



WORLD MARCH OF WOMEN NEWSLETTER

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Editorial

The 8th March was defined as International Women's Day in reference to the Russian women's march for Peace, Bread and Land in 1917, demands that are still very up-to-date. On this 8th March, we women will be in the streets to demand negotiated solutions to conflicts, and for the end of the criminalisation and repression of people's struggles. We will occupy street squares to denounce the financial crimes that have caused this grave economic crisis and the huge transfer of public resources to banks. The objectives of the false solutions to these crises – be they economic, environmental or related to food prices – are to create markets and to force a loss of rights and life quality upon workers, or to reduce our hopes of attaining them.

We women will be out in the streets to affirm the real solutions to the crises; solutions that we have been constructing as part of our collective and daily experiences, motivated by our desires for changes, and based on solidarity, justice, peace, equality and freedom.

INTERNATIONAL

Women struggling against the commodification of life and of the environment!

Men and women the world over are resisting the idea of considering nature as resource in the service of corporate profit, as unlimited good, or as more expensive one as it becomes exhausted by improper use. Women, in particular, are very active in these struggles. Their experience of being rendered invisible and devalued in the work they do caring for others is very similar to the invisibility and devaluation of nature. The time and energy that women spend in care-taking, cooking, providing affection and listening, are not visible and are elastic. In most families, women are the first up in the morning and the last to go to bed at night. The time and energy required for nature to regenerate are hidden and treated as an obstacle to be overcome in order for the machine of consumerism to continue operating at full throttle. Women continue to be pressured to adapt conflicting attitudes and times – between life and profit – and must then deal with the resulting tensions. Their work is instrumentalized, for entertainment and to conceal the injustices brought about by multilateral institutions, governments and corporations.

Capitalist, patriarchal society is organized with a gender-based division of labor, separating men's work from women's work, and promotes the idea that men's

work is worth more than women's. Men's work is associated with production (of items sold on markets) and women's work, with reproduction (creation of human beings and interpersonal relationships). The representations of masculinity and femininity are double and hierarchical, like the association between men and culture, and women and nature.

At the World March of Women, we fight to overcome this gender-based division of labor and, at the same time, for the recognition that reproductive work is at the very core of the sustenance of human life and of relations, between members of families and between members of society. We believe it is possible to establish (or, in some cases, re-establish) a dynamic, harmonious relationship between people and nature, and that women, with their historical experience, have much to say on this topic.

Throughout 2012, we will deepen our analysis and our actions on these issues. Key moments for this will be the

Alternative World Water Forum (in March) and the People's Summit for Social and Environmental Justice: against the commodification of life and nature and in defense of the commons, in parallel to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, or Rio+20 (in June).



Mobilization for water and life, in Peru

AMERICAS

WMW Peru mobilizing for water and life

The Great Water March, Conga No Va!, took place from 1 to 9 February in Peru. It started with a march leaving from Cajamarca and other cities and heading for Lima, ending on the 10th with a National Forum for Water Justice. Our sisters from the WMW in Cajamarca, together with the other members of the caravan, marched from Lagunas el Perol, going from town to town until they reached Ciudad de Dios, where they met up with WMW from the Northern macro-region. They continued on to the city of Trujillo, where another 4,000 people joined the action.



Part of the travel was covered on foot and the rest in trucks, vans and pick-ups. “The villagers cheered on the participants and helped them by delivering water, rice, etc. Along the way, meetings were held with local authorities as well”, reports Rosa Rivero.

“Our WMW sisters from Cajamarca made a valuable contribution and successfully achieved the goal of travelling from Cajamarca to Lima, where they were received by sisters from the WMW’s National Coordinating Body in Peru.”

Finally, adds Rosa, on the 9th and 10th, WMW sisters joined the National Water March, “contributing significantly to the creation of spaces for the presentation of proposals from Cajamarca’s female leaders, who had been somewhat invisible in the management of this great water event”.

Click here <http://www.movimientos.org/madretierra/> to read reports on each day of the Water March.

Alternative World Water Forum 2012

From 12 to 17 March, the World March of Women will be present at the Alternative World Water Forum (FAME in French) in Marseille, France. The Forum is an alternative to an official event in which transnational companies and the World Bank plan to appropriate the global governance of water. The alternative forum intends to continue and enlarge the civil society movement in favor of the preservation of water resources and their management, with citizens’ participation, which has been developing in specific alternative spaces, as well as the World Social Forums (like in Porto Alegre, Caracas, Nairobi, Belém and Dakar). This movement promoted the recognition of access to water as a fundamental human right by the UN General Assembly on July 29, 2010.

For this Forum, we have prepared a discussion paper about rural and urban women’s experiences with water management and our struggle against its privatization, which is available to our groups on our website. Click to [read it](#).

For further information on FAME:

<http://www.fame2012.org>

International solidarity prevents expropriation in Apodi, Brazil

In late November, the World March of Women in Brazil called for the solidarity of our friends and allies around the world in their fight to revoke Decree No. 0-001 of 10 June 2011. This decree provides for the expropriation of more than 13,000 hectares of land in the region around Apodi (Rio Grande do Norte), in Northeastern Brazil, expelling more than 150 families who have a history of small-scale agriculture begun in the 1960s, based on the principles of agro-ecology and food sovereignty. The aim of this expropriation project is to divert water to irrigate the region, but which would benefit just five (5) industrial hydro- and agri-business groups.

Conceição Dantas, from the WMW in Mossoró, a village in the region under threat, says that the movements are unified, which is fundamental to the struggle. More than a thousand letters and emails have been sent to the Brazilian government, which immediately suspended the permit to begin the work and launched an investigation of the National Department of Drought Prevention Works (DNOCS), which was coordinating the project. In addition, two public hearings have been held with the President’s General Secretary, and a third with the Minister of Integration. “The goal is to keep up the pressure and stop the project once and for all”.

Click to read the [full call issued by the WMW Brazil](#).

WMW actions in India and Nepal: focusing on the struggle against violence and for women's rights and participation

During the preparatory process for the 8th International Meeting, held in the Philippines, the WMW National Coordination Bodies from India and Nepal submitted documents that presented the activities in which they are involved and the challenges facing women and the WMW in their countries.

India's document highlighted the actions undertaken regarding violence against women, particularly on the subject of trafficking in women during the Commonwealth Games (CWG) in 2010. While the market was renovating brothels and publishing advertisements to stimulate the sex trade, the WMW sent open letters to India's President and Prime Minister, and to the Chief Minister of Delhi, calling on them to use their offices to stop the trafficking of women. A special appeal was addressed also to female MPs, asking them to raise their voices in protest. Public outcry did have some impact: after the Games, the media reported that sex industry profits were lower than expected.

India's NCB also highlighted all of the initiatives relating to the organization of domestic workers, to demand rights such as a minimum wage, weekly time off, as well as National Legislation for Domestic Workers. The Government of India has refused such legislation but has agreed to develop a policy guideline. The WMW continues to mobilize workers, in order to heighten this pressure. The actions planned for 8 March are especially important in bringing the different organizations together.

Click to read the [full report from India](#).

In Nepal, an ongoing process of transformation

The Nepalese NCB reports that women in the country are fully involved in the political, economic and social process of transformation now under way. A pro-democracy movement, which began to develop in the 1990s, expanded until it finally came to power in 2007,

after two and a half centuries of monarchical regime. That victory led to the institution of a Constituent Assembly and to the establishment of a Republic.

The monarchy left behind a legacy of discriminatory mechanisms across all Nepalese State structures and society. Now, for the first time, the preamble to the interim Constitution addresses the need to move forward on the issues of gender equality and the inclusion of traditionally excluded groups. But legal mechanisms still in force in the country are in contradiction with international conventions signed by Nepal and do not provide any guarantee of women's rights.

Women in the country are very active in the Constituent Assembly process (with a 33% quota allocated to women) and in the creation of mechanisms and policies to suspend all ancient discriminatory legal provisions and replace them with others that treat women as equal citizens. They work hard to keep activists involved in this whole process and to ensure that women are represented in each section of the new Constitution, in the midst of political instability with frequent changes of government within short periods of time. And dealing at the same time with the ongoing reality of gender-based violence, economic dependence and the continued struggle for their own survival and that of their families.

Such a context demands a great deal of energy from the WMW groups who are trying to help the transformation process to advance in their country. There are plans for future meetings to reorganize, exchange and engage in joint planning with other movements, targeting violence against women in particular. The agenda also includes issues like debt, the struggle against multilateral financial institutions, and climate justice.

Click to [read the report](#) submitted by Sujita Shakya on Nepal's WMW activities.

Erratum: Filipino independence and the struggle of Filipinas

In correction of information published in issue 05/2011 of our newsletter, our sisters from the Philippines have submitted the following: "Formal independence of the Philippines was declared by the US on July 4, 1946, but the Filipino people's struggle for true sovereignty continues as US neocolonial policies helped shape weak and compliant governments with the compliance of the local elite. Today, feminism continues to

struggle for deeper changes in the country and in women's lives".

Jean Enriquez explains that the Filipino government celebrates the country's independence on June 12, which was the date declared by the first President of the Republic, Emilio Aguinaldo, in 1898. However, it should be kept in mind that Aguinaldo was also part of the sell-out of the Philippines' freedom from Spain to

the US. For this reason, the Filipino people's movement continues to organize protests today.

Click to read the text of "[Herstory - The Filipinas and their struggle as women, as part of the oppressed classes and as part of a nation asserting sovereignty](#)",

EUROPE

WMW joins protests in solidarity with Greek women

In response to the appeal made by women and people struggling in Greece, who have been in the streets for almost two years now, denouncing the liberal policies under way in their country, the WMW National Coordinating Body in France joined the demonstrations organized on 18 February in Paris.



The protests were held within the framework of the approval on February of a third set of "austerity measures" that force the people to pay for a crisis that they did not cause. The measures imposed by the International Monetary Fund, the European Union and the

Greek government (not elected by the people) include budget cuts for all social services, a reduction in wages and pensions, the privatization of State-owned companies, and dismissals of public officials. These same cuts are not, however, applied to arms trade, and a warlike atmosphere persists.

The WMW denounces the fact that women are paying the highest price for these cuts: they are the first to be fired – especially those working in public administration – and, in addition to the usual housework, they are forced to take on duties that were previously covered by social services. In this way, they carry the weight of the patriarchal, capitalist ideology in which women's place is in the home, a position that

In Portugal, the WMW on the alert for attacks on women's achievements!

11 February marked the five-year anniversary of the referendum that decriminalized abortion in Portugal. On that day, WMW activists there joined a demonstration convened by the trade union confederation CGTP, which brought together more than 300,000 people.

For the WMW, that date was a reminder of the long, hard struggle that led to this victory and of women's intention to continue mobilizing, to overcome any challenges to this right. They say they are on permanent alert against offensives launched by the conservative right, which seeks to deny women in the

which narrates the country's history of colonization and foreign occupation, and the continued resistance of women against these different forms of violence.

Click to read more about the [current context in the Philippines](#).

only becomes more deeply entrenched in times of crisis.

Greece is a sort of test lab for a wider policy conducted across the European continent, which only serves to engender destitution, increase poverty among the underprivileged and violence against women, and which benefits only the rich, who get richer, even in this crisis scenario. We therefore extend our solidarity to all women who are fighting in Europe, organizing to resist the reactionary, neo-liberal offensive that can also be seen today in Portugal, Italy and the Spanish State.

WMW France also condemns the violence perpetrated by the police, which goes against people's fundamental right to self-expression and to legitimate self-determination.

Click to read the full version of the [solidarity statement issued by WMW France](#) (only in French).

Video: Effects of the crisis on women

The WMW's European Coordinating Body launched its first campaign publication on the effects of the crisis on women. The video transmits the testimonials of WMW activists from Albania, Macedonia, Belgium, Italy, Portugal, Switzerland and Turkey, recorded during the European Meeting held in Skopje, Macedonia, in October 2011. Click [here](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LUxI4wL7tWE&feature=youtu.be) to watch the video.

Spanish State the right to free and safe abortions. WMW Portugal also spoke out in solidarity with the various social

movements in Europe and around the world: "We know that our struggle is a global one, against faceless markets and the daily oppressions suffered in this patriarchal and capitalistic world".

Click to read the full [WMW Portugal manifesto](#) (only in Portuguese).



2nd European Young Feminists Camp...

... will take place from 6 to 16 August 2012, in Moroieni, Romania. Preparations for the camp are just starting, and volunteers are needed for a European team responsible for organization, translations and decisions. Full information is available in the latest issue of the Young Feminists Camp Newsletter in: [English](#), [French](#), [Spanish](#).

ALLIANCES AND MOBILIZATIONS

WMW at the Thematic Social Forum – Capitalist Crisis, Social and Environmental Justice

From 24 to 29 January 2012, we were present at this event in Porto Alegre, Brazil, where we strengthened our alliance-building process with other social movements that are struggling against the capitalist, patriarchal and racist system, which is now hidden under a green mask (the concept of the “green economy”).



During the Social Movements Assembly, which brought more than 1,500 activists together on 28 January, we reinforced our shared lines of struggle defined in Dakar in

2011: against transnational corporations, for climate



Opening march, 24 January

24 Jan.: Women from several Brazilian states and other countries such as Argentina, Chile, Japan, Peru, Portugal and South Africa, joined us in the initial demonstration and at various activities organized throughout the event.

Feminism and ecology: women struggling against green capitalism, 25 January

justice and food sovereignty, against violence against women and against war, colonialism, occupations and the militarization of our territories. Throughout 2012, these struggles will be given full expression at the protests against NATO and the G8 (in May), the People’s Summit in parallel to the Rio+20 UN conference (in June) and the Free Palestine Social Forum (in November).

As a result of the Social Movements Assembly, we are also building a common global day of action on 5 June, aiming to send a strong message to each of our governments before the UN Rio+20 Conference, in which we will highlight our position against the commodification of nature, our lives and our bodies, and affirming our alternative solutions.

Click here to read the [declaration of the Social Movements Assembly](#).



World March of Women plenary session, 25 January

The session began with the video of the WMW’s Third International Action. Wilhelmina Trout

(South Africa) then presented a report on the 2010 Action and what it meant to organize the closing event in a territory in conflict (Democratic Republic of the Congo). Raquel Duarte (Brazil) presented a report on the 8th WMW International Meeting, held



in the Philippines, and Nalu Faria (Brazil) closed with the challenges of the movement in Brazil and the calendar of action for 2012.



Feminist global connections!

On the 26th and 27th, the WMW was present at discussions where we reaffirmed how we build our movement in the streets, with poor women who often have little or no access to electricity or the Internet, while recognizing the fundamental role of virtual networks in building the WMW as an international movement. On the 27th, we also took part in the debate on “Social movements, politics and revolution in the 21st

century”, organized by the group Brasil Autogestionario.

28 January: Public launch of the People's Summit for Social and Environmental Justice: against the commodification of life and nature and in defense of the commons, in parallel to Rio+20, to be held from 15

to 23 June in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Click to see the [speech by Mafalda Galdames](#), from WMW Chile (Spanish only), during the launch ceremony.



Solidarity with Palestine

After more than a year of work, social movements in Brazil such as CUT, WMW and MST have been the driving force behind the organization of the first National Meeting of Solidarity with Palestine, which took place in Sao Paulo last November. The meeting brought together solidarity groups, as well as delegates from Palestinian social movements, NGOs and political parties. As a result of this national gathering, the organizers announced their decision to the World Social Forum's International Council, to hold a Free Palestine Social Forum (FSPL in Portuguese), a global event scheduled from 29 November to 1 December 2012, in Porto Alegre, Brazil. At a meeting held on 29 January, within the framework of the Thematic Social Forum, the Palestinian and Brazilian FSPL organizing committees decided to create various working groups in preparation for the Forum, such as Methodology and Strategies, Communication, Resources and Logistics, Mobilization, and Translation and Interpreting. We will

be sending out further detail on the FSPL in the near future.

Solidarity with Palestine was also expressed during the 3rd National Conference on Policies for Women, from 12 to 15 December 2011. WMW Brazil presented a motion in solidarity with 11 female Palestinian political prisoners being detained in the Ha-Sharom and Damon Israeli prisons. There have been reports that the majority female detainees were the victims of some form of psychological, physical and/or sexual torture at the time of their arrest, as well as during their stay in those centers. Examples of physical abuse include beatings, undernourishment, poor sanitary conditions, forced separation from their families and denial of care before, during and after childbirth, as well as intrusive internal examinations. The motion concludes with a denunciation of such practices as “common, systematic violence perpetrated by the State on the basis of gender and racial discrimination.”

South Asia Social Forum 2011: hope for the creation of a new Asia

“Democracy For Social Transformation in South Asia: Participation, Equity, Justice and Peace” was the main subject of the South Asia Social Forum, held from 18 to 22 November 2011 in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The event started with a massive rally – with some 15,000 people in attendance – in which delegates from various

countries such as India, Pakistan, France, Iraq, Brazil, Nepal, Myanmar, the Spanish State, Turkey and Sri Lanka were present. WMW Bangladesh and delegates from WMW Pakistan also participated in the forum, raising their voices against exploitation, deprivation, discrimination and torture.

This **Newsletter** is edited by the World March of Women International Secretariat (IS) and distributed by email.

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