

IAW Newsletter April 2020 No. 2

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IAW • AIF NEWSLETTER

April 2020 no 2 COVID19

Dear readers,

The world is closing down. CSW64 was downsized considerably, the NGO Forum was cancelled, running races around the world are cancelled, Water and Pads has to postpone further planning, we cannot travel, borders are closed, and we all know what is happening in our own countries. What have we done to our world?

Globalisation has its good and bad sides. A pandemic is definitely bad - virtual communication across borders and time zones is definitely good.

Enjoy reading but first and foremost

Look after yourselves and stay healthy!



OMDF

OBSERVATOIRE MAROCAIN DES DROITS DES FEMMES

IAW Congress 2020

November 24 - 28

Rabat- Morocco

More information below



UNICEF emoji

Corona virus and us

by Ursula Nakamura

By now everyday life has changed. for all of us.

Time to look at the specific impacts it has on women and girls!

Covid-19 and gender

So far policies and public health efforts have not addressed the gendered impacts of disease outbreaks, writes [The Lancet on 6 March 2020](#). Despite an equal number of male and female cases being affected by the virus there are sex differences in vulnerability and mortality. Women are predominantly employed within the health workforce which increases their risk of contamination. During a health crisis the sparse resources are often diverted from sexual and reproductive health services towards the emergency response. Also, women often cannot participate in the decision-making, and so their specific needs are not met during a crisis.

For more comprehensive background information e.g.increased sexual violence, please read the excellent analysis and recommendations in [Gender Implications of Covid-19 Outbreaks in Development and Humanitarian Settings](#) by www.care.org.

How can we face all these challenges?

I highly commend to you all information issued by WHO on a daily basis. These

rules and guidelines are valuable wherever you are living!

Thanks to the newly released WhatsApp **WHO Health Alert** you can directly get answers related to your specific questions. WHO is also giving advice to the public by fighting against **myth busters** and fake news. So many people now are suffering from loneliness and isolation. Look at

WHO Mental Health and Psychosocial Considerations. There is a whole bunch of excellent advice.

How about our IAW colleagues in Africa and Asia?

Again I refer to WHO: Africa has the world's youngest population, says the **WHO Director for Africa**, and it appears that older people are more vulnerable to COVID-19...Across the region, nearly 26 million people are living with HIV. Over 58 million children have stunted growth due to malnutrition. So it is possible that younger people will be more at risk in Africa than in other parts of the world.... WHO within its possibilities is sending a lot of health equipment to these countries. But a simple preventive measure such as handwashing is extremely difficult in places without any water and sanitary installations. These women and girls are not only facing the corona crisis. Already in their normal life, they are burdened with heavy household chores. Our IAW member organizations know well about all these problems.

TAKE CARE OF YOUR HEALTH!

How we work together in times of corona crisis?

by Arina Angerman

IAW representative on the Board of European Women's Lobby

On Sunday 22 March more than 300.000 people worldwide have been tested positive, and Europe is at the centre of the corona crisis. In hindsight it is very strange: No participant at Board Meeting of EWL - mid-February - mentioned corona at all.

EWL Board meeting

Before the meeting we had to read a lot of internal documents (for information or discussion and approval), among other things an activity report from June to December 2019 which mentions 'how to integrate work on cyber-violence into new EWL strategy' and EWL demands for EU strategy on equality between W&M We as members. representing 41 National Coordinators or European-wide

...members, representing a national secretariat of European NGOs, organisations and EWL staff always share and talk a lot during the meeting in interactive sessions and formal discussions. One of the priorities for 2020 is gender mainstreaming in EU policies i.a. the European Green Deal. **For your information please read report of this EWL Board Meeting at the website.**

Coronavirus in Europe

In the Netherlands and in Germany, where Marion Boeker (Alternate Board Member) lives and works, according to **John Hopkins Coronavirus data** on 23 March there are more than 30,000 confirmed cases. I'm very proud of how we are working together online using e-mails and social media like Twitter or Facebook. Friday 20.March we had an extra online EWL Board meeting and shared our experiences in times of corona in, for instance, Germany, Italy and Spain. It is very, very important that women and girls must not pay the price because of more gender-based violence! Please read **Women must not pay the price for COVID-19: Putting equality (...)** I will end my EWL contribution by this quote about corona pandemic

"As women make up the majority of those currently working in hospitals, providing essential care and cleaning services, or continue to work in retail, hospitality and education contexts that enable the rest of the community to live in self-isolation, we are reminded about how invaluable women's care work is to the wellbeing and functioning of our societies and planet."



**Samira Yassni, president
of L'Observatoire des
Droits des Femmes,
invites International
Alliance of Women to
hold its 38th Congress in
Rabat, Morocco**

**Invitation to the IAW International
Congress
Rabat, Morocco**

November 24 -28, 2020

Dear friends near and far, dear feminists, dear members of the International Alliance of Women, warm greetings to you from Morocco!

In the name of the Observatory of Women's Rights of Morocco it is my great honor and pleasure to cordially invite you to the 38th congress of IAW, to take place from 24 to 28 November 2020. As venue we have chosen the centrally located Hotel Rabat situated near the old Medina and the business district.

The members of the Observatory as well as of other national women's organizations are delighted to receive you and to discuss with you common concerns related to the exercise of Women's Human Rights.

Our congress will be held in Rabat, the capital of Morocco, the city of light, classified heritage of humanity by UNESCO under the title "Rabat, African capital of culture". We are looking forward to having working sessions with animated discussions but also meetings of friendship and networking. And we are preparing a cultural and artistic program for you. As in the past this congress will again be a reunion of old friends but also an occasion for making new ones.

More information will follow in due course.
Please contact us in case you need a visa.

In the meantime stay healthy.
With kind regards,

SAMIRA YASSNI
President
March 30 2020

Invitation au congrès mondial de l'Alliance Internationale des Femmes Rabat Maroc Novembre 24 – 28, 2020

**Chères amies du monde, chères militantes et membres de l'Alliance
Internationale des Femmes,**
Les membres de l'Observatoire Marocain des Droits des Femmes sont

enchantées de vous inviter au Maroc pour participer au 38^{eme} Congrès Triennal de l'Alliance Internationale des Femmes. Cette rencontre aura lieu à l'Hôtel de Rabat du 24 au 28 novembre 2020, situé non loin de la vieille Médina de Rabat et de son quartier des affaires. Il sera consacré aux Droits Humains des Femmes.

Rabat, le cité de lumière, classifiée héritage mondial par l'Unesco comme « Rabat, capitale africaine de culture » vous attends.

Ce congrès sera une unique occasion pour réunir les femmes expertes de la paix, des droits fondamentaux, de l'autonomisation des femmes, afin de renforcer l'échange intellectuel et nos amitiés à l'échelle locale et mondiale. Cela nous permettra d'être des agents de changement proactifs dans toutes les sphères de notre société **et de tirer avantage des** expériences présentées en faveur du tissu associatif marocain.

Vous recevrez plus ample informations le moment voulu.
Contactez-nous en cas ou vous avez besoin d'un visa.

Militantes des droits des femmes : nous attendons votre participation ! Femmes engagées : ensemble nous aurons une voix !

Mes amitiés ! Restez en bonne santé

Samira YASSNI
Présidente de l'OMDF
Mars 30, 2020



Cher(e) Membre de l'Alliance Internationale des Femmes

Cheryl Hayles, Vice President North America

March 30, 2020

Project 21.1 Empowerment Fund Update

The fast evolving COVID -19 Pandemic is impacting large gatherings and everyday operations. As you are aware NGOC SW64 was cancelled, then the Brooklyn Spring Half Marathon I was to run on March 14th was cancelled.

IAW member and "Indy Runners and Walkers" running club member, Alison Brown who was to run a parallel race in her community on March 14th to support the Project 21.1 Empowerment Fund also received a race postponement notice. Nevertheless, she and her training partner each donated € 21.10 to fulfil her pledge to the Project 21.1 Empowerment Fund.

We know that schedules will have to be flexible and social distancing is key to the health of communities. If you belong to a running community or a Women's group most plans will have to change based on guidance from your local Public Health Officials

I was hoping to replace the March 14th Brooklyn Spring Half Marathon race with my already scheduled 30 kilometres "Around the Bay" race taking place close to home on March 29th, but that has also been postponed. In light of not knowing which official races will proceed or be postponed, I will update you when I have completed a race.

Alison and I both continue our training and will be ready when the next race opportunity becomes available. Our commitment to building the Project 21.1 Empowerment Fund continues. During the COVID-19 pandemic it is more obvious than ever that IAW will have to respond to the negative impact this will have on women globally. We do not know where the greatest need will be but we do know we will need resources to help empower women.

When this pandemic is over let us not take for granted our good fortune to go to lunch with friends, conversation with neighbours, family gatherings, an outing to the theatre, rush hour traffic, school routines, each deep breath, travel abroad, a run or walk with friends, our health and life itself!

Although the stock markets are worrisome, financial security is of greater priority, we still see donations coming in and for that we are appreciative. Stay healthy and be safe.

CSW 64

As we all know, CSW64 was downsized and the NGO Forum 2020 was cancelled due to the Covid19 pandemic.

Read the Political Declaration adopted on March 9 2020

here: <https://undocs.org/en/E/CN.6/2020/L.1>

Read the NGO CSW/ NY Committee cancellation notice **NGO CSW64 Forum Cancellation Notice**

“Although everyone was heart broken at the cancellation of the NGO Forum for CSW64, many NGOs have put their events online. The IAW represented by Soon-Young Yoon participated in the Virtual Consultation Day segment Breaking the Silos

Virtual Consultation Day!

The Virtual Consultation Day had over 1500 people registered and almost 600 people who joined the conference!

If you were not able to join the meeting, you can listen to the recording [here!](#) Additionally, read the statements of **Mabel Bianco**, Fundación para Estudio e Investigación de la Mujer, and **Zaruhi Batoyan**, Armenian Minister of Labor and Social Affairs, who were not able to present during the call..

Mexico and Paris very likely will postpone Generation Equality Forum to the autumn.

SHARE YOUR STORY

As we commemorate **Beijing+25**, join us in creating *My Memories and Messages for the Next Generation*.

This online book will reflect upon the monumental achievements we made together and inspire the next generation of feminists.





Each contribution will respond to one of the twelve critical areas of concern in the **Beijing Platform for Action and Declaration**.

For questions, please visit: www.ngocsw.org



Memories Book

Soon-Young Yoon, IAW Main Representative to New York is co-producing this Memories Book together with Tanya Selvaratnam.

Register here:

<https://www.beijingplus25.com/eBook/#/Auth/signup/29ec8878-10ae-4338-b7e1-8daf8399901b>





WHO from the outside

WHO sets the bar higher – too high for IAW

By Ursula Nakamura

As already mentioned at the IAW International Meeting at Geneva now WHO is drastically implementing its new framework Framework of Engagement with Non-State Actors (FENSA) . This describes the collaboration with the non-State actors NSA in official relations with WHO. IAW as an NSA cannot meet anymore the highly increased demands for keeping its privileged status. The current list of around 220 NSA comprises international health-organizations, some selected universities and renowned foundations... Due to its very limited financial resources WHO wants to focus strictly on universal health care issues.

This was clear during several meetings at WHO and some intensive talks I had with the IAW contact persons at WHO. Definitely WHO is very much interested in a close collaboration regarding sexual and reproductive health rights, e. g. menstruation. Therefore the “Water and Pads” project is highly appreciated. But although WHO welcomes all efforts by IAW addressing gender-based violence (GBV) these activities would need to be more coordinated within IAW.

On the administrative level, FENSA also requires an official headquarter (address) of the NSAs.

The WHO Executive Board has decided on 4 February 2020 “...to discontinue the official relations with IAW...”

For Seema, Gudrun and me this is very sad because we have represented IAW at WHO. I want to recall, how intensively Gudrun and later on Seema have worked together with WHO; Soon-Young Yoon has actively participated in an important tobacco prevention programme. I myself had the chance to watch closely the recent developments of WHO from within. This was highly interesting.

Now IAW looks at the impressive WHO-building rather from the outside. But we shall stay in touch with the contact persons. Provided IAW can intensify its successful menstruation education in poor areas, present a more coherent policy on its international efforts on GBV and disseminate other health-programs too, among the IAW membership then IAW may get accepted again as an NSA!

Water and Pads Project

Activities at Shree Jana Jagriti Secondary School, Sindhuli District, Nepal

5 – 6 February 2020

by Goma Devi Bastola, President of RUWON



General health situation in Nepal

The girls don't get any basic health education in schools. Nepalese society is a male-dominated society, and this affects health and educational sectors as well. In rural areas especially girls are treated as second-class citizens and considered the property of men, only there to work and fulfil men's desires. Most parents favour their sons in every sector, while girls have to deal with household chores...menstruation is a taboo, and menstruating women are considered untouchable.

In some rural areas, menstruating girls are banished from their homes and forced to live in huts very far from their villages. Due to the seclusion each year women lose their lives - from animal bites or smoke inhalation. Even in urban areas, women are discriminated against. They are also prohibited from temples or other public areas and have to keep away from the kitchen

Activities of RUWON

RUWON Nepal carried out the very meaningful and interesting WP project at Shree Jana Jagriti Secondary School in the Sindhuli district. The female students having reached the age of menstruation were given an ecological sanitary kit and the educational booklet "ABC's of Being a Girl". The others received stationary. We gave sanitary kits to 195 girls and school notebooks to 470 students. We also distributed the IAW-booklets "Entering Womanhood" to the girls and boys from grade 8-10.

RUWON included the male-students with the thinking that if the boys are aware of the girls and women issues it will be helpful to make the change...

Everybody should know that menstruation is just a natural process, and all should help the girls to be clean during their periods. The female students should be allowed to attend school and get their usual food within their families. One should also prevent them from hard work in the field.

After seeing this precarious situation with my own eyes I want to ask everybody for support. The teachers and parents hope to get some school-bags and stationary for the girl students in the new school year beginning 15 April 2020. We are very proud of the meaningful WP activity done for girls and

...we are very proud of the meaningful work being done for girls and women.

Read the whole report by Goma Devi Bastola [here](#)

Unfortunately now in the middle of our preparations for the WP project this year we are dramatically blocked by the brutal Corona virus. In Europe and everywhere on the globe now literally everything stands still. This is also the case for the WP-project.

Therefore we have to postpone the actual planning, be it organizing and shipping the booklets or the fundraising.

But we are hoping very much that we might be able to manage everything for the school-start in August or September 2020.

Ursula Nakamura and Gudrun Haupter

Girls and boys from Epworth High School, Zimbabwe telling about their experiences with Water & Pads Project



Tendai Marongwe & Chipso Phiri
Epworth High School Prefects (girls)

Getting our dignity back

The girls were concerned about the mostly young girls attending high school for the first time. Although the times are changing it is generally taboo in most homes, especially in rural areas, to speak about the issues related to menstruation. The girls expressed gratitude to the International Alliance of

Women for providing oral guidance reinforced by the booklets with informative details about menstruation. They also expressed concern about the use of unsanitary material, which obviously breeds a plethora of diseases. Generally, girls are shy to talk about infections which fester and lead to devastating consequences. The other concern is that not only the girls cannot afford a visit to the Doctor. Most people do not have access to medical aid.

Girls are inevitably disempowered due to the lack of sanitary wear. . Most girls who cannot afford sanitary wear make painful decisions not to come to school as they fear to spoil their uniforms resulting in missing out on the school activities and important assignments, which may result in deterioration of the girls' school work. It is in that vein that they averred that the work done by Women's Comfort Corner Foundation in spreading International Alliance of Women's project is making a difference in the community. The feeling was that more could be done, for example a donation of pads to students doing first year at High School. They also decried the advent of Corona Virus which will limit the ongoing project of the International Alliance of Women. They also loved the booklet entitled "Entering Womanhood" which also made described biological features of the body and was very easy to understand, they also cascaded the information to people at home and other students who are neighbours. Doing plays and dancing for change is making a huge difference in the community.

Classance Petro
Deputy Head Boy
Epworth High Court

Menstruation & Menstrual Hygiene Management

Sanitary pads are more important to girls' health because menstruation is a natural phenomenon. It is very essential for us as males to make sure that every girl is supplied with sanitary pads. Availability should be free to prevent the use of rags infected bacteria which will result in avoidable health complications. It is important for the boys to support girls as their school mates or siblings during the menstrual periods and assist by buying pads. The lack of water negatively impacts society as a whole; desperation to stem the bleeding at times causes the girls to use newspapers. Little has been done to address this reproductive health issue, which has devastating consequence.

I am proud to be selected by Women's Comfort Corner Foundation to further the objectives and the project of the International Alliance of Women. We were looking forward to a gathering of high schools at our school to share experiences with other schools but the Corona Virus happened. Despite the unforeseen setback, I was honoured to be chosen to lead the committee for changing attitudes towards the girl child.





Council of Europe

Anje Wiersinga reports from seminar WORLD
NGO DAY – 28 FEBRUARY 2020.

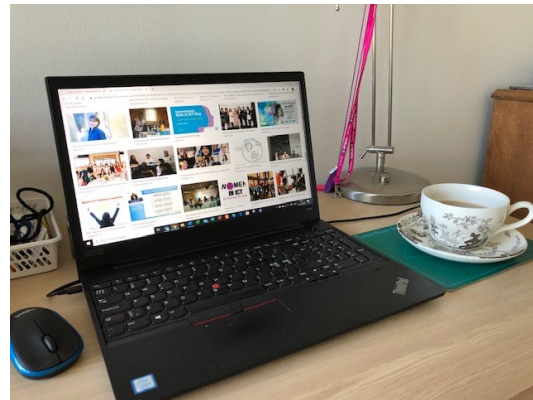
The seminar was organised by the INGO
Conference of the Council of Europe in
collaboration with other NGOs.

[Read her report](#)

President's Newsletter March 2020: Women and ICT

Read the Newsletter

*This paper has been researched and
drafted by **Mallaury Cervellera**,
intern at the President's Secretariat
of IAW in Athens*





Dar Maalma, réseau de 4000 femmes artisanes au Maroc

Par Lyda Verstegen

L'indépendance économique a été un désir secret des femmes partout dans le monde, dans tous les temps, mais spécialement depuis la fin du 19e siècle. C'est que dans ce temps les femmes commençaient à s'organiser. En Hollande l'eau courante, le gaz et l'électricité avaient libéré les femmes de beaucoup de tâches domestiques. Il y avait des écoles pour filles. Des bourgeoises avaient le temps, l'éducation et une conscience sociale et elles voyaient des injustices envers les femmes partout.

A cette époque c'était considéré scandaleux pour les filles de 'bonne' famille de travailler.

Donc elles restaient à la maison, en attendant un mari. Si celui-ci ne se matérialisait pas et que leurs parents mouraient, elles étaient forcées de vivre avec leur famille : oncles, tantes, frères ou sœurs. Et elles n'avaient pas d'argent.

Donc en 1870 une courageuse femme, Betsy Perk, fonda une association pour vendre du travail manuel des femmes. L'association sous le nom 'Le travail ennoblit' organisait des expositions, des maisons de vente. C'était le souhait de Betsy de nommer les femmes artisanes et artistes mais c'était trop moderne, elles devaient rester anonymes.

Cette association existe toujours, toujours sans nommer les artisanes, mais avec du travail superbe. Et à partir de ces débuts, on a fondé des écoles pour améliorer le travail.

Cette histoire me revint pendant mes vacances au Maroc en février dernier.

Samira Yassni me demanda de visiter Dar Maalma à Marrakech. C'est un réseau de 4000 femmes artisanes de Maroc. Elles sont partout dans le pays et font des broderies incroyables, des deux cotés du tissu

. Moi, je brode un bavoir pour chaque neveu ou nièce qui naît, mais il ne faut pas regarder au revers!

Les broderies sont différentes par région. Les artisanes apportent leur travail à Marrakech, quand elles ont le temps, toutes les semaines ou une fois par trimestre. Ces femmes doivent rester à la maison souvent pour s'occuper de leurs enfants et elles brodent dans leur temps libre. Grâce à la broderie, elles ont une certaine indépendance économique et c'est ce qui compte. Dar Maalma est située dans un beau quartier, entourée d'hôtels et restaurants, de sorte que les touristes puissent la trouver.

A Marrakech j'ai acheté le livre 'Contes des sages Berbères' dans lequel j'ai trouvé une belle histoire pour terminer ce récit. Elle s'appelle 'La tisserande avisée'.

Il y avait un marchand qui avait fait fortune dans le commerce des étoffes précieuses et des épices rares.

Quand il mourut son fils hérita son commerce, mais il n'avait pas le sens des affaires et en quelques années il perdit tout. Sa femme lui dit - j'ai su profiter de tes biens, maintenant laisse moi t'aider à devenir riche de nouveau. Partons d'ici, allons à la capitale. L'époux, qui n'avait plus rien à perdre acquiesça.

Le lendemain le couple prit le chemin de la ville. Au bout de quelques jours il se présentèrent à un ami de famille. En reconnaissance pour le père défunt, avec qui il avait collaboré longtemps il offrit au jeune couple une maison qu'il possédait aux portes de la ville. Une fois installés là la jeune femme dit à son mari : La laine génère l'abondance. C'est- disent les anciens- un cadeau du ciel. Va chez notre bienfaiteur, emprunte lui assez pour acheter de la laine de couleur saffran, de mimosa et de pétales de genêt, aussi achète du bois pour faire un métier à tisser et un fuseau pour filer. Quand tout fut prêt, elle se mit à l'ouvrage. Pendant de longues heures elle filait sa laine, puis elle tissa un tapis de soleils éclatants, de belles araignées jaunes et de fiers rameaux. Elle faisait une petite prière, espérant que l'homme qui verrait son tapis le paierait généreusement. Elle envoya son mari chez le cadi, qui regarda longuement l'œuvre d'art. Qui a fait ce tapis? Fièrement l'homme dit: -mon épouse. Bien, dit alors le notable, qu'elle en soit remerciée! Que Dieu pose son oeil miséricordieux sur elle et lui apporte ses bienfaits et la santé. Sans autre formalité le cadi congédia son visiteur. - C'est tout, fulmina la femme, ses bénédictions !

Mais elle se reprit et dit à son mari - Demain tu retournes chez notre bienfaiteur, et tu lui empruntes de nouveau de quoi acheter de la laine blanche, et aussi celle colorée par la poudre de cochenille, et par la racine de coquelicot et de pommier. Le tapis rouge que je tisserai sera comme un verger plein de fruits à croquer!

Une fois terminé le tapis elle le confia à son mari, et lui dit: cette fois tu vas chez le vizir. Et l'histoire se répéta, tout ce qu'ils reçurent fut une bénédiction pareille.

La femme faillit perdre sa bonne humeur, mais se resaisissant elle dit- Aujourd'hui, sur le port mouillent des bateaux pleins de cargaisons précieuses, va et achète la totalité d'entre elles.

Le mari éclata de rire.-As-tu perdu la raison? Nous sommes déjà endettés et demain nous n'avons plus à manger. -Tu achèteras, insista la femme. Le nom de ton père sera notre crédit et tu diras que nous paierons en quelques jours. Le jeune homme partit au port, acheta la cargaison de trois navires et le fit entreposer chez leur bienfaiteur.

Les marchands attendèrent quelques jours, mais impatients vinrent tambouriner sur la porte du couple. Ce fut la femme qui ouvrit, et quand ils demandèrent d'être payés elle dit- Soyez remerciés de votre visite. Que Dieu pose son oeil miséricordieux sur vous et vous apporte la santé! Allez, partez. Elle referma subitement la porte et entendit les marchands la menacer.

Bientôt le juge, lorsqu'il était en compagnie du vizir et du sultan reçut la visite de marins en colère. Le roi, sitôt qu'il fut informé du délit, ordonna qu'on se saisît de l'acquéreur et son épouse et qu'on le fît comparaître devant lui. Il s'occuperait personnellement de cette affaire. Quand tous furent réunis devant

le sultan! Il demanda au couple- Est-il vrai? N'avez vous pas payé ces hommes?

La femme prit la parole avec une voix pleine d'aplomb.

-Je les ai payés, votre Majesté.

Puis, s'adressant aux marchands -Ne vous ai-je pas donné ma précieuse bénédiction? Ceux-ci acquiescèrent, la mine consternée.

Excusez-nous, Votre Altesse, reprit la jeune femme, nous sommes des étrangers. Pour chacun des mes beaux tapis proposés à votre cadî et votre vizir, j'ai reçu pour tout paiement deux belles bénédictions. Il me sembla que c'était la monnaie d'usage dans votre pays.

Voulant examiner les tapis en question le sultan se les fit apporter. En les contemplant, ses yeux se mirent à briller. Il apprécia les motifs, les couleurs. La jeune femme, ravie de remarquer que le sultan apprécia son travail, poussa une cri de joie. Le sultan demanda le vizir et le cadî de payer de leurs propres coffres les marchands.

- Les marchandises sont à vous, dit-il au jeune homme. Faites fructifier votre négoce. Et il nomma la jeune femme Reine des tisserandes dans son pays.

Ainsi la tisserande avisée s'était procurée l'indépendance économique.

Read the English translation here

Across the Globe, a 'Serious Backlash Against Women's Rights'

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/04/us/domestic-violence-international.html>





Torild Skard, IAW member and benefactor, receives the Bertha Lutz Award

Senior Researcher Ms. Torild Skard (born 1936 in Oslo) is a pioneer in women's studies with particular focus on women in politics and diplomacy. She has combined an exceptional political and diplomatic career nationally as well as internationally with extensive research and public writing based on her analyses and experiences.

.....

Torild Skard was appointed to a number of high positions in the foreign service and multilateral collaboration, often being the first woman in the post. In 1977, she was the first female Chairperson of the Norwegian National Commission for UNESCO and in 1984 the first Director for the status of women in UNESCO Headquarters in Paris. In 1986 she became the first female Director General and in 1991 the first female Assistant Secretary General in the Norwegian Ministry for Development Cooperation and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Oslo. She was elected Chairperson of the UNICEF Executive Board, and in 1994 designated as the first female Regional Director for UNICEF in West and Central Africa in Abidjan.

Having left the UN system, Torild Skard wrote about women and development in Africa and conducted research on women and the UN from 1945 to the present day and on female presidents and prime ministers worldwide. Her studies of the UN provided new perspectives on the history and activities of the organization, and her book on "**Women of Power**" was awarded by *Choice*, the US Library Journal, "Outstanding Academic Title" in 2015. The book obtained considerable distribution and was among others instrumental in the establishment of a new training course on "Leadership, Women and the UN" at the United Nations System Staff College, UNSSC, in Turin.

Going deeply into the documents from the United Nations Conference on International Organization, UNCIO, in San Francisco in 1945, Skard's research among others disclosed that the official history of the organization was partly incomplete, partly incorrect. Particularly the role Latin-American women played in the creation of the UN was overlooked and depreciated. The findings were followed up by other scholars and the International Studies Association, ISA, created a Bertha Lutz Prize to honor the Brazilian woman who was at the head of the efforts to include the rights of women in the UN Charter, and award scholars who later "conducted the highest quality public writing and research on women in diplomacy, defined broadly"

Read the whole article.

CONGRATULATIONS, TORILD!



IAW member Helen Self has kindly sent this
book review

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2020/feb/26/our-bodies-their-battlefield-review-by-christina-lamb-what-war-does-to-women>

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Heading

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