



Women's Federation for  
World Peace Australia

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# Women's Federation for World Peace Oceania Newsletter



## WFWP Oceania delegates travel to the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW 62) at the United Nations in New York

Report on CSW62 – Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls

In De Saint-Exupéry's classic tale written in 1942, the fox in "The Little Prince" reveals a secret....."One sees clearly only with the heart" and this secret, once revealed, buoyed the prince as he progressed on his journey in search of wisdom. This same secret revealed itself time and time again as I journeyed through CSW 62 and listened to the stories of the numerous presenters.

Amongst the constant distractions and destructive forces operating across the globe, hundreds or perhaps more accurately, thousands of women are using 'their hearts to see clearly' and some of these women narrated their tales of how they are making a difference to the orphans in Africa, to the impoverished schoolgirls on the northern borders of Thailand and Myanmar and to the marginalised Dalits in Nepal. These women came to share their stories across the different venues hosting the side events and parallel events during the NGO CSW 62 Forum in New York.

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## Reflections from the Field

*Veronica Hasset - Vice President WFWP Victoria*

Attending the 62nd Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) was an incredibly moving experience. Surrounded by people from diverse cultures and different language and educational backgrounds was uplifting and stimulating. Hearing from people whose lives were spent generating positive change was both refreshing and inspiring. Yet even in the presence of such multi diversity, there was a common thread which bound us together – the need to work towards ‘empowering rural women and girls’.

As different speakers shared their stories, their concerns and their future goals, my heart and mind were opened to the possibility that if we want to truly empower women and girls, we must not just be listeners, we must put our faith and work into action.

The experience has given me an understanding of the futility of working alone. Partnership with other like-minded people is the key to breaking the cycle of disempowerment of women & girls all over the world. By working together in solidarity, women and girls the world over, can be empowered and strengthened to realise their potential.

I truly believe that WFWP has an important role to play in working with other organisations in their quest towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Personally, my attendance at CSW 62 has helped me recognise that there are many people who share my thirst to work for justice and I believe we can achieve positive outcomes together by networking and connecting with each other.

I have so many wonderful memories of my time at CSW but the memory that really stands out is the warm and inviting welcome we received from a group of Zimbabwean women at the Millennium Hotel. Unfortunately, we weren't able to attend a UN parallel event for which we had booked places as the venue was overcrowded so we were turned away. The feeling of “being rejected”, which many refugees experience, engulfed as we walked away feeling dispirited and forlorn. As we walked on to the Millennium Hotel where the event was being streamed, we promised ourselves we would never turn away invitees to any event.

When we arrived at the Millennium Hotel, women representing the Rozaria Memorial Trust welcomed us with open arms and demonstrated great hospitality by serving us with food and drinks. This hospitality was accompanied with music and dancing which erased our feelings of hurt and worked towards healing our bruised spirits. Such generosity of spirit helped me recognise that none of us are perfect and even when events can be planned well, we can still “stuff up”. The warmth of these lovely African ladies restored my spirits and I was able to return to a feeling of peace and calm.

Many of the presenters at CSW 62 were extremely talented and the excellent quality of their presentations made this a rich and uplifting experience for me. The excitement of being present on the sacred site of the United Nations and listening and learning from so many diverse cultures has been awe inspiring.

One speaker who stood out for me was Dr Sakena Yacoobi - one of the presenters at the WFWPI Side Event on “Fostering Hope for Rural Women and Girls through Integration and Education”. Her compassion and strong desire to provide Afghani women and children with opportunities to become educated was very moving. Even though her activities placed her in conflict with some of her community, she held on to hope and showed great courage in her continuous endeavours to create schools. She was inspirational and proved what the Power of One can do to impact others' lives.

Attending the Commission on the Status of Women has left me with a fund of possibilities for my work in the WFWP. I am grateful to Anne Bellavance for opening a new door for me by inviting me to join this organisation. I feel empowered to work for WFWP in its mission to break down the barriers that restrict women and girls from achieving their potential. Being surrounded by women of hope at the Commission has inspired me to HOPE too for a better world.

# The Hope for Humanity Comes from Mothers



“History is calling for reconciliation, compassion, love, service and sacrifice. Today’s problems cannot be solved by the logic of power. Our present problems can only be solved by the logic of love.”

Dr. Hak Jan Han Moon  
Founder, WFP International

## Overview of WFP activities in Oceania

**Empowering women**  
**Strengthening families**  
**Connecting communities**

WFP is founded on the belief that a peaceful world begins in the heart of each person and in each family. The family is the cornerstone of peace and mature couples are the foundation for strong and loving families. The organisation encourages every woman to become a ‘woman of peace’ through cultivating her heart, the mother’s heart, to care not just for her own children, but for the children of others, the children of other nations, the children of the world, by developing and expressing the qualities of empathy, forgiveness, and unconditional love.

WFP is committed to

**Serving communities** – service projects within Australia & the Pacific Islands

**Strengthening the family** – workshops, forums, seminars and conferences

**Reconciling differences and healing wounds of the past** – Bridge of Peace

**Global Women’s Peace Network (GWPN)** – A network of women leaders and organisations dedicated to solving pressing social issues and securing an environment for human development.

WFP Australia supports projects within Australia and the Island Nations of the Oceania region.

Projects include: Global Women’s Peace Network; Dignity Project; Marriage, Family and Wellness education; reconciliation through the Bridge of Peace ceremonies; Workshops, Seminars, Conferences and Forums on Peace Building; an Annual Walk-a-thon to support its Pacific Neighbours; Books for the Islands; Solomon Islands New Hope Kindergarten; Pacific Island Scholarship Fund; Women’s Sewing Centres; and, Island Lights Project;

WFP is a dynamic organisation committed to providing women with the opportunity to create lasting peace in the world by fostering dialogue, developing projects that nurture reconciliation and conflict resolution, and supporting projects that serve the community and overcome racial boundaries; all centering on the inherent feminine characteristics of care, empathy, support, nurturing and cooperation.

# Victoria

## Building a Culture of Values and Peace in Australia Ambassadors for Peace Leadership Training

Melbourne, Australia, 17<sup>th</sup> of February 2018

The 2018 Peace Building Seminar series theme is: "Building a Culture of Values and Peace in Australia". This series of seminars seek to open a conversation about universally shared values that can be used to build peace. This seminar, the first of a series of four, was held to explore the moral, spiritual and methodological principles that underpin the work of WFPW and UPF.

Dr John Stewart, author of the book entitled, *From Genocide to Generosity* spoke about the importance of having the right mind-set for peace building. His book documents the lives of people who were deeply affected by the genocide in Rwanda. He has monitored the changes in Rwanda from 1977 to the present day in respect to the healing and personal recovery efforts of amazing individuals affected by the genocide. The conclusion he has reached as a result of his study highlights his belief that "The practice of healing and forgiveness is more likely to make human development a success".

Anne Bellavance, President WFPW Australia, and IVP for the Oceania Region, urged leaders to follow the path of living for the sake of others. A life of living for the sake of others opens the gates of peace. She noted the importance of learning from historical successes, when loving the enemy brought reconciliation and peace.

John Bellavance, Vice-President UPF Australia and Director of UPF Victoria, spoke about peacebuilding as the battle between selfish love and unselfish love. Self-love is the source of the misuse of people, the misuse of love and the misuse of material wealth to the detriment of others. He believes that when working towards peace, peacebuilders must master self-centred love, pride, jealousy and anger in their selves.

Report by John Bellavance



# Support our Pacific Neighbours Annual Walkathon

Lysterfield Lake Park, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2018

The purpose of our yearly Walk-a-thon is to raise funds for the WFWP Australia projects undertaken for nations in the islands of Oceania. Since 2003, WFWP Australia has undertaken these practical service projects which include: donating books for school children on the Islands; donating sewing machines to support the Women's Sewing Centres; providing funding for the solar project for the New Hope Kindergarten in Honiara and contributing to the Pacific Island Scholarship Fund.

This year, the "Support our Pacific Neighbours Walk-a-thon" took place for the first time at Lysterfield Lake Park near Narre Warren, on the outskirts of Melbourne. The event open to young and old provided three different types of trails: gentle; advanced; and one that catered for special needs.

On arrival, participants registered for their walk and were ready to hit the trail at 11.00 am. While walkers hiked off well-equipped with hats, water and snacks, volunteers prepared lunch using one of the barbeques.

On their return, the walkers enjoyed lunch which included barbequed sausages, salads and cold



drinks. The overall atmosphere was very positive and every one was friendly and supportive. It was also very inspiring to meet new people interested in supporting our cause.

This year, funds raised from the Walk-a-thon will support the education of two young women in the Solomon Islands who have received scholarships from the “Pacific Island Scholarship Fund”. This project, in partnership with UPF and FFWPU is a not for profit development program that aims to provide young adults from Solomon Islands and Vanuatu with opportunities to access empowering education programs in their own country. The program supports young people who besides being passionate about getting an education, align their hearts with one of the values and goals of WFWP: “Living for the sake of others”.

In the Solomon Islands, education is not free, so families can only afford sending their children to school until a certain age. As a consequence, youth and young adults do not fully complete their education and their place is therefore taken by foreigners. This creates a tremendous social problem: Solomon Islanders become second-class citizens in their own country. With this scholarship, WFWP allows young women to receive an education and feel empowered, thereby contributing to the resolution of this social problem.



Our first scholarship recipient, Jenny, has successfully completed her first year of study in Early Childhood Education and has now started her second year. We are all very proud of Jenny and

wish her all the best for her final year of university. This year we have a second scholarship recipient Janet who is enrolling in the Early Childhood Education Course as well. Congratulations Janet! We wish her all the best for her studies.

Further WFWP projects for 2018 include the establishment of a women’s sewing centre in Samoa where 20 sewing machines were sent in early February of this year. Over 500kg of donated books and school stationery were shipped to the New Hope Academy in Solomon Islands. Formerly a kindergarten, this school is being enlarged to include new classrooms as it transitions to become a primary school where the books and stationery will be very useful. Funds raised at the Walkathon contribute to the shipping expenses connected to these two initiatives.



WFWP is very grateful to all the sponsors, supporters and walkers who made the Walk-a-thon a successful event this year. Over \$2000 was raised on the day which will enable the realisation of the 2018 projects. Many thanks to all the volunteers whose assistance ensured the success of the event.

The event generated a great sense of fun and it is hoped that this will continue next year!

Report by Giulia Iacono

# Leave no Women Behind International Women's Day 8<sup>th</sup> March 2018

## Southern Migrant & Refugee Centre (SMRC)



Veronica Hasset (WFWP VIC Vice-president) spoke in occasion of the International Women's Day at the Southern Migrant and Refugee Centre.

name is Veronique'. Unfortunately, when I started school, my name changed from Veronique to Veronica.

While attending school in the 60's in England, one was not permitted to speak or sit next to someone who was from your own country. My parents had to sign weekly forms which were sent to the Home Office to show that they had attended English classes. This was considered part of 'Assimilation' - the key policy for new migrants in the 60's. One's original culture and language were almost viewed as not being important.

### 'Leave no Women Behind'

What does this theme really mean to me?

What does it mean to me personally, in my family, in the workplace, in society and globally? This theme really did challenge me!

To me, the theme means more than physically leaving someone behind. It is about the 'darkness in our lives' such as; Conflict, War, Violence, Migration, Relationship breakdowns, Unemployment, Poverty, Homelessness, Financial issues and Escaping from your home country. Although the darkness creates fears and can hold us back, I am reminded of Martin Luther King's advice *'Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us.'*

As a migrant woman myself, I know how hard it is trying to fit in and to remain true to yourself. I have had the privilege to call three countries my home: Mauritius my birth home, England, where we migrated to in 1962 and Australia, where we migrated to in the late 70's.

In these countries which we moved to, there were challenges - to adapt to a new culture, to learn a new language, and to belong and none of these was easy. My Grand mere, illiterate in her own language was the one who taught me my first English words: 'Please', 'Thank you' and 'my

In 1976, we migrated to Australia and settled in Dandenong, which in the late 1970's, was a small country town. We rarely saw a dark skinned person and my sisters and I stood out. The barrier was no longer learning a new language. This time, it was working out how to fit in. We spoke English as we had completed our high school education in England. But, the colour of our skin did not fit in with how we spoke.

Another quote that stands out for me is Ghandi's 'If you want change, then be that change'. With Martin Luther King empowering me with his advice 'that our fear is that we are powerful beyond measure, and it is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us' and Ghandi's advise 'to be the change we want', I realised that the light for me was to step out and to be the change I wanted.

I embarked on my first degree – a Bachelor of Education, followed by a Bachelor of Social Science. Then, not long after the birth of my 3rd child, I completed a Bachelor in Pastoral Studies, and after the birth of my 4th child, I completed a Diploma in Community Development. It was difficult juggling parenting, part time work and studying but, as most women manage to do, I just kept on 'going'.

The hunger to improve myself, to fit in, to learn, to be educated was being responded to and yet,

I still felt dislocated. I questioned where and what did I really want to do? Teaching was not the answer, and neither was working as a Pastoral Associate. Neither of these jobs filled the hunger I was experiencing.

In 1983, I met Sr. Ann Halpin. She was a woman who believed in 'not leaving any women behind'. She had a dream to turn the convent in Dandengong into a safe learning environment for women. I became part of her dreaming team, volunteering my time to plan how to best develop a safe place for women to share their stories and learn from each other and in 1994, this dream came true and "Wellsprings for Women" was born.

In the meantime, I continued with my teaching and my work as a Pastoral Associate. But in 2003, I took up my first employment position at Wellsprings, and learnt a lot about not-for-profit organisation. I decided to do a Business Management Course, once again wanting to better myself, and the hunger started all over again.

In 2008, Ann retired, and she encouraged me to take up the management role at Wellsprings. It's amazing how we can doubt ourselves. I didn't think I could do it. I already understood the business side of the business but was still afraid and feeling inadequate. I began doubting myself and remained in the darkness of my own fear of not being good enough or qualified enough.

In 2009, after gathering the courage to apply for the role, I was selected for the position as Manager of Wellsprings for Women. As a not-for-profit organisation, we were totally dependent on funding from different organisations including State and Local Government bodies. The most difficult aspect of my role was the need to apply for this funding by trying to convince these supporters that we were worthy of receiving their support. Based on evidence, all the programs were able to achieve successful outcomes yet, we had to constantly prove that we were 'making a difference' and we were worthy of their support. We were engaged in meeting the needs of our community and not leaving any one of them behind. It was frustrating indeed to have to continuously provide facts and figures as evidence of the achievement of our outcomes. Empower-

ing women who were our clients to live their lives to the fullest was very much part of my value system and this motivated me to fulfil this role for 15 years and I gave it my best effort.

In 2016, just before completing my role at Wellsprings for Women, I was approached by another Anne – Anne Bellevance, the President of the Women's Federation for World Peace. Anne invited me to speak at an event titled "Dignity of Asylum Seekers and Migrant Women". It was a significant moment for me, a migrant woman myself, who had been on a journey – a journey where I had to hold on to my dignity and self-worth while juggling many ups and downs. I accepted her invitation enabling me to meet many people at the event who shared my values and aspirations for 'empowering women'. This was a turning point in my life.

2017 was a 'gap year' until Anne Bellevance invited me to join the Board for the Women's Federation for World Peace. WFWP is a not-for-profit organisation which holds General Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations. Founded in 1992 in Japan, the Federation is active in 122 nations. As an international organisation, WFWP empowers women to work together to create an environment of peace and well-being for all people.

Living by the principle of 'Leave no woman behind', the organisation contributes to this principle by operating a range of service projects.

In Australia, the Women's Federation for World Peace focuses its Service Projects to support women and children in Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Fiji, and Samoa. Some of these projects include -

- Books for the Islands
- Supplying sewing machines for 'Women's Sewing Centres which created a business model for women who sew uniforms for school students
- Funding for the building of the New Hope Academy School in the Solomon Islands
- Scholarship Funds to assist young adults from the Solomon Islands to obtain a degree in Early Childhood Education which will help them to teach at the New Hope Academy
- Solar panels to provide electricity to a



school building

- The provision of iPads to the New Hope Academy - the first school in the Solomon Islands that has a computer lab

The Women's Federation for World Peace puts the theme "Leave no women behind" into action through the work that they do. Members are all volunteers donating their own time to raising funds and organising programs to empower women to live their lives to the fullest.

Each year, the United Nations brings together organisations from all over the world to attend the Commission on the Status of Women' – an opportunity to meet together to discuss the priority theme and develop conclusions which become policy recommendations. At the Commission, many non-Governmental Organisations conduct events which focus on issues of concern. The Women's Federation for World Peace will be part of this Commission working towards achieving sustainability, peace, reconciliation and improving the status of women in society.

It will be an opportunity for me to hear from many high-level leaders from the UN and other organisations. It will also provide me with an opportunity to learn about the different aspects of the UN. Most importantly for me, it will be a platform for the voice of the voiceless to be heard.

Why is this important to me? My whole career has been about empowering women through education or social support – providing them with a voice. Now, as a member of the Women's Federation for World Peace and through participation in the Commission, I will be able to be with other like-minded women who want to work for change in a positive way - women while expressing their desire for peace, work courageously to ensure the safety of women in times of conflict, violence and war. There are so many areas of concern around the world and yet, we will be speaking the language of PEACE.

To be there, to learn and hear this language will assuage the hunger that I have experienced through my career and my life's journey, the hunger that started when as a migrant child, I felt 'left behind'.

Now, I feel is the time to bridge that gap and not give into the darkness that I experienced. I am the change that I want.

I believe it is our creator who holds all our plans and our dreams and who has now connected me on this new journey with 'Women's Federation for World Peace'. It is now up to me to let my true light shine and not let fear hold me back. What the future holds for me, what experiences and new doors will the future open?

Only God knows.

Veronica Hassett

# Connecting Communities Dinner Celebrating the 26<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of WFWP

Mount Waverley Youth Centre, May 5<sup>th</sup> 2018

A wonderful buzz emanated as guests gathered to celebrate the 26th anniversary of the Women's Federation for World Peace at the Mount Waverley Youth Centre on Saturday May 5th. The festivity of the occasion was enhanced by the beautifully set tables and colourful floral arrangements.



As Veronica Hassett, Vice President of the Victorian chapter of WFWP and the evening's MC, welcomed the guests, a strong sense of community permeated the hall. After a Welcome to Country, Anne Bellavance was invited to the podium to address the gathering and initiate the evening's activities. The address included an interesting account of the time spent at the CSW 62 in New York during March. This year, four representatives from Oceania three from Australia and one from New Zealand were able to attend the inspiring event. Following this account, Anne presented a PowerPoint Presentation which documented the origins of the Women's Federation, its goals and its achievements internationally, and locally.



Following a tradition introduced in 2017, it was then time for conferring the esteemed Global Women's Peace Network Partnership Award. This year's recipient was the World Peace Prayer Society. Founded in 1955 by a Japanese philosopher, Masahisa Goi, to promote a neutral non-sectarian movement for world peace, the Prayer Society is an organisation that transcends religion, politics and ethnicity. As an NGO associated with the UN's Department of Public Information, it has members worldwide and continues its mission through a range of peace building activities.



To receive the award, two members of the Victorian branch Silvana Benacchio and Anda McMillan were invited to the podium. Expressing her gratitude for this tribute to their work, Anda emphasised our shared role - "Women working together to realise one global family rooted in a culture of sustainable peace". Etched on the

award, this message will be a lasting and constant reminder of our joint responsibility towards peace building.

Recognition was also provided to the Board Members whose support is an important aspect of the Federation's mission. Judith Talanoa, a volunteer with WFWP, was acknowledged with a certificate and a gift for her diligent and positive contributions to our activities.



Giulia Iacono, Secretary and Coordinator of Island Projects presented an updated report on the different projects WFWP supports in the Pacific Islands. These include the support of the New Hope Academy in the Solomon Islands, Women's Sewing Centres, Pacific Island Scholarship Fund, Endeavour Credit (a micro-credit program), and Books for Islands.

This year, the dinner was ably catered for by Kyung Mi, chef and owner of Sushimon, a Korean restaurant in Bentleigh. The buffet style dinner providing a range of delicious Korean fare was relished by all the guests.

Entertainment after dinner was provided by Huanchaco – a Melbourne based band playing World Fusion music. Playing a mix of different cultural music with Latin undertones, the talented foursome entertained the guests, who joined in with gusto - clapping and singing along in time to the music. Some guests were even inspired to form a Conga line and sway along to the rhythm around the hall.

Great excitement continued when the raffle tickets were spun around the raffle barrel and lucky

winners were invited to the raffle table to choose a prize. The door prizes of boxes of Krispy Kreme donuts were well received too.



Attention then centred on the enormous birthday cake lit with candles which were blown out by the Board Members while onlookers joined in a lively rendition of 'Happy Birthday'. After generous slices were cut and distributed, the guests savoured this sweet treat.



The night drew to a close not long after having achieved the goal of communal connection in a cheerful and friendly environment.

The night would not have been possible without the support of the City of Monash who provided a venue for this community celebration and other supporters who provided raffle prizes, Veronica the MC and all the volunteers who set up the venue, organised the distribution of food and willingly helped with all the diverse tasks which contribute to a successful event.

Written by Joan D'Abreo

# New South Wales

## WFWP evening seminar with Mrs Madhu Sharma

Sydney, May 3<sup>rd</sup> 2018

A seminar for WFWP members was held on the evening of May 3<sup>rd</sup>. Mrs Madhu Sharma, a trained psychometrician, a certified career counsellor and a member of the British Psychological Society was the Guest of Honour and Speaker for the evening. Besides her background in psychometry, Madhu has a PhD in Modern Indian History and certification in Green Belt Six Sigma and Competency Mapping. With an exceptionally long career of 30 years in research, testing, teaching and training, Madhu has conducted 5800 workshops and trained approximately 120' 000 organisational leaders.

them to give them hope and helped to empower them to share their skills and talents.



Madhu believes that one can learn at any age and no matter when you start learning, your life can change for the better. She advised us to love ourselves as this has an impact on our level of self-esteem – the force that propels us forward in life.

While sharing her experiences with her audience, Madhu expressed her pleasure at being able to attend this special occasion as it provided her with an opportunity to “interact with a wonderful set of ladies who were teachers, students and senior officials of WFWP”.



In her presentation, Madhu described the pathways her life's journey has taken and how her training eventually helped her to develop her own identity. Although highly trained, she revealed, initially she was lacking in an identity and unable to make her own decisions until Destiny intervened. A paradigm shift occurred and she was able to connect with her inner vision. She started to work with women whose low self-esteem and lack of confidence gave her a purpose in life and inspired her to share her knowledge and experience with

Her address provided us with much food for thought and we are grateful to have had this opportunity to spend some time with her. We look forward to organising similar sessions which will help us broaden our vision and energise us with hope for the future.

Written by Debra Bruce

# Queensland

## Merly Barlaan visits Brisbane

Sunnybank Hills, February 8<sup>th</sup> 2018

On February 8th, Merly Barlaan from the Philippines was welcomed by Queensland WFWP at the new Brisbane Centre in Sunnybank Hills. She then spent the next two days enjoying the Sunshine Coast hosted by the Evans family. On Friday evening, Merly flew off to Melbourne to meet WFWP Australian President Anne Bellavance and the WFWP community in Victoria. While in Melbourne, Merly shared her experiences and work in the Philippines with the WFWP Victoria Board and spent a delightful weekend with the Bellavance family.

She returned to Brisbane on Monday, to attend a joint gathering of WFWP VIP's and UPF Ambassadors for Peace that evening. Rev. Steve Evans, Pastor of the Brisbane Family Church and Director of UPF Queensland emceed the event. Merly inspired the guests with descriptions of the innovative programs and events organised by WFWP in the Philippines followed by a question and answer session.

Back on the Sunshine Coast on Tuesday evening, Merly shared her vision and involvement in WFWP activities with personal friends of the Evans family over dinner.

On Thursday, we accompanied Merly to the Queensland Zoo where she was fascinated by the beautiful Australian flora and fauna. That evening, once again, she recounted the work she does with WFWP in the Philippines with some guests.

Merly has a great spirit of loving commitment and true dedication to serving others. Through unity of heart, we are determined to build an ongoing successful relationship between WFWP Philippines and WFWP Queensland and ultimately with other chapters in Oceania.

Written by Susan Evans



# Inaugural Meeting of Young Indigenous Women for Peace

Sunnybank Hills Library, April 16<sup>th</sup> 2018

Young Indigenous Women for Peace (YIWP) was established by Aunty Peggy Tidyman of Logan Elders in collaboration with WFWP Queensland in early 2018. This initiative aims to empower young indigenous women by helping them to connect with their cultural and traditional backgrounds through the provision of opportunities which contribute to the development of self-confidence & resilience, and which encourage them to understand and embrace broader cultures.

YIWP's inaugural meeting was held on Monday 16 April 2018 from 6pm at the Meeting Room in the Sunnybank Hills Library.

After an Acknowledgement of Country, Aunty Peggy Tidyman encouraged all the participants to introduce themselves to each other. Besides two young indigenous women Djandi Merenda and Caitlyn Ryan, other participants included Aunty Cathy Jackson and Sheri Merenda from Logan Elders and Yuko, Sara Josifoska, Shizuyo Adamedes and Julia Raymond from WFWP.

After the introductions, Aunty Peggy explained the aim of the YIWP initiative and outlined the program.

Mamiko Rattley, past president of WFWP Queensland, introduced WFWP and its activities in Brisbane using a PowerPoint presentation. She encouraged YIWP youth to understand WFWP's core values by inviting them to attend the Celebrating Life presentations in July.

The meeting concluded after a discussion about future projects of the YIWP, including a possible trip to Japan.

The support of WFWP members and the assistance of Robert Josifoski as sound technician are greatly appreciated.

Prepared by Mamiko Rattley



# New Zealand Christmas Party

Parnell Peace Embassy, Auckland, December 11<sup>th</sup> 2017

December 9th was a clear summer day and a perfect opportunity for the Unification Movement in New Zealand to thank its supporters for all their help during the year. Gathering together at the Parnell Peace Embassy in Auckland, family members, Ambassadors for Peace and other guests celebrated each other's presence and support as One Family under God. The event was co-organised by members of New Zealand's WFWP and YFWP and the Holdem family with Mrs Felicity Cairns acting as MC.

As food and gifts were shared, the people from different backgrounds enjoyed each other's company and not even the extreme heat of the afternoon could mar this enjoyment. While children played happily, the adults mingled with each other in the shade.

After Mrs Felicity Cairns warmly welcomed everyone to the event, we heard Reverend Adel Jamati share his vision for 2018 while Mr Geoffrey Fyers provided a summary of UPF's principles and practices. After lunch, supporters of WFWP – NZ provided a few testimonies followed by the presentation of gifts by Nita Wallis to members of the Federation. The audience were then entertained by Tongan dancers who performed two delightful dances followed by two musical acts.

Plenty of laughter and excitement followed with young and old participating in a range of family games. After raffle prizes were awarded to the lucky winners, candles on a celebratory cake were blown out to great applause. All the participants agreed that they had

experienced a wonderful day as they waved goodbye to each other. Overall, the day was a great success and inspired us to wish for a year ahead filled with hope and joy.

By Andrew Halim



# Visit to the Ahmadiyya Annual Convention

Muslim Jama'at in Manukau, Auckland, January 27<sup>th</sup> 2018

Felicity Cairns, Nita Wallis, Fina Suafa, Pauline Jamati, and Lia Goijarts attended the morning event. We were surprised to share a welcoming morning tea with Dame Susan Devoy NZ Race Relations Commissioner.

Besides our members, members from a number of faith organizations were also in attendance. While Ruth Cleaver WFPW founding member and current President of the Auckland Interfaith Council was seated with other VIPs in a special marquee outside, we were seated inside the women's section of the mosque and watched proceedings on a screen. Although it was very hot and humid outside, we were cooler as we had some fans providing us with a cool breeze. We were joined by two current Labour MPs, Mrs. Anahila Kanongata'a-Suisuiki and Mrs. Priyanka Radhakrishnan who later joined us for lunch and collective photographs.



al Association of Parliamentarians for Peace at the Quality Hotel on the 17<sup>th</sup> of February. It was very fortuitous meeting these MPs, as two of the MPs who were to speak at the event were no longer able to attend. MP Kanongata'a-Suisuiki and MP Radhakrishnan very kindly volunteered to join the panel of speakers at the UPF event.

Our visit to the mosque allowed us to continue to build a common bond with our sisters of the Ahmadiyyan community. Working together with them is a great opportunity to build unity and contribute to the well-being of society.

Report compiled by Lia Goijarts



Several speakers addressed the gathering including an MP and Susan Devoy, the Race Relations Commissioner. The National President of NZ Mr Bashir Ahmed Khan, and Respected Bilal Atkinson, Representative of the Head of the Worldwide Ahmadiyya Muslim Community spoke on the beliefs of their faith with regards to social peace and justice.

During a wonderful lunch while networking with our Ahmadiyyan friends, we were able to meet Labour MP Priyanca Radhakrishnan.

Felicity invited our contacts as well as the MPs we had met to the launching of the Internation-



# UN International Women's Day Breakfast

## Parnell Peace Embassy, Auckland, March 8<sup>th</sup> 2018

About 25 people attended this event at the Parnell Peace Embassy in Auckland, New Zealand. Mrs. Felicity Cairns, President of WFWP New Zealand welcomed the participants. After providing a brief introduction about WFWP International, she explained that the proceeds of the event would be donated to the UN Women Meri Seif Bus Project in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, to enable women and girls to travel safely and free from sexual harassment and violence.



As a flyer advertising this event was posted on the UN Women's website, the event was booked out very quickly and many of our own members were unable to acquire tickets.



Barbara Williams, the President of UN Women National Committee Aoteroa NZ, welcomed guests and

live stream participants. She and the Governor General, the Right Honorable Patsy Reddy, spoke with pride about how New Zealand was the first country to give women the right to vote 125 years ago. They both encouraged all women to continue the pursuit for gender equality and for the empowerment of rural women.

During the interlude, we were able to enjoy a delicious breakfast. While there were a number of vegan options, there were several breakfast cereals and scrambled eggs too. Amon Watanabe made a wonderful vegan celery soup with coconut cream. Leon Pogoni donated fresh salmon that was beautifully prepared by Keiko Watanabe.

After breakfast, we listened to Dr Gill Greer, Chief Executive Officer of the National Council of Women New Zealand conversing with the Right Honorable Helen Clark, former Prime Minister of New Zealand who reminisced about a time when there were only eight women members of Parliament.



Helen Clark confirmed that times were tough then. She described how to make space for the women, some of the billiard tables in Parliament had to be removed. This discussion was very enjoyable and there was a consensus among us that even if we all do only small things, together it can create big results. She encouraged us to pursue our dreams with a concluding statement: "Don't wait for the door to be opened for you, or the red carpet to be rolled out, kick the door open and roll the red carpet out for yourself!" We hope that next year, the event will be held in the afternoon to allow us more time to organize the celebration.

Report compiled by Lia Gojarts & Felicity Cairns

## Support our Island Projects in the Pacific Islands

### Why the Pacific Islands?

WFWP Australia focuses its Service Projects in the Island Nations of the Oceania region (Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Fiji, and Samoa).

These regions are some of the poorest countries in the world. The 2014 World Bank ranking of 181 nations according to GDP for the Pacific Islands is: Solomon Island (ranked 131), Micronesia (123), PNG (127), Vanuatu (119) Marshall Islands (113), Samoa (103), and Fiji (95).

In these countries, there is no social security, and no free education, even in public schools. For these reasons, and especially being these regions our immediate neighbours, we feel responsible for their wellbeing and development.

### Some of our Service Projects in the Island Nations of Oceania

#### Women's Sewing Centres



Dating back to 2003, this is our oldest humanitarian project within the Island Nations of the Pacific. The project gives island women an opportunity to gain new skills and financially support their families. Women's Sewing Centres have been established in Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Fiji and Samoa.

#### New Hope Academy



In 2010, WFWP Australia provided funding for the building of the New Hope Academy Kindergarten. The school opened in 2011 with the 1 first intake of 40 students ranging from 3 to 6 years old. In 2018, the number of students has reached over 100. The school was delighted to receive a set of iPads, which have been donated by WFWP Australia. They function as additional learning resources for the teachers and students. This donation has boosted the learning curve for students to the next level, and parents were really proud of this.

Now the New Hope Academy is the first kindergarten in Solomon Islands that has a computer class where students can access new technology, learn new things and develop their skills as part of their learning experience at school.

#### Pacific Island Scholarship Fund



The WFWP "Pacific Island Scholarship Fund", is a not for profit development program launched in March 2017 that aims to provide young adults from Solomon Islands and Vanuatu with opportunities to access empowering education programs in their own country. The program supports young people who are passionate about getting an education and who align their heart with one of the values and goals of WFWP: "Living for the sake of others".

Our first chosen candidates are Jenny (currently in her second year of studies to become a primary school teacher) and Janet (currently in her first year of studies in early childhood education). As a newly graduated teachers, Jenny and Janet will be employed in the New Hope Academy.

Visit [www.wfwpaustralia.org/pacific-islands-projects](http://www.wfwpaustralia.org/pacific-islands-projects) for more information on how to support these projects

# Solomon Islands

## 2017 Annual Report

Honiara, February 27<sup>th</sup> 2018

### PROGRAM AIMS /GOALS

The 2017 various program and activities aims at empowering women with the various knowledge and skills as enhancing tools to support the needs of women to create peace at home, peace in our communities and peace throughout the world. WFWP SI seeks to attract women in various fields, with exceptional knowledge and skills and a strong commitment to serve the development needs of the WFWP and the country as a whole. It intends to strengthen participants' knowledge and understanding about the environmental and social issues affecting the family and to enable them to cultivate the leadership skills, approaches and networks to make meaningful contributions to family, community, nation, region and the globe as a whole.

### PROGRAM OUTCOMES

The 2017 main strategic priorities tools as a guide for WFWP SI is to enhance their Participants to have clear responsibilities and priorities within the WFWP SI and have clear goals, objectives and roles. The WFWPSI facilitated four main major projects in year 2017.

They were as follows:

- 1) The New Hope Academy Kindergarten School Project,
- 2) Sewing Department Project,
- 3) Canteen/Shop Project and
- 4) Scholarship Project.

### PROJECT ONE: NEW HOPE ACADEMY KINDERGARTEN SCHOOL

The New Hope Academy Kindergarten was initiated by WFWP Japan and WFWP Australia and operated by WFWP Solomon Islands.

In the year 2017, the school has developed and increased its participant's numbers to 110 students. The school enrolls students into the age group categories of age 3, 4 and 5. There were 50 students enrolled under age 3, with the support of three teachers. 30 students were enrolled under the age group of 4 years old, with the support of

two teachers. Also, 30 students enrolled under the age group of 5 years old, with the support of two teachers. The school has one administrative staff that is responsible for doing related administrative matters for the school. The school also has one supervisor, which supervises the general well-being of the school. The school has a total of 8 staff.

2017 was not an easy year for the New Hope Academy Kindergarten, as the school had to move to a new location. This caused extra efforts and expenses. Despite this, the school has managed to settle down, and operated successfully until the end of the academic year of 2017.



The school was also delighted to receive a set of iPads, which have been donated by WFWP Australia. They function as additional learning resources for the teachers and students. This donation has boosted the learning curve for students to the next level, and parents were really proud of this. Now the New Hope Academy is the first kindergarten in Solomon Islands that has a computer class where students can access new technology, learn new things and develop their skills as part of their learning experience at school.

The school successfully completed the 2017 academic year, with 30 students graduating from the kindergarten to move onto a primary level of education.

The school has managed to break through to finance its ongoing activities, with the support of the schooling fees collected from the students. Collection of the school fees has also financed the teaching staff salaries and the general operations of the school.



The New Hope Academy Kindergarten School Board, together with the WFWP Solomon Islands, would like to give sincerely thanks to the WFWP Japan, WFWP Australia and other donating individuals for your continuous support rendered for the School in year 2017.

## PROJECT TWO: SEWING DEPARTMENT

The Sewing department is one of the most influential project for WFWP Solomon Islands. This creates an avenue for women and girls to exert their knowledge and skills in sewing that create meaningful contributions to their family as a whole.

The sewing department under the WFWP Solomon Islands begun in November 2016. The idea came out when the Australia WFWP donates thirty sewing machines to the Solomon Islands in year 2014. Thus, with these sewing machines, the Solomon Islands WFWP women meet and discuss that they should take ownership of these sewing machine by doing sewing trainings. The sewing training began in late 2015 by Ann Marie from Brisbane Australia who came to Solomon Islands to lead the sewing training sessions. Hence, in year 2016 the WFWP Solomon Islands had implement new ideas that our women should be responsible to sew the New Hope Academy Kindergarten School Uniforms.

Therefore, the WFWP Solomon Islands has selected four women and started to sew the school uniforms project and other small sewing projects

for the schools as well.

In year 2017, the sewing department group had sewn the school graduating gown for the school grandaunts. In November 2017, the sewing department team had also successfully sew the school order uniforms for year 2018. They sew 120 pairs of uniforms in preparation for the academic year for year 2018.



Generally, the women really develop their knowledge and skills with having strong determination to carry on these sewing activities. It had really change the mindset of women to think positives on how to develop themselves with being professional in sewing. Thus, it boost their performance to work extra harder to increase their sewing professionalism to a better required standards.



In short, the WFWP Solomon Islands is proposing for the future to engage the sewing department team to further do other sewing such as to sew varieties of island outfits and to market it to the public nationally.

### PROJECT THREE: CANTEEN / SMALL RETAIL SHOP

The WFWP Solomon Islands had seen this as one of the contributing tools that can financially support the ongoing of its activities together with the general running of the school so the small retail shop had begun operated in June 2017.

The WFWP Solomon Islands discuss and initiate the small retail shop. The aim of the small retail shop is to financially support with the new school building for Primary level of education for children/students of the New Hope Academy Kindergarten.

The shop initiated purposely to raise additional funds while at the same time the responsible staff had grown in their hearts of living for the sake of others and benefits in creating jobs opportunity for two staff.



During the month of December 2017, the shop is successfully accomplishing its goal that is financially support the new school building.

The shop had help in financially supported to paid for the registration of the new school building from the Honiara city council and also meets other related costs that was required or demanded before the construction of the new school building that was constructed.

Thus, with the small retail shop the school had grown its asset to empower the school as a whole. This is the first business that the school have and the retail shop is located within the school compound that makes it easier to access school stationaries and other goods for students and parents whom want to purchase items.

The small retail shop has successfully operated from June 2017 and currently operating to meet other financial needs for the school.

The WFWP Solomon Islands is very pleased to have the small retail shop initiated purposely for financially supporting the New Hope Academy School expansion.



## PROJECT FOUR: SCHOLARSHIP

The scholarship project programme has initiated with the kind support from the WFP Australia. The WFP Solomon Islands is very pleased to have scholarship sponsored for their women group, as this is one of the enhancing skills and knowledge that will boost the women performance in contributing and participating to the WFP future programs.

In 2017, the WFP Australia had sponsor one female named Jenny Quta. She is doing her first year Diploma in Early Childhood Education and will be doing her second year in year 2018.

This is the first time ever for the WFP Solomon Islands to receive such kind of scholarship programme or support for financially support with tuition's fee. The WFP SI were really glad and looking forward to see their bright future with the mutual support to WFP future activities and for their own benefits to acquire extra knowledge and skills.



Jenny Quta, the first scholarship candidate happy and always attend to WFP activities in the Solomon Islands. She really feels motivated to help though the fund received from WFP Australia.

Thus, this is very powerful tool to connect women. Providing scholarship really empower women and it brings women's mindset to share their inside out. They talk about what they want to do and what they want to achieved. It boost positive ideas and listen to others view on how to develop.

Currently, there are three women that the school had recruit to do volunteer teaching with the New Hope Academy School. Where it brings avenue for them to help with the school activities. The WFP SI sees this as a gateway for them to untrain them for teaching professions for one or two years then will smoothly transitioned them to move on further into skilled-trained teachers in the future to do teaching services. This same procedure is how we get through with Jenny Quta for the scholarship. So our future scholarship selection will targeted to WFP SI untrained teachers whom undertake volunteer teaching and see as a potential candidate for the next scholarship award to sponsored under the WFP.

The WFP SI is also pleased to declare that they also sponsor two students with their final semester fees for year 2017.

The WFP SI see that by providing financial assistance with scholarship for its future human resources is essential and efficient for a bright future and continues to encourage women and girls by empowering them to grow in furthering their knowledge and skills that they are capable to acquire.

Written by Monica Ilala Longanimala

# Report on school materials donated by WFWP VIC

## Honiara, April 12<sup>th</sup> 2018

On behalf of the Women's Federation for World Peace Solomon Islands (WFWP SI) and the New Hope Academy School (NHA), we would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Women's Federation for World Peace Victoria, Australia for your kind donations. We thank you for donating school materials together with four projectors and second hand clothes.

Women's Federation for World Peace Victoria, Australia and Beaconhills College for your kind donations and for your continued partnership and friendship enabling us to work towards our common goals.

Written by Monica Ilala Longanimala



On the 12th of April 2018, we were delighted to receive a total of 49 boxes from Melbourne containing materials which will be of great assistance to the NHA School and WFWPSI. The New Hope Academy School is so fortunate to have these additional learning materials which will contribute to a favourable learning environment for our young students. Now, the school is finally equipped with a school library which will enhance and boost the learning environment of the school.



Your continuous support is of great value to our team (WFWP SI & NHA).

Once again, we would like to sincerely thank the

# Report on sewing department program Training of Trainers

Honiara, April 12<sup>th</sup> 2018

The Women's Federation for World Peace Solomon Islands (WFWP) SI is pleased to present its report on the recent sewing training program for the WFWP SI training of trainers.

May 2018, 7th to 11th May 2018 - Three representatives from WFWP SI participated in a sewing training program which cost SBD3600 and the training was successfully accomplished.

July 2018 - Proposal to open an Extension outlet for selling clothes

August 2018 to November 2018 - Sewing and fabric art programs will continue to create items for sale in the extension outlet.

December 2018 - Closing and Exchange programs



June 2018 - Proposed plan for month of June:

- These 3 trainers will sew the NHA School uniforms.
- They will sew other types of clothing for sale for example traditional island dresses, shirts, trousers, school uniforms and children's clothes
- They will hold sewing training programs for members of WFWP SI or other interested women for two weeks every month
- They will also conduct other fabric art programs such as fabric dyeing, printing on fabric, screen printing and fabric design

Although the creation of sewed items may seem a simple process, building an outlet for selling these items will require more effort and additional finance. A discussion will be held with members regarding a program of fund raising.

The photographs illustrate the training program taking place with members of WFWP SI

Written by Monica Ilala Longanimala





# Samoa

## Sewing machine project

### Magiagi, April 28<sup>th</sup> 2018

On Saturday 28th April at 2pm, FFWPU Samoa hosted leaders federated to Women's Federation for World Peace Samoa and Women's Groups connected with me through Tribal or village links. The meeting was held in our Tribal Meeting house, Tafito, Magiagi.

Special guests were Taranaki Fiso Talamalei, President of WFWP Samoa, Oceania FFWPU leaders Greg Stone of Australia and Santosh Nepune National Leader in Fiji. The latter were part of an Asia Pacific delegation visiting for meetings with Samoa PM Tuilaepa and Head of State Excellency Tuimaliifanos.

Currently, groups federated into our WFWP Samoa include Two Assembly of God Church women's group, Tafito and Tonoa tribal women's groups and Atuaia Tribal women's group of Letogo.

I invited Greg and Santosh to provide some encouragement to our new WFWP chapter and share the "4 Family loves" Curriculum and Character Education presentation -a syllabus currently being used by Fiji Education board and now being introduced to Samoa.

Tafito Women's group provided a morning tea and their President Sala was emcee.

After Greg shared his PowerPoint presentation, Santosh spoke about family values in his home in Nepal. Then, an introductory video on the role of WFWPI was shown to the audience.

A lottery was conducted to ensure the sewing machines were distributed fairly before photographs were taken with our guests.

Each group leader then gave thank you speeches and promised to utilise the machines well. We hope to send you photos of the resulting projects in the near future.

Thank you again to WFWP Melbourne for the donations. We have already received many reports of 'happy' mothers putting these machines to good use.



Report by Mauganai Seti Suafa

# International

## International Leadership Conference

### Seoul, South Korea, March 11<sup>th</sup> 2018

Attending an International Women's Federation event has not ever been an opportunity offered to me till now when I was asked to represent Australia at the International Leadership Conference being held from 18th to 21st of February in Seoul, Korea. As Anne Bellavance the President of WFWP Australia was unable to attend this conference, she directed the invitation my way and off I flew to Seoul to participate in the conference organised by the International Peace Federation.

While travelling to Seoul, I was seated next to a woman flying to Seoul to attend the Winter Olympics as her son was competing in the bob sled event. While I learned about bob sledding from my travelling companion, I was able to inform her about the Women's Federation for World Peace and its role in promoting peace.

I arrived in Seoul on the 18th morning and was driven to the conference in Cheongpyeong. While travelling to the conference, I was struck by the serenity of my surrounds. I had heard Korea referred to as 'the Land of the Morning Calm' and I could whole heartedly endorse this title as I absorbed the beauty and calm spirit encircling the conference centre.



My time in Korea was absolutely wonderful. While enjoying different aspects of Korean culture including the food, I was uplifted by the stories presented at the conference about the work being done by

women across the different continents.

Mrs Hak Ja Han Moon our founder related her experiences in Africa where she has been working to promote peace and reconciliation. Her main role there was to heal the hearts of the African people whose ancestors had been taken as slaves to the Americas. Both the President of Senegal and Nelson Mandela's grandson Mandla Mandela praised Mrs Moon's efforts towards generating universal peace. While Mandla was highly impressed by his grandfather's efforts to promote peace in Africa, he felt that Mrs Moon's efforts were loftier as she was working towards global peace.



During the conference, I was lucky to meet up with Susan Kone the WFWP President from Nairobi Kenya. While conversing with her, I mentioned my hope that she would meet a young woman from Nairobi with whom I have connected online.

Attendance at this conference was empowering and an opportunity to recognise the great gifts the participants possess. I was buoyed by their enthusiasm and the love they have for all people. The conference provided me with a zest for sharing the goals and vision of WFWP with others. The world is in need of change and by taking the lead; women can pave the way for change through the power of love and care.

Report from Debra Bruce

# Report on CSW62

## Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls

United Nations, New York, March 18<sup>th</sup> 2018

Continued from page 1

Listening attentively to their stories and to the underlying messages in each of these stories, one could not but be energised to reach out, follow their star and make a difference no matter where or to whom. Some of the messages that resonated strongly and could reap rich benefits if practised across the globe are that in the pursuit of success, no person should do harm; peace is freedom to see the needs of others naturally and human rights are sacred rights.

With regards to the first message of 'doing no harm', speakers at a parallel event titled "Promoting Mental Health and Well Being for the Advancement of Women" emphasised the need to develop a range of interventions to deal effectively with people experiencing mental health problems. While depression continues to become a wider mental health problem, the implementation of current interventions is neither timely nor socially acceptable thus causing further problems. In rural settings, this issue is exacerbated. Besides the lack of treatment facilities, the social stigmas attached to mental health problems creates an environment that degrades women and treats them like pariahs.



One of the suggested strategies to alleviate this growing dilemma was to use technology more effectively and more frequently. Besides reducing the time and physical effort required to perform tasks most often performed by women to run a household, technology could also help women to con-

nect with others including health professionals who could offer advice and counselling to deal with concerns regarding emotional and mental issues. By connecting with others, women in rural areas could be provided with a listening ear, strategies to build their self-esteem and treatment options to help reduce their sense of despair and isolation.

Many women in rural settings or in rural areas dominated by males have little or no access to equity and are often subjected to gender based violence. Responses to this violence are often cruel and victims are subjected to further violation of their human rights when they are placed in mental institutions or isolated from their family. This is in direct opposition to SDG 3 – access to good health and wellbeing and needs to be addressed.



The provision of education for women and training for local health workers in rural areas were seen as key strategies to enable the reduction in mental health problems in rural areas.

These strategies which require government and civil society investment have been operating successfully in Guinea where funds and effort have been provided to improve the ratio of health workers to citizens. In the session "Investing in rural health workers for the economic participation and empowerment of rural women and girls", presenters provided evidence that highlighted the impact such a program was having. Besides providing initial training for local health workers, training programs that enhanced their skills and

provided further qualifications in midwifery and nursing were also made available. Education was seen as Power and enabling health workers to improve their skills and knowledge caused a ripple effect as the health of mothers and babies improved due to better access to trained midwives and nurses.

While there were many opportunities to listen to the transformative changes that women have wrought in many areas, we were reminded that negative forces were at play across the globe that were working against women. Hon. Ulrika Karlsson an MP from Sweden cautioned her listeners to become aware of the political groups proliferating across the world with views that are detrimental to gender equity and who are trying to demolish the gains made by women over the last 40 years in regard to equity. “Disregarding women’s rights”, she warned was “detrimental to the globe”. She urged women to stand strong and ensure these gains continued to occur.

She posed two questions to conclude her warning – “If not we, then who? And if not now, then when?” leaving us with the message that now is a critical time for action if the goals of CSW 62 were to be met.

Sessions organised by Women’s Federation for World Peace were informative and inspirational. At the side event “Fostering Hope for Rural Women and Girls through Integration and Education: Challenges and Impact”, presenters offered a range of ideas and facts on the problems facing women in rural areas and some effective strategies to deal with these problems.

Mr Ashraf El Nour the Director of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) Office to the UN described the work being performed by the Global Combat for Migration (GCM). This is an initiative which works to deal respectfully with the growing trend of mass human migration. “Human migration,” Mr El Nour explained is a “game changer.” While this phenomenon is occurring on a scale never experienced before, treatment of displaced persons is becoming less compassionate.

“While women tend to be a large percentage of these migrants”, he explained, “Their roles are changing.” Many of these women are migrating from rural areas to urban areas in their own countries or to other countries in search of work. From the traditional role of ‘home-maker’ they are becoming ‘bread-winners’. While working away from home, these women nevertheless, still support their families at home sending money to provide for the education and care of their children while managing to contribute small amounts

to a saving plan for the future. This game changing scenario is sure to have an impact on the future of these communities.

Professor Yeon Ah Moon the President of the Women’s Federation for World Peace International described the contribution that this organisation was making to alleviate the growing violations experienced by displaced people in different parts of the world. While these “homeless travellers” were vulnerable and often overlooked, she highlighted the role WFWP played in forming partnerships with other organisations to respond to these travellers with respect and love.

Dr Sakena Yacoubi from Afghanistan presented a personal perspective of the power of hope and education her organisation is able to offer to women in Afghanistan. Working in camps with refugees and women in rural areas, the Afghan Institute of Learning (AIL) has been providing education for Afghani women to become lawyers and advocates for ensuring rights for their sisters. She concluded her presentation with a brighter picture of women in her country who she assured us with joy in her voice were progressing and becoming more competent.

Two other speakers at the event provided examples of how scientific research and humanitarian efforts were contributing to provide hope and dignity to vulnerable women and children thus emphasising to the audience that they too could contribute to making a difference to others.

While the content of other sessions reflected these concepts and reiterated the notion of working for the common good, a key message for consideration when endeavouring to generate equity, was the importance of balancing the power between men and women and recognising that each gender has their own strengths. It is only by working in unison, can equity be truly achieved.

In conclusion, CSW 62 was an opportunity to listen, to be inspired and to reaffirm within myself the value of ‘seeing clearly with the heart’ and to work towards peace by uplifting, collaborating and transforming the lives of others by being a ‘Leader of the Heart’ a term referred to by Angelika Selle President of WFWP USA and Vice President of WFWPI.

Written by Joan D’Abreo

# Fostering Hope for Rural Women and Girls Through Integration and Education: Challenges and Impact

## United Nations, New York, March 14<sup>th</sup> 2018

On March 14, 2018, during the 62nd session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW62), the UN Office for the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and WFPW International (WFPWI) co-sponsored the side event, "Fostering Hope for Rural Women and Girls Through Integration and Education: Challenges and Impact." The event took place in the Auditorium of the Japan Society, across from the United Nations Headquarters in New York City. The building's incredible architectural features from the wooden ceiling panels to the serene water fountain in the foyer seemed fitting metaphors for the hope at the centre of the event's theme.

Ms. Maryam Farooq, a pre-med student at SUNY Westbury in New York, served as emcee and welcomed the audience, promising an informative session on the scientific and educational approach to ensure the achievement of human rights for rural women and girls. She invited two guest speakers to give the opening remarks: Mr. Ashraf El Nour, Director of the UN Office for IOM; and Professor Yeon Ah Moon, President of WFPWI.

resilience to survive the traumas caused by migration. He emphasised the need for people to plan programs which effectively met the needs of rural women.



Prof. Yeon Ah Moon thanked Mr. El Nour for his statement and shared how humbled she felt to be in the presence of such esteemed guest speakers. She explained how fitting it was that this event coincided with the UN debate on the Global Compact for Migration, expressing her belief that partnerships with like-minded people and organizations could have an appropriate impact on migration. According to Prof. Moon, by working together in harmony, through love and shared responsibilities, hope can be returned to those vulnerable in displaced communities.

After a resounding applause from the audience, the emcee invited the panellists up to the stage to provide their different perspectives and methods for instilling hope in rural women and girls.

The first panellist, Dr. Sakena Yacoobi, who greeted the audience with a few words in Arabic, emphasized how vital education was in giving hope to young women. As the founder and CEO of the Afghan Institute of Learning (AIL), she stressed the importance of giving young women more opportunities for training to showcase and hone their skills. She insisted that the support for women's rights must come not only from government or men, but also from the community. Dr. Yacoobi emphasized that breaking away from



In Mr. El Nour's statement, he acknowledged the instrumental role of CSW in the protection of women's rights, as it documents the issues and challenges in women's lives and uses these as resources and tools for advocacy. Despite the vulnerable position in which many women are placed, Mr. El Nour is hopeful that women are able to withstand these difficulties and develop a

old traditions that undermine women's rights is necessary. In her closing statement, she said, "Women of Afghanistan are really progressing... They will take on whatever challenges come their way!"

them easier access to education. Ms. Hori detailed how WFPW Japan assists in school management, building facilities and providing temporary foster parents for young girls who live too far from school.

"Twice a year, I take young Japanese girls to these villages so they can see these young girls from the Karen Tribe," shared Ms. Hori. "In CSW, rural women are said to have many bad experiences, but to see that these girls in Thailand have more energy than the young Japanese girls offers a moving perspective on education," eliciting a light chuckle from the audience.

After a productive question and answer session with the panellists, the event came to a close with a loud round of applause from the audience. Elisabeth Giuliano, a member of WFWPI, reflected, "For me, in order to achieve women's equality, it is necessary to have them assured of the basic services, such as security, access to technology and education. The only way to achieve that is by involving not only the women themselves, but also their families and their communities."

Report from Julia Handschin



Professor Catherine Panter-Brick, Professor of Anthropology and Global Health at Yale University whose research specializes in human resilience and health impacted by conflict, shared her realization that programs relating to child education and development have to be unpacked and examined to bring about long-lasting results. She described a method of tracking which programs were most effective in easing stress by analysing a single strand of hair. She has successfully tracked stress levels affecting human behaviour, social relationships, experiential learning and decision-making. The hope of this revolutionary discovery for Professor Panter-Brick is to establish a system of effective educational programs particularly for children affected by conflict. "There is no life without hope," she concluded. "Children can fly if we give them wings."



The final panellist, Ms. Moriko Hori, President of WFPW Japan, gave a presentation about the organization's project with the Karen Tribes in Thailand. The project assists young girls of the tribe by giving

# WFWPI Side Event Highlights the Vital Role of Education for Rural Families

United Nations, New York, March 16<sup>th</sup> 2018

On March 16, 2018, WFPW International co-sponsored a parallel event with The Guild of Service as part of the 62nd UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW62) on the theme “Engaging the Rural Family: The Vital Role of Education.” The speakers shared their insights on the role and importance of education and sustainable methods of supporting rural communities.

The event started in anticipation and excitement as around 135 people filled the room on the second floor of the Church Center for the United Nations in New York City. There was a friendly atmosphere as members of several different women’s NGOs and participants of CSW62 greeted each other.

Ms. Krista Smith, a recent graduate of the University of Bridgeport’s College of Public and International Affairs, served as emcee and co-chair of this event. She invited Ms. Meera Khanna, a writer, poet, social activist and the Executive Vice President of the Guild of Service in India, to open the program.

Ms. Khanna acknowledged that we are all “comrades on the path to women’s empowerment” and expressed her delight at creating new bonds with WFWPI and young women. She launched into a description of India’s challenges and barriers, such as how 69% of the population is illiterate, that there is a very high level of violence against women, and that women, especially rural wom-

en and girls, are marginalized in society. However, Ms. Khanna passionately spoke of the key role of education and how it intersects with the aforementioned challenges. She drew attention to the way we conceptualize “education” – that education does not only exist in the classroom, but how indigenous “barefoot knowledge” is also very important. “This makes sense because traditional knowledge is [also] knowledge,” said Ms. Khanna. The audience applauded enthusiastically as she said, “There is an absolute paradigm shift! The way we educate in India is changing.”

The next speaker, Ambassador Isaiah Chabala, former Permanent Representative of Zambia to the UN, gave his address by first acknowledging his faith and warmly spoke about all of us being “one human family.” Ambassador Chabala suggested a focus on what we can do to instigate change rather than focusing only on the challenges of those in rural communities. He spoke about his experience after retiring as Permanent Representative, feeling called to a social justice ministry to advocate for orphans and widows who were in need, and to promote the empowerment of women within the UN. Ambassador Chabala confidently stated “I’ve become a women’s activist” and stressed the need to meditate and go back to God to become activists ourselves.

Dr. Bishnu Maya Pariyar, founding President of the Association of Dalit Women Advancement in



Nepal, was welcomed next to expound on her experience working with Dalit women and children in Nepal through micro-funding, education, empowerment and sustainable farming. Dr. Pariyar shared the moving and emotional story of her rural upbringing in Nepal, one of challenge and humiliation. However, through the support of her loving family and the Peace Corps, she was able to transform her life through education. “It was suffering,” she said. “[However] I turned that to love and power!”

educational opportunities for girls in Nepal.

Through her inspirational story, she highlighted the power of practicing ‘the logic of love’ in her own life and work. Dr. Pariyar passionately shared how she started her organization in order to help those who are marginalized, especially by gender. “Education is Human rights!” she exclaimed. “We want to make sure that no one is left behind!” Dr. Pariyar’s ardent delivery ignited the audience into vigorous applause, especially when she ended with “educating one girl is educating the whole community, empowering one girl is empowering the whole community.”



Dr. Bishnu Maya Pariyar was born in Nepal to a family who were considered outcasts and was discriminated against while at school as she was considered an untouchable. She was often questioned, “Why are you at this school?” and was not allowed to sit at the table with the other children. She had to sit on the floor and was degraded throughout her school years because she was a woman and a member of the Dalit caste. She recognized that education would be her key and worked towards gaining a doctorate in 2013. While completing her own education at age 20, she started her own organisation which offered

The next speaker, Dr. Sandra Barrueco, an Associate Professor of Psychology at the Catholic University of America, spoke about her intervention approaches for young ethnically and linguistically diverse children and families, including migrant and seasonal farm workers from Mexico, in the United States. Dr. Barrueco highlighted the success of a family-focused, multi-generational approach, such as English as a Second Language classes as a family. Migrant worker families have complex and multifaceted challenges. Many of these families suffer from depression, emotional pain, displacement, and lack of time with their children. According to Dr. Barrueco, it is important to empower women and families by listening to their stories. Children’s education is not only a child’s issue, she stated, but also a family one. Through intergenerational learning with families, Dr. Barrueco believes that children can learn and develop in a holistic and more successful way.



The final panelist was a young professional who is a doctoral candidate at Yale University, Ms.



Maile T. Phillips, who shared her experience in the Peace Corps as a Math's teacher in a remote village in Sierra Leone where she initiated a girls' club. The club focused on their empowerment and educational themes of goal-setting, leadership and sexual and reproductive health. Through working with the families of these young girls and their community, Ms. Phillips was able to encourage more girls to attend school. At the start of the year, there was 50/50 representation of boys and girls. But, towards the end of the year the class was mainly boys. The girls had to stay home due to home chores and felt awkward when they got their menstrual cycles. Girls end up getting married at a young age, have children early and often die during child birth. They have few job opportunities or the means to lift their own children out of the same cycle without the chance for education, this includes sexual health education.

In closing, Ms. Alexa Ward, Director of WFWPI's UN Office in New York, explained how this event was primarily organized by a young adult team from WFWPI, which included the Emcee, Krista Smith, co-chair Maryam Farooq, Dustin Knoblauch, and Naria Garder, who were treated with great appreciation by the speakers and the audience.

After the event concluded, there was a warm, inspiring atmosphere of support and solidarity among those present. The guest speakers and participants posed together for pictures, highlighting the perception that instilling an intergenerational, collaborative spirit is the way forward to success.

Report by Grace Prentice Jung

## Global Women's Peace Network



**Mission:** A network of women leaders and organisations dedicated to solving pressing social issues and securing an environment for human development. It seeks to ensure mutual prosperity and lasting peace through feminine peace leadership rooted in a culture of care, responsibility and education in family values.

People in our 21st century are demanding a new style of leadership. Leaders in our 'flattening world' need a different set of skills; requiring aptitude in emotional intelligence, reconciliation, mediation and forgiveness.

In 2012 during the GWPN inaugural assembly, the founders of WFWPI, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon and her husband Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon called for a new era of women's leadership in peace building. The assembly highlighted the need for a body of NGO leaders, whose collective wisdom and judgment can complement the deliberations of the United Nations; which as a body of government representatives is overwhelmingly male. The GWPN is a project of WFWP international.

**Find out more at: [www.wfwpaustralia.org/global-womens-peace-network](http://www.wfwpaustralia.org/global-womens-peace-network)**

# Horizon Summit – ‘Rising Side by Side’

United Nations, New York, March 21<sup>st</sup> 2018

Ninety two WFWP delegates from 22 nations attended CSW62 this year. The week of forums within the United Nations building, and around New York, concluded with the intergenerational weekend Horizon Summit held at the beautiful 4W 43rd Street venue in downtown Manhattan. At the Summit, our International President, Professor Yeon Ah Moon welcomed all the women delegates. In her address, she stressed the importance of Peace Leadership as a means for creating mutual prosperity and interdependence for everyone which in turn, she explained upholds universally shared values.

While Alexa Ward (WFWPI Dep. Director of the New York UN office) inspired the young women of WFWP to “make the work theirs, stand up, shine, and make the dream real,” Angelica Selle (WFWP USA President) asked the audience to search for answers to the question - “What could be done to solve the world problems of today?”

One solution, she suggested, lay in leadership and the most successful type of leadership she explained is leadership of the heart where ‘living for the sake of others’ is practised. “This,” she explained, “is a holistic solution that requires the joint efforts of each other, and will only occur if we understand the values we share.”

She highlighted the role that WFWP plays as an agent of change. WFWP offers a partnership approach where men and women, working together and supporting each other bring their attributes forward for peace building. To conclude her address, Angelica asked us to heed this African proverb - “If you want to go fast, go alone, if you want to go far, go together” which recapped the essence of her presentation.

During the panel on Peace Leadership, Carolyn Handschin (Director of the WFWPI UN Office worldwide) shared that Peace Leadership must be rooted in love, and dignity must be rooted in purpose, because we are ‘one family under God’. Peace means horizontal balance and harmony; becoming one. Therefore, Peace Leadership is leadership with warmth, tenderness and love. It is about quality, not quantity.

Dr. Sakena Yacoobi (founder and CEO of the Afghan Institute of Learning and winner of the Sun Hak Peace Prize) explained that Peace Leadership is a great responsibility, because as leaders, we are role models for guiding people. She highlighted the necessity for leaders to have peace within themselves. “Peace”, she explained, “means you love each other”. In the Holy Koran, God said that we must love each other. Thus, a



leader must lead people with the right heart and work collectively with other citizens for peace.

Learning about love begins at school where the curriculum teaches children to share and love each other. Young people are the future and older people are the link to the past, so both need to be brought to the table when seeking solutions. Leaders need to go out into the community and listen carefully to the people in order to find solutions to problems. This builds respect and trust. Women have heart and a loving care, thus as a leader, women must act with this attribute.

Dr. Yacoobi shared that she is a strong believer who never gives up hope. “When terrible things happen, I go to my God and pray. We must be patient and never give up.” Describing her reasons for choosing to work with Afghani women, Sakena explained that as mothers are the first teachers, women must be educated. The family must be part of our children’s ‘values education’, because teachers cannot do it alone.



The 2018 WFWPI Global Woman’s Peace Prize recipient was Ambassador Anwarul Chowdhury. The Ambassador is the permanent representative of Bangladesh to the UN & founder of the Global Movement for the Culture of Peace. Ambassador Chowdhury in his address advocated the need for engaging women in leadership roles particularly when seeking solutions for world peace.

He explained, “We should never forget that when women, who are half of our global population are marginalised, there is no chance for our world to get peace. When women work together in

equality with men, then we will achieve sustainable peace. When women are included in peace security, peace lasts longer and is more easily achievable because women bring harmony. The question is not to make war liveable for women, but to remove war from the security table. Empowering women’s peace leadership will be better for everyone. When women join politics they want to do something, when men join politics, they want to be something. None of the SDGs will make headway until we address women’s equality and empowerment. The UN has had a man occupy the head of the organisation for its entire 7 decades. Change is possible and long overdue.”

Ambassador Chowdhury shared that he was a proud feminist and advised us all to be feminists. “Feminism”, he clarified, “is not women against men; it is about human rights. It is about recognising the role of women and working with them to achieve change.”

In concluding, he advised us to consider this statement - “In your eagerness to get something done quickly, never lose your soul, and in the business of life, find space for spirituality”.



During the afternoon capacity building workshops, participants had a choice of attending two of the eight sessions.

Margaret Williams (senior Peace and Security Officer at the World Federation of United Nations Associations in New York) presented a session on ‘Advocacy, Building out a Strategy’. She explained the role the SDGs play in the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies; they provide

justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels of society. The SDGs are more inclusive, have many stakeholders, and thus provide ownership. They involve everyone everywhere to take responsibility, and they challenge member states to get involved.

She provided an extensive description of the process involved in building an advocacy toolkit. In order to attract interest in a cause, she suggested a focus on building a coalition. To do this, it is important to find the champion who 'gets' your cause and who will then champion your cause. It is important to build friendships and leave enemies at the door, rather than focusing on differences, find the sweet spot where you can work together with others.

When a project is ready to roll out, messaging is the key; it needs to be short, clear, relevant and powerful, linked to an action, and has a solution. You need to know your audience, publicise your message and pitch your message as, "I want to change x, y, and z and this is how to do it."



Angelica Selle (WFP USA President) presented a session on 'Leadership of the Heart' in which she explained how a leader can win the heart of people in order to make positive change.

She highlighted the motto of WFP USA which is 'to uplift, collaborate and transform'. In order to follow this motto, the truth is very simple – we need to ask how I care for others. The answer is only possible through developing relationships of the heart.

In peace building, we need to find common

ground, and to achieve this, we need to break down barriers, because one person does not have all the answers. Collaboration is the key to solve issues.



Feminine leadership is about building fulfilling relationships, and is the foundation for peace building. 'Leadership of the heart' is an innate feminine style of leadership that involves the act of thinking about people's hearts, embracing others, and preventing personal feelings from getting in the way for collaboration to occur. It involves seeing from a higher perspective, rather than just from a personal perspective. WFP is advocating 'leadership of the heart' to champion feminine styles of leadership in all areas of society. WFP is promoting balanced leadership, rather than the power of a masculine or feminine leadership style over the other. This is a partnership approach, where men and women work together to bring peaceful solutions to societies' problems.

Written by Anne Bellavance

# Meeting with WFWPI President Yeon Ah Nim

## United Nations, New York

Six delegates from Oceania attended this year's Commission on the Status of Women, five from Australia and a young woman representative from New Zealand. CSW62 was an opportunity to connect with our Oceania government delegates during the UN Side Events which were hosted or cosponsored by the Ministerial body of Oceania nations.

our regions to network with international NGOs and most especially to link our local work to what is happening with WFPW internationally. Thank you to the USA WFPW team and the WFPW UN team for providing the space to help develop our regions.

One of the highlights is the opportunity to attend international leaders meetings with our WFPW International president, Professor Yeon Ah Moon (YAN). She shared her heart and care for each of our regions. This year YAN spent time with delegates from each region. In a special session, she listening to and shared her wisdom to the group of young women from Europe, USA, Japan and Oceania. Oceania delegates had the opportunity to share with her during breakfast.

Written by Anne Bellavance



Grace Prentice, our WFPW young woman sponsored by FFWPU New Zealand, was invited to a private function with the NZ High Commission and NZ NGOs to celebrate the 125th anniversary since women in New Zealand gained the right to vote.

CSW is an excellent means for professional women and young future leaders of WFPW in



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## United Nations Affiliation

WFWP International became a "NGO in general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations" in 1997. This status has continued to be renewed based on the preparation of the Quadrennial Report.

Consultative status is granted by ECOSOC upon recommendation of the ECOSOC Committee on NGOs, which is comprised of 19 Member States. There are only 139 NGOs worldwide that hold the general consultative status. The requirements of this level of affiliation include:

- Applying organisation's activities must be relevant to the work of ECOSOC
- The NGO must have been in existence (officially registered) for at least two years in order to apply
- The NGO must have a democratic decision making mechanism
- The major portion of the organisation's funds should be derived from contributions from national affiliates, individual members, or other non-governmental components
- NGOs granted General Consultative Status must submit to the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, every fourth year, a brief report of their activities, in particular regarding their contribution to the work of the United Nations (Quadrennial Report). General consultative status is reserved for large international NGOs whose area of work covers most of the issues on the agenda of ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies. These tend to be fairly large, established international NGOs with a broad geographical reach.

The benefits of receiving this status include:

- The NGO may propose new items for consideration by the ECOSOC
- Organisations granted status are also invited to attend international conferences called by the UN General Assembly special sessions, and other intergovernmental bodies.

WFWP International maintains a UN office in New York City. WFWP International has twenty UN representatives in seven countries: Austria, Chile, Ethiopia, Lebanon, Switzerland, Thailand, and the US.

We thank all our members, sponsors and supporters for their contribution to WFWP Oceania.