

# Gender Network News

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Gender Network

ADB

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*This edition of the quarterly newsletter focuses on International Women's Day. For any suggestions or inputs for future editions, contact Jennifer Francis (Telephone 632-5729; E-mail: [jfrancis@adb.org](mailto:jfrancis@adb.org)) or Zarah Zafra (Telephone 632-6995; E-mail: [zmzafra@adb.org](mailto:zmzafra@adb.org)).*

*Gender Network Secretariat*

### Thought for the Day

**"No culture can survive when sunlight does not fall on half of its people."**

*Eleanor Smeal, former president,  
National Organization for Women*

## Contents

### A. International Women's Day/Week Events

#### 1. International Women's Day Breakfast

Celebrations to mark International Women's Day kicked off on 8 March 2004 with a breakfast at ADB hosted by Director General, BPMSD, Hideo Nakajima. In an opening address, Managing Director General Young-Hoi Lee said: "Today provides an opportunity for us to reflect on the progress made by women and to consider what other initiatives are needed to achieve gender equality in the workplace and in society."



L-R: Y.H. Lee, H. Nakajima, A. Smith, and P. Sahilan

Professional Women's Committee

Chair Ainslie Smith gave a speech on the significance of the event, taking stock of women's progress to date, while Pilar Sahilan, representing local staff, examined the issues from a national officer's perspective.

#### 2. Regional Workshop on Gender and Governance Issues in Local Government in South Asia

A Regional Workshop on Gender and Governance Issues in Local Government in South Asia was held 9–10 March 2004 at ADB headquarters. Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Pakistan were represented. Local government officials, partner nongovernment organizations, elected women representatives, and grassroots women leaders were also among the participants. Director General Yoshihiro Iwasaki of the South Asia Department opened the workshop. The objective of the workshop was to present findings of the regional technical assistance (RETA), which was implemented from August 2002 and aimed at building the capacity of locally elected women leaders in local governments to promote more efficient and transparent public service delivery. Advocacy skills and increased interface among women representatives improved government response to problems identified by the poor.



Workshop Participants

### 3. In the Spotlight: Talk with Women Leaders

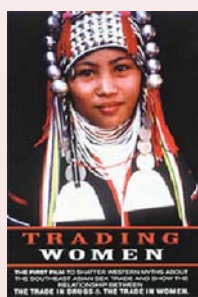
Six women grassroots leaders from Bangladesh, Nepal, and Pakistan shared their stories as representatives of local government at a talk show held on 10 March 2004. The women described how they fought against discrimination; lack of access to education; and discouragement from entering local politics to become role models in society as elected women leaders. “As female officials, we no longer allow the men to force us to sign blank pages of the council meetings notes. Instead we demand to be told in advance when the council meetings will be held and make sure we attend. During these meetings we also raise issues such as budgets and we now know about its content,” said Adeba Khanam, representing the Manirampur Upazila, Bangladesh.

### 4. ADB Review: Gender and Development: Getting the Balance Right

The February 2004 issue of *ADB Review* focused on Gender and Development to mark International Women’s Day. This special issue of *ADB Review* explores complexities and multiple dimensions of gender and development issues, views, and actions in Asia and the Pacific. Included are articles by Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Director of UNIFEM, and Hilde Frafjord Johnson, Norway’s Minister of Development Cooperation; interviews with Ing Kantha Phavi, Secretary of State for Women’s and Veterans’ Affairs, Cambodia, and Geert van der Linden, ADB Vice-President for Knowledge Management and Sustainable Development. To read *ADB Review* online, go to <http://www.adb.org/review>.



### 5. Film Screening: Trading Women



The documentary film *Trading Women*, produced by an award-winning anthropologist, Dr. David Feingold, was screened on 8 March 2004 at ADB headquarters. The film investigates the trade in minority girls and women from the hill tribes of People’s Republic of China, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, and Myanmar into the Thai sex industry. *Trading Women* explores how changes in the upland economy—resulting from a combination of well-meaning development and opium suppression

programs in Thailand; and civil unrest, economic dislocation, and repression in Myanmar—has promoted and worsened the trade in women. The screening was followed by a lively discussion with the film producer.

## B. Other ADB Gender Activities

### 1. Regional Seminar: Gender, Poverty and Rural Development, Hanoi, Viet Nam

A 3-day seminar designed for executing agencies, especially project directors of ADB-financed projects, was held in Hanoi, Viet Nam, 24–26 March. The seminar objectives were to (i) showcase gender-inclusive ADB loan projects achieving successful results and (ii) build the gender capacity of project staff implementing ADB loan projects that include gender components and gender action plans. Representatives from eight DMCs (Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam) including ADB resident mission gender specialists participated in the seminar.

Gender-inclusive loan projects in the rural infrastructure, water resource management, and livestock sectors were featured as achieving substantial positive results. For example, the **Bangladesh Third Rural Infrastructure**



Grassroots leaders from Bangladesh, Nepal, and Pakistan

**Development Project (TRDIP)** has provided (i) employment under construction works, tree plantations, and road maintenance programs generating close to 6 million days of work for over 3,000 women; (ii) income-generation opportunities through training in business and financial management (2,500 women); (iii) access to credit, growth center markets, and women’s market corners (816 shops); (iv) opportunities for building leadership skills and participation in local governance as members of traders’ associations and union parishad complexes; (v) gender-sensitive infrastructure designs with separate women’s facilities in boat landings and flood refuges; and (vi) 604 contractors ensuring safety, sanitation, and fair wages for women laborers. Gender-based features of TRIDP are replicated under the **Rural Infrastructure Improvement Project**, approved in 2003.

Nepal highlighted the positive outcomes of involving women in decisions related to the use, management, and distribution of water resources. Key results under the **Irrigation Management Transfer Project** include (i) 60% women in water users associations; (ii) 100% irrigation service fee collection; (iii) greater equity in water distribution; and (iv) doubling of paddy production and multicropping by farmers. Ninety percent of households in the project communities reported that they are food secure and more girls are enrolled in school. The **Second Small-Scale Water Resources Development Project (SSWRDSP II)** in Bangladesh is a replication of successful gender-based features of SSWRDSP I, which achieved (i) women occupying one third of positions in management committees; (ii) 25–200% in women’s local contracting societies, 100% women in tree plantation and care-taking; (iii) equal wage for equal work; (iv) 50% women in all meetings, 26% women’s representation in water management committees; (v) 52% in employment generation; and (vi) 19% in training.

Positive results reported from gender-inclusive loan implementation under the **Nepal Third Livestock Development Project** were (i) women’s time savings (3–4 hours) in fodder collection; (ii) increased livestock and forage cover; (iii) higher livestock productivity and better family nutrition; (iv) improved technical knowledge of women in livestock health, nutrition, and management due to participation (44%) in training programs; (v) increased control of income by women through access to credit and employment opportunities; (vi) shifts in gender roles as men share household management tasks; and (vii) 80% increase in girls’ attendance in school.

Participants indicated through the evaluations that the seminar provided them with increased motivation and knowledge “to incorporate gender issues in loan projects” and “to assist their executing agencies to develop gender strategies and interventions to promote gender equity” and improve the effectiveness and sustainability of agriculture and rural development programs.

### 2. Seminar: World Bank—Africa Region Gender and Law Program

Francesco Tornieri joined the ADB Gender Team in the Poverty Reduction and Social Development Division in January 2004. Prior to joining ADB, he worked as an Institutional Development Specialist in the African Region of the World Bank (Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Department, PREM) in Washington, DC. At the seminar on 1 March 2004, he shared his experience in launching and supervising an innovative World

Bank “Gender and Law Program” in 14 Sub-Saharan African countries. The objective of the program was institutional strengthening and capacity building support for governments and collaborating NGOs involved in promoting the elimination of legal and societal barriers to women’s empowerment. Components of the program included gender-responsive legal reform, legal literacy/education, and improved access to legal and judicial services.

### 3. Seminar: Microfinance and Gender

Nancy Barry, President of Women’s World Banking (WWB), gave a presentation on 26 February 2004 on WWB’s initiatives and activities in the Asia region through the ADB-financed regional technical assistance for Financial Services for Poor Women. She discussed WWB’s initiatives to build retail capacity of microfinance institutions and to build financial systems that work for the majority in Asia.

### 4. Seminar: Gender in Water Operations Review

To launch the Gender in Water Operations Review (also known as the Gender-Scan), a seminar was held on 19 February 2004 to present and discuss the background, methodology, and scheduling of the Gender-Scan. The Gender-Scan is one of the activities to operationalize the Gender in Water Partnership between ADB and the Gender and Water Alliance (GWA) launched during the 3<sup>rd</sup> World Water Forum in Kyoto, Japan, March 2003. The partnership aims to improve gender mainstreaming in ADB’s water operations through sharing of knowledge, experience, and skills. The Gender-Scan will examine ADB’s operational and institutional approaches in water-related activities. The water operations review is an opportunity to consolidate and formalize the steps ADB has taken, and to think strategically about the future.

### 5. Philippines Workshop on Harmonized Gender and Development Guidelines

A workshop was organized on 19 February 2004 at ADB’s headquarters for government and funding agencies to discuss the draft gender and development guidelines for project development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. Existing gender and development guidelines are currently under review by the Official Development Association—Gender and Development Network with a view to harmonization to provide funding agencies, the National Economic and Development Authority of the Philippines, and implementing agencies with a common tool to guide them throughout the project cycle. The workshop also served as the initial testing ground for the application of the guidelines.

### 6. ADB and Government of Bangladesh Workshop on Gender and Development, Dhaka, Bangladesh

The workshop was organized by the Bangladesh Resident Mission (BRM) and held on 14 January 2004 in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Jennifer Francis, Social Development Specialist (GAD), attended. The objectives of the workshop were to provide an opportunity for Government of Bangladesh officials, ADB staff, and invited guests to (i) share experiences and lessons learned of how ADB-financed projects are addressing gender concerns during implementation; and (ii) seek practical suggestions and ideas on how to further improve the effectiveness of implementing gender dimensions of ADB-financed projects. Fifty-four people representing officials from the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, the Ministry of Finance, project directors, and senior team members attended the roundtable. BRM Country Director Toru Shibuichi chaired the meeting.

### 7. Translated Gender Checklists

Gender checklists are now available in the following languages: Bangla, Russian, and Vietnamese. They can be accessed at [http://adb.org/Gender/](http://adb.org/Gender/publications.asp#2)

[publications.asp#2](http://adb.org/Gender/publications.asp#2). The Viet Nam Country Gender Assessment has also been translated. Hard copies can be obtained from the respective ADB resident missions. Translations are under way for Bahasa Indonesian, Khmer, and Chinese. These will be available in the latter part of 2004.

### 8. Fiji Islands: Gender Audits

Gender audits of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Health prepared under the *Technical Assistance to the Fiji Islands for Women’s Plan of Action* (TA No. 3360) have been published. Hard copies can be obtained from the Poverty Reduction and Social Development Division. Electronic versions are available on the gender web site <http://adb.org/gender/country/fiji.asp>.



### 9. Viet Nam: Technical Assistance for Gender Strategy and Action Plan for Agriculture and Rural Development



The Gender Strategy and Action Plan prepared under the technical assistance (TA No. 3831) were launched in November 2003. Published versions of the two documents are available in both English and Vietnamese. Hard copies can be obtained from ADB’s Viet Nam Resident Mission. Electronic versions are available at <http://adb.org/gender/country/vie.asp>.

### 10. Cambodia: Joint ADB-World Bank-UNDP Country Gender Assessment

The first ADB-World Bank-UNDP Country Gender Assessment (CGA) for Cambodia has now been completed and is being printed. Copies will be available by April 2004. Joint ADB-World Bank CGAs currently under preparation include Indonesia and Mongolia.

## C. Global Events

### 1. Conference: Cairo and Beyond—Reproductive Rights and Culture

Women’s sexual and reproductive rights, and the role played by culture, were the central themes of an international conference held in Amsterdam 7–9 March 2004. Coinciding with International Women’s Day on 8 March, the Conference was organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). Attended by Jennifer Francis, Poverty Reduction and Social Development Division, the Conference facilitated analysis and discussion by a select group of international experts from Asia, Latin America, and Africa, to reach recommendations for the successful implementation of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Program of Action.

Deaths during childbirth, rape, unwanted pregnancies, genital mutilation through circumcision, and HIV infection are the most widely publicized examples of the enormous problems women face in asserting their reproductive and sexual rights. HIV/AIDS deaths, infant and maternal mortality, health problems, and the inferior position of women are significant causes of poverty and underdevelopment in the world.

Since the UN Population Summit in Cairo in 1994, much progress has been made to implement the ICPD agenda. However to reach the MDGs much more needs to be done. There are many obstacles to be overcome. Conservative forces throughout the world are moving toward a break with

the ICPD agreements. Contentious issues include sex education and supply of contraceptives. “What we need is a new political élan,” said Ms. van Ardenne, Dutch Minister of International Cooperation, “to keep reproductive health high on the agenda.” The 2-day discussions resulted in affirmation of commitment and cooperation by the various organizations to implement the ICPD program of action.

## 2. Women, Peace, and Security—Expert Group Meeting

The UN Commission on the Status of Women during its 48<sup>th</sup> session on 1–12 March 2004 reviewed the thematic issue of “women’s equal participation in conflict prevention, management, and conflict resolution and in post-conflict peace building.”

In November 2003, the UN Division for the Advancement of Women organized an Expert Group Meeting on “peace agreements as a means of promoting gender equality and ensuring participation of women – a framework of model provisions.” The report includes obligations of content of peace agreements with regard to security (legal, political, and physical) taking into consideration the legal regime for transitional period, security forces, gender preparedness, and physical security for women. The Gender preparedness component includes elements such as mandating a gender unit within the headquarters of the military operation that reports to the military mission command, and has access to the highest level of decision making. This gender unit is also mandated to audit physical spaces where women require protection/access, such as schools and refugee camps, audit areas requiring mine clearance to assess risks faced by women, and conduct training on gender-specific issues during deployment on mission.

For the full report, contact UN/DAW, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, e-mail [daw@un.org](mailto:daw@un.org) or view the web site at <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw> (Source: IWTC Women’s Global Net No. 246. Web site: <http://www.iwtc.org>)

## 3. World Social Forum, India

The 2004 World Social Forum was held in Mumbai on 16 January 2004 with around 100,000 activists in attendance. The International Feminist Dialogue session analyzed how current feminist organizing is constrained by global economic, political, and cultural forces, particularly globalization. They also identified strategies for movement building at different levels, one of which is to ensure that women’s agenda is heard and addressed by other civil society actors such as trade unions, peasant organizations, and youth movements. It was suggested that rather than concentrating only on women’s events at such forums, gender advocates should ensure they attend sessions by other civil society organizations.

(Source: IWTC Women’s Global Net No. 243. Web site: <http://www.iwtc.org>. Article is by Mavic Cabrera-Balleza of Isis International, Manila)

## D. Publications

*ILO Publications.* A new report *Global Employment Trends for Women* was launched by the International Labour Office on International Women’s Day, which highlighted the influx of women entering the global labor force and represent 60% of the world’s 550 million working poor. Yet women still face higher unemployment rates and lower wages. The report is available at <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/strat/stratprod.htm>.

A separate updated analysis of trends in the efforts of women to break through the glass ceiling demonstrates that the rate of success in crashing through the invisible barrier to top managerial jobs remains “slow, uneven, and sometimes discouraging.” Data show that countries such as in North

America, South America, and Eastern Europe have a higher share of women in management jobs than countries in East Asia, South Asia, and the Middle East. The report indicates, “in female dominated sectors where there are more women managers, a disproportionate number of men rise to the more senior positions and in those professions normally reserved for men, women managers are few and far between.” (*Update 2004: Breaking Through the Glass Ceiling: Women in Management*, International Labor Office, Geneva 2004. ISBN 92-2-115523-4, [www.ilo.org/dyn/gender/gender.home](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/gender/gender.home)). (Source: ILO Press Release, 8 March 2004)

*World Rainforest Movement (WRM) Bulletin.* WRM Bulletin 79 focuses on the issue of women and forests, to coincide with the celebration of International Women’s Day. The aim of this bulletin is to share information on both the differentiated impacts that women suffer in relation to forest loss and degradation and on the special role that women play regarding wise and equitable forest use. (Web site: <http://www.wrm.org.uy>)

*Women and Water: How Gender Policy is Working Out in South African Villages.* The Water Research Commission in South Africa conducted a research study in four villages to see how the gender policy of the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry, which requires a quota of at least 50% women in all decision-making committees as well as adequate participation and technical training, works out in the rural areas. [Berold, R (2004), *Women and Water: How Is Gender Policy Working on the Ground?* Water Research Centre, Pretoria, South Africa, ([www.wrc.org.za/files/waw\\_reduced.pdf](http://www.wrc.org.za/files/waw_reduced.pdf))]

*id21News* is a newsletter reporting service of the id21 Development Research, bringing the latest UK-based international development research. Issue No. 119 looks at employment opportunities in developing countries. Research highlighted in this issue examines how the poorest, particularly women, are often denied the opportunity to work. Other articles include (i) *Poverty and Gender: The Limits of Microfinance*; (ii) *Sexism Rules the Waves—The Perils Facing Women at Sea*; and (iii) *Aiming High: How Can Women Climb the Academic and Occupational Ladders?* Available at <http://www.id21.org/id21-email/news-sample.html>. (Source: Institute of Development Studies, <http://www.ids.ac.uk/ids/info/index.html>)

## E. Useful Web Sites

The Development Gateway Cross-Topic Special on Gender Equity at <http://www.developmentgateway.org/topics/social/gender> was launched in March 2004 to coincide with International Women’s Month.

Other sites include:

- (i) [http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/html/dev\\_goals.shtml](http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/html/dev_goals.shtml) on Millennium Development Goals (MDGs);
- (ii) [http://www.unifem.org/files/confirmed/10/8\\_04section\\_01.pdf](http://www.unifem.org/files/confirmed/10/8_04section_01.pdf) on MDG Goal No.3; and
- (iii) <http://topics.developmentgateway.org/ngo/highlights/viewAllHighlights.do> to view highlights of the NGO Topic page on Women’s Action and Resource Initiative, a Thailand-based NGO that is devoted to issues of socioeconomic development, specifically as they relate to women.

For previous issues of *Gender Network News*, visit <http://www.adb.org/documents/periodicals/gnn>

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