



43 (05) 2009. Warsaw, 10/07/2009

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Dear KARAT News Readers !

June was a very busy month for KARAT Secretariat and member organizations. We are very glad to announce that the next WIDE Annual Conference will be hosted by Org AUR, KARAT member organization from Romania in June 2010. The conference topic will be migration.

Please note that due to the summer brake you will receive the next issue of KARAT News in September. Remember also that I am always looking forward to receive your news. It's enough to send me a short paragraph till the end of each moth.

Have a nice reading !

Kasia Staszewska, KARAT Networking Officer

What's new in KARAT ?

KARAT on the WIDE AC

KARAT Secretariat and member organizations' representatives joined WIDE (Women in Development Europe) Annual Conference on Care Economy and Care Crisis held in Basel, Switzerland on 19-21 June 2009. During the intensive three days program, KARAT Coalition representatives served as a discussant on the UNSRID study on the care economy, co-facilitated the workshop on the care realities in Eastern Europe & CIS, co-organized the meeting of the young feminists initiative in WIDE and participated in the WIDE ad hoc task force meeting on CEDAW +30. These all to bring Central & Eastern Europe regional perspective to elaboration of the feminist responses on current multifaceted crisis and revalued care work. We are also very happy to announce that Org AUR, KARAT member organization from Romania, has been formally approved as a host of the next year WIDE AC on migration to be held in Bucharest in June 2010. KARAT is very much looking forward to the event !

Report from the WIDE AC 2009 should be ready in August To know more now, please write to Kasia at: kasia.staszewska@karat.org.pl

Through their eyes: exhibition in Berlin and further awareness raising



The opening of the *Through Their Eyes* photo exhibition within the project led by KARAT took place on the 2nd of July in the European Academy of Berlin on the occasion of the international conference: *EU gender politics in an international context. Gender perspectives and gender indicators*. Both events have been organized by Womnet from Germany, KARAT partner in the project focusing on rising public awareness about development problems faced by women from developing countries in the EU Eastern

Neighborhood, Balkans and Central Asia. The exhibition consists of the photographs taken by women from developing countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Photos show women in their economic context. On the one hand the photos undermine the stereotypes: depicting women determined, full of energy, facing problems, on the other picture the reality: poverty and other problems in this Region. The exhibition is open in Berlin till the end of July. Later it will travel to Weimer and Bonn.

Next to the exhibition KARAT is currently working on different innovative awareness raising materials to draw the general public attention to the women's rights in developing countries. Short clip-movie on women's economic rights in the countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia is being prepared. Official launch is planned for August 2009. We encourage you to contribute to the movie. We will update you soon about details of production. For more information please contact Ewa at: ewa.pintera@karat.org.pl

Women in supermarkets: conference



Labour Rights of Women employed in Supermarkets – preventing infringements, protection, improvement of the working conditions was a title of the conference organized by KARAT in Warsaw, Poland, on June 19. The aim was to publicise the poor working conditions offered by super/hypermarkets to their employees, mostly women, abuses and violations prevention. KARAT believes that it is particularly important in times of economic crisis, when, in Poland for example, amendments to the Labour Code, instead of strengthening, weaken the position

of the most vulnerable groups of employees. KARAT, nor the trade union representatives that took part in the conference, did not agree with National Labour Inspectorate (NLI) statement on progressive improvement of the working conditions in supermarkets. Trade unionist emphasized that official audits do not see the violations since supermarkets know the exact time of the audit and prepare themselves for it. Further, number of supermarket employees is constantly decreasing provoking the situation of intensified abuses as far as overtime work, payment, and workload are concerned. In our opinion, unless executive power of NLI is strengthened, positive changes for women employed in the supermarkets will be very slow. To know more about the conference and other project activities contact Agnieszka at: agnieszka.chmielecka@karat.org.pl

Fair Play: made in Eastern Europe



Problems related to the women's work in garment industry are not limited to the regions of Asia or Latin America. They emerge also in Eastern Europe. On 26th and 27th of June KARAT organized the international seminar "Made in Eastern Europe" for 'multipliers' focusing on education and consumers' campaign. 36 participants could find out what was the history implications for garment industry in Eastern Europe, how does it function at the

moment, what are its perspective for future and how all this influence workers of this branch – majority of them women. Case studies from Poland, Romania and Macedonia were presented to give the participant possibility to become familiar not only with Eastern European regional perspective, but also national contexts. The second day of the seminar was dedicated to the newest Clean Clothes Campaign "Better bargaining" targeting giant retailers. The "Cashing In" report describing the problem of business model implemented by Giants and its consequences for workers in entire supply chains was presented. Participants discussed possibilities of campaigning in particular countries, share thoughts and definitely got more gender aware about working conditions in the clothing sector.

To know more about the seminar and Fair Play project activities write to Joanna at: Joanna.szabunko@karat.org.pl

Gender and Development in NMS: conference in Prague

On the occasion of the Czech Presidency of the European Union KARAT Secretariat representative participated in the *Civil Society Organizations Development Effectiveness Conference* organized by FoRS - Czech Forum for Development Co-operation – held in Prague on June 23-24, 2009. The event gathered over 170 representatives of civil society organizations (CSOs), donors and governments from nearly 50 countries of Africa, Asia, Australasia, Europe, Latin and North America. The conference focused on the principles of development effectiveness and the CSOs specific role in development with respect to the external conditions that could best contribute to their full performance. Gender & development and migration & development were important topics of the conference recognized in its final Proclamation. CSOs representatives present in Prague committed themselves to *Promoting gender equality and advocating to address the causes of vulnerability (not only advocating for the vulnerables and excluded but supporting their own efforts to claim their rights and creating environment where their voices are responded to)*.

To know more about the Prague conference or gender and development in the NMS project write to Kasia at:

kasia.staszewska@karat.org.pl

Members' News

VESTA Association (BiH): civic dialogue for women's rights



As a part of the *Civil Dialogue For the Rights of Women and Children in Bosnia and Herzegovina* - initiative funded by the European Union - VESTA organized the conference: *CSOs and Governmental Institutions in the Improvement of Women's and Children's Rights in BiH*. Event was held in Sarajevo, on June 15, and was attended by 100 participants from the civil society and the governmental sector. The Conference provided data on the quality and capacities of the civil society to establish civil dialogue with governmental institutions for the advancement of the status of women and children in the country and defined the spaces for change. It is also important to emphasize that such an important event was organized at the momentum of strenghtening civil society consulting role as inevitable for the reforms that Bosnia and Herzegovina has to undertake in the coming EU accession process.

To know more write to Selma at: selma@vesta.ba

PPC Shtip (Macedonia): Mobbing-Stand against it!



PPC Shtip has started the implementation of the action: Mobbing – stand against it ! - Building Network of First Generation of CSOs for Representing the Rights of Victims of Mobbing. The aim is to raise public awareness of different stakeholders for protection of rights of mobbing victims in Macedonia. In partnership with RDDA Sonce-Tetovo, WCI Antico-Skopje and AEC Millennium -Vrapciste PPC Shtip has organized two workshops but also prepared pop - up advertised at the national TV Chanel 5 and web site available in Macedonian, Albanian and English language. The action will be followed by local street campaigns and round tables in September and October.

To know more write to Katerina at: fe_mail@t-home.mk or visit www.mobbingnet.org

Women in Development Association (Albania): quota and elections in June 2009

Even though women in Albania fully participate as equal citizens in the decision-making processes of the country, yet they are underrepresented in decision-making. Potentially, the most significant step in increasing women's presence in decision-making was the recent adoption by the Albanian Parliament of the law, "Gender Equality in Society" in July 2008, which includes a 30% quota in appointed and elected positions; and the adoption of a 30% quota in the Electoral Code in November 2008. With these changes, particularly in the electoral code, all political parties were supposed to ensure that a minimum 30% representation of women was put forward as candidates in both national and local elections, with sanctions being levied against parties which do not meet this minimum standard. With the passing of the new electoral code, Albania started to react toward recommendations made by Albanian women NGOs and international community.

Due to these changes, Albania has recently reached 15 % of female seats in the national assembly (elections 28 June 2009), thus exceeding 7.1 % female representations of the previous national assembly. The lack of a formula for quota placement in the electoral lists and the weak penalties related to the implementation of quota in the electoral processes, no doubt limited the space for female candidates by reducing women's chances. However, without these changes, far fewer women would be sitting in the parliament of 2009. Moreover, the increase in percentage of women in the parliament, whatever it is, will no doubt produce greater weariness about significance of gender equality and the importance of women's equal representation in politics. This has already started. Under Albanian women's community pressure, for the first time, Albanian political parties introduced gender issues in their electoral platforms that also aimed political priorities for equal treatment of both men and women in the work place, education, bank credits and health issues, instituting thus barriers for gender related discrimination. What is important from now on is not the considerable number in the national assembly, but what political power elected female MPs will have.

Want to know more? Write to Jeta at: jkatro@albmail.com

Org AUR (Romania): CSR against social exclusion



Effective Utilisation of the CSR Practices to Deal with the Margins of the Labour Markets in South-East Europe (EU-CSR) was a title of the conference organized by Org AUR - The National Association of Human Resources Specialists. The event held at the Romanian House of Parliament "Human Rights Chamber", aimed at the promotion of the CSR concept and best practices through the lens of social inclusion in Romania. By creating an open space for discussions and debates between the business environment and different international stakeholders the topics of the efficiency, relevance and benefits of social

inclusion practices in the context of the global economic crisis were put on the table. The conference was attended by more than 60 participants from Romania, UK, Bulgaria, and Serbia (Association "FELICITAS", KARAT Coalition member). In order to achieve the aim of the conference, AUR invited members of the Romanian parliament, employers' organisations, TU's, NGOs working in the area of CSR and local and central state authorities. As an important outcome of the conference, the Romanian NGOs decided to form a national platform on CSR. A positive feedback came also from the Romanian media who showed the interest in a further collaboration on this topic.

The Romanian CSR Conference was followed by a similar event held in Sofia (Bulgaria).

The overall aim of the CSR project by Org AUR is to fostering the implementation of the Corporate Social Responsibility in South East Europe. A tool-kit consisting of a compendium of best CSR practices from 7 EU Member States and a methodology for monitoring and assessment of the level of excellence achieved in CSR practices in Europe will be developed.

To know more write to Raluca at: org.aur@gmail.com

Felicitas (Serbia): citizens against mobbing



Ministry of Labour and Social Policy of Serbia is now officially supporting all the activities of Felicitas and its partners against mobbing. Law proposal against workplace harassment is finally in the Parliament procedure. Next step would be to enforce the law implementation. New pdf brochure on mobbing is in preparation and will be on the Felicitas web site in Autumn. To know more about actions against mobbing in Serbia write to Majda at: majda@felicitas.org.rs

Beijing + 15 ECE Prepcom in Geneva

ECE (that is CEE, CIS, EU and North America) Regional Preparatory Meeting for the 15-year Review of Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action will take place in Geneva, Switzerland on 02-03.11.2009. There will be also possibility of having some space for side events on Saturday 31 October and Sunday 1 November. In view of the 30th Anniversary of CEDAW this year, there will be a discussion on the possibility to have a CEDAW 30th Anniversary regional gathering/event on Wednesday 4 November, the day after the PrepCom. The preliminary PrepCom agenda focuses squarely on economic issues, including the financial crisis. UNIFEM is currently considering organizing a half day interactive workshop, on Sunday 1 November, for interested civil society, government and other partners to foster policy engagement, partnerships and networking on the subjects of the development cooperation agenda and its ownership and implementation at national level; this will include a focus on the response to the financial crisis, from a rights-based, pro-poor and gender-responsive perspective. For more information contact Information Unit, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) at: info.ece@unece.org, or have a look at: www.unece.org

Action to sign OP ICESCR !

On December 10th 2008, 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Optional Protocol to the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (OP ICESCR) was adopted. Ratifications of 10 State Parties are now needed that it can enter into force. It is particularly important because of the mechanism it would introduce. It allows victims of ESCR violations, from countries that have ratified the OP-ICESCR to find justice within the UN System, when no effective means of protection and redress are available nationally. On 24 September, the OP ICESCR opens for signature by States. You can help to make this happen by contacting your government and pushing them to sign the OP ICESCR in September. We strongly encourage you to learn more about the OP-ICESCR, actions in preparations for the UN Signature Ceremony and possibilities to get involved by visiting the website of the International Network for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCR-Net), Coordinator of the Justice Now ! Campaign at: http://www.escr-net.org/actions/actions_show.htm?doc_id=940687&attrib_id=13453

UN Conference on crisis : expectations failed

According to the Women's Working Group in Financing for Development (WWGFD), the outcome document of the UN Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact on Development, held in New York on June 26, is limited by the high diplomacy and fragile consensus that narrow UN to the development cooperation role. It is pretty discouraging since CSOs and Southern governments had fought very hard in Doha, November 2008, to ensure that the UN would play a part in world efforts to counter the impacts of the financial crisis on developing countries. Further, the outcome document fails to go far what has already been agreed on the FfD conference in Doha and does not make any new commitments to reform the financial architecture worldwide. However, there are some possibilities and progressive language recognizing women as facing "greater income insecurity and increased burdens of family care" (para. 3) and women and children had been mostly impoverished by the crisis (para. 7). The document further recognizes that responses to the crisis needs to have a gender perspective (para. 10), mitigation measures should take into account gender equality, among others (para. 21), and leadership appointments in the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) should take regard of gender balance (para. 49). Facing the situation that there are really no strong commitments to follow up the outcome document, WWGFD will however continue to demand for economic justice and gender justice in the United Nations!

WWG Statement on the Outcome Document of the UN Conference on the Crisis and its Impact on Development is available at: <http://www.awid.org/eng/About-AWID/AWID-News/High-Diplomacy-and-Fragile-Consensus-Limit-UN-to-Development-Cooperation>

Poland, Congress of Women

The 2-day Polish Congress of Women organized in June in Warsaw turned out to be a landmark in the women's rights raising awareness process in Poland. It was attended by around 3 000 women from all over Poland and has resulted in numerous news, articles, commentaries and interviews in all kinds of media. It has fuelled the discussion on women's issues and rights by providing the public opinion with postulates, formulated during the 21 panel discussions, as well as with presentations and opinions delivered by well known female representatives of all areas of social life and professions. Among them were artists, writers, researchers, journalists, scientists, lawyers, business women, politicians, women's rights advocates and other activists from women's formal and informal organizations and trade unions. The participation of female VIPs such as two Polish first ladies: the former - Jolanta Kwaśniewska and the present – Maria Kaczyńska, as well as the meeting venue - Warsaw Congress Hall – contributed to making the event very prestigious. This in turn helps to lobby and advocate for 2 main recommendations formulated during the Congress: (1) to introduce the principle of 50/50 male/female candidates into the election law and (2) to establish an independent (appointed by the Parliament) ombudswoman for women and equality. The recommendations have already been taken further by their advocates and meetings are now being held with leaders of the political parties represented in the Polish parliament.

Apart from the main postulates mentioned above over 100 others were formulated. Among them are also those that are perceived in Poland as very controversial since they address women's reproductive rights and call for liberalizing the Polish restrictive anti-abortion law.

Although the Congress brought together women with different views on women's rights, the feminists perspective was extremely strongly represented and these were the feminist presentations that were applauded with the greatest enthusiasm. The Congress radiated with positive energy and revealed the potential of Polish women.

Interested to know more ? Write to Ola at: aleksandra.solik@karat.org.pl

Events

Webb Institute for Leadership in Democracy

'Women, Leadership and Gender Equality' is a five-day English / Russian course for young women NGO and trade union leaders from NIS and Western Balkan run by Ruskin College in Oxford on 18 -24 October 2009. The aim is to discuss experiences, key themes including the roots of gender inequality, expectations of women in the workplace & society and ways to addressing these challenges. Deadline for applications in 26 July. More information: <http://vle.webbatruskin.org/>

EuroNGOs Reproductive rights in times of economic crisis

Investing in Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in Times of Economic Crisis is a title of the conference organized by the Network of European NGOs for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, Population and Development in Riga, Latvia on September 7-8. For more information, preliminary program and to register go to <http://www.eurongos.org/Default.aspx?ID=18832>

Resources

NEW CCC report on Giant retailers



At a time of financial crisis the millions of women, who are employed in factories and workshops and make the clothes on sale in supermarkets, are paying for the profits of the gigantic global retailers such as Carrefour, Tesco, Aldi, Lidl, and Walmart. This is the conclusion from the Clean Clothes Campaign report "**Cashing In: Giant retailers, purchasing practices, and working conditions in the garment industry**". KARAT Coalition has prepared the Polish version of the report. It is now

available both in electronic and in printed format. The report is focusing on the clothing industry, in which the giant retailers are bigger and bigger players. They have gained great popularity also in Eastern Europe; four of them are present in Poland, which is one of highest numbers among the countries in which the Giants are present. Far from lifting women out of poverty, the Giants are cashing in on it. The report is available at: <http://www.cleanclothes.org/campaigns/1270-ccc-cashing-in-research-report-launched>
If you wish to receive the printed version of our publications, don't hesitate to contact Ewa at: ewa.kaminska@karat.org.pl.

MakeITfair: labour rights conditions in Philippines



KARAT as a partner in the project focused on electronic industry launched new makeITfair report about labour conditions in the computer industry in the Philippines on the 6th of July. This is the second time when makeITfair researchers reported miserable situation in the Philippines factories. Two years ago reports revealed that suppliers of computer components in the Philippines violated labour laws and codes of conduct of computer brands. Several companies promised improvements but a new report from makeITfair shows that no real change has occurred. The report is available at: <http://www.karat.org/index.php?pageId=316>
For more information contact Marta: marta.gontarska@karat.org.pl

New development & transition

The socio-economic dimensions of the global economic crisis in Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) are the focus of the new issue of Development & Transition. Where does the crisis leave the 'good governance' agenda that has been the dominant development paradigm since the 1990s? What are the crisis consequences for women? What is the situation with falling remittances and returning migrants? Read more at: http://www.developmentandtransition.net/uploads/issuesAttachments/25/DT.13_English_FINAL.pdf

OSCE Guide on Gender-Sensitive Migration

First international Guide on Gender-Sensitive Labour Migration Policies produced by Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) aims at presenting good practices and providing tools on how to shape gender-sensitive labour migration processes. Labour migration has become one of the most visible and vital concerns in ensuring stability and economic progress, national welfare and social cohesion; it has, therefore, moved to the top of the policy agenda in many countries of origin, transit and destination. However, little attention has been given to the fact that more women, as active contributors to the economy in countries of destination, are leaving their countries of origin than ever before, and are experiencing this process differently from men. Full version of the guide is available on: http://www.osce.org/publications/eea/2009/05/37689_1289_en.pdf

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): Women in Development Association (Albania), VESTA Association (Bosnia and Herzegovina), PPC Shtip (Macedonia), Org AUR (Romania), WIDE, AWID, EURODAD, CONCORD, TRIALOG, BSCDN, EWL, IWRAW Asia-Pacific

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