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What's new in KARAT ?

The latest changes at the KARAT Secretariat

November was marked with staff changes in KARAT's Secretariat. The Financial Coordinator Marek Skowronek, who has been working with us for last 16 months has decided to pursue his career at more challenging financial post. During his time in KARAT, Marek has contributed significantly to the positive atmosphere within the secretariat while dealing with the financial issues. We wish him all the best in his further career and family life.

Pamela Wells joined KARAT's Secretariat in October and since November is responsible for the KARAT's finances. Born in California, she lived in England for over a decade, where she was involved with voluntary organisations in the creative and cultural sector. In 2008, she took up permanent residence in Warsaw.

There is also another change, after 18 months working with us, the Networking Officer – Ewa Kaminska has decided to return to her home town Lodz to work in the environmental organization,. At the beginning of her employment with KARAT she was involved in Fair Play in sporting goods industry project and was involved in the work of Clean Clothes Poland. In March she took the position of the networking officer and since then has also been responsible for KARAT's News. Ewa will continue to cooperate with KARAT as a contact person for networking until the end of 2010. We wish her all the best.

The KARAT Secretariat's staff

KARAT Board meeting

The second KARAT Board meeting for 2010 took place on 15th of October in Warsaw. It was agreed that the Board members present at the meeting would make the proposals on the various issues and request other Board members for opinion.

We are very happy to announce that we have 2 new member organizations in our network. Women's Center (Georgia) and "Nasi" (Tajikistan - this is the first KARAT member in this country!) were accepted by the Boards. Consequently KARAT Coalition has expanded to 60 organizations from 25 countries.

The Board addressed the concerns and suggestions raised by KARAT members during the General Assembly in Bucharest in June 2010. As a response to the one of the members' proposal the Board has decided to establish a pilot working group focusing on Gendered Economic and Social Justice.

The other issue which was also debated was a question of KARAT's approach towards membership enlargement. The previous KARAT's strategies have focused on pro-active approach to have geographical coverage and on inviting organizations with expertise on social and economic justice. The Board has concluded that at the current stage, there is a need to be more inclusive of the problems faced by different groups of women: lesbians, young women, minority women, migrant women, refugees, women with disabilities etc. This will refresh the KARAT's perspectives and approaches. The issue of the proactive strategy towards members' diversity will be discussed further at the next Board meeting.

For more information on Board decisions please write to Kinga at: kinga.lohmann@karat.org.pl

Gender and development: needs assessment meeting

As a response for the recommendations of Gender and Development Working Group made at the last KARAT's General Assembly the needs assessment meeting took place on 13-14 October 2010 in Warsaw, Poland. Five representatives of developing countries from Eastern Europe, Central Asia, Balkans and Caucasus discussed their understanding of development issues, identified needs of women from developing countries covered by KARAT and developed ideas for possible joined activities of KARAT members on gender and development. During the meeting future cooperation within Gender and Development Program was also discussed. As a consequence of the meeting all of the participants had better understanding of development processes, terms and were informed about the international debate on development issues. Participants also agreed that members from developing countries covered by KARAT have to build their capacity to push gender onto development agendas and to discuss their problems and ideas on the international level.

More information about the meeting: joanna.szabunko@karat.org.pl

KARAT's participation at the First Polish Social Forum

The debate on violations of female worker rights including repression and new trends at the labor market such as precarious work, intensification of work, growing role of Temporary Job Agencies and their impact on economic insecurity of women was organized by STARFISH - the Leftist Feminist Network in cooperation with KARAT, at the First Polish Social Forum (5-6 November 2010, Warsaw).

The debate was based on the presentations by nurses from the Trade Unions and the methodology and findings from the research on women's working conditions in supermarkets by KARAT's representatives. The movie – interview with Malgorzata Hirzewska, the Trade Union leader of nurses' strike in Lodz in September 2008 - presenting the case of the violation of her rights and repressions contributed considerably to the heated discussion.

The similarity of experience of both female professional groups was quite evident in terms of new trends such as recent mechanisms/structures of substantial intensification of their work without increased remuneration, and also in terms of 'more sophisticated' methods (e.g. intimidation) of undermining their working rights. The violation of the basic women's human rights in the context of women's economic activities at the labor market was one of the main topics of the debate.

The first Polish Social Forum gathered more than hundred representatives of civil society organizations including different social organizations and groups, Trade Unions, and comprised 19 debates, workshops, seminars. The feminist perspective was quite well presented at the Forum. Three consecutive workshops (on women's poverty, new trends on the labor market and macroeconomic policies and feminist critical approach to neo-liberal economy) organized by STARFISH aroused a great interest and gathered quite important number of participants. It was strengthened by the KARAT's exhibition displayed at the venue of the Forum (a building of the Trade Unions) which depicted economic position of women from the Southern and Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

For more information please write to Kinga at: kinga.lohmann@karat.org.pl or to Aleksandra at: aleksandra.solik@karat.org.pl

KARAT at the Consultation on the CEDAW Framework and Women's Rights meeting

The representatives of KARAT took part in the *Consultation on the CEDAW Framework and Women's Rights* organized in Sri Lanka in October 2010 by [International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific](#) in cooperation with [Women and Media Collective](#). The meeting brought together women and women's rights advocates from all around the world. The impact of the war and conflicts on women was discussed and the role of the international human rights mechanisms in strengthening the protection of women's rights in the conflict and post-conflict settings was analyzed. The participants focused particularly on the CEDAW convention, its applicability to girls and women

affected by a conflict and the process of supporting the creation of the CEDAW General Recommendation that would address their rights.

For more information please write to Aleksandra at: aleksandra.solik@karat.org.pl

KARAT at Art & Fashion Festival (Poznań, Poland)



KARAT as a member of Clean Clothes Poland (CCP) took part in the Art and Fashion Festival (AFF), annual event gathering hundreds of participants involved in fashion industry. We have conducted a workshop: „Ethical, sustainable or responsible fashion?”. The participants had a chance to become familiar with the other side of the fashion industry: working conditions of mainly women workers of garment industry, social responsibility of the companies and the consumers. CCP has also provided the young designers with examples of good practices of responsible fashion designing and clothes

production. The consumers participating in the meeting were invited to join the campaign for the improvement of the working conditions of women who sew their clothes. The CCP's workshop met with great interest of the audience and we have gained new supporters of our campaign.

More information on AFF: <http://starybrowar5050.com/artandfashionfestival/en>, on CCC: www.cleanclothes.org, and if you wish to know more about KARAT's involvement in this area write to Joanna at: joanna.szabunko@karta.org.pl

Her Story – the first projection



The first projection of the documentary movie [Her Story](#) took place in [Łódzkie Centrum Społeczne](#) on the 24th of October 2010.

The author of the movie is Paulina Jędrzejewska, spent two weeks in Orsantia which is the town on the border between Abkhazia and Georgia (as part of KARAT's project "Through Their Eyes, Through Ours"). Paulina had an opportunity to observe women's role in Georgian society by participating in their everyday life. Paulina's movie focuses mainly on

economic situation of women. In the background of all stories the impact of conflict in Abkhazia on the society, the patriarchal nature of society, and still not completed transition to democracy could be seen. After the screening of the movie Paulina and Ewa Pintera from KARAT facilitated a very interesting discussion with the participants of the event.

If you are interested in receiving copy of the movie please write to Ewa Pintera at: ewa.pintera@karat.org.pl



The blog "Balkan women"



["Balkan women"](#) created by Katarina Medlova from Slovakia is another awareness raising tool produced within the project "Through their Eyes, Through Ours". All together 6 participants from EU New Member States went to Balkans and Caucasia in order to collect data and create awareness raising tools, one of them was the film described above another was Katarina's blog.

In her blog Katarina put emphasis on the use of photography in order to create convincing portraits of women and draw attention to the reality of life of Macedonian women. Those multicolor

photographs taken from different perspectives and angels serve as the background for the stories of women described in the blog. KARAT encourages you to read the blog.

If you wish to know more about the project, please write to Ewa Pintera at ewa.pintera@karat.org.pl

KARAT teaches at the “Gender Mainstreaming School”

The KARAT Secretariat staff is currently conducting a course “From Theory to Practice” which is a part of “Gender Mainstreaming School” at the Polish Academy of Sciences. The course covers KARAT’s history, activities and projects, CEDAW Convention, gender and development, women’s rights, gendered economy. It shows how the feminist perspective can be applied in practice while working in NGOs within the existing socio-institutional structures.

More information: joanna.szabunko@karat.org.pl

Poland still without a good antidiscrimination law

The Polish parliament has voted in favor of the project of the antidiscrimination law which goal is to implement the EU antidiscrimination directives. Unfortunately, this project is really disappointing and has been criticized by the Coalition for Equal Chances - an unofficial platform of a number of Polish well-known NGOs, including KARAT, which promotes human rights and equality. Our voice, however, has been ignored. At the current stage the project is waiting to be signed by the President of the country.

If you wish to know more about the work of the Coalition for Equal Chances, please write to Aleksandra at aleksandra.solik@karat.org.pl

Members’ News

Coalition for Gender Equality (Latvia): Gender Equality Award in good hands!



Two nominees by the Coalition for Gender Equality in Latvia: the Chairperson of the Human Rights and Public Affairs Commission of the Latvian Parliament Ingrida Circene and former Minister of the Foreign affairs Maris Riekstins have been awarded national Gender Equality Award.

The award aims to promote public awareness of gender issues and evaluate the Latvian Parliament members and Cabinet members contribution to gender equality. "This year, the Latvian Women's NGO Network and the jury assessed the personal initiative and the practical results of the work," explained Inete Ielite, of the Women's NGOs Cooperation Network in Latvia.

For more information please write to Inete at: inete.ielite@bernuforums.lv

Gender Studies, O.P.S. (Czech Republic) - Women Resist All-Male Cabinet

By Alexandra Jachanova Dolezelova (alexandra.jachanova@genderstudies.cz)

The new government, which started to work in June in the Czech Republic is “special” in proposing gender equality. One of the coalition political parties has used during its election campaign a calendar of erotic pictures of its female candidates with a slogan: “bringing beauty into politics”. It was not very surprising that the “beauty” stayed in the

Parliament and was not invited to the Cabinet. The Czech Republic is a second country in the EU (after Hungary) which does not have any woman in the Cabinet. Last but not least, the new Cabinet dissolved the position of Minister for Human Rights and Ethnic Minorities, who was responsible also for gender equality. What else will come?

"Istiqbolli Avlod" (Uzbekistan) involved in CEDAW implementation in Djizak region

Partner NGO of "Istiqbolli Avlod" in Djizak, after conducting a seminar on the Concluding Observations of the CEDAW Committee for local Women's Committees, has been asked to conduct a similar event for the Department of Law, represented by heads of three Commissions set up after the Enacts of the Cabinet of Ministers, in order to implement various UN recommendations including the ones of the CEDAW Committee. In the result of this event, which took place on 6 November 2010, a Working Group was established, in order to organize the events enlisted in the National Action Plan on the implementation of the Concluding Observations of the CEDAW Committee in the Djizak region. "Istiqbolli Avlod" in Djizak was included as one of the key implementers of the above mentioned Plan in the Djizak region.

For more information please write to Liliya Khamzayeva at lkhamzayeva@mail.ru

Macedonian Women's Rights Center – Shelter Centre (Macedonia): New publication

On September 21, the promotion of the publication "Analysis of international standards and best practices and existing national laws, policies and plans of the anti-discrimination legislation" was held in Skopje. The above mentioned publication is part of the project "Macedonia without Discrimination" funded by the EU, where MWRC-Shelter Centre is a partner organization. The analysis looks at the experiences of several European countries and the mechanisms that they use in fighting discrimination. The previous experiences and current trends in anti-discrimination policy are summarized, in order to offer a material that will contribute to the development of antidiscrimination legislation in Macedonia.

The publication (in Macedonian) is available [here](#). If you want to know more, contact Daniela Dabeska at: dabeska_daniela@yahoo.com

World

CEDAW Committee: two new General Recommendations

The CEDAW Committee has adopted two new General Comments (General Recommendations) at its 47th Session which ended in October 2010. The General Comment 27 concerns the issue of Older Women and Protection of their Human Rights and the General Comment 28 focuses on multidimensional nature of discrimination against women.

The General Comment on Older Women extrapolates the multiple forms and intersectionality of discrimination experienced by older women and provides a comprehensive interpretation of State obligation in this context.

In the General Comment 28 the CEDAW Committee reaffirmed that discrimination of women is interlinked with other factors which includes sexual orientation and gender identity. It emphasizes that the states are obliged to "proclaim their total opposition to all forms of discrimination against women and that they should pursue their policies in this regard by all appropriate means and without delay". The adoption of this General Comment can be interpreted as a sign that the Committee supports the calls to all states to withdraw their reservations to CEDAW.

You can read the CEDAW Committee General Comments [here](#).

European Commission : Strategy for Equality of Women & Men 2010-2015

The European Commission adopted a five-year strategy for promoting equality between women and men in Europe. The strategy aims in particular to make better use of women's potential, thereby contributing to the EU's overall economic and social goals.

The gender equality strategy spells out a series of actions based around five priorities: the economy and labour market; equal pay; equality in senior positions; tackling gender violence; and promoting equality beyond the EU.

[More information](#)

Maternity rights: a groundbreaking decision of the European Parliament

The European Parliament by a large majority passed a Resolution in favor of substantially increasing European minimum standards for maternity and paternity leave provisions. An increase of maternity leave provisions from 14 weeks to 20 weeks and the introduction of two weeks leave for new fathers, both fully paid, has been approved.

Currently in Europe, women's employment rates drop by more than 12% when they have children. The OECD found in 2006 that in countries where the maternity leave provisions are longest, female employment rates were also highest, with over 80% in Iceland and over 70% in Denmark and Sweden – well above the OECD average of 57%.

There are also some critical voices regarding the Resolution: the proportion between leave granted for men and women (20 weeks for women versus 2 weeks for men) undermines the EU claims for gender equality at the work place and socio-economic sustainability.

The proposal will be now discussed by the Council of European Union.

[More information](#)

Events

AWID's Young Women's Regional Dialogue

On 19-20 October a regional dialogue of young feminist activists from the Region organized by [Association For Women's Rights In Development](#) (AWID) took place in Tbilisi, Georgia. A diverse group of young women gathered to discuss the challenges and problems in relation to young women's rights in their countries and Region, as well as the multigenerational cooperation and tensions in the movement that derive, among others, from different approaches to gender, activism and identities. The meeting was primarily devoted to the theme of resource mobilization for feminist activism and preceded the AWID's regional gathering on resource mobilization organized as part of the program '[Where's the money for women's rights?](#)'.

To learn more about Young Women's Dialogue check out Young Feminist Wire at: www.yfw.awid.org



KARAT: Development cooperation and gender equality in EU New Member States

The *Action Brief: Development cooperation and gender equality in EU New Member States* was published as a part of the KARAT's project "Connect! South/ East/ West Women for Development". The authors of the briefing have emphasized that the EU New Member States (NMS), such as Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Poland, Romania and Slovakia are facing many challenges regarding development cooperation, but the most important issue is that the development policies of NMS are gender blind. The analysis of the situation and recommendations presented in the briefing can be useful not only for the members from NMS – donor countries, but also for the members from Eastern developing countries – recipients of Official Development Assistance.

We encourage you to read the *Action Brief* on: <http://www.karat.org/karat,14,What+is+new%3F,en.html>

Human Development Report 2010

For the first time, the Report looks back at the past several decades and identifies often surprising trends and patterns with important lessons for the future. These varied pathways to human development show that there is no single formula for sustainable progress—and that impressive gains can be achieved even without consistent economic growth.

The report is available [here](#)

UNESCO Report: Push to end gender disparities in education

According to a new United Nations report girls and boys only in 85 countries will have equal access to primary and secondary education by 2015 if present trends continue. This calls for greater efforts to reduce gender differences in education.

The annual edition of the Global Education Digest, published by the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) adds that 72 countries are not likely to reach the goal of gender parity in education by 2015. This is despite the knowledge that compromising the education of girls and women will only lead to more vulnerability and reinforce the vicious cycle of poverty.”

The report is available [here](#)

UNIFEM: Video Series on Gender & Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

UNIFEM (a part of UN Women), in collaboration with UNTV, has produced a series of five videos highlighting selected MDGs from a gender perspective. All videos are now available for download in [English](#), [French](#), [Spanish](#) and [Russian](#). For DVDs, please contact Jaya Jiwatram at jaya.jiwatram@unifem.org.

The videos are available [here](#)

UN: Women's Control over Economic Resources

The 2009 *World Survey on the Role of Women in Development* addresses the important theme of women's control over economic resources and access to financial resources, including microfinance. The *World Survey* illustrates the importance of examining women's access to those resources in a broad sense (including resources from national levels; financial services such as savings, credit, remittance transfers and insurance; employment; land, property and other productive resources; and social protection). The *World Survey* makes a timely contribution in the context of the current financial and economic crisis. It points out the need for an appropriate gender-sensitive response to the crisis.

The *World Survey* is available [here](#)

UN: the World's Women 2010: Trends and Statistics

The World's Women 2010: Trends and Statistics is the fifth issue of *The World's Women*. It highlights the differences in the status of women and men in eight areas – population and families, health, education, work, power and decision-making, violence against women, environment and poverty. Analyses are based mainly on statistics from international and national statistical sources.

The World's Women 2010 shows that progress towards gender equality has been made in some areas, such as school enrolment, health and economic participation. At the same time much more needs to be done to close the gender gap in critical areas such as power and decision-making and violence against women.

The report is available [here](#)

WIDE: Women's Labour Migration in the Context of Globalisation

The new publication from WIDE, entitled "Women's Labour Migration in the Context of Globalisation" offers an introduction to important contemporary political analysis on the influence of globalisation on women's work, mobility and empowerment. Authors of the report Anja K. Franck and Andrea Spehar highlight how globalisation shapes women's labour migration. This study tries to bridge the gaps between feminist analysis and practice on both economic and migration issues.

Download the report from [here](#)

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): Coalition for Gender Equality (Latvia), Gender Studies, O.P.S. (Czech Republic), "Istiqbolli Avlod" (Uzbekistan), Macedonian Women's Rights Center – Shelter Centre (Macedonia), ASTRA, AWID, EWL, WIDE, WUNRN.

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