

WILDAF WEST AFRICA

Newsletter

Women in Law and Development in Africa

N°17 - January 2004

EDITORIAL

The coordinator and the staff of the WiLDAF/FeDDAF sub regional office of West Africa are pleased to wish you a very good year 2004!

This special edition deals with Mali. You could read about the many activities that WiLDAF organises to sensitise the judicial and extra-judicial stakeholders on women's rights and to promote the international instruments for the defence of the rights such as the Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). WiLDAF Mali also informed us of a case it supports jointly with the Association pour le Progrès et la Défense des Droits des Femmes concerning a case of marital violence of which the victim is now permanently disabled.

Of course, you will find the usual topics. We also added a section entitled **Woman of Honour** in order to highlight the distinctions and prizes received and the work which women achieved.

We also want to emphasise that the sub-regional network is striving to ensure the presence of women organisations in any African institutions. Thus, the West African office continues to involve itself in a new structure, which is the West African Civil Society Forum recently made official at the first General Assembly in Accra in December 2003. Also, the office will continue its work of promotion of women's rights by going to New York in March 2004 to the 48th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women in order to promote the ratification of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights relating to Women's Rights and to launch the major report on judicial and extra-judicial stakeholders trained by WiLDAF on capacity building in women's rights in West Africa.

WiLDAF is reminding you that this publication is yours and that you own it. The next issue will deal with Guinea. It is the last of a series whose topics dealt with each country where the West African office is present. **We are waiting for suggestions from you to determine the direction of the next topics which you wish to be developed in this newsletter.** Please feel free to contact us by E-mail (wildaf@cafe.tg).

Have a nice reading!

Colette LELIÈVRE
Communication Officer

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The *Wildaf West Africa Newsletter* is also available on our website:

www.wildaf-ao.org

E-mail : wildaf@cafe.tg

SUPPORT NETWORK FOR COMBATING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

The Association pour le Progrès et la Défense des Droits des Femmes (APDF), which is a member of WiLDAF/FeDDAF Mali, requested them to form a pressure group with the whole network in order to fight impunity, injustice and the abuse in case of a woman victim of physical violence perpetrated by her husband.

Indeed, three years ago, Mrs Tienfing Camara was brutally assaulted by her husband so much that she was admitted for at least two weeks at the emergency department of the Gabriel Touré Hospital. She was released from intensive care after several months of hospitalisation. Now she suffers from a major permanent disability limiting her capacity to meet her needs.

Having lodged a complaint against her «torturer» Mr. Kéïta in first instance, the latter was convicted in absentia to prison as well as to the payment of immediate damages because he was not present at the initial hearings. Armed with a mental disorder certificate, his lawyer contacted the judge who changed the first sentence into a suspended sentence to prison and payment of damages.

Since 1999, as Mrs Tienfing Camara appealed against this suspended decision, 8 December 2003 was fixed for a new ordinary public hearing. Mrs. Tienfing Camara is now paralysed in the right limb and the right hand. Her husband continues taunting her by saying that nothing will be done on the 8 December 2003, for he has money, he said.

APDF, through the network, wishes to make the Tienfing case an example of solidarity in the fight against impunity, injustice, abuse, but also against violence

perpetrated against women in Mali. WILDAF/MALI therefore convened all its members to a consultation meeting on 2 December 2003 in order to prepare an intervention strategy for the hearing of 8 December 2003. The associations for the defence of women's rights recruited a lawyer for the defence of Mrs Tienfing. Unfortunately, nothing was done because the judge decided to reopen Mr. Keita's medical file in order to reassess his mental status. No date was set for the a resumption of hearing.

The last reopening of Courts in Mali was placed under the sign of «respect of human rights», a revealing theme in a country where justice is not always just. Let us keep in mind that solidarity is essential to support a case such as that of Mrs. Tienfing and that we must be determined to obtain justice. We will keep you informed about the future development of the case and the decisions. Let us hope that women's rights without violence will be recognised and ensured in future for Malians.

BOUARE Bintou Founé SAMAKE
Program Officer, WiLDAF Mali

**Violence
against
women is
violence
against
society.**

WiLDAF/FeDDAF West Africa Network will be at the 48th session of the Commission of the Status of Women at the United Nations

The 48th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) will be held from March 1st – 12th 2004 in New York United Nations headquarter. Here are the two themes which will be discuss:

1. The role of men and boys in achieving gender equality;
2. Women's equal participation in conflict prevention, management and conflict resolution and in post-conflict peace-building.

The WiLDAF/FeDDAF West African network will take part in this next meeting. The funding is not yet found for all the members of the delegation but the West African network very well intends to do all its best in New York, with the available means, to work on its file in relation to the two themes of the session.

WiLDAF/FeDDAF West Africa delegation activities in New York

WiLDAF/FeDDAF West Africa network intends to organise the following activities:

1. A workshop on the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights relating to Women's Rights in Africa in the context of the Women's equal participation in conflict prevention, management and conflict resolution and in post-conflict peace-building;
2. A workshop on the contribution of judicial and extra-judicial stakeholders for the effectiveness of women's rights;
3. A statement on the necessity for African countries to ratify the Protocol related to women's rights in Africa and to implement it in their own country.

On CSW: www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/

On 48th session:
www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/48sess.htm

BUILDING THE INTERVENTION CAPACITY OF YOUNG MAGISTRATES ENDING THEIR INTERNSHIP

On Thursday 23 October, 2003, WILDAF/MALI, in collaboration with the American Cultural Centre of Bamako and the Legal Training Institute, organised an official ceremony of presentation of the booklet on the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and training modules to the magistrates ending their internship.

The ceremony was preceded by a conference on the topic: "Content of the CEDAW and its application by the judge". During the opening session, the President of WILDAF/MALI, Lawyer Djènèba Diop Sidibe, noted that the objective of this ceremony was to explain CEDAW to the magistrates so that it becomes an element of their legal arsenal.

In his intervention, Mr. Daniel OC Hamilton, Director of Public and Cultural Affairs at the US Embassy stated that he is interested on several accounts in capacity building of the judicial stakeholders because the consolidation of democracy in a country necessarily depends on the way justice is done. He is himself lawyer, hence protection and promotion of women's rights falls within the scope of his profession.

Mr. Wafi Ougadeye, Magistrate, former Attorney General at the Court of Appeal and currently Legal Adviser at the Presidency of the Republic then gave the background of the women's movement, which led to the adoption of the CEDAW by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1979, ratified by Mali in 1985. Consequently, it is part of the legal arsenal and it is an element of substantive law.

To the question of knowing whether legal practitioners (magistrates, lawyers) refer to this convention, the speaker stated that he had never come across a court decision during his career of magistrate in which CEDAW was mentioned as

a ground or line of reasoning. However, he made the young magistrates understand that their role is to enforce the law. According to him, the ignorance of international texts would explain the fact that legal practitioners do not use them in their pleas and judgements. He urged the young magistrates to continue learning and to always seek information, which they can use to better do justice. With CEDAW, he also noted that decisions delivered by the courts on the basis of discriminatory customs against women, especially with regard to inheritance, should disappear.

The issue of "law enforcement and social peace keeping" gave rise to a lot of debate in the room. Some young magistrates found that it is often very difficult to deliver a decision, which threatens social peace even if it is a good application of the law. The speaker answered that the judge himself must be convinced of the decisions that he delivers and that he must explain them and make them understood by the public.

After the conference, the President of WILDAF and the Cultural Adviser at the US Embassy presented the CEDAW booklet and the training modules to 50 young magistrates.

BOUARE Bintou Founé SAMAKE

Program Officer, WILDAF Mali

*CEDAW text is available on
WILDAF/FeDDAF website in DOC and PDF
format in Resources/Publications section.*

www.wildaf-ao.org/eng/ress_iii.htm#cedaw

WOMAN OF HONOUR

The United Nations Development Programme honours five with poverty eradication award

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has presented the **2003 Poverty Eradication Awards**. It is given to people who have dedicated themselves to alleviating poverty in all its forms through their innovative work on HIV/AIDS, joblessness and human rights. This year all the activities focused on the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). Helen Ditsebe-Mhone/Botswana—Founder and Executive Director of the Coping Centre for People Living with HIV/AIDS has received one of the award.

Press release:

www.undp.org/dpa/pressrelease/releases/2003/october/28oct03.html

MDG: www.undp.org/mdg/

Source: AWID, Carrefour, vol. 2 no 84

UN has paid tribute to human rights defenders

The United Nations system has paid tribute on December 10th 2003 to human rights defenders who "stand in the front lines of protection, casting the bright light of human rights into the darkest corners of tyranny and abuse."

The prizes, awarded every five years for outstanding promotion and protection of civil liberties and fundamental freedoms, went to one African organization, the Mano River Women's Peace Network in the West African countries of Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea.

Article:

www.undp.org/dpa/pressrelease/releases/2003/october/28oct03.html

Source: AWID, Carrefour, vol. 2 no 84

Women's Leadership and the Future of Africa

Two women lawyers who are respected for their bold effective action for women's rights have received the **2003 Africa Prize for Leadership for the Sustainable End of Hunger** often referred to as the Nobel Prize for Africa. Meaza Ashenafi established the Ethiopian Women Lawyers' Association (EWLA) that has led the charge for women's rights across the political spectrum and across the nation. Sara Longwe of Zambia is a lawyer, grassroots mobiliser, critic and author of the "Longwe Framework for Gender Analysis." Ms. Longwe serves as chairperson of FEMNET, the African Women's Development and Communications Network that aims to strengthen the role and contribution of NGOs focusing on women's development, equality, and rights and to provide an infrastructure for information and empowerment.

The Hunger Project: www.thp.org

Source: Pula no 3, November 2003

Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

175 countries has ratified up to December 10 2003. Ethiopia and Nigeria have deposited their reports for the 30th session which is being held from January 12th to 30th 2004 at United Nations office. Guinée Équatoriale should deposit their report for the 31st session. Two African countries have not signed nor ratified CEDAW yet : Somalia and Sudan.

30th session:

www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/30session.htm

Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa

Only twenty one (21) countries have signed the Protocol up to January 19th 2004. None have ratified yet. As long as it is not ratified, countries which have signed won't have to implement it in their own country. It is thus important to make pressure on African countries so it is ratified quick.

To follow-up on countries which have signed and eventually ratified, go on the African Union website, section **Official Documents** and check out the list.

African Union: www.africa-union.org

EVENT

African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights

Next ordinary session: May 3rd to 17th 2004

Venue: Dakar, Senegal

Commission: www.achpr.org

Source: Human Strategies for Human Rights list

WILDAF Mali Activity:

MALIAN WOMEN STUDY CEDAW

On 6-7 November, 2003 and 27-28 November, 2003, the *Direction Nationale de la Promotion de la Femme*, with the financial support of the Agence Intergouvernementale de la Francophonie and the technical support of WILDAF/MALI, organised two training workshops on the Convention on the Elimination of all the Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) for two women's groups.

WILDAF/MALI, while being involved in this activity, wanted to build women's capacity in order that they are more effective in their interventions on the ground. The first workshop was held in Bamako at the Aoua Kéïta Centre. It brought together 25 women of the Bamako sections of the Coordination of Women's Associations and NGOs of Mali (CAFO). The second was held at Koulikoro, second administrative region in Mali, located at 75 km from Bamako. It brought together 14 female programme officers of the National Department for

the Promotion of Women in the circles of the region.

During two days, the participants reviewed the concept of discrimination against women and the content of CEDAW. At the end of the training, women worked out an activity programme for the dissemination of the Convention and the training of women in their locality. Each one received the small booklet titled "CEDAW made easy" from WILDAF/MALI.

In their vote of thanks, the participants showed their gratefulness and all their gratitude to WILDAF. They affirmed that the booklet would be their bedside book.

BOUARE Bintou Founé SAMAKE

Program Officer, WILDAF Mali

The booklet «CEDAW made easy» is a tool to facilitate the understanding of the Convention to a large number of people. It is available in DOC et PDF format on WILDAF/FeDDAF West Africa website in **Resources/Publications** section.

Publications: www.wildaf-ao.org/eng/ress_i.htm

Montreal Principles

The Montreal Principles were adopted at a meeting of experts held December 7 - 10, 2002 in Montreal, Canada. These principles are offered to guide the interpretation and implementation of the guarantees of non-discrimination and equal exercise and enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights, found, *inter alia*, in Articles 3 and 2(2) of the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, so that women can enjoy these rights fully and equally. The principles can serve as an interpretative guide to governments and courts, an advocacy tool for activists at all levels, a training tool for gender equality advocates, and a useful reference for women's human rights advocates, policy-makers and researchers.

Check out Rights and Democracy website to read the Principles: www.ichrdd.ca

To download the document: www.awid.org/rights/montreal.doc

The *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* is available in DOC et PDF format on WILDAF/FeDDAF West Africa website in sub-menu Reference Documents section **Resources**.

Covenant: www.wildaf-ao.org/eng/ress_iii.htm

CAPACITY BUILDING OF JUDICIAL AND EXTRAJUDICIAL STAKEHOLDERS: a traditional ruler committed to women's rights

On 15 December, 2002, Ibrahim Maïga, a traditional ruler (griot) at Kidal, organised a conference to conduct the restitution of the sensitization training received in Bamako. The conference was under the chairmanship of the High Commissioner of the region, Mr. Egleze Ag Foni. Present were staff's members of the High Commissioner, political and administrative authorities, Executive Board members of the Association Malienne pour l'Union et le Progrès de l'Islam and several guests.

In his opening speech, the High Commissioner underlined the role of woman in nomadic society. "Woman is the central pillar of the shelter among nomadic people. She is thus a significant component of the society" he declared. Today, more than ever, women are crucial to the development of countries. It thus seems compulsory to him that nomadic women get to know the content and the terms of conventions relating to them, such as the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women. He hoped that the discussions would bring out ideas that could improve living standards of nomadic women.

Mr Ibrahim Maïga went on to explain that he received a sensitization training in Bamako in October 2002, within the framework of a project implemented by WILDAF aimed at sensitising and training judicial and extra-judicial stakeholders for the effective implementation of women's rights in Mali. Within the framework of this training, he was introduced to the provisions of CEDAW regarding gender equality, registration of marriages with authorities to guarantee the future of woman, access of women to health care and family planning, and the rights of women to education and work.

The issue of equality of girls and boys with respect to inheritance gave rise to heated debates and several religious issues were discussed. However, the marabout Mohamed Ag Hamzatta's intervention was salutary. The

audience know that Islam recommends the protection of women's rights and that they have the right to defend their interests. Religion does not deprive the woman of her right to education, nor the right to work especially when she seeks to earn her daily bread. Baba, a traditional chief thus gave an example. "All my sons have left. Only my daughters are with me. They do everything. I agree with all the causes they defend and I support their struggle".

At the end of the conference, the audience expressed the hope that debates are organised more often in the region and that a centre for assistance to women should be created.

Secretary of the Meeting,

Moussa Ag AMIDI

EVENT

Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo Celebrating RIPROF " Réseau Interdisciplinaire pour la Promotion de la Femme", Anniversaire

Different women who live in the Democratic Republic of Congo will related to the community, the history of RIPROF and their future plan.

Contact: Agathe Nyembo
Address: University of Kinshasa,
Department of Demography

Email: blututala@hotmail.com

Venue: Kinshasa, Democratic Republic
of Congo

Date: March 9-16, 2004

Source: AWID, Carrefour, vol. 2 no 49

West African Civil Society Organizations Forum in Accra

For two days, the Forum of the West African civil society was held in Accra, Ghana on December 11-12 2003. More than 80 participants, men and women, representing 13 countries worked together to set up a single structure in Africa, which will facilitate dialogue between the civil society organisations and collaboration with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

The Forum was organised following a meeting held in May 2003 in Abuja, Nigeria, conducted by the Centre for Democracy and Development and International Alert in collaboration with ECOWAS. From the beginnings, WILDAF/FeDDAF West Africa, as a member of the ad hoc committee, having organised the Forum, took part in the meetings and the development of its draft Charter. Several women's organisations were present but not as much as we would have wished. Those who attended the Forum worked hard to ensure that the women's interests are well defined in the Charter and were included in the recommendations to the Heads of State of ECOWAS. Moreover, gender equality will be applied at all levels of the new organisation.

In the closing communiqué of the Forum, a recommendation was particularly included for the West African countries so that they ratify as soon as possible the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights relating to Women's Rights adopted in Maputo, Mozambique, in July 2003 during the Summit of the Heads of State and Government.

In the meantime, the ad hoc committee was re-elected for two years, the time to set up the Secretariat and to prepare next Forum. Mrs. Adjamagbo-Johnson, coordinator of WILDAF/FeDDAF West Africa will continue working in this new structure. Please consult the WILDAF/FeDDAF West Africa site to follow the development of the Forum.

**For more information, take a
look at our Press Releases of
October 27th and November
28th 2003:**

www.wildaf-ao.org/eng/actu_ii.htm

Global Women's Charter for Humanity

The World March of Women movement has decided at their last international meeting in March 2003 to organize another common action at the global level in view of working towards equality and justice. The national coordinating bodies have now committed to coming up with a means enabling us to address local, national, regional, and global decision-makers, and in a broader sense, our respective societies. Our desire to draw up a Global Women's Charter for Humanity is based on the urgent need to propose economic, political, social and cultural alternatives to make another world possible.

The goal of the Charter is to affirm the indispensable nature of our movement as a force for global social transformation and to serve as a mobilizing tool for international women's movements. It is addressed to women of the world and their organizations; to civil society and other social movements; and to institutions (local, national, regional and international). The charter will be presented to international institutions (UN, IMF, World Bank, WTO), national governments, social movements and our respective communities.

Drafting the charter

It is understood that the process of drafting the Women's Global Charter for Humanity will include all groups who participate in our network and movement. It has also been agreed that the Charter's content will be inspired by the WMW's 17 world demands and reflect the vision, ideas and strategies from which they emerged. We also want to highlight the contribution of feminists of recent decades whose writing is still relevant today and could enrich our work on the Charter.

After we have received comments from every body, a second draft will be written and the Charter will be ratified at the 5th international meeting of the World March of Women to be held in Rwanda in December 2004.

Source: Newsletter from the World March of Women,

March 2003: www.marchemondeiale.org/en/bulletin/05-2003.html

December 2003: www.marchemondeiale.org/en/bulletin/12-2003.html

Urgent action for the ratification of the Protocol of the ACHPR for the Rights of Women in Africa and to the inclusion of women in all spheres of action of the African Union!

At this moment, the AU is gradually setting up its different decision-making and operational structures. Also, the Protocol related to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa has to be ratified by 15 countries to become in force and to be implemented in every country. Act now so African women can fully participate in newly institutions and to ensure that gender issues are dealt with in every programs and policies.

Take a look at our Urgent Actions section under News to read all the details of our campaign.

Urgent Actions: www.wildaf-ao.org/eng/actu_iii.htm

GOOD WEBSITES

You are surfing on INTERNET? Here are some interesting sites!

Subject: The francophone network **Genre en Action**, has been initiated by the Exterior Affairs ministry of France. It has the ambition to share information with people and organisations engaged in development and cooperation in the North and in the South on gender and development.

Language: French

Website: www.genreenaction.net

Source: La toile d'elles number 74, November 2003, www.famafrique.org

Subject: **Human Rights Education Associates** (HREA) is an international non-governmental organisation that supports human rights learning; the training of activists and professionals; the development of educational materials and programming; and community-building through on-line technologies. HREA is dedicated to quality education and training to promote understanding, attitudes and actions to protect human rights, and to foster the development of peaceable, free and just communities.

Languages: English, French and several others

Website: www.hrea.org

If you know websites that members of Wildaf/FeDDAF could use in their work, don't hesitate to share this information with us!

You are member of WiLDAF/FeDDAF West African Network and wish to publicize your activities? Your realisations? Your association ?

Send us your text (long or short, what counts is the content!) by e-mail to WILDAL West Africa to the following address: wildaf@cafe.tg.

The deadline for the reception of the texts is: February 23rd 2003 (for April 2004 issue).

Who are the Newsletter readers? The Wildaf West Africa Newsletter is distributed to WiLDAF West Africa members in nine countries of the sub-region BUT ALSO to our partners in Europe, Scandinavian countries and America.

For any question or comment, don't hesitate to contact us.

wildaf@cafe.tg

NETWORK NEWS

The WiLDAF Ghana has a new coordinators: Welcome Bernice SAM

The team of the WiLDAF sub-regional office is happy to welcome Bernice Sam, the new coordinator of WiLDAF Ghana who took office early January 2004.

Bernice has come to improve the Ghana WiLDAF network through her tremendous experience in the area of human rights. She studied law in the United States and at the school of law of Ghana. Throughout her studies, she was already in connection with WiLDAF Ghana through SNV/Netherlands Development Organization, which organised joint activities in order to train volunteers para-legals. Finally, she is leaving the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative located in Accra, which was set up with her assistance, to join the WiLDAF Ghana team. She hopes very well to put her experience both in financial management and in her professional experience at our disposal, she said. Let us welcome her!

Kafui Adjamagbo-Johnson Sub regional Coordinator of WiLDAF/FeDDAF West Africa *****

UN PROTOCOL AGAINST WOMEN TRAFFICKING COMES INTO FORCE

The UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children received its 40th ratification at the end of September and has come into force on 26 December 2003. The Protocol now has 117 signatures and 42 ratifications. Once in force all states that have ratified it have to ensure that their national policies and practice fully comply with the Protocol. A Conference of the parties to the Convention will be convened by the UN Secretary-General, no later than September 2004 in order to monitor implementation of the Convention.

For further information and lists of states which have ratified, go to: www.unodc.org/unodc/en/trafficking_hu_man_beings.html

Source: AVIVA, www.aviva.org

Project: «Sensitisation and capacity building of judicial and extra-judicial stakeholders for the implementation of women's rights in West Africa»

Some stories from people trained

I am the president of the Medical Association of Mali and a practising doctor at the National Assembly in the clinic opened for the Members of Parliament and their families.

I was trained on the effective implementation of women's rights in West Africa in October 2002 by WILDAF/MALI within the framework of the "Sensitisation and capacity building of judicial and extra-judicial stakeholders " project.

This training was very beneficial to me and all my colleagues. It was the first time I took part in a training on the issue of women's rights and violence against women. I became aware of the role, which I could play in this respect. Now, I counsel violent husbands. I joined an NGO (Association pour la Promotion et la Défense des Droits des Femme), which elected me as ambassador within the framework of the combating violence against women. Once a week, I participate in listening women victims of violence who have come to seek assistance from this association.

Now, I am convinced that women have rights that must be respected. With the APDEF, we will train men of the camps on the issue of violence against women. Through WiLDAF/Mali, I thus joined this vast movement for combating violence against women and of the respect of women's rights. The training was an eye opener for me and I sincerely thank its promoters.

Dr Beffon CISSE, Bamako
♦♦♦♦♦

I am Pastor of the Protestant Evangelical Church of Banconi in Bamako. I was trained in October 2002 by WILDAF/MALI .When I was selected to take part in the training, I was very sceptical. However, I learned a lot through the discussions I had with my colleagues. I highly appreciated gender-related issues. If everyone could appropriate this theory, our society would encounter less family problems.

People come to confide in me so that solutions are found to their problems and often women are involved. I suggest solutions on the basis of the Bible, informal laws (tradition, custom) and the modern law. After the training, I paid more attention to issues relating to women.

Here is the case of a couple whose wife requested me to speak to her husband. Married for ten years ago, she still has no child. For some time now, her husband has been having sexual intercourse with her through anal penetration instead of vaginal. She does not really approve this and always tells her husband about it. He keeps on answering that this is what she deserves. I spoke with the husband. When I repeated to him what his wife told me, he did not deny it. According to him, a woman does not deserve a vaginal sexual intercourse when she cannot bear a child. I then spoke to him about the issue of gender and about the roles that one can change or not. I quoted biblical passages to him and also advised him to obtain a medical opinion to know the possible causes of their infertility. He accepted my counselling and they consulted a doctor.

Pastor Noël DIARRA, Bamako
♦♦♦♦♦

I am a Magistrate of the Prosecutor's office. We receive cases of violation of customs, rape, desertion, pedophilia, assault and battery, etc.

In May 2003 I had the WILDAF/MALI training, which enabled me to pay more attention to the cases in which women are involved.

Continued on page 8

EVENT

International Conference on Bride Price and Development

International conference on Bride Price and Development in Africa is organised by MIFUMI, a women's rights and development organisation.

The objectives are: present evidence and expert opinion on the intersection between bride price and human rights violation, poverty and gender inequality, provide a platform for sharing experiences and innovative approaches and adopt a declaration of action for the reform or removal of bride price.

MIFUMI
Po Box 274
Tororo, Uganda
Email: mifumi@mifumi.org
Phone: 00256 77 781122/3

Venue: Makerere University, Kampala,
Ouganda
Date: 16 - 18 February 2004

On the conference: feelfreenetwork.org/

Mifumi: www.mifumi.org

PUBLICATION

Africa's Orphaned Generations

This report outlines the context and current situation of children orphaned by HIV/AIDS in Africa, examines the impact of orphaning on families, communities, and on the orphans themselves, and describes a framework for priority actions that includes community mobilisation, sharing of information, and raising awareness of the issues on a regional and global scale. (in PDF format only)

Article:
www.plusnews.org/AIDSreport.asp?ReportID=2773

Report:
www.unicef.org/media/files/orphans.pdf

Source: ACPD Friday Facts, vol. 4, no 24

NETWORK NEWS

Continued from page 7

We start certain cases on the basis of statements forwarded to us by the Police. After the training, we took the initiative of summoning the Police under our jurisdiction to be little more strict and more attentive with respect to cases of rape, pedophilia, physical violence, etc. The difficulties encountered are especially social pressures. The victims often withdraw their cases because they do not know that the Public Prosecution can institute proceedings with or without their agreement.

I will wish that WILDAF pursues this initiative in favour of judicial and extra-judicial stakeholders, for there will be social peace only when justice is well done.

Djibril KANE, Bamako

Deputy Public Prosecutor at the Court of 1st Instance of Commune III of the Bamako District



« 16 days of Activism against Gender Violence 2003 »

First organised in 1991, this international event lasts for 16 days. It starts on November 25th to end on December 10th, the Human Rights Days, so it is acknowledged that violence is a violation of human rights. Here are some of the themes of the activities organized by West African members of WILDAF/FeDDAF during the 2003 campaign:

Bénin : Domestic Violence

Activities : Broadcasting of advertisement, organisation of radio and television show, debate on women's rights.

Burkina Faso : Women and AIDS

Activities : Radio show, games on radio station and educative talk.

Ghana : Women, AIDS and violence

Activities: Seminar by a member of the network, the Ghana Muslim Women's Fellowship

Mali : Women, AIDS and violence

Activities : Talk and radio show

Nigeria : Popularizing the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Right on the Rights of Women in Africa

Activities: Media Campaign and trainer's training on the Protocol.

Togo : Rape and incest

Activities: Sensibilisation tour in Togo, reproduction of a rape map of Lomé and organisation of radio and television debates.



Development of the sub regional West Africa office website

The West Africa office has obtained a grant from the World Association for Christian Communication (WACC) to go on with the second step of the website. Soon, it will be much more easy and quick to up-date the website by all the staff and to publish informations sent by all of you.



Millions of girls are left out every year, with major consequences for nations

International development efforts are drastically short-changing girls, leaving hundreds of millions of girls and women uneducated and unable to contribute to positive change for themselves, their children, or their communities, a major UNICEF report released on December 11th 2003 contends. Here is a summary of the findings.

The agency said that without accelerated action to get more girls into school over the next two years, global goals to reduce poverty and improve the human condition would simply not be reached. Conversely, it said that bringing down the barriers that keep girls out of school would benefit both girls and boys – and their countries.

UNICEF argued that the adjustment in development strategies needed to get girls in school and keep them there would jump-start progress on the entire development agenda for 2015, known as the Millennium Development Goals.

UNICEF noted that illiteracy rates are still far higher among women than men, and at least 9 million more girls than boys are left out of school every year – statistics that have lasting implications not only for girls and women, but for their children and families as well. The report presents compelling evidence that enabling girls to get a basic education of good quality would improve other indicators of human well-being.

Why It Matters?

The report shows that girls denied an education are more vulnerable to poverty, hunger, violence, abuse, exploitation and trafficking. They are more likely to die in childbirth and are at greater risk of disease, including HIV/AIDS.

But according to *The State of the World's Children*, the positive impact of educating girls is equally dramatic: As mothers, educated women are more likely to have healthy children, and more likely to ensure that their children, both boys and girls, complete school.

"This is not about choosing to put girls into classrooms instead of boys," Bellamy emphasized. "It's about approaching a key development challenge with into strategy, sensitivity, and smarts. The things that get more girls school, and keep them there, are the things that make schools better. And they

make development efforts better, too."

What's Gone Wrong?

The report argues that the standard approach to achieving universal education has fallen short because it assumed that generic efforts to enrol more children would benefit all children equally, an assumption that has not examined or addressed the specific barriers faced by girls.

"Because of the persistent and often subtle gender discrimination that runs through most societies, it is girls who are sacrificed first – being the last enrolled and the first withdrawn from schools when times get tough," the report states.

The report argues that education must be approached as a human right rather than a privilege or an expected outcome of economic progress. When education is considered a right, governments are obligated to mobilize the needed resources so that all children can complete a quality education. And parents are more likely to hold their governments accountable for failing to do so.

What Must Change?

The report presents an agenda for action, calling on development agencies, governments, families, and communities to focus and intensify their efforts on addressing the challenges that keep girls out of school. Essentially, the report calls for adjustments in how development is approached from the start.

Among specific measures, the report calls for: Creation of a *national ethos* recognizing the value of educating girls as well as boys; Education to be included as an essential component in *development plans*; The *elimination of school fees* of every kind; Increased *international funding* for education; and The integration of education into national plans for *poverty reduction*.

The report found that, with few exceptions, industrialized countries and international financial institutions

have failed to meet their commitments to fund education.

The greatest need is in sub-Saharan Africa, where the number of girls left out of school each year has risen from 20 million in 1990 to 24 million in 2002. (Eighty-three percent of all girls out of school live in sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, and East Asia & the Pacific.)

Why It's Urgent?

The first of the *Millennium Development Goals* to come due is the goal of gender parity in education by 2005. UNICEF argues that major progress toward achieving that goal is still possible with the strategic acceleration of national efforts and international support.

"Educating girls on an equal basis with boys, addressing the needs of all, is not an optional investment," Bellamy said. "None of the world's wealthier countries developed without making a significant investment in education. That's a lesson we need to keep in mind if we're serious about really doing things differently in this world. This is a test for us. Whether we pass or fail will have major and lasting consequences."

The Report is available in PDF format in one document or in section at:
www.unicef.org/sowc04/sowc04_contents.html

Informations on Sub-Saharan Africa about the degree of education of girls (DOC format):

www.unicef.org/media/files/sowc_africa.doc

Press Release:

www.unicef.org/sowc04/sowc04_16165.html

Source: AWID, Carrefour, vol. 2 no 49

PUBLICATION

World Health Report 2003

Health care systems must be strengthened through focused action in countries if global health goals agreed by the international community are to be met, according to a new report published by the World Health Organization (WHO). The health care services of most developing countries require urgent investment and international support, says **The World Health Report 2003 - Shaping the Future**.

Report: www.who.int/whr/en/

Source: AWID, Resource Net, no 194

- NEWS - FLASH -

Sudan: The government has undertaken to prohibit the practice of female genital mutilations: Sudan, which has the highest rate of female genital mutilations prevalence in the world has undertaken to eliminate this practice in the country. At the end of a three-day symposium held in Khartoum at the end of August 2003, and according to a summary provided by UNICEF, the Minister for the Health of Sudan expressed his government's commitment to eliminate female genital mutilations practice at all levels.

Article of September 3rd 2003:
www.irinnews.org

Source: AWID Carrefour vol. 2 no 45

Zambia: Kwacha Kum'mawa – Chipata: A newspaper written and produced by a group of 5 teenage girls. Supported by local donations, staff contributions, and advertising, the newspaper disseminates sexual and reproductive health information, mostly for adolescents and young girls, through the sharing of real-life sexual reproductive stories. Produced 4 times a year, issues include interviews, columns on local celebrities and gossip, puzzles, question-and-answer sessions, and feature stories.

Information:
www.comminit.com/pdskdv62003/sld-7921.html

Source: Drum Beat 229, December 22nd 2003

DID YOU KNOW THAT?

12 advices against spamming

Your Email mailbox is buried under messages sent by unknown persons and advertisement companies? Don't let it annoy you.

"Spam" or junkmail, this short text tells you how to keep away from it:

1. Dont react
2. Be careful of boxes to check or uncheck when you subscribe to a service, a list or a newsletter
3. Try to have at least two email address
4. Use temporary email box
5. Use the filter for undesirable message in Outlook
6. Try to download only header of messages
7. Create reception rules in Outlook
8. Choose good criterias and key words for filtering
9. Alert authorities
10. Encrypted your email address on your personal web site
11. Dress up your email address
12. Subscribe to a anti-spam list

Some of these advices may sound weird but each one has an explanation that you can take a look at on the following web site: thot.cursus.edu/rubrique.asp?no=19670 (in French only)

Follow-up on the Protocol relating to the establishment of the Peace and Security Council

On January 19th, 2004, 47 countries out of the 53 have signed the Protocol and 26 of them have deposited their instruments of ratification.

Follow-up on the Protocol to the treaty establishing the African Economic Community relating tot the Pan-African Parliament

Thirty countries have ratified it to January 19th 2004. It is in force since December 14th 2003.

Union Africaine: www.africa-union.org

A new Togolese organisation for the defense of women's rights in Togo

The organisation 'Groupe de réflexion et d'action, Femme, Démocratie et Développement' (GF2D) is proposing to put up a Consultative Council for Women in Togo which will held its first meeting on January 23rd 2003 in Lomé. This new organe want to influence positively the political choices and the priorities and orientations of development in relation with women's interests. It will support its opiniosn upon studies and surveys on women's status.

For information: gf2d_criff@hotmail.com

- NEWS FLASH- NEWS FLASH - NEWS FLASH -

Senegal: Senegal Program Eradicating FGM: Some 2 million women around the world are subject to female genital mutilation every year. Now, a program is set to eradicate the custom in Senegal and is likely to be replicated elsewhere in Africa.

Article of December 7th 2003:
www.womensenews.com/article.cfm/dyn/aid/1630/context/archive

Kenya: The Binti Pamoja Center: Designed to create a safe space for girls and young women to discuss reproductive health issues and to address problems such as gender discrimination, domestic abuse, and rape. The Center in Kibera, Nairobi, uses group discussion, art, and photography to enable young participants to speak out about difficult issues. Discussion topics have included violence against women, sex, contraception, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and ethnic conflict. To further discussion, field trips to NGOs addressing some of these issues have been organised. To complement the discussions, members were given disposable cameras and assignments that paralleled the topics.

Information:
www.comminit.com/pdskdv92003/sld-8643.html

Source : Drum Beat 228, december 12th 2003

Africa: Anti-Abortion Policies Take Heavy Toll in Africa: A Kenyan woman bleeding from a botched abortion is denied

medical help by disapproving hospital nurses. It is the kind of incident that translates into high maternal mortality rates in Africa, where reproductive-health clinics are losing U.S. funding.

Article on November 2nd 2003:
www.womensenews.com/article.cfm/dyn/aid/1586/context/archive

Democratic Republic of Congo: Gender Violence Based: Despite a recent peace agreement aimed at ending the five-year war in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), massacres, mutilation and rape continue in the eastern part of the country. Throughout the conflict, rape and other forms of sexual violence have been used routinely as a weapon of war by all parties involved. In many cases, further wounding or killing the victims follows these acts of sexual torture. Additionally, many of the girl children being forced to serve as soldiers on the frontlines are routinely raped and used as sexual slaves by adult commanders. Act now to stop violence against women in the Democratic Republic of Congo!

TAKE ACTION:
takeaction.amnestyusa.org/ctt.asp?u=610768&l=7616

Source: AWID, Resource Net 'Announcement' issue 192

Africa: Prostitutes of Africa, victims of silence: Amely-James Kohbela Okoo, from Cameroon living in France is a volunteer in the Agence Internationale de Développement Économique (AIDE-Fédération). She has infiltrated the world of African prostitution in Paris to know the reality thereof. And what

she discovered there revolted her: "African prostitutes are at the bottom of the ladder, exploited for all the most lousy, scatology, films for zoophiles... And who is responsible for this? The activist got information: 60/70%, the family; for the remainder, the Mafia, and particularly that of Ghana, "known by all the police forces in the world", she said. She tries to help young girls by giving information on real life they are awaiting for which is not what they are told by people helping them to emigrate in Europe.

Article:
www.penelopes.org/xbreve.php3?id_article=4078

Source: Les Pénélopes

International: Speakers Highlight Increasing Role Of Women In Ending Wars: U.N. officials and activists last week marked the anniversary of Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security by highlighting the contributions women are making to national reconciliation and the role Resolution 1325 plays in promoting that goal.

The resolution, adopted by the Security Council in 2000, calls on the secretary general and states to enhance the role of women in conflict resolution, "incorporate a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations" and "put an end to impunity" for crimes against women.

Resolution 1325: ods-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N00/720/18/PDF/N0072018.pdf?OpenElement

Article:
www.unwire.org/UNWire/20031103/449_10030.asp

EVENTS

Forum of the United Nations /African Union and the Pan- African Youth Conference On HIV/AIDS in Africa

*Moving from words to action: Putting
the African Youth first*

The main aim of this forthcoming Forum is to address specific issues and modalities of how to implement the Lusaka Youth Declaration securing practical commitment from all stakeholders towards the holistic implementation of the Declaration with specific action provisions.

The Forum is also expected to adopt and operationalise the legal framework constituting the African Union Youth League (AUYL) to exist in close liaison with African Union mainstream and accelerate the action provisions of NEPAD and promote the implementation of the UNGASS declaration of Commitment further towards the achievement of the Global Millennium Goals.

**No registration will be accepted
after January 30 2004**

Venue: Livingstone, Zambia
Date: February 14-18 2004

Information:

Young Africans Welfare
Association or the Department of
Youth Development, Ministry of
Youth Sport and Child
Development (MSYCD)
P. O. Box 50700
Lusaka, Zambia

E-Mail: pizoyabatu@yahoo.com

Fax: +260-1-223996/
+260-1-252749

Mobile phone: +260 96 456147
+260 97 851702

Source: Drum Beat, January 6th 2004

5th International Workshop on Resource Mobilisation

The 5th International Workshop on Resource Mobilisation (IWRM) will be taking place at the Birchwood Executive Hotel. The core programme provides training in all aspects of resource mobilisation, including fundraising, communication, accountability and mobilising local involvement. The programme also includes a policy day, which will specifically focus on the wider policy environment in which not-for-profit organisations operate in and the challenges and opportunities in the global south.

Venue: Johannesburg, South Africa
Date: March 26-28 2004

Information:

The IWRM Team
Tel: 00 44 (0) 20-7587-0287
Fax: +44 (0) 207 582 4335

E-Mail: iwrn@resource-alliance.org

Resource Alliance website:
www.resource-alliance.org

Source: Drum Beat, January 6th 2004

WILDAF WEST AFRICA

Newsletter

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ACTING TOGETHER FOR A JUST WORLD

The World Assembly is a forum for civil society to exchange information about their achievements and challenges. Hundreds of diverse participants, including non-governmental organisations, community-based groups, research think-tanks and academia will meet to focus on building civil society's commitment to addressing the many political, socio-economic and cultural injustices affecting the world in which we live. The 2004 World Assembly will address and debate civil society's roles in shaping more effective governance, development and economic initiatives.

Four Main Themes: Civic Justice, Economic Justice, Political Justice, Social Justice and Cross-cutting themes: HIV/AIDS Gender Equity and Equality Youth Empowerment Capacity-Building and Socially Marginalised groups.

The World Assembly is part of the CIVICUS mission to enhance citizen participation through civic existence, civic expression and civic engagement. For more information about the World Assembly, go to www.civicus.org or email David Kalete, Programmes Director at worldassembly@civicus.org.

Site: www.civicus.org

Venue: Gaborone, Botswana
Date: March 21 -25 2004

Source: AWID Carrefour, vol. 2 no 40