

WILDAF WEST AFRICA

Newsletter

Women in Law & Development in Africa

N°08 October 2001

EDITORIA

LIKE AN IRRESISTIBLE CALL TO CONTINUE THE STRUGGLE ...

While it was not programmed to devote this edition of the WILDAF West Africa Newsletter to violence towards women, the actualities made it become the dominant theme. The Conference on Racism in Durban, the victims of Thiès (Senegal), the Nigeria meeting on the rights of widows to inherit are recent events which we are to report. Because they all have as common denominator violence against women, they sound like an irresistible call for all human rights campaigning (men or women) to continue the struggle against these forms of discrimination which consequences are at times incommensurable for the victims and for the societies where they occur.

To continue the struggle supposes, among other requirements, that our network and its members be strengthened day by day. The impact study on women's rights organizations since the capacities building program (held within WILDAF from January 1999 to April 2001), the one relating to communications within the network do participate in this logic. This issue of your Newsletter also talks about it. Besides, a call is made to participate in an action launched by ECA/ACW for the signature and ratification of the instruments relating to women and children's rights. You will also find in your Newsletter information on the going-on action for the success of the adoption process of the Protocol to the African Charter of Human and People's Rights relating to Women's Rights and on events to occur in the world and in Africa relating to women's rights. Finally, different news about our members activities clearly show that the national WILDAF/FEDDAF networks are really determined, each in its own context, to accept the challenge for the effectiveness of women's rights, and against violence in particular.

Kafui Adjamagbo-Johnson
Sub-regional Coordinator
Wildaf/Feddaf West Africa

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WILDAF WEST AFRICA
Newsletter

Site Internet

<http://www.multimania.com/cyberlys/wildaf>

E-mail : Wildaf@cafe.tg

TRAFFICKING IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN A SITUATION ANALYSIS FOR AFRICA

By Bisi Olateru-Olagbegi, Wildaf-Nigeria Coordinator
World Conference on Racism, Durban (August 26 to September 7 2001)
Workshop "Women as victims of racism", organised by Wildaf

Despite the fact that the incidents of trafficking in women and children in Africa had been going on for several decades there was no public recognition and/or focus on the issue until the mid 90s. Until 96 or 97, many Africans were ignorant of what the issue was about and that it had any connection with AFRICA. To many it was an Asian or Latin American issue. However events soon proved such erroneous beliefs wrong as more awareness was created came the realization that Africa was well grounded on the map of trafficking in women and children.

With increasing number of deportees of trafficked victims of prostitution and the publicity generated came the equation of Trafficking with Prostitution to the neglect for other forms of trafficking. We must know that most of the victims of trafficking are children and that trafficking of women and children for other purposes is the predominant form of trafficking particularly in West Africa.

Definition Of Trafficking

The latest United Nations definition contained in the Protocol on Trafficking in Persons defines, in Article 3, trafficking in persons as follows. (a) "Trafficking in persons" shall mean the recruitment, transportation,

transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction of fraud or deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the given or receiving of payment of benefit to achieving the consent of a person having control over another person for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include at a minimum the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery on illegal adoptions), servitude or the removal of organs.

(b) The consent of a victim of trafficking in persons to the intended exploitation set forth in paragraph (a) of this article shall be irrelevant where any of the means set forth in sub paragraph (a) have been seen.

Types of trafficking

Africa experiences internal and external trafficking of persons especially women and children. Internal trafficking takes the form of recruitment and transportation of persons especially women and children from the rural areas to the urban and city centres for the different forms of labour under exploitative conditions. External trafficking is trafficking of persons across National bor-

ders for different forms of labour also under exploitative and slave-like conditions.

Root factors and social implications of trafficking in women and children

Some of the root factors for the reenactment of trafficking a modern form of slavery have been attributed to poverty and its attendant consequences. Other factors include the devaluation of the local currency, which has made the acquisition of foreign exchange more attractive. In addition the fallen standard of family values, lack of parental control and general avarice for wealth have contributed immensely to the escalation of the illegal trade of trafficking.

Poverty thus become one of the root catalyst to the escalation of forced and bonded child labour and human trafficking. Children from poor families become easy prey to Traffickers and employers of cheap labour. With the pervading poverty, Government Officials also are prone to corruption making law enforcement ineffective.

The social implications are manifold on the development of the Nation. As the subjection women and children to slave like labour some of which are hazardous has grossly violated the rights of women and children.

In fact the low level of the societal perception of women and children makes peoples readily accept and ignore the criminality of trafficking of women and children for forced labour.

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Extract from: **TRAFFICKING IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN- A SITUATION ANALYSIS FOR AFRICA WITH EMPHASIS ON NIGERIA**

TRAFFICKING IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN A SITUATION ANALYSIS FOR AFRICA

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Legal Implications of trafficking in women

African countries are bound to uphold International Covenants contained in related International Instruments such as the Convention for the suppression of the Traffic in Persons and the Exploitation of the Prostitution of others (1949) and the more recent Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons especially women and children (2000). Other International Instruments include the Convention the Elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW) 1979, and the optional Protocol to CEDAW; Convention Against Torture and other cruel inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (1984), the Slavery Convention (1926) and the UN General Assembly Declaration on Violence Against Women (1993).

Despite the abundance of International and Local Laws for the protection of the women and children against forced labour and trafficking the level of enforcement is extremely low almost non-existent in many cases in many parts of Africa.

In reality, the traffickers of women and children for forms of labour other than prostitution are not regarded as criminals...

The International Instruments, particularly the recently negotiated Protocol on trafficking should be domesticated into local legislations. Furthermore human right standards should

also be incorporated in law reform and strategies for combating trafficking in women and children.

Migration and Migration Policies

With globalization and increased economic ties came a tremendous intra and trans-border movements. In West Africa the already porous borders became more difficult to control as a result of the ECOWAS (Economic Communities of West Africa States) treaty which permits free movements of people and goods within the West African countries. This borderless situation coupled with the aid of corrupt immigration and customs officials has facilitated easy passage of traffickers and their trafficked victims through West Africa routes. As a result of the high profitability of human trafficking, the traffickers are dynamic in the change of routes and identities of their victims to avoid detection. Routes are constantly changed and forged traveling certificates or International Passports are obtained while genuine passports are recycled by several victims assuming identities of unknown persons within the sub-Region to facilitate easy passage to the destination countries.

Moreover, as a result of the borderless situation of the European Union, an Schengen Visa Permit movement within the European countries who are party to the Visa arrangement. Once a victim is trafficked from West Africa by land through

North Africa into Spain or United Kingdom by crossing the Suez Canal, the victim is free to move to Italy, Germany or Netherlands where they are forced into prostitution.

Untrained Law Enforcement Officers

Those law enforcement officers dealing with issue of trafficking in women are usually not specially trained for a technical sensitive and human approach necessary for the handling of such cases. The lack of special technical training in detecting investigating and gathering evidence against traffickers who are usually a step ahead of the Police in their trafficking schemes results in failure to arrest and prosecute traffickers.

The lack of sensitivity to the plight of the trafficked victims and their young ages often deny the law enforcement officers the necessary cooperation from the victims for an effective investigation and evidence gathering.

Often times the victims are treated as people with leprosy as they are perceived as potential HIV/AIDS victims or carriers. They are therefore discriminated against and forced to undergo HIV/AIDS tests in violation of their rights.

Above all the failure to integrate human rights principles for the protection of the trafficked victims hampers enforcement of the trafficking laws. to the detriment of the victims.

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Lack of International Co-operation

As the issue of trafficking in women and children has a global dimension, the absence of concerted and constructive International co-operation constitute a stumbling block to law enforcement. Individual and uncoordinated efforts at combating the transnational crime of human trafficking for instance result in failure to arrest traffickers. The massive repatriation of victims who later find their way back into the countries of deportation make such efforts an exercise in futility.

Lack of Victim Protection Schemes

The victims are most times mortally afraid of their traffickers who invariably are members of syndicated crime gangs. Furthermore the subjection of the children to the administration of traditional secret oaths involving the use of their body parts and blood to instill fear in the victims so as not to divulge the identities and the nature of the transaction relating to the force labour or trafficking. This situation creates a blockade to information gathering by Law Enforcement Agencies.

A witness is subjected to heavy interrogation regardless of the age and the sensitivity of the issue. The evidential Rules also require strict proof of corroborative evidence which are ordinarily unobtainable in transactions leading to forced bonded child labour and which makes conviction difficult to obtain.

Recommendations

The issue of trafficking in women and children is a multifaceted problem that requires a holistic approach. Undoubtedly no one group be it Government or civil society can effectively manage and combat the heinous crime of human trafficking alone. Therefore there is need for a strategic plan towards the enforcement of laws, protection of victims and prevention of human trafficking for all forms of labour for a human and progressive society.

Societal Re-orientation

The re-orientation of the societal perception of women and children as human beings entitled to the protection of their rights guaranteed by the International and local laws is essential.

The society needs to be educated on the existing fundamental Rights of women and children especially as contained in the Constitution and International Instruments and Covenants. Society needs to be sensitized to recognize that trafficking and forced and or bonded labour are gross violations of human rights and criminal offences.

Effective Policing and Border Control

There is need for an effective policing and border control by well-trained officers to detect traffickers and prospective victims of trafficking.

This training has to be well aligned with human rights training so as not to violate the rights of the women and children in an

attempt to protect them from the violation of rights under the laws.

More importantly serious efforts should be made in a transnational co-operative manner to arrest prosecute and punish traffickers and their collaborators

International Cooperation

International co-operation should be extended to the protection and reintegration of victims of trafficking in the global interest of the development of the women and children. Best practices in training of law enforcement agencies and migration policies with human rights standards should be shared amongst nation.

Victims Protection and Re-integration

Law enforcement and administration of justice should cooperate victims protection schemes from their abusers. In essence the laws and evidence rules should be streamline to take cognizance of the tender and sensitive nature of trafficked victims.

Adequate plans involving both financial and material support with the International and local cooperation should be made for meaningful re-integration of the victims of trafficking into the society.

Civil Society Cooperation

Due to the complexity of human trafficking as earlier pointed-out, it needs the concerted efforts of all concerned including, members of the Civil Society.

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TRAFFICKING IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN A SITUATION ANALYSIS FOR AFRICA

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It is necessary to garner the support and collaborative efforts of NGOs and groups in combating the crimes of human trafficking.

Migration

As the world is gradually becoming a global village, migration laws and policies need to be relaxed in line with International Instruments, which promote freedom of movement. Men and women will continually move from place to place in search of better life and survival. Consequently, migration laws which will facilitate the free movement of people with genuine goals will prevent women and children from fallen prey to traffickers who force them into labour.

Applying human Rights standards which most countries have endorsed by covenanting to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) 1949, and other International Instruments will enhance the protection of the rights of women and children and enforcement of labour laws affecting them.

Poverty Alleviation

For as long as there is a wide gap between the rich and the poor Nations where some people have to live in abject poverty the problems of human trafficking will continue to rear its ugly head. It is therefore of paramount importance to put in place programmes to bridge the gap between the poor and rich Nations. Poverty alleviation schemes geared towards poverty reduction is a sine-qua-

non to significant reduction of human trafficking.

Programmes which will provide, education, skill acquisition and alternative opportunities to women and children the family will go a long way to reduce the poverty level. Thereby preventing the sale of children or use in forced or bonded labour.

Conclusion

Efforts of the members of the civil society should be complemented by the Government to guarantee the prevention of trafficking, protection of trafficked victims

and prosecution of traffickers. Therefore it is imperative to take urgent strategic and sustainable action towards enforcing the laws and protecting the Rights of the women and children to promote global peace and development. Combating Trafficking in women and children is a civic responsibility of each and every one of us to ensure that the slave trade, which has long been abolished, is not re-enacted.

*by Bisi Olateru-Olagbegi,
National coordinator Wildaf-
NIGERIA
Presented at the World
Conference on Racism-
Workshop organised by Wildaf*

Did you know that...

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights says, in article 25:

(1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food (...)

BUT...

-Today 31 countries, accounting for under 8% of the world population, face chronic freshwater shortages.

-By the year 2025, 48 countries, accounting for 35% of the world's projected population are expected to face shortages.

-Among countries likely to run short of water in the next 25 years are Ethiopia, India, Kenya, Nigeria, and Peru.

-In this century world population has tripled, water withdrawal has increased 6 times, and the amount of available water has been reduced by pollution.

Source: Solutions for a Water-Short World - Population Reports, published by the Population Information Program, Center for Communication Programs, The Johns Hopkins School of Public Health.

ADVOCACY DURING THE OAU SUMMIT HELD IN LUSAKA/ZAMBIA, FROM 2ND TO 11TH JULY 2001

Within the framework of the strategies aiming at mobilizing the support to the draft Protocol to the African Charter of Human and People's Rights relating to Women's Rights and following the decisions taken at the Addis-Ababa meeting of the Regional Committee on the Protocol to the African Charter of Human and People's Rights relating to Women's Rights in Africa, two members of the Regional Committee were accredited to take part in the last OAU Summit (Madam Bisi Olateru-Olagbegi of WILDAF Nigeria and Madam Matrine Bbuku Chuulu of Women and Law in Southern Africa Research Trust).

Besides the preparatory activities such as the writing of a one-page advocacy document

first for the Deans of the Ambassadors, then for the other Ambassadors, Ministers, Heads of State, many other activities were realized in Lusaka.

During the meeting of Ambassadors and the Council of Ministers prior to the Heads of State and Government Summit, it was possible to organize a lobbying action in order to put the draft Protocol on the agenda. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of South Africa (a woman) talked on the women issue and on the draft Protocol at the Council of Ministers which took a decision confirmed by the Heads of State Meeting, to call on the OAU General Secretariat to organize the First Experts Meeting as soon as possible. Besides, members of the Committee met with other NGOs in the content who

also committed themselves to the support of the Protocole.

A fruitful mission...

This mission which was very important for the advancement of the adoption process of the Protocol in accordance with its aims; the Ministers and Ambassadors present in Lusaka are all sensitized now on the existence of the draft Protocol, the governments know that they have to appoint efficient experts who are sensitized to gender problems and armed enough to negotiate a quality draft Protocol relating to women's rights, support was mobilized from a number of official OAU Representatives who were of great support in the advocacy activities of the Regional Committee and from other civil society organizations and the media in the actions undertaken hopefully for the adoption of the Protocol by the next OAU Summit in 2002, finally, the members of the Committee were able to talk with representatives of the media's and NGO's who also became conscious of the necessity for a follow-up in their country concerning the Protocol...

...but the battle is still to be won! The Regional Committee will continue the advocacy actions and invites every activist of civil society organizations and in particular the Follow-up National Committee to follow closely the process and commit themselves more actively to support the adoption process of the draft Protocol on women's rights.

Based on the report of mission submitted by Madam Bisi Olateru-Olagbegi, WILDAF-Nigeria Coordinator

EVENTS

Protocol

The First Experts Meeting on Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa that should have taken place in September will be held instead from 12 to 16 of November 2001 in Lome, Togo

For more information, Contact Mr. Germain Baricako, ACHPR Secretary
Tel: (220) 39 29 62 / 37 09 16 Fax: (220) 39 07 64
E-mail: secretary@achpr.

Working with Men to End Gender-based Violence: An Interchange for Global Action

The event will takes place from 8 to 12 October 2001 in Rockefeller Bellagio Conference Center, Italy. The proposed meeting would bring together men and women from all regions of the world who are in the forefront of work with men in ending gender-based violence. A few researchers with theoretical interests in the construction of gender and patriarchy would also be invited. Most participants would be from the grassroots level in their countries. Their collective experiences would be key for an assessment of what really works to change the attitudes and behaviours that lie behind gender-based violence. The focus would be on men as partners against violence, working for its prevention, rather than on perpetrators themselves.

Contact Information: Ruth Finney Hayward, Senior Adviser, Ending Violence Against Women and Girls, Gender, Participation and Partnerships Section, UNICEF, rhayward@unicef.org OR its4ruth@aol.com

WIDOWS IN AFRICA EXPOSE THE PRIVATIONS THEY SUFFER AFTER THE DEATH OF THEIR HUSBAND AND ARE ASKING WHEN A NEW DAYBREAK WILL COME FOR THEM

On 26th, 27th and 28th August 2001, NGO's from Ghana, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Togo joined their sisters from Nigeria in Enugu to celebrate, for the third consecutive year, the day of action on women's rights to inheritance.

In Togo, it was the GF2D, a NGO member of WILDAF which was invited to take part in the Enugu meeting.

It is worth recalling that it was in November 1998, and for the first time, that women's rights NGO's working specifically on the questions of inheritance met in Accra (Ghana) under the aegis of "International Human Right Lawgroup", an international NGO based in Washington D.C. The Accra meeting allowed the activists from Bénin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo, to exchange their experiences on questions relating to the rights of widows and orphans and to map new strategies to be set up at national, regional and international levels.

The institution of a day of action to be celebrated during the month of July every year was one of the decisions which were taken at this meetings of Accra and participated in the reinforcement of the individual and collective awareness of the populations in order to look for efficient solutions liable to fight against the privation of elementary rights which are recognized to every individual but are denied to some women at the death of their husband or father.

The aim of the celebration this year was to collect first hand information on the situation of widows and girls after the death of their husband or father.

These collected information should become solid and strong arguments for an advocacy in view of more commitment of each and everyone to the resolution of the dramas which thousand of women suffer in Africa. A range of evidences of situations encountered by widows of all categories : very young ones (of about twenty years); women of a more advanced age (more than sixty years old) : very well educated

women (university and post university levels), those who can at least read and write and those who were not educated at all. Women who, already when their husband was alive, lived in a state of quasi-privation and saw themselves pushed to the bottom of the abyss at the death of their husband. Others who have had happy days with their husband and children, having houses, cars, companies and who in one day were deprived of these by their in-laws because the husband lives no more.

Many of them are still fighting to recover their rights. This is the case of this Nigerian who was accused by her in-laws of having ordered, with the help of her brother, the murder of her husband who was killed with five other persons by armed robbers in Lagos.

She was imprisoned for 4 months with her twin babies of less than six months. At the end of the four months, the investigations proved that the accusations were not founded and she was released. The in-laws didn't stop their relentlessness against her for that. They demanded that the widow should undergo traditional rites consisting in making her drink a beverage which effects will give the evidence of her implication or non implication in the death of her husband. Obviously, the widow refused because there was a strong probability that she would get poisoned if she drinks this product. The corpse of the deceased was kept at the mortuary for all this time and it was only 18 months later, during the year 2000, that it was buried and not without difficulties. During this long journey, the in-laws grabbed the possessions of the couple (houses, cars and others). Thanks to Women Aid Collective(WACOL), a NGO based in Enugu, the widow was able to get back some of the properties which belonged to them. She is still fighting with WACOL to return to the house where she lived happy with her husband and their 6 children.

Certain widows managed to annihilate the efforts of the in-laws to deprive them thanks to their tenacity, courage,

endurance and resolution. This was the case of this Togolese woman who knew martyrdom from the first days of her husband's death. As she will say with an intense pain, "I was not given to mourn for my husband". Indeed, three days after the news of her husband's death in an hospital abroad came, and before any measure is taken for the burial, the in-laws went to the husband's employer and demanded to be given the benefits due to the widow and the orphans.

Moreover, a few days later, the in-laws will bring a potential buyer in the new house they had just finished building and were to move in after the husband returned home. Unfortunately for these shady in-laws, the watchman didn't have the keys of the house which were with the widow as well as the title deeds. Warned by these two facts and upon the advice of her husband's friends, the widow decided to move in her new house just after her husband was buried. This behaviour on her part was found very bold by the in-laws who uttered very serious threats against her in view of bringing her to waive her rights and these of her two girls of 7 and 3 years, sole descendants of the deceased. The plan they imagined was to take away her children from her, to entrust them to one of the deceased's sister and to ask her to go back to her parent's house as she was only 40 years old and could easily get married again. On the advice of a sister-in-law, she took contact with "Maison de la Femme" of GF2D and there started an unremitting struggle. With the help of a lawyer, a request was sent to the President of the Tribunal. The request asked to recognize to the widow the right to the custody of her children and the management of their belongings. The judgement of the tribunal was in favor of the widow. Having the ruling of the judge, she was able to retrieve from the employer of her husband the payment of the duty, the insurance in favor of the deceased and the other benefits which were provided for and were due to the assigns.

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WIDOWS IN AFRICA EXPOSE THE PRIVATIONS THEY SUFFER AFTER THE DEATH OF THEIR HUSBAND AND ARE ASKING WHEN A NEW DAYBREAK WILL COME FOR THEM

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On 8th September this year, one year after the death of her husband, we visited this widow in the house of the couple where she lives with her two girls.

Other widows saw themselves deprived at the death of their husband but the experience they went through made them decide to help other widows not to encounter the same situation. They created widows associations to continue the struggle.

The Enugu meeting gave us the opportunity to live an unforgettable moment filled with resentment, rebellion and great emotion. Obviously, these feelings seem to expose the weakness of woman in a milieu, a society where she is fighting against thousands of forces which try to swallow her in order to subjugate her and deprive her of her human dignity and even to destroy her physically. At the same moment, Enugu makes us measure the greatness and nobleness of the commitment of the NGO's which decided to help their sisters in towns and rural areas overcome all the vexations, violation and violence from the society and to give to the woman the place which belongs to her.

Enugu gave us the opportunity to measure our responsibility as member of the civil society. Every women's rights fighter must commit himself more in order to be of concrete and efficient help to those who need their assistance. We have seen the evidence in Enugu. Widows who, at a moment or another met on their way an organization of determinate women saw they situation change. This calls out to any women's rights organization to commit itself alongside with the widows and orphan-girls, and with the in-laws if necessary and most of all with the judicial authorities so that concrete actions should be made to help the victims. Beyond the care taking of the victims, we must continue the sensitization in order to arouse the consciousness and to

prevent this evil in the future. Men and women who perfectly know the provisions of the law and the local practices are beginning to take measures as soon as they are aware of the situation of widows and orphans and by all means will avoid them these dramas. This is an encouragement to continue the struggle.

A glance at the judicial paraphernalia of our countries show, but for some exceptions, a total absence of provisions or an inadequacy or even a weakness at this level. Legislative reforms are necessary.

The sub-regional strategies also must be reinforced. The draft additional

Protocol to the African Charter of Human and People's Rights relating to Women's Rights is worth the support from all of us. Indeed, this draft contains articles which regulate the question. If adopted, this Protocol will be a giant step in the protection of widows and orphan-girls' rights.

We must step up our efforts to find pragmatic solutions in order to put an end to the everyday sufferings of those for whom the light stops shining the day they loose their husband or father.

Kafui Kuwonu
President Wildaf-Togo

TOP WOMEN'S RIGHTS RELATED WEBSITES Do you surf on internet? Here are some interesting sites:

Topic: The new website Development Goals presents national and regional statistics on poverty, education, gender equality, infant and child mortality, reproductive health and environment..

Language: English

URL Address: <http://www.developmentgoals.org>

Topic: Famafrigue, a website for french speaking african women. Offers a lot of relevant informations about women's rights such as information on international meetings (Beijing +5, Regional Africain Conference...) and numerous Internet links to international organisations....

Language: French

URL Address: <http://www.famafrigue.org>

Topic: Women graduated outside of United States can ask the American Association of University Women (AAUW) Educational Fund for scholar grants (study or research in the USA).

Language: English.

URL Address: <http://www.aauw.org/3000/fdnfelgra/internat.html>

Topic: World Computer Exchange, a NGO based in the United-States, collects second hand computers to send them in schools in Africa, South America and Asia with installation, connection, maintenance and training.

Language: English

URL Address: www.worldcomputerexchange.org

Topic: North-South Centre. Creates an interface between Europe and the South to generate new ideas and proposals for constructive relations.

Languages: French and English

URL Address: www.nscentre.org

Topic: Internet website prepared by the Senegalese Sigil Jigéen network (member of WILDAF) aiming at sensibilizing the public opinion on the replacement of the notions of "marital power" and "father power" by those of "joint kinship" and "joint responsibility of the family".

Language: French

URL Address: <http://www.famafrigue.org/parenteconjointe/accueil.html>

If you know websites which can help Wildaf members in the fulfilment of their tasks, do not hesitate to share such information!

BRIEFS - BRIEFS - BRIEFS - BRIEFS - BRIEFS -

Impact study

The Lomé sub-regional bureau has just obtained the agreement of the European Union to carry an impact study and an audit, following the project entitled "Strengthening the capacity of the national women's rights networks to contribute to women's rights achievement" (financed by the EU) which took place from January 1999 to April 2001.

The opportunity given to WILDAF/FeDDAF West Africa to carry such a study will allow to measure the precise impact of the project on:

- The reinforcement of the institutional and organizational capacities of the national networks which benefited from the training sessions and support to recruit a program officer.
- The ability of the national networks to identify the priorities of their countries and to plan and implement programs liable to ameliorate women's conditions.

The impact of the training sessions organized within the framework of the EU project on the organizations members of the national networks and on women in the countries.

We must also note that such a study will have the advantage to recall to our partners that WILDAF/FeD-DAF cares about the quality of its actions as well as of the repercussion they generate, and that transparency in the management is one of its priorities.

Study on Communications at WILDAF/FeDDAF West Africa

We are recalling members of our network that the study on the communications within WILDAF/FeDDAF West Africa is presently under way! All the national networks should have

received (by post or by electronic mail) many weeks ago the following documents:

- The explanatory letter addressed to the national networks
- The explanatory letter addressed to the members who were selected to answer the questionnaire
- The inscription form for the sub-regional member's directory WHICH ALL THE MEMBERS HAVE TO FILL IN IF THEY WANT THEIR NAMES TO APPEAR ON THE MEMBER'S DIRECTORY
- The questionnaire addressed to each national network
- The questionnaire addressed to individuals members (10 by national network)
- The questionnaire addressed to the organizations members (15 by national network).

This study will give the opportunity to understand the forces and weaknesses of the network in matter of communications; and this is essential for the further actions of WILDAF/FeDDAF.

To the national networks: At this end, you are requested to speed up as much as you can the collecting and sending to Lomé of the questionnaires and registration forms after completion, the constitutions documents and a complete list of our members.

To the members: If you have not heard of this study in your country, don't hesitate to contact your national network and moreover, MAKE SURE YOU HAVE COMPLETED THE INSCRIPTION FOR THE SUB-REGIONAL MEMBER'S DIRECTORY!!

UNDP - Human Development Report 2001

The latest UNDP report on human development is now available. You

can download it (one chapter at a time or entirely) from the following website:

<http://www.undp.org/hdr2001/>

Note that you will need the software "Acrobat Reader" that allows the reading of PDF documents.

This year theme is: Making new technologies work for human development: "Technology networks are transforming the traditional map of development, expanding people's horizons and creating the potential to realize in a decade progress that required generations in the past."

Appeal for Mobilization by the African Centre for Women (ACW)

The African Centre for Women (ACW) is an institution of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa.

Aware of the role of the civil society in the sensitization for the recognition, respect and protection of women's and children's rights, the ACW sends an important appeal to the whole of the civil society: it invites you to mobilize your partners and to act so that the maximum of African governments sign and ratify the instruments relating to women's and children's rights (see the frame) to which the countries are not yet parties.

Doing this, the States could reaffirm their attachment to the preeminence of law at the occasion of the fifty sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly to be held from 19th September to 5th October.

Please inform Madam Souad Abdennebi-Abderrahim, Regional Advisor for the promotion of women's rights (ECA/ACW) of the activities you engaged following this article; sabdennebi@uneca.org

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BRIEFS - BRIEFS - BRIEFS - BRIEFS - BRIEFS - BRIEFS

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NEWS FROM NATIONAL NETWORKS

Core List of Treaties pertaining to the rights of women and children

1. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. New York, 18 December 1979
2. Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. New York, 6 October 1999
3. Convention on the Rights of the Child. New York, 20 November 1989
4. Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict. New York, 25 May 2000
5. Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. New York, 25 May 2000
6. International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. New York, 7 March 1966
7. Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. New York, 10 December 1984
8. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. New York, 16 December 1966
9. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. New York, 16 December 1966
10. Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. New York, 16 December 1966
11. Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty. New York, 15 December 1989
12. International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families. New York, 18 December 1990
13. Convention on the Political Rights of Women. New York, 31 March 1953
14. Convention on the Nationality of Married Women. New York, 20 February 1957
15. Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages. New York, 10 December 1962
16. United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. New York, 15 November 2000
17. Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. New York, 15 November 2000
18. Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. New York, 15 November 2000
19. Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others. Lake Success, New York, 21 March 1950
20. Final Protocol to the Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others. Lake Success, New York, 21 March 1950
21. Slavery Convention, signed at Geneva on 25 September 1926 and amended by the Protocol done at the Headquarters of the United Nations, New York, on 7 December 1953. New York, 7 December 1953.
22. Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery. Geneva, 7 September 1956
23. Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. Rome, 17 July 1998

The 16 days campaign is nearing by leaps and bounds (from 25th November to 10th December). Some national networks informed us of the activities they are preparing. Keep us informed of what you are getting ready so that we can promote your activities, tell us what is going on well and of what is wrong... May be we can help you find within the network the resource person you are looking for or the document you need?! It will be our pleasure to make an appeal on your behalf.

WILDAF-Nigeria:

- Press conference on violence against women
- Individual activities at the zonal levels focusing on violence against women in conflict situations
- Rally on violence against women highlighting the effects of internal and external conflict on women
- Posters & books exhibition

WILDAF-Togo:

This year again, WILDAF Togo has decided to continue the struggle against sexual harassment. Here are the planned activities:

- Elaboration of a guide of care taking of victims of sexual harassment
- Reediting of the posters and leaflets produced during the 2000 campaign.
- One day training for representatives of already existing structures or those to be created (e.g. SOS Filles).
- Sensitization caravan in the prefectures of the two regions (Maritime and Central) where the freak is more rife.

Meetings with the media, forum of discussion and broadcastings on the media.

WILDAF-Mali:

This year, for the 16 days of activism on gender violence, WILDAF/MALI is planning to organize a drawing contest. This contest will take place in the fundamental and high schools of the six communes of the Bamako district.

- Commune I: Lycée FILY DABO SISSOKO and Nelson MANDELA, Hippodrome Fundamental School
- Commune II: Lycée BOUILLAGUI and Missira Fundamental School

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Crimes in THIES:

Six victims of acts of barbarism in such a short period!

Let's act together so that this should never happen again!

THIES is one of the ten regions of Senegal and is located at seventy kilometers from Dakar. Its nearness with the capital made that many organizations and associations of defense of women's rights are present there or are represented. Added to these, the groups of women promotion of the nine zones of the region and the religious associative movement which militates energetically for the promotion of women's rights and the eradication of acts of violence against women.

Yet, since some times, this region which is characterized by the dynamism and commitment of women, is witness of violent crimes against women which created psychosis and agitation in the whole country.

THE FACTS

- A young woman was stabbed to death by her husband who struck her twelve times with a knife (September 2000). He then locked her in his room. But for the smell of putrefaction noticed by the neighbourhood which has had enough and wanted to know the provenance of this odor, may be the drama would have been discovered much later. Their investigation led them to the flat occupied by the couple; and as they haven't seen Madam Koudeydia MAR for some days, they seized the competent authorities (Ministry of Interior, Fire Brigade, Hygienic services). At their arrival, they broke the door of the flat open and found the body of Koudeydia MAR in a state of advanced putrefaction. The husband who fled after his infamy was arrested five months later and is still in pre-trial custody.

- A three-and-half year old little girl named Mame Diarra Gaye Diakhaté is savagely killed by an acquaintance of her parents who, not happy to take the life of such a fragile creature, also removed her eyes (March) 2001).

- A thirteen-year-old girl beaten to death by her uncle who, apparently wanted to correct her for a reaction he thought impolite from his niece (July 2001).

-An other victim of domestic violence: Madam Ndèye LÔ whose leg was struck by her husband with a pestle causing a serious fracture.

The case Aby SALL (presently on the top

of news) named after the 19-years-old victim who received thirty two (32) stabs of scissors from her husband Thième MBOUP (attack on 12th August 2001, death of the victim on 29th August 2001).

The author of this crime, thinking he could manage on his own by simulating an aggression, version he gave to the young woman's mother after his crime, forgot that his wife would, just before she fainted in front of some people who were alerted by her shouts, say that it was her husband who perpetrated this barbarism. In addition to her revelations, the first people who came to her recourse saw a man running away and it was at that moment that Aby said: "It is my husband Thième MBOUP". The latter went to change his clothes soaked with blood, take his wife's jewels and bury them in front of the gate. But at the moment he was coming out to join the crowd, (the houses being contiguous), he met the crowd which was coming towards his house and the two first women he met slapped him severely.

Admitted to the THIES Regional Hospital, Aby died of her wounds a few days later.

- A 23-years-old woman named Fatou SOW was killed by her husband who stabbed her mortally with machete at Mbacké, a district near Touba where a number of marabouts live (5th September 2001). The victim died of her wounds at the Mbacké Health while they were getting ready to evacuate her to the Diourbel Regional Hospital. The husband-murderer is in police custody in Mbacké and an investigation is under way.

THE MOBILIZATION

On **Tuesday, 4th September 2001**, the Senegalese women's rights organizations among which were WiLDAF members organized a march of protestation against the violence in Thiès. This march registered a very strong mobilization comprising: the families of the victims, all the women associative movement, the organizations of defence and promotion of human's rights and youth associations. The march passed through the main roads of the region and stopped at the Governor's place where a memorandum with all the complaints were read and handed over to the Governor. On **Thursday 6th September 2001**, in the afternoon, the national march of Dakar took place and the mobilization was at its paroxysm with delegations coming from all over the country (regions, communes, departments, districts, all in all, urban, rural and peri urban areas), former Ministers,

members of Parliament, the Red Cross handicapped persons, people of the third age as well as the spouse of the Head of State, Mrs Viviane WADE, who joined the procession just before our arrival at the Presidency of the Republic where a memorandum was read and handed over to the Head of State. Among other complaints we can note:

- the urgency to set up a national observatory of Women and Little Girls rights
- the possibility for associations to associate in an action with the public prosecutor in case of abuse or violations of women's rights
- the refusal of invocation to crime of passion
- the care taking of victims of violence
- the effective implementation of the law of 13th January 1999
- a revision of the family code
- the substitution of the notion of father power to that of parent's authority
- the interdiction of the reduction of sentence in case of murder of the wife or husband
- the full exercise of the rights of the divorced woman having the custody of the children.

Part of the memorandum was read by the spouse of the Head of State.

In his reply, the Head of State thanked us for our initiative and assured us that all measures would be taken so that violence, especially against women ceases. The Observatory will be set up and entrusted to a woman. A green number will be opened and the victims of violence or associations could call free of charge and at any moment to alert the competent authorities. Finally, he called on women to set up an association which could associate in an action with the public prosecutor for the defence of victims.

We are sure that if we succeed in getting these strategies move with strength and vigour, we will reach our aim which is to make VIOLENCE disappear forever.

No society can build a lasting development without the participation of women but no women can fully play her role of development agent if she lives in an environment of violence.

Mariame COULIBALY
Coordinator of the RADI Judicial
Information Centre and President of
WiLDAF/FeDDAF/SENEGAL

NEWS FROM NATIONAL NETWORKS

Continued page 10

- Commune III: Lycée ASKIA MOHAMED and N'Tominkorobougou Fundamental School
- Commune IV: Lycée ACI 2000 and Lafiabougou Fundamental School
- Commune V: Lycée Massa MAKAN DIABATE of Baco-Djicoroni and Badalabougou Fundamental School
- Commune VI: Lycée IBRAHIM LY and Banankabougou Fundamental School.

The launching and closing of the drawing contest will be made by the different radios of the concerned communes. The aims of this contest are to bring children to denounce violence, to cultivate the love for non-violence in the children in order to have a generation who will be follower of non-violence and finally, to reduce the rate of violence in schools.

After the drawing contest, WiLDAF/Mali is planning to organize a training workshop for educators and a training workshop for judicial and extra-judicial actors. The aims of these training workshop are: to reinforce the experiences of the former campaigns, to reduce the rate of violence in the working places, in homes and in the society and finally, to inform, sensitize and mobilize around violence in general and domestic violence in particular.

Moreover, WiLDAF/Mali informs us that, within the framework of the activities of its plan of action, they are planning to organize the following activities and training programs:

In the days to come, WiLDAF will organize, with CECI-DCF financing, a national workshop on the strategies of struggle and prevention of violence in general and domestic violence in particular.

Withing the framework of women training in politics, WiLDAF/Mali has elaborated and submitted to "l'Oeuvre Malienne d'Aide au Sahel" a training program for thirty trainers in "Women in Politics" for the coming 2002 electoral terms in Mali (presidential, legislative, communal).

The project will concern associations and NGO's members of WiLDAF which aims are to insure equity Man/Woman, to reinforce women' participation in politics, to improve women wrong image in politics and finally to provide women with competence and to allow them to be efficient and to be elected. Moreover, WiLDAF/Mali has elaborated a number of projects to be shortly submitted to the financial partners for the reinforcement of its member's capacities:

- Project on the Conception and Management of Programs and Projects, GTZ,
- Program of judicial community education in Commune I of the Bamako District,

Embassy of Canada to Mali and CORD AID in the NETHERLANDS,
- Project of women judges training in the New Information Technologies, UNDP.

Finally, WiLDAF/MALI will soon have a documentation centre with books on law and judicial knowledge. The project was elaborated and submitted to the CIDA. The beneficiary of this project are: WiLDAF/MALI, the APDF and CAFO. The CIRJ has already recruited a technician in documentation and communication who will be in charge of the implementation of the documentation centre and of the classification of the documents and books for the three NGO's mentioned above. The technician will stay for three months, one month with each NGO. What means from 26th November to 14th December 2001 with APDF, from 17th December 2001 to 19th January 2002 with CAFO and from 22nd January to 16th February 2002 with WiLDAF. The lodging, food and travel of the young canadian trainee will be at the charge of each of the NGO's.

WILDAF-Burkina Faso

WiLDAF/BURKINA sent us news from two of their projects: a training workshop for para-judicial actors and a campaign of sensitization on the texts which are favorable to women with the populations.

The training workshop for para-judicial actors is a project financed by UNICEF and which beneficiaries are the women members of the WiLDAF/Burkina network associations. The global aims are to contribute to the promotion of women through information and the training in women's rights and to increase women's participation in public life. The specific aims are: to train women as para-judicial actors in the Moore and Dioula national languages, women who shall be able to convey the information on women's rights to the grass-roots and to direct the people to the competent authorities when the need arises and to train women on the functioning of the public institutions, and women who shall be able to create a leadership with the women population.

Period: 24th to 29th September 2001.

The campaign of sensitization on the texts which are favorable to women with the populations will be held in partnership with the DCF-CECI Project. The beneficiaries are the populations of 5 provinces in Burkina Faso. The project is divided into 3 stages: the first stage is to sensitize associations and NGO's (list the associations at the level of these 5 provinces in order to obtain information on the different situations of women's rights violations, to have talks-discussions with them on the listed cases of women's rights violations, to obtain their commitment to help WiLDAF/Burkina in the sensitization of the populations on the favorable texts). The

second stage consists in the training workshop on the favorable texts for the listed associations and the third stage is the organization of a campaign of sensitization of the populations by a theatre-forum (big public). Period: from January 2001 to January 2002.

"Association pour le Progrès et la Défense des Droits des Femmes (APDF).

A workshop on the "National and International Texts of Law for the Prevention and Protection of women/children against traffic and sexual exploitation" was held from 18th to 20th July 2001 at the Bamako Aoua Keita Centre.

This workshop was organized by the Coalition against Women Trafficking, section of Mali, in collaboration with the "Association pour le Progrès et la Défense des Droits des Femmes" (APDF) (the Association for the Advancement and Defence of Women's Rights), which is member of Wildaf-Mali. For three days, the workshop worked on activities like: the state of the freak of traffic and sexual exploitation of women and children in Mali, the restitution of the regional concertation on the children exploitation to commercial purposes held in Dakar in December 2000, the experience of CATW in the struggle against the freak of traffic and sexual exploitation of women and children, the national and international texts of law for the Prevention and Protection of women against the freak and the presentation of the experiences made by the Ministry of the promotion of women, children and family through the National Department of Promotion of Children and Family.

WILDAF WEST AFRICA Newsletter

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**For more information
please to contact :**

**WILDAF West Africa
B.P. 7755 Lomé-TOGO**

Tél. (228) 22-26-79

Fax. (228) 22-73-90

<http://www.multimania.com/cyberlvs/wildaf>

E-mail : wildaf@cafe.tg