norms and of course in economic development.

I was there in 1985 in Nairobi conference but sadly missed the formal decision meeting on the formation of APWLD. I had a speaking engagement at the same time. This initial loss, however, was compensated by my appointment in Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) in Bangkok which allowed me to be in close association with APWLD’s work particularly in the two areas: rural and indigenous women’s networks and violence against women. Interesting at one time I was approached for the position of regional coordinator of APWLD but I had to give priority to my presence in AIT where it was promised that ‘Soon the academic system of AIT will have a graduate programme in gender and development studies, on par with other field of studies’. This did happen and I regularly transferred my learnings from APWLD to my students in AIT. My association with APWLD gave me strength to struggle and change indecent representation of women in posters and calendars spread across AIT campus, and establish a field of gender studies with academic parity and dignity for women students in a graduate school.

Despite my association with APWLD, setting up Gender and Development Studies at AIT was a challenge and tough experience. Some of our efforts at advocacy for a full-fledged graduate program of teaching and research in gender and technology studies did not cause problems and sailed smoothly, while others were opposed because they were seen as ‘blatantly feminist, and argued for gender equality’ and therefore subversive of cultural norms. The latter caused enduring and tiresome controversies. For over a period of six years (1991-1997), there were repeated deadlocks causing fatigue and demoralising experience. There were many occasions in the first five years when I felt indignant and questioned myself if my struggle at AIT was worth the effort. I however carried on because of the undying support I received from my friends in APWLD and AIT students, a large number of them being feminist (both women and men) and held strategic positions in various places within the Institute, across the region and outside the region as well.

Mikiko Otani, Japan

Member, APWLD Regional Council 2001-2014, Programme and Management Committee 2008-2014, POC Grounding the Global International 2009-2018



I came to know about APWLD when I was looking for opportunities to get involved in the human rights activities at the regional level when I returned to legal practice in Tokyo in 1999 after two year study on international human rights law in the US. Studying international human rights law in the US created in me of self-consciousness of 'Asian' identity and motivated me to study and work for human rights issues in the Asia-Pacific region. Also I decided to use my legal skill and knowledge of international human rights law for women's rights. With these interest and motivation, when I learned about APWLD from Yoko Hayashi, a Japanese lawyer and a member of APWLD, I expressed my interest in participating APWLD.

I was appointed as a Regional Council member replacing a Regional Council member from Japan who finished her term. That was the start of my involvement in APWLD. Although I was very much excited and keen to participate in the activities, there was no vacancy for a Task Force or Working Group member. For a new comer without previous experiences in the activities through Task Forces or Working Groups, it was not easy to understand how APWLD was working and to get closer with other Regional Council members and Secretariat. As a young woman lawyer from Japan who studied international human rights law in the US, APWLD was the place of all learning and training on women's movement, women's issues, feminism, justice, development, etc.

I was rather shy for several years having no opportunity to participate activities through Task Force or Working Group. But I had been always enlightened, inspired and empowered by feminist women activists and leaders whom I met at APWLD. Later, I was given opportunities to contribute to APWLD as a Programme and Management Committee member in its challenging time in terms of finance, leadership and structural changes. Through working closely with other members and Secretariat, my sense of belonging to APWLD, strong feminist regional women's organization, developed and became further solid.

When Task Forces were abolished to strengthen member-led activities by Organising Committees, I joined the Grounding the Global Organising Committee. I was engaged in organising and participating in annual regional consultations with the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women and other Special Rapporteurs. The title of the programme, 'Grounding the Global' comes from the concept of using global norms and mechanisms such as the UN human rights mechanisms on the ground, closer to women in the region rather than our going to the UN or other global platforms. Discussions at the international forum often get disconnected from the reality on the ground. APWLD's annual regional consultations provide critically important platform connecting the real women's lives, issues and challenges with the discussions at the UN or other international forum. How the discussions at the UN reflect the reality on the ground and have real impact on women, children, marginalised groups of people particularly in the global south is always a checking point for me now as a member of the international body, the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Ivy Josiah, Malaysia

Member, APWLD Regional Council 2000-2005, 2012-2016, Programme and Management Committee 2017-2020, Task Force on Violence Against Women 1997-2005, POC Grounding the Global International 2013-2017, POC Feminist Learning Institute (Cross-Programme Organising Committee) 2016-2018
Former Executive Director, Women Aid's Organisation, Malaysia



I stumbled into the APWLD world in 1997 when I heard that this women's organisation was holding a regional meeting in Penang, a northern state in Malaysia. Task Forces were being formed and one of them was going to be regional Task Force on Violence Against Women (VAW).

Of course prior to 1997, I was already aware that a regional women's organisation had been set up in Kuala Lumpur in the UNDP building but in my view at that time, in the mid 80s, APWLD seemed like a closed club of elite and rather intimidating women leaders.

Back to 1997, I called Zainah Anwar who was in the governance structure at that time and asked if Women's Aid Organisation(WAO) could be included as WAO was the first shelter in Malaysia for domestic violence survivors. I was then invited to be part of the VAW Task Force and so ensued more exposure to APWLD activities particularly the annual face to face meetings with the UN Special Rapporteur on VAW Radhika Coomaraswamy. Coming from a national space, it was very reassuring to find out that women's groups in the region were also setting up shelters, pushing for legislative reform and creating innovative public education campaigns.

The annual sessions with the UN Special Rapporteur on VAW made APWLD stand out, as Geneva and New York UN meetings were out of reach for national NGOS.

'The consultations, held annually since 1995, allow us to think, discuss and voice our collective anger about the causes of women's inequality in Asia Pacific without the constraints and rule of treaty bodies. They place women and women's rights organisations at the heart of the conversation, not in the periphery as observers. The consultations give women the opportunity to tell their stories of pain, of courage, of success and of repression not only in a supportive environment, but an environment that matters to the "ears" of the Human Rights Council'.³⁷

Combating gender violence was a common theme in our region in the late 80s and early 90s. By bringing together activists working on this issue, it reinforced our understanding that eliminating VAW must strike at the root causes, bring about structural reform and place VAW as both a cause and consequence of discrimination against women. Women must not only be free from violence but from the fear of violence. Furthermore, we took cognizance of the reality that we are Asia Pacific women dealing with postcolonialism.

At that time in the 80s, in our national discourse in Malaysia, we dared not declare ourselves as feminists for all the usual reasons that we will be labelled as home breakers, man hating,

.....
³⁷ Summary report of the Asia Pacific NGO consultation with the office of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its Causes and Consequences; 'My Body, My Life, My Rights: Addressing Violations of Women's Sexual and Reproductive Rights' 7-8 December 2009 Bangkok, Thailand

westerners etc. However, when I began interacting with fearless feminists from India, Philippines, Korea and Sri Lanka, to name a few I was inspired to wear my feminist credentials openly! Conversations with Raquel Tiglaio from the Philippines and Shamima Ali from Fiji within the Task Force on VAW led us to produce a handbook on Feminist Counselling³⁸, to link theory to practice. We embraced a feminist ideology that fueled our activism.

Upon reflection, what makes APWLD different is that this organisation is committed to movement building. APWLD is fired up, led and shaped by feminists who came together in solidarity and purpose and we are still igniting movements for women's equality and justice.

Azra Talat Sayeed, Pakistan

*Member, APWLD Regional Council Member 2006-2011 & 2014-2016, Programme and Management Committee 2005-2011, Task Force on Women and the Environment 1999-2006, POC Feminist Development Justice 2013-2017, POC Women Interrogating Trade and Corporate Hegemony 2018
Founder of the Roots for Equity*



I first came to know about APWLD when the organisation I was serving, Roots for Equity, received an invitation from APWLD to join the Task Force on Women and Environment (WEN) in 1998.

My beginning years at APWLD were marked by the height of the anti-globalisation movement, with Asia being a very strong front; and it soon became clear that APWLD, led by very determined anti-imperialist feminists was going to challenge the neoliberal agenda that that was being thrust on the third world countries. The World Trade Organization, and the international financial institutions were pushing for trade liberalisation and open markets. These were the initial years of globalisation, and there was limited understanding of the WTO agreements, and neoliberal policies.

What was unique about APWLD was that the task forces had the freedom to develop programs that were demanded by the membership. A hallmark of APWLD was its grass roots-based membership. The women who were part of APWLD generally were strong activists at home, representing key women groups and feminists, fighting for women's rights in their countries.

Though a regional platform, APWLD was very down to earth in its membership base. This was particularly true for women at WEN and the Rural and Indigenous Women (RIW) Task Force that was represented by grass root women. An important articulation by these task forces was the need for tools that could develop a grass root cadre of women activists at home that could be in the forefront of fighting against globalisation.

Apart from the internal work that APWLD carried out to build the movements at home, it also maintained a close scrutiny of international happenings. In 2001, a very big women's delegation from APWLD attended the First International Assembly of the International League of People's Struggle (ILPS), an anti-imperialist front against the western hegemonic forces that was held in Eindhoven, Netherlands. A number of these women were elected to sit in the International

Coordinating Council of ILPS. During this decade APWLD also participated in numerous FAO meetings in Rome and represented the women's front at the people's forums organized to challenge the globalisations forces. It was through the close solidarity that APWLD maintained with regional and international organisations, that APWLD was able to be a major women's rights voice at the Hong Kong People's Alliance on the WTO (HKPA) in Hong Kong, organising against the WTO 6th Ministerial Conference.

In the late 2000s, APWLD once again decided to reevaluate its program structure, which was based on the task forces. The organisation was facing a number of challenges, financially as well as in its

The period was marked by stress and worry about the viability of the organisation but the membership stood united and pitched in various forms of resources to overcome this period. The amazing camaraderie, solidarity and unity of members fighting to keep APWLD a front line organisation fighting for women's rights was in itself a great motivation for the further bonding and strong unity. Number doubt those months of APWLD going through another metamorphosis show the mettle of APWLD's membership; its fearless willing to embrace change in its dedication to fighting for women's rights; to serve its constituency, the oppressed and marginalised women across many sectors ranging from women suffering at the hand of imperialist globalisation, patriarchy, class-based discriminations, religious atrocities, and climate change disasters, among others.

No doubt, for women rights defenders, Asia Pacific without APWLD is not imaginable!

Zohra Yusuf, Pakistan

*Member, APWLD Regional Council 1998-2002
Chairperson of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP)*



My first encounter with APWLD was in December 1988 when I was nominated by Shirkat Gah (Women's Resource Centre) to represent it at an APWLD meeting in Kuala Lumpur. APWLD had its office in KL at the time. The meeting focused on drafting a set of common values for women.

I wasn't among the founders but I believe it was the commonality of concerns among women of the Asia-Pacific region that led to the formation of gender-based violence, rights of women in employment, land rights, political participation among others.

I have not been involved with APWLD for many years now. However, our countries are increasingly seeing greater challenges to fundamental freedoms - from internet censorship to attacks on NGOs and human rights defenders. APWLD needs to be responsive to these developments.

Elisa Tita Lubi, Philippines

Member, APWLD Steering Committee 1996-2000, Regional Council 2004-2011, Programme and Management Committee 2004-2006, Task Force on Rural and Indigenous Women 1997-2001, Task Force on Women and the Environment 1999-2000, Task Force on Women's Participation in Political Processes 2003-2007
Founding Vice Chairperson of Gabriela Women's Party
Karapatan National Executive Committee member
Former interim Regional Coordinator of the Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD)



My first encounter with APWLD was when GABRIELA, through her Secretary General Nelia Sancho, sent me to represent the organisation to an APWLD workshop held in Yogyakarta in the island of Java, Indonesia in 1989 (or was it 1990?). GABRIELA was a new member of APWLD and was usually represented by Nelia. Since the workshop was about human rights, I was sent since I was a newly released political prisoner having worked underground since the time of President Ferdinand Marcos's martial rule and until my arrest during the administration of Corazon Aquino.

This was the period when APWLD encouraged the participation in its activities of non-lawyer activists and grassroots women. It more consciously linked itself to national women's movements in the Asia-Pacific. It took on a mission of assisting national women's movements, helping in whatever small way in strengthening the relatively weaker ones and in helping consolidate small women's groups and encouraging them to build a movement in their own countries. APWLD was very conscious of its role in helping build and strengthen women's movements in the Asia-Pacific.

Having started as a political activist during the martial law years of the dictator Ferdinand Marcos, and having been arrested and detained three times, the last time under President Corazon Aquino, 'democracy icon', I completely dismissed laws as tools of the state to maintain the oppressive and exploitative status quo and came to the conclusion that the law profession is useless under repressive governments and would not recommend it as a course for young people.

APWLD's advocacy to use law to change the situation of women for the better and to contribute to women's emancipation eroded my hard stand. My attitude has changed to the extent that I am now actively involved in the use of legal struggle in court in our defence of human rights in the Philippines and in the work in the Philippine legislature to enact legislations that benefit the marginalised majority especially those in the basic sectors and push for onsite hearings to investigate and expose human rights violations. However, it is also clear to me that legal advocacy cannot be separated from the mobilisation of women and the public outside the courts and parliament to generate public opinion to support the cases or law being advocated.

APWLD gave me the opportunity to meet women from various countries in the Asia-Pacific and beyond thereby enriching my knowledge of the situation of women especially those places which are very different from the Philippines, like South Asia and Africa for example. Our South Asian sisters taught me a lot about fundamentalism and its effect and impact on women. Some of the things suffered by women due to fundamentalism I could not have imagined. Our sisters

in Central Asia gave me a clearer idea as to what they are losing due to globalisation versus the gains from whatever level of socialism their country has reached.

The knowledge gained from actual exposure, facilitated by APWLD, deepened my understanding and tightened my grasp of the principles and theories learned. And the sharing of women's resistance and struggles strengthened my commitment to fight for a better world, helping to further improve our practice and give added inspiration to our own national struggle.

After over two decades of working with the organisation, I can say with certainty that APWLD is an effective venue for developing women's consciousness and women's international solidarity!

Judy Taguiwalo, Philippines

Member, APWLD Steering Committee 2000-2003, Regional Council 1997-1999 and 2012-2014, Programme and Management Committee 2012-2014, Task Force on Rural and Indigenous Women 1998-2003, POC Feminist Learning Institute (Cross-Programme Organising Committee) 2016-2018
Founding National President of All UP Academic Employee Union
Founder of All-UP Workers' Alliance
Former Secretary of the Philippines' Department of Social Welfare and Development



I became a member of APWLD in its second wave; the time it shifted its office from Kuala Lumpur to Chiang Mai in late 1997. I am not sure now what came first, my participation in the meeting with UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women Radhika Coomaraswamy in Sri Lanka or in the "Rural Women Speak Out Against Globalisation" the first network activity held in Chiang Mai.

The consultation with Radhika, one of the founding members of APWLD, was on state violence against women. I gave an account on custodial violence describing my experience of torture during the martial law period in the Philippines.

After the Chiang Mai meeting, I became a member of Task Force Rural and Indigenous Women (TF-RIW) as I had spent years in rural women organising during martial law and when the Marcos dictatorship was overthrown, I helped organise AMIHAN, National Federation of Peasant Women, and became its first Secretary General. As a member of the TF-RIW, I put together the APWLD module on globalisation which introduced neo-liberalism and its impact on the lives of Asian women especially rural women. I was also a part of the team that brainstormed the Food Sovereignty kit.

In 1999, I became a member of the Regional Council and attended its meeting in Vanuatu in the Pacific and met a number of our Pacific sisters addressing issues of violence against women and creeping authoritarianism. In 2001-2003, I would be elected to the Programme and Management Committee. I wrote of that period in this solicited essay for the 2004 Forum:

'It was great to be part of APWLD's Programme and Management Committee. I would be a member of APWLD governance bodies on and off from 2001 to 2017. I admire it for its strong standpoint for poor, marginalised and vulnerable women and communities. I salute it for its sharp analyses of the roots of women's oppression, linking patriarchy with globalisation, fundamentalism and militarism. Its critique of law as legitimising social injustice and inequality and its brave initiatives to transform laws to empower women have led to many pioneering changes benefitting women.'

Being part of APWLD means being part of a sisterhood bound by a common vision of and aspiration for a just, equitable and peaceful world. It is a sisterhood of brave Asia Pacific women, young and old, committed to changing the world.

Heisoo Shin, Republic of Korea

Member, APWLD Steering Committee 1996-1999, Regional Council 1994-1997 & 2012-2016, Task Force/ Working Group on Violence Against Women 1998-2007, Programme Organising Committee Grounding the Global International 2009-2018

Member, UN Committee on Economic, Social and Culture at United Nations (2011-2022)



I have been a member of APWLD since 1991, and it had some organisational changes. It was task forces then, it has changed now to organisational committees, OCs. It fluctuated; I belonged first to the Violence Against Women task force, then the Women's Human Rights Working Group, and now Grounding the Global International OC. I think the best trends from its (APWLD's) democratic nature. Organisationally it is based on membership, it has structured the decision-making so that it is by each OC, each area, and then Regional Council. I think during the years, APWLD has struggled to survive and to expand. But it has continued till now, as a membership-based, democratically structured organisation.

The world is changing, there is a conservatism, or a backlash. I think it makes a big difference when women's activism pays attention on any issue of women's human rights and pushes it through. Those women's human rights that have been secured are unstable. You never know when the backlash, the conservatism or fundamentalism takes over, and then whatever human rights that we have secured so far will be shattered. So it is very important for women's activism to keep going, as well as take more young women into the movement. I think APWLD should play that kind of role, building and supporting the grassroots movements in the member countries, so that our next generation of women will not suffer the same discrimination and violence. If we don't keep doing it, it will get lost, I'm afraid. But if I think of Korea, we can never imagine going back to the old days in my generation, when we were discriminated against. Of course, there are new forms of discrimination and violence in this age of smartphones, there's online harassment, all kinds of fraud, new forms of violence that we have to fight against. I hope APWLD lasts 100 years, but then I would be really happy if we lived in a society where women's organisations are not needed because we have achieved gender equality.



Lists of Members of APWLD's Institutional Structure 1986-2018

Introduction

These lists were compiled using various sources including APWLD's progress/ half-yearly/ annual reports from 1988 to 2017, quarterly newsletters 'Forum News' from 1990 to 2014, minutes of the various meetings of the Steering Committee, Regional Council, Programme and Management Committee, the General Assembly, and the institutional memories of staff members. Some of these documents, specially for the earlier years, were only available in hard copies in APWLD's physical archive which were moved around in boxes every time the location of the Secretariat shifted. It was an arduous and time consuming process to go through the piles of these unorganised documents and extract the relevant information, and even then, some of the information remained missing due to the inconsistent documentation style of the above mentioned documents. We tried our best to compile a complete list, and any gaps and mistakes in these lists are unintentional.



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1. Founding Members: 1986¹

Bangladesh

Roushan Jahan, Women for Women
Salma Sobhan (1937- 2003), Ain-O-Salish Kendra (ASK)

Fiji

Shamima Ali, Women's Crisis Center
Mere Pulea, Mere Pulea and Associates

India

Rani Advani (1952 – 2001), Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA)
Nandini Azad
Jyotsna Chatterji, Joint Women's Programme
Rani Jethmalani (1945 –2011), Supreme Court Advocate
Ranjana Kumari, Center for Social Research
Manjula Rathore, Benares Hindu University
Josna Roy, Center for Social Research
Nalini Singh, Journalist

Indonesia

Luisa Gandi, Fakultas Hukum, Universitas Indonesia
Saparinah Sadli, LKbuWK (Women's Legal Services Project)
Amartiwi Saleh, Legal Aid Lawyer
Nani Yamin, LKBuWK (Women's Legal Services Project)

Japan

Miyoko Shiozawa, Center for Asian Women Workers

Malaysia

Noor Farida Ariffin, Association of Women Lawyers
Lim Kah Cheng, Association of Women Lawyers
Irene Fernandez (1946 –2014), Women's Development Collective

Nepal

Silu Singh, Women's Legal Services Project, Nepal Women's Organisation
Shanta Thapaliya (1945 –2011), Faculty of Law, Trihubvan University

Pakistan

Asma Jahangir (1952- 2018), AGHS Law Associates
Hina Jilani, AGHS Law Associates
Rashida Patel, Pakistan Women Lawyers Association

Philippines

Alice Canonoy-Morada, Central Visayas Regional Projects
Marilyn Cepe, BATAS (Center for People's Law)
Mariflor Parpan, MATAKU
Soledad Perpinan (1937 –2011), Third World Movement Against the Exploitation of Women
Jing Porte, Women's Center
Emelina Quintillan, PILIPINA Legal Resources Center

1 These founding members were listed in Appendix II of 'The Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development: Its Origins, Issues and Vision' jointly published by APWLD and OEF in 1990.

Sri Lanka:

Radhika Coomaraswamy, International Center for Ethnic Studies
Nimalka Fernando, National Christian Council
Savitri Goonesekere, Faculty of Law, Open University
Manouri Muttetuwegama, Attorney

Thailand

Chantawipa Apisuk, EMPOWER
Malee Pruekpngswalee, Faculty of Law, Thammasat University
Virada Somswasdi, Faculty of Social Sciences, Chiang Mai University

2. Steering Committee Members: 1986–2003²

First Steering Committee 1986–1987

Fiji	Mere Pulea
India	Rani Jethmalani
Malaysia	Noor Farida Ariffin
Philippines	Emelina Quintillan
Pakistan	Asma Jahangir
Sri Lanka	Radhika Coomaraswamy
Thailand	Virada Somswasdi

Steering Committee 1988

Fiji	Mere Pulea
India	Rani Jethmalani
Malaysia	Irene Fernandez
Philippines	Emelina Quintillan (to be replaced)
Pakistan	Asma Jahangir
Sri Lanka	Radhika Coomaraswamy
Thailand	Virada Somswasdi

Steering Committee 1994–1995³

India	Fatima Nateson Burnad
Japan	Yoko Hayashi
Malaysia	Lim Kah Cheng
Pakistan	Hina Jilani
Sri Lanka	Radhika Coomaraswamy
Thailand	Virada Somswasdi

Steering Committee 1996⁴

Bangladesh	Hameeda Hossain
Fiji	Imrana Jalal
Indonesia	Nursyahbani Katjasungkana
Japan	Yoko Hayashi
Korea, Republic of	Heisoo Shin
Malaysia	Noor Farida Ariffin
Philippines	Elisa Tita Lubi
Sri Lanka	Nandini Samarasinghe

Steering Committee 1997⁵

Bangladesh	Hameeda Hossain
Fiji	Imrana Jalal
India	Madhu Mehra
Indonesia	Nursyahbani Katjasungkana
Japan	Mizuho Matsuda
Korea, Republic of	Heisoo Shin
Malaysia	Noor Farida Ariffin
Pakistan	Hina Jilani
Philippines	Elisa Tita Lubi
Sri Lanka	Nandini Samarasinghe
Thailand	Virada Somswasdi

Steering Committee 1998⁶

Bangladesh	Hameeda Hossain
Fiji	Imrana Jalal
India	Madhu Mehra
Indonesia	Tati Krisnawaty
Japan	Mizuho Matsuda
Korea, Republic of	Heisoo Shin
Malaysia	Noor Farida Ariffin
Pakistan	Hina Jilani
Philippines	Elisa Tita Lubi
Sri Lanka	Nandini Samarasinghe
Thailand	Phanomwan Yoodee
Thailand	Virada Somswasdi (ex officio)

Steering Committee 1999⁷

Bangladesh	Hameeda Hossain
Fiji	Imrana Jalal
India	Madhu Mehra
Indonesia	Tati Krisnawaty
Japan	Mizuho Matsuda
Korea, Republic of	Heisoo Shin
Malaysia	Noor Farida Ariffin
Pakistan	Hina Jilani
Philippines	Elisa Tita Lubi
Sri Lanka	Nandini Samarasinghe
Thailand	Phanomwan Yoodee
APWLD	Virada Somswasdi (ex officio)

Steering Committee 2000

Bangladesh	Sultana Kamal
Cook Islands	Lynnsay Francis
India	Madhu Mehra
Indonesia	Titi Soentoro
Japan	Mizuho Matsuda
Korea, Republic of	Young Sook Cho
Kyrgyzstan	Nurgul Djanaeva
Malaysia	Zainah Anwar
Philippines	Judy Taguiwalo
Sri Lanka	Kamalini Wijayatilake
Thailand	Phanomwan Yoodee

Steering Committee 2001

Bangladesh	Sultana Kamal
Cook Islands	Lynnsay Francis
India	S.K. Priya

2 Steering Committee was dismantled in 2003, APWLD 2003 mid-term annual report
3 Forum News. August 1994. Volume 7 No. 2. P13.
4 Forum News. December 1996. Volume 9 No. 4. P22.

5 APWLD Annual Report 1997-1998
6 APWLD Annual Report 1997-1998
7 APWLD Annual Report 1999

Korea, Republic of	Young Sook Cho
Kyrgyzstan	Nurgul Djanaeva
Malaysia	Zainah Anwar
Philippines	Judy Taguiwalo
Sri Lanka	Kamalini Wijayatilake
Thailand	Virada Somswasdi
APWLD	Mary Jane N. Real (ex-officio)

Steering Committee 2002

Bangladesh	Sultana Kamal
Cook Islands	Lynnsay Francis
India	S.K. Priya
Indonesia	Titi Soentoro
Korea, Republic of	Young Sook Cho
Kyrgyzstan	Nurgul Djanaeva
Malaysia	Zainah Anwar
Philippines	Judy Taguiwalo
Sri Lanka	Kamalini Wijayatilake
Thailand	Virada Somswasdi
APWLD	Mary Jane N. Real (ex-officio)

Steering Committee 2003

Bangladesh	Sultana Kamal
Cook Islands	Lynnsay Francis
India	S.K. Priya
Indonesia	Titi Soentoro
Korea, Republic of	Young Sook Cho
Kyrgyzstan	Nurgul Djanaeva
Malaysia	Zainah Anwar
Philippines	Judy Taguiwalo
Sri Lanka	Kamalini Wijayatilake
Thailand	Virada Somswasdi

3. Regional Council Members: 1997–2020

Regional Council 1994–1995⁸

Bangladesh	Hameeda Hossain
Fiji	Imrana Jalal
India	Rani Jethmalani
Indonesia	Sita Aripurnami
Indonesia	Rita Kolibonso
Japan	Mizuho Matsuda
Korea, Republic of	Heisoo Shin
Malaysia	Irene Fernandez
Pakistan	Asma Jahangir
Philippines	Emelina Quintillan
Thailand	Siriporn Skrobaneck

Regional Council 1996⁹

Bangladesh	Hameeda Hossain
Bangladesh	Sultana Kamal
Cambodia	Srey Chan Phallara
Fiji	Imrana Jalal
Fiji	Praveen Sharma
India	Madhu Mehra
Indonesia	Nursyahbani Katjasungkana

⁸ Forum News, August 1994. Volume 7 No. 2. P13.

The structural changes to the Regional Council was made in a December 1995.

⁹ Forum News, December 1996. Volume 9 No. 4. P22.

Indonesia	Ita Fatia Nadia
Japan	Mizuho Matsuda
Japan	Yoko Hayashi
Kampuchea	Srey Chanphallara
Korea, Republic of	Heisoo Shin
Malaysia	Noor Farida Ariffin
Malaysia	Zainah Anwar
Nepal	Silu Singh
Pakistan	Hina Jilani
Pakistan	Asma Jahangir
Philippines	Elisa Tita Lubi
Sri Lanka	Nandini Samarasinghe
Vietnam	Le Thi Quy

Regional Council 1997

Bangladesh	Hameeda Hossain
Bangladesh	Sultana Kamal
Fiji	Imrana Jalal
Fiji	Ema Tagicakibau
India	Madhu Mehra
India	S.K. Priya
Indonesia	Nursyahbani Katjasungkana
Indonesia	Ita Fatia Nadia
Japan	Mizuho Matsuda
Japan	Tomoko Suganuma
Kampuchea	Srey Chanphallara
Korea, Republic of	Heisoo Shin
Korea, Republic of	Young Sook Cho
Malaysia	Noor Farida Ariffin
Malaysia	Zainah Anwar
Nepal	Silu Singh
Pakistan	Hina Jilani
Pakistan	Asma Jahangir
Philippines	Elisa Tita Lubi
Philippines	Judy Taguiwalo
Sri Lanka	Nandini Samarasinghe
Sri Lanka	Radhika Coomaraswamy
Thailand	Virada Somswasdi
Thailand	Wanee Bangprapha-Thitiprasert
Vietnam	Le Thi Quy

Regional Council 1998

Bangladesh	Hameeda Hossain
Cambodia	Srey Chan Phallara
Fiji	Gina Houg Lee
India	S.K. Priya
Indonesia	Ita Fatia Nadia
Japan	Tomoko Suganuma
Korea, Republic of	Young Sook Cho
Malaysia	Zainah Anwar
Nepal	Silu Singh
Pakistan	Zohra Yusuf
Philippines	Judy Taguiwalo
Sri Lanka	Radhika Coomaraswamy
Thailand	Wanee Bangprapha-Thitiprasert
Vietnam	Le Thi Quy

Regional Council 1999

Bangladesh	Sultana Kamal
Cambodia	Srey Chan Phallara
Fiji	Gina Houg Lee
India	S.K. Priya
Indonesia	Ita Fatia Nadia

Japan	Tomoko Sugamuma
Korea, Republic of	Young Sook Cho
Malaysia	Zainah Anwar
Nepal	Silu Singh
Pakistan	Zohra Yusuf
Philippines	Judy Taguiwalo
Sri Lanka	Radhika Coomaraswamy
Thailand	Wanee Bangprapha-Thitiprasert
Vietnam	Le Thi Quy

Regional Council 2000

Bangladesh	Salma Sobhan
Cambodia	Srey Chan Phallara
Fiji	Gina Houg Lee
India	S.K. Priya
Indonesia	Ita Fatia Nadia
Korea, Republic of	Sunmi Kang
Malaysia	Ivy Josiah
Nepal	Silu Singh
Pakistan	Zohra Yusuf
Philippines	Evalyn G. Ursua
Sri Lanka	Radhika Coomaraswamy
Thailand	Virada Somswasdi

Regional Council 2001

Bangladesh	Salma Sobhan
Cambodia	Srey Chan Phallara
Fiji	Virisila Buadromo
India	Madhavi Kukeraja
Indonesia	Kamala Chandrakirana
Japan	Mikiko Otani
Korea, Republic of	Sunmi Kang
Malaysia	Ivy Josiah
Mongolia	Zanaa Jurmed
Nepal	Silu Singh
Pakistan	Hina Jilani
Pakistan	Zohra Yusuf
Philippines	Evalyn G. Ursua
Sri Lanka	Radhika Coomaraswamy
Thailand	Wanee Bangprapha-Thitiprasert
Ex-Officio, APWLD	Mary Jane N. Real

Regional Council 2002

Bangladesh	Salma Sobhan
Cambodia	Srey Chan Phallara
Fiji	Virisila Buadromo
India	Madhavi Kukeraja
Indonesia	Kamala Chandrakirana
Japan	Mikiko Otani
Korea, Republic of	Sunmi Kang
Malaysia	Ivy Josiah
Mongolia	Zanaa Jurmed
Nepal	Silu Singh
Pakistan	Hina Jilani
Pakistan	Zohra Yusuf
Philippines	Evalyn G. Ursua
Sri Lanka	Radhika Coomaraswamy
Thailand	Wanee Bangprapha-Thitiprasert
Ex-Officio, APWLD	Mary Jane N. Real

Regional Council 2003

Bangladesh	Salma Sobhan (deceased)
Fiji	Virisila Buadromo
India	Madhavi Kukeraja
Indonesia	Kamala Chandrakirana
Japan	Mikiko Otani
Korea, Republic of	Sunmi Kang
Malaysia	Ivy Josiah
Mongolia	Zanaa Jurmed
Pakistan	Hina Jilani
Philippines	Evalyn G. Ursua
Thailand	Wanee Bangprapha-Thitiprasert

Regional Council 2004¹⁰

Australia	Alison Aggarwal
Bangladesh	Sultana Kamal
Fiji	Virisila Buadromo
Fiji	Gina Houg Lee
India	Madhu Mehra
India	Fatima Nateson Burnad
Indonesia	Tati Krisnawaty
Indonesia	Titi Soentoro
Japan	Mikiko Otani
Korea, Republic of	Young Sook Cho
Kyrgyzstan	Nurgul Djanaeva
Kyrgyzstan	Olga Djanaeva
Malaysia	Ivy Josiah
Malaysia	Zainah Anwar
Mongolia	Zanaa Jurmed
Pakistan	Hina Jilani
Pakistan	Azra Talat Sayeed
Philippines	Eleanor Conda
Philippines	Elisa Tita Lubi
Thailand	Virada Somswasdi
Thailand	Wanee Bangprapha-Thitiprasert

Regional Council 2005

Australia	Alison Aggarwal
Bangladesh	Sultana Kamal
Fiji	Virisila Buadromo
Fiji	Gina Houg Lee
India	Madhu Mehra
India	Fatima Nateson Burnad
Indonesia	Tati Krisnawaty
Indonesia	Titi Soentoro
Japan	Mikiko Otani
Korea, Republic of	Young Sook Cho
Kyrgyzstan	Nurgul Djanaeva
Kyrgyzstan	Olga Djanaeva
Malaysia	Ivy Josiah
Malaysia	Zainah Anwar
Mongolia	Zanaa Jurmed
Pakistan	Hina Jilani
Pakistan	Azra Talat Sayeed
Philippines	Eleanor Conda
Philippines	Elisa Tita Lubi
Thailand	Virada Somswasdi
Thailand	Wanee Bangprapha-Thitiprasert

¹⁰ The Regional Council (ReC) was adopted as the policy making body. The Steering Committee (SC) was dissolved and the SCmembers became part of the ReC.

Regional Council 2006-2007

Australia	Alison Aggarwal
Bangladesh	Sultana Kamal
Burma	Nang Lao Liang Won
Fiji	Virisila Buadromo
Fiji	Gina Houn Lee
India	Madhu Mehra
India	Fatima Nateson Burnad
Indonesia	Tati Krisnawaty
Indonesia	Dwi Astuti
Japan	Mikiko Otani
Korea, Republic of	Young Sook Cho
Kyrgyzstan	Nurgul Djanaeva
Kyrgyzstan	Olga Djanaeva
Malaysia	Zainah Anwar
Mongolia	Zanaa Jurmed
Pakistan	Hina Jilani
Pakistan	Azra Talat Sayeed
Philippines	Eleanor Conda
Philippines	Elisa Tita Lubi
Thailand	Virada Somswasdi
Thailand	Wanee Bangprapha-Thitiprasert

Regional Council 2007-2011

Bangladesh	Khushi Kabir
Fiji	Edwina Kotoisuva
Fiji	Virisila Buadromo
India	Madhu Mehra
India	Manisha Gupte
Indonesia	Kamala Chandrakirana
Indonesia	Titiek Kartika
Japan	Mikiko Otani
Kazakhstan	Yevgeniya Kozyreva
Korea, Republic of	Young Sook Cho
Kyrgyzstan	Cholpon Akmatova
Kyrgyzstan	Olga Djanaeva
Malaysia	Maria Chin Abdullah
Malaysia	Noor Farida
Mongolia	Zanaa Jurmed
Nepal	Sita Pudel
Pakistan	Azra Talat Sayeed
Philippines	Cynthia Abdon-Tellez
Philippines	Elisa Tita Lubi
Philippines	Vernie Yocogan-Diano
PNG	Helen Hakena
Sri Lanka	Sunila Abeysekera
Thailand	Phanomwan Yoodee
Thailand	Virada Somswasdi
APWLD	Kate Lappin, Australia (ex-officio)

Regional Council 2012-2014

Bangladesh	Sanaiyya Ansari
Bangladesh	Khushi Kabir
Fiji	Priscilla Naidu
Fiji	Vandhana Narayan
India	Albertina de Jesus Piedade Almeida
India	Esther Beulah Devakumari
Indonesia	Titiek Kartika Hendrastiti
Japan	Mikiko Otani
Kazakhstan	Yevgeniya Kozyreava
Kyrgyzstan	Aizhamal Bakashova
Kyrgyzstan	Nurgul Djanaeva
Malaysia	Rashila Ramli

Malaysia	Ivy Josiah
Malaysia	Noor Farida Ariffin
Mongolia	Mandkhaikhaikhatan Tsevegmid
Philippines	Judy Taguiwalo
Philippines	Tess Vistro
Korea, Republic of	Heisoo Shin
Taiwan, ROC	Hsiao Chuan Hsia
Thailand	Nuthamon Kongcharoen
Thailand	Virada Somswasdi
APWLD Secretariat	Kate Lappin (ex-officio)

Regional Council 2014-2016

Bangladesh	Fatema Rashid Hasan
Cambodia	Thida Khus
Nepal	Renu Rajbhandari
Pakistan	Tahira Khan
Pakistan	Azra Talat Sayeed
Fiji	Virisila Buardomo
India	Govind Kelkar
Malaysia	Ivy Josiah
Malaysia	Rashila Ramli
Philippines	Joan May Salvador
Philippines	Judy M. Taguiwalo
Indonesia	Yuniyani Chuzaifah
Indonesia	Dewi Amelia Eka Putri
Thailand	Pranom Somwong
Thailand	Ravadee Prasertchareonsuk
Taiwan	Hsiao-Chuan Hsia
Mongolia	Enkhjargal Davaasuren
Korea, Republic of	Heisoo Shin
Korea, Republic of	Ranhee Song
Kyrgyzstan	Aizhamal Bakashova
Kyrgyzstan	Nurgul Dzhanaeva
Kazakhstan	Raushan Nauryzbayeva
Tonga	Ofa-Ki-Levuka Guttenbeil-Likiliki

Regional Council 2017-2020

Pakistan	Abia Akram
Pakistan	Azra Sayeed
Philippines	Christina Palabay
India	Fatima Nateson Burnad
Philippines	Joan M Salvador (Joms)
India	Govind Kelkar
Hong Kong	Eni Lestari
Indonesia	Helda Khasmy
Thailand	Matcha Phorn-in
Korea, Republic of	Mijoo Kim
Fiji	Nalini Singh
Tonga	Ofa Guttenbiel Likiliki
Kyrgyzstan	Olga Djanaeva
Kazakhstan	Raushan Nauryzbayeva
Thailand	Ravadee Prasertcharoensuk
Nepal	Renu Rajbhandhari
Bangladesh	Sultana Kamal
Cambodia	Thida Khus
Indonesia	Titi Soentoro
Vietnam	Tran Thi Thanh Toan
Nepal	Yasso Kanti Bhattachan
APWLD Secretariat	Kate Lappin (ex officio - outgoing 2017) / Misun Woo (ex officio - incoming 2018 onward)

4. Programme and Management Committee Members: 1996-2020

Programme and Management Committee 1996¹¹

Malaysia	Noor Farida Ariffin
Malaysia	Lim Kah Cheng
Thailand	Anchalee Phonklieng
Philippines ¹²	Josefina Yolanda F. Oraa

Programme and Management Committee 1997-1999¹³

Malaysia	Noor Farida Ariffin
Sri Lanka	Nandini Samarasinghe
Thailand	Anchalee Phonklieng
Thailand	Virada Somswasdi

Programme and Management Committee 2000

India	Madhu Mehra
Philippines	Judy M. Taguiwalo
Thailand	Virada Somswasdi
Thailand	Wanee Bangprapha-Thitiprasert

Programme and Management Committee 2001

Philippines	Judy M. Taguiwalo
Thailand	Virada Somswasdi
Thailand	Wanee Bangprapha-Thitiprasert
Sri Lanka	Kamalini Wijayatilake
Ex-Officio, APWLD	Mary Jane N. Real

Programme and Management Committee 2002

Indonesia	Titi Soentoro
Philippines	Judy M. Taguiwalo
Thailand	Virada Somswasdi
Thailand	Wanee Bangprapha-Thitiprasert
Ex-Officio, APWLD	Mary Jane N. Real

Programme and Management Committee 2003

Indonesia	Titi Soentoro
Philippines	Judy M. Taguiwalo
Thailand	Virada Somswasdi
Thailand	Wanee Bangprapha-Thitiprasert

Programme and Management Committee 2004

Bangladesh	Sultana Kamal
Indonesia	Titi Soentoro
Kyrgyzstan	Nurgul Djanaeva
Philippines	Elisa Tita Lubi
Thailand	Virada Somswasdi
Thailand	Wanee Bangprapha-Thitiprasert

Programme and Management Committee 2005

Bangladesh	Sultana Kamal
Kyrgyzstan	Nurgul Djanaeva
Pakistan	Azra Talat Sayeed
Philippines	Elisa Tita Lubi
Thailand	Virada Somswasdi
Thailand	Wanee Bangprapha-Thitiprasert

Programme and Management Committee 2006

Bangladesh	Sultana Kamal
Kyrgyzstan	Nurgul Djanaeva
Pakistan	Azra Talat Sayeed
Philippines	Elisa Tita Lubi
Thailand	Virada Somswasdi
Thailand	Wanee Bangprapha-Thitiprasert

Programme and Management Committee 2007

Bangladesh	Sultana Kamal
Kyrgyzstan	Nurgul Djanaeva
Pakistan	Azra Talat Sayeed
Philippines	Eleanor Conda
Thailand	Virada Somswasdi
Thailand	Wanee Bangprapha-Thitiprasert

Programme and Management Committee 2008-2011

Korea, Republic of	Young Sook Cho
Japan	Mikiko Otani
Pakistan	Azra Talat Sayeed
Philippines	Cynthia Abdon-Tellez
Thailand	Virada Somswasdi
Thailand	Wanee Bangprapha-Thitiprasert

Programme and Management Committee 2012-2014

Bangladesh	Sanaiyya Ansari
Indonesia	Titiek Kartika Hendrastiti
Japan	Mikiko Otani
Philippines	Judy Taguiwalo
Thailand	Virada Somswasdi
Thailand	Wanee Bangprapha-Thitiprasert
APWLD Secretariat	Kate Lappin (ex officio)

Programme and Management Committee 2014-2016

Bangladesh	Sanaiyya Ansari
India	Govind Kelkar
Malaysia	Rashila Ramli
Philippines	Judy M. Taguiwalo
Fiji	Virisila Buardomo
Thailand	Virada Somswasdi
Thailand	Wanee Bangprapha-Thitiprasert (ex-officio)
APWLD Secretariat	Kate Lappin, Australia (ex-officio)

Programme and Management Committee 2017-2020

India	Govind Kelkar
Thailand	Matcha Phorn-in
Philippines	Joan M Salvador (Joms)
Indonesia	Titi Soentoro
Cambodia	Thida Khus
Malaysia	Ivy Josiah, Malaysia (ex-officio)
APWLD Secretariat	Misun Woo, Republic of Korea (ex-officio)

11 Forum News, December 1996, Volume 9 No. 4, P22.

12 Nationality of Josefina Yolanda F. Oraa was mentioned on page 25 of APWLD progress report Jun-Jun 1995.

13 APWLD Annual Report 1997-1999

5. Task Forces / Working Groups: 1997-2008¹⁴

Task Forces 1997¹⁵

Task Force on Labour and Migration 1997

Convenor Joy de Guzman, Hong Kong
Co-Convenor Hameeda Hossain, Bangladesh

Task Force on Rural and Indigenous Women 1997

Convenor Fatima Nateson Burnad, India
Co-Convenor Elisa Tita Lubi, Philippines

Task Force on Violence Against Women 1997

Convenor Noor Farida Ariffin, Malaysia
Co-Convenor Ivy Josiah, Malaysia

Task Force on Women's Participation in Political Processes 1997

Convenor Neela Matin, Bangladesh
Co-Convenor Nandini Samarasinghe, Sri Lanka

Task Force on Women's Human Rights 1997

Convenor Cecilia Hofmann, Philippines
Co-Convenor Madhu Mehra, India

Task Forces 1998

Task Force on Labour and Migration 1998

Convenor Joy de Guzman, Hong Kong
Co-Convenor Hameeda Hossain, Bangladesh
Members Viniana Seeto, Fiji
Agnes Khoo, Hong Kong
Tati Krisnawaty, Indonesia
Caridad Tharan, Malaysia
Irene Fernandez, Malaysia
Imelda Laguindam, Philippines
Manouri Muttetuwegama, Sri Lanka
Phanomwan Yoodee, Thailand
Siriporn Skrobaneck, Thailand

Task Force on Rural and Indigenous Women 1998

Convenor Fatima Nateson Burnad, India
Co-Convenor Elisa Tita Lubi, Philippines
Members Kabita Chakma, Bangladesh
Madhavi Kuchreja, India
Ina Bibi, Indonesia
Sew Enh Teo, Malaysia
Judy Taguiwalo, Philippines
Govind Kelkar, India
Anchalee Pholkleing, Thailand

Task Force on Violence Against Women 1998

Convenor Ivy Josiah, Malaysia
Co-Convenor Noor Farida Ariffin, Malaysia
Members Mahbooba Mahmood, Bangladesh
Shamima Ali, Fiji
Heisoo Shin, Korea, Republic of
Shantaj Qizibash, Pakistan
Evalyn G. Ursua / Raquel Edralin Tiglao, Philippines
Theresa Balayan, Philippines
Shyamala Gomez, Sri Lanka
Earporn Thongkrajai, Thailand
Le Thi Quy, Vietnam

Task Force on Women's Participation in Political Processes 1998

Convenor Nandini Samarasinghe, Sri Lanka
Co-Convenor Neela Matin, Bangladesh
Members Nanda Pok, Cambodia
Madhu Kishwar/ Rani Jethmalani, India
S.K. Priya, India
Ita Fatia Nadia, Indonesia
Tahira Khan, Pakistan
Marilyn C. Cepe (Ayetta), Philippines
Nayan Tara Amatya, Nepal
Pusadee Tamthai, Thailand

Task Force on Women Rights Human Rights 1998

Convenor Madhu Mehra, India
Co-Convenor Aurora de Dios/ Cecilia Hofmann, Philippines
Members U.M. Habibannesa, Bangladesh
Leang Meang Ho, Cambodia
Imrana Jalal/ Gina Hong Lee, Fiji
Nursyahbani Katjasungkana, Indonesia
Yayori Marsui, Japan
Yoko Hayashi, Japan
Myoung-Ryoon Kim, Korea, Republic of
Elizabeth Wong, Malaysia
Hina Jilani, Pakistan

Task Forces 1999

Task Force on Labour and Migration 1999

Convenor Agnes Khoo, Hong Kong
Co-Convenor Hameeda Hossain, Bangladesh
Members Viniana Seeto, Fiji
Joy de Guzman, Hong Kong
Tati Krisnawaty, Inonesia
Irene Fernandez, Malaysia
Imelda Laguindam, Philippines
Manouri Muttetuwegama, Sri Lanka
Phanomwan Yoodee, Thailand

Task Force on Rural and Indigenous Women 1999

Convenor Fatima Nateson Burnad, India
Co-Convenor Elisa Tita Lubi, Philippines
Members Kabita Chakma, Bangladesh
Madhavi Kuchreja, India
Sew Enh Teo, Malaysia

Judy Taguiwalo, Philippines
Govind Kelkar, India

Task Force on Violence Against Women 1999

Convenor Ivy Josiah, Malaysia
Co-Convenor Noor Farida Ariffin, Malaysia
Members Mahbooba Mahmood, Bangladesh
Shamima Ali, Fiji
Heisoo Shin, Korea, Republic of
Shantaj Qizibash, Pakistan
Evalyn G. Ursua / Raquel Edralin Tiglao, Philippines
Theresa Balayan, Philippines
Shyamala Gomez, Sri Lanka
Earporn Thongkrajai, Thailand
Le Thi Quy, Vietnam

Task Force on Women's Participation in Political Processes 1999

Convenor Nandini Samarasinghe, Sri Lanka
Co-Convenor Neela Matin, Bangladesh
Members Madhu Kishwar, India
S.K. Priya, India
Ita Fatia Nadia, Indonesia
Tahira Khan, Pakistan
Marilyn C. Cepe (Ayetta), Philippines
Nayan Tara Amatya, Nepal
Pusadee Tamthai, Thailand

Task Force on Women Rights Human Rights 1999

Convenor Madhu Mehra, India
Co-Convenor Aurora de Dios/ Cecilia Hofmann, Philippines
Members U.M. Habibannesa, Bangladesh
Leang Meang Ho, Cambodia
Imrana Jalal/ Gina Hong Lee, Fiji
Nursyahbani Katjasungkana, Indonesia
Yayori Marsui, Japan
Yoko Hayashi, Japan
Myoung-Ryoon Kim, Korea, Republic of
Elizabeth Wong, Malaysia
Hina Jilani, Pakistan
Sunila Abeyeseekera, Sri Lanka

Task Force on Women and the Environment 1999

Convenor Virada Somswasdi, Thailand
Co-Convenors Mere Pulea, Fiji
Members Syeda Rizwana Hasan, Bangladesh
Arimbi Haroeputri, Indonesia
Moon, Soon-hong, Korea, Republic of
Sarojeni Rengam, Malaysia
Azra Talat Sayeed, Pakistan
Elisa Tita Lubi, Philippines
Frances Quimpo-Dongeto, Philippines
Wanee Bangprapha-Thitiprasert, Thailand
Thai Thi Ngoc Du, Vietnam

Task Forces 2000

Task Force on Rural and Indigenous Women 2000

Convenor Fatima Nateson Burnad, India
Co-Convenor Elisa Tita Lubi, Philippines
Members Chandrika Sharma, India
Govind Kelkar, India
Madhavi Kuchreja, India
Hesti R. Wijaya, Indonesia
Leem Deock Kyou, Korea, Republic of
Urmila Aryal, Nepal
Goma Devkota, Nepal
Judy Taguiwalo, Philippines
Teresita Oliveros- Vistro, Philippines
Cholada Montreevat, Thailand
Pham Hoai Giang, Vietnam

Task Force on Violence Against Women 2000

Convenor Ivy Josiah, Malaysia
Co-Convenor Noor Farida Ariffin, Malaysia
Members Mahbooba Mahmood, Bangladesh
Shamima Ali, Fiji
Kamala Chandrakirana, Indonesia
Young Sook Cho, Korea, Republic of
Shantaj Qizibash, Pakistan
Evalyn G. Ursua, Philippines
Shyamala Gomez, Sri Lanka
Earporn Thongkrajai, Thailand
Le Thi Quy, Vietnam

Task Force on Women's Participation in Political Processes 2000

Convenor Tahira Khan, Pakistan
Co-Convenor Rashila Ramli, Malaysia
Members Nanda Pok, Cambodia
Nilufar (Neela) Matin, India
S.K. Priya, India
Ita Fatia Nadia, Indonesia
Lee Sung Yol, Korea, Republic of
Nurgul Djanaeva, Kyrgyzstan
Nayan Tara Amatya, Nepal
Pusadee Tamthai, Thailand
Jezima Ismail, Sri Lanka

Task Force on Women Rights Human Rights 2000

Convenor Madhu Mehra, India
Co-Convenors Aurora de Dios/ Cecilia Hofmann, Philippines
Members U.M. Habibannesa, Bangladesh
Leang Meang Ho, Cambodia
Imrana Jalal/ Gina Hong Lee, Fiji
Nursyahbani Katjasungkana, Indonesia
Yayori Marsui, Japan
Heisoo Shin, Korea, Republic of
Hina Jilani, Pakistan
Sunila Abeyeseekera, Sri Lanka
Tsering Tsomo, Tibet

Task Force on Women and the Environment 2000

Convenor Virada Somswasdi, Thailand

14 The Regional Council decided to discontinue the Task Forces and establish six programmes in 2008.

15 Forum News, December 1997. Volume 10 No. 3-4

Co-Convenors Mere Pulea, Fiji
Members Syeda Rizwana Hasan, Bangladesh
Arimbi Haroeputri, Indonesia
Sarojeni Rengam, Malaysia
Azra Talat Sayeed, Pakistan
Elisa Tita Lubi, Philippines
Frances Quimpo-Dongeto, Philippines
Moon, Soon-hong, Korea, Republic of
Wanee Bangprapha-Thitiprasert, Thailand
Thai Thi Ngoc Du, Vietnam

Task Forces 2001

Task Force on Labour and Migration 2001

Convenor Tati Krisnawaty, Indonesia
Co-Convenor Aegile Fernandez, Malaysia
Members Laisa Bale, Fiji
Connie Regalado, Hong Kong
Chong Yang Hee, Korea, Republic of
Irene Fernandez, Malaysia
Joy de Guzman, Philippines

Task Force on Rural and Indigenous Women 2001

Convenor Judy Taguiwalo, Philippines
Co-Convenor Chandrika Sharma, India
Members Appakutty Magimai, India
Govind Kelkar, India
Titi Soentoro, Indonesia
Hesti R. Wijaya, Indonesia
Leem Deock Kyoo, Korea, Republic of
Olga Djanaeva, Kyrgyzstan
Urmila Aryal, Nepal
Elisa Tita Lubi, Philippines
Anchalee Phokleing, Thailand

Task Force on Violence Against Women 2001

Convenor Ivy Josiah, Malaysia
Co-Convenor Ruby Ghuznavi, Bangladesh
Members Shamima Ali/ Edwina Kotoisuva, Fiji
Kamala Chandrakirana, Indonesia
Young Sook Cho, Korea, Republic of
Shantaj Qizibash, Pakistan
Evalyn G. Ursua, Philippines
Shyamala Gomez, Sri Lanka
Ubalda Alvez, East Timor
Enkhjargal Davaasuren, Vietnam
Le Thi Quy, Vietnam

Task Force on Women and the Environment 2001

Convenor Virada Somswasdi, Thailand
Co-Convenors Mere Pulea, Fiji
Members Syeda Rizwana Hasan, Bangladesh
Aleyamma Vijayan, India
Julia Kalmirah, Indonesia
Moon, Soon-hong, Korea, Republic of
Sarojeni Rengam, Malaysia
Azra Talat Sayeed, Pakistan
Frances Quimpo-Dongeto, Philippines
Ravadee Prasertcharoensuk, Thailand
Lynnsay Francis, Cook Islands

Task Force on Women's Participation in Political Processes 2001

Convenor Tahira Khan, Pakistan
Co-Convenor Rashila Ramli, Malaysia
Members Nanda Pok, Cambodia
Priscilla Singh, Fiji
Nilufar (Neela) Matin, India
S.K. Priya, India
Ita Fatia Nadia, Indonesia
Nurgul Djanaeva, Kyrgyzstan
Nayan Tara Amatya, Nepal

Task Force on Women Rights Human Rights 2001

Convenor Madhu Mehra, India
Co-Convenors Aurora de Dios/ Cecilia Hofmann, Philippines
Members Perween Hasan, Bangladesh
Leang Meang Ho, Cambodia
Asenaca Colawai, Fiji
Nursyahbani Katjasungkana, Indonesia
Yayori Marsui, Japan
Heisoo Shin, Korea, Republic of
Hina Jilani, Pakistan
Sunila Abeyeseekera, Sri Lanka
Passang Dolma, Tibet
Zainah Anwar, Malaysia
Kamalini Wijayatilake, Sri Lanka

Task Forces 2002

Task Force on Labour and Migration 2002

Convenor Tati Krisnawaty, Indonesia
Co-Convenor Aegile Fernandez, Malaysia
Members Sultana Kamal, Bangladesh
Laisa Bale, Fiji
Connie Regalado, Hong Kong
Chiho Ogaya, Japan
Jong-Yoon Choi, Korea, Republic of
Zanaa Jurmed, Mongolia
Maita Santiago, Philippines
Pranom Somwong, Thailand

Task Force on Rural and Indigenous Women 2002

Convenor Chandrika Sharma, India
Co-Convenor Judy Taguiwalo, Philippines
Members Appakutty Magimai, India
Miran Oh, Korea, Republic of
Olga Djanaeva, Kyrgyzstan
Urmila Aryal, Nepal
Rita Baua, Philippines

Task Force on Violence Against Women 2002

Convenor Kamala Chandrakirana, Indonesia
Co-Convenor Young Sook Cho, Korea, Republic of
Members Ruby Ghuznavi, Bangladesh
Lynnsay Francis, Cook Islands
Ubalda Alves, East Timor
Ivy Josiah, Malaysia
Enkhjargal Davaasuren, Mongolia
Evalyn G. Ursua, Philippines

Suteera Thomson Vichitranonda, Thailand
Shyamala Gomez, Sri Lanka
Le Thi Quy, Vietnam

Task Force on Women and the Environment 2002

Convenor Mere Pulea, Fiji
Co-Convenors Azra Talat Sayeed, Pakistan
Members Tasaima Islam, Bangladesh
Aleyamma Vijayan, India
Julia Kalmirah, Indonesia
Mi-Young Lee, Korea, Republic of
Frances Quimpo-Dongeto, Philippines
Ravadee Prasertcharoensuk, Thailand
Virada Somswasdi, Thailand

Task Force on Women's Participation in Political Processes 2002

Convenor Tahira Khan, Pakistan
Co-Convenor Rashila Ramli, Malaysia
Members Nanda Pok, Cambodia
S.K. Priya, India
Ita Fatia Nadia, Indonesia
Jae Huie Lee, Korea, Republic of
Nurgul Djanaeva, Kyrgyzstan
Juree Vichit-Vadakan, Thailand

Task Force on Women Rights Human Rights 2002

Convenor Madhu Mehra, India
Co-Convenors Aurora de Dios/ Cecilia Hofmann, Philippines
Members Perween Hasan, Bangladesh
Leang Meang Ho, Cambodia
Asenaca Colawai, Fiji
Nursyahbani Katjasungkana, Indonesia
Heisoo Shin, Korea, Republic of
Hina Jilani, Pakistan
Zainah Anwar, Malaysia
Kamalini Wijayatilake, Sri Lanka
Sunila Abeyeseekera, Sri Lanka
Passang Dolma, Tibet

Task Forces 2003

Task Force on Labour and Migration 2003

Convenor Tati Krisnawaty, Indonesia
Co-Convenor Aegile Fernandez, Malaysia
Members Sultana Kamal, Bangladesh
Laisa Bale, Fiji
Connie Regalado, Hong Kong
Chiho Ogaya, Japan
Jong-Yoon Choi, Korea, Republic of
Zanaa Jurmed, Mongolia
Maita Santiago, Philippines
Pranom Somwong, Thailand

Task Force on Rural and Indigenous Women 2003

Convenor Chandrika Sharma, India
Co-Convenor Judy Taguiwalo, Philippines
Members Appakutty Magimai, India

Titi Soentoro, Indonesia
Miran Oh, Korea, Republic of
Olga Djanaeva, Kyrgyzstan
Urmila Aryal, Nepal
Rita Baua, Philippines
Anchalee Phokling, Thailand

Task Force on Violence Against Women 2003

Convenor Kamala Chandrakirana, Indonesia
Co-Convenor Young Sook Cho, Korea, Republic of
Members Ruby Ghuznavi, Bangladesh
Lynnsay Francis, Cook Islands
Ubalda Alves, East Timor
Shamima Ali, Fiji
Ivy Josiah, Malaysia
Enkhjargal Davaasuren, Mongolia
Shahtaj Qizibash, Pakistan
Suteera Thomson Vichitranonda, Thailand
Shyamala Gomez, Sri Lanka
Le Thi Quy, Vietnam

Task Force on Women and the Environment 2003

Convenor Mere Pulea, Fiji
Co-Convenors Azra Talat Sayeed, Pakistan
Members Tasaima Islam, Bangladesh
Aleyamma Vijayan, India
Julia Kalmirah, Indonesia
Mi-Young Lee, Korea, Republic of
Frances Quimpo-Dongeto, Philippines
Ravadee Prasertcharoensuk, Thailand
Virada Somswasdi, Thailand

Task Force on Women's Participation in Political Processes 2003

Convenor Tahira Khan, Pakistan
Co-Convenor Rashila Ramli, Malaysia
Members Nilufar (Neela) Matin, Bangladesh
Nanda Pok, Cambodia
Melina Pires, East Timor
Priscilla Singh, Fiji
S.K. Priya, India
Ita Fatia Nadia, Indonesia
Jae Huie Lee, Korea, Republic of
Nurgul Djanaeva, Kyrgyzstan
Elisa Tita Lubi, Philippines
Juree Vichit-Vadakan, Thailand

Task Force on Women Rights Human Rights 2003

Convenor Madhu Mehra, India
Co-Convenors Aurora de Dios/ Cecilia Hofmann, Philippines
Members Perween Hasan, Bangladesh
Leang Meang Ho, Cambodia
Asenaca Colawai, Fiji
Nursyahbani Katjasungkana, Indonesia
Heisoo Shin, Korea, Republic of
Hina Jilani, Pakistan
Zainah Anwar, Malaysia
Kamalini Wijayatilake, Sri Lanka
Sunila Abeyeseekera, Sri Lanka
Passang Dolma, Tibet

Task Forces 2004

Task Force on Labour and Migration 2004

Convenor Tati Krisnawaty, Indonesia
Co-Convenor Aegile Fernandez, Malaysia
Members Sultana Kamal, Bangladesh
Laisa Bale, Fiji
Connie Regalado, Hong Kong
Chiho Ogaya, Japan
Jong-Yoon Choi, Korea, Republic of
Zanaa Jurmed, Mongolia
Maita Santiago, Philippines
Pranom Somwong, Thailand

Task Force on Rural and Indigenous Women 2003

Convenor Olga Djanaeva, Kyrgyzstan
Co-Convenor Fifi Rayanyaan, Indonesia
Members Susmita Chakma, Bangladesh
Lilly Luisa Natesan, India
Sita Poudel, Nepal
Rita Baua, Philippines
Anchalee Phokling, Thailand

Task Force on Violence Against Women 2004

Convenor Manishe Gupte, India
Co-Convenor Shyamala Gomez, Sri Lanka
Members Ferdousi Akhter, Bangladesh
Desti Murdijana, Indonesia
Yevgeniya Kozyreva, Kazakhstan
Ivy Josiah, Malaysia
Enkhjargal Davaasuren, Mongolia
Suteera Thomson Vichitranonda, Thailand
Merilyn Rose Tahigogona, Vanuatu

Task Force on Women and the Environment 2004

Convenor Azra Talat Sayeed, Pakistan
Co-Convenors Ravadee Prasertcharoensuk, Thailand
Members Tasaima Islam, Bangladesh
Chhooen Thavy, Cambodia
Leba Ciriya Halofaki Mataitini, Fiji
Ushakumari Jayakumar, India
Dwi Astuti, Indonesia
Choony Kim, Korea, Republic of
Teresita Oliveros Vistro, Philippines
Virada Somswasdi, Thailand

Task Force on Women's Participation in Political Processes 2004

Convenor Tahira Khan, Pakistan
Co-Convenor Rashila Ramli, Malaysia
Members Nilufar (Neela) Matin, Bangladesh
Nanda Pok, Cambodia
Melina Pires, East Timor
Priscilla Singh, Fiji
S.K. Priya, India
Ita Fatia Nadia, Indonesia
Jae Huie Lee, Korea, Republic of
Nurgul Djanaeva, Kyrgyzstan

Elisa Tita Lubi, Philippines
Juree Vichit-Vadakan, Thailand

Task Force on Women Rights Human Rights 2004

Convenor Kamalini Wijayatilake, Sri Lanka
Co-Convenors Eleanor Conda, Philippines
Members Imrana Jalal, Fiji
Madhu Mehra, India
Kamala Chandrakirana, Indonesia
Heisoo Shin, Korea, Republic of
Zainah Anwar, Malaysia
Hina Jilani, Pakistan

Task Forces 2005

Task Force on Labour and Migration 2005

Convenor Tati Krisnawaty, Indonesia
Co-Convenor Aegile Fernandez, Malaysia
Members Sultana Kamal, Bangladesh
Avelina Rokoduru, Fiji
Cynthia Abdon-Tellez, Hong Kong
Sujata Mody, India
Fusae Oshita, Japan
Kim Hye-Seon, Korea, Republic of
Jocelyn de Guzman, Philippines
Zanaa Jurmed, Mongolia
Pranom Somwong, Thailand

Task Force on Rural and Indigenous Women 2005

Convenor Olga Djanaeva, Kyrgyzstan
Co-Convenor Tess Vistro, Philippines
Members Susmita Chakma, Bangladesh
Lilly Luisa Natesan, India
Dwi Astuti, Indonesia
Sita Poudel, Nepal
Geetha Fernando, Sri Lanka
Kingkorn Narintarakul, Thailand

Task Force on Violence Against Women 2005

Convenor Manishe Gupte, India
Co-Convenor Shyamala Gomez, Sri Lanka
Members Ferdousi Akhter, Bangladesh
Desti Murdijana, Indonesia
Yevgeniya Kozyreva, Kazakhstan
Young Sook Cho, Korea, Republic of
Ivy Josiah, Malaysia
Enkhjargal Davaasuren, Mongolia
Nang Lao Liang Won, Myanmar/Burma
Shahnaz Iqbal, Pakistan
Suteera Thomson Vichitranonda, Thailand
Merilyn Rose Tahigogona, Vanuatu

Task Force on Women and the Environment 2005

Convenor Azra Talat Sayeed, Pakistan
Co-Convenors Ravadee Prasertcharoensuk, Thailand
Members Tasaima Islam, Bangladesh
Chhooen Thavy, Cambodia
Ushakumari Jayakumar, India

Risma Umar, Indonesia
Kim Young Ran, Korea, Republic of
Gombosurengiin Uranstooj, Mongolia
Vernie Yocogan-Diano, Philippines

Task Force on Women's Participation in Political Processes 2005

Convenor Tahira Khan, Pakistan
Co-Convenor Rashila Ramli, Malaysia
Members Priscilla Singh, Fiji
S.K. Priya, India
Chung-Nam Ha, Korea, Republic of
Nurgul Djanaeva, Kyrgyzstan
Beissova Svetlana, Kazakhstan
Elisa Tita Lubi, Philippines
Virada Somswasdi, Thailand
Nimalka Fernando, Sri Lanka

Task Force on Women Rights Human Rights 2005

Convenor Eleanor Conda, Philippines
Co-Convenors Madhu Mehra, India
Members Imrana Jalal, Fiji
Kamala Chandrakirana, Indonesia
Heisoo Shin, Korea, Republic of
Zainah Anwar, Malaysia
Hina Jilani, Pakistan
Sunila Abeysekera, Sri Lanka

Task Forces and Working Groups 2006

Task Force on Labour and Migration 2006

Convenor Tati Krisnawaty, Indonesia
Co-Convenor Aegile Fernandez, Malaysia
Members Sultana Kamal, Bangladesh
Avelina Rokoduru, Fiji
Cynthia Abdon-Tellez, Hong Kong
Sujata Mody, India
Fusae Oshita, Japan
Kim Hye-Seon, Korea, Republic of
Jocelyn de Guzman, Philippines
Zanaa Jurmed, Mongolia
Pranom Somwong, Thailand

Task Force on Rural and Indigenous Women 2006

Convenor Olga Djanaeva, Kyrgyzstan
Co-Convenor Tess Vistro, Philippines
Members Susmita Chakma, Bangladesh
Lilly Luisa Natesan, India
Dwi Astuti, Indonesia
Sita Poudel, Nepal
Geetha Fernando, Sri Lanka
Kingkorn Narintarakul, Thailand

Task Force on Violence Against Women 2006

Convenor Manishe Gupte, India
Co-Convenor Shyamala Gomez, Sri Lanka
Members Sadaf Saaz Siddiqi, Bangladesh
Desti Murdijana, Indonesia
Yevgeniya Kozyreva, Kazakhstan

Young Sook Cho, Korea, Republic of
Zarizana Abdul Aziz, Malaysia
Enkhjargal Davaasuren, Mongolia
Nang Lao Liang Won, Myanmar/Burma
Shahnaz Iqbal, Pakistan
Merilyn Rose Tahigogona, Vanuatu

Task Force on Women and the Environment 2006

Convenor Azra Talat Sayeed, Pakistan
Co-Convenors Ravadee Prasertcharoensuk, Thailand
Members Tasaima Islam, Bangladesh
Chhooen Thavy, Cambodia
Ushakumari Jayakumar, India
Risma Umar, Indonesia
Kim Young Ran, Korea, Republic of
Gombosurengiin Uranstooj, Mongolia
Vernie Yocogan-Diano, Philippines

Task Force on Women's Participation in Political Processes 2006

Convenor Tahira Khan, Pakistan
Co-Convenor Rashila Ramli, Malaysia
Members Priscilla Singh, Fiji
S.K. Priya, India
Titiek Kartika Hendrastiti, Indonesia
Chung-Nam Ha, Korea, Republic of
Nurgul Djanaeva, Kyrgyzstan
Beissova Svetlana, Kazakhstan
Elisa Tita Lubi, Philippines
Virada Somswasdi, Thailand
Nimalka Fernando, Sri Lanka

Working Group on Women Rights Human Rights 2006

Convenor Eleanor Conda, Philippines
Co-Convenors Madhu Mehra, India
Members Imrana Jalal, Fiji
Kamala Chandrakirana, Indonesia
Heisoo Shin, Korea, Republic of
Zainah Anwar, Malaysia
Hina Jilani, Pakistan
Sunila Abeysekera, Sri Lanka

Task Forces and Working Groups 2007

Task Force on Labour and Migration 2007

Convenor Cynthia Abdon-Tellez, Mission for Migrant Workers, Hong Kong
Members Rahela Rabbani, Karmojibi Nari, Bangladesh
Sujata Mody, Malarchi-Women's Resource Centre, India
Asfinawati, The Jakarta Legal Aid Institute, Indonesia
Fusae Oshita, National Network in Solidarity with Migrant Workers, Japan
Kim Hye-Seon, Korea, Republic of
Zanaa Jurmed, Centre for Citizen's Alliance, Mongolia
Jocelyn de Guzman, Migrante

International, Philippines
Pranom Somwong, MAP Foundation,
Thailand

Task Force on Rural and Indigenous Women 2007

Convenor Olga Djanaeva, ALGA, Kyrgyzstan
Co-Convenor Tess Oliveros- Vistro, Amihan Peasant
Women's Coalition, Philippines
Members Susmita Chakma, TAUNGYA, Bangladesh
Rosalin Jayaseelan, Society For Rural
Education and Development, India
Dwi Astuti, Bina Desa, Indonesia
Sita Poudel, All Nepal Women's
Association, Nepal
Geetha Fernando, National Fisheries
Society, Sri Lanka
Kingkorn Narintarakul, Northern
Development Foundation, Thailand

Task Force on Violence Against Women 2007

Convenor Manishe Gupte, Mahila Sarvangeen
Utkarsh Mandal, India
Co-Convenor Shahnaz Iqbal, Shirkat Gah: Women's
Resource Centre, Pakistan
Members Sadaf Saaz Siddiqi, Naripokkho,
Bangladesh
Nang Lao Liang Won (TayTay), Women's
League of Burma (WLB) / Shan Women's
Action Network (SWAN), Burma
Edwina Kotoisuva, Fiji Women's Crisis
Centre Suva, Fiji
Desti Murdijana, PIKUL Foundation,
Indonesia
Yevgeniya Kozyreva, Feminist League,
Kazakhstan
EunKyung Kim, Korea Women's Hotline,
Korea, Republic of
Zarizana Abdul Aziz, Women's Centre for
Change, Malaysia
Enkhjargal Davaasuren, National Center
Against Violence, Mongolia
Sarala Emmanuel Suriya Women's
Development Centre, Sri Lanka

Task Force on Women and the Environment 2007

Convenor Vernie Yocogan- Diano, Innabuyog,
Philippines
Co-Convenor Ushakumari Jayakumar, Thanal, India
Members Khushi Kabir, Nijera Kori, Bangladesh
Chhouen Thavy, Banteay Srei, Cambodia
Risma Umar, Solidaritas Perempuan,
Indonesia
Kim Young Ran, Korean Federation
for Environmental Movement, Korea,
Republic of
Gombosurenegiin Uranstooj, Centre
for Human rights and Development,
Mongolia
Suntaree Saeng-ging, The Northeastern
Women's Network, Thailand

Task Force on Women's Participation in Political Processes 2007

Convenor Virada Somswasdi, Women's Studies
Center, Chiang Mai University, Thailand
Co-Convenors Elisa Tita Lubi, GABRIELA Women's Party,
Philippines
Titiek Kartika Hendrastiti, The Indonesian
Women's Coalition for Justice and
Democracy / Koalici Perempuan Indonesia
(KPI), Indonesia
Members Zarina Rahman Khan, Bangladesh
Beissova Svetlana Kapsultanovna, Taraz
Initiative Centre, Kazakhstan
Kim Ki, Seon Mi, Korea, Republic of
Bermet Stakeeva, Kyrgyzstan
Kabita Pandey, Forum for Protection of
Public Interest – Pro Public, Nepal
Afu Billy, Solomon Islands
Nimalka Fernando, Women's Alliance for
Peace and Democracy, Sri Lanka

Working Group on Women Rights Human Rights 2007

Convenor Eleanor Conda, Philippines
Co-Convenors Madhu Mehra, Partners for Law in
Development, India
Members Imrana Jalal, Regional Rights Resources
Team, Fiji Islands
Kamala Chandrakirana, Komnas
Perempuan, Indonesia
Heisoo Shin, Korean Council for the
Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery
by Japan, Korea, Republic of
Zainah Anwar, Sisters In Islam, Malaysia
Hina Jilani, AGHS Legal Aid Centre,
Pakistan
Sunila Abeysekera, INFORM Human
Rights Documentation Centre, Sri Lanka

6. Programme Organising Committees (POCs): 2009–2018

Programme Organising Committees 2009–2012

POC Breaking Out Of Marginalisation 2009–2012

Edwina Kotoisuva, Fiji
Cynthia Ca Abdon-Tellez, Hongkong
Govind Kelkar, India
Neelavalli, India
Eni Lestari Adi, Indonesia
Tati Krisnawaty, Indonesia
Olga Djanaeva, Kyrgyzstan
Pranom Somwong, Malaysia
Jyotsna Maskay, Nepal
Zubaida Birwani, Pakistan
Frances Quimpo-Dongeto, Philippines
Teresita Oliveros-Vistro, Philippines

Vernie Yocogan-Diano, Philippines
Geetha Lakmini Fernando, Sri Lanka
Hsia Hsiao-Chuan, Taiwan

POC Feminist Law and Practice 2009–2012

Imrana Jalal, Fiji
Gina Lee, Fiji
Madhu Mehra, India
Asfinawati, Indonesia
Cholpon Akmatova, Kyrgyzstan
Zoya Choudry, Pakistan
Judy M. Taguiwalo, Philippines
Alnie Foja, Philippines

POC Grounding the Global International Mechanism 2009–2012

Nurgul Djanaeva, Kyrgyzstan
Kamala Chandrakirana, Indonesia
Ivy N.Josiah, Malaysia
Heisoo Shin, Korea, Republic of
Mikiko Otani, Japan
Virada Somswadi, Thailand

POC Grounding the Global Regional Mechanism 2009–2012

Lee Shook Fong, Malaysia
Wanee Banggrapha-Thitiprasert, Thailand

POC Women in Power Programme 2009–2012

Priscilla Singh, Fiji
Esther Beulah, India
Fatima Nateson Burnad, India
S.K.Priya, India
Titiek Kartika Hendrastiti, Indonesia
Bermet Stakeeva, Kyrgyzstan
Nurgul Djanaeva, Kyrgyzstan
Junaenah Sulehan, Malaysia
Rashila Ramli, Malaysia
Cristina Ellazar Palabay, Philippines
Panowan Yodee, Thailand

Programme Organising Committees 2013

POC Women in Power Programme 2013

Priscilla Naidu, Fiji
Rashila Ramli, Malaysia
Binda Pandey, Nepal
Tahira Khan, Pakistan
Virada Somswasdi, Thailand
Gizela da Cruz de Carvalho, Timor Leste
Ofa Gutteinbeil Likiliki, Tonga

POC Grounding the Global International 2013

Lin Lixia, China
Vandhana Narayan, Fiji
Mikiko Otani, Japan
Heisoo Shin, Korea, Republic of
Ivy Josiah, Malaysia
Cristina (Tinay) Palabay, Philippines

Suchada Thaweessit, Thailand
POC Grounding the Global Regional 2013
Khushi Kabir, Bangladesh
Seng Reasey, Cambodia
Joan May Salvador (Joms), Philippines

POC Feminist Law and Practice 2013

Seema Naidu, Fiji
Albertina Almeida, India
Yevgeniya Kozyreava, Kazakhstan
Noor Faridah Ariffin, Malaysia
Alnie Foja, Philippines
Cheng Yi-Chen, Taiwan

POC Breaking Out Of Marginalisation – Rural Indigenous Women 2013

Govind Kelkar, India
Dewi Amelia Eka Putri, Indonesia
Aizhamal Bakashova, Kyrgyzstan
Helen Hakena, PNG

POC Breaking Out Of Marginalisation – Labour and Migration 2013

Eni Lestari, Indonesia
Renu Rajbhandari, Nepal
Cynthia Ca Abdon-Tellez, Philippines
Rina Anastacio, Philippines
Hsiao-Chuan Hsia, Taiwan
Pranom Somwong, Thailand

POC Breaking Out of Marginalisation – Climate Justice 2013

Puspa Dewy, Indonesia
Asel Dunganaeva, Kyrgyzstan
Teresita Vistro, Philippines
Geetha Fernando, Sri Lanka
Ravadee Prasertcharoensuk, Thailand

POC Feminist Development Justice 2013

Virisila Buadromo, Fiji
Asha Ramesh, India
Young-sook Cho, Korea, Republic of
Azra Talat Sayeed, Pakistan
Vernie Yocogan-Diano, Philippines
Wanee Banggrapha-Thitiprasert, Thailand

Programme Organising Committees 2014

POC Women in Power Programme 2014

Priscilla Singh, Fiji
Binda Pandey, Nepal
Rashila Ramli, Malaysia
Tahira Khan, Pakistan
Virada Somswasdi, Thailand
Gizela da Cruz de Carvalho, Timor Leste
Ofa Gutteinbeil Likiliki, Tonga

POC Grounding the Global International 2014

Lin Lixia, China

Mikiko Otani, Japan
Heisoo Shin, Korea, Republic of
Ivy Josiah, Malaysia
Vandhana Narayan, Fiji
Cristina (Tinay) Palabay, Philippines

POC Grounding the Global Regional 2014

Khushi Kabir, Bangladesh
Seng Reasey, Cambodia
Gina Hounng Lee, Fiji
Joan May Salvador (Joms), Philippines

POC Feminist Law and Practice 2014

Seema Naidu, Fiji
Albertina Almeida, India
Yevgeniya Kozyreava, Kazakhstan
Noor Farida Ariffin, Malaysia
Alnie Foja, Philippines

POC Breaking Out Of Marginalisation – Rural Indigenous Women 2014

Govind Kelkar, India
Dewi Amelia Eka Putri, Indonesia
Aizhamal Bakashova, Kyrgyzstan
Helen Hakena, PNG

POC Breaking Out Of Marginalisation – Labour and Migration 2014

Eni Lestari, Indonesia
Renu Rajbhandari, Nepal
Cynthia Ca Abdon-Tellez, Philippines
Rina Anastacio, Philippines
Hsiao-Chuan Hsia, Taiwan
Pranom Somwong, Thailand

POC Climate Justice 2014

Puspa Dewy, Indonesia
Asel Dunganaeva, Kyrgyzstan
Teresita Vistro, Philippines
Geetha Fernando, Sri Lanka
Ravadee Prasertcharoensuk, Thailand

POC Feminist Development Justice 2014

Virisila Buadromo, Fiji
Asha Ramesh, India
Young-sook Cho, Korea, Republic of
Azra Talat Sayeed, Pakistan
Vernie Yocogan-Diano, Philippines
Wanee Banggrapha-Thitiprasert, Thailand

Programme Organising Committees 2015

POC Women in Power 2015

Priscilla Singh, Fiji
Nurgul Djanaeva, Kyrgyzstan
Binda Pandey, Nepal
Tahira Khan, Pakistan
Carol Kidu, PNG
Gizela da Cruz de Carvalho, Timor Leste

Ofa Gutteinbeil Likiliki, Tonga

POC Grounding the Global International 2015

Lin Lixia, China
Vandhana Narayan/Lili Vuiyawasa, Fiji
Mikiko Otani, Japan
Heisoo Shin, Korea, Republic of
Ivy Josiah, Malaysia
Cristina (Tinay) Palabay, Philippines

POC Grounding the Global Regional 2015

Khushi Kabir, Bangladesh
Seng Reasey, Cambodia
Gina Hounng Lee, Fiji
Joan May Salvador (Joms), Philippines

POC Feminist Law and Practice 2015

Seema Naidu, Fiji
Albertina Almeida, India
Raushan Naurzybayeva, Kazakhstan
Soukphaphone Phanit, Laos
Noor Farida Ariffin, Malaysia
Alnie Foja, Philippines

POC Breaking Out Of Marginalisation – Rural Indigenous Women 2015

Aizhamal Bakashova, Kyrgyzstan
Govind Kelkar, India
Dewi Amelia Eka Putri, Indonesia
Srijana Pun, Nepal
Helen Hakena, PNG

POC Labour and Migration 2015

Eni Lestari, Indonesia
Renu Rajbhandari, Nepal
Cynthia Ca Abdon-Tellez, Philippines
Rina Anastacio, Philippines
Hsiao-Chuan Hsia, Taiwan
Pranom Somwong, Thailand

POC Climate Justice 2015

Titi Soentoro, Indonesia
Asel Dunganaeva, Kyrgyzstan
Toma Lama, Nepal
Teresita Vistro, Philippines
Geetha Fernando, Sri Lanka
Ravadee Prasertcharoensuk, Thailand

POC Feminist Development Justice 2015

Tara Chetty, Fiji
Young-sook Cho, Korea, Republic of
Azra Talat Sayeed, Pakistan
Vernie Yocogan-Diano, Philippines
Wanee Banggrapha-Thitiprasert, Thailand

Programme Organising Committees 2016

POC Women in Power Programme 2016

Priscilla Singh, Fiji

Nurgul Djanaeva, Kyrgyzstan
Binda Pandey, Nepal
Tahira Khan, Pakistan
Carol Kidu, PNG
Gizela da Cruz de Carvalho, Timor Leste
Ofa Gutteinbeil Likiliki, Tonga

POC Grounding the Global International 2016

Lin Lixia, China
Mikiko Otani, Japan
Heisoo Shin, Korea, Republic of
Ivy Josiah, Malaysia
Cristina (Tinay) Palabay, Philippines

POC Grounding the Global Regional 2016

Khushi Kabir, Bangladesh
Seng Reasey, Cambodia
Gina Hounng Lee, Fiji
Joan May Salvador (Joms), Philippines

POC Feminist Law and Practice 2016

Seema Naidu, Fiji
Albertina Almeida, India
Raushan Naurzybayeva, Kazakhstan
Soukphaphone Phanit, Laos
Noor Faridah Ariffin, Malaysia
Alnie Foja, Philippines

POC Breaking Out Of Marginalisation – Rural Indigenous Women 2016

Govind Kelkar, India
Dewi Amelia Eka Putri, Indonesia
Aizhamal Bakashova, Kyrgyzstan
Srijana Pun, Nepal
Helen Hakena, PNG

POC Labour – Women Organising Women 2016

Nazma Akhter, Bangladesh
SK Priya, India
Daisy Arago, Philippines
Padmini Weerasinhe, Sri Lanka

POC Migration 2016

Eni Lestari, Indonesia
Renu Rajbhandari, Nepal
Cynthia Ca Abdon-Tellez, Philippines
Rina Anastacio, Philippines
Hsiao-Chuan Hsia, Taiwan

POC Climate Justice 2016

Asel Dunganaeva, Kyrgyzstan
Titi Soentoro, Indonesia
Toma Lama, Nepal
Geetha Fernando, Sri Lanka
Ravadee Prasertcharoensuk, Thailand

POC Feminist Development Justice 2016

Veena Singh, Fiji
Young-sook Cho, Korea, Republic of
Vernie Yocogan-Diano, Philippines
Azra Talat Sayeed, Pakistan
Wanee Banggrapha-Thitiprasert, Thailand

Cross-POC Feminist Learning Institute 2016

Sanaiyya Ansari, Bangladesh
Govind Kelkar, India
Aizhamal Bakashova, Kyrgyzstan
Rashilla Ramli, Malaysia
Ivy Josiah, Malaysia
Judy Taguiwalo, Philippines
Vernie Yocogan-Diano, Philippines
Pranom Somwong, Thailand

Programme Organising Committees 2017

POC Women in Power Programme

Nurgul Djanaeva, Kyrgyzstan
Binda Pandey, Nepal
Tahira Khan, Pakistan
Carol Kidu, PNG
Virada Somwasdi, Thailand
Gizela Carvalho, Timor-Leste
Ofa Gutteinbeil Likiliki, Tonga

POC Grounding the Global 2017

Khushi Kabir, Bangladesh
Reasey Seng, Cambodia
Lin Lixia, China
Gina Huong Lee, Fiji
Mikiko Otani, Japan
Heisoo Shin, Korea, Republic of
Ivy Josiah, Malaysia
Cristina Palabay, Philippines
Joms Salvador, Philippines
Suchada Thaweessit, Thailand

POC Feminist Law and Practice 2017

Seema Naidu, Fiji
Albertina Almeida, India
Raushan Naurzybayeva, Kazakhstan
Soukphaphone Phanit, Laos
Noor Farida Ariffin, Malaysia
Alnie Foja, Philippines

POC Breaking Out Of Marginalisation – Rural Indigenous Women 2017

Govind Kelkar, India
Dewi Amelia Eka Putri, Indonesia
Aizhamal Bakashova, Kyrgyzstan
Helen Hakena, PNG

POC Labour – Women Organising Women 2017

Nazma Akhter, Bangladesh
Daisy Arago, Philippines

POC Migration 2017

Eni Lestari, Indonesia
Cynthia Ca Abdon-Tellez, Philippines
Hsiao-Chuan Hsia, Taiwan

POC Climate Justice 2017

Titi Soentoro, Indonesia
Asel Dunganaeva, Kyrgyzstan
Toma Lama, Nepal
Geetha Fernando, Sri Lanka
Ravadee Prasertcharoensuk, Thailand
Toan Tran (FP), Vietnam

POC Feminist Development Justice 2017

Nalini Singh, Fiji
Youngsook Cho, Korea, Republic of
Azra Talat Sayeed, Pakistan
Vernie Yocogan-Diano, Philippines

POC Women Interrogating Trade and Corporate Hegemony 2017

Fatima Nateson Burnad, India
Dinda Nuranisaa, Indonesia
Azra Talat Syed, Pakistan
Joan (Joms) Salvador, Philippines
Janarthi Arumugam, Malaysia

Cross-POC Feminist Learning Institute 2017

Sanaiyya Ansari, Bangladesh
Govind Kelkar, India
Aizhamal Bakashova, Kyrgyzstan
Rashila Ramli, Malaysia
Ivy Josiah, Malaysia
Judy Taguiwalo, Philippines
Vernie Yocogan-Diano, Philippines
Pranom Somwong, Thailand

Programme Organising Committees 2018

POC Women in Power Programme 2018

Mahmuda Begum, Bangladesh
Cheath Chansolinda, Cambodia
Munuswamy Valliammal, India
Nurgul Djanaeva, Kyrgyzstan
Vernie Yocogan Diano, Philippines
Gizela Carvalho, Timor-Leste

POC Grounding the Global 2018

Jayshree Mangubhai, Fiji
Heisoo Shin, Korea, Republic of
Cristina Palabay, Philippines
Karen Lai, Malaysia

POC Feminist Law and Practice 2018

Seema Naidu, Fiji
Albertina Almeida, India
Mikiko Otani, Japan
Raushan Nauryzbayeva, Kazakhstan
Honey Tan, Malaysia

POC Breaking Out Of Marginalisation - Rural Indigenous Women 2018

Triana Kurnia Wardhani, Indonesia

Govind Kelkar, India
Sharanya Nayak, India
Cholpon Asakeeva, Kyrgyzstan
Mai Len Cer, Myanmar
Geetha Lakmini, Nepal
Helen Hakena, PNG

POC Labour - Women Organising Women 2018

Nazma Akhter, Bangladesh
Sringatin, Indonesia
Daisy Arago, Philippines
Padmini Weerasinhe, Sri Lanka
Jarujit Prajit, Thailand

POC Migration 2018

Sunzinda Sultana, Bangladesh
Dolores Pelaez, Indonesia
Eni Lestari, Indonesia
Cherry Clemente, Philippines
Glorene Amala, Malaysia

POC Climate Justice 2018

Kalyani Raj, India
Titi Soentoro, Indonesia
Catarina T. Estavillo, Philippines
Ravadee Prasertcharoensuk, Thailand
Toan Tran, Vietnam

POC Feminist Development Justice 2018

Sheepa Hafiza, Bangladesh
Nalini Singh, Fiji
Geetha Narayanan, India
Olga Djanaeva, Kyrgyzstan
Shanta Laxmi Shrestha, Nepal
Cielito Perez, Philippines
Wanun Permpibul, Thailand

POC Women Interrogating Trade and Corporate Hegemony 2018

Fatima Nateson Burnad, India
Dinda Nuranisaa, Indonesia
Channsitha Mark, Cambodia
Azra Talat Sayeed, Pakistan
Joan (Joms) Salvador, Philippines

POC Feminist Learning Institute (Cross-programme Organising Committee) 2018

Sanaiyya Ansari, Bangladesh
Govind Kelkar, India
Aizhamal Bakashova, Kyrgyzstan
Rashilla Ramli, Malaysia
Ivy Josiah, Malaysia
Judy Taguiwalo, Philippines
Vernie Yocogan-Diano, Philippines
Pranom Somwong, Thailand

7. Regional Coordinators (RCs): 1988-2018

1. Emelina Quintillan, Philippines (October 1988 – June 1989)
2. Nimalka Fernando, Sri Lanka (June 1989 - February 1994)
3. Salbiah Ahmad, Singapore (Acting: 1994 -1995)
4. Josefina Yolanda F. Oraa, Philippines (December 1995 - September 1997)
5. Virada Somswasdi, Thailand (Interim: October 1997 - December 1999)
6. Jennifer S. Thambayah, Sri Lanka (November 1999 - August 2000)
7. Mary Jane N. Real, Philippines (September 2000 to 2004)
8. Lynnsay Rongokea Francis, Cook Islands (Interim: March 2005 - July 2005)
9. Titi Soentoro, Indonesia (2005-2006)
10. Lynnsay Rongokea Francis, Cook Islands (2006-2009)
11. Azra Talat Syed, Pakistan (Interim: April - July 2009)
12. Tita Elisa Lubi, Philippines (Interim: July - October 2009)
13. Kate Lappin, Australia (October 2009 - December 2017)
14. Misun Woo, Republic of Korea (December 2017 - present)

8. Secretariat Staff: 1996-2018

Secretariat Staff (Kuala Lumpur) 1988 - 1996

Regional Coordinator (1988 to 1989) - Emelina Quintillan
Regional Coordinator (1989 to February 1994) - Nimalka Fernando
Human Rights Desk Coordinator - Nimalka Fernando (February 1994 - June 1996)
Acting Regional Coordinator (January 1994-1995) - Salbiah Ahmad
Regional Coordinator (December 1995 - September 1997) - Josefina Yolanda Fuentebella Oraa
Programme Associate (July 1988 – September 1990) - Shanthi Dariam
Secretary - Sherine Abdullah
Training Coordinator - Ratna Kapur
Research Officer - Sunitha Rangaswami
Resource Officer - Debbie Stothard / Janet-May Chin
Finance Officer - Leong Mee Nan (a.k.a Mei Yun)
Administrative Officer - Saira Shameem
Accounts/Administrative Assistant - Azlini Abdul Ghani

Secretariat Staff (Chiang Mai) 1997¹⁶

Interim Regional Coordinator - Virada Somswasdi
Assistant to the Regional Coordinator (Volunteer) - Mary Kumvaj
Programme Assistant - Maria Herminia Graterol
Administrative Officer - Sachee Vilaithong
Accountant - Parichaath Thronchaisith
Intern - Maria Greterol

Secretariat Staff (Chiang Mai) 1998

Acting Regional Coordinator - Virada Somswasdi
Resource Officer - Etsuko Ikeda
Assistant to the Regional Coordinator – Mary Kumvaj
Programme Assistant - Maria Herminia Graterol
Programme Assistant - Zahra Fatima Ahmed
Administrative Officer - Sachee Vilaithong
Accountant - Parichaath Thronchaisith

Secretariat Staff (Chiang Mai) 1999

Acting Regional Coordinator - Virada Somswasdi
Regional Coordinator - Jennifer S. Thambayah
Assistant to the Regional Coordinator - Mary Kumvaj
Programme Officer - Mary Jane N. Real
Programme Officer - Alison Gita Aggarwal
Programme Assistant - Zahra Fatima Ahmed
Programme Assistant - Maria Herminia Graterol
Resource Officer - Etsuko Ikeda
Resource Assistant - Kanok-Rakha Losiri
Administrative Officer - Sachee Vilaithong
Accounts / Finance Officer - Parichaath Thronchaisith
Part Time Accounts Assistant - Siriporn Srichoowong
Intern - Julie Greenspoon

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16 Meeting kit. Joint Steering Committee and Programme and Management Committee meeting 29-30 Nov, 1997, Chiang Mai

Secretariat Staff (Chiang Mai) 2000

Regional Coordinator - Jennifer S. Thambayah
Acting Regional Coordinator - Mary Jane N. Real
Programme Officer - Alison Gita Aggarwal
Programme Officer - Amarsanaa Darisuren
Programme Assistant - Zahra Fatima Ahmed
Resource Officer - Taeko Kawamura
Resource Assistant - Kanok-Rakha Losiri
Administrative Officer - Satchee Vilaithong
Accounts / Finance Officer - Parichaath Thronchaisith
Part Time Accounts Assistant - Siriporn Srichoowong
Intern - Julie Greenspoon

Secretariat Staff (Chiang Mai) 2001

Regional Coordinator - Mary Jane N. Real
Programme Officer - Alison Gita Aggarwal
Programme Officer - Amarsanaa Darisuren
Programme Officer - Vani Dulaki Ravula
Resource Officer - Taeko Kawamura
Administrative Officer - Satchee Vilaithong
Accounts / Finance Officer - Parichaath Thronchaisith
Part Time Accounts Assistant - Siriporn Srichoowong
Intern - Cara Dilts

Secretariat Staff (Chiang Mai) 2002

Regional Coordinator - Mary Jane N. Real
Programme Officer - Alison Gita Aggarwal
Programme Officer - Amarsanaa Darisuren
Programme Officer - Vani Dulaki Ravula
Resource Officer - Judy Pamela Pasimio
Administrative Officer - Satchee Vilaithong
Accounts / Finance Officer - Parichaath Thronchaisith
Part Time Accounts Assistant - Siriporn Srichoowong

Secretariat Staff (Chiang Mai) 2003

Regional Coordinator - Mary Jane N. Real
Programme Officer - Amarsanaa Darisuren
Programme Officer - Vani Dulaki Ravula
Programme Officer - Yamini
Resource Officer - Judy Pamela Pasimio
Liaison Officer - Satchee Vilaithong
Finance Officer - Parichaath Thronchaisith
Finance Officer - Punika Shinawatra
Accounts Assistant - Siriporn Srichoowong
Intern - Valentina Soe
Intern - Melissa Haeckel

Secretariat Staff (Chiang Mai) 2004

Regional Coordinator - Mary Jane N. Real
Assistant to the Regional Coordinator - Nalini Singh
Programme Officer - Amarsanaa Darisuren
Programme Officer - Yamini
Resource Officer - Cholporn Akmatova
Programme Officer/ Assistant to the Resource Officer - Tomoko Kashiwazaki
Programme Officer - Julie Kon Kam King
Programme Associate - Alycia Nicholas
Programme Assistant - Valentina Soe
Liaison Officer - Satchee Vilaithong
Finance Officer - Parichaath Thronchaisith
Finance Officer - Punika Shinawatra
Accounts Assistant - Siriporn Srichoowong
Part time Bookkeeper - Kornvika Paupratum

Intern - Jennifer Taylor
Intern - Lisa Pusey
Intern - Cait Sainsbury

Secretariat Staff (Chiang Mai) 2005

Interim Regional Coordinator - Lynnsay Francis
Regional Coordinator - Titi Soentoro
Assistant to the Regional Coordinator - Jyotsna Maskay
Programme Officer - Lisa Pusey
Programme Officer - Judy A. Pasimio
Programme Officer - Nalini Singh
Liaison Officer - Satchee Vilaithong
Finance Officer - Punika Shinawatra
Information Officer - Cholpon Akmatova
Programme Assistant - Tomoko Kashiwazaki
Programme Assistant - Valentina Soe
Bookkeeper - Kornvika Paupratum

Secretariat Staff (Chiang Mai) 2006

Regional Coordinator - Lynnsay Francis
Assistant to the Regional Coordinator - Jyotsna Maskay
Programme Officer - Lisa Pusey
Programme Officer - Judy A. Pasimio
Programme Officer - Nalini Singh
Programme Assistant - Tomoko Kashiwazaki
Programme Assistant - Valentina Soe
Liaison Officer - Satchee Vilaithong
Finance Officer - Punika Shinawatra
Information Officer - Cholpon Akmatova
Bookkeeper - Kornvika Paupratum

Secretariat Staff (Chiang Mai) 2007

Regional Coordinator - Lynnsay Francis
Programme Officer - Lisa Pusey (outgoing)
Programme Officer - Misun Woo
Programme Officer - Judy A. Pasimio (outgoing)
Programme Officer - Nalini Singh
Programme Officer - Almah Tararia (outgoing)
Programme Assistant - Tomoko Kashiwazaki
Programme Assistant - Valentina Soe (outgoing)
Information & Communications Officer - Cholpon Akmatova (outgoing)
Information & Communications Officer - Mary Ann Llanza
Liaison Officer - Satchee Vilaithong
Finance Officer - Punika Shinawatra
Finance Assistant - Kornvika Paupratum
Intern and Volunteer - Louise Vigeant
Intern and Volunteer - Felicity Millner
Intern and Volunteer - Sopit Cheevapanich
Intern and Volunteer - Heidi Berkmuller

Secretariat Staff (Chiang Mai) 2008

Regional Coordinator - Lynnsay Francis
Programme Officer - Misun Woo
Programme Officer - Nalini Singh
Programme Officer - Tomoko Kashiwazaki
Information Communications Officer - Mary Ann Llanza
Liaison Officer - Satchee Vilaithong
Finance Officer - Punika Shinawatra
Finance Assistant - Kornvika Paupratum

Secretariat Staff (Chiang Mai) 2009

Regional Coordinator - Kate Lappin
Programme Officer - Misun Woo
Programme Officer - Tomoko Kashiwazaki
Programme Officer (Volunteer) - Philippa Smales
Liaison Officer - Navarat Nophran
Finance Officer - Punika Shinawatra
Information and Communications Officer - Tina Lee
Financial Assistant - Kornvika Paupratum
Office Assistant - Nee Jainanta

Secretariat Staff (Chiang Mai) 2010

Regional Coordinator - Kate Lappin
Programme Officer - Misun Woo
Programme Officer - Tomoko Kashiwazaki
Programme Officer (Volunteer) - Philippa Smales
Programme Officer - Dalina Prasertsri
Programme Officer - Rohini Ghadiok
Information and Communications Officer - Tina Lee
Liaison Officer - Navarat Nophran
Finance Officer - Punika Shinawatra
Financial Assistant - Kornvika Paupratum
Caretaker - Panee Jainanta
Volunteer (M&E) - Claire Layden
Volunteer/Intern - Dana Meads
Intern - Huong Tran
Intern - Grace Bangoy
Volunteer - Gaayathri Nair

Secretariat Staff (Chiang Mai) 2011

Regional Coordinator - Kate Lappin
Programme Officer - Misun Woo
Programme Officer - Tomoko Kashiwazaki
Programme Officer (Volunteer) - Philippa Smales
Programme Officer - Dalina Prasertsri
Programme Officer - Rohini Ghadiok
Programme Officer - Diyana Yahaya
Information and Communications Officer - Tina Lee
Liaison Officer - Navarat Nophran
Finance Officer - Punika Shinawatra
Financial Assistant - Kornvika Paupratum
Volunteer (M&E) - Claire Layden
Volunteer/Intern - Dana Meads
Programme Officer - Nina Somera
Information and Communication Officer - Sarah Matsushita
1st APFF Coordinator - June Taguiwalo
Executive Assistant - Josephine Mann
Intern - Tatjana Bosevska
Intern - Huong Tran
Intern - Grace Bango
Volunteer - Gaayathri Nair
Caretaker - Panee Jainanta

Secretariat Staff (Chiang Mai) 2012

Regional Coordinator - Kate Lappin
Programme Officer - Misun Woo
Programme Officer - Diyana Yahaya
Programme Officer - Marion Cabrera
Programme Officer - Wardarina
Programme Officer - Tomoko Kashiwazaki
Programme Associate - Wint Thiri Aung
Executive Assistant - Josephine Mann
Information and Communication Officer - Sarah Matsushita

Liaison Officer - Navarat Nophran
Finance Officer - Punika Shinawatra
Financial Assistant - Kornvika Paupratum
Programme Officer - Nina Somera
Programme Associate - Kamonwan Petchot
Programme Associate - Rawnak Jahan
Panee Jainanta
Programme Officer (Volunteer) - Philippa Smales
Volunteer - Seng Bu
1st APFF Coordinator - June Taguiwalo
Intern - Tatjana Bosevska

Secretariat Staff (Chiang Mai) 2013

Regional Coordinator - Kate Lappin
Deputy Regional Coordinator - Misun Woo
Programme Officer - Wardarina
Programme Officer - Marion Cabrera
Programme Officer - Diyana Yahaya
Programme Officer - Sunee Singh
Programme Officer - Tessa Khan
Programme Associate - Leanne Sajor
Programme Associate - Wint Thiri Aung
Finance Officer - Punika Shinawatra
Finance Assistant - Kornvika Paopratum
Liaison Officer - Navarat Nophran
Information and Communications Officer - Aileen Familara

Secretariat Staff (Chiang Mai) 2014

Regional Coordinator - Kate Lappin
Deputy Regional Coordinator - Misun Woo (on maternity leave from September 2014)
Executive Assistant - Daungkamon Doncha-um
Programme Officer - Diyana Yahaya
Programme Officer - Marion Cabrera
Programme Officer - Wardarina
Programme Officer - Tessa Khan
Programme Officer - Sunee Singh
Programme Associate - Banamalika Choudhury
Programme Associate - Reileen Dulay
Programme Associate - Pichayupuk Leangsombut
Programme Associate - Wint Thiri Aung
Programme Associate - Camille Risler
Programme Associate - Leanne Sajor
Information and Communications Officer - Aileen Familara
Research and Publication Associate - Trimita Chakma
System and Evaluation Officer - Smita Sharma
Finance Officer - Punika Shinawatra
Finance Assistant - Kornvika Paopratum
Liaison Officer - Navarat Nophran
South South Young Feminist Leadership Intern - Betty Barkha
Intern - Haley Pedersen
Intern - Tatjana Bosevska
Intern - Josephine Giarrusso

Secretariat Staff (Chiang Mai) 2015

Regional Coordinator - Kate Lappin
Deputy Regional Coordinator - Misun Woo (on maternity leave)
Executive Assistant - Daungkamon Doncha-um
Programme Officer - Diyana Yahaya
Programme Officer - Marion Cabrera
Programme Officer - Wardarina
Programme Officer - Tessa Khan

Programme Officer - Sunee Singh
Programme Associate - Wint Thiri Aung
Programme Associate - Camille Risler
Programme Associate - Leanne Sajor
Programme Officer - Reileen Dulay
Programme Associate - Pichayupuk Leangsombut
Finance Officer - Punika Shinawatra
Finance Assistant - Kornvika Paoprathum
Liaison Officer - Navarat Nophran
Information and Communications Officer - Aileen Familara
Research and Publications Associate - Trimita Chakma
System and Evaluation Officer - Smita Sharma
South South Young Feminist Leadership Intern - Alina Saba
Intern - Haley Pedersen
Intern - Nadia Maki
Intern - Tatjana Bosevska

Secretariat Staff (Chiang Mai) 2016

Regional Coordinator - Kate Lappin
Deputy Regional Coordinator - Misun Woo
Executive Assistant - Betty Barkha
Programme Officer - Diyana Yahaya
Programme Officer - Marion Cabrera
Programme Officer - Wardarina
Programme Officer - Camille Risler
Programme Officer - Sunee Singh
Programme Officer - Suluck Fai Lamubol
Programme Officer - Sanam Amin
Programme Officer - Tessa Khan (outgoing)
Programme Officer - Leanne Sajor (outgoing)
Information and Communications Officer - Aileen Familara (outgoing)
Information and Communications Officer - Neha Gupta
Research and Communications Officer - Trimita Chakma
Finance Officer - Punika Shinawatra
Finance Assistant - Kornvika Paoprathum
Liaison Officer - Visaline Phuntip
South South Young Feminist Leadership Intern (outgoing) - Alina Saba
South South Young Feminist Leadership Intern - Ranjana Giri
Intern - Josephine Giarrusso
Intern - Heidi Gritsch
Intern - Kathryn Leuch

Secretariat Staff (Chiang Mai) 2017

Regional Coordinator (outgoing) - Kate Lappin
Regional Coordinator (incoming) - Misun Woo
Executive Assistant - Kim Anh Nguyen
Programme Officer - Diyana Yahaya
Programme Officer - Marion Cabrera
Programme Officer - Wardarina
Programme Officer - Suluck Fai Lamubol
Programme Officer - Sanam Amin
Programme Officer - Shradha Shreejaya
Information and Communications Officer - Neha Gupta
Research and Publications Officer - Trimita Chakma
Finance Officer - Kornvika Paoprathum
Finance and Admin Officer - Satnam Kaur
Finance Associate - Chachanok Anjanbhati
Liaison and Admin Officer - Visaline Phuntip
South-South Young Feminist Leadership Intern - Zar Zar Tun

Secretariat Staff (Chiang Mai and Penang) 2018

Regional Coordinator - Misun Woo
Deputy Regional Coordinator - Tess Vistro
Executive and Programme Associate - Kim Anh Nguyen
Sub-Grant Coordinator - Aizhamal Bakashova
Programme Officer - Marion G. Cabrera
Programme Officer - Wardarina
Programme Officer - Sanam Amin
Programme Officer - Suluck Fai Lamubol
Programme Officer - Shradha Shreejaya
Programme Officer - Madhura Chakraborty
Programme Associate - Hien Nguyen
Programme Associate - Patricia Wattimena
Research and Publications Officer - Trimita Chakma
Information and Communications Officer - Neha Gupta
Information and Communications Associate - Andita Listyarini
Finance Officer - Kornvika Paoprathum
Liaison Officer - Visaline Phuntip
IT & Finance Associate - Chachanok Anjanbhati
South-South Young Feminist Leadership Intern - Zar Zar Tun
Programme Officer - Diyana Yahaya (Relocated to Penang in September)
Finance and Admin Officer - Satnam Kaur (Penang)



Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development

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Chiang Mai 50100

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Penang, Malaysia

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Facebook: [apwld.ngo](https://www.facebook.com/apwld.ngo)

Twitter: [@apwld](https://twitter.com/apwld)

Instagram: [apwld_](https://www.instagram.com/apwld_)

YouTube: [AsiaPacificForumonWomenLawandDevelopment](https://www.youtube.com/AsiaPacificForumonWomenLawandDevelopment)

Soundcloud: [apwld](https://www.soundcloud.com/apwld)