

## New Groups

### The Women and Shelter Network, the Caribbean

Habitat International Coalition (HIC) is the international body representing NGOs dealing with shelter issues. It focuses on the rights of poor people worldwide to land and shelter. Since women form the majority of the poor, HIC have set up a **Women and Shelter Group** to deal with the particular issues affecting them.

Among these issues are women's unequal rights, or access, to land and dwellings. They suffer additional burdens where services such as water and fuel are lacking, because of their traditional role in providing these for their families. There are increasing numbers of very poor female-headed households lacking adequate shelter. The Network feels that there needs to be concerted global action on these issues, as well as on women's increased access to construction and other shelter related skills.

The focal point for the **Women and Shelter Network** in the Caribbean is Sarah Power who is in the process of gathering names of groups and individuals interested in being part of the Network. If you are working on women and shelter issues, including land, shelter, health, income generation, credit, services or community organizing, and are concerned with taking or supporting action at community level, she would be pleased to hear from you. Information about the work people and organizations are doing will be collected and published in the "*Women and Shelter Newsletter*" which is sent to members.

Sarah works with the St. Peter Claver Women's Housing Cooperative, which has made an eighteen-minute video about the progress of the co-op from its beginnings to the occupancy of the first house. It is available for 100 units of local currency from 33B Waltham Park Road, Kingston 13 Jamaica.

For more information please contact:

Sarah Power  
c/o 166 1/2 Hope Road  
Kingston  
Jamaica

Source: *Cafra News*, Sept. 1990

### Women in Rice, Trinidad

**Women in Rice (WINRE)**, the women's arm of the Trinidad Rice Growers Association (TIRGA), was formally launched on April 22, 1990.

Most of the rice growers in Trinidad are women. Women, especially Indian women, have contributed substantially to the development of agriculture in the country. Since colonial times, women have had to adjust to doing household chores and tending to the fields. They must make breakfast for their children and husbands before their day in the lagoon, and do the laundry, etc. on their return home in the evening. And a day in the lagoon is no easy task. The women are exposed to sun, rain and insects as they work, their backs bent to the ground, while they clean and plant.



Gabriela

WINRE does not plan to move as a shadow of TIRGA, but to expand nationally in the hope of addressing the problems that affect family life - child abuse, battered women, promiscuity and alcohol abuse by women. They also hope to get into cottage industry and manufacture craft items out of the rice industry.

Source: *Cafra News*, Sept.1990.  
(Information taken from an article by Phoolo Danny in the *Sunday Express*, July 22 1990)

## Amnesty International Task Force on Women and Human Rights, U.S.A.

Amnesty International at its 1989 meeting passed a resolution calling for greater attention to human rights violations against women. Amnesty International USA has formed a **Task Force on Women and Human Rights** whose aims are:

- to draw attention to women prisoners of conscience around the world;
- develop lobbying and educational tools focusing on rape and sexual assault in detention and persecution of women activists;
- gather information on women's organizations focusing on human rights issues;
- to work for ratification of the Convention by the United States.

For more information please contact:

Maryam Elahi or Suzanne Roach  
Amnesty/USA  
322 Eighth Avenue  
New York  
NY 10001  
USA  
Fax:212 627 1451

Source: *The Women's Watch*, Vol.4  
No.2, Oct.1990.

## Pro Femina, Poland

On June 6 1990 the feminist organization **Pro Femina** was founded in answer to a proposed law which would make abortion illegal.

The group's objectives include:

- to defend the rights and protect the dignity of women, on a public, professional and private level;
- to promote a responsible attitude in both men and women towards sexuality;
- to abolish discrimination against women.

For more information please write to:

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ul. Turmoncka 19m.102  
03-254 Varsovia  
Poland

(*Off Our Backs*, volume XX, no.8,1990)

## Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development

A vision of women's human rights that establishes a foundation for action to challenge tradition, change laws, and make a world in which the customary way of doing things includes women and all their interests, was articulated recently by the **Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development** at its regional consultation on human rights mobilization and strategies:

"We envision a society where we can act on our own behalf with dignity and freedom, recognizing that we have both the right and the obligation to develop our full potential and to support the development of others.....Human rights for women has been defined as the

"collective rights of a woman to be seen and accepted as a person with the capacity to decide or act on her own behalf and have equal access to resources and equitable social, economic and political support..."

For more information please contact:

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Centre 9th Floor  
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Kuala Lumpur  
Malaysia

Source: *The Women's Watch*, Vol.4,  
No.2, Oct.1990.