

# APRC NEWSLETTER

*MARCH 2022*



## APRC EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

President: Hean Bee Wee  
Secretary: Christine Knock  
Treasurer: Joan Fuh

## APRC PRESIDENT'S REPORT - MARCH 2022

Welcome to the March edition of APRC Newsletter celebrating International Women's Day. The theme chosen by UN WOMEN to mark International Women's Day 2022: "Gender Equality today for a sustainable tomorrow"; a topic of primary importance for the building of a more sustainable future for all. In this Newsletter, we share with you all the celebrations of IWD by our APRC sisters.

Due to the continued impact of COVID-19 pandemic, CSW66 was held in a hybrid format with the theme of "Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes"

ICW organized a parallel event on March 17 with the theme of "Women's Empowerment in a Future World of Work Impacted by Climate Change". The event was successfully held with wonderful speakers and participants from ICW and our wider family world-wide.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ZIIYFGPBkY> . KOWANI also organized their side and parallel events. On March 16, Elizabeth Carll, ICW main representative to UN New York, organized a side event in the name of ICW with the Permanent Mission of Thailand, Communications Coordination Committee for the United Nations (CCCUN) and Pan Pacific and South East Asia Women's Association International (PPSEAWA) with the theme of "Women's Health and Well-Being: Impacted by the Environment and Non-Communicable Diseases". This event was very successful too. Mohinder Watson, ICW main representative to UN Geneva, also organised a virtual expert meeting on March 10. ICW co-sponsored this event together with UNICEF, UN Human Rights.

In Adelaide Australia, the IWD Breakfast Committee organised a virtual breakfast with Senator Penny Wong having a conversation with Grace Tame, Australian of the year 2021. Grace is an activist and advocate for survivors of child sexual abuse through driving cultural and structural changes, with the ultimate goal of a future free from the sexual abuse of children and others. Over 3,000 women attended this virtual breakfast. Funds raised from this Breakfast (\$100,000) will be donated to UN Women for projects to support women in the Pacific Islands.

ICW GA in Avignon will proceed as planned. 40 women from APRC have already registered to attend. Early bird registration closes on 31 March 2022. Look forward to meeting all of you in Avignon.

It is with great sadness that I share the passing of Dame Miriam Patricia Dell D.B.E. O.N.Z J.P. with our APRC members. Many of you would have met her and ranked her as a giant on whose shoulders women in APRC stood upon. Thank you for all your efforts in helping ICW achieve equality for women. Vale

Hean Bee Wee AM



***Dame Miriam Dell  
[Nee Matthews]  
D.B.E., O.N.Z, JP  
14 June 1924 – 22 March 2022***

It is with sadness that I wish to inform you, on behalf of Te Kaunihera Wāhine o Aotearoa - the National Council of Women NZ, that Dame Miriam Dell passed away this week.

Dame Miriam was a life member of NCWNZ since 1982, and until very recently was still active in our affairs. She was NCWNZ President from 1970-1974, and led many initiatives such as being the NZ coordinator of the UN International Women's Year in 1975, and Chair of the Suffrage Centennial Year Trust in 1993. She was a member of the Order of New Zealand, which is limited to only 20 living people at one time - so a very special woman.

Dame Miriam will also be remembered because of her role as President of ICW-CIF from 1979 to 1986, and her continued involvement after that time; for example, organising the ICW-CIF centenary celebrations in Washington in 1988, and being in charge of the development programme until 1991. She was a member of the ICW-CIF Committee of Honour.

Suzanne Manning  
President,  
Te Kaunihera Wāhine o Aotearoa - National Council of Women New Zealand

## **Indonesia's Leadership in the G20, Women at the Front**

### **Hadriani Uli Tiur Ida Silalahi**

2022 is becoming a year full of opportunity for Indonesia especially since it is the year Indonesia holds the G20 presidency. The Indonesian presidency is for one year, from December 1, 2021, to November 30, 2022. The handover from Prime Minister Mario Draghi (the Italian presidency) to President Joko Widodo took place on October 31, 2021, at the G20 Summit in Rome, Italy.

To achieve this target, the Indonesian Presidency is focusing on three priority sectors as the key for a strong and sustainable recovery, which are:

1. **Strengthening of Global Health Architecture**

It is evident from the current pandemic that the global health architecture needs to be strengthened. This is not only to face the current pandemic but also to prepare the world to respond better and have the capacity to deal with future health crises.

2. **Digital Transformation**

Digital transformation is one of the key solutions in moving the economy during a pandemic and has become a new source of economic growth. For this reason, the Indonesian presidency will focus on enhancing digital skills and digital literacy to ensure an inclusive digital transformation for all.

3. **Energy Transition**

The Indonesian Presidency will promote energy transition toward new and sustainable energy by prioritising energy security, accessibility, and affordability. This will ensure a green and sustainable future and manage the climate change issues more effectively.

Under the inclusiveness principle, the Indonesian Presidency also invites guest countries and international organisations to participate in the G20 events. On various occasions, President Joko Widodo emphasised that this inclusiveness is the priority of Indonesia's leadership in the G20, to "leave no one behind."

National Council of Women Indonesia (Kowani), is humbly trusted to be the coordinator of W20, an engagement group of G20 focusing on gender equality mainstreaming and empowering women to actively participate in the economy hence moving the economic wheels. Due to the ongoing programs of Kowani in related to women empowerment in several sectors, to be selected as Chair of W20 is an honor. Kowani is a federation of organizations in Indonesia which covers millions of Indonesia women.

Since the G20 presidency handover in December, we have done several events in order to increase awareness, receiving inputs and discourses on women issues, as well as engaging with the W20 delegates with the aim of developing a comprehensive communique. On December 22, 2021, we did the kick off of W20 Indonesia. Following that, most of the engagement groups and working groups have kick started their process as well.

Starting in February we did our first plenary event with the theme discrimination and equality, followed by the second plenary on Women MSMEs and economic inclusion on March 8 located in Batu, East Java. This is the most interesting thing in our process. With the support from everyone, we managed to celebrate International Women's day with concrete actions. A lot of respective Kowani members are also invited and delivered their interventions at the session.

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The event on the first day was opened by showing the International Women's Day event with concrete actions from Women20 in encouraging women's empowerment, first, W20 Italy and Indonesia initiated a form of cooperation between MSMEs as the W20 Initiative, this program is in line with the priority issues of W20 and the embodiment of commitment W20 related to MSMEs. In the near future this initiative will be continued in the form of an MoU between the leather producing sector in Italy and Garut for the development of MSMEs in leather craft. With this initiative that has been carried out, it is hoped that it can be developed for outreach among MSMEs from various countries, both G20 members and countries in the world.

Second, the W20 Sispreneur program for MSMEs initiated by XL Axiata through the Sisternet program will take place from March 8 to July 19, 2022. This program is in the form of incubation, during which participants who pass the selection will be given 4 training classes, namely market segmentation & product innovation, digital financial literacy, business planning, and content and digital marketing. Women MSMEs can take part in the selection process for this program by submitting an article to the Sisternet application which can be downloaded on the Google Playstore & Apple Store from 20 March – 25 April 2022. This program will also provide a capital prize to the winner of 300 million Rupiah, which will be announced. and given at the W20 Summit in Lake Toba, 19 July 2022.

Third, a program on inclusive economy was also launched for friends with disabilities. Later this program will facilitate in the form of increasing the abilities of persons with disabilities through various trainings so that they can become entrepreneurs that have commercial value, as well as empowering skills and business management for persons with disabilities. Not only capacity building facilities, the program carried out by the central government through the Ministry of State Owned Enterprises also provides access to capital through the SOE ecosystem. The community, especially groups of people with disabilities who want to participate in the program, can contact the call centre of 143.

After in Batu, the W20 to W20 Summit side events will then be held in Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan in March 2022, in Manokwari, West Papua, in May 2022, in Lake Toba, North Sumatra in July 2022, and Denpasar, Bali in September to October next 2022.

Aside from our own programs, W20 has been actively involved in ensuring a more inclusive progress of other Engagement and Working groups by sending inputs, playing the role of peer reviewers, and actively attending peer events.

**INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN**  
**REPORT ON THE FAO ASIA PACIFIC REGION CONFERENCE**

8-11 March, 2022

Wendy Rainbird, Environment Adviser

The Food and Agricultural Organisation Asia Pacific Conference was held from 8-11 March hosted from Dhaka, Bangladesh.

**Some of the key concerns are:**

1. Actions to promote climate resilient agrifood systems in Asia and the Pacific Region (APR).
2. Identifying One Health priorities in APR. One Health being about the interlinking between our health, and the health of our environment for the food we eat, the water we drink and the air we breathe.
3. The FAO has Priorities that include Better Production, Better Nutrition, Better Environment and Better Life that are anchored in the Sustainable Development Goals. Some of these SDGs referred to in presentations were about SDG 1 Ending poverty, SDG 2 Ending Hunger, SDG 10 Ending Inequalities, as well as SDG 13 taking urgent action on climate change.
4. There are hundreds of FAO projects and they have prioritized for example Rural Women's empowerment. Also, resilient agrifood systems particularly with the impacts of climate change. Water scarcity is a major concern in many countries, and spokespeople described as its impact on food security being at breaking point for many countries, even Vietnam. There are transboundary dependencies for Vietnam and other countries, increased water demand, low access to clean safe water, with a lot of contamination of water, plus low efficiency of water use. The Mekong Delta is unusually dry and that has led to crop failures, and increased poverty. The Vietnamese spokesperson said their priorities are to strengthen legal frameworks, have better plans and strategies for water management, a national irrigation network, and upgrade existing water facilities. They talked of educating about the value of water. Pacific Islanders usually depend on groundwater and this resource is becoming over-exploited and contaminated sometimes by salinity as sea levels rise.
5. Scaling up inclusive digitization in agricultural value chains. The on-going e-commerce revolution is happening at the same time that mobile-based business models are emerging to provide advisory, marketing and financial services at scale to smallholder farmers. In some countries low literacy levels impacted on the take up of digital technology.eg. PNG. An Indigenous Civil Society presenter said that in many Pacific Islands there is a lack of access to the internet, smartphones or other devices. However, as in the point below, some people are finding ways to overcome lack of accessibility. Some countries mentioned the ageing, and declining numbers of small-scale farmers, but with use of drones, smart devices and other digitization, young people can get engaged in agrifood production.
6. Presenters and leaders spoke about the ways that science, technology and innovation can lead to more efficient, inclusive and resilient agrifood systems. This is across all sectors, is people centred, evidence driven, ethics based and gender equal. Thailand said these need to be accessible and affordable and for some countries, or communities they are costly. But Bangladesh presented a video that included Digital Village Centres that have been set up

across Bangladesh. There were women in the room, and people are being educated in internet use, that can help with pest management, markets and market pricing, so farmers are more connected and can develop business planning and get support. Another example was Samoa Women's Association that provided access to women, especially with the pandemic, to develop micro-businesses, online platforms to sell products. 70 % of market stallholders were women and they could access better earnings. One example was in vanilla production.

7. One of the FAO Priorities is for better nutrition and a number of countries' representatives spoke about increasing urbanisation together with changing diets and importation of processed foods that are not always better for our nutrition. They spoke about programs for promoting healthy food and more equitable food systems e.g. in the Philippines.
8. The impact of Covid on food chains was mentioned by many representatives. The Thai spokesperson said about the importance of social protection and safety nets. In Japan both the Japanese government and FAO helped to improve food supply chains, while Singapore, that is so dependent on food imports, they are working on producing more of their own food, on rooftop gardens, in aquafarms, and indoor vegetable farms. The Philippines government proceeded to develop programs for healthier, sustainable food systems. The Samoan spokesperson told about Covid amplifying the challenges of climate change impacts, and their dependence on processed, imported food. While in Thailand urban vegetable growing grew a lot. In Korea, they developed a National Food Plan based on food security, environmental sustainability, and healthy food. They expanded precision agriculture and reduced food waste.
9. The session on the Strategy on Climate Change reported about its impact on food production and the need for urgent action and enhanced actions. They spoke about the potential to combine adaptation and mitigation in agrifood systems. For example, Japan spoke about forest conservation benefiting water catchments and therefore water supply, and sequestering CO<sub>2</sub>. Also, the value of carbon sequestration in soils that also improve soil nutrition. Thailand and others spoke about reducing food loss and waste as part of climate change mitigation. Rotting food increases greenhouse gases. Bangladesh spoke about using floating gardens in the flooded zones.
10. In Nepal, with help from the World Bank, they developed GIS mapping over the country, and integrated that with provinces and sub-sections to find the most suitable food production within those regions. They explored climate change impacts on land and crop use. They improved the location of market hubs according to types of food produced. But serious climate change impacts are the melting of the Himalayan glaciers, and extreme rain events associated with the monsoons, leading to flash flooding, general flooding, mudslides and land slides impacting dwellings as well as crops. While other countries like Thailand and Vietnam are mapping the increased impacts of drier dry seasons, and the need to manage water allocations.
11. Some countries reported about greener agriculture by using bio fertilizers and bio pesticides, climate resilient plants and distribution of their seeds.
12. The leader who spoke from the Maldives was passionate about the impacts of climate change on their country from sea level rise, to salinity into taro and coconut areas so they cannot be grown, to ocean acidification and high-water temperatures causing coral bleaching. This in turn impacts tourism which is important for the Maldives. He said climate change is an existential threat to them and urged countries to be very strong on climate mitigation.

# NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF UKRAINE



## Impact of Climate Change on Women and Children in Ukraine

14-03-2022 WFUWO

Even the shifts that are currently caused by hostilities as the result of Russia's aggression against Ukraine are dangerous in terms of climate change and environmental impact.



A few days ago, a fuel base in Vasylkiv was on fire near my house. The media asked all Kyivites to close their windows tightly and not to go outside. It was very difficult to breathe. The same fires occurred in Yavoriv in the Lviv region and in many other parts of Ukraine. This must affect the climate, the health of women and children.



Ukraine may have a shortage of agricultural products for itself and for Asia and Africa, where it exports them. This will happen due to significant contamination of lands with all kinds of military waste and the inability to clean the land in time and sow grain on it. The total destruction of the Donetsk region will exclude him from the agricultural sector this season.

This report is from Lyudmyla, Health Advisor for ICW-CIF, who is a highly respected medical doctor and expert in radiation health/medicine in Ukraine. She works hard to try to improve the health and well-being of women and children.



Dear NCW Presidents and Sisters,

Different people have different understanding of the justification, or lack thereof, for the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The causes of war are always complex. My focus here is not to join what appears to be essentially the global condemnation of Russia's aggression, but to emphasize the growing number of those who suffer.

We cannot help but feel enormous sympathy for all the casualties, particularly for all the innocent women and children whose lives have been turned upside down if not destroyed. As members of the International Council of Women, our hearts ache for them. When we see clips of fleeing moms with babies in arms, it hurts us deeply. We can literally feel their fear and anguish. When we see women hand in hand with their young family, walking mile after mile to safety in tears, we cry with them. Regarding neighbouring countries which have graciously taken in hundreds of thousands of refugees, potentially millions, we express our gratitude and appreciation for their kindness.

Our strongest hope is that there can be a peaceful, just and speedy resolution of the conflict. But as we move toward that goal, it is imperative that we remain vigilant to the plight of women and children. They need and deserve our strongest support.

Humanitarian action, we believe, is an important role that national councils of women can play in influencing policy. As members of the global community, we at the International Council of Women will redouble our efforts to enforce the various international humanitarian and human rights laws and conventions that protect the rights of women and girls during and after conflicts. We will also do our best to stop the war and take the lead in establishing permanent peace with the power of women's cooperation and unity.

Jungsook Kim,  
President of ICW

# ICW Statement to mark International Women's Day 2022

March 8, 2022

The International Council of Women, a Non-Governmental Organization in consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council, has worked diligently to advance equal rights for women since its establishment in 1888. The Council is steadfastly committed to full implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, advancing the status of women, and the removal of all forms of discrimination against women and girls. The International Council of Women's objectives are definitely in line with the theme chosen by UN WOMEN to mark the International Women's Day 2022: "Gender Equality today for a sustainable tomorrow"; a topic of primary importance for the building of a more sustainable future for all.

Gender inequalities still remain deep-rooted in many societies. Structural barriers in the economic, social, political and environmental spheres produce and reinforce these inequalities, resulting in a lack of equal access to the workforce, as well as occupational segregation and gender wage gaps. Very often, women and girls are still widely denied access to basic education and health care, are victims of domestic violence and discrimination, and are under-represented in relevant important political and economic decision-making processes.

Despite the many formidable challenges, women have a critical role to play in all the Sustainable Development Goals; and the need to recognize gender equality is especially represented in Goal 5. This goal, known as "the stand-alone gender goal", is dedicated to achieving gender equality and empowerment of women and girls, and detailing within the single goal a full range of issues of general concern. It is true that effective actions have brought some positive change. However, all too often the hard-earned achievements in the field of Gender Equality have suffered from a serious backlash; particularly in the last two years of a worldwide pandemic and an increase of violence and unrest in certain parts of the globe, as the case of Afghanistan has shown, and now the crisis in Ukraine.

Sustainable development is tightly interlinked with both gender equality and peace; without peace there will not be a sustainable tomorrow. Sadly, there are too many places of conflicts around the world to mention one by one and the most recent news are filled with heartbreaking images of many women and children trying to flee from Ukraine in search of safety and survival. Women and girls suffer inordinately during and after armed conflicts, losing their fundamental human right to live in safety and peace. They have to face the overwhelming tasks of holding their families together after displacement, of providing food, clothing and shelter in destroyed areas, and the heightened risks of becoming widowed, as well as being victims of sexual violence and diseases. Security Council Resolution 1325 clearly acknowledged that women's participation and empowerment are critical components for the maintenance of peace and security. Yet the gender gap in these peace mechanisms still persists. As such, members of the global community must hasten their implementation of this important Security Resolution through enforcing the various international humanitarian and human rights laws and conventions that protect the rights of women and girls during and after conflicts, taking special measures to protect them from all forms of violence, protecting the needs of women and girls in refugee camps and settlements and including women as full and equal participants in peace processes, including disarmament and rebuilding mechanisms.

The International Council of Women's affiliates diligently continue to struggle for women to gain opportunities to play a decisive role in addressing the challenges in the fields of politics, economics, and climate change. Clearly, women are indispensable in this process and must be included as strategic partners. The building of solid partnerships is unquestionably a key component of ensuring a positive sustainable future for all. Thus, there is a fundamental necessity to bring together a whole range of relevant participants: institutions, international and regional organizations, governments and even members of local communities, in order to form alliances and direct efforts towards achieving gender equality.

Long-term advocacy and actions, in conjunction with specially designed policies and measures to promote the inclusion of women in the economy and polity, continue to be an urgent necessity that will contribute for a sustainable tomorrow. We need to ensure that women and girls are at the very heart of this matter, because the inequities and inequalities impacting on their health, opportunities and wellbeing are so persistent. This is, unfortunately, a much unfinished business and this should be the world's greatest challenge as we chart the path ahead.

To work towards meeting such challenge, one must recognize that good education is certainly a prerequisite for the fulfillment of human gender equality potentiality. However, although the gender gap in education is gradually closing, far too many girls are still denied schooling or have to drop out prematurely with few skills and even fewer future opportunities. With two thirds of the world's illiterate being women, overall gender equality cannot be achieved.

Therefore, overcoming the gender inequalities and critical barriers, which prevent women and girls from exercising their rights and empowering themselves, must be at the heart of our efforts to create sustainable and resilient societies in order to build a sustainable future for us and our future generations. The International Council of Women joins UN WOMEN in stressing the belief that "Without gender equality today, a sustainable future, and an equal future, remains beyond our reach".

We at the International Council of Women recognize the supreme challenge of the times. Our hearts go out to those of you who have lost loved ones, those of you who have felt economic decline, those of you who have been denied a good education, those of you who have lost security and safety, those of you who have felt deterioration of equal rights and all the other despicable baggage that has come along with this pandemic and the increase in climate disasters, gender-based violence and armed conflicts around the globe. We feel with you, but don't let this defeat you. Rather than despair, we believe it is time to redouble our efforts to help build a just, peaceful and sustainable future. It is time to dig deep to help create what we know to be a better world.

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IWD 2022 Campaign Theme: [#BreakTheBias](https://www.internationalwomensday.com/Theme)  
<https://www.internationalwomensday.com/Theme>

Imagine a gender equal world.....

**A world free of bias, stereotypes, and discrimination.**

**A world that is diverse, equitable, and inclusive.**

**A world where difference is valued and celebrated.**

**Together we can forge women's equality.**

**Collectively we can all #BreakTheBias.**

**Individually, we're all responsible for our own thoughts and actions - all day, every day.**

**We can break the bias in our communities.**

**We can break the bias in our workplaces.**

**We can break the bias in our schools, colleges and universities.**

**Together, we can all break the bias - on International Women's Day (IWD) and beyond.**



## **APRC ELECTION RESULTS**

As the Returning Officer I reported that the APRC Meeting with elections, due to have been held in September 2021, was not able to take place due to the postponement of the ICW-CIF General Assembly, caused by COVID-19 restriction, to 16<sup>th</sup>- 21<sup>st</sup> May 2022.

In accordance to the Asia-Pacific Regional Council Constitution, amended November 2019, a first call for the election of APRC office bearers was circulated, in conjunction with the quarterly newsletter, in January 2021.

Due to the postponement of the ICW-CIF General Assembly, a second call for nominations, also circulated with the quarterly newsletter, was made in December 2021. The closing date for receipt of nominations was extended to 15th February 2022.

As the nominations received do not exceed the number of places vacant for each of the three positions, no election was required. The three nomination forms received were correctly completed and received by the required date, I therefore declare:

Hean Bee Wee AM nominated by NCWA duly elected as President.  
Christine Knock MNZM nominated by NCWNZ duly elected as Secretary.  
Joan Fuh nominated by NCWT duly elected as Treasurer

I congratulate Hean Bee, Christine and Joan and wish them well for their term of office. They look forward to seeing you at the APRC meeting to be held during the General Assembly.

Elisabeth Newman AM  
ICW-CIF Ex-officio Board Member  
ICW-CIF Life Member