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*Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture & Natural Resources Management*

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## AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2009

This newsletter comes to you after a long hiatus, resulting from an exceptionally active year for WOCAN. Please read the highlights below. As always, more details can be found at [www.wocan.org](http://www.wocan.org)

### WOCAN Secretariat has a new home

WOCAN has relocated its Secretariat to **Washington, DC**, where it occupies a space offered generously by the IFAD North America Liaison Office. This strategic move puts us in the center of discussions at the World Bank, the US government and numerous international organizations around women's role in agriculture and climate change.

### WOCAN Meetings

WOCAN itself has worked hard to advocate for this new attention to women within the agriculture/climate change dialogues of global policy makers, through side events and continual efforts within the UN and the World Bank, through this year's **Commission on Sustainable Development sessions**, meetings related to REDD (Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation), the FAO Committee for Food Security and other venues. Meetings organized by WOCAN itself include one held at the Gates Foundation on **What Will it Take? Challenges and Strategies for Putting Women at the Center of Global Food Security** and several of the **WARM** Network of Washington DC-based members and colleagues. One WARM session featured the CEO of the Global Environment Fund, who spoke on gender mainstreaming within that organization, and the Regional Director, UNEP North America. Two other WARM meetings were held at the World Bank in conjunction with workshops of the Gender and Agriculture Sourcebook.



### Appointment of a new coordinator for West/Central Africa

Jane Takang Tarh is the new Coordinator of our office in Cameroon, located within the CIFOR offices.

In addition to developing new projects with members in the region and supporting the work of existing project partners, Jane is managing the new regional website for West and Central Africa, available in English and French



<http://westcentralafrica.wocan.org>

## Reframing Leadership for Women and Men for Gender Equality

Is a new WOCAN course offered as a pilot to about 20 WOCAN members of Africa and South Asia in Nairobi in June, 2009. Participant Kanchan Lama writes, “We defined our learning objective as to be able to lead strategically by building teams and association through a robust network of influential and powerful women leaders, and men leaders in supporting fellow men for advancing women’s leadership. Proceeding onto a personal reflection exercise, we reviewed our life experiences, remarkable incidents, factors that shaped us to date as change agents for transformation.” Please click here to read more of her 2 page impression of this training: [Reframing Leadership for Women and Men for Gender Equality](#)



### A Focus on Men’s Roles for Equitable Leadership

A unique and integral component of this new course is a focus on men’s roles in gender equality and women’s leadership. Male participants from Africa and Asia developed a vision to enhance the role of men as advocates and active supporters for women leaders and for processes of transformation in gender relations within their organizations. The objective here is to increase the awareness of ‘masculinities’ and men’s role as gatekeepers of current gender roles and as potential resisters of change; to separate the popular notion that equates ‘gender’ with women, effectively marginalizing women and women’s struggles even in the name of mainstreaming; to demonstrate that leaving out men addresses only the symptoms of the underlying gender system, and to show that although empowering women is one part of redressing the relations of power, there also needs to be systematic and systemic efforts to change the lives of men, if power relations are to be redressed at their root.

## WOCAN South Africa

We are very excited about the initiative of WOCAN members in South Africa, who are building **WOCAN South Africa** to meet the needs of the new government there to mainstream gender throughout agriculture and NRM departments, as well as focus programs on building leadership and other skills of women farmers. This team of WOCAN members -including a farmer, trainers, researchers, and activists - are showing how a group of motivated members can organize themselves in collaboration with the Secretariat to develop a program to implement activities at a national level.



## Gender and Climate Change: Forests

### Advocacy:

We are fast approaching the December meeting of the climate change negotiations of the UNFCCC. Our advocacy efforts for this process are in collaboration with the Global Gender and Climate Alliance, which is led by UNDP, UNEP, IUCN, and WEDO. As a member, WOCAN engages regularly with the GGCA network, which consists of 12 UN agencies (including FAO, UNIFEM, and UNICEF), and 25 civil society organizations. WOCAN will participate with



other civil society organizations in the GGCA Advocacy Team, particularly following the REDD negotiations under the UNFCCC at both the Bangkok and Copenhagen meetings.

WOCAN has led a process of trying to incorporate women's and gender issues within the global forest dialogues and fora for many years, most notably within the UN Forum on Forests, but also within the World Bank's Forest Investment Program Design phase. A new opportunity has now opened up, with the appointment of the Director to the Steering Committee of The Forest Dialogue

**Publications:**

WOCAN prepared a paper for CARE Denmark entitled "**Gender-differentiated Impacts of REDD to be Addressed in REDD Social Standards**" and led a 2 day workshop on "Engendering REDD" in collaboration with IUCN and the GGCA.

**Projects:**

WOCAN has developed a proposal for a pilot project for a Payment for Environmental Services scheme to be implemented with women's groups engaged in forest management in 2-3 countries of South Asia and Africa, that it plans to implement within the coming months.

## Gender and Food Security and Agriculture

**Advocacy:**

WOCAN has been selected as a member of the **Contact Group to represent women within the FAO World Committee on Food Security (CFS) Reform processes**. WOCAN's active involvement in global policy making processes related to food security and agriculture has helped to bring about a stronger focus of global policy makers on small holder farmers, especially women farmers. The recognition of this has led to this key position within the CFS, which is a new space for us to use for further high level advocacy, to hold countries accountable to the commitments made at the Commission Development session. WOCAN's role as Organizing Partner for Women at the CSD 16 and 17 produced results in May, when we witnessed a turning point as a large number of countries stated their commitments to providing more resources to women farmers. With its focus on themes of agriculture, rural development, land, drought and desertification and Africa, the CSD provided a good learning experience for the WOCAN advocacy team (documented in the **Advocacy Training Module for Women in Agriculture**). WOCAN's engagement at the CSD and CFS will culminate in the preparations leading to and at the World Summit on Food Security to be held in Rome in November 2009; WOCAN plans to organize a Women's Summit in advance of this meeting.



**Publications:**

WOCAN is pleased to announce the availability of its **Advocacy Training Module for Women in Agriculture** to enhance the capabilities of WOCAN staff, members, partners and others who are participating in advocacy efforts within policy making processes at the global, regional and national levels. The preparation of this Module builds from several consultation processes and training sessions conducted by WOCAN over the last three years. It is intended to be an iterative document that will be updated and reformatted based on further comments and hands-on experience in its use. Over the last year, WOCAN has authored two chapters in the **Gender in Agriculture Sourcebook** of the World Bank/FAO/IFAD and prepared **Scoping Studies on Rural Women's Leadership in Agriculture and NRM** in India, the Philippines, South Africa and Nepal as part of the design phase for a new program to be implemented by IFAD for Rural Women's Leadership.

**Projects:**

Based on the findings of the Scoping Studies, WOCAN will implement the two year project to increase the responsiveness of national policies, programmes and institutions to the needs and potential of rural women producers and labourers through building women farmers' leadership in Nepal and the Philippines . We continue to implement the project on **Women's Leadership in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management to Support Global Advocacy and Organizational Change for Poverty Alleviation** with partner organizations in Africa and South Asia.

## New Donors

We have received some funds from the **Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD)** to support participation of women in key events related to food security and climate change in relation to the Network of Women Leaders in Agriculture.

**UNIFEM** is supporting WOCAN Cameroon to implement a project on Women, Land Rights and Climate Change Implications to catalyze the formulation of gender sensitive land and forestry laws that protect women's rights that considers the implications of climate change for women in Cameroon.

## New Roles

The Director of WOCAN has been appointed as the Gender Representative to the Program Advisory Committee of the **CGIAR's Participatory Research and Gender Analysis Program**.



The Director has also been appointed to the Steering Committee of **The Forest Dialogue**.

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