



Association of War Affected Women

## **Newsletter Vol. 6 December 2009**

*Our special thanks to American Jewish World Service and Global fund for Women for their generous support to run our office as well all others who partnered with us this year to make life better for women world over and to make a genuine effort to bring peace to Sri Lanka*

### **Objectives of AWAW**

To achieve sustainable peace in Sri Lanka through socio-economic development with the active participation of war affected women.

To further women's advancement, empowerment and development

### **Strengthening Skills and Preparing for Participation in Peace Talks: Sri-Lankan Women's Cross-Party Coalition Realizing UNSC 1325**

AWAW / ICAN Partnership with Program on Negotiation at Harvard law School Negotiation Skills and Knowledge Building Workshop For Senior Sri Lankan Women politicians Jan 26- 30th 2009.

The second Phase of the project which AWAW hopes to engage the cross party senior women politicians was concluded successfully in January 2009. 12 cross party senior women politicians participated in this very interesting workshop on Negotiations skills and knowledge building conducted by the Program of Negotiations at Harvard law school. This program was funded by the Royal Norwegian government, Hunt alternatives fund and Harvard law school.

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### **“Colomba conversations of Club 1325”**

The Cross party women politicians' coalition upon their return from Harvard met at Hon. Ferial Ashcroft's residence on the 11th of June and agreed that these discussions will be henceforth called “Colomba conversations” and will continue to deliberate very important and timely issues pertinent to the country's future the first Colomba conversation was held on 23rd June at Hon. Minister Ferial Ashrof 's residence and the issue was 13th amendment to the constitution

On the 21st July 2009 we had our 2nd Colomba Conversation to discussed the IDP situation in Vavuniya Camps and the guest speaker was Dr. Vinya Ariyaratna, Executive Director of Sarvodaya.

We held a workshop on UNSCR 1325, 1820 and also the new 1888 and the possibility of brining a bill on 1325 to the parliament. The second day looked into the possibly of working on our action plan. Madam Swarna Sumanasekara guide us on drafting the bill.

On 15th of December we had a one day workshop at Tamarind Tree Hotel as to make several changers and develop the document

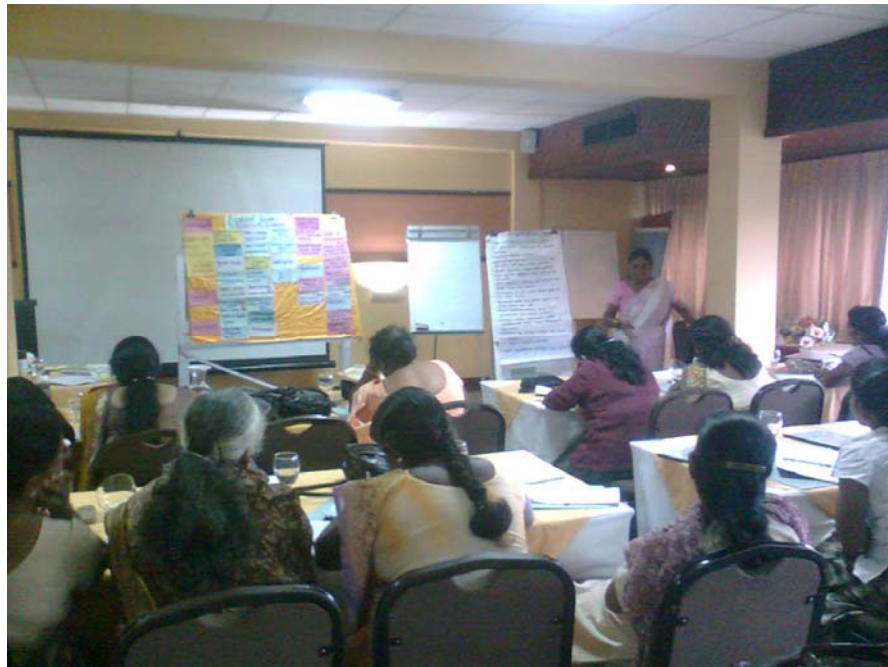


## **“Training Women to Run for Political Office Implementing UN Resolution 1325” Funded by NED**

AWAW was able to get these 25 well trained women leaders to build a coalition called “TEAM 1325” and work as a net work in fulfilling ours and their goals.

On August 28th and 29th we held an evaluation meeting for members of Team 1325 who completed the trainings in 10 districts to share the experience with the rest.

AWAW was successful in securing funding for the rest 15 districts leaders from National Endowment Democracy to further train 750 women. We want to extend our heartfelt gratitude to AJWS for helping us to secure the funds. The fifteen selected women leaders who were trained, to conduct the training in their respective Districts. The 2nd phase disbursement of funds to the 15 trainers was done at an orientation workshop which was held in Kandy on the 7th of November 2009. Our TEAM member for Galle, Ms. UDM Chandra was the resource person for this workshop. Currently the 15 trainers has begun their trainings workshops and the first one was held in Ampara on the 6th of December.



## **Further trainings for the members of TEAM 1325 funded by ministry of foreign Affairs Norway**

We have successfully conducted a 03 day training workshop for the 25 trainers on 13th and 17th amendment to enhance their knowledge regarding the amendments and to also to get to know the short comings and advantages the first phase of this project have successfully were on 24,25 & 26th September. The discussed topics were Legal background of 13th amendment, the background and the journey of 13th

amendment, Legal background and practical limitations of the 13th amendment and the existence of provincial council and its current status.



The second phase of this project as conducted for further enhancement of the knowledge of the TEAM on 17th amendment and its limitations and 13th Amendment and also the Executive presidency and the responsibility and powers of the President's office was conducted on 21st 22nd and 23rd of December 2009

### **Jaffna visit**

AWAW decided to go to Jaffna in August after Jaffna municipal elections was declared to support the women who were contesting from 4 political parties and one Independent list. AWAW chair together with 5 women leaders from TEAM 1325 and adviser to AWAW was among the delegation. They are Visaka Dharmadasa from AWAW. Tilaka Weerakoon from Matara, Daya Kahagalla from Kurunagala, Chandra Gamage from Galle, Nalika Amarawickrama from Kandy and Somenath Parua from AWAW. Since it was important to let the country know the reason for the visit and also because of the lack of news coverage of the Jaffna and Vavuniya elections we decided to hold a news conference in Colombo prior to our departure.



We were able to hold a very successful meeting for more than 50 women which was well attended by key figures of many political parties including TNA member of parliament and two of the candidates. . We also met with heads of all political parties who were contesting elections in separate individual meetings. We also distributed 30000 hand bills calling for specifically women of Jaffna to vote. We are very happy as all three women who were physically present in the contest won and one women was elected as the Mayor of Jaffna.

**Child Soldiers in Sri Lanka: Collaborative Project of McGill University, Canada and the Association of War Affected Women, Sri Lanka**

**Workshop on Violence against women and its impact on country's economy**

On 3rd December AWAW together with UNFPA conducted a very successful one day workshop for prominent government and non government officials of Kandy on violence against women and its economic impact. Though we have been speaking about violence against women for decades the results is marginal and we thought it is timely to highlight the economic impact to get more attention to the issue and find solution for the same. This was conducted in conjunction with the 16 days activism against gender based violence.

