

**INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN  
ALLIANCE INTERNATIONALE DES FEMMES**

**IAW website: <http://www.womenalliance.org>**

**Equal Rights - Equal Responsibilities  
Droits Égaux - Responsabilités Égales**

**IAW NEWSLETTER September 2010, no. 8**



**Equal Rights**

*Dear members,*

*Health is the main issue of this newsletter, seen in the light of the Millennium Development Goals. The millions at risk from the floods at Pakistan, the child mortality rates, the mass rape victims in Congo, maternal death and other worldwide worrying issues were all discussed at the UN Summit on MDGs.*

*There are also some good practices to mention here. UNICEF made a proposal to decrease child mortality. National action plans by West African states will promote the role of women in peace and security. Financing climate change in a gender-sensitive way was discussed at ECOSOC by IAW member Soon-Young Yoon.*

*In the European Union two Health institutes will work together to benefit 53 countries. The European Women's Lobby sees health as a human rights issue, which includes securing the sexual and reproductive rights of all women.*

*As usual, you will find a list of conferences and events at the end.*

### **The MDGs and the WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION**

The UN Summit on the Millennium Development Goals (20-22 September) concluded with the adoption of a global action plan to achieve the eight anti-poverty goals by their 2015 target date and the announcement of major new commitments for women's and children's health and other initiatives against poverty, hunger and disease. On: <http://www.un.org/en/mdg/summit2010/> and on: <http://www.un.org/en/mdg/summit2010/pdf/mdg%20outcome%20document.pdf>

#### **Health of millions at risk from Pakistan floods**

Pakistan's flood crisis has affected over 15 million people, with at least six million needing life-saving humanitarian assistance, including health care. Access to health care, including routine services, is difficult as monsoonal rains and raging flood waters have damaged or destroyed more than 200 hospitals and clinics.

WHO is coordinating the international health response. Medicines for close to two million people have already been delivered and thousands of people have been treated for water-borne diseases, such as diarrhoea, skin infections, acute respiratory illnesses and malaria. Vaccination campaigns have begun in some flood-affected areas. Health services must continue for mothers to deliver babies, for cancer patients to receive treatment and for people with mental and psychosocial health concerns to receive support. Dozens of mobile clinics have been sent to treat survivors. New hubs to deliver health care in the worst-affected areas are being established.

#### **Cholera – Key facts**

An excellent article on cholera is to be found on:

<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs107/en/index.html>

- Cholera is an acute diarrhoeal disease that can kill within hours if left untreated.
- There are an estimated 3–5 million cholera cases and 100 000–120 000 deaths due to cholera every year.
- Up to 80% of cases can be successfully treated with oral rehydration salts.
- Effective control measures rely on prevention, preparedness and response.
- Provision of safe water and sanitation is critical in reducing the impact of cholera and other waterborne diseases.

- Oral cholera vaccines are considered an additional means to control cholera, but should not replace conventional control measures.

### **Child mortality rates drop by a third since 1990 – UNICEF**

17 September 2010 – Fewer children are dying before they reach their fifth birthdays, with the total number of under-five deaths falling by one third in the past two decades, according to fresh estimates by the United Nations Children's Fund ([UNICEF](#)).

Between 1990 and 2009, the number of children below the age of five who died annually fell from 12.4 million to 8.1 million. The global under-five mortality rate dipped from 89 deaths per 1,000 live births to 60 during that period.

However, “the tragedy of preventable child deaths continues.” Some 22,000 children under the age of five continue to die every day, with 70 per cent of these deaths occurring within their first year of life.

### **Half of all deaths in just five countries ... India, Nigeria, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Pakistan, China**

Mortality is increasingly becoming concentrated in a few countries, with half of all deaths of children below five in 2009 occurring in these five countries where one in eight children do not live to see their fifth birthday. That is nearly 20 times the average for developed regions.

The new figures were published in this year's [Levels & Trends in Child Mortality](#), issued by the UN Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation, bringing together several UN entities. The estimates are developed with oversight and advice from independent experts from academic institutions.

#### **Dying due to pregnancy**

A recent new report by UNICEF, the World Health Organization ([WHO](#)), the UN Population Fund ([UNFPA](#)) and the World Bank found that the number of women dying due to complications during pregnancy and childbirth has decreased by 34 per cent from an estimated 546,000 in 1990 to 358,000 in 2008. While the progress is notable, it is not enough to reach the target.

More on: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=35969&Cr=unicef&Cr1=>

### **New research by the United Nations Children's Fund**

A study based on counterintuitive and compelling new research by Unicef, contends that providing services to the world's poorest children in the most impoverished communities is not only just, it is also more cost-effective than the current policy of mainly helping the less poor in areas that are easier to reach.

UNICEF, whose core mission is helping the most deprived and vulnerable children, has been examining statistical data from 26 countries. It developed a computer model and had the results vetted by outside experts.

#### **Focus on the most remote and disadvantaged areas of poor countries**

Agency officials say they can now document that \$1 million spent helping children 5 years old and younger in the most remote, disadvantaged areas of poor countries would prevent 60 percent more deaths than their current approach — a stunningly higher return on investment.

Unicef is recommending several new policies for itself and other agencies:

- \* Train and deploy more community health care workers who, working with simplified modern technologies, can deliver basic health services directly to remote villages.
- \* Use mass communications to encourage the poor to seek care, then eliminate user fees and cover transportation costs.
- \* Build maternal “waiting homes” near urban hospitals where rural women can stay before delivery.

In all 26 countries that Unicef examined, the national under-5 mortality rate has declined by 10 percent or more since 1990. Yet in 18 of those countries, the gaps between child mortality rates in the richest and poorest segments of the population has either grown or remained unchanged.

*Sent to us by IAW member Anjana Basu. More on:*

[http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/19/opinion/19sun2.html?\\_r=1&th&emc=th](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/19/opinion/19sun2.html?_r=1&th&emc=th)

## **INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN**

### **IAW Congress in South Africa**

IAW Secretary Lene Pind writes: Preparations for Congress are in full swing, and we are all looking forward to seeing many representatives of our member organizations and many individual members in South Africa in November.

We – the organizers (Mmabatho Ramagoshi and myself) are very anxious to have everything beautifully planned for a successful Congress, and for that we rely on your cooperation.

About the written reports: I wish to underline that the deadline is very tight, and that it will not be possible for me to include in the booklet reports that arrive after October 15, and that would be a shame. I am looking forward to reading all the reports and to having the whole documentation of the activities of IAW worldwide printed for us all.

### **Women strike back in Iceland**

Invitation to a unique and empowering international conference and a mass demonstration against gender based violence and the gender pay gap October 24<sup>th</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup> 2010, in Reykjavik, Iceland

### **A warm welcome to women from all over the world!**

*Announcement from IAW Affiliate Kvenrettindafelag Islands – we wish you all a great conference!*

### **ECOSOC Newsletter, August 24**

The report on the IAW paper, read during the ECOSOC H-L meeting, is to be found on:

<http://esango.un.org/paperless/Web?page=static&content=hls2010> along with those by others.

*Sent to us by IAW member Irini Sarliss*

### **Josephine Butler Society**

On 13<sup>th</sup> October, the Josephine Butler Society is holding its Annual Lecture in London, about the successful conviction of those prosecuted as being violent to women. This is a new approach to the problem by a Project in Liverpool and the local police.

*Sent to us by IAW member Valerie Gore.*

## **PEACE AND SECURITY IN AFRICA**

### **West African States back UN resolution promoting role of women in peace and security**

Representatives of 16 countries across the region adopted the Dakar Declaration after a three-day forum in the Senegalese capital that considered how West Africa can better implement Resolution 1325.

#### **National Action Plans**

Gender ministers in West Africa have made commitments under the Declaration to draw up national action plans outlining what steps they will take to implement Resolution 1325 in their countries, while monitoring and evaluation mechanisms will also be set up to check what progress is being made. This process will be shepherded by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in collaboration with the UN Office for West Africa ([UNOWA](#)) and United Nations Women ([UN Women](#)), the new UN entity dedicated to gender issues.

UNOWA organized the forum in cooperation with several other UN agencies, including the UN Development Fund for Women ([UNIFEM](#)), the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights ([OHCHR](#)), the UN Population Fund ([UNFPA](#)), the UN High Commissioner for Refugees ([UNHCR](#)), the UN Development Programme ([UNDP](#)), the UN Children's Fund ([UNICEF](#)) and the UN Information Centre (UNIC) in Dakar. More on:

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=35985&Cr=gender&Cr1=>

### **UN has failed mass rape victims in Congo, says investigator**

The UN "failed" the victims of a mass rape in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, a top official has said, as the number of reported cases rose to more than 500.

The world's biggest UN peacekeeping mission has been accused of ignoring warnings from community leaders days before Rwandan and Congolese rebels began [a spree of raping and looting 20 miles from a UN base](#).

#### **Unacceptable brutalisation**

Atul Khare, the UN assistant secretary general for peacekeeping, conceded:

"While the primary responsibility for protection of civilians lies with the state, its national army and police force, clearly we have also failed. Our actions were not adequate, resulting in unacceptable brutalisation of the population of the villages in the area.

Khare called for prosecution of Rwandan rebel group FDLR – which is led by perpetrators of the Rwandan genocide who fled to Congo – and Congolese Mai-Mai militia blamed for many of the attacks and UN sanctions against their leaders.

#### **And the UN did not learn in time about the rapes**

Khare was sent to Congo by the UN secretary general, Ban Ki-moon, to investigate why the UN did not learn about the 242 rapes in the Luvungi area between 30 July and 4 August until 12 August, when it was informed by the International Medical Corps, which was treating many of the victims.

#### **Preliminary UN report confirms over 300 rapes by rebels in eastern DR Congo**

"The scale and viciousness of these mass rapes defy belief," said UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay.

"Even in the eastern part of DRC where rape has been a perennial and massive problem for the past 15 years, this incident stands out because of the extraordinarily cold-blooded and systematic way in which it appears to have been planned and executed."

*The known victims include 235 women, 52 girls, 13 men, and 3 boys, some of whom were raped multiple times, according to the 15-page preliminary report, prepared by the UN Joint Human Rights Office comprising the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Human Rights Division of the UN mission in the DRC (MONUSCO).*

*By David Smith and Associated Press; [guardian.co.uk](http://guardian.co.uk), Wednesday 8 September 2010.*

*Also on: [http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/08/world/africa/08nations.html?\\_r=1&th&emc=th](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/08/world/africa/08nations.html?_r=1&th&emc=th)*

*and on: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=36129&Cr=democratic&Cr1=congo>*

*Sent to us by IAW member Helen Self.*

### **ALL AROUND THE WORLD**

#### **Michelle Bachelet will head UN Women**

Former Chilean president Michelle Bachelet will head United Nations Women (UN Women), the newly created entity to oversee all of the world body's programmes aimed at promoting women's rights and full participation in global affairs.

The new body, which will become operational in January, merges four UN agencies and offices: the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues, and the UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN-INSTRAW).

The new entity is set to have an annual budget of at least \$500 million, double the current combined resources of the four agencies it comprises.

*Sent to us by IAW President Rosy Weiss and many others.*

#### **CALL FOR PARTNERS: Survey about the role of UN Women at country level**

Oxfam Novib and the UK Gender and Development Network (GAD Network) are commissioning the international consultancy firm MDF Training and Consultancy to conduct a survey which identifies what women want from the new UN gender equality entity at country level by interviewing a diverse range of women's rights advocates and their organizations.

Based on the survey results, we are looking for a report that honestly and accurately captures the needs, aspirations and concerns of women's rights advocates and their organizations at country-level.

#### **Call for 100 survey participants and colleagues: We need you!**

Oxfam Novib and the members of the UK GAD Network are looking for 100 partners and colleagues to participate in our survey on what women need from the new UN Women's agency! For partners who cannot work online, the survey will be e-mailed or faxed in advance. The survey will be conducted in English, French, Spanish or Portuguese.

*\* Are you working on women's rights and gender equality in **Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Middle East, Eastern Europe and the Caucasus** for an organization that matches one of these criteria?*

- \* National level women's rights organisation, including working with marginalized women (30% of total sample)
- \* Local and/or grassroots organization working on women's rights and gender equality, including working with marginalized women (30% of total sample)
- \* National level NGO with core programming promoting women's rights and gender equality (25% of survey sample)
- \* International NGO programme offices/country teams with core programming promoting women's rights and gender equality (15% of survey sample)

If you are interested, please send a short e-mail immediately with your contact details and the requested information to Hady Klaassen at [KL@mdf.nl](mailto:KL@mdf.nl). For general information about this project you can contact the project manager: Daniela Rosche, Oxfam Novib, [daniela.rosche@oxfamnovib.nl](mailto:daniela.rosche@oxfamnovib.nl).  
Deadline: September the 29<sup>th</sup>!

*Sent to us by IAW member Helene Sackstein*

### **Financing for climate change: gender equality**

New York, April 2010. During the Global Preparatory Meeting for the Annual Ministerial Review session of ECOSOC, Soon-Young Yoon, Vice-Chair of NGO CSW/NY stressed the importance of viewing climate change as a women's human rights issue. The poverty of some affects us all and information about climate change has to move freely in multiple directions, through diverse forms of economies from slash and burn to highly industrialized societies.

A global ecology must ensure open access to science and technology information for everyone, including poor women.

### **CEDAW**

Ratified by 186 countries, CEDAW is a legally binding instrument that can reinforce implementation of gender provisions in climate change. Women's invisibility in national statistics, which constitutes a violation of CEDAW provisions (Article 2) because it affects a government's ability to prevent discrimination is an example.

Sectors such as forestry, energy, transport, construction, and infrastructure typically do not collect gender-disaggregated data, yet when gender-blind policies in these sectors persist, women's contributions are undervalued.

Other examples of how CEDAW is relevant to financing for gender and climate change include: ensuring equal decision-making powers for women (Article 7), guaranteeing equal economic and employment rights (Article 11, 13, and 15), and strengthening provisions for rural women recognizing their rights to participate in government programs (Article 14).

The CEDAW statement on gender and climate change, adopted at its 44<sup>th</sup> session in New York, 2009, recognized the gender-differentiated impacts of climate change, and the critical role of women as agents of change and leaders.

### **Beijing Platform of Action**

While CEDAW is legally binding, policy guides are found in the Beijing Platform for Action. All of the 12 critical areas of concern of the Platform, including environment, poverty, economic structures, and sharing of power and decision making have implications for involving women in climate change finance instruments.

Human rights, health, communications/media, education and training, and the girl-child contain recommendations for participation of women in the media, politics, economic activities, education and training, science and technology, and in reducing risk factors in facing climate change.

### **A guide for financing**

The Beijing Platform for Action is a good guide for financing in gender and climate change because it recognizes the wide diversity of women (by ethnicity, religion, culture, economic circumstances, and age).

The Beijing Platform for Action also makes recommendations to be implemented by multiple stakeholders, including the private sector, transnational companies, banks, research and education institutes, media, trade unions, women's organizations and NGOs.

### **Demanding a fundamental change!**

This reflects the aim of the women's movement to demand a fundamental change in the structure of society—a change that involves many actors, including men, and that moves beyond policies and laws. *(This is part of the discussion, brought in by IAW member Soon-Young Yoon)*



### **Former UK Ambassador EU representative to Sudan**

Dame Rosalind Marsden has been appointed as the new EU Special Representative for Sudan. Dame Marsden is the first ever female EU special representative. She will take up her post on September first. *Sent to us by IAW member Helen Self.*

## **EUROPEAN UNION**

### **Health in the European Union**

The European Women's Lobby (EWL) started to work on health issues after recognising a strong demand among its membership, after a consultation process with members, including an exploratory seminar on in Dublin in January 2010. This led to the adoption of the EWL Position Paper on Women's Health.

Lobbying for a gender-sensitive approach towards health is crucial because both the biological sex and the social construct of gender lead to differences between women and men in terms of level of health, access to health and health-care. There are also major gaps in expertise and general knowledge about some aspects of women's health, which are often ignored in health policy planning and service.. This calls for gender-sensitive studies, analyses, investigations and sex-disaggregated data.

#### **Health is a human rights issue**

Finally, health should be seen as a human rights issue. This includes considering securing the sexual and reproductive rights of all women. It also relates to the elimination of practices that violate rights and harm the health and/or integrity of women and girls, such as for example female genital mutilation and forced sterilisation. All forms of violence against women must be regarded from a human rights perspective and recognised as a public health issue.

*More is to be found at the page of the EWL, on <http://www.womenlobby.org/>*

### **EU - World Health Organisation - WHO**

The WHO Regional Office for Europe and the European Commission adopted a joint declaration seeking to strengthen policy dialogue and technical cooperation on public health.

Since 2001, the two organizations have cooperated closely in a wide range of areas, including health security, health information, tobacco control, nutrition and obesity, cancer and other non-communicable diseases, environment and health, and the strengthening of health systems.

#### **More cooperation between the two**

They will now extend their cooperation to e-health, health research, innovation in health and education. The partners will also develop a closer working relationship between European Commission delegations and WHO country offices in eastern Europe.

It particularly emphasizes the need to act against the threats of antimicrobial resistance, especially multi-drug resistance.

#### **WHO will be quicker and more efficient across 53 countries**

The WHO Regional Office for Europe and the European Commission will join forces to help improve public health surveillance and strengthen alert and response systems to allow quicker and more efficient responses to disease outbreaks and pandemics across the 53 countries in the WHO European Region.

*These articles have been sent by the IAW regional coordinator for Europe, Joanna Manganara*

### **An EU Peace Institute?**

September 9, 2010 - the governments of Sweden and Finland have called on the EU to set up an independent peace institute. According to an article published by the [Associated Press](#) last week, the foreign ministers of both countries made the recommendation in a letter to EU High Representative Catherine Ashton.

### **The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)**

The EIGE is a new EU Agency which supports the EU Institutions and Member States in promoting gender equality, fighting discrimination based on sex and raising awareness about gender issues.

The tasks of the institute are to collect and analyse comparable data on gender issues, to develop methodological tools, in particular for the integration of the gender dimension in all policy areas, to facilitate the exchange of best practices and dialogue among stakeholders, and to raise awareness among EU citizens.

The seat of the [European Institute for Gender Equality](#) is in Vilnius (Lithuania).

See: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=732&langId=en>

*Editors comment: this is an excellent site for our IAW members in the EU to visit. It has all the latest EU news.*

## EVENTS - CONFERENCES - INSPIRING LINKS

Website of the General Assembly of the United Nations on: <http://www.un.org/en/ga/>

### **Ending Violence and Criminal Sanctions on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity**

September 23 - There are 78 countries where individuals may still face criminal sanctions on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity according to Human Rights Chief Navi Pillay.

On: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/GenderIdentity.aspx>

### **Security Council**

24 September 2010 – Top United Nations officials urged countries to build on recent achievements in the field of disarmament and to step up efforts to rid the world of weapons of mass destruction. On:

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=36127&Cr=disarmament&Cr1=>

#### **1 October**

[International Day of Older Persons](#) (Worldwide)

- **14 October**

[Information Economy Report](#)

“ICTs, enterprises and poverty alleviation” – issued by the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD, Geneva)

- **16 October**

[World Food Day](#)

"United Against Hunger" (Worldwide)

- **17 October**

[International Day for the Eradication of Poverty](#)

Part of the Second Decade for Poverty Eradication (2008-2017): “Decent work and full employment for all” (Worldwide)

- **18 – 29 October**

[Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity](#)

### **Note**

We are sending this Newsletter as an attachment, saved in Word 97. Please be so kind to advise Pat Richardson if you know of any IAW members or affiliate/associate organisations with an e-mail address, so we can mail them this Newsletter too.

IAW Newsletter / News Flash : Joke Sebus

<iaw.newsletter@inter.nl.net>

International Women's News : Priscilla Todd (English)

<iaw.iwnews@womenallince.org>

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