

JANUARY e-BULLETIN

Dear UNIFEM members and supporters

Welcome to our January e-bulletin and I send you all my best wishes for 2010. Please also visit our website www.unifemuk.org for more information and news items.

Unfortunately this year has started with the devastating news of the earthquake in Haiti. We thought you would want to know what UNIFEM is doing to help, so there is information in the 'News from UNIFEM New York' section below with links to follow to find out more or make a donation.

This year we will be supporting three UNIFEM projects which are helping to develop the businesses of small groups of women in Kenya, Liberia and Peru to give them some financial independence. Our intern Selina has written an introduction to them in 'News from the UK' below. We plan to have a specific part of the website dedicated to these projects so we can keep you informed about their progress. So in 2010 the focus of our fundraising will be on these projects and of course on the UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women. I do hope you will continue your support for the work of UNIFEM by renewing your membership subscription and by encouraging other people to become involved. Last year we were able to send £40,000 to UNIFEM which included sponsorship money and the results of fundraising events which so many of you supported. This was a record amount!

Thank you
Jan Grasty
President – UK National Committee for UNIFEM

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NEWS FROM THE UK

UNIFEM UK fundraising in 2010

The UNIFEM UK Board has agreed that in addition to continuing our efforts to raise money for the UNIFEM Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women, we will focus our support for three projects where the key is economic empowerment.

Reducing women's poverty through economic empowerment is a strategic goal for UNIFEM. In 2007 UNIFEM partnered with the World Bank and the International Centre for Research on Women to implement innovative pilot programmes (Results Based Initiatives) in six countries. UNIFEM UK will be supporting three of them – in Kenya, Liberia and Peru – which all need more funding this year. There

is an introduction to them below but we will shortly have more information on the website and a facility for making online donations. We'll be receiving first-hand accounts on their progress during the year.

Kenya: strengthening the export competitiveness of women bead workers

In Kenya the Micro and Small Enterprises (MSE) sector is considered the primary driver of the country's industrialisation strategy and a major contributor to the drop in poverty levels. The handicraft industry is an important element of this sector. Although the opportunity to expand into new and non-traditional products continues to grow, the full potential for commercialising handicrafts still remains untapped. Benefits are yet to be seen by grassroots producers, a majority of whom are women living in rural areas.

The UNIFEM initiative aims to demonstrate that women become economically empowered through innovative approaches, and, by extension, the livelihood of families is also improved. There are three main components: providing business development services to enhance the entrepreneurial skills of the women, strengthening the export competitiveness of women producers and working to disseminate project activities and findings. The programme involves 850 Maasai women in groups currently producing beadwork. Membership of the groups ranges from 15 to 100 and they are spread throughout the Kajiado district; they operate as small business enterprises with an elected leadership.



UNIFEM has just produced a short 4-minute video featuring women involved in this project: just follow the link to www.youtube.com/watch?v=LeNubH4dons

Liberia: a cassava production and processing enterprise

In Liberia cassava is a staple food at the centre of the food security chain. However, women are faced with significant challenges which constrain their productivity and ability to earn substantial income from cassava production. These include a lack of appropriate processing equipment, transport to market, and basic farming tools, and the inability to afford necessary inputs for optimal production.

The objective of the UNIFEM initiative is to contribute to the Liberian national strategic targets of reducing poverty and increasing women's economic empowerment by turning a small-scale women's cassava production operation into an income-generating cassava production and processing enterprise. The aim is to demonstrate that women make good entrepreneurs and can play an important role in the growth of the agricultural sector - and that women's economic empowerment can contribute to positive changes in gender relations at household and community level.



The programme is being implemented in Ganta, the largest city in Nimba County, and surrounding villages. It's a rich agricultural region with high productive capacity. However, at present the region is recovering from the civil conflict and operating at an unusually low level of economic output and crop productivity. It also suffers from a near complete lack of public infrastructure

Peru: economic empowerment of women with newly acquired property rights

The Government of Peru began formalising informally-owned property by implementing the Urban Property Rights Project (UPRP) which enabled low-income families to obtain titles for their properties. More than 50% of the total beneficiaries of the UPRP were women and over 66% of individual owners

were women. They can use their newly acquired property rights to access formal credit and build small businesses.

The UNIFEM project was designed to address two constraints faced by these women. Firstly, it will develop their business skills, improving profits and sustainability. All participants receive general training in business skills and financial management, while half also receive integrated, individually tailored technical assistance. Secondly, the project will address the social and family issues that often constrain women's development through a module on life skills and empowerment. It will take into account the problems women face in attending training so as to maximise participation.



The project is based in the metropolitan area of Lima and it focuses on women with small businesses as microenterprise is one of most important economic activities available to poor urban women living in this area. Demand for business training and capacity building is high among women micro entrepreneurs; almost all are literate, but few have had any training in business and tend to rely on personal experience.

NEWS FROM UNIFEM NEW YORK

UNIFEM seeks funding to provide shelter and services for women in Haiti

In the aftermath of the devastating earthquake in Haiti, UNIFEM has issued a call for close to US\$2 million to provide urgently needed services for the protection of women and their families. In particular, UNIFEM seeks to rebuild women's shelters and expand the provision of emergency services for women.

More information about this appeal at www.unifem.org/news_events/story_detail.php?StoryID=1012

You can donate online now through UNIFEM at:-

https://secure.globalproblems-globalsolutions.org/site/Donation2?df_id=1960&1960.donation=form1

As part of the overall UN effort in the country, the UNIFEM team in Haiti is trying to help survivors who are seeking refuge in spontaneous and self-managed temporary camps. There's no electricity and water, food, medical care and shelter are all in short supply.

You can read their latest report at www.unifem.org/news_events/story_detail.php?StoryID=1016

UNIFEM has an established country programme in Haiti. Prior to the earthquake, political instability and budget constraints were adding to the fragility of public institutions. UNIFEM was working with ministries and civil society organisations to help build the government's capacity to deliver services and be accountable. Priorities included reforming laws that discriminate against women, increasing women's participation in elections, mobilising a response to widespread sexual violence and dealing with women's poverty.

It was with tremendous sadness that UNIFEM learned about the deaths in the earthquake of several women leaders from government and women's organizations. Among them were Myriam Merlet, Chief of Cabinet of the Ministry of Women's Condition and Rights and founder of the umbrella women's organisation National Coordination for Advocacy on Women's Rights (CONAP); Myrna Narcisse, Director General of the Ministry of Women's Condition; Magalie Marcelin, founder of KayFamn, which operates the only shelter for victims of gender-based violence; and Anne-Marie Coriolon, founding member of one of Haiti's largest women's groups, Solidarite Fanm Ayisyèn (SOFA).

Afghan women are central to achieving peace, say activists

In the lead-up to the 28 January London Conference on Afghanistan, hosted by the UK Government, four prominent Afghan women human rights defenders will release their recommendations on security and governance priorities for their country.



The women's mission is sponsored by UNIFEM and the Washington-based Institute for Inclusive Security.

Their message is that women's rights and security are critical to achieving stability; the international community cannot postpone attention to women's interests, expertise and needs.

See the full press release about the mission at www.unifem.org/news_events/story_detail.php?StoryID=1015

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Food and Gender: women's role in the food crisis

An evening meeting organised by **UNIFEM Cambridge** to highlight issues facing women around the world. Guest speakers will be **Dr Deborah Bryceson** (Gender Studies, Oxford) and **Dr Steven Jones** (consultant in poverty reduction and social security and partner at Meta-Development LLP).

Date and time: **Friday, 12 February** at 7.00pm
Venue: Murray Edwards College, Huntingdon Road, Cambridge CB3 0BN
Admission: Free
Contact: cambridge@unifemuk.org

UNIFEM in Edinburgh coffee morning

Guest speaker will be **Glenn Liddall** from the **Sunflower Garden** project which helps young people in Edinburgh affected by drugs and alcohol

Date and time: **Tuesday, 16 February** at 10am for 10.30am
Venue: Royal Overseas League, 100 Princes Street, Edinburgh
Admission: £3.50
Contact: edinburgh@unifemuk.org

News from the 2010 session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)

UNIFEM in Edinburgh have invited members of other women's groups to join them for a coffee morning with guest speaker UNIFEM UK President **Jan Grasty**. Jan will be reporting on the 54th session of the CSW in New York which she will be attending earlier in March.

Date and time: **Tuesday, 30 March** at 10.30am
Venue: Royal Overseas League, 100 Princes Street, Edinburgh
Admission: £3.50
Contact: edinburgh@unifemuk.org

The coffee morning will be preceded by the **UNIFEM in Edinburgh AGM** which will run from 10am for 30 minutes and is open to members only.

UNIFEM in London Annual General Meeting

Details of the evening event which will follow the AGM have still to be confirmed

Date and time: **Wednesday, 28 April** from 5.45pm
Venue: Houses of Parliament, Westminster
Contact: london@unifemuk.org

The national Annual General Meeting of UNIFEM UK will be held in London on the afternoon of Saturday, 15 May – further details next month.

THANK YOU FOR YOU SUPPORT!

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