



## International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

E-Newsletter – October 2008

### Current UN-INSTRAW work/activities

#### Virtual Dialogue on the Current Situation in Gender Training

The UN-INSTRAW Gender Training Community of Practice (CoP) seeks to articulate gender training practitioners and experts together with specialists in gender equality, gender mainstreaming, knowledge management and capacity development to exchange experiences and knowledge in order to improve the effectiveness of gender training. The CoP will also eventually develop materials and activities such as good practice criteria, templates and capacity profiles, among others. The CoP held an initial activity that gathered more than 90 experts from more than 40 countries in a virtual dialogue entitled “Current Situation in Gender Training”, from 22 September to 17 October 2008. Experts belong to UN entities (UNICEF, UNIFEM, UNDP, DPKO, etc.), other international organizations (OXFAM, CRS, etc) and national NGOs, governments, etc. “This dialogue aimed at helping gather information on concrete experiences in gender training, including evaluations, opinions and recommendations of those involved as designers, facilitators, participants, etc. This information will help identify priorities and actions for the CoP itself, and it will also help CoP members get to know each other and start exchanging ideas and knowledge on Gender Training,” explained Alicia Ziffer, Coordinator of the CoP. During the four week virtual dialogue, participants discussed their experiences with gender training; the current situation of gender training and recommendations for improving it; as well as techniques for monitoring and evaluation of gender training and its short- and long-term impacts. Read more:

<http://www.un-instraw.org/en/media-center/e-news/virtual-dialogue-on-the-current-situation-in-gender-tra.html>

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#### Executive Board Review of UN-INSTRAW Activities

On 2 October 2008, the Executive Board of UN-INSTRAW looked at the progress made by the Institute in the implementation of its Programme of Work for 2008, in addition to other issues related to strengthening the long-term financial sustainability of UN-INSTRAW. UN-INSTRAW is governed by an Executive Board that brings together representatives of ten UN Member States - currently Belarus, Egypt, Grenada, Honduras, Israel, the Philippines, the Slovak Republic, Spain, Syria and Zimbabwe – in order to guide and support the work of the Institute. During its session, the Board was updated on the implementation of existing and new UN-INSTRAW projects and programmes, including the beginning of “Building Networks: Women and Global Care Chains in Latin America,” the launch of the study “Gender, Remittances and Local Rural Development: the Case of Filipino Migration in Italy,” and the conclusion of the project and international conference on “Gender, Peace and Security in Somalia: Implementation of Resolution 1325”. The Board also reviewed the progress made on institution-building within UN-INSTRAW, including administrative and other changes, the Institute’s financial status, and various pending projects.

<http://www.un-instraw.org/en/media-centre/e-news/executive-board-review-of-un-instraw-activities.html>

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### **UN INSTRAW Study: Vulnerable Populations and Natural Disasters**

On the occasion of the International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction (8 October 2008), the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN-INSTRAW) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) published the study: Sexual and Reproductive Health and Violence of Vulnerable Persons: Tropical Storm Noel in the Dominican Republic at UN-INSTRAW headquarters on 9 October 2008. Tropical Storm Noel affected the Dominican Republic in October 2007, leaving around 79,728 displaced persons, hundreds of communities isolated and almost 20,000 damaged homes. According to estimates from ECLAC, this natural disaster event caused losses of more than US\$439 million (1.2% of the country's GNP), affecting more than 70% of the population in a direct or indirect manner. The evaluation seeks to analyze the impact of natural disasters on vulnerable populations, such as boys, girls, adolescents, women, persons living with HIV/AIDS, the elderly and people with disabilities, as well as analyze the provision of sexual and reproductive health and the prevention of violence against women. The study is based on a series of interviews conducted with 64 key informants from security, local government, governmental agencies, provincial and regional health administrative offices, hospitals, rural clinics, integral attention units and NGOs among others, who highlighted obstacles that vulnerable groups confronted during situations of natural disasters, mainly related to health, violence against women, girls and boys, legal services and the security situation of shelters.

Read more:

<http://www.un-instraw.org/en/media-center/press-releases/nuevo-estudio-sobre-la-situacion-de-poblaciones-vulnerables-ante-desastres-natur.html>

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### **Filling the Gaps: A Virtual Discussion on Gender, Peace and Security Research**

UN-INSTRAW is bringing members of its global research database, the Gender, Peace and Security Research Directory together in an online discussion titled "[Filling the Gaps: A Virtual Discussion on Gender, Peace and Security Research](#)" from 13-31 October 2008. The discussion is based on the continuous research efforts of the gender, peace and security area and compiled information available in the Gender, Peace and Security Research (GPS) Directory. Since its launch in June 2006, the directory continues to serve as the most comprehensive database of its kind. Currently, it contains information and access to more than 120 research institutions in academia, universities, UN organs and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) focusing on GPS related issues. This virtual discussion will focus on issues that need to be comprehensively integrated into the GPS academic debate and research production process, such as the participation of women and refugees in the peacebuilding process, which need to be visible and strengthened. The discussion aims to assess the impact of research on GPS issues and identify concrete strategies and mechanisms to strengthen the impact of research on policy-making and operation efforts. It is composed of three modules: (1) General Assessment of Current Research; (2) Identifying Research Gaps; (3) Tools to Fill Identified Research Gaps. The discussion is an opportunity for academics, researchers and institutions from around the world to fortify existing networks and build a platform for participatory and dynamic research. Participants currently involved are from Australia, Czech Republic, Ireland, Nigeria, Norway, Romania, Serbia, Uganda, United Kingdom and the United States.

Read more: <http://www.un-instraw.org/en/media-center/e-news/filling-the-gaps-a-virtual-discussion-on-gender-peace-and-security-res-3.html>

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### **Public Event: Gender and Security Sector Reform Toolkit**

The United States Institute for Peace (USIP) and the Geneva Center for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) jointly hosted a public event on the Gender and Security Sector Reform Toolkit, published by DCAF in collaboration with UN-INSTRAW and ODIHR. The event took place on 15 October 2008. By including a gender perspective in security sector reform (SSR) policies and processes, the Gender and SSR Toolkit aims to ensure that members of the security sector are accountable to the women, men, girls and boys that they protect and that their different needs are recognized. It includes 12 Tools on such topics as police reform, defence reform, border management, and parliamentary oversight from a gender perspective. Each tool includes concrete guidelines and other tips, as well as easy-to-follow practice notes on mainstreaming gender issues and increasing women's participation in SSR.

[Download the complete Gender and Security Sector Reform Toolkit  
http://www.usip.org/events/2008/1015\\_reform\\_toolkit.html](http://www.usip.org/events/2008/1015_reform_toolkit.html)

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### **UN- INSTRAW and CAWTAR Launch Competition for the Best Political Posters**

UN-INSTRAW, in collaboration with the Center for Arab Women for Training and Research (CAWTAR), is launching a competition for the best posters on the theme of women's participation in the political life in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia. This initiative is part of the UN-INSTRAW/CAWTAR Project "Strengthening women's leadership and participation in politics and decision-making in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia", financed by the government of Spain. The competition is for political parties, governmental and non-governmental organizations and associations active in the defense of women's political participation in the project countries. Students from art, information, communication institutes and artists are eligible for participation as long as the posters are prepared in collaboration with a political party or an organization from Algeria, Morocco or Tunisia. The posters should be creative and innovative, and must be specially created for the competition or have been published before. The winning poster created specially for competition will receive a prize of US\$ 2000 and US\$ 700 for the poster previously published. The deadline for submission is 30 November 2008 and the results of the competition will be announced in December 2008.

Read more:

<http://www.un-instraw.org/en/media-centre/e-news/un-instraw-and-cawtar-launch-competition-for-the-best-political-pos.html>

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### **UN Calls for Greater Recognition of Rural Women's Role in the Eradication of Poverty**

On the occasion of the International Day of Rural Women, UN-INSTRAW and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) called for the recognition of rural women's contribution to agricultural development and the elimination of poverty. FAO estimates that there are 850 million hungry people in the world. This number will grow to 100 million more, as the rise in food prices generates greater shortage and thus increases poverty levels. According to the World Bank 75% of the poor in developing countries live in rural areas. Women are the primary producers of food in the world – producing 90% of staple crops. However, gender disparities cause women to experience poverty and hunger to a larger extent than men. Forty-five percent of women in developing countries suffer from anemia, a common result of malnutrition, compared to 25% of men who suffer from the same condition. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), 428 million women and 608 million men work in the agricultural sector worldwide. In Sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia, 68% and 61% of women, respectively, work in the agricultural sector. Although women work the land, traditionally they

lack resources to perform their work, in developing countries they own less than 2% and in many countries they still do not have the right to inherit it (IFAD).

<http://www.un-instraw.org/en/media-centre/press-releases/un-calls-for-greater-recognition-of-rural-women-s-role-in-the-eradication-of-pov.html>

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## Global Gender News

### Special Rapporteur on Trafficking of Persons Assigned

On 1<sup>st</sup> August 2008, Ms. Joy Ngozi Ezeilo, a Nigerian national, assumed her post as Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons with an emphasis on women and children. Ms. Ngozi Ezeilo has an intensive background in law and politics, is a lawyer by practice and a professor at the University of Nigeria. She has also served as the Honourable Commissioner for the Ministry of Women Affairs & Social Development in Enugu State, has worked as a consultant for various international organizations, and has written extensively on human rights, women's rights and Sharia Law. The three-year post was created as a result of the sixtieth session of the UN Commission of Human Rights, in which it decided to appoint a Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons with an emphasis on women and children. According to the mandate, the Special Rapporteur is to act on violations committed against victims of trafficking and on cases in which there is a failure to protect their human rights; conduct country visits in order to assess specific situations and to formulate recommendations to fight trafficking and protect the rights of victims; and submit to the Commission of Human Rights an annual report on the activities of the mandate.

Read the International Standards for the Special Rapporteur  
<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/trafficking/standards.htm>

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### Rwanda: Parliament Led by Female-Majority

Rwanda now holds the record for being the first country in the world to have a female majority in Parliament. This is the result of last September's peaceful elections, in which 44 women were elected in the lower house of the government. The Rwandan parliament has 80 seats. In 2003, the UN set a target for member nations to implement a 30% quota of female representation in their parliaments. Rwanda quickly implemented this into their newly developed constitution, reserving 24 seats of the parliament for women. Rwandans do not vote directly for parliamentary seats, but instead they vote for a specific party and a National Electoral Commission assigns parliamentary seats based on the percentage of votes received by each party. The number set by this September's election put the percentage of female parliamentarians in Rwanda at 56.25. This percentage reflects the current demographic make-up of the nation in which currently, there are slightly more women than men as a result of the 1994 genocide, in which more men were killed than women. Rwanda has made significant progress through the incorporation of women in the reconstruction and peace-building process of the nation. This progress is reflected in the long-term development plan 'Vision 2020', a series of economic, social and political goals that the nation aims on achieving by the year 2020. The inclusion of women in the political arena is certainly moving Rwanda towards 'Vision 2020.' The nation that struggled so much less than two decades ago is a now a model that should be taken into account for increasing women's political participation worldwide.

<http://www.un-instraw.org/en/media-centre/world-gender-news/rwanda-parliament-led-by-female-maj.html>

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## **UNIFEM: Progress of the World's Women 2008/2009**

UNIFEM launched its biennial global report, *Progress of the World's Women 2008/2009: "Who Answers to Women? Gender and Accountability"*, on 18 September 2008 at the UN Secretariat in New York. The publishing of the new report marks the halfway point for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2015. The report asserts that the lack of accountability to women adversely affects poverty reduction and development, and takes the standpoint that the lack of structural accountability has directly resulted in the international community's failure to fulfilling its commitments to women. The report analyzes several areas of development affecting women: politics, services, markets, justice, aid and security and includes policy guidelines and recommendations in each area of analysis. In the area of politics, the report asserts that political accountability to women necessitates strong representation, in which temporary measures such as reserving political seats for women support the engagement of women in the political arena. Men hold more elected positions than women at a rate of 4:1, and in developing countries it will take 40 years before gender parity in governance is reached. Women in power are more inclined to ensure that issues affecting gender and development are addressed. Policy recommendations in this area include reforming and equipping public institutions with the incentive, information and capacity to address the needs of women. *Progress of the World's Women 2008/2009* has special significance as it comes at the midway point of the MDGs.

Read more:

<http://www.unifem.org/progress/2008/>

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## **India, Brazil and South Africa Sign a Memorandum on Women's Development**

India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA) signed a memorandum focusing on the development of women during the Third IBSA Business Summit from 13-15 October 2008 in New Delhi. The memorandum was drafted by the IBSA women's working group. The group, which includes women from these three countries, was established in South Africa in 2007 with an aim to strengthen collaborative efforts in women's development. This year the working group focused on the theme "Strengthening the Women's Movement for an Equitable Society". In light of this, the memorandum focuses on an inclusive macro-economic policy and research that involves gender budgeting and micro finance. In addition, it incorporates actions to be taken in relation to violence against women and cooperative societies of women. This is to be achieved through cooperation at multilateral forums. Delegations, parliamentarians and diplomats from each IBSA country, as well as the UN took part in the memorandum deliberations. This initiative is part of IBSA's effort to promote good governance and strengthen South-South co-operation. Learn more about the IBSA partnership

<http://www.forumibsa.org/index.php?ln=en>

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## **Celebrating the Performance of Women in the Americas**

The University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) Centre for Performance Studies, in conjunction with the Hemispheric Institute for Performance and Politics is hosting an event titled "Actions of Transfer: Women's Performance in the Americas" from 20-23 November 2008 at the UCLA campus. The four day event will bring together performers, activists and scholars from all over the Americas that think about performance as a mode of social intervention. Through choreography, dance, song and theatre, *Actions of Transfer* will explore diverse issues such as domestic violence, labor, transnational/global encounters, indigenusness, gender and sexuality. Featured performances include Ana Correa of the Peruvian theater group Yuyachkani, FOMMA, a Mayan Women's Collective from Chiapas and Mexican

performers Liliana Felipe and Jesusa Rodriguez. Actions of Transfer is being conducted as a sister event with the inauguration of the Centro Hemisférico/FOMMA, a research, cultural and performance center in Chiapas, Mexico held earlier this year.

For more information visit:

<http://www.performancestudies.ucla.edu/actions/actions.html>

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### **Pakistan: Draft legislation on Sexual Harassment**

Ms. Sherry Rehman, the Federal Minister for Women Development in Pakistan has announced the creation of a draft legislation bill on sexual harassment, 'Protection for Women from Harassment Act' on 18 October 2008. The draft legislation was written by the Pakistan's Women Development Industry and AASHA, a network of civil society organizations. The bill aims to facilitate an environment where legal protection of women against sexual harassment in the workplace is guaranteed. It is being formalised with the inclusion of other civil society actors and stakeholders in order to insure that multiple gender perspectives are addressed. The bill includes a Code of Conduct for implementation at the workplace and provides a guideline for employee behaviour. Though the legislation has not been formally passed, about 300 organisations in Pakistan have voluntarily adopted the Code of Conduct in their workplace.

Visit the Pakistan's Ministry of Women Development

<http://202.83.164.26/wps/portal/Mowd>

Learn about the work that AASHA has done in Pakistan

<http://www.aasha.org.pk/>

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### **Migrant Women in Lebanon Gather against Abuse**

On 20 October 2008, women's human rights organizations attended the conference "Migrant Domestic Workers and Women's Rights: Finding Common Ground" organized by Human Rights Watch and the Collective for Research and Training on Development-Action (CRTDA). The purpose of the conference was to create a network of Lebanese women and domestic workers, to discuss the negative perception of domestic workers in Lebanese society, and to re-think the influencing cultural and patriarchal elements. The conference was created to discuss the findings of Human Rights Watch reports detailing the frequency of abuse of domestic workers in Lebanon. Many of them face physical and sexual abuse and some even rape. In addition, a recent report by the organization states that since January 2007, 95 domestic workers have died of unnatural deaths, many of which have been classified as suicide. Some deaths were caused by the workers falling out of high rise buildings while trying to escape their abusers. There are approximately 200,000 migrant workers in Lebanon, most of them women from Ethiopia, the Philippines and Sierra Leone. This conference is an important progress towards ensuring women's rights and migrant rights in the region.

Read the Human Rights Watch report on Lebanon

<http://www.hrw.org/pub/2008/women/Lebanon.MDW.Annex.082608.pdf>

Read the Human Rights Watch news report

<http://www.hrw.org/english/docs/2008/08/25/lebano19690.htm>

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### **Narrating women's Experiences: Call for Papers**

ENQUIRE Quarterly is calling for papers for its 3<sup>rd</sup> edition themed Narrating women's Experiences. The deadline for submission is 21<sup>st</sup> November 2008, and accepted papers will be published in winter 2009.

ENQUIRE is an online journal focusing on Social Sciences. Run by post-graduates, the journal produces three themed issues a year under the School of Sociology and Social Policy at Nottingham

University in the United Kingdom. The 3<sup>rd</sup> issue asks for authors to consider the various ways that women engage in narrative practices. Suggested topics include: feminist discourse and how it has affected the theoretical debates about narrative; what impact does narrative have on the negotiation of women's identity; and the ways in which feminist research and methods challenge research boundaries. Papers are limited to 8000 words in length, and will be peer-reviewed anonymously. Guidelines for submission can be found on the ENQUIRE website at:

[www.nottingham.ac.uk/sociology/enquire](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/sociology/enquire)

Contact the ENQUIRE editorial team: [Enquire@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:Enquire@nottingham.ac.uk)

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