

KARAT NEWS

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Our News

Dear KARAT News readers,

Beginning from this issue of KARAT News, we are starting a round of introductions of KARAT Coalition membership – organizations as well as individual members. This is done in order to get to know each other better, learn more about our projects, strategies and national contexts in which we work.. These introductions are to be found in *National/Members' News* section. This time we have a pleasure to introduce our individual member – Katalin Medvedev and Gender – Center from Moldova. We hope that you will find this information interesting, inspiring and useful. We are looking forward to receiving profiles from other. Further, if there is anything that you would like to update KARAT News readers on, let us know! Just e-mail me at: magda.pochec@karat.org.pl

New staff members of KARAT secretariat

In February/March, KARAT secretariat has been joined by 5 new staff members. In the first round, we would like to introduce to you Monika Roslonska, Katarzyna (Kasia) Staszewska and Ewa Pintera.

Monika took a position of finance officer and she will deal with all the projects from the financial perspective.

Kasia is our new networking officer and she will be working closely with KARAT members which will include updating them on activities undertaken by Karat and assisting them in becoming involved in relevant initiatives. Since KARAT consists of over 50 member organizations now, we find it highly important to cooperate with all of you in a more professional way.

Ewa is coordinating the project "Through their eyes, through ours: Raising Public Awareness about development problems faced by women from developing countries from EU Eastern Neighborhood, Balkans and Central Asia" that has just started and you can learn more about it in the separate news below.

Update on the CEDAW project

On 27-28 March Karat will be hosting the first strategic meeting organised within the project "Building towards Eastern European and Central Asia NGO Coalition on Optional Protocol to CEDAW". The meeting will be attended by women delegated by project partner organizations: Women's Independent Democratic Movement from Belarus, International Women's Political Resource Centre from Georgia, Gender-Center from Republic of Moldova and Ukrainian Women's Fund from Ukraine. More information about the project is available at: http://karat.org/economic_lit/cedaw.html
The project is coordinated by Aleksandra Solik who you can contact at: aleksandra.solik@karat.org.pl

"Through Their Eyes, Through Ours"

On first of March Karat as a lead agency has started a 3 year project funded by European Commission titled: "Through their eyes, through ours: Rising Public Awareness about development problems faced by women from developing countries from EU Eastern Neighbourhood, Balkans and Central Asia". The project is implemented in partnership with Karat member organizations: Centre for Communication and Development (Slovakia); Permaculture and Peacebuilding Center Ppc Shtip (Macedonia) as well as GenderMediaCaucasus Journalists' Association (Georgia), WOMNET (Germany), and WIDE (Belgium). The objective of the project is producing and presenting to the general public, particularly the CEE New Member States information addressing development problems of women in the developing neighbouring countries, and developing countries from the Balkans and Central Asia, in accessible convincing, not fragmented or sensationalized manner. The project will place strong emphasis on involving as many Karat members as possible. The main event of the project implemented this year will be exhibition of the artwork produced by women from Balkans, Central Asia, Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus focusing on the economic situation of women in these countries and undermining existing negative gender stereotypes. The call for the submission of artwork will be issued soon. The first important activity of the project will be the strategic meeting of the partners which will take place in the middle of April. In each issue of Karat News we will be providing you with more updating on activities related to the project, however if you want any more specific information now please write to Anita at anita.seibert@karat.org.pl.

Report on gender aspects of sporting goods industry

Titled "*Fair Play always in Fashion. Consumers' awareness and working conditions of women in sporting goods industry*", the report includes three major topics. It diagnoses the condition of the sporting goods industry in Poland, examines working conditions of women and finally assesses consumer's needs and attitudes. The report is a part of project "FairPlay in sporting goods industry" that is realized by Karat Coalition in partnership with Sudwind Agentur (Austria) and Inkota (Germany). The main objective of the project is to raise awareness among consumers on the working conditions in the sporting goods production in the whole chain of suppliers, including CEE countries and mobilize consumers' support for worker's rights.

The electronic version of the report is available at:

http://www.karat.org/publications/report_fashion_EN.pdf

If you have any questions you can contact Joanna Szabunko, who coordinates the project at: joanna.szabunko@karat.org.pl

With this project KARAT also supports Play Fair 2008 campaign that is taking place in the lead up to the 2008 Olympic Games to push for respect for workers' rights in the global sporting goods industry. We encourage other organizations to support this campaign as well.

For more information visit the campaign's website at:

<http://playfair2008.org/>

Social Watch – New project has started

With the 1st of March, Karat has started a new three-year project *Promoting Social Development: building capacities of Social Watch Coalitions* co-financed by European Commission. Social Watch is an international network of non-government organizations monitoring national policies and alternative policy proposals from a "grassroots" perspective. The project is to enhance actions and impact of Social Watch coalitions in Italy, the Czech Republic and Poland, that is above all, to improve capacities of analyzing public policies and their impact upon development objectives, mobilize civil society and dialogue with national, regional and local decision makers to shape policies within national coalitions of Social Watch, especially Poland and Czech Republic.

Karat will participate in capacity building sessions and will become a competent Social Watch coalition leader in Poland. The monitoring activities will focus on gender and social development issues. The project is led by a Consortium of three organizations - two Italian: UCODEP and MANITESE and Karat Coalition, and realized with several partners, including Oxfam Novib, Eurostep, Ekumenische Akademie Prague, Lunaria, Fondazione Culturale Responsibilita' Etica, Carle.net.

If you have further questions you can contact Julia Wrede at julia.wrede@karat.org.pl

UPDATE FROM MEMBERS

Learn more about KARAT members!

Born in Hungary, but currently living in the United States, **Katalin Medvedev**, Ph.D. (individual member of KARAT) has a wide area of expertise that includes: Construction and expression of cultural identity through dress; intersections of gender, race, class, sexuality and dress; feminist theories and methodologies as well as Women's history. Katalin works as an assistant professor at the University of Georgia and is involved in a scholarly project that investigates the St. Paul Women's Institute's activities in the 1930s in Minnesota and the membership's consumer agency and its influence of increasing commerce in St. Paul.

GENDER-CENTRU

Gender-Center from Moldova is a nonprofit organization working to promote gender equality in society through information, education and communication. Most spectacular successes of the organization in recent years was direct contribution to elaboration and advocacy for Moldovan Gender Equality Law (February 2006) and Law on Prevention and Combating Family Violence (February 2008). It also authored shadow report for the UN CEDAW Committee. Currently, Gender-Center is running a project entitled "Preventing and Managing Gender Based Violence" that is aimed at raising capacities of policemen on victims' protection through assurance of victim' security by using Protection Order (new tool for Moldovan legislation). The organization also facilitates trainings on gender equality for teachers and students.

We encourage you to visit their website which is also available in English:

www.gender-centru.md

National/Members' News

UKRAINE: accesses World Trade Organization (WTO)

Ukrainian government has to ratify the agreement till June 2008 and one month after, the country will formally become member of WTO. Accession makes Ukraine eligible to negotiate free trade agreements (FTA) with the European Union. EU-Ukraine negotiations has been already launched on 14th of February in Kiev. FTA has to be viewed as a part of the European Neighbouring Policy (ENP) as economic development contributes to the stability of the region. EU-Ukraine FTA negotiations have important gender aspect as almost 50% of economically active population in Ukraine are women. You can learn more about gender implications of EU-Ukraine trade relations by reading WIDE's fact sheet that is available online at:

<http://62.149.193.10/wide/download/EU-Ukraine%20gender%20factsheet.pdf?id=568>

MACEDONIA: launch of documentary on gender-based violence

The documentary movie titled "*Starts with a scream and must never end in silence*" is a contribution upon overcoming the problem with violence against women. With this movie, the National Council of Women of Macedonia – SOZM alerts about the situation with domestic violence and women' victims who live maltreated and limited from their freedom. The movie presents the efforts by the institutions and civil sector, as well the established mechanisms and accomplished results in the fight against this societal evil. The author of the documentary movie is the famous Macedonian editor Teona Mitevaska

GEORGIA: Women's NGOs statement on the occasion of Mother's Day, March, 3

Women's movement takes a chance to discuss what does maternity means in Georgia and how it affects women's position, especially in terms of reconciliation of family and professional life. NGOs claim that the states policies and programmes aimed at boosting fertility rate and addressing challenging demographic situation of a country are not enough as they are only targeted at eradication of poverty (about 15% of population lives below the poverty line) and vulnerable groups. The problem is there are no policies targeted specifically at maternity as such in Georgia. Particularly, there are no provisions that will secure women from discrimination faced on the labour market. NGOs highlight that maternity should not be an obstacle to professional development and that the government must take an action on that. Press release of the Georgian Women NGOs Coalition is available at:

<http://www.wcg.org.ge/eng/index.php>

KAZAKHSTAN: Monitoring of women's rights

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) organized a five-day workshop on the methodologies used to monitor women's rights. It was targeted at governmental as well nongovernmental representatives. They learned how to investigate, document and report on the implementation of the government's international commitments on women's rights. The workshop had also strong focus on economic rights that were included in the recommendations to Kazakhstan elaborated by the UN CEDAW Committee. The follow up workshop is already planned. The workshops are part of the project "Strengthening Human Rights in Central Asia", co-organized with *Equitas - International Centre for Human Rights Education*, the CIS Regional Office of the UN Development Fund for Women, and co-funded by the European Commission and the Canadian International Development Agency in 2007-2009.

For more information go to: <http://www.osce.org/item/29617.html>

EU News

WIDE contributes to the public consultations on EU Policy Coherence for Development (PCD)

Recently, the European Commission has facilitated public consultation as it is in the process of preparing the Communication on PCD. It will be issued in March 2008 and it is hoped that the Commission will incorporate WIDE's input. First of all, WIDE identifies policy coherence as a key issue in the discussion around financing for development (FFD), aid effectiveness (AE) and aid for trade (AFT). According to WIDE, policy coherence should move towards the achievement of specific sets of social and economic goals that benefit the maximum number of people, especially vulnerable and discriminated groups. In other words, it should be people-centered concept in compliance with UN Commitments, especially as regards women's rights and gender equality.

WIDE has formulated concrete recommendation for the European Commission.

You can read more about this in the February issue of WIDE newsletter that is available online at:

http://62.149.193.10/wide/download/2008_News_2.pdf?id=586

Call for stronger EU Action on Women's Rights

At the occasion of the International Women's Day, the European Parliament calls upon the Council of the European Union to adopt guidelines on women's rights. The initiative of the scaled up commitment to women's rights of the EU has been launched by the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) that prepared position paper and appealed to MEPs to support it.

The position paper on the EU guidelines on women's rights is available at:

<http://www.fidh.org/IMG/pdf/FIDHguidelinesonwomenrightsFeb08.pdf>

You can also check up the list of MEPs who support the appeal at:

<http://www.fidh.org/spip.php?article5318#2>

Other News

52nd Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), 25 February – 7 March, 2008, New York, USA

The theme of the 52nd CSW session was *Financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women*. The most important outcome is a document called Agreed conclusions that has been drafted by Division for Advancement of Women (DAW). NGOs are not satisfied with the draft as in fact it has weak language on the financing for women's rights movement. It does not specify the sources and size of the funding so does not indicate concrete obligations of the Member States.

During the session, there has been also a strong lobbying of the NGOs as regards gender equality architecture reform (GEAR) of the United Nations. Liberia has proposed to create a consolidated, strong and fully resourced United Nations entity for women and gender equality led by an Under-Secretary General that combines normative and operational functions to effectively enhance results at the country level.

Karat participated in the session as a part of WIDE delegation.

For more information about the session visit CSW's website at:

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/>

To learn more about GEAR campaign go to:

<http://www.gadnetwork.org.uk/pdfs/Sept07/GEAR%20Campaign%20Statement.pdf>

European Feminist Forum (Warsaw, Poland) will not take place

Planned to take place in June 2008, the European Feminist Forum (EFF) that is meant to be a platform for debate for women's movement in Europe has been canceled due to lack of funding. The organizers: Karat Coalition (host) and IIAV (secretariat) put much effort in fundraising for this needed and long awaited event but none of the approached donors was able to provide financial support. This can be viewed as another example of cuts in funding available for women's movement and feminist agenda. Nevertheless, women's rights activists are still encouraged to exchange ideas and to continue discussion via EFF's website that will be maintained for at least two years. On 28th of March, 2008 there is a meeting in Amsterdam with to define the character of the planned publication.

More information is available at:

<http://europeanfeministforum.org/spip.php?article417&lang=en>

CEDAW: NGOs met to build alliance for the realization of women's rights, March, 1- 2, 2008, New York, USA

The aim of the alliance building meeting was to explore ways to develop and strengthen cross-regional advocacy for women's rights within the framework of the UN Convention on the elimination of all form of discrimination against women (CEDAW). This was meant to be the first step towards building global partnership in executing women's rights worldwide through the UN Human Rights system. At this meeting there was also a room for women's organizations to share experiences on the CEDAW review process and its impact on the national activism.

The discussion has been initiated by IWRAP (International Women's Rights Action Watch) Asia Pacific, which is has been working for the realization of women's human rights through the lens of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women since 1993 through various strategies.

Kinga Lohmann from Karat Coalition participated in the meeting. Karat is currently running a project that aims at building capacity of women's NGOs in CEE/CIS to use Optional Protocol to CEDAW.

To learn more about the project go to: http://karat.org/economic_lit/cedaw.html

You can also contact Aleksandra Solik for more detailed information aleksandra.solik@karat.org.pl

To learn more about IWRAP AP visit their website: <http://www.iwraw-ap.org/>

International Women's Day (IWD): International Labour Organization (ILO) calls for decent work for women

At the occasion of the IWD, ILO organized panel discussion on the topic "decent work fro women" and launched new report that examines employment trends for women worldwide. It provides statistics and also addresses new indicator that is share of women in vulnerable employment. The chapters are divided into geographical region with a special section on Central and Southern European and CIS countries.

The report "Global Employment Trends for Women, March 2008" is available online at:

http://www.ilo.org/wcmstp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_091225.pdf

Information Sharing

New book on women's movement in Croatia and Slovenia

The author of the book, Andrea Spehar discusses impact on national gender policies of women's movement in two post-communist countries. The book is entitled *How Women's Movement Matter. Women's Movements' Strategies and Influence on Gender Policy Formation in Post-communist Croatia and Slovenia*. This publication focuses on four policy areas: violence against women, anti-discrimination policy, parental leave and pension reform.

Book examining different aspects of gender equality in Europe

Recently published book titled "Multiple meanings of gender equality. A critical frame analysis of gender policies in Europe" takes (among others) a geopolitical context into account when discussing approaches to gender equality. It presents the diverse ways in which the concept is understood. There are case studies of particular countries including the ones from the CEE region – Hungary and Slovenia. Each chapter provides insights into the ongoing theoretical and political debate about "what is gender equality?"

If you would like to learn more about this publication follow the link:

<http://www.ceupress.com/books/html/MultipleMeanings.htm>

Sisterhood and solidarity? – article by Silke Roth

The author examines the impact of EU enlargement on women's organizations, mainly from the new EU member states. It describes the dynamics of women's movements: opportunities and threats that women activists face in the EU. This unique paper elaborates also on the impact of transformation processes on women from Central and Eastern Europe.

The article can be purchased at: <http://sp.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/content/abstract/14/4/460>

Transnational Institute – a worldwide fellowship of committed scholars – activists

The website of Transnational Institute contains interesting resources – articles and opinion papers on the variety of issues including economics, democracy, social policy and so forth. There is a special 'Europe' section that you might find useful.

Check it up at:

http://www.tni.org/list_page.phtml?&publish=Y&int02=&pub_niv=&workgroup=&text06=&text03=&keywords=EUTR&lang=&text00=&text10=&menu=11a

East Chance – Your future starts here!

A very useful website especially for young citizens of the CEE/CIS region that provides information on the great deal of opportunities available: scholarships, events, jobs, conferences, seminars and so forth. Besides being a comprehensive database for individuals looking for internships and other forms of activities, it gives useful hints on how to write successful CV/resume and how to prepare traveling abroad or apply for scholarship.

We encourage you for visit the website at: www.eastchance.com

Prize for Women's Creativity in Rural Life

This is a prize of the Women's World Summit Foundation honouring creative and courageous women and women's organizations working to improve the quality of life in rural communities around the world. Organizations and individuals are encouraged to nominate candidates. The deadline is March, 31, 2008.

For detailed information go to:

<http://www.woman.ch/women/1-introduction.php>

Call for papers: 7th European Feminist Research Conference, June, 4 – 7, 2009, Utrecht, the Netherlands

The main focus of the conference is on the way in which knowledge, politics and the imagination inform gendered culture in contemporary Europe. It is organized jointly by three institutions: ATHENA (Advanced Thematic Network in Activities in Women's studies in Europe), Gender Studies Programme Utrecht University and AOIFE (Association of Institutions for Feminist Education and Research in Europe). The idea is to make this event interdisciplinary which should be taken into account when submitting abstract. One of the key topics will be Social Economic Europe.

Learn more at:

<http://historyfeminism.wordpress.com/2008/02/19/call-for-papers-7th-european-feminist-research-conference-netherlands/>

Training programme of International Human Rights Network (IHRN), National University of Ireland, Maynooth

IHRN organizes two trainings that might be of interest to some of you – Justice sector reform: applying human rights based approaches; and Human Rights Fieldwork: Principles, strategies and skills.

Detailed information is available at:

<http://www.ihrnetwork.org/2007-08-programmes.htm>

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS

KARAT Secretariat would like to sincerely thank the following for their contributions to the News (forwarding information and providing us with 'original' information): WIDE; NEWW-Polska; EastChance, WUNRN; IGTN

Edited by Magda Pocheć