



KARAT 2008 Annual Report

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Oxfam Novib
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Minority Rights Group
Friedrich Ebert Stiftung
BREBank

NGOs:

UCODEP (Italy)
SÜDWIND (Austria)
SOMO (Netherlands)
IWRAW - Asia Pacific (Malaysia)
WEED (Germany)
CIR (Germany)
WIDE (Belgium)

1. Introduction

KARAT Coalition is a regional network of 57 women's NGOs and 11 individuals from 24 countries of Central, Eastern & Southern Europe, and Central Asia (in the document referred to as "the Region"). KARAT has been established in a response to the need for cooperation expressed at the UN Beijing Conference on Women (1995) by participants from the Region to jointly ensure the advancement of women's rights and social & economic justice.

2008 was a critical year as far as the KARAT's organizational development is concerned: KARAT's budget has significantly increased, number of the long-term (over 1 year) projects has risen and the number of KARAT Secretariat employees has tripled.

KARAT's main achievements in 2008:

- Elaboration of the first four-year KARAT's Programme (2009-2012) based on the strategic goals and thematic priorities defined by the International Board in May 2008. The program will serve as a point of reference for the future activities if the Coalition as well be the basis for the fundraising strategy.
- Initiating collaboration between women's NGOs in CIS on the Optional Protocol to CEDAW and developing global cooperation with IWRAW Asia Pacific.
- Establishment of Polish Social Watch Coalition and production of the first national Social Watch Report.
- Initiating cooperation between various stakeholders, esp. trade unions and production of the two research reports on the employees rights protection system in the super/hypermarkets in Poland.
- Organizing an international photo competition and related exhibition for female photographers from the Region focusing on the socio-economic situation of women.
- Successful consumer's awareness rising campaign conducted in Poland on worker's rights particularly related to Olympic games
- Strengthened advocacy capacity of the NGOs in the New Members States (NMS) related to better working conditions and sustainable environmental impact of electronic industry.
- Significant improvement in the organizational management (particularly human resources enlargement).
- Strengthened cooperation within KARAT Network related to the creation of the position of Networking Officer and improvement of communication tools (website, members e-group, newsletter)
- Strengthened cooperation with EU/Global networks/NGOs (e.g. WIDE, IWRAW AP, SOMO, Sudwind, CCC, ECCJ, Social Watch)

The following parts of this annual report are structured around the four thematic programs implemented by KARAT in 2008: economic justice, women's rights, gender & development, and organizational & strategic empowerment. Projects and statutory activities are highlighted for each of the programs. The document begins with a brief description of the context in which KRAT was implementing its activities.

2. Context of KARAT's activities

2.1. Structure

KARAT Coalition is a regional network of women's organizations and individuals governed by the International Board with its Secretariat based in Warsaw. Since it is registered in Poland KARAT acts in compliance with Polish law under supervision of KARAT Registered Board (different to the International Board). Thus, KARAT International Board does not have a legally binding power of the Registered Board.

KARAT Coalition carries out significant proportion of its activities on the basis of the voluntary work of its members. Presently KARAT has 57 member organizations from: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Kyrgyz Republic, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Montenegro, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia and Ukraine. There are also 11 honorary individual members from: Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Serbia and Slovenia. Full list of KARAT members is included in the Annex I.

The General Assembly, International Board, Executive Director, Advisory Body and the Registered Board are governing bodies of KARAT. The International Board consisting of 7 representatives elected by the Coalition Members is the decision making body between General Assemblies. The work of the KARAT governing bodies in 2009 is described further in the section 6 of this document. Detailed information about the KARAT's governance structure is provided in the statute available on www.karat.org

2.2. Context

In the last 13 years of its existence KARAT has built up a considerable capacity to promote a holistic gendered view of economic and social development. Being a part of the international women's movement KARAT has a crucial role in ensuring that women's rights and achievements in the Region are recognized and not jeopardized by the processes of liberalization, transformation, and aspects of EU enlargement undermining regional solidarity. KARAT believes that profoundness and acuteness of socio-economic obstacles and inequalities faced by women from the Central and Eastern Europe, Balkans and Central Asia are one of the characteristics of the Region linked to the global backlash against women's human rights.

KARAT is concerned about the socio-economic inequality on the regional, European and global level caused by neo-liberal economic paradigm (and particularly by the Region-specific interpretations and applications of this paradigm). The gender aspects of socio-economic consequences of the current economic crises, and the fact that women as a group are not well prepared to deal or even to understand is also important to KARAT.

KARAT believes that gender justice in the Region can be only insured through pan-European cooperation as well as cooperation between EU and the countries outside it. This is why KARAT participates in diverse EU initiatives related to human rights of women, gender and development, gender and economic justice. Similarly KARAT is concerned about the financial situation of women's NGOs in the Region, in Europe, and Global South connected

to the reluctance of the national and local authorities to provide funding for NGOs, and particularly gender focused NGOs, as this seriously threatens gender initiatives in the Region.

KARAT participates in regional, European and global initiatives focusing on the strengthening of gender justice through strategic partnership with other networks and organisations. The Coalition has also developed its own four year program responding to the geo-political changes in the Region based around 4 thematic priorities:

- Gendered economic and social justice
- Women's Human Rights
- Gender focused development cooperation
- Organizational strategic empowerment

KARAT Programme is also a basis for the new fundraising strategy.

3. Economic justice

Economic justice including social justice is particularly relevant to women from the Region due to the process of a continuous socio-economic transformation taking place since the collapse of the centrally controlled economic systems that began in 1989 in Poland and quickly spread to the entire Region. KARAT's activities within this program include building the capacity of its members, partners and other stakeholders through trainings, production of manuals and other publications; research and analysis; monitoring of working conditions in selected industries; involvement in the campaigns and advocacy for the improvement of working conditions and in lobbying different stakeholders including transnational corporations.

While implementing its **economic justice** program KARAT has been building on over 10 years of extensive experience in gendered economic social justice. In 2008 KARAT has implemented following economic justice projects:

1. Labour rights protection from a gender perspective in super/hypermarkets in Poland
2. Fair Play in sportswear industry
3. MakeITfair
4. ProcureITfair

3.1. Labour rights protection from a gender perspective in super/hypermarkets in Poland

This 18 months long project funded by OSI and Friedrich Ebert Foundation, was launched in March 2008. Its goal was a permanent change of the employment environment in Poland by strengthening labour rights protection of super/hypermarkets employees, who are mainly women and empowering them to exercise their rights. This innovative pilot project focusing on Poland has potential for being multiplied in the other countries of the Region. It is implemented in the close partnership with the employees united in the Association of Persons Wronged by Big Supermarket Chains "Biedronka" and trade unions, and attracted a great interest of National Labour Inspectorate, other NGOs and media.

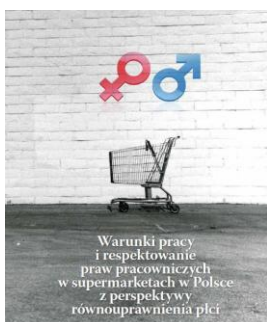
The key project activities implemented in 2008:

3.1.1 Publications:



Research: *Situation of women in the super / hypermarkets in Poland* (450 copies)

RAPORT Z BADANIA
„SYTUACJA PRACOWNIC SUPER- I HIPERMARKETÓW”



Legal Report: *Working conditions and labour rights protection from gender perspective in supermarkets in Poland* (600 copies)

3.1.2 Building the alliance of the various stakeholders: gender and employees' right NGOs, trade unions, decision-makers and individual lawyers consulting the recommendations and supporting proposed changes in the labour rights protection system

The biggest achievement was successful partnership established with trade unions (TU): The All Alliance of Trade Union (OPZZ), the Independent Trade Union “Solidarność”, and the others. This is important since TU usually do not consider nor mainstream gender perspective into their activities and in the past cooperation between women's NGOs and TU have not been successful.

Key element of this activity was also establishment of Strategic Action Advise Body (SAAB), composed of the representatives of TU, the women leaders of the employees' protests that took place in the supermarkets chains in March-April 2008, NGO's dealing with the women issues or employees rights issues, labour law specialists and, legal practitioners. Another significant achievement includes reaching two institutions with supervision and inspection power over labour law regulations and safety rules: National Labour Inspectorate (NLI) and Labour Protection Council at the Parliament.

3.1.3 Awareness raising, lobbying and advocacy for a comprehensive legal system effectively protecting labour rights in super/hypermarkets and empowering employed women to exercise their rights



This activity focused on influencing the government and parliament to introduce the amendments to the law. The advocacy campaign aimed at improvement of the working conditions also targeted super/hypermarket chains. Another target group were employees movements' women leaders and TUs activists. The activity included a workshop (Warsaw, October 23-24, 2008) on building cooperation and alliances among women leaders, to equip them with legal tools to improve working conditions and provide with knowledge about

women's rights, stereotypes, gender and discrimination. Project publications, especially folder and leaflet "If you work in supermarket, you have a right" were very appreciated by the participants.

As far as the lobbying and advocacy are concerned it is important to mention that National Labour Inspectorate (NLI) which was supposed to be one of their main target groups turned out to be one of the project most supportive partner. Another significant success is that recommendations included in the legal report were included in the Labour Protection Council instructions for the NLI inspectors for 2009.

3.1.4. Awareness raising and sharing experience on women's working conditions in Poland at international level

This included a Workshop during the Annual Conference of Women in Development Europe (WIDE), the Hague, the Netherlands, 9-11.10.2008 (attended by 30 persons). The workshop's participants requested for the English translation of KARAT's project materials.

3.2 Fair Play in sportswear industry

Supported by the EU Commission this awareness raising project has started in 2007 and will last until the end of 2009. It is implemented in cooperation with partners from Austria (Sudwind Agentur, lead organization) and Germany (Inkota). The network of the KARAT activists established in 2007 played also an important role in the project.

The project promotes sport rule of 'fair play' in relationship between sportswear producers and workers. Within the project framework KARAT has continued its cooperation with Clean Clothes Campaign- the global NGOs' and trade unions' initiative for the improvement of working conditions in garment industry worldwide. The fact that 80% of garment workers are women and 1/3 of global garment production take place in CEE countries made this project particularly relevant to KARAT's economic justice program.

KARAT's role in the project involves further monitoring of working conditions in the garment factories in Poland, as well as initiating consumers' campaign in Central and Eastern Europe by using CCC's experience and framework. Main project activities included awareness rising via publications, education, campaigning and research.

The most important project activities implemented in 2008 were strongly associated with Euro 2008 in Austria and Switzerland and Olympics in Beijing and included:

3.2.1 Reaching the current and potential allies

KARAT organized 2 meetings in Poland with two women labour rights activists from Hong Kong. Their visit to Poland was a great success. About 250 people attended these unique meetings. As the consequence of the meetings workers rights violations in the sportswear/garment industry with an emphasis on the gender aspect of the problem received an excellent coverage in Polish media: 3 interviews with the mainstream media were organized, large numbers of articles were published at internet information services, NGOs websites and their newsletters.

KARAT organized an education workshop that brought together activists, trade unionists, representatives of NGOs, Responsible Business Forum, consumer's group, garment industry

workers, students and other interested individuals. The participants prepared letters to three Polish garment companies asking about their purchasing practices in their suppliers' chains. One of the companies wrote back providing the initial answers to the consumers and promising further information to be sent. This is extremely important and significant achievement since it is first time in Poland that a garment company, recognized consumers as partners in discussion on CSR and working conditions in garment industry.

3.2.2 Media coverage

Thanks to the press journey to the production sites in Hong Kong to which KARAT invited 2 reporters from the Polish largest daily newspaper and main information radio a sustainable relationship with the media was established and the coverage of the issues addressed by the project was secured.

3.2.3 Awareness rising via public actions, development and distribution of information and campaign materials

It is important to mention that workers rights violations in the sportswear /garment industry is very new in Poland and so are public actions and campaign materials addressing these issues. Campaign materials were met with enthusiastic response; for example KARAT was constantly asked for consumer cards for sending to the companies urging them to take action against violating workers rights in their supply chains, project leaflets, etc.



A report: „*Fair Play - always in fashion. Consumer's awareness and working conditions of women in sporting goods industry*” was also produced (500 copies). It presented the findings of the KARAT investigation on working conditions in sportswear factories in Poland as well as consumer's awareness on social aspects of sporting goods production. It has been widely disseminated among interested NGOs, trade unionists and interested individuals also during the public events of the project.

3.2.4 Being part of the network



All the project actions organized in Poland, particularly the ones during the Euro Football Championships (so called *Soccer Month*, June 2008) and Beijing Olympics (for example: *Catch the Flame*) were part of the global Play Fair 2008 campaign taking part simultaneously in 35 countries around the world. Further, project coordinators and KARAT activists participated in the seminar in Germany and public actions in Berlin and Vienna. KARAT has also joined the Action Day in Hong Kong, just before the start of the Olympics on 3rd of August 2008.

3.3 Connecting people North and South. Raising awareness about the development issues in the production of next-generation consumer electronics: mobile phones, MP3 players, and laptops ('MakeITFair')

2008 was a second year of this three year project implementation. Supported by the European Commission the project is coordinated by the consortium of European NGOs led by SOMO. It aimed to contribute to poverty eradication and sustainable development by improving the social, environmental and human rights situation associated with the whole production and life cycle chain (from extracting raw materials to end products and electronic waste) of next – generation consumer electronics.

KARAT's main role involved coordination of activities in the 3 countries of Central Europe. Since a majority of the IT workers are women KARAT put a great emphasis on the gender dimension of the project. The most important project activities implemented in 2008 included:

- Preparation of the reports on labour conditions in the electronic industry in the Czech Republic and Hungary
- Organization of capacity building sessions in Czech Republic
- Editing and translation and dissemination of educational materials (9 000 copies).
- Facilitating 2 workshops on labour rights in IT industry (WEED Summer School for young activists in Budapest, Hungary; European Social Forum, Malmö, Sweden).
- Participation in the global roundtable in Indonesia where KARAT had an opportunity to contribute its expertise and knowledge from the research on labour conditions in the IT industry in Central Europe.
- Participation in the global debate on the working condition in IT production, with an opportunity to present a Regional perspective.

3.4 ProcureITfair: campaign for sustainable purchasing of computers

The project has started in 2008 and will last until the end of 2010. It is implemented in cooperation with partners from Germany (WEED) and Czech Republic (Ekumenická Akademie Praha). ProcureITfair is a coalition of NGOs from European countries that intend to raise awareness on the working conditions and environmental pollution in the production of computers and asks politicians and public purchasers to use their (buying) powers to demand compliance with international labour rights and ecological standards in the global supply chain of computers. KARAT's role in the project involved organising two parallel researches on working conditions and environmental pollution in computer hardware factories in Hungary as well as Romania, with emphasis being placed on gender.

3.5 Other activities

Non-project statutory activities of the **economic justice** program were implemented mainly through KARAT's engagement in the international networks and participation in the relevant meetings on the EU and global level. Special emphasis was based on linking the women's networks and organizations from EU members states with organizations from non-EU countries in Europe. In 2008 KARAT was engaged in:

3.5.1. *Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC)* (described in section 6.2.4).

3.5.2 *European Coalition for Corporate Justice (ECCJ)* (described in section 6.2.3)

3.5.3 *Women in Development Europe* (described in section 6.2.1)

4. Women's Rights

Women's Rights and legal instruments focusing on gender justice are vital for women from the Region where the democratic mechanisms are not yet well grounded and both the decision makers as well as social actors are characterized by a lack of awareness about gender equality standards. KARAT's **Women's Rights Program** focuses on monitoring the implementation of international government commitments (e.g. CEDAW Convention, Beijing Platform for Action, and EU gender equality legal standards and policies). The specific projects and activities within this program include capacity building, advocacy and lobbying at national, regional and international levels (CEE/CIS countries, ECE, EU, UN) for the needs and concerns of women in the Region; as well as strengthening the KARAT Coalition and building alliances with other networks/NGOs at European and global level to scale up the results in observing women's rights. One of the sub-program has been focusing on labour rights of women, another sub-program focus on OP CEDAW, and number of statutory activities were implemented within this program framework.

4.1. Building towards Eastern European and Central Asia NGOs Coalition on Optional Protocol to CEDAW

This project was supported by Oxfam Novib, and conducted in strategic partnership with IWRAW Asia-Pacific (International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia-Pacific) and partner organizations from Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan. The project aimed to build capacity of women's NGOs in CEE & CIS to use OP CEDAW to counteract discrimination against women.

The objectives of the project included:

- Increasing capacity and skills of women's NGOs in 8 CEE/CIS countries to bring cases to CEDAW under the OP
- Supporting national lobbying campaigns in the countries where the OP has not been yet ratified;
- Identifying areas of women's rights violation that could be addressed by seeking remedies through the OP CEDAW mechanism;
- Providing easily available information on how to use OP CEDAW;
- Creating platform for sharing experience and information.

The project is based on two one-year implementation steps. During the first step (2008) women's NGOs from 5 countries were involved: Civic Organisation "Women's Independent Democratic Movement" (CA "WIDM"), KARAT member from Belarus; International Foundation Women's Political Resource Center, Georgia; Gender-Center; KARAT member from Moldova; Ukrainian Women's Fund, Ukraine; Women Support Center (WSC), Kyrgyzstan. The NGOs from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan were expected

to join the project in 2009.

Establishment of the regional coalition of women’s NGOs to promote CEDAW together with development of the strategic partnership with the IWRAW Asia Pacific – multiyear experience organization with the trainers, training materials and global scope of action - were the most significant project achievements. These were possible due to the following 2008 project activities:

4.1.1. Developing the cooperation framework with the project partners from Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan and IWRAW Asia Pacific

This was mainly done during the strategic meetings in Warsaw, Poland (March and December 2008) and e-mail & phone communication. The participants stressed that the added value of the project is the unique opportunity of working together, sharing experience and learning more about the problems women in other CEE/CIS countries face in the context of CEDAW. Joining forces with WSC that was planning to implement a similar project focused on OP CEDAW in Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan had a significant impact on further development of the second year step of the project for 2009, and contributed greatly to its visibility, effectiveness and regional coverage of the implemented activities.

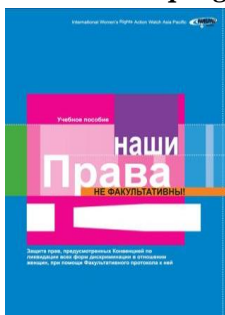
4.1.2. Raising awareness and capacity building on OP CEDAW

International 4 day training on OP CEDAW for lawyers and women's right activists (17 participants from 6 countries) held in Warsaw, Poland, was a great success largely due to the involvement of recognized resource persons: Shanthi Dairiam (a former member of the CEDAW Committee) and Alda Facio (a jurist and an international expert on women’s human rights, gender violence and gender analysis). The training participants had the opportunity to discuss and analyze the cases of the women's rights violations from their respective countries that can be potentially submitted to the CEDAW Committee. As the result of the follow-up analysis by IWRAW Asia Pacific experts, two of these cases (from Belarus and Kyrgyzstan) were qualified as potential inquiry cases. WSC in Kyrgyzstan, is determined to submit the complaint on bride kidnapping under the inquiry procedure in the near future.

4.1.3. Promotion of CEDAW, OP CEDAW and the project in project partners’ countries

Activities undertaken by the partner's organizations at the national level were strong component of the project. The national coordinators adjusted the target groups and forms of the meetings to the specific needs of women’s movement in their countries for better transmission of knowledge gained during the international training on OP CEDAW in Warsaw. The workshops and seminars were attended by women's NGOs representatives, members of governments and local authorities, gender focal points, teachers, lawyers and the media. In all the countries the actions taken met a great feedback and follow-up. E.g. during the workshop for lawyers in Georgia, the idea to establish a new association of women's lawyers for women's rights was born.

4.1.4 Developing resources on OP CEDAW



Additionally to the project website with comprehensive information on CEDAW and OP CEDAW procedures (English version) KARAT translated and printed the Russian version of the IWRAW Asia Pacific resource guide on OP CEDAW “Our rights are not Optional!”.

4.2. Other activities

In 2008 non-project statutory activities conducted within the framework of the Women's Rights Program were implemented through KARAT's engagement in the international networks and participation in the global initiatives of IWRAP Asia-Pacific including:

- *Alliance Building meeting on CEDAW organized next to the 52nd Session of the Commission on the Status of Women in New York by IWRAP Asia Pacific.*

KARAT took part in the process of building international coalition on CEDAW contributing its multi-year experience working in the countries of CEE& CIS

- *IWRAP Asia-Pacific Advisory Body*

Information about KARAT's engagement in IWRAP Asia Pacific is described in section 6.2.2. of this document.

5. Gender and Development

Since many of KARAT's members are from developing countries despite not being defined as a development organization KARAT has been always focusing part of its activities on gender and development. One of the important elements of KARAT's activities implemented under this program is an opposition to the simplistic North-South, division often used in the context of development as this approach omits the significance of the gender and development issues present in Eastern Europe, Balkans and Central Asia.

With its Gender and Development program KARAT intends to raise the awareness among diverse stakeholders about the development problems faced by women from Region, it also aims to facilitate the use of EU neighborhood policy and EU gender equality standards as tools to increase awareness on gender equality. Further it focuses on building bridges between women from South and East in alliances with the North, and participates in campaigns on ethical consumption in relation to the working conditions of women in the South and East.

In 2008 KARAT implemented following gender and development projects:

- Through Their Eyes, Through Ours. Raising public awareness about development problems faced by women from developing countries in the EU Eastern Neighbourhood, Balkans and Central Asia.
- Promoting Social Development: Building Capacities of Social Watch Coalitions

Apart of these in 2008 KARAT have also entered into partnership with One World Action – recognized UK development agency – and cooperated on the joint project elaboration: 'Building Support in New Member States for Gender-sensitive and -responsive European Development Cooperation' that was approved by the European Commission and will start in 2009.

5.1. Through Their Eyes, Through Ours. Raising public awareness about development problems faced by women from developing countries in the EU Eastern Neighborhood, Balkans and Central Asia

Supported by the EU Commission and Minority Rights Group International the project was launched in March 2008 and will last until March 2011. KARAT as a leading organization has been working in partnership with: Gender Media Caucasus Association from Georgia, WOMNET from Germany, Permaculture and Peacebuilding Centre Ppc Shtip from Macedonia (KARAT member) and Center for Communication and Development from Slovakia (KARAT member). This joint work is conducted with the objectives to:

- Raise awareness of EU general public, NGOs and decision makers about the development problems experienced by women in developing countries of the Region.
- Mobilize public support for strategies and policies for development in the CEE & CIS countries.
- Greater access of EU public to comprehensive, easy to understand information
- Elimination of negative stereotypes associated with economic position of women from the countries mentioned above.

One of the very important outcomes of the project was strengthening of KARAT Coalition identity due to the almost complete regional coverage of the project activities implemented in 2008 that included:

5.1.1. Preparation of the Exhibition of photograph.



Project partners have organized an international photo competition for amateur and professional photographers from the Region addressing socio-economic situation of women from: Albania, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. Over 100 photographs were collected, out of which 39 were selected for the exhibition, which will be shown in number of locations in the Region and outside it. During 2008 KARAT and project partners have prepared for the launch of the exhibition in Warsaw, Poland (January 2009); exhibition in Poznan (March 2009); exhibition in Bratislava, Slovakia (May 2009) and 3 exhibitions in Germany to be held in 2009. They have also been requested for the exhibitions to be shown in other countries (e.g. Czech Republic and Ukraine).

5.1.2. Exhibition publication and other awareness raising materials



The publication exhibition publication: “Images of the economic situation of women from the developing countries of Central Asia, Eastern Europe and Balkans” (500 copies in Polish; 1000 copies in English) describing the economic situation of women in those countries in the context of development and the relationship between the countries and EU was produced and disseminated. Further, postcards “Economic rights of women are human rights” were produced and disseminated.



5.1.3. Information and project visibility in the media

KARAT estimations over 220 000 people were reached via media (covered by the media 28 times including 2 radio interviews), websites (including project websites of the partners in English, Polish, German and Slovak, as well as other websites) and through project pamphlet (2000 copies in English, 1000 each in Polish, Slovak and German) with the gender and development message of the project. This significantly contributed to the achievement of the objectives of the project.

5.2. Promoting Social Development: Building Capacities of Social Watch Coalitions

Supported by the EU Commission and Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands the project was launched in March 2008 and will last until March 2011. It is implemented in cooperation with partners from Italy (Unity Cooperation for Development People unlus, UCODEP – leading organization) and Czech Republic (Ecumenical Academy Prague, EAP). The goal of the project is to develop national Social Watch coalitions in Poland, Italy and Czech Republic to monitor and advocate for social development and gender equality on both: national and European level.

KARAT’s role in the project is to mobilize civil society organizations in Poland to build national Social Watch coalition, coordination of its activities and production of the annual

national Social Watch report. The most important project activities implemented in 2008 included:

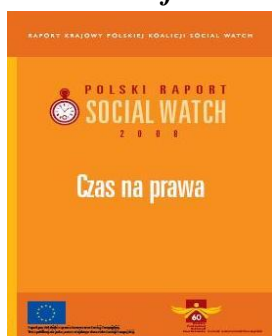
5.2.1. Networking to create wide Social Watch (SW) Coalition in Poland

Activities associated with coordination and extending of Polish SW Coalition were undertaken throughout entire 2008. Seventeen organizations replied to KARAT invitation and attended the meeting on building Polish SW Coalition held in June. The meeting launched SW Coalition work in Poland was finally composed of the following organizations: Amnesty International, Institute of Global Responsibility, the Federation for Women and Family Planning, Nobody's Children Foundation, Democratic Society East, TUS Foundation, Campaign Against Homophobia, KARAT Coalition, International Commission of Jurists, Polish Society of Anti-discrimination Law, Stowarzyszenie Interwencji Prawnej, The Network of West-West Women – NEWW Polska. The second strategic meeting of the coalition members was held in October and focused on the official launch and promotion of the national SW report.

5.2.2. Training for the national Social Watch coalitions to study analysis methods, advocacy and campaigning

In July 2008 KARAT coordinated the organization of the 3 day training session for the representatives of the 3 SW national coalitions: Italian, Polish and Czech. The training focused on strategies to engage with the other organizations and groups to enlarge the number of national SW coalitions collaborators and analysis methodology as far as the methods of processing SW national reports are concerned. The training was a great capacity building opportunity and contributed to enhancing the cooperation among the 3 coalitions project partners. In particular the training strengthened the capacity of the coalitions in building the national platforms and the competences of their members in developing networking activities at the local level. In the report from the training Polish Coalition was praised for being successful in enlarging its membership.

5.2.3. Identification of experts and production of the first Social Watch Report



Polish Social Watch Coalition (PSWC) developed the first national Social Watch Report 2008. The report „Czas na Prawa” (The Right time for the Rights) (1500 copies) tackled such burning issues as: jurisdiction, conditions in prisons, rights of minor victims of domestic violence and lingering discrimination against certain groups; women, sexual minorities, disabled people and refugees. As far as women's rights are concerned, the report focused on the low participation of women in the politics, discriminatory pension system and violations in the area of sexual and reproductive rights. There was also a strong section on multinational corporation performance and right to development with regard to Polish development assistance policy. The publication also contained the reprints from the international report covering the countries of KARAT member organizations and recipients of the Polish development aid (Tanzania and Angola).

5.2.4. Report distribution and communication activities



The report „Czas na Prawa” (The Right time for the Rights) was launched on the 60th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (10th of December) in the Polish Parliament. PSWC succeeded in ensuring the

presence of Chairperson of the Parliamentary Committee of Justice and well-known expert on human rights from Helsinki Human Rights Foundation. The launch was organized jointly by PSWC and the Parliamentary Club of the Left-wing. The report launch was a big success as far as the media coverage is concerned. Further, it was also a great opportunity for distribution of the publication to the relevant MPs, decision makers and journalist. Distribution and communication activities were continued by KARAT till the end of the year.

5.3. Other activities

Non-project statutory activities conducted within the framework of gender and development program were implemented mainly by strengthening KARAT's cooperation with European NGOs working on gender and development and by participation in meetings and capacity building events at the EU level. This included:

- *Strengthening the strategic partnerships with European and International networks & organizations:*
Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC), Social Watch, Women in Development Europe (WIDE), SOMO, Südwind, European Coalition for Corporate Justice (ECCJ) and One World Action (OWA). For more information about KARAT's engagement in the above organizations refer to section 6.2.
- *Participation in WIDE /UNIFEM consultation on gender equality in European aid.* As a regional platform of WIDE KARAT strengthened its capacity and contributed to development of common recommendations for two most important events concerning the new aid architecture in 2008: September 2008 Accra High Level Forum III and the November 2008 Doha Review International Conference of the Monterrey Consensus.
- *Participation in TRIALOG/CONCORD/FORS conference: 'Are we on the right track?'* KARAT participated in this event held in Prague, on May 2008 as WIDE's representative.

6. Organizational and strategic empowerment

KARAT's activities within this program aim to strengthen capacity and strategic impact of KARAT's member organizations as well as organizational capacity and strategic impact of Coalition itself.

Since KARAT is undertaking organizational and strategic activities not as separate projects they are build on the statutory actions around the following interrelated policy fields: integration and mobilization of member organizations; strategic alliances and partnerships; communication tools; efficient and democratic governance; efficient Secretariat's management.

6.1. Integration and mobilization of member organizations

In order to effectively facilitate the communication between the Secretariat and Member Organizations KARAT responded to the recommendation of its International Board (2007 term) and employed a networking officer who in 2008 undertook following actions: establishment of the KARAT member e-group; update of the KARAT Members database;

regular call for contribution to the KARAT Newsletter; liaising with other organizations at the regional/EU and global level. This had a significant impact on the number of organizations approaching KARAT as far as the membership and participation in the elections of the International Board are concerned.

By January 2009 KARAT membership increased by 8 organizations from: Belarus (2), Moldova (1), Montenegro (1), Serbia (1), Russia (1), Slovakia (1), Kirgizstan (1) and 3 individuals members from Poland (2) and Serbia (1). Further, 65% of KARAT members, that is 10% more than in 2007, took part in the electronic election of the International Board.

In order to guarantee transparency and ensure the information dissemination about the activities undertaken by the KARAT Secretariat and the coalition members regular updates in the monthly newsletter - KARAT News – are produced and send electronically to over 650 regular subscribers worldwide. Further, KARAT News are also available on the www.karat.org.

In order to integrate and mobilize KARAT members the Secretariat was placing great emphasis on involving members in the joint projects and programs. In 2008 number of KARAT member organizations engaged in the joint projects increased to 8, out of which 5 were from the countries of Commonwealth of Independent States. These include: Women's Rights Center (Armenia), Azerbaijan Gender Association "Symmetry" (Azerbaijan), Women's Independent Democratic Movement (Belarus), Gender-Center (Moldova), Women Support Center (Kyrgyzstan).

6.2 Strategic alliances and partnerships

One of the KARAT's strategic goals is building partnership and strengthening the cooperation with other European and global networks, organizations and initiatives. Further, one of the most important KARAT objective is bridging the women's organizations from old European member states with organizations from NMS and non EU countries. To achieve these KARAT contributed to the agendas of the following strategic partner organizations:

6.2.. WIDE - Women in Development Europe, Brussels, Belgium

WIDE is a European feminist network of women's organisations, development NGOs, gender specialists and women's rights activists that monitors and influences international economic and development policy and practice from a feminist perspective. As an official regional platform of WIDE, KARAT was represented in the WIDE Board by Jivka Marinova (member of KARAT Board, Gender Education Research and Technologies, Bulgaria) that served as a WIDE Executive Secretary till General Assembly in October 2008. Kinga Lohmann, KARAT Executive Director, was a member of WIDE Steering Group and part of WIDE official delegation to the Commission of the Status of Women in New York in January 2008 and member of the WIDE Annual Conference (AC) Programme Committee. As far as WIDE AC is concerned KARAT contributed to the content of conference, held in the Hague, Netherlands in October 2008, bringing 5 participants from its member organizations, identifying speakers and resource persons from the Region, holding a session on 'Women organizing for changes in working conditions' and co-facilitating the workshop on the European Feminist Forum. Additionally, KARAT Secretariat was engaged in the WIDE Working Group on Financing for Development and represented WIDE during several events

and trainings at the European and global level that are described further in the relevant sections of this document. WIDE is also a KARAT partner in the “Through Their Eyes, Through Ours” project.

6.2.2. International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia – Pacific (IWRAP Asia-Pacific), Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

IWRAP Asia Pacific – KARAT strategic partner in the OP CEDAW project - contributes to the progressive interpretation, universalisation, implementation and realization of women's human rights through the lens of CEDAW and other international human rights treaties. Its objective is to facilitate a process through which the CEDAW Convention is used as a tool for applying international human rights standards at the national level and in a wide range of contexts. KARAT Executive Director is representing Europe in the IWRAP Asia-Pacific Advisory Body (IWRAP AB) dedicated to promotion of CEDAW and its Optional Protocol worldwide. In September 2008 she participated in the IWRAP AB meeting held in Warsaw, Poland. The IWRAP strategy for the following years was discussed and the decision to organize the regional meeting on CEDAW and using CEDAW Committee concluding remarks as a tool to forward women's rights in Warsaw, Poland, in 2009 was taken.

6.2.3. European Coalition for Corporate Justice (ECCJ), Brussels, Belgium

KARAT is one of the founding organizations of ECCJ that brings together national platforms of civil society organizations including NGOs, trade unions, consumers' organizations and academic institutions promoting Corporate Accountability (CA) from all over Europe. ECCJ represents over 250 civil society organizations present in 16 different countries around Europe and believes that CA and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) mechanisms should be based on international legal frameworks and principles, serving as the foundation of corporate justice. Raluca Manaila from Romanian member organization: Org AUR is representing KARAT in the ECCJ. In 2008 she attended the conference: *Legislative opportunities for the EU to improve corporate accountability* and contributed KARAT's voice to the General Assembly where the future strategy covering ECCJ European Wide Campaign and Capacity Building Working Group were discussed.

6.2.4 Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC), Amsterdam, the Netherlands

The CCC is an alliance of organizations in 12 European countries supporting garment workers in garment-producing countries in their efforts to create substantive, sustainable improvements in working conditions. KARAT has been cooperating with CCC since 2003. In October 2008 KARAT Secretariat representative attended the CCC South-East Exchange Meeting held in Istanbul, Turkey, with the primary objective to learn from experienced labour rights activists in the South and share experiences on national alliance building, regional networking and public education in the Balkan countries, Poland and Turkey. Further cooperation was based on the framework of “Fair Play in sportswear industry” project.

6.2.5 Social Watch Secretariat, Montevideo, Uruguay

Social Watch is an international network informed by national citizens' groups aiming at following up the fulfilment of internationally agreed commitments on poverty eradication and equality. Together with The Network of East-West Women: NEWW-Polska KARAT serves at the Social Watch Polish National Focal Point and is responsible for promoting the initiative; submitting a national report for the yearly publication as well as contribution to the Social Watch global report. In 2008 the cooperation was based on KARAT's involvement as a partner in “Social Watch Coalition in Poland” project and KARAT Gender and Development

program.

6.3. Communication tools

KARAT's communication tools were significantly improved in 2008. Two persons whose job descriptions include specific responsibility for the communication management were appointed: PR Officer (contacts with the media, launches of publications, events organization) and Networking Officer (liaison with members and partners). Further, new KARAT website - www.karat.org was launched and a closed e-group for the ever KARAT membership was established.

KARAT has also continued communication via KARAT News - a monthly electronic newsletter covering the area of women and gender issues relevant to the Region with the strong section of Member organizations' update; an e-group: KARAT CEE/CIS serving as an open information exchange platform, and project email lists involving partners from each of the KARAT's project team.

2008 was also a very fruitful as far as publications are concerned: 7 reports, 3 guides /booklets and 4 brochures/ campaign materials were produced. List of KARAT 2008 publications is included in the Annex II.

6.4. Efficient and democratic governance

Securing efficient and democratic governance of KARAT Coalition in 2008 included 1 face-to face meeting of the International Board (May 2008), regular communication between KARAT Secretariat and the governing bodies via email list, and the electronic elections for the new Members of the Board held in November /December 2008.

6.4.1. KARAT Board Meeting

Thanks to the Sigrid Rausing Trust (SRT) institutional grant a Board meeting attended by the Board as well as the Advisory Body was held in May 2008. The meeting focused on the elaboration of KARAT 2009-2012 program framework and finalization of policy of cooperation. Detailed reports from the meeting were disseminated and posted in the 'internal documents' section of KARAT website.

6.4.2. Board elections

KARAT Board is composed by persons representing perspectives and problems faced by women from different geo-political 'sub-regions': EU New Member States, the Balkans and CIS. As a result of yearly e-elections to the International Board 4 new members were elected for the two year term of office. They were: Zuzana Jezerska (Slovak Center for Communication and Development, Slovakia); Michaela Marksova-Tominova (Association for Equal Opportunity, Czech Republic); Katerina Milenkova (Permaculture and Peacebuilding Center, Macedonia); Susanna Vardanyan (Women's Rights Center, Armenia). The newly elected members joined three other Board members: Ludmila Petina (Balarus), Valentina Bodrug -Lungu (Moldova), Raluca Manaila (Romania).

A high percentage of KARAT members participated in the election process. Participation increased from 55% in 2007 to 65% in 2008.

6.5. Efficient Secretariat's management

In 2008 KARAT Secretariat has grown significantly. A marked financial progress of the organization (budget increase by 540% from 2005) resulted from fundraising efforts of very experienced and devoted staff. KARAT has secured financial sustainability for 2009 and beyond, however, the organisation faces significant problems with rising funds for own contribution required by the European Commission.

KARAT financial progress linked to increase of long-term projects and enlargement of the staff (from 5 persons in 2007 to 13 in 2008). The newly hired persons include: Office Manager, Financial Officer, Networking Officer, PR Officer and 4 project coordinators. With regard to significant staff enlargement Secretariat moved to a larger office and developed effective management structure based on Executive Director as the main supervising body, three key program managers and newly appointed Office Manager involved in overall strategic decision making and supervision of the projects implementation

With the primary objective to ensure efficient Secretariat management organization's policy & practice code was developed, 5 internal trainings for the Secretariat new comers were organized, communication training for all members of KARAT staff arranged and weekly meetings of managers as well as weekly meetings of the entire team have been held. Further, an evaluation of the Secretariat new employees and five managers was conducted.

Number o KARAT Secretariat staff attended relevant professional trainings to increase their professional capacity including: European Commission finance reporting training by the external expert, Warsaw, Poland, January 2008; External training on human resources management, Warsaw, Poland, November 2008; Concord training on Human Rights Based Approach to Development, Budapest, Hungary, April 2008; IWRAW Asia Pacific Global Training for Trainers on OP CEDAW, Warsaw, Poland, September 2008; WIDE capacity building workshop 'On the road again: Feminist visions and strategies for Accra and Doha', Madrid, Spain, July 2008.

Annex I

KARAT' member organizations:

Albania

1. Union Gender and Development (previously known as Union Gender Task Force)

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Phone/Fax: +(355-4) 272 592

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Evelina Koldashi: ekoldashi@yahoo.com

2. Women in Development Association

Rr. Abdyl Frasheri. P. 9 Sh. 5 Ap. 42, Tirana, Albania

Phone/Fax: +(355-42) 277 47

Contact persons:

Jeta Beluli: Jkatro@albmail.com

Yllka Selimi: YLLKA@albaniaonline.net

3. Gender Alliance for Development Center

Rruga Abdyl Frasheri, Apartamenti 3, Pallati 10/1, P.O.Box: 2418 Tirana, Albania

Telephone: +355 255514/15; Fax: +355 25555

www.gadc-al.org

E-mail: gdi@gadc-al.org

Contact person:

Eglantina Gjermeni: tina@gadc-al.org

Armenia

4. Hope and help

post adress: 23 Mashtots Ave, apt. 35, Yerevan, Armenia 0002.

Phone: +347 10533352; Fax: +374 10531770

Contact persons:

Yenok Shatvoryan: hopehelp@web.am

Nora Mnatsakanyan: hopehelp@graffiti.net

5. Women's Rights Center

Postal address: 36 Babayan Str., ap. 23, 375037 Yerevan, Armenia

Office address: 17 Abovyan Str., ap.20, 375037 Yerevan, Armenia

Phone: +374- 10 583 618, Fax: +374- 10 583 618

www.wrcorg.am

Contact persons:

Susanna Vardanyan: vardanyan_9@yahoo.com, susanna@wrcorg.am

Zaruhi Shahinyan: wrcarm@arminco.com

Azerbaijan

6. Azerbaijan Gender Association “Symmetry”

29 Bul-Bul av. 54, 370014 Baku, Azerbaijan

Phone: 994-12-934-056

Email: kdadashove@hotmail.com

Contact persons:

Kamila Dadasheva: kdsgender@yahoo.com

Tamila Aslanbekova: aslanbekova@yahoo.com

Belarus

7. Women’s Independent Democratic Movement

Volodko Str. 20, room 58, 220007 Minsk, Belarus

Phone/Fax: +375 017 224 41 59, +375 017 250 31 68

widm.iatp.by/widm/index.phtml

E-mail: wcdmb@user.unibel.by

Contact persons :

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8. NGO Vitebsk Women’s Club

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Tel : +375 29 130 14 82 , +375 212 216 453

Contact persons:

Svetlana Dubrovskaya,

Galina Davidovskaya : vwc@ramler.ru

9. Center for Gender Initiatives “ADLIGA: WOMEN FORFULL CITIZENSHIP”

Volodarskij 129, 210016 Vitebsk, Belarus

Telephone / Fax: +375 (29) 210 920 / +375 (212)210920

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Bosnia and Herzegovina

10. Association Vesta

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www.vesta.ba/en

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Bulgaria

11. Gender Education Research and Technologies

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www.gert.ngo-bg.org/en

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12. Gender Project for Bulgaria Foundation

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www.gender-bg.org/bg/news_bg.html

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13. Women's Alliance For Development

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www.women-bg.org/index_en.html

Contact persons:

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Croatia

14. B.a.B.e. (Be Active, Be Emancipated) - Women's Human Rights Group

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Toll free SOS number: 0800 200 144

www.babe.hr/v2/

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Czech Republic

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16. Association for Equal Opportunities

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17. Gender Studies, O.P.S., Information and Advocacy Center for Women's Rights

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Georgia

19. Center for Women and Development

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Eka Kimeridze

20. NGO Anti-Violence Network of Georgia (AVNG)

#9 Antonovskaia str, Apart. 10, Tbilisi 0177, Georgia

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www.avng.ge/Eng.htm

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Hungary

21. Center for Democracy and Information Foundation

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 Phone: +36 30 94 10 554; Fax: +36 23 452 842
www.drszabo.hu/
 E-mail: erzsebet@drszabo.hu
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 Erzsebet Maria Szabo: erzsebet@drszabo.hu
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Kyrgyz Republic

22. International Public Fund „Pangea for a word free of violence”

129 -1. Jumabek, 720040 Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic
 Phone: +996 312 626 456; Fax: +996 312 667 245
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 Saltanat Barakanova: sbarakanova@mail.ru
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23. "Women Support Center"

microraion Kok Djar 23, 720082 Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
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 Munara Beknazarova: munarabek@gmail.com

Latvia

24. Coalition for Gender Equality in Latvia

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 Email: apvieniba@apvieniba.lv
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Lithuania

25. Women's Issues Information Center

Jakšto 9 kab. 303 / 315, Lithuania
 Tel: + 370 2 629 003, Fax: + 370 2 629 050
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Macedonia

26. Organization of Women of the City of Skopje

11 Oktomvri br. 17 – 1000 Skopje, Macedonia
 Phone/Fax: +389-2-3164-8150
 2/ 15 700 – National SOS line for victims of violence
www.ozs.org.mk
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www.sozm.org.mk/mak/Za%20nas.asp

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28. Women's Centre of the Republic of Macedonia

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30. Macedonian Women's Rights Center – Shelter Centre

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Moldova

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32. Youth Informational Center "World Window"

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33. Political Club of Women – 50/50

51-a Alexandru cel Bun , 2012 Chisinau, Moldova
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34. Association of Employed Women «Women Today»

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E-mail: federacja@federa.org.pl

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37. Women's Association For Gender Equality -BEIJING'95

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Anita Seibert: anita.seibert@karat.org.pl

Romania

38. ARIADNA - The Romanian Women Journalists Association

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Georgeta Adam

Ileana Andrei

39. Equal opportunities For Women Foundation

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Andreea Leitoiu: sef@sef.ro

40. National Union for Women's Rights Romania

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41. Romanian Society for Feminist Analyses AnA

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www.anasaf.ro/ro/index.html

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42. Women's Association of Romania/War

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OFICIUL POSTAL 37 C.P.80 Bucuresti sectorul 2
 Phone: 40 1 650 27 95; Fax: 40 1 659 79 31
<http://www.afr2010.ro/>

Contact person:

Liliana Pagu
 Lucia Maria Catana: afr@opensys.ro

43. ORG. 'AUR' - National Organization of Human Resources Specialists

Str. Cristian Popisteanu, nr. 1-3, scara D, etaj 5, camera 585
 Sector 1 – Bucuresti
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www.resurseumane-aur.ro

E-mail: org.aur@xnet.ro

Contact persons:

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 Ioana Manaila: org.aur@gmail.com

Russia

44. "Women from Zato" (Women from Closed Cities of Russia)

P.O. box 514, Chelyabinsk Region, Snezhinsk, 456770.
 Phone: 7 (35172) 255-00;
www.owl.ru/eng/women/aiwo/snezhin.htm

E-mail: women@pop.snz.ru

Contact persons:

Tatyana Brovkina: brovkin@snezhinsk.ru
 Oksana Stepanova: oksana_stepanova@yahoo.com

45. Information Center of the Independent Women's Forum

p/b 230, 119019 Moscow
 Phone/Fax: (095)366-92-74
www.owl.ru/eng/women/org001/

E-mail: iciwf@okb-telecom.net

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 Nina Gabrieljan: iciwf@okb-telecom.net

46. The Association of Women Journalists

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47. Center for Media Studies, Faculty of Journalism, Moscow State University

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Email:mediagender@gmail.com

Contact persons:

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Serbia

48. Association of Business Women

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Phone/Fax: +381 11 2776 801

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49. Femina Creativa Association for the Economic Empowerment of Women

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www.feminacreativa.org.yu/index_en.html

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50. Association for Women's Initiative

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51. Citizens's Association Felicitas

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Slovakia

52. Alliance of Women in Slovakia

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tel: 0903 519 550

www.alianciazien.sk

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Robert Dobrovodsky: rodbobro@alianciazien.sk

53. Slovak Center for Communication and Development

Kalinčiakova 25, 831 04 Bratislava, Slovakia

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www.sccd-sk.org

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Rastislav Klimes : resto.klimes@gmail.com

Ukraine

54. League of Professional Women

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55. Women's Prospects

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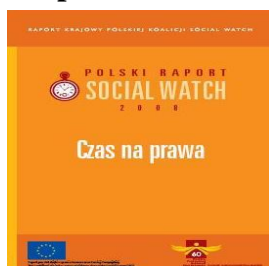
Slovenia

Jana Javornik: jana@ruc.dk

Annex 2

KARAT's publications in 2008

Reports:



Time for Rights, Polish Social Watch Report 2008 (Polish version)



Situation of women employed in super/hyper markets in Poland, Karolina Oponowicz, Agnieszka Chmielecka, KARAT 2008 (Polish version)

RAPORT Z BADANIA
„SYTUACJA PRACOWNIC SUPER- I HIPERMARKETÓW”



Working conditions and labour rights protection from gender perspective in supermarkets in Poland, Agnieszka Chmielecka, dr Barbara Krzyśków, Anna Wojciechowska-Nowak, KARAT 2008 (Polish version)



Bieg z przeszkodami. W stronę wyższych płac i lepszych warunków pracy przy produkcji artykułów sportowych, Fairplay 2008 (Polish version)

Bieg z przeszkodami
W stronę wyższych płac i lepszych warunków pracy przy produkcji artykułów sportowych

Play Fair 2008





Pekin 2008: Bez medalu za przestrzeganie praw pracowniczych, Fairplay 2008 (Polish version)



Fair Play always in fashion, Fairplay 2008 (Polsih and English version)



Through their eyes. Images of the economic situation of women from developing countries of Central Europe, the Balkans and Central Asia, Anita Seibert and Ewa Pintera, KARAT 2008 (Polish and English version)

Guides:



China calling: makeITfair (Polish, Czech and Hungarian version) – Third consumer guide in the makeITfair campaign

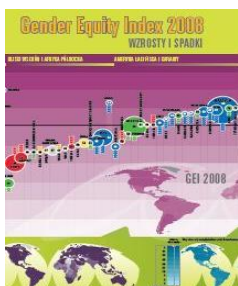


Women about their work in supermarkets, KARAT 2008 (Polish version)



Наши права не факультативны!, IWRAW Asia-Pacific & KARAT Coalition 2008 (Russian version of the IWRAW Asia Pacific guide on the Optional Protocol to CEDAW)

Brochures:



GEI 2008 detailed tables, Social Watch 2008 (Polish version)
Basic Capabilities Index (BCI) 2008, Social Watch 2008 (Polish version)
Gender Equity Index (GEI) 2008, Social Watch 2008 (Polish version)



When working in supermarket, you have a right... , KARAT 2008 (Polish version)