

Institute at the Asian University for Women: A Force Multiplier

August 1-15, 2012

Handbook

"No nation can rise to the heights of glory unless your women are side by side with you"

Mohammad Ali Jinnah- Founding Father of Pakistan

"... I am reading a book titled World and Women. I learned from it what Ling White the President of Mills College in the USA wrote.... The author goes on to say that it is time to look at the thoughtless use of stereotypes...Man as leader, woman as follower, man as producer, woman as consumer, man as strength, woman as weak; this is the cosmography that has brought us to man as aggressor..."

*Indira Gandhi- Prime Minister of India,
Women's Conference Building Complex in India in 1980*

“Ultimately, leadership requires action: daring to take steps that are necessary but unpopular, challenging the status quo in order to reach a brighter future. And to push for peace is ultimately personal sacrifice, for leadership is not easy. It is born of passion, and it is a commitment. Leadership is a commitment to an idea, to a dream, and to a vision of what can be. And my dream is for my land and my people to cease fighting and allow our children to reach their full potential regardless of sex, status, or belief.”

Benazir Bhutto, Prime Minister of Pakistan and Daughter of the East

**Curriculum developed by Dr. Rangita de Silva de Alwis for the
Women in Public Service Project**

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Day One: August 1

Amplifying Women's Voices: Developing A Crucible of Women's Leadership

"By making full use of half the world's intelligence — the intelligence of women — we improve our chances of finding real and lasting solutions to the challenges that confront us"

-Michelle Bachelet- Under Secretary General and Executive Director of UN Women

Welcome and conversation on the aims, goals and potential impact of WPSP
Dr. Rangita de Silva de Alwis

Q/A – Student Leaders will discuss their own expectations from the Institute

The Transformative Potential of Women's Leadership: Voices from the Region
Dr. Rangita de Silva de Alwis

Journey to Leadership: Five Narratives from Student Leaders at AUW

The Power of Storytelling

Power of Women's Narratives/Listening to Women's Voices

Five AUW Student Leaders will present a short narrative of their journey to AUW

Power of Voice: Making a Compelling Case on Behalf of Women

Amplifying Your Voice: Skills and Strategies to Communicating Effectively

Refer to Sessions 1-2 of materials

Group 1

Introduce or support an initiative in your community or school to increase greater engagement of girls in STEM education. Draw from your own educational experiences in your communities and countries to highlight the needs.

Group 2

As a student delegate from AUW you are invited to an international conference on the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's). Target 2.A: of the MDG calls for: Ensuring that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full source of primary schooling. Sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia are home to the vast majority of children out of school. As student delegates from South Asia what are your recommendations to closing the gender gap in education? How do you combat inequality? Why is this so important? What can you do advance this goal? Draw examples from your country and region.

Group 3

You are supporting a woman candidate who is running for office. You are leading a campaign for her in your school. Introduce her to the community. Why do you want the community to support her? How do you think she will contribute to the community? Why is her personal story so compelling to you as a young leader?

Group 4

You are conducting a press interview for emergency services after the earthquake in Pakistan. Make a case for immediate emergency services for girls and women.

Group 5

Year 2012 has been designated by the United Nations as the Year of the Co-operatives. You have been asked to speak of the importance of women's leadership in co-operatives.

Comments from all participants

Day Two: August 2

Transformative Leadership

“As women parliamentarians, we need to share our experiences. This in itself will inspire women. We will not feel that we are alone in this game, and other women will not feel isolated from the process. At every opportunity, at every forum, each and every time we must share information, ideas, knowledge. We must make sure that women are the most informed people within society.”

-Margaret Dongo, MP

Zimbabwe

Unblocking Challenges to Women’s Leadership: Innovative Strategies from the Ground

Dr. Rangita de Silva de Alwis

The gender gap in political leadership globally has been described by Secretary Hillary Clinton as one of the “great pieces of unfinished business in the 21st century.” Women’s economic empowerment and women’s political participation and leadership are inextricably interlinked with women’s empowerment. Engaging women in democratic transitions and post conflict processes is key to national development planning. At the same time, leveling the playing field for women includes eliminating discriminatory legal provisions in family laws, electoral codes, penal codes and combating violence against women both in public and private.

How do we transform politics and leadership? How do we address the masculinization of politics? How do we recreate power and leadership in the image of both men and women?

How

do we redefine violence against women as important security issues? At the highest level there is President Sirleaf, President of Liberia and Novelist; on day one of her first term as President she discussed the taboo issue of rape in her inauguration speech and placing women and violence against women at the forefront of her presidency and recreating gender violence as a national security issue. On the other hand, the power of role models is transformative.

Having a woman in a seat of power can be in and of itself transformative and help inspire peers and future generations of women. This session will examine case studies from around the world.

Building Blocks of Change: Ensuring more women are at the decision making table, at negotiations and in positions of leadership

- AUW Student led panel on Mobilizing Advocacy Campaigns, Forging Alliances and Partnerships and Building Effective Networks in the Asian Region

Students will discuss transnational networks of peasants, farmers, environmentalists and women as an important force that drives international norm creation and the development of institutions. Students will discuss how local and national social movements have driven changes in the Arab World and Asia. Student leaders will discuss the resistance movement spawned by the Narmada Valley dam project and or identify a particular social movement you are familiar with. In particular, examine the impact of movements and the role of women in the movements. Students will raise to the surface women's roles in these movements. Think about acts of resistance in everyday life in the community you live in and discuss ways in which women resist discrimination, violence and exploitation in their everyday lives.

Strategies to Overcome Obstacles:

- Women's human rights- Beijing Platform of Action, eight core human rights treaties including the CEDAW; Security Council Resolution 1325, Security Council Resolution 1820, and Millennium Development Goals.
- Sharing of case studies on building women's movements
- Networking and remaining aligned with local and national women's groups and networks
- Building bridges with male political leaders, community leaders and religious leaders; building alliances with different constituencies
- Local, national, transnational alliances, partnerships and collaborations with grassroots, religious leaders, grassroots men and men in leadership positions
- Building women's political caucuses and networking between and across party lines
- Campaign finance
- Building constituencies
- The role of oversight of legislators- checks and balances, accountability
- Placing women's issues on the legislative agenda
- Gender mainstreaming into legislative development
- Gender analysis of Legislation
- Gender Budgeting
- Quotas for women and men in underrepresented areas of political and public life

AUW Student Leaders will divide into groups and create a strategic action program to transcend challenges:

Identify political, legal, social and cultural challenges in your community and country for women's leadership. Strategize on ways to overcome these challenges. The Programmatic Action Plan will be presented to the plenary.

Refer to Session 2 (1-8) of materials

Group discussions

Role Play before the Plenary

Comments and Discussion

Day Three: August 3

Transformative and Inclusive Policy Making

"We cannot achieve democracy and lasting peace in the world unless women obtain the same opportunities as men to influence developments at all levels of society,"

-Nobel Prize committee 2011

"Women have to be part of the future. And it's imperative that as constitutions are created, as political parties are organized, as elections are waged and won, nobody can claim a democratic future if half the population is marginalized or even prevented from participating"

-U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton

Introduction

In law, as in political life generally, much depends on who controls the influential discourses. What law is or ought to be has been historically determined based on a male standards and often reflects primarily male values. The founding theorists of many of the laws are male and tend to ignore unequal distribution of power in family life and politics.

The laws biases describe stereotyped views about women and men and ignore the realities of their lives resulting in laws and practices that disadvantage women. In the process of lawmaking, women's voices have been largely absent. The result of this long standing exclusion of women from law is that the legislation and case law used by lawyers and judges have been developed by men, with their problems and concerns in mind, and they reflect men's perspectives on the world; including their perspectives on women and women's roles.

How can laws be more inclusive of the needs of both men and women? How do we recreate laws in the image of both men and women and their families?

Group Work

Students will be asked to unpack family laws, labor laws, penal codes in Asia and asked to identify areas where women's needs are not represented.

Group Exercises:

- **Drafting Inclusive Educational Policies**

Draft a new education policy that provides food for education and other incentives to mothers and families that will help to retain girls in schools.

The Government of Bangladesh launched the innovative Food for Education (FFE) program in 1993. The FFE program provides a free monthly ration of rice or wheat to poor families if their children attend primary school. The goals of this program are to increase primary school enrollment, promote attendance, reduce dropout rates, and enhance the quality of education.

How can you improve this program? How can this program be replicated in other countries in Asia?

- **Create a National Action Plan to Prevent Child Marriage**

This should include programs to delay marriage; register birth and marry; raise the minimum age of marriage in compliance with CEDAW and CRC; compulsory education etc.

- **Develop an Anti- Corruption Policy for your country**

Systematic corruption threatens democracy and governance by weakening political institutions and mass participation, and by eroding economic development. Public ethics are a cornerstone of good governance. Ethics reforms have been enacted by many parliaments around the world. Ethics regimes have been adopted by many countries in order to inculcate more ethical behavior among politicians and to rebuild public trust in political institutions.

The **United Nations Convention against Corruption of 2005** provides measures for prevention of corruption, with measures directed at both the public and private sectors. These include model preventive policies, such as the establishment of anticorruption bodies and enhanced transparency in the financing of election campaigns and political parties. The Convention also provides for prosecution of corruption.

Refer to Materials in Session 12

4) Develop a National Action Plan based on the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) to empower women and promote gender equality.

Afternoon

New Awakenings and Women's Critical Role in Democratic Transformations:

Women and the Arab Spring and Women in Democratic Transitions in Asia

Dr. Rangita de Silva de Alwis in a panel discussion with AUW student leaders will share experiences of political transitions from their communities and countries (Nepal, Sri Lanka, Cambodia)

Introduction

How do we honor the historic role of women in the Arab Spring and locate women in peace building and conflict resolution? This session will examine the paradox of women's extensive engagement in the revolutions and in pro-democracy struggles and their subsequent marginalization from democratic negotiations and newly formed governance structures, institutions and democratic and political processes.

Some Issues for Discussion:

- How can women be at the forefront of placing equality under law at the heart of democratic transitions?
- What are the transitional justice processes women have been left out of in the Asian region (Nepal, Sri Lanka)?
- How can we sustain the spirit of the revolutions while preventing the rollback of prior gains for women?
- How do we combat violence against women in transitional justice processes including sexual abuse?
- How can we prevent conservative and fundamentalist forces from eroding equality for women?

The Way Ahead: Lessons from Other Post- Conflict Communities

Lessons from Rwanda, East Timor, and South Africa

Dr. Rangita de Silva de Alwis

Refer to Session 3 (1-2) of materials

Student Leaders will break into groups and discuss ways in which women in their countries have informed peace and transitional justice processes. How, for example, did women in Nepal organize for a quota in the Constitution? How did **Women's Action Forum** in Pakistan or the **Chipko movement** in India organize and mobilize attention around critical issues? Discuss ways to network and build alliances with male and religious groups?

Day Four: August 6

Women's Rights as Human Rights

Combating Violence against Women within the Human rights Framework: Innovative Lessons from the Asian Region

Dr. Rangita de Silva de Alwis

Bangladesh Domestic Violence Law: Advocates from Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association and Mitali Jahan, Bangladesh National Women lawyers Association

Lawmaking on Trafficking

Tawhida Khondke, Director of BNWLA

Jamila Akhter, Project Coordinator of BNWLA

Mitali Jahan, Program Manager of BNWLA

Introduction:

Although domestic violence is a global epidemic, it has special significance in Asia where crimes against women in the name of family honor, acid crimes, kitchen crimes, dowry deaths, and female infanticide are all egregious forms of domestic violence. Violence against women in Asia include some of the most harmful customary practices which range from virginity testing, female foeticide, sex selective abortion, harmful traditional practices related to menstruation and child birth, polygamy and polyandry, witch hunting, child marriage and forced marriage, marriage of girls to older women, ghost wives, honour killings, widow burning, dowry deaths, dedication of young girls to temples (*devadasi* in India and *deuki* in Nepal), bonded labour, human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of girl children and women, selling and buying of women for marriage; forced marriage; child marriage; forcing women to commit self- immolation.

The above mentioned forms of gender discrimination as well as the following affect both the woman and the girl child: child marriage; the *Chaupadi* custom which requires women and girl children to leave their homes and live in cow sheds during and after child birth and during menstrual periods; and the *Kumari* practice which deifies a young girl in Nepal till she reaches puberty. In *Sapana Malla v. Nepal* the Supreme Court of Nepal issued a directive order to ban the *Chaupadi* custom. Discriminatory customary and traditional practices affecting the health

of women and girls constitute a heinous form of violence against women and girls and a serious violation of their human rights. Not only in Asia but across the world, the preference for sons results in millions of missing girls. Sex-selective abortions, and infanticide or abandonment are means of controlling the birth and development of the girl child. A study conducted by Amartya Sen on the 100 million women missing in Asia as a result of discrimination and son preference reinforced this view. In India, China, South Korea, Singapore and Taiwan where sex ratios are skewed, overwhelming son preference collides with prenatal sex determination technology. Son preference was the root cause of female infanticide, dowry related deaths and the malnourishment of the girl child. Thus both implicit and direct violence against women was a personal security issue. Furthermore, such son preference manifests itself in discriminatory feeding, dowry, polygamy, the devaluing of a woman's education, and the lack of freedom of choice in marriage, all practices of which are often both a continuum and root cause of domestic violence, affecting both women and children.

Honor killings constitute the murder of women and girls by family members on the grounds that their intended or unintended behavior marred the family's honor and therefore entail the most egregious form of violence in the family. *Swara* is another incarnation of an honor crime. Practiced predominantly in the North- West Frontier Province of Pakistan, *Swara* marriage is a community sanctioned crime in which a minor girl is sacrificed to the family of a victim as a retribution or compensation in a dispute. Acid burning and dowry deaths in Asia are other forms of gender-based violence that affects not only women, but also the girl child and all children in the family.

Some Exciting New Developments in the Law in Asia

The Afghanistan Domestic Violence Law, 2009 attempts to reconcile human rights with Islamic injunctions:

The law seeks to eliminate "customs, traditions, practices that cause violence against women contrary to the religion of Islam".

The law makes illegal the selling and buying of women for marriage; forced marriage; child marriage; forcing women to commit self-immolation. Acknowledging that women's rights cannot be realized in Afghanistan unless harmful practices are addressed, the law defines the denial of right to education, work, access to health services as harmful practices. Moreover, the criminalization of the prohibition of an Afghan woman's or girl's education is particularly salient.

Pakistan, The Acid Control and Burn Crime Prevention Bill, 2010

National Acid Control Councils will be established to implement the Act in every province. Moreover, the provincial Acid Control Committees are to ensure prevention of sale of acids in their relevant areas of jurisdiction. The Acid and Burn Crime Control Tribunal is to monitor the Act.

Malaysian Law on Domestic Violence

The Malaysian domestic violence law of 1994 set up a one- stop crisis center in every state to deal with cases of violence against women and children. The first center was established at the University Hospital in Kuala Lumpur in 1986, as the result of a campaign by women's organizations

Indian Law on Domestic Violence

A novel element of the Indian law is the provision on protection officers. These protection officers were appointed to assist the Magistrate in the discharge of his functions. Under the law: "Protection officers shall make available a shelter home and make a list of service providers."

Refer to Materials in Session 5 (1-7)

Participants will break into groups and discuss the following role playing scenarios based on emerging challenges and creating opportunities to address those challenges:

Group one

Create a program to support victims of acid crimes. Prevention will be the key element of this program. How will you include men and boys in this program?

Group Two

Discuss ways in which anti- violence against women can be integrated into the curriculum in schools. What will be the key elements of this curriculum?

Group Three

Create an outreach campaign on honor crimes. How can you create awareness among boys in your community? How can you get boys to join this campaign?

Group Four

Address your university community or community about sexual harassment/ teasing/ stalking in Bangladesh and other countries.

Group Five

Although in many South Asian countries child marriage is prohibited, the practice still continues. What are the policies you will put in place to combat child marriage. This can

include mandatory education policies, educational awareness with male groups, etc. For example, in Delhi, state cash awards are given for every year a girl is in school; food for cash awards.

Day Five: August 7th

Visit to the Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association (BNWLA) Offices in Chittagong, Field Office, Shelter Home and Partners

Field visits led by: BNWLA

Overview of Bangladesh National Woman Lawyers' Association

For over 30 years the Bangladesh National Woman Lawyers' Association (BNWLA) has fought to create equal opportunities and equal rights for every woman and child in the country. The programs and service provisions of BNWLA are particularly targeted at the poorest and most disadvantaged areas of the country and are aimed at providing comprehensive legal service delivery programs, along with other preventive and protective supports, in establishing human rights and resisting violence against women and children.

Examples of Peace Agreements

- The 2006 Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) provided for the establishment of the Transitional Darfur Regional Authority (TDRA). The DPA grants the TDRA authority over the implementation of the DPA in Darfur and general control over the region pending the outcome of the Darfur referendum in 2010.
- The Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) recognizes the lack of representation for women in Sudanese government and society. The DPA's provisions attempt to ensure the effective participation of women in government.
- The 2006 Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) provides numerous mechanisms for the protection of women's rights, including provisions establishing women's right to participate in government institutions, provisions recognizing the role of women in the economy, and provisions guaranteeing property rights to women. The DPA also requires the Government of Sudan to engage and consult women in the reconstruction, redevelopment, and reintegration efforts in Darfur.
- The DPA requires that women who are displaced persons have access to financial assistance and that the government create special programs to address the special needs of women in the reintegration process.
- The Darfur Peace Agreement, art. 3, para. 28(a) (1) the right marry; (2) maternity and healthcare for pregnant women; and (3) access to education, without discrimination as to gender. The agreement also requires parties to combat harmful customs and other activities that demean the status of women, and to protect lactating women from the death penalty.

Day Six: August 8

Women and Security: Women Negotiating Peace

“Bringing women to the peace table improves the quality of agreement reached and increases the chances of successful implementation.”

-UN Secretary General Ban Ki

Moon

“Future mediation processes must create spaces specifically for women to sit at the table... Women cannot be relegated to shouting from the windows because they are not allowed through the doors....”

-Graca Machel, a lead negotiator in the Kenyan mediation

process

Introduction

The rule of law processes must be shaped by both women and men and must be responsive to both women and men. However, since 1992 women have represented fewer than three percent of mediators and eight percent of negotiators to major peace processes; numbers that have not markedly improved since the passage over a decade ago of the landmark UN Security Council Resolution 1325. One of the most important on-going constraints to women's capacity to engage effectively in conflict mediation and peace-building is the experience of sexual and gender-based violence during conflict and its inhibiting effect on women's ability to engage in conflict resolution, peace-building, and recovery efforts. This session will analyze concrete strategies to operationalize SCR 1325 which enshrines the critical importance of women's participation in decision making; the recognition of the use of sexual violence as a tactic of war as adopted in SCR 1820 and the realization of SCR 1889 call for women's participation across all stages of the peace process:

"to take further measures to improve women's participation during all stages of peace processes, particularly in conflict resolution, post conflict planning and peacebuilding, including by enhancing their engagement in political and economic decision-making at early stages of the recovery process, through promoting women's leadership and capacity..."

Women Negotiating Peace and Conflict Resolution

Discussion on SCR 1325 and 1820

Dr. Rangita de Silva de Alwis

Student Leaders will discuss different forms of truth commissions including Sri Lanka's Lessons Learned and Reconciliation Commission and Cambodia's **Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia** (commonly known as the "**Khmer Rouge Tribunal**" and the "**Cambodian Genocide Tribunal**")

Group Work

Process Leading to the Peace Agreement: How do you get more women and youth involved in peace negotiating and peace keeping?

Drafting a Peace Process: What are the areas of concern that you would like to see in a peace negotiation? Will this include security from violence, access to education for girls, access to land and employment for women, economic security for families, rehabilitation with families and communities?

Role play as mediator and representatives of the different sides to the conflict.

Movie- Pray the Devil Back to Hell

Refer to Materials Session 4 (1-4)

Day Seven: August 9

Women's Leadership as Smart Economics

"Nothing is as important today in the political economy of development as an adequate recognition of political, economic and social participation and leadership of women."

-Nobelist Amartya Sen (Amartya Sen grew up in

Bangladesh)

"When we liberate the economic potential of women, we elevate the economic performance of communities, nations and the world"

-U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton

"Gender equality is a core development objective in its own right. It is also smart economics. Greater gender equality can enhance productivity, improve development outcomes for the next generation, and make institutions more representative"

-World Development Report 2012

Introduction

The flagship World Bank Development Report, 2012 defines Women's empowerment as the moral and economic imperative of our times. Women's agency is important for women's individual well-being; the well-being of women's families; and for the well-being of their communities. Countries that create better opportunities and conditions for women and girls can raise productivity, improve outcomes for children, make institutions more representative, and advance development prospects for all.

The World Bank Report 2012 on Gender Equality and Development

Dr. Rangita de Silva de Alwis

Issues to be discussed:

Unequal access to economic opportunities and incomes, whether in the labor market, public service, agriculture, or entrepreneurship; Equal pay for equal work; wage gaps; and productivity gaps between men and women;

Increasing decision making in the family and in the public sphere; Gender unequal child care policies including social norms around care work that perpetuate wage disparities between men and women; lack of power in households and in society and the perpetuation of gender inequality across generations;

Women's equal access to property and land including joint land titling; access to credit;

Substantive gender equality in the public and private sector; Disparities in girls' schooling across regions; Increasing women's voices at all decision-making levels;

The importance of public/private partnerships: How can governments harness the potential of the private sector to increase access, enhance quality, and improve efficiency in public services

Meeting the Millennium Development Goals

Dr. Rangita de Silva de Alwis will moderate presentations by the AUW Student Leaders

Student leaders will break into five groups and discuss innovative strategies that their countries need to adopt to reach the 2015 MDG deadline. Groups can focus on one or more of the MDG Goals: 1) Eradicate extreme poverty or hunger; 2) Achieve universal primary education; 3) Promote gender equality and empowerment of women; 4) Reduce child mortality; 5) Improve maternal health; 6) Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other disease; 7) Ensure environmental sustainability; 8) Develop a global partnership for development.

Group Work

Present an action plan on helping to meet the Millennium Development Goals on fair representation of women in politics

Develop a plan of action for maternal health in Bangladesh/ How do you see that in the framework of gender equality?

Civic Leadership and Social Entrepreneurship

Women in particular have used the vehicle of social entrepreneurship as an avenue for economic and social empowerment and as a way of galvanizing communities to harness the resources and power of disenfranchised communities.

Presentation by Dr. Rangita de Silva de Alwis

Group Work

Create a Social entrepreneurship program in your university. Refer materials to the Delhi program on discovering India and her needs.

Refer to Materials Session 6 (4)

“Social Entrepreneurship is about innovative leaders who provide new ideas to solve intractable social problems and who can transform societies.”

- Echoing Green

“Social entrepreneurs are not content just to give a fish or teach how to fish. They will not rest until they have revolutionized the fishing industry.”

- Bill Drayton

Many Faces of Social Entrepreneurship

Grameen Bank

In 1976, Muhammad Yunus loaned US \$27 out of his own pocket to 42 families in the village of Jobra, Bangladesh, so that they could buy straw to make stools. It was the first loan made by what later became the Grameen (“Village”) Bank. A U.S.-trained Bangladeshi economics professor, Yunus thought that the lack of available credit was a major obstacle preventing the poor from improving their lives. Credit, he argued, should be a human right.

The Grameen Bank loans small amounts—as little as US \$9—to the rural poor. The money is typically to be used to buy supplies for a small business, such as a cell phone to set up a pay-phone stand. The loans typically have a term of a year and are repaid in weekly or biweekly installments. The interest is typically higher than what is charged by commercial banks, but much lower than the interest usually charged by the moneylenders who are the only people willing to lend to the very poor. The Bank does not require collateral or signed legal

agreements. Instead, it relies on social pressure to ensure the repayment of loans. Each borrower must join a five-member loan group, which meets regularly with a Bank employee who travels to their village. The loan group does not have joint liability for the loan, but the members are able to encourage and support each other. The Bank also tries to promulgate positive social habits through its Sixteen Decisions, which all members must recite. The Sixteen Decisions include promises to educate children, drink clean water, and not pay or accept dowry.

Since its founding, Grameen Bank has lent US \$7.59 billion to 7.67 million borrowers. Over 98 percent of the money has been repaid. The bank is 95 percent owned by its borrowers, with the remaining 5 percent owned by the government of Bangladesh. It currently does not accept money from donors and has made a yearly profit every year but three since its founding. In 2006, Muhammad Yunus and the Grameen Bank were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

BRAC

With 110,000 paid employees and a \$482 million annual budget, BRAC is the largest anti-poverty group in the world. In Bangladesh, BRAC works in 72,000 communities and claims to reach three quarters of the entire population with its services. With initiatives in economic development, healthcare, education, microfinance and more, BRAC fights poverty from every angle, aiming to provide a “complete method for poverty alleviation.” Long before the term became popular, BRAC had a strong social entrepreneurship focus. As founder Fazle Hasan Abed has said, “There are market incentives in everything we do.”

Originally founded in 1972 by the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee, BRAC’s first goal was to provide immediate relief in the wake of Bangladesh’s devastating war of independence. But Abed soon came to believe a comprehensive approach was needed. “The poor are poor because they are powerless,” he says. One of BRAC’s earliest successes was in combating child mortality. Women workers were trained to educate their peers to treat diarrhea, a leading cause of death, and paid based on their success rates. This program has been identified as one of the reasons that the mortality rate of children from one to four has fallen from 25 to 7 percent.

BRAC has come to focus many of its programs on poor women and girls, “recognizing both their vulnerabilities but also their thirst for change.” Central to BRAC’s work are the Village Organizations (VOs), which consist of 30-40 women and meet weekly. The VOs provide microfinancing but also much more: “A poor woman in the village,” says BRAC’s website, “can rely on BRAC to provide her with essential healthcare, education for herself and her family, business support, legal assistance and a voice in local issues.”

Day Eight: August 10

Transforming Gender Roles: Achieving Work/Family Balance

“Women’s empowerment requires overcoming a number of hurdles –including the gender stereotypes that relegate disproportionate responsibility for household caregiving to women...”

- Michelle Bachelet- head of UN

Women and former President of Chile

Discussion led by Dr. Rangita de Silva de Alwis

Introduction

Women leaders across the world have identified their dual responsibilities in the public sphere and the family life as being one of the major impediments to their advancement in public life. It is thus important to create new policies that ensure that both men and women choose caregiving responsibilities and both receive similar treatment.

Questions for Discussions

How can workplace policies be drafted to recognize the role that both parents play in child rearing and caregiving? How do we honor the value of caregiving, cooperation, and responsibility? How can we celebrate the responsibility of both sexes to fill caretaking and nurturing roles. Discuss mandatory and non transferable parental leave as a way to transform gender roles; quality child care services are also incentives for women to reach their full potential in public service.

The patriarchal construct of the male head of household is often carried over and replicated in politics and public service. How do we address women’s disenfranchisement as heads of household? When women are denied agency and full citizenship and decision making powers in the home, how can they achieve leadership in the public sphere?

Refer to Materials Session 8

Transformative Strategies for Women Leading Change

Dr. Rangita de Silva in discussion with student leaders

Progressive Interpretation of Religious Texts: Women Reinterpreting the Koran

One of the most exciting developments around the world is the new initiative of women reinterpreting the Koran. Feminist scholars are drafting model family laws based on a framework of equality and justice.

These interpretations reconcile the reality of women's lives with the secular human rights framework and the principles of justice in the Koran. Some of this research brings to the surface the negative impact of polygamy on the family.

Reformist efforts to create a model family code have burgeoned in Indonesia and Malaysia. Siti Mulia, as a special expert at the Ministry of religious affairs in Indonesia led the drafting of a model family law (the Counter Legal Draft) based on the principles of equality in Indonesia. The counter Legal Draft is an attempt to move away from a patriarchal interpretation of Islamic principles to an egalitarian interpretation and calls for equality in marriage, guardianship, custody, property and inheritance.

On the other hand, the plural legal systems in South Asia have resulted in family laws that discriminate against women. Till recently, under Indian and Nepalese family law, certain groups of women did not have equal inheritance of property. Although the Indian Constitution enshrines the right of the State to promulgate a Uniform Civil Code to all its citizens, separate religious laws govern women in family matters.

Students will Discuss Opportunities and Challenges for Emerging Reform in their Communities and Countries

Students will help to make recommendations to the Bangladesh Shadow report to the CEDAW Committee

Day 9: August 13

Role of Media in Advancing Gender Equality and Good Governance

Introduction

Dr. Rangita de Silva de Alwis

The media plays a profoundly important role in defining the role of engaged citizenship, changing stereotypes about women and men and the way in which national and global security issues are defined.

This session will focus on the transformative potential of the media to change stereotypical paradigms, transform conversations about men and women in public service and create gender sensitivity in reporting on issues of democratic governance, human rights and humanitarian crisis that concern both men and women.

Some Questions for the Moderator:

- How can the media transform public deliberations and critical debate on informed citizenship?
- How can the media impact the quality of government? What is the ideal role of the media in strengthening democratic governance?
- How can the media report about urgent humanitarian crises and development challenges in a gender sensitive manner?
- How can the media respect and advance international standards of universal human rights around the world?
- How can the media play a standard setting role in mainstreaming gender sensitivity into the public sphere?
- How can the media be watchdogs and gatekeepers of human rights?
- Can we create a media watch or a watchdog organization for women in public service?
- How can the media portray women and men in public service that avoid gender stereotypes?
- How can the media transform issues (for example: trafficking, sexual abuse, access to water) that are considered traditionally gender issues into critical security issues?
- How can women leaders in public service use the media to strengthen their platform and advance equal protection under law and other good elements of good governance?
- What kind of gender sensitivity training do the media need?
- How can women in public service use the media to advance women's leadership; press conferences, Op- eds, letters to editor, taking advantage of international women's day etc.

Participants will break into small groups to discuss the following role playing scenarios
Refer to Materials in session 7 (1)

Group Work

Potential Candidate: Press conference to announce that you have decided to run for office. Define the issues you stand for.

Press: What are the questions you will ask the candidate?

The Transformative Potential of Social Media: Strengthening Women's Empowerment and Good Governance

Has the shift in the balance of power from nation-states to individuals and from media institutions to citizen journalists through social media had a transformative impact on women's empowerment? Has the rise of social media led to a democratization of power and politics? There has been research done on the feminization of social media but very little on the transformative potential of social media on women's empowerment. Social media has helped to blur the distinction between the public and private and thus has potential to make visible in the public sphere hitherto private acts of violence and subordination.

Some case studies examined in the materials include:

Harassmap Egypt is a social media project that utilizes open-source mapping technology to allow women to report incidents of sexual harassment and abuse by sending a text message marking immediately the place where the abuse is taking place.

Women 2Drive- Saudi Arabia

Social media can be a powerful space and a platform for women not only to bear witness to events but it can be an alternative space to rewrite women's narratives. The Twitter and Facebook campaign in Saudi Arabia on Women2Drive is another critical example of how social media can literally help drive women's empowerment.

Social Media Demonstration by AUW students

Delegates break into groups and design the following based on a cause-driven issue:

Refer to materials session 7 (1)

Group One: Create Youtube video for the network

Group Two: Create Facebook for the network

Group Three: Create Twitter for the network

Group Four: Create a blog for the Network

Group Five: Create a Website (preliminary thoughts)

Day Ten: August 14

The Transformative Power of Mentoring and a Critical Mass of Women

"The word has recently gained currency in the professional world, where it is thought a good idea to have a mentor, a wise and trusted counselor, guiding one's career, preferably in the upper reaches of the organization"

- American Heritage Dictionary

"One who helps the wandering traveler does, as it were, light another's lamp by their own, and it gives no less light because it helped another."

- Gaius

Discussion led by Dr. Rangita de Silva de Alwis

Introduction

Homer's epic, The Odyssey, introduces the first mentor. A mentor advised the young Telemachus as he went looking for Odysseus, his father. A mentor can be a role model, advisor, coach, teacher, counselor, supervisor or friend. This session will examine the critical importance of a mentor/mentee relationship to women's advancement in public service and civic engagement.

Possible issues for Discussion:

- How do you define a mentoring relationship?
- What are the responsibilities of a mentor?
- The important role of a mentor in passing on the torch and nurturing a new generation of leaders
- What are the qualities of an effective mentor?
- How would the mentor/ mentee relationship grow?
- How can it be mutually reinforcing/ Can mentors learn and benefit from mentees?
- What is the process of mentoring?
- How can the mentee go on to mentor others?
- How have you benefited from mentoring?
- What are the benefits of serving as a mentor?
- How do you guide mentees to public service and nurture their advancement?

Group Discussions

Role Play before the Plenary

Refer to materials in session 10

Role play:

Students will break into groups and develop a mentoring program at AUW.

You will develop a mentoring program for young college students interested in public service. How would you like your interest in public service nurtured? What areas would you like to focus on? Would you arrange internship programs or a day of public service? Some examples: A dedicated day of meetings with women in public service; A forum for women in public service; Introductions to women in public policy, visits to national assembly, government offices, political parties, and leading women in public service. What skills would you like to develop?

What are the questions that mentees would come with? Create a short curriculum for the program.

Create a peer to peer mentoring program at AUW. What are the innovative strategies you would introduce? Example: Periodic roundtables for exchange of information, formal and informal networks (real or virtual) within AUW; guest speaker events etc.

Afternoon Session

Temporary Special Measures for Women in Politics: Valuing Role Models and Changing Perceptions

Introduction: Erasing the Gender Gap

Quotas in Indian local government or the Panchayat Raj

Some Case Studies in Asia

India

The Panchayat Raj Act in India reserves 33% of the three-tiered panchayats (village council, council of cluster of villages and the district council) for women. Today there are close to one million elected women leaders at the village level. A recent assessment revealed that corruption has gone down and transparency has greatly increased because of women's participation in panchayats.

Consider the following quote from Sushima Swaraj, a member of parliament in India:

“We have tried reserved parliamentary seats for village panchayats, and from my experience, this is a very effective measure. We have reserved 33 per cent of the seats in panchayats for women. Before this policy, we did not have women prepared for leadership positions; but as a result of the policy, political parties have to search for women. We got a mixed response. Some men did not want women to come forward, so they put forward their wives, sisters-in-law and mothers. But talented, educated women also came forward. Now the old argument that there are no able women to become candidates for legislative assemblies no longer holds. Because now the women serving as mayors and as chairmen of the municipal committees will be groomed as prospective candidates for parliament. More and more women have been elected to panchayats -- and this is a valuable pool of women for legislative assemblies. Thus the reservation of seats is a very effective measure, especially in countries such as India where there is such meager representation of women in parliament. In India, only 6.5 per cent of parliamentarians, 39 members of a house of 543, are women. A bill for reservation of seats for women in parliament is also pending; discussions are ongoing. It has not yet passed, but I think it will see the light of day.”

The Women's Reservation Bill was tabled recently in the Upper House of the Parliament of India, Rajya Sabha, on 6th May 2008. Legal reform on political representation of women, was initiated during Rajiv Gandhi's tenure as the Prime Minister of India with the adoption of

Panchayati Raj Act, 1992 By this enactment women were granted 33% reservation in the Panchayati Raj Institutions or local bodies. The proposed legislation to reserve 33.3 percent seats in Parliament and state legislatures for women was drafted first by the H D Deve Gowda-led United Front government and was thereafter introduced in the Lok Sabha on September 12, 1996. Since 1996 the bill has been introduced with difficulty thrice in the Lok Sabha and has, each time, lapsed with dissolution of the House due to lack of political consensus.

Currently women legislators constitute only 8.3% of the Indian Parliament. If the Bill is passed, one-third of the total available seats would be reserved for women in national, state, or local governments. The main opposition thus far has been on the issue of incorporating sub-quotas for women belonging to minority communities.

Bangladesh

The quota system was first introduced by the 1972 Constitution (originally providing for 15 reserved seats for women, out of 315 seats, for a period of 10 years). In 1978, a presidential proclamation enlarged the number of reserved seats to 30 and extended the period of reservation to 15 years from the date of promulgation of the Constitution of the Republic in December 1972. The constitutional provision lapsed in 1987 and was re-incorporated in the Constitution by an amendment in 1990 to be effective for 10 years. In 2004, a new law increased the size of Parliament to include forty-five reserved seats for women.

Pakistan

Under the Conduct of General Elections Order 2002, seats are reserved for women in both the lower house of the parliament (60 of 342 seats, or 17%) and in the provincial assemblies (also 17%). Thirty three percent of the seats in lower-level councils (union, tehsil, municipality, and district) are reserved for women. Women are elected to the reserved seats in the national parliament and provincial assemblies by a system of proportional representation. In the general elections of 2002, 12 women won seats in the national parliament from generally contested 8 seats, in addition to the 60 reserved seats, making for a total representation of 72 women out of 342 seats, or 21.1 percent.

Discussion topics:

- Do women have equal opportunities to lead?
- Strengths and weaknesses of the quota: how do you address the question that quotas may seem to view women as symbolic representatives at the early stages of game?
- Quotas also may imply that politicians are elected because of their gender, not because of their qualifications, and that more qualified candidates are pushed aside
- Are quota's enough? What more must be done to prepare women for politics?
- Are bottom- up- quotas that first create a critical mass of women at the local government level effective preparation for women to run for national office?

Group Role Play

Refer To materials in Session 11

Break into groups and develop a plan of action to execute a temporary special measure for women. You can decide whether it should be at the local government or national level. Will it be through Constitutional reform, electoral lists? How do you make sure that women are not at the bottom of the party lists? How do you make sure that women candidates are not mere representatives of their male peers but independent and capable of running for office? What are the challenges you foresee in quotas? How do we overcome those challenges through training, connections to women's groups and making sure that these candidates represent the concerns of women and men? What are the other ways you will strategize on advancing women in politics? What are the incentives that you can provide for political parties to support female candidates? What economic, political and social support do women need to run for office?

Day Eleven: August 15

The Way Ahead

"I urge you to be fearless about the future. Just because something has not been done yet, doesn't mean it can't be. I was never deterred from running for president just because there had never been any females elected head of state in Africa. Simply because political leadership in Liberia had always been a 'boys' club' didn't mean it was right, and I was not deterred. Today, an unprecedented number of women hold leadership positions in our country, and we intend to increase that number."

-President Ellen Sirleaf of Liberia - Commencement Address at Harvard University, 2011

The Way Ahead: Developing a Platform for Action

Refer to materials in Session 13

The AUW students will draft an outcomes document that could be taken back to their communities as a way of follow up action to the work of the WPSP Institute. This Platform of Action should identify critical strategies, joint action, collaborative and independent initiatives to mainstream women's leadership.

Discussion to be moderated by two Student leaders

How can the pilot take a life of its own and endure and grow in the region/s?

- How do we ensure sustainability and multiplier impact
- Can the course be replicated and mainstreamed into university or other institutional curricular?
- Share resource list with programs and networks on women in politics and public service around the world. We will first get the commitment of these organizations to share reports, materials, networks and other in-kind resources.
- How to create a platform of action to amplify voices and share ideas and strategies?
- How to coalesce these efforts into a network?
- How to create local to global exchanges? How can this network link to existing networks in the region and around the world?
- How can these existing transnational networks support the nascent network?
- How to combat the accusation that women's movements are elite or "westernized"? How to mine the common aspirations that link women which are stronger than the divisions of region, class or politics?
- How can we create a clearing house of information?

Some Questions for the Platform of Action

The Platform of Action will help guide students to identify key areas for advancing women in public service in your schools, universities, communities and countries. The sample categories set out below are not meant to be prescriptive but are a guide to inform our thinking as we map the way forward on a set of shared goals.

Mentoring Programs for Women Leaders in Public Service, including Peer-to Peer Mentoring Programs

These could include developing innovative initiatives in your school and community. How do we attract younger women to leadership positions? How do we expand opportunities for others; pass on the torch and mentor the next generation of leaders.

Developing Pipelines for Women in Public Service and in Non Traditional Areas of Public Service such as Finance, Economy, Energy, and National Security

These could include broadening programs or developing novel programs in your university and community for programs for women in public service.

Developing Crucibles of Leadership in our Communities and Countries

How can we work together with existing programs to mutually strengthen our vision of women leading public service? If no such programs exist in your community or colleges in your university, how can we build incubators to target young women for public service? How

can courses on leadership be introduced and mainstreamed into university and/or institutional curricular?

Women in Public Service Networks

- Identify some of the local, national, regional and global networks you belong to and know of and consider ways of expanding the scope and impact of these networks to advance women in public service.
- How would a new network of emerging women leaders forge alliances and strengthen partnerships with existing networks?
- How do we remain connected and link with other existing initiatives?

Clearinghouse of Information

How best would you exchange experiences of women in public service and share best practices and strategies with your peers in other universities and communities?

How can we make sure your story inspires women in your university and community?

Address Unequal Laws and Institutional Barriers

How can the network share best practices on law and institutional reform and identify areas for reform and strategies to accelerate reform?

Address Barriers to Public Service: Patriarchy, Gender Bias and Violence

What are the efforts to address patriarchal attitudes, gender bias in the family, dual burden of work/family obligations, tribalism, traditional and cultural biases that impede women's access to public service in your university curriculum? How do we strengthen these steps? How do we implement such steps?

Special Measures for Women in Public Service

Can you share strategies to advance women in public service and political leadership in your university and community?

How can these measures be strengthened? What training programs would you like to see developed? What should the areas of focus be?

Political, Social, Economic and Cultural Empowerment

Numerous studies show that women in public service and leadership contribute to women's political, social and economic empowerment and the development outcomes of the community and country. In turn, women's economic and social empowerment is often a determinant of women's political empowerment.

Can you identify some concrete examples of the impact of women in public service and how these impacts can be multiplied between and across borders, locally, nationally, regionally and globally?

How can we stay connected and collaborate on shared goals?

Transnational connections and partnerships help us in our journey as women in public service and civic leadership. How do you suggest that we realize this goal as AUW's inaugural network?

How do we pass on the torch to other emerging women leaders and how do we inspire a new generation of women in public service?

Other Steps

Closing Keynote (video): Honorable Jane Harman- President and CEO of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars

Presentation of Certificates

*Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high
Where knowledge is free
Where the world has not been broken up into fragments
By narrow domestic walls
Where words come out from the depth of truth
Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection....*

-From Gitanjali-

Rabindranath Tagore: First Asian to win the Nobel Prize for literature. Tagore also wrote the national anthems of India and Bangladesh and influenced the words and music of the Sri Lankan national anthem

AUW WPS Summer Institute Participants

Ruvani Nisansala Nagoda Gamage, Sri Lanka

UG2, Biological Science

Ruvani wants to be involved with environmental research upon her graduation. Her goal is to be an environmental chemist studying environmentally-friendly chemicals. She has 2 younger brothers, and comes from a lower-middle class family. Her mother is a school teacher, and her father, who passed away in January 2012, was a school principal. Ruvani feels it will be a bit difficult for her mother to support her now, but she still receives support from her mother. AUW has positively changed her view towards the world, and towards different groups of

people she encounters daily.

Mariam Khatun, Bangladesh

UG2, Environmental Science

Mariam is interested in today's environmental issues. She believes the student community can bring about positive change for the AUW community and country of Bangladesh. She is appreciative of the diversity of courses, from arts to sciences, offered to her at AUW. Her father owns a small business, and her mother is a housewife. Mariam's entire community, especially her close family, encouraged her to study at AUW. Mariam takes advantages of conferences, clubs, and the opportunity to meet speakers and guests at AUW. She welcomes opportunity to enrich her skills through different opportunities provided by AUW.

Sharmin Akter, Bangladesh

UG2, Asian Studies

Sharmin is deeply committed to volunteer work. She believes that the way to change a society is to get young people involved in solving the country's most pressing issues. Thus, she has been volunteering with the United Theater for Social Action, where she helps raise funds for organizations that provide educational facilities for blind women in Chittagong. She also teaches English classes. Sharmin wants to eventually build an organization that will motivate Bangladeshi youth to become a part of the solution. She comes from a family of six. Her father is a dining supervisor at AUW, and her mother is a housewife. She is the oldest child in her family, and has three other siblings.

Rimu Byadya, Bangladesh

UG2, Biological Sciences

Rimu's dream is to study medicine and open a clinic in her village. At AUW, she is taking every opportunity to develop the communication and leadership skills necessary to make her dream into a reality. Rimu is currently a House Captain, a peer advisor for one of the residential units at AUW. She says that her experiences at AUW have taught her to dream big. She now understands that it is possible to "materialize those dreams with our knowledge and experiences." Thus, she continues to work hard with the continuous support of her parents. Her father is a poultry farmer, and her mother is a housewife.

Anowara Begum, Bangladesh

UG2, Public Health Studies

Anowara enjoys working with people, which is why she is studying Public Health. She dreams of one day joining the World Health Organization and working to improve health conditions in Bangladesh. Her inspiration are her parents, who uneducated themselves, have worked hard to educate Anowara and her five siblings. Her father is a retired government

worker, and her mother is a housewife. At AUW, Anowara has discovered her own interests and dreams. She looks forward to making all her dreams a reality.

Minnu Jose, India

UG2, Politics, Philosophy, and Economics

Minnu has a background in science, but at AUW, she discovered that she enjoys economics more. Now, she wants to pursue an MBA. Her father is a hardworking businessman who has always supported her education. Minnu says that she has changed much since she joined AUW. Mostly, she has a broader worldview.

Fahria Kabir, Bangladesh

UG3, Computer Science

Fahria is from a family that values education. Her father, a retired doctor, and her mother, a chemistry professor, have encouraged her and her siblings to further their studies and become successful professionals. Fahria has been working towards just that: she plans to eventually create web applications that can be accessible to visually impaired people. In the short term, she is busy teaching people effective use of the internet so as to improve their lives. To date, she has organized IT workshops, programs, and conferences through AUW's IT Club. She hopes to continue making Bangladesh stronger by increasing effective use of technology.

Nishat Mowla, Bangladesh

UG3, Computer Science

Nishat became interested in IT when her father, a retired army colonel, started a computer business where they assembled CPUs. There, she learned how to assemble CPUs and took several IT training courses. Since then, she's been keenly pursuing computer science. Her goal is to provide IT solutions to various sectors in Bangladesh. The most valuable thing she has learned at AUW, she says, is how to think critically to tackle problems that people everywhere face.

Fahmida Yesmine, Bangladesh

UG3, Politics, Philosophy, and Economics

Fahmida is passionate about equality and women's rights. Her inspiration is her mother, a housewife. Fahmida has watched her mother remain silent and bear the burdens of a family that

undervalues women, thinking that she too would become like her mother. But, her mother wanted a different life for Fahmida and pushed Fahmida to pursue education. Now, Fahmida knows that the way to women's empowerment is through education.

Fariba Housaini, Afghanistan

UG3

In high school, Fariba was very interested in biology and the sciences, and her interest still remains, but she is excited to be at AUW where she can focus on a lot of subjects at once. All in all, though, her interest lies in politics and development. After graduating, she wants to go back to Afghanistan and help change the situation for women there. She believes that all women should be educated and feels a strong connection to her home. She is lucky, she says, to be at AUW. This way she will be given the power to make a change when it really matters.

Nazifa Alizada, Afghanistan

UG3

Nazifa moved with her family of five siblings to Kabul in 2001, after the Taliban collapsed. She came to AUW because she realized that an education and the opportunity to interact with new cultures and people would propel her to success. **After graduating, Nazifa** intends to get a master's degree and go back to her home town. She believes that there is too much discrimination against women there and she'd like to encourage more women to get an education, just like she is. She believes that her generation is the generation to help Afghanistan, and with an education at AUW, Nazifa feels that she'll be well equipped when the time comes. As she says herself, AUW feels like a "community of teachers and learners."

Jan Afsa Sarwari, Afghanistan

Access Academy

Jan Afsa joins AUW from Afghanistan, where she ultimately plans to return and work in politics in order to have a positive influence on women's rights in her home country. She speaks Dari, Pashto, and English, and will be the first in her family to attend University—neither of her parents know how to read or write. Jan Afsa's hobbies include sewing, reading, and music. She intends to pursue a master's degree and Ph.D. after her studies at AUW are complete.

Tahmina Roufi, Afghanistan

Access Academy

Tahmina hails from Kabul, Afghanistan, where she has been a TV presenter and chief of "The Young Committee." Her mother holds a bachelor's degree and works as a teacher, and her upbringing has instilled Tahmina with the confidence to be a strong communicator and thinker. She speaks Dari, Pashto, Urdu, and English. She enjoys reading and music and plans to utilize

her AUW education to help her country.

Shaiesta Ehsani, Afghanistan

Access Academy

Shaiesta, a native of Kabul, Afghanistan, has always done well in her studies and has worked hard to prepare herself for admission to AUW. Her ambition is to be an educated citizen and a role model for young Afghan girls. Not content to wait until university for such opportunities, she currently teaches at an Afghan Girls Language Centre in Kabul. Her other hobbies include football, basketball, and watching meaningful movies.

Fatima Saadat, Afghanistan

Access Academy

Fatima applied to AUW from Kabul, Afghanistan, in order to better her opportunities through higher education. She counts reading and writing among her hobbies and exhibits strong leadership potential. She will be a first-generation University student, raised by parents with no formal education. She speaks Dari, enjoys sports, and has received awards for painting.

Paryin Hejran, Afghanistan

Access Academy

Paryin joins AUW from Kabul, Afghanistan. Her parents both have primary school educations, and she is enthusiastic about the opportunity to attend AUW and pursue higher education. She plans to use her education to become a human rights activist. A highly motivated young woman, Paryin has worked as a teacher and received a yellow belt in Karate. Her hobbies include reading, writing, and sports.

Zahra Rezai, Afghanistan

Access Academy

Zahra is enthusiastic about attending an international women's university—raised by parents with little formal education, she will be the first in her family to attain a bachelor's degree. Zahra's hobbies include art, music, writing poetry, and playing basketball.

Shayesta Nawabi, Afghanistan

Access Academy

Shayesta hails from Kabul, Afghanistan, where her father serves as an Army Officer. She is likely to contribute significantly to AUW's active campus life given her many interests, which include driving, music, dance, and swimming. She speaks Dari and Persian.

Zeinab Noori, Afghanistan

Access Academy

Zeinab joins AUW from Kabul, Afghanistan, where she has worked as a high school teacher. Her father has no formal education, while her mother has completed a primary school education. Zeinab is interested in writing, art, and social analysis. She speaks Dari and English, and looks forward to studying with students from different cultures at AUW.

Raihana Saidy, Afghanistan

Access Academy

Raihana, a native of Kabul, is a highly ambitious young woman who recognizes how AUW can help her achieve her long-term goals. She will be a first-generation University student, and looks forward to developing her English and critical thinking skills. She speaks Dari and her hobbies include reading history books, playing sports, and dancing.

Batool Askari, Afghanistan

Access Academy

Batool, who joins AUW from Kabul, plans to use her university education to help women and improve their situation in Afghanistan. Her interests include reading, music, painting, and playing volleyball. Batool speaks Dari and has strong English listening and speaking skills. She looks forward to the diversity that AUW offers.

Marzia Habibi, Afghanistan

Access Academy

Marzia, who comes to AUW from Kabul, is interested in studying Politics, Philosophy and Economics at the University. Although neither of her parents have formal educations, she has been active in her school's student government, holding a position as Class Representative. She speaks Dari and her hobbies include sports and music.

Mitra Sheva Shefa, Afghanistan

Access Academy

Mitra has worked as an English teacher in her hometown of Kabul, Afghanistan, and intends to study Politics, Philosophy and Economics at AUW. She wants to use her education to be a

good citizen and contribute to Afghanistan's economy. Mitra is very impressed with the diversity of AUW's student body and the University's facilities—in addition to her academic pursuits, she is interested in participating in athletics.

Atefa Erfan, Afghanistan

Access Academy

Atefa comes to AUW from Kabul, where she has been a member of her School Council and enjoys writing, singing, and sports. She is a first-generation University student—neither of her parents has any formal education. Atefa is looking forward to the facilities and opportunities available to her at the University.

Regional Mentors

Advocate Salma Ali, Bangladesh

Executive Director of the Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association (BNWLA)

Ms. Salma Ali has helped draft many gender-sensitive laws including the domestic violence law, anti-acid throwing law and the trafficking law in Bangladesh and has spear headed several ground breaking initiatives on anti- trafficking against women.

Hon. Mu Sochua, Cambodia

First Minister for Women's Affairs and current leader of the Opposition, Cambodia

Mu Sochua, a recent Nobel Peace Prize nominee, is one of the most prominent women in Cambodian politics. For over twenty years, she has been at the forefront of her country's efforts for democratic reform, free elections, and human rights.

Sochua received a master's degree from the University of California Berkeley's School of Social Welfare. In 1993, Sochua succeeded in incorporating strong provisions into the Cambodian Constitution, improving human and women's rights across the nation. With support from the United Nations Fund for Women, Sochua helped to organize Cambodian women's participation in the 1995 UN Fourth World Conference for Women.

In 1998, Sochua won a parliamentary seat in a northwestern province of Cambodia, and became Minister of Women and Veterans' Affairs, one of the only women to join the cabinet. As a Cabinet member, Sochua authored the Domestic Violence Law, and negotiated an agreement with Thailand to curtail human trafficking in Southeast Asia.

Hina Jilani, Pakistan

Pre-eminent human rights lawyer, United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary General on Human Rights Defenders; UN International Fact-Finding Commission on Darfur, Sudan

Pakistan's pre-eminent human rights lawyer, Hina Jilani has represented victims of honor crimes, blasphemy, and forced marriage. She was the United Nations Special Representative of

the Secretary-General on Human Rights Defenders; Member of the UN International Fact-Finding Commission on Darfur, Sudan; a member of the Eminent Jurists Panel on Terrorism, Counter-terrorism and Human Rights; a member of the United Nations Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict and co- wrote the Goldstone Report.

Naheed Farid, Afghanistan

Member of Parliament

I am a MP of the Afghanistan Parliament. I have a bachelor degree in Law and Political Science, a diploma of Leadership and certificates of International Development and Political Management from Bochum University Germany. I have ten years of work experience in humanitarian and women rights activities. I spent more than 6 years of my life at home because of the Taliban dark government. During the Taliban period women had no access to education, justice and health. The worst memory of my life is the day of Taliban attack to my city. They burned my school with all the books, chairs and important documents. After 9/11 my life and the life of millions girls like me has completely changed. They could use any opportunity to succeed. I returned to school and finished high school. Then I chose Political Science as my field of study in University. When studying in the University in Afghanistan, I received several scholarships to study in Europe as a remarkable experience of my life. I engaged before finishing my university with another student in the same field of study. My engagement was a very significant decision of my life. Although Afghan girls face force marriage in Afghanistan my family gave me the chance of decision making to marry. My husband is the one who decided to run the campaign for me. It was a dream of him to feel proud of his wife. Fortunately I could win the election. I got the highest votes from my constituency among all women. I can say that it was the best memory of my life when I heard that people have trusted me. At 27, I am the youngest member of Afghanistan Parliament and as a young woman I face enormous challenges.

Naheed Sarabi, Afghanistan

Director, Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS), Office of Policy Institution, Ministry of Finance

Ms. Naheed Sarobi is the Director for the Afghanistan National Development Strategy

(ANDS) in the Afghan Ministry of Finance (MoF), Office of Policy. She commands respect in the Afghan Government, even though she is in a Ministry that has no female leadership. Ms. Sarobi started her position in the Ministry of Finance as an intern after finishing her Master's degree in Germany. She initially worked in support of a government-wide effort to prioritize the national strategy for development and good governance, to develop an effective accountability mechanism and to advance donor coordination in a fluid, chaotic aid environment. She subsequently took on the role of national technical advisor to the governance team, working directly with key-line ministry staff and the Senior Minister for Afghanistan. She was soon promoted as Director of ANDS, a key position within the government.

Rangita de Silva de Alwis, Sri Lanka

Director, Global Women's Leadership Initiative

Dr. Rangita de Silva de Alwis previously served as the Director of Women in Public Service Project's 2012 Institute at Wellesley College. Rangita is the Director of International Human Rights Policy at the Wellesley Centers for Women and Faculty at the Madeleine Albright Institute for Global Affairs at Wellesley College. She is also the inaugural Susan McGee Bailey Scholar at the Wellesley Centers for Women. She will be a Fulbright Specialist at the Asian University for Women this summer. Rangita will co-teach Human Rights Theory and Practice at Wellesley College as Distinguished Visiting Lecturer next fall.

Rangita has worked globally with a vast network of academic institutions, civil society and government organizations to develop innovative human rights initiatives around the world including, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, China, Cambodia, Malaysia, Indonesia, Mexico, Georgia, Egypt, Russia, Kenya, Turkey, Morocco, Bulgaria, Romania, Lebanon, South Africa and Burma. She leads the Women's Leadership Network in Muslim Communities at the Wellesley Centers for Women. She helped convene the Asia Cause Lawyer Network in India and the Women's Watch- China. She has worked in partnership with China's leading women's rights advocates on new developments in gender and law reform in China for over 10 years. She has testified twice before the Congressional Executive Commission on China on the status of women's rights in China. She also advised UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP and the U.N. Secretariat on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on state accountability under the relevant treaties and the intersections of the different treaties. Most recently, she developed a Gender Supplement to the U.N. Secretary General's Guidelines on Disability.

She is a Gender Advisor to Vietnam's Ministry of Justice and National Assembly. She has published with the United Nations (Child Marriage and the Law; Girl Child Labour; The Status of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and Legislative Compliance in Eastern Europe and Central Asia; and the Intersections of the CEDAW and the Convention on the Rights of the child) and in law journals including in the:

Yale Journal of Law and Feminism; Texas Journal of Gender and the Law; University of Pennsylvania East Asia Law Journal; Duke Journal of Gender and the Law; UCLA Pacific Rim Journal; University of Washington's Pacific Rim Law and Policy Journal; and Michigan State Journal of International law. Rangita has created a curriculum and materials for the Asian University for Women's course on Women Leading Change in Asia.

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