

ISSUE NO. 26 - DECEMBER 1984

COPING WITH TEENAGE PREGNANCIES IN TOGO

In Togo, West Africa, anyone responsible for the pregnancy of a schoolgirl will be sentenced to between six months and three years imprisonment and a fine.

Recently, 10 men and six schoolboys were either dismissed or expelled when it was found that they were responsible for the pregnancies of 10 schoolgirls who were forced to forego their education. This action was issued as a warning by the government in its effort to reduce teenage pregnancies.

The problem of teenage pregnancies is caused by a lack of information available to youths on the results of experimenting with sex.

The passing of the new law, the first of its kind in the West African region, was met with approval by women.

Populi Vol. 11 No. 2, 1984

Journal of UNFPA

AWARD FOR THIRD WORLD WOMEN

Four women from Asia and Africa share the 1984 Right Livelihood Award of U.S. \$50,000--the first time that a major western award has gone entirely to Third World women.

The award was introduced four years ago by Jakob von Uexkull, a Swedish-German Alternate Member of the European Parliament. It is presented in Stockholm, Sweden, on December 9--the day before the Nobel Prize ceremony--to "honour and support those working on practical solutions to the real problems facing us today."

The winners of this year's award are: Winefreda Geonzon (Philippines),

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lawyer and founder of the Free Legal Aid Volunteers Association; Professor Wangari Maathai (Kenya), biologist and women's leader who pioneered the "Green Belt" reforestation movement; The Self-Employed Women's Association (India) founded by Mrs. Ela Bhatt.

A special Honorary Award will be presented to Miss Iman Khalifeh of Lebanon who has inspired and organized the Beirut peace movement.

The awards are presented by the Right Livelihood Foundation, an educational charity registered on the Isle of Man. The winners are chosen by an international panel.

News Release, Friends of Right Livelihood
Foundation, October 8, 1984

CUTS WEAKEN U.S. DAY-CARE

The Reagan administration budget cuts have weakened the child care system for low and moderate income families, in the U.S.

That's the conclusion of the Children's Defense Fund, a non-profit research and lobbying group based in Washington, D.C. which recently released a study of 47 states' day-care services.

The study showed that while attendance at federally funded day-care programmes had increased from 437,000 in 1983 to 510,000 in 1984, the administration's cuts in social services had actually shrunk the number of available programmes.

The study found that: 25 states spend less for child care now than they did in 1981; 27 states serve fewer children now than in 1981; and two-thirds of all day-care workers earn less than U.S. \$9,000 per year.

Plexus, Vol. 11 No. 8, November 1984

RESEARCHING WOMEN'S ISSUES

The Swedish Agency for Research Cooperation with Developing Countries (SAREC) has introduced a new research fund in the area of women's issues. This will take the form of individual research grants for persons in the developing countries.

For further information, contact: Ms. Annika Johansson, SAREC, S-105
25 Stockholm, SWEDEN.

Women's Program Newsletter, International
Council for Adult Education, October 1984.

LOW-INCOME WOMEN ON THE MOVE IN ECUADOR

An action-research project to promote the organization and advancement of low-income women is changing women's lives in Ecuador.

The project is being carried out by the women themselves, together with researchers from Centro de Planificacion y Estudios Sociales (CEPLAES) --an independent research centre concerned with social planning and change.

The project is investigating the socio-economic conditions of the women, paying particular attention to their strategy for subsistence through self-help and collective efforts. It will also provide leadership training and promote the creation of self-reliant organizations; train women in self-selected income-generating skills; and develop a methodology for action-research that can be transferred to other low-income communities in Ecuador.

As a result of home visits and surveys, community needs such as sewage, water, and better disease prevention practices were identified. A successful demand was made of the authorities to provide promised services, a course on health issues was started, and new activities dealing with pre-school services and nutrition were planned.

Women leaders have also been identified and women's associations now exist in each community.

The IDRC Reports Vol. 13, No. 3 Oct. 1984

WOMEN AGAINST POLLUTION

In Turkey, demonstrations by village women in Gokova province have halted the building of a power station which would have affected the health of the 6,000 villagers.

The women, mainly in their 60s and 70s, established a camp on the site of the proposed power station and were soon joined by women of all ages.

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They are being supported by the local tourist board and some local members of parliament who have threatened to resign if nothing is done.

A former official of the Turkish Ministry of the Environment has said the building of the plant would result in the Aegean coast of Gokova having twice as much pollution as the country's capital, Ankara, one of the most polluted cities in the world.

Spare Rib Issue 149, November 1984

WOMEN'S OPPOSITION GROUPS FORM COALITION

A coalition of women's groups has been formed in the Philippines to place women on an equal footing with men in all spheres of social, political and economic activity.

The coalition is called Gabriela--General Assembly Binding women for Reforms, Integrity, Equality, Leadership and Action--after the first woman general in the Philippines, Gabriela Silang of the 18th century.

Gabriela is intended as an umbrella for a growing number of oppositionist women's organizations such as: Women Against Marcos; Organization of Nationalist Women; Centre for Women's Resources; and Third World Movement Against the Exploitation of Women.

These groups have set a series of far-reaching objectives, but they basically aim to "educate, organize and mobilize women towards the elimination of all forms of oppression against women."

Programme priorities will be consciousness-raising, dissemination of information, publicity drives, encouragement for women's sections in political movements throughout the Philippines, and special women's action.

Women and Development Network of Australia
No. 10 1984