Media Landscape is Changing, Women in Media Up for New Challenges

The 34th IAWRT Biennial Conference held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 21st - 24th November 2011 brought together participants from Africa, Americas, Asia, Europe and Oceania, to discuss media’s pressing role in obliterating cliched portrayals of women in various sectors, through the social media. Social media is opening up terrain originally not covered by traditional media.

Under the theme ‘New Paradigms: Media Women Responding to Change’, former IAWRT President Olya Booyar stressed the fact that despite the breaking of glass ceilings by women in various fields, men still constitute an enormous 75% of people portrayed in the media around the world. This continues to pose a big challenge to women who are barely visible on the pages of newspapers or in the broadcast media.

This was given context by Tunisian film producer Khedija Lemkecher who talked about the notable absence of women in the reports on international media during the February revolution (Arab spring). She said that even as women bloggers actively documented the events that were unfolding in Tunisia, the same stories and issues around women were not visible in the international media.

Marina Mahathir (Malaysia), columnist and advocate of ending discrimination on sexual orientation, said that although we have many women accessing online versions of the news, they shy away from talking about hot issues since online readers can be very vicious if they find ideas that do not conform to the mainstream point of view.

With the advent of the World Wide Web, we have witnessed new challenges for women in media. Kenya’s Grace Githaiga said “claiming of space in new media entails inserting women’s content into different media platforms.” This content should be consistent with women’s agenda/women’s movement. She stressed that blogging, presence and activism on social media (link fests, audiobooks, videos) should be increased and added, “what is shared on social media should be amplified on broadcast media to get to more people”.

During the session on ‘Using Media to Engage Women in Governance’, Rose Haji Mwalimu (Tanzania) emphasized the role of media in promoting good governance.

Message from the New President

Happy New Year! It is with great pleasure and humility that I write my first column as president of IAWRT. First, on behalf of the entire board, I want to thank all of you for electing us to serve you for the next two years. Rest assured that we are a committed and dynamic team of seasoned professionals who are ready and willing to summon our experiences and networks, to steer the organization to the next level. I am sure that by now you have encountered us on our family Facebook address and other creative ways that technology has generously provided. Thanks to Bibiana Piene for being proactive in setting up the Face book group. We encourage those who have not yet joined to jump onto the bandwagon. Remember, social media is no longer a personal tool for handling domestic issues but a relevant professional interactive tool capable of setting agenda and creating linkages.

The attendance at the 34th Biennial conference was a clear indication of the growth and enthusiasm of the organization that celebrated 60 years of its existence last year. We salute the past leadership, right from Lillian Vander Goot in 1951 to
**Media Landscape is Changing . . .**

She shared the 2010 elections experience in Tanzania, where media sensitized women to ensure that the election process was transparent, democratic, free and fair. Community media was used to inform and educate women on their rights, the gender-based violence prevalence and the support programs available for them.

Three films were shown under the session on ‘Documentary Master Class’: Ifmat Fatima’s film on Enforced Disappearances in Kashmir; Madeleine Memb’s on the Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in Cameroon; and Ananya Chakraborti and Kajal Singh’s on Anti-Trafficking in Kolkata – India. All the films depicted women’s continued struggle to fight injustices and the common problems encountered across the two continents.

In 2010, IAWRT gave production grants to members in 10 countries to produce short documentaries under the theme ‘Violence Against Women’. The filmmakers also underwent a training on short documentary production organized by IAWRT in Manila – Philippines. Films produced by members from Canada, Moldova and the Philippines were shown and Elizabeth Miller (Canada) shared the impact of the films on the specific countries. These films were shown on national television in 10 countries.

IAWRT is also on the forefront of mainstreaming the gender guidelines in broadcasting. The pilot phase, which included members from Philippine Broadcasting Service, Radio-TV Malaysia, Thai Public Broadcasting Service, Voice of Vietnam and the Young Asia TV in Sri Lanka was launched in Hanoi, Vietnam. Former President Olya Booyar will lead and facilitate the second phase.

Insights into Investigative journalism by Margo Smit, Director of VVOI Netherlands were refreshing. Margo emphasized the need for investigative work as being key to making informed decisions by the ordinary people. According to Margo, investigative journalism is systematic, active and impactful. Alina Radu (Moldova) shared her practical and harrowing experience where she followed 16 young women who had been trafficked and ensured that the traffickers were convicted. Alina put her life and that of her newspaper at risk but she was determined to ensure that justice prevails. Racheal Nakitare (Kenya), former Vice-President (now elected President of IAWRT) strongly supports IAWRT’s direction with regard to pursuing investigative journalism stories.

While exploring how to Use Advocacy Tools to Create Social Movements, Cai Yiping (China) shared her fears in treading the fine line between advocacy and journalism. The principles of journalism will basically be the same. The difference lies in the objective and the sponsorship.

The last session of the conference was an extensive tour to the IPPTAR training center and the Radio TV Malaysia offices. The RTM Studios, with its long history of broadcasting in Malaysia has world-class facilities and more importantly, plays an important role in the history and progress of Malaysia.

It is clear that women in media have come a long way, but for them to make a difference, they have to move in tandem with the times and ensure that their participation counts. The space provided by the social media enables women who for many years were unable to talk about their own stories, tell their stories in their own voices.

But as the media landscape is changing. Not only are nations rapidly breaking barriers to pave way to a borderless world, nations are emerging from a conservative political and economic environment through the media, specifically the social media and women are up for new challenges as they respond to change.
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Message from the New President

Olya Booyar (my predecessor), who have seen the membership grow in numbers and strength. Our membership now stands at 389 spread across 56 countries. Nothing gives me greater joy than the active participation of past presidents like Elizabeth Kirby (1976 – 1980), Christina Ruhnbro (1992 -1997), Gundel Krauss Dahl (1997–2001), Jai Chandiram (2001 – 2005) and Frieda Werden (2005 – 2007), whose rich experience enhances our institutional memory, besides guiding and inspiring all of us abundantly. Those who attended the biennial conference will bear witness. Together, we will build on IAWRT’s past accomplishments and enable the organization to do more to advance the cause of women in the world.

Sharing our experiences and identifying good journalistic practice under the conference theme of ‘New Paradigms: Media Women Responding to Change’ could not have come at a better time. The challenges posed by globalization require concerted approach to surmount.

I’m sure that given an open slate to prioritize issues to pay attention to, we will all give a different order of priority based on geographical, cultural, national as well as other considerations. A hypothetical scenario might appear to have Africa prioritize poverty, conflict and political reforms, the Middle East might have awakened to reforms through insurgency, Latin America will decry drugs and crime, America will fight against terrorism and immigration, Europe economic woes while Asia might focus on economic trade barriers as well as health and climate change. In the midst of all these challenges, those who bear the greatest burden of all or any of these situations are the women and extended to children. This is where we come in with reviewed strategies and renewed energy, to act and stand for change. To quote our facilitator on the Investigative Journalism workshop, Margo Smit, “critical journalism may happen by creating new facts, but also by interpreting or connecting already known information in a new way”.

We recognize the essential contribution of women around the world in working towards peace, fighting for human rights, promoting sustainable development and eradicating poverty, hunger and disease. The 2011 Nobel Prize recipients attest to it. It should, however, not be lost to us as media professionals that women make up less than 10% of the world’s leaders as much as they constitute just about half of the world’s population. In Kenya for example, UNFPA 2011 report puts it at 50:50 ratio of male to female. Women’s political participation is fundamental to democracy and essential to the attainment of sustainable development. We must endeavor to interrogate political activities with a view of scaling up women participation and visibility.

This year alone, we have elections coming up in over 70 countries of the world. As media women, we are called upon to proactively strengthen and equip women with knowledge that will enable them make informed decisions. It is time that we begin to explore avenues where we can profile women with leadership qualities and mainstream gender in our newsrooms and production studios. Affirmative action on paper will not be an end in itself – we must ensure implementation, monitoring and vigilance.

As the countries prepare to turn digital by 2015, broadcast technology is changing at a very fast rate. We need to keep abreast of the changes to remain relevant and effective in disseminating information. We need to consciously insert women’s content that is consistent with women’s concerns into our different media platforms, including new media.

As we start the year 2012, we encourage each one of you, at personal or chapter level, to share your stories, concerns, projections, proposals and even dreams so that together, we can realize our organization’s vision. The team reviewing our Statutes, Policies and Procedures (Gunilla, Gundel, Mary, Kavita and Rose) has done a tremendous job. We encourage all of you to own the document by contributing to it.

Above and beyond all, I request your support in order to make any meaningful achievement.

Best Wishes,

Rachel

10 Qualities of an Empowered Woman

By: Irene Morada Santiago

[Chair and CEO of the Mindanao Commission on Women. She was a member of the government peace panel in the negotiations with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) from 2001 to 2001; was an Executive Director of the NGO Forum on Women 1995 in China; and she also served as one of the guest speakers at the 2010 IAWRT Regional Meeting held in Manila]

AN EMPOWERED WOMAN...

1. Lifts up other women;
2. Inspires other women and mentors young women;
3. Never feels guilty;
4. Does not try to be superwoman;
5. Lives the truth of the saying: don’t agonize, organize!
6. Honors diversity;
7. Has the capacity for intelligent rage;
8. Knows and claims her rights, not just her obligations;
9. Claims power;
10. Says no more waiting!

INSPIRATIONAL QUOTES FOR WOMEN

The minute you settle for less than you deserve, you get even less than you settled for.
-Maureen Dowd

There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you.
-Maya Angelou

Never give up, for that is just the place and time that the tide will turn.
-Harriet Beecher Stowe

2012 INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY

Connecting Girls, Inspiring Futures

On March 8, let’s share our piece of contribution, big or small, in celebrating the economic, political and social achievements of women (past, present and future).
MEET THE NEWLY-ELECTED BOARD, 2011-2013

Racheal Nakitare, President (Kenya)

Racheal Nakitare holds a Bachelor’s and Master’s Degrees in Communication from the University of Nairobi. As a Hubert Humphrey fellow, she studied New Media and Conflict Transformation at the University of Maryland’s Philip Merrill School of Journalism. She attended the winter programme on conflict management at the University’s Centre for International Development and Conflict Management and also had a stint at the Voice of America as well as the American Forum while attending the fellowship. She participated in the knight fellowship programme on ‘Challenges in Foreign Policy - and a Changing Media World.’ She is a career journalist / Television Producer having trained at the Kenya Institute of Mass Communication, Radio Netherlands Training Centre, Korea Broadcasting Corporation and briefly at the South African Broadcasting Corporation under the commonwealth travel bursary. She has risen through the ranks to the position of Chief Producer in charge of Current Affairs and Documentaries at the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation where she also chairs the Talent Management Committee. She has traversed the entire country (Kenya) producing programmes of just about every genre. She has won several awards of outstanding performance at work. She was the first Kenyan Journalist to interview a sitting U.S.A President in 2010. Rachel is also the head of IAWRT Kenya chapter.

Gerd Inger Polden, Vice President (Norway)

Gerd Inger draws many years of her experience as a journalist from the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation, NRK. She studied languages at the University of Bergen and obtained her specialization in television work through internal courses at the NRK. Since 1974, she has produced/directed numerous TV-programs and has created documentary films for educational purposes and on general affairs. Gerd Inger’s documentaries are characterized by a critical stance towards social problems. She has particularly focused on the status of women and minorities. Her aim is to contribute to tolerance and the understanding and promotion of human rights. She has created a number of documentaries in Africa, two of which have been awarded international prizes, from Japan (1997) and Geneva (in 2000). She has done prime time investigative documentaries in NRK. Her film The Dream of Knowledge (1999, NRK) documents how the practice of female genital cutting in Senegalese villages is discontinued. Currently retired from NRK, Gerd Inger now devotes her time to IAWRT in various capacities as the Chapter Head, IAWRT Awards Coordinator, negotiates with Fokus on behalf of IAWRT and recently elected as the Vice President.

Violet Gonda, Secretary (Zimbabwe)

Violet is a Zimbabwean radio journalist forced to broadcast to her country from exile in London and Washington DC because of media restrictions in her country. In 2001, she helped set-up SW Radio Africa - Zimbabwe’s first independent radio station that broadcasts, via shortwave, daily news and current affairs programs from exile in London to Zimbabwe. In 2002, Gonda was banned from returning to her home country by the Zimbabwean government because of her journalism work at the radio station. She holds journalism qualifications from Zimbabwe and is a holder of a Master’s degree in International Journalism from City University in the United Kingdom, and recently graduated from Harvard University’s Kennedy School of Government with a Master’s degree in Public Administration. She is a recipient of an international award for best radio documentary from the International Association of Women in Radio and Television and also studied at Stanford University as a John S. Knight Fellow. She is currently working for Voice of America – Zimbabwe Service Desk, broadcasting daily news stories from Washington DC to Zimbabwe.
Ananya Chakraborti, Treasurer (India)

Ananya is a filmmaker, television journalist, writer and an activist. She holds a Master’s degree in Comparative Literature from Jadavpur University and was chosen as an international visitor from India by the United States meeting, networking and sharing with leading experts in the field of television and women’s organization in the US. Ananya is a full time professor and head of the Department of Journalism & Mass Communication at St. Xavier’s College, Kolkata. She is currently pursuing her Ph.D. on “Rewriting Social History: The Emergence of the ‘Other’ in the New Indian Documentary”. She has received a number of awards and felicitations, including The National Award, The Humanitarian Award at Tiburon, California and the UNFPA Laadli Media Award for “Understanding Trafficking” funded by IAWRT, apart from various other State and non-State awards. She is a member of the Social Welfare Board of the Government of West Bengal, India and is a social activist.

Liz Miller, Board Member (Canada)

Liz is a documentary maker interested in new approaches to community collaborations and documentary as a way to connect personal stories to larger social concerns. She teaches video and new media production at Concordia University in Montreal and is the co-founder of the Concordia Documentary Centre. Liz does media training with women’s groups and human rights activists from around the world. Her films on timely issues such as water privatization and immigration have won awards, been integrated into educational curricula, and influenced decision makers. Her most recent project, Mapping Memories, is a book/DVD/website about refugee youth in Canada (mappingmemories.ca). She is currently exploring new trends in web documentary, cross-platform documentary projects, mobile media, and innovative outreach strategies. Liz is interested in the potential of documentary media as art, advocacy, and as a powerful educational tool.

Patricia Dallas-Katz, Board Member (USA)

Patricia, with post-graduate degree in Applied Theatre from the University of Manchester in the UK has been using her extensive media skills to assist communities in development. Her media career began when she joined Hard Copy Television logging tape then moved up to desk officer and co-producer of some shows. She made a name for herself in community radio in New York, on WBAI/Pacifica Radio, where she produced and hosted many public affairs programmes, especially shows on women and gender issues. She has worked for the United Nations Radio in New York where she effected visible social and political change was as Chief of UN Radio with the UN Mission in Sierra Leone where she conceptualized, set up and managed the successful United Nations radio station for the Sierra Leone Peacekeeping Mission. Sheila has also produced numerous shows for the Women’s International Newsgathering Service (WINGS).

Valerie Lew, Board Member (Malaysia)

Valerie, currently the General Manager and founding member of GS Productions, has over 15 years of experience in the film and TV industry. She spent 7 years with NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation) assisting the bureau chief in news reporting from the Asian region. She has been involved in documentaries for the National Geographic Channel, Discovery Channel, NHK (Japan) & NZZ Television (Switzerland). Her recent involvement in “Fight Master:Sila” produced by GS Productions for the National Geographic Channel was awarded "Best Cultural Documentary" at the Malaysian Documentary Awards 2010. Her most recent credit includes ‘Sacred & Secret’, a feature length documentary that looks at how the Balinese’s beliefs and occult ceremonies of these long bygone times have survived so well; “Singapur – Die Schweiz Asiens”, “süß und salzig,sauer und scharf die thai küche”, “spo-Quella des Wohlbefindens” (NZZ Switzerland), among others.
IAWRT in the Maldives
By Olya Booyar

Three days of workshops on gender mainstreaming were conducted in Malé, capital of the island nation of the Maldives from 18-20 December 2011.

They were conducted in partnership with IAWRT, ABU (Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union) and the ITU (International Telecommunications Union) and hosted by the Maldives National Broadcasting Corporation (MNBC) at their Radio Building on Senaco Maalum, Malé. The workshop was facilitated by IAWRT’s immediate past President, Olya Booyar and attended by members in Maldives, Fathimath Leeza and Hassan Zihnath.

Being an in-country event, it was possible to invite a wide range of participants from the MNBC, other media and related agencies and Government departments and other interested parties and NGOs. The support and involvement of the ITU meant we were able to engage to a greater depth with issues affecting technical services, a field vitally important to the success of the regional Focus on Gender project.

The workshop program was designed to concentrate on workplace aspects of gender mainstreaming, as well as sensitisation on the portrayal aspect, in recognition of the importance media practitioners – especially technically-minded people - place on understanding underlying rationales for behaviour change. The workshop was also designed to allow discussions and exchange of experiences together with some recommendations for future action at the MNBC, to mainstream gender into the broadcaster’s policies and programs.

As with all in-country workshops, there were comparisons and commonalities, within the uniqueness of the political, cultural and socio-economic contexts of each country. This proved to be especially true of the Maldives, though the workshops there demonstrated also that there are enough commonalities within this diversity to give hope that while gender mainstreaming in the media will be a complex task, it is practicable throughout the Asia-Pacific region and beyond.

Gwizi receives award for reporting gender issues

Soneni Gwizi, an IAWRT member and a Producer/Presenter for SFM radio station with Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) was awarded third place in the broadcasting category for reporting on gender issues at a competition held in Harare, Zimbabwe on 2 December 2011. The awards were presented by Professor Hope Sadza Vice Chancellor of Women’s University in Africa at the “Federation of African Media Women Zimbabwe (FAMWZ) 2011 Gender Sensitive Media Awards”. Gwizi has a radio talk-show programme titled “Disability Issues”, which tackles disability challenges in society. The awards is intended for encouraging journalists to be gender-sensitive in their reporting and supporting the campaign on 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence from 25 November to 10 December.

8th IAWRT ASIAN WOMEN’S FESTIVAL
Theme: Mediation, Movements and Memories

The India Chapter of the International Association of Women in Radio and Television will hold the festival at the India International Centre, New Delhi, on March 5,6 and 7, 2012.

The selection of films will explore influences, issues and ideas shaping Asian identities and experiences, offering new perspectives on the contemporary world.

Apart from the general program, there will be three curated sections focusing on women directors from Hong Kong, Japan and Turkey. A fourth package will be of films about contemporary childhood.
This two-day workshop held at the Doordarshan studios in New Delhi facilitated by Olya Booyar was a partnership among IAWRT, the Asia Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). It aims in engaging media practitioners of the Indian sub-continent in assessing the scope for operationalizing the Gender Guidelines into their local context and gathering Best Practice examples for gender sensitive representation and reporting.

The objectives for the two-day workshop were:

- To understand the business case for gender mainstreaming in the media and in the workplace;
- To share the progress of the pilot case studies from the Broadcasting for All: Focus on Gender regional pilot program in which IAWRT members from Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Vietnam and the Philippines are already participating;
- To uncover Best Practice examples in mainstreaming gender in radio and television programs in the region;
- To identify policies and strategies in the workplace to promote diversity and inclusion; and
- To recognize the role of journalism education and training institutions in mainstreaming gender.

The workshop was very well attended, with the Secretary-General of the ABU, the Director General of Doordarshan and head of UNESCO India Cluster opening the first session. Many IAWRT members attended and participated in leading several sessions. Jai Chandiram, head of the India Chapter led a session on the role of training institutions in mainstreaming gender and Ananya Chakraborti took everyone through her award-winning Understanding Trafficking documentary and discussed the challenges and opportunities that were created for her as a filmmaker and activist.

Workshop participants reiterated the need for not only in-country but in-workplace workshops which sensitised top management to the benefits of mainstreaming gender on air and in the workplace followed by practical training in how to do that with content. The need for specific training in the development of gender sensitive policies, plans, workplace rules and codes of conduct was also raised as was the lack of knowledge about the range of flexible work practices and development programs for women which could be implemented immediately. Participants felt the workshop was highly useful and welcomed further training and development.
Users/members who have never logged in will not get their profiles viewed by other users. While users who have logged in at least once can get their profiles viewed on a normal basis. The website has to confirm first if the user’s email address is valid. Thus, the need to log in for the first time before making individual profiles available for viewing.

To update individual profile:
1. Login your username and password;
2. At the members page, type your name or last name on the search box then click on submit button on the page or enter on your keyboard. You will then see your name on the search result;
3. Click on the full profile to go to your profile page;
4. There are three tabs on top: the view, edit and memberbio tabs. If you click on view, you will see your profile and the details that have been initially filled out; and
5. Click on MemberBio tab to edit or update the information then completely fill-out items on personal information, contact, categories, work, IAWRT participation and provide a photo.

During the 34th IAWRT Biennial Conference in Kuala Lumpur in November 2011, the Statutes Working Group presented a proposal for a new and updated IAWRT Statutes adapted to IAWRT’s organizational development was presented by the Statutes Working Committee at the 34th Biennial Conference in Kuala Lumpur last November 2011. Members present took part in the interactive workshop where many proposals and comments were raised. The statutes committee will now incorporate comments and proposals from the workshop and come up with a revised proposal, to be delivered to the new IAWRT International Board and put up on the web for all members and Chapters to give feedback upon.

Gunilla Ivarsson, Sweden
Head of IAWRT Statutes Committee

IAWRT Side Event
Demystifying Media at the Grassroots: Rural Women Using Media for Change

Date and Venue
Downstairs Room at the Salvation Army, 12W 14th Street, New York, 10011, USA
10:30am to 12:00pm on Wednesday, 29 February 2012

Call for Nominations for the 2012 Courage In Journalism Awards and Lifetime Achievement Award

Deadline for Submission: March 2, 2012
For further details, please visit the IWMF website, http://iwmf.org/honoring-courage.aspx

Welcome to the IAWRT Family!

Mahbuba Begum Hena (Bangladesh); Jasbir Kaur (India); Gugulethu Mseleku (London); Angela Soper (USA)

FEEDBACK
Thumbs up for the work that you’ve been doing.
- Irene Ngonga, Cameroon
The newsletter looks great!
- Jai Chandiran, India
This issue is very informative and looks heavy work.
- Benaz Batrawi, Palestine
Very good newsletter!
- Frieda Werden, Canada

ANNOUNCEMENTS!
For anti-spam purposes, the info@iaawt.org e-mail address has been deactivated and changed to inquiry@iaawt.org

IAWRT Production Series is now available for viewing at the projects section of the website
For membership application, please visit http://www.iaawt.org/node/1548