



National Council of Women of Australia Newsletter August 2009



FROM THE PRESIDENT

How time flies! I have come to the end of my term as President and this will be my last report to members.

I was invited by Senator Ursula Stephens Parliamentary Secretary for Social Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector to participate in a workshop on the development of the national compact between government and the third sector in Canberra on 20 July 2009. Large charities, health, arts, museums, aged care providers, and NGOs including the Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement were present. The womens sector was represented by NCWA, CWA and National Foundation of Australian Women. The draft National Compact was presented and participants agreed broadly on key principles in the document. Consultation will start in August and email invitations will be sent to invite interested organizations to register for the compact online forum.

Advertisements will also appear in a range of media inviting public submissions for the further development of a national compact. The online forum will be the centerpiece of the consultation strategy and it will enable organizations to freely discuss the consultation document together. For further information go to

www.socialinclusion.gov.au.

NCWA endorsed most of the CEDAW NGO Shadow Report. The report is now available on line

<http://www.ywca.org.au/policy/cedaw.php>

The CEDAW Project will recommence in mid-2010 in the lead up to the formal review of the Australian Government at the 46th session of the CEDAW Committee.

Thanks to those members who have sent me their response to ICW Beijing+15 Survey. The closing date is 14 September 2009. NCWA is partnering with Jera International – (Justice, Equality, Rights, Access International) who have received funding from OfW to run the Beijing+15 caravans. Jera will help NCWA distribute the surveys at the various caravans.

www.jerainternational.com

Last weekend I attend the AWC meeting in Sydney. With the preparation for Alliance still under way, OfW has funded AWC and the other 3 Secretariats to December 2009. In the next four months, AWC is planning to run some advocacy training for members, prepare a draft response to the Government's review of equal opportunities for women in the workplace (EOWA), contract National Foundation of Australian Women to prepare a submission to government discussing the implications to women of the Australia Institute Report on the Global Financial Crisis

Eight members of NCWA will be attending ICW-CIF General Assembly in Johannesburg this October. Please donate gifts for the gift shop at the GA. The funds raised from the sale of the gifts will be used for development projects.

Let me take this opportunity to thank all members who have supported me in a variety of ways during the last three years in role as President of NCWA It is very much appreciated. Best wishes to Margaret Findlater-Smith and the 2009 -2012 Board .for a successful term

Hean Bee Wee.

Shared Commitment to Achieving Gender Equality



Ines Alberdi and Bob McMullan at the signing of the partnership framework.

Bob McMullan, Parliamentary Secretary for International Development Assistance, and Inés Alberdi, Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) signed a Partnership Framework to strengthen efforts to achieve both gender equality in development and the Millennium Development Goals.

The new Partnership Framework, signed on 12 August 2009, provides a strategic shared focus for future practical collaboration and cooperation over the next six years.

Focus areas for the partnership are: promoting gender equality in developing countries and achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); ensuring gender equality and women's empowerment are integrated into UN reform initiatives; ending violence against women; and building public awareness of the outcomes of the Partnership.

The partnership recognises that gender equality is crucial to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), but globally is the area where progress has been the slowest. Advancing gender equality is a strategic step in further improving development outcomes in the region.

The Partnership Framework further strengthens the existing relationship between the Australian Agency for International Development and

UNIFEM. Internationally, AusAID and UNIFEM already work closely in a number of areas including to promote women's leadership and address violence against women.

More information:

[UNIFEM AusAID Partnership Framework](#)

**** The Australian CEDAW NGO Report is now available online **** Please visit <http://www.ywca.org.au/policy/cedaw.php> to download either a PDF or Microsoft Word version. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Report and to all the organisations who endorsed the Report. The CEDAW Project will recommence in mid-2010 in the lead up to the formal review of the Australian Government at the 46th session of the CEDAW Committee. Irregular updates will be sent to this web-list. If you know of others who would like to be kept informed of the review of the Australian Government by the CEDAW Committee, please ask them to email natoffice@ywca.org.au with '**please add me to the CEDAW weblist**' in the subject heading.

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United States vows support for UN efforts against sexual violence in DR Congo

The United States stands alongside the United Nations ready to face down the use of rape as a weapon of war in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Secretary of State Hillary Clinton [told](#) a local UN-backed radio station during her visit to the strife-torn nation.

"Unfortunately, we have seen in the late 20th century and now in this century a terrible trend of using sexual and gender-based violence as a tool of war to intimidate and demoralize populations and to force

them to flee their homes," Mrs. Clinton said in an interview with Radio Okapi. She stressed that any bid to halt the scourge in the region has to "start with making sure that the military of the DRC does not engage in sexual and gender-based violence."

Mrs. Clinton also underscored in her interview with the radio station supported by the UN peacekeeping mission in DRC ([MONUC](#)) the importance of ending impunity for military offenders, as well as cutting off funds to militias operating in the area and resolving the region's underlying political tensions.

In his most recent report to the Security Council on sexual violence in armed conflict, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon noted that at least 200,000 cases of such abuse had been recorded in eastern DRC since 1996.

"But sexual violence is a problem across the country as it is in many countries and there have to be stronger laws against domestic violence [and] against criminal rape that happens on the streets of Kinshasa or any other city," said Mrs. Clinton.

The Secretary of State called for robust prosecution, law enforcement and judiciary measures to "make it clear that this is unacceptable, that there is no excuse for it."

The human rights record of the Congolese Government is "in desperate need of improvement," she added.

"The United States, other countries as well as the United Nations stand ready to assist the Government in taking actions to both promote human rights and to punish violators of human rights and women's rights, but there needs to be much more action and greater commitment from the Government."

Mrs. Clinton is slated to meet victims of sexual violence when she visits a camp for displaced persons in the eastern province of North Kivu, where 400 cases of rape are currently registered every month, according to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Unifem Australia website

National Child Protection Week 2009
This year we are taking a new and exciting approach to getting the whole Australian community involved in the prevention of child abuse and neglect. And we need your help.

The centrepiece of the campaign is the largest attitudinal survey ever conducted in this country. We want every adult to spend time thinking and telling us about their attitudes to the safety and wellbeing of Australia's children and we want as many as possible to commit to ongoing involvement as advocates for children.

How will this work?

On 6 September, the first day of National Child Protection Week, we will launch the survey and it will run until the end of Children's Week on 1 November, linking these two important events. It will be an online survey with its own website. There will also be an 1800 number for people who can not access the internet.

The survey will take about 20 minutes and will be completely confidential. It's been designed by a team of Australia's leading researchers and the outcomes will be used to inform future strategies for change.

As people undertake the survey we will be asking them to become part of NAPCAN's advocacy network, to assist us in formulating our policies and to participate in our ongoing action to promote the wellbeing and safety of Australia's children.

The survey strategy is specified within the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children (Strategy 1.2), recently endorsed by all State and Territory Governments through the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) and is being supported with funding from the Commonwealth Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs. Finally the wellbeing and safety of children is getting the priority in Government that it deserves.

Now we need to work on making it a priority for everyone: the Australian public, community organisations, business and the media.

NAPCAN

WOMEN AND EMPLOYMENT

Women will be hit hard by the financial crisis, with low wages and a lack of work hours set to get worse, new research has revealed.

ACTU president Sharan Burrow will release the findings of the report, *The Impact of the Recession on Women*, by independent public policy research centre The Australia

Institute, at the Industrial Relations Society World Congress in Sydney today.

While more men had lost full-time jobs than women, women faced worsening under-employment - not enough hours at work - and poor pay, Ms Burrow warned.

"Women are missing out on decent jobs and they are being underpaid," Ms Burrow said.

"It's just not good enough."

Report author David Richardson said women were at a significant disadvantage.

"While official figures suggest women haven't fared as badly in the recession as men, more detailed analysis shows that women face chronic difficulties in the labour market and that those difficulties have been exacerbated by the global financial crisis," Mr Richardson said in a statement.

"The fact that the official statistics conceal more than they reveal simply adds insult to injury," Mr Richardson said.

He said hidden unemployment was likely to rise significantly in the next 12 months and there were significant regional and state variations of female unemployment.

The peak national body for refugee women, the Network of Immigrant and Refugee Women of Australia (NIRWA), has welcomed the report.

"The report validates what we find in working with immigrant and refugee women who constitute a large number of the hidden unemployed," NIRWA chair Vivi Germanos-Koutsounadis said.

"If they were employed many of them usually work in hospitality, cleaning, clothing and community care, and in other precarious work conditions, which are affected most by the global financial crisis.

"Those who come through the family migration scheme find difficulties in finding jobs because of lack of opportunities such as free English classes - as 500 hours provided by the government is totally inadequate - support to find employment and access to training."

The chief executive of support group Women's Information, Samiro Douglas, said many unemployed women call their helpline.

"We have noticed an increase in women contacting us who are struggling to pay for their housing and are in need of financial and material aid," said Ms Douglas.

"Many ... say they are unable to access care for their dependents, they can't find work during the hours they need or are forced to put their careers on hold or accept

less hours, less pay and less challenging work than they are capable of."

Marie Coleman, from the National Foundation for Australian Women, said women's wages were around 17 per cent lower than wages for men in equivalent jobs in 2009.

"Women constitute a large proportion of the under-employed and the hidden unemployed - yet stimulus related programs have not had any focus on reaching these women," Ms Coleman said.

"Women who could benefit include some in rural and regional Australia, women from migrant and refugee backgrounds who will need support services and English language classes beyond those short courses for newly arrived refugees, and women with disabilities."

Age 24 August 2009

STOP VIOLENCE IN MELANESIA AND EAST TIMOR

Stephen Smith, Australia's Minister for Foreign Affairs and Tanya Plibersek, Australia's Minister for the Status of Women, have launched the publication, "Stop Violence: Responding to violence against women in Melanesia and East Timor".

The publication sets out the Australian Government's priorities and actions to combat violence against women in the region. This includes Australia's support to increase women's access to justice and support services, prevent violence against women and deliver a coordinated and comprehensive response to the issue.

The publication has been developed in response to research by AusAID's Office of Development Effectiveness, Violence Against Women in Melanesia and East Timor: Building on Global and Regional Promising Approaches.

Stop Violence demonstrates how Australia is using the lessons learnt from the Office of Development Effectiveness' research, to deliver more effective development outcomes and to support greater equality between men and women. Central to this is a long term commitment to work with partner governments and other stakeholders in order to address violence against women.

Copies of the report are available from the AUSAID website

What needs to be done to achieve the millennium development goals?

Lara Jacques writes in the latest UNIFEM newsletter.

We are now less than six years away from the deadline for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and there is still a significant amount of work to be done if these goals are to be achieved. For women and girls the Millennium Development Goals are of vital importance. It is a sad fact that the majority of the world's poor are women and that poverty has a particularly profound impact on women and girls.

Without addressing the issue of women's rights and empowerment, none of the eight Millennium development Goals will be achieved. However, MDG3 and 5 are of particular importance to women. MDG3 included the aim to eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education.

Across the world girls are less likely to be educated than boys. In fact there are over 53 million girls across the globe who are at school age and are not being educated. Not only should education be a right for every individual, the education of girls is essential to ensure prosperity for communities and states.

MDG3 also addresses the issue of the lack of women in political decision making positions. Unfortunately the Pacific region has the lowest representation of women in political positions in the world. The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 recognises the need for women to be included within decision-making in post-conflict situations. However this representation of women needs to go further.

At a community, local, national and international level women should be given the opportunity to participate. UNIFEM Australia contributed towards a project in Timor-Leste which encouraged women at a local level to be elected to village head positions. This program had enormous success with more women being elected at regional levels. Programs such as this ensure that women are given the same opportunities as men to participate politically in their community and country.

The impact of maternal mortality is addressed by MDG5. World-wide, every minute, at least one woman dies from complications relating to pregnancy or childbirth. For every woman who dies in childbirth, there are 20 women who are left with injuries or infections, for example obstetric fistula. Within our region the number of maternal deaths is in fact increasing instead of decreasing.

MDG5 aims to reduce the maternal mortality rate by three quarters. Essential to reducing maternal mortality is ensuring access to reproductive health services for all women. MDG5 aims to have universal access to services and education for all women by 2015. However, across the globe even though the number of women with access has increased it is unlikely that this goal will be achieved.

Another vital part of achieving MDG5 is increasing the number of women and girls with access to family planning. This is essential if the number of women dying as a result of pregnancy or childbirth is to be reduced. If families can be assisted to plan the number of children, it can be demonstrated that the maternal mortality rate will be reduced.

For more information about what still needs to be done to achieve the Millennium Development goals, please visit the UNIFEM website at www.unifem.org.au

EARLY CHILDHOOD STUDY TO BEGIN

The University of Melbourne is about to commence a fiveyear study to establish optimum use of the \$3 billion invested annually in Early Childhood Education. The study will be led by Professor Collette Tayler who was co-author of the 2006 OECD

Starting Strong II: Early Childhood Education and Care Report. This new study will examine not only structural issues such as teacher qualifications, staff-child ratios and group size but also the scope of program's offered, social mix and frequency of participation. While a large sample will be used, it is hoped to track 500 children between the ages of 4 and 8 years. The OECD Report provides data relevant to control of, and participation in, the wide variety of early childhood services offered at national and state levels. Education at a Glance (OECD 2008) shows that most children begin education before the age of 5 and around 40% of Australian children fit

that mould Coordination of goals between early childhood and primary education is approached from 2 different premises— that ECE should prepare the child for school or that ECE should support families and the broad developmental needs of children. Most support for ECE in Australia comes in the form of tax subsidies.

From July NCWNSW Newsletter

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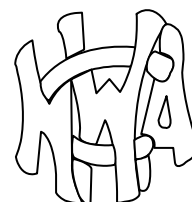
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2009 TRIENNIAL CONFERENCE, ADELAIDE
24th to 27th September

Thursday, 24th

Government House Reception 5 pm

Friday, 25th

8.30 am Registration

9.30 am Opening of Conference: Her Excellency Governor-General of Australia Ms Quentin Bryce AO

Keynote Speaker – Prof. Jennifer McKay
Prof. Business Law at UniSA. 2008 Fulbright Scholar
on water law and how we are going to handle water as a nation

Speaker: Dr. Ian Kowalick . B.SC(Hons), BEc. tbc
Was Chief Executive Dept. Premier & Cabinet 1995-2000
Chaired S.A. Government's Biotechnology Industry Council
2002, also on Advisory Council of CSIRO

Reports

Resolutions

Coordinators & Advisers Workshop

Civic Reception – Queen Adelaide Room, Adelaide Town Hall

Saturday, 26th

8 - 9 am Tai Chi - Asian Women's Consultative Council SA

Speaker: Ms Leanne Liddle
Graduated in Law 1999. Has worked for Dept. Environment & Heritage for 5 years.
Is Aboriginal Parks & Wildlife Service Program Co-ordinator

Resolutions

Speaker: Sophie Thomson from Gardening Australia

Conference Dinner - Naval Military & Air Force Club

Speakers: Prof. Emerita Marian Quartly and Assoc. Prof. Judith Smart, who are currently undertaking a History of the National Council of Women of Australia

Sunday, 27th Program continues Resolutions

Virtual Morning Tea

African Women Dancers

AGM

Close of Conference 3 pm



**National Council of Women
of Australia Inc Ltd**



ACN 061 777 937 ABN 46 061 777 937

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

to be held at

1 PM SUNDAY 27 SEPTEMBER 2009

at

**THE BRADLEY FORUM
THE HAWKE CENTRE UNI SA
50 – 60 NORTH TERRACE ADELAIDE SA**

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By 15 September 2009**