



# Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General  
26 September 2011

Original: English

---

## Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations

2012 regular session

30 January-8 February, and 17 February 2012

### **Quadrennial reports for the period 2007-2010 submitted by non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council through the Secretary-General pursuant to Council resolution 1996/31**

**Note by the Secretary-General**

#### Contents

	<i>Page</i>
1. Dominican Union of Journalists for Peace . . . . .	2
2. Equidad de Género: Ciudadanía, Trabajo y Familia . . . . .	3
3. Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention . . . . .	4
4. Forum for Women and Development . . . . .	6
5. Foundation for Ecological Security . . . . .	8
6. Foundation Projekta for Women and Development Services . . . . .	10
7. Freedom House . . . . .	12
8. Girl Scouts of the United States of America . . . . .	14
9. Global Volunteers . . . . .	15
10. Gulf Automobile Federation . . . . .	17
11. Human Rights First . . . . .	18
12. Inclusion International . . . . .	20
13. Indian Council of Education . . . . .	22
14. Information Habitat: Where Information Lives . . . . .	24
15. Initiatives: Women in Development . . . . .	25



## **1. Dominican Union of Journalists for Peace**

**Special, 1995**

### **Significant changes in the organization**

There have been no significant changes.

### **Contribution of the organization to the work of the United Nations**

1. In the field of human rights promotion, the institution conducted nine courses during the years 2007 to 2010, all using human rights documents issued by the United Nations to contribute to the promotion of and respect for human rights and peace. A total of 4,612 people participated in these courses.

2. The organization conducted seven workshops on peace culture to explain the role of the United Nations in maintaining world peace. A total of 2,112 people participated.

### **Participation in meetings of the United Nations**

The organization could not participate in United Nations activities in the reporting period due to economic difficulties, but during next period (2011-2014), it will take part in at least one activity per year.

### **Cooperation with United Nations bodies**

The organization did not participate in any projects with the United Nations during the reporting period, because of its focus on educational activities in the areas of peace, human rights, the Millennium Development Goals, and the like. During next period (2011-2014), it will do so.

### **Initiatives taken by the organization in support of the Millennium Development Goals**

In relation to the Millennium Development Goals, the institution has worked in Moca, Dominican Republic, in the following goals:

- **Goal 3.** The organization has conducted 12 workshops on gender equality, attended by 2,625 women and 1,915 men aged 16 to 54 years; 19 workshops on domestic violence, 2,075 people, women and men, aged 16 to 35 years, as well as prosecutors and public health authorities; 13 workshops on violence against women, attended by 3,012 women and 2,159 men, aged 15 to 50 years.
- **Goal 4.** The institution has conducted 3 medical activities in 2008 for 660 children under age 5 (409 females and 251 males); 2 medical activities in 2009 for 521 children under age 5 (198 females and 323 males); 3 medical activities in 2010 for 802 children under age 5 (438 females and 364 males). The children were treated for various diseases, especially diarrhoea, vomiting, parasites, skin diseases, anaemia, malnutrition and related diseases as well as eye diseases.
- **Goal 7.** The institution has worked with various environmental institutions in the area of reforestation in Jamao River basin in the Cordillera Central of the country. It has helped to plant nearly a half million trees.

**Additional information**

The institution has worked hard to explain to people through the media of radio and television the role of the United Nations in the peacekeeping mission in Haiti and in other countries affected by violence.

**2. Equidad de Género: Ciudadanía, Trabajo y Familia****Special, 2007****Introduction**

Equidad de Género: Ciudadanía, Trabajo y Familia (hereafter Equidad) is a Mexican non-governmental organization that was founded in 1996 by leading feminists from different sectors within Mexico.

**Aims and purposes of the organization**

Equidad's mission is to promote gender equity through monitoring and advocating for gender-sensitive public policy and strengthening women's leadership and civil participation in the political and social life of the country.

**Significant changes in the organization**

There have been no significant changes.

**Contribution of the organization to the work of the United Nations**

In order to advance the achievement of the development agenda of the Economic and Social Council and the United Nations, Equidad has participated in regional and international networks and engaged in regional and international advocacy activities, especially with regard to women's health and development. Notably, the Director of Equidad is a member of the Board of Directors of the Latin American and Caribbean Women's Health Network and the organization is a member of the Pro-Choice Alliance in Mexico. As the legal representative of the organization and within her capacity as a representative for the above-mentioned networks, the Director has participated with other staff members in the following meetings where she has advocated for women's sexual and reproductive health and rights and a comprehensive development agenda. In 2009, Equidad sent two representatives to the Meeting of Women Representing Regional Networks in Latin America and the Caribbean in the Cairo+15 Process, held from 3 to 5 August 2009 in Panama. Also in 2009, the Director of Equidad was invited to attend the High-level Meeting on Maternal Health — Millennium Development Goal 5, held on 26 October 2009 in Addis Ababa, which was organized by the Minister for Development Cooperation of the Netherlands and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

**Participation in meetings of the United Nations**

- **2008.** Equidad sent two representatives to the fifty-second session of the Commission on the Status of Women, held from 25 February to 7 March 2008 in New York. The two representatives were awarded a scholarship from the Division for the Advancement of Women in order to attend as observers. In

preparation for the session, Equidad submitted a written statement (E/CN.6/2008/NGO/36).

- **2009.** Equidad sent two representatives to the forty-second session of the Commission on Population and Development, held from 30 March to 3 April 2009 in New York. The Director of Equidad was also present at the session as a senior member of the official Mexican delegation. In preparation for the session, Equidad submitted a written statement (E/CN.9/2009/NGO/8). At the session, Equidad helped with the drafting and signed on to an oral statement entitled “Political declaration of Latin American and Caribbean feminist and youth organizations present at Cairo+15”.
- **2010.** Equidad sent five representatives to the fifty-fourth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, held from 1 to 12 March 2010 in New York. Equidad also sent one representative to the forty-third session of the Commission on Population and Development, held from 12 to 16 April 2010 in New York. The Director of Equidad was also present at the session as a senior member of the official Mexican delegation. In addition, in 2010, Equidad sent one representative to the 2010 Millennium Development Goals Summit, the High Level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly, held from 20 to 22 September 2010 in New York.

#### **Cooperation with United Nations bodies**

Equidad has collaborated with United Nations bodies within Mexico throughout its history, in particular, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UNFPA and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM, now the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women)). Equidad was also a participant of the Gender Equality Architecture Reform Campaign in the Latin American region in order to promote the creation of UN-Women. Equidad operated several projects in collaboration with UNIFEM (now UN-Women) and UNFPA during the reporting period. Equidad received funding from UNIFEM (now UN-Women) towards the organization of the eleventh Latin American and Caribbean Feminist Meeting, held from 16 to 20 March 2009 in Mexico City.

### **3. Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention**

#### **Special, 2007**

##### **Introduction**

The Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention is the social, moral, and religious liberty concerns agency of the Southern Baptist Convention. The organization was organized in 1908 and established as The Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1913. The present organizational structure took shape in 1953, and the organizational name was changed to its present name in 1997.

**Aims and purposes of the organization**

The organization is dedicated to addressing social, moral, and ethical concerns, including human rights, especially freedom of religion, poverty issues, population, and the family. It works to ensure that basic social and religious rights are granted to all peoples. These efforts are driven to see that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is upheld so that each person — inherently granted dignity with equal and inalienable rights — can enjoy freedom, peace and justice.

**Significant changes in the organization**

In 2010, the organization's bylaws were revised with non-substantive changes to clarify the language of the document and bring it in line with current procedures.

**Contribution of the organization to the work of the United Nations**

Over the past four years, the organization gave significant attention to such issues as human rights, religious liberty, human trafficking, and hunger — all stated concerns of the United Nations and its subsidiary bodies. Efforts included educating constituents and national and international officials; speaking at conferences, rallies and press conferences; and broadcasting by means of syndicated radio. The organization also informed its constituents of some of its work as a member of the Economic and Social Council with special consultative status. A brief account of the organization's engagement on these issues follows. Widespread international persecution compelled the organization to participate in national summits to speak against these human rights abuses. It educated constituents and United States Government officials on the plight of asylum-seekers and refugees displaced by internal social violence or religious persecution in their homelands. It submitted a series of recommendations to the United States Government on how to address and minimize prison rape in United States prisons and detention facilities. In 2010, the organization worked closely with other organizations and United States congressional offices to draft legislation designed to encourage improved prison and detention facility conditions internationally. It helped to expose the worldwide human trafficking industry. Efforts included participating in the drafting of major anti-trafficking legislation, subsequently adopted into law in 2008, to aggressively prosecute sex traffickers in the United States and to strengthen efforts to combat slavery and trafficking worldwide. The organization raised awareness of the plight of world hunger by supporting and promoting an annual World Hunger Sunday and the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund, which provides educational tools and opportunities to contribute towards international hunger relief.

**Participation in meetings of the United Nations**

The organization's Vice President for Public Policy and Research participated in the international forum organized by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime on the topic "Interfaith dialogue: what the religious community can do to combat human trafficking", in Cape Town, South Africa, from 3 to 5 October 2007. The organization's participation helped to provide a basis of collective ideas for the Vienna Forum to Fight Human Trafficking, organized by the United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking, from 13 to 15 February 2008. Representatives of the organization participated in the Department of Public Information/Non-Governmental Organizations conference entitled "Climate change: how it impacts us

all”, held in New York from 3 to 5 September 2007. In 2008 and 2010, the Commission’s Vice President for Public Policy and Research participated in meetings with international delegations at United Nations Headquarters on the resolution on combating defamation of religions, considered by the General Assembly.

#### **Initiatives taken by the organization in support of the Millennium Development Goals**

In each of the past four years, the organization highlighted the anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948, through communications with constituents and national and international leaders. The Commission also promoted religious liberty and hunger awareness each year through special emphasis Sundays in churches.

#### **Additional information**

Due to limited financial resources and number of staff, the organization is constrained in the number of United Nations events in which it is able to participate.

### **4. Forum for Women and Development**

#### **Special, 1999**

##### **Introduction**

Forum for Women and Development is a knowledge and resource centre for international women’s issues with an emphasis on the spreading of information and women-centred development cooperation.

##### **Aims and purposes of the organization**

The primary goal of the organization is to contribute to the improvement of women’s social, economic, and political situation internationally. As of December 2010, the organization consists of 77 women’s organizations and women’s committees in political parties, trade unions, and solidarity and aid. The Forum strengthens cooperation between women’s organizations in Norway in their international involvement and cooperation; contributes to the social, economic and political empowerment of women through international project cooperation and exchange of knowledge; and is raising awareness on the situation of women in a global perspective through public relations and information activities. Activities include:

- Coordinating the project cooperation which Norwegian women’s organizations have with women in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe
- Communication activities aimed at increasing the Norwegian public’s awareness regarding a better knowledge of women’s situation and participation in a global perspective, through managing and updating a web portal
- Advocacy-work towards Norwegian authorities, international aid organizations, the United Nations system and multilateral institutions in order to build a better understanding of women’s issues

- Coordinating and facilitating cooperation between women's organizations through common seminars and campaigns regarding women's issues as well as annual networking conferences with partners from the South
- Hosting Forum 1325: the objectives of these meetings are to coordinate organizations' efforts on common issues of interest and to increase capacity-building among women's organizations in Norway and abroad
- Coordinating and participating in international meetings and conferences, creating side events at global conferences such as the Commission on the Status of Women
- Acting as a competence and resource centre for the member organizations, authorities, media and others.

### **Significant changes in the organization**

In 2007, Forum for Women and Development made an overall strategy for the organization. It was decided to concentrate on four main policy areas: women's rights training and local mobilization; violence against women; women in conflict and post-conflict; economical and political rights; and participation. In the strategy period 2007-2012, the Forum aims to contribute to:

- Strengthening women's rights: the organizing of women and their participation shall result in better knowledge, formalization, respect and realization of women's rights
- Combating violence against women: the organizations shall step up its influence on attitudes, behaviour, judicial frameworks and support measures with the aim of reducing the extent of violence against women
- Strengthening women's political and economic participation the organizing and participation of women shall strengthen their control over economic resources and boost their influence in political structures at different levels
- Strengthening the Forum as an advocate for women's rights, it shall, in collaboration with women's organizations in the South, become more visible in pressing and advocating for women's rights in relation to public opinion and authorities in Norway and international forums.

### **Contribution of the organization to the work of the United Nations**

The organization has promoted sexual and reproductive rights at the United Nations General Assembly, the Commission on the Status of Women and in the preparation for the establishment of UN-Women.

### **Participation in meetings of the United Nations**

The organization has participated every year at the United Nations General Assembly and the Commission on the Status of Women. It also participated at the high-level segment of the substantive session of 2010 of the Economic and Social Council, on gender. The Forum also actively participates in various international United Nations conferences.

### **Cooperation with United Nations bodies**

The organization is a National Committee for UN-Women. It also works closely with UNDP and UNFPA on various issues.

### **Initiatives taken by the organization in support of the Millennium Development Goals**

A statement was made at the Economic and Social Council meeting on sexual and reproductive rights. The International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women has been marked by holding seminars, torch-marches and national awareness-raising campaigns during the whole period. The campaigns and seminars were featured in media at the local, regional and national levels.

## **5. Foundation for Ecological Security**

### **Special, 2007**

#### **Introduction**

Foundation for Ecological Security works towards the ecological restoration and conservation of land and water resources, in the uplands and other eco-fragile, degraded and marginalized zones of the country and to set in place the processes of coordinated human effort and governance.

#### **Aims and purposes of the organization**

Undertake work, either directly or with and through a range of democratic village institutions, their federal bodies, and civil society organizations, (set up) through initiatives that are ecologically sustainable, socially and economically equitable and provide relief to the poor, in particular.

#### **Significant changes in the organization**

- The organization's scale of operations increased from 85,800 hectares to 129,126 hectares, to cover 205,454 households as compared to 107,906 in 2006-2007.
- The organization initiated its activities in an additional location in Orissa. A new project team is also being set up in Northeast India to further scale up its interventions.
- The operational budget of the organization increased from \$2.2 million in 2006-2007 to \$5.4 million in 2010-2011.
- The organization is a member of International Association for the Study of the Commons, International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources and International Land Coalition.
- The organization collaborates with the Collective Action and Property Rights Initiative, the International Forestry Resources and Institutions, Washington University, Clemson University, the International Livestock Research Institute, and the World Agroforestry Centre to take up action-research projects to enhance the issue-based understanding and improve the interventions of the organization.



### **Contribution of the organization to the work of the United Nations**

- Foundation for Ecological Security organized the thirteen biennial International Association for the Study of Commons Conference to bring together international experience and evidence for the role of the commons in maintaining ecological health, in reducing poverty and improving collective action. The Conference was attended by 800 participants across 69 countries.
- The organization's ecorestoration activities primarily involve restoring degraded landscapes, and setting up effective systems of decentralized natural resource management. It uses the Natural Resource Accounting System Framework to demonstrate the benefit of restoration of the degraded landscapes.
- The organization conducted a research study in collaboration with UNDP to suggest programmatic action on the problems related to land use, land use change and forestry issues in four states of the country.
- The organization launched the first phase of India Biodiversity Information System, namely, the Avian Information System, to consolidate the large amount of information available on floral and faunal biodiversity ([www.avis.indianbiodiversity.org](http://www.avis.indianbiodiversity.org)).

### **Participation in meetings of the United Nations**

- The organization attended the United Nations Climate Change Conference, held in Bali from 3 to 14 December 2007, to participate in the Global Environment Facility Non-Governmental Organization (GEF-NGO) Network deliberations at the Conference.
- The organization was the Regional Focal Point for the South Asia of the GEF-NGO Network during the period from May 2007 to May 2011 and contributed to policy deliberations for the GEF-5 project cycle, upgrading and execution of small grants programme arrangements under GEF-5, and an increased role and participation of civil society in GEF-5. The Executive Director attended the GEF-NGO Network Coordination Committee meetings in Washington, D.C., as Chair of the Governance Subcommittee of the Network and contributed to the development of governance and membership mechanisms of the Network.

### **Cooperation with United Nations bodies**

During the period, the organization collaborated with United Nations bodies in: (a) implementing projects on strengthening conservation and local livelihoods in the forest and tribal-dominated landscape within and around the Kumbhalgarh Wildlife Sanctuary, Udaipur, Rajasthan, and on preparation of Directory/Atlas of Community Conserved Areas of Madhya Pradesh and Orissa; (b) implementing a project for the stabilization of ravines along the River Mahi with support from the UNDP-Small Grants Programme; (c) organizing the thirteenth biennial International Association for the Study of Commons Conference with UNDP USA and the UNDP-GEF, India.

### **Initiatives taken by the organization in support of the Millennium Development Goals**

The restoration activities were scaled up to cover 129,126 hectares in improving the community-based natural resource management and supporting the livelihoods of 205,454 households, through a watershed approach. Through its activities to promote sustainable livelihoods, the organization helped to generate 0.65 million person-days in its project areas during the last four years. It undertook planting of 2.85 lakhs trees on 33,233 hectares of land (March 2010) across six project locations.

## **6. Foundation Projekta for Women and Development Services**

**Special, 1999**

### **Introduction**

Foundation Projekta for Women and Development Services is a non-governmental organization based in the capital city Paramaribo, Suriname.

### **Aims and purposes of the organization**

Projekta's mission is to enhance the capacity and capabilities of women, youth and other vulnerable groups to fully participate in the human development process.

### **Significant changes in the organization**

- An increased focus on the creation of systems and structures for policy dialogue between civil society and local and national-level policymakers
- An increased focus on the themes of democracy, governance and civil society participation, in addition to gender equality. Our logo now reads "PROJEKTA: Governance, Participation and Gender Equality"
- A specific focus on a rights-based approach to development

### **Contribution of the organization to the work of the United Nations**

Some main activities which Projekta has undertaken in the past four years that contribute to the work of the United Nations are:

- Annual awareness for the International Day of Democracy (15 September), International Women's Day (8 March), and World AIDS Day (1 December). Awareness consists of opinion statements ("letters to the editor"), letters to Parliament, blog and Facebook posts and/or producing and showing of movie/theatre productions.
- Founding of and organization of the annual Democracy Month (every November since 2008). During the month, the organization draws attention to informal and cultural aspects of democracy (as more than elections). Activities are public awareness (radio, newspaper and television), discussion and research on democracy-related issues, as well as the publication of the annual newsletter "State of our democracy".

- Lobby, advocacy and research for gender equality in education and health initiatives, and for a more participatory and effective national gender policy.
- Lobby for more inclusive and participatory processes of priority setting, policy formulation, and implementation by local United Nations organizations and local offices of other major international development partners.
- Training and capacity-building of schoolchildren, and youth and community organizations. The youth counselling programme entitled “A golden future” received a Best Practice Award for effectiveness and innovation from the World Bank Caribbean Contest entitled “Keeping boys out of risk”.
- Creation of dialogue spaces between citizens and local and national government through the organization of interfaces and support for attendance at district meetings.
- Creation of theatre and film productions for awareness on HIV/AIDS. Two of these films won Caribbean Population Awards from UNFPA.
- Lobby and awareness for anti-corruption and the establishment of a national ombuds institute: letters and presentations to Government officials and Parliament, research into policy processes and training of journalists.

#### **Participation in meetings of the United Nations**

Projekta has participated in meetings of other United Nations bodies: 23 January 2008, United Nations Country Office Workshop for the formulation of the Common Country Programme Action Plan; Paramaribo, 11 and 12 March 2008, United Nations Country Office project formulation sessions for the 2008 Annual Work Plans; Paramaribo, 3 December 2009, United Nations Country Office project formulation session for the 2009 annual work plans; Paramaribo, 21 July 2010, member of the UNIFEM panel at the World AIDS Conference, Vienna.

#### **Cooperation with United Nations bodies**

In 2007-2008, the organization conducted an NGO capacity assessment and strategy in Suriname (as part of a research consultancy for UNDP).

In 2008, the organization produced *The Hardest Job*, a series of six television documentaries on parenting (Consultancy for UNFPA, Suriname), as well as *Sma Mofo*, an HIV “edutainment” film (project for the Caribbean Community and Pan Caribbean Partnership against HIV/AIDS, in partnership with various United Nations organizations). The film premiered nationwide on World AIDS Day (1 December 2008) in Paramaribo, and won a regional UNFPA Population Award in 2009. In 2008, the organization designed and produced a Caribbean HIV/AIDS Edutainment KIT (project for the Caribbean Community and Pan Caribbean Partnership against HIV/AIDS, in partnership with various United Nations organizations).

In 2009, the organization designed and delivered a five-day basic training workshop on gender, gender mainstreaming, gender statistics, gender analysis, donor aid modalities and gender equality and gender budgeting (consultancy for UNIFEM and the Ministry of Home Affairs), Paramaribo.

**Initiatives taken by the organization in support of the Millennium Development Goals**

In the period 2002-2009, the organization conducted training and capacity-building of 3 local village communities and 12 rural community organizations in participatory policy-monitoring, village development, entrepreneurship, gender and vocational skills.

**7. Freedom House**

**Special, 1995**

**Introduction**

There have been no changes.

**Aims and purposes of the organization**

There have been no changes.

**Significant changes in the organization**

There have been no significant changes.

**Contribution of the organization to the work of the United Nations**

Freedom House's annual research and publications provide country-specific information on fundamental human rights, which are used around the world by journalists, academics, policymakers, other non-governmental organizations, and representatives of Governments and multilateral organizations, including the United Nations. A brief description of its most relevant research and publications follows:

(a) *Freedom of the World* is an annual survey on the state of political rights and civil liberties in every country in the world. The survey's methodology is based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and evaluates the levels of freedom people experience in seven key categories, including political processes, political pluralism, governance, freedom of expression and belief, freedom of association, rule of law, and individual rights;

(b) *Freedom of the Press* is a global survey of media independence that covers trends in media freedom. The survey rates the level of press freedom in each country on a numerical basis and provides a brief written summary of the year's main developments based on three criteria: the legal environment for press freedom, political influences on media content, and economic pressures that restrict the operation of independent media;

(c) *Freedom on the Net* is a comprehensive, comparative and numerically based index for analysing Internet freedom. The pilot edition, which covered 15 countries, was published in 2009.

### **Participation in meetings of the United Nations**

Freedom House sent delegations to attend several regular and universal periodic review sessions of the Human Rights Council in Geneva during the reporting period:

- **2007:** Representatives attended the fourth regular session of the Council, from 20 to 24 March, and conducted a side panel event on the topic of human rights in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea.
- **2008:** A representative attended the first universal periodic review session, from 7 to 9 April.
- **2009:** Representatives attended the tenth regular session, from 9 to 13 March, and held three side panel sessions on the situation of human rights in Cuba, Egypt and Zimbabwe; representatives attended the eleventh regular session, from 1 to 19 June; representatives attended the meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Elaboration of Complementary Standards, from 19 to 30 October.
- **2010:** Representatives attended the thirteenth regular session, from 7 to 13 March, and conducted a side panel event and delivered an oral intervention on the topic of “defamation of religions”; representatives attended the fourteenth regular session, from 31 May to 4 June, and conducted a side panel event and delivered an oral intervention on freedom of expression in Africa; representatives attended the fifteenth regular session, and delivered oral interventions on (a) the situation of human rights in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and (b) freedom of the press in Somalia.

### **Cooperation with United Nations bodies**

In 2009, Freedom House submitted stakeholder reports to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for the universal periodic reviews of Egypt, Kazakhstan and the Islamic Republic of Iran. In 2010, Freedom House published a special report entitled “Policing belief: the impact of blasphemy laws on human rights”, which examined the impact of blasphemy or religious defamation laws on fundamental human rights in seven countries — Algeria, Egypt, Greece, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan and Poland — where such laws exist both on paper and in practice. Copies of the report were sent to the United Nations special rapporteurs on the freedom of expression and on the freedom of religion and belief, and the report was released at an event in New York on 21 October 2010 to which Member States were invited.

### **Initiatives taken by the organization in support of the Millennium Development Goals**

Freedom House contributed to Goal 3 of the Millennium Development Goals by producing a special report entitled “Women’s rights in the Middle East and North Africa 2010”, a comprehensive study of women’s human rights in the region. The report was a follow-up to the first such report published in 2005 and offered an updated examination of the issue, with a special focus on changes that have occurred over the previous five years.

## **8. Girl Scouts of the United States of America**

### **Special, 2003**

#### **Introduction**

Girl Scouts of the United States of America was founded in Savannah, Georgia, in 1912. The organization has 3.2 million members — 2.3 million girl members and 880,000 adult members working primarily as volunteers. Girls participate in Girl Scout programming at 112 local councils located throughout the United States and in over 92 countries abroad through the United States of America Girl Scouts Overseas.

#### **Aims and purposes of the organization**

Girl Scouts of the United States of America is the world's pre-eminent organization dedicated solely to girls — all girls — where, in an accepting and nurturing environment, girls build character and skills for success in the real world. In partnership with committed adult volunteers, girls develop qualities that will serve them all their lives, like leadership, strong values, social conscience, and conviction about their own potential and self-worth.

#### **Significant changes in the organization**

Girl Scout Leadership Experience: in 2008, Girl Scouts of the United States of America initiated a new programme model based on the Girl Scout Research Institute's original research, "Change It Up!", that focuses on girls' definition of leadership.

#### **Contribution of the organization to the work of the United Nations**

Girl Scouts of the United States of America has served as a member of the Coalition for Adolescent Girls, convened by the United Nations Foundation and the Nike Foundation, from 2008 to present. It co-sponsored a parallel event during the fifty-second session of the Commission on the Status of Women: "Agenda for adolescent girls: a case for investment and action", on 4 March 2008. Girl Scouts of the United States of America served as general member of the United Nations Association of the United States of America.

#### **Participation in meetings of the United Nations**

Commission on the Status of Women: representatives attended the following sessions in New York: 26 February-9 March 2007; 25 February-7 March 2008; 2-13 March 2009; 1-12 March 2010; and 22 February-4 March 2011. Along with Girl Scouts of the United States of America staff, each year 8 to 12 Girl Scout representatives were chosen to participate.

#### **Cooperation with United Nations bodies**

Girl Scouts of the United States of America participated in the launch of the Paint the Planet Exhibit on 23 October 2008, sponsored by the United Nations Environment Programme. Sixteen Girl Scouts attended the event and a representative, Sapreet Saluja, from the World Association of Girl Guides/Girl Scouts spoke. Girl Scouts of the United States of America joined with UNEP to

coordinate the announcement of Giselle Bundchen as a UNEP Goodwill Ambassador.

### **Initiatives taken by the organization in support of the Millennium Development Goals**

Every 22 February, on World Thinking Day, Girl Guides/Girl Scouts around the world celebrate international friendships and participate in activities that help them reflect on being part of a global community. Each year's theme is chosen by the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts. In 2007, it was "Discover your potential". In 2008, the theme was water and Girl Scouts of the United States of America promoted the United States Fund for UNICEF tap project. In 2009, the World Association of Girl Guides/Girl Scouts began aligning the World Thinking Day themes to the Millennium Development Goals. 2009 focused on girls fighting diseases, such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, in their communities. In 2010, the theme was "Together we can end extreme hunger and poverty". Girls learned about poverty in their communities and abroad and engaged in action projects to address the issue. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has hosted programmes for USA Girl Scouts Overseas in Paris for World Thinking Day from 2008 to 2010. The Girl Scout Global Action patch, developed in partnership with the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, is a way for girls to participate in realizing the Millennium Development Goals. By earning the Global Action patch, girls learn, in a fun and educational way, about serious global issues affecting girls, young women and their communities. The HIV/AIDS Twinning programme, partnership between Girl Scouts of San Diego and Girl Guides of Kenya, trains girls as HIV/AIDS prevention peer educators. Global Cinema Series, a six-month programme for Girl Scouts ages 14 to 18 years, uses film and Girl Scout resources, to teach about issues that impact girls globally. Girls watch and discuss films, participate in leadership activities and develop action projects to address issues similar to those highlighted in the films.

## **9. Global Volunteers**

### **Special, 1999**

#### **Introduction**

Global Volunteers is a private, non-profit, non-sectarian international human and economic development organization that focuses on improving the lives of children. Founded in 1984, Global Volunteers sends teams of short-term volunteers to work on long-term development projects. Nearly 30,000 volunteers have served in more than 30 countries on 6 continents.

#### **Aims and purposes of the organization**

Global Volunteers focuses on children. It helps local communities to create, nurture and sustain the well-being of children, so they might realize the full promise of their human potential.

### **Significant changes in the organization**

For more than two decades, Global Volunteers has helped to provide the 12 essential services to children in communities throughout the world, although not all services are available in any one community. In 2010, the organization investigated the possibility of offering every partner community comprehensive support in delivering all 12 services. We honour the basic principle that local people are in charge of their own human and economic development. This is foundational to effective development because local people understand their own communities and their challenges and opportunities in ways that outsiders do not.

### **Contribution of the organization to the work of the United Nations**

Global Volunteers supported the United Nations and the Millennium Development Goals in more than 150 communities in 22 countries. It is in consultative status with UNICEF and partners with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and The Growing Connection in raising awareness of and establishing school and household gardens using EarthBox® technology. It has also had substantive conversations with executives of the World Food Programme (WFP). Wherever possible, it utilizes United Nations materials, attends United Nations meetings and conferences, and promotes United Nations goals and objectives to partner organizations across the planet, volunteers from throughout the United States and Canada and local people in the communities we serve. The organization's volunteers help to start and maintain school and household gardens (using EarthBox® technology), support child feeding and nutrition programmes and provide micronutrient supplementation. They teach basic hygiene with a focus on handwashing with soap and water, offer HIV/AIDS education, and supply malaria nets and de-worming tablets. They also teach math, science and conversational English in classrooms; build schools, health clinics and libraries; train teachers, help to provide adequate sanitation and access to safe water, promote girls' education and offer psychosocial support.

### **Participation in meetings of the United Nations**

Burnham Philbrook, Global Volunteers President and Chief Executive Officer, participated in numerous United Nations meetings and conferences with FAO, WFP, the World Health Organization (WHO), and the United Nations office of the Special Envoy for Haiti, in his capacity as Deputy Under-Secretary for Farm and Foreign Agriculture Services at the United States Department of Agriculture during 2009 and 2010, while on leave of absence from Global Volunteers. We support holding meetings in other countries; however, it is financially challenging to attend when these conferences are held abroad. During the past four years, Global Volunteers liaisons have participated in conference planning committees in New York.

### **Cooperation with United Nations bodies**

Global Volunteers and the FAO office in Washington, D.C., cooperated in submitting a contract application to the United States Department of Agriculture to manage a school garden project in the United States. Unfortunately, our application was not successful; however, that effort helped to establish a foundation for future cooperation with FAO promoting school and household gardens in Costa Rica, Ecuador, Ghana, Peru, Romania, Saint Lucia and the United Republic of Tanzania.



**Additional information**

In addition to the initiatives undertaken in support of the Millennium Development Goals, the organization has also contributed to the development of our community partners in the area of Internet technology.

**10. Gulf Automobile Federation****Special, 1995****Introduction**

The Gulf Automobile Federation is a non-governmental organization that has worked in Kuwait since 1969. It promotes tourism and travel by private car.

**Aims and purposes of the organization**

The organization promotes tourism through its contacts and cooperation with the following institutions: (a) the International Organization of the Associations of the Roads Precautions, in Luxembourg; (b) the Union of Arab Organizations of Tourism; (c) the American Organization of Travel Agencies; and (d) the Indian Union of Car Clubs.

**Significant changes in the organization**

The organization is always ready to follow up on issues with various customs administrations, thereby contributing to strengthening tourism by private car and preserving the rights of customs and States members.

**Contribution of the organization to the work of the United Nations**

The organization contributes to the promotion of tourism and cooperation with many authorities, especially the representatives of the following club members: (a) Gulf Automobile Association in Kuwait; (b) Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; (c) Club of Cars and Tourism, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates; (d) Bahrain Club of Tourism Cars; (e) International Syria Club for Cars and Tourism; (f) International Lebanon Club for Cars and Tourism; (g) Turkey (Arap Tourism and Trading); (h) Doha Club of Cars and Tourism, Qatar; (i) Sudanese Club of Cars and Tourism; (j) Islamic Republic of Iran; (k) International Cairo Club for Cars and Tourism, Egypt; and (l) Automobile Association of Pakistan.

**Participation in meetings of the United Nations**

The organization appointed the law firm of Borel & Barbey 2, rue de Jargonnant, with respect to all its rights and obligations related to the conduct of attending as an observer in the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations in Geneva.

**Cooperation with United Nations bodies**

The organization cooperates with members nations for international peace and participates at meetings held by United Nations entities in various countries.

### **Initiatives taken by the organization in support of the Millennium Development Goals**

The organization supports the process of strengthening the relationship between members nations to improve and discuss the main causes of poverty and hunger. It also thinks imaginatively about how to strengthen the United Nations so that the world body can better serve States and people alike in the new era. The organization endeavours to improve road maps and road conditions.

### **Additional information**

The organization is also pleased to strengthen the links of friendship between the people of the region, with the aim of consolidating friendship and international peace and lowering the threat of terrorism.

## **11. Human Rights First**

### **Special, 1991**

#### **Introduction**

Human Rights First was founded in 1978 as the Lawyers Committee for International Human Rights to promote laws and policies that advance universal rights and freedoms. It exists to protect and defend the dignity of each individual through respect for human rights and the rule of law.

#### **Aims and purposes of the organization**

For over three decades, Human Rights First has promoted laws and policies that advance universal rights and freedoms. It believes that building respect for human rights and the rule of law will help to stem the tide of tyranny, extremism, intolerance, and violence, and ensure the dignity to which every individual is entitled. In pursuing its goals, Human Rights First builds coalitions, carries out research and analysis, produces reports, and engages new constituencies in order to develop a more durable consensus to advance human rights.

#### **Significant changes in the organization**

There are no significant changes.

#### **Contribution of the organization to the work of the United Nations**

Human Rights First has particular expertise in its core thematic programme areas: refugee rights and issues relating to asylum; advancing the work of human rights defenders around the world; promoting effective international responses to crimes against humanity and mass atrocities; combating discrimination; promoting awareness of and compliance with human rights by business corporations; and promoting State adherence to international law in the struggle against terrorism and in upholding national security. In each of these areas, it interacts with a wide range of United Nations mechanisms and agencies, including the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and many different parts of the United Nations human rights machinery: treaty bodies, special procedures, the Human Rights Council, and the universal periodic review procedure. Its

contribution to the work of the United Nations includes the preparation of reports and oral and written statements on violations of human rights and protection of the rights of refugees, recommendations for Member States to protect and ensure human rights as well as provide remedies for human rights violations, recommendations for Member States to comply with their obligations to protect the rights of refugees, and recommendations for the United Nations and treaty bodies to promote respect for human rights and the rights of refugees.

### **Participation in meetings of the United Nations**

Human Rights First participates frequently in United Nations meetings related to its areas of expertise. It was actively involved in the preparation for the Durban Review Conference held in Geneva in 2009 that evaluated the progress towards the goals set by the 2001 World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Racial Intolerance. It also participated in the Conference.

### **Cooperation with United Nations bodies**

Human Rights First is actively engaged with a wide range of United Nations bodies. With respect to treaty bodies, it has provided written information and specialized briefings to members of the Human Rights Committee for its review of the compliance of the United States of America with its obligations as a State party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Human Rights First has also provided information to the Human Rights Committee on other countries that have been the focus of its programme activities. It provided written information and specialized briefings related to United States detention practices and abusive interrogation techniques to the Committee against Torture. It briefed the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on the situation of women human rights defenders in Colombia. It provided several submissions for the universal periodic review process of the Human Rights Council. It works closely with several United Nations special procedures mandate holders, including the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, the Special Rapporteur on torture, and the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders. In 2009, Human Rights First was instrumental in establishing a forum for human rights defender specialized mechanisms in intergovernmental organizations, including the United Nations Special Rapporteur, with the aim of better coordinating multilateral efforts to support human rights defenders around the world. In December 2009, it worked with UNHCR on the adoption of guidelines on combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and other forms of related intolerance.

## **12. Inclusion International**

### **Special, 1975**

#### **Introduction**

There have been no changes.

#### **Aims and purposes of the organization**

There have been no changes.

#### **Significant changes in the organization**

The adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has had a positive impact on the work and vision of Inclusion International. The organization has been able to “link local voices to global change” with greater ease now that there is a universal code of conduct for countries to go by.

#### **Contribution of the organization to the work of the United Nations**

Inclusion International promotes and supports the role of families in advancing the human rights and inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities by advocating:

- (a) A family-friendly public policy;
- (b) Access to information and training for families;
- (c) Support to families such as respite in-home care and income support.

Inclusion International demands the right of all people with intellectual disabilities to decide where and with whom they live and to receive the support they require in the community by specifically promoting:

- (a) That persons with disabilities have the opportunity to choose a place of residence and where and with whom they live on an equal basis with others and are not obliged to live in a particular living arrangement;
- (b) That people with disabilities must be supported by a range of support;
- (c) The closure of segregating residential institutions;
- (d) That no further investments are made into the renovation of existing institutions or building of new segregating residential institutions.

Inclusion International promotes the right of people with intellectual disabilities to live in the community by advocating for:

- (a) Appropriate support, including in-home, residential and other community support services;
- (b) Support to families;
- (c) Access to regular mainstream services and support in the community.

Inclusion International will work to promote the goal of full inclusion by advocating for:

- (a) Progressive development of inclusive education;

- (b) Ensuring that one ministry is responsible for the education of all children;
- (c) Teacher training to ensure that individual needs are met in inclusive settings;
- (d) Support to families;
- (e) Inclusive education policy development.

### **Participation in meetings of the United Nations**

Since 2007, Inclusion International has participated in conferences held by UNICEF, UNESCO, WHO and the World Bank and has submitted papers about issues that affect persons with intellectual disabilities. Inclusion International also annually attends the Conference of State Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

### **Cooperation with United Nations bodies**

Inclusion International is actively involved with UNESCO in promoting Education for All.

It has been a member of the Non-Governmental Organizations Committee of UNICEF and was instrumental in establishing a subcommittee with a focus on children with disabilities.

Additionally, it was actively engaged in the development and negotiations of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

### **Initiatives taken by the organization in support of the Millennium Development Goals**

The national pilot initiative in Zanzibar supported the Zanzibar Association for People with Developmental Disabilities. In January, the Association conducted consultative meetings with 50 families in order to identify rights-related issues affecting people with developmental disabilities. Based on the response from those consultations, the Association was able to identify the issues surrounding the rights for people with disabilities and held a workshop to review the policy gaps that affect the capacity of families to support their children with disabilities.

Inclusion International held a regional forum for families and self-advocates on the theme “Transforming rights into action: africa in focus” on 2 and 3 March 2011 in Johannesburg, South Africa. Representatives from over 16 countries from all regions of Africa participated, as well as invited guest speakers such as Edah Maina, a member of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, agreed to participate in the event.

Inclusion International, in collaboration with Asdown Colombia, Inclusion Interamericana, and Fundación Saldarriaga Concha, organized a regional forum for families in Bogota, from 10 to 13 November 2010. Over 300 persons participated in the forum on the theme “The road to inclusion: together we can make the change!” and the event was a huge success.

Inclusive Education Canada, Inclusion International, Asdown Colombia and la Fundación Saldarriaga Concha united efforts to develop a study tour on inclusive

education entitled “Education with all and for all” in New Brunswick, Canada on 4 April 2010.

### **13. Indian Council of Education**

#### **Special, 1995**

##### **Introduction**

Indian Council of Education is an international organization of Indians in India and abroad. Its head office is in New Delhi, with offices in Europe and North America and affiliate offices in Asia and Africa.

##### **Aims and purposes of the organization**

Indian Council of Education was established in 1985 with the purpose of working for the promotion of social consciousness among the masses, particularly among the economically weaker and socially backward sections of the Indian society against the prevailing evils and to make them aware of the significance of education as an instrument of economic, social and cultural emancipation and change.

##### **Significant changes in the organization**

The organization is pursuing the rights-based approach to fulfilling the needs of the vulnerable and weaker sections of the society, in particular women, children, physically and mentally challenged persons, drug addicts and HIV/AIDS patients, in the developing countries, and ensuring them their basic human rights.

##### **Contribution of the organization to the work of the United Nations**

The organization participated in the meetings and side events at the fourth through fifteenth sessions of the Human Right Council (2007-2010) and made oral statements at the seventh through fifteenth sessions. In addition, it organized the following briefings and seminars in connection with the sessions: fifth session (June 2007): briefing on the universal periodic review; ninth session (September 2008): seminar on the future of the United Nations and the New World Order and economic, social and cultural rights; tenth session (March 2009): seminar on the human rights issues facing the women and street children of South Asia; and twelfth session (October 2009): seminar on the rights of minorities in Asia.

##### **Participation in meetings of the United Nations**

(a) High-level segment of the 2008 substantive session of the ECOSOC, New York, July 2008; (b) Social Forum on Poverty Eradication Strategies (31 August-2 September 2009), Geneva. The organization’s contribution is through publications, research and extension programmes. Examples include: “International terrorism and its ramifications”, 2007; “Need for right to education in India — a study of school drop-outs”, 2007; “United Nations in the New World Order”, January 2008; “Child labour in South Asia”, 2008; “Women’s empowerment and right to participation in elections — a case study of India”, 2009; “New Asia-Africa strategic partnership”, 2009.

The Council has organized international, regional and national conferences, seminars and discussion meetings in South Asia, including on the issues and themes set out below:

2006-2007: Domestic violence in South Asia, “combating torture, a human-rights approach” (Delhi University, New Delhi, India); 10 January 2007; right to development (New Delhi); democracy, human rights and social development (Himachal Pradesh University); the human rights of migrants (University of Delhi); women and peace (YMCA, Kathmandu, Nepal); sexual orientation and gender identity (Lucknow University); the persecution of sexual minorities (University of Delhi).

2008: The human rights situation in Nepal (Habitat Centre, New Delhi); human rights and development (Kashi Vidyapith Varanasi); the right to food in developing countries (Delhi University); the fight against extreme poverty (Nirmala Niketan, Mumbai); the right to information (Kashmiri University, Srinagar); the prevention of corruption in India (Mata Sundri College); the rights of women (Indira Gandhi National Open University); the Urban Programme of Action imperative for Asia (Jamia Millia Islamia University); international human rights reporting (Loyola College, Chennai); the poverty alleviation programme in India (Lucknow University).

2009: Protecting children in South Asia (Kathmandu); violence against women and children in India (Jamia Millia Islamia); the empowerment of women (Delhi University); the negative impact of globalization (India International Centre); the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (Kanpur University); caste-based discrimination (Jesus of Mary College); business ethics and values (New Delhi); human rights for all (Jammu University); minority rights in India (Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh).

2010: Views of the youth on racism and racial discrimination; women’s rights (Delhi University); the situation of children’s rights in Asia (Jamia Millia Islamia); conflict resolution in the Gulf (Agra University, Agra); violence against children (Lucknow University); promoting tribal rights (Jawaharlal Nehru University); human rights defender — the need for protections (Sri Lanka); State terrorism in Asia (Indraprastha University); the right of freedom of expression (Jamia Millia Islamia); human rights and HIV/AIDS (Mumbai).

### **Cooperation with United Nations bodies**

Indian Council of Education, apart from raising awareness, also works with policymakers on the framing of more responsive and integrative policies on these social issues. The speakers and delegates to the various conferences organized by the Council are well-known academicians who frame policies.

### **Initiatives taken by the organization in support of the Millennium Development Goals**

(a) The organization was instrumental in advocacy with policymakers and legislators in passing the Right to Education Act in the Indian Parliament; (b) it promoted gender equality and women’s empowerment by organizing lectures, seminars and other gender-sensitization programmes at the grass-roots level; (c) it

worked to combat HIV/AIDS by organizing, sensitizing and educating communities on the human rights issues relating to patients living with HIV/AIDS.

## **14. Information Habitat: Where Information Lives**

**Special, 1995**

### **Introduction**

Information Habitat: Where Information Lives continues to play a unique role in the United Nations Non-Governmental Organization community in its attention to the far-reaching implications and opportunities of the accelerating growth, affordability and accessibility of information and communications technologies in support of a sustainable common future. In addition, it has been devoting attention to local hands-on sustainability initiatives in New York City in recognition of the critical leadership role of cities in the transition to sustainability, and of the vital importance of hands-on activities in education for sustainable development.

### **Aims and purposes of the organization**

The aim of the organization is the “Co-facilitation of peaceful, creative, participatory global transition to knowledge-based societies, economies, and environments in the context of an appreciation of the critical role of information and communication technologies in the transition to a sustainable common future”. The organization’s main course of action incorporates a holistic approach that includes monitoring developments in information and communications technologies with attention to ways of strengthening broad-based, informed participation in decision-making and access to information, enabling access to markets, education, health care and more, and more broadly to the benefits of transition to an essentially carbon-free platform for economic and social transactions.

### **Significant changes in the organization**

The continued rapid acceleration in information and communications technology — particularly for cellphones, smart phones and digital video and photography — accompanied by the greatly increased affordability and rate of adoption and use in developing and developed countries have led the organization to focus on the need to promote an understanding of the “information universe” as a realm of the natural world — and as a realm that is not governed by the scarcity constraints of the material world.

### **Contribution of the organization to the work of the United Nations**

Much of the organization’s contribution to the work of the United Nations has been through its informational and networking support for the United Nations Non-Governmental Organization community and Non-Governmental Organization committees and networks. Representatives of Information Habitat have served as Co-Chair of the Non-Governmental Organization Committee on Education, with a focus on the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, and as Chair of its Information and Communications Subcommittee. Through that Subcommittee, Information Habitat has compiled and organized key United Nations documents relating to sustainability and education for sustainable development,



including a unique hyperlinked collection of key United Nations documents at [www.un-documents.net](http://www.un-documents.net), and has enhanced the digital value of key documents — including reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change — through the addition of bookmarks to documents published in PDF format and a bookmarked compilation of documents.

### **Participation in meetings of the United Nations**

Representatives of Information Habitat have participated at the sessions of the Commission on Sustainable Development throughout the quadrennium (New York, April-May 2007, May 2008, May 2009 and May 2010) and in the Intergovernmental Preparatory Meetings (New York, February-March 2007 and February 2009). Representatives also participated at the sixth through ninth sessions of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (New York, May 2007, April-May 2008, May 2009 and April 2010) and in the First Preparatory Committee Meeting of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (New York, May 2010). Representatives have also participated in a number of seminars hosted by the United Nations University.

### **Cooperation with United Nations bodies**

During the quadrennium, the organization's cooperation with United Nations bodies has been on an informal/virtual basis, with a focus on designing, developing and implementing ways to enhance the accessibility and dissemination of information and documents of United Nations bodies. An example of this has been the utilization of a service that provides e-mail delivery of sustainability and climate change-related rich site summary (RSS) feeds from United Nations bodies and other sources.

### **Initiatives taken by the organization in support of the Millennium Development Goals**

Millennium Development Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability has been a central focus of the organization's work, with a twofold approach: promoting the appreciation of the transition to a digital platform as a critical path to sustainability; and active involvement in local sustainability initiatives, including urban agriculture, rainwater harvesting and composting, accompanied by workshops with local schools, and participating in a variety of action and planning groups working towards a sustainable New York City.

## **15. Initiatives: Women in Development**

### **Special, 2007**

#### **Introduction**

The organization operates in India and also extends training support to South Asia and other countries. It is a gender resource training, research and advocacy organization.

#### **Aims and purposes of the organization**

- To strive towards an environmentally sustainable society

- To provide participatory training support to development organizations on gender issues, leading to appropriate changes in attitudes, knowledge and skills
- To conduct research on gender and development issues and work towards the development of poor and marginalized women
- To promote national and regional networks and influence policies from a gender perspective

### **Significant changes in the organization**

There have been no significant changes.

### **Contribution of the organization to the work of the United Nations**

The organization addresses the political empowerment of women, women's workplace rights, violence against women, health and the reproductive rights of women. It collaborated with women's networks of India and the state of Tamil Nadu to organize a women's parliament in November 2009, and conducted the Tamil Nadu Women's Legislative Assembly in March 2010. The organization strives for 33 per cent representation of women in the legislative bodies. It organized consultations with women leaders of various political parties to drive the 33 per cent representation of women forward. These initiatives of the organization are in line with the larger agenda of the United Nations and the Beijing Platform for Action. The organization, through its research on the impact of microcredit on women and research on judicial gender bias in rape-related judgements, strives to achieve gender equality. The research on the status of employment of disabled women addresses the rights of the disabled women. The organization also researched the State's responsibility towards women's health. These activities go in tandem with the development agenda of United Nations entities.

### **Participation in meetings of the United Nations**

The organization participated in the fifty-fourth and fifty-fifth sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women and reflected the voices of the grass roots in the panels and dialogues with United Nations entities.

### **Cooperation with United Nations bodies**

- The organization supported programmes of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) (now UN-Women) and was involved in the engendering, monitoring and evaluation processes of the five-year plan of the Government of India, strengthened the links between economic growth and gender justice and fostered development through the agency on women.
- A number of grass-roots level trainings were carried out to spread the messages of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Beijing Platform for Action. The Committee was used as the main framework to address the various issues.

**Initiatives taken by the organization in support of the Millennium Development Goals**

The organization was involved in the following:

- Strong campaigns on attaining land rights for women and achieving access and control for women over land resources.
- Efforts at creating opportunities for landless women to gain access and control over land through collective farm initiatives and facilitating the direct participation of women at all levels in decision-making on land issues.
- Organized a national consultation on women farmers and collective farming, on 8 and 9 September 2010, and consolidated and strengthened the activism on land rights for women in India.
- Facilitated the emergence of a national-level forum, the National Campaign for Women Farmers and Collective Farming, to work towards the achievement of land rights for women. The organization advocates on land rights for women through advocacy, networking, capacity-building programmes, research, documentation and dissemination of information.
- Worked towards the facilitation of the emergence of a self-advocacy group of women farmers to voice their demands which includes and rights for women and the inclusion of women's perspective in policymaking. Women's access to land creates economic opportunities for women.

**Additional information**

The organization carried out significant research on microcredit and women's empowerment. Research was carried out on the issues of health, violence against women, women workers and land rights for women.

---