



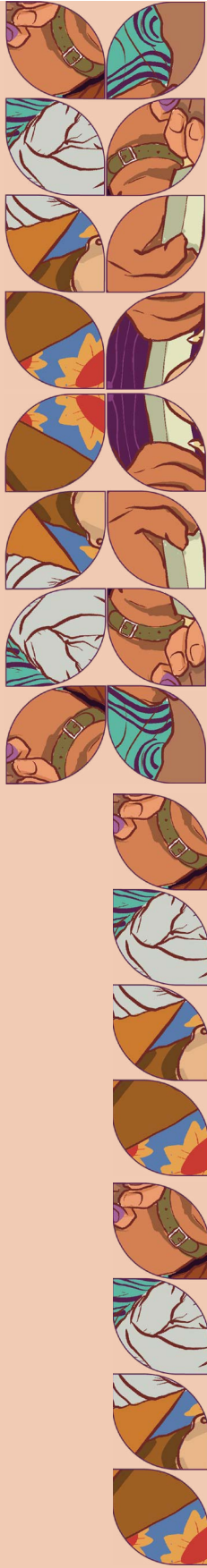
APWLD  
Annual Report  
2024

# SOLIDARITY IS REVOLUTIONARY !

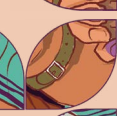


# TABLE OF CONTENTS

01	Who We Are	01
	Our Collective Resistance—2024 Snapshots	02
	Letter to Members:	03
	A Message from APWLD’s Regional Coordinator	
02	Our Solidarity in Action—Impacts and Wins	05
	• Our Struggles are Interlinked and so is our Resistance	06
	• Mapping our Wins: From the Ground Up!	08
	• Indonesia: Women Returned Migrants Secure Rights Through Legal wins	10
	• Nepal: Increased State Budgets for Women Returned Migrants	11
	• Uzbekistan: Stronger State Support for Women Migrants	12
	• Bangladesh: Women Farmers Reclaim Land and Food Sovereignty	
	Indonesia: Defending our Waters: Women’s Bold Fight Against Shrimp Farm Pollution	13
	Thailand: Reclaiming the Mangroves: Women Challenge False Climate Solutions	15
	Kyrgyzstan: Workers Run the World: Women Workers Force Changes in the Labour Code	17
	Philippines Makes History: First in Asia to Ratify ILO C190	18
	• Journeys of Reflection	19
	• The many faces of militarism in Asia and the Pacific	22
	• Research as Resistance: Can research be in service to our movements?	22
	Lessons for our Resistance	23
		24



● Raising Voices of all Women in the Struggle, at all Levels	24
● Co-creating Democratic Multilateral Spaces for Global South Grassroots Women	25
• Beyond SDGs: Rallying movements for Development Justice	25
• Strengthening feminist discourse on debt justice	27
• Centering human rights of women migrants in multilateral negotiations	30
• Democratising the BEIJING+30 Review Process	32
● Expanding the Mandate: Women's Human Rights in Global Debt Discourse	34
• Centering Indigenous women in debt and climate advocacy	36
• Bringing UN Mandate Holders together: a regional feminist platform	37
● Milestones in Our Collective Resistance	39
• Fostering Solidarity Between Media and Movements	39
• Our stories build movement solidarity	41
● Journeys of Reflection	42
• Are We Listening? Advancing language justice through activist interpreters	42
● Lessons for our Resistance	43
<hr/>	
● Injustice for one of us, is Injustice for all of us	44
● Home But Not Free: Mary Jane Veloso's Struggle For Justice	45
• A timeline of collective resistance to free Mary Jane Veloso	47
● Milestones in our Collective Solidarity	49
• Finding new ways to support communities facing loss and damage	49
• Global and local solidarity for political prisoners in the Philippines	50
● Journeys of Reflections	52
• Finding sisterhood in Community Visits	52
● Lessons for Our Resistance	53
<hr/>	
● We Created Safe, Vibrant Political Spaces for Regional Solidarity	54
● A Gathering of Feminist Movements—The Fourth Asia Pacific Feminist Forum	55
● Nurturing Feminist Organising: Our Experience in Central Asia	58
● Strengthening Member-led Feminist Leadership and Accountability	61
● Lessons for our Resistance	63





03

APWLD’s Governance Structure (2024-2027)  
and Secretariat

63

04

Financial Narrative & Accounts

69

05

Our 2024 Funders

71

06

Acronyms

72









# Who We Are

APWLD is an independent, non-governmental, non-profit organisation and a leading network of feminist organisations and individual activists in Asia and the Pacific. With over 310 members from 31 countries and territories in the region, APWLD actively works towards advancing women's human rights and Development Justice since 1986.

We use feminist analysis to dissect, engage with and transform laws, legal practices and the systems that shape and inform them. At the heart of our work is the belief that 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. Equality, Development Justice and the realisation of human rights can only happen when women, particularly marginalised women, have the agency to lead policy and legal debates and determine solutions.

We believe that advances in women's human rights are achieved when strong, autonomous, sustained and diverse feminist movements exist and thrive, free from any form of harassment and constraint.

Our work is designed to support and foster movements and amplify their impact through four key elements:

- Building strong capacities to analyse, organise, advocate and drive social, economic and political change;
- Co-creating knowledge, evidence, tools and resources to advocate for change;
- Extending/Facilitating advocacy space and opportunities to engage with and influence policymakers at local, national, regional and international levels; and
- Enabling institutional structures and space to build alliances, coalitions and networks that amplify common demands and collectively drive change.

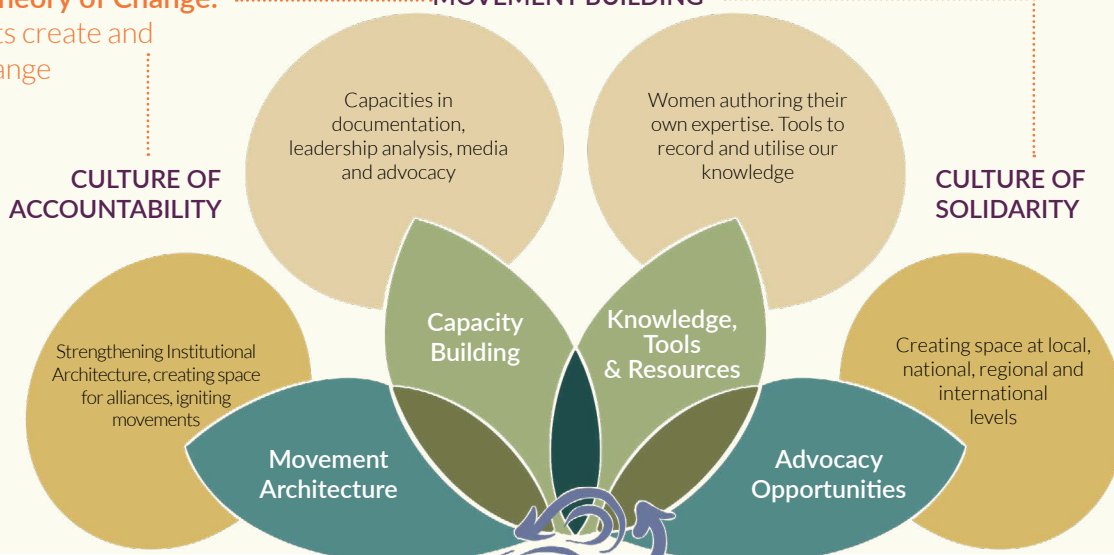
We believe that sustained movement-building occurs when interventions are accompanied by a culture of solidarity with other networks and movements, as well as a culture of accountability of state and non-state actors in the pursuit of women's human rights and Development Justice.

[Read about our HerStory here.](#)

## APWLD Theory of Change:

Movements create and sustain change

## MOVEMENT BUILDING





# Our Collective Resistance—2024 Snapshots

## Capacity-Building

We strengthened the capacity of at least 5,974 grassroots women, their communities, women journalists and activists and increased their skills to document, analyse and formulate policy recommendations to advance women's human rights and Development Justice.

## Knowledge, Tools & Resources

Together with our members and partners, we collectively produced 429 new feminist knowledge tools and resources amplifying the experiences, perspectives and demands of grassroots women from Asia and the Pacific. APWLD produced 42 publications and 1,135 multimedia posts.

## Advocacy Opportunities

We supported 361 women to directly participate in 44 regional and global high-level advocacy spaces, resulting in a total of 74 interventions and four outcome documents that were influenced.

## Movement Architecture

We worked closely with 15 alliances, coalitions and networks that amplify common demands and collectively drive change. We also supported four campaigns and helped give birth to 35 new formations—signs of a growing feminist wave across borders. At the Asia Pacific Feminist Forum, we gathered over 550 women from 35 countries and territories to forge and renew bonds and solidarity across the region and beyond.







## A Message from APWLD's Regional Coordinator

Dear members, fellow resisters and supporters,

As I take a moment to reflect on the year 2024, I am immediately drawn into the memory of over 500 feminist and women's rights activists who gathered at the Fourth Asia Pacific Feminist Forum. There were many organic moments of collective joy and dancing, of quiet moments of appreciation and understanding for each other, our struggles, joys, pains and healing, the sharp analyses and overflowing wisdom, but most of all—the great wave of courageous, feminist solidarity.

We titled this year's annual report, 'Solidarity is Revolutionary!' as we deepen our understanding of what solidarity might look like in the realities of our movements. Solidarity is revolutionary as it requires critical reflection and analysis as prerequisites for any movements' political demands. Solidarity is revolutionary as it guides movements to understand our own power, privileges as well as fractions. Solidarity is revolutionary as it leads movements to constantly check, give up and shift power towards making our collective power stronger. Solidarity takes serious efforts to 'undo' many harms that have been forced upon us—internalised patriarchy, capitalism, individualism and colonialism to name a few.

The world around us seems to be rushing into an apocalypse. One would not be surprised if another world war breaks out—there is no lack of necessary and sufficient conditions that enabled the two second world wars in the current state of the world. Colonialism and imperialism never left us but continues more blatantly in renewed or mutated forms—the intensified use of militarism to create wars, conflicts and genocide for power and greed; rising authoritarianism and digital surveillance to crush organising for social justice and peoples' sovereignty; the systemic debacle of the United Nations to undermine any attempts in shifting power relations; cuts in Overseas Development Aid and funding as a tactic to retain colonial hierarchies between countries and their peoples; and the use of digitalisation to cement profit over peoples.



When APWLD's current strategic plan was developing in 2021, with COVID-19 and interconnected crises as the backdrop, our members were intentional in creating moments of knowledge-building and sharing, new dialogues and cross-movement learning and collectivising. The first two years of new experiments—going wider and deeper into the realities of women in the context of rising fascism, militarism and global economic crisis orchestrated by colonial global powers—renewed APWLD with robust evidence to clarify, advance and consolidate our feminist analysis and resistance. All the wins as well as challenges represented in this report are 'fruits and nutrition' that continue to guide our ongoing feminist organising work.

In moving forward, the upcoming few years present critical opportunities, not only for APWLD, but for the larger social justice and peoples' movements to find ways to rectify the systems that produce generational harms, inequality and injustice. Our experience confirms that when we listen and are guided by members and their communities, we create a global political momentum. For instance, when APWLD's strategic plan was being crafted in 2021, led by members, it was not known then that the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development to reframe global financial and macroeconomic structures or the International Labour Conference's standard setting on decent work in the platform economy would take place in 2025. And yet, APWLD's membership and their communities clearly instructed APWLD at the time, to look into the nexus between debt, militarism and digitalisation and its consequences on women's human rights—the very 'cross-cutting thematic priorities' APWLD has been focusing on in the past two to three years. Because of the guidance, knowledge and expertise that comes from our members, we are now prepared to lead, support and consolidate our diverse movements' political unity with women's realities, analysis and visions at the core.

The next couple of years for APWLD will be to advance accountability—accountability of duty bearers and accountability within our movement itself. We are more than convinced that our struggles are interconnected, and hence our solutions must also be connected both vertically and horizontally. By connecting movement-led solutions from local to global levels, we will be required again to critically think and practice feminist solidarity so that our collective web of movement-led solutions will actually break the current systems of oppression.

As the oppressions continue over generations, it takes generations for meaningful change to happen. That is why APWLD underlines the importance of intergenerational political unity and solidarity-building so that we do not repeat similar paths or struggles in every generation, but we build on the unselfish activism and visionary resistance of our previous generations. Join us as we intentionally create spaces for intergenerational, cross-regional and cross-movement dialogues, learning and organising to connect movement-led solutions for a feminist just future.

In solidarity,

Misun Woo





02







## Our Solidarity in Action—Impacts and Wins

The year 2024 showed us how deeply and strongly we are connected to each other in the region—to movements, to members, to partners, to grassroots communities.

Together, **we created safe, vibrant political spaces that celebrated our solidarity and collective power in the region.** The strongest expression of this was the solidarity we witnessed at the Fourth Asia Pacific Feminist Forum (APFF4), as hundreds of our sisters in Asia and the Pacific responded to the call to harness our creative energies and collective journeys and imagine the new feminist worlds we have been fighting for. It reinforced the spirit of cross-regional, cross-issue, cross-identity, cross-generational feminist solidarity and reminded us that solidarity is truly revolutionary.

This growing collective power and the enduring connections between us remains critical as we face growing repression and heightened violence of all forms in the world. It is what will help us realise a feminist world, free of systemic oppression of fundamentalisms, militarism, globalisation and patriarchy. But this collective power is only possible because we recognise that **our struggles are interlinked and so is our resistance and solutions.** Feminist organising on the ground continued and influenced change at multiple levels in 2024. We saw real impacts of this collective work and campaigns of solidarity that have taken place over the years—from the adoption of the International Labour Organisation Convention No. 190 in addressing violence and harassment in the world of work (ILO

C190) in the Philippines—a key demand in the struggle for labour rights, to women migrants in Nepal successfully gaining state budgetary and policy commitments on access to support, to the growth of movement organising among women in Central Asia.

Our local, regional and global struggles and resistance are all interlinked. But our resistance at all levels is firmly rooted in the work of communities at the grassroots. It is the demands and experiences of people that guides our advocacy in regional, global and multilateral spaces. Advocacy against systematic inequality can only ever make sense when it is connected locally.

But effective resistance also demands that we center the voices of people most impacted and ensure we use our power to raise their narratives so it is loud and clear, that it is heard where it matters and is widely understood. **Raising the voices of women in our struggles is vital to our resistance.** This could look like making space for women from the movements to speak within regional and multilateral spaces; supporting women journalists to amplify stories of other women and their communities as they themselves work in difficult and dangerous contexts; recording and publishing women's narratives and demands as evidence so they can be put in the hands of people holding the reins of power and cannot be ignored; and ensuring language is not a barrier to participation in spaces and to speaking.

Many women human rights defenders in our region

however have been persecuted for speaking, for resisting and refusing to back down. They are often the face of our collective and larger struggles. We continue to stand with them in solidarity and fight for their access to justice and human rights, because **injustice for one of us, is injustice for all.**

Our journey of resistance, then, is through revolutionary acts of solidarity. It is to mobilise

cross-border, cross-movement and cross-regional solidarity with the purpose of deep and lasting structural change for all people in our region and the world.

**Here's what we built together in 2024 and what we learned.**

## Our Struggles are Interlinked and so is our Resistance



In 2024, we collectively built our grassroots resistance with members and partners in Asia and the Pacific, which resulted in significant and sustained gains.

Our work at the grassroots has been led by our approaches of:

### **Feminist Participatory Action Research (FPAR)**

that has enabled grassroots women and their communities across the region to organise and build solidarities, collect and document human rights violations, analyse and challenge power inequalities and use evidence-led advocacy for women's human rights and Development Justice at the local, national, regional and international levels;

**Womanifesto** - a journey of participatory democracy that organises women as movements, mobilises them to understand their inherent human rights and political power, make state and power structures accountable and amplifies women's political demands;

**Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Monitoring Programme** - that enabled women and feminist organisations to use SDGs as accountability tools and transform laws, policies and practices at all levels; and

**Gender and Politics Training** - that strengthens the capacity of grassroots women to lead in political participation and decision-making spaces to advance the women's human rights agenda for change in an age of growing authoritarian, macho-fascism and imposed militarism.





**Kyrgyzstan:** The president approved the revised Labour Code to take effect in January 2025, increasing fines for employers who fail to formalise labour contracts with women migrant workers. This was a result of a national advocacy campaign led by FPAR partner, Ravnye Prava and Ak-Zhar women internal migrants.

## Mapping Our Wins: From the Ground Up!

Our collective resistance and solidarity actions sent ripples of change across the region.

### Barahachhetra Municipality, Nepal:

Returnee women migrants successfully advocated for a six-fold increase in local government budgets for livelihood and reintegration support.

### Uzbekistan:

FPAR recommendations on improving women returned migrants' access to state support programmes was reflected in a Parliamentary decision on implementing measures to assist migrant workers abroad.

### Hamadoni, Tajikistan:

Women have been prioritised in a new state-run adult education centre with 130 of 150 seats for short-term courses for women. This offers critical reintegration support for women returned migrants in the area and follows sustained campaigning by FPAR partner, Dunyoi Muhabbat.


### Arungkeke, Indonesia:

Women seaweed farmers reclaim their power over their food systems by challenging shrimp farm pollution of their coastal waters. They worked together to collect evidence, fundraise, build networks and campaign for change.

### Lampung Province, Indonesia:


Three village governments made written commitments to stronger protections for women migrant workers at all stages of migration, from pre-departure to reintegration.






**Kushtia District, Bangladesh:** Women assert food sovereignty by rejecting harmful tobacco cultivation and corporate control of their lands, replacing it with vegetable crops.

**Philippines:** Our members experienced a landmark win as the Court of Appeals granted the petition for a Writ of Kalikasan (nature) against the genetically modified Golden Rice and Bt eggplant—a critical win for women on the frontlines of the struggle against false solutions affecting their lives and livelihoods.



**Mongla, Bangladesh:** Women fisherfolk have been organising to demand social security and customary land rights for their community. An ongoing struggle, their solidarity has given them renewed strength and voice to demand their rights.

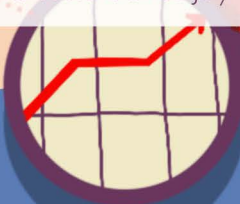



**Shan District, Burma/Myanmar:** Local monitoring of SDGs resulted in the hiring of local health workers by the local authorities to provide Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and medical services to nine Pa-O communities in the district.


**Philippines:** Mary Jane Veloso is finally home following years of advocacy and campaigning in the region. Wrongfully convicted and having spent over fourteen years on death row in Indonesia, she was finally returned home only to continue serving her sentence. The call for clemency continues.

**Trat Province, Thailand:** Indigenous women lead the fight to reclaim their customary rights to a community mangrove forest. Resisting false solutions of carbon credits, they have organised themselves to apply for community conservation and sustainable use of the forest.

**Philippines:** Partner organisation EILER with others, successfully advocated for an increased daily wage of Php 35 (US\$ 0.60) in Metro Manila, Metro Cebu and Metro Davao. The new daily rate is now between Php 608-Php 645 (US\$10-11) across its sectors since July 2024.



Philippines makes history as the first in Asia to Ratify ILO C190 after years of relentless organising and advocacy by women's and workers' movements. The Convention sets clear standards to end violence and harassment in all places of work.



**Bali, Indonesia:** Continued lobbying by Bali Women's Crisis Centre for access to clean water and sanitation with the local governments led to a US\$6,000 budget allocation for a pilot water facility in the village.



## Women Returned Migrants Secure Human Rights Through Legal Wins

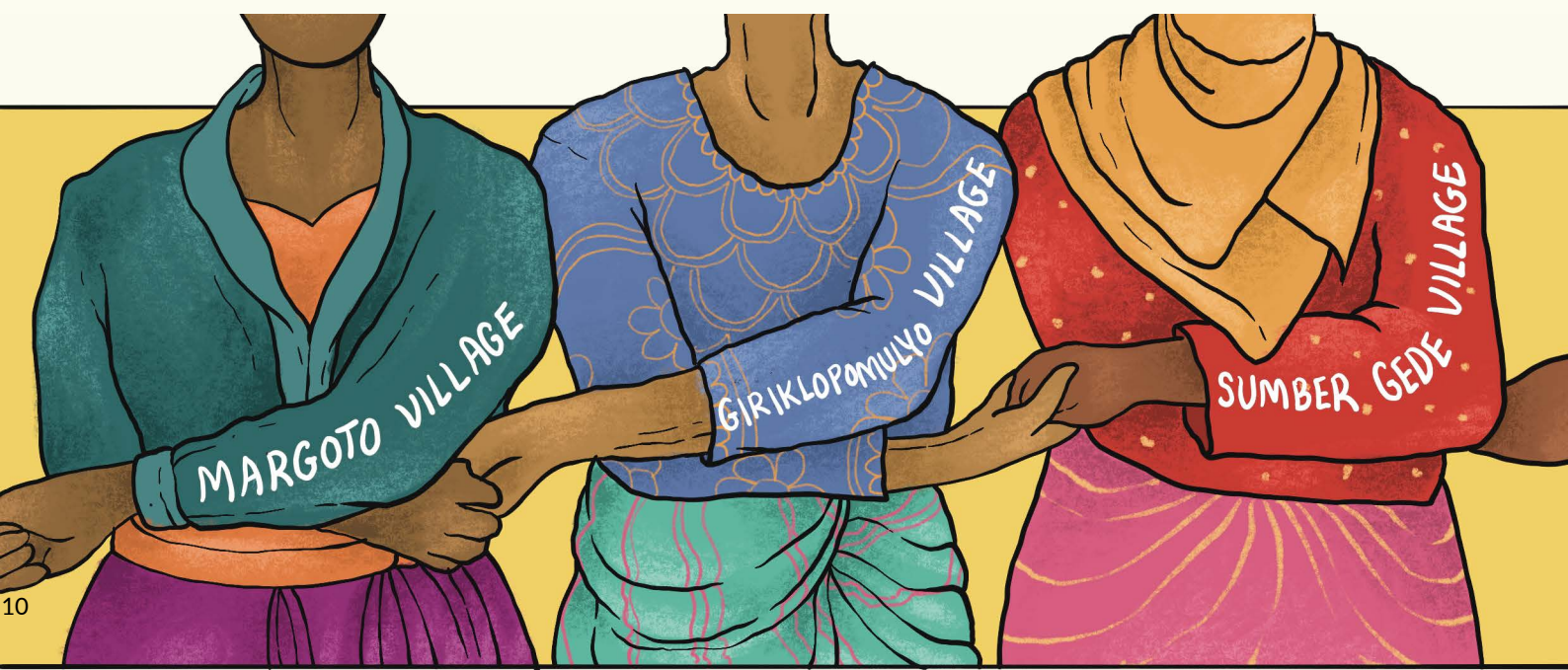
In Indonesia, three village governments—Margototo Village, Giriklopomulyo Village and Sumber Gede Village in Lampung province—committed stronger protections to migrant workers, especially women. These governments signed three Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with APWLD partner organisation Solidaritas Perempuan Sebay Lampung and grassroots women migrant collectives.

The women migrant workers demanded that their rights from pre-departure to reintegration stages be fully protected. Although Indonesia's national Law Number 18 on the Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers guarantees these rights, it is rarely implemented at the village level. The law gives the regional and village governments authority to create their own regulations and provide essential support and services—such as information on safe migration, the rights and obligations as migrant workers at every stage of migration, job placements and migrant worker placement companies. Through the MOUs, the village governments agreed to use the women's policy document as the foundation for

new village regulations to protect migrant workers. The MOUs recognise Solidaritas Perempuan and the women's collectives' role in increasing community awareness—especially among women—on safe migration and preventing human trafficking.

These agreements represent a significant win. They are the result of grassroots organising and campaigning led by Solidaritas Perempuan Sebay Lampung through the FPAR process with APWLD. Through FPAR, returnee women migrants identified their struggles, collectively developed their demands and gender-transformative recommendations, built advocacy skills and negotiated directly with local officials to demand change. The Lampung province is among the highest senders of migrant workers from Indonesia, most of whom are women. Changing mindsets and perspectives of local government officials was a critical victory that has already made a tangible impact on women's lives at a local level.

While the regulations are still in the process of being formally enacted, these commitments mark





an important step towards safer migration and stronger protection for women migrant workers.



Photo Source: Solidaritas Perempuan

‘This signing activity is not only symbolic but we hope that the village government is truly committed to implementing existing village regulations regarding the protection of migrant workers, or making other rules/policies that support the interests of migrant workers, especially women.’

- Sugiarti from Sumber Gede Village

‘My hope that this activity will not be the end, but we, especially from Kelompok Perempuan Peduli Buruh Migran (KPPBM), will continue to follow it until village regulations are made.’

- Dewi from Giriklopomulyo Village



## Increased State Budgets for Women Returned Migrants

In Nepal, the local government of the Barahachhetra Municipality increased its annual budget for a reintegration programme for returnee women migrants to Rupees 300,000 (US\$ 2,202.30) in 2024. This milestone follows persistent advocacy led by FPAR partner WOREC Nepal together with grassroots women migrant groups.

Since 2023, returnee women migrants have been actively engaged in analysing gaps in the reintegration policies and processes. Through FPAR, they submitted a demand paper and had dialogues with the local government demanding proper and holistic socio-economic reintegration programmes at local level. Their FPAR advocacy efforts led to

an initial budget allocation of NPR 50,000 (US\$ 377) in 2023, earmarked for a skills development programme. At the time, Mayor Ramesh Karki committed to including reintegration measures in the municipality’s annual plan.

The women followed up on this promise and by the start of the 2024 fiscal year, they secured a sixfold increase in funding. The expanded allocation now supports a livelihood reintegration programme under the scheme: Entrepreneurial Women’s Encouragement, Dhaka Weaving Training, and Deputy Chief Women’s Skills-based and Self-employment Training.

## Stronger State Support for Women Migrants in Uzbekistan



Women returned migrants from Uzbekistan have long been demanding stronger state support and services to help them reintegrate on their return. They reached a significant milestone in their struggle for human rights and recognition, when Parliament members in Uzbekistan made a decision to more effectively implement a Presidential Decree from 2020 on improved access to state reintegration programmes and measures to support migrant workers abroad. This decision and the related recommendations for implementation were drawn from the research findings and advocacy of APWLD partner organisation Association of Women in Agriculture, Fergana Branch.

Based on this Parliamentary decision, the women would now have access to effective retraining courses and low-interest loans for returned migrants. The government also emphasised collaboration between Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)

and consulates in countries where Uzbek migrants reside; and strengthened cooperation with relevant ministries and organisations on the reintegration of returning migrants. In practice, this would mean ensuring their employment, enhancing their professional skills and creating favourable conditions for entrepreneurial activities.

Implementation of the President's Decree 'On Additional Measures to Improve Labour Migration Processes and Support Individuals Engaged in Temporary Labour Activity Abroad' is an important step forward in their struggle. However, the Association of Women in Agriculture will also continue to advocate for their primary recommendation—removing restrictions on accessing the reintegration programme for all migrants, regardless of their status.

The work of APWLD and partners in support of the

rights of women migrant workers in nine countries of Asia and the Pacific—including the cases above—went on to inform a submission to the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights of Migrants in March 2024. These reflections were also included in the report of the Special Rapporteur to the 56th session of the Human Rights Council in June 2024.

The inputs that were included were in relation to: developing and implementing comprehensive integration policies to assist migrants upon arrival and during settlement; removing barriers that prevent migrant workers from exercising their rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining; ensuring that migrants have access to justice and redress for human rights violations and abuses; and facilitating the inclusion of migrant voices in policy and planning processes, in particular when those processes affect them.



Photo Source: Association of Women of Agriculture, Fergana Branch

READ APWLD's [full submission](#) on the website of the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR).



## Women Farmers Reclaim Land and Food Sovereignty

In Kushtia District, Bangladesh, 12 women are courageously fighting against the high-value, monocrop farming system controlled by British American Tobacco, as well as the patriarchal norms that intend to keep them tied to corporate agriculture.

With the support of APWLD partner Mukti Nari, they challenged the corporate control of their food system by reclaiming their traditional agricultural lands, planting vegetables and maize instead of Tobacco. They relied on their own traditional knowledge to set up four community gardens and negotiate directly with market vendors to sell their produce—taking back control of their livelihood and food.

Women food producers are often on the frontlines of food production in rural areas and in many regions, women play a key role in sustaining family and community food supplies. A majority of people in this village are dependent on tobacco cultivation, spending 18-20 hours a day on these farms for eight months of the year. This monocrop is polluting their waterways, exposing women and children to health hazards and stripping the local community from a sustainable means to feed their families. Prior to tobacco cultivation, the Kushtia community used to supply their own food cultivated on their own lands such as vegetables and different types of pulses among others. With the lure of a better income,





local farmers began converting to tobacco farming, losing whatever control they had over their land and resources.

Through a process of FPAR, local women in the village were organised into six groups that discussed the ways tobacco cultivation was affecting their health and income, the ways they could address these impacts, and how their capacity could be strengthened to speak out and challenge it. They shared their experiences, strategised and gathered evidence to prove the damage that tobacco cultivation caused. With the support of their families and communities, 12 women took a bold decision to stop tobacco cultivation entirely and shifted back to planting vegetables and other crops for commercial purposes. Further, 50 women have reduced tobacco cultivation and are exploring cultivation of alternative crops and animal rearing for commercial purposes as well.

This change is more than a shift in crops. It is a reclaiming of power. It reflects growing autonomy, capacity and confidence of the women to push back

against corporations that weaponise food and hunger to exert control over people, resources and food systems. The fight for Feminist Food Sovereignty is the fight for autonomy, dignity and self-determination in producing, preserving, distributing and consuming their food.

Their resistance is still growing—but this is just the beginning.

33

*'After quitting tobacco, we are now living in peace. Whatever we eat is home-cooked food, and we have no debts.'*

**- Taslima, woman co-researcher, Kushtia**





FPAR Partner Mukti Nari formed a 'human chain' to demand for the rights of women tobacco farmers in Kushtia, Bangladesh.



FPAR Partner Mukti Nari in an outcome sharing meeting with Upazila Executive Committee in Kushtia, Bangladesh.



## Defending our Waters: Women's Bold Fight Against Shrimp Farm Pollution

In Indonesia, women seaweed farmers from Arungkeke and their communities have been fighting against a shrimp farming company that has been polluting their coastal area.

Through a Feminist Participatory Action Research process with APWLD partner organisation Bina Desa, women fisherfolk from the community have been learning and investigating the impacts of the company's actions on their water quality, courageously gathering evidence of seawater pollution by collecting wastewater samples for testing and demanding for the formal Environmental Impact Assessment for the project. The women were not deterred by the high cost of the laboratory testing, and instead turned this stumbling block into an opportunity to further consolidate and mobilise the women fishers in their coastal communities. Women raised funds for the wastewater sample lab-

tests by increasing their own processing activities producing seaweed snacks and chilli paste which they sold to the local markets. This initiative also gave the women from the community the momentum to strengthen their coordination and collaboration with other local organisations, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and a university.

The work of Bina Desa and the women farmers shows us how consistent and persistent organising and strategising in solidarity, can sow the seeds of action and change. The women have since stepped up their advocacy and campaigning to stop shrimp production in their community through live public discussions in the media, national level protests against the Ministry of Fisheries and by building a network with other organisations working on the issue. In October 2024, they were able to mobilise more than 100 coastal residents from 31 villages



and seven districts in Jeneponto county joining a Coastal Social Gathering organised by Bina Desa and Komunitas Perempuan Nelayan Sipittanggari (KPNS) or Sipitangarri Fisherwomen Community, for a deeper and collective understanding of the shared issues of these coastal communities in Jeneponto, South Sulawesi. Their fight is ongoing, but they have already shifted power in their favour.

With each act of resistance, they are reclaiming power over their food systems, their environment and their futures.



WATCH the [campaign video](#) developed by Bina Desa with women from the community to raise awareness about the environmental damage caused by shrimp farming waste in Arungkeke Village, Jeneponto, South Sulawesi. The video was produced following a digital literacy workshop as part of the FPAR process, where they learned tools and techniques to create digital content on their mobile phones.





## Reclaiming the Mangroves: Women Challenge False Climate Solutions

In Pred Nai village, Trat Province, Eastern Thailand, women are leading the fight to reclaim their rights over a mangrove forest that has sustained their community for generations.

The government has been trying to use the 12,000 hectare mangrove forest to claim carbon credits and mitigate greenhouse gas emissions to benefit a private petrochemical corporation. Since 2017, the community of Ban Pred Nai has been deprived of their rights to access and manage the mangrove forest because of a government policy that revoked their community forest status and reclaimed forest lands. As a result, the community can no longer utilise their traditional community rules for managing and utilising the mangrove forest. The Pred Nai village has 168 homes and a population of 591 people, most of whom work in fruit orchards, rubber plantations, small-scale fisheries and aquaculture. The majority of local fisherfolk fish in canals and along the coast in tiny boats as well as gathering aquatic animals in mangrove forests. The government's proposed carbon credit programme—framed as a climate

solution—threatens to displace them further. It unfairly shifts the burden of emissions reductions to vulnerable communities and their territories—in this case, the mangroves that are an important site of the Pred Nai community's livelihood.

Through FPAR, Sustainable Development Foundation (SDF) Thailand formed the Ban Pred Nai Mangrove Forest Conservation Group with the intention of registering a community mangrove forest for conservation and enhanced management. In 2024, they reached a significant milestone in their resistance when they submitted an application to the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (DMCR) for community management. This was in response to DMCR policy in 2022 allowing communities to register their community mangrove forests so they can participate in conservation, restoration and sustainable forest use. With their application for registration, the community hopes to restore biodiversity to the forest using local knowledge and scientific expertise.





Strengthened by the evidence from their FPAR, the women have clearly shown how carbon credit schemes are affecting their livelihood and ways of living as a coastal community. Based on this, more people in the community have resisted signing up with private companies for carbon credits on their land, showing the shift in thinking among the wider community as well.

SDF Thailand, alongside the women of Pred Nai have taken this fight beyond local borders. At

the 29th Conference of Parties (COP29) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), they joined global feminist and grassroots movements to expose climate colonialism and reject false solutions including carbon trading that extract resources and exploit communities in the name of climate action. While their fight is ongoing, it has underscored how real solutions for climate justice begin from the communities.

## Workers Run the World: Women Workers Force Changes in the Labour Code

Years of organising and campaigning by Ravnye Prava and Ak-Zhar women internal migrants gained results—the President of Kyrgyzstan approved revisions to the Labour Code, marking a major milestone for safer, fairer workplaces for women.

The women's demands for better labour standards, drafted based on their FPAR findings, were all reflected in the new Labour Code that takes effect in January 2025. This includes enhancing monitoring and enforcement of the Labour Code by: 1) providing regular inspections of workplaces to ensure that employers adhere to labour laws; 2) impose penalties, fines or other punitive measures on employers to deter non-compliance and promote adherence to labour laws; and 3) develop a robust mechanism for monitoring enterprises and mandating all employers to register their employees formally.

Nazgul Oskolenova from Ravnye Prava and part of the FPAR process said, reflecting on this win, *'Although we've completed the national advocacy phase,*



Photo Source: Ravnye Prava

*our real work is just beginning! We will be deeply involved in follow-up consultations with members of Parliament, and other relevant stakeholders to ensure the Labour Code is amended. Even now, we are receiving numerous follow-up calls from these duty-bearers requesting clarification, additional information and analysis. This shows that even if we wanted to pause our efforts to push forward the FPAR recommendations, the engaged parties—and especially the women internal migrants we work with—would not allow it.'*

For APWLD, this also reflects the solidarity and actions of five years of organising for women's human rights in Central Asia, together with members and partners.



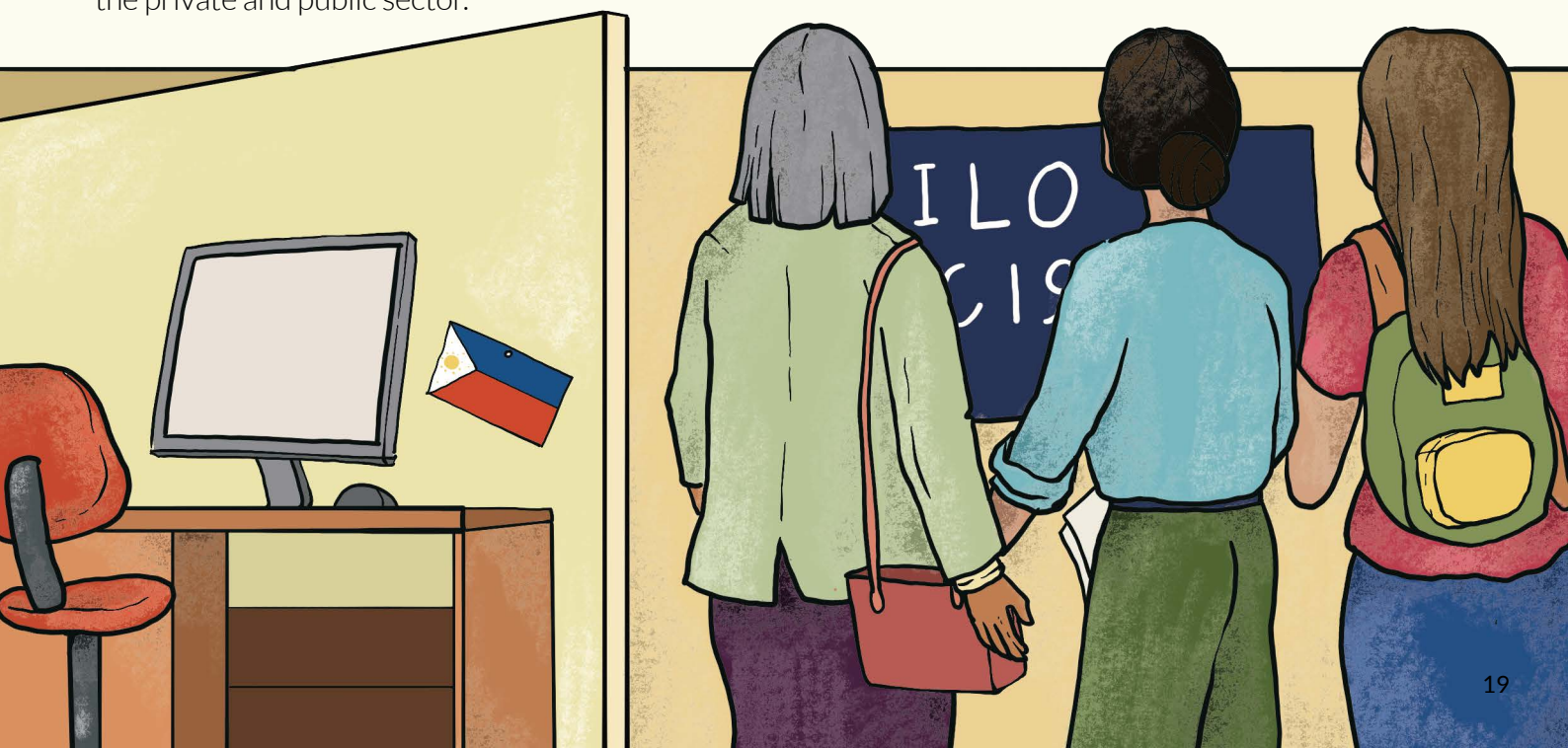
Photo Source: Ravnje Prava



## Philippines Makes History: First in Asia to Ratify ILO C190

After years of relentless organising and advocacy, the Philippines became the first country in Asia to ratify ILO C190 in early 2024. This international labour convention sets a clear standard to end violence and harassment in the workplace, whether in the formal and informal economy and across both the private and public sector.

This historic win did not come easily. Women workers organisations in the Philippines, including APWLD members, have kept the pressure on this issue for years. They recognised the importance of organising to collectively fight for labour rights and tackle the pressing issues of violence at the workplace.





EILER, APWLD's SDG Monitoring partner, utilised the SDG monitoring as a tool to push for State's accountability to ratify ILO C190.

33 *'The campaign for the ratification of the ILO Convention on ending gender-based harassment goes back in 2019. With the FDJ (Feminist Development Justice) Monitoring work, we were able to produce research and other materials that helped us elevate the campaign further. We were invited as resource speakers in the Philippine Congress and Senate (parliament), and by the end of 2023 [the Senate voted for the ratification in 2023, followed by ratification in February 2024], the Philippines became the first country in Asia to ratify ILO C190. That's a huge achievement considering we've been campaigning this since 2019 and largely because there's not enough conversation about the convention.'*

- Rochelle Porras, EILER

This is also a particularly significant impact of the years of work on this issue because [Asia Pacific is ranked as the the second worst region in the world for workers](#) with systematic violations of workers' basic and democratic rights to organise a trade union and to strike, according to the [ITUC 2024 Global Rights Index](#). Philippines, Bangladesh and Burma/Myanmar are in the ranks of the top ten worst countries for workers.

APWLD has stood with activists from the region since 2019, calling on countries to ratify C190

and enact supporting legislation to give it effect and report on the measures taken on the ground to implement it, through: solidarity actions and protests, public statements, campaigns, advocacy interventions in regional and multilateral spaces and building of grassroots evidence through Feminist Participatory Action Research on the human rights of workers. Together with members, partners and allies, APWLD has demanded that countries be held accountable for the deliberate violence permitted and maintained through national legal and economic systems.

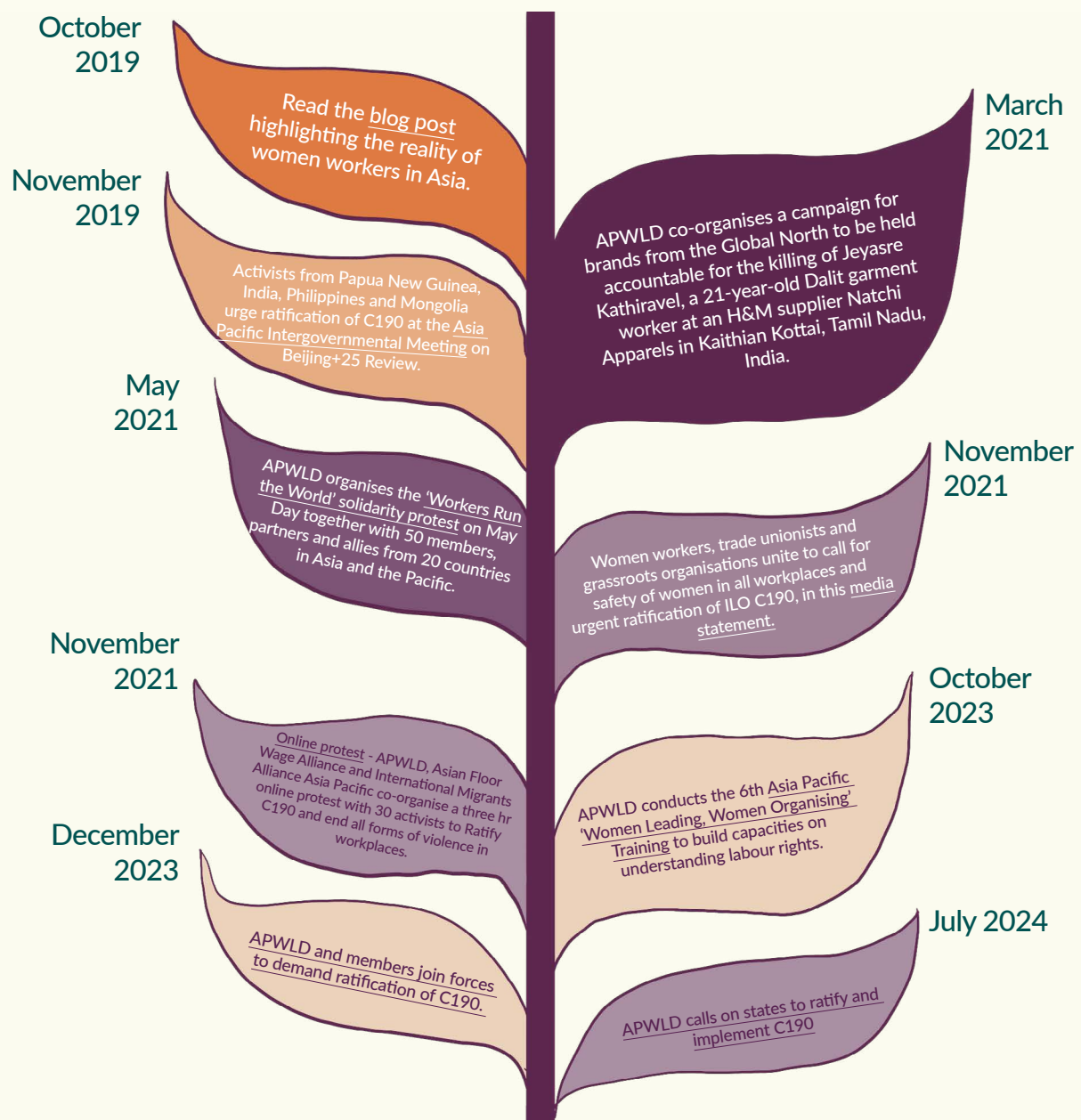


33 *'Garment suppliers have also used the excuse of COVID-19 to terminate women trade unionists as a form of union-busting. TTCU, also lost one of its youngest organisers', Jeyasre Kathiravel, a 21-year-old garment worker, to gender-based violence during the pandemic. She was murdered by her supervisor after facing months of sexual harassment and now, we are fighting for justice for her by demanding binding commitments from brands to end Gender-based Violence (GBV) in their*

supply chains. Convention 190 must be ratified by governments and implemented by employers. As part of upholding C-190 obligations, fashion brands and retailers need to negotiate legally binding, enforceable agreements with trade unions to cover Gender-based Violence and Harassment (GBVH) and freedom of association in their supplier factories.’

- Thivya Rakini, Tamilnadu Textile and Common Labour Union (TTCU), India

LISTEN to women workers across workplaces—including women migrant workers, trade union leaders and women’s human rights activists—tell us what decent work means to them. Complement it with this #RatifyC190Now podcast series on ending GBV in all forms at the workplace.







## Journeys of Reflection

Over the past few years we have tried new approaches in our work on women's human rights—ongoing initiatives to connect our work at all levels so that it deepens our analysis and provides critical points for strategising and reflection.

### The many faces of militarism in Asia and the Pacific

Understanding the ways militarism operates and manifests in Asia and the Pacific and its impacts on women's human rights is an integral part of our framework of analysis at APWLD. It has long been clear that imperialist countries are fuelling waves of relentless extraction through theatres of war. APWLD has an important mandate from our membership to interrogate militarism in our region, develop a shared analysis across contexts and a vision for addressing the challenges and dangers it poses and deepen our work on this issue.

Connecting the dots on this issue has been an ongoing and evolving journey for APWLD, its members and partners. Together we are building a network in Asia and the Pacific that strives to work on issues of militarism in interconnected ways. We are doing this through:

- Regional convenings on militarism and spaces of discussion such as at the Asia Pacific Feminist Forum;
- Multi-country research efforts that have taken place to date in South Korea, Kyrgyzstan, West Papua and Burma/Myanmar;

- Activity Organising Committees made up of organisations from our membership and outside who continue to guide specific initiatives of APWLD;
- Webinars on militarism and women's human rights together with regional allies and/or members such as Asia Pacific Research Network (APRN), Asia Pacific Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines (APCHRP), Karapatan, PEACEMOMO (South Korea) and ELSHAM Papua (West Papua); and
- A media fellowship on militarism to build capacity and strengthen the analysis of women journalists covering issues of militarism.



As we work towards feminist visions of peace and justice, these processes have helped APWLD understand experiences of militarism in the region at a deeper level. It has made clear how militarism is inherent to processes of colonialism, imperialism and capitalism and continues to violate women's sovereignty and self-determination. But it has also clearly shown that women are not passive victims but active agents resisting militarism in their everyday lives and at national and global levels.

### Research as Resistance: Can research be in service to our movements?

Research is a political act. APWLD's starting point for any research we do is challenging the idea that communities do not have enough understanding of their own issues, nor enough knowledge for critical analysis and action. They do. When viewed from a 'peoples' research' perspective, research stops becoming simply a set of methodologies and tools but an act of larger resistance that allows people to use information and evidence to challenge power and reclaim sovereign power over their own lives.

APWLD has been actively engaging with others in the region to understand what this approach looks like in practice and what it can mean for our movements. In May 2024, APWLD convened a space with 30 activists, researchers and academics from South East Asia, South Asia, East Asia, Central Asia and the Pacific to explore the ways we do research, including why and how our use of research has grown and evolved with time and context.

Research continues to be a critical area of APWLD's work, whether it is through the FPAR approach of

Explore [stories](#) by APWLD media fellows on militarism, peace and women's human rights in Asia and the Pacific.



the past decade or our newer approach of multi-country rapid research that deepens our regional level political analyses that impacts on women's human rights and informs our regional and global advocacy.

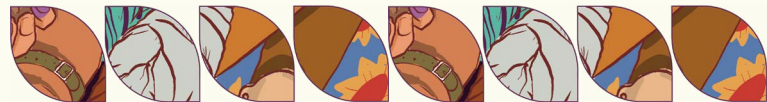
Read our [blogpost](#) for reflections on what we have learned on research as an act of resistance.







Explore some of our recent research work on the [links between digitalisation and household debt for women gig workers](#).



## Lessons for our Resistance

### *Reflections from 2024 that continue to guide our struggles*

- **Feminist Research Builds and Shifts Power.** Whether it is through FPAR, feminist rapid research, community organising or storytelling, we have seen how research becomes an act of resistance when women claim the tools to define their realities. We have learnt that when grassroots women lead research, they do not just collect data—they name oppression, build power and demand justice on their own terms.
- **Feminist organising grows leaders from the ground up:** We have witnessed grassroots women leading meetings, negotiating with parliaments, holding local governments accountable and shaping national laws. These are the results of long-term, consistent, grassroots organising designed to shift power and make space for women to step in as leaders.
- **Intersectional solidarity is not optional—it is essential.** When our movements stand in solidarity across sectors and borders, our demands are harder to ignore. Our journey in exposing the different faces of militarism has taught us that. Together with our members and allies from the Indigenous women's movement, rural women, Dalit and Tamil women, peace and anti-war movements, media journalists, as well as with the broader people's movements, we are connecting the dots of our struggles, so that our resistance and solutions can be also be interconnected.



## Raising Voices of all Women in the Struggle, at all Levels





Our resistance at all levels is firmly rooted in the work, the experiences and demands of communities at the grassroots. This guides APWLD's advocacy in regional, global and multilateral spaces, which in turn informs efforts and solidarity on the ground. Regional and global advocacy against systematic inequality can only ever make sense when it is connected locally. Through our engagement in these multilateral spaces, we are trying to strengthen an inclusive and feminist analysis in global discourse and mobilise resources and support to meaningfully address the issues women face in the region.

APWLD recognises the importance of positioning historically discriminated and marginalised women's groups at the forefront of our advocacy. This ensures that their voices are not only heard but directly represented and also meaningfully included in the political discussions and decisions in all spaces, from grassroots mobilisation and advocacy, mainstream and social media to regional and multilateral corridors of power.



## Co-creating Democratic Multilateral Spaces for Grassroots Women

APWLD is known for leading feminist alternative, democratic peoples' spaces. This is especially critical in the context of the crisis in multilateralism and increasing challenges to meaningful civil society participation and leadership in policy spaces. APWLD's political leadership is recognised in regional and global advocacy spaces as we bring strong feminist analyses and visions grounded in the lived realities of women from Asia and the Pacific.

Some of the key civil society mechanisms that APWLD co-leads, through which we ensure that civil society influences intergovernmental processes in the region and globally, are the following: in relation to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UN CSW) process, we are part of the Women's Rights Caucus and the Steering Committee of Asia Pacific Regional Beijing+30 processes; For the Agenda 2030 processes, we are part of the Asia Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism (APRCM) and the Major Groups and Other Stakeholders Coordination

Mechanism (MGoS Mechanism) at the High Level Political Forum. Further, in 2024, we also participated and co-led the Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) for the UN Network on Migration Asia and the Pacific.

Through APWLD's presence in these formal civil society mechanisms, we ensured that grassroots women and peoples' organisations and movements were able to meaningfully engage, contribute and influence the process. Their participation also brought in substantive recommendations that aim to tackle systemic barriers in achieving women's human rights and Development Justice.

### a) Beyond SDGs: Rallying movements for Development Justice

The year 2024 marked a significant turning point for APWLD's engagement in the SDGs processes.

## Deepening grassroots leadership in multilateral spaces

APWLD officially stepped back from APRCEM's governance structure after co-chairing the platform for nine years. We did so with pride and hope—witnessing APRCEM's new leadership take shape, led by powerful national and movement-based organisations deeply rooted in grassroots struggles. Among them are several of APWLD members: ALGA, now serving as the Central Asia focal point and APRCEM's co-chair; Center for Women's Resources (CWR) as the focal point of the Women's Constituency for APRCEM and the Asia Organising Partner for the Women Major Group (WMG); Kadamay, leading the Urban Poor Constituency; SDF as the focal point for Fisherfolk Constituency; and AGHAM for the Science and Technology Constituency.

This new composition is more than just a transition. It is a signal of deepening grassroots leadership for Asia and the Pacific and we stand in solidarity as they carry forward the fight for women's human rights and Development Justice.



## Creating space for women's voices at all levels and processes

Even as we transition from APRCEM's governance roles, we continue to open up spaces for women's grassroots voices in key subregional, regional and global advocacy platforms. In four regional and global spaces, we facilitated the meaningful participation of 39 members and partners and secured 45 official speaking interventions for CSOs in the region, in which 16 interventions were delivered strongly by our grassroots members on these issues.



Renu Raj Bhandari from WOREC at HLPF2024





This resulted in successfully influencing the outcome documents of both the [Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development \(APFSD\)](#) and the [High-Level Political Forum \(HLPF\)](#). These outcome documents include languages of APWLD's demands, including: 1) the urgent need for climate action and just transition, 2) the need for a significant increase in public investments in social protection, 3) the need for systemic changes in the international financial architecture, 4) the importance of accountability mechanisms in partnerships and 5) access to information and the right of civil society and human rights defenders to organise.

Most importantly, our work is not just to bring forward grassroots voices to the global stage but also to ground the global back at the local level.

Our SDGs Monitoring work led to the formation of 31 new women's groups and coalitions in five countries. Through these, women were able to exert power and gain understanding on issues of disability among women, health and labour rights of women workers, women's rights to access water, gender injustices in inequitable budget provisions and access to resources and the inclusion of indigenous women in decision-making.

Despite the long road ahead of us in achieving the SDGs, we celebrate the growing leadership of grassroots women in regional and global spaces, the increasing voices of marginalised peoples filling rooms and alliances, old and new, fighting for women's human rights. Together, we strengthen and rally our movements as we demand Development Justice.



*'...Our engagement in these spaces elevated our local and national issues to the regional stage where we saw the commonality of the challenges that we face in our own communities. Through this process, we were able to explore shared alternatives and solutions to advance our pursuit of Development Justice.'*

**- Cielito 'Cham' Perez, Center for Women's Resources, Philippines at APFSD**

READ APWLD's detailed analysis of [10 years of monitoring the SDGs in Asia and Pacific](#)

## b) Strengthening feminist discourse on Debt Justice and Financing for Development

**APWLD made a deliberate choice to lead spaces that amplify global south feminist perspectives on debt justice.** These in turn have guided our mobilising strategies to influence the agenda on debt and financing for development and its nexus with climate change.

We organised a series of regional feminist

convenings, global-level teach-ins and strategy meetings on the issue of debt and financing for development. Our multi-country research on debt and women's human rights further exposed the devastating impacts of the debt crisis and International Monetary Fund (IMF)-driven austerity across Asia and the Pacific.

**APWLD successfully engaged with Global South member states/missions and UN agencies to advance our advocacy for economic justice.**

APWLD collaborated with the Government of Sierra Leone, the UN Working Group on Discrimination Against Women and Girls, OHCHR, the African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET), Red Latinoamericana por Justicia Económica y Social (LATINDADD) and Debt for Justice Norway on a side event entitled, *Ending the Debt Burden: Reclaiming Women's & Girls' Rights* at the 68th UN Commission on the Status of Women (UN CSW68). Attended by representatives from the IMF, UN agencies and women's rights movements, the side event engaged in a policy discussion advocating for progressive fiscal and tax policies through a feminist lens.

With APWLD's strong and concerted efforts with the members of the Women's Rights Caucus, we managed to successfully retain crucial language on our feminist inputs on debt justice, trade and social

protection in the [CSW68 Agreed Conclusions](#)—displaying the power and impact of raising grassroots voices at the global level amidst pushback from other member states.

The strategic connections built through this event aids APWLD in preparing for the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4) conference in 2025.



**APWLD's advocacy on FfD is gaining momentum**

For the first time, APWLD was invited to the Eighth Retreat of the Friends of Monterrey, where we raised feminist demands on debt and gender justice. At the Ninth FfD Forum in New York we delivered a lead statement on Science, Technology and Innovation, representing both APWLD and the CSO FfD Mechanism.

APWLD led the facilitation of the Regional High-level consultation on FfD4 in collaboration with the UN ESCAP. The latter sought collaboration with APWLD to build modalities for CSO engagement.

Through this, APWLD is now included in the Coordination Group of the Civil Society Financing for Development Mechanism (CS FfD Mechanism) as part of its Asia facilitation group.

APWLD and the APRCEM FfD Working Group facilitated the engagement of more than 50 representatives from different constituencies in the region, of which 15 were APWLD members/partners, in both the CSO Preparatory Meeting and the High-Level Meeting. We also secured nine speaking interventions for civil society, of which



three were delivered by APWLD members.

As part of the collective preparations for the High Level Meeting, APWLD also led the APRCEM FfD Working Group to produce critical factsheets on the issues under FfD. These were the primary reference to the strong CSO Collective Statement produced during the Asia Pacific Civil Society Preparatory Meeting, and was referenced by all the civil society interventions during the High Level Meeting.

Further, we brought together three generations of the UN Independent Experts on Debt and Human Rights—Attiya Waris (current), Juan Pablo Bohoslavsky (2014-2020) and Cephas Lumina (2008-2014)—to discuss our feminist analysis on debt, women’s human rights and financing for development. We also collectively built our feminist recommendations at the Regional Consultation on Financing for Development held back to back with the Asia Pacific High Level Meeting on FfD. With our strong position and the contributions of the Independent Experts during the panel, we brought progressive voices in the meeting, particularly on challenging the role of International Financial Institutions (IFIs) in imposing austerity measures, heightened military spending, debt servicing and trade and investment agreements.

A major win of this work is civil society’s strong influence on the language used in the [Chair’s Summary](#) of the Asia Pacific High-Level Meeting in FfD. APWLD’s written recommendations were adopted word for word including concrete recommendations on:

- Redirecting military funding and debt servicing to social services;
- Mobilising collective borrower’s block at the UN

to counter creditor’s bloc;

- Debt cancellation and the need for a multilateral debt workout mechanism;
- Importance of progressive taxation, taxing the rich and strengthening of international cooperation and fairness through the UN Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation;
- Trade agreements involving military and arms trade should be subject to public participation;
- Ex-ante and post reviews of trade agreements with a focus on human rights and sustainable development and review and scrutinisation of Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS); and
- Review and assessment of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) and other private finance mechanisms.



This consistent, grounded work on women's human rights and financing for development—rooted in the lived realities of grassroots women across Asia and the Pacific—has not only shaped national and regional outcomes. It has also shifted global civil society architecture towards a global south perspective. APWLD initiated and now co-leads the newly established Feminist Workstream within the Civil Society Financing for Development (CS FfD) Mechanism, alongside the African Women's Development and Communications Network (FEMNET) and Red Latinoamericana por Justicia Económica y Social (LATINDADD).

This marks a major milestone: for the first time, a feminist-led, Global South-driven space exists within the FfD process, offering an opportunity to bring together cross-regional feminist movements, grassroots networks and organisers to collectively influence the FfD4 negotiations in Sevilla, Spain in 2025 and beyond.

# FEMINIST WORKSTREAM

## CSO FfD Mechanism



READ our [Civil society intervention statement on Science, Technology, Innovation and Capacity Building at the Ninth FfD Forum in New York.](#)

READ the [APRCM CSO Collective Statement on the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development.](#)

### c) Centering human rights of women migrants in multilateral negotiations

APWLD, together with our members and allies, have been consistently pushing for grassroots migrant organisations' engagement at the regional and global level processes on migration, specifically the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) and in preparation for the Second International Migrant Review Forum that will take place in 2026.

In 2024, APWLD's collaboration with the Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants (APMM) to hold a

Regional Migrants Convening resulted not only in strengthening grassroots migrants' engagement at the GCM Review process. It also served as a space in surfacing the issues of internal migration and marriage migrants which are not recognised by the GCM but are significant challenges for women migrants. This collaboration eventually expanded to include the APRN, Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network (APRRN), Coordination of Action Research on AIDS and Mobility in Asia (CARAM Asia) and International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia



Pacific (IWRAW AP). As a result of this collaboration, Migrants and Refugees Indicators were developed to better monitor the implementation of the GCM and migrant-related policies at the local and national levels.

Further, APWLD was selected to be one of 14 members of the Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) for the regional UN Network on Migration (UNNM). This creates opportunities for APWLD members and partners to secure spaces and interventions at the 2025 GCM Regional Review with an aim to shed light and influence conversations around unrecognised issues such as internal migration and marriage

migrants. Being the only feminist organisation in the group, APWLD has garnered more political support from larger migrant movements on the feminist agenda on migration.



*‘The issue of marriage migration is increased because borders are also opening up. I am asking an opening into the GCM for marriage migrants as well for the issue of marriage migration to be included because in Malaysia alone there are over 200,000 marriage migrants. And many of them are faced exclusion of their issues pertaining citizenship, statelessness and very vulnerable to GBV.’*

**- Bina Ramanand, Family Frontiers, Malaysia, at the GCM Briefing for Stakeholders**



#### d) Democratising the BEIJING+30 Review Process

Building on decades of feminist organising, APWLD is once again leading regional and global processes towards the sixth review of the thirtieth anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action (Beijing+30). The review is to be held at the UN CSW69 in March 2025.

APWLD convened feminist spaces to ensure diverse grassroots women's groups across Asia and the Pacific could shape the regional submission, bringing shared priorities and evidence-based recommendations to hold governments accountable for their commitments under the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the SDGs.

Our message leading up to Beijing+30 is clear: women's human rights and Development Justice are being obstructed by deeply entrenched systems of oppression. Without exposing and dismantling neoliberal capitalism, fundamentalisms and militarism, patriarchy will continue to thrive. We sound the alarm on the systematic rollback of state institutions for gender equality and women's human rights, including the defunding and shutting down of mechanisms critical for their advancement. We continue to work with our members and partners to reclaim voices and power against neocolonial forces that force Global South countries and people in the grassroots further into the margins.

At CSW68, APWLD forged alliances to create a space for meaningful dialogue on feminist demands. In collaboration with the Governments of Indonesia and Sweden and UN Women, we brought together governments and grassroots feminists in a rare

conversation about the shrinking democratic space and the dismantling of institutions meant to protect and advance women's human rights.

APWLD's member, Youngsook Cho from the Korean Women's Association United (KWAU), delivered a powerful intervention at the side event on *Institutions and Resources for Women's Human Rights and Women's Empowerment*, exposing state-led oppression and the rise of misogyny and anti-feminism in Korea.



*'Ahead of Beijing's 30th anniversary, the CSW68 meeting was held as a venue to find ways to cooperate and unite with women's organisations in countries in similar situations while informing the international community of misogyny and anti-feminism in today's Korean society. With governance broken with the state and financial support for women's organisations completely cut off, APWLD's financial support [to attend the CSW68] was truly valuable support for Korean women's organisations to connect with the international community. During the week-long meeting,*





*I was able to participate in an event on “Institutions and Resources for Women’s Human Rights and Women’s Empowerment”, organised by the APWLD, and to inform the reality of state-led oppression of women’s rights and to raise the need for solidarity to jointly solve it was very accomplished.’*

**- Cielito ‘Cham’ Perez, Center for Women’s Resources, Philippines at APFSD**

*me realise that a just and equal future for women is never out of our reach, as long as we unite towards a common goal together. Thank you for showing me that another world is truly possible, especially for women of the Global South!’*

**- Nisa Amalia, SERUNI, Indonesia**

As Co-Chair of the Beijing+30 Asia Pacific Civil Society Steering Committee, APWLD worked with 12 Steering Committee members, UN Women and United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) to convene four online consultations, a CSO Forum and a Young Feminist Forum as preparatory spaces. APWLD successfully pushed for increasing the space and participation of CSOs in the CSO Forum and Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on the Beijing+30 Review, bringing in over 330 women from across the region—the highest number of attendees from civil society so far, the highest from the Pacific islands and the highest from the disabilities movements.

33 *“Through the CSO Forum, I was able to acquire many new experiences and knowledge that are relevant to SERUNI’s work, especially when it comes to organising and advocating for women’s rights in a Global South country such as Indonesia. Whether it is the advantages, challenges or potentials that other participants have shared, I can confidently summarise them as useful knowledge on the do’s and don’ts of organising among Global South women. Not to mention the solidarity, companionship and camaraderie the participants had shown made*

Representing voices from diverse grassroots, feminists and marginalised communities across Asia and the Pacific, civil society delivered powerful interventions echoed in the Chair’s Summary. Civil society’s framing of systemic inequalities—rooted in patriarchal control, militarism, globalisation and authoritarianism—was central to shaping the analysis of the region’s women’s human rights and Development Justice landscape. These structural critiques, as articulated in the collective CSO Forum statements, pushed toward the recognition that persistent systemic inequalities, including those stemming from intersecting forms of discrimination, require bold and transformative actions rather than incremental reforms. Key demands from civil society—such as economic justice and people-centred policies, universal social protection, the redistribution of un/der/paid care work, climate justice grounded in Indigenous knowledge and meaningful participation and leadership for women in all their diversity—were reflected in the Chair’s Summary. The inclusion of calls to finance feminist movements, implement gender-transformative budgeting and uphold bodily autonomy through expanded sexual and reproductive health and rights demonstrates that civil society was not just present, but strategically asserting impactful messaging toward structural and rights-based solutions.



## Expanding the Mandate: Women's Human Rights in Global Debt Discourse

For over 13 years, APWLD has engaged consistently with the UN Independent Expert on Debt and Human Rights to push for feminist analyses of debt and its devastating impacts on women's human rights. Our sustained work with three generations of mandate holders—Attiya Waris, Juan Pablo Bohoslavsky and Cephias Lumina—has been instrumental in expanding the scope of their mandates and ensuring Global South women's realities shape global discourse on debt justice.

This long-term engagement has resulted in a significant shift. What began as siloed discussions on foreign debt has evolved into an intersectional conversation on debt, militarism, austerity, climate financing, household debt, labour rights and women's human rights.

Women's Right to Development in Cambodia in 2011, Cephias Lumina, then UN Independent Expert on Debt and Human Rights, focused his report to the UN General Assembly on the impact of foreign debt on women's human rights—the first-ever [report](#) of its kind. The Independent Expert publicly credited APWLD's submission as a substantial influence on the report's focus and content.

### 2018

APWLD joined an Expert Group Meeting contributing to former UN Independent Expert on Debt and Human Rights Juan Pablo Bohoslavsky's report on the development of guiding principles for assessing the human rights impacts of economic reform policies.

#### Key Milestones:

### 2012

Following APWLD's Regional Consultation on

READ his report [here](#), which integrates gendered consequences of economic policies/reforms.





## 2019–2020

In 2019, Juan Pablo Bohoslavsky engaged in APWLD's Regional Consultation on People's Trade Agenda to address the nexus between trade and investment policies, debt and women's human rights. Following the Consultation, APWLD contributed to the mandate holders' Report to the Human Rights Council on private debt and human rights. APWLD's submission, which focused on the perspectives of women migrants, was cited highlighting the issue of debt bondage and our recommendations in [this report](#) (A/HRC/43/45).

## 2021

Continuing APWLD's engagement with the mandate holder, Juan Pablo Bohoslavsky, since 2018 on the issue of the [impact of austerity measures on women's human rights](#), APWLD co-organised a virtual CSW side event—*IMF and World Bank Austerity Measures are Impediments to the Realisation of BPfA*. The event intended to press the urgency of macroeconomic transformation in the Beijing+25 review processes, and was co-organised with Public Services International (PSI), Development Action for Women Network (DAWN), Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW) and Women in Informal Employment Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO). Juan Pablo Bohoslavsky was a speaker for this event, and he spoke about the COVID-19 pandemic through a human rights lens with a focus on private and household debt and the role of IFIs.

## 2023

During APWLD's National and Regional Consultations on Debt in Sri Lanka, we deepened our collaboration with Juan Pablo Bohoslavsky who spoke at a press conference alongside women demanding

economic justice in the face of economic and other interconnected crises. Various media outlets covered the conference resulting in an increased media exposure on the debt situation in the country as experienced by grassroots women.

## 2023

APWLD facilitated the participation of the current mandate UN Independent Expert on Debt and Human Rights, Attiya Waris at COP28 in Dubai, where she contributed feminist perspectives on climate financing, debt and women's human rights. Following her participation in APWLD's regional consultations, Attiya Waris issued a [formal letter](#) to the Climate Finance Commission, addressing the gendered impacts of climate-related debt financing.

## 2024

Juan Pablo Bohoslavsky was a speaker for APWLD's events at CSW68—a side event entitled, 'Ending the Debt Burden: Reclaiming Women's & Girls' Rights' and parallel event called, 'Rising Voices: Women Unite for Debt Justice'. He worked with APWLD to develop feminist human rights language and recommendations to strengthen the CSW68 Agreed Conclusions.

Watch Juan Pablo Bohoslavsky's video on [Why Debt is a Feminist Issue](#) [here](#).

## 2024

APWLD, ESCR-Net and Ibon International released a joint statement strongly criticising the operationalisation of the carbon market mechanism and pushing for key demands. We shared this with the UN Independent Expert Attiya Waris and Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and Climate Change,



Elisa Morgera who issued a joint statement echoing our stance and demands. This also shaped Elisa Morgera's interventions demanding the needed climate actions and financing at COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan.

[Read their statement here.](#)

## 2024

The three successive generations of UN Independent Experts on Debt and Human Rights—Cephas Lumina, Juan Pablo Bohoslavsky and Attiya Waris—actively engaged in APWLD's Regional Strategy Consultation

on Financing for Development (FfD) as well as the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference in Bangkok, Thailand. Their involvement strengthened the feminist and human rights framing of the discussions, highlighting the structural impacts of global economic governance on women's human rights and Development Justice. Through this sustained collaboration, the Experts helped amplify calls to reform the global financial architecture to centre people over profit.



### a) Centering Indigenous women in debt and climate advocacy

Connecting Indigenous Majhi women in Nepal with the UN Independent Expert on Debt and Human Rights, Attiya Waris, so she could understand their experiences first hand, helped centre their voices in global conversations on climate and debt justice.

In 2024, Attiya Waris joined APWLD's pilot Women's Human Rights Impact Assessment (WHRIA) of the Sunkoshi-II Hydropower Dam and Marine Diversion Project in Nepal. During a field visit to the Majhi Indigenous Women's village in Manthali, Attiya heard firsthand testimonies on the gendered impacts of large-scale infrastructure projects financed by debt. Her reflections on the visit underscored the intersection of climate change, debt-fueled development and violations of indigenous women's human rights:



*I'm back in Nairobi from Nepal and I must say that it was one of the most incredible experiences that I have experienced in a long time. I got to go to the village and talked to indigenous women who will get displaced should the dam be built; and one of the biggest concerns that I have was the effect on children and elderly as well as gender dynamics at play. I also went in because of the fact that the dam will be built using debt, and I wanted to better understand the connection between climate change, debt and investment agreements that are now more and more concerning. And while we are going through this difficult time in the world, where the temperature is rising, I wonder whether we are reflecting on the necessity to have another dam,*



*or whether the existing dams are really needed. I wonder whether we are reflecting enough on why the rivers are running dry, or the fish are no longer there, and why we are undermining peoples' ability to live a subsistence life.'*

**- Attiya Waris, UN Independent Expert on Debt and Human Rights**



Her experience at the COP28 with the climate justice movement, as well as with the Majhi women in Manthali in 2024, have given her grounded evidence on the link between climate change, debt and finance. Attiya Waris is to submit a report tackling the issues of Climate Finance, Debt and Human Rights to the 59th Human Rights Council in February 2025.



## b) Bringing UN Mandate Holders together: a regional feminist platform

APWLD's long-term, deliberate engagement with the UN Independent Experts on Debt and Human Rights has expanded their mandates to include feminist and intersectional analyses of debt. The Independent Experts' involvement in their different capacities and invaluable expertise met with grassroots women's knowledge and realities solidifying the linkages between the climate crisis, debt and human rights

violations, calling for an urgent need to transform international economic and financial structures and policies.



*'The Financing for Development regional preparatory meetings were fascinating and I was excited by the style of engagement with the CSOs and the use of the methodology was*

*inspiring. I was delighted to be in the room with Juan Pablo and Cephas [the two former Independent Experts on Debt and Human Rights]—whom I had never previously met.'*

**- Attiya Waris, UN Independent Expert on Debt and Human Rights**

Juan Pablo Bohoslavsky reflected on his engagement with the Regional Strategy Consultation and preparatory meetings ahead of the 4th International Financing for Development Conference. Juan Pablo together with APWLD presented an artistic collaboration with photographer Jairo Alvarez on debt and human rights titled, 'Eyeing the Debt.'

36 *'I think the regional meeting was extremely successful. I appreciate that we were able to reflect the ground realities through the photos at the regional meetings, as we exchanged views, ideas, experiences, feelings with the audience. This is a project that crosses and seeks for synergies among social sciences, human rights activism and art, and this collaboration has brought them well together in this regard.'*

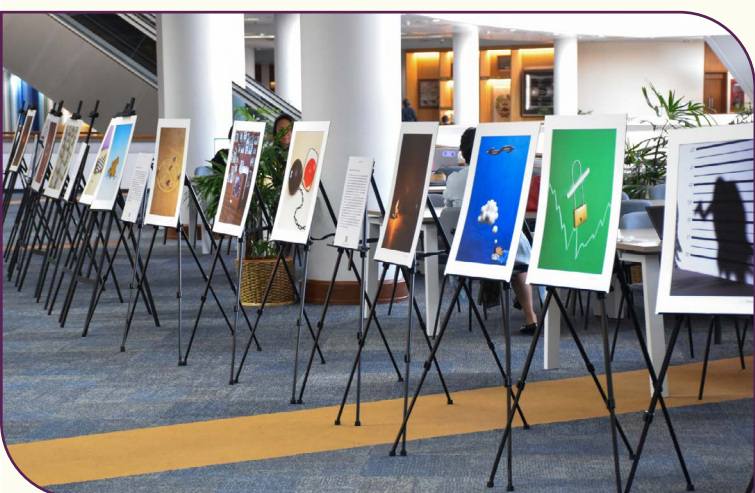
*The critique of debt (as it functions in the world today) is incumbent upon all of us.*

*The commodification and financialisation of education, housing, health, clothing and food, fiscal cuts in areas highly sensitive to human rights, people's debts forcing them to work more and more, the predatory practices of the so-called "vulture funds," usurious interest rates, the regressive role of the IMF and the World Bank in terms of human rights, the disproportionate burden of debt on women, debt accelerating climate change, finance shaping our dreams, are some of the ideas that run through the photographs.'*

36

View photos from the exhibit [here](#).

Through this sustained effort, co-learning and capacity-building occur on both ends—from local to global actors and vice versa, with women gaining direct access to speak to UN mandate holders and share their experiences and analysis. APWLD has succeeded in ensuring that women's human rights, especially those of Indigenous, rural, migrant and working poor women in the Global South, are front and center in global debt policy discussions.





## Milestones in Our Collective Work

In amplifying the voices of women at all levels, we reached **milestones** that encourage us to celebrate the stories and the relationships that propel our movement forward.

### a) Fostering solidarity between media and movements

Since 2018, APWLD has led a Media Fellowship programme for women journalists and media professionals to build a community of women journalists who collectively work to strengthen their reporting and analysis of grassroots issues with a human rights and feminist lens.

APWLD's work with media fellows over the years has strengthened feminist media advocacy in the region—from influencing media narratives to amplifying the voices of women in regional and global civic spaces.



In 2024, we worked with 12 media fellows from Bangladesh, Burma/Myanmar, India, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, the Philippines and Thailand to report on militarism and its impact on women and their communities, producing 30 multimedia stories published across 20 media outlets in English, Thai, Burmese and Russian languages.

Media fellows engaged in key regional and global fora such as the CSW, carving out spaces for critical conversations and solidarity. Methmalie Dissanayake, a media fellow and journalist from Sri Lanka, delivered the collective CSO statement at the CSW Regional Consultation in Bangkok. Janess Ann Ellao and Lady Ann Salem, media fellows and journalists from the Philippines, spoke about safety issues and state-perpetuated attacks against women journalists in a CSW parallel event in New York.

“The media does not only inform the people about the work of CSOs but also amplifies the issues faced by the community. This connection enables both the public and CSOs to unite, creating a stronger, more cohesive voice to work together. I feel together, we can make significant strides in addressing the challenges we face and achieving our common objectives for the betterment of the people.”

- **Methmalie Dissanayake, media fellow from Sri Lanka**



**Feminist Conversations** were held at the media fellowship exhibit area to provide space for media fellows to share their reflections on feminist reporting and the challenges women journalists face in reporting on militarism. The space provided a rare opportunity for women journalists, activists and feminists to express support and solidarity.

33

*‘Seeing our work in the exhibit is really affirming. It felt like our stories really matter and are appreciated.’*

**- Guliza Urustambek, Media Fellow from Kyrgyzstan**



**Beyond the Bylines: Women at the Forefront of Feminist Storytelling**, a media fellowship exhibit that was organised at the APFF, featured the journeys and published work of the media fellows. It spotlighted 26 multimedia stories, including podcasts, video documentaries and photo stories of 30 media fellows from 15 countries—Bangladesh, China, Burma/Myanmar, India, Korea, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Mongolia, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan and Thailand.

Through these different opportunities for our media fellows, women are not only gaining access to feminist media training and mentorship, but they also gain and build relationships with other women journalists and feminist activists in the region, nurturing spaces of safety and solidarity with others. The media fellowship has transcended its work from being a platform for women journalists to produce stories from a feminist perspective to becoming an opportunity for them to become part of the women’s movement.

READ more about our Media fellows’ work [here](#).





## b) Our stories build movement solidarity

Misinformation, fake news and propaganda dominate narratives surrounding grassroots struggles. At APWLD, we strive to counter narratives that invisibilise grassroots voices and instead we amplify the realities of marginalised women and their communities. This year, we continued to highlight the voices and stories of women in Asia and the Pacific through publications and resources as tools of our resistance and records of struggle and solidarity.

APWLD produced [42 publications](#) that tackle varying issues and challenges experienced by our members and partners, creating solid evidence for further advocacy and campaigning. For instance, 10 fact sheets produced together with the APRCEM Advocacy Working Group and seven fact sheets on issues and concerns in Financing for Development as preparatory work for the Asia Pacific High Level Meeting on Financing for Development—went on to inform and guide the drafting of at least two CSO Collective Statements in these major multilateral spaces. These fact sheets were also referenced by a total of 45 intervention statements. In this way, grassroots voices went on to influence multilateral processes and outcome documents.

Through digital campaigns, APWLD pushed for key feminist demands on social media to coincide with regional and global advocacy spaces, centering grassroots voices, experiences and feminist analyses from the region. We produced and posted over a thousand (1,135) pieces of multimedia content that garnered 804,428 in reach, 253,273 engagements, 965,679 impressions, 5,173 new followers on Facebook, X and Instagram and 66,620

website visitors.

This year, APWLD also developed tools that consolidated years of work and learning with our members and partners—country reports, case studies, regional analyses and external resources. We created an [FPAR Guide](#) that outlines selected tools adopted by APWLD and partners in our community led research, for over a decade.



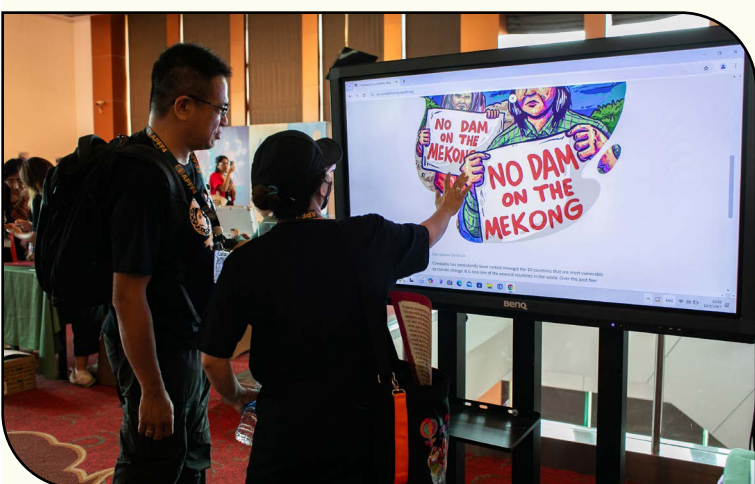
*'I think that the FPAR guide is really helpful and good for the communities and researchers, who aim to use research as a tool for advocacy, because it has the easy reading format with lovely illustration but still reflects the essentials of FPAR and it can link to other APWLD's tools for structural changes such as Feminist Legal Analysis, theory of change.'*

**- Maliwan Senawong, Lecturer, Women's Study Centre of the University of Chiang Mai, Thailand**

APWLD also developed an interactive [Feminist Accountability Map \(FAM\)](#)—an online space that collects the stories of women from the region and tracks the extent to which governments are meeting their commitments to women's human rights in the region. The FAM was developed based on the research and work of APWLD members and partners to highlight issues, gaps in accountability and women's voices in pursuit of women's human rights and Development Justice. The FAM currently features 11 countries from Southeast Asia, East Asia and the Pacific with plans to include more subregions in 2025.

These feminist knowledge tools and resources are intended to be used by researchers, activists, Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs), students and general audiences.

These tools are voices, struggles and demands coming together to weave solidarities in the region, not only building knowledge and capacities but further strengthening our solidarities and movements.



## Journeys of Reflection

A critical part of our ongoing efforts to raise women's voices at all levels is in striving for language justice, ensuring as many women as possible from our region can speak and be heard.

### a) Are We Listening? Advancing language justice through activist interpreters

#### **We are refusing to let language divide us.**

Finding ways to bridge differences in language across our diverse contexts in Asia and the Pacific helps us understand each other better, strengthen our solidarity and our movements and raises the voices of many more people. One approach has been through nurturing activist interpreters.

In our training sessions and activities, interpreters

are considered participants who are also 'learning by experiencing'. They immerse themselves in the discussion, games and activities through our interactive and participatory feminist learning methods. With this, interpreters gain the same knowledge of issues and analysis together with the participants. Strengthening the capacity of our activist interpreters in this way enables them to go beyond word-for-word translation and situate their interpretations in relevant contexts and with feminist analysis—facilitating participants' understanding while deepening their own.

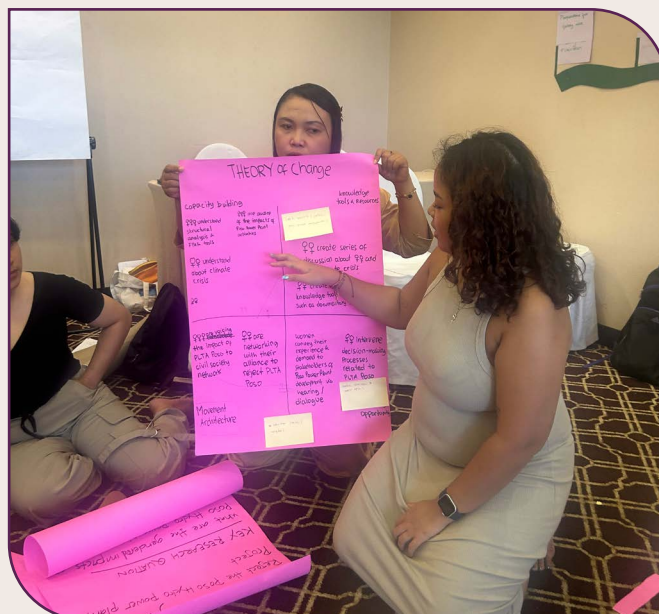


*'At APWLD trainings, everyone's voice was accounted for including interpreters. From the process I realised that my role is not merely interpreting from one language to*



*another but more importantly grounding the big words of climate into a simpler language. For me, interpreting at APWLD training was one of the ways to support language justice and connect women and activists from across the region.'*

**- Salsabila Putri Noor Aziziah, Climate Justice FPAR interpreter**



## Lessons for our Resistance

- 1. Rooting Global Advocacy in Local Struggles:** Our global advocacy only holds value when it is grounded in grassroots work. However, engaging unorganised and often regressive contexts in the region remains challenging as most of the regions' governments are rolling back on their commitment to women's human rights. Nevertheless, our experiences show that meaningful global change must begin with local organising. We are exploring new ways to engage and build stronger political unity with global civil society from Asia Pacific grassroots feminist leadership.
- 2. Building feminist presence in multilateral spaces takes time and trust:** Shifting power in regional and global multilateral spaces is not about being everywhere. It is about showing up and engaging with intention, holding spaces for others and creating pathways for global south grassroots participation that are meaningful and not tokenistic. Oftentimes, it also means questioning power and privileges, not only among Member States and the UN, but among civil society groups as well.
- 3. True solidarity across movements is a gradual process:** This often requires the creation of spaces that allow for deeper understanding between groups that may not always align on every issue. We are learning that solidarity does not always mean being in the same place at the same time, but it does mean finding ways to connect, communicate and build trust across different movements and also to give up privileges or power for a greater shared cause. This remains a critical priority of APWLD in the coming years.



## Injustice for one of us, is Injustice for all of us

Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs) in our region are often the face of our collective and larger struggles. We continue to stand with them in solidarity and fight for their access to justice and human rights, because justice for one of us, is justice for all.





## Home But Not Free: Mary Jane Veloso's Struggle for Justice

### PETITION

## Bring Mary Jane Veloso Home and Grant Her Immediate Clemency



Our resounding call is to bring Mary Jane Veloso safely home to her family and grant her full clemency forthwith.

Scan the QR code to sign the petition

Photo by Jefri Tarigan

After more than a decade on Indonesia's death row, Mary Jane Veloso finally returned home. On 16 December 2024, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. announced that Mary Jane would be returning to the Philippines to complete her sentence. Two days later, she arrived at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) and was escorted directly to the Correctional Institution for Women (CIW) for quarantine where she met her family for the first time in almost 15 years.

APWLD has been part of a global campaign to Free Mary Jane for over a decade. It has been a long and difficult journey with our members and partners to bring her home. We started our advocacy campaign in 2015 when our member, Migrante International, brought her case to the membership's attention and gained widespread support, including the National

Union of People's Lawyers (NUPL) in the Philippines, Migrant Care in Indonesia and migrant workers from Hong Kong mobilised by Eni Lestari, the chair of the International Migrants Alliance (IMA). Strong and concerted pressure from the movement led to the suspension of Mary Jane Veloso's execution on 29 April 2015 following an appeal from Former President Benigno 'Ninoy' Aquino III and the self-surrender of Maria Kristina 'Tintin' Sergio, who had promised Mary Jane work in Indonesia but instead planted drugs in her suitcase.



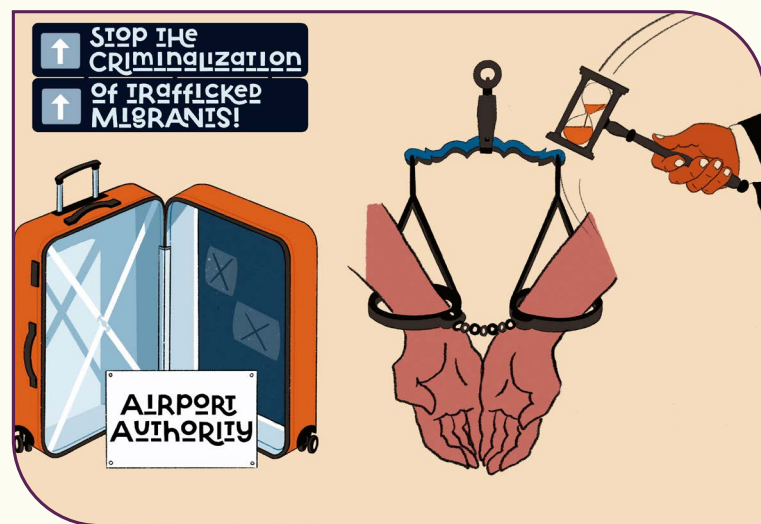
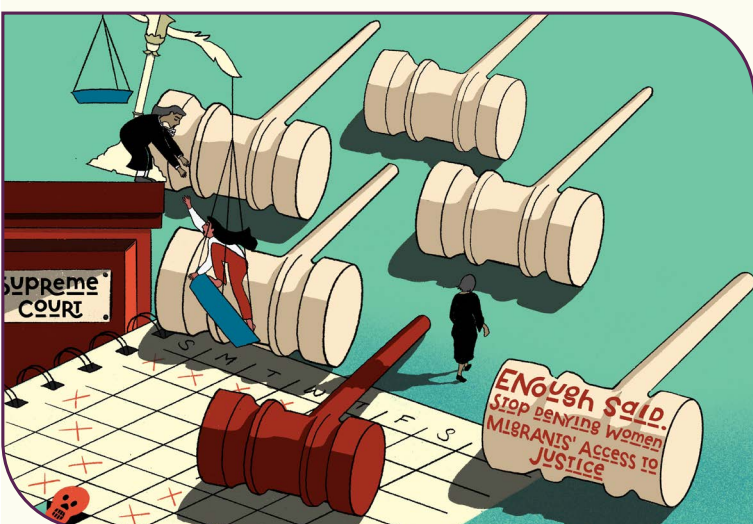
Illustrations by the Big Fat Bao

Over nearly 15 years, both the Philippine and Indonesian governments issued contradictory decisions regarding Mary Jane's case. When Former President Rodrigo Duterte began his term in 2016, he reportedly gave the Indonesian government the 'go-ahead' to proceed with Mary Jane's execution. Years later, the current President of the Philippines facilitated Mary Jane's repatriation but has not granted her clemency.

Throughout the years that Mary Jane struggled for her freedom, APWLD stood with her alongside our members and partners, fighting for human rights

and justice. Undoubtedly, her return warrants a celebration of homecoming and is a significant win for the movements that have campaigned for justice. However, the fight remains until Mary Jane is granted clemency and her innocence is recognised. APWLD continues to advocate for her freedom and demand justice from both Indonesia and the Philippines. Being home is not enough—Mary Jane must be truly free.

Follow the timeline of our collective work in the region to free Mary Jane.



Illustrations by the Big Fat Bao





## A Timeline of Collective Resistance to Free Mary Jane Veloso

APWLD and its members and partners have long called for and worked towards freedom and justice for Mary Jane Veloso. Below are highlights of our collective action and solidarity with members and partners in the region.

### 2015

**01** Migrante International shared the case of Mary Jane Veloso with the APWLD membership and mobilised regional support. Several APWLD members such as NUPL responded and cross-border activism began.

**02** In Indonesia, Komnas Perempuan and KABAR BUMI built a network of supporters in Jakarta to stop the death penalty and to raise funds for the travel, accommodation and food of Mary Jane's family and advocates from the Philippines.

**03** Before the announcement of Mary Jane's execution, Komnas Perempuan or the National Commission on Violence Against Women visited Mary Jane in prison where they successfully gathered and drafted an accurate fact sheet of her case. They further investigated the case and concluded that Mary Jane was a victim of trafficking and that her case needed to be reviewed entirely and immediately.

**04** In Hong Kong, Eni Lestari, then focal point of APWLD's Migration programme and Chair of IMA, mobilised Indonesian migrant workers including Erwiana Sulistyaningsih, whose own case brought international attention to the common, violent abuse that migrant domestic workers face. APWLD supported Erwiana to write a powerful opinion piece for the Jakarta Post entitled, 'I could have been Mary Jane'.

**05** APWLD's email campaign resulted in the support of Felicity Gerry, a lawyer specialising in trafficking cases, who immediately started assisting Migrante International and Mary Jane's lawyers with their case.

**06** As part of APWLD's delegation, Migrante International mobilised even more civil society support during the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) People's Forum. In collaboration with the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA), APWLD held a dialogue with ASEAN Members of Parliament, including that of Indonesia who promised to speak to their Prime Minister about Mary Jane's case.

**07**

A successful global campaign led by migrant advocates, faith-based groups, community organisations and institutions saved Mary Jane from execution on 29 April 2015. Her execution was suspended at this time.

**Read** APWLD's statement calling to stop the execution of Mary Jane Veloso [here](#).

### 2018

APWLD's Migration Programme Organising Committee members joined a campaign to demand justice for Mary Jane Veloso in Penang, Malaysia.

Migrante International led the Global Day of Action for Mary Jane Veloso. As part of this Global Campaign, KABAR BUMI and Jaringan Buruh Migran Indonesia initiated a network against the death penalty.

**Read** APWLD's statement condemning the unsubstantiated charges against NUPL Attorney Katherine Panguban who has also worked on Mary Jane's case [here](#).

### 2019

**12** The Global Campaign led by Migrante International appealed to the Philippine Supreme Court to allow Mary Jane to testify as a victim of human trafficking. As a result, the Supreme Court of the Philippines released its final decision to uphold the August 2016 decision of the Nueva Ecija Regional Trial Court allowing Mary Jane Veloso to testify by way of written deposition in Indonesia.

The Philippine Supreme Court's decision affirms Mary Jane as a victim of human trafficking and asserts that Mary Jane's voice would be silenced and her right to due process will be denied if she were not given the opportunity to testify.

**Read** this blog piece by Glorene A. Das, Executive Director of Tenaganita and APWLD's Migration Programme Organising Committee member as she reflects back on her visit with Mary Jane Veloso [here](#).

FREE  
MARY  
JUSTICE



# 2020

APWLD organised an Access to Justice campaign which called for the release of Mary Jane Veloso. As part of this campaign, on International Migrants Day, an online event was organised demanding justice and lending solidarity support to Mary Jane and her family members. APWLD also published an open letter to create public pressure on the governments of the Philippines and Indonesia to facilitate a fair legal procedure for Mary Jane and release her from imprisonment.

*Read* APWLD's Access to Justice Campaign's Press Release, 'Bring Mary Jane Home!' [here](#).

*Watch* a playback of our International Migrants Day web event entitled, 'Access to Justice for Women Migrant Workers' [here](#).

*Read* our Open Letter to the Governments of the Philippines and Indonesia [here](#), demanding justice for Mary Jane and her return to the Philippines. The letter was endorsed by over 180 organisational and individual signatories.

# 2022

In December, the solidarity continued with the Network for the Protection of Women Migrant Rights (NPWMR) launching its first campaign action on behalf of Mary Jane Veloso. APWLD issued an appeal letter calling for clemency and pardon for Mary Jane that was endorsed by 139 organisational and individual signatories in less than two weeks to President Jokowi and to relevant Indonesian government authorities.

# 2023

Anne Marxze D. Umil, a Filipino journalist and APWLD Media Fellow joined APWLD and its Migration FPAR Partners to visit Mary Jane Veloso in prison at the Wonosari Penitentiary in February 2023. Anne published an article '[On the fringes: | Meeting Mary Jane](#)' following this. The organised visit, along with stronger media coverage, added pressure and amplified the campaign to release her, with increased requests from the Philippine president to the President of Indonesia to grant her clemency.

*Read* this reflection piece by Ananya K., Country Coordinator for India at Women's Regional Network and FPAR Young Researcher as she recounts her visit with Mary Jane Veloso in prison [here](#).

*Read* about the Solidarity Action conducted by APWLD's Central Asian FPAR Partners in Almaty, Kazakhstan [here](#).

*Read* this reflection piece by Katrina Cepeding entitled, 'From Research to Real Life – A Young Researcher's Reflection on Cilacap's Community Exchange Learning and Meeting Mary Jane Veloso' [here](#).

*Read* Mary Jane Veloso's Letter to the Presidents of Indonesia and the Philippines [here](#).

*Read* these letters by Migrante International and Mary Jane Veloso's mother pleading for the release and return of Mary Jane, endorsed by numerous organisations [here](#).

# 2024

*Read* APWLD, Migrante International and Kabar Bumi's statement, 'A plea of over-a-decade innocence: Free Mary Jane Veloso now!' [here](#).

*Sign* our petition to bring Mary Jane Veloso home and grant her immediate clemency [here](#).

*Read* our statement on the call for 'Freedom and Justice for Mary Jane Veloso Now!' [here](#).

**As a result of this long, collective advocacy and solidarity actions, Mary Jane Veloso returned to the Philippines while her journey to achieving justice continues.**



## Milestones in our Collective Solidarity

### a) Finding new ways to support communities facing loss and damage

As communities in Asia and the Pacific are devastated by climate disasters and compounded by the impacts of commercial projects, APWLD has been finding new ways to offer direct and meaningful support.

This year, APWLD successfully piloted our urgent response for Loss and Damage, providing support to two APWLD members—Amihan National Federation of Peasant Women (Amihan) from the Philippines and Climate Watch Thailand. Their communities have been wrecked by natural disasters and made worse by the impacts of commercial projects such as dredging and reclamation projects and residential and commercial conversion of rice lands. Both organisations used the urgent response support not only for immediate and relevant relief and recovery, but also to surface and document women's experiences and solutions to the impacts of the climate crisis.

APWLD released a [statement](#) raising concerns about the impacts of the flood crisis in Nepal in September



Photo Source: Climate Watch Thailand

2024 that devastated communities and cities, with Kathmandu Valley being affected the most. With real losses expected to reach US\$19 to US\$59 trillion by 2050, only US\$765.59 million has been pledged for loss and damage so far. Moreover, it was decided during COP29 that the new climate finance goal will be US\$300 billion per year by 2035. This figure is insufficient as global south demands are for US\$5 trillion based on their needs. But even with this inadequate commitment, there is a serious concern regarding implementation because global north countries have failed to deliver even on their previous promise of US\$100 billion per year by 2020.

33

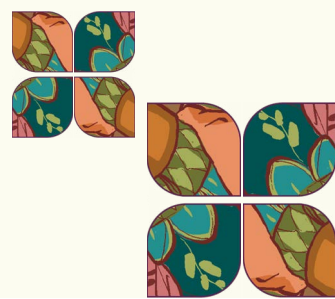
*'After the typhoon, we were devastated as our houses were damaged and we had difficulties providing food for our families. The relief mission was a big help for us and our community as we had food to consume for 3-5 days. After this, we will continue our campaign for compensation from the government and people-centered disaster preparedness and climate change adaptation initiatives.'*

- **Teresita Lipapao, Cavite woman fisherfolk**

33

*'The support came exactly when we needed it the most, focusing on what women and our communities truly needed during the floods. It wasn't just about providing help—it was about listening to us and delivering timely, meaningful support that made a real difference in our lives.'*

- **Suchisa Lekmeechai, a woman community member from the Bang Ra Kham District**



Contrastingly, climate false solutions continue to be financed, implemented and supported despite being regarded as one of the main drivers of worsening climate impacts in the country.

Together with our members and partners, APWLD continues to explore new and relevant ways to respond and support during crises. We document the experiences of women and their communities' to build

and sustain evidence of loss and damage and evidence of the power of women-led climate solutions. By linking these experiences with other communities and countries in the region, we contribute to movement building and strengthening solidarities across nations to collectively address the climate crisis.



Photo Source: Amihan Philippines



## b) Global and local solidarity for political prisoners in the Philippines

### 'How long must they wait to be free?'

These were the words of the United Nations Special Rapporteur (UN SR) on Freedom of Expression and Opinion, Irene Khan, after visiting three political prisoners at the Tacloban City Jail in the Philippines.

Towards the end of their official visit, UN SR Irene Khan was set to deliver an [end of mission statement](#) during a press conference sharing their findings and recommendations. However, in an effort to counter the UN SR's statement, the Philippine government scheduled their own press conference on the same



date and time. Upon learning this, the OHCHR coordinated with Tanggol Bayi, requesting assistance in mobilising journalists to cover the UN SR's press conference. In less than three hours, Tanggol Bayi received confirmations from at least 80 journalists and media practitioners. Ultimately, at least 95 journalists covered the press conference of the UN SR.

The UN SR's findings and recommendations reflected the views and calls of WHRDs, CSOs, grassroots community members, journalists, artists and academia on the current realities on the ground. To a certain extent, the findings also challenged the Philippine government's narrative on the current human rights situation in the country that painted it as if all is well.

The campaign on Freedom of Expression and Opinion fostered a strong sense of solidarity amongst WHRDs and advocates. It led to the creation of an informal network called #FightToExpress spearheaded by Tanggol Bayi and Karapatan, which served as the overall CSO coordination hub during the official visit. The network also led the advocacy campaign efforts and facilitated the submission of reports from civil society groups to the UN SR. A total of 42 inputs or reports detailing the realities on the ground were submitted to the UN SR's office. The #FightToExpress network also paved the way for more than 150 people—including CSO members, journalists, academics and artists to meet with UN SR Irene Khan.

APWLD supported Tanggol Bayi and Filipino WHRDs during the official visit of the UN SR on Freedom of Expression and Opinion to the Philippines in January 2024. Mid-way through their visit, UN SR Irene Khan met with Filipino political prisoners at the Tacloban City Jail. This visit was significant for the movement

because it was the first time an international observer was permitted to visit them. All previous attempts by global media, human rights organisations and even diplomatic missions were denied by jail authorities or by the national government.

33 *'I want to acknowledge the permission the government gave me to visit three pre-trial detainees in Tacloban prison, Mariel Domequil, Alexander Philip Abinguna and journalist Frenchie Mae Cumpio, who had turned 25 only a few days before my visit. All three of around the same age have been languishing in prison for the past four years while awaiting the resolution of their cases on non-bailable terrorism-related offences. Justice delayed is justice denied, and I trust that my visit will encourage the relevant authorities to either review the cases and dismiss the charges as unfounded, or to speed up the trials with full due process.'*

**- Irene Khan, UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Opinion**



Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression Irene Khan visited Human Rights Defenders Mariel Domequil, Alexander Philip Abinguna and journalist Frenchie Mae Cumpio while they were detained in Tacloban Prison.

Photo Source: Irene Khan on X

## Journeys of Reflection

### a) Finding sisterhood in community visits

Community visits are powerful. They serve as avenues for truth-telling, reflection and regional solidarity. They remind us that collective struggles need collective resistance to achieve women's human rights and Development Justice.

Together with FPAR partners, APWLD visited local communities in Sahiwal in Pakistan, Sidodadi in Indonesia and Surat Thani in Thailand in 2024. The visits gave APWLD and FPAR partners an insight into women's resistance in action, especially in resisting corporate control of food systems. The visits grounded regional political education in real life-struggles.

The community visit to **Sahiwal** organised by Pakistan Kissan Mazdoor Tehreek (PKMT) was inspiring in how local communities have shifted their agricultural practices to resist corporate dependency. Collectively, they have prioritised local seeds and livestock, abandoned imported Australian cows that required excessive resources and recentered food sovereignty. The exchange of knowledge and experiences fostered solidarity among participants on pushing back against neoliberal agendas. Their powerful public campaign against the Minimum Pasteurisation Law successfully delayed the law's implementation from 2022 to 2026. The community visit to Khlong Sae Pratana village in Surat Thani province, Thailand was a powerful example of how grassroots movements reclaim land and develop sustainable agricultural practices, despite ongoing threats from agribusiness and political instability.

The learning exchange provided a critical space for



*‘The exploitation we experience in the Philippines—the plundering of natural resources, the use of our people as cheap labour, the extraction of raw materials by foreign powers—is also happening in Pakistan. We saw it first hand while speaking with the peasant community. We witnessed the severe exploitation, especially of women. But alongside the suffering, we also saw resistance—how peasants are organising and fighting back for their rights and livelihoods. Amidst oppression, the spirit of struggle endures.’*

**- Janina Gacosta, Kadamay, FPAR Partner**



the participants to collectively examine how land rights, food sovereignty and feminist resistance intersect, particularly through the experiences of the Southern Peasant Federation of Thailand (SPFT). The Federation's model of land redistribution and collective farming has strengthened the economic resilience of the community, also providing them with nutritious food. Their experience highlighted the



inseparability of land rights from broader struggles against economic exploitation.



*The community visits we undertook during the year to Surat Thani in Thailand and Sahiwal in Pakistan, were powerful avenues for truth telling, reflection and solidarity.*



## Lessons for our Resistance

- 1. Our Long-Term Solidarity Makes a Difference:** Mary Jane Veloso's return after nearly 14 years of relentless movement work reminds us that justice is rarely immediate; that sustained pressure, cross-border solidarity and grassroots mobilisation does move institutions. Her homecoming is not the end, rather a signal that movements can shake the boat.
- 2. Our Support Must Evolve with the Crisis:** Rising state violence, corporate abuse and climate catastrophes have demanded that we listen and adapt the way we respond. APWLD's first steps into urgent response for loss and damage and WHRDs were driven directly by what our members needed in real time to continue their political organising work.



## We Created Safe, Vibrant Political Spaces for Regional Solidarity

The strongest expression of our regional solidarity and movement building in 2024 were the spaces we created for deep political conversation, collective feminist dreaming and planning. Creating these spaces are critical steps in our journey for

Development Justice and women's human rights. These spaces allow us to connect the dots between our struggles, nurture our intersectional and intergenerational solidarity and plan a collective strategy for advocacy, action and change.





## A Gathering of Feminist Movements—The Fourth Asia Pacific Feminist Forum



At APFF4 in Chiang Mai from 12-14th September 2024, hundreds of our sisters in Asia and the Pacific responded to the call to harness our creative energies and collective journeys and imagine the new feminist worlds we have been fighting for. It reinforced the spirit of cross-regional, cross-issue, cross-identity, cross-generational feminist solidarity and reminded us that solidarity is truly revolutionary. The APFF4 welcomed over 550 feminists from 35 countries and territories across the region, as well as global allies from 11 countries outside of Asia and the Pacific—representing 276 organisations altogether.

Together, we grounded our feminist vision in our present struggles and movements, and learned new ways of feminist advocacy and resistance from each other. Here's what we learned about the value of these spaces that can inform our political work:

**Through our shared experiences, we recognise the myriad faces of our oppressors.** These are the varied and intersecting forms of patriarchy, neoliberal capitalism, militarism and fundamentalisms in different regions that are the root structural causes of oppression and violence. This shared understanding in turn shows us how our resistance must adapt and change.

33

*'Because in this battle against authoritarian, anti-rights, anti-gender forces, we will be hit, again and again. It is our knowledge, our conviction, our courage and our solidarity that will enable us to stand up, each and every time, dust off the battle scars, build new allies and fight the good fight because we believe in the end that justice will prevail, must prevail.'*

**- Zainah Anwar, Founder of Musawah**

**WATCH** [this illustrated documentary](#) that brings together critical conversations from the APFF4 on where we are, where we want to be and how we get there, consolidating the political analysis of the movements in our region.



33

*'Overall, I really enjoyed APFF because it was enlightening and shocking to learn about feminist issues outside of our own scope of work, and to see the state of women's rights being violated on a broader and deeper scale. The conference made it clear to me that no matter what region or country, whether large or small, rich or poor, there is always militarism, imperialism, fundamentalism, patriarchy, exploitation and oppression of women's rights and interests, power and money colluding and manipulating everything, and women's rights being victimised first and foremost. And feminism is often isolated and suppressed, so it's important for us to come together and support and encourage each other in order to have the strength to make our voices heard and fight back against the oppression of us. Thanks to APFF, we were able to experience the power of sharing and solidarity, and it was like a gas station for our cars, leaving each of us energised to continue the fight for women's rights.'*

- Participant, APFF4

**Mutual support through knowledge exchange, skills sharing and resourcing remains critical for our movements to progress.** The APFF4 through its multiple hands-on workshops, plenaries, discussion spaces and feminist knowledge tools and resources, created avenues for shared learning, skills building and creative activism. For instance, lessons on community organising on digital platforms or through a pandemic; models of feminist leadership across contexts; how food sovereignty can help communities claim land from corporate and state control; a Digital Security Clinic for feminists and Women Human Rights Defenders to do a risk assessment of their devices and improve their digital security; building feminist capacities on global policy instruments, and more. It also included subversive spaces such as the 'Really Really Free Market', for exchanging pre-loved goods to challenge hyper-consumerism.

33

*'Meeting people from different contexts and despite it being such a huge conference, I felt there was always enough space for everyone to shine and bring forth their voice and topics. Given that APFF platformed women who were on the ground, the curation of the programmes were also rooted in real world conditions and also strategies which taught me so much about the possibilities of feminist world-building.'*

- Participant, APFF4

*'APFF for me felt like a true decolonised space for the global south feminist movements to gather, share stories of organising and urgent issues, build solidarity networks, and increase awareness / tangible support of our collective movements.'*

- Participant, APFF4

33



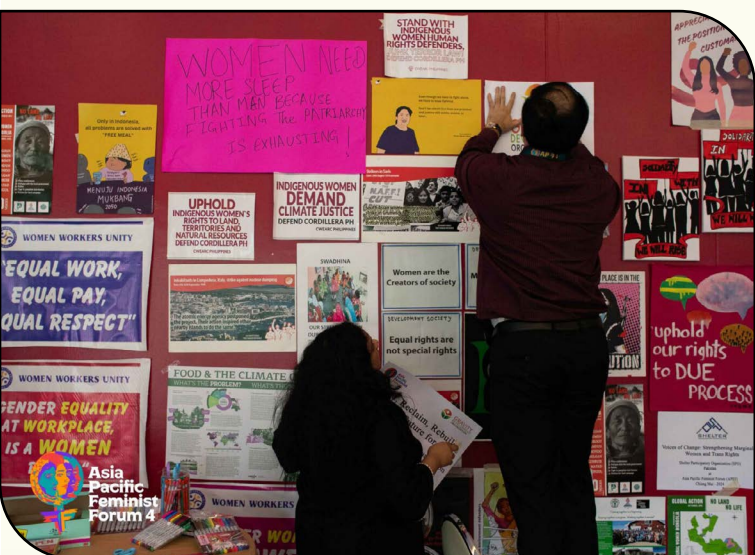


This political space reinvigorated feminist solidarities and alliances with our local, regional and global allies and movements. There was a focused effort to increase the participation and inclusion of previously underrepresented groups such as grassroots and Indigenous activists, queer activists, young feminists and feminists from the Pacific region. The Pacific delegation at the APFF4 included 40 Pacific feminists from 10 countries: Fiji, Guam, Kiribati, Northern Mariana Islands, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Vanuatu and West Papua.

As one participant from the Pacific said, 'While

the Pacific group is usually dominated by Fiji, the whole Pacific delegation agrees that this time around the delegation was fairly well represented by other countries. Great to have participants from the North Pacific that included Guam, Palau, Marshall Islands. This meant getting new people in the space.'

**Another participant said,** 'Before I joined APFF4, I believed that there were many feminist movements in the world, various issues and cases. But I haven't seen it. After attending APFF4, my trust was fully paid off. I really saw a large and solid feminist movement throughout the Asia Pacific which included women from various backgrounds of struggle, issues and cases.'



Art as resistance was an important theme of the APFF. From a mannequin called Sheila who encouraged participants to use paint to express sites of violence, or a tabletop game that encouraged participants to countermap our neighbourhoods, to a zine making workshop on 'Politicising Everyday Life' that explored zine-making and its history as a form of rebellion and dissent—there were several spaces that explored creativity in our feminist struggles.

Revisit the Asia Pacific Feminist Forum through this [APFF4 Retrospective](#).



## Nurturing Feminist Organising: Our Experience in Central Asia



Between 2018 and 2024, APWLD responded to a call from its members to actively nurture and support feminist organising in Central Asia—in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The intention was to address underrepresentation of Central Asia in APWLD's membership and activities; to strengthen the capacity of Central Asian women's organisations to advance women's human rights in their countries; and to facilitate movement building in the subregion.

APWLD did this through a Feminist Legal Theory and Practice session as a way to identify issues of concern and to strategise, followed by two cycles of Feminist Participatory Action Research with local communities. The FPAR cycles began a political process together with women in communities to understand and collect evidence of rights violations, to mobilise and advocate collectively for their demands.

Over five years, the sustained engagement in the Central Asia subregion has proven to be powerful in capacity building, organising and action in support of rural, Indigenous, migrant and urban poor women's movements. There have been significant gains for women in local communities through direct changes in laws and policies and access to state and municipal services, especially for women migrants. Working together with members and partners in Central Asia, women's issues and demands have also been consistently raised in regional and multilateral spaces.

33

*'The APWLD-Central Asia engagement has been a turning point for many of us in the sub-region. Through the FPAR, we were able to understand feminism and systemic barriers for the first time, especially those affecting the rights of women migrants. We conducted strong advocacy that led to policy changes, built grassroots movements, and significantly strengthened the leadership of young women. Thanks to the CA subregional FPAR initiative, we also became part of a regional and global advocacy process. Our voices reached the UN Global Compact for Migration review, making visible the realities of Central Asian women migrants on the international stage.'*

**- Asel Dunganaeva, Public Foundation 'JIPAR',**



APWLD now has 17 members from Central Asia, enriching the work and engagement of the network. Efforts in Central Asia have informed APWLD's strategies of engagement in other under-represented subregions such as East Asia and the Pacific.

For the women who were part of the FPAR processes, there have been intangible but critically important personal experiences of growth. They shared how the process of FPAR strengthened their own capacity to use a structural analysis (patriarchy, militarism, fundamentalisms and globalisation) to understand the issues they faced, to build their demands for their human rights and it strengthened their skills to conduct legal analyses on advocacy and campaigning. It was these changes in capacity that shifted some power into the hands of grassroots women and made way for the strong and successful campaigns discussed earlier in this report.

They reflected on their experience saying:

‘FPAR has been instrumental in mobilising and empowering women, fostering self-advocacy and initiative. Witnessing the transformation of my community of women returned migrants has been profoundly rewarding. Initially reserved and reticent, they gradually blossomed into confident individuals, ready to assert their rights and drive change in their communities. On a personal level, FPAR has catalysed significant growth within me. I've embraced elements of feminism and wholeheartedly champion women's rights. FPAR has honed my skills as a young researcher and organisation leader, thanks to the invaluable guidance of our facilitators and the enriching training sessions. After the FPAR journey, I can confidently state that I overcome and address both work and

*personal life-related problems. Moreover, the solidarity built with fellow FPAR partners has grown into a strong, supportive community that feels like family. Admittedly, the initial stages of the FPAR journey were overwhelming, filling me with a lot of new knowledge and experiences. However, each subregional training equipped me with practical skills and confidence, allowing me to apply newfound knowledge in my community effectively. Also, FPAR has significantly bolstered Dunoyi Muhabbat's potential as a fast-growing organisation.'*

**- Jamilakhon Barotova, Dunyoi Muhabbat, Tajikistan, 2nd CA FPAR cycle**

‘Before FPAR, only decision-makers spoke at meetings, and my community and I remained silent listeners. However, thanks to FPAR, the women and I have gained the confidence to openly express our challenges and demand that parliament members acknowledge our recommendations and take action.’

**- Anastasia Zueva, Moy Dom, Kazakhstan, 1st CA FPAR cycle**





## Raising voices of women from Central Asia



APWLD actively shared opportunities for engagement with Central Asia (CA) members and partners at regional and global levels. In 2024, Central Asia FPAR partners strengthened their networking and engagement with the

Network for Protection of Women Migrants' Rights—a unified network of 114 women returned migrants in Asia and the Pacific.

Notably, our CA members, including our CA FPAR Partners, secured several speaking opportunities to present the subregional CSO statement, both as panellists during the CSO and Ministerial Conference and through interventions from the floor during side events. Their meaningful participation in these spaces resulted in all six demands outlined in their subregional statement being incorporated into the Beijing+30 Chair's Summary Report following the Ministerial Conference.





## Strengthening Member-led Feminist Leadership, Solidarity and Accountability



Every three years, APWLD holds its General Assembly—a gathering of our entire membership, reminding us of our strength in regional, subregional and intergenerational solidarity that sustains our work. The General Assembly is a moving reminder of who we are as a network, our accountability to our members and each other and it reflects the commitment of members to this shared feminist journey.

33

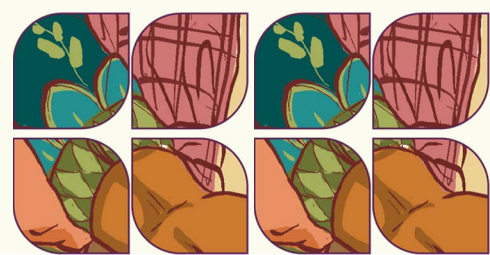
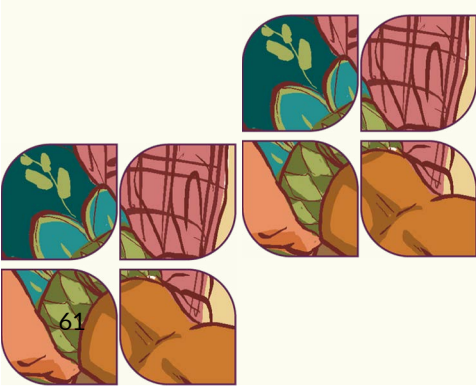
*'APWLD GA's participatory and feminist decision-making processes were instructive. It showcased how leadership structures can be built to ensure inclusivity, transparency and shared power. This offers a model for developing governance and leadership styles that reflect feminist values—ensuring that all voices, particularly those traditionally excluded from leadership roles, are heard and valued.'*

- Samreen Khan Gauri, APWLD member from Pakistan

33

*'As a member, the APWLD General Assembly holds deep significance. It not only enables participation in key decision-making processes, but also keeps us informed about APWLD's programmes and their relevance to the issues we advocate for. It offers critical insights into the progress of members across the Asia-Pacific region, opening pathways to build advocacy networks and deepen movement solidarity. The strength of resistance and unity within the women's movement in Asia and the Pacific, under APWLD's umbrella, was palpable. The spirit and energy of collective resistance were evident throughout—APFF's programme design and methods were exceptional: inclusive, respectful, grounded in shared experiences and full of joyful, enthusiastic resistance.'*

- Risma Umar, Aksi! for gender, social and ecological justice, Indonesia



The space APWLD created in 2024 was a powerful one, a reflection on how far we have come, in the political spaces and contexts we inhabit and reaffirming the work to be done as a network in the years ahead.

During the General Assembly, 12 new members were elected to join the now 24-member Regional Council of APWLD for the term of 2024-2027. This is the highest policy making body of APWLD. Notably, for the first time, we have a Regional Council member from Samoa, Pacific. The Regional Council elected the Programme and Management Committee, a standing committee of the Regional Council, for the term 2024-2027. Through the General Assembly, the Regional Council and Programme and Organising Committee, members from Asia and the Pacific are actively involved in the governance and direction of APWLD's work. It is an approach that not only keeps APWLD connected to regional organising of issues of concern to the region, but strengthens leadership in the region as well and keeps us accountable as a

network to the movements we are a part of and that we support. And over and above all of this, it is also a space for solidarity, care and sisterhood.

In 2024, we had 23 new members join our network. APWLD is connected to 313 members across 31 countries and territories in Asia and the Pacific. Of these, 217 are organisational members while 97 are individuals.

Listening carefully to members, APWLD held two sub-regional members' convenings, one in East Asia and another in the Pacific—two relatively under-represented sub-regions. The convenings identified priority issues in the context of each subregion, discussed strategies to ensure representation of East Asia and the Pacific in the leadership in APWLD, as well as suggestions for distinctive strategies for engagement reflecting the political, socio-economic and cultural specificities of the sub-regions.





## Supporting values of feminist collective care

In 2024, the APWLD Secretariat expanded to 37 Secretariat staff members from 15 different countries and territories. This included full-time staff and interns. With the hiring of seven new staff in 2024, all new positions in APWLD's newly approved organisational structure were complete.

As the Secretariat expands, we are cognisant of our feminist workplace culture and values which form the foundation for operations. As most of APWLD Secretariat staff work remotely from their home countries, we intentionally organise activities throughout the year for reflections, discussions, learning and team building, strengthening our own solidarity and sisterhood within the Secretariat.

While the Secretariat has expanded, turnover has reduced significantly over the last three years, with the emphasis on strengthening a feminist workplace culture and on employee wellbeing. In 2024, our staff turnover rate was 2.7 per cent. This indicates that the Secretariat has become a safe space for our staff where they enjoy our work and find it politically motivating and aligned with their values.

This year, we had a special moment of celebration as we celebrated the 20-year work anniversary of APWLD Finance and Admin Manager, which was with all Secretariat colleagues and members in person during the General Assembly. This celebration reminded us how much we value our staff's contribution and hard work.

## Lessons for our Resistance

- 1. Creating spaces for dialogue is powerful in strengthening cross-border and cross-movement solidarity.** They have been critical avenues to reimagine and rethink ways forward in our struggles and for catharsis and solidarity around emerging trends and newer forms of globalisation, fundamentalisms, militarism and patriarchy in our region. Half of the participants from these convenings were new allies and partners, resulting in a consolidation of new knowledge, strategies and new collaborations.
- 2. True solidarity across movements is a gradual process,** often requiring the creation of spaces that allow for deeper understanding between groups that may not always align on every issue. We are learning that solidarity doesn't always mean being in the same place at the same time, but it does mean finding ways to connect, communicate and build trust across different movements and also to give up privileges/power for a greater shared cause.
- 3. Movement-building takes time, trust—and a deep commitment to listening.** APWLD's work in Central Asia has shown that feminist organising grows strongest when rooted in the realities, strategies and leadership of grassroots women. It took years of co-learning, reflection and consistency to nurture leadership, spark policy change and build trust.



03





# APWLD's Governance Structure (for 2024-2027) and Secretariat

## Programme and Management Committee

Korea Center for United Nations  
Human Rights Policy (KOCUN)

Heisoo Shin (South Korea)

Independent Member

Madhu Mehra (India)

Representative of the Malaysian  
National Board of Directors

Daniella Zulkifli (ex-officio) (Malaysia)

Regional Coordinator, APWLD  
Secretariat

Misun Woo (ex-officio) (South Korea)

Center for Women's Resources (CWR)

Cielito V. Perez (Philippines)

Public Foundation 'JIPAR'

Asel Dunganaeva (Kyrgyzstan)

Representative of the Thailand  
National Board of Directors

Maliwan Senawong (Thailand)





## Regional Council

Fiji Women's Crisis Center	Stephanie Chanelle Dunn	Fiji
Fiji Women's Rights Movement	Nalini Singh	Fiji
Brown Girl Woke	Doris Tulifau	Samoa
Center for Women's Resources	Cielito V. Perez	Philippines
Women's League of Burma	Nang Moet Moet	Burma/Myanmar
Palangkaraya Ecological and Human Rights Studies (Progress)	Kartika Sari	Indonesia
SILAKA	Reasey Seng	Cambodia
All Women's Action Society (AWAM)	Jayamalar Samuel	Malaysia





Sangsas Anakot Yawachon Foundation	Matcha Phornin	Thailand
Indonesian Migrant Workers Union	Sringatin	Hong Kong
Korea Center for United Nations Human Rights Policy (KOCUN)	Heisoo Shin	South Korea
Centre for Human Rights and Development (CHRD)	Mandkhaitsetsen Urantulkhuur	Mongolia
PA Feminist League	Yevgeniya Kozyreva	Kazakhstan
Public Foundation 'JIPAR'	Asel Dunganaeva	Kyrgyzstan
PO Otifa	Nurmatova Sanoat	Tajikistan
Zan va Zamin	Mamadaliyeva Mukhabbatkhon	Tajikistan
Roots for Equity	Azra Sayeed	Pakistan
HomeNet Pakistan	Ume Laila Azhar	Pakistan
Access Planet Organization	Laxmi Nepal	Nepal
Karmojibi Nari	Sunzida Sultana	Bangladesh
Stand Up Movement Lanka	Ashila Dandeniya	Sri Lanka
Independent Member	Madhu Mehra	India
Representative of the Thailand National Board of Directors	Maliwan Senawong	Thailand
Regional Coordinator, APWLD Secretariat	Misun Woo (ex-officio)	South Korea



## APWLD Secretariat in 2024



Name	Position
Aijamal Bakashova	Grants Manager
Aliza Yuliana	Programme Officer, Migrants United and Act for Human Rights
Alyssa Balite	Programme Associate, Feminist Knowledge, Learning and Publications
Andi Cipta Asmawaty	Programme Officer, Labour Women Organising Workers
April Porteria	Programme Officer, Feminist Development Justice
Edz Dela Cruz	Programme Officer, Feminist Voice (Information and Communications)
Eloisa Delos Reyes	Programme Officer, Breaking out of Marginalisation
Gerimara Manuel	Programme Associate, Feminist Voice (Information and Communications)
Ka Mei Lau	Executive Officer





Kalpna Rai	Programme Associate, Feminist Development Justice
Kamakshi Amar	Programme Officer, Women in Power
Kornvika Paupratum	Finance & Administrative Manager
Liani MK	Programme Associate, Feminist Voice (Information and Communications)
Lyn Pano	Programme Manager
Maham Tanveer	Human Resource Manager
Maitree Muzumdar	Interim Executive Officer
Misun Woo	Regional Coordinator
Munkhsaruul Mijiddorj	Programme Manager
Nazira Torobaeva	Coordinator, Central Asia FPAR
Nguyen Thi Hien	<i>Former</i> Programme Officer, Women Interrogating Trade & Corporate Hegemony
Phantiwa da Cruz Fernandes	Liaison and Administrative Officer
Rachel Tan	Programme Officer, Grounding the Global
Raktai Damrongmanee	Finance Officer
Ranjana Giri	Programme Officer, Climate Justice
Rattikan Kuntapoung	Finance Associate
Sadia Afrin Khan	Programme Officer, Feminist Law and Practice
Sagarika Bhatta	Programme Associate, Climate Justice and Crises & Women's Human Rights
Sanila Gurung	Programme Officer, Women Interrogating Trade & Corporate Hegemony
Shardha Rajam	Programme Associate, Labour & Migration



Tasmiah Juthi	Programme Associate, Breaking out of Marginalisation
Thanyarat Khrueawongkaew	Administrative Associate
Wardarina	Deputy Regional Coordinator
Zainab Ibrahim	Programme Officer, Feminist Knowledge, Learning and Publications
Zainab Shumail	Coordinator, Crises & Women's Human Rights
Zar Zar Tun	Programme Associate, Women in Power & Feminist Law and Practice



#### Fourth Asia Pacific Feminist Forum (APFF4) Team

Ghausia Rashid	APFF4 Event Coordinator
Rosarin Schweis	APFF4 Event Coordination Associate
Ruiyao Luo	APFF4 Communications Consultant
Wint Lwin Lwin	APFF4 Event Coordination Intern











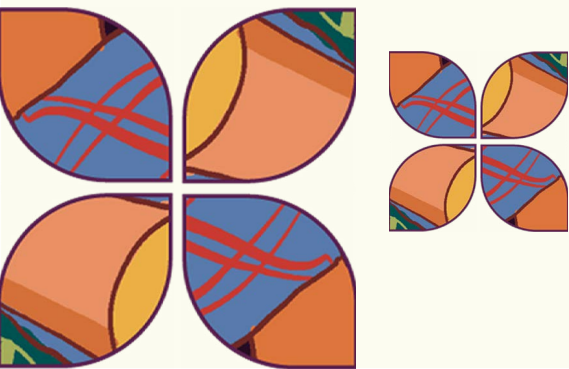
## Financial Narrative & Accounts

In 2024, APWLD received grants totaling USD 3,775,184.41, and our expenditure for the year was USD 3,048,771.30. It was the year with the largest expenditure as well as the largest amount of grants received. We are grateful to have a sustainable and healthy financial status especially despite the context of ongoing adverse shifts in resourcing ecosystem—as manifested in Official Development Assistance (ODA) cuts against the increasing military expenditure, executive decisions of the US government that has been detrimental to years of important organising work of groups on sexual and reproductive health and rights, disability rights and human rights in conflict situations as well as growing uncertainties in private philanthropies.

Programme costs for 2024 constituted 82 per cent of total costs. Institutional development costs, which includes network support, non-programme resources, publications and materials, member governance meetings and staff development constituted 12 per cent and administration 6 per cent. The proportion of sub-grants against the programme costs was 10.49 per cent, enabling APWLD to work directly with 57 women's rights organisations and their communities from 19 countries across the region. APWLD's financial accounts have been audited and approved by NB Accounting, who have reported that our accounts are prepared in

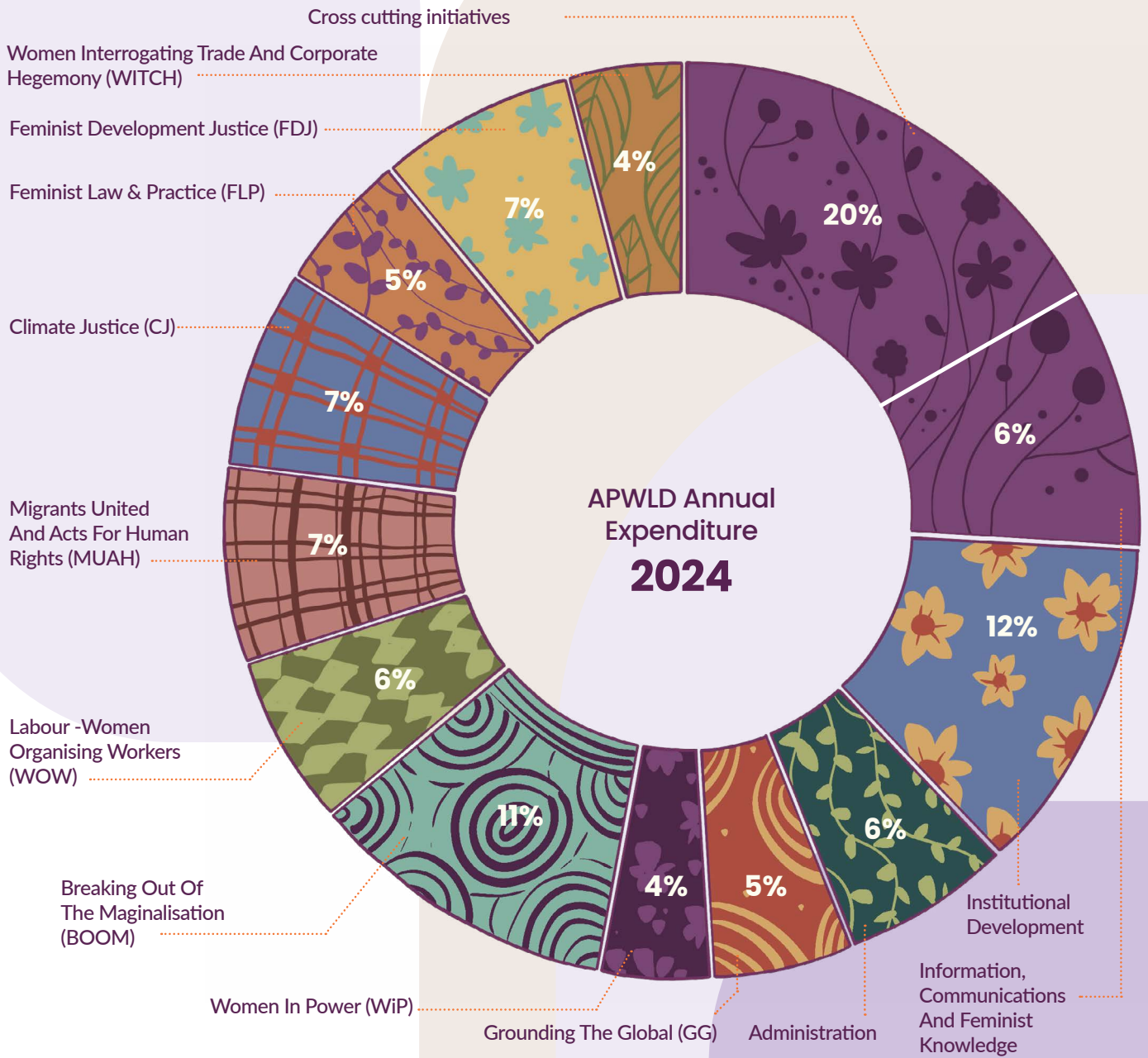
accordance with Thai and International Financial Reporting Standards for non-publicly accountable entities, as well as the terms and conditions of our donor contracts. The APWLD auditor was also requested to undertake management auditing to ensure continual improvement of our finance, accounting and systems management.

In 2024, we deeply appreciated the ongoing support from our core and programme donors: a) Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA); b) Foundation for a Just Society (FJS); c) Wellspring Philanthropic Fund; d) Porticus; e) Open Society Foundations; f) European Commission. It was a special year to receive additional support from a number of donors and funds for feminist convenings and movement organising, including resources to co-create the 4th Asia Pacific Feminist Forum from: a) Equality Fund; b) Thousand Currents; c) Urgent Action Fund - Asia & Pacific; d) Pacific Feminist Fund. APWLD understands the critical importance of multi-year, core operational grants for our organising and movement building work, and we appreciate the strong and ongoing support and trust from our donors.





# APWLD Annual Expenditure 2024





DEVELOPMENT  
JUSTICE  
NOW!

05

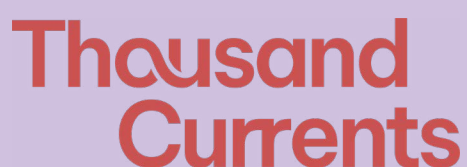
DEVELOPMENT  
JUSTICE  
NOW!





## Our 2024 Funders

We acknowledge the support of the following donors and funding agencies in our work to advance women's human rights and Development Justice in Asia and the Pacific.



Co-funded by  
the European Union



FOR WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS  
ASIA & PACIFIC

## Acronyms

<b>AIPA</b>	ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly	<b>DAWN</b>	Development Action for Women Network
<b>AMIHAN</b>	Amihan National Federation of Peasant Women	<b>DMCR</b>	Department of Marine and Coastal Resources
<b>APCHRP</b>	Asia Pacific Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines	<b>FAM</b>	Feminist Accountability Map
<b>APFF4</b>	Fourth Asia Pacific Feminist Forum	<b>FDJ</b>	Feminist Development Justice
<b>APFSD</b>	Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development	<b>FEMNET</b>	African Women's Development and Communication Network
<b>APMM</b>	Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants	<b>FfD</b>	Financing for Development
<b>APRCM</b>	Asia Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism	<b>FfD4</b>	Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development
<b>APRN</b>	Asia Pacific Research Network	<b>FJS</b>	Foundation for a Just Society
<b>APRRN</b>	Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network	<b>FPAR</b>	Feminist Participatory Action Research
<b>ASEAN</b>	Association of Southeast Asian Nations	<b>GAATW</b>	Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women
<b>AWAM</b>	All Women's Action Society	<b>GBV</b>	Gender-Based Violence
<b>Beijing+30</b>	Thirtieth anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action	<b>GBVH</b>	Gender-Based Violence and Harassment
<b>BPfA</b>	Beijing Platform for Action	<b>GCM</b>	Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration
<b>CA</b>	Central Asia	<b>HLPF</b>	High-Level Political Forum
<b>CARAM Asia</b>	Coordination of Action Research on AIDS and Mobility in Asia	<b>IFIs</b>	International Financial Institutions
<b>CEDAW</b>	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women	<b>ILO C190</b>	International Labour Organisation Convention No. 190 in addressing violence and harassment in the world of work
<b>CHRD</b>	Centre for Human Rights and Development	<b>IMA</b>	International Migrants Alliance
<b>CIW</b>	Correctional Institution for Women	<b>IMF</b>	International Monetary Fund
<b>COP29</b>	29th Conference of Parties	<b>ISDS</b>	Investor-State Dispute Settlement
<b>CS FfD Mechanism</b>	Civil Society Financing for Development Mechanism	<b>IWRAW AP</b>	International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific
<b>CSOs</b>	Civil Society Organisations	<b>KOCUN</b>	Korea Center for United Nations Human Rights Policy
<b>CWR</b>	Center for Women's Resources	<b>KPPBM</b>	Kelompok Perempuan Peduli Buruh Migran
		<b>KWAU</b>	Korean Women's Association United



<b>LATINDADD</b>	Red Latinoamericana por Justicia Económica y Social
<b>MGoS Mechanism</b>	Major Groups and Other Stakeholders Coordination Mechanism
<b>MOUs</b>	Memorandums of Understanding
<b>NAIA</b>	Ninoy Aquino International Airport
<b>NGOs</b>	Non-Governmental Organisations
<b>NPWMR</b>	Network for the Protection of Women Migrant Rights
<b>NUPL</b>	National Union of People's Lawyers
<b>ODA</b>	Official Development Justice
<b>OHCHR</b>	Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights
<b>OSF</b>	Open Society Foundations
<b>PKMT</b>	Pakistan Kissan Mazdoor Tehreek
<b>PPPs</b>	Public-Private Partnerships
<b>PROGRESS</b>	Palangkaraya Ecological and Human Rights Studies
<b>PSI</b>	Public Services International
<b>SAG</b>	Stakeholder Advisory Group
<b>SDF</b>	Sustainable Development Foundation
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SIDA</b>	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
<b>SPFT</b>	Southern Peasant Federation of Thailand
<b>SRHR</b>	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
<b>TTCU</b>	Tamilnadu Textile and Common Labour Union
<b>UN CSW</b>	United Nations Commission on the Status of Women
<b>UN CSW68</b>	68th UN Commission on the Status of Women
<b>UN SR</b>	United Nations Special Rapporteur
<b>UNESCAP</b>	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
<b>UNFCCC</b>	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
<b>UNNM</b>	UN Network on Migration
<b>WHRDs</b>	Women Human Rights Defenders
<b>WHRIA</b>	Women's Human Rights Impact Assessment
<b>WIEGO</b>	Women in Informal Employment Globalizing and Organizing
<b>WMG</b>	Women's Major Group





**Layout and Design by**

Shahdia Jamaldeen | Kanil Dias Abeyagunawardene

**Year of Publication**

2025

**Copyright © 2025 Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development**

**Address**

189/3 Changklan Road, Amphoe Muang, Chiang Mai 50100, Thailand

 [apwld@apwld.org](mailto:apwld@apwld.org)

 [apwld.ngo](https://www.facebook.com/apwld.ngo)

 [@apwld\\_](https://www.instagram.com/apwld_)

 [www.apwld.org](http://www.apwld.org)

 [@apwld](https://twitter.com/apwld)

 [Asia Pacific Forum on Women,  
Law and Development](https://www.youtube.com/AsiaPacificForumonWomenLawandDevelopment)