

CSW Session

The 55th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women was held from 22nd February to 4th March, 2011. **Chandrika Bhattarai**, Chairperson, **Neera Shrestha**, Human Resource Development Coordinator and **Srijana Lohani**, Senior Program Manager from WHR represented during the session.

South Asian Network for Widows' Empowerment in Development (SANWED) which had been working as a loose network was decided to register formally in Nepal through a meeting held on 21st February. Further, roles and responsibilities of National Chapters were also identified during the SANWED meeting.



A panel discussion on Resolution on Widowhood: The Time is now for UN Attention organized by Widows for Peace through Democracy (WPD) took place on Tuesday 22nd February at noon at 221 East 52nd in the Main Auditorium of the International Social Justice Commission of the Salvation Army. **Margaret Owen**, Director of WPD chaired the session. Other panelists were **Meera Khanna**, Vice Chairperson of Guild of Service, India; **Eleanor Nwadinobi**, Director of Widows' Development Organization, Nigeria; **Srijana Lohani**, Senior Program Manager of WHR, Nepal; **Judge Zakia Hakki**, Former Member of Iraqi Parliament and **Lauren Gibbs** of Global Action on Widowhood. Ms. Lohani from WHR made the presentation on *Mobilizing the Grassroots for Advocacy*.

The Resolution on Widowhood was drafted during this CSW meeting and lobbied to ratify at UN. This resolution is developed based on the recommendation from Widows' Charter and Kathmandu Declaration that were developed during International Conference on Widowhood organized by WHR in June 2010 at Kathmandu.

WHR representatives also participated in the official launching of the National Action Plan (NAP) on UNSCR 1325 at CSW on 23rd February at Millennium Hotel Plaza, 44 Street and 1st Avenue, New York. Nepal is the first country in South Asia and second in Asia after Philippines to adopt NAP on UNSCR 1325 which has also incorporated widows' issues. Further, the representatives also participated in the official launching of UN WOMEN, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women on 24th February at General Assembly Hall, UN building.



Margaret Owen and Srijana Lohani also had a meeting with Madam Michelle Bachelet, Executive Director of UN WOMEN on 3rd March which focused on widowhood issues.

Discussion Program on Plans and Policies for Single Women

WHR with the support of Women's Alliance for Peace, Power, Democracy and the Constituent Assembly (WAPPDCA) organized a two-day discussion program on plans and policies for single women on 10th and 11th February, 2011 at Chhahari Training Hall of Chhahari Services. Altogether, 53 participants including representatives from Ministry of Law and Justice, Supreme Court, National Women Commission, Regional Offices of WHR and WHR board and staff members participated in the program.



Outlining the major achievements of WHR, Lily Thapa informed all about the **National Action Plan for Widows of Nepal** that is being developed with the support of **National Planning Commission**. Other key achievements involved the **Emergency Fund** that has been set up for the single women by the **Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare**; **Guidelines** that is being prepared for getting widows' allowance and that in the **upcoming census 2011**, the data of single women is being collected from each and every household. During the program, the participating single women focused on the need of devising appropriate national level plans and policies for them.

The major topic of discussion for the second day was the widows' allowance. **Prakash Mani Sharma**, Director of Pro-Public and speaker for the program elaborated on widows' allowance. Similarly, the Public Service Announcement (PSA) and a poster on upcoming census produced by WHR with the support of European Union were also launched during the program.

Nain Kala Thapa, Chairperson of National Women Commission and Chief Guest of the program; **Hemanta Rawal**, spokesperson at the Supreme Court; **Kedar Poudel**, Joint Secretary of Ministry of Law and Justice; **Chandrika Bhattarai**, Chairperson of WHR; **Durga Neupane**, Regional Chairperson of Western Development Region and **Lily Thapa**, Founder President of WHR joined the program during the closing session and provided their valuable inputs to WHR.

Chhahari Open House

On 8th December, 2010, WHR organized Chhahari Open House at Chhahari Services, Gairhidhara, Kathmandu. Visitors were invited to look at and partake many offerings at the stalls of Chhahari Services. On display were the details of the activities and programs of the organization along with the photographs of its work. Handicraft and tailoring products made by single women at the Chhahari as well as from the single women groups across the country were on sale. Food stalls had also been set up as an initiative from the Chhahari participants.



They offered Somalian cuisine, made by the trainee from Kathmandu Community Centre who had undertaken three months skill development training at Chhahari Services and special Newari food, prepared by the single women at Chhahari. Visitors enjoyed the variety of dishes.



During the event, training certificates were also distributed to the participants from KCC. The participants were from Pakistan and Somalia. **Sudha Khadka** from KCC and **Chandrika Bhattarai**, Chairperson of WHR handed over the certificates to the participants.

The day ended with the announcement of the winners of WHR fund-raising lucky draw. The fund raised was to provide educational support to the children of single women. The lucky winners of the first, second, and third prize were Ama Vaidya, Kamal Yonzon, and Subhadra Shakya respectively. Twenty other lucky winners won the follow-up consolation prizes.



Chhahari Haat Bazaar is open every first Sunday of the English month at Chhahari Services, Gairhidhara, Kathmandu.

Knowledge Management Training

WHR with the support from GIZ (former DED) organised one day knowledge management training (24th March, 2011) and one day training on improvising the questionnaire (22nd March, 2011) for collecting the information of single women group members.



The workshop was facilitated by **Barbara Gerbautz**, Junior Technical Advisor of GIZ for WHR and **Michael Krings**, Advisor for Democracy Promotion Program

of GIZ. Altogether, 7 participants from the central office participated in the training of which the main objective was to know the existing practices used for knowledge management and how we can use its other instruments. There are fundamentally six instruments of knowledge management (analysis, reports, community of practice, lesson learnt workshops, filing and debriefing) which can be used as per the organization's requirement and relevance.

There were group works and discussion sessions that made the workshop very interactive and lively. The discussion sessions also provided with the platform for the staffs to discuss on the challenges related to the knowledge management.

On the second day of the training, there were 10 participants. The second day was focused on revising the questionnaire that will be used in obtaining in basic information of single women. There were altogether 10 participants on this day. The participants came up with the list of questions that would be asked to the single women. Ms.Gerbautz also introduced the Multidimensional Poverty Index that has been used by the United Nations and other institutions to measure the real situation of the people.

The training proved to be very fruitful in reflecting on the procedures adopted in the daily organizational work and on improving the existing situation. There will be follow up meetings in order to finalize the questionnaire and systematically manage the knowledge within the organization.

OSI at Mahendranagar

On 21st December 2010, WHR with the support of **Open Society Institute (OSI)** organized an orientation program for single women in Mahendranagar, Kanchanpur. There was participation of 27 single women in the program and was facilitated by **Lily Thapa**, Founder President of WHR.

The program focused on the mobilization of single women groups in the district and how they can achieve support at the local level. WHR also provided participants with an orientation regarding the OSI project, which aims to develop legal awareness among single women. WHR representatives also visited the office at Kanchanpur and provided inputs for appropriate office setup and arrangements. The Kanchanpur Single Women Group will continue to receive support towards their administrative, capacity development, and legal awareness programs. In addition, Janaki Joshi, a single woman from the district was also recruited as a social mobilizer.



Congratulations



WHR family heartily congratulates **Margaret Owen**, Director of WPD, UK for receiving Order of the British Empire (OBE) from Queen on 31st March, 2011. WHR is proud to have her as our International Focal Person and we are very grateful for receiving her continuous support. Our best

wishes and love are always with her.

Eastern Regional Workshop

On 19th and 20th February, 2011, Eastern Regional office organized a regional workshop at Sunsari, Dharan. Altogether, 41 participants from 13 districts participated in the workshop. Guidelines for the monthly allowance for widows, National Action Plan for Widows of Nepal, Collection of data of the single women in the upcoming census 2011, and the Regional Policies were the major issues that were discussed during the workshop. **Lily Thapa**, Founder President and Srijana Kafle, Regional Coordinator from WHR central office participated in the workshop.

TOT on Capacity Building Program

WHR, with the support of FES, conducted capacity building program at Chhahari Services from 13th to 17th March, 2011. Altogether, 30 participants from various single women groups of Kathmandu district participated in the program. The major objective of the program was to develop single woman as a social mobilizer capable of mobilizing their respective group. The participants were informed about the importance of single women group, procedure of group mobilization, legal rights, networking, saving and credit program and responsibilities of the executive committees of the groups. **Dev Raj Dahal**, Chairperson and **Chandra Dev Bhatta** Program Officer of FES were present during the closing session of the program.

Commemorating 16 Days of Activism

A talk programme was hosted in the Chhahari Training hall on 8th December 2010 as part of WHR's observance of the 16 days, in which the guest speakers spoke on a number of issues pertaining to single women's rights and gender-based violence. The talk programme was facilitated by **Nirmala Dhungana**, General Secretary of WHR, and the speakers present shared their insight into the problematic state of single women and gender-based violence in Nepal.

Lily Thapa, Founder President of WHR focused on the need of social security schemes for single women with which to ensure that the correct channeling of resources takes place. **Jayapuri Gharti**, CA member said, *"Underdeveloped and developing nations have the highest rates of discrimination and violence against women in the world, and the situation is even worse for single women. Thus, change is imperative."* **Shanti Pakhrin**, CA member said that participation is the start and not the solution to the problem of discrimination and violence against women.

Other speakers of the program were **Lars Peter Christensen**, Program Coordinator of Danida HUGOU; **Charan Prasai**, Human Rights Activist; **Prakash Mani Sharma**, Chairman of Pro Public; and **Durga Sob**, Founder of FEDO. **Mr. Chistensen** said that now there is greater awareness among Nepalese on the subject and appreciated the work of WHR for it. Similarly, **Mr. Prasai** said, *"WHR as an organization has successfully introduced a number of successful, positive changes in Nepali communities and there is still the need to change the mindset of the people."*

Prakash Mani Sharma focused on the need of change in the laws and policies of the country for the rights of single women. Finally, **Durga Sob** emphasized that there is a great need for proportional representation of both women and dalits in the government as well as in the political arena.



Skill Development Training at Chhahari

In March, WHR with the support of WOMANKIND Worldwide, an UK based organization, conducted skill development training for the single women. Altogether, 28 single women from Central, Mid Western and Far Western Development Regions participated in the training who were below the age 35 and had no adequate support in their life. The training was commenced with an orientation program on March 4th, 2011 at Chhahari Training Hall. The participants were from Salyan, Bardiya, Rolpa, Pyuthan, Banke, Surkhet, Kanchanpur, Dadeldhura, Jumla, Bara, Jajarkot, Sarlahi, Kailali and Dang districts. As per the need identification, single women received training in tailoring, beautician, flower making and catering and also the information regarding their rights and group mobilization.

The participants expressed their gratitude for providing them such training which supported them for economic empowerment and rehabilitate themselves.

WHR is very thankful to WOMANKIND Worldwide for supporting the vulnerable single women for their holistic development.



Nirmaya Rai, a single woman from Ilam district received the catering training under the skill development training that was conducted during August-September, 2010. After returning to her home, she started the catering business on 26th October, 2010 with the help of other single women. She even provided 15 days catering training to other single women which was organized by "Gharelu Udhyog". Nirmala, now, is successfully providing the services to various banks and other organizations such as Machhapuchhre Bank, SBI Bank, Action Aid etc. The training and the subsequent business which she could start helped a lot to improve her economic condition. *"With the training provided by WHR and the confidence build up through the training supported me to take a new turn in my life and made me economically strong"*, said Nirmala.

Interaction with Local Stakeholders and Single Women at Rolpa

With the support of **Open Society Institute (OSI)**, WHR organized an interaction program with the local stakeholders and single women on 2nd and 3rd March, 2011 respectively at Rolpa district. Altogether 100 participants including representatives from different political parties, women organization and district court and media personnel participated during the interaction program with local stakeholders. **Jay Puri Gharti Magar**, CA Member was the chief guest during the program, which was organized to make the local stakeholders aware on the situation of single women at Rolpa. The stakeholders also showed their commitment to support and work for the single women in the district, which according to the District Administrative record comprises of 800 conflict affected women.



On the second day, the single women from Libang, Budagaun, Bhawang, Gajul, Jangkot, Dhawang and Iriwang VDCs participated in the program. The participants were informed about the importance of group and networking, measures to form single women group in other VDCs, procedures to deal with cases of domestic violence and process of group mobilization. Also, a new District Executive Committee was formed and one year Action Plan for the district was prepared during the program. In addition, office was set up and Raj Kumari Bujhel was recruited as a social mobilizer in the district.

Rojina Shrestha, Project Coordinator and **Rajin Rayamajhi**, Assistant Legal Officer from the Central Office; and **Yam Kumari Dhakal**, Vice Chairperson of Mid Western Development Region facilitated the program.

Single Women Data being Collected in Upcoming Census 2011

With several meetings, discussion and working in close collaboration with the authorities of Central Bureau of Statistics since last two years, WHR has made another historical achievement that in the upcoming census 2011, the data of single women is being collected (in Form 1) from each and every household. Intending wider promulgation of this information, WHR with the support of **European Union** published and produced a **poster** and **Public Service Announcement (PSA)** respectively to raise awareness among single women and all the related stakeholders that no single women should be left or repeated in the census.



WHR is very grateful to European Union for supporting us in this campaign.

Voices through Media

The Public Service Announcement (PSA) produced to raise public awareness regarding the upcoming census 2011 is being on aired through Radio Sagarmatha 102.4 MHz. every day at 7:20 AM and 8:00 PM.

The TV Spot produced by WHR on one of the issues of single women: socio-cultural discrimination against single women (widows) was broadcasted through Nepal Television in its weekly program "Platform".

We hope our small effort would help to raise awareness on the issues of single women.

Welcome to New Staff

WHR family warmly welcomes our new staff **Kopila Rijal** as a Project Focal Person, Human Resource for Health (HRH). She joined WHR in February 2011 and is responsible for carrying out HRH project activities.



We wish all the best for her future endeavor.

International Volunteer

Barbara Gerbautz is working at WHR for a year as a Junior Professional from GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), former German Development Service (DED)). She joined WHR from December 2010. She will be supporting WHR in systematically maintaining the data and profile of single women, their database as well as supporting the regional offices for maintaining the database and knowledge management.



We highly acknowledge GIZ for providing us the technical support particularly in data and knowledge management.

Editorial Board:

Advisor: Lily Thapa, Srijana Lohani
Editor: Rosy Singh
Designers: Laxman Gautam, Rosy Singh

Contact Address: Shree Hari Marg- 145, Baluwatar, Kathmandu, Nepal
P.O.Box : 8973 NPC 427, **Phone No.:** +977-01- 4446020 **Fax :** 977-01-4413868
E-Mail: csw@mail.com.np, mail@whr.org.np; **Website:** www.whr.org.np