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Agenda setting:

Women's turn after the downturn! Global Crises and Challenges to Women in Local Communities

By Bianca Miglioretto



The environmental crisis has been going on for a while now. This was followed by the food crisis in early 2008 and before the year ended, the economic crises hit us. Crisis over crisis and women are supposed to adjust and still make ends meet.

"[The] financial, food, climate and energy crises are not isolated phenomena, but represent a crisis of the model itself, driven by the super exploitation of work and the environment, and financial speculation of the economy,"¹ said the women during this year's World Social Forum (WSF) held in Belém, Brazil. In this sense they reject any responses based on the market logic of the neoliberal system. As a result of this financial meltdown, seven out of ten workers who lost their

jobs in the Philippines are women. Migrant workers, many of them women, are likewise the first ones to lose their jobs in their host countries.

Different government administration - social democrats, conservatives and repressive regimes - are one in their response to the financial crisis: bailing out the rich with tax money coming from the poor. As anti-globalisation activist Susan George put it, "We need to understand that there has been a huge transfer of wealth from the bottom to the top." In numbers, by mid November 2008, 4100 Billion US\$² have been paid by Europe and the United States to salvage large firms. Since then this amount has just become bigger.

If we compare this amount to the 90 billion USD that have been spent by the same countries in 2007 for development co-operation - 45 times less - we can hardly believe that these governments are seriously committed to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Their priority is clearly the development of their rotten economy based on overexploitation and speculation. If we compare the 4100 billion USD bailout packages with the meagre 2.7 billion USD spent on the climate crisis, it becomes clear that the governments would rather invest into an economy that destroys the environment with agro-fuel, immense pollution and overexploitation.

"We, feminist women propose radical and profound changes in the relations among human beings and with the environment, the end of lesbophobia, of hetero-normative and racist patriarchy," asserted the Women's Assembly at the 2009 WSF. In terms of the food crisis, they reject genetic engineering and reaffirm women's alternatives towards the development of organic production and food sovereignty.

- ❖ Women in South Africa have resolved to food self-reliance by cultivating their own land and backyards to produce the food for their own consumption and even reviving an alternative gift economy.
- ❖ Women in Thailand and other countries are shifting to organic farming, despite the fact that they

1 Women's Assembly Declaration , World Social Forum, Belem, Brazil Feb. 1 2009, <http://feministdialogues.isiswomen.org/>

2 Figures from Susan George's speech on Dec. 12, 08 at the Clean Start conference organised by the New Internationalist, www.tni.org

would not have as much yields and earn less in the first two years. But for them, this is a small price to pay in reviving the soil from overexploitation; protecting themselves from ailments caused by their exposure to pesticides without any recourse to social security; and ensuring the health of their families. By no longer depending on commercial pesticides, fertiliser and hybrid seeds they are also less dependent on the global market.

- ❖ Through community-based direct marketing, women in Japan guarantee the high quality of their produce to their consumers, without the use of market feeds or the intervention of middle persons.
- ❖ Women in the Philippines avoid expensive and usuary loans through a community saving scheme, where people in the community contribute to a community fund and members can borrow money at fair conditions.

There are many more ways to reduce our dependence on the global market and reduce our vulnerability to global crises. But we cannot avoid them completely. External factors have drastically increased the prices of food, especially staples such as rice or corn. For women in Kenya this means only two meals a day with maize flour and substitute one meal with a cheaper staple.

While women build on self-reliance, we have to struggle for a change in the production and consumption model. As everyone agrees to economic regulations, Susan George urged us to act fast and demand for long-term solutions. She suggested that:

- ❖ Banks need to be nationalised, devote a certain percentage of their investments into ecological projects at no interests and grant loans at low interests to small businesses while high interests are charged to speculative businesses.
- ❖ The North needs to cancel the debts – a promise made long ago by the G8 – on the condition that the countries whose debts are cancelled preserve biodiversity, conserve the soil and the forests.
- ❖ The so called “tax havens” need to be closed as big capital evades taxes amounting to 250 billion USD yearly.
- ❖ Restore taxes on the rich that were cut by Bush and other leaders.
- ❖ Introduce international taxes on financial transactions and transnational corporations.

Those measures go in direction of an environmentally friendly market system. But if it should also be viable for poor people in the South especially women, we need to combine these measures with the demands of the Women's Assembly at the 2009 WSF, “We, feminist women, demand employment protection and the right to a decent income. We cannot accept that attempts to maintain this system are made at the expense of women. The mass lay-offs, cuts in public spending in social fields ... directly affect our lives as women”. In other words:

- ❖ Banks need to invest a certain percentage into women's project and grant lower interests to gender fair businesses.
- ❖ Countries whose debts are cancelled need to show advancements in terms of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the implementation of the Beijing Platform of Action (BPFA) and in achieving the MDGs.

- ❖ Gender budgeting needs to be introduced in all government and social welfare spending, that governments spend the same amount on services to women as on services to men.



March 8 2009 women's rally in Manila on the economic crisis

These are just a few ideas. Women around the globe have many more ways and ideas of confronting the global crises but also have many stories to tell on how they are affected by the crises, how their lives are getting

more and more difficult, while Northern governments save the rich. Community radio stations surface these stories and AMARC WIN collects them on its website and makes them available to the world.

- ❖ Contribute your radio stories to the AMARC WIN March 8 radio campaign that takes place every year. You can contact the AMARC Asia Pacific Regional Office for assistance.
- ❖ Listen to the untold stories from women around the world starting March 8 on www.amarc.org and share them with your listeners, networks and friends.

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Special Report from the Pacific:

**Women's Civil Society - Looking Ahead to Commission on the Status of Women
From the Rural to the Global**

The HIV/AIDS pandemic has brought greater urgency to the issues of care giving, including in terms of the division of labour between women and men. The attention to contributions of rural women as well as to their needs and priorities is critical in the context of ongoing discussions on health security. Health Security refers to the availability of health facilities, ones' access to it and also it is required that not only do the resources exist but are also made available to those in need.



femLINKPACIFIC has reinforced the need to address the empowerment of rural women in a comprehensive manner. As rural women bring attention to their needs, priorities and to their health security, femLINKPACIFIC brings to the forefront the issues of the rural women that they will address and voice out during the fifty third session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW).

The fifty third session of the Commission on the Status of Women will be held in New York from the 2nd to 13th March 2009. The theme for this year's CSW is "the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including care giving in the context of HIV/AIDS."

Every year representatives of member states gather at United Nations Headquarters in New York to evaluate progress on gender equality, identify challenges, set global standards, and formulate concrete policies to promote gender equality and advancement of women worldwide.

The unequal division of labour and responsibilities within households limits woman's potential to find time and to develop, the skills required for participation in decision making in wider public forums.

This year eight Non Government Organisation (NGO)/Civil Society Organisation (CSO) representatives from the Pacific have been selected to participate in the 53rd session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in New York with support from the United Nations Development Programmes (UNDP) Pacific Centre. This is twice the number supported by the UNDP Pacific Centre for CSW 52.



Members of the Nausori Rural Women's Association prepare their recommendations

In preparation of this year's CSW we tried to localize this year's CSW theme "the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including care giving in the context of HIV/AIDS". Women who were part of FemLINKPACIFIC Community Radio Consultation – pre broadcast planning for International Women's Day 2009 in conjunction with the Nausori Rural Women's Association shared their views and thoughts. Some had said that there is a great need to share the responsibilities, while others needed to have access to more information so that they are able to make better choices and decisions.

As one woman said: *"Talking about education to your own child sometimes is a struggle/challenge for both mums and dads; there are existing barriers and challenges for even parents to communicate the right information and step up to their responsibility to being able to talk about theit is also time for more equal responsibility between men and women"*

Stereotypical gender roles perpetuate unequal power relations between women and men, resulting in unequal access to rights and privileges and discrimination against women and girls, including unequal sharing of responsibilities in access to resources and decision making.

So what does the CSW theme mean to us and members of our rural women's media network?

- ❖ Ensure that the reference of caregivers does not serve to perpetuate the unpaid work of women but also takes into account the role and responsibilities in extended families;
- ❖ We need to ensure that care work is recognised, measured, and valued. There is a need to start increasing the role of men and boys in care giving within households and in care giving professions.
- ❖ We also need to increase consultation with women to strengthen their access to decision making in policies and programmes designed to support care giving including in the context of HIV/AIDS.
- ❖ In addition to the context of care giving, there is also a critical need to address women's participation in decision making in relation to their sexual and reproductive health rights, including access to and the availability of the female condom
- ❖ We need to consider the barriers to women's enjoyment of their sexual and reproductive health rights including domestic violence as well as their economic status/rights within their home, including the lack of recognition of women's contribution to the management of their homes and communities

- ❖ Additionally we also need to recognize women's contributions to developing and implementing community programmes to raise awareness and share correct information about HIV/AIDS

The recommendations in this report have been prepared following rural consultations and radio conversations with Sharon Bhagwan Rolls, Coordinator, femLINKPACIFIC; sharon@femlinkpacific.org.fj Sharon is attending the 53 CSW in New York in March, 2009. For the transcribed radio conversations please write to Prativa Chhetri at chhetri_prativa@yahoo.com

Les' talk, voice from lesbians, let's talk!

By Xiao Dou

It is a friendly zone for lesbians to know themselves, confront themselves and search for healthier lives. It creates a warm world, where lesbians voice their heart and show their charm! *"Welcome to our blog <http://lestalk.blog.sohu.com/>! It is a LES online broadcast, and we are waiting for your logging in every Saturday."*

LGBT³-Issues in China

As we known, lesbians are a vulnerable group in China. We, as members of them, choose online broadcasting to express our views, in order to change the current situations. In mainland China, the State Administration of Radio Film and Television (SARFT) ban programs containing homosexual themes. Therefore, we have chosen the underground radio, rooted in the network. Les' talk was launched on 15 March 2008, with a nationwide programming group. Most of the group members are in their 20ties and two of them are overseas Chinese.

Programme Content

- ❖ News: Weekly Comrade World news from the Ai'Bai website www.aibai.cn
- ❖ Theme Conversation: One topic per week, throughout the entire program
- ❖ LaLa Affairs: Sharing trivia, life tips; enriching and comforting your life

Production

The entire production and transfers of recordings are done online, including the following steps:

1. The editors choose a specific topic and develop it
2. The anchorpersons record the program online
3. The technicians do the mixing and editing
4. The network staffs publish it

Our Audiences

At present, we have about 300 listeners. Most of them are lesbians; a few are lesbian friendly people. They enjoy our broadcasts very much and often offer suggestions to support our program.

Our Beautiful Vision

With Les' Talk we share our identity, feeling, life, and social and literary information. We hope Les' talk can be a communication platform among lesbians and with the outside world, which does not just talk to the world but also arouses a wonderful and diverse world!

Xiao Dou can be contacted at: 425228676@qq.com

3 LGBT = Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual,

The power of one is small, but collectively it becomes big

By KIM Chiaki, FMYY Integrated Producer, KOBE, Japan



Kim Chiaki in her studio at FMYY, Kobe;
photo: Suman

Women's rights in Japan are guaranteed by the Equal Employment Opportunity Law, introduced in 1985. Following the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) that was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1991, Japan revised the Equal Employment Opportunity Law.

This law allows women in Japan to pursue their profession while availing benefits such as child care. But the law does not address women's duties outside of their professional life as housekeeper or mother or wife. Hence modern Japanese women are double burdened as professionals and efficient homemakers. While men work hard in their profession but once at home they resort to the traditional patriarchal role.

Currently the world is at the verge of an economic crisis. Most politicians in Japan, however, are devoted to their power struggles and their blunders are evident to people from all over the world.

The other day I watched an interesting TV programme of the Japanese Broadcasting Corporation (NHK) that showed how the first protests against the atomic and hydrogen bombs had started. When the United States conducted the first hydrogen bomb experiments in the Bikini Islands, Japanese fishermen were fishing tuna in the neighbouring waters. Their exposures to radiation lead to the "atomic bomb diseases" which were widely reported in the media.

Besides fishermen the damage caused by the atomic and hydrogen bombs testing polluted the fishes, the sea and the wind, which caused contaminated rain all over the world. The air and rain was no longer safe and people were deprived of the enjoying the wind. For a long time Japanese could not eat tuna, their favoured diet.



Japanese women in traditional costume Kimono, in a program commemorating Kyoto Community Radio's 4th Anniversary;
photo: Tetsuo Matsuura

Japanese "politicians" of the time, most of them men, did not oppose to the testing. In such a situation, it needed "a woman" to take action. A mother wrote to a newspaper, voicing her antipathy over the words of her husband, "there is nothing we can do about it." Other mothers followed her example. They began to collect signatures in the aspiration to protect the life of their children. The activity was just writing and collecting names, but it sent out messages that moved the world. 600,000,000 signatures were brought to the world meeting of which 30,000,000 came from Japan only.

I was a little disappointed to find out that the secretary general of the organization, collecting the signature was a man. I believe that women tend to act and send out messages, while men tend to plan and package them.

Nowadays, we have useful tools such as the Internet and the radio. It is possible for us to get information easily and network with each other. Let's change our world for the better with women's sensibilities and courage to protect our environment for future generations.

"Let's collect each voice. The voice of one is small,
But together it will become a stream that transforms to a river.
Moving the world is possible!"

Kim Chiaki works in community radio FMYY in Kobe, Japan and can be contacted at: yym1@tcc117.org

Women Journalists in Afghanistan Persevere Despite Grave Threats

By Zarghona Roshan

Despite security threats against journalists in Afghanistan, the women journalists continue to work in insecure provinces especially in the south and east of the country. Mursal Ahmadzai head of Kandahar Information Agency has been working as a journalist in the southern province of Kandahar for four years.

In answer to the question about how she manages to work in a bad security situation that challenges women's life every moment, Mursal says: "When we are busy at work, we don't think about our personal lives. If we stop working and struggling, there will be no one to fight for women's rights. It is we as women journalist who should ensure a prosperous future for women".

Mursal continues "When I started my work as manager of Afghan Azadi radio, there was only one woman in the radio who refused to work out of the studio. We invited some young school girls and trained them. Finally around 10 to 12 of them were able to start working with us. Some of them had good progress and they went on to work in other TVs and radios".

Kamela Akbari has been working as a journalist in Khost province for four years. "In our province, when a woman wants to leave home, she should be accompanied by a family member even if there is an office pick up and drop vehicle for her".

Sitara Setayesh considers the women journalist's work as *a bit troublesome*. "Women journalist cannot participate in events that are held in the evenings. A number of women journalists have been killed over the last year and some others have received threats warning them to quit the profession or they would be killed".

Hamida Osman has been working with Azadi Radio for six years and she was the first female journalist who worked under Burqa during the interim Taliban government. Recently, she was appointed as secretary general for South Asia Free Media Association (SAFMA).



Farida Nekzad, Managing Editor and Deputy Director of Pajhwok Afghan News winner of 2008 **Courage in Journalism Awards** given by International Women's Media Foundation

As an attempt to support the women journalists, the Afghan Women Journalists Association was established recently with the support from SAFMA. Hamida says, "This association will be linked with eight countries of South Asia and will be exchanging successful experiences among the women journalists".

Let's hope and pray for better times ahead for the women journalists of Afghanistan.

Source: *Internews Afghanistan*, kind courtesy of [Tamara Agrabawe](mailto:tamara@internews.af) who can be reached at tamara@internews.af

Role of Women in Community Radio Operations in Bangladesh

By Farjana Akter, Programme Coordinator, VOICE



Community radio can facilitate people's access to information and promote their active participation in local decision-making processes, which ultimately result in participatory governance. In other words community radio can play the role of promoting a participatory, accountable and transparent governance system while at the same time it creates enormous opportunities for growth and poverty reduction.

The world economy is concentrated to a limited number of institutions controlled by the rich nations. Their institutions rule the life and livelihood of the poor people through the control over the world resources. This dominance has manifold implications on society. It reinforces the existing divides such as social, economic, education, information and knowledge, cultural, urban-rural, gender, North-South, and even between countries. People's media is essential to challenge these divides and community radio carries the opportunity for people to address and manage their issues without outside dominance or impositions.

Community Radio will be an important tool in the development of Bangladesh. The Ministry of Information formulated the Community Radio Setting Up, Broadcasting and Operation Policy in 2008. It is a matter of time before community radio comes into full operation in this country.

Gender discrimination exists in all sectors but more so in the broadcasting industry. As community radio is going to be launched soon, it should ensure gender balance in its management and gender fair reporting in all its programmes. In particular, community radio must strive to create an opportunity for women, especially those from the rural areas. Community radios would do well to introduce affirmative action to enable women from marginalized and rural sectors to fully participate so as to enhance the quality of life through greater access to information and being able to voice their concerns. Women must be involved in the decision making and women's issues need to be given priority in the content management so that local women can identify and relate to the radio.

We hope the community radio stations that will soon start in Bangladesh will give due importance to gender and ensure an inclusive policy in its operation. For a clear orientation on the implementation of gender equality in community radio, I highly recommend the AMARC-WIN Gender Policy which has been translated into Bangla and is available online on www.amarc.org. There is a need for coordination among the stakeholders in Bangladesh so that decision can be taken jointly in order to ensure the success of community radio operations in the country.

References: Facing the Challenges of Corporate Globalization: Role of Media and Information Communication Technology; www.bnnrc.net; and www.win.amarc.org

Farjana can be contacted at farjana@voicebd.org



The 9th World Social Forum (Fórum Social Mundial) was held in Belém, Brazil between January 27 and February 1, 2009. 150,000 participants were involved in almost 2,400 activities and actions during the week. By far the largest number of participants was from South America and over 4,100 organisations from that region had a presence.

What I found particularly encouraging was the gender balance of the panels at almost all of the sessions I attended. I don't know if this was the norm or not. Maybe I was lucky. Nonetheless, during these sessions, women from all backgrounds were given prominent positions as speakers and presenters. From academics to lawyers, mothers to craft workers, women were able to address the topics and present their perspectives first hand.

However, what was not as encouraging was that, generally, the women presented a bleak outlook on their experience. For instance, during one session "Livelihoods are Every Woman's Human Right" Sonia Costa, from "Beyond the Food International Network" spoke about the links between land evictions and livelihoods. She related how, within the Brazilian experience, many more young women now have access to education and the potential to become income earners and therefore more independent. At the same time, the level of poverty in outer-urban and rural areas is rising. Coupled with this is the compulsory acquisition of land by the government (sometimes working with corporations) and how this disrupts family and communal life, particularly the lives of women. Even though there are laws to protect land owners, government policies have not protected agrarian workers, in particular, and their families. Women bear the brunt of these policies in many ways. Young women are sent to school and potentially given an opportunity to escape their poverty but when the father is killed or loses the ability to earn a living, the whole family, including the children, is recalled to work thus depriving them of the right to education.





A women's session in progress

In many regions women are spearheading reforms and the struggle for justice and land rights. Often sellers impose huge interest payments on land buyers which leads to a poverty cycle that becomes generational. So, while for some, there is way out – though better education and the opportunities it presents – many still struggle to rise out of their low status. This then, impacts on the ability of many women to achieve their dreams and their basic human right of obtaining a stable and sustainable livelihood.

Speakers from India, Vietnam, Uruguay and the Philippines also related similar stories. It seems, therefore, that, in relation to women's rights, the World Social Forum presents its participants with a challenge.

The slogan of the WSF is "Another World is Possible" and it seems that in order for that hope to become a reality, a renewed solidarity is needed. This solidarity calls to all men and women to continue to network and develop combined strategies that seek to achieve basic human rights and obtain sustainable livelihoods. But not only this. The role of women in society will not change and the opportunities for their full and equal participation in society will not eventuate until drastic changes are pushed through.

As Ana Filippini from the Uruguay based, "World Wide Forest Movement" said, a new world is not possible unless men and women unite to change those things that deprive people of their basic human rights and the ability for them to, at the least, attempt to realize their hopes and dreams of achieving their basic right to a sustainable livelihood.

Shane Elson is a community radio worker in Australia and the treasurer of AMARC Asia Pacific. All photos are by Shane Elson. He can be contacted at shane@araustralia.org.

For the latest from the community radio sector of Asia Pacific, please join the AMARC email list by following the link

<http://lists.amarc.org/mailman/listinfo/asiapacific-general>

Or just email to amarcap@wlink.com.np to have you subscribed.

Website: <http://www.asiapacific.amarc.org>

Gender Equality in Community Radio has many Languages

By Bianca Miglioretto



ນະໂຍບາຍດ້ານບົດບາດຍິງ-ຊາຍ
ສຳລັບສະຖານີວິທະຍຸຊຸມຊົນ
ໂດຍ AMARC-WIN Asia Pacific
8 ມີນາ 2008



Gender Policy in Lao

“When I attended training in my radio station, they separated the men and the women. The men were given technical training while the women were not. I insisted that I also wanted to learn the studio operation and editing, but they would not let me.” Mariani from Darsa FM in Aceh, Indonesia is not alone. Many women experience this kind of exclusion or marginalisation in the operation of their community radio stations. The situation does not look any better in the management of the stations. In a survey conducted by Isis International and AMARC-WIN Asia Pacific (AP), women only represent 28 per cent of the leadership positions in community radio stations in Asia Pacific, given their difficulty to participate in the decision-making processes. These decisions affect their very engagement with the station and in the content of radio programmes.

Women like Mariani want to change this situation. They no longer want to accept their token participation in community radio. It is precisely for this reason that AMARC-WIN AP developed the Gender Policy for Community Radio.

In a simple language, this document explains what gender equality means in community radio and how it can be achieved. It demonstrates the necessary measures which can enable and encourage women's equal participation in all fields and levels of the radio station. These measures may come in the forms of special women's training, quotas for women in leadership, security measures to guarantee women's safety, day care facilities and arrangements and flexible working hours, among others.

“The Gender Policy for Community Radio is exactly what we need in Africa. It is simple and clear with useful tips and ideas. The National Community Radio Forum adopted it at the last general assembly. The challenge now is to convince the individual stations to adopt and implement the policy. That is where we find most resistance;” remarked Rebone Molefe from TUT FM 96.2 in South Africa.

Indeed the Gender Policy for Community Radio earned a lot of positive feedback when it was presented in different media forums around the world. The boards of AMARC Europe and AMARC Asia Pacific endorsed it to all its members. At the Our Media Conference in Ghana, African women welcomed the policy as a document they can take home to strengthen women's participation in their community radio stations. Internews held workshops on the policy in Afghanistan and in Bangladesh it was presented at a multi-stakeholder round table.



A snapshot from Radio Kothmale, Sri Lanka; photo: Dr. Kalinga Seneviratne, AMIC

These international conferences and board endorsements are crucial in the promotion of the policy. However, they remain inadequate in effecting an impact in terms of women's more meaningful participation in community radio stations. Instead we need the support of both men and women in each and every station to understand, appreciate, adopt and implement the policy.



Radio training for women in Khoum Community Radio station in Laos by Isis International

One barrier to this vision was language. Initially, the policy was only available in the colonial languages: English, French and Spanish.

As a proactive response, members of AMARC-WIN and Isis International have been coordinating efforts in finding volunteers to translate it into as many local languages as possible. Within no time, we were able to translate the document into 18 different languages: Arabic, Bahasa Indonesia, Bisaya, Chinese, Dari, English, French, German, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Kannada, Lao, Nepali, Pashto, Spanish and Tagalog.

One of the translators is Cai Yiping the Executive Director of Isis International: "In China, there is no community radio yet but this policy is very useful for the government radio stations at national, provincial and local levels and for the NGOs who broadcast on the internet or in the community-based government radios. This is why I am happy to translate it into Chinese."

Don't miss your chance to promote gender equality. Download the Gender Policy for Community Radio in your language from the AMARC-Website www.amarc.org and share it with your radio station, friends and your network.

If you cannot find your language and wish to translate the four- page document into your language, you are more than welcome to do so, just contact the AMARC Asia Pacific Regional Office at suman@wlink.com.np or Isis International at bianca@isiswomen.org.

Towards Gender Equality in Community Radio, in Media and in Society!!!

REPORT:

Evaluation of 16 Days WIN Campaign on Gender and Violence Against Women

By Prativa Chhetri

The Women's International Network of the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC-WIN) participated in the 16 days of activism against gender violence from 25 November through 10 December, 2008 with an internet radio campaign. The multilingual programme was broadcast on www.amarc.org/16jours.

The theme for the campaign was "Media and Violence Against Women", denouncing gender violence in the media and to transform media into a catalyst to end violence against women. The campaign addressed the following points:

1. Media as an instrument in combating violence against women;
2. Violence against women as projected in the media which "normalizes" violence; and
3. Violence committed against women media practitioners.

The 16 days of campaign covered the following international events from its commencement on 25 November till its final day on 10 December, 2008.

November 25: International Day for the Elimination of violence Against Women

November 29: International Women's Human Rights Defenders Day

December 1: World Aids Day

December 6: Commemoration day of the Montreal (Canada) Massacre in 1989

December 10: International Human Rights Day



Broadcaster of a youth program in the Philippines by Isis

Community radio producers from Asia-Pacific, Middle East, Africa, Europe, North America and Latin America and the Caribbean participated in this campaign. Over 50 different programmes in different languages were prepared and uploaded at the AMARC website at www.amarc.org/16jours.

From the Asia Pacific region the following programmes were received:

◆ **OneWorld South Asia:**

- ◆ Legal Rights for Women
- ◆ Status of Women in Nepal Celebrating Women's Day
- ◆ The Story of Dalit Women
- ◆ Would a man be guilty of domestic violence?

◆ **Voices, India:** A programme on Dowry Issues

◆ **Radio FM YY from Japan:** "The present condition of women in Japan".

◆ **Community Radio ECR FM 104.2 MHz, Nepal:** Serophero

◆ **Radio Namobuddha, Nepal:** Programme on Violence against Women.

◆ **Radio Sagarmatha, Nepal:** Saha Astittyo

An evaluation of the 16 days campaign on Violence against Women was carried out. The feedbacks received from the participants of the campaign from the Asia Pacific region are:

1. The community radios or related organizations participated in the campaign by sending programmes and to some extent carried out discussions on the topic.
2. The issues discussed were the kind of violence and discrimination a woman faces from the womb till her death such as femicide, deprivation of education as a girl, domestic violence, marital rape, right to property, stereotyping women and their role at home, discrimination at workplace, etc.
3. Some useful suggestions for future campaigns are:
 - i. Allow more interactive for collaboration to send and download programmes
 - ii. Provide space for comments by listeners
 - iii. Publish a newsletter with all the programmes at the end of the event

- iv. Organise a competition to encourage more contributions
- v. A comparison of the issue between regions would allow better understanding
- vi. Create links to other portals and site for more information
- vii. Improve participation by providing timely information for programme production
- viii. Create a wider online network and encourage more contributions irrespective of dialects.

Overall the response from the Asia Pacific region was good but there is always room for improvement. We hope that there is more participation from the region for the upcoming AMARC March 8, International Women's Day programme and the 21 March, Radio Voices without Frontiers (RVSF) radio campaigns.

For more information on the AMARC global broadcast campaigns please contact Prativa Chhetri at prativa_chhetri@asiapacific.amarc.org

Radio for unmarried feminist women "Flower Cafe of Wild Voices"

By Kim Ji Hyun



They first met in a small radio class and started broadcasting on March 6, 2006 on Mapo FM in Seoul, one of eight community radio stations in Korea. After 93 broadcasts, which were carried once a week, the members stopped broadcasting on December 10, 2007 feeling exhausted and out of energy.

After the break, one of the previous members decided to run a radio training program, hoping to find a new broadcasting team. It was an opportunity to strengthen feminists and women's communications. The classes ran from April 23 to June 4, 2008 with 20 to 25 participants. Following the successful completion of the training, 5 to 10 participants joined the second round of "Flower Cafe of Wild Voices" and transmitted their first radio program on July 7, 2008.

Their radio show can be heard every Monday midnight at Mapo fm 100.7 MHz, MapoFM' homepage mapofm.net or their website femidio.net.

For more information on the "Flower Cafe of Wild Voices" in Korean please visit their website: <http://femidio.net/>

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Global crisis will always affect human needs and more so of women than men. Because while men are usually the planners and in control of development they tend to forget or overlook women's needs.

For example, talking economy, we usually look at export and import and do not take into consideration the contribution of woman selling goods in the local market, earning enough to support their families. We do not look at the huge unpaid contribution of women at home. Some men say their wives do nothing but they fail to see that women are the first to wake up and the last to go to bed. Yet no calculation has been done to put a dollar value to the unpaid and unmentioned work of women.

When we talk about food, women often sacrifice their meals to feed their family first. Women budget to see that everything is paid for and this may mean that their own needs come last. “We rather have tea everyday and then when our children fall sick, we either walk them to hospital or we borrow money adding to our frustration and stress.”

Women face difficulties when shops are not available in their villages and they have to walk to the other village for groceries while leaving the children unattended at home. Sometimes they send their children to walk to the next village which is about a mile away to shop. Rape cases of women and children have been reported while walking alone to or from the shop.

The effect of global warming on Fiji has led to over fishing and over exploitation of the land. This results in women working longer hours looking for food and in turn spending less time with the children and their husband.

The hinterland and outer island communities in Fiji are challenged with high cost of transportation and communication due to Fiji's underdeveloped infrastructure.

In Fiji, a common yet seldom discussed problem is limited access to public services such as health care and education. Due to lack of access to quick medical treatment, women have died during childbirth.



Women preparing food for their extended family; photo: Pua Karikaritu

For better education young people are sent to better equipped schools in the urban areas. They board with relatives who often are themselves struggling to make ends meet. The students face difficulties such as lack of sleeping space, study area, bus fare and lunch for school which prompts them to look for alternative ways of earning money. Young women, who should be at school, find employment in the sex industry.

The global economic downturn has led to closure of factories where the majority of the employees are women. Who will support their families now? Given the challenges women in Fiji face there is a need for their empowerment so that they are prepared to provide local solutions for sustainable development in the country.

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While Barack Obama promises change, he should not become a prisoner of power.

We've been taught to believe that it is the early bird that gets the worm. But in these days of economic melt-downs, we need to urgently change our lens. How can we synergise the worm's eye view with the bird's eye view — so that both the developing and developed get an equal slice of the global cake? On three occasions last month, this Catch 22-like question resonated with no easy answer in sight.

One such occasion came a couple of weeks ago, during feisty journalist, Amy Goodman's presentation at the international symposium of the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) in Montreal. Goodman, one of the most prominent names in independent media and a part of the popular US radio and television programme "Democracy Now!" is also this year's recipient of the Right Livelihood Award (Goodman shares the honour along with three others from different countries in the world including India).

Amidst the euphoria that characterised Barack Obama's inspired electoral victory, Goodman's presentation presented a reality check in more ways than one. Without diluting the significance of Obama's victory, Goodman's presentation highlighted the relevance of community participation towards ensuring a viable bridge between promise and performance. Like other political pundits, Goodman emphasised the formidable challenges that confronted Obama. But there was one significant difference. Highlighting the Obama campaign's adroitness and skill in community organisation and its use of community media especially the web, she emphasised the responsibility of the community to ensure that the Obama regime would not stray away from its promises once it assumed power. It doesn't take more than common sense to affirm Goodman's wisdom. Obama's victory promises change. However, too often we have seen inspirational leaders with a promise of dynamic change becoming prisoners of power. Hopefully, Barack Obama will be the exception — but to help him remain on track, the community has to play a critical role.

Cut to Yogyakarta, Indonesia, the country of Barack Obama's childhood, on October 17 when World Poverty Day took centre stage. Across the world, we were informed that "tens of millions of citizens" united to "Stand Up and Take Action" against poverty and inequality as part of the Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP) and the UN Millennium Campaign".

Official statements stated that at the half-way point towards the target date, significant progress had been made, but urgent and increased efforts are needed by all stakeholders in order to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015.

The reality check came at an Asia-Pacific community media consultation in Yogyakarta. About 50 community media practitioners were clearly unimpressed by the policy pronouncements and argued that regular community reports about essentials like food, clothing, shelter in their villages and localities confirmed that we have a long way to go before meeting the MDGs. The disconnect between policy pronouncements and ground realities merely confirms the writing on the poverty wall.

As Director of the UN MDG Campaign Salil Shetty recently explained, "Turn your attention to the street conversation... and you will hear a different discourse on why the MDGs are not being met. For the

poorest people... their daily experience is of being powerless in the face of being denied basic public services...."

There is, however, a silver lining. If community exclusion poses the key problem, community participation provides the answer. As Shetty pointed out, "the good news is that whether in Africa, Asia or Latin America, the poor are demanding action from their leaders to deliver on the promises they have already made. Ordinary citizens want to see tangible results at the local level, and the poorest want to not only be part of the planning and implementation, but also of monitoring performance of the MDGs."

While growth prospects of developing economies should not suffer in the face of rampant recession, the proof of the pudding, however, lies in the eating.

Source: This article was posted on the *BangaloreMirror.com* on Wednesday, November 19, 2008. It can also be viewed online at: <http://www.bangaloremirror.com>

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About AMARC WIN

The Women's International Network is a large assembly of women's broadcasters working to ensure women's right to communicate through and within the community radio movement.

WIN's main principles

- WIN works for women's right to communication as a basic human right.
- WIN supports women's empowerment, gender equity, a general improvement of women life with informed choices.
- WIN promotes women's participation at all levels of community radio and within the community radio movement, including decision making and leadership.
- WIN supports women's efforts to express themselves within and beyond their communities, by providing capacity building, experience and production exchanges at local, regional and international level.
- WIN aims to challenge stereotyped images of both women and men in the media and promote gender-faire, non-discriminatory portrayal of women.
- WIN subscribe to the principles of the Beijing Platform for Action and CEDAW.

How does WIN work?

The women representing AMARC member organisations elect a Vice President for Women to sit on AMARC's International Board, and regional Vice Presidents for Women to sit on the regional boards of AMARC Asia Pacific, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe and North America.

For the latest activities of AMARC WIN, please visit <http://win.amarc.org/> or contact Bianca Miglioretto, WIN Vice President for Asia Pacific, email: bianca@isiswomen.org

To join the email-list of WIN Asia Pacific send a request to chhetri_prativa@yahoo.com. Please write 'request to join AMARC WIN Asia Pacific email-list' in the subject line.