

# KARAT NEWS

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KARAT Secretarial would like to wish all the News followers all the best with the coming International Women's Day on 8 of March. We wish you determination, satisfaction and good fun with all your gender justice fights ! Keep on going !

Herewith we would also like to present you a re-shaped formula of the KARAT News. We will try to keep it shorter and more focused on the updates from the network. The new layout will be ready with the March issue. Your suggestions and contribution of 'articles' are more than welcome.

## What's new in KARAT ?

### OP CEDAW: regional coalition expands



The group of partners working together within KARAT OP CEDAW project in 2009 has increased by organizations in 4 additional CIS countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan. The new partners that were selected as a result of the call announced by KARAT Coalition are: **Women's Rights Center** (Armenia), **Azerbaijan Gender Association "Symmetry"**, **Public Foundation "Panorama"** (Tajikistan) and **"Generation of the Future"** (Uzbekistan). The project partners will be responsible for implementing the project activities at the national level. The type and scope of these activities as well as the rules for cooperation will be defined during the strategic meeting planned for the end of March. Since not all states mentioned above are parties to the Optional Protocol to CEDAW, one of the project aims is to support the women's NGOs in these countries to convince their authorities to ratify this document.

\*2009 is the second year of the project implementation. Therefore the newly established partnership will build on the experience gained last year by KARAT and women's organizations from Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. Like in 2009, also this year, part of the project activities will be conducted in cooperation with IWRAP Asia Pacific the organization focused on CEDAW for over 15 years. Due to the cooperation between KARAT Coalition and Women's Support Center in Kyrgyzstan greater number of women's organizations in more CIS countries will be involved in the OP CEDAW related activities this year.

To know more about the project write to Ola at: [ola.solik@karat.org.pl](mailto:ola.solik@karat.org.pl)

### Women in Supermarkets: round table



State institutions (parliamentarians, representatives of ministries, National Labour Inspectorate, Ombudsman Office), employers and employers' organizations, trade unions, NGOs, lawyers and researchers participated in the roundtable on improvement of the working conditions in supermarkets held in Warsaw, Poland, on 26 February 2009. Recommendations and conclusions from the Round Table will be sent to Chairman of the Three-Sided Commission (government-employers-trade unions) – Prime Minister Waldemar Pawlak.

This was the first time when representatives of super/hypermarket chains and employers' organizations were invited to join KARAT's activities. We wanted to hear the employers' opinions about recommendations focusing on more effective protection of the employees' rights developed by KARAT's experts (SAAB) and find out what can be realistically done to improve the employees' situation. Unfortunately none of the invited supermarket representatives attended the meeting. This lack of will for dialogue is not understandable especially in the time of economic crisis when multi-stakeholder debate is a key to shape positive approach and the solution satisfactory for all the parties.

\*Up to 90% of the super/hypermarkets staff are women. The research conducted by KARAT in 2008 showed that not the law but its implementation in supermarkets is improper and in result - labour rights protection system often fails. The most obvious infringements include increasing the length of shifts, not observing appropriate breaks between them, the number of days worked without a day off, mobbing.

To know more write to Agnieszka at: [agnieszka.chmielecka@karat.org.pl](mailto:agnieszka.chmielecka@karat.org.pl)

### MakeITfair: capacity building in Hungary



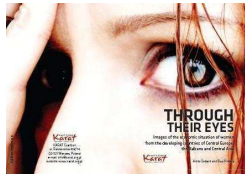
The workshop on the working conditions in the electronic industry organized in Budapest, Hungary, in February 2009 aimed to inform interested NGOs and civil society actors (such as trade unions) about the MakeITfair campaign and possibilities of cooperation; impact of growing demand for electronic goods on environmental issues; social & economic development in Southern countries and so

called countries in transition. The special attention was given to educational materials and how they can be used further by the interested organisations, groups & individuals in Hungary.

\*MakeltFair is a European campaign, raising awareness about developmental issues in the production of consumer electronics, such as mobile phones, MP3 players and laptops. We want to encourage consumer, especially youth, to get active to improve the situation in the electronic industry. We are trying to make big brand electronics companies accountable – asking them to take responsibility for the labour abuses and environmental damage at the bottom of their supply chain. KARAT takes part in the campaign as a partner from Central Eastern Europe region because of its interest in improvement of women's working conditions. Women constitute the majority of employees in the big brands electronics supply chains.

For more information write to Monika at: [monika.matus@karat.org.pl](mailto:monika.matus@karat.org.pl)

### **Through their eyes, Through ours: exhibition in Poznań**



On the occasion of 8<sup>th</sup> of March - International Women's Day – the "Through their Eyes" exhibition will be exhibited in Poznan on the initiative of Women's Association Konsola and Spot Foundation.

*Through their eyes* exhibition, is one of the elements of "Thought Their Eyes, Through Ours" project and consists of the photographs taken by women from developing countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia. It depicts women in their economic context, showing their determination, energy, and struggle to fight the poverty and other development problems present in the in the Region.

With the exhibition KARAT aims to to undermine the existing stereotypes associated with socio-economic problems experienced by women from the EU Eastern Neighbourhood, Balkans and Central Asia and mobilise EU public support for gender-sensitive strategies and policies for development.

You can visit the exhibition from 5 to 15 March in SPOT Foundation: Dolna Wilda 87, Poznań

Should you like to host an exhibition in your country or at any event you organize please contact Ewa at: [ewa.pintera@karat.org.pl](mailto:ewa.pintera@karat.org.pl)

### **Campaigning for corporate accountability**

The European Coalition for Corporate Justice (ECCJ) – with KARAT as one of the funders - plans a public campaign to push for establishment of legal proposals at the EU level to improve corporate accountability (within a three year project co-financed by European Commission). The Extraordinary General Assembly of ECCJ (Brussels, 25-26 February, 2009) aimed at developing a strategy of a successful campaign for the period 2009-2011 which foresees legal proposals of better legal obligations (e.g. companies having a duty to prevent human rights abuses), better access to justice by victims, better transparency of companies, as well as a research on violations of social, environmental and human rights standards by companies in the Global South and on legal remedies to address these violations. KARAT, focusing on decent work for women in Central Eastern Europe, and member of ECCJ, participated in EGA. Its representative was surprised by the fact that a case study on violation of human rights in Europe (e.g. documented cases on women in the supermarkets in Poland) would not be taken by the ECCJ in its campaign. As a result a group of ECCJ members explored further the issue of focusing on Europe, namely on new member states (NMS), and identified a need of ECCJ project focusing on violations of human rights by companies in NMS and strengthening cooperation with organizations from these countries.

To know more about KARAT engagement in ECCJ write to Kinga at: [kinga.lohmann@karat.org.pl](mailto:kinga.lohmann@karat.org.pl)

### **Financing for Development (FfD): joining the debate**

Kasia from KARAT Secretariat joined the WIDE Ad Hoc Working Group: Financing for Gender Equality that met in Brussels on February 20<sup>th</sup> 2009. The group's main mandate is to monitor and advocate for gender equality in the center of development agenda and new aid architecture process. The February

meeting focused on elaborating an action plan for 2009 -2012 with regard to the current global financial crisis.

\*Gender & Development is one of the 4 thematic priorities in the KARAT Program for 2009-2012. In the last Board Meeting it was agreed that the participation of women from CEE & CIS in the EU & global development discourse / process should be increased. This aims to make the Region more visible and make a link between East, North and Global South.

KARAT is WIDE (Women in Development Europe) regional platform. WIDE constitutes a European feminist network of women's organizations, development NGOs, gender specialists and women's rights activists that monitors and influences international economic and development policy and practice from a feminist perspective.

To know more about KARAT and Gender & Development write to Kasia at:

[kasia.staszewska@karat.org.pl](mailto:kasia.staszewska@karat.org.pl)

## Members' News

### **VESTA Association (BiH): preventing violence against adolescents**



With the support from UNIFEM VESTA Association is starting a new project *Preventing violence against girls and promotion of gender equality values among adolescents*. The project aims to fill the research gap examining the manifestations of adolescent dating violence and develop the mechanisms for the preventive actions and the suppression of violence in such relationships. The project addresses the increasing number of reports on girls being brutally murdered by their boyfriends in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The project has a strong media component.

VESTA is asking women NGO with the experience in this field to exchange the information and outcomes. To know more about the project write to Selma at [selma@vesta.ba](mailto:selma@vesta.ba)

### **Gender Studies o.p.s (Czech Republic): for the Barcelona targets**



Czech women's rights organizations do not agree with the government position on questioning the targets of the Barcelona process. According to Gender Studies o.p.s *Barcelona Targets will secure wider options for Czech parents since the current supply of childcare services or facilities is inadequate and insufficient, effectively preventing women (parents) from returning back to the labour market any sooner than after three years after the birth of their child*. Barcelona targets aims to provide childcare services for at least 90% of children between the ages of three and school age, and for at least 33% of children younger than three by 2010.

To read the full press release go to: <http://www.feminismus.cz/fulltext.shtml?x=2147223>

### **Women's Support Center (Kyrgyzstan): campaign on safe maternity**

Official meeting with the business representatives, international and local NGOs staff and media held on 10<sup>th</sup> of February 2009 launched the campaign by the Kyrgyz women's rights organizations on reducing maternity death rate. Maternity death rate in Kyrgyzstan is particularly high: 100 women die in childbirth per year, while in western countries the number is 15. The campaign aims to inform the public about the safe motherhood. With this regard the presents for 8 of March that are available in the Bishkek supermarkets will contain the campaign messages. Profit from the sale on 5 – 7 March will be donated to National Care Center for Mothers and Children where the women from the entire country with the most difficult pregnancies are treated.

To know more about the campaign contact Munara at: [munarbek@gmail.com](mailto:munarbek@gmail.com)

### **Felicitas (Serbia): new projects on the labor market**



*Citizens Against Mobbing* and *Concealing Center for Small and Medium Enterprises* are the titles of two projects that Citizens' Association Felicitas will be starting in April 2009. The first one is the continuation of the advocacy work on Law on Mobbing in Serbia with the overall goal to contribute to changes and amendments to the Labour Law concerning protection from all forms of harassment in the broader sense. The second will provide serious education for unemployed – particularly women between 40 –60 years of age that lost their jobs due to the transition process - for starting small / medium size enterprise.

More information on both projects will be available in April on [www.felicitas.org.rs](http://www.felicitas.org.rs) To know more now write to Majda at: [majda@felicitas.org.rs](mailto:majda@felicitas.org.rs)

### **Association of Women Journalists (Russia): bridges across conflicts**

Twenty five women journalists from India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Iran, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Georgia, Russia, Israel, Palestine, Ukraine, Italy, Croatia, Latvia and USA participated in the international workshop: *Women Journalists: Building Bridges Across Conflicts*, that took place in Moscow, Russia, on February 2<sup>nd</sup>. Initiated by Russian Union of Journalists, Glasnost Defence Foundation, Gender council of IFJ, Russian PEN and UNESCO the workshop aimed to professional experiences exchange and exploring future strategies and networking.

To know more or join the newly established network write to Nadia at: [azh@gdf.ru](mailto:azh@gdf.ru)

## **Special**

### **Women Must Be Included In Solving the Crisis !**

UN and Women's Organizations are calling the governments to give women a key role in solving the global economic meltdown.

On 6<sup>th</sup> of February United Nations Committee warned that current global crisis is likely to have a serious impact on the full realization of gender equality. It stressed that particular attention must be paid to providing women an access to programmes aimed at alleviating poverty and hunger, as well as to a guarantee that national and international efforts effectively reach those most in need and that funding of programmes for women's empowerment is not eroded. It called all the States parties of CEDAW to comply with all their obligations under the treaty in spite of the financial crisis.

Source: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=29800&Cr=women&Cr1=economy>

Solving the crisis cannot be build on traditional macroeconomic concept that is gender blind and gender neutral! Women's Rights organizations are currently working to identify the alternatives / proposals addressing current development model. To know more about their advocacy work towards Stiglitz Commission, March G20 meeting in London and next UN conference on the global crisis and the impact for development countries (second half of 2009) check: <http://www.wide-network.org/> or <http://www.awid.org/>

## **Funding**

### **German UNIFEM Prize**

German UNIFEM announced the call for a Prize 2009 which will be awarded to projects and programmes from Africa, Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe (excluding the countries which are part of the European Union) working to strengthen women's empowerment since the last 3 years. The cash award is €10,000. Deadline to apply is 15 June 2009.

More information is available at: [www.unifem.de](http://www.unifem.de)

### **UNVF on Contemporary Forms of Slavery**

United Nations Voluntary Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery Calls for Grant Proposals up to \$15,000US to help NGOs attend sessions of the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery or to provide direct assistance to individuals whose human rights have been violated as a result of slavery. The deadline is 30 March 2009.

To access the grant application, please visit the [Stop Violence Against Women Website: http://www.stopvaw.org/United Nations Voluntary Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery Calls for Grant Proposals.html](http://www.stopvaw.org/United_Nations_Voluntary_Fund_on_Contemporary_Forms_of_Slavery_Calls_for_Grant_Proposals.html)

### **OSI International Women's Program call for proposals**

International Women's Program is currently accepting the proposals on reducing discrimination and violence against women, strengthening women's access to justice and increasing women's role as decision-makers and leaders. As far as CEE&CIS is concerned Bosnia and Herzegovina and Tajikistan can take advantage of this funding opportunity. Organizations can apply for 1-3 year grants ranging from 25,000 to 200,000 USD per year. The deadline is 8<sup>th</sup> of march.

To know more go to: [http://www.soros.org/initiatives/women/news/equality\\_20090213](http://www.soros.org/initiatives/women/news/equality_20090213)

## **Events**

### **WIDE AC Conference, Switzerland, June 18-20, 2009**

*Care Economy and Care Crisis* is the title of this ths year WIDE (Women in Development Europe) Annual Conference co-hosted with the Swiss platform from 18 to 20 June in Basel, Switzerland.

Information about how to register will be available soon on <http://www.wide-network.org> . To pre-register or for more information, write to Patricia Meyer: [patricia.meyer@cf-d.ch.org](mailto:patricia.meyer@cf-d.ch.org)

## **Resources**

### **New Book on gender equality policies in an Enlarged Europe**

*Between Success and Disappointment. Gender Equality Policies in an Enlarged Europe* is a title of the new book by Susanne Baer and Miriam Hoheisel examining the impact of the EU and transition process on gender equality. The book contains contribution from Regina Barendt and Silke Steinhilber, KARAT's Advisory Body Members and Kinga Lohmann, KARAT's Director.

### **Report: Women in European politics - time for action**

A new report by the European Commission entitled "Women in European politics - time for action" (January 2009) is available online. The report analyses the under-representation of women in decision-making at all levels in the European Union. It examines why it has been difficult to break down the barriers hindering women to enter political decision-making in the EU. You can access the report on: [http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/publications/booklets/equality/pdf/ke8109543\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/publications/booklets/equality/pdf/ke8109543_en.pdf)

### **New issue of CaucAsia magazine**

First 2009 issue of CaucAsia – information / analytical electronic magazine – by international coalition of gender journalists is available online at: <http://www.gmc.ge/images/PDF/Kavkazia2009-1E.pdf> In this number: letter to the presidents of Georgia and Russia.

## **Gender & Migration**

PICUM - Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants has now started a 3-year strategy to gender-sensitize its rights based approach. A section on undocumented women in PICUM's monthly newsletter provides an opportunity to report on recent issues of concern, trace policy developments and highlight networking opportunities arising from new projects and partnerships across Europe. PICUM invites all recipients of its newsletter to send materials for inclusion and furthermore, to encourage subscription among individuals and organizations with specific interest in gender and migration. To know more about their work visit: <http://www.picum.org/>

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### **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): Selma Hukic from VESTA Association, Linda Sokačová from Gender Studies o.p.s. , Munara Beknazarova from "Women Support Center", Majda Sikosek from Citizens's Association Felicitas, Nadezhda Azhgikhina from Association of Women Journalists, Mirjana Dokmanovic, WIDE, CONCORD, VAW Monitor, EWL, NEWW, DEEP, BCSDN, NOTICIAS / NOUVELLES, BSCDN, ASTRA, WIDE, WUNRN, CONCORD, ASTRA, VAW Monitor, NEWW

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