

IWRAP ASIA PACIFIC

ANNUAL REPORT
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Executive Summary

2011 was a time of various challenges in terms of the work on standard-setting taking place in the human rights arena. IWRAP Asia Pacific forged ahead at this time, continuing to advocate for the full realisation of women's human rights. From the requests IWRAP AP received, to the situational analyses done by staff and experts, it remained clear that many countries still required CEDAW related training and expertise; a need which is not likely to abate in the near future.

In 2011 continued challenges from fundamentalism based on specific interpretations of religion and culture have a direct impact on women including restriction on their mobility and access to public life including education and employment, imposition of strict cultural standards on women, limitations on women's legal capacity, and lack of sanctions for violence against women, and denial of freedom and choice when it comes to matters of sexual and reproductive rights.

The unfinished treaty body strengthening and reform process also places some stress in terms of the continued need for NGO (and specifically women's human rights) advocacy to ensure that evolving systems, harmonization of procedures and belt tightening by the UN does not jeopardise the human development agenda and focus on ensuring that all people can and are enabled to exercise their human rights and fundamental freedoms. There have been various limitations proposed by member states to the UN to limit international and expert scrutiny of their human rights record and the legitimate expectations of civil society organisations in taking part, providing submissions and alternative solutions and perspectives in such processes of the UN as well as in holding their states accountable for human rights implementation at both national and international levels.

There is still a lot to be done in order to achieve institutionalised gender equality in many countries. The influence of the CEDAW Convention framework and principles on States can be clearly observed in the creation of gender-sensitive laws and policies in the Asia-Pacific region in the last few years, as well as in the formulation of national plans of action for the advancement and empowerment of women. In its Concluding Observations, the Committee has consistently called for the incorporation of the Convention into national laws, which should also include a clear definition of discrimination. States have responded positively in recent times by creating legislative and policy structures to ensure their compliance. However the work to strengthen the gender architecture and systems which support women's equality is still not complete. Experiences of CEDAW implementation show that the potential for CEDAW in shaping laws, policies and programmes which affirm women's equality and challenge discrimination against women, will only flourish in an environment in which there is a combination of political will, a high level of consciousness regarding the Convention and legal and social recognition of women's rights. It is crucial to involve high

ranks of decision makers and to ensure active civil society engagement with the Government for advocacy on compliance with the Convention. While prevailing economic, social, political and cultural factors create many barriers and obstacles to its implementation, this is balanced through growing interest in its use and application by Governments and women's groups, and through systematic support from the donor community and the United Nations.

IWRAP Asia Pacific's work has been to balance between achieving organizational objectives in relation to gender equality goals and also addressing the concerns of partners, in all regions, MENA, Africa, CEE-CIS and Asia Pacific regions, who inform us of the continued impact on their rights advocacy by the continued resistance from cultural and religious forces, which impedes the acceptance of internationally recognised standards for human rights.

Grounded as we are on use of CEDAW and other international instruments and norms, we observe that women's groups at the local, community and national level are currently faced with various national/local level pressures, political changes and time constraints, and thus are not able to embed these constructions of human rights norms into their substantive or strategic advocacy plans in a holistic way. The effect of the Arab Spring is the foremost factor in terms of women's democratic engagement and specifically on the issues of civil and political rights, in the MENA and certain other countries facing similar constitutional crises. For women, this has created fears and threats of backsliding with regard to commitments to the women's rights agenda, as much as potential positive opportunities to the improvements in democratic space and civic engagement. The need for women activists to be part of the reform movement has taken a toll on focused activities on CEDAW implementation. We expect that with governments in flux, relationships previously established with internal 'allies' are also now unstable. As much of the CEDAW compliance and monitoring post the review anticipates further NGO-government interaction, there may be delays in effecting such follow-up. Besides constitutions, many national laws relating to women have or are being proposed for reform – our partners in various regions such as Morocco and Indonesia have already warned us about the potential for creeping conservative interpretation of Islam to be proposed as basis for such laws.

Increasingly, the lack of democratic space in various states impedes the advocacy on drawing accountability from the State on CEDAW implementation. Human rights defenders, including women are faced with harassment and stringent monitoring of their activities. The lack of democratic space to voice dissent is an impediment to the lobbying by the partners. Efforts at different levels have to be encouraged to ensure the safety of the activists in their home countries and when they participate in activities outside their countries.

The ASEAN human rights developments provide both an opportunity for strengthening CEDAW and women's human rights implementation, and conversely a risk of politicizing human rights goals and language. The new ASEAN mechanisms of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission of Human Rights and ASEAN Commission on Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women

and Children are new institutional players in the region for gender equality which women's rights advocacy groups need to establish working relationships as well as specific programmatic collaborations to ensure that each constituency provides inputs from their perspective of women's rights in the region to ensure stronger compliance to universal standards of rights.

Changes in the donor environment were also a key organisational consideration for IWRAP Asia Pacific in 2011. Competition for and progressively closed climate for funding for organisations like ours which straddle the national-regional identity are obstacles towards planned and strategic support we can give to our partners. Focus on funding only national groups while commendable and ensures self-sufficiency and autonomy of local CSO organisations, many of whom are IWRAP AP's partners, to develop and drive their own strategies on women's human rights, there is a need to recognise and fund regional entities like IWRAP Asia Pacific who play a different but necessary role. Often regional groups like IWRAP Asia Pacific have experience and resources for supporting national level action but due to constraints in funding criteria cannot obtain funds earmarked to grow national women's rights actors.

There is still a lot to be done in order to achieve institutionalised gender equality in many countries. The influence of the CEDAW Convention framework and principles on States can be clearly observed in the creation of gender-sensitive laws and policies in the Asia-Pacific region in the last few years, as well as in the formulation of national plans of action for the advancement and empowerment of women. In its Concluding Observations, the Committee has consistently called for the incorporation of the Convention into national laws, which should also include a clear definition of discrimination. States have responded positively by creating legislative and policy structures to ensure their compliance.

To meet with the shift in focus, yet remain true to our purpose of providing cross-cutting CEDAW expertise to women's groups, IWRAP Asia Pacific held a Strategic Planning Meeting in August 2011 to meet with partners and stakeholders both internal and external to plan our thrusts for the coming years. This resulted in some preliminary findings to guide the strategic planning process.

Besides steering the overall focus of the organisation, IWRAP Asia Pacific continued to hold the anchor programme From Global to Local which provides mentoring and lobbying training during the CEDAW sessions to facilitate participation of national level women's groups, providing technical assistance for shadow report writing, CEDAW monitoring and filing of cases using the OP. The pilot testing for the Lawyers Resource Package envisioned in the 2008 Write Shop was also held in June 2011 with lawyers from all over the world with a minimum of five years litigation experience who work on women's human rights.

IWRAW Asia Pacific prioritised enhancing capacity of groups in developing their CEDAW shadow reports for initial reporting countries who are scheduled to report in the upcoming years such as United Kingdom, Lesotho, Zimbabwe, and Jordan .We also contributed technical assistance and inputs to the Malaysian, Iraqi and South Korean Shadow Report processes.

There were also many opportunities this year to input on treaty body strengthening processes. IWRAW Asia Pacific released statements, recommendations and attended consultations on the issue to remind stakeholders about the importance of incorporating the gender perspective in the treaty body monitoring processes.

The Enhancing Realisation of Rights unit also responded to requests for assistance in the filing of cases using the OP CEDAW. IWRAW AP sent experts to Tanzania, Kyrgyzstan and South Africa to hold case clinics on filing cases tailored to suit the contexts of the countries concerned. The requests signify further the importance of IWRAW AP's work on CEDAW and the continued acknowledgement of its expertise.

IDEAS continued to maintain the website, sending important newsflashes through the listservs and undertaking research or information collection when necessary. This year, the history project saw lead researcher Shanthi Dairiam travel to Nepal, India, Bangladesh, Thailand and America to interview people associated with IWRAW AP and its work. Planning was also underway for two consultations in Latin America to interview partners in the region as a group and together; plan for sustained engagement and partnerships in the coming years.

Due to the current climate of shifting priorities in grantmaking, IWRAW Asia Pacific found itself having to not merely realign its work in accordance to donor requirements but also to embark on cost cutting measures to see the organisation through the coming year. A move to more cost efficient office within the city was planned, arranged and executed in the later part of the year. The team also spent much time on proposals to old and new prospective donors. This effort continues in 2012.

Acknowledgements

On behalf of the Board of Directors of IWRAW Asia Pacific we thank the Advisory Committee as well as the individual committees for the different strategies; namely the Capacity Building Advisory Group (CBAG), Optional Protocol to CEDAW Advisory Group (OP CEDAW AG) and the Programme Management Team (PMT) for the From Global to Local; for all their input, expertise and efforts expended in 2011 to ensure the success of the programmes of our programmes. Without their expertise and wisdom our programmes would have been the poorer.

Also thanks to our pool of dedicated resource persons and all our NGO partners who have contributed their time and expertise for our common cause. IWRAW Asia Pacific is also extremely grateful for the efforts of special advisor on the Board of Directors, Shanthi Dairiam who has continued to offer her expertise, guidance, time and knowledge to building the organisation, shaping its work and supporting its staff.

We also wish to thank our donors Ford Foundation South Asia, Ford Foundation New York, the Global Fund for Women, HIVOS, Oxfam Novib, Foundation of the Open Society Institute, American Jewish World Service, and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (UN Women) who have helped us take one step closer towards our goals of a society based on gender equality and social justice.

Appreciation and thanks are also due to the programme team - Wathshlah, Gauri, Ann, Ayesha, Diana, Dorathy and Gayathiri - for their dedication and exemplary service to the goals of the organisation; and the leadership of Li Ping, our Administration and Finance Manager, with her team of Azlini, Siew Yan, Cindy, Razlan, Norwazi, Vijey and Ezza who provided great overall support.

Audrey Lee

Officer in Charge

Organisational Information

A. General introduction to IWRAP Asia Pacific and summary of its work

International Women's Rights Action Watch (IWRAP) Asia Pacific is an international organisation based in the South working nationally, regionally and internationally towards the achievement of women's human rights. It plays a critical role in ***filling the gap between the promise of women's human rights as embodied in human rights treaties, and their actual realisation at the national level***. It does this by mobilising women's groups at all levels to draw accountability from governments on the domestic application of human rights standards.

IWRAP Asia Pacific is located in Malaysia and since 1993 has worked internationally, regionally and nationally towards the achievement of women's human rights. Although it has a primary focus on the Asia Pacific region, IWRAP Asia Pacific has a global outreach. When it was first set-up in 1993, IWRAP Asia Pacific focused on work in 12 countries in South and Southeast Asia. Today, in 2011, the reach of our presence and expertise has expanded in a sustained manner to various countries/territories in South and Southeast Asia¹, and we are now also working collaboratively with groups in the Central and Eastern Europe, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) regions and in the island states of the Pacific. In addition, we are exploring new ways and strategies of promoting CEDAW and CEDAW implementation in Southern Africa. Besides this, we have facilitated the advocacy of women's groups in over 122 countries globally to the CEDAW review.

IWRAP Asia Pacific remains the only organization that ***works systematically and consistently on monitoring and implementation of CEDAW***, using the work of the CEDAW Committee and of other human rights mechanisms to advance the promotion and protection of women's human rights. IWRAP Asia Pacific seeks to improve the understanding of CEDAW as an instrument that adds significance to the concepts of ***substantive equality, non-discrimination, the relevance of treaty law to improving national level action plans geared towards social justice, women's equality and empowerment of marginalised groups***. Thus CEDAW is embedded with integral concepts and components that creates and reforms institutional mechanisms that promote social transformation, thus ***support the building of states and societies premised on democratic principles, good governance, realisation of human rights for all and sustainable development***.

Despite many advances in the law and policy environment towards recognition of gender equality and new mechanisms for promotion and protection of women's human rights, women still experience multiple forms of discrimination. Exclusion of gender perspectives and obstacles to women's participation in public and civic roles negatively impact democratic principles, good

¹ Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka in South Asia and Aceh, Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor Leste and Vietnam

governance and rule of law. Using CEDAW to empower women as agents of social change, will strengthen good governance and rule of law. CEDAW provides the philosophical and practical framework for engendering state systems and processes, and defining a clear role for women in these processes. Democracy and good governance can only be achieved when women are acknowledged as equal citizens and empowered in claiming rights.

In summary, throughout the 18 years of its work, IWRAW Asia Pacific has facilitated a process by which the CEDAW Convention has been used as a tool for applying international human rights standards in a wide range of contexts at the national level and in relation to many critical and emerging issues in relation to women, such as violence against women, employment, rights in marriage and citizenship rights. The experiences gathered have contributed to the development of new knowledge and skilling through better understanding of the various dimensions of equality, non-discrimination, State obligation, human rights principles: universal and indivisible and a rights based approach to development.

B. Conceptual Premise

One of the foundational concepts embodied in IWRAW Asia Pacific's work is that women's equality is central to the full enjoyment of human rights. Another working premise of the programme is that a rights framework does not automatically confer rights. Rather it legitimises the claim for rights and women have to be able to claim their rights.

One of IWRAW Asia Pacific's goals is the elimination of all forms of discrimination, including discrimination against women, using a focus on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) as the basis for activism for the advancement of women's human rights. To do this, IWRAW Asia Pacific has chosen to focus on the promotion of women's rights as women face an additional layer of discrimination as compared to men due to historical disadvantage. Consistent work with treaties ensures State accountability for taking specific actions to realise the human rights of women according to an expanding set of principles, standards and substantive commitments.

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (the CEDAW Convention) mandates substantive equality and gender responsive policies and programmes that are premised on a human rights perspective. It requires States parties to condemn discrimination against women in all its forms and to ensure its elimination. The strength of the CEDAW Convention is that it recognises the systemic nature of the oppression of women and extends protection to all groups of women in all contexts.

IWRAW Asia Pacific believes the implementation of human rights treaties and other mechanisms are critical in the realization of women's equality. It views international human rights standards as tools for bringing about change at all levels, the national and international, and in a wide range of contexts (e.g. violence against women, employment, rights in marriage,

citizenship rights, rural development). IWRAW Asia Pacific sees this approach as enabling women activists to advocate for their rights, to address the conditions that contribute to discrimination against women and to ensure that the specificities of women's experiences inform the laws and policies in their country.

Thus IWRAW Asia Pacific's programme is premised on the belief therefore that, before women can access 'real' equality, several other conditions are needed:

- Standard-setting at the international level that matches the realities of women at the local level;
- A culture of compliance with gender sensitive human rights;
- Women's ability to claim their rights;
- Women forming a constituency with a strong voice to invoke their rights and push for political action and create the necessary political will. This implies the need for capacity building and gender-sensitisation for women themselves, and for those bodies who would put the institutional changes in place (e.g. judges, lawyers, bureaucrats, and parliamentarians);
- Mechanisms for enforcement that are gender-sensitised and have the will to implement the CEDAW Convention; and
- A mechanism for monitoring the fulfilment of State obligations under the Convention to track the progress in making equality a reality for women at the domestic level.

The above factors are interactive and reinforce each other. All of this requires a focus on various actors and types of action. While women remain central to our programme, we also need to impact on all branches of government, legislators, the bureaucracy and the judiciary. We need to look at various institutions within these branches of government or which have an effect on them. These segments of actors include, politicians, bureaucrats at different levels, law enforcers, and prosecutors, specific institutions or mechanisms that monitor and or enforce human rights standards, judges and lawyers.

C. Philosophy, Vision and Mission Statement

IWRAW Asia Pacific's Philosophy Vision and Mission statement was amended on August 14th, 2011 at our Strategic Planning Convening with key stakeholders. With inputs from staff, the Board of Directors and the Advisory Committee we reflected on our current goals and the context for gender equality the programme is trying to address and the statement now read,

Philosophy, Vision and Mission

Our vision is of a world in which everyone enjoys human rights and fundamental freedoms on the basis of equality, without discrimination on the ground of sex and gender, and free of oppressive power relationships, within a developmentally sustainable and inclusive society.

To achieve our vision we adopt an approach based on the universal nature of human rights, focusing particularly on the experiences of women from the global South by:

- (a) promoting and facilitating the effective implementation of human rights in conformity with CEDAW and other international human rights treaties and mechanisms;*
- (b) advocating and facilitating the inclusion of women and a women's rights perspective in human rights standard-setting, interpretation, monitoring, and implementation*
- (c) critically engaging with and advocating progressive interpretations of human rights standards, promoting the adoption of new standards; and, in collaboration with our partners, generating new knowledge and materials on women's human rights,*
- (d) contributing to the further mobilisation of women towards achieving human-rights based governance and sustainable development, and holding accountable both State and non-State actors for protecting, promoting and fulfilling women's human rights.*

Philosophy - As a feminist human rights organization, we strive to cooperate and collaborate with women's groups and others, towards women's agency, visibility and empowerment

Our work in 2011

In 2011 we continued to work through our four inter-related strategies:

- Building Capacity for Change Strategy (BCC), which focuses on building skills and training to partners through workshops, training of trainers, preparation of frameworks for monitoring and application of CEDAW and tool kits to support trainers in their work.
- Enhancing Realisation of Rights Strategy (ERR), which focuses on regional and international advocacy, supporting women to participate in standard-setting activities at the global level and ensuring that women's rights concerns are embedded in the work of international and regional human rights organisations and civil society organisations.
- Information Dissemination, Exchange and Application Strategy (IDEAS) which supports information capture and knowledge generation through publications, research, listservs and the website.
- Institution Building Strategy (IB), which provides the administrative and financial management support for the organisation as well the structures for guiding future directions of IWRAW Asia Pacific.

Building Capacity for Change programme in 2011

A. Overview/Background

The Building Capacity for Change (BCC) programme primarily aims to develop new ways of knowledge creation and skill building for activists, women's rights organisations and advocacy groups for the advancement of women's human using the key principles and framework of international human rights law, primarily the CEDAW Convention. The Programme works very closely with national partner organisations to identify and design training and other conceptual/skill building activities which enhance their capacity to strengthen the structural and cultural environment for gender equality advocacy.

The Programme continues to develop innovative strategies of building the capacity of organisations and institutions at national, regional and international levels for advocacy and reform. The programme fulfils the commitment of the organisation to provide training on the principles and application of the CEDAW Convention, adding value to the work of partner organisations through enhancing their capabilities to achieve the application of the standards of equality and non-discrimination set out in CEDAW and in other international human rights instruments.

IWRAP Asia Pacific's BCC Programme is conscious of the emerging issues and contexts challenging the implementation of CEDAW towards advancement of women's human rights, and continues to undertake programme strategies to meet these challenges.

B. Specific Objectives²

The overall objective of the BCC programme is to develop knowledge and skills in the application of international human rights law, especially on the principles of CEDAW. The specific aims of the strategy are as follows:

- To strengthen and expand the capacity of women's groups and networks to claim their human rights and to draw accountability from governments through national, regional and international mechanisms towards the realisation of women's rights and good governance in contexts specified under Article 2 of CEDAW and in relation to other contexts such as neo-liberal economic globalisation;
- To promote non-discrimination and equality at all levels of government action towards the crafting and effective implementation of laws, policies, and programmes, and securing remedies in cases of violations or non-enforcement of these measures by state and non-state actors;
- To strengthen alliances and collaboration with mainstream human rights organisations, social movements and other key players to sharpen women's equality and non-discrimination perspectives in their advocacy and strategies; and

² These objectives were reviewed and affirmed at the March, 2008 Capacity Building Advisory Group meeting.

- To develop tools, methodologies, resource materials, training frameworks and resource persons to facilitate the implementation of the Building Capacity for Change Programme.

C. Highlights in Implementation

National and regional level support to NGOs on CEDAW implementation through training & technical assistance

We organized and provided more than 10 training workshops during this period. These trainings provided women activists with substantive knowledge on CEDAW and practical skills in applying international human rights standards and laws to national level issues, policies and laws. These workshops were a basis for promoting the use of international standards to guide national level policy setting and to support women's groups working at the level of implementation to devise comprehensive inclusive and long term goal setting strategies based on CEDAW towards embedding and realizing WHR and principles of subs equality and non-discrimination into law and policy. Various requests for IWRAW Asia Pacific's help with trainings, providing technical and substantive inputs into CEDAW and women's human rights strategies illustrate the continued gaps in knowledge of both NGOs, state and UN agencies on CEDAW implementation.

1. CEDAW Trainings

- The BCC unit held one CEDAW related training in Laos in October themed as "Laos CEDAW Training – Access to Justice". IWRAW Asia Pacific pursued collaboration with Lao Bar Association on CEDAW implementation as a follow-up to a regional training conducted where the need for training on CEDAW was highlighted. This was also seen as an opportunity for the trainers from the RTOT to practice the training skills which IWRAW AP provided guidance on in 2010. 19 women underwent the training.

Laotian lawyers and legal/justice sector personnel being trained by IWRAW AP and local trainers mentored by IWRAW Asia Pacific



- IWRAW Asia Pacific supported Rainbow-Rights Philippines to hold a workshop on the 3-4 November themed “Capacity Building Workshop for State Agencies Gender Focal Persons on CEDAW, Concluding Observations, and Issues on Gender Rights”. IWRAW Asia Pacific pursued collaboration with R-Rights on CEDAW implementation as a follow-up to a regional training conducted where the need for training on CEDAW was highlighted. This was also seen as an opportunity for the trainers from the RTOT to practice the training skills which IWRAW AP provided guidance on in 2010. The training focused on LGBT rights and intersectionality as well as a dedicated session on the principle of state obligation. The output was to strengthen gender focal persons’ knowledge, appreciation and skills in applying the principles of CEDAW, deepen their analytical skills in examining gender realities and complying with CEDAW and concluding observations and enhancing government agencies’ efforts in the promotion of gender rights.

2. Shadow Report Writing Workshops- Engaging with the CEDAW process is IWRAW Asia Pacific’s most important strand and thus, trainings on shadow report writing are always either requested or initiated for initial reporting countries and those who feel the need to update their skills in the area. With 2011/2012 seeing many new reporting countries; IWRAW AP received several requests in 2011 and we initiated some of these for priority and initial reporting /countries new to CEDAW reporting. Trainings/meetings/discussions took place for Afghanistan, UK, Lesotho, Korea, Jordan, Zimbabwe and Malaysia.

- For the UK, IWRAW AP tailor made a training in January 2011, to address the needs 32 participants from diverse backgrounds, organizational representation and CEDAW expertise. IWRAW Asia Pacific collaborated with the UK CEDAW Working Group (NGOs); the Women’s Resource Centre. The training was to facilitate a participatory and inclusive approach to shadow report design as well as developing a collective and comprehensive approach linking national action and international advocacy, as UK was coming up for reporting in the coming year.
- On April 15-18 2011, IWRAW AP held a training co-organised by FIDA Lesotho in Lesotho. Lesotho as an initial reporting country to CEDAW was a priority. Fourteen organisations participated and a coalition was set up to produce the final shadow report. The training, the first of its kind to be held in Lesotho, set out to enhance CEDAW knowledge- on its concepts and processes – and how best to engage with the process as a tool for advocacy.
- In April, IWRAW Asia Pacific received a request to provide Korean women’s network KOCUN, with inputs on CEDAW. Not so much a training on the substantive content or structure of the shadow report but the half-day long training programme covered the reporting cycle, the state report, the purpose of a shadow report, the role of NGOs, the

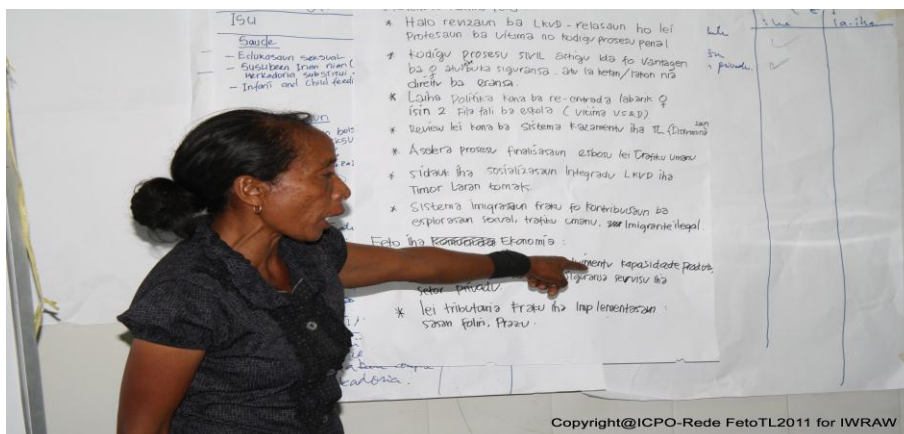
structure and content of the report and follow-up to the review process and this was done in lecture form to students and activists who were going to work on the national level shadow report process.

- Another request came from the Arab Women's Association (AWO) of Jordan. Jordan has submitted its 5th report for the 51st CEDAW session which will take place in 2012 in Geneva. 15 participants attended the training held on 27 – 29 July 2011 that strengthened their knowledge of CEDAW concepts and mechanisms, emphasising the process of writing and presenting a Shadow Report to the CEDAW Committee and how to use the shadow reporting process as a tool for advocacy in Jordan. The core context for Jordan that became the focus was the underlying issue of patriarchy in society and how it links to CEDAW and its principles of non-discrimination, substantive equality and state obligation.
- Zimbabwean NGOs underwent a shadow report writing training to 20 women on 24 – 26 August 2011 to build clarity on the concepts of CEDAW, enhance their understanding of the role of NGOs in the process, proficiency in writing shadow reports and then using the report for advocacy at the national level. The training discussed the basic modules on CEDAW and its principles as well as how NGO strategies to collate information and produce a strong shadow report. The coalition formed during this training produced the shadow report for the session.
- Malaysia is currently due for reporting and though to date has not been scheduled; NGOs organized a meet on 6 October 2011 to start discussions on their shadow report and the delegating of research and writing duties. Together with IWRAW Asia Pacific representatives the coalition brainstormed on the best reporting methodologies and delineating of writing and information gathering duties. 15 women from NGOs working on child rights, women migrant worker's rights and LGBT rights were present to provide input and contexts which represent the prevalent issues in the country. There will be another follow-up meet to draft the final shadow report and IWRAW Asia Pacific has pledged continuous support for this process.
- In Afghanistan, IWRAW Asia Pacific and Afghan's Women's Network - AWN entered into a collaboration to strengthen the capacities of national NGOs and women's rights groups on CEDAW and its application. As a follow-up to IWRAW Asia Pacific's previous engagements with Afghan women's rights groups and network on CEDAW promotion and implementation, IWRAW Asia Pacific conducted a Capacity Building Workshop for Afghan NGOs on CEDAW and its Reporting Process on 17-19 December 2011 in Kabul. This Workshop was organised in collaboration with Afghan Women's Network (AWN). A group of 22 national NGOs and members of AWN having offices in provinces as well as in Kabul participated at the workshop. Ms. Zohra Rasekh, CEDAW Committee member

from Afghanistan provided her inputs as a CEDAW expert to the Afghan women's groups on ways to enhance their strategising and lobbying around the CEDAW reporting process. In the post-conflict context of Afghanistan, re-enforcement of traditional customs and religious norms limiting women's agency and their human rights is a challenge for activists and organisations. IWRAP Asia Pacific through this training was able to connect the local groups with the Global Movement for Equality and Justice in the Family (Musawah) to revisit the Islamic interpretation of equality for women using the lens of women's human rights and CEDAW. IWRAP Asia Pacific's collaboration with AWN for this workshop has led to developing a long term strategy on CEDAW implementation through collaborative activities. The context for Afghanistan is largely violence against women and conflict but the training touched on many areas including health, employment, and education. The training opened for the organisation multiple opportunities to build and support the Afghan women's movement for gender equality and justice.

Projects on CEDAW Application/Compliance Framework

This is a strategy that supports CEDAW Compliance by supporting national partners to develop a comprehensive strategy for analyzing, monitoring and developing solutions/responses to specific laws and policies to ensure the outcome/results of such law and policy produces the effect of equality and elimination of discrimination and women's exercise of rights under the law. The very nature of the CEDAW Application/Compliance Project (CCF Project) was to allow the national partner its own space and autonomy to pursue specific policy change and law reform plans while enabling IWRAP AP to provide its technical assistance through a cohesive and mutual assistance framework toward common goals in relation to working on projects related to strengthening the normative standards for gender equality in the domestic environment in support of its national partners. IWRAP Asia Pacific collaborates with its partners in Bangladesh (Naripokkho), Vietnam (GENCOMNET) Indonesia (CWGI) and Timor Leste (Redefeto/Alola).



Timor Activist reviewing economic policy applying CEDAW standards in CEDAW compliance project

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- In Bangladesh through two compliance workshops the groups initiated situational analyses on two issues which strongly impact women's capacity to exercise rights, the weaknesses of the agriculture policy (as majority of women worked in the informal rural sector) and the Violence against Women legislation and to engender the Agricultural Policy. A framework for tracing the implementation and interpretation of these policies was developed through the participatory approach which included 5 coalitions and drafting of recommendations. The immediate next steps included a second meeting in December 2011 to reach a consensus on recommendations. In December 2011 the group held a larger meeting with its in country CSO partners to share their goals and their advocacy plan to mobilize support, and validate their findings through the larger group.
- In Indonesia, initial field visits, discussions and planning were initiated to help the local women's groups and advocacy organizations working under the umbrella of CEDAW Working Group Initiative (CWGI) to use the framework to test CEDAW compliance of the domestic legislation on marriage ie. the Indonesian Marriage Law (IML) (Law No. 1, 1974). This will be used to strengthen the NGOs version of the draft law to reflect specific amendments to make the law in line with CEDAW and other standards of equality. A further capacity building workshop on the CCF will be conducted in 2012 by IWRAW Asia Pacific jointly with CWGI to build advanced level knowledge of its member organizations and familiarity with use and application of the Framework in the context of marriage law.
- In Timor Leste the project aimed at providing advocacy points to strengthen the Labour Law and Re-entry Policy (girls going back to school after their pregnancy). Working in collaboration with national level women's network Rede Feto and its member organizations Alola Foundation and FOKUPERS we held on 10-11 November 2011 a project briefing as a way to develop a process oriented strategy. The group began conducting research and data collection to monitor the current labour law and gather info to formulate a Re-entry policy. Plans are in discussion for how the project will proceed in 2012 especially with a skill building workshop (Phase 2).
- The final country listed for CAF training is Vietnam. From 2-3 December 2011, IWRAW AP and GENCOMNET held the initial project briefing with women's groups from Vietnam to identify critical concerns in advocacy related to amendments to the identified laws/policies and in developing strategies for the implementation of the Project and identifying stakeholders. Two areas identified by the members on which they will work on is the Employment Law and Land Ownership Law and future steps include the second phase technical skilling to implement components of the project including research,

monitoring, analysis and designing and mobilizing for advocacy with stakeholders including government agencies.

Developing Training Materials

In terms of resource creation, in 2011 we focused on resources to support our law and litigation (for claiming women's human rights) strategy. Throughout 2011 we worked on finalizing the OPCEDAW Training Manual for training on application of OPCEDAW and the CEDAW-CESCR Manual to enhance ESC rights claims which is a major problem for women and prioritized as it is a basic enabler for access to other rights. Another new package – the lawyers resource package on using CEDAW in national level litigation - was tested in June 2011 when we held a Pilot Testing Workshop for Litigating Lawyers on Women's Human Rights Using CEDAW . This resource for lawyers was envisaged to help towards changing the political attitude towards women and creating a conducive environment for women to claim their human rights through the domestic court system.

Our impact through BCC

144 women activists trained on CEDAW and how to use the CEDAW review process and shadow reports to drive advocacy, and substantively on CEDAW concepts.

Providing shadow report training and continuous technical advice to Afghanistan, Lesotho, Zimbabwe, Iraq, Jordan, United Kingdom supported the women's groups in preparation of the CEDAW review. On a practical level, the strategy helped make substantive improvement to the quality of NGO shadow reports by strengthening NGO's in writing clear, concise and effective shadow reports /alternative reports and promote use of CEDAW Review process as way to mobilize national advocacy via CEDAW Shadow report trainings/ CEDAW workshops on-going monitoring and technical reviewing of NGO shadow reports. Additionally they used a tested framework IWRAP Asia Pacific created to ensure that rights issues are framed clearly so that the Committee can take cognizance of these violations and non-compliance to CEDAW and issue specific recommendations. It also helped the group decide on a priority issues list commonly agreed by the coalition. They also made arrangements to hold a series of processes later to refine and mobilise input for finalising the report before sending it to the Committee as well as take the opportunity to obtain broader support for their ideas and issues.

With the Shadow Report Trainings, the format of the training ensures that the groups anticipate certain key steps to ensure the effectiveness of their advocacy after the review. For example the Jordanian group has already anticipated the need for a clear monitoring plan for their focused set of issues which includes legal reform and need to focus on Jordanian women's rights in marriage. They sought opportunities for learning, tools and skills to do this monitoring and data collection as an empowering process for all groups as well as a means to ensure implementation of the specific recommendations from the Concluding Observations.

After the shadow report workshops we followed up with Zimbabwe, Jordan and Lesotho and provided technical recommendations to their shadow report. We are continuing to support Afghanistan NGOs with their shadow report and their upcoming CEDAW review session, as well as other CEDAW implementation strategies, to ensure that in the rebuilding phase, laws and policies will reflect universal gender equality norms and recognize the equal and central status of women in rebuilding systems and their society.

Via the CEDAW Compliance Framework projects we initiated preliminary skilling towards reviewing drafts of laws for Indonesia Marriage Law, Bangladesh Agricultural Policy and Bangladesh Violence Act. The Technical Workshops for Bangladesh that improved understanding of NGOs and CSOs on the CEDAW Application Framework and its use for policy advocacy in their engagement with the government and stakeholder institutions. Strategy and technical sessions with partners in Philippines, Fiji, Indonesia, Timor Leste, Vietnam, Bangladesh to obtain clarity and improve coherence in CEDAW monitoring. We provided 82 women's rights advocates into guided advocacy project which supports them in considering ways and analytical methods to improve their advocacy using international norms to effect local change which reflect progressive standards for women's rights. The practical application of the technical framework also allowed us to refine our CEDAW Application Framework based on the experiences and lessons learnt in different countries. We foresee that eventual sharing of good practices and dissemination of the refined version of the Framework to national partners, associated resource persons and past participants of IWRAP Asia Pacific's meetings and activities as many countries share similar socio-political and economic contexts, as well as cultural factors.

In 2011 we supported capacity building for 41 government officials through trainings on CEDAW standards. IWRAP AP and partners, Lao Bar and Rainbow Rights were able to raise awareness of the importance of international human rights standards and to build on existing understanding and obligations of states on CEDAW implementation towards the promotion and protection of women's rights to substantive equality and non-discrimination. Clarity on major priority issues for contexts that are more isolate and are less familiar to IWRAP AP that must be addressed e.g. access to justice and state obligation in relation to addressing discrimination based on multiple intersecting factors including due to sexual orientation and gender identity.

Our system of engaging with women trained under our training of trainers to act as trainers for others provided spaces for knowledge sharing and opportunities for growth and testing their learnt skills as the three (3) Laos trainers showed they had capacity for CEDAW substantive training and were able to apply the norms and standards of CEDAW to Laotian context for women's rights realisation. This type of sharing platform encourages openness in terms of information and potentially by working cohesively on specific areas there can be many benefits, not least of which resource saving and time saving, with each group performing their area of

expertise and leveraging on their strengths. The final output was the collective discussions on a practical strategic plan towards the immediate actions for advancement and implementation of CEDAW by analyzing entry points, strengthening existing and exploring new opportunities of Government-NGO engagement. These trainings also developed strategic entry points with members of state institutions and agencies, who will also be more aware of their role in ensuring compliance of laws, policies and programmes with international standards, and also develop greater respect for the role of women activists as civil society actors in matters relating to formulation and the reform of laws and policies through direct capacity

Through the pilot testing we were able to provide capacity building and upscaling of skills for 15 legal practitioners and activists on use of CEDAW in expanding interpretation of rights through the law and through litigation. Women working at the national level benefit from sharing their strategies and learning the most current case law and innovative use of international treaties by domestic courts as many domestic level changes and innovations may happen at lower court level and written judgments or translations of these may not exist or there may not be contextual information to provide clarity for legal activists who wish to learn from other regions and the workshops were designed to provide these moments for sharing.

On development of resources:

- Five module Lawyers resource Package created with topics on: the role of Law and Lawyers in Litigating on Women's Human Rights; overview of the UN Human Rights System and International Human Rights Law and Law of Treaties; Substantive Equality, Non-discrimination and State Obligation which demonstrate how key principles of CEDAW interact with other human rights treaties, standards, and domestic law, Considerations when using CEDAW in Domestic Litigation and issues to consider in planning Litigation Strategies, designing Litigation Plans and political/advocacy Strategies To be used in Trainings in SEA and MENA in 2012 and 2013.

Enhancing Realisation of Rights (ERR) Programme in 2011

A. Overview/Background

The advocacy unit of IWRAP Asia Pacific; ERR carries out activities at the national; regional and international levels in pursuance of the organisations overall objectives. The national level work primarily involves supporting national level groups to develop and carry out their own advocacy strategies based on the CEDAW framework to strengthen respect for and fulfilment of women's human rights by their government. This is often conducted as a support strategy for activities by the BCC programme or in conjunction with regional or international strategies.

The rationale behind the IWRAP AP's advocacy initiatives is the belief that women should be facilitated in presenting and articulating their national level human rights concerns in international standard-setting arenas. This is to ensure their voices are heard at a level where the most significant advances to the development of human rights theory have been made, and it is at this level that conceptual clarity on the universality and interconnectedness of all rights must be sought.

The strategy employs a synergetic approach to ensure that international gains are informed by and, therefore, reflective of the realities of women's lives and that these gains are able to support and strengthen claims for human rights at the national level. This is done through the feeding of information by local women's groups to the United Nations and other international mechanisms to ensure policies are in line with realities on the ground. Such information would not otherwise be accessible to the international committees/bodies or vice versa. Such participation will ensure that useful instruments are created that can actually apply to the national setting. This in turn works to support civil society in expanding normative human rights standards and ensuring that the national level perspectives have an impact on the formulation of international instruments. The cyclical approach is then to ensure that the national level strategies and advocacy are based on international human rights principles and standards. Ultimately, the strategy aims to strengthen state accountability for the fulfilment of human rights and adherence to international human rights norms.

B. Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the programme include:

- Contribute to institutionalising women's human rights, creating a culture of respect for women's human rights and strengthening protection mechanisms nationally, regionally and internationally;
- Facilitate the claiming of rights by women at the national, regional and international level;

- Contribute towards a feminist engagement at the international level to support the integration of a women's human rights perspective into international mechanisms and procedures as well as the mobilisation and representation of a polity of women as rights holders in these processes.

The objectives of the Enhancing the Realisation of Rights programme for 2011-2013 include the following:

1. To develop advocacy strategies and collaborate with national and regional organisations to address critical and/or emerging issues using an international women's human rights framework ensuring that the positioning on these issues is grounded in national realities;
2. To facilitate women's engagement in standard setting and interpreting processes and in expanding the scope for the application of international women's human rights standards at the regional and international levels, with particular emphasis on the perspectives and issues of women facing multiple discriminations; and through strengthening of national level implementation of these standards³;
3. To contribute towards strengthening of mechanisms and processes for the claiming of women's human rights, at the national, regional and international levels;
4. To facilitate the claiming of rights by women, using law as a tool, at the national and international levels, in particular through the OP CEDAW and OP ICESCR.

C. Highlights in Implementation

Mentoring at the CEDAW sessions

The *From Global to Local* mentoring programme strategy aims to provide women activists at the national level familiarity and skills to directly engage with the CEDAW review process and access the CEDAW Committee for driving policy changes and to mobilise support and raise concerns about the continued existence of gender based discrimination and inequality in the countries being reviewed. It represents a transnational strategy to add critical domestic voices to the constructive dialogue between the CEDAW committee and states. We facilitated women to attend the review sessions and provided training and lobbying expertise to maximize national NGOs engagement with the CEDAW Committee. In addition the programme trains NGOs to tailor follow-up strategies according to the CEDAW Committee's Concluding Observations. This offers more weight to their advocacy initiatives when lobbying government.

³ Part of the work in the next three years will be to focus on strengthening the linkages inter and intra programmes in terms of IWRAW Asia Pacific's overall strategy and its strengths as an organisation that focuses on drawing on standards and using processes (including that created under CEDAW) to operationalise theoretical treaty standards to create domestic level change and make connections between standard setting, expanding interpretation of standards, monitoring of state accountability and mobilisation of groups for national advocacy.



Briefings with the CEDAW Committee –NGOs present reports and address queries from the experts

The 48th CEDAW session saw 7 countries being reviewed; namely Bangladesh, Belarus, Israel, Kenya, Liechtenstein, Sri Lanka, and South Africa. The session began on the 17th of January 2011 and ended 4th February 2011 with a total of 23 NGO representatives from Israel, Belarus, Kenya, South Africa, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka attending the session and the Global to Local orientation and mentoring programme.

The 49th session had 8 countries scheduled: Costa Rica, Italy, Ethiopia, Zambia, Republic of Korea, Nepal, Djibouti and Singapore with representatives from all of these except Djibouti attending. IWRAW Asia Pacific funded the participation of 10 out of 43 representatives from the participating countries mentioned and presented on a range of issues such as those affecting vulnerable groups like Roma women, disabled women, LGBT people, migrant and indigenous women.

The 50th session reviewed another 8 countries namely, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, Lesotho, Kuwait, Mauritius, Montenegro, Oman and Paraguay. The most challenging session in which to scour for participants as out of the 8, 5 were initial reporting countries and IWRAW Asia Pacific funded 7 out of the 8 participants who attended the training and monitoring programme. Due to sudden tightening in visa application processes, participants from Cote d'Ivoire were unfortunately unable to attend at the last minute though they had prepared a brief shadow report.



Women creating common lobbying points for the CEDAW Review

A correlation could be derived between the involvement of the national organizations, raising their priority issues through the

From Global to Local programme and the evolution of the work of the CEDAW Committee. IWRAP Asia Pacific has systematically been facilitating the participation of women's groups working on marginalized issues such as conflict, sexual orientation and gender identity as well as on specific issues related to economic social and cultural rights. In addition to the submission of alternative information to the CEDAW committee we have also organized thematic briefings for the CEDAW Committee on these issues since 2008. This led to more enhanced engagement with the CEDAW Committee on these issues resulting now in adoption of General Recommendation 27 and 28 in 2010 which has specific references to non-discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. Concluding Observations of some of the countries which reported in 2011 such as Sri Lanka and Costa Rica also had strong recommendations on SOGI issues. Further, the CEDAW Committee is also initiated the drafting of General Recommendations on Women Affected by Conflict and Access to Justice, both of which we are actively engaged in supporting.

In terms of our work focused on thematic areas of women's rights we realized that there is a need for recognizing the experiences of women and girls in conflict settings as they are linked to many aspects of their identities is critical to strengthening rights promotion and protections. In October 2010 we held a global meeting to develop more critical analysis on CEDAW's standards in relation to protection of women's human rights in conflict and post conflict situations. In July 2011 we took part in a general dialogue with the CEDAW Committee facilitating nine women from our partner groups towards oral submissions and recommendations for more rigorous approaches through CEDAW in establishing state obligation towards promoting and protecting women's human rights in conflict/post conflict environments.

Post CEDAW Review Support

In 2011, IWRAP AP continued support to strengthen implementation of CEDAW Concluding Observations by highlighting and prioritizing these recommendations of the Committee to drive national action on gender equality, based on requests and ideas submitted by national level partners.

- In September 2011, IWRAP Asia Pacific was invited by Singapore's migrant rights groups to provide technical input into a national CSO meeting where 180 participants from the migrant domestic worker community and gender advocates were given training on the application of CEDAW standards to the context of migrant women workers and their families and discussed with participants how to practically engage with the mechanism to seek redress for issues faced by migrant domestic workers.
- IWRAP Asia Pacific provided resource and technical assistance to Sri Lankan group Women and Media Collective towards 3 activities: a) CEDAW Publications, b) National

Consultation on CEDAW and c) Media Briefing. The major outcome of this activity has been the increased awareness and interest generated in the CEDAW Concluding Observations by national rights networks.

- In October 2011 NGO Platform of Italy developed a booklet which includes both the synthesis of the issues analyzed in the Shadow Report and the Concluding Observations of the Committee and disseminating the booklet and the information toward the general public, the mass media, the politicians, participating in events at local and national level. Target audience for these awareness raising and sharing was the Italian civil society and particularly the female and feminist organizations, NGOs, trade unions, organizations of migrants, disabled, LGBTQi and sex workers, academics, religious, jurists and peace organizations, mass media, students and in general individual women and men.
- We provided support to women's groups in Costa Rica post CEDAW review which enabled Colectivo por el Derecho Decidir to develop a newsletter that contains the main concluding observations that the CEDAW Committee has made to Costa Rica, and explains them, to be distributed among decision makers, government officials, journalists, women's organizations and other stakeholders. The Target audience includes government officials, women's organizations and journalists. The second activity supported was a workshop of 16 hours with activists and professional women to raise awareness of the social audit process of developing a shadow report.

Technical Input

We were also invited by the Commonwealth Secretariat to provide technical inputs based on our work on implementation of the Concluding Observations of CEDAW and in facilitating national NGOs in submitting reports to the UPR process and their attendance at the UPR sessions. At the Commonwealth Seminar on Universal Periodic Review follow-up and implementation in Asia and Europe in Dhaka we provided suggestions to participants on how to incorporate a gender perspective into the process as well as specifically on how legislative change can be used to facilitate greater equality in the context of the follow-up process.

The Human Rights Council also invited IWRAW Asia Pacific to provide responses as a women's rights organisation to questions on the concrete impact of the UN commitment to gender integration and the role of NGOs in working with and challenging UN institutions in making gender integration a reality as well as how the CEDAW Committee and Human Rights Council can work together more efficiently to achieve this goal.

OPCEDAW

As part of IWRAP AP's initiatives to promote access to justice for women, the use of the OP has always been a priority area of work. This year, IWRAP AP was approached to provide technical assistance to four countries on use of the OPCEDAW via communication or inquiry and two training on the filing of cases with the OP.

The countries that have requested IWRAP Asia Pacific's assistance in providing clinics on OP CEDAW and the filing of cases are Tanzania, South Africa and Kyrgyzstan. IWRAP Asia Pacific assisted by sending experts on OPCEDAW and litigation strategies from our pool of resource persons. IWRAP AP worked with Women's Lawyers Association of Tanzania on the issue of the treatment of widows to be addressed by an inquiry, and with Open Line in Kyrgyzstan on the issue of bride kidnapping. With our partner Masimanyane in South Africa, we are working on the issue of violence (rape cases) providing them inputs and technical advice in 2011 and jointly organising a consultation on filing of cases in 2012. Next steps in the compilation of information and the drafting of the case and arguments based on gaps in compliance with national and CEDAW standards are underway with plans to submit to the Committee by 2012-2013, as well as technical and legal review by a team of experts to ensure viability of submissions.

IWRAP Asia Pacific conducted a workshop for our CEE/CIS partner organization, the KARAT Coalition, who initiated an Access to Justice project in the region. As IWRAP Asia Pacific has ongoing work with the Coalition on OP CEDAW, this workshop was devised as a follow up as well as a tie-in to KARAT's Access to Justice programme which sought to address gaps in application of and access to justice systems for 5 countries. The workshop was designed for female women's rights activists and lawyers from Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Poland, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to enhance their understanding of the OP CEDAW and how this can positively contribute to women's access to justice in the region.

ASEAN

As an organization that began as an Asia Pacific initiative and continue to put Asia high on its priority list due to the continuous grievances to women's human rights experience by women in the region; IWRAP AP continues to closely engage with the ASEAN and its mechanisms for human rights. IWRAP Asia Pacific, jointly initiated and is co-convenor of the SEA Women's Caucus on ASEAN together with APWLD. Various strategic meetings with our partners and with ASEAN mechanisms were held throughout this period, to advocate on strengthening the work and mandate of the AICHR and the ACWC as well as to ensure that the upcoming ASEAN Human Rights Declaration will comply with universal standards of human rights as well as including a gender perspective. Reports and statements regarding our strategies and initiatives on ASEAN are available here: <http://www.apwld.org/our-work/asean-the-womens-caucus/>.

Other Advocacy

IWRAW Asia Pacific and partners attended the one day of general discussion during its 49th CEDAW Session in New York on the 18th of July 2011 to seek wider consultation on its proposed General Recommendation on protection of women's human rights in the situations of conflict and post-conflict. IWRAW Asia Pacific and its partner organizations made interventions on the Day of General Discussion, to provide clarity to the Committee on issues, experiences and rights violations affecting women in situations of conflict, and provide insights on the gaps and challenges in applying the CEDAW framework in the background of the existing legal framework of humanitarian and human rights law. Partners from Nepal, Sri Lanka, Lebanon, Indonesia and Croatia attended as well.

A panel discussion was held at the Human Rights Council to affirm Women's Sexual and Reproductive Rights on 1st June 2011 organised by IWRAW AP in collaboration with APWLD. The overall objective of the event was to create context, terminology, language and recommendations to support the development and interpretation of standards at the national and international levels in the area of sexual and reproductive rights. The panel particularly wished to highlight issues affecting the ability of marginalized groups to fully realize their sexual and reproductive health rights. The event focused on the right to sexual and reproductive health that encompasses the right to determine one's own sexual orientation and gender identity, as well as issues relating to contraception and sexual and reproductive autonomy.

Treaty Body strengthening has been a topic of major discussions in the past years. Many quarters feel the need to make significant changes to ensure the process remains effective and relevant. IWRAW AP attended the Civil Society Consultation on Strengthening the Treaty Body System in Seoul, Korea on the 1st of June 2011; a consultation organized by the OHCHR to provide NGO and WHR perspectives into the debates on the strengthening and reform process. IWRAW AP was part of the NGO group drafting and endorsing the Seoul Statement as an outcome of the meeting, which drew attention to various priority considerations in the reform process including the role of NGOs, the need to focus on reform on strengthening implementation while streamlining processes. <http://www.iwraw-ap.org/statements.htm>.

Our impact via ERR

In 2011, through the From Global to Local we were able to facilitate the participation of 46 national level NGOs to the international CEDAW review process. These women's groups presented 35 shadow reports and 39 oral statements to the Committee, thus contributing to the relevance of concluding observations so that they can then be used as a tool for advocacy at the national level. Global to Local mentoring and training towards effective participation and lobbying at the CEDAW Review session provided to 77 women from 21 countries - Chad, Lesotho, Mauritius, Montenegro, Oman, Paraguay, Costa Rica, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Italy, Nepal,

Republic of Korea, Singapore, Zambia, Bangladesh, Belarus, Israel, Kenya, Liechtenstein, Sri Lanka, South Africa (out of 23) reporting to CEDAW in 2011

Witnessing the CEDAW session to build confidence in international Treaty Body systems to fuel engagement with more mechanisms in international human rights processes. NGOs provided invaluable insight to the committee on issues affecting women at the national level. We provided support to 12 women activists from marginalized groups (minority, disabled, lesbian, bisexual and transgender rights, rural, indigenous) who could then take the opportunity to strengthen their advocacy through the mainstream women's networks.

We provided post CEDAW review support to women's groups in four countries that focused on disseminating the concluding observations of the Committee to inform domestic level policy making and debate, to create a way to discuss CEDAW implementation with state agencies, to discuss specific rights and recommendations to critical issues advocated by the CEDAW Committee and highlight the role of NGOs and the obligation of governments to CEDAW via media and briefings for stakeholders in gender equality and national action plans for women.

Ground level policy changes we were able to track based on issues that were lobbied on by women's groups at the domestic level and through the CEDAW review include:

- Singapore : The government has announced the mandatory weekly restday for domestic workers to be effective next year⁴. More flexible long term passes for foreign wives (automatic 3 years plus 5 years renewal) to make their stay less onerous in terms of visa renewal and to enable accessibility to jobs without having to get work permits⁵. The inter agency task force for trafficking in persons has consulted with civil society on the TIP National Plan and will be releasing the TIP national plan by the third week of March. AWARE activists also successfully lobbied the government in amending rape shield laws⁶ to ensure that the victims past sexual history cannot be used to impeach her credibility, as reported by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Law⁷.
- Zambia: The recent September 2011 elections brought a new government which upgraded the women's department in government into a new women's ministry⁸ with greater powers of execution for the Concluding Observations of CEDAW. The government would also fast-track adoption and implementation of the Gender Based Violence (prevention) Bill.

⁴ <http://blogs.wsj.com/searealtime/2012/03/06/singapore-maids-finally-get-a-break/>

⁵ http://www.straitstimes.com/BreakingNews/Singapore/Story/STIStory_774261.html

⁶ <http://www.aware.org.sg/2011/11/section-157d-of-evidence-act-repeal-it/>

⁷ <http://theonlinecitizen.com/2011/11/section-157d-to-be-repealed-law-minister/>

⁸ <http://www.times.co.zm/?p=718>

- Italy: In September 2011 the Italian inter-ministerial Committee for Human Rights (CIDU) organized a meeting with the civil society organizations/experts on CEDAW and UN Resolution 1325. In February 2012, the Department of Equal Opportunities organized a dialogue meeting with the CSOs in occasion of the 56th session of the CSW in New York. The role of women's network were recognized by these Institutions as an active platform working on women's rights issues (and monitoring CEDAW implementation) and consequently to open with them a formal dialogue. A point of order has also been prepared by the Parliamentarian Susanna Cenni (in collaboration with Rosa Calipari) in order to urge the Government to ratify the Council of Europe Convention, to review and implement the National Action Plan on gender violence, to set up an appropriate system data collection on all forms of violence against women. Based on C.O. no. 26 the term "Femicide" has started to be used in the public speeches as well as in the media (before that nobody mentioned it), marking a first important step towards the cultural change and the recognition of this specific type of crime against women requiring state action and societal condemnation.
- Israel: In 2011 the Supreme Court of Israel received and agreed with the Petition of Kav La Oved an organization we supported to the CEDAW review working on migration and women's rights. The Court's decision changed the regulation which required a lawfully employed migrant worker upon giving birth in Israel to return home and lose her work permit or to send her child back. This was declared unconstitutional.
- In 2011 Government of Ukraine through the Ministries of Social Policy and Ministry of Gender Equality are compiling information on trafficking of women and girls, which was a priority issue identified by women's groups for immediate action. This is also in response to the relatively new CEDAW procedure for follow-up on Concluding Observations.
- Throughout 2010-2011 Swiss women's network NGO Coordination Post worked on gender budgeting and the role of women in agriculture as two key issues to engage with the state through national consultations and media strategies in terms of ensuring gender equality through these state policies.
- Malta Confederation of Women's Organisations report that they CEDAW Concluding Observations on the need for better flexible arrangement regarding maternity and parenting through employment/labour laws was strengthened by the recent announcement of the government during a budget speech in November 16, 2011 to provide for increased maternity leave from 12 to 14 weeks with basic rate of pay . The Maltese government also is considering

changes to the domestic violence legislation especially to ensure that the practice of discontinuing rape prosecutions upon request of the victim is regulated and reduced to ensure that the issue of rape is seen as a crime against society as well as the individual victim and requires clear legal action even without the participation of the victim in the trial. This was discussed with the Minister for Education, Employment and Family, Dolores Christina and to be brought to the European Commission entity working on Gender Equality.

Provided inputs on gender equality integration and in relation to various thematic issues such as sexual and reproductive health, conflict and culture to eight different consultations and panels organized by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Human Rights Council and the treaty body mechanisms.

- Developed a background and outcome document on the impact of conflict and post conflict contexts on women and girls towards strengthening state obligation on conflict and shared this with the CEDAW Committee. Please refer to our website for the background paper and outcome document. <http://www.iwraw-ap.org/publications/doc/FinalReporttoParticipantsApril202011.pdf>.
- Besides this our advocacy with the CEDAW Committee during its review also enabled us and our partners to inform the discussions and recommendations of these mechanisms with the perspectives and issues of women's groups from the national level, as well as those of marginalized communities. We were able to bring together minority rights groups to the same training and to share the same public dialogue space with mainstream women's groups in the interface with the CEDAW treaty body. We believe this approach to process oriented advocacy will be able to mobilise more support for gender equality in the local rights and civic discourse, as well as socialise concepts and norms of equality and non-discrimination more effectively. These are extremely relevant approaches for countries facing on-going conflict/crisis like Israel-Palestine.
- Our support to marginalized groups, especially groups working on sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) issues saw positive developments with the CEDAW Committee adopting more progressive recommendations through General Comments 27 & 28 as well as the Concluding Observations (South Africa, Costa Rica, Singapore) that specifically states there should be no discrimination on the basis of SOGI. This continues to illustrate the need to work with and support the CEDAW Committee in creating better clarity and understanding on specific issues for more progressive recommendations.

- We also developed more than 8 position papers and lobbied international and regional mechanisms to ensure gender perspectives and women's human rights are foundational to their principles and plans. These include:
 - o Statement on Mandate and role of UN Women
 - o Joint NGO Statement (Seoul Statement) on Treaty Body Reform and Strengthening
 - o Statement on the CEDAW GR on conflict
 - o Statement on CECSR GR on right to reproductive health
 - o Statement on CRTC-CEDAW Joint GR on harmful practices (affecting women and girls)
 - o Human Rights Day Statement
 - o Statement to the Human Rights Council
 - o Statements on ASEAN focused on ASEAN Commission on Women and Children, and ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights
 Found here: <http://www.iwraw-ap.org/statements.htm>.

Participation in official and coordinated CSO discussions and strategic platforms allowed us to contribute to ensuring inclusion of women's human rights into the ASEAN human rights structures.

- 4 statements addressed by SEA Women's Caucus on ASEAN, led by IWRAW Asia Pacific and APWLD, to the drafting committee of the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration (AHRD) drafting process.
- Southeast Asia Women's Caucus on ASEAN position paper on the need for the AHRD to ensure gender equality and be founded on international human rights norms and standards submitted to the ASEAN Secretariat, the AICHR and the ACWC
- Developed suggested in the draft ASEAN Human Rights Declaration by governments of ASEAN currently already propose general principles that accept women's human rights as a universal norm to be maintained by the ADHR, sex as a ground for non discrimination , accepting the need to address the role of non state actors are capable of being expanded to ensure full recognition of women's human rights and move away from the cultural relativism and non-intervention approach which characterized ASEAN policies in the past. While still rather vague in terminology the language indicates some shift away from incorporating the language of rights into these overarching framework documents.

Contributed to building spaces for engagement for women's organisations and activists in the ASEAN mechanisms by organizing responses of civil society to address actions taken by the

ASEAN mechanisms, organizing CSO consultations to build capacity of national groups to engage directly with ASEAN, create familiarity and working relationships with the ASEAN bodies towards strengthening acceptance of the legitimate role of human rights organisations in interfacing with ASEAN.

- Participated at an interface meeting in Jan 2011 between the CEDAW Committee and the ASEAN Women's Commission on Promotion of Women and Children's Rights representing women's NGOs of the SEA region and made recommendations to the mandate and structure of the ACWC in relation to CEDAW implementation
- One of the main critique of ASEAN is the lack of genuine civil society inclusion and participation in its decision making process. IWRAW Asia Pacific co-organised a drafting workshop on CSO participation on 30-31 January 2012 to develop common principles towards ensuring CSO participation that is open, transparent, inclusive and representative of all groups, including marginalized and vulnerable. Representatives from several marginalized groups attended the writeshop and were able to share and articulate elements and good practices of CSO participation mechanisms in inter-governmental organizations.
- The Women's Caucus, co-coordinated by IWRAW Asia Pacific, was the only civil society entity invited to informally meet with the AICHR representatives at their meeting in February 2012. This was both an opportunity and development in the recognition given to the work and contributions on women's human rights of the Women's Caucus in the region. Nonetheless, it also continued to mark the selective and non-inclusive nature of the ASEAN mechanisms as the civil society organizations also requesting for space to engage were not invited to the same process.

Through the focus on OPCEDAW we were able to strengthen various key areas:

- From participation at their strategic and project planning, continued partnership between IWRAW Asia Pacific with KARAT network and national level members is continuing into 2012 and beyond, illustrating the usefulness of cross regional collaborations to engender state policy, promote use of CEDAW domestically and to strengthen the global women's movement toward common goals.
- Draft submissions to CEDAW that will fulfill the criteria for admissibility and have exhausted domestic remedies and that are based on progressive and expansive interpretations of national and CEDAW norms and standards.
- Provide case studies on specific priority/critical issues e.g. on lack of implementation to deal with 'culture' and systemic gaps in addressing violence against women, continued existence of patriarchal harmful practices like bride kidnapping and stigmatization of widows.

- Materials on CEDAW translated into regional languages for awareness raising and as technical resources.
- National plans for women's rights that incorporate specific litigation based advocacy.
- Our system of engaging with women trained under our training of trainers to act as trainers for others provided spaces for knowledge sharing and opportunities for growth and testing their learnt skills. Thus we discovered and trained 16 women in the intensive TOT to become resource persons for future trainings on CEDAW.

Information Dissemination Exchange and Application Strategy in 2011

The IDEAS unit provides integral research and communications support to enhance the effectiveness of the other programmes within the organisation. It aims to promote activism that is more knowledge based to tackle discrimination. Since its inception, IWRAP Asia Pacific has worked at creating awareness and building the capacity of women's groups to enable them to use international human rights treaties and mechanisms at the national level. It has always been integral to the organisations objectives to produce and distribute knowledge products on CEDAW and the treaty bodies.

It is through this engagement with activism that IWRAP AP is able to identify areas that still require work and how best to proceed in order to advance domestic application of international standards and norms. The IDEAS programme functions through systemising information related to CEDAW and other human rights mechanisms and channelling this into IWRAP AP's own programmes as well as those of our partners. Also central to our work thus far has been the consistent efforts to collect and disseminate all other relevant data and documents pertaining to human rights.

In close collaboration with the ERR and BCC units of the organisation, IDEAS works to process knowledge gained through the organisation's activities as well as funnelling back relevant information to enhance the programmes based on research and collected data from various sources. Sometimes, these findings are repackaged and disseminated to our partners or other stakeholders internal and external. Should more structured knowledge building be required, the unit will in collaboration with the others; organise expert group meetings (EGM) calling on partners with particular knowledge or expertise to brainstorm and produce new and critical thinking about a particular topic or issue.

The IDEAS unit also maintains the IWRAP AP website and listserv and hopes in 2012 to start a foray into social media such as Twitter and Facebook to reach a wider audience and disseminate information on CEDAW. The current website will undergo a revamp to make it more accessible and user friendly.

B. Objectives

The path to achieving substantive equality through CEDAW remains a challenge for the following reasons:

- Lack of information on the principles of the treaty and the contents of its provisions, as well as knowledge on how to use this;
- Narrow interpretation of treaty provisions;
- Absence of information on best practices related to the CEDAW Convention;

- Absence of links with and information about other international human rights treaties and mechanisms that can allow for greater effectiveness in the campaign to eliminate discrimination against women;
- Lack of synergy in NGO activism on the work of the treaty bodies (i.e. women's groups are not utilising the work of the different treaty bodies and also not exchanging positive experiences in relation to this); and
- Absence of information on how international treaties can be incorporated into domestic laws.

The overall objectives of IDEAS is to address some of these issues. These include:

1. Addressing the lack of information on the CEDAW “framework” by promoting better understanding of CEDAW, its principles and the content of its provisions and its framework on women's human rights.
2. Developing/capturing knowledge on how to use CEDAW more holistically and creatively by investigating new contexts and issues in application (practice) of the CEDAW framework (theory)
3. Disseminating information on the work of international human rights treaties and mechanisms and facilitate a flow of information between mainstream human rights groups and women's human rights groups to ensure that the international discourse on women's human rights, which is inclusive of varying contexts and experiences of marginalisation and oppression continues to be addressed and to allow for greater effectiveness and synergy in the work at all levels to eliminate discrimination against women.
4. Supporting the Building Capacity for Change and Enhancing Realisation of Rights strategies through conducting background research, fact checking and quality control through external and peer review mechanisms, collating materials, editing and publishing reports, and institutionalizing knowledge gains through coordinating the annual report of the organisation.

C. Highlights in Implementation for 2011

Publications

- OPS on Gender Equality Laws – the purpose of this paper is to propose the need for gender equality laws and then provide a discussion on possible elements of such a law. The paper will illustrate and provide guidance on how states should operationalize CEDAW through a GEL. There is already a draft of this paper which can be obtained from

IWRAW Asia Pacific on request. The author of this paper is Shanthi Dairiam, ex-CEDAW Committee member.

- OPS on Addressing Impunity in the Context of Violence Against Women (with specific focus on CEDAW). The main purpose of this paper is to demonstrate how the use of the impunity principles together with the CEDAW framework can give women's human rights advocates working on VAW a more comprehensive analytical tool to help them better understand and design interventions that are comprehensive and responsive to women victim-survivor's needs and demands for justice and reparation. Due to her tight schedule, the author, Kamala Chandrakirana ex-Commissioner of the Indonesian National Commission on Violence Against Women has requested an extension until the first quarter of 2012 to complete the first draft.
- OPS on Civil and Common Law Systems and challenges posed to CEDAW implementation, especially in operationalizing the CEDAW Committee's decisions under the communications procedure of the Optional Protocol to CEDAW. Alda Facio who is the Director of the Women, Gender and Justice Program at the United Nations Latin American Institute for Crime Prevention (ILANUD) based in Costa Rica is the author of this paper. The paper has been completed and awaits a decision on publishing.
- In addition to these publications, in 2010, IDEAS and the BCC Programme worked with Edna Aquino, to prepare an outline for a toolkit on maximising the use of both CEDAW and other international mechanisms towards promoting and protecting the rights of women migrant workers. The toolkit is called "Respect, Protect and Fulfil the Rights of Women Migrant Workers": A CEDAW in Action Toolkit (Toolkit). This Toolkit will draw on the discussions and information generated at the Roundtable, on Migration-Trafficking and CEDAW which was held in 2009. The toolkit is ready and is to be reviewed and published by IWRAW AP in the first quarter of 2012.
- The IWRAW AP History Project started preliminary interview stages in 2011. Lead researcher Shanthi Dairiam made trips to India, Thailand and America to interview people initially identified as useful for the book. She also took the opportunity to speak to partners during the Strategic Planning Meeting in August 2011 to elicit more information and written blurbs that will prove useful. Transcripts of her interviews were partially completed and passed on the editor for review. Planning was also underway for two consultations in Latin America to gather more responses from the region and brainstorm on possible next steps for IWRAW AP and partners in the coming years.

Expert Group Meetings and Testing of Knowledge Products

- IWRAW Asia Pacific organised the Workshop as a culmination of previous processes (Expert Group Meeting and Write-shop) in development of the Lawyers Resource Package. The Workshop was held in Kuala Lumpur on the 22-28 June 2011 to pilot test materials prepared by Resource Persons for the Lawyers Resource Package. The 16 participants were practising lawyers with more than 5 yrs of experience in litigation on women's rights and human rights from 15 countries across the world. The countries represented were, Fiji, Australia, Japan, Indonesia, Philippines, Malaysia, Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, Botswana, Kenya, Bulgaria, Latvia, United Kingdom and Colombia. The Workshop surfaced various technical and strategic points of feedback and inputs from participants on the materials being developed. Resource Persons are now working to aid the larger process of refinement and completion of the Resource Package.
- A Steering Committee Meeting for the Lawyers Resource Package was held in Toronto as the follow-up to the Lawyer's Resource Package meeting held in June where the selected experts met to discuss the package. This meeting was held for the experts to review the updated drafts and work on further additions and amendments based on their expert and practitioner's inputs.

Website, listserv and maintenance of resource centre on CEDAW and WHR

IWRAW AP's website that serves as a CEDAW knowledge resource continued to highlight and compile the most updated information about the CEDAW review process. It now includes more than 26600 pages on CEDAW and women's human rights with nearly 100,000 hits in a year. We were able to expand the resource centre by 57 journals and 17 books. Our listserv membership has continued to grow beyond 1600 members. As is the practice, papers and publications are disseminated during all our workshops and events. In 2011, approximately 200 hard copies have been distributed. To reduce bulky baggage, IWRAW AP also started burning resource materials onto CDs for distribution where hard copies could not be carried.

- A background and outcome document on the impact of conflict and post conflict contexts on women and girls. Please refer to our website for the background paper and outcome document.
<http://www.iwraw-ap.org/publications/doc/FinalReporttoParticipantsApril202011.pdf>.
- Resources and good practices/case studies from CEDAW Application Framework Project shared with larger pool of resource persons to upscale the CAF project with other national partners. [This framework is available from IWRAW Asia Pacific upon request.]

- Refining and updating training kit for “ From Global to Local on advocacy and lobbying at CEDAW” to reflect changes made to the CEDAW Review process in 2011 due to the treaty body strengthening process
- In 2011 there were 4 requests for translation of specific IWRAW AP resources, and in 4 trainings our materials were translated in local languages.
- Updated version of our Guide on Using the Universal Periodic Review to strengthen Women’s Human Rights to reflect changes to the procedure made in 2011. A completed online version will be disseminated by May 2012. <http://www.iwraw-ap.org/aboutus/documents/factsheetupr.pdf>

Summary of Institution Building Activities in 2011

With the reduction in grants received for the period 2012 onwards, the institution building unit had to focus much energies on identifying new grantmakers and applying for grants as well as looking for ways to cut back spending. Cost cutting measures were undertaken beginning with the office move to a more cost effective premise and not filling vacancies from natural attrition. Plans to rationalize the staff strength and align these with programmatic needs were agreed and were implemented in 2012.

IWRAP AP wrote proposals to large donors such as the FLOW funds from Netherlands, UNDEF, Global Fund for Women, Oxfam Novib, amongst others, as well as making collaborative applications to AusAid through our national partners.

Many donors cited a shift in focus areas and the channeling of funds towards more democracy based programmes as well as development based programmes. In order to consider this and to proceed to define IWRAP AP's thrusts for the coming years; the organization held a 7 day strategic planning meeting for both internal and external partners.



IWRAP Asia Pacific staff, Board, Advisors, and partners planning for the future at the Strategising for Change Consultation in August 2011

In August, the staff, Board members and the Advisory Committee met with various constituents including national partners, advisory members, and resource persons for a period for almost 7 days to review the past, create spaces for visioning and exploring the future, find agreement and articulate a shared basis and rationale for continued collaboration as well as ideas for increasing efficiency of the governance structures and the management of institutional processes. A report and set of recommendations by the consultant who led the process is being finalized and will be considered by the Board in coming Board meetings. We also initiated a Sharing process with partner Aurat Foundation to improve Planning Monitoring and Evaluation practices (September 2011 – into 2012)

In the first quarter of 2011, a new accounting system, UBS, was identified and installed. As a result of this, the manual system of preparing financial reports and donor reports were

eliminated. The UBS was able to provide a financial report that showed the donors and the activities allocated to the donors. This allowed for greater transparency and integrity in the financial reporting and timely management of donors' funds. Because transactions are processed regularly, financial reports were produced on a monthly basis and donors' reporting was made well within the deadlines given.

The monthly financial report was reformatted to show variance against budget and by donors. This allows the Programme Officers to know how much funds are available and manage the programmes accordingly. The financial manual was updated to reflect all decisions made since 2007 to guide the operations of the organisation.

In 2011 the Board met 3 times as part of their role in policy and oversight of the organisation.

In terms of staff movement, the organization was led by Thusitha Simon as Executive Director from December 2010 – June 2011. A new programme officer Gayathiri Jambulingam also joined the team in 2011.

Our work in 2012

Based on our three year plan as well as inputs and discussions with our stakeholders in August 2011, in 2012 we will continue to work towards the effective implementation and application of international human rights standards at the local, national, regional and international levels. Our activities and responses will seek to enhance commitments in promoting the participation of women in the development of human rights standards and to build women's capacity to claim and access their rights through the promotion of the principles enshrined in the CEDAW Convention. We will work towards the inclusion of women's experiences into policy, legislation and development programs is essential to the realization of ALL human rights.

In 2012, we will have to respond to the shifting policy environment for gender equality – through the Rio+20, the debates around new standards for Sustainable Development, the possible changes to be proposed in the ICPD global survey mechanism and document, new mechanisms for promoting human rights such as the Working Group on Discrimination in Law and Practice, we will have to promote awareness of these environmental and structural changes and address the impact on women of critical contexts including conflict, the economic-financial crises as well as climate and environmental degradation issues , in ensuring the promotion of gender equality.

In 2012 we will be strengthening our engagement with women's machinery in the Southeast Asian region, continuing our pilot projects on CEDAW application in Bangladesh, Vietnam, Timor Leste and Indonesia. Litigation strategies will also be a major focus for us as we support local groups in Southeast asia in creating a more conducive environment for women to claim rights though the legal system.

In all these we are working directly with our partners at the local level to learn from their experiences, as well as work collaboratively to plan and strategise to trigger responses in law and policy, as well as in use of law towards strengthening clarity of state obligation under CEDAW.

Our engagement with the treaty body process will continue with direct engagement with the CEDAW Committee, not only through the facilitation of participation of NGOs at the review process, but also engaged more substantively in the drafting of the General Recommendations on Women Affected by Conflict, Access to Justice and on Rural Women. This would include conducting relevant research, developing our submissions on elements to be considered in the GRs as well as organizing regional consultations. We are also working in collaboration with other international partners on providing inputs into the drafting of the General Comment on Sexual and Reproductive Health by the Committee on the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

A description of our full calendar of activities for 2011 is included in the annex below.

ANNEX 1: IWRAW ASIA PACIFIC CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES IN 2011

Activity 1: Facilitating Women to the CEDAW Sessions for Advocacy with the CEDAW Committee through IWRAW AP's "From Global to Local Programme"

This strategy aims to provide women activists at the national level familiarity and skills to directly engage with the international framework for driving policy change such as through UN mechanisms like CEDAW and to build understanding of women's groups on how to use the CEDAW review to mobilise support and raise concerns about the continued existence of gender based discrimination and inequality. It represents a transnational strategy to add critical domestic voices to the constructive dialogue between the CEDAW committee and states. We facilitated women to attend the review sessions and provided training and lobbying expertise to maximize national NGOs engagement with the CEDAW Committee. In addition the programme facilitates NGO follow-up strategies in response to the CEDAW Committee's Concluding Observations.

1a. 48th CEDAW Session, From Global to Local, Geneva (17 January 2011 – 4 February 2011)

The 7 countries reviewed at this session were Bangladesh, Belarus, Israel, Kenya, Liechtenstein, Sri Lanka, and South Africa. A total of 23 NGO representatives from Israel, Belarus, Kenya, South Africa, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka attended the session and the orientation and mentoring programme organised by IWRAW Asia Pacific.



6 Oral statements and 11 Shadow reports from NGOs can be found here:

http://www.iwraw-ap.org/resources/48_ngocedaw_resources.htm

State reports and concluding observations of the Committee can be found here: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/cedaws48.htm>

1b. 49th CEDAW Session, From Global to Local, New York (8 – 23 July 2011)

This session saw the review of 8 countries: Costa Rica, Italy, Ethiopia, Zambia, Republic of Korea, Nepal, Djibouti and Singapore with representatives from all of these except Djibouti. IWRAW Asia Pacific funded the participation of 10 out of 43 representatives from the participating countries mentioned and presented on a range of issues such as those affecting vulnerable groups like Roma women, disabled women, LGBT people, migrant and indigenous women.

19 Oral statements and 13 Shadow reports from NGOs can be found here: http://www.iwraw-ap.org/resources/49_ngocedaw_resources.htm

State reports and concluding observations of the Committee can be found here: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/cedaws49.htm>

1c. 50th CEDAW Session, From Global to Local, Geneva (29 September – 15 October 2011)

The 50th session reviewed another 8 countries namely, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, Lesotho, Kuwait, Mauritius, Montenegro, Oman and Paraguay. Out of the 8, 5 were initial reporting countries and IWRAW Asia Pacific funded 7 out of the 8 participants who attended the training and monitoring programme that runs for three days prior to the review sessions. Due to sudden tightening in visa application processes, participants from Cote d'Ivoire were unfortunately unable to attend at the last minute.



Oral statements and Shadow reports from NGOs can be found here: http://www.iwraw-ap.org/resources/50_ngocedaw_resources.htm

State reports and concluding observations of the Committee can be found here: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/cedaws50.htm>

2) National and regional level support to NGOs on CEDAW implementation including training, technical assistance

2.a CEDAW Trainings

2a.1 Training of Trainers by KARAT-IWRAW-AP for Women's Rights Activists from Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Azerbaijan, in Warsaw, Poland (November 17-23, 2010)

IWRAW-AP cooperated with Karat Coalition on conducting a TOT on the Application of CEDAW for 16 women's rights activists from 3 Central Asian republics and Azerbaijan on November 17-23, 2010 to support national strategising on CEDAW. Training sessions and materials were translated into Russian. The three main segments of the 7 day training included foundational sessions (1-5), Sessions on CEDAW framework based on a holistic approach (sessions 6-12) and skills building for trainers/methods through practice sessions (13-14). This training supported our regional partner KARAT to develop a core of CEDAW trainers in the region who could train on CEDAW in the regional language and addressing their specific context as post-Soviet, newly democratizing states.

2a.2. Afghan Capacity Building Workshop on CEDAW Reporting (17-19 December 2011)

IWRAP Asia Pacific and Afghan's Women's Network - AWN entered into a collaboration to strengthen the capacities of national NGOs and women's rights groups on CEDAW and its application. The capacity building workshop followed by a strategy meeting was planned in early October, but was postponed due to the security condition in Afghanistan. The workshop in December was followed by a meeting with AWN on developing long term strategy on CEDAW implementation through collaborative activities. The context for Afghanistan is largely violence against women and conflict but the training touched on many areas including health, employment, and education. The training was for a sort of reintroduction to CEDAW and to revive the national level process of producing a shadow report.

2.b CEDAW Shadow Report Writing Workshops

2.b.1 United Kingdom Shadow Report Writing Training (Request for Assistance) (26 – 28 January 2011)

Tailor made to address the needs of the participants; the training was held in London for 32 participants from diverse backgrounds, organizational representation and CEDAW expertise. IWRAP Asia Pacific was invited by a representative of the UK CEDAW Working Group (NGOs); the Women's Resource Centre. The UK context required a balance of focus and advocacy on issues of concern to mainstream and marginalized women's issues and attention to implementation of the government gender policy. The training was designed as well as developing a collective and comprehensive approach linking national action and international advocacy. The usefulness of IWRAP's training is captured in their evaluation report available from info@wrc.org.uk.

BOX

Statements made by UK participants on the impact and usefulness of the training include:

"[The training] gave very clear information and understanding. Now have more confidence in utilising CEDAW as a tool and informing others of its use"

"It will help us to empower ourselves and other women and other NGOs that we work with. It will be knowledge that will be passed on and actively engaged in"

"Be able to explain CEDAW at a grassroots level, enhanced my personal understanding"
"Renewed attention to CEDAW procedures and protections. Greater knowledge of issues in the UK"

"Far reaching in terms of how widely we can disseminate"

"Re-read CEDAW concluding observations and identify key issues for next examination"

"Organise a CEDAW event with young women students"

2b.2. Lesotho Shadow Report Training (15 – 18 April 2011)

The training took place co-organised by FIDA Lesotho. Lesotho as an initial reporting country to CEDAW was a priority. Fourteen organisations participated and a coalition was set up to produce the final shadow report. The training, the first of its kind to be held in Lesotho, set out to enhance CEDAW knowledge- on its concepts and processes – and how best to engage with the process as a tool for advocacy. The general objectives for this workshop is to reaffirm and strengthen participants' knowledge of CEDAW concepts and mechanisms, emphasizing the process of writing and presenting a Shadow Report to the CEDAW Committee and how to use the shadow reporting process as a tool for advocacy within the country. The participants formed a coalition and produced the Shadow Report for Lesotho.

2b.3. Shadow Report Writing for KOCUN, Korea (21 April 2011)

IWRAP Asia Pacific provided KOCUN with inputs on CEDAW. The half-day long training programme covered the reporting cycle, the state report, the purpose of a shadow report, the role of NGOs, the structure and content of the report and follow-up to the review process and this speech was delivered to students and activists who were going to work on the national level shadow report process. This was to feed into KOCUN's participation and presentation at the 49th CEDAW Session. The output from the session was the shadow report prepared by the coalition that attended the training.

2b.4. Jordan Shadow Report Training (27 – 29 July 2011)

The Arab Women's Association (AWO) of Jordan collaborated with IWRAP Asia Pacific on the organising of this training. Jordan has submitted its 5th report for the 51st CEDAW session which will take place in 2012 in Geneva. 15 participants attended the training that strengthened their knowledge of CEDAW concepts and mechanisms, emphasising the process of writing and presenting a Shadow Report to the CEDAW Committee and how to use the shadow reporting process as a tool for advocacy in Jordan. The core context for Jordan that became the focus was the underlying issue of patriarchy in society and how it links to CEDAW and its principles of non-discrimination, substantive equality and state obligation.

In running this training, we were able to connect Jordanian women's activism on gender equality to larger political activism. A letter of thanks from AWO reflects their increased strategic understanding and willingness to participate at international processes for monitoring state accountability for human rights as well as further concerted effort on gender equality measures during this time of flux in Jordan.

Letter from AWO

On behalf of the Arab Women Organization of Jordan (AWO), I'd like to convey our deep gratitude and many thanks to IWRAP-AP for the assistance rendered to AWO to hold a training workshop on CEDAW Shadow Report. IWRAP-AP has been so generous to cover for the travel and accommodation of 2 outstanding trainers and provide excellent training materials. It is with pleasure to tell you that the workshop had had a very positive impact on the participants, who represented several Jordanian women NGOs, as well as on the role and performance of AWO in the CEDAW monitoring process.

Right after the training, an NGO delegation with 2 participants from the training workshop, including myself, had traveled to New York to attend the CEDAW pre-session working group assigned for 51st session. An Oral Statement was presented on behalf of the Jordanian NGOs as an overture for the detailed discussion over the implementation of CEDAW. This was a valuable experience, in itself. Meanwhile, the process is still going on with AWO and partners starting to prepare a Shadow Report to be delivered presently. Fortunately, Jordan is going through a reform process under the pressure of the Arab Spring. We expect changes pertaining to women's rights that we should highlight in the upcoming Shadow Report. Of course, there will always be unsolved dilemmas as in Art.16 or the cultural stereotypes, etc. All and above, there is the haunting threat of the Islamist and patriarchy alliance against women's rights. We reiterate our appreciation for IWRAP-AP and look forward for strengthening our mutual relations and ties. We ask you kindly to convey our appreciation to the trainers for their excellent performance as trainers and well-informed instructions.

Sincerely Yours

Layla Naffa Hamarneh

AWO

2b.5. Zimbabwe Shadow Report Training (24-26 August 2011)

Also scheduled with Jordan for review at the 51st session, Zimbabwe NGOs underwent a shadow report writing training to 20 women build clarity on the concepts of CEDAW, enhance their understanding of the role of NGOs in the process, enhance their proficiency in writing shadow reports and then using the report for advocacy at the national level. The training discussed the basic modules on CEDAW and its principles as well as how NGO strategies to collate information and produce a strong shadow report. The coalition formed during this training produced the shadow report for the session.

2b.6 Shadow report discussion with WAO and Malaysian NGOs (6 October 2011)

The meeting aimed to discuss the details and seek contributions from Malaysian NGOs to begin the drafting of a new Malaysian shadow report. Though Malaysia has yet to be scheduled for review at the OHCHR, it has been 5 years since their last review and the usual four year cycle should mean a review coming up in the near future. Together with IWRAP Asia Pacific representatives the representatives brainstormed on the best reporting methodologies and delineating of writing and information gathering duties. 15 women from NGOs working on child rights, women migrant worker's rights and LGBT rights were present to provide input and contexts which represent the prevalent issues in the country. There will be another follow-up meet to draft the final shadow report and IWRAP Asia Pacific has pledged continuous support for this process.

2.b. Iraqi Shadow Report Workshop – coordinated by Baghdad Women’s Association (14-16 October 2011)

This project is a continuation of the work achieved during the write shop held by the Norwegian Church Aid last December 2010, and to which IWRAP contributed by engaging an expert to facilitate the process, BWA project will build on the already existing resources and the work done during that workshop meeting. BWA will also continue to build on the already established cooperation with Norwegian Church Aid in terms of getting the latter technical support in implementing this activity project. BWA will assume the full responsibility of ensuring the timely implementation of the activities, the overseeing of the processes. A draft shadow report was produced in Arabic and used as a basis for discussion with the larger group of NGOs.

2.c Requests for assistance/input sessions/post review support

IWRAP Asia Pacific was also invited for various meetings/trainings organized by other groups to provide technical input on CEDAW.

2c.1. CEDAW and Migrant Domestic Workers Workshop, Singapore (11 September 2011)

IWRAP Asia Pacific was invited by Singapore’s migrant rights groups to provide technical input into a national CSO meeting on the application of CEDAW standards to the context of migrant women workers and their families and discussed with participants how to practically engage with the mechanism to seek redress for issues faced by migrant domestic workers. Our resource person provided coverage of the recent GR on Migrant Women Workers rights under CEDAW, substantively clarifying that: though migration has often been addressed by the Committee through: General Principles of Equality and Non-Discrimination in Articles 1-5, Article 6 on Trafficking and Prostitution (specifically trafficking, not migration generally), Article 11 on Employment, Article 12 on Health, the Committee has adopted General Recommendations to fill gaps in the provisions of the Convention.

Through this input session we clarified that GR 26 on Women Migrant Workers (2008) States that migrant women, like all women, should not be discriminated against in any sphere of their life. Although both men and women migrate, migration is not a gender-neutral phenomenon. The position of female migrants is different from that of male migrants in terms of legal migration channels, the sectors into which they migrate, the forms of abuse they suffer and the consequences thereof. We highlighted that recommendations to States by CEDAW Committee are made on the character of migration for each state e.g. origin, transit, and destination)

This easy to follow chart explains the different levels and character of state obligation and issues of concern and in relation to rights of women migrant workers for each origin, destination, transit or mixed character state.

GR 26: Sex- and gender-based human rights concerns In countries of origin before departure and after return:	GR 26: Sex- and gender-based human rights concerns In countries of destination:	GR 26: Recommendations Common responsibilities of countries of origin and destination	GR 26: Recommendations Obligations of destination countries:
Bans or restrictions on migrating based on sex, sex and age, marital status, pregnancy, age of children or maternity status Restrictions on the types of occupations Need for male permission Where women have restricted access	Formal restrictions (bans on female employment in certain sectors) Gender stereotypes (gendered notions of appropriate work result in familial and service job opportunities) Lack of legal protections for work (not classified as employees) Discrimination in contracting and wages	Develop gender-sensitive, rights-based policies to regulate all aspects and stages of migration, facilitate work opportunities for women abroad, promote safe migration and ensure protection of the rights of women migrant workers. Involve women migrant workers and NGOs Undertake research and analysis and collect data to identify needs and problems	Lift discriminatory restrictions on immigration and bans that prohibit women migrant workers from getting married, becoming pregnant or securing independent housing Ensure legal protection for women migrant workers’ rights Ensure access to remedies

to education, training and information on migration, they may be more vulnerable to (1) trafficking and deception in the process of migration; and (2) violence and violations of their rights by border patrols, immigration officials, prospective employers and others in the country of destination. Stigmatization, compulsory HIV/AIDS testing, moral rehabilitation In countries of transit: Abandonment or sexual and physical abuse by agents/escorts	(lower wages, delayed payment, non-payment or the deposit of wages into accounts they cannot access; unable to leave positions because of debt to agencies; inability to transmit savings; expectations to support family and extended family or to remit all of their earnings) Discrimination in health services (lack of access to health care, health insurance, mandatory HIV/AIDS or pregnancy testing) Discrimination in living and working conditions Sexual abuse, harassment and physical violence, including sleep and food deprivation Limitations on access to justice, especially because of isolation from other workers, limitations on communications with others and mobility, etc.	Monitoring and reporting obligations to CEDAW Committee GR 26: Recommendations (cont.) Obligations of countries of origin: Lift discriminatory bans or restrictions on migration Education, awareness-raising and training Regulations and monitoring systems Health services Ensure equal and independent access to travel documents Ensure legal and administrative assistance Establish measures to safeguard remittances Facilitate the right to return Design or oversee comprehensive socio-economic, psychological and legal services aimed at facilitating the reintegration of women who have returned. Provide diplomatic and consular protection	Ensure legal protection for the freedom of movement Provide non-discriminatory family reunification schemes and residency regulations Provide training / awareness-raising for public and private recruitment agencies, employers, State employees Implement monitoring systems Ensure access to services Protect rights of women migrant workers in detention Enable integration into the new society Protect undocumented women migrant workers
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2.c.2. Commonwealth Seminar on Universal Periodic Review follow-up and implementation in Asia and Europe” held in Dhaka, Bangladesh (9-10 February 2011)

IWRAW Asia Pacific was invited by the Commonwealth Secretariat to provide technical inputs based on our work on implementation of the Concluding Observations of CEDAW and in facilitating national NGOs in submitting reports to the UPR process and their attendance at the UPR sessions. We provided suggestions to participants on how to incorporate a gender perspective into the process as well as specifically on how legislative change can be used to facilitate greater equality in the context of the follow-up process.

2.c.3 Support to women’s groups in Sri Lanka post CEDAW review

IWRAW Asia Pacific provided resource and technical assistance to Sri Lankan group Women and Media Collective towards 3 activities: a) CEDAW Publications, b) National Consultation on CEDAW and c) Media Briefing. Complete report from Women and Media Collective available at www.womenandmedia.net

The primary objective of publishing the reports below is to disseminate the Concluding Observations to NGOs and CBOs and other relevant organizations / individuals throughout the island. The major outcome of this activity has been the increased awareness and interest generated in the CEDAW Concluding Observations by networks.

Publications created and disseminated:

- ‘Shadowing the State Through CEDAW’ : This publication was published separately in English, Sinhala and Tamil and includes the following documents:
 - a. The Sri Lanka NGO Shadow Report to CEDAW prepared by WMC
 - b. The CEDAW Committee’s List of Issues and Questions with regard to the consideration of the combined 5 th , 6 th & 7 th Periodic Reports of Sri Lanka
 - c. The Submission of the WMC in response to the list of Issues and Questions raised by the CEDAW Committee
 - d. The Concluding Observations of the CEDAW Committee

- ‘Sexual Rights and CEDAW’: This trilingual publication includes the Shadow Report on the Status of Lesbians, Bisexuals and Transpersons in Sri Lanka prepared by the WSG.

Activities held:

- On 30th June the Sexual Rights Network of the WSG conducted a full day meeting on the CEDAW Concluding Observations (COs), discussing strategies and ways forward to advocate for the implementation of CO 25(g) and 29 on decriminalization of same sex relationships and on abolishing the Vagrants Ordinance of 1842.
- On 16 th August, the Mothers & Daughters of Lanka conducted a similar meeting, particularly with the aim of disseminating the COs and discussing future strategies. Kumudini Samuel (WMC), Chulani Kodikara (ICES) and Jayanthi Kuru-Utumpala (WMC & WSG) addressed the audience about issues relating to Women affected by Conflict, Women’s Political Representation, and Sexuality Rights respectively.

2.c.5 Support to women’s groups in Italy post CEDAW review

From September –November 2011 the NGO Platform in Italy worked on translating the Concluding Observations formulated by the CEDAW Committee in the 49th session, writing a booklet which includes both the synthesis of the issues analyzed in the Shadow Report and the Concluding Observations of the Committee and disseminating the booklet and the information toward the general public, the mass media, the politicians, participating in events at local and national level. Target audience for these awareness raising and sharing was the Italian civil society and particularly the female and feminist organizations, NGOs, trade unions, organizations of migrants, disabled, LGBTQi and sex workers, academics, religious, jurists and peace organizations, mass media, students and in general individual women and men.

2.c.6 Support to women’s groups in Singapore post CEDAW review

HOME Singapore conducted six training workshops “CEDAW AND MIGRANT DOMESTIC WORKERS” for the migrant domestic worker community and advocate volunteers and staff on Sep 11& 25, Oct 9& 23, Nov 13 & 27 - Time 2 pm to 5 pm, Sep 11 at SCWO Centre, 96 Waterloo St. Singapore and Sep 25, Oct 9 & 23, Nov 13 & 27 at ISS International School, 25 Paterson Road.

180 participants from the migrant domestic worker community and 30 advocate volunteers in Singapore were provided an opportunity at these 6 workshop sessions to understand CEDAW and how it works for the rights of women in particular, migrant domestic workers; develop their capacity as advocates for the rights of women under the CEDAW provisions.

2.c.7 Support to women’s groups in Costa Rica post CEDAW review

IWRAW Asia Pacific’s support enabled Colectivo por el Derecho Decidir to develop a newsletter that contains the main concluding observations that the CEDAW Committee has made to Costa Rica, and explains them, to be distributed among decision makers, government officials, journalists, women's organizations and other stakeholders. The Target audience includes government officials, women's organizations and journalists. Expected outputs / outcomes: 300 newsletters distributed to 150 people in the first four months.

The second activity supported was a workshop of 16 hours with activists and professionals women to raise awareness of the social audit process of developing a shadow report. The workshop will include the CEDAW Convention, the general recommendations and the concluding observations made to Costa Rica. The activities are reported on their website: www.colectiva-cr.com.

Activity 3: Collaborative Projects on Application of CEDAW for law and policy advocacy (CEDAW Application/Compliance

Framework Project)

This is a strategy that supports CEDAW Compliance by supporting national partners to develop a comprehensive strategy for analyzing, monitoring and developing solutions/responses to specific laws and policies to ensure the outcome/results of such law and policy produces the effect of equality and elimination of discrimination, and women's exercise of rights under the law. The very nature of the CAF project was to allow the national partner its own space and autonomy to pursue specific policy change and law reform plans while enabling IWRAP AP to provide its technical assistance through a cohesive and mutual assistance framework toward common goals in relation to working on projects related to strengthening the normative standards for gender equality in the domestic environment in support of its national partners. The basic stages of this project included: project briefing and planning in phase 1 with core groups, workshop on use of the CAF analytical tool, IWRAP AP staff providing technical support in implementation (research, data gathering, monitoring, audit/review, socialization, advocacy strategising); and the final phase of holding regional sharing meetings towards assessment and determining future directions

3a. Bangladesh

The pilot of the CEDAW Application/Compliance Project in Bangladesh began in December 2010 with the initial workshop. The entire project was planned to take approximate two years to come to completion. The project aims to build knowledge and skills of members of Naripokkho, the national partner in Bangladesh, and a coalition of 5 women's rights organisations on the use of the CEDAW Application Framework in their legislative and policy advocacy, identify ideas for refinement of the CEDAW Application Framework and develop advocacy work plan to be implemented at the national level after the workshop. The groups chose to work on two issues, tracing the implementation and interpretation of the Violence against Women legislation and to engender the Agricultural Policy.

The second phase workshop was held in August 2011 and discussed the National Agriculture Policy and the Prevention of Oppression of Women and Children Act in relation to State Obligations for the enjoyment and exercise of women's rights provided for in CEDAW, then developed recommendations for CEDAW compliant Agriculture Policy and VAW legislation, identified next steps for development of an Advocacy Strategy and Action Plan for the achievement of a CEDAW compliant Agriculture Policy and VAW legislation. Re-visitation of the CEDAW Compliance Framework was needed in light of the participants' feedback. However, due to the sheer amount of work required to meet these objectives, the one workshop was not enough though a good draft on the content of the advocacy was developed and firm agreement on next steps. The immediate next steps included a second meeting in December 2011 to reach a consensus on recommendations. In December 2011 the group held a larger meeting with its in country CSO partners to share their goals and their advocacy plan to mobilize support, and validate their findings through the larger group.

3b. Indonesia

A preparatory visit was held in November 2011 to touchbase with CWGI on the possible contexts and legislation to be scrutinized during the consultation. We aim to help to use the framework to test domestic legislation on marriage, Indonesian Marriage Law (IML) (Law No. 1, 1974). Women's groups and NGOs have been developing a draft of the law to reflect specific amendments to make the law in line with CEDAW and other standards of equality. CWGI is the national level group working with IWRAP Asia Pacific to hold this consultation in 2012. The plans the groups have identified are related to socializing certain norms on marriage equality with the community and raise awareness for the need for such rights for women, as well as to engage with lawmakers during the drafting process.

3.c Timor Leste

Timor Leste was identified as a priority country in Southeast Asia to undergo the framework training. The project is in collaboration with national level partners Rede Feto and the Aloia Foundation for two years. On 10-11 November 2011 IWRAP AP and Rede Feto Network held the initial project briefing as a way to develop a process oriented strategy. The two areas identified by the members on which they will work on are the Labour Law and Re-entry Policy (girls going back to school after their pregnancy). In the meantime, the group will conduct research and data collection to monitor the current labour law and gather info to formulate a Re-

entry policy. Plans are in discussion for how the project will proceed in 2012 especially with a skill building workshop(Phase 2). The group may also consider monitoring of the new Violence against Women law using the CAF framework.

3.d Vietnam

From 1-3 December 2011, IWRAP AP and GENCOMNET held the initial project briefing with women's groups from Vietnam to identify critical concerns in advocacy related to amendments to the identified laws/policies and in developing strategies for the implementation of the Project and identifying stakeholders. Two areas identified by the members on which they will work on is the Employment Law and Land Ownership Law and future steps include the second phase technical skilling to implement components of the project including research, monitoring, analysis and designing and mobilizing for advocacy with stakeholders including government agencies.

Activity 4. National/Regional Dialogues/Consultations on CEDAW with NGO partners and state stakeholders

4.1. Capacity Building Workshop for State Agencies Gender Focal Persons on CEDAW, Concluding Observations, and Issues on Gender Rights, Philippines (2 – 4 November 2011)

IWRAP Asia Pacific supported Rainbow-Rights to hold a workshop on the 3-4 November themed as “Capacity Building Workshop for State Agencies Gender Focal Persons on CEDAW, Concluding Observations, and Issues on Gender Rights”. IWRAP Asia Pacific pursued collaboration with R-Rights on CEDAW implementation as a follow-up to a regional training conducted where the need for training on CEDAW was highlighted. This was also seen as an opportunity for the trainers from the RTOT to practice the training skills which IWRAP AP provided guidance on in 2010. The training focused on LGBT rights and intersectionality as well as a dedicated session on the principle of state obligation. The objective was to strengthen gender focal persons' knowledge, appreciation and skills in applying the principles of CEDAW, deepen their analytical skills in examining gender realities and complying with CEDAW and concluding observations and enhancing government agencies' efforts in the promotion of gender rights.

The outcomes derived include:

1. The participants' interest in furthering their skills and knowledge on CEDAW and translating their learning points into the design procedural aspects of their specific agency programmes to ensure a result of substantive equality and non discrimination
2. Clarity that there was a strong need that governments and NGOs need to focus on CEDAW training and information in the provinces
3. Clarity that the issue of the non-passing of the Reproductive Health Bill, the Anti-Discrimination Bill and the lack of Divorce law in the country was still a major obstacles to the promotion and protection of WHR. However, activists are continuously working on realising these bills and laws. The influence of the church on the State's non-actions around these issues has been openly identified and the interference of religious beliefs on human rights has not been welcomed and is continuously challenged



4. A clearer understanding of the situation and issues faced by women from various vulnerable groups which can strengthen understanding and application of the universality of CEDAW's principles while also recognising the need to ensure diversity and communal perspectives.
5. The strengthening of relationship between a (marginalised) rights group like R Rights with national institutions for rights which as an LBT NGO, they might not have received as many positive responses from the various public service sectors. There is potential for further institutional-CSO sector linkages.
6. Another end product will be a publication of the proceedings which will provide a guidebook for replication of this workshop among other government agencies, and would be an effective tool for gender mainstreaming.
7. At the end of the workshop, we expect immediate results in governance that will be key in the next CEDAW reporting requirements, and in support of the Magna Carta of Women. R-Rights has dialogued with some of these agencies already and they can do a lot if provided a deeper understanding of CEDAW that this workshop will give them.

4.2 Laos CEDAW Training for Local Government – Access to Justice, Vientiane, Lao P.D.R. (12 – 21 October 2011)

IWRAW Asia Pacific supported the Lao Bar and other Laotian women's groups to hold a training on 12-21 October themed as "Lao CEDAW Training – Access to Justice" IWRAW Asia Pacific pursued collaboration with Lao Bar Association on CEDAW implementation as a follow-up to a regional training conducted where the need for training on CEDAW was highlighted. This was also seen as an opportunity for the trainers from the RTOT to practice the training skills which IWRAW AP provided guidance on in 2010. 19 CSO and local government women underwent the training. The trainers conducted a basic CEDAW training in Laotian over 4 days in Vientiane for a group of 19 participants representing different government agencies.

Most of them had not heard about CEDAW. There were 5 men among the participants. Through this workshop we raised awareness of CEDAW and its significance to gender equality, enhanced knowledge on and skills of using a legal framework, created an advocacy mechanism which can support women's access to justice and introduced concepts and tools needed for effective CEDAW monitoring to (local) government agencies.

The acknowledgement and recognition that a major obstacle to women's rights was implementation de jure (many legal policies adopted based on CEDAW articles) but not implemented de facto and that there needed to be specific and planned responses to address these obstacles to the environment for gender equality. Throughout the training, lots of issues faced by women were expressed and there was a feeling of frustration from the participants on their inability to do much as a result of lack of funding and State protocols and priorities.

IWRAW AP was able to establish contact with various government branches and a few representatives who have been through CEDAW training but however, expressed limitations in its implementation and gauge interest expressed to further improve conceptual clarity on CEDAW e.g. by the Law School (under the MoJ) in co-conducting CEDAW training with the trainers and IAP. As a follow-up skilling for trainers we have trained, this workshop provided a training ground to hone the trainers interests and skills and knowledge in CEDAW training, especially for advanced levels within the Laos context. Substantively we were able to build understanding about key concepts of women's human rights from CEDAW such as temporary special measures as a means to effect/fastrack access to justice, a subject which the participants felt they needed further exploration to ensure the current system and policies are measured against these standards of the convention which require not only long term outcomes but also measurement of short term enablers mandated by temporary special measures.

In pre and post evaluation the three Lao trainers trained by IWRAW Asia Pacific achieved a 40% increase in substantive understanding of CEDAW (self reported) from participants and all were evaluated to be above average in skills and knowledge of CEDAW (more than 81%). We make the assumption that this demonstration of capacity of Laotian resource persons will encourage the state agencies to further network and collaborate with this group.

Activity 5: Developing resources to support implementation of CEDAW in the national context

5.a Pilot Testing Workshop for Litigating Lawyers on Women's Human Rights Using CEDAW (22 – 28 June 2011)

IWRAW Asia Pacific organised the Workshop as a culmination of previous processes (Expert Group Meeting and Write-shop) in development of the Lawyers Resource Package. The Workshop was organised to pilot test materials prepared by Resource Persons for the Lawyers Resource Package. The Workshop was different to the extent that the main aim was to elicit feedback and inputs from participants on presentation of materials by Resource Persons to aid the larger process of development of the Resource Package. The key topics identified were: (i) Conceptual/theoretical understanding of substantive equality, non-discrimination and state obligation; (ii) Status and hierarchy of CEDAW in domestic legal systems; ways in which CEDAW can be used to advance women's human rights; how to cope with the legal ramifications of reservations to CEDAW in litigation and (iii) Practical application which included, determining litigation plan, developing political strategies, elements on how to confront hostile state institutions and enforcement and monitoring measures.

Proceedings (including presentations, and discussions between resource persons and participants during the sessions) of the Workshop are to be compiled and presented with the aid of a prescribed format by documentors as the Draft Resource Package after the Workshop.

This resource for lawyers was envisaged to help towards the following long term outcomes:

- i) Changing the political attitude towards women and creating a conducive environment for women to claim their human rights in all fields on the basis of equality and non-discrimination;
- ii) Contributing to an increased capacity of women's human rights activists in drawing State accountability towards the realization of women's human rights through domestic litigation;
- iii) Increasing litigation at the domestic level using CEDAW to promote women's equality and non-discrimination in all fields, creating relevant jurisprudence at the domestic level and contributing to the exhaustion of domestic remedies;
- iv) Increasing capacity of litigators to prepare for potential use of OP CEDAW;
- v) Increasing women's accessibility to justice

Pilot Testing Workshop for Lawyers on Litigation on Women's Human Rights Using CEDAW 16 - 20 June 2011, Kuala Lumpur



The 16 participants were practising lawyers with more than 5 yrs of experience in litigation on women's rights and human rights from 15 countries across the world. The countries represented were, Fiji, Australia, Japan, Indonesia, Philippines, Malaysia, Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, Botswana, Kenya, Bulgaria, Latvia, United Kingdom and Colombia. The Workshop surfaced various technical and strategic points of feedback and inputs from participants on the materials being developed. Resource Persons are now working to aid the larger process of refinement and completion of the Resource Package.

5.b Steering Committee for the Lawyers Resource Package Meeting in Toronto

This meeting was the follow-up to the Lawyer's Resource Package meeting held in June where the selected experts met to discuss the package and how to make the operational changes post the pilot testing. This meeting was held for the experts to review the updated drafts and work on further additions and amendments based on their expert and practitioner's inputs. Currently the

lawyers resource package is being finalized by the Steering Committee and the drafting team in the form of a reference handbook for lawyers, for the achievement of following aims and goals:

- a. To be used primarily by litigating lawyers but also by persons engaging with the law in the area of policy reform, advocacy and capacity building on women's human rights.
- b. To frame arguments for women's human rights under the CEDAW framework on non discrimination, substantive equality, state obligation and accountability. (Explanation – this refers to framing of arguments relating to all human rights for women within the larger ambit of substantive equality. This is specifically to counter arguments that suggest right to food or right to health to be more crucial for women as opposed to right to equality.)
- c. To facilitate use of international standards creatively in arguing for women's human rights at the domestic level.
- d. To identify strategies and tools for lawyers to overcome challenges and obstacles in litigation on women's human rights.
- e. To facilitate lawyers in expanding and contributing to jurisprudence on equality and non discrimination at the national level.
- f. To offer strategies to ensure availability of highest level of remedies (including regional courts and international treaty bodies) in the interest of women's access to justice.

6. Website, listserv and maintenance of resource centre on CEDAW and WHR

During this time, our CEDAW knowledge resource website continued to highlight and compile the most updated information about the CEDAW review process. It now includes more than 26600 pages on CEDAW and women's human rights with nearly 100,000 hits in a year. We were able to expand the resource centre by 57 journals and 17 books. Our listserv membership has continued to grow beyond 1600 members. Papers being finalized for publication on the subject of gender equality legislations, treaty incorporation (domestic legal framework and hierarchy of laws) for Vietnam, Malaysia, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Laos and on the impact of civil and common law systems in applying decisions of international claims mechanisms.

- Disseminated 200 hard copies of various publications from our Occasional Paper Series (1-14) <http://www.iwraw-ap.org/publications/ops.htm> at various trainings and events.
- Added to website by 15 pages on CEDAW information and other human rights instruments.
- Effective dissemination of time sensitive information on CEDAW, women's human rights and other issues to activate and support the advocacy strategies of national partners through listserv and website.

Activity 7. Use of law and litigation strategy (to realise women's rights)

The strategy focuses on the use of law and litigation in promoting women's human rights and the use of CEDAW. The Lawyers Resource Package is a tool that is being developed by lawyers and specialists on women's human rights specially selected for their expertise. The package is aimed to be a resource for judges and lawyers to ensure they are always aware of CEDAW and it's possible uses in the cases they are handling.

7a. OPCEDAW clinics and technical support for Philippines, Tanzania, Kyrgyzstan and South Africa (Throughout 2011)

These countries have requested IWRAW Asia Pacific's assistance in providing clinics on OP CEDAW and the filing of cases. IWRAW Asia Pacific assisted by sending experts on OPCEDAW and litigation strategies from our pool of resource persons and staff.

Tanzania: IWRAW AP worked with Women's Lawyers Association of Tanzania on the issue of the treatment of widows to be addressed by an inquiry. The Consultation was arranged as a part of technical assistance being provided to Women's Legal Aid Centre (WLAC) and Widows for Peace through Democracy (WPD) in support of their preparation for a request for Inquiry by the

CEDAW Committee into de jure and de facto discrimination against widows in Tanzania. The Consultation was hosted in the format of a basic OP CEDAW Training to provide the participants a clear idea of the treaty, its mechanisms and procedures with particular focus on the Inquiry system. Pursuant to the Consultation the partners were able to rethink and re-strategise priorities in terms of issues to be highlighted through the Request Letter to CEDAW and action plans to be executed both in preparation and in follow-up to the submission of the Request Letter.

Kyrgyzstan: With Open Line in Kyrgyzstan on the issue of bride kidnapping. The Consultation was arranged as a part of technical assistance being provided to Open Line in support of their preparation for a request for Inquiry by the CEDAW Committee into the issue of bride kidnapping in Kyrgyzstan. The Consultation consisted of an in-depth training on the OP and the inquiry procedure in particular, technical assistance on a draft request for an inquiry and support around complimentary advocacy strategies.

South Africa: With our partner Masimanyane in South Africa, we worked on the issue of violence (domestic violence cases) providing them inputs and technical advice in 2011 and jointly organising a consultation on filing of cases in 2012.

With Philippines, we worked with national level groups to submit a request for an inquiry over the implementation of the EO on local government provision of reproductive health services which were not in compliance with CEDAW. Various initiatives are currently being planned between the CEDAW Committee and the government of Philippines to effect the investigative phase of the inquiry.

Next steps in the compilation of information and the drafting of the case and arguments based on gaps in compliance with national and CEDAW standards are underway with plans to submit to the Committee by 2012-2013, as well as technical and legal review by a team of experts to ensure viability of submissions.

[Please note some of these are currently at a confidential stage of the official inquiry process so this information cannot be publicly shared at this time.]

Issues uncovered through the clinics include:

Tanzania	South Africa	Kyrgyzstan
<p>Discrimination against widows highlighted as violations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Under the Local Customary Law (Declaration) Order No.4 of 1963, Cap. 358 R.E 2002, widows are denied the right to inherit property of their deceased husband. The application of this law is mainly amongst rural women and may at times result in the widow being excommunicated if she insists on receiving a share of the estate, or even forcibly removed from the matrimonial house. Rule 5 of the Local Customary Law (Declaration) Order No.4 of 1963, Cap. 358 R.E 2002, excludes the rights of widows to act as administrators or participate in the administration of their deceased husband's estates/ property. As customary practice, widows are not allowed to be part of the decision 	<p>Issues related to discrimination against women due to Violence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Cost of domestic violence to productivity -Substance abuse & VAW -Violence in lesbian relationships -Impact of domestic violence on children & youth – prostitution and teenage pregnancy -Harmful customs & practices as a form of discrimination -Women's increased vulnerability to HIV infection as a result of poverty, violence <p>The inquiry requires identification of the degree or the severity of the situation of VAW in SA. What evidence or information do we need? What is the methodology that we are going to use to get that information?</p> <p>CEDAW is not widely known. Especially to state actors. SAPS says that crimes against women are down. Rape is increasing / Sexual Violence is</p>	<p>The main objective is to scale and to evaluate the social and economic consequences of the bride kidnapping, causes and effects of dignity depreciation and to change the patriarchal attitudes to the women rights under such discriminatory practice.</p> <p>The following tasks objectives and issues were outlined for further work in 2012.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To analyzed current researchers on bride kidnapping as well as existing publications. To study the dominant level of the patriarchal traditions in the society. To study public opinion on bride kidnapping.

Tanzania	South Africa	Kyrgyzstan
<p>making processes regarding division of matrimonial assets, rites and rituals, etc., during the pre-burial preparations of their husband. The pre-burial meeting is entirely dominated by the family of the deceased husband without any representation for the widow. This in turn impacts subsequent enjoyment of rights relating to shelter, inheritance and property by widows and their children. Additionally, widows may be denied custody of their children where relatives of the deceased husband take them away forcefully.</p> <p>4. Customary laws and practices relating to division of estate do not take into consideration that the estate might be a matrimonial asset and jointly acquired during the lifetime of the marriage. Matrimonial contribution made by the widow is not accounted for in the division of the estate.</p> <p>5. Widows are accused of witchcraft and subjected to violence, discrimination and stigma.</p> <p>6. Widow cleansing and widow inheritance are common practices through which widows are subjected to physical and psychological torture heightening risk and vulnerability towards HIV/ AIDS and other sexual diseases.</p> <p>7. Child widows while being denied right to inherit property of their deceased husbands are additionally denied the right to education since they are often not allowed re-admission in schools.</p>	<p>broader and greater No.'s – Child sexual exploitation. Truth is D.V. is increasing CSO statistics are showing that. More magistrates in Courts dealing with D.V. cases. People have lost confidence in criminal justice system because of impunity. Marital rapes / rape of disabled women. Rape dealt with in family units not through criminal justice system. Domestic Violence is the no.1 issue. – emotional, financial, physical, psychological, sexual, femicide, culture. Cultural beliefs foster women's subordination of women. Femicide – reports are tip of the iceberg. Sexual harassment of girls and women. Trafficking of women and children. Structural violence – socio economic conditions.</p> <p>Masimanyane research shows: Police refusing to allow women to lay charges against her abuser or assailant, Police using poor discretion in deciding what type of charge to lay against the perpetrator Refusing to take a complainant's statement, until a female officer comes on duty; Not allowing complainants to give her statement in privacy, away from the charge office; Not allowing complainants to make supplementary statements; Making a complainant repeat her statement numerous times or to numerous officers; Not effecting arrests (using their discretion about the 'seriousness' of the offence or the dangerousness of offenders) In more than half the dockets (52.7%), an instruction to arrest the suspect had to be issued twice or more before the investigating officer complied with it; Not proceeding with an investigation of a rape case; Not informing the complainant of arrest, bail, bail conditions or what to do in the case of breaches; Not allowing a complainant to make her statement in the language of her choice. In 82% of cases, no contact person was recorded on the victim's statement. Furthermore, over 80% of disposed cases were disposed because the suspect or victim were untraceable, including 30% untraceable victims . The victim's residential address was not recorded</p>	<p>4. To evaluate the magnitude of the forced bride kidnapping and the consequences. 5. To find main tools and activities for counteraction/decrease of this practice.</p> <p>It is expected to use complex research methods: expert interviews, discourse analysis, public opinion pool, focus and group discussions.</p>

Tanzania	South Africa	Kyrgyzstan
	<p>in the docket in 25% of cases and a work address not captured in three-quarters (75.2%) of the dockets.</p> <p>In only 17.8% of cases were the details of a contact person in addition to the victim captured. More complete police dockets could reduce circumstances when victims become untraceable.</p> <p>More than half of the cases closed by the police were closed because the perpetrator could not be identified or located (52.3%). Notably, descriptions of the perpetrator were absent from more than three-quarters of victims' statements.</p> <p>In 42% of cases, the complainant identified other witnesses to the crime, yet no statements were taken from these identified witnesses; in 70% of these cases, the police could not provide a reason for why witness statements were not obtained.</p> <p>Police using their wide discretionary powers to establish whether an incident is 'criminal' or warrants investigation in ways that replicate traditional interpretations, often based on stereotypical assumptions, of what constitutes 'real rape' and what is considered 'criminal' activity.</p> <p>In 73.7% of rape cases, the police did not examine the scene of the crime, even though international best practice and SAPS National Instructions advocate visiting the scene of the crime. Because rape cases are difficult to prove, it is crucial to examine the scene of the crime and to collect physical evidence.</p> <p>An average of four days passed between the report of the rape and the police recording of the complainant's statement, double the length of time recommended by the SAPS National Instructions. This time lag impairs the victim's ability to remember the detail of her rape, which could hinder the investigation and the prosecution of the offender.</p> <p>With regard to forensic evidence, of the cases in which such evidence was obtained it was not sent to the lab in 41.6% of cases. Even when evidence was sent to the lab, it took officers an average of 15 days to do so, heightening the risk of the chain of evidence being broken.</p> <p>In another study : A report from the laboratory containing the results of DNA testing was available</p>	

Tanzania	South Africa	Kyrgyzstan
	<p>in only 2% of dockets. Worryingly, in only 16.4% of cases where a suspect was arrested was his blood taken. This low rate prevents the police from comparing the J88 to the suspect's DNA, severely hindering the investigation.</p> <p>15.6% of rape convictions received less than the mandated 10 year minimum sentence.</p> <p>Corruption contributes to the loss of cases, with 37% of police officers interviewed for the CIET Africa study claiming that one or more of their rape cases had been mishandled due to corruption. Postponements may also lead to witnesses not coming to court or becoming untraceable; the loss of witnesses obviously has a negative impact upon the strength of the prosecution's case.</p> <p>Instances have also been recorded of both magistrates and prosecutors failing to adhere to the rules of evidence and procedure applicable to rape during the course of a trial.</p>	

7b. Trainings and Strategic Development for Karat Network partners on Optional Protocol to CEDAW and Women's Access to Justice in Warsaw, Poland,

7.b.1. Training of Trainers on Optional Protocol to CEDAW and strategy meeting on Women's Access to Justice project of KARAT, Warsaw, Poland (18-21 May 2011)

This activity was a follow-up activity by IWRAP Asia Pacific's partner in the CEE / CIS region, the Karat Coalition, to its on-going work on the OP CEDAW and was used, with IWRAP Asia Pacific's support, to launch its project on access to justice in the region. Karat had identified a need to research and assess the barriers women in the region face when attempting to use the OP as a key priority in their work. The activity was therefore designed for female women's rights advocates and lawyers from Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Poland, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan who aimed to sharpen their understanding of the Optional Protocol to CEDAW (OP CEDAW) and to contribute to improving women's access to justice through promoting the procedures available under the treaty as well as through identifying the barriers hampering their use and proposing the possible solutions to eliminate them. IWRAP Asia Pacific contributed by inputting into the concept note and design of the agenda, presenting a number of sessions on the CEDAW, the OP and access to justice and participating in the strategy meeting to determine the way forward with the project in the region. IWRAP Asia Pacific has been following up with Karat on the project, including how it can provide information to the CEDAW Committee in the elaboration of its proposed GR on Access to Justice.

7.b.2 Optional Protocol to CEDAW and Women's Access to Justice 29-30 November 2011.

For the next phase of the project IWRAP Asia Pacific supported the KARAT Coalition on the strategy with a more intensive CEDAW compliance and OP CEDAW training, which was devised as a follow up as well as a tie-in to KARAT's Access to Justice programme which sought to address gaps in application of and access to justice systems for 5 countries. The training was designed for female women's rights activists and lawyers from Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Poland, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to sharpen their understanding of the OP CEDAW and how this can positively contribute to enhancing women's access to justice in the region.

Activity 8: Engagement and advocacy with international and regional mechanisms

8.a Advocacy with treaty bodies - CEDAW, CESC

8.a.1 Day of General Discussion on Women in Conflict and Post Conflict Situations (18 July 2011)

IWRAP Asia Pacific and partners attended the one day of general discussion during its 49th CEDAW Session in New York to seek wider consultation on its proposed General Recommendation on protection of women's human rights in the situations of conflict & post-conflict. IWRAP Asia Pacific and its partner organizations made interventions on the Day of General Discussion, to provide clarity to the Committee on issues, experiences and rights violations affecting women in situations of conflict, and provide insights on the gaps and challenges in applying the CEDAW framework in the background of the existing legal framework of humanitarian and human rights law. Partners from Nepal, Sri Lanka, Lebanon, Indonesia and Croatia attended and provided written submissions to inform the debate. IWRAP Asia Pacific's submissions focused on:

- Recognition of diversity of issues and rights violations and state accountability
- Need to develop a legal framework based on women's human rights perspectives and principles enshrined in CEDAW
- On the State's Accountability vis-a-vis private or non-state actors
- On the realisation of women's human rights in the private sphere
- On Access to Justice and the need for responsive, sensitive and rights-based legal justice system
- Establishing a CEDAW focused nexus between existing mechanisms addressing impact of conflict vis-a-vis women
- Recognising and responding to the multiplicity of roles and diversity of actors

8.b Human Rights Council and Treaty Body Reform and Strengthening Advocacy

8.b.1 APWLD Asia Pacific Regional Consultation: 'Multiple Dimensions of Women's Equality: Women's dialogues' (11-12 January 2011)

From 11 – 12 January 2011, APWLD held its annual Asia-Pacific Regional Consultation with the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women. The Consultation was entitled 'Multiple Dimensions of Women's Equality: Women's dialogues' and focused on intersectional and multiple discrimination experienced by women and the consequences for the fulfillment of women's equality in the region. The discussion and findings aimed to inform national, regional and international mechanisms, including the annual report of the SR which she will present to the HRC in June 2011.

IWRAP Asia Pacific was pleased to be able to support this Consultation financially, facilitate the participation of women's rights activists from PNG and Indonesia and to attend and contribute directly to the discussions to ensure that the experience and expertise we have gained from our national level partners were made available to the SR in the preparation of her report. Participants from 17 Asia and Pacific states joined representatives from a number of regional organizations to share their experiences of intersectional discrimination and how it operates in their own national contexts. Each participant prepared and submitted in advance a brief paper outlining their concerns and the issues they deal with.

The Consultation highlighted multiple discriminations and the concept of intersectionality in the context of neoliberal globalization, fundamentalisms and militarization/armed conflict and considered how these phenomena impact on the realization of women's human rights. The Consultation offered an excellent opportunity for IWRAP Asia Pacific to engage with a diverse range of activists, deepen our knowledge of how intersecting identities lead to increased vulnerability to violations and share our understanding of how international women's human rights can be applied to address these issues.

8.b.2. SAPA Working Group on UN Human Rights Mechanisms Regional Consultation on Joint Action Initiatives, Bangkok, Thailand (30 – 31 March 2011)

IWRAW Asia Pacific, a Steering Committee member of the SAPA Working Group on UN Human Rights Mechanisms, attended the Regional Consultation on Joint Action Initiatives organised by FORUM-ASIA on 30 – 31 March 2011 in Bangkok.

The Regional Consultation focused on (i) setting a common understanding of recent developments at the UN human rights mechanisms and their relevance to human rights advocacy at the national and regional levels in Asia; (ii) developing regional joint action initiatives for 2011 with clearly identified timelines for implementation and responsible focal points among the national and regional NGOs in Asia; and (iii) developing a regional-level stock-taking tool to monitor the implementing status of UPR recommendations. It was also an opportunity to have a discussion on the issue of strengthening the structure of the Working Group. IWRAW Asia Pacific, G. Naidu, led the discussions on treaty body reforms and monitoring.

8.b.3 Civil Society Consultation on Strengthening Treaty Body System Seoul, Republic of Korea (19 – 20 April 2011)

The activity was organized by the OHCHR and hosted by the National Human Rights Commission of Korea. IWRAW Asia Pacific was invited to participate as a member of a regional organization engaged with the Treaty Bodies. IWRAW Asia Pacific aimed to use the space to advocate for incorporation of our positions regarding the treaty body strengthening process and ensure that a women's rights perspective was represented and included. Prior to the Consultation, IWRAW Asia Pacific submitted a written document outlining our key concerns. During the Consultation NGOs drafted a common position statement, the 'Seoul Statement', to be considered by the OHCHR in the course of drafting the report which it will finalise in late 2011 / early 2012. This was adopted by the participants post-Consultation and made available to states during an OHCHR Consultation for states organized in Lucerne, Switzerland in May 2011. IWRAW Asia Pacific has continued to engage in the treaty body strengthening process through participation in further activities and the development of further lobbying documents.

8.b.4 Civil Society Consultation on Strengthening Treaty Body System, Seoul, Republic of Korea (1 June 2011)

IWRAW AP attended this consultation organized by the OHCHR to provide NGO and WHR perspectives into the debates on the strengthening and reform process. IWRAW AP was part of the NGO group drafting and endorsing the Seoul Statement as an outcome of the meeting, which drew attention to various priority considerations in the reform process including the role of NGOs in the process, the need to focus on reform on strengthening implementation while streamlining processes. <http://www.iwraw-ap.org/statements.htm>.

8.b.5 Human Rights Council Panel Discussion – Affirming Women's Sexual and Reproductive Rights, Human Rights Council in Geneva, Switzerland, 1 June 2011

IWRAW Asia Pacific collaborated with APWLD to hold this panel event during the 17th HRC session. The overall objective of the event was to create context, terminology, language and recommendations to support the development and interpretation of standards at the national and international levels in the area of sexual and reproductive rights. The panel aimed in particular to highlight issues affecting the ability of marginalized groups to fully realize their sexual and reproductive health rights. The event included a particular focus on the right to sexual and reproductive health that encompasses the right to determine one's own sexual orientation and gender identity, as well as issues relating to contraception and sexual and reproductive autonomy. Panel speakers were Heisoo Shin, Shireen Huq, Anand Grover and Jenta Tau. The panel was moderated by Ivy Josiah. The identification of barriers to the realization of women's sexual and reproductive health and rights focused on systematic and structural causes, including cultural definitions of traditional masculinity and femininity, gender discrimination and inequality. Challenging and changing power relations and education, empowerment, participation and democratic governance were discussed as a road map for the implementation of state obligation in this context.

8.b.6 Annual discussion on the integration of a gender perspective in the work of the Human Rights Council – Panel discussion on “Promoting gender equality as institutional practice: from policy to action” in Geneva, Switzerland (26 September 2011)

IWRAW Asia Pacific was invited by the Human Rights Council to provide responses as a women’s rights organisation to questions on the concrete impact of the UN commitment to gender integration and the role of NGOs in working with and challenging UN institutions in making gender integration a reality as well as how the CEDAW Committee and Human Rights Council can work together better. Recommendations made by IWRAW Asia Pacific included:

- The need for CEDAW to be the critical framework for gender integration. The fact that it is almost universally ratified and a creation of all UN member states, supports the obligation of states towards domestic implementation of CEDAW standards.
- Need for states to recognize the role of NGOs and treaty bodies such as the CEDAW Committee, and the work of some special procedure mandate holders contribute through Concluding Comments, General Recommendations and Comments and Reports, to a broader understanding among activists and women’s NGOs of the implications of women’s rights and linkages between them the concept of gender equality and non-discrimination, and the need for holistic approaches in realising rights and these insights and understanding on gender based inequality are crucial for gender integration
- That adequate progress has not been made in promoting holistic gender integration at the national level because key challenges include the fact that development Goals have sometimes acquired a parallel focus which does not integrate human rights commitments of State Parties and has impacted to undermine gender integration in the responses of government and development agencies that partner with the State. National gender agencies are invariably poorly resourced, lack technical gender expertise and leadership in the political power hierarchy to integrate gender.
- That adopting a human rights based approach also requires democratic space for NGOs to challenge governments locally, regionally or internationally through interaction and constructive democratic dialogue and dissent.

8.b.7 OHCHR Consultation on current challenges that impact on the economic, social and cultural rights of women and how to advance them using the international human rights mechanism (27 - 28 October 2011)

IWRAW Asia Pacific gave a presentation on Gender Stereotypes and WESCR which covered issues such as the impact of gender stereotyping, the link between stereotyping and WESCR, as well as suggested strategies for addressing stereotyping. IWRAW AP was able to make inputs relating to: (a) the importance and usefulness of briefing for experts on areas that intersect with their mandates but are not their areas of expertise; (b) the need for better coherence and collaboration between HR bodies.

8.c Regional Advocacy with the ASEAN Human Rights System and Mechanisms

IWRAW Asia Pacific is co-convenor of the SEA Women’s Caucus on ASEAN. Various strategic meetings with our partners and with ASEAN mechanisms were held throughout this period, to advocate on strengthening the work and mandate of the AICHR and the ACWC as well as to ensure that the upcoming ASEAN Human Rights Declaration will comply with universal standards of human rights. Reports and statements regarding our strategies and initiatives on ASEAN are available here: <http://www.apwld.org/our-work/asean-the-womens-caucus/>.

List of ASEAN initiatives implemented:

8.c.1. Women’s Caucus’ Working Group Meeting on ACWC’s Rules of Procedure and Work Plan Jakarta, Indonesia (16 – 18 March 2011)

On 16 - 18 March 2011, the Women’s Caucus Working Group on ACWC’s Rules of Procedures (RoP) met in Jakarta to develop our

position paper on ACWC's RoP and our recommendations on the ACWC's work plan. Both of the documents were subsequently submitted to the ACWC. The working group meeting was held at the same time as the first ACWC meeting and provided excellent preparation for the Interface meeting on 18 March 2011.

The position paper on ROP urges the ACWC to i) commit to Women Caucus' guiding principles; ii) establish consultations and dialogues with the women's groups; iii) to share information with general public; and iv) to strengthen its protection mandates, to establish complaint mechanisms, to monitor the situation of women's human rights and to strengthen the advocacy role. IWRAW Asia Pacific jointly coordinated this meeting with APWLD.

8.c.2 Regional Workshop on the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration (AHRD) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. (23 to 24 August 2011)

Bringing together more than 20 participants from Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor Leste and Vietnam, the workshop aimed to build capacity of women around international women's human rights standards, the work of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) and the AHRD process. The regional workshop was a retooling session that not only facilitated a review of ASEAN and women's human rights. It sharpened the Women's Caucus and its members' range of feminist theoretical handles and positioning within the AHRD process, and surfaced the diversity of perspectives and strategies within the Women's Caucus.

Outcomes:

- The regional workshop produced the core submission material for the Women's Caucus' submission for the AHRD (refer to Women's Caucus website: <http://www.apwld.org/our-work/asean-the-womens-caucus/>)
- Women's Caucus members shared initiatives, updates, plans and strategies in engaging AICHR representatives, AHRD drafters and other ASEAN stakeholders.
- The workshop generated reflections on progress to date of the Women's Caucus as well as its way forward.
- A renewed sense of collaboration and motivation to engage with the ADHR AHRD resulting from the workshop was reflected in the successful online discussions following the meeting, in which around 20 members participated that led to the development of the Women's Caucus submission on the AHRD to AICHR.

8.C.3 Southeast Asia Women's Caucus on ASEAN, Annual Meeting (23- 25 November 2011)

IWRAW Asia Pacific is one of the co-convenors of the Women's Caucus, and programme staff attended as resource persons on several sessions. The meeting was held to update the members on the caucus's accomplishments and interaction with AICHR/ACWC, share successes and challenges across the 11 countries as well as to clean up the architecture and have clear internal and external processes. IWRAW AP's participation is in the sharing of the beginnings of the WC and to facilitate discussions on where the members would like to see the Caucus head towards and ensuring



that women's rights is prioritised as the basis of their work.

Women's Caucus members

Members were updated on the AHRD process and the relevant communications with AICHR. Activities for 2012 were explored along with the spillover of activities from 2011 that needed to be completed. These included activities in relation to the upcoming chairship of Cambodia, followed by Brunei and Burma and the opportunities and challenges in the chairship of these countries were discussed extensively.



Ideas on programs for the coming year was charted for each country. National level NGOs commitment towards ASEAN and our work with AICHR and ACWC was emphasized and there was a clearer vision for the caucus but it was agreed that currently, priority has to be given to how we manage our membership and the caucus in general – for example around regional groups joining the caucus, internal dispute resolution and the monitoring of GONGOs within the Caucus. Women's Caucus Statement can be found here: <http://www.apwld.org/wp-content/uploads/Press-release-ASEAN-Bali-Nov-2011.pdf>

Women's Caucus members speaking at Consultation panels

List of ASEAN strategic activities participated in:

8.c.4 Meeting with the ACWC Representatives in Geneva (27 January 2011)

The newly established ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) conducted a study tour to Geneva from 24 – 28 January 2011 to meet with representatives of the OHCHR, the CEDAW Committee and the CRC Committee as well as to observe the state reviews.

On 27 January 2011, Wathshlah G. Naidu representing IWRAW Asia Pacific and the Southeast Asia Women's Caucus on ASEAN met with the ACWC representatives to discuss IWRAW Asia Pacific's work on CEDAW and with the CEDAW Committee. It was also an opportunity to engage with the ACWC on the work of the Women's Caucus and to discuss critical areas such as on CSO engagement in Southeast Asia as well on the processes of Women's Caucus. It was also an opportunity used to seek possible commitments on the engagement in Southeast Asia.

8.c.5 Discussion on the Human Rights Implications of the ASEAN Community Blueprints - Luang Prabang, Lao P.D.R (22 – 23 February 2011)

Pursuant to the vision of an ASEAN Community to be realized by 2015, ASEAN currently has respective blueprints for the three pillars of the envisioned ASEAN Community, namely: Political-Security, Economic, and Socio-Cultural. The dialogue aims to discuss and assess the human rights impact and implications of the three community blueprints.

On 22-23 Feb 2011, IWRAW Asia Pacific attended the Discussion on the Human Rights Implications of the ASEAN Community Blueprints held in Luang Prabang, Laos organized by the Working Group on Human Rights Mechanisms. IWRAW Asia Pacific was invited as a regional organization working on women's rights and as part of SEA Women's Caucus on ASEAN to provide inputs to the ASEAN Blueprints to ensure the plans evolved from the blueprints will be gender oriented and promote and protect women's human rights. This is the second phase of the Working Groups strategy to engage with stakeholders on the Blueprints and IWRAW also attended the first meeting for NGOs.

Followup meetings to further discussion on blueprints with government stakeholders are in the planning and CSO groups have

agreed to continue to participate with the Working Group and work closely with the ASEAN Secretariat toward evolving national level plans to effect the blueprints.

8.c.6 1st Interface Meeting with ACWC, Jakarta, Indonesia (18 March 2011)

The Women's Caucus met with nine ACWC representatives on 18 February 2011 to discuss specific measures for increased women's participation with the newly established body. The meeting was organised by the ACWC and the Indonesian Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Children's Protection.

During the meeting, the ACWC representatives provided brief updates of their discussions during their first meeting on 16 – 18 February, 2011. This included logistics, capacity building, alignment and RoP, amongst others. The ACWC has also appointed Madam Kanda Vajrabhaya (Women's Rights Representative, Thailand) and Mr. Ahmad Taufan Damanik (Children's Rights Representative, Indonesia) as the Chair and Vice Chair of ACWC, respectively. The Women's Caucus raised the important issues of CSO engagement, ACWC alignment with AICHR, Rules and Procedures (RoP), work plans and the ASEAN Declaration on Human Rights (ADHR).

The ACWC expressed their appreciation on the submissions made by the Women's Caucus including the Compilation and Analysis on the NGO Alternative Reports, the Women's Caucus' Position Paper on ACWC's RoP and the Women's Caucus' Recommendations on ACWC's Work Plan.

8.c.7 ASEAN Human Rights Conference-Workshop on Promoting Maternal Health: Responding to the UN Millennium Development Goal 5 (14 – 15 October 2011)

The ASEAN Human Rights Conference-Workshop on Promoting Maternal Health: Responding to the UN Millennium Development Goal 5 was hosted by the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines, in support of the Program on Women and Children of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR). It was held from 14 – 15 October 2011 in Manila and was to result in a draft Declaration on Maternal Health in the region for endorsement by the AICHR at its upcoming meeting. Numerous NGOs from the Philippines were in attendance as well as representatives from Amnesty International and APWLD.

IWRAW Asia Pacific participated with the aim of ensuring that the Declaration reflected CEDAW standards on the subject and did not regress or subjugate CEDAW standards to less strong 'ASEAN values' or result in reduced commitments to women's human rights. IWRAW Asia Pacific actively participated in group discussions with approximately 20 NGO representatives, experts and state delegates on the topic of Gender and Maternal Health (including women's human rights, empowerment of women, VAW, behavioural change, culture, attitude of service providers, among others). The purpose of the small group discussions was to develop recommendations for inclusion in the draft Declaration. IWRAW Asia Pacific urged that the recommendations from the group include the need to take specific action to address the needs of vulnerable groups such as women with disabilities, girls, migrants, refugees and those displaced by natural disasters and emphasised the particular relevance of this last given the current flooding affecting at least four ASEAN countries and the increasing impact of climate change. IWRAW Asia Pacific also highlighted the impact of certain harmful practices and violations of the rights of girls which can increase the risk later of complications relating to their health as mothers. These include violence against girls, lack of adequate nutrition and practices such as FGM which is currently the subject of a fatwa in Malaysia. During the plenary negotiations on the text the following day, IWRAW Asia Pacific intervened three times to make recommendations regarding the inclusion of references to international human rights law, the need to pay particular attention to maternal health in the context of disaster-prone areas and close collaboration with civil society.

8.c.8 4th Regional Consultation on ASEAN and Human Rights (27 – 29 November 2011)

IWRAW-AP attended the consultation as a member of the women's caucus. The consultation was held to provide a platform for all stakeholders in the ASEAN region to come together to dialogue and exchange views on the AHRD, identify challenges and

opportunities in enhancing the independence and effectiveness of AHRD and to promote a constructive dialogue and cooperation among stakeholders in mainstreaming human rights in ASEAN.

IAP along with the WC secretary and 5 other WC members represented the WC to ensure that WHR was given its due priority in the AHRD process. The consultation was attended by HE Navi Pillay, OHCHR, the regional OHCHR representative, Rafendi (AICHR chair), select ACWC reps, NHRIs, national and regional thematic groups. In the afternoon open session with Navi Pillay, the Women's Caucus made an intervention via a written statement and IAP staff along with 2 other caucus members met with HE Navi Pillay within a small group of NGO representatives to directly lobby their WC issues on the extent and limit of the WC's involvement with the AHRD process, AICHR and ACWC as well as the challenges faced. IAP staff presented on the challenges and way forward with the ASEAN Human Rights Mechanisms in relation to the WC. and actively participated in the drafting of the statement after the 4th Regional Consultation on ASEAN and Human Rights.

This was a great platform to be as we had the opportunity to directly lobby with HE and for her to conceptualise our issues and directly address AICHR's role and the AHRD process with our challenges and providing options on having a more open and formal space for CSO to engage with the mechanism and the process based on our recommendations

9. Institution Building

9.a Strategic Planning Process (SPE) : *IWRAW Asia Pacific Strategizing For Change: Sharing, Learning, Consulting, Malaysia (13 – 19 August 2011)*

In August Staff, Board and the Advisory Committee met with various constituents including national partners, advisory members, and resource persons for a period for 6 days to review the past, create spaces for visioning and exploring the future, find agreement and articulate a shared basis and rationale for continued collaboration as well as ideas for increasing efficiency of the governance structures and the management of institutional processes. A report and set of recommendations by the consultant who led the process is being finalized and will be considered by the Board in coming Board meetings. We also initiated a Sharing process with partner Aurat Foundation to improve Planning Monitoring and Evaluation practices (September 2011 – into 2012)

10. Publications and Resources

1. Lawyers Resource Package for Litigation on Women's Human Rights Using CEDAW

Following from a Training/Pilot Testing of the materials held in Kuala Lumpur in June 2011, and then a review of these materials by an expert panel in October 2011 in Toronto. The key objective of testing, vetting applicability of the content for lawyers was achieved. Participants provided substantive feedback to improve the resource package and make it more applicable to the context for legal advocacy in their specific national context. The final structure of the Resource Package, on the basis of discussions at the Pilot Testing, was updated and finalised. In addition as the methodology incorporated input sessions and 'teaching spaces', lawyer activists skills and knowledge was also enhanced and updated in applying international norms and standards towards comprehensive gender equality rights claiming. The package includes case law on women's human rights collected from Australia, Bangladesh, UK, Fiji, Botswana, Japan, Colombia, India and is a progressive tool for unpacking how to implement a litigation strategy with five core areas: Topic 1: Role of Law and Lawyers in Litigating on Women's Human Rights, Topic 2: Overview of the UN Human Rights System and International Human Rights Law and Law of Treaties, Topic 3: Substantive Equality, Non-discrimination and State Obligation, Topic 4: CEDAW in Domestic Litigation and Topic 5: Litigation Strategies: Litigation Plan; Political Strategies. Upon finalisation of the Resource Package, IWRAW Asia Pacific and other partners will be able to use this standardised resource package in 2012 and beyond to support national level litigation strategies in various partner countries.

2. OP CEDAW Training Manual and Reference Guide

In 2010, we started work with the support of an international law expert to produce a training manual and reference guide on the Optional Protocol to CEDAW. We have since produced a set of training materials and a reference guide which has seven sections. (CEDAW Convention: Its Key Features and the Committee's Role, Overview of the Optional Protocol to CEDAW, The Inquiry Procedure In Depth: Requirements and CEDAW Committee's practice, The Communications Procedure in Depth to be broken up into appropriate sessions with separate Facilitators Notes each of the sub-sessions, Choice of Forum Considerations, Situating international women's human rights litigation within broader strategies and Strategic Directions for Future Exploration.) In 2012 we will explore the use of this set of materials to provide training to partners in countries that have ratified the OPCEDAW.

3. Manual for Advocacy on Women's Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCR) using CEDAW and CESC

The Guide seeks to provide a practical tool for activists and lawyers to advance the protection and fulfilment of women's ESC rights by promoting the use of CEDAW and ICESCR's normative framework and procedures in complimentary and mutually reinforcing ways. Developed in collaboration with ESCR Net, this online manual provides substantive and strategic knowledge to women who seek to claim women's ESC rights using the two UN mechanisms the CEDAW and CESC. The Resource Guide also provided an opportunity to both the organizations to connect with activists, lawyers and experts actively advocating on substantive equality under CEDAW and ICESCR in claiming of women's economic, social and cultural rights. The Comité de América Latina y el Caribe para la Defensa de los Derechos de la Mujer (CLADEM), Center for Reproductive Rights (CRR) and the Women's Law Centre (WLC) in South Africa have contributed to the development of this Guide and ensured the relevance and comprehensiveness of its content to the world of women who are deprived of their ESC rights. There are eight sections to the guide with explanations of substantive content of ESC rights, strategic information about the processes and practices of the treaty bodies as well as suggested strategies for strengthening accountability for government implementation and recognition of women's ESC rights as a core responsibility to both the human rights treaty.