



Women's Learning Partnership 2014 Transnational Partners Convening White Paper

INTRODUCTION

Women's Learning Partnership (WLP) held its 2014 Transnational Partners Convening (TPC) on October 4-7, in Potomac, Maryland, with WLP board members and representatives of WLP partners from Bahrain, Brazil, Egypt, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Iran, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Norway, Pakistan, Palestine, Saudi Arabia,¹ Senegal, Turkey, USA, and Zimbabwe.

Since 2014 is the 15th anniversary of WLP's founding, the meeting focused on reviewing the Partnership's progress over the last 15 years, highlighting WLP's major achievements, successes, challenges, and lessons learned in curriculum development, training, civil society strengthening, advocacy and movement building, and online learning. Partners also reviewed the past year, reflecting on each partner's major accomplishments and challenges, as well as issues facing the Partnership, and identifying priorities and strategies for the Partnership's work to promote women's rights and democracy in the coming years.

Based on our many successes, and changes in context that we could not even have imagined at our founding in 2000, the Partnership decided that our 15th anniversary presented us with a timely opportunity to discuss what changes we should consider for the Partnership and if or how we should reconfigure our activities and ways of working to ensure our effectiveness in the future.

Both the discussion at the TPC and this white paper were conceived as a frank look at what has worked in the past for the Partnership, what we have been able to accomplish, how we have addressed challenges, and what we need to address in the changing global context, in the hopes that this will provide guidance for the Partnership and benefit other organizations that may learn from our history and organizational model.

¹ Dr. Thoraya Obaid, WLP Board Chair, participated in the TPC by teleconferencing call.

REVIEWING 15 YEARS OF PROGRESS: *Where We Have Been*

WLP'S FOUNDING

Since 2000, when WLP was founded, we have worked closely with our partners to empower women and youth in the Global South. Our Partnership began with five strong, dedicated, idealistic, grassroots women's organizations from five countries on three continents, in response to the expressed needs of a network of non-governmental organization (NGO) leaders and grassroots activists in the Middle East-North Africa (MENA) region at the 1995 Beijing Fourth UN World Conference for Women. On their recommendation, WLP organized a dialogue in June 2000 for 15 women NGO leaders from Muslim-majority societies to identify the themes and priority areas for the newly established organization.

WLP'S PRINCIPLES

WLP's founders all shared a vision of a just and peaceful world that offered every individual the opportunity to grow and realize her or his full potential and prosper. We knew that achieving that vision would require equitable gender norms and new patterns of human relations and structures in the family, workplace, and society.

We realized that the key underlying construct that shaped these norms, relations, and structures was leadership and active participation. We therefore concluded that it was of utmost importance to **redefine concepts of leadership and power to conform to women's values; develop culture-specific curriculum that could be adapted to varied societies; and train and help women achieve positions of leadership and decision-making in the public sphere.** Together we identified a horizontal leadership and participation process that is communicative, egalitarian, gender-inclusive, ethical, and built on a participatory and democratic philosophy that values individual skills and contributions, as the basis to foster the full claiming of rights and opportunities.

As a result of these deliberations, WLP developed a **concept of participatory leadership based on dialogue, consensus building, and shared vision.** We also realized that working together would be necessary to realize the large-scale social change we seek – that through our collective approach we could have an impact much greater than we could from the isolated intervention of individual organizations.²

WLP's foundational operating philosophy is that **for change to be truly lasting it must come about organically, from within.** That is why we developed a Partnership of indigenous partner organizations dedicated to women's human rights, development, and peace and worked to strengthen their capacities through network building, knowledge sharing, and logistical support. Our partners are women's human rights organizations, located primarily in Muslim-majority societies, and are all strong, credible, and well respected in the broader community and among

² The Partnership exemplifies the concept of "collective impact," where the commitment of a group of important actors from different sectors to a common agenda for addressing social issues has greater impact in effecting large-scale social change, as described by John Kania and Mark Kramer in "Collective Impact," *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, vol. 71, Winter 2011, http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/collective_impact.

their constituencies. While each partner is autonomous and independent, we all share a common vision, values, and aspirations across the Partnership. We use this network of interconnected partners to expand our reach and replicate our participatory programs to enable women and youth around the world to recognize their own individual promise and support them to begin to imagine themselves as powerful leaders in their homes, in the public space, and well beyond. Our partners work together, build on each other's knowledge and experiences, and share strategies and approaches to nurture leadership and participation capacities in women and youth. We consider our greatest strength to be the solidarity, resilience, and dynamism of our Partnership, based on relationships of trust, respect, and cooperation. The synergy created by these relationships has made possible the astonishing growth and impact of our programs over the last 15 years.

WLP's core ideology did not start with a theoretical assumption and try to fit reality to it, but came from grassroots evidential experience and is based on knowledge and full respect for cultural differences. All WLP programs and activities come from the partners. We work from the grassroots to national to international and back again, with WLP partners replicating the international formula in their own countries and regions. Even our structure (one partner per country rather than multiple partners within countries) comes from the experience of what works.

WLP uses a decentralized approach to program implementation. WLP partners act as national or regional "hubs" where jointly developed knowledge and tools, based on our participatory leadership concept, are tested, adapted, and disseminated through workshops, eCourses, Training of Trainers Institutes (TOTs), and other programs. Partners also form thematic hubs under which those with extensive experience in a particular area work together to advance our programs, in fields such as combating gender-based violence (GBV), economic empowerment, or ICTs. Through our advocacy work and support for campaigns, WLP helps shape the discourse on and analysis of women's rights issues nationally, regionally, and internationally. We convene South-South, peer-to-peer exchanges, supporting cross-regional exchange of experience, knowledge, and strategies. The Partnership has been successful in working across communities and on potentially divisive issues by **strengthening relationships and solidifying ties between and among partners**. WLP represents the coming together of powerful autonomous organizations to create an identity that is strongly national yet identified as a global partnership. The solidarity, strength, and dynamism of our Partnership are reflected in our level of interconnectedness and in the cumulative impact of our work across the Global South.

WLP'S STRATEGIES

Since our founding, we have used the strategies of **curriculum and resource development, training, civil society strengthening, and women's human rights advocacy and movement building** to help bring about the following long-term outcomes and sustainable changes in women's empowerment and status:

- Build democratic and peaceful societies that embrace pluralism and tolerance and are governed by gender-equitable norms and policies that translate into equal rights and

equal levels of participation and decision-making for women and men in the family, community, and politics.

- Promote strong moderate and secular voices and civil societies, grounded in democratic principles, where women are equal participants in key decision-making positions and influence public opinion.
- Support and strengthen sustainable and effective civil society organizations and grassroots women's rights movements in the Global South with the capacity to engage in diverse advocacy and networking strategies to promote democracy and women's rights.

Throughout our history, we have worked to establish and **strengthen relationships with our partners based on ongoing communication, trust, and institutional agreements**, and we have developed and enhanced our strategy for transnational cooperation in areas such as knowledge sharing, advocacy, and exchange of best practices.

During the early days of the Partnership, we focused on developing, testing, and successfully adapting a concept of participatory leadership based on learning, dialogue, consensus building, and creating a shared vision. This is articulated in our signature training manual and curriculum, *Leading to Choices: A Leadership Training Handbook for Women*. We worked with partners to **adapt this manual into local languages and cultures** and utilized it as we **expanded our training program and strengthened our model for adapting culture-specific curriculum**(for example, facilitators ask workshop participants to recount their own stories or scenarios that relate directly to local communities).

In 2004, we **developed a model for organizational sustainability** that allowed WLP to “grow without growing” by keeping WLP International lean and maximizing the Partnership's shared resources. We accomplished this by expanding at the national and regional levels through geographic and thematic hubs and National and Regional TOT Institutes. During this time, we **developed our unique grassroots-driven advocacy model for human rights campaigns initiated at the country level**, drawing on our Moroccan partners' successful experience with family code reform. The model starts with gathering sociological evidence and testimony, analyzing legal codes (including constitutional guarantees, international human rights instruments, civil and religious codes), and building a local advocacy and outreach strategy – moving from practice to theory, not theory to practice. Regionally, our partners build and enhance networks, discuss and share experiences, building solidarity and potential sets of tactics and strategies for local adaptation. At the international level, WLP helps to make the partners' campaigns, goals, and progress more visible through mainstream media, social media, and a wide range of alliances, such as the Association of Women's Rights in Development (AWID), Civicus, and the International Women's Democracy Network (IWDN).

In 2008, we began to **promote movement building at the national and regional levels by mobilizing youth** through a range of networks, including ministries of education, youth clubs, and partnerships with universities and social justice networks. We also **developed a peer-to-peer model of organizational capacity building**, which allows partners to approach

organizational development in a manner that is self-directed and responsive to local needs. Partner organizations began participating in peer exchanges to guide each other through a multi-year strategy planning process. Each organization developed a plan to address its: value-added and strategic positioning; human, financial, technological, and administrative assets, as well as resources needed; programmatic, monitoring, and evaluation systems; and strategies for averting risks.

From 2009 to 2010, we focused on evaluating our work, **documenting organizational best practices**, and **developing holistic, long-term evaluation mechanisms** for use throughout the Partnership. We also explored innovative ways to channel our collective voice, **using new and emerging technologies to promote social change**. We focused more intensely on youth outreach, expanding our training and curriculum, and engaging youth in ICTs for advocacy, in order to harness the power of social networks to reach a wider audience.

Beginning in 2011, the events of the Arab Spring demonstrated again that women and youth can be instrumental in bringing about significant political change. They also reinforced our understanding that initial movements for change do not necessarily lead to the new democratic, pluralistic, tolerant, and secular societies that we seek. Thus, we continued to **focus our work on the foundations of political and social equality by establishing systems that recognize and protect universally recognized individual rights and equal citizenship**; and on locating and exercising a social vigilance that will prevent the regression of rights that have been previously gained. To this end, WLP increased our emphasis on human security – with universal human rights being a critical component – and forged new alliances (e.g., UN Women) with others to build a movement around this concept.

We and our partners also worked to broaden our networks and expand the reach of WLP's resources and methodologies by making use of our partners' increased capacity. For example, our **peer-to-peer capacity-building activities** strengthened partners through strategic planning, financial and human resource management, internal understanding and practice of participatory and democratic leadership, efficient use of ICTs for social networking and advocacy, and most importantly, knowledge sharing within the Partnership through frequent brainstorming sessions and annual Transnational Partners Convenings (TPCs).

This increased capacity enabled us to launch our Global Training of Trainers Initiative in 2011, which is multiplying the reach of WLP programs well beyond the Partnership. By **building a cadre of multilingual trainers who will implement leadership and political participation trainings** for women in WLP partner countries and beyond, WLP is further building the training and advocacy capacity of individuals, NGOs, and civil society organizations (CSOs) for effective civic and political engagement.

We also increased our collaboration with our partners to **expand our outreach and impact through the use of ICTs**. Given the ubiquity of technology – and with the sweeping political changes taking place around the world and the role of the youth in these changes – we

increased our efforts to provide young women and men with the essential tools they need to become even more involved in the process of nation-building.

In 2012 we increased our efforts to reach new audiences and expand our existing constituency by **producing documentary films on the challenges to and achievements of the women's rights movement** around the world. In 2012 we produced our documentary *From Fear to Freedom: Ending Violence Against Women*, which features experts and activists who discuss root causes of gender-based violence, share strategies to combat it, and provide inspiring accounts of important milestones already achieved through the international women's movement. In 2013, we released *Because Our Cause Is Just*, our documentary on women's rights and democratic transition in the MENA region. We also dubbed or subtitled the films in several languages, to ensure they could be utilized by the target audiences. These films are now being used as awareness-raising and educational tools by women's rights organizations, universities and secondary schools, women's shelters, and individual citizens seeking to take political action and advocate for change in their communities.

In 2013 we launched *ABAN*, WLP's Online Learning Portal, which is providing **an online learning space** for a community of those engaged in advancing equality and democratic principles. By also serving as a repository of information, including a *Corpus of Laws in Muslim-majority Countries*, the portal will be an extremely valuable tool to women and youth who are challenging undemocratic norms.

In the wake of the ongoing popular uprisings in the countries where we work, we increased our efforts to enhance women's and youth's ability to claim their rights and democratically engage in politics and society; to ensure that the voices of women were heard; to strengthen national, regional, and international efforts for legislation, policies, and norms in accordance with women's universal human rights and democratic principles; and to bolster the women's movement.

Over the past 15 years, we have **trained more than 25,000 women and youth** who have in turn reached hundreds of thousands of individuals in their families, neighborhoods, and workplaces and **spearheaded advocacy campaigns, civic organizations, small businesses, and human rights reforms** that have improved the lives of millions more. We have **disseminated our participatory leadership training methodology** and expanded and **strengthened our networks** through National and Regional Institutes for Women's Leadership and Training of Trainers in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Gulf Region, and the Middle East. Our trainings have transformed the way women and youth view leadership and how they view themselves.

EVALUATING THE CURRENT CONTEXT: *Where We Are Now*

Today the Partnership has grown to include 20 autonomous and independent organizations from the Global South and our culturally-adapted curriculum is now freely available online in 20 languages. We have made a significant impact by disseminating knowledge about women's rights and democratic ideas and methods, and increasing our partners' organizational, strategic, and tactical capabilities to influence decision making at international, regional, national, and

community levels. **The Partnership is now increasingly a force for freedom, equality, and democracy** in societies where, to varying degrees, non-democratic systems and social norms still persist. Although we have changed some tactics based on lessons learned, WLP's core principles remain constant:

- **Mission:** To transform power relations and promote justice, equality, peace and sustainable development by strengthening the feminist movement.
- **Strategy:** To achieve this mission, the WLP Partnership will build capacity through the sharing of vision, mechanisms, and concepts; exchange of experiences, strategies, skills; and mobilization of resources.
- **Approach:** To promote and sustain leadership that is participatory, inclusive, horizontal, and replicable.
- **Values:** The Partnership shares values of gender equality, human rights, collective and consensus-based action, and respect for diversity.

We work with various stakeholders to achieve targeted outcomes for each:

- **Grassroots women and men** relate to each other on the basis of equality and respect, with equal sharing of power, resources and decision making.
- **Youth** are actively engaged as citizens and practice and promote values of democracy and equality.
- **Activists** advocate in favor of human rights of women.
- **Affiliate CSOs** demand accountability for gender equality from social institutions.
- **Policy makers** mainstream gender equality in public policies.
- **Media** practice gender aware reporting.
- **Donors'** decisions and practices are informed by grassroots perspectives on women's realities in the Global South.
- **Scholars** communicate WLP's values, knowledge and methodology to their sphere of influence.
- **International institutions** (e.g., the UN) hold governments accountable on the implementation of human rights and women's rights instruments.

EVALUATION OF THE WLP MODEL

An independent external evaluation found that WLP curriculum, trainings, and other activities have been successful because they allow for a deep empowerment and open up space for women to design and implement their own visions of change.³ The evaluation showed that **after taking part in WLP programs, participants' conceptualizations of leadership changed significantly**⁴ from a hierarchical, "leader and follower" model to the more horizontal model that WLP promotes, in which anyone can be a leader in different settings and situations.⁵ After taking part in WLP programs, 9 out of 10 participants self-identified as leaders⁶ and experienced

³ *Democracy and Women's Leadership: Assessing Transformative Changes from the Individual to the Collective Levels in the Women's Learning Partnership*, Alexandra Pittman with Karine Lepillez, 2013, p. 5,

⁴ *Idem.*

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁶ Before the training, only 23% of individuals identified as a leader. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

an increase in self-esteem, participants increasingly took on leadership positions or roles in the community or politics, and networks among women's rights activists were strengthened.⁷ This self-identifying as a leader is a crucial first step to women taking on a leadership role in the family, community, and nation, which contribute to transforming norms of women's role in the public and private spheres. The evaluation also found that **the majority of participants went on to implement democratic leadership in their families (87%), communities (86%), and professions (80%).**⁸ Other important outcomes for participants include: taking on a leadership position or role in the community or politics after program participation; strengthening networks among women's rights activists; and adaptations of the WLP training for special groups.

The evaluation⁹ found that the elements that make the WLP training model effective included:

- Engaging role models from the local culture in the trainings
- Allowing the change to emerge from each individual's own dialogue, internalization, and learning processes
- Facilitators framing empowerment as a commitment to continual learning and curiosity.
- Ongoing connection with WLP partners deepens the development of women's leadership capacities
- Highlighting that one's dreams are possible and the need to believe in oneself
- Facilitators providing powerful counter-examples to push back against traditional norms and finding alternative ways for women to participate and engage in their communities, professions, families, and politics
- Creating an atmosphere of safety, where participants' basic needs are met
- The creative adaptation of outreach strategies in politically unstable or repressive conditions

The evaluation also found¹⁰ that WLP's and partners' advocacy campaign activities made significant progress to contributing to reform of national laws in partner countries to be more supportive of women's rights. Noting that WLP partners contributed to the law reforms alongside a diverse range of other actors and contextual openings and political opportunities and constraints, the evaluation credited some of the successes to the nuts and bolts of advocacy campaigns amongst the Partnership,¹¹ including:

- Building the evidence base and documenting prevalence of the problem as an essential advocacy first step
- Surfacing the inconsistencies between religious texts and existing constitutional or international human rights laws and policies that have been agreed upon in different countries as argumentation for reform

⁷ Ibid., p. 5.

⁸ Ibid., p. 22.

⁹ Ibid., p. 5.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 6.

¹¹ Ibid., pp. 6-7.

- Allowing flexibility in how different countries implement advocacy strategies while still also retaining a common regional framework based on universal human rights
- Reframing and broadening notions of citizenship to resonate with the new context of transitions
- Adapting advocacy work to the shifting context and the overall resonance in different political spaces and periods
- Bringing legal concepts to life through real cases and mobilizing around politically charged events
- Innovating in terms of outreach strategies, organizing around issues that matter to women and youth
- Creating a strong political body and ensuring that women’s rights agendas are on the table
- Articulating clear demands and justifications in coalitions, lobbying with parliament or other committees, and raising political and public awareness of the need for law or policy reform through diverse strategies
- Respecting the indigenous nature of the campaigns, supporting regional advocacy efforts when and where they make strategic sense

The evaluation concluded¹²that WLP **strengthens grassroots women’s leadership, building active leadership, participation, and citizenship** through its leadership and political participation programs and trainings, as well as through its curriculum and translations; **catalyzes communities of social and political change, strengthening movement building and promoting grassroots models of advocacy** for legal equality, economic justice, security, and political participation through its advocacy and movement building work; and **builds sustainability and the capacity for women’s rights organizations and movements to effect transformative change** through its partner capacity building, networking, and visibility work, and by providing flexible funding so that partners can respond to risk and navigate times of crisis.

CURRENT CONTEXT

The current context of our work is situated in a unique political moment, since most of the countries where we and our partners work have been immersed in **political upheaval and transitions**, and monitoring, **repression of, and threats against human rights and women’s rights groups have increased** in many countries over the last few years. Despite, and perhaps even because of, our work to implement strong mobilizations and strategies to promote women’s equal rights, **the conservative backlash against women’s rights activists in the regions where we work has been intense**. This violent backlash is embedded within the wider trends towards conservative governance, increased militarization and emergence of extremist non-state actors, and the overall normalization of violence. This backlash can often be particularly dangerous, targeting and threatening women’s human rights defenders’ lives and organizations. Several WLP partners have experienced such high levels of political and social violence that their work had to be temporarily suspended. Within such a tumultuous, shifting

¹² Ibid., p. 7.

context, our partners report that **being a member of the WLP Partnership is crucial and brings them a number of unique value added and benefits.**¹³

At the 2014 TPC, partners identified one of the most critical current challenges as the resurgence of fundamentalism around the world, especially in countries in transitional contexts. Our partners are faced with a complicated context in the MENA region in particular, but also in other regions where religious fundamentalisms are becoming more entrenched and where conservative backlash and consolidation of counter-movement rhetoric are increasing. In Central Asia and areas of sub-Saharan Africa, the return of traditionalism based on patriarchy as a form of post-colonial resistance to Western influence has also been quite strong. In many of these countries, fundamentalists are framing the NGO sector as connected to the West, as “culturally inauthentic,” imposters, trouble-makers, and economically or socially privileged which complicates mobilization for equality and women’s rights. Additionally, the increasing strength of political Islamists threatens to undermine and undo women’s rights gains in many countries across the region, since they are in positions of power to make this more of a reality now. Globally, partners report that strengthening civil society has been radically altered and made more difficult by the situation since 9/11 and that societies are becoming increasingly polarized.

The ongoing situation in the Middle East is having serious regional implications, since the spill-over from the crisis and war in the region affects every country in the area. The influx of refugees from Syria into the surrounding countries is major humanitarian concern, and racism is now a fact of life, as are attacks against refugees, the trafficking of women and girls, and increasing violence against women. Increased militarism in many of the surrounding countries is dimming the prospects for national dialogue processes.

WLP and our partners are at the forefront of analyzing the context and developing strategies for organizing throughout these transitional contexts. For example, to collectively analyze the context, constraints, opportunities, and possibilities for strategizing given the Arab Spring, WLP organized a series of meetings with feminists and women’s rights activists in the MENA region to push forward a common agenda and strategies. WLP hosted the largest of these meetings, with over 100 women’s rights and feminist scholars and leaders, at the spring 2012 AWID Forum in partnership with AWID, the Global Fund for Women, and the *Equality without Reservation* campaign. One of the clearest lessons to emerge from that meeting was **the failure of feminist activists to effectively mobilize messages and agendas that resonated with the grassroots.** This stood in contrast to the highly effective social influence of political Islamists due to their history of providing services within communities, their established political platforms, and their systematic access to various significant resources.

WLP’s Unique Value Added

- Adaptable culture- and linguistic-specific curricula and training programs
- A transformational and participatory leadership model aimed to empower women and men to build cultures of democracy
- Capacity building and support at the partner organization and individual levels
- Access to, engagement with, and visibility in international spaces of influence
- Collective advocacy efforts that deepen the impact of legal reforms for enhancing and promoting women’s rights
- Deep international partnership of solidarity and support
- Consistent learning, information, and strategy exchanges to help strengthen movements

¹³ Ibid., p. 4.

While these meetings were good first steps to analyzing the context, key challenges to women's movements in the MENA region continue, including the often disparate nature of women's rights networks across the region; the sense of competition; the very different political strategies used to mobilize and advocate, e.g., secular arguments for equality (drawing from international human rights foundations) versus religious arguments (reinterpreting women's rights from within the religious frame); the disconnect between younger and more established organizations and activists; and, at times, the disconnect between middle-class CSOs and activists and those living in poverty or most affected by different discriminations.

These challenges were also noted during the 2014 TPC, where partners discussed the current context and identified the major strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats facing the Partnership:

Strengths

- The Partnership itself, as well as its cultural diversity and flexibility
- Our shared principles of horizontal leadership and women's rights and our commitment to work for women's rights and democracy
- Our experience and expertise, leading to solid collective analysis

Weaknesses

- The difficulty in mobilizing financial resources
- Limited human resources
- The difficulty in monitoring and evaluating our achievements and in capitalizing on what we have achieved

Opportunities

- The ability to assist women's economic empowerment
- Turning the backlash of conservatism into an opportunity – fundamentalists can no longer be considered as something that doesn't affect everyone
- Working with the multilateral, international framework of the UN and other international agencies and events (UNHRC, UN Women, CSW, WMD) for them to hear our voices and for us to deliver our messages

Threats

- Rise of religious extremism and increasing violence (in all its forms) and war – women find themselves at the heart of this violence; governments using the rubric of security to clamp down on women's rights organizations and activities
- The imbalance between what needs to be done and available financial resources, especially with funders decreasing support for human or women's rights and the changing nature of funding organizations
- The persistence of patriarchal societies, the structural inequality of women's role in relation to men, and women's poverty and lack of economic power

These contextual factors, in addition to the changing political opportunity structure, will affect WLP's work in trainings, advocacy, the mobilization of different groups, and strategies for effective messaging moving forward. It is likely that "holding the line" and attempts to stave off reversals of progress may become the status quo in many contexts in areas where we and our partners work, given constraining political contexts and the power of counter-movements.

PLANNING THE FUTURE: *Where We Want To Go*

While a global women's movement has emerged as an important transnational force in the struggle for equality, it has also encountered the limits of progress within a patriarchal gender order. Given the state of the world today, it is clear that ending patriarchy is not going to happen tomorrow; but what can and is happening is the lessening of the patriarchal nature of societies as patriarchal privileges are challenged, weakened, and ruptured.¹⁴ Over the last 15 years, dismantling the existing patriarchal order has been at the core of our curriculum, trainings, advocacy, and civil society strengthening activities.

Looking ahead to the future, we will work to exponentially increase the reach of our leadership, political participation, and gender equality work grounded in universal human rights in order to train and help women achieve positions of influence and exercise effective leadership and decision-making that support human rights; and advocate for the removal of barriers to women's equality and rights in the private sphere and for full participation in the public sphere.

Because the existing political and social conflicts and violence will continue in our partner countries and beyond, we will increase our focus on WLP's founding themes of women's human rights, human security, conflict resolution, creating a culture of peace, and the participation of women in peace-building, which have once again become central to our partners' activities. To address this, we will continue to develop new resources and tools on human rights and peace-building. We are committed to introducing new trainings and resources on transitional justice and building a culture of peace and to continuing to adapt and publish new language editions of our manual on violence against women and on women in peace-building.

We will also continue to build on the significant impact that our joint advocacy and movement-building activities have had by testing a model of regional advocacy hubs. Advocacy hubs will consist of one WLP partner serving as a lead for the region, facilitating the sharing of strategies, joint strategizing as appropriate, and cross-regional connection building. We will intensify our efforts to engage youth as partners in the struggle to advance universal human rights by enhancing their ability to actively engage as citizens; strategically utilize ICTs for advocacy; combat violence against women; and support democratic and women's rights movements. We will continue to create new connections among partners and new allies to mobilize greater numbers of activists in support of women's rights.

¹⁴From *A New Feminist Vision?* Drafted by Dr. Thoraya Obaid, Jacqueline Pitanguy, and Yakın Ertürk, and circulated at the 2014 WLP TPC.

Finally, we will foster a deeper multiplier effect through our programs, while still remaining true to our aim to “grow without growing.” We will actively encourage the wider application of our participatory leadership, political participation, and capacity-building training manuals. We will achieve this by holding more international and regional TOT Institutes; expanding the scope and use of our Online Learning Portal, *ABAN*; networking with policy organizations, donors, and international NGOs who are interested in integrating participatory leadership training into their organizational contexts; increasing our global team of facilitators—a group of consultants who train interested organizations that are not part of the Partnership in our participatory leadership methodology; and leveraging partnerships with partners or networks that have possibilities for geometric growth embedded in their structure.

As has been the case since our founding, our goals, outcomes, and objectives will continue to be based on and informed by continuous discussions with and feedback from WLP partners, affiliate and allied organizations, and funders.

APPENDIX I: WLP YEAR-BY-YEAR HIGHLIGHTS¹⁵:

2000

- In January, WLP formed the initial Partnership with a core group of NGOs: Association Démocratique des Femmes du Maroc (Morocco), BAOBAB for Women's Human Rights (Nigeria), and Women's Affairs Technical Committee (Palestine). The partners focused on developing, testing, and successfully adapting a concept of participatory leadership based on dialogue, consensus building, and creating a shared vision. We then worked collaboratively to create a prototype leadership training manual and curriculum for women, *Leading to Choices: A Leadership Training Handbook for Women*.
- In May, in collaboration with the Library of Congress's African and Middle Eastern Division, we inaugurated WLP's "Lifelines: The Literature of Human Rights" program, which looked at human rights through literature and poetry. Participants in our first Lifelines event included poet and author Ama Ata Aidoo (Ghana), author and activist Mahnaz Afkhami (Iran), poet and author Samar Attar (Syria), poet Carolyn Forché (USA), and author and activist Grace Paley (USA). We followed this up with another Lifelines event in New York in September, in collaboration with State of the World Forum 2000, with poet and novelist Meena Alexander (India), poet and author Abena Busia (Ghana), author and activist Emma Sepúlveda (Argentina), and poet and activist Rose Styron (USA).
- From WLP's earliest days, we tried to leverage technology to our advantage. In June, we held our first WLP symposium, "Cultural Boundaries and Cyber Spaces," co-hosted with New York University's Kevorkian Center for Near Eastern Studies, which focused on innovative tools and strategies for strengthening women's leadership in Muslim societies and which resulted in the publication, *Cultural Boundaries and Cyber Spaces: Women's Voices on Empowerment, Leadership, and Technology*.

2001

- In 2001, we convened the first meeting of our International Advisory Council, a group of human rights and development experts with diverse professional, cultural, and religious perspectives, to examine the ideas, concepts, and methodologies used in the new leadership model; to review preliminary field results from test workshops; and to suggest ways of enhancing the prototype handbook. Since that time, we have relied on these international experts to help us analyze the social, cultural, political, and gender implications of our programs and to fine-tune them accordingly.
- In March we conducted test workshops using our newly developed leadership training curriculum and in December published *Leading to Choices*. By December, we had trained more than 600 women and girls using the manual. *Leading to Choices* has since been used in leadership training workshops in over 50 countries with thousands of women, young girls, and men; Muslims and Christians; and human rights activists, university students, women NGO representatives, refugees, rural women, domestic workers, lawyers, and journalists, among others.
- In July 201 we launched the WLP website in English, produced by and for women from the Global South, and which was accessed from more than 100 countries.
- In July, more than 200 activists supported our international action alert for reforms in Morocco's civil code for women's rights. We also collaborated with UNIFEM, Civicus, and AWID to form

¹⁵ This summary includes only the highlights and landmark activities in WLP's history, since describing all of WLP's events, trainings, publications, and other activities would necessitate a much longer publication than is possible in the current white paper.

Gender at Work, an international knowledge network for gender, equality, and institutional change, with the goal of advancing gender equality in the workplace.

- Within weeks of 9/11, we gathered women activists for our first live webcast and conference on, “In the Aftermath of Terror: Women Leaders Discuss Peace, Justice, and Conflict Resolution,” to discuss the role of women in building peace and combating terrorism.
- In 2001 and 2002 we expanded the partnership network to include organizations from Afghanistan, Cameroon, Jordan, Lebanon, Malaysia, Turkey, Uzbekistan, and Zimbabwe. We focused on establishing and strengthening relationships with partners based on ongoing communication, trust, and institutional agreements and developed and enhanced our strategy for transnational cooperation in areas such as knowledge sharing and exchange of best practices.

2002

- During 2002 we expanded our training program and strengthened our model for adapting culture-specific curriculum, working with partners to adapt our *Leading to Choices* manual into local languages and cultures. Drawing on the participatory leadership methodology guiding the prototype curriculum, we established a shared model for grassroots leadership training workshops for women. In addition, partners identified their need for organizational and ICT capacity building to support the implementation of successful leadership and empowerment programs.
- In April we launched WLP’s Arabic website to provide linguistically and culturally-relevant resources for women in the Middle East and North Africa; by the end of the year, WLP’s website had received more than 2.5 million hits.
- In June we published *Leading to Choices Multimedia Curriculum*, an innovative multimedia training package designed to empower women to participate as leaders in the decision-making processes that impact their lives. It provides interactive, scenario-based activities and illustrative examples of how to create participatory and democratic learning environments, how to implement successful advocacy campaigns, and how to develop compelling messages for target audiences.
- In June we also held our first Women’s Leadership and Training of Trainers Institute, in Maryland. The week-long meeting brought together 17 women heads of NGOs and leading rights activists from Afghanistan/Pakistan, Cameroon, Jordan, Lebanon, Malaysia, Morocco, Nigeria, Palestine, and Uzbekistan to focus on enhancing women’s rights, leadership, and political participation in the Global South. Participants strategized about ways to empower women in diverse Muslim societies to take on leadership roles within their communities and to develop the skills to become better advocates for women’s equal participation in decision-making and civil society.
- In October we published the first edition of eNews, WLP’s quarterly newsletter.
- On November 25, in collaboration with the School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) at the Johns Hopkins University, WLP held the “Women and Leadership in Muslim Societies: Voices for Change” event. This brought together an international group of women leaders from Iran, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia to discuss the constraints and opportunities Muslim women face in expanding their political participation and leadership opportunities. These prominent leaders challenged stereotypes associated with Muslim women and strategized about the possibilities for strengthening the role of women in creating democratic and pluralistic societies in the Muslim world. Over 200 scholars, activists, NGO leaders, and policy makers participated in the event.

- By December, more than 1,000 women and men had taken part in WLP’s participatory leadership training workshops, with many participants taking direct action. For example, in Afghanistan, participants addressed the trafficking of children; in Cameroon, participants mobilized to establish a local radio station; in Jordan, a participant ran for Parliament; and in Morocco, activists launched a shelter for battered women.

2003

- In March, in collaboration with the Center for Global Peace at American University, we held another event in our “Lifelines: The Literature of Human Rights” program, featuring poet and playwright Nathalie Handal, author and director of the Johns Hopkins University’s SAIS Dialogue Project Azar Nafisi, poet and activist Sonia Sanchez, and poet and author Reetika Vazirani.
- From May to August, we held our first online course, “Leading to Choices: A Distance Learning Course on Participatory Leadership,” with activists from 18 countries. This was the start of what we call today ABAN, our online learning program.
- In July, WLP launched the Herat eLearning Center in Afghanistan to provide Afghani women with computer training, vocational skills-building, and other education programs, and implemented a technology training and capacity-building workshop in Herat and Kabul.
- In October in collaboration with The Global Fund for Women, we held the “Clash or Consensus? Gender and Human Security in a Globalized World” symposium at SAIS, which provide a forum for women leaders and human security experts from the Global South, particularly from Muslim societies, to come together to discuss and strategize on ways to advance human security around the world. This conference was unique in re-conceptualizing human security from an exclusive concern with the security of the state to include a holistic concern with the security of the people. We advanced this new vision of human security by analyzing security issues from a gender perspective and exploring ways to implement human security goals, including conflict prevention, sustainable development, gender equity, and strong civil societies that promote democratic processes.
- In December, WLP International and WLP Jordan/SIGI-J convened our first regional MENA Institute for Women’s Leadership in Petra, Jordan. Thirty women leaders from Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, the Sudan, and Yemen took part in the week-long Training of Trainers (TOT) Institute. Like future WLP TOT institutes, this program also provided an opportunity for South-South exchanges of experience, information, and knowledge among women’s rights activists from nations with similar social, political, economic, and cultural conditions.
- By December, the Partnership had expanded to Afghanistan, Cameroon, India, Jordan, Lebanon, Malaysia, Morocco, Nigeria, Palestine, Turkey, Uzbekistan, and Zimbabwe.

2004

- In April we launched our Online Directory of Women Leaders. Designed to be used as a resource and networking tool, the Directory increases the visibility of women leaders and helps connect individuals, organizations, and networks focusing on women’s human rights, democracy and civil society, peace and conflict resolution, information and communication technologies, and international development, among other issues.
- Also in April WLP International and the Afghan Institute of Learning convened an Institute for Women’s Leadership and Training of Trainers in Kabul, Afghanistan. Twenty-nine women and one man from five Afghan provinces and Pakistan took part in the five-day Institute, which we organized to counteract the severe political and social discrimination facing Afghani women by

helping them gain skills to be more effective advocates for women's rights, social justice, and equal participation in decision-making.

- In May we held an eight-day IT Training for Women's Empowerment and Capacity-Building in Afghanistan, to help trainers strengthen their understanding of computer networks and software programs, and more importantly, to learn training and facilitation methodologies that foster effective IT learning among grassroots women activists in Afghanistan.
- In September WLP held our TPC in Beirut, Lebanon. Partners from 12 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East gathered for an intensive five-day brainstorming and strategy meeting on expanding WLP's programs for empowering women and girls through culturally relevant approaches to leadership development and capacity-building and strengthening and expanding linkages within the Partnership.
- In December we convened the Maghreb Regional Learning Institute for Women's Leadership and Training of Trainers in Marrakech, Morocco – one of the first training and networking forums that brought women activists and trainers together from across the region. The Institute's goal was to empower women in the Maghreb region to actively participate as effective leaders and advocates in the decision-making processes that affect their personal, family, community, and national condition and to develop their facilitation skills in training grassroots women to be leaders working towards gender equity and human rights for all citizens. Twenty-six women's rights activists and leaders of women's groups from Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Sudan, and Tunisia participated in the Institute.

2005

- By January 2005, just five years after our founding, WLP partners had been able to conduct leadership training workshops with more than 4,500 women and dozens of men in over 15 countries.
- In 2005 we launched WLP's French website.
- In early 2005 we held a Persian online distance learning course on participatory leadership for women activists in Iran and Afghanistan. Despite a climate of government crackdown and imprisonment of internet activists and bloggers, eight women based in Iran participated, including heads of women's organizations, educators, and experienced trainers. Through the course discussions and activities they expressed a collective concern and commitment for the restoration of Iranian women's rights and freedoms by preparing women in their communities to realize their potential and participate equally in society.
- With the support of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), in March WLP held the symposium, "Leading to Change: Eliminating Violence against Women in Muslim Societies" in New York. Speakers (from Afghanistan, Brazil, Iran, Jordan, Malaysia, Morocco, Nigeria, Singapore, Turkey, the UK, and the US) addressed major challenges to eliminating violence against women and girls and discussed grassroots, national, and regional measures needed to raise awareness, initiate reform legislation, and create synergy for ongoing efforts to prevent violence and to promote women's human rights.
- In May, in collaboration with the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars' Middle East Program, we held "Reflections on the International Women's Movement: 10 Years after Beijing." Four leading international women's rights activists from Brazil, Ethiopia, Iran, and the US engaged in an intercultural dialogue on the status of women in a fast-changing world and discussed the challenges presented by the new technological, economic, cultural, and political realities.
- Also in May, we held a National Institute for Women's Leadership in Nouakchott, Mauritania, for

15 women leaders from Mauritanian NGOs, each from different *wilayas* (provinces). The Institute was organized by Mauritania's Association des Femmes Chefs de Famille with the support of WLP. Using WLP's *Leading to Choices* training curriculum, the Institute combined training on participatory leadership, media, and advocacy skills with discussions on urgent human rights issues affecting women in Mauritania, in particular slavery and the personal status code.

- In August WLP and our regional partner convened a Central Asia Regional Learning Institute for Women's Leadership in Shymkent, Kazakhstan. NGO leaders, journalists, and human rights activists from Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan participated in the Institute, which consisted of a week-long intensive skills development program in participatory leadership, interactive facilitation, persuasive communication, and effective advocacy campaign development. In addition to this Central Asia Institute, WLP convened TOT Institutes for Women's Leadership in Africa (Nigeria), Middle East-Gulf (Lebanon), Persian (Thailand), and International (Thailand).
- By mid-2005 we had published 11 culturally-adapted editions of our *Leading to Choices* training curriculum.
- In September, 14 experienced leadership trainers from WLP partners in Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, and Palestine participated in a five-week prototype Arabic eCourse (online distance learning course) on participatory leadership to test and adapt the Arabic curriculum in preparation for a full eCourse in 2006.
- In October we published the first in WLP's Translation Series, *Guide to Equality in the Family in the Maghreb*, an innovative advocacy tool for reform of the family law in Muslim-majority societies (from the original Arabic to English, and to Persian to help Iranian and Afghan women). Because family law in Muslim-majority societies governs every aspect of a woman's life, the reform of family law is crucial to women's ability to participate on equal terms in both family life and public life. In each of its thematic modules, the *Guide* presents the current state of the law, then proposes religious, human rights, sociological, and domestic legal arguments for reform, well-supported by relevant data.
- In late October, WLP convened our annual TPC in Bangkok, Thailand, immediately preceding the 10th AWID International Forum. WLP partners from 13 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East attended. The meeting's focus was to further define the structure and identity of the WLP Partnership and to strategize on ways to build our collective capacity and to ensure the future sustainability of our partnership model. Participants noted that the Partnership gained them the higher visibility for their activism, increased their access to resources, and enabled them to expand their leadership programs to new communities. Many partners also felt they had been able to transform their individual organizations by introducing more internally democratic processes and principles of operation.
- Our participation in the 10th AWID International Forum in Bangkok, Thailand, is an example of how WLP uses spaces that other conferences provide to bring prominence to the partners and partnership and ensure that voices especially from the MENA region are heard. We presented information about WLP Morocco/ADFM's work on reforming family laws in Muslim majority countries. Iranian participants went back and started the *One Million Signatures* movement and were main participants in Iran's Green Movement. *Musawah* (the international family law reform movement) also came out of this conference.
- In November, in collaboration with the Johns Hopkins University's SAIS Dialogue Project, we held "A Shared Vision for Change: Women and Legislative Reform in Muslim-Majority Societies." Women leaders from Iran, Jordan, Malaysia, and Morocco discussed strategies for the creation

of egalitarian communities and reform of family law in Muslim-majority societies based on women's capability to choose.

- In November, in collaboration with the Association for Middle East Women's Studies, WLP held "Violence against Women: A Human Security Perspective," a special session at the Middle East Studies Association's Annual Meeting in Washington, DC. The event provided a forum for scholar/ activists from Muslim-majority societies to address major challenges to eliminating violence against women and girls from a human security perspective and to discuss grassroots, national, and regional measures needed to raise awareness, initiate reform legislation, and create synergy for ongoing efforts to prevent violence and to promote human rights of women. Violence against women, a manifestation of the historically unequal power relations between men and women, is one of the primary obstacles to empowering women and achieving peace and security for all.
- In November, 27 women's rights activists and leaders of women's groups from Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, and Yemen gathered in Beirut, Lebanon to attend the Middle East-Gulf Regional Learning Institute for Women's Leadership and Training of Trainers, organized by WLP and WLP Lebanon/CRTD-A. The Institute helped women activists in the region to develop skills in participatory leadership, facilitation, communications, and advocacy, building their capacity as leaders. This intensive skills development supported participants in their work to empower grassroots women in the Middle East-Gulf region to actively participate in decision-making processes within their families, communities, and societies. In addition, the Institute created an opportunity for women leaders to engage in dialogue and reflect on shared challenges, developing stronger national and regional linkages.
- In late 2005, WLP published a five-year report on our work, *When Women Lead Change Follows*. The report documented the impact of our collective transformational leadership and technology training programs, as well as our advocacy and networking for women's rights.

2006

- In 2006, the Partnership expanded to Afghanistan, Bahrain, Brazil, Cameroon, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mauritania, Morocco, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palestine, Turkey, Uzbekistan, and Zimbabwe.
- In June, WLP co-convoked gathering of prominent women leaders in Jordan to mark the launch of the Global Women's Action Network for Children (GWANC), a new alliance of high-profile women leaders committed to supporting programs for women and girls and to building a powerful global voice for women and children that will impact national and international policy arenas. The conference was convened by former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, former President of Ireland and UN Human Rights Commissioner Mary Robinson, CEO of Vital Voices Melanne Verbeke, President of the Children's Defense Fund Marian Wright Edelman, and WLP founder and President Mahnaz Afkhami. Discussions at the conference addressed strategies for meeting the Millennium Development Goals on maternal mortality and girls' education. With more than 115 million children around the world out of school, the majority of them girls, and more than half a million women dying during pregnancy or childbirth, the GWANC tackles a critical and timely challenge.
- In August we launched the Young Women's Learning Partnership (YWLP) initiative to help develop the talents and skills of emerging leaders and to facilitate intergenerational dialogue and cooperation, thereby expanding and strengthening young women's active participation in the women's movement.
- In September we held our annual TPC at the Bolger Center in Maryland, USA, focusing on

"Confronting Crisis, Creating Change: WLP Partner Challenges and Strategies."

- In September, we convened a panel discussion in collaboration with the Johns Hopkins University's SAIS Dialogue Project and launched *Claiming Equal Citizenship: The Campaign for Arab Women's Right to Nationality*, an international campaign in support of a regional campaign for Arab women's right to nationality in Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Morocco. WLP joined with regional partners in the Middle East, North Africa and the Gulf to call for: legal reform enabling women to confer their nationality to their husbands and children without condition; full implementation of reformed nationality laws and equal access to these laws for all women; and recognition of women as equal citizens in all areas of life.
- In late September, WLP supported the launch of the Women Leaders Intercultural Forum (WLIF). The launch of WLIF, co-convened by Mary Robinson, Thoraya Obaid, Mahnaz Afkhami, and Lisa Anderson, marked the beginning of a unique endeavor linking women leaders around the world through intercultural and intergenerational networks.
- In October, BAOBAB for Women's Human Rights, a core WLP partner since 2000, took on the role of WLP Africa Hub, committing to work in Ghana, Liberia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and other countries, to organize TOT institutes on women's leadership, workshops on political participation, and capacity building and mentoring programs for women's groups in sub-Saharan Africa.
- In October we released *Leading to Change* in Portuguese, the 17th language edition of our signature leadership manual for women.
- In December we released our first documentary, *Against All Odds: Women Partnering for Change in a Time of Crisis*, which tells the story of women activists from Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East who, working in partnership, have developed and implemented appropriate strategies to overcome the challenges of war, violence, extremism, fundamentalism, and restrictive legislation.

2007

- WLP supported Iranian women's rights activists fighting gender apartheid through the *One Million Signatures* campaign, which aims to collect one million signatures to demand an end to discriminatory laws against women in Iran. The campaign is a continuation of Iranian women's century-long struggle for gender equality.
- In July, three WLP alumnae won seats in Jordan's municipal councils. Additionally, two alumnae of a WLP regional training in Africa took on leadership roles in NGOs and in civil service. Christiana Thorpe and Daphne Williams were appointed as National Electoral Commissioners of Sierra Leone in 2005 and 2006 respectively, with Ms. Thorpe gaining the distinction of being the first woman to hold that position in the country. Elections were held in Sierra Leone in August 2007, and Ms. Thorpe and Ms. Williams were key players in overseeing the process.
- WLP participated in the World Social Forum in Nairobi, and the Oxfam Novib Consultative Committee asked us to introduce our participatory leadership concept and training to their organizations.
- We held ICT TOTs in Jordan and Beirut, and added an NGO in Malaysia as the newest WLP partner
- In June we held our annual TPC in Antalya, Turkey; 35 grassroots women's rights activists from 15 countries met to discuss how to strengthen the international women's movement by building the capacity of women's NGOs, how to increase opportunities for women's political leadership, and how to counter the "clash of civilizations" paradigm by building cultures of dialogue and tolerance.

- In September, we held an Arabic eCourse with participants from Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, and Palestine, which enabled participants to develop participatory leadership skills, encouraged cross-regional dialogue on rights, and emphasized peer-to-peer learning and cultural exchange.

2008

- In February we co-convened our first Central America Regional TOT Institute for Women's Leadership, which brought together 24 participants from Brazil, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, and El Salvador.
- In March, in cooperation with the Johns Hopkins University's SAIS Dialogue Project, we held our "Politics of Participation: Women and Transformative Leadership" symposium, where grassroots women leaders from Kyrgyzstan, Mauritania, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Palestine shared their experiences and discussed practical strategies and culture friendly initiatives that they used to mobilize women, and especially young women, to participate in making decisions that affect their lives and the lives of their communities.
- In April we held our annual TPC in Potomac, Maryland, where over 30 women leaders representing 19 WLP partners from Africa, Asia, Latin America, North America, and the Middle East shared experiences and explored strategies for increasing the number of women in decision-making positions and expanding awareness and expertise about the ways and means of promoting participatory and democratic leadership.
- In April we launched the International Women's Democracy Network (IWDN) Online Resource Center to build a network of solidarity among women and women's organizations engaged in democracy activism and to strengthen links among members by developing a virtual resource center and a forum for exchange of information and knowledge.
- On April 13-15th, WLP joined forces with other internationally-focused women, faith, and development organizations to convene a "Breakthrough Summit" to launch the Women, Faith, and Development Alliance (WFDA), which seeks to give new focus and energy to the global efforts to reduce poverty by increasing investments in women's and girls' empowerment around the world. Madeleine Albright, Kim Campbell, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, Queen Noor, Mary Robinson, Desmond Tutu, and Muhammad Yunus were among the Alliance Co-Chairs. By 1008 more than 100 organizations and thousands of activists joined WFDA and committed to conduct programs that empower women and girls. With \$1.4 billion in commitments, WFDA targets issues ranging from education and economic empowerment to organizational funding for maternal mortality and violence against women.
- In May WLP published *Making IT Our Own: Information & Communication Technology Training of Trainers Manual*, to improve the technology skills of women activists and to introduce ways in which Information Technology (IT) can be used for human rights and women's rights advocacy.
- In late August/early September WLP partners from Afghanistan, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Nigeria, and Palestine gathered in Potomac, Maryland, for a Strategic Planning and Capacity Building Institute. This six-day program provided opportunities for a rich dialogue addressing partners' expectations and experiences in implementing WLP's participatory leadership methodology through trainings, advocacy, and organizational development. During the Institute, participants co-created a draft curriculum for organizational strategic planning and capacity building, developed a timetable for carrying out this strategic planning process with individual partner organizations, and undertook an intensive review of WLP's *Leading to Choices* curriculum and trainings after eight years of its implementation.
- In September WLP presented a panel at the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) on "Technology for Women's Rights Advocacy and Democracy Building." The panel discussion

included women leaders from Afghanistan, Jordan, Lebanon, and the US, addressing the increasingly crucial role of ICTs in the context of advocacy for women's rights, and how ICTs can be used within a participatory framework.

- WLP participated in the AWID meeting in South Africa and in the WMD meeting in Kiev, Ukraine.

2009

- To commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the Young Women's Learning Partnership (YWLP) program asked young people to submit two-minute videos on YouTube that answered the question, "*What Does Human Rights Mean to You?*"
- In February, WLP participated in the *Musawah* conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, where WLP's Mahnaz Afkhami pointed out that "...it is not Islam that holds us back; rather it is the path history of patriarchy in Muslim-majority societies has taken that limits our freedom."
- In late May/early June, WLP held our annual TPC in Jordan, where women from Africa, the Americas, Asia, and the Middle East discussed the political, social, and economic challenges that their organizations face, innovative approaches for bringing about justice and equality for women, and the challenges of implementing CEDAW without reservations, strengthening Security Council resolution 1325, advocating for family law reform, and shaping new nationality laws that do not discriminate against women. WLP Jordan also co-organized an event on women's participation in politics and conflict resolution.
- WLP and WLP Jordan held our 1st Youth Tech Festival in Jordan, which brought together over 90 young women and men from across Jordan to learn new ways of using technology to advance human rights campaigns. This first festival was international; since that time WLP Jordan has held similar youth festivals on different topics.
- WLP published the English version of our *Iranian Women's One Million Signatures Campaign for Equality: The Inside Story*. By June WLP had published 18 language editions of our *Leading to Choices* leadership curriculum, in English, Maghreby-Arabic, Shamy-Arabic, Assamese, French, Hausa, Kyrgyz, Malay, Meiteilon, Persian, Portuguese, Russian, Shona, Spanish, Swahili, Turkish, and Uzbek.
- In late June more than 100 representatives from 43 women's organizations from 14 countries in the Middle East, North Africa, and the Gulf met in Amman, Jordan, at the invitation of the *Equality without Reservation* regional campaign coalition. This meeting came at a time when conservative political powers had launched a campaign against women's groups demanding that CEDAW (*the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*) reservations be lifted in Jordan. The progress and challenges of the campaign in select Arab countries were presented, allowing participants to compare and contrast opportunities and challenges in their own countries.
- In August, WLP launched Our Vision & Our Voices blog, "Making a better world, one idea at a time."
- In October, marking WLP's 10th anniversary and the 30th anniversary of CEDAW, WLP and the Johns Hopkins University's SAIS held "Women & the Politics of Change in the Middle East." Women activists from campaigns for justice in Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, and Bahrain shared their challenges and successes in demanding equal rights as citizens and in their working to change public opinion, laws, and policies in order to build democratic and inclusive societies.
- In October, WLP organized two panel discussions in Washington, D.C. to reflect upon the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), WLP's 10th anniversary, and the launch of *Iranian Women's One Million Signatures*

Campaign for Equality: The Inside Story, the latest volume in WLP's Translation Series. Participants from Bahrain, Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, and Morocco shared concrete examples of their successes and challenges in demanding greater women's political participation and equal rights, and the lively conversation focused on the importance of a more holistic outlook on both the grassroots and policy-making levels.

2010

- On the 30th anniversary of CEDAW, WLP invited young people around the world, especially in developing countries, to participate in our youth essay contest "We Can Change," and share their ideas on how and what can be changed to "ensure the equal rights of men and women to enjoy all economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights" as envisioned by the Convention.
- In March WLP published the 10th edition of *Leading to Choices*, in Bahasa Indonesia; participants in Indonesia are using the manual to develop leadership, communication, and negotiation skills, and to learn to work cooperatively to gain further economic, social, cultural, and political rights.
- In March WLP and WLP Lebanon/CRTD.A held "Mobilizing for the Future with Mass Media and Participatory Web" at the United Nations Plaza, New York, a panel discussion that showcased WLP-related success stories and best practices including our Youth Tech Festival in Jordan, the Domestic Violence Campaign in India, using Facebook for Advocacy in Lebanon (part of the Claiming Equal Citizenship" campaign), and using video games in the US to create awareness and public dialogue about the human rights consequences of unfair detention and deportation policies that are destroying families and communities.
- In March WLP in cooperation with The New School for Social Research's Social Research journal presented our symposium "20/20 Vision: Mobilizing for Women's Rights and Eliminating Violence against Women." Keynote speakers highlighted major challenges to women's empowerment and shared a roadmap for success in the second decade of the 21st century.
- In April we held our annual TPC in Jakarta, Indonesia, with partners from Afghanistan, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mauritania, Morocco, Nigeria, and Zimbabwe, prior to the World Movement for Democracy's Sixth Assembly. WLP partners shared strategies for enhancing the Partnership's work in political participation, ending violence against women, our peer-to-peer mentoring and exchange program, and advocacy campaigns, in light of challenges such as increasing extremism, restrictive NGO laws, and a challenging funding landscape.
- In July, as part of its commitment to increasing women's role in all of public life, WLP Nigeria/BAOBAB held a training session in Abia for a group of politically enthusiastic and ambitious young women. Participants included members of the media, Abia state government officials, 30 young women undergraduates and 30 women political aspirants.
- In August, WLP Bahrain/BWA launched *Leading to Action*, our political participation manual, as part of their national workshop on women's political participation. The group is gearing up towards the elections to be held in Bahrain in October 2010.
- In August WLP Kazakhstan/SWRC held the second Central Asia Regional Institute for 23 women from Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan, who shared experiences and strategies in leadership, enhancing communication skills, and building institutional capacity, despite restrictions on freedom of assembly, an open press, and internet usage in Central Asia.
- In September WLP in cooperation with the Johns Hopkins University's SAIS held "Challenges of Change: Religion, Secularism & Rights." Speakers discussed the impact of a decade of "clash of civilizations" rhetoric on the intellectual as well as pragmatic work of those who struggle for gender justice and seek to transform cultures of violence into cultures of peace; the

interrelation between violence against women in the home and violence in the community, nation, and internationally; and strategies for mobilizing communities to bring about non-violent, positive change.

2011

- In January, as the world watched the remarkable political upheavals that were sweeping through the Middle East and North Africa, WLP partners on the ground shared their perspectives, political analysis, fears, and hopes in a series of articles posted to WLP's blog *Our Vision & Our Voices*.
- By February, WLP had trained more than 15,000 women in 44 countries in our leadership and political participation workshops.
- In February, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) was launched at CSW, and WLP in partnership with The Center for Public Scholarship & Gender Studies Program at The New School presented the symposium, "Celebrating UN Women: The Way Forward." Over 500 women leaders from across the globe convened to discuss the challenges women face on the ground and offered visions, hopes, and strategies for the new entity.
- In February we held our 1st West African Francophone Regional Institute, in Dakar, Senegal, for women leaders of West African NGOs.
- We postponed our annual TPC planned for Rabat, Morocco, because of security concerns and held it instead in Washington, DC, in September.
- In June WLP and WLP Jordan held our 3rd annual Youth Tech Fest, where about 100 youth representatives from partner organizations in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, and Palestine participated in the TOT Institute, facilitated the Tech Festival, and went on to create and launch their own advocacy campaigns in support of youth and women's economic empowerment.
- In July we launched our GTOT model in Lebanon, for partners to train other NGOs in their country, with facilitators and key trainers from Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Nigeria, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, and St. Lucia.
- In July we published *Yes I Can!*, our new youth leadership manual, as part of the Young Women's Learning Partnership (YWLP) initiative. The manual was developed in cooperation with our partner in Bahrain and with consultation with partners in Jordan, Malaysia, Morocco, Nigeria, Palestine and Turkey.
- In September we published *Measuring Change: Monitoring and Evaluating Leadership Programs*.
- In September in partnership with The Middle East Program at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, we presented our symposium, "Women and Democratic Transition in the Middle East," where representatives of the women's movement from Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey addressed the challenges and the ways and means of achieving viable democracies using women's position as a barometer for the success of democratic transition.

2012

- In March WLP held a parallel event at CSW 56, on "Women's Social and Economic Rights in Light of Political Changes in the Arab Region," and supported WLP Lebanon/CRTD.A's parallel event/panel, "Rural Women, Economic Rights, and Empowerment: Implications of MENA Transitions on Economic Policies" and WLP Morocco/ADFM's parallel event/panel discussion on "Women and the Right to Collective Lands in Morocco: Exclusion and Empowerment."

- WLP released our second documentary film, *From Fear to Freedom: Stopping Gender-based Violence in a Transitioning World*, on ending violence against women. In March, in partnership with The New School's Center for Public Scholarship & Gender Studies Program, we presented the film with a panel discussion of leading experts and activists from across the globe who discussed the root causes of gender-based violence, shared strategies to combat it, and provided inspiring accounts of the important milestones already achieved through the international women's movement.
- In April, we published *Strategizing for Democracy: Challenges and Opportunities for Women in the MENA Region*. This white paper compiled many of the insights presented during a WLP-convened March 2012 strategy meeting of activists and experts from across the world who discussed the causes, consequences, threats and opportunities presented by the revolutions sweeping the MENA region.
- The Partnership expanded to include an NGO in Indonesia
- WLP participated in the Club de Madrid, convened IWDN sessions, and convened the MENA Caucus and played a major role in the AWID convening in Istanbul
- In September, WLP International, WLP Lebanon/CRTD.A, WLP Jordan/SIGI/Jordan, and WLP Brazil/CEPIA attended and spoke at "Women Breaking Barriers," the Women Peacemakers 10th Anniversary Conference organized by the Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice in San Diego.
- In October WLP partners convened in Lima, Peru, for our annual TPC, held alongside the 7th assembly of the World Movement for Democracy. WLP brought many partners (including women activists from the Middle East) to participate in the WMD convening in Lima, Peru, which allowed the partners to voice their own challenges and shape the conversation, especially on the role of women in peace building.
- WLP published *Victories Over Violence*.
- WLP participated in the Ford Foundation's Roundtable on *Women's Rights and Democratic Transition*.

2013

- In February, we launched our eLearning space, offering an eCourse to 14 Indonesian youth activists from WLP Indonesia/WYDII in Surabaya on the use of social media, such as blogs and Twitter for advocacy.
- We released our third documentary film, *Because Our Cause Is Just*.
- WLP International and several WLP partners traveled to The Hague to discuss the work we do with funders.
- WLP launched the *Stand with Women Who Stand for Democracy Campaign*, with global screenings of our documentary film, *Because Our Cause Is Just*, in Arabic and English.
- In October we held our annual TPC at the Bolger Center in Maryland, USA.
- WLP convened the MENA regional gathering and presented at the *Women Deliver* general convening.

2014

- WLP participated in the *Women and Girls Rising* Conference
- WLP participated in the World NGO Day conference in Finland
- WLP visited SIDA in Stockholm and held a screening of our documentary film, *Because Our Cause Is Just*, at Kvinna Till Kvinna, Sweden.
- WLP held our first online event, "Gender, Identity, and Activism in MENA."
- WLP raised the voice of many of our partners in the MENA region about the ISIS challenge.

APPENDIX II: WLP ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS¹⁶

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

- WLP has published more than 100 distinct publications in over 20 languages
- WLP manuals and curriculum are culturally adapted
- Publications include:
 - Manuals for workshop facilitators on leadership, political participation, combating violence against women, information and technology, youth leadership, and monitoring and evaluation
 - Several books on women's rights campaign strategies
 - Multi-media toolkits for use in workshops and by individuals
 - Films on gender-based violence and advancing women's rights during democratic transitions
- More than a thousand organizations and groups outside the Partnership have used WLP curriculum and materials, including:
 - Amnesty International, Aid Afghanistan for Education, Kvinna till Kvinna (Sweden), the World Bank, Aware Girls (Pakistan), KVINFO (Denmark), Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, World Movement for Democracy Assembly (WMD), National Council of Women (Canada), and many more
- WLP's films have been screened around the world, including in:
 - Amman, Auckland, Beirut, Bishkek, Hyderabad, The Hague, Chicago, Washington, DC, and many more
- *Leading to Choices*
 - Subject: Leadership
 - First published: 2001
 - 19 Languages: Shamy Arabic, Maghreby Arabic, Assamese, Bahasa Indonesia, English, French, Hausa, Kyrgyz, Malay, Meiteilon, Persian, Portuguese, Russian, Shona, Spanish, Swahili, Turkish, Urdu, Uzbek
- *Leading to Action: A Political Participation Handbook for Women*
 - Subject: Political Participation
 - First published: 2010
 - 11 Languages: Shamy Arabic, Bahasa Indonesia, English, French, Kyrgyz, Persian, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Turkish, Urdu
- *Victories over Violence*
 - Subject: Combating gender-based violence
 - First published: 2012
 - 4 Languages: English, French, Persian, Urdu
- *YWLP Manual: Yes I Can*
 - Subject: Youth Leadership
 - First published: 2011
 - 5 Languages: Arabic, English, French, Turkish, Urdu
- *Making IT Our Own*
- *Measuring Change* evaluation manual
- Leading to Choices Multimedia Package
- Translation Series

¹⁶ As of September 2014.

- *One Million Signatures Campaign for Equality: The Inside Story* published in Arabic and English
- Films:
 - *Because Our Cause is Just*
 - *From Fear to Freedom*
 - Universal Human Rights (forthcoming)
- Upcoming publications:
 - *Leading to a Culture of Democracy* (Transitions toolkit)
 - Human rights manual and film
 - Economic empowerment manual

TRAINING

- Trained over 30,000 grassroots women, men, civil society activists, and youth in over 55 countries, including nearly 3,000 facilitators
- Global Training of Trainers Initiative launched in 2011
- Nearly 120 International, Regional, and National Training of Trainers Institutes since 2003
- ICT workshops and Institutes
- Youth trainings (YWLP) and Youth Tech Festivals
- Grassroots workshops: leadership, political participation, ending violence against women
- 55 project countries reached to date:

| | |
|----------------|------------------------|
| ○ Afghanistan | ○ Mali |
| ○ Algeria | ○ Mauritania |
| ○ Angola | ○ Mexico |
| ○ Azerbaijan | ○ Morocco |
| ○ Bahrain | ○ Mozambique |
| ○ Brazil | ○ Nicaragua |
| ○ Burkina Faso | ○ Niger |
| ○ Cameroon | ○ Nigeria |
| ○ DRC | ○ Oman |
| ○ Egypt | ○ Pakistan |
| ○ El Salvador | ○ Palestine |
| ○ Ghana | ○ Panama |
| ○ Guinea | ○ Saudi Arabia |
| ○ Guatemala | ○ Senegal |
| ○ Honduras | ○ Sierra Leone |
| ○ India | ○ Sudan |
| ○ Indonesia | ○ Syria |
| ○ Iran | ○ Tajikistan |
| ○ Iraq | ○ Tanzania |
| ○ Jordan | ○ Togo |
| ○ Kazakhstan | ○ Tunisia |
| ○ Kyrgyzstan | ○ Turkey |
| ○ Kuwait | ○ Uganda |
| ○ Lebanon | ○ United Arab Emirates |
| ○ Liberia | ○ Uzbekistan |
| ○ Libya | ○ Yemen |
| ○ Malaysia | ○ Zimbabwe |

- 7 Regional and Linguistic Hubs
 - Regional hubs reaching non-partner countries
 - National hubs reaching out to other national organizations and grassroots women
 - Multilingual Global Training of Trainers team

Leadership Training Impact

- Individual Transformation:
 - 9 out of 10 participants identified as a leader and experienced an increase in self-esteem
 - Survey results also found that the majority of participants implemented democratic leadership in their families (87%), communities (86%), and professions (80%)
- Expanding audiences:
 - CSOs through TOTs (for example, 33 participants from Brazil TOT reached 5,982 additional participants)
 - Radio and television (Bahrain and Kyrgyzstan)
 - Universities
 - Ministries and government entities (Afghanistan, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Pakistan)
 - Youth groups and clubs
- Cross-regional exchange: Global TOT – Cross regional peer-to-peer exchanges
 - Malaysia TOT: Egypt, Nigeria
 - Brazil TOT: Angola, Morocco, Mozambique
 - Turkey TOT: Afghanistan, Egypt, India, Iran, Lebanon, Pakistan
- Political breakthroughs:
 - Past participants ran for and/or were elected to political and community leadership positions in Brazil, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Indonesia, Jordan, Libya, Morocco, Nigeria, Palestine, Pakistan Sierra Leone, Yemen, and Zimbabwe, among other countries
- Grassroots action and activism:
 - LTC workshops continued to be a springboard for mobilization (for example, nationality and land rights in Lebanon and Morocco)

ABAN ONLINE LEARNING

- Since 2013, the ABAN Online Learning Community has launched 13 online trainings in 4 languages, reaching over 200 participants from over 20 countries
- Online training topics included political participation, leveraging social media for advocacy, and
- NGO capacity building in proposal and report writing, program evaluation, and budgeting
- WLP is continuously adopting and adapting new technologies and customizing ABAN, to accommodate our online participants' needs, and create a more effective, participatory environment. For example:
 - ABAN moved to a new, more user-friendly platform called Docebo
 - WLP switched to a new online platform called Adobe Connect to lessen tech-based challenges faced in previous online trainings

STRENGTHENING CIVIL SOCIETY

- WLP partners report that the key benefits of being involved in the WLP Partnership include:
 - Strengthened national networks and partnerships
 - Deepened national leadership capacity using a democratic and participatory model of capacity building

- Development of strong collective women’s rights voice to push back against increasing global conservatisms and fundamentalisms
- Strengthened financial and organizational capacity, enhancing professionalism, through mentoring and exchange programs
- Enhanced learning and strategizing through cross-cultural experience exchange with leading global women’s rights activists
- Engaged with leading source of information on global women’s rights issues and news, focusing on Muslim-majority societies
- Enhanced solidarity and deep trust among partner organizations
- Increased visibility of women’s rights concerns and partner NGOs’ positions
- Sharing of best practices and lessons learned across the Partnership
 - Transnational Partners Convening
 - Commission on the Status of Women
 - Smaller Regional and Thematic Convenings
- Peer-to-Peer capacity building
 - Examples: Pakistan/Jordan, Kazakhstan/Kyrgyzstan, Brazil/Mozambique
- WLP Partner national capacity building and mentoring
 - Examples: Egypt – Local-level CSOs, Turkey – Coops, Brazil – Catadores

WLP DIGITAL ARCHIVE

- Since January 2014, WLP has reviewed, edited, and catalogued (tagging strategy to enable searching for any topic easily):
 - 30 hours of interviews (68 videos)
 - 32 hours of documentary films (47 videos)
 - 23 hours of public event footage (34 videos)
 - 70 hours of training workshops
- Partnering with Internet Archive project (archive.org) at the University of Toronto

WLP KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

- Strengthening WLP’s processes, especially to record and convey to funders the important impact of our work
- Development of processes to capture the grassroots impact of TOT and National and Regional Hub activities
- Streamlining how we collect, share, and store information – news, photos, reports, etc.
- Using new technologies where needed and using old technologies better!

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

- Preserving for future generations, the pivotal experiences and contributions of grassroots women’s human rights activists in the Global South, in their voices
- To date, we have recorded 21 oral histories with:
 - Audio file
 - Full transcript
 - Video
 - Photographed portrait

ADVOCACY

Advancement in reforms of national laws in partner countries

- External evaluation: WLP's and partners' advocacy "show that significant progress has made toward ... reform of national laws in partner countries to be more supportive of women's rights"
 - Examples: Bahrain Marriage Law; Jordan Personal Status Law; new laws in Brazil, Jordan, Morocco, and Pakistan against Gender-Based Violence; Morocco's success in securing land rights for tribal women; and many more
- Grassroots Culture Change for Women's Rights: Increased public awareness of policies favoring gender equality and women's rights
 - Examples: Lebanon: Nationality Campaign and Women's Active Citizenship; Malaysia and Nigeria's work with men to combat GBV; Post "Arab Spring" awareness raising on women's rights and democracy
- International screenings of WLP-made documentaries on women activists in the Global South; gender-based violence; women's rights and democratic transition; and universal human rights (forthcoming)
- Media Outreach: Raising the voices of WLP partners in leading international news outlets to global audiences:
 - WLP has received citations in mainstream and alternative media, including Agence France Presse, *All Africa*, *Al Arabiya*, BBC News and BBC Radio, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, *Chicago Reporter Magazine*, CNN and CNN International, C-SPAN, *Deutsche Welle*, Feminist International Radio Endeavor, *Foreign Policy*, France's *Le Monde* and *Elle* magazine, German Radio Network, *The Guardian*, *Human Rights Watch*, The Huffington Post, *The Independent*, *The Jordan Times*, Lebanon's *Daily Star*, Malaysia's *The Star*, *Middle East Women's Studies Review*, *The Monitor*, *Ms. magazine*, National Public Radio, *The New Republic*, *The New York Times*, NPR, Pakistan's *The News* and *DAWN*, *L'Orient-Le Jour*, Radio Farda, Radio Free Europe, *Reuter's TrustLaw*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Saudi Gazette*, *Toronto Globe and Mail*, UN Wire, Voice of America, *The Washington Post*, Women's International News Gathering Service, WorldNet TV, and Zimbabwe's *The Herald and The Express Ex: Tribune*