

Newsletter: NWP FOCUS
News from the Network Women's Program
Issue 2, 2000

(Contact: women@sorosny.org)

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1. Program Area Highlight: Violence Against Women

Violence against women and domestic violence are largely under-documented in post-communist countries, due to government inaction and the lack of resources available to non-governmental institutions. Women are generally unaware of their legal and human rights, while at the same time laws and legal procedures do not adequately protect them.

In 1999, the Network Women's Program launched three major initiatives to encourage and support the development of a regional response to violence against women. These initiatives include (i) an intervention training program, Community Coordinated Response to Domestic Violence—the Duluth Model, (ii) a Service Support Exchange Program to strengthen NGOs responding to violence against women, and (iii) a small grants program to support NGOs combating trafficking in women, as a follow-up to the 1998 Transnational Training Seminar on Trafficking in Women, in Budapest.

Community Coordinated Response on Domestic Violence – the Duluth Model

In many economically transitional countries at present, there is no official women-friendly procedure for dealing with battered, raped and abused women who turn to the police, legal and/or healthcare systems for help. It is therefore crucial to train law enforcers, legal and medical personnel, and peer advocates to understand the issues surrounding violence against women.

In November 1999, the NWP introduced a new training program--the Community Coordinated Response to Violence Against Women (the Duluth Model) based on the internationally acclaimed Duluth Domestic Abuse Intervention Project (DAIP), to respond to violence against women.

Initially designed in the U.S. in 1977, the DAIP created a community response to assault cases. The significance of a community response to violence against women is that violence should be prevented and responded to systematically by community agencies, to avoid placing the responsibility of stopping violence on the victim. In the Duluth model, women's advocacy groups play an essential role in working with policy makers, legislators, and agency directors to redesign the criminal justice system to appropriately respond to women who experience domestic violence.

In collaboration with OSI national foundations, NWP supported multi-sector national teams from 20 countries to improve the effectiveness of intervention in domestic assault-related cases. Teams were made up of women's NGO activists, practitioners in the criminal and civil justice system (police officers, prosecutors, probation officers, judges), human service providers (counselors, psychologists, group facilitators), and policy-making community leaders. The trainers of the program were Ellen Pence, a co-founder of the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project; Minnesota Congressman Michael Paymar, an active member of the DAIP; and Loretta Frederick, an attorney for the Battered Women's Justice Project.

Six months after the training, 16 national team representatives from Armenia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Tajikistan, Ukraine, and Yugoslavia participated in a follow-up seminar to present their national strategy plans to combat domestic violence, based on the Duluth Model, and to discuss their accomplishments, problems, and country-specific needs.

The national teams chose diverse methods of combating violence: the Bulgarian team is working with their regional police department; the Kazakhstan team collaborated with their government to organise a conference on domestic violence and prepared a policy paper on legislative changes; the Croatian team advocated for a new domestic violence law; and the Kyrgyzstan team informed women MPs about domestic violence issues.

Reflecting on the significance of the Duluth trainings, one Bulgarian team participant recognised that "in order to achieve success in our activities [of combating violence

against women], we must use the strength of uniting institutions and social service groups, as well as advocacy for legislative change”.

Among the many obstacles to providing appropriate responses to violence, noted participants, is the lack of rehabilitation programs for men who batter. A Lithuanian team participant plans to counteract this problem: “[w]e got a lot of new ideas and gained inspiration on how to modify our activities in the field of eliminating violence against women—such as coming up with alternatives to imprisoning offenders.”

In the year 2000, the country teams will continue to work together on sustainable collaborative projects to address the pervasive and complex problem of violence against women.

Seven key components of the Duluth Model:

1. Creating a coherent philosophical approach to victim safety
2. Developing “best practice” policies and protocols for intervention agencies
3. Enhancing networking among service providers
4. Building/monitoring a supportive community infrastructure for battered women
5. Providing sanctions against and rehabilitation opportunities for abusers
6. Undoing the harmful effects violence against women has on children
7. Evaluating, from the victim’s perspective, the coordinated community response

Service Support Exchange Program

As visibility of the situation of violence against women in the OSI network countries increases, NGOs are initiating programs to respond to the problem.

NWP's Service Support Exchange Program for women’s NGOs encourages learning and collaboration among NGOs combating violence against women in the region. In 1999, 13 countries participated in the NWP Host-Visitor Exchange Program, which allowed experienced NGOs to share with newer organizations their knowledge and expertise about issues of violence against women and services offered for survivors of violence.

The program provided practical and hands-on education for visitor NGOs who learned how to open and sustain crisis centers, set-up hotlines, or develop effective communication with the police, and governmental and legal institutions. Participants visited local crisis centers and shelters in order to learn how to train staff on violence issues, provide psychotherapeutic care, handle financial difficulties, collaborate with other institutions, and run workshops on patterns of violence and survival strategies.

In follow-up seminars, presentations, and working groups, the participants addressed many of the central issues surrounding violence against women, including women's human rights, children's issues, and dealing with violent men. Participants analyzed common social-psychological mechanisms that perpetuate violence, as well as the role of governmental institutions, mass media, and the international community in fighting

against it. Participants agreed that establishing collaboration among municipal, legal, educational, and medical representatives who work with survivors of violence is a benchmark of success.

The following NGOs served as Hosts of the Visitors:

- Animus Association, Sofia, Bulgaria
- NANE, Women Together Against Violence, Budapest, Hungary
- National Center Against Violence, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia
- St. Petersburg Psychological Center for Women, Russia
- Arzamas Women's Crisis Center, Russia
- Shelter for Women & Children Victims of Violence, Belgrade, Yugoslavia.

Following the exchange program, 17 participating NGOs received grants for their national projects addressing violence against women. In the year 2000, NWP and fifteen national women's programs will devote over half a million dollars to support multiple approaches that address violence against women.

Trafficking in women

As the economic situation for women in post communist countries becomes increasingly dire, trafficking in women for sexual and labor exploitation is rising. Poverty is a precondition for trafficking. Women, desperate for work, migrate abroad, without knowing the actual conditions of their labor. Traffickers prey on women's desperation and force them into prostitution or forced labor.

NGOs are responding to trafficking in multiple ways, including educating the public about the risks of trafficking through media and public outreach campaigns; providing psychological, medical, and legal assistance to trafficked women; targeting legislative bodies to promote anti-trafficking laws and regulations; and working toward improving the economic and social status of women living in transitional economies.

In 1999, the NWP provided small grants to 22 NGOs working on anti-trafficking campaigns. The grant program also supported three international trainings for NGOs with La Strada, an anti-trafficking NGO in Poland, Ukraine and the Netherlands.

The trainings focused on the legal, social, economic, and migration aspects of the problem. Participants learned practical skills to help them organize anti-trafficking campaigns; work with the mass media, police, and other state agencies; and provide education to girls and women at risk for trafficking.

Anti-Trafficking Grant Recipients, 1999

- Reflexione (Albania)

- Center for Development of Civil Societies / Scientific Women Council (Armenia)
- Animus (Bulgaria)
- Praetios Pedos (Lithuania)
- Women's Center of Republic of Macedonia
- Lublin project, Bialystok project, and La Strada –Warsaw (Poland)
- Equal Opportunities for Women, and Society for Children and Parents (Romania)
- Petersburg Center for Gender Studies, Irkutsk Crisis Center for Women “Angara”, Moscow Center for Gender Studies, Agency for Social Information, FALTA Centre, and Legal Aid Society for Domestic Violence and Sexual Cases (Russia)
- La Strada –Kyiv, Women’s Initiative Center; Zinochna Hromada; Donetsk City Public Women’s NGO “Venus”; and Kirovohrad Regional Informational Service (Ukraine)

2. Fellow Initiates Lesbian/Gay Efforts

OSI Policy Fellow, Miriam Molnár, is breaking new ground for both OSI and Eastern Europe in her recent policy report on lesbian and gay issues in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia.

In her report, Molnár assesses the climates of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia in relation to lesbians and gays by revealing: (i) law and governmental policy, including initiatives of and resistance to domestic partnership and adoption laws; (ii) the presence or absence of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered (LGBT) organizations; (iii) the level of activity of the LGBT movement, using lesbian and gay publications, radio programs, meeting places, film festivals, and other cultural activities as indicators; and (iv) positive and negative (chiefly the latter) perceptions of lesbians and gays in mainstream media.

Molnár proposes strategic solutions, including measurements of success and sustainability, to many of the problems she uncovered. As part of her fellowship, Molnár recommended the following next steps:

- Create a “Virtual Central-Eastern European LGBT Center” on the Internet
- Establish a think tank to write responses to homophobic media release
- Establish a “LGBT Community House” as a way to emphasize the existence of LGBT in society
- Organize a CEE Conference on LGBT issues in the region
- Support research on the social status of LGBT people and levels of homophobia within the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia
- Encourage secondary schools and higher educational institutions to integrate LGBT issues into the curriculum

- Organize a summer school to train teachers about discrimination against LGBT people
- Encourage law and sociology students to work on LGBT discrimination cases
- Organize competitions for poetry and prose on LGBT themes
- Encourage publication of books with LGBT themes

The success of Molnár's work prompted OSI to renew her fellowship funding in order to expand her regional focus. Molnár will now broaden her report to include Romania, Poland and Slovenia. Dagmara Baraniewska, Women's Program Director at the Stefan Batory Foundation, served as one of Molnár's mentors.

More recently, Molnár collaborated with the Center for Publishing Development in Budapest to create the 1999 Lesbian & Gay Issues Translation Project Competition, a pilot program aimed at translating books into local languages to raise public awareness of lesbian and gay issues.

3. Upcoming Events

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| June 5-9 | Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the 21 st Century, The 23 rd Special Session of the UN General Assembly; New York, USA |
| November 3-5 | CEU/NWP Oral History Workshop; Budapest, Hungary |
| December 4-9 | Schweitzer Breast Cancer Policy Seminar; Budapest, Hungary |

4. Breast Cancer Program Aids Rural Moldovan Women

In 1999, the Soros Foundation-Moldova Women's Program supported a pilot project investigating the problem of breast cancer among rural Moldovan women. The goal of the project was to create a national report, known as the Breast Cancer Country Report, on the current status and incidence of breast cancer in Moldova, as well as create awareness among women about prevention and treatment options.

From March to May 1999, a team comprised of members of the Oncology Institute, Mammologists Association, and other gynecological and ultrasound professionals, conducted investigations into the health of 1500 women from the villages of Rezeni and Cegirleni using portable mammography units and clinical examinations.

Dr. Nadejda M. Godoroja, a leader of the team and chief of the mammology department of the Institute of Oncology of the Republic of Moldova, noted that the situation of rural

women's health is dire. The sharp increase in breast cancer incidences among rural women (32.6%) is now almost equal to the incidences of urban women (35.6%). The report indicates that since 1990, the incidence of breast cancer tripled in women between ages 25-29 (from 3.2% to 15.8%), doubled for women between 30-34 (from 9.6% to 22.9%), and doubled for women 35-39 (from 27.2% to 62.2%).

The team studied 212 risk factors associated with the high rate of breast cancer, including genetic, social, reproductive, constitutional, and hormonal factors. They found that there was no single factor determining breast cancer risk, but a complexity of factors. However, the report found that the region with the highest incidence of breast cancer (40%) was affected by a radioactive spill.

Godoroja explains that the startlingly high death rate is in part due to women's low level of access to medical facilities. She writes, "The increase in the total mortality of women...in our country suggests that many patients do not consult a physician due to their financial difficulties and therefore die at home without being diagnosed...Clinical screenings would prevent 300-400 breast cancer deaths per year." Godoroja concludes that the most practical and effective way to reduce the number of advanced cases of breast cancer is to organize clinical and instrumental screenings. However, the success of the screenings depends upon having trained specialists, up-to-date technical equipment, exams that are available and accessible, and an interest by women in receiving exams. Godoroja further observes that due to Moldova's overall financial crisis, screenings and treatment will only be possible on a widespread basis if outside funding is secured from international relief organizations.

Moldova is one of 13 OSI national foundations that participated in the Breast Cancer Country Report project. As a follow-up to this project, a seminar concerning women and cancer will be organized in December 2000 with the Public Health Program through the Schweitzer Seminar Series. The seminar will bring together doctors and policy-makers to focus on creating policy-oriented strategies to battle breast cancer, based on the findings in the Breast Cancer Country Reports.

5. NWP Mission Statement

The mission of the Network Women's Program is to promote the advancement of women's human rights, equality and empowerment as an integral part of the process of democratization. Open societies cannot exist without measurable and accountable respect for gender equity and diversity. The NWP serves as a resource, partner, and consultancy body for the Soros network, including OSI leadership, national foundations, other network-wide and international programs, as well as other entities inside and outside the Soros network, to encourage, support, and initiate gender-inclusive projects. The NWP seeks to:

- Eradicate violations of women's rights

- Develop nonsexist inclusive policies at the international, regional, national and local levels
- Raise awareness of issues of gender and diversity through education, advocacy, and research
- Promote local, national, regional, and international cooperation and linkages among women's organizations which oppose gender discrimination and work for women's empowerment
- Encourage access of the regions' women to women's activities internationally and to resources available to countries in transition
- Support women's contributions to advancing alternative solutions to social and political crises

6. Human Rights Fellows Make Strides for Women

By December, 1999, 103 fellows completed the training phase of NWP's Human Rights Advanced Leadership Training for Women (HRALTW) initiative. The training program, conducted by Women, Law and Development International and Human Rights Watch was based on the manual, *Women's Human Rights Step by Step*. The manual presents definitions, human rights instruments and mechanisms, and methodologies for documenting and monitoring women's human rights.

Participants planned and implemented a team-based strategy to promote or defend women's human rights in their countries of origin which included: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Macedonia, Mongolia, Poland, Russia, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, and Yugoslavia. Strategy subjects included discrimination in the labor market, sexual harassment in the workplace, violence against women, and increasing the visibility of women's human rights.

Many teams successfully used local media to raise awareness of their chosen issue. The Lithuanian team published an article in a national newspaper claiming that the new law on equal opportunities passed in the Lithuanian Seimas (Parliament) did not adequately address discrimination of women in the labor market. The team stressed that the reality for women in Lithuania is that they are "considered too old at 35 [to be employed]; the qualities of physical attractiveness are often preferred over skills, experience and qualifications; they are often coerced by their employers to sign declarations stating they will not get pregnant during their time of employment; and are faced by newspapers overloaded with gender discriminating ads." The article generated multiple responses and sparked a national discussion on women's human rights.

The Macedonian team formed a women's human rights watch group that conducted the first successful media campaign and lawsuit against sexual harassment in the workplace. This precedent created a positive environment for enforcement of the anti-sexual harassment law.

Central Asian teams noted that until the training, women's human rights issues were not raised in their countries. Consequently, their team conducted seminars and informational roundtables to increase the general awareness of women's human rights.

The Turkmenistan team created a women's information center to help inform women of their rights. They plan to increase the services of the center to provide information on children's rights and domestic violence.

While teams focused on their countries of origin, some Roma women's issues transcend national boundaries and more broadly focused strategies were needed. Roma women's activist Nicoletta Bitu addressed the need for Roma women to participate in decision-making processes that create governmental Roma policy in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, Macedonia and Spain.

Many participants said that prior to the training, they assumed only lawyers could use national and international laws to advocate for women's human rights. While implementing the country strategies, many realized that as NGO leaders, they have the knowledge and tools to advocate successfully for women. A Bulgarian participant commented, "learning...practical skills of advocating was new to me. I was acquainted with international [and] UN documents, declarations, mechanisms, and institutions but did not know how they functioned, [nor] how they could be used. I found this information very helpful, adding to the picture I had."

When asked about what skills and knowledge were gained from the training, one Czech team participant responded, "never before the training did I...recognize women's rights as an integral part of human rights. [In] international law and human rights [courses] at the University [I attended], women's rights were never mentioned."

7. Youth Debate Gender Issues

In 1999, the NWP joined together with the International Debate Education Association (IDEA) and the OSI Karl Popper Debate Program for The Fifth Annual International Debate Workshop and Camp, an annual summer educational workshop for girls and boys from the CEE region, held in Veli Losini, Croatia. The NWP helped shape a special focus on gender issues for the Camp and worked with the youth debaters and teachers to explore and better understand the current situation of women in various cultures.

The team of trainers included B.a.B.e. representatives Sanja Sarnavka, Martina Belic and Vesna Jankovic (Croatia); SOS Crisis Centre representative Natalia Khodreva (Russia); teacher and girls rights organizer Gabrielle Durocher-Radeca (USA); and NWP staff

member Pamela Shifman (USA). Trainers led workshops on issues such as violence against women (focusing on trafficking in women), gender role socialization, education, employment discrimination and gender stereotypes.

Many students said that this was the first time that they had considered the profound impact that gender has, not only on political systems, but also in their own personal lives. One youth debater remarked, "I think this is not just a problem for women, but for all society, and I think that we should all evolve a bit more." Participants said they had never had access to statistics on women's socio-economic position, nor had they experienced feminist, participatory teaching methodology. For more information on Debate Camp, contact Nina Watkins at her email address: <nwatkins@sorosny.org>.

8. Romani Women Define Priorities

With the support of OSI's East East Program, the Association of Romani Women in Romania brought together more than 20 Romani women from Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Macedonia, Yugoslavia and Romania to the international conference, "Romani Women and Public Policies in Countries of Central and Eastern Europe" in Bucharest on December 2-3, 1999.

The conference addressed the participation of Romani women in public life, and issues related to health and education. The discussions focused on the status of Romani women at different levels of society; existing national and international resources for promoting the rights of Romani women; and elements of future strategies for Romani women in civil society, governments and international organizations. Participants stressed the fundamental role of discrimination and racism confronting Romani women.

To implement their priorities, the participants will create a European network to establish regular communication and to promote Romani women's rights.

Written and undersigned by the participants of the conference, a declaration was created to identify their priorities for future work.

- Organize a broader study and inventory of projects addressing or concerning Romani women
- Integrate Romani women's issues in the Romani movement, women's rights movement, ecumenical movement, and in the agendas of governments and international organizations
- Lobby for the inclusion of Romani women's issues in national strategies concerning Roma and in state policies concerning women's rights
- Increase the participation of Romani women in decision-making bodies
- Improve the level of leadership skills among Romani women
- Promote policies that create more individual choices in relation to migration, family planning, culture and education

- Strengthen already existing Romani women's organizations and to support the creation of new organizations throughout the region

9. OSI-Uzbekistan Initiates Dialogue on Poverty

In January, 1999, OSI-Uzbekistan hosted a conference in ancient Samarkand, dedicated to the economic situation of women in Central Asia and the Caucasus. The conference, supported by East-East, gathered participants from Georgia, Turkmenistan, Mongolia, Yugoslavia, Uzbekistan, and the Ukraine.

Open discussions about poverty among women and their economic dependence still remain taboo in most countries of the region. One goal of the gathering was to break this norm and engage women in dialogue about the issues. Participants, women and men alike, exchanged their experiences, ideas, successes and failures concerning women's economic situation in the region. In the words of Mongolian participant Nergiu Sandag, "...[I]t was important to share all the experience we have accumulated in the sphere of micro-crediting. We have methods that can be adapted and used in Central Asia."

Many participants said the conference, organized by Nargiza Turgunova, gave them new ideas for future action and expressed their wish for the continuation of such regional gatherings focusing on women's economic issues.

Recently published materials and a video-film about the conference are available in the office of OSI-Uzbekistan at Zarbog 31, Tashkent. E-mail: <nigora@osi.freenet.uz>; Phone: (998 71) 120 68 54; Fax: (998 71) 152 27 41

10. Translation Seminar Examines Gender

The Network Women's Program and the Central European University's (CEU) Program on Gender and Culture held a special seminar, *Gender Sensitivity in Translation* in Budapest, October 17-20, 1999. Designed in conjunction with the NWP and Center for Publishing Development's translation competition on the theme "Women at Risk," the seminar was open to those who received grants to translate books into local languages.

Seventeen translators from Bulgaria, Croatia, Georgia, Hungary, Macedonia, Moldova, Mongolia, Romania, Russia, and Tajikistan participated in the seminar. Dr. Ester Shapiro (USA), a member of the Boston Women's Health Book Collective, shared her expertise with all those working on books related to women's health. The four-day meeting examined issues related to gender and translation from a variety of perspectives.

Kinga Klaudy (ELTE University, Budapest) spoke about academic training and translation at universities, presenting the program and methodology of teaching at

ELTE's Translators and Interpreters Training Center. Using examples from the region of the former Yugoslavia, Branka Arsic (CEU) in her lecture "Signatures of Gender in Translation" spoke about political choices translators have to make in order to prevent manipulation of their texts, and Kornelia Merdjanska spoke about the various ways in which text proves to be "gendered". Ester Shapiro spoke about Latin-American translations/adaptations of "Our Bodies Our Selves", Jasmina Lukic (CEU) on cultural concepts in translation and Lucy Tatman (CEU) on the various ways in which term 'gender' is conceptualized in English. Martina Moravcova (Prague) analyzed gendered problems in a special case of translation of North American Indian legends into Czech through English as a third language. Finally, participants discussed specific problems of translating gender-related texts and terminology from the perspective of various regional languages (Croatian, Romanian, Bulgarian, Russian, Hungarian, Macedonian, Moldovan, Georgian, Tajik). The meeting concluded with a call for producing a comparative glossary of gender related terms in regional languages.

11. 1999 Publishing Grants Competition

In collaboration with the Center for Publishing Development, the NWP held a grants competition for publishing houses to translate into local languages books concerning violence against women and women's health. Publishers in the following countries received grants to translate books on the theme, "Women at Risk":

ALBANIA

Jeffrey Edleson and Zvi C. Eisikovit *Future Interventions with Battered Women and Their Families*

Miranda Davies *Women and Violence: Realities and Responses Worldwide*

BELARUS

Barrie Levy *Dating Violence: Young Women in Danger*

BULGARIA

Boston Women's Health Book Collective *Our Bodies, Ourselves for the New Century*

Susan Brownmiller *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape*

CROATIA

Gloria Steinem *Revolution From Within: A Book of Self-Esteem*

Andrea Dworkin *Letters From A War Zone*

GEORGIA

Ruth Bell, et al *Changing Bodies, Changing Lives*

HUNGARY

Judith Lewis Herman *Trauma and Recovery*

Catherine MacKinnon *Feminism Unmodified*

MACEDONIA

Hyman Wegscheider and Esther Rome with the Boston Women's Health Book Collective
Sacrificing Ourselves for Love: Why Women Compromise Health and Self-Esteem and How to Stop
Judith Herman *Trauma and Recovery*

MOLDOVA

Hyman Wegscheider and Esther Rome with the Boston Women's Health Book Collective
Sacrificing Ourselves for Love: Why Women Compromise Health and Self-Esteem and How to Stop

MONGOLIA

Hyman Wegscheider and Esther Rome with the Boston Women's Health Book Collective
Sacrificing Ourselves for Love: Why Women Compromise Health and Self-Esteem and How to Stop

POLAND

Amy Elman *Sexual Politics and the European Union: The New Feminist Challenge*

ROMANIA

Gloria Steinem *Revolution From Within: A Book of Self-Esteem*
Andrea Dworkin *Letters From A War Zone*

RUSSIA

Ellen Bass and Laura Davis *The Courage to Heal*

SLOVAKIA

Judith Herman *Trauma and Recovery*
Ann Jones *Next Time She'll Be Dead*

TAJKISTAN

Evan Stark and Anne Flitcraft *Domestic Violence and Women's Health*

12. Responding to the Kosovo Crisis

On March 24th, 1999, the 78 day NATO air campaign began in response to the crisis in Kosovo. The Kosovars were forced to flee to Macedonia, Albania, and Montenegro on foot, tractors, and in cars. By May 1999, international organizations and humanitarian relief missions built refugee camps to accommodate the involuntary mass exodus. Several hundred thousand Kosovars became refugees in Albania, Macedonia, and Montenegro. Many displaced Roma fled to Serbia.

While larger international organizations and humanitarian groups helped build much needed refugee camps and provided other general services to refugees, few efforts were geared specifically toward the needs of refugee women. In response, the OSI foundations in the Balkan region took action.

In response to the immediate needs of refugee women in Macedonia, Women's Program Coordinator Slavica Indzevska of OSI-Macedonia facilitated the distribution of over 1,500 sanitary packages. Indzevska worked with Kosovar refugees Flora Macuca and Sanida Perjuci, two women living with Albanian families in Tetovo, to create programs reducing stress and facilitating readjustment for women and children in the Neprsteno refugee camp. During a site visit, NWP-NY staff Anastasia Posadskaya-Vanderbeck and Debra Schultz joined Indzevska, Macuca and Perjuci in successfully advocating for a women-only tent in the camp to aid refugee women who experienced post-traumatic stress and sexual violence.

Responding to the crisis on a strategic level, the OSI-Macedonia Women's Program created the forum, "Women's Fund for Dialogue and Integration". The forum coordinated dialogue and collaboration among a network of 30 multi-ethnic women's NGOs. With the understanding that the refugee crisis exacerbates existing tensions among different ethnic communities in Macedonian society, the OSI-Macedonia Women's Program will also support the launch of a media campaign project to highlight models of cross-ethnic cooperation.

Also in response to the refugee crisis in Macedonia, Azbiya Memedova, director of the Roma Community Center, an OSI Roma Participation Program affiliate, helped international agencies provide humanitarian aid to displaced Roma.

The Women's Program of OSI-Albania, directed by Valdete Sala, responded to the crisis by supporting an educational conference on refugee women and children, and by providing grants to local women's NGOs.

The May 29, 1999 Conference of National and International NGOs in Tirana sought to sensitize Albanians and the international community about the situation and living conditions of the refugees. Among the topics discussed were: the need for international human rights standards for refugee women and children; treatment of sexual violence cases; the need for providing access to services, such as reproductive health and psychosocial programs; UNHCR guidelines on protecting refugee women; local NGO responses to the crisis and need for collaboration with international NGOs; and minimum condition standards for refugees returning to Kosovo.

The following list highlights OSI-Albania Women's Program grantees responding to the crisis.

- Albanian Group for the Protection and Promotion of Breast Feeding published and distributed materials in the camps on reducing infant and children's mortality, emergency infant feeding, and infectious disease prevention

- Linea Counseling Center for Women and Girls provided post traumatic stress counseling to mothers and their children in refugee camps
- Women's Center Refleksione trained volunteers on how to help refugees cope with crisis situations
- Women's Advocacy Center documented the crisis to raise public awareness and provide credible evidence for legal remedy at the International Court in Hague
- Drama Artists in partnership with National Film Archives showed films to children to help them with psychological rehabilitation

The OSI-Bosnia and Herzegovina (OSI-B&H) Women's Program contributed to regional conflict resolution by organizing a delegation of women from Bosnia to participate in the conference, "Women Activists in Conflict: a Democratic Perspective for the Balkans", in December 1999, at the Royaumont Foundation, France. Participants from the former Yugoslavia created a declaration for political action, establishing the basis for future communication and cooperation among the regions as part of democracy building processes in Southeast Europe. OSI-B&H Women's Program Coordinator, Nada Ler Sofronic and Milica Kajevic of the Sarajevo-based NGO, Women to Women, contributed to the declaration.

Also in response to the crisis, Croatian women's activist group and former grantee of the OSI-Croatia Women's Program, The Center for Women War Victims established training programs to teach Kosovar women refugees how to work and cope with war trauma. They succeeded in helping refugee women learn how to establish and sustain networks and support groups in order to maintain autonomy under challenging conditions in the refugee camps and upon their return to Kosovo.

Women activists in Yugoslavia, including OSI Women's Program Coordinator Slavica Stojanovic, continued to promote cross-ethnic dialogue; provide aid to women traumatized by the war and sexual violence; and work with Roma women to distribute humanitarian aid. Women's studies scholars and anti-war activists such as Women in Black, organized educational activities addressing questions of racism, nationalism, ethnocentrism, war and violence against women, and responsibility.

The women's programs in the Albanian, Macedonian, Yugoslavian, Bosnian, and Croatian national foundations, as well as the new women's programs in Kosovo and Montenegro, continue to work on cross-ethnic dialogue; violence against women; and critical thinking about women's roles in post conflict situations.

13. NWP Sends Participants to Beijing Plus 5 Meetings

The year 2000 marks the fifth anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action (PFA), a declaration on global women's human rights, created at the UN's Fourth World Conference for Women, in Beijing, China. At this 1995 landmark conference, governmental Delegates from over 140 countries ratified the PFA, thereby agreeing to implement strategic actions set forth in

the 12 areas of critical concern for women. These areas include Women and Poverty; Education and Training of Women; Women and Health; Violence Against Women; Women and Armed Conflict; Women and the Economy; Women in Power; Institutional Mechanism for the Advancement of Women; Human Rights of Women; Women and the Media; Women and the Environment; and the Girl Child.

In June 2000, the United Nations General Assembly is holding a special session entitled, “Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the Twenty-First Century” to review the progress and obstacles to implementing the PFA by the countries that ratified it. NWP is sponsoring 57 women to attend the June Special Session, ensuring the participation of women from the CEE and CIS regions in the review process.

To prepare for the June Special Session meeting, the UN and international women’s NGOs initiated a series of regional conferences beginning in the fall of 1999 to undergo their own reviews of government implementation of the PFA, based on their regional expertise. The regional meetings were followed by a special Preparatory Committee meeting (PrepCom) in March during the 44th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women, the UN body responsible for monitoring the progress of the platform.

In January 2000, the Network Women’s Program and participating OSI national foundations sponsored 30 NGO representatives from Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union to attend a regional conference for Europe. Representatives met in Geneva at the European Commission for Economics Regional PrepCom to review four areas of the PFA: Violence Against Women; Institutional Mechanisms; Women and the Economy; and Women in Power.

At this meeting, NGO representatives from Eastern Europe drafted recommendations for their official government delegates, highlighting the situation of women in their countries. Among the topics emphasized were: low representation of women and women’s NGOs in fragile democracies; shrinking opportunities for women; trauma caused by armed conflict; widespread violence against women; and government inaction concerning women’s human rights.

Also in January, the NWP sponsored 15 NGO representatives to attend “The Global Forum of Women Political Leaders” in Manila, Philippines. The forum brought together women in politics, civil society, the private sector and the academy to review the role of women in power for the new millennium. The conference called for greater participation of women in politics at the local, regional, and international levels. NWP Coordinator Pamela Shifman commented, “the meeting provided Eastern European and Asian women with a much-needed opportunity to engage in a cross-regional dialogue concerning electing women into politics”. Delegates also addressed the issues of globalization and the challenges it poses for women's participation in the economic sector.

In March 2000, the NWP and participating OSI national foundations sponsored 35 women from CEE and CIS countries to attend the March PrepCom in New York. At this meeting, government delegates from around the world began preparing the ‘final

outcome' documents of the review process. The documents list achievements of and obstacles to the implementation of the PFA at the global level. Government delegates are presenting the finalized documents to the General Assembly at the June Special Session meeting.

At a reception hosted by NWP during the March PrepCom, NGO participants commented on the value of attending the PFA review meetings, saying it was a unique opportunity to network with other regional and international NGOs. Others observed that the meetings raised their awareness about the UN processes and the (often-low) level of their governments' interest in uplifting the status of women regionally and internationally.

Erzsebet Szabo, a participant from Budapest, remarked, "the knowledge we gathered during the Beijing plus 5 Review in Geneva [in January] and New York [in March] will allow us to understand and work on our common goals all over the region." Szabo further commented that even her small contribution to the review process will "make our countries more democratic and developed in the field of gender equality."

For more information on the Beijing Plus Five processes, contact the UN website at <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/>.

14. Women's Program Spotlight: Russia

In May 1998, the Open Society Institute-Russia (OSI-Russia) initiated its national Women's Program, joining the NWP.

Initially, the Russian Women's Program provided competitive grants in the areas of women's rights, leadership training, domestic violence, trafficking in women, and gender/women's studies. More than doubling its initial budget, the Russian Women's Program has grown significantly in the last two years. "In the last year and a half we received 500 grant applications," Program Director Elena Kotchkina observes. "We gave 67 grants last year. This year, it increased to approximately 120."

Kotchkina believes that there is a growing sense of gender awareness in Russia as a result of the work of women's NGOs in the region and OSI-Russia. She remarks, "many people didn't believe trafficking in women was a problem in Russia. After a number of academic programs and publications in Russian newspapers, they finally recognized that these are real problems in Moscow and elsewhere...The same is true for domestic violence."

Leonard Benardo, Regional Director for Russia, comments that the Russian Women's Program has done superb work in many areas. "Its efforts to integrate Russian women into the programs of the international women's movement has been of great importance. The program has a wide yet strategic scope focused on programs such as crisis center support, informational monitoring, and support for various educational and curricular

efforts. The battle remains uphill, but large and significant steps have been taken in a brief period of time.”

In addition to supporting and working with regional women’s NGOs, the Russian Women’s Program also collaborated internally with several other OSI programs, including Law, Health, Publishing, and Civil Society Programs to integrate women’s issues/perspectives in their grant competitions, program design and development, conferences, and other activities.

Russian Women’s Program 1999 Activities:

- Human Rights Leadership Training for women’s NGO representatives
- Training courses and information exchange for women and crisis centers in Russia, CEE and Asia
- Women’s abuse prevention program, “Women’s Response to Abuse”
- Technical Assistance on gender-related legislation
- Training for lawyers and local officials on issues of gender and women’s social rights
- Open grant competition on positive new images of women in the mass media
- Creation of an interdisciplinary resource center for teaching gender/women’s studies courses
- Open grant competition on developing gender/women’s studies courses in provincial universities
- Training program on “women and gender research” courses for provincial universities and professors
- Publication of textbooks and teaching materials on gender/women’s studies for universities
- Summer school on gender economics for state employees, economists, and representatives of CIS NGOs

For more information, visit <http://www.osi.ru>

15. NWP Advances Gender Studies Development

The NWP, in cooperation with the East-East Program, the Fund for an Open Society-Yugoslavia and the Belgrade Center for Women’s Studies, organized and conducted the *Inaugural Conference: Women’s Studies and the Countries in Transition* from September 9-12, 1998. The conference encouraged participants to share research and experiences, as well as strategize about the future development of gender/women’s studies nationally, regionally, and internationally. Addressed to OSI Network countries, the conference had several aims: to present innovative scholarly/theoretical work on women produced in the region; to assess the development and needs of women’s/gender studies; and to create action agendas to promote the growth and institutionalization of gender/women’s studies.

Over 100 representatives from Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Haiti, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Mongolia, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Tajikistan, Ukraine, the U.K., the U.S., Uzbekistan and Yugoslavia attended the conference. Participants represented gender studies/women's studies centers, programs, departments, and institutes--whether independent or affiliated with higher education institutions. OSI Network foundations selected representatives from two main groups: scholars/practitioners who have promoted intellectual and institutional development of gender/women's studies at the local, national, sub-regional or regional levels and those positioned and committed to introducing and developing gender/women's studies in countries where it is new or unknown.

Sonja Licht, President of the Executive Board of the Fund for an Open Society-Yugoslavia and Dasa Duhacek, of the Belgrade Center for Women's Studies, welcomed the participants. NWP Deputy Director Debra Schultz chaired the opening plenary session on the history of women's/gender studies in OSI network countries. Panelists included Nada Ler-Sofronic on the former Yugoslavia; Irena Novikova on the Baltic countries; Jirina Siklova on the Czech Republic; Olga Voronina on Russia; Malgorzata Fuszara on Poland; and Rhoda Kadalie on South Africa.

The second plenary asked "*What are Women's/Gender Studies?*" In smaller working groups, participants explored *Theoretical Contributions* on the following themes: Women, the Subjects of our Inquiries; Literary Perspectives; Women and the Market Economy; Women in Mainstream and Alternative Politics; Media and Representation; and Body Politics.

The second set of working groups addressed *Strategies and Institutionalization*. Topics included: Starting New Women's/Gender Studies Programs and Legitimizing Gender/Women's Studies; OSI Training and Exchange Mechanisms; and Publications. The third plenary addressed *Building Bridges Between Theory and Practice*.

The third set of working groups focused on *Methodologies - From Research to Teaching* addressing Methodologies; Research; and Pedagogy. The next session of working groups focused on *Teaching*, Examining Different Models of Women's/Gender Studies, and Methods of Constructing Syllabi and Curricula. The final plenary focused on *Crossing Boundaries - Building Alliances*.

A wrap-up session called for more research/teaching/action projects in the areas of lesbian studies; and violence, conflict, war, and fascism. A significant outcome of the conference was the formation of a Women and Gender Studies Association of Countries in Transition. With the Belgrade Center for Women's Studies acting as interim secretariat, an international steering committee formed.

Plans made in Belgrade for other follow-up activities included two international conferences. The first, held May 23-25, 1999, addressed *Pleasure and Power in a*

Gendered Perspective. Hosted by the Program on Gender and Culture at the Central European University and co-sponsored by the NWP and the Goethe Institute, the conference began with readings by women writers from the region.

The second conference, *Women's History and the History of Gender in Countries in Transition*, was held September 30 to October 2, 1999 in Minsk, Belarus. Organized by the CEU Program on Gender and Culture, Budapest; the Center for Gender Studies, European Humanities University, Minsk; and the Institutum Studiorum Humanitatis, Ljubljana, NWP helped support the event. Sixty-four women and men from nineteen countries participated in this first international conference on women's history in Eastern Europe.

In 1999, NWP and participating national foundations supported one-month women's studies exchanges. The following host institutions and visiting scholars took part in the program:

ANA—The Romanian Society for Feminist Analysis, Bucharest, Romania
Valentina Bodrug, Moldova

Centre for Gender Studies, University of Latvia, Riga
Zorica Mrsevic, Yugoslavia

Central European University-Gender and Culture Program, Budapest, Hungary
Group One
Maia Morarescu, Moldova
Ludmila Papuc, Moldova
Tatiana Kirmikchi, Moldova
Gombosuren Urantsooj, Mongolia
Natalia Kutova, Ukraine

Group Two
Ludmila Gerasimova, Russia
Evgenia Balabanova, Russia
Milica Antic Gaber, Slovenia
Eglantina Gjermeni, Albania
Armineh Mkhitarian, Armenia
Irina Lebedinska, Ukraine

Comenius University, Bratislava, Slovakia
Lyudmila Erokhina, Russia

Kharkov Center for Gender Studies, Kharkov, Ukraine
Lkhamsuren Enkhjargal, Mongolia
Nadezhda Radina, Russia
Lidija Zafirovic, Croatia

Ivanovo Center of Gender Studies, Ivanovo, Russia
Natalia Chuhim, Ukraine

Moscow Center for Gender Studies, Moscow, Russia
Sofia Babayan, Armenia
Nigar Mamedova, Azerbaijan
Zuleikha Mikailova, Azerbaijan
Rabiyyat Aslanova, Azerbaijan

Prague Center for Gender Studies, Prague, Czech Republic
Danijela Merunka, Croatia
Alenka Svab, Slovenia
Maria Belousova, Russia
Jelka Zorn, Slovenia

Zagreb Centre for Women's Studies, Zagreb, Croatia
Victoria Gaidenko, Ukraine

16. 1999 Publishing Library Core Collections

In collaboration with the Network Library Program, the NWP is holding its third annual Gender Studies Library Core Collections Competition. The 2000 collection of books focuses on minority women and women in conflict zones. In 1999, the competition, "Women at Risk," focused on violence against women, women's health, and girls' issues. The following NGOs, libraries and academic centers received a collection of 42 books on those issues.

ALBANIA
Women's Center

ARMENIA
Women's Rights Center
UNO Armenia, Dept of Public Information

AZERBAIJAN
UNDP Gender Development Project

BELARUS
Western University
Center for Gender Studies, European Humanities University

BOSNIA-HERZOGOVINA
Medicina Zenica U.G.
Women's Therapy Centre

Jayna Biblioteka Zenica

BULGARIA

“Nadja Center” Foundation

CROATIA

Zenska Infoteka

CZECH REPUBLIC

Czech Helsinki Committee – Documentation and Information
Center, Human Rights Library

GEORGIA

Independent Human Rights Library “Open Society”

HAITI

ENFOFAM

HUNGARY

Human Rights Information and Documentation Center

KAZAKHSTAN

The Eastern Kazakhstan Pushkin Regional Library

KYRGYZSTAN

NGO Coalition “For Democracy and Civil Society”
International Center “Interbilim”

LATVIA

The Center for Gender Studies

LITHUANIA

Vytautas Magnus University, Library

MOLDOVA

National Women’s Studies and Informational Center

POLAND

BORIS Support Office for the Movement of Self-Helping Initiative

ROMANIA

Information Center for Gender Studies and Women’s Issues, Institute of Anthropology
Romanian Society for Feminist Analyses – AnA
Equal Opportunities for Women

RUSSIA

The Regional Junior Library
Scientific Library at Krasnoyarsk State University
Murmansk State Regional Universal Scientific Library
Public Women's Movement of Prikamie
Center for Information on Women's Rights and Gender Issues
Tver State University, Centre for Women's Studies
The Chuvash State University

SLOVAKIA
Aspekt Feminist Cultural Journal

SLOVENIA
The Peace Institute, The Center for Gender and Politics

SOUTH AFRICA
Women's Legal Center
Rape Crisis Cape Town

TAJKISTAN
Gender Resource Centre
NGO Sitora

UKRAINE
V. Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine

UZBEKISTAN
Women's Resource Center
Open Library for Legal Information

17. Women's Program Coordinators of the Open Society Institute-Network Women's Program

Open Society Foundation – Albania
Valdete Sala

OSI Assistance Foundation – Armenia
Anaida Allakhverdyan

Open Society Institute – Azerbaijan
Gulnara Mamedova

Open Society Fund – Sarajevo (Bosnia & Herzegovina)
Nada Ler Sofronic

Open Society Fund – Sofia (Bulgaria)
Tatyana Kmetova

Open Society Institute – Croatia
Danica Eterovic and Natasa Janev

Open Society Fund – Prague (Czech Republic)
Monika Vlkova

Open Society Foundation – Georgia
Elene Nakashidze

Soros Foundation – Kazakhstan
Zhanna Zhanabekova

Soros Foundation – Kyrgyzstan
Elmira Shishkaraeva

Kosovo Foundation for an Open Society
Luljeta Vuniqi

Soros Foundation – Latvia
Angelita Kamenska

Soros Foundation – Lithuania
Vilija Geciene

Open Society Institute – Macedonia
Marija Savoska

Soros Foundation – Moldova
Antonina Sarbu

Open Society Institute – Mongolia
Odon Darjaa

Open Society Institute – Montenegro
Bilijana Maslovaric

Stefan Batory Foundation (Poland)
Dagmara Baraniewska and Anna Stalewska

Foundation for an Open Society – Romania
Roxana Tesiu Paraschiv

Open Society Institute – Russia
Elena Kotchkina, Larisa Fedorova, Nelli Utesheva and Marina Vlasova

Open Society Foundation – Slovakia
Viera Klementova

Open Society Institute – Slovenia
Suzana Tratnik and Lilijana Vucenovic

Open Society Institute – Tajikistan
Tatiana Abdushukurova

International Renaissance Foundation – Kiev (Ukraine)
Natalia Karbowska

Open Society Institute – Uzbekistan
Nigora Yuldasheva

Fund for an Open Society – Yugoslavia
Jandranka Stojanovic, Slavica Stojanovic and Zordna Sijacki

18. Strategic Initiatives of the Network Women's Program

NWP Community and Partnerships

Open societies cannot exist without accountability for gender equity and respect for diversity. NWP promotes the development of inclusive programming in the OSI network. By working with OSI national foundations and network programs, as well as international women's groups and funders, NWP seeks to increase women's programming internally and at the local, national, regional, and international levels.

Violence Against Women

Hidden before transition, violence against women, one of the key social mechanisms for maintaining women's inequality, has now become a public issue. Through international trainings and co-funding with OSI national foundations, NWP supports the development of sustainable women's NGOs responding to the multi-faceted problem of violence against women.

Women's Health

Due to lack of resources, availability, and access to quality medical services, women are not receiving the care they need for their general and gender-specific medical concerns from national and private medical systems. To create greater awareness of women's health issues, NWP and participating national foundations support educational and research-oriented health programs for women.

Information and Documentation

Exchanging information and developing collaborative projects between the Soros foundation network and women's organizations internationally is essential to addressing the diverse needs of women. The NWP promotes information exchange and collaboration by encouraging initiation, support, and linkage of national women's information centers.

Romani Women

Roma people in Europe continue to experience prejudice, discrimination, and violence. The NWP supports multiple approaches to empowering Roma women in the region. Working with Roma colleagues, NWP supports efforts to build Roma women's leadership and to increase Roma women's access to OSI resources and to international legislation, funding, and activities related to Roma and women.

Women and Conflict

Women continue to suffer enormously in gender-specific ways as a result of civil wars in the OSI region. Systematic rape, forced pregnancy and forced abortions, under the policies of ethnic cleansing, have become the most egregious violations of women's human rights. The NWP aims to build upon existing analysis and efforts in the areas of conflict prevention and women in post-conflict processes, while supporting the OSI network's efforts to make national and regional interventions.

Women's Participation in Public Life

In the post-soviet era, most countries in the OSI network saw a sharp decrease in the representation of women in national parliaments and leadership positions. As a result of the failure of new democracies to integrate more than half of the population in policymaking processes, almost all proposed and adopted reforms have been gender biased. To challenge these biases, NWP supports the development of women leaders and advocates at local, national, regional, and international levels.

Women and Education

Education, which supports the introduction and exchange of new ideas, is integral to the development of open societies. Women and girls must have diverse opportunities to formulate their ideas, participate equally in the conceptualization of their societies, and develop skills and knowledge needed to join critical conversations about the future. While advocating for gender-aware systemic change through educational reform processes in the OSI network, the NWP encourages the development of independent teaching and research on women, including gender studies.