

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

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

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

IAW NEWSLETTER April 2011, no. 4



Equal Rights

Dear members,

Surfing the net for news on climate change and at the same time looking for the position of women, I found an excellent website, showing the way we have to go to get a better planet. The material is very complicated and maybe we, as women and as members of IAW, have to focus on a few aspects only. In that way we can give it more force in the political decisions that will follow after the experts have done their research. There is the IAW Board Meeting in Iceland to discuss strategies for example!

Here is a selection of the news this month. UN Women designed an inspiring quiz on violence against women and point out the needs of widows in India, Bangladesh and Nepal. There is CEDAW, World No Tobacco Day, the projects of the Aunties in Cameroon, the worrying boys/girls ratio in India, the High-Level Meeting on Youth on 25/26 July.

There are dates of some of the UN conferences in the coming months: the Least Developed Countries in Turkey; Sustainable Development in New York; Aids, also in New York, and Human Rights with the UPR in Geneva.

To new members, please browse through this newsletter to see where your interest are. If you miss a topic you like in particular, please let us know!

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN

IAW Board Meeting in Iceland

Our members in Iceland and IAW General Secretary Lene Pind are already preparing the IAW Board Meeting of 2011. The dates are September 20 - 25 2011 in Reykjavik, the capital city of this beautiful and mysterious Nordic land.

The theme will be: EDUCATING FOR EQUALITY and apparently in Iceland they have some unique examples of how to do that! Please make a note of the dates.

Mailed to us by IAW General Secretary Lene Pind

Statement signed by several NGOs including IAW

NGO Written Submission to the 2011 UN ECOSOC High Level Segment in Geneva on
"Implementing the Internationally Agreed Goals and Commitments in regard to Education"

In short:

'We call upon all Member States to demonstrate in practice their commitment to education by including ***environmental education*** as a means to understand and reconnect to the natural world, our environment, our home upon which we all rely for our physical, spiritual and cultural well-being.

We value the recognition by many member states of the need to engage all of civil society to strengthen the work in partnership to deliver further progress!'

The ECOSOC High Level Segment will be held on 4-7 July 2011 at Le Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland.

More information at <http://esango.un.org/irene/?page=static&content=statements2011>

Mailed to us by IAW President Lyda Versteegen

Call for gender equality in Egypt

The Union of Australian Women has joined the international campaign for gender equality in Egypt by forwarding the attached letter to Australia's Foreign Minister. They have also included an article on the issue in their monthly newsletter, writes Carmen Green, Acting Secretary, UAW Vic.

Tuesday 19 April, 2011

The Hon. Kevin Rudd, M.P. Minister for Foreign Affairs, Parliament House, Canberra 2600

Dear Minister,

Re: Call for gender equality in Egypt

The Union of Australian Women is a member of the International Alliance of Women and has received disturbing advice from them about the current position of women in Egypt.

Members are concerned to hear that women are not being allowed full participation in the democratic changes taking place in Egypt.

We understand that Egyptian women have already been excluded from the Committee for Constitutional Reform and from the Interim Government, as if nothing had changed in their country. Yet during the demonstrations - watched on TV by our members - women were clearly participating in, and in some cases leading, the struggle for change.

We urge you to use Australia's influence to persuade the Egyptian Government to allow Egyptian women equal participation in the political changes now taking place.

Yours sincerely, Carmen Green, Acting Secretary, UAW Vic

Fund-raising dinner of the UK All Pakistan Women's Association

Dear Friends,

I am delighted to inform you that the fund-raising dinner to celebrate the women of Pakistan in aid of the UK All Pakistan Women's Association is set to take place on the evening of the 26th June 2011 at the Marriot Hotel, Grosvenor Square, London, W1K 6JP. Further details will be available in the next few weeks, but please keep this date free in your diary. You may be interested to know that our website has now been set up and can now be viewed at: www.theukapwa.com

Yours sincerely, Bashan Rafique, Chairperson- UK APWA

CLIMATE CHANGE - PREPARING FOR DURBAN 2011

Climate Change - surfing the internet

One of the most interesting websites on climate change is the one of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change - IPCC - on: <http://www.ipcc.ch/>

On 23 June 2010, the IPCC announced that 831 highly qualified experts had been selected from among 3000 nominations. They are working and writing for the Fifth Assessment Report due in 2014, which will provide an update of knowledge related to climate change.

Meanwhile, two Special Reports are due in 2011 - "Renewable Energy Sources and Climate Change Mitigation" and "Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation". With recent disasters like those in Haiti, Pakistan and Japan still on our minds, it will be interesting material to read.

Three Working Groups

There are three Working Groups, with several meetings planned for 2010-2013, in China, Japan, Korea, Switzerland, Morocco, all over the world. They are sponsored by several countries. See for example the planning of Working Group I on:

<https://www.ipcc-g1.unibe.ch/meetings/meetings.html>

And yes, there are highly qualified women experts too, although only a few. You will find them on the combined list on http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/ar5/ar5_authors_review_editors_updated.pdf

Women at the UNFCCC in Bangkok

April 8, 2011. On the last day of the UN Climate Change Conference in Bangkok, women from the Asia Pacific called on parties to urgently translate agreements into bolder and genuinely gender sensitive commitments to address climate change. Press Release

Women are the frontline casualties of these weather disasters," avers Teresita Vistro, Focal Person for Climate Justice Programming with Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD).

On behalf of women in the Asia Pacific region, the groups appealed to UNFCCC parties:

- To focus on delivering concrete commitments to reduce GHG emissions at scientifically appropriate levels and adopt sanctions against countries which persistently refuse to reduce huge historical and current emissions.
- To adopt and establish an advanced differentiated database to demonstrate empirically the differences between men and women regarding climate change.

- To adopt policies and mechanisms to address climate change which enhance capacity and participation of women and ensure no discrimination against women.
- To ensure that new, additional, sufficient and accessible funds are earmarked for adaptation of poor and highly vulnerable peoples and women in Asia and the Pacific Islands.
- To ensure that new, additional, sufficient and accessible funds are earmarked for lifelong learning and education of the world's population to further more humane and scientific understanding and behaviour change of climate change and the environment.

More on: <http://www.apwld.org/act-now/women-at-the-unfccc-in-bangkok/#more-722>

CCAF (Climate Change, Agriculture, and Food Security)

CCAFA's overall goal is to overcome the additional threats posed by a changing climate to achieving food security, enhancing livelihoods and improving environmental management.

One critical area of research that CCAFA has identified is the need to understand the complex and dynamic relationships between climate change, agriculture and food security and how it affects men and women differently.

Women scientists and gender issues

Therefore, CCAFA is searching for women scientists who are interested in conducting research on gender issues related to the climate change, agriculture, and food security nexus.

In order to fund research on gender and climate change, CCAFA will award women scientists enrolled in a PhD program or interested in a post doctoral opportunity, and who are citizens of and affiliated with an institution in Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Bangladesh, India, or Nepal a research grant of \$35,000. The grant application is due by 1 May 2011.

On <http://www.ccafs.cgiar.org>

Mailed to us by Soon-Young Yoon, UN representative for the International Alliance of Women and Vice-Chair of the NGO/CSW/NY

UN forms partnership with Mediterranean countries to save region's forests

6 April 2011 – In an effort to save forests in the Mediterranean region from damage exacerbated by the impact of climate change, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has formed a partnership that will tackle the threats facing the woodlands and draw attention to their value.

The partnership brings together 12 institutions and organizations, including FAO, and will focus primarily on six countries in the southern and eastern Mediterranean – **Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Syria, Lebanon and Turkey.**

These include soil and water protection, landscape values, carbon sequestration and biodiversity conservation. The Mediterranean Basin loses between 0.7 and one million hectares of forests every year to fires.

The region faces considerable increase in longer and more frequent droughts and heat waves, resulting in the growing risk of large-scale forest fires as well as more water scarcity, affecting both rural and urban populations. Total forest area in the Mediterranean region is 73 million hectares, or 8.5 per cent of the region's total land area.

Benefits of the Partnership

The partnership is designed to integrate policies and investments at the country level in order to adapt forests to climate change. It is also aimed at developing a joint regional approach to forest management and in particular to wildfire prevention, through the sharing of expertise, knowledge and best practices.

At the local level the partnership will help to promote sustainable forest management among all stakeholders, including local communities, forest owners and managers, farmers, herders, environmentalists, protected areas managers and researchers, according to FAO.

On: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=38023&Cr=forests&Cr1>

IAW Regional Coordinator to the Mediterranean Chief Representative to the FAO, Bettina Cork

ALL AROUND THE WORLD

Say No - Unite to end violence against women

A quiz on a marvellously designed website, by UN Women, in English, Spanish and French. How widespread is violence against women and girls? What solutions have worked to stop it? How many countries have laws to address common forms, such as domestic violence? Test your knowledge at <http://bit.ly/SayNoUNiTEquiz>. Learn more about the issue right now!

The 51st CEDAW session 2012

The following countries have been tentatively scheduled to report at the 51st CEDAW session: **Algeria, Brazil, Comoros, Grenada, Jordan, Norway, Republic of Congo, Zimbabwe**
NGO's have still time to prepare their shadow reports.
On: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/cedaws51.htm>

World No Tobacco Day 2011

On 31st May each year WHO celebrates World No Tobacco Day, highlighting the health risks associated with tobacco use and advocating for effective policies to reduce consumption. Tobacco use is the second cause of death globally (after hypertension) and is currently responsible for killing one in 10 adults worldwide.

The World Health Assembly created World No Tobacco Day in 1987 to draw global attention to the tobacco epidemic and its lethal effects. It provides an opportunity to highlight specific tobacco control messages and to promote adherence to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. Tobacco use is the number one preventable epidemic that the health community faces.

On: <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/events/annual/wntd/en/index.html>

Pictures of the World No Tobacco Day 2010 in Japan can be found on:

https://www.who.int/tobacco/wntd/2010/smoke_free_walk/en/index.html

Mailed to us by WHO Consultant on gender and tobacco, IAW member Dr Soon-Young Yoon

Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries,

9 -13 May 2011, Istanbul, Turkey

The Least Developed Countries (LDCs), a group of 49 countries recognized by the United Nations (UN) as “the poorest and weakest segment” of the international community, require special support from the international community to overcome poverty and achieve sustainable development. Since 1981, the UN has organized three Conferences on the LDCs in order to streamline support from the international community and to mobilize the appropriate resources. LDC-III (Brussels, 2001) resulted in the Brussels Programme of Action (BPoA) for the LDCs for the Decade 2001-2010, which will soon come to an end.

The purpose of the conference is to assess the results of the 10-year action plan for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) adopted at the Third United Nations Conference on LDCs in Brussels, Belgium, in 2001; and to adopt new measures and strategies for the sustainable development of the LDCs into the next decade.

Civil Society and bottom-up

The participation of the civil society in the LDC-IV process will strengthen the bottom-up character of the process. It will bring the rich experiences and lessons from the ground to bear on the process, ensuring a more thorough assessment of the Brussels Programme, and a more inclusive new programme.

The participation and implementation of the CSO activities towards the LDC IV conference will be overseen and directed by a steering committee, with a secretariat being established to facilitate, implement and follow-up the decisions of the steering committee.

Documents are to be found on: <http://www.un.org/wcm/content/site/ldc/home/documents>

No girls for prospective grooms in Vaish community, India

Mahendergarh: How the dowry system has adversely affected the male-female ratio is evident from the introduction functions being organised by the Vaish community to find matches for boys and girls, as only a few girls turn up at such events in comparison to their male counterparts.

The sex ratio has reached such alarming proportions in the community that girls are hard to find for marriageable boys.

The number of prospective grooms have reached ten times the number of girls registered.

The deep-rooted dowry system, prevalent in the community, is being cited as the cause for this skewed sex ratio in the community. More on:

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/gurgaon/No-girls-for-prospective-grooms-in-Vaish-community/articleshow/7985794.cms>

Mailed to us by IAW member Anjana Basu.

The Aunties project in Cameroon

The ‘Aunties’ project for reproductive and sexual health and non-violence in Cameroon is led and coordinated by RENATA, the National Network of Aunties’ Associations.

RENATA has mounted campaigns to prevent early unwanted pregnancy, reduce gender inequality and combat many forms of violence against women including Breast Ironing. By mid-2010 240 Aunties Associations motivated and empowered young women in Cameroon to stand up for their right to choose.

The approach has been developed in the Cameroon Health Ministry. The Aunties project has been carried out in partnership with the German International Cooperation, GIZ, up to now RENATA’s main sponsor.

Maternal mortality and morbidity

IAW submits input to the OHCHR’s Civil Society consultation on effective practices in adopting a human rights-based approach to eliminating preventable maternal mortality and morbidity.

For the IAW input executive Secretary Georgette Arrey Taku, individual member of IAW, provided pertinent information. See also www.tantines.org

The Aunties project is described on <http://www.german-practice-collection.org/en/successful-programmes/sexual-health-and-rights/aunties-for-sexual-health-and-non-violence-how-unwed-young-mothers-become-advocates-teachers-and-counsellors-in-cameroon>

Mailed to us by Gudrun Haupter, convenor of the IAW Health Commission

UN Women - The needs of widows in India, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

New Delhi—UN Women has launched a three-year regional programme to address the needs of widows in India, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

Funded jointly by UN Women’s Swiss National Committee and the Standard Chartered Bank, the programme will be implemented to reduce the social ostracism faced by widows.

This will be done by collecting data and evidence to highlight the stigma widows face, working with widows’ coalitions so they can speak up and access public services, and by guaranteeing that discriminatory social practices against widows are reviewed and repealed.

UN Women announced the launch of the new programme on 8 March as part of International Women’s Day.

40 million widows in India

“India has an estimated 40 million widows in India and due to religious and social taboos, their lives are often mired in poverty, neglect and deprivation.” said Ms. Anne F. Stenhammer, South Asia Regional Programme Director, UN Women. “The time has come for us to act and create space for widows in mainstream policy and social welfare schemes. Their situation has to be recognized and addressed.”

While in India, UN Women will work with widows affected by HIV.

In Nepal and Sri Lanka the focus will be on young widows and widows living in conflict areas. The programme will be implemented in partnership with the Guild of Service and Astha Sansthan in India, the Women for Human Rights (WHR) in Nepal and Women’s Education and Research Centre in Sri Lanka.

More on <http://www.unwomen.org/2011/04/bringing-widows-to-the-forefront-un-women-launches-programme-for-widows-in-south-asia/>

UN General Assembly High Level Meeting on AIDS from 8–10 June 2011 in New York.

Thirty years into the AIDS epidemic, and 10 years since the landmark UN General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS, the world will come together to review progress and chart the future course of the global AIDS response at the 2011 UN General Assembly High Level Meeting on AIDS from 8–10 June 2011 in New York.

Member States are expected to adopt a new Declaration that will reaffirm current commitments and commit to actions to guide and sustain the global AIDS response. Civil Society update consultation on effective practices in adopting a human rights-based approach to eliminating preventable maternal mortality and morbidity. More on:

<http://www.unaids.org/en/aboutunaids/unitednationsdeclarationsandgoals/2011highlevelmeetingonaids/>

EVENTS - CONFERENCES - LINKS

WHO, Sixty-fourth World Health Assembly

Date: 16–24 May 2011, Geneva, Switzerland

Selected topics: Child injuries and violence; Cholera; Chronic diseases; Health systems; Malaria; Millennium Development Goals.

More on: <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/events/2011/wha64/en/index.html>

Convenor of the IAW Health Commission: Gudrun Haupter

High-Level Meeting on Youth

The UN General Assembly adopted a draft resolution **A/65/L.63** on the Organization of the High-level Meeting on Youth.

As part of the International Youth Year, the General Assembly will hold [a High Level Meeting on Youth on 25 and 26 July 2011](#). The high-level meeting will have as its overarching theme “Youth: Dialogue and Mutual Understanding”.

More on: <http://social.un.org/youthyear/news.html>

United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development - 19th Session (CSD-19)

New York, 02 - 13 May, 2011

As the second year of the CSD-18/19 implementation cycle, CSD-19 will produce policy decisions on the following thematic areas: Transport, Chemicals, Waste Management (hazardous and solid waste), Mining, a 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns.

More on: <http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/index.html>

Human Rights Council - Universal Periodic Review

NOW is the time to challenge and lay pressure on reporting countries and the Working Group to ensure that education rights are properly addressed!

For the eleventh session (May 2011), the following countries will be examined, so NOW is the time to influence or 'shadow' the official reports: Belgium, Denmark, Hungary, Greece, Latvia, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Sudan, and Suriname.

More on: <http://www.right-to-education.org/node/170>

IAW representative at the Human Rights Council: Helene Sackstein

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.

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