

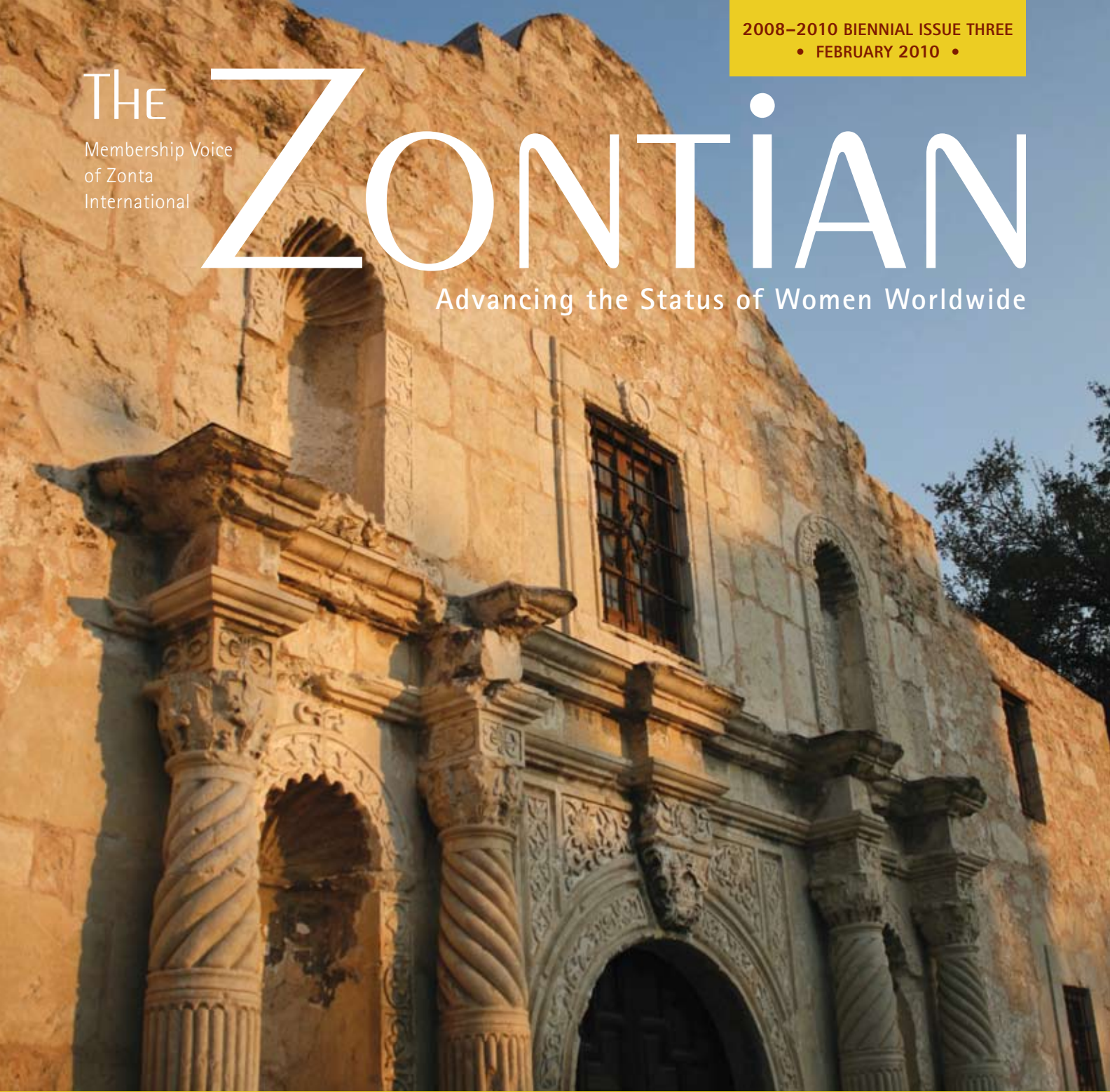
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• FEBRUARY 2010 •

The

Membership Voice
of Zonta
International

ZONTIAN

Advancing the Status of Women Worldwide





THE ZONTIAN

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Beryl Sten

Zonta's advocacy
can make a difference
and our vigilance is
needed to ensure that
our governments take
appropriate action.

Around the world, at least one woman in every three has been beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime. In most cases the abuser is a member of her own family. Deeply rooted in gender inequality, gender-based violence is increasingly being recognized as a major public health concern as well as a fundamental abuse of human rights.

Gender-based violence takes numerous forms. In many instances it is based on tradition or culture — dowry murder, early marriage (from 12 years), female infanticide and female genital mutilation. Approximately 100 to 140 million girls and women in the world have experienced female genital mutilation/cutting, with more than 3 million girls in Africa at risk of the practice annually; and more than 64 million girls worldwide are married before the age of 18. Other forms of violence include rape (also used as a weapon of war); trafficking into prostitution; forced labour, slavery or servitude; honor killings of rape victims or women suspected of engaging in premarital sex; coerced sex resulting in infection with HIV/AIDS; sexual harassment in the workforce or at school; and violence in police custody. According to the World Bank, women aged 15-44 years are more at risk from rape and domestic violence than from cancer, motor accidents, war and malaria.

The United Nations Secretary-General's campaign on the elimination of violence against women (UNiTE) was launched in February 2008, and there are excellent resources on the UN website which provide fact sheets, campaign ideas, UN resolutions on VAW, studies, a framework for action and links to UN partner websites. There are also sources on model legislation (developed this year), and a detailed inventory of UN system activities to prevent and eliminate VAW. All documents can be accessed through www.un.org/women-watch/daw/vaw and www.un.org/women/endviolence.

Of major concern to Zonta International, as well as to governments around the world, is the cost of violence against women or, as the World Health Organization describes it in their 2004 report, 'The Economic Dimensions of Interpersonal Violence'. They state that interpersonal violence is expensive — in the USA it is estimated at 3.3% of the gross domestic product (GDP). In England and Wales, violence, including homicide, wounding, and sexual assault, amounts to an estimated \$40.2 billion annually.

The latest 'cost' information has been produced in Australia by KPMG for the Australian government's plan of action to address VAW. The report updates the 2002-2003 costs (estimated at \$3.5 billion at that time) to 2021-2022. While the costs are of particular interest to the Australian government which commissioned the study, it is the methodology which will be of interest to all countries as it is extremely comprehensive and provides costs by category and rank order.

These costs are estimated as:

1. Pain, suffering and premature mortality (48%)
2. Consumption-related (23%)
3. Production-related (8%)
4. Transfer costs (7%)
5. Administrative (7%)
6. Health (5%)
7. Second generation (2%)

Continued on page 4...

“Ending violence against women is a top priority for Zonta International.”

Sources:

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The groups in society which bear these costs are:

- Victim / survivor (52%)
- Federal, state, territory governments (19%)
- Community (12%)
- Children (8%)
- Perpetrator (6%)
- Employers (3%)
- Friends and family (0.1%)

The most vulnerable groups are estimated to be:

- Immigrant and refugee women
- Women with disabilities
- Aboriginal and islander women
- Children who witness violence

Most alarming are the second generation costs associated with domestic violence. These costs include increased adult crime, increased juvenile crime, childcare, out-of-home care, child protection, changing schools and special/remedial education. Thus, the children who witness violence — our next generation — are victims too. Children subjected to violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect are at risk of death, poor physical and mental health, HIV/AIDS infection, educational problems, displacement, homelessness, and poor parenting skills later in life. Violence against children by any perpetrator — mother or father — is unacceptable. Without good parental role models, children that experience or witness violence are at risk of continuing this violent behavior as they grow into adulthood and become parents themselves, thus continuing the cycle of violence with a new generation of children.

All societies will experience similar impacts wherever violence occurs, so it is in a government's financial interest to intervene to prevent or curtail such events. It is also a government's responsibility to achieve a reduction and elimination of violence as part of their responsibilities for women's human rights under the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

Check your latest country reports to CEDAW for actions which your government is / is not taking relating to VAW. Advocate for data collection, preventative action and strategies, including changes to laws in dealing with perpetrators of violence.

The cost of violence against women to society is significant; the impact on children is intolerable as indicated in the second generation costs specified above.

Zonta's advocacy can make a difference and our vigilance is needed to ensure that our governments take appropriate action.

Ending violence against women is a top priority for Zonta International. As the only NGO that focuses on advancing the status of women, we must continue to support initiatives like the Say NO — UniTE campaign and maintain our financial commitment to the Zonta International Strategies to End Violence Against Women program. Together, we can promote and protect the rights of women and girls to lives free from all forms of violence.



Beryl Sten

Zonta International President

Zonta International Foundation President

Service and Award Programs

Zonta International is on the forefront of efforts to improve the legal, political, economic, educational, health and professional status of women around the globe. Programs funded by the Zonta International Foundation during the 2008–2010 Biennium have provided access to life-saving medical treatments, enhanced the ability of local authorities to enforce laws to end and prosecute incidences of violence against women, provided services to survivors of violence, and expanded educational and professional opportunities for women in aerospace-related sciences and engineering, business and public service.



Safe Cities for Women Project in Guatemala City and San Salvador

The Safe Cities Program by UNIFEM strengthens women’s citizenship and rights to reduce public and private violence against them in public spaces by integrating violence against women in the agendas of social organizations, women’s groups and municipalities, and in public policies on urban safety and urban planning, and by strengthening the participation of women’s organizations and local networks to increase government’s accountability to violence against women.

This project lays the ground for women’s organizations in Guatemala City and San Salvador to develop the capacity to identify risks in their communities, advocate for their right to neighborhoods free from violence and fear, and participate in the planning of safe neighborhoods with local authorities.

WITH ZONTA INTERNATIONAL’S SUPPORT, UNIFEM HAS:

- *worked to prevent violence in public spaces* in several municipalities in Guatemala City and San Salvador.
- *built capacity of women in these cities* to be informed, participate and organize as a way to enjoy their cities and move safely in public spaces, in full exercise of their rights.
- *trained women in Guatemala City* to become active citizens who conducted a local diagnosis on urban security and violence against women in public spaces and neighborhoods. The diagnosis resulted in a series of proposals that were presented to municipal authorities to inform the development of a guide to improve public spaces.
- *conducted workshops in Guatemala City resulting in*
 - women becoming aware of their rights as human beings and citizens, particularly their right to use public space without the fear of being victims of violence.
 - the implementation of a Women’s Forum where women discuss and make their voices heard in the community.
- *focused on the recovery of public spaces for women resulting in*
 - “Bikes and Steps” organized jointly with Women’s Office of the Municipality of Guatemala City; every Sunday cars are prohibited in some streets to allow citizens to have fun and enjoy the city.

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REPORT ON ZONTA INTERNATIONAL Service and Award Programs



(left) Dr. Mulbah, an obstetric fistula surgeon, speaks at the graduation ceremony for women who are leaving the Rehabilitation and Reintegration Center and returning to society.

(right) Equipped with starter kits, these graduates of the Rehabilitation and Reintegration Center are ready to return to their communities.

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SAFE CITIES FOR WOMEN PROJECT

- “The Gender Equality Drying Area” to discuss gender-based violence.
- *conducted workshops in San Salvador that resulted in*
 - The Salvadoran Women’s Organization for the Peace developing a Social Watch, or Observatory, on violence against women to disseminate strategies on VAW prevention, developing a series of indicators on violence against women in public spaces posted on a web site
 - a diagnosis of unsafe spaces, highlighting the perception of places where women feel they may suffer violence and presented the results to local authorities and to the Minister of Justice and Public Security and the National Director of the National Civil Police, who made a commitment to implement the recommendations.
 - development of advocacy strategies with the National Civil Police, the Municipal Major, Unit of Health, the Salvadoran Children’s and Youth Institute and schools, among others.

Reduction of Obstetric Fistula—Liberia

Liberia has an estimated population of 3.5 million with a high maternal mortality ratio estimated at 580 deaths per 100,000 live births. Fifteen years of civil crisis has affected the social and economic development negatively. The health service provision and the rebuilding of the health infrastructure face multiple challenges.

The exact prevalence rate of obstetric fistula is unknown. The initial information on maternal mortality ratio and initial information gathered as part of a 2006 fistula analysis provide indicative information that fistula is a major problem in Liberia. Key information in the 2006 analysis includes:

- Prolonged labour accounted for 87% of fistula cases.

Zonta International's support of UNFPA contributes to the overall goal of eliminating obstetric fistula and reducing maternal and newborn mortality and morbidity in Liberia.

- More than 55% of patients lived with fistula for more than 2 years before receiving treatment.
- 57% of women living with fistula were rejected by their husbands.
- 351 patients received fistula treatment from 2004–2005.

Liberia began a fistula program in 2007 in response to the recognized need for increased attention and work on obstetric fistula in the country. The fistula program is designed within the context of maternal and newborn health and is part of the Liberia Reproductive Health Program. It focuses on the three key intervention areas of prevention, treatment and reintegration of women following treatment.

Zonta International's support of UNFPA contributes to the overall goal of eliminating obstetric fistula and reducing maternal and newborn mortality and morbidity in Liberia.

Within the first year of the program, encouraging progress has been made toward the achievement of the main outputs. Examples of the main results to date include:

- Conducting ongoing media campaign, resulting in an increase in the number of patients treated since the start of the project, and an increase in community receptiveness to women living with fistula.
- 197 women received fistula treatment in 2009, contributing to more than 520 women treated since the start of the program.
- In 2009, 12 doctors and 30 nurses/midwives received training in fistula prevention and treatment, thereby helping to strengthen human resource capacity to address obstetric fistula.
- In 2009, 44 fistula survivors who received rehabilitation services and training were reintegrated in their communities.

In part due to support from Zonta, maternity services were provided within the catchment communities of the fistula rehabilitation center. As a result, 304 antenatal visits were conducted, including 112 new visits and 192 revisits. One patient was referred elsewhere for Caesarian Section due to an obstructed labor. Thirty-four normal deliveries were conducted, and 28 mothers received post-natal care.

With the support of Zonta, the Fistula Project provided fistula treatment to 197 patients, with an 81% rate of complete closure and dryness. Of the overall surgical interventions conducted in 2009, 81 were complex cases and 116 simple. These patients come from all over the country. Aside from JFK & Redemption hospitals in Monrovia, UNFPA has opened a major Fistula unit at the Liberian government hospital in Tubmanburgh, Bomi County.

In order to increase awareness of the availability of fistula services, media campaigns encourage fistula survivors to come out for treatment. A major fistula outreach campaign was conducted in August 2009. Two surgeons from Mali participated to foster south-south cooperation and opportunities for knowledge exchange and skills transfer. At the end of the 14-day campaign, a total of 67 patients received surgery in three hospitals: JFK medical center in Monrovia, Phebe hospital in Bong County (central Liberia) and Liberian government hospital in Tubmanburgh, Bomi County (south-eastern Liberia).

The Fistula Project in Liberia operates a Rehabilitation Center as part of

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REPORT ON ZONTA INTERNATIONAL Service and Award Programs



Rwanda, January 2010. A PMTCT counseling session in progress at the Kicukiro Health Center. Part of the “Family Package” of services which Zonta International is supporting through its partnership with UNICEF, the package includes voluntary, confidential, and free HIV testing and counseling; prenatal and obstetrical care; antiretroviral medication during pregnancy and delivery to prevent transmission; counseling on options to prevent transmission through infant feeding and income generating activities. ©U.S. Fund for UNICEF/Mia Brandt

“It is important that services like this exist because being HIV-positive is not a death sentence. Look at me. I am growing, I am giving and I am living.”



—Felona, whose own life has been deeply affected by the AIDS pandemic, is now a counselor for families living with HIV in Rwanda.

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REDUCTION OF OBSTETRIC FISTULA

the delivery of comprehensive fistula care. At the Rehabilitation Center, fistula survivors participate in 8 hours of training 5 days a week during a 4-month cycle. Each survivor stays at the Center 4 months where they receive meals three times a day and are provided with hygienic materials and personal effects. Following the cycle of training, they are equipped with starter kits to prepare them for adequate entry into their various communities. The starter kits are made of materials that will initiate re-entry into the community and create a sense of empowerment and employment with their newly developed skills.

Most fistula survivors are from rural parts of the country where illiteracy rates are very high. This has prompted the program to add an adult literacy program so fistula survivors can learn to read and write.

PREVENTION OF MOTHER-TO-CHILD TRANSMISSION OF HIV — RWANDA

Rwanda today is one of the most vibrant, dynamic and emerging democracies in Africa. While the wounds of the 1994 genocide are still raw, the country has elaborated its Vision 2020 for attaining not only the Millennium Development Goals, but national goals, has decentralized and devolved authority and most importantly — succeeded in increasing enrolment of girls and boys in school, reducing child mortality and electing the highest number of women to parliament (56%). Rwanda has sustained good economic growth rates averaging 5.8% per year.

However, there are some basic challenges that hinder rapid achievement of results, like:

- Half of the 9.1 million people are children, 220,000 of whom are orphans due to AIDS and 100,000 of whom live in child-headed households;
- Rwanda is still one of the poorest countries in the world and is ranked 167 out of 182 countries according to the UN Human Development Index (Human Development Report 2009).

UNICEF is working in partnership with UNAIDS, WHO and UNFPA within the framework of the “One UN Programme” and is contributing to result 2B (*The morbidity and mortality due to AIDS and other Epidemics is reduced*) of the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). The support from Zonta has been used to focus on prevention of mother to child transmission (PMTCT) of HIV and provision of health care, prenatal and obstetrical services, linkage to reproductive health programs, nutritional support, psychosocial services, and income-generating activities to HIV-positive mothers, with the specific objectives lined out in the goals for the PMTCT of HIV in Rwanda project.

The aim of the PMTCT program is elimination of transmission of HIV from mother to child and hence requires ensuring elimination of new infections in women of reproductive age combined with effective intervention of pregnant HIV positive women.



A mother, with her child on her lap, engaging in an income generating activity through the PMTCT “Family Package” program at the Kicukiro Health Center, which is supported by the Zonta International/UNICEF project. A large order for knitted scarves had just been received by the center. Other activities include weaving baskets, sewing fabric dolls, and beadwork, as well as staffing an on-site canteen. ©U.S. Fund for UNICEF/Mia Brandt

UNICEF and its implementing partners, with the support of Zonta and the US Fund for UNICEF, have achieved the following results:

1. Scaling-up PMTCT plus service in 20 sites by supporting provision of comprehensive services for prevention of vertical transmission of HIV. The comprehensive PMTCT services include:

- promoting couples/partner testing
- ensuring that all HIV-infected pregnant women receive CD4 testing to determine eligibility for Anti Retroviral Therapy (ART) testing
- reinforcing active referral of Highly Active Antiretroviral Therapy (HAART) eligible pregnant women for early enrolment into the HIV care and treatment program
- improving testing in the maternity for women of unknown HIV status
- strengthening the follow-up of mother-infant pairs by establishing a system for home visits
- integrating family panning of HIV services
- ensuring routine follow-up of HIV exposed infants and provision of early HIV diagnosis

More specifically, UNICEF was able to provide technical and financial support for:

- capacity building of health care staff
- community mobilization for male partners’ involvement and couple HIV counseling and testing
- mentorship and supportive supervision for the transition from single dose nevirapine to the more efficacious anti-retroviral (ARV drugs) regimens for PMTCT
- delivery assisted by health care provider
- care for the HIV-exposed and infected infants
- routine provision of Cotrimoxazole Preventive Therapy (CPT) to all sites to HIV-exposed infants
- early infant diagnosis of HIV

2. Empowering HIV+ women for their own benefit and that of the whole family through strengthening PMTCT family package approach

With the contribution from Zonta it was possible:

- to strengthen the implementation of the family package approach to 7 sites, including 5 old sites and 2 new ones
- to support the empowerment of women living with HIV, organized into associations, where they received vocational training for the confection of local handmade artistic articles and on sewing techniques The project also supported acquisition of 30 sewing machines for 6 associations of women and 120 pieces of cloth material for start-up income-generating activities.
- to ensure sustainability, all 6 associations supported were mentored for the creation of the cooperative. Investing their benefits into a cooperative will allow the association to be able to directly provide start-up funds to new members.
- psychosocial support of HIV+ women and their families

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REPORT ON ZONTA INTERNATIONAL Service and Award Programs



*(above) Awareness-raising workshop,
Ezbet El-Haggana*



*(right) Training workshop with Centre's
staff and volunteers*

ZISVAW PROJECTS

Zonta's support to the UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women/ UNIFEM this biennium is directed towards three countries — Cambodia, Egypt and Syria. The projects aim to raise broad awareness of the existence of violence against women and to strengthen advocacy in order to accelerate the implementation of relevant laws.

CAMBODIA

In Cambodia, Gender and Development for Cambodia, with the support of Zonta International, works with local communities to establish men's and women's groups to educate their peers on stopping violence and utilizing their rights to seek legal protection. In only one year, the groups have organized hundreds of village meetings involving more than 3,000 people and reached out to an additional 6,000 women and men through door-to-door campaigns. Women's community groups resolved or referred cases of violence against women for prosecution, and men's community groups counseled perpetrators on alternative forms of behavior.

Among the achievements are:

- Increased availability of sex-disaggregated data on demographic, social and legal issues related to VAW
- Strengthened capacity of women from target communes to monitor the incidence of VAW and the implementation of VAW-related legislation and to hold local authorities accountable
- Engagement of men from targeted communes to end VAW
- Local authorities and police from target communes enforce violence against women-related laws.

EGYPT

In Egypt, the Al Shehab Foundation, with the support of Zonta International, organized five focus groups in a slum outside Cairo to identify the most prevalent forms of violence the women experience, their causes and consequences. From these focus groups, they found that female genital mutilation was widely practiced and not considered a form of violence. These women are often held responsible for violence acts committed against them and rarely

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Chheuy Ratha, aged 25 years old, with his wife and children in Pong Ro commune, Rolea Paer district, Kg. Chhnang province after visiting by CMGs

“I used to regard my self as a head household and last decision maker in my family. A men’s core group always visit me. He told me about law against domestic violence, which I did not hear before. He explained me about basic rights of women and as well as the gender relation between spouses in family. I also was invited to sit in the village meeting with other men where we shared each other about experiences of ourselves in relation violence against wives. I started to realize about violence is violation of women’s right, than I decided to change my harmful behavior and ideology. I now change and recognize the importance of my wife in promoting family harmony and development in our family. I helped my wife and family by looking for job as construction worker, I have some money for family, for children schooling and playing role model for them. For the future, I will reach for consultation with my men’s group in the village rather than committing violence. And now, I gain more respect from my neighbor.”

REPORT ON ZONTA INTERNATIONAL Service and Award Programs

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ZISVAW PROJECTS

report incidences of violence because of a lack of economic opportunities or safe place to go if they leave a violent home. Using this information, the Al Shehab Foundation developed a One-Stop Centre in the slum to provide the appropriate legal, medical and psychosocial aid to survivors.

Achievements and results to date are:

- Strengthened capacity of community-based organizations and shelters to provide quality services to women survivors of violence in six communities of six Egyptian governorates (Cairo, Suez, Minia, Quena, Aswan and Qalyubia)
- Increased awareness of women from Ezbet El-Haggana, a slum area in Greater Cairo, on violence against women and increased capacity to monitor and report cases
- Increased awareness of members from Ezbet El-Haggana on VAW

SYRIA

With the support of Zonta International, the Association for Women's Role Development in Syria created a one-stop center to provide immediate protection, medical and legal aid, counseling, and rehabilitation and reintegration services for survivors of violence. The Centre, which provides services to approximately 1,000 survivors of violence a year, focused on developing and strengthening the capacity of the Centre and its staff and volunteers to provide quality services. To reach women throughout Syria and ensure privacy and confidentiality for those women seeking assistance, the Centre also established a telephone hotline.

AWARD PROGRAMS

AMELIA EARHART FELLOWSHIPS



*Amelia Earhart Fellow
(1994-1995), Naoko Yamazaki*

Amelia Earhart Fellow (1994-1995), **Naoko Yamazaki**, prepares to lift off from Kennedy Space Center for a two-week flight as a Japanese crew member of the Atlantis on 18 March 2010. During this important mission, the Atlantis is to carry equipment and materials to the International Space Station, and Yamazaki will be responsible for operating a robotic arm.

Naoko Yamazaki (born December 27, 1970) is a Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) astronaut, and the second Japanese woman to qualify as an astronaut. The first was Chiaki Mukai who was named a Zonta International Honorary Member in 2000.

Yamazaki is married to Taichi Yamazaki, a flight controller with Mitsubishi Space Software, and they have an 8-year-old daughter. Naoko stated: "Now my daughter is beginning to understand space and space shuttles." She told me, "Mom you're going to be the one to fly on that!"

Yamazaki joined NASA's Astronaut Candidate Training in June 2004. Astronaut Candidate Training includes orientation briefings and tours, numerous scientific and technical briefings, intensive instruction in Shuttle and International Space Station systems, physiological training, T-38 flight

training, and water and wilderness survival training. Successful completion of this initial training qualifies Yamazaki for various technical assignments within the Astronaut Office.

Zonta International wishes Naoko Yamazaki a safe and successful trip. We are proud of Naoko, and her story is just one of many of the successes of our Amelia Earhart Fellows.

To date, the Amelia Earhart Fellowship program has provided women from 59 countries with the necessary financial resources to conduct innovative research and develop new technologies as they achieve their educational goals and realize their dreams. This year, Zonta received 115 applications from talented women worldwide. The Committee met at the end of January to review the applications, and the recipients will be notified by the end of March. It is through your contributions to the Amelia Earhart Fellowship Fund that we provide financial assistance to women like Naoko Yamazaki who are pursuing PhD /doctoral degrees in aerospace-related sciences and engineering.



2009 International JMK Scholarship Recipient, Samantha Seto (District 4)

JANE M. KLAUSMAN WOMEN IN BUSINESS SCHOLARSHIPS

The Jane M. Klausman Women in Business Scholarship program continues to expand opportunities for women pursuing careers in business-related fields. The 12 international recipients of the 2009 Scholarships represent 7 countries around the globe. In addition to their academic achievements, they demonstrated strong leadership skills and a commitment to service. Many of them hope to one day open their own business and give back to the communities in which they will live and work.

YOUNG WOMEN IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS AWARDS

The Young Women in Public Affairs Award program continues to grow through support at the club and district levels. Applications are currently available at www.zonta.org. Promote this Award in your local communities, and encourage more young women to continue their participation in public and political life. ■

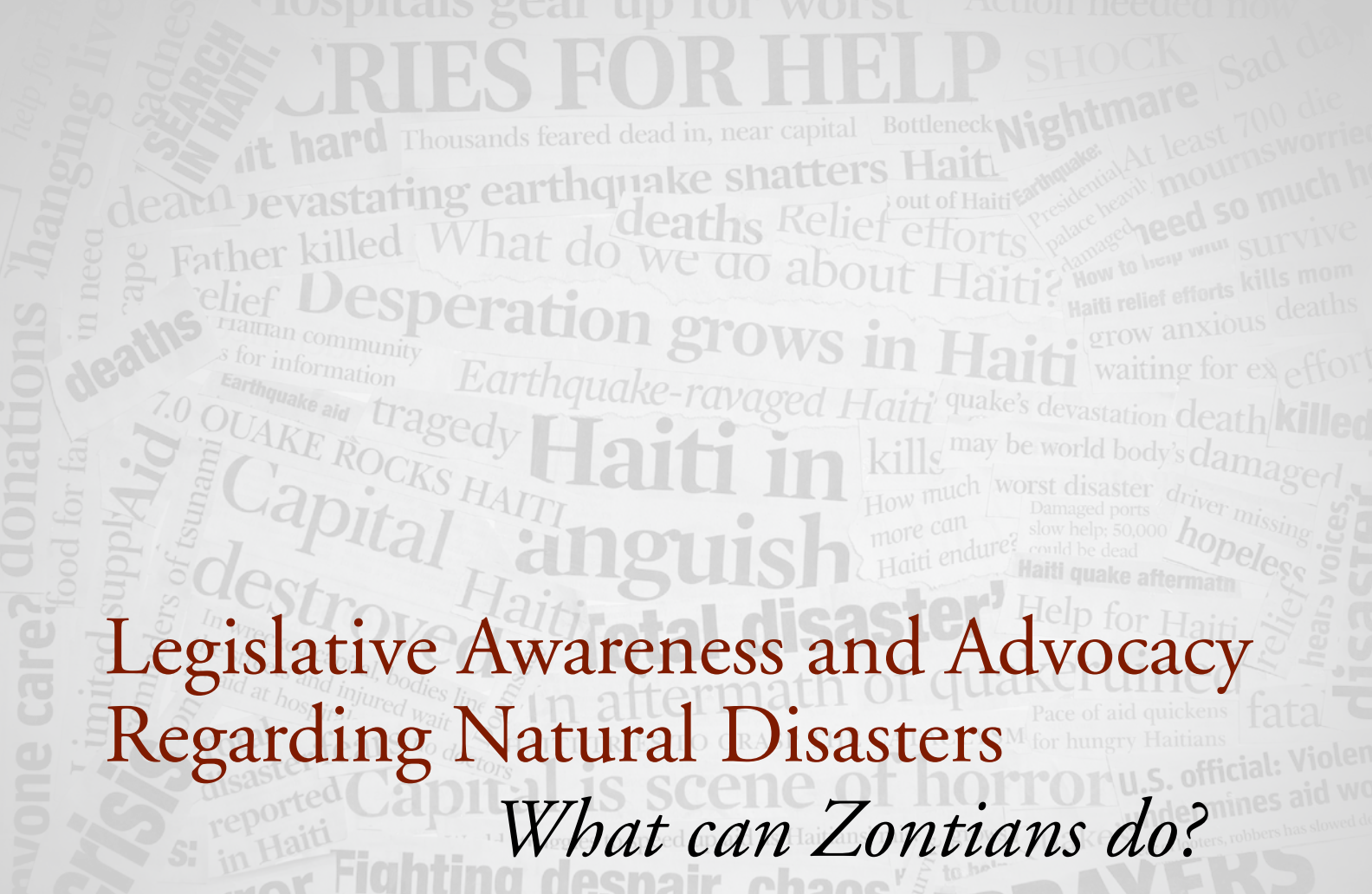
WOMEN NEED OUR SUPPORT — DONATE NOW!

With the support of Zonta International and the Zonta International Foundation, our International Service and ZISVAW projects have made great strides toward achieving Zonta's mission to advance the status of women worldwide; however, these projects are not finished. As they learn from the challenges they have faced and make improvements, updates on their results and successes will be posted on the Zonta International website.

The Zonta International Service Program seeks to improve the legal, political, economic, educational and/or health status of women in developing countries or countries in transition.

The Zonta International Strategies to Prevent Violence Against Women (ZISVAW) Program seeks to reduce the incidence of violence against women and girls by changing personal and/or political knowledge, attitudes and behaviors contributing to violence against women.

This report contains information from project progress reports submitted by UNIFEM, UN Trust Fund to Eliminate Violence Against Women (UNIFEM), UNICEF and UNFPA.



Legislative Awareness and Advocacy Regarding Natural Disasters

What can Zontians do?

BY DENISE CONROY
*Chairman, International Legislative
Awareness and Advocacy Committee*

Natural disasters are occurring around the world at an alarming rate. In 2009, we have had Zontians experience bushfires/wildfires; typhoons/cyclones/hurricanes; tornados; earthquakes; tsunamis; floods/landslides/mudslides; pandemics (swine flu); drought (and associated effects such as desertification, famine); heatwaves and cold snaps in their country of domicile and some have been affected by more than one such disaster this year.

An immediate response from our members is what can Zonta do? Or, more precisely, what role can Zonta International play, or the relevant district, area, club or individual member? Our International President has had a 'flood' of emails from concerned members on each occasion that we have heard of a 'disaster' this year and has asked me to prepare some suggestions for action.

The potential for action by Zontians spans 'advocacy' and 'working with and through relevant UN

agencies but in a coordinated way' so that our actions do not adversely affect what the UN agencies, governments and relevant emergency relief agencies (NGOs) are expert at doing.

As Zontians, we must not just act emotively without also taking the time to think rationally about the situation. Disaster relief and emergency management involves complex and strategic coordination of effort, which Zonta (at any level) is not set up to do.

What can Zonta members do in Zonta's name in response to natural disasters?

LEVEL	RESPONSE	COORDINATOR / ACTION
International disaster in a country other than your own	None as a Zontian. Refer concerns to UN Committee Chairman.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ZI President ■ UN Committee Chairman
National (within <u>own</u> country) (Where a disaster affects more than one district within a country, the relevant District Governors should confer on the matter <u>before</u> reporting to members).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ None as a Zontian. ■ As individuals, we can volunteer to assist disaster relief organizations or donate money/goods to authorized appeals. Be aware, however, that it may not be possible to direct such donations/goods to benefit women in affected communities. ■ If any Zonta members have been adversely affected, please advise the District Governor of the district in which the disaster has occurred. ■ As individuals, we can respond to appeals or provide assistance to other Zonta members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LAA Committee Chairman ■ District Governor to advise members of <u>own district only</u> and ascertain what assistance may be of most help.
State/Province (within <u>own</u> State/Province)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ None as a Zontian. ■ There can be individual support for general victims or response as individual Zontians for Zonta members in disasters at a local level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Area Director to advise District Governor who will then inform other members in the district.

Our primary focus is on improving the status of women, and we are now the only women's NGO which has this specific purpose.

Zonta International is not a welfare agency, nor a disaster relief/emergency organization. Our primary focus is on improving the status of women, and we are now the only women's NGO which has this specific purpose. To be able to focus on our set Objects, we should not attempt to take on other responsibilities such as disaster relief, but leave such tasks to specialist agencies which have the relevant expertise. **So let us examine what Zonta can do and then look at the realities of natural disasters and the capacity of our organization to respond in a way which does not adversely affect any relief efforts.**

Zonta's role in a 'reactive' situation (that is, following a disaster) is very limited. **For natural disasters which occur outside our own country, or on a broad scale within our own country, we should play no role in disaster-relief in Zonta's name.** An exception might be at a district/

area level where club members join together to be volunteers who are 'directed' by relevant coordinating agencies (such as Emergency Services Department, Police, etc.) to provide on-the-ground assistance.

Zonta's major role in disaster relief should be a proactive one where we ensure that there is an appropriate response when necessary. This we can do most effectively through advocacy.

At the **international** level, the UN and LAA Committee Chairmen can brief the ZI executive on the need to advocate that international agencies, governments and their defense personnel, are 'attuned' to the gender dimensions of disasters. We can advocate to ECOSOC and CSW that each country has a disaster relief plan which is gender sensitive. This plan should be assessed as part of a country's report to CEDAW or in their report on progress towards the MDGs, particularly MDG3.

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WOMEN OF HAITI NEED OUR SUPPORT—HOW WILL ZONTA RESPOND?

Relief organizations around the world have taken swift action to help the Haitian people recover from the devastating effects of the earthquake, providing rescue services and support for survivors. The infrastructure needs of the country — reconstruction of roads, peoples' homes, hospitals — are demanding, and the international community is providing the resources to meet these needs and the humanitarian needs of the people of Haiti.

The recovery and rebuilding process in Haiti will, however, be a long one. The Zonta International Board has begun discussions with UNIFEM about a project that will be in place after the immediate need for help has decreased. In the aftermath of the earthquake, when law and order is not functioning, women and girls are at risk to be victims of all kinds of violence, including adult crime, increased juvenile crime, trafficking into labor or sexual exploitation. As a strategic partner of UNIFEM, Zonta is working on a project which will both meet Zonta's mission and objects and address the issue of violence against women in the aftermath of the earthquake. This proposed project will be brought to the Convention in San Antonio for voting as laid out in the international bylaws.

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At the **national** level, Zonta districts can advocate for gender-sensitive disaster-relief plans for the types of disasters experienced within their country, and pay special attention to any inquiries held post-disasters to see if such issues were addressed. It is extremely important that lessons from disasters are not just about the structural damage or the urgent requirements for food, shelter, clothing, clean water and sanitation. They also need to include the recognition of women's different needs, vulnerabilities, capacities and coping strategies based on research rather than stereotypes. This recognition requires systematic social and gender analysis in a given context.

Any efforts by national governments to assist in the international arena should also take note of such gender-sensitive issues. The checklists and guidelines mentioned previously provide more detailed suggestions.

At the **state/province or local level**, members can also advocate for gender-sensitive disaster-relief plans. Most local governments are required to have such plans; and, of course, they become extensively involved in disaster recovery efforts. Apart from advocating for plans which take account of women's needs, members could become emergency service volunteers or indicate their preparedness to assist other well-known disaster relief agencies such as the Red Cross, Salvation Army, Oxfam, Doctors Without Borders (Medecins Sans Frontiers), Mercy Corp, etc. and become personally involved in helping women victims. There are also relief organizations to which other professionals can volunteer (e.g. Architects Without Borders, Engineers Without Borders, Scientists Without Borders). Another proactive stance which can be taken at the state/province or local level is to comment on failures

of public policy which may have contributed to the disaster outcomes. This failure could include the failure of government to prevent the building of residences in vulnerable areas (e.g. too close to coastlines, on mountain slopes, too close to river valleys) or to allow buildings which cannot withstand strong winds or where there may be sub-standard building codes or lack of building inspections that allow 'at risk' dwellings to be erected.

Where there have been inquiries into previous disasters and reports issued, have the recommendations for improved practices/processes been followed up?

Frustrating though it may be for Zonta members to take a more 'passive' role with respect to natural disasters, we do need to realise that we cannot respond to every crisis or need in our communities. We are a relatively small organization compared to other women's service organizations (such as Soroptimist International — 90,000 members) and we are extremely small if we compare ourselves to community service organizations such as Lions International (1.4 million members) and Rotary International (1.2 million members).

So, what **can** we do?

Zontians can volunteer as individuals; we can also donate personally to established relief efforts. Most importantly, we can use our advocacy efforts to ensure that the needs of women affected by disasters are not neglected by our respective governments' response to any calls for assistance.

The following 'background' information explains why Zonta itself should not be actively involved in relief efforts.

The realities

1. **Most of today's humanitarian emergencies are multidimensional** and require the simultaneous response of a range of organizations — govern-

A community-based disaster preparedness and response plan that takes women's physical, psychological, social and economic vulnerabilities into account will help reduce their vulnerability overall.

ments, disaster/emergency NGOs, UN agencies and individual volunteers.

Zonta International (at all levels) does not have the capacity or the expertise to play a role in field coordination. We also do not have any capacity to distribute funds or goods to women in need in such emergencies (apart from, perhaps, Zonta members helping their other club members who may have been adversely affected).

2. With respect to our Objects, we are, of course, concerned with the human rights of women who have been affected by such disasters. One of the aspects of our Advocacy Policy is that, **where an event occurs 'outside' our own country which causes us some concern, we contact the UN Chairman with such concerns and not take any direct action ourselves.**

The importance of this was brought home to us some years ago with the Amina Lawal case in Nigeria, when we were advised that adverse comments made about this case and about the Nigerian Government's actions at the time were having the effect of making things worse for this person. Good intentions, emotive reactions (in this case to a grave abuse of human rights) had unintended negative consequences. It made the situation much worse for the person we were trying to assist.

Similarly, **there can be unintended negative consequences in responses to natural disasters where, if we provided donations, they either do not reach their intended 'destination' or where 'doing our own thing' without consultation with the designated coordinating agencies can have an adverse affect on the relief effort.**

Research has shown these negative effects to be (*inter alia*):

- Uncontrolled or unsolicited shipments of donations arriving unannounced in the disaster area can easily interfere with other ongoing disaster response operations.

- Donations not coordinated by relief organizations (not met at the point of entry to a country or not stored in a secure distribution centre) can be hijacked and sold so any efforts to obtain such donations will have been in vain.
- It is inefficient to have to distribute donations which just arrive in boxes either unmarked or as 'mixed' items. Precious time has to be spent sorting and re-boxing these donations. Also, it is more efficient to deal with products packaged in uniform configurations as it is easier to load/unload them on pallets. Experienced agencies involved in emergency relief know about such obstacles and handle goods in an efficient way.
- General relief drives collecting previously used, or new, personal property such as clothing and household products may not benefit the community in need but can, if sent unsolicited, make it more difficult for critically needed items to reach those who are in need.

3. **There exist real concerns about the feasibility and appropriateness of giving people cash.** With respect to the 2004 tsunami affecting Sri Lanka, reluctance and fears prevented the use of cash due to a fear that people would buy the wrong things. There was also a concern that money would go to fund the conflict, either willingly or by extortion; and agencies had little experience with cash and did not have systems for distributing it.

The major problem with cash payments is that markets are very diverse and complex and can be difficult to understand; what can work in one situation or country, may not work in another.

It is also difficult to ensure that, as a donor, your 'cash' gets to your intended recipients. In District 24 in early 2005, approximately \$38,000 AUD was 'donated' by Zontians for

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the tsunami victims. The District sent the funds to the Australian Red Cross with a specific request that they be used to support women affected by the tsunami. To this day, we have no idea how these funds were used—all we have is a receipt for the amount given.

Again, the reality is that we can have the best intentions, but we lack the operational capacity to put them into effect. Even the presence of Zonta clubs in a disaster affected area will not guarantee distribution according to the donors' wishes as it is likely that members will have been adversely affected themselves and are not able to assist, nor should we expect them to perform a disaster relief role.

4. **There are key agencies** such as the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the World Health Organization (WHO), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), **which have adopted a gender perspective to humanitarian aid.**

All UN agencies and governments which are signatories to CEDAW are obliged to consider the need for gender-specific responses to the provision of aid in pursuit of not only CEDAW goals but also the Beijing +10 Goals and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), particularly MDG 3.

See:

- 1) WHO Checklist www.who.int/gender/gwhdisasterassessment2.pdf
- 2) UN-HABITAT www.unhabitat.org/downloads/docs/872_40033_GenderDMP.pdf
- 3) FAO Socio-Economic and Gender Analysis for Emergency and Rehabilitation Programmes www.fao.org/docrep/008/y5702e/y5702e00.htm

The UN Security Council, ECO-SOC and the Inter-Agency Standing

Committee have all called on humanitarian actors to mainstream a gender perspective into all humanitarian programs. To use the tsunami of late 2004 again as an example, gender issues were forgotten in the initial assessment needs. Many more women than men died, but there was no analysis of the implication that this demographic change would have on surviving communities. Such omissions led to failures to meet protection needs and served to reinforce discriminatory structures, thus undermining women's opportunities for recovery. (IASC, 2006)

We, in Zonta, have no capacity to undertake such gender analysis in disaster-stricken areas which is what we would need to do in order to direct any efforts to improving the status of women in either the short or long term, thus meeting our Objects. Of course, in the first instance assistance is needed to rescue those who can be saved and to restore safe drinking water and sanitation systems and to prevent the outbreak of disease.

Researchers who have studied gender effects of disasters agree that any response to providing aid or assisting with development must include both the needs, and the potential contributions, of women as well as men.

A community-based disaster preparedness and response plan that takes women's physical, psychological, social and economic vulnerabilities into account will help reduce their vulnerability overall. A plan that goes further to recognize women's abilities and include them in disaster relief efforts, will help change gendered beliefs about women. (PAHO, n.d.)

Zonta is not set up to provide the kinds of organizational services needed in disasters, nor do we have the capacity to coordinate efforts in the field to deal with national disasters and emergencies. These efforts are best left to organizations

which have the required expertise and capacity to respond quickly. The only "good" thing to come from so many disasters in recent times has been the increased preparedness of agencies such as the Red Cross, World Vision, Save the Children and Oxfam International. Save the Children has built up warehouses in various locations in Indonesia, for example, and trained hundreds of relief workers to better respond to the earthquakes and other disasters which frequently affect the country. World Vision is similarly prepared in this region as is UNICEF. ■

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Zonta International and the United Nations: Partnering at the Global Level to Promote the Rights of Women and Girls

BY JACKIE SHAPIRO
*Chairman, Zonta International
UN Committee*

In the introduction to their new book, "Half the Sky", Pulitzer Prize-winning authors Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn state their belief that "in this century, the paramount moral challenge will be the struggle for gender equality in the developing world." Their articulate voices have generated a welcomed increase in public awareness of some of the key issues that Zonta International has been addressing for several decades through both our representatives at the United Nations and our international service projects.

I would add, however, as many of us know and have experienced, that women encounter widespread gender inequality throughout the world, not just in developing countries.

When the United Nations was established in 1945, its Charter expressed many of the same goals for women's rights and universal freedom and justice that were adopted when Zonta International was founded in 1919. It is no surprise then that Zonta International saw the UN's potential to play a strong role in advocating for women worldwide and has supported the UN since its inception.

Today, the United Nations is universally acknowledged as the premier world body working to advance the status of women and girls and to promote women's rights and gender equality around the globe. Organizations, whose mission is advocacy for women and girls, come to the UN

to partner with other like-minded groups to highlight obstacles in their work, to exchange information on successful strategies that have made a difference in the lives of women and girls, and, above all, to work with the UN to enact and implement more policies and programs that focus on women and girls.

I have written and spoken countless times over the years about some of the UN bodies that work on gender issues and about how our own Zonta International representatives help to move the agenda for women forward. I have come to understand that the UN structures and operations are very complex, especially to those who do not work with the UN on a regular basis.

Let us take, for example, a landmark resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 14 September 2009. The resolution requests that the UN Secretary General appoint



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an individual at the rank of Under Secretary General to head a new entity that would be created by consolidating the four existing UN bodies whose work is focused on women — the Office of the Special Advisor on Gender and the Advancement of Women (OSAGI), the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the International Training and Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW). For more than three years, in an effort to create a more effective and coherent UN development system on gender issues, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from around the world have advocated and consulted with Member States to forge a consensus that such a composite body offers the best possibility for the UN to advance women's equality, empowerment and rights. Continued vigilance and advocacy by NGOs will be needed, however, to ensure that this new entity is both adequately funded to carry out its expanded mandate and fully integrated into the UN's decision-making structure for women's voices to be heard.

Just this one initiative will involve many UN bodies and NGOs for long periods of time and on many levels before it can be successfully moved forward. At the same time, there are countless other programs and advocacy efforts aimed at advancing the rights of women and girls taking place every day, many of which offer opportunities for Zonta International's UN representatives to participate in establishing priorities.

Zonta International is affiliated with the United Nations as an NGO in different ways. As an accredited NGO with a strong interest in the work of the UN, Zonta obtains

information through the Department of Public Information (DPI) and reports back to Zontians all over the world to enhance their understanding and build support for the UN's work. Zonta International is also affiliated with the UN through Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), a special arrangement for NGO organizations whose work is deemed by Member States to contribute to the achievement of UN objectives. There are several categories of NGO ECOSOC affiliation, and Zonta International has the most extensive — General Consultative Status. Some 1,500 non-governmental organizations are affiliated through DPI and more than 3,000 are affiliated through ECOSOC, though many, like Zonta International have both affiliations.

When individuals are accredited to represent their organization at the United Nations, they begin to participate in committees of NGOs organized at the UN. Zonta International is a member of the Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations (CONGO). Founded in 1948, CONGO's mandate is to increase opportunities for NGOs to participate in debates and decision-making processes at the UN. One way that CONGO is most effective is through the organization of standing committees that inform and engage NGOs in ensuring that their particular issues of concern — be it the status of women, sustainable development or mental health — are prominent on the agenda for action by Member States and UN bodies. There are 12 CONGO standing committees in Geneva, 23 in New York and 8 in Vienna.

There are also other committees outside CONGO, such as the NGO Committee on UNICEF, working groups, such as the Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, and numerous ad hoc committees, which

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“Every issue is a woman’s issue.”

—American Congresswoman
Bella Abzug

address important issues for women’s rights and offer opportunities for NGOs to work together.

As American Congresswoman Bella Abzug once aptly remarked, “Every issue is a woman’s issue.” Zonta International’s UN representatives must carefully select which activities they undertake so that they can make the greatest possible contributions toward fulfilling our organization’s commitments to women’s rights. The following is a mere sketch of some of the areas in which our Zonta International UN representatives are working to advance the status of women and girls. Of course, in Geneva, New York and Vienna where there are CONGO Committees on the Status of Women, all our UN representatives are expected to take part.

In Geneva, Simone Ovar is the Vice Chair of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women and, in particular, is extremely busy representing Zonta International at meetings of the Human Rights Council and the CEDAW Committee. She is also Vice Chair of the CONGO Committee on Human Rights.

In New York, our representatives are active with both the NGO Committee on UNIFEM and the NGO Committee on UNICEF. In addition, I am the Vice Chair of the

NGO/DPI Executive Committee, which works with the UN’s Department of Public Information (DPI) to represent the voices of NGOs from around the world. As Co-Chair of the NGO Committee on UNICEF, I am currently busy preparing for the 20th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Karen Siegel and Mary Ann Tarantula are both active in the sub-committee on violence against women (part of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women). Karen has also adamantly worked to bring a focus on gender to the NGO Committee on Mental Health.

In Paris, long-time representative Janine N’Diaye and representatives Monique Vernet and Jacqueline Besnard are working on programs to advance a UNESCO priority issue of Education for All, notably primary education for all children and a massive reduction in adult illiteracy. This effort includes a special emphasis on gender equality initiatives.

In Vienna, our team is anchored by Eva-Maria Kodek-Werba, who also serves as Treasurer of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women. Eveline Hejlek is a member of the NGO Committee on Narcotic Drugs. Zonta International has a special interest in the work of the UN Office of Drugs and Crime as it relates to

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*International UN Committee Chairman,
Jackie Shapiro, at the 2009 DPI/INGO
Conference in Mexico City with Yuru
Chou, member of the Zonta Club of New
York, and two members of the Tzu Cho
Foundation from California.*

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the trafficking of women. Monika Klenovec continues to serve as the Chair of the NGO Committee on Ageing, which is promoting a General Recommendation to CEDAW on the Rights of Older Women.

As essential as our work on standing committees has been, our participation in UN-organized world conferences has been equally important. Hilka Pietila in her must-read pamphlet, "Engendering the Global Agenda: A Success Story of Women and the United Nations", chronicles the change between intergovernmental conferences of the 1970s and 1980s, where it was a matter of chance whether women's voices were articulated and heard, and what is now a powerful, effective network of women's advocates participating actively in conferences throughout the world. Pietila also remarks that the enthusiastic participation of women from all over the world in UN conferences is "a manifestation of women's great expectations and faith in the potential of the United Nations."

Zonta International has participated in and continues to be engaged in many UN-sponsored conferences. The one most closely related to our work is the annual Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) held in New York. The CSW is the principal, global policy-making body for gender equality and the advancement of women. For fifty-four years, the Commission has met to evaluate progress made on gender equality, identify challenges, and formulate actions to promote the advancement of women throughout the world. The Commission also makes recommendations to ECOSOC, of which it is a functional committee, on urgent problems regarding women's rights that require immediate attention.

Zonta International UN representatives are very active in their various sites in preparing for these meetings. Zonta International, under its General Consultative Status, has the right to submit a 2,000 word statement to the CSW on its work for women. Our representatives on the NGO Committees on the Status of Women and other committees in Geneva and Vienna will also take part in formulating group statements to the CSW. In Geneva, Simone Ovar and other NGO representatives are organizing interactive roundtables for the UN-ECE (the regional Economic Commission that includes Europe, Canada and the United States) Beijing+15 review meetings. In New York, a two-day NGO Forum is being planned prior to the CSW.

This year's meeting will celebrate 15 years since the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing and will review the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action for Equality, Peace and Development (PFA). The Zonta International President, President-elect and International Legislative Awareness and Advocacy Chairman, Denise Conroy, will join other Zonta representatives in participating in these meetings.

While the CSW is an important annual event for Zonta International, it is only one of many in which Zonta UN representatives have assumed a prominent role. Other important events include the CEDAW Committee meetings which are held twice a year in Geneva and once a year in New York, a meeting organized by our Paris team on "E.F.A. and Higher Education", the ECOSOC High Level Segment Annual Ministerial Review in Geneva on "Implementing the Internationally Agreed Goals and Commitments Regarding Global Public Health," and the 61st Annual DPI/NGO Conference in Mexico City on the theme of "Disarmament, Peace and Development."

As you can see, your Zonta International UN representatives are working very hard in many areas to advance the service and advocacy goals of our organization, and the volunteer efforts of each and every one of them must be applauded.

This outstanding work of our UN representatives has positioned Zonta International as a leader among NGO groups in advancing the status of women and girls at the United Nations. Our international service projects partnering with UN agencies have further contributed to Zonta International's reputation. Zonta International is frequently named by UNIFEM in its programs and publicity as its largest NGO donor. We are widely recognized as a major NGO partner of the UN Trust Fund to Eliminate Violence against Women, which is administered by UNIFEM. Similarly, at a dinner I was invited to attend for the President and First Lady of Rwanda, the President of the US Fund for UNICEF mentioned Zonta International twice in her opening remarks! What a welcome acknowledgement of our work and a testament to Zonta's organizational effectiveness!

While the Zonta International's United Nations team and our international service projects are contributing enormously to fulfilling our goal to advance the status of women and girls worldwide, every Zonta member has an opportunity to get involved. Do your part by informing others about the UN's important work in promoting women's rights and gender equality, by advocating for gender empowerment initiatives put forward under UN leadership and by financially supporting our international service projects that are making a difference in the lives of women and girls every day around the globe. ■

Remembering Dr. Beatrix Kempf

ZONTIAN, JOURNALIST AND ADVOCATE FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS (1908–2009)



Dr. Beatrix Kempf

Club members were always fascinated by stories she shared about her life and experiences and enjoyed her discussions of politics and trends of the new century.

Publicly, Dr. Beatrix Kempf is perhaps best known for authoring “Women for Peace: The Life of Bertha Von Suttner,” a biography of Austrian Bertha Von Suttner—the first woman to be named a Nobel Prize Laureate. However, for the Zonta Club Vienna I and members of the Zonta International community who had the honor of meeting her, she will be remembered for her 50 years of commitment to promoting Zonta International and women’s rights.

Born in Czechoslovakia in 1908, Beatrix Kempf received her doctorate degree from Prague University in 1932. After losing her husband during World War II, she and her daughter Beatrice travelled to Austria as refugees. Once settled, Dr. Kempf applied for a job as a journalist and was hired by the Austrian government where she was installed as the first public relations manager of the Austrian government in 1955. At this post, she was asked to write a biography of Bertha Von Suttner—winner of the Nobel Prize for Peace. During her research for the project, she extensively studied the origins and history of the peace movement—a topic she later lectured on at the University of Vienna Institute of Ethics and Social Sciences. She would also later become a member of the editing board of the journal, “Wiener Blätter für Friedensforschung” and serve as a representative at the UN in Vienna for the Institute of Peace Research from 1980 to 1998.

Active in various Austrian women’s organizations, Dr. Kempf chaired the Austrian Federation of University Women from 1975 to 1978 and represented Austria on the International Board of the International Federation of University Women from 1975 to 1990 as Secretary and Coordinator of International European Relations.

Dr. Kempf joined Zonta in 1959, served as Club President from 1962 to 1965 and as Governor of District 14 from 1968 to 1971. She was honoured with the Meritorious Service Award at the 75th anniversary of Zonta Club Vienna I and received an International Award for 50 Years of Membership in 2008. An honorary member of the Zonta Club Vienna I since 1995, Dr. Kempf was still very interested in promoting Zonta International and women’s rights. Club members were always fascinated by stories she shared about her life and experiences and enjoyed her discussions of politics and trends of the new century. She continued to attend club meeting and events and celebrated her 100th birthday with the Club in November 2008.

In addition to her recognition by the Zonta Club Vienna I and Zonta International, Dr. Kempf received the highest award of the Republic of Austria in 1968 and special recognition by the Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs on her 100th birthday.

Dr. Kempf, a devoted advocate for women’s rights and an exemplary Zontian, will be remembered fondly by the Zonta Club Vienna I and the entire Zonta International community. ■



Cecilia Y. Koo

“It is God’s will and blessing that I can and should go on serving. So, until then....”

Cecilia Y. Koo—ADVANCING THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN TAIWAN FOR NEARLY 40 YEARS

Born to a family of notable scholars and philanthropists in China some 80 years ago, Cecilia Koo grew up in an environment that emphasized Confucian doctrines and the virtue of giving. As a student in school, she learned about Christian love and service to humanity. These early influences had a lasting impact on Cecilia and are evident in the woman she is today.

Ms. Koo has dedicated her life to enhancing the well-being of women and children. She joined the Zonta Club of Taipei in 1973 and was elected Club President in 1980. During her tenure as President, she initiated a fundraising campaign to purchase a custom-made ambulance for heart attack patients and formed a sisterhood alliance with the Zonta Club of Kansas City. Cecilia, together with other club members, welcomed the Zontians from Kansas City during a visit to Taipei in 1981.

In 1984, she was elected Director of Area 4 of then District 17, which was comprised of 11 Asian Countries. She led Area 4 in support of Zonta International’s biennial service projects, enthusiastically raising funds for the Water Well project in Bangladesh and the Amelia Earhart Fellowship.

Upon completion of her term as Area Director, Cecilia participated in the fundraising campaign for the purchase of Zonta International’s first owned Headquarters building. Together with other outstanding Zontians, Cecilia put Taiwan in the top three contributors to the campaign worldwide. Taiwan took their support one step further, making a pledge to decorate and furnish the Board Room of the new Headquarters building. When the project was completed in 1990, Cecilia led a team of Taiwanese Zontians to Chicago to officiate the dedication ceremony of the new Board Room.

At the 1990 Zonta International Convention, Cecilia was unanimously elected Charter Governor of the new District 26, comprised of Japan, Taiwan and Korea. Accepting this new challenge, Cecilia established a plan of intense interaction between the three areas with complete transparency. With this solid foundation, District 26 flourished and expanded its boundaries in the three areas with substantial increases in members and clubs.

Cecilia’s influence as District Governor extended beyond Taiwan. She introduced Zonta to Mme. Olga Havel, wife of the President of Czechoslovakia, now the Czech Republic. Through this encounter, the first Zonta club in the Czech Republic was founded with financial support from Taiwan. Members from the two continents met at the 1992 Hong Kong Convention as Cecilia completed her term of office as Charter Governor of District 26.

In addition to her commitments to Zonta International, Ms. Koo was President of the Federation of Asia-Pacific Women’s Associations, coordinated the formation of the National Council of Women in Taiwan and has devoted time to educational, cultural and medical causes in Taiwan. Most recently, she was appointed as Senior Advisor on Women’s Affairs by President MA Ing-Jiou.

At 85 years old, Cecilia still maintains a hectic schedule of work and social obligations. Despite these commitments, she still finds time to practice Peking Opera singing, a passionate pastime she shared for many years with her late husband, C.F. and enjoys playing the latest video games with her grandchildren. When asked if she would consider slowing down a bit, Cecilia smiles and says, “It is God’s will and blessing that I can and should go on serving. So, until then....” ■

Zonta International Congratulates...



Irina Gueorguieva Bokova of Bulgaria, chosen by the Executive Board of UNESCO to serve as Director-General of UNESCO on 15th October 2009. During her long and distinguished career, Ms. Bokova served as Bulgaria's representative to the UN and as her country's Secretary of State for European integration and Foreign Minister. As Founder and Chairperson of the European Policy Forum, she worked to overcome divisions in Europe and promoted the values of dialogue, diversity, human dignity and rights. Ms. Bokova is the first woman to serve as Director-General of the UNESCO.



Helen Clark on her appointment as Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme. Prior to her appointment with the UNDP, Ms. Clark served nine years as Prime Minister of New Zealand. Under her leadership, New Zealand achieved significant economic growth, low levels of unemployment, and high levels of investment in education and health, and in the well-being of families and older citizens. She is the first woman to lead the UNDP and also serves as Chair of the United Nations Development Group, a committee consisting of the heads of all UN funds, programmes and departments working on development issues.



Zonta International Honorary Member, **Dr. Catherine Hamlin**, who was awarded the 2009 Right Livelihood Award "for her fifty years dedicated to treating obstetric fistula patients, thereby restoring the health, hope and dignity of thousands of Africa's poorest women." Ms. Hamlin came to Ethiopia from Australia in 1959 to work as an obstetrician and gynecologist at a hospital in Addis Ababa. She and her late husband, Reginald, pioneered the surgical treatment of obstetric fistula and founded the Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital, where women are treated free of charge.



Margot Wallström on her appointment as Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. Ms. Wallström, the outgoing Vice President of the European Commission, is tasked with intensifying efforts to end sexual violence against women and children in conflict situations. She has been a long-time advocate of the rights and needs of women throughout her political career and has said she will lobby for sexual violence in war to be recognized as a war crime. ■

NEW APPOINTMENTS AT ZONTA INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

On 7 May 2009, the Zonta International Board of Directors appointed **Maureen Powers** as Executive Director of Zonta International and **Jason Friske** as Deputy Executive Director.

Maureen joined the staff in May 2001 as the Director of Programs and Foundation Administration and was promoted to Deputy Executive Director in November 2008. She has managed the program, advocacy, communications and development operations at headquarters. She has also served as the headquarters liaison to several international committees and the Zonta International Foundation Board of Directors.

Jason Friske joined the staff in January 2007 as Director of Member Records. He has managed annual dues billings, the membership database and credentials registration for the 2008 Rotterdam Convention. He has also ensured the coordination of the member, donor and website databases. As Deputy Executive Director, Jason Friske will also manage the donor database, contribution processing and donor acknowledgement and recognition processes. ■

New Zonta International Headquarters

On 20 June 2009, members of the Zonta International community from around the world joined the Zonta International Board and Headquarters staff for a ceremony to officially open the new Zonta International Headquarters in Oak Brook, Illinois.

President-Elect Dianne Curtis was Mistress of Ceremony. President Beryl Sten officially cut the symbolic ribbon and declared the new HQ opened, while Past International President Ruth Walker elegantly reflected on her opening of the office at West Randolph Street. She then handed over the “key” to the new board room to Past International Director, Amy Hung, who hung the first board room key on the new board room wall. Amy represented Laura Fei and Cecilia Koo, two major donors of the artifacts in the board room, all of which were properly taken care of and moved to the new Headquarters in Oak Brook.

Also present were Past ZI Foundation Director Amy Lai, who was instrumental in funding and designing the board room artifacts, Kikuko Hara (D26), who proudly praised the display of Japanese silk screens and Peace Garden in the new lobby, District 6 Governor Buffie Kelly and District 18 Past Governor, Princess Josephine Odedina.

During the day, more than 80 Zontians took the opportunity to visit the new Zonta International Headquarters, expressing their appreciation of Zonta’s new home, while letters of congratulations came from all over the Zonta world to commemorate the occasion. ■



(above) Zonta International President Sten and President-Elect Curtis with visitors at the opening of the new Zonta International Headquarters.



(left) Zonta International President Beryl Sten cuts the ceremonial ribbon to commemorate the opening of the new Headquarters office in Oak Brook.

Did you know

Up to 70 percent of women and girls will be beaten, coerced into sex or otherwise abused in their lifetime?

Join Zonta International and UNIFEM
in the
Say NO – UNITE
to

End Violence against Women campaign

Add your name to the global call to end violence today!

SAY NO – UNITE
End Violence against Women

The goal of the Say NO initiative is to collectively reach 100,000 actions by March 2010 and 1 million actions in one year. Visit www.zonta.org to sign the global call, submit your actions and help us raise awareness of Zonta International's efforts to end violence against women around the world.



Zonta International

Advancing the Status of Women Worldwide

1211 West 22nd Street | Suite 900

Oak Brook, IL 60523-3384

USA

www.zonta.org



Zonta Clubs

Members of Zonta International

Welcome New Zonta Clubs

The Zonta International community extends a warm welcome to our new Zonta clubs.

- Zonta Club of Hagonoy & Environs, Philippines
District 17, Area 1
- Zonta Club of Ploiesti, Romania
District 30, Area 5
- Zonta Club of Porkkala, Finland
District 20, Area 1
- Zonta Club of Ringwood, USA
District 3, Area 2
- Zonta Club of Tualatin Valley, USA
District 8, Area 4

As of February 2010, Zonta International has
1,215 clubs in 67 countries.

