



IWDA Feast 2008 see page 2 for details...

## IWDA and partners gather in Vietnam for a week of inspiration, sharing, learning & solidarity

Erin McKinnon, Overseas Program Manager

**Bringing together some 20 women from 10 of IWDA's partner organisations across six countries in Asia, the 2007 IWDA Asian Partners Workshop was held in Hanoi, Vietnam, from 29 October till the 1 November.**

Hosted by the Vietnam Women's Union, the gathering provided an opportunity for women from IWDA's partner organisations in Asia to come together for dialogue, peer exchange, workshops, presentations and information sharing, building friendships and networks.

Leading up to the workshop, participating organisations helped shape the design and content of the program, ensuring topics of greatest relevance and interest were covered. The result was a focus on three key areas: strengthening our respective organisations, effective development practice for women, and partnerships and networking. The strategies developed will be used to achieve the workshop goal for IWDA and our partners to work more effectively for the advancement of women.

**The workshop was a valuable opportunity for IWDA to hear and reflect on what is required to be an effective partner.**

Two women from each partner organisation participated in the workshop. There was a mix of senior and experienced women, some of whom had met at previous IWDA workshops, and others who were travelling outside their country for the first time. It was inspiring to witness the growing confidence and participation of these women some of whom will become future leaders of their organisations.

The high-level engagement reflected the passion, energy and dynamism of IWDA's partner organisations.

Cultural sharing activities created a safe, comfortable and women-centred space that enabled free-flowing discussion and learning. Time spent together outside of the formal program during meals, chatting at the end of the day, sharing cups of tea, or sitting next to a new friend on the bus, all helped create a bond of sisterhood among the group.



Sisterhood in Vietnam

The women had many questions for each other relating to their work, the issues facing women in their respective countries, and organisational structure and management. This informed a dialogue about the will to strengthen the network among our partner organisations. IWDA is committed to supporting and resourcing this network, and will work with partners on this in 2008.

**Above all, the workshop provided the opportunity for the hard-working women of IWDA's partner organisations to acknowledge each other's work and leadership, feel valued for the work they do, and take time out from busy lives to reflect, share and learn from each other.**

IWDA acknowledges the invaluable assistance of the Vietnam Women's Union in the organisation and hosting of this event, in particular Mdm Tran Thi Hoa and her team.

## Letter from the Executive Director

**With the New Year comes an exciting time of change and growth for IWDA, and a move to larger premises in Melbourne's CBD, not far from our base of the past ten years (see page 3 for details). Our new national office will be in the 'City Village' created by the City of Melbourne for not-for-profit organisations from the creative, environmental, educational and development sectors.**

With International Women's Day coming up on 8 March, it's a good time to reflect on what we're working towards when we talk about our vision of a just, sustainable and equitable world for women. We are seeking for women freedom from violence, a seat at the political decision-making table, enduring economic opportunities, access to reproductive health, literacy and education, equal access to land ownership and the opportunity to contribute to environmental stewardship. Just a few of the areas where change is imperative.

While IWDA's focus is supporting women in developing countries, and in Indigenous Australia, we recognise that there are many women in western countries including Australia who are still fighting to secure paid maternity leave and equal pay for equal work.

Your contribution whether it be donating funds, attending events, advocating change through your networks or supporting key campaigns provides the momentum for empowering women throughout the region to improve their own quality of life and that of their families and their communities.

It's important to know our own power, and the potential in our tenacity and commitment to achieving a better world. Arundhati Roy, writer, activist, and environmentalist wrote, "another world is possible...and on a quiet day I can hear her breathing."

I'm excited to be working with highly skilled and committed IWDA Board members, staff, volunteers and project partners in developing and implementing our new five year Strategic Plan, which you'll soon be able to access on our website.

We look forward to your company – in the knowledge that a better world is possible.

  
**Jane Sloane,**  
 Executive Director



PHOTO: ANNA STONE  
 PHOTO: SUZETTE MITCHELL

## Ready your tastebuds for the IWDA Feast 2008!

What brings thirty of Melbourne's most inspirational female chefs together in one hot kitchen? Their desire to help other women.

At the IWDA Feast on Sunday 2 March you will be treated to a fantastic night of fun, entertainment and food. Each chef will cook for a table of ten and guests will sample food from a different chef for each course.

Imagine being seated to dinner and enjoying an entrée from Nicky Riemer (Trunk), a main from Patrizia Simone (Simone's of Bright) and a heavenly dessert from Virginia Redmond (Ciccolina's). The only way to get this combination outside of Feast would be a lengthy progressive dinner that criss-crossed Melbourne!

Some of Australia's finest wine producers will ensure the best matches for each dish. Both a live and silent auction will give guests the opportunity to grab

amazing items for a steal, whilst raising additional funds for IWDA.

Jane Sloane, IWDA Executive Director said, "It's inspiring to see Melbourne's best female chefs come together to support women of the world. Feast is an event that recognises the interconnectedness of our lives and the centrality of food to human flourishing."

IWDA would like to thank our major sponsors Holding Redlich and Peters McKeown. Thank you also to our supporters, suppliers, volunteers and entertainment.

For all details including a full list of chefs, silent and live auction items and entertainment visit [www.iwda.com.au/feast](http://www.iwda.com.au/feast)

### IWDA FEAST 2008

**Date:** Sunday 2 March 2008

**Time:** 7:00pm

**Venue:** Grand Hyatt, 123 Collins Street, Melbourne

**Tickets:** \$175 per head

**Bookings:** online at [www.iwda.com.au/feast](http://www.iwda.com.au/feast) or phone 1300 661 812

*Part of the Melbourne Food & Wine Festival.*

## ABOUT INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (IWDA)

IWDA is an Australian non-profit organisation that supports positive change for women. Our practical and rights-based projects directly address poverty and inequality in developing countries.

Our projects focus on five key areas of well being: economic empowerment, freedom from violence, participation in

decision-making, reproductive health, and environmental management.

We work in the Asia-Pacific region, in direct partnership with women who work and live in the communities themselves.

*When women benefit, the whole community benefits*

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**Donation hotline: 1300 661 812**

ABN 19 242 959 685



# Celebrating sustainable sisterhood since 1988: IWDA & Vietnam Women's Union

Erin McKinnon, Overseas Program Manager

The 2007 IWDA Asian Partners Workshop, hosted by and organised with the assistance of the Vietnam Women's Union (VWU), provided the perfect occasion to acknowledge IWDA's longest-running partnership, that with the VWU. Since our relationship began in 1988, both organisations have evolved and changed, as have the projects on which we collaborate. Yet the following excerpt from a statement of partnership, jointly developed by IWDA and VWU at a workshop in 2001, continues to hold true:

"Across the divide of culture, we share a strong common goal – to work towards the empowerment of women and gender equality."

Spanning 20 years, the partnership has focussed primarily on developing effective models for poor women to access credit and appropriate technologies for their economic empowerment. IWDA has also supported initiatives that enable VWU staff to strengthen their skills and knowledge in planning, management, lobbying and negotiation.

Most recently, IWDA and VWU worked together on the AusAID-funded project Rural Development for a Future without Poverty in Tuyen Quang Province, northern Vietnam. This project, which began in 2002 and concluded in 2007 after a year-long extension phase funded through the ANZ Bank Charity Challenge, provided credit, innovation grants and skills and training for enterprise development to rural women in four villages.

Over the life of the project, 800 women benefited from training in business planning, budgeting, marketing and gender and access to technical support. Some 464 women accessed loans from a revolving loan fund, with interest earnings supporting ongoing sustainability.

Some 1176 women successfully applied for innovation grants to develop businesses. One woman began a broom-making business with assistance through the project. She recognised that this product was used in her village but was not locally available.



PHOTO: VANESSA STERN

She now supplies her village with brooms, sourcing the materials locally, and making them to order. This is one of many examples that demonstrates, as reported by the VWU, that "the project has significantly promoted women's empowerment economically and socially".

IWDA and VWU look forward to continuing our close relationship, collaborating on research using learnings from recent enterprise development work to evolve models of micro-finance that better support and empower women.

www.iwda.org.au

IWDA news



PHOTO: CATH RUTTEN



225 Bourke Street – our new home.

## IWDA is moving!

**IWDA is in the process of moving offices. We have finally outgrown our lovely home at Ross House in Flinders Lane and must move on.**

We have been included in the City of Melbourne's City Village and will be located at **level 4, 225 Bourke Street, Melbourne**. This beautiful art-deco building formerly housed the Melbourne City Council offices and it is now the centre for a group of not-for-profit organisations.

We would like to thank Ross House and its tenants for the wonderful support and community atmosphere that IWDA has enjoyed over the past ten years.

We would also like to express our thanks to the City of Melbourne for including us in such an exciting initiative.

## Pacific Women's Forum 2008

Carole Shaw, Senior Overseas Program Manager

**After long discussion and debate, the 15-member advisory committee for the Pacific Women's Forum decided in December 2007 to postpone the planned April 2008 Regional Forum.**

Through a process of reflection and dialogue, the advisory committee reached the view that to get the best outcome from a regional forum, national dialogues needed to take place first.

IWDA acknowledges the efforts of the advisory committee to find an approach that will strengthen the collective voice of women in the Pacific.



The Charity Challenge gang at Angkor Wat.

## IWDA's Challenge for Change – the Ride of a Lifetime!

Kathy Oliver, Charity Challenge Coordinator

**In November 2007, 27 IWDA Challenge for Change participants pushed through heat, rain and hills to conquer over 400 kilometres as they cycled around beautiful Cambodia. But before these physical demands there was the fundraising challenge. Each individual committed to raising a minimum of \$5000 and achieved this throughout the year with a combination of sponsorship and community events such as trivia nights and wine tours.**

The journey started in Phnom Pehn, the capital of Cambodia, and saw our intrepid participants cycle distances of up to 104 kms per day. The group would stretch out over the 20 km legs with individuals cycling at their own pace. At regular rest stops participants could be seen playing ball games with school children, drinking freshly cut coconut juice or simply snoozing on the matts provided.

The IWDA Challengers travelled all the way down to the coast and then up to the spectacular temples of Angkor Wat. Watching dawn rise over this majestic temple was certainly a once in a life time experience. Enroute the local delicacy of "fried tarantula" was an unexpected additional challenge – many couldn't resist a nibble.

Participants came from all over Australia and ages ranged from 22 to 65. Each faced their own personal hurdles, be it getting accustomed to different foods, the heat or the physical demands. The supportive friendships formed on this trip meant that everyone came through with many magical memories.

Many thanks to the riders and their supporters who assisted with donations, events and moral support – this would not have been possible without you.

We are looking forward to the next challenge, to be held in January 2009. Keep your eye on the website – details will be posted in March.

"It was a great trip and I will certainly do one again. The vivid greens of the rice fields contrast greatly with the browns of Australian scenery." – Michelle D'arcy Sydney

"I had a cracker and loved every second." – Bec Harnett

"Over ten days as we ride through the lush green countryside, around rice paddy-fields surrounded by all kinds of palms, on stony, pot-holed, dirt roads as well as narrow sealed roads, past groups of smiling children calling out 'hello' or raising a little hand for a 'high-5' – I have to pinch myself to realise that it is happening to me and it is all real!" - Sue Wagner, QLD

Read Sue's full article at [www.iwda.org.au](http://www.iwda.org.au)

## Silent-a-thon

STAND UP  
for something  
great...

SHUT UP  
to give  
young  
women  
a voice!

Cath Rutten, Communications  
Coordinator

**The IWDA silent-a-thon is up and ready for schools this International Women's Day! Register your school now if you haven't already!**

The silent-a-thon began in 2004 with a group of students from the social justice group at Avila College in Melbourne. Members of the group approached the most 'vocal' members of classes and challenged them to stay silent for a day to raise funds for IWDA. The girls walked around with sandwich boards asking people to 'Pay me to remain silent for those with no voice!'

Since then a number of schools have piloted the project, notably Ferny Grove High School in Queensland, who will participate for the third year in 2008. Students at Ferny Grove High raised an incredible \$3,203.55 in 2007!



In 2008 we challenge the schools that are registered to beat the amazing effort of students at Ferny Grove High School!

Funds raised by the silent-a-thon go towards the Karen Young Women's Leadership School and Shan Women's Action Network Internships on the Thai Burma border.

NB. Funds raised in excess of those required for these projects will go towards IWDA projects working with young people.

## Pin your hopes on women

**Show your solidarity with women around the world by wearing a Kachin Pin this International Women's Day. Kachin Pins are hand made by women from Burma who have fled violence, poverty and trafficking.**

These gorgeous pins are individually made using hand woven material from inside Kachin state. Look out for those with a silver sparkle, a traditional favorite of Kachin women. In 2007 IWDA funded training for a further 20 Kachin women to learn the skills to make these tiny dolls, generate income, and enable more people in Australia to hear about their story.

Look out for Kachin Pins at some ANZ branches and in Melbourne and Sydney CBD on 7th March.

PHOTO: MAHLAB FAMILY



Eve Mahlab with her youngest grandchild Jesse

## HERSTORY: Eve Mahlab AO

Jenny Davidson – External Relations Manager

**Eve Mahlab has worked throughout her career to empower women and improve women’s rights in relation to divorce law, and access to credit, work and business opportunities. She was the first woman elected to the boards of the Westpac Bank and Monash University.**

Eve is actively engaged in changing the face of philanthropy in Australia, working to encourage more women, and mainstream trusts and foundations, to invest in women and girls. She believes that investing in women is the surest way to benefit communities as a whole, now and for future generations – a belief that is borne out by research and practice in the development sector, and by projects such as those supported by IWDA.

Eve has been involved with IWDA for over 20 years, as a long-standing and generous donor and more recently as a valued advisor. She has worked with IWDA to develop fundraising and relationship strategies and contributed her valuable and considerable expertise to assist with IWDA’s positioning and growth. Supporters like Eve are invaluable to IWDA’s future. She says:

**“I support IWDA because its approach of empowering women is recognised as the most effective way of improving the health, education and living standards of women, children, families and communities.”**

Eve has been a practising solicitor, founded and built the Mahlab Group of Companies and been a leader in government and community groups. She has also been very active in the Women’s Electoral Lobby. She was named Australian Businesswoman of the Year in 1982, was honoured with an Order of Australia for services to government, business and the community, especially women in 1998, and accepted an honorary Doctorate of Laws from Monash University in 1997.



PHOTO: DEB CHAPMAN

CLAN project staff at work

## Evolution of the Community Learning for Action Network, Solomon Islands

Deb Chapman, Gender Advisor - Melanesia

**With this AusAID-funded project now into its fifth year, IWDA is working to strengthen the overall gender capacity of our consortium partners, Live and Learn Environmental Education (LLEE) Solomon Islands, and APHEDA Union Aid Abroad Solomon Islands.**

During 2008, IWDA will assist our partners to mainstream gender across their work, improving the ongoing gender responsiveness of both organisations. This shift in focus responds to the desire of the consortium

partners to better ensure that all of their work in Solomon Islands improves the situation of women. A gender development role will be created within LLEE Solomon Islands with an initial focus on reviewing the gender-sensitivity of the organisation’s activities. IWDA will support the establishment and ongoing work of this position. Within APHEDA, a new Literacy and Livelihoods role will integrate a women’s literacy component into community-based and non-formal education and training centres at village level, so that literacy work with women is strengthened and expanded.

## Remembering the Tsunami – three years on

**On Boxing Day, 160 people gathered at the Rialto Tower in Melbourne to watch three pairs of runners race up the 1254 stairs to the Observation Deck. The three teams completed the race within the targeted 33 minutes, with the quickest combined time of 21 minutes achieved by IWDA board member and tsunami survivor Trisha Broadbridge and her team mate Lynden Dunn from Melbourne Football Club.**



Trisha and the Run Up the Rialto team.

The event raised money for two tsunami reconstruction projects: an IWDA income-generation project for women in the Maldives to grow chillies and bottle chilli sauce, and the Broadbridge Education Centre, built by Trisha on Pei Pei Island, Thailand, in memory of her husband Troy.

Many thanks to the sponsors ANZ Bank, Puma, Fitness First, Naughty and the staff of the Rialto Tower, the Reach Foundation and the runners.

# International Women's Day 2008

## MELBOURNE

### Stories of Strength

This evening picnic of celebration will include IWDA Program Managers sharing Stories of Strength from women who work on the ground with our partner projects, and fantastic music provided by Liz Stringer and Shona Honeyhill Sonko.

Thursday 6th March, 5:30pm – 9pm.

Venue: Railway Station  
Neighbourhood House  
20 Solly Avenue, Princes Hill VIC

Free Entry & Family Friendly

RSVP: Tuesday 4th March

BYO rug and picnic or order a platter online ready for when you arrive. Wine, beer and soft drink will be available for purchase at the venue.

Email: melbourne@iwda.org.au

Call: 9650 5574

## SYDNEY

### International Women's Day Breakfast

Celebrate women worldwide and hear about IWDA's current projects over a delicious light breakfast with Guest Speaker Katie Richmond, IWDA Program Manager.

Saturday 8th March, 9 - 11am

Venue: Petersham Bowling Club, 77 Brighton St, Petersham 2049

Price: \$35/\$25 Concession

(Concession prices are available for full-time students, senior citizens and those on a pension)

RSVP: Monday 3rd March

PLEASE NOTE: Access to the breakfast is via one set of outside stairs - there is no disabled access or toilet.

## International Women's Day March

Show your support for women worldwide by joining the annual International Women's Day march. Meet for the rally at 11am at the doors of St Andrew's Cathedral facing George St. Look out for women in green & the IWDA logo, and wear a green t-shirt.

March from 12pm through the CBD to Hyde Park.

Date: Saturday 8th March

Time: 11am for 12pm march

Venue: Sydney Town Hall

## International Women's Day Stall

IWDA will have a stall in Hyde Park from 1-4pm

Volunteer at the IWDA Stall or just drop by and say hello, whatever the weather!

Date: Saturday 8th March

Time: 1-4pm

Venue: Hyde Park

## HOBART

### International Women's Day Soiree

International Women's Development Agency (IWDA) with Amnesty International Australia - Tasmania (AIA-Tas)

The International Women's Day 2008 Soiree will feature Guest speaker Erin McKinnon, IWDA Program Manager, discussing projects IWDA supports in the area of economic empowerment of women, and a representative from Amnesty International Australia-Tasmania who will speak about Amnesty's report on domestic workers in Indonesia.

Wednesday 5th March, 5-7pm

Venue: Women Tasmania, 140-142 Macquarie Street, Hobart

Price: \$5, including drinks and nibbles

Bookings: Women Tasmania, 0362332208

Raffle Tickets will be available for purchase at the event

For information on all International Women's Day events please go to [www.iwda.org.au/womensday](http://www.iwda.org.au/womensday)

## Winter Warmers – Australia wide

Do you like to entertain? Would you like a great excuse to shake off the winter blues (yes, summer will end...), get together with friends and raise funds to support IWDA projects?

Throughout the month of June IWDA invites supporters to sign up to host a party of any size or theme. You may like to host a movie night, a chocolate-themed party or even a brunch. We have taken the hard work out of planning, with checklists and suggestions, and will post you materials to distribute to guests.

For more information and to sign up visit [www.iwda.org.au/winterwarmers](http://www.iwda.org.au/winterwarmers) or phone 1300 661 812. Get ready to party with a purpose!

## Congratulations!

IWDA is delighted to pass on the news that Suzette Mitchell, former IWDA Executive Director, and her partner Zoran Rakovic had a baby daughter, Veronika Amelia Rakovic on the 14 January 2008 in Hanoi, Vietnam. All the family is doing extremely well!



International Women's Development Agency is a signatory to the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) Code of Conduct which defines minimum standards of governance, management and accountability for non-government development organisations. Adherence to the Code is monitored by an independent Code of Conduct Committee elected from the NGO community. Our voluntary adherence to the Code of Conduct demonstrates our commitment to ethical practice and public accountability. More information about the ACFID Code of Conduct can be accessed at [www.acfid.asn.au](http://www.acfid.asn.au)

## Yes! I will join the fight for women's rights this International Women's Day!

I can make a difference to women in Asia and the Pacific with a contribution to women's:

\$  **Freedom** (\$5001 & beyond)

\$  **Equality** (\$1001 to \$5000)

\$  **Dignity** (\$501 to \$1000)

\$  **Respect** (from \$5 to \$500)

All donations of \$2 or more are tax-deductible.

Donation hotline: 1300 661 812

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IWDA endorses the National Privacy Principles.  
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