

**MEASURING IMPACT
THE WORK OF THE ADVOCACY PROJECT
WITH CIVIL SOCIETY
1998 TO 2007**



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INTRODUCTION

This document assesses the work of the Advocacy Project (AP) in supporting human rights advocacy between 1998 and 2007.

AP helps community-based partners to produce, disseminate and use information, and so become stronger advocates for social change and social justice. The mission was launched in 1998 when AP recruited a team of information specialists to support the Coalition for an International Criminal Court. Since then AP has profiled scores of community-based advocacy campaigns, and helped many to develop information tools. This document looks at 35 organizations which have developed partnerships with AP. It should be read in conjunction with AP's 2008 strategic plan.

METHODOLOGY

Each of the profiles in this document is organized into six sections. The first three correspond to AP's three program goals. We then look at the indirect benefits which have resulted from the partnership, and whether the partnership has succeeded in producing social change/social justice. Finally, we provide feedback from the partner.

1. Goal: Helping partners to produce information and achieve information self-sufficiency

Producing information about partners: The objective is to help partners describe their work in a compelling manner through information products (blogs, news bulletins, promotional brochures, video clips etc). This can be done by AP consultants and Peace Fellows, as well as by officials from the host organization.

Information produced by partners: AP seeks to help the partner develop information tools (websites, newsletters), and so produce information without being dependent on outsiders. This is measured by:

- The regular publication of information products by the partner
- An investment in information production by the partner (as indicated by the hiring of an information officer; creation of a budget line-item; etc)
- Integration of information tools into the partner's advocacy (e.g. if the partner uses information tools to advance a campaign or tackle a human rights abuse).

2. Goal: Helping partners to use ICT and disseminate information

Using ICT: The objective is that partners produce, maintain and use ICT tools (websites and email) free from dependency on outside technical experts. This is measured by:

- The ability to update websites regularly
- The use of email in communications and/or advocacy
- An institutional investment in ICT (e.g. hiring of a webmaster or ICT officer)
- The use of ICT by members.

Disseminating information through AP: The objective is to help partners reach an international constituency by posting information on the AP site and sending out their news through AP's online news service (*AdvocacyNet*). This is measured by:

- The posting of new partner pages on the AP site, with content provided by partners
- The regular usage of the AP partner pages by the partner
- The re-issue of AP news bulletins by other online news services, thus indicating that the bulletins are of high quality and are reaching a wider audience¹
- The use of AP news bulletins in the partner's advocacy
- Support for a partner's advocacy, and funds, in response to an AP news bulletin
- Inquiries to AP about partnership

3. Goal: Help community-based partners use their information by networking and outreach

Networking: The objective is to attract supporters who will support the advocacy of AP's partners, at home and abroad. This can be done by partners or by AP. It is measured by:

- The creation of databases for use by partners and AP, and a corresponding increase in foreign contacts
- An increase in communications from abroad, indicating growing interest
- Donations received as a result of the networking
- Invitations to meetings, nominations for prizes etc
- Signatures for partner petitions and support for lobbying

Outreach: The objective is to help partners act on their information, in the form of a campaign or some other form of collective action. This can be done by partners or by AP on their behalf. It is measured by:

- The launching of a campaign, real or virtual
- The holding of an event, or conference, which results in an agenda or advocacy outcome
- The short-term success of the campaign

4. Indirect outcomes

AP expects that our interventions will produce the following important, but indirect, outcomes:

- Institution-building: While AP does not seek to "build institutional capacity," we hope that AP's interventions, and the regular production of information, will help partner organizations to become more sustainable, more effective, and more transparent
- Increased funds for partners

¹ AP tracks the pick-up of news bulletins. <http://www.advocacynet.org/page/apinthemedia>

- Empowered Fellows: The Fellowship program is intended to educate the next generation of American leaders in the importance of human rights and civil society, and benefit their future careers
- Inter-cultural connections: AP's model brings Americans into contact with other cultures and societies in a mutually constructive manner.

5. Social change

We hope that our intervention will, eventually, make some inroads into the root causes of discrimination – which in our view is the key to social change. This is a desired outcome from our work, but not a formal goal for AP because it will be difficult to show cause and effect between our intervention and long-term social change. Nonetheless, we track it carefully.

6. Feedback

In assessing whether these results are achieved, we rely first and foremost on feedback from partners.

CASE STUDIES

1. THE INTERNATIONAL COALITION FOR AN INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT – CICC(1998)

AP Partner: The NGO Coalition for an International Criminal Court

In June 1998, AP was contracted to help the Coalition lobby for a strong ICC statute. The AP team sent out daily online reports (*On the Record*) from the Rome conference, for advocates who could not attend the meeting, and produced 50% of the conference newspaper (*Terra Viva*) for use by advocates at the conference. This helped to mobilize support for the ICC in Rome and abroad.

a) Producing information and achieving information self-sufficiency

Information about the partner: The AP team produced 32 issues of *On the Record*. These reported on the negotiations and provided information for Coalition members outside Rome.

Information by the partner: AP was part of the International Coalition at Rome. The Coalition has continued to use information to build support for the ICC since Rome.

b) Disseminating information and using ICT

ICT and dissemination: *On the Record* showed how online information can build support for a major human rights goal and in the process strengthen an international network. AP's online reports were sent out daily by email to around 2,000 individuals and activists, who used them in lobbying their governments. The reports were also published in the daily conference newspaper, *Terra Viva*, thus reaching conference delegates. AP also set up a new site where the reports were posted.

c) Using information (networking and outreach)

Lobbyists and advocates used AP's bulletins to lobby for the ICC, at home and in Rome. AP's coverage helped the Coalition identify key lobbying issues, and even helped to preserve important articles in the ICC statute which came under attack.² AP's coverage was credited with helping to create a strong ICC statute.

d) Social change

This was a short-term project, but it produced long-term social change by ensuring that the ICC got off to a strong start. The ICC has proved resilient in the face of challenges, and is now undertaking critical prosecutions in Sudan, Uganda and the Congo.

e) Feedback

“Thank you for the excellent coverage of the Rome conference and its background. For those of us interested in this vital conference but not able to attend, your coverage fills an important gap without which we will be left in the dark. The occasional and inadequate newspaper coverage of the event does not even begin to explain the stakes.” **Hrair Balian.**

² One article in the ICC statute, supported by the International Committee of the Red Cross and Spanish government, declared attacks on aid workers a war crime. It was fiercely attacked by some governments, but survived after AP campaigned for it in *On the Record*.

2. INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN NGOS (1999)

AP Partner: The International Coalition for Voluntary Agencies, ICVA

In 1999, ICVA – a network of 73 agencies – asked for AP’s assistance in developing a communications strategy. At the time, ICVA was seeking to recover from a drastic loss of membership. AP helped ICVA to produce information tools which ICVA has used to strengthen the network and improve its ability to advocate on behalf of survivors of humanitarian emergencies.

a) Producing information and achieving information self-sufficiency

Information about the partner: An AP consultant produced six issues of a new ICVA monthly newsletter (*Talkback*) and a new website within the project timeframe (six months). The first issues of *Talkback* were praised for their content and special reports (e.g. on the humanitarian situation in Kosovo after the war).

Information by the partner: After six months, AP’s consultant took up the information post at ICVA after the project finished, ensuring that ICVA would be able to manage its new information tools. ICVA took over management of the newsletter and website after six months and became self-sufficient in information and ICT.

b) Disseminating information and using ICT

ICT: ICVA contracted an ICT specialist to maintain the website, this ensuring that it was updated regularly.

Dissemination: After the 6-month project with AP finished, ICVA took over dissemination of *Talkback* and sent out the website to its own members and subscribers.

c) Using information (networking and outreach)

ICVA has used its new information tools to disseminate a common message and take collective action as a network. In the process, ICVA again became an important and independent voice for victims of humanitarian crisis. For example, ICVA played a key role in exposing the sexual abuse of children by UN peacekeepers, and campaigned successfully for greater transparency in selecting a new High Commissioner for Refugees. All current 75 ICVA members are using the website.

d) Indirect

Institution-building. This project showed how regular information plays a role in strengthening a network. Possessing strong centralized information tools helped to put ICVA back on a strong institutional footing after its crisis and strengthened the ICVA network as a whole.

3. WOMEN OF KOSOVO (1999-PRESENT)

AP Partners: Motrat Qiriazhi and the Kosova Women's Network (KWN)

Kosovar women were severely disempowered during the 1990s - first by the Serbian occupation and second by humanitarian agencies in the aftermath of the 1999 war. In the aftermath of the war, in 1999, AP was invited to profile Kosovar civil society. One of groups profiled, Motrat Qiriazhi, became a close AP partner. Based on this, in 2002 Motrat Qiriazhi asked AP to develop a communications strategy for a new network, the Kosovo Women's Network (KWN) that it was establishing to harness the energies of 32 women's groups.

During this year-long project, AP helped the KWN to develop and use a website and newsletter, which the KWN has since used to promote women's rights and present an alternative vision to nationalism in the Balkans. AP has recruited 3 interns and Peace Fellows for KWN and continues to disseminate the network's information.

a) Producing information and achieving information self-sufficiency

Information about the partner:

- **AP profiles:** In 1999 and 2000, AP twice profiled women's civil society in Kosovo, and the AP partner Motrat Qiriazhi, in the online newsletter *On the Record*.
- **KWN newsletter:** During the first, intensive phase of the partnership between AP and KWN, AP produced content for three issues of the new KWN newsletter (*KWN Voices*) and a new KWN website. The publication of the newsletter was hailed by women advocates and politicians in Europe.³
- **Blogs:** Since 2003 two AP Fellows have produced blogs on KWN's work. AP's 2006 intern, Barbra Bearden, published a series of blogs which were picked up by Episcopalian Church groups in the US and won praise.⁴

Information by the partner: In 2002, KWN lacked the capacity to take over the newsletter and website immediately. Both were put on hold while the network revised its mission and restructured the KWN Board so as to make the Board more broadly representative of Kosovo women. KWN re-emerged invigorated and redesigned the newsletter and website in line with its own needs and resources, thus realizing a key objective of this partnership - KWN's self-sufficiency in information and ICT. KWN has since produced its own regular newsletter, press releases, and annual reports – in Albanian and English.

b) Disseminating information and using ICT

ICT: During the project, in 2002, AP did everything possible to ensure that KWN's first website was locally produced, by contracting a Kosovar IT company (the Internet Project Kosovo IPKO) to build the site, and by training a local Kosovar eRider to connect KWN members and provide

³ Elisabeth Meijer, a Dutch MP wrote: "Congratulations! with your Kosovo Women's Network Letter. I am looking forward to the next issue and I wish you a lot of success!"

⁴ Ms. Rogova emailed AP about the coverage: "Thank you all who were involved in this especially Barbra. I don't think we will let her return in US because she is a great help for KWN."

basic ICT training. AP also located several computers for the project. As a result, 75% of the network members were connected in 2002. But the remaining 25% were the more isolated – and thus a priority for the network. KWN was able to connect them after upgrading its ICT capacity. This was achieved in 2003, when KWN redesigned and translated the site. AP continues to pay the domain name for KWN’s website in the US.

Dissemination: KWN information is disseminated through:

- The KWN website
- The KWN database of contacts
- **AP bulletins:** Since 2003 AP has produced 6 news bulletins about KWN campaigns and KWN’s partnership with Serbian women.⁵
- AP website: KWN’s partner page on the AP site (as of 2007)

c) Using information (networking and outreach)

KWN has used its information tools to mobilize network members and within a year it was engaged in six campaigns.⁶ KWN has since lobbied the UN administration in Kosovo to improve the protection of women; to enhance women’s participation and stop trafficking; and to integrate women into the negotiations over Kosovo’s status. Igo Rogova, the founder, is routinely invited to UN meetings, and is an advisor to the Global Fund for Women. KWN has also taken the lead in promoting UN Resolution 1325 globally, calling for greater engagement by women in peace-building.

d) Indirect benefits from partnership

- **Institution-building:** KWN has used the tools that were developed with AP’s help to build a strong network, which grew from 32 member organizations in 2002 to over 80 members by 2006. The network has also become truly representative of the larger community (Kosovo women) and includes Albanian, Serb, Ashkali and Roma organizations.
- **Empowerment of interns:** Intern Barbra Bearden wrote about the strong response to her blogs: *“It has made me a bit uneasy and excited. The whole thing makes me think that advocacy does work.”*

e) Social change

KWN has become an important agent for social change in the Balkans. KWN has formed a partnership (the Women’s Coalition for Peace) with the Serbian organization Women in Black to lobby for the full participation of women in the future state of Kosovo. In the summer of 2006, KWN’s Igo Rogova was one of 13 women from six countries to form a new regional group (the Women’s Lobby for Peace, Security and Justice in South East Europe) which also pressed for women’s rights in Kosovo.

This partnership between Serbian women and Kosovar women is exceptionally important for the future of Kosovo, because it creates an alternative vision to peace between the two countries

⁵ (<http://www.advocacynet.org/resource/558>).

⁶ Education, Women in the Economy, Violence Against Women/Domestic Violence, Coalition: NGOs and Politicians, Trafficking in Women and Refugee/IDP Women.

based on women's rights rather than nationalism. While it will be hard to achieve this vision, the mere existence of this alternative vision is an indicator of social change. AP is seeking to strengthen the partnership by publishing the Coalition's material and working with the Women in Black in Serbia. (See below)

f) Feedback:

Ms. Rogova has credited AP with helping to lay the foundation for KWN's advocacy success: "We were invisible before the (Advocacy Project) helped us. We are now visible worldwide. The wall came down."

The KWN and Women in Black will be priority partners for AP in 2008

4. NIGERIAN WOMEN, AT RISK FROM TRAFFICKING (2000-PRESENT)

AP partners: a) The Women's Consortium of Nigeria (WOCON); b) the Transnational AIDS Prevention among Migrant Prostitutes in Europe Project (TAMPEP) c) Africans in America (New York).

Hundreds of women and girls are trafficked from Nigeria to Europe and the United States every year. Many are rounded up as illegal immigrants and deported back to Nigeria, where they face abuse, ostracism and violence. In 2000, AP was asked by the **Women's Consortium in Nigeria (WOCON)** a leading advocate on the issue, to publicize its work on the issue. In 2003, AP developed a second partnership with an Italian advocacy group (**Transnational AIDS Prevention among Migrant Prostitutes in Europe Project - TAMPEP**) that assists women who are trafficked into prostitution from Nigeria. TAMPEP is working at both ends of the trade, to support trafficked women in Italy and spread information in Nigeria. In 2006, AP developed a partnership with **Africans in America**, a New York-based group that advocates for trafficking victims among the Nigerian *diaspora*.

In the process of working with these three organizations, AP has itself become something of an international clearing house for information about Nigerian trafficking.

This has ensured that trafficking in Nigeria is widely publicized and indirectly contributed to a range of improvements in Nigeria and Italy – including the establishment of safe houses for returned survivors and tougher legislation against trafficking in Italy. The international agencies (IOM) have also invested in Nigerian trafficking since AP took up the issue. AIA has emerged as an effective advocate.

But our interventions have had limited impact on strengthening WOCON as an organization and only a marginal impact on unifying advocacy at both ends of the trade – one of our original aims.

a) Producing information and achieving information self-sufficiency

Information about the partners:

- **Profiling the problem:** In 2001, an AP team visited Nigeria and published a series of online articles about the trafficking crisis and the advocacy of WOCON. These were reprinted in a leading Nigerian magazine, and attracted attention to the issue and to WOCON. AP also published an editorial on trafficking in the *International Herald Tribune*.
- **Blogs:** AP interns and Fellows have produced 8 sets of blogs since 2003 from Nigeria and Italy. This year's Fellow produced 11 blogs in English and 8 in Italian, and raised several controversial issues, such as the link between trafficking and prostitution. This has encouraged a lively debate between US-based activists and AP Fellows.
- **Research paper:** An AP intern in 2006 in Nigeria conducted original research on safe houses for returned trafficked victims, in Lagos and Benin City at the request of a British church group.

Information by the partner: Neither WOCON nor TAMPEP have committed to regularly producing their own information. WOCON has been plagued by limited resources, a high turnover of staff and poor infrastructure. Finally, in 2006, WOCON decided to withdraw from trafficking as an issue. In Italy, TAMPEP has yet to make the shift from delivering services to trafficked prostitutes in Turin, to advocacy and information. This year, at AP's urging, TAMPEP has made an institutional commitment to creating an information department, work more in English, and produce a newsletter. TAMPEP expects to have a website and newsletter, in English and Italian, functioning by the summer of 2008. AP has drafted a newsletter template for use by TAMPEP.

Of the three groups, Africans in America (which has the least resources) has invested most in a strong website and publishes regular news bulletins.

b) Disseminating information and using ICT

ICT:

- **Websites:** AP has helped WOCON and TAMPEP to develop websites. This has been a long and drawn-out task, spread out over two years and involving several AP interns. But the desired outcome was eventually achieved. TAMPEP and WOCON are both managing their sites, although the WOCON site suffers greatly from poor connectivity. Six AP interns and Fellows have worked on the two websites.

Dissemination:

- **AP website:** AP has posted partner pages on the AP site for TAMPEP and WOCON, but as yet these have been very little used by these partners.
- **AP bulletins:** Since 2003 AP has produced 4 bulletins on trafficking between Nigeria and Italy, which have highlighted the efforts of civil society at both ends to work together. They have also publicized the efforts of Africans in America to expose examples of trafficking within the US, and broken stories of trafficked victims.

c) Using information (networking and outreach)

Networking: AP has developed databases of partner organizations for TAMPEP and WOCON. In the process, AP's role as a networker has also expanded. AP's publications on trafficking continue to attract inquiries, from the media, advocates and governments. AP has also provided support for a team of Danish journalists to make a powerful television documentary. This has led to other networking by AP around trafficking – with the Churches Alert to Sex Trafficking in Europe (CHASTE).

Working through its interns in Italy and Nigeria, AP also sought in 2006 to lay the foundation for an international network, and strengthen ties between civil society in Italy and Nigeria. But this did not receive the necessary support from partners, and was not followed up.

Outreach: AP's work on trafficking in Nigeria has showed that when the partner is committed, AP can provide powerful support for their advocacy:

- The joint AP-WOCON mission in 2000 conducted many outreach activities in Nigeria including a press conference at the US Embassy.⁷
- AP organized two speaking visits to the US for the WOCON Director.
- Several AP interns and Fellows have linked up with community groups in the US through their blogging and follow up with presentations on return to the US (including presentations at a Youth Club in the Bronx.) This has produced an important outcome for the Zonta Women's Club of Washington (see below).
- At the request of TAMPEP, AP visited and supported a young Nigerian woman in Nigeria (HIV-positive and pregnant) who had been deported from Italy.
- Several AP bulletins have resulted in action. One 2006 bulletin encouraged the US State Department to provide diplomatic protection for the Executive Director of Africans in America, when he returned to Nigeria to face trial on a charge of having sued traffickers. Another 2007 bulletin exposed the case of a young woman who was trafficked in Houston. This latter bulletin was re-issued by many online news services and mobilized the Nigerian *diaspora* community. It also helped to secure a lawyer for the woman and ensure that she was not deported.

d) Indirect

- **Institution-building:** WOCON failed to see the connection between information and a strong organization. TAMPEP is still making the shift from service-delivery to advocacy and information could help to strengthen TAMPEP's exciting work in Italy and Nigeria.
- **Empowered Volunteers:** All interns and Fellows who have worked on this issue have been transformed by the experience. *"This internship was wonderful because it pushed me to accomplish things that I had never done before...It has also pushed the limits of my writing and organizational skills. Frequent last minute*

⁷ The Embassy press officer later wrote: *"I Just wanted to let you know that one of the journalists to whom you began sending the trafficking newsletter has started using it in a regular column in her paper. She uses the full text of the report and continues it each week. The trafficking issue has become much more heavily covered in the Nigerian press since your visit here and with the Beijing+5 conference. I am very pleased, and I think you would be too. Anyway, keep up the good work. It is making a difference."*

deadlines forced me to write well and fast. They also challenged me to work more independently, develop quick problem solving strategies and to handle multiple assignments all at the same time. All in all, this internship was a supreme boost in confidence and I feel I can do almost anything I set my mind to” - Malia Mayson, 2005 WOCON Intern: Michelle Lanspa, a 2006 TAMPEP Fellow has decided to remain with TAMPEP, which is an important indicator of a successful fellowship. She writes: *“This fellowship has made me confront that reality every day – to not be selfish and to remember to take other people’s troubles, concerns, problems into consideration.”*

- **Building cross-cultural bridges:** This year, several members of the Zonta Women’s Club linked up with AP Fellows through blogs and reported that the experience had been hugely rewarding. The Zonta president wrote to say that this exchange had helped the club receive a signal honor, within the Zonta family.⁸

e) Social change

Since 2000, AP has invested heavily in Nigerian trafficking. While this has undoubtedly helped to publicize the crime – an important achievement – AP has failed to help WOCON, TAMPEP and AIA to move to the next level and use their information tools to make real inroads into the roots of trafficking. TAMPEP’s work in Nigeria and Italy holds great promise, and TAMPEP is committed to more vigorous advocacy, but AP at present lacks the resources to help. We may stand more chance of success with AIA, which has already begun to model its website and press releases around those of AP.

f) Feedback:

The Features editor of Punch, one of the largest Nigerian magazines wrote the following about AP’s coverage of trafficking from Nigeria: *“I have read each of the five articles in the series (of On the Record) and I think they are wonderfully detailed and informative. Diligent research can’t have a better example. Over the next five or so weeks, we intend to run the whole series in the Sunday PUNCH newspaper in Lagos, where I work as Features Editor. We will give full credits to the Advocacy Project and all the collaborating organizations as mentioned in the story.”*

5. INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN UNIONS (2001-PRESENT)

AP Partner: The Democracy and Workers Rights Center

AP’s partnership with the DWRC dates from 2001, when an AP mission visited the occupied Palestinian Territory and profiled the DWRC’s work on behalf of independent Palestinian unions. In the years since, AP has continued to promote DWRC’s important work as a leader in Palestinian civil society and recruited a Peace Fellow for DWRC in 2007. DWRC’s goal is to provide a voice to independent Palestinian unions (which are fiercely resented by the official unions) and promote democracy in the Palestinian union movement. Both are critically important

⁸ *“We are on quite a high - our club received the award for being the best in the district (out of 34 clubs) in part because of our work with AP!”*

outcomes for any future Palestinian state. Up to now, AP has worked with DWRC. In future, AP may also try to work directly with DWRC's grassroots members.

a) Producing information and achieving information self-sufficiency

Information about the partner:

- **Profiling advocacy:** AP profiled the DWRC in 2001 in *On the Record* (the start of the *intifada*). The reports were criticized by the NGO Monitor.
- **Blogs:** AP Peace Fellow Eliza Bates produced hard-hitting blogs on the DWRC this summer. One of her blogs attracted 26 comments – more than any other AP blog.
- **Research:** AP's Executive Director, Iain Guest, covered the issue of independent Palestinian trades unions issue in a 60-page research paper on human rights (Spring 2007).⁹ The recommendations were adopted by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation and widely discussed in Palestine and by Foundations.

Information by the partner: The DWRC has made important steps this summer to produce its own information on a regular basis, with AP's help.

- **Newsletter.** In early October, DWRC produced the first issue of a new newsletter, profiling its work with independent unions. This was an important outcome.
- **Press releases and new bulletins.** DWRC produced six press releases between June and August – a significant increase over previous periods.
- **Investment in staff.** Ms. Bates worked with a new DWRC Information officer, Ms. Jumana Dubis during the summer of 2007, and trained Ms. Dubis in writing press releases and newsletters. DWRC is close to “information self-sufficiency.”

b) Disseminating information and using ICT

ICT and dissemination:

- **DWRC website:** Until 2007, DWRC's use of ICT did not keep pace with the work plan, and its website was particularly deficient. This summer DWRC finally unveiled a new website - a major achievement. AP will encourage DWRC to use the site to showcase its reports and bulletins.
- **AP website:** AP has posted a DWRC partner page on the AP website which we hope will also serve DWRC's grassroots members.
- **Technical support:** AP helped DWRC to find a new server, in the US, and provided extensive technical advice on ICT (2006).
- **AP news bulletins:** AP has produced 11 news bulletins on the DWRC and its work. These have been re-used by many other services.¹⁰

c) Using information (networking and outreach)

Networking: In 2002, AP organized meetings at the World Bank for the Director of DWRC during a visit to the US in 2004.

⁹ <http://advocacynet.org/resource/839>

¹⁰ One AP bulletin was reprinted in the inaugural issue of the International Journal of Civil Society Law.

Outreach: DWRC has long been an articulate spokesperson for independent Palestinian unions, and there is strong evidence that this is leading to social change in the OPT. In July 2007, DWRC helped to launch a new federation of independent unions. DWRC used its new information tools to cover the meeting, with guidance from AP fellow Ms. Bates. The meeting was also attended by a senior government official and UN agencies, signaling a softening of the official position (which is fiercely opposed to any challenge to official unions). DWRC will now follow up.

AP has also used its publications to lobby the International Labor Organization to support independent unions. An ILO mission visited DWRC and referred to independent unions for the first time in its report for the annual ILO conference. DWRC has also taken its message outside Palestine, through the International Federation of Workers' Education Associations (IFWEA). DWRC and AP will now follow up and build on this successful advocacy.

d) Feedback

Tim Wise, a former Executive Director Grassroots International (GRI) wrote the following about AP's 2001 coverage of Palestinian civil society: *"What a remarkable and useful piece of work! I dreamed about such things when I was at GRI: compelling profiles of partners' work that put it in political context and showed their effectiveness and inspiration in responding."*

The DWRC and its independent affiliates will be a priority partner for AP in 2008

6. INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES OF CHIXOY, GUATEMALA (2001-PRESENT)

AP partner: The Association for the Integral Development of the Victims of Violence in the Verapaces, Maya Achi (Adivima)

Adivima is a community-based association that advocates for survivors of the notorious Rio Negro massacres that killed hundreds of indigenous villagers in Guatemala in 1982. AP's partnership with Adivima began in 2001, when we were invited to visit Guatemala and profile Adivima's advocacy. AP has since sent three interns and Fellows to work with Adivima.

The group is highly motivated and has clear social justice goals – to bring the killers to justice, to identify those killed, and to provide economic empowerment for survivors (particularly women and girls). Adivima has registered modest successes in all three areas, and this summer the group started a new scholarship program for girls.

Adivima is strongly committed to the AP model, and AP helped the group to produce a new website and newsletter this summer. AP will follow up and help Adivima to maintain these tools and use them in their advocacy.

a) Producing information and achieving information self-sufficiency

Information about the partner:

- **Telling the story:** AP sent a staff member to Guatemala in 2001 to tell the story of the Rio Negro massacres and profile Adivima's advocacy. This material formed the basis for an online newsletter (*On the Record*) and 2 sets of illustrated web pages on the AP website.
- **Adivima newsletter:** This summer, with help from AP Peace Fellow Abby Weil, Adivima produced its first-ever newsletter.
- **Blogs:** Four AP Peace fellows have worked at Adivima and written extremely effective blogs.

Information by the partner: Adivima's challenge is to ensure that the new newsletter is sustained, improved and used. To this end, Abby Weil worked alongside Ophelia Gonzalez, an Adivima staff member, in producing the new newsletter. AP also identified a translator in Washington who translated the newsletter into English. AP will continue to help Adivima develop its capacity to produce its own newsletter for at least another year, at which point it will be considered to be self-sufficient in information production.

b) Disseminating information and using ICT

ICT:

- **Websites:** AP has helped Adivima produce two websites. The first site, which was posted by AP Peace Fellow Charles Wright was a static (brochure) site. This summer Peace Fellow Abby Weil worked with Ophelia Gonzalez to produce content for a new site. The site was re-designed for free by a Texas IT company. Adivima has not yet met the test of ICT self-sufficiency, and the group is still some way from being able to maintain the new newsletter or pay for hosting. AP will continue to work with Adivima, and make the case for investing in ICT and the maintenance of the site.

Dissemination:

- **Adivima site** carries the new newsletter and other material about Adivima
- **The AP site** also carries an Adivima partner page
- **AP reports and Bulletins:** AP has disseminated information about Adivima through 8 issues of *On the Record* (2001), and two news bulletins. AP has produced two bulletins on Adivima.

c) Using information (networking and outreach)

Networking: AP has promoted Adivima's message with others, including church groups and *diaspora* organizations and AP's coverage of the Rio Negro massacres have been referred to in many different outlets. They have also spurred others to engage with the Rio Negro communities, and helped Adivima take its case to the World Bank (see below). AP has produced a database of contacts for Adivima that will receive the newsletter and other Adivima publications. AP's networking intern will also continue build a constituency for the group.

Outreach:

- Adivima's advocacy has helped to send 9 paramilitaries to prison for involvement in the 1982 massacres. Over 200 victims have been exhumed and identified.
- AP's advocacy on behalf of Adivima in 2001 helped Adivima's leaders to make their case at the World Bank in the spring of that year. (Bank officials had the AP reports on their desk during the meeting.) This was credited with encouraging the Bank's Guatemala office to invest more in the Peace Process and support civil society. But the Bank still refuses to accept responsibility for the massacres and Adivima's long-term goals (the arrest of those responsible and the social and economic empowerment of survivors) remain elusive. AP will work with Adivima to come up with new and innovative approaches to advocacy, possibly including a memorial quilt.

d) Indirect

- **Institution-building.** Adivima has grown steadily stronger as an organization and now comprises three main program areas. It is now moving more into economic empowerment, particularly for women, and has asked AP for help in developing income-generation modeled on AP's support for the Bosnian weavers
- **Empowered Volunteers:** *"On a personal level, this experience forced me to re-evaluate my definitions of poverty, lack of resources, discrimination and suffering. I came in contact with incredible people, people who have endured decades of hardship but still remained hopeful and looked to people like me with great hope that I might in some way be able to help further their cause. Faced with the existing conditions and seemingly hopeless situation, one can only be humbled and duly impressed by their resolve and their tireless spirit."* **Paula Tufro**, 2005 Intern. *"This fellowship shows that I can perform under strenuous circumstances, operate in another language, and utilize technology to access an international audience."* **Abby Weil**, 2007 Peace Fellow.

e) Social change

Adivima has managed to keep the Rio Negro issue alive in the face of unrelenting intimidation, and in the process become of Guatemala's most celebrated and self-reliant advocacy groups. But its local achievements have not been replicated in the many thousands of other communities that suffered during the war. Real social change will clearly require a combination of factors, including commitment from the Guatemalan government – perhaps through the new impunity commission – and advocacy from abroad. AP will continue to network with other interested

f) Feedback:

"We are very grateful to you for helping us for a third consecutive year, and sending students to our organization to provide strong institutional support. Abby Weil's help was critically important in helping to adapt and realize our website. We thank Abby for the tremendous work she devoted to our organization. We consider her a strong ally in our struggle. We hope to continue to count on your support, and the support of students who remain ready to collaborate on our behalf." **Juan de Dios**, Director of Adivima (2007).

Adivima will be a priority partner for AP in 2008

7. INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF ECUADOR (2001-2005)

AP Partner: the Center for Economic and Social Rights (CDES)

In 2001 AP staff writer Peter Lippman profiled the efforts of indigenous communities in Ecuador to halt oil exploration in the Amazon. Lippman's powerful series was published as a special series of *On the Record* and continues to attract readers. This remains a substantial achievement and contribution.

AP recruited interns for CDES in 2004 and 2005. Christina Fetterhof, the 2004 intern, did a highly professional job, and has since gone into the Peace Corps. But the 2005 intern did not fulfill her obligations to the program, and the partnership with CDES never recovered. This was one of the few real failures in the AP Fellowship program. CDES itself remains a major player in the struggle for indigenous rights in South America.

Feedback: *“Congratulations and thank you for the clear, comprehensive, well-written, accessible series on Ecuador by Peter Lippman. He does a great job of connecting the reader to the facts and the people, bringing it much closer to home. These issues are so important.”* **Rae Levine.**

8. YOUNG AFRICANS SUFFERING FROM HIV-AIDS (2001)

AP Partner: Youth against AIDS (YAA)

In 2000-1, AP received an urgent request from 3 African students to help them pull together a network of young AIDS activists from 16 African countries known as Youth Against AIDS – YAA. Their goal was to provide better information to young Africans about the health risks and to engage young Africans more in fighting AIDS.

AP asked the three students to contact all of their focal points and confirm their interest, which they did. Based on this, AP paid for the three coordinators of YAA to visit six African countries and profile the work of their partners there. AP published their reports in an online newsletter that was widely read, and developed a YAA website. Several network members launched projects, and YAA played an important lobbying role at the successful 2001 special session of the UN General Assembly.

But unlike other partners – KWN and AWN – YAA was unable to take over and use the information tools that AP had developed. YAA collapsed as a network when its three coordinators were forced to find work.

a) Producing information and achieving information self-sufficiency

Information about the partner: The material collected in Africa was disseminated in a special 2001 series of *On the Record* AP, which explored eight ways in which young Africans are vulnerable to AIDS. The series also highlighted the critical importance of information as a tool

of prevention. AP created a new website with a clickable map with profiles of 16 young AIDS activists. AP also profiled YAA's work in a newspaper for the Special Session of the UNGA on children.

Information by the partner: The material for these products came largely from young Africans and thus represented an authentic voice of African advocacy. The series also provided an outlet for several African journalists and services (including Rights Features in Nairobi.)

b) ICT and dissemination

AP designed and posted the YAA website, but YAA was unable to take it over and turn it into a tool for lobbying. Eventually, after two years, YAA took down the site but failed to replace it. YAA remained highly dependent on AP to disseminate information until it disbanded.

c) Using information

Networking and outreach: YAA's three coordinators were effective advocates and they used their information tools to give a voice to young Africans affected by HIV-AIDS. This was effective outreach. (Their online newsletters generated more feedback than any single AP publication.) YAA's outreach culminated in an effective performance by YAA-President Lydia Bosire at the Special Session of the UNGA on HIV-AIDS (June 2001). This conference was one of the most successful ever at the UN. It embraced many of the changes called for in the YAA-AP publications and included unusually progressive provisions on prevention and information.

d) Indirect

Institution-building: This project failed to build YAA into a strong and sustainable institution and YAA collapsed when its three coordinators were forced to find work. One conclusion drawn by AP was that the three YAA coordinators were not part of the struggle against AIDS in Africa, and therefore lacked the same motivation of those on the frontline. Another is that some plan for sustainability should be integrated into all partnerships, at the outset.

e) Social change:

While YAA itself proved unsustainable, its products contributed to a massive wave of publicity about HIV-AIDS in Africa, in 2000-2001. This helped to produce major changes in policy and contributed to a significant lowering of rates of infection in many African nations.

f) Feedback:

"That was good stuff. Please keep it up! I hope to get some articles from young people up onto the internet soon. Thanks for the good work again!!" **Sentamu Phillip Sparks**, the YAA Ugandan focal point, (referring to YAA's writings in *On the Record*).

9. CHILDREN

AP Partner - The NGO Committee for UNICEF

In 2001, AP was asked to cover the run-up to the Special Session of the General Assembly on Children for the UNICEF NGO Committee. AP produced three newsletters, each one more

ambitious than the previous one. The project culminated at the Special Session itself where AP produced content for a daily tabloid newspaper, a new website, and an online newsletter.

The immediate goal was to help NGO advocates lobby for a strong conference declaration on the rights of children. This was achieved and in the years since, the protection of children has remained at the front of the international agenda. The project also produced some indirect results, including the training of young journalists. But AP failed to help its immediate client – the UNICEF NGO committee – sustain and use its new information tools.

a) Information about partner:

The main goal of this project was to produce strong content (as at the 1998 Rome conference.) This was achieved. AP produced 24 printed and email editions of *On the Record for Children*, and they were much praised. (See below).

b) ICT and dissemination

AP covered all dissemination at the meetings, on behalf of the UNICEF NGO Committee. In what amounted to an important innovation, AP disseminated the same content to three different outlets through an email newsletter, sent out to Committee members around the world; a Committee website, which carried a PDF version of the newspaper; and the daily e-mail newsletter, which went out to over 5,000 subscribers.

c) Networking and outreach

On the Record for Children was the only reliable source of information at the conference and AP's editorial team obtained several "scoops" as the final discussions went behind closed doors. AP's NGO sponsors viewed this as a highly significant outcome, which played a critically important role in advancing the NGO agenda. (See below)

d) Indirect

Institution-Building. The AP team was not able to train the NGO Committee to take over the newsletter and website, and both products lapsed when AP's involvement ended. The main reason was that the Committee was unable to define goals for its own network beyond the conference – which effectively killed the website and newsletter.

On the job training through conference newspapers. This project produced one unintended outcome by training young journalists. Aware that young writers would be attending the conference, the AP team hired three young writers, aged 13 to 16, and offered daily training sessions in journalism for young participants at the conference. A total of 24 trainees took part, and all were invited to contribute articles to the AP newspaper (*On the Record for Children*). By the end of the conference, half of the writers on the paper were under 20. Their age was not made known to readers and few could tell the difference between the "professionals" and the youngsters.

This nurturing of young writing talent turned out to be one of the most positive outcomes of this project, even though it was never one of the original goals. Yelena Ovcharenko, a 15 year old writer wrote: *"We the children of the UN newspaper would like to thank AP's patient and hardworking staff for putting up with our amateur writing and our attitudes. We would like to*

thank you for giving us the best days of our lives. CPACIBO -- (thank you in Russian) -- for being willing to work with us because together we have made a difference." This was echoed by the co-chair of the UNICEF Committee.¹¹

e) Social change:

As with AP's work for Youth Against AIDS, AP's partnership with the UNICEF Committee produced highly effective tools and short-term outcomes, but failed to empower the actual partner. In spite of this, these projects contributed to major long-term change. The international regime for protecting children has strengthened since 2002, building on the framework created at the Special Session.

f) Feedback:

"I realized more than ever what a great contribution the newspaper was to the whole process. With the formal negotiations behind closed doors, the newspaper became even more important for NGOs. You targeted the issues well and kept NGOs better informed than we thought possible when the week began. Everyone looked forward to the next issue." **Mary Purcell**, Co-chair of the NGO Committee.

10. EAST EUROPEAN ROMA eRIDERS – (2002-2003)

The Roma are among Europe's most disempowered communities. They suffer from poverty, illiteracy, ill health and unemployment. AP has always viewed information as a key to their empowerment, and has sought to help several Roma partners produce and use information.

In 2002, AP was contracted by the Open Society Institute (OSI) to train and support six Roma eRiders (IT trainers) from Bulgaria, Macedonia, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Romania and Slovakia. This was known as the Roma Information Project – RIP. The six eRiders were all young, college-educated, activists, and comfortable with the technology. Four were women. AP helped the six work together as a team, train Roma activists in their own countries, and promote the use of ICT as a tool for empowering Roma. The eRiders achieved the short-term goals of the project, but were unable to transform their own association into a sustainable organization and trigger long-term social change.

a) Producing information and achieving information self-sufficiency

Information about the partner (outputs): AP produced a newsletter, and website content in the form of a new website and 12 separate pages profiling the eRiders and their work.

Information by the partner (outcomes): The eRiders produced a RIP newsletter during the life of the project which was distributed to subscribers. They were also required to produce information in English and their native language.

¹¹ Mary Purcell, the co-director of the UNICEF Committee, wrote: *"Thanks for the time you spent with young journalists, helping them to try their journalistic skills. With this being a Special Session for Children it was very important to see their thinking and writing so well presented in the newspaper."*

b) Disseminating information and using ICT

ICT: This was an ICT training project, intended to develop the ICT skills of those participating, and of their community-based clients. To this end AP undertook the following:

- **Organized four trainings** for the RIP eRiders in US and Europe. These trainings enabled the eRiders to increase their ICT skills and left them more confident. They became well known in the Roma community as young Roma leaders (below).

c) Using information (networking and outreach)

The intention was that the eRiders would become “ICT ambassadors” and use ICT to empower Roma communities throughout East Europe. During the life of the project the eRiders provided ICT support for 55 NGOs, 14 networks, and 3 regional initiatives in 7 countries.¹² Their work was written up in a RIP newsletter, in their blogs, and profiled on the AP site. The eRiders also took on three ambitious campaigns, using ICT.¹³

Outreach in the USA: Parallel to their work in Europe, AP encouraged the eRiders to bring their message to the USA and promote the eRiding model at a major meeting of ICT experts in the US. Three RIP eRiders made a presentation to over 50 of the 250 participants and were interviewed for a movie. They also contributed to the first-ever online series on eRiding, which were posted to the largest NGOs and technology web portal (Tech Soup) and profiled in the Digital Opportunity Channel.

The eRiders participated in an online forum, which received the highest rating in Tech Soup history. Together and independently the eRiders represented RIP at the Council of Europe, OSCE, World Bank, International Romani Union, Roma National Congress and OSI organized conferences. The six eRiders collaborated on the development of brochures, business cards and profiles of their work, which were posted on the AP site. AP staff wrote the profiles.

d) Indirect

- **Institution-building:** The RIP project met its short-term goals and produced many more outputs and outcomes than had been originally intended. But the larger goal of the project – to build an international team of Roma ICT eRiders who would serve as a catalyst for social change in Roma communities throughout Europe – was not realized. The RIP eRiders formed a new NGO, based in Bulgaria, and AP continued to seek allies and funding for them for two years. But no funding could be found and the RIP members were forced to focus on their own countries and lives. They are all working in ICT and using ICT in the cause of development.

¹² In one example, Gyula Vamosi, in Hungary, was able to 'sell' the benefits of IT to a group of Roma parents who were trying to end segregation against their children in the local schools. He helped the parents use e-mail to contact the Prime Minister directly and so bypass the obstructionist local authorities. Mr. Vamosi then used this to help the parents reorganize their way of working - from raising funds to setting goals.

¹³ Combating sexual taboos in Roma communities and promoting the freedom of choice for Roma women in Macedonia; the desegregation of Roma schools and state institutions in Hungary; and the reform of the EU's Phare funding program for Roma NGOS.

e) Social Change:

One outcome from this project was to increase interest in international eRiding, and ICT as a tool for empowering communities. The number of participants at the annual eRiding conference grew from 20 in 1997 to 200 in 2002. Ms. Crawford was credited with helping to spur the growth and has since become well known as a pioneer of eRiding.

f) Feedback:

"The work she (Ms. Crawford) is doing is near and dear to my heart -- she's trying to establish a "movement" that I founded here in the US in Europe. OSI has funded portions of her work. They think she's the cat's pajamas." **Gavin Clabaugh**, Mott Foundation.

11. ROMA WOMEN IN EAST AND WEST EUROPE (2002-PRESENT)

AP partner: The International Roma Women's Network (IRWN)

In 2002 the Council of Europe asked AP to help 18 Roma women advocates from East and West Europe form a lobbying network. AP helped the network to elect a committee, secure IT training and create a listserv. AP also gave advice to the committee members at international meetings, and helped them to use the IRWN listserv to take collective action on behalf of Roma.

IRWN has shown its potential, and used its network to effect, but has not been able to evolve beyond a voluntary association because of insufficient funding. AP was able to raise \$8,000 for the IRWN, but this was the only core funding raised by the network. AP has lacked the resources to recruit a Peace Fellow for the IRWN or develop a long-term partnership beyond the initial two years.

a) Producing information and achieving information self-sufficiency

Information about the partner: AP has produced four news bulletins on the IRWN and its online campaigns.

Information by the partner: IRWN has not developed to the point as an organization that it is able to produce regular information.

b) Disseminating information and using ICT

ICT:

- **Listserv:** AP helped the IRWN develop a listserv, which now has over 150 names and has proved important in helping the 18-member network communicate among its members and take collective action;
- **IT Training.** AP helped the IRWN committee win a grant of \$8,000 for computers, and provided basic ICT training for the network's 5 committee members

Dissemination:

- **AP site:** AP has posted an IRWN partner page on the AP site, which will substitute for the network's own site until IRWN can produce its own site

- **AP bulletins:** has disseminated four bulletins, which were widely picked up and re-issued.

c) Using information (networking and outreach)

IRWN demonstrated its potential as an advocacy network during the first two years. After it was created, the IRWN filled a hole and quickly emerged as an important advocate for the larger community of Roma women in Europe. It won election as a founding member of a new Forum for Roma, Gypsies and Travelers, created in 2004 at the Council of Europe.

The IRWN network has since used its listserv to lobby online against the sterilization of Gypsies in Slovakia, evictions in the UK, the deportation of Roma back to Kosovo, and poverty in the Czech Republic.¹⁴ IRWN has continued to lobby on selective issues, as when it came out strongly this summer against the holding of a Miss Roma beauty Pageant in Macedonia.

AP has taken up issues on behalf of IRWN, through our own outlets. In 2004, we launched an online campaign to forced Dictionary.com to drop an offensive online definition of Gypsies. The definition was removed.

d) Indirect

Institution-building and fundraising: Exceptionally, and at the request of the IRWN's founding members, AP helped the IRWN to get started as an organization. AP helped the founding members draft a mission statement (which was posted on the AP website in *Romanes* and English); elect a president; define job responsibilities for a six-person IRWN committee; elect a committee; draw up a work plan; and secure legal status. This provided IRWN with some initial rules. But IRWN has been unable to build on this and move to the next level (e.g. hold elections). Donors and governments are at fault for helping to start the network and then failing to provide core support.

The IRWN survives as a network, but is hampered by the lack of resources. The IRWN listserv continues to attract new subscribers, indicating that the network possesses a basic level of ICT self-sufficiency. This has been achieved without any outside support in the form of core funding. This indicates strong social capital and motivation. But the shortage of financial resources has prevented the IRWN from mounting sustained activities, lobbying for deep social change, and building democratic rules. As long as this persists, the IRWN's potential as a representative of Roma women will remain unrealized.

12. SURVIVORS OF THE SREBRENICA MASSACRE (2002 - PRESENT)

AP Partner: Bosfam

The international community long ago lost interest in survivors of the 1995 Srebrenica massacre, but survivors from the massacre are more disempowered with each passing year. They need to earn a living, return home, identify their lost relatives, and bring the killers to justice. In 2002, AP began working with one of their leading advocacy groups, the Bosnian family or Bosfam

¹⁴ This last protest evoked a response from the head of the European Commission.

which sought to use advocacy to achieve these goals. (This partnership began after AP profiled the efforts of Bosnian refugees to return to their homes, including to Srebrenica. Based on this report, Bosfam asked for help with their advocacy.)

AP began as it has with other partners – by helping Bosfam tell its story. The partnership then moved to helping Bosfam develop information tools, particularly a website, and devising outreach strategies to help Bosfam meet the goals set out above. AP has recruited six interns and Fellows to help – the largest number sent to any AP partner.

This partnership has met several important short-term and medium-term goals, but the arrest of the killers remains elusive and the prospects for the return of Bosfam weavers to their homes depends squarely on them generating sufficient income.

a) Producing information and achieving information self-sufficiency

Information about the partner: AP has produced much material on Bosfam and its work since 2003. (See below). Bosfam itself has not reached the stage where it can produce information about its work.

- **Blogs:** AP interns and Peace Fellows have produced excellent blogs which have given a poignant personal account of the challenges facing Bosfam's members.

Information by the partner (outcomes): Bosfam lacks the institutional capacity to produce its own regular information and communicate regularly in any language other than Bosnian. It has preferred to use AP's news service and its own website.

b) Disseminating information and using ICT

ICT: Bosfam has, from the start, view a website as an important vehicle for promoting the carpets of its weavers and for telling the story of its members. Over the past four years, Bosfam has posted two websites with AP's support and Bosfam is now able to maintain a website, which means that the group has acquired a basic ICT self-sufficiency and so met an important marker for AP.

In 2003, an AP consultant/eRider helped Bosfam to produce content for a new Bosfam website, and worked with a local Bosnian ICT company to train Bosfam members in basic ICT use and website development. Bosfam developed a site, but decided to revise it. This year, AP Peace Fellow Alison Morse helped Bosfam to develop content and post the new site, in English and Bosnian.

Bosfam now uses the site to promote its products and campaigns online, including joint campaigns with AP. This is a major advance since 2002. But while Bosfam is self-sufficient in ICT, the site has yet to generate significant online sales, and Bosfam as a whole lacks a solid financial base.

Dissemination: While the Bosfam site carries basic information about Bosfam's work, Bosfam has relied mainly on AP to disseminate its information:

- 11 news bulletins about Srebrenica and Bosfam’s advocacy. Five were published around the anniversary of the July 11 massacre, helping to keep the memory of the massacre alive. These have been among AP’s most widely-read bulletins. They have also produced a response from one of AP’s target audiences, the Bosnian *diaspora*.¹⁵
- Material for 3 sets of illustrated web pages on the AP site (totaling 39 individual pages) and two Bosfam websites.¹⁶
- A 20-minute promotional video, which has been widely used in AP’s advocacy.
- Several brochures on Bosfam’s work, the most recent being on the Srebrenica Memorial quilt.¹⁷

c) Using information (networking and outreach)

Networking: Since 2003, AP has worked hard to develop a constituency for Bosfam in the US. Those contacted have included the online retailer Worldstock.com (which has made two purchases of Bosfam carpets); Aid to Artisans (which offers technical advice to community-based artisans); and the Dutch Refugee Foundation, which donated Bosfam \$13,000 for its weaving center in Srebrenica at AP’s strong recommendation. AP has also introduced Bosfam to senior officials at the United Nations, foundations, and corporate sponsors.

Outreach: AP has used Bosfam’s carpets as the centerpiece for a long campaign to promote Bosfam’s message in the US. AP has exhibited carpets at promotional events in Washington, Baltimore and Boston, which generated articles in the mainstream media and orders for carpets worth over \$2,000. AP has also launched a sponsorship scheme for weavers which has so far generated \$12,000.

AP has encouraged the Bosfam weavers to weave a Srebrenica Memorial Quilt, which is slowly moving around *diaspora* communities in the US, gathering new panels. *Diaspora* advocates hope that eventually the quilt can be exhibited in Washington and used to press US lawmakers to increase support for Srebrenica survivors and hunt down the killers.

Parallel to this, AP has worked with three other advocacy groups to launch two online campaigns to arrest the Srebrenica killers. The first petition, in 2005, attracted almost 10,000 signatures and was used by AP and the others to lobby the US Congress and NATO.¹⁸ The second was launched this summer.

¹⁵ Typical of the many replies was the following from Bisera Julardzija, a Bosnian who resides in the US wrote: “Many times I feel like I should do more for my country. I admire your work and would like to use this chance to thank you for recognizing Bosnia’s situation and killings that happened in Srebrenica. I wish you the best success;”

¹⁶ The number of page views went from 769 on November 18 2002, to 4,556 on November 19, the day that new Srebrenica pages were posted.

¹⁷ These have been collected in one of several AP “partner portfolios” containing outreach products on AP partners.

¹⁸ AP linked up with three other human rights groups and used the signatures to lobby the US Deputy Secretary of State; the High Representative in Bosnia; the head of NATO; and the prosecutor at the International Criminal Tribunal in The Hague. Shortly after receiving the petition, the director of NATO confronted the president of Serbia and demanded the arrest of Karadzic and Mladic.

d) Indirect

- **Institutional support - Fundraising:** AP's outreach and networking have helped to generate \$69,861 for Bosfam and its weavers since 2002.
- **Empowered Volunteers:** AP has recruited six interns or Fellows for Bosfam, including three graduates from the Business School at Georgetown University. *"I will likely focus my academic work in the coming year on women's organizations and the developments of civil society in post-conflict societies."* **Alison Morse (2007 Peace Fellow)**
- **Cross-cultural bridges:** This partnership has built many bridges between the Srebrenica survivors in Bosnia and activists in the US, including with individuals who have sponsored a weaver, at \$1,000 apiece. AP has also nurtured a partnership between survivors of Srebrenica in Bosnia, and the Bosnian *diaspora* in the US.
- **Indirect benefits for AP:** This partnership with Bosfam has pushed AP to develop innovative approaches to outreach, using handicrafts, which could be used with other partners who are struggling to recover from massacres and abuse.
- **Personal empowerment:** There is much evidence that reaching out to Americans has proved empowering for individual Bosnian survivors, by giving them a chance to express themselves through their carpets, and receive payment for their products. This has happened in different ways and on different occasions. In 2004, AP organized a carpet event in Washington which was filmed by Voice of America and transmitted to Bosnia, where it was seen by survivors.¹⁹

e) Social change

In spite of these encouraging outcomes, this partnership has not turned Bosfam into a stronger or more transparent organization. In addition, only four weavers have been able to return home to Srebrenica – a key long-term goal. Karadzic and Mladic remain at large. Still, Srebrenica remains a powerful symbol and the Bosfam weavers themselves are very inspiring. This campaign calls for patience.

f) Feedback:

"Last night I took part in a radio show. It was 2 a.m. local time, and we talked for about 40 minutes. It was good, we talked, and there were questions from the listeners. Basically, everything was just fine. Now we just need to see what happens with the rest as well as the project work. Of course, you, and AP volunteers were with us. Without you, none of this would work, I know that for sure." **Beba Hadzic**, Director, Bosfam.

Bosfam will be a priority partner for AP in 2008

13. PALESTINIANS AND ISRAELIS WORKING TOGETHER FOR A JUST PEACE (2003-PRESENT)

AP Partners: Middle East Non-violence and Democracy (MEND) and the Alternative Information Center (AIC)

¹⁹ Beba Hadzic, the director of Bosfam wrote: *"I was really delighted when I saw the broadcast of the kilim exhibition in Washington reviewed by VOA. I am aware of the enormous effort and work your organization and you have put in. Thank you very much."*

AP first engaged with Palestinian civil society in 2001 when AP profiled several Palestinian advocacy organizations that were struggling to defend human rights in the middle of the *intifada*. This produced a partnership with the Democracy and Workers Rights Center in Ramallah (above). Two years later, in 2003, AP developed a partnership **with Middle East Non-Violence and Democracy (MEND)**. In 2005, AP was approached by the **Alternative Information Center** in Jerusalem/Beit Saheur, which represents progressive Palestinian-Israeli civil society.

AP sent interns to MEND in 2003 and 2004, when the partnership with MEND was suspended. AP has sent three interns and Fellows to AIC. The partnership with AIC is close and has yielded many strong outputs (blogs, press releases, articles) as well as ICT benefits. But it has yet to produce a strong outreach agenda or coherent profile of joint Israeli-Palestinian activities on behalf of peace. These should be priorities if the partnership continues.

a) Producing information and achieving information self-sufficiency

Information about the partner (outputs): AIC is a news service, and the partnership with AIC has focused mainly on producing information:

- **AIC News:** The three AP interns and Fellows who have worked with AIC all produced articles and content for the AIC website to a high professional level. They also worked on AIC campaigns and activities (including the first-ever summer camp for young Palestinians from Israel and the West Bank).
- **Blogs:** Five AP Fellows have used their blogs to present a harsh but realistic portrait of the Israeli occupation.

Information by the partner (outcomes): AIC is a professional news service, and as such able to produce its own information.

b) Disseminating information and using ICT

ICT: AP has provided technical and other ICT support to MEND and AIC:

- **MEND:** In 2004, AP helped MEND to draft an ambitious project proposal to create village-based tele-centers in seven villages near Bethlehem. This could have generated significant outcomes and evolved into a model project of ICT empowerment, but had to be put on hold because of the political crisis and a financial crisis inside MEND.
- **AIC:** AP has offered constant assistance and advice to AIC, in developing and building a new website. This was acknowledged by AIC when the site finally went public this summer.²⁰

²⁰“With the strong encouragement of AP, the AIC has been investing in its website over the past couple of years. This strategic decision is producing wonderful results and this week we are in the process of moving our server over to the US in order to better meet demand of our visitors vis-à-vis download time (for example). With this milestone and the end of the year rapidly approaching, we are wondering how to best evaluate the website in order to draw conclusions and plan for 2008. Any suggestions or guidelines you might have will be most welcome. As always, thanks for the support and partnership of AP – good to know we have friends even in a place like DC!” **Connie Hackbarth, AIC**

Dissemination:

- **AP Bulletins** Since 2005, AP has produced 5 news bulletins on the work of the AIC. Some of these drew on Fellows' blogs.

c) Using information (networking and outreach)

AP's publications on the Middle East have all had a clear advocacy goal. One AP bulletin protested the administrative detention of Ahmad Abu-Haniyeh, youth coordinator at the AIC's Beit Saheur office. Mr. Abu-Haniyeh was released after 18 months and AIC acknowledged AP's contribution. AP also produced a bulletin on the Hebron "mini-wall," which was used by AIC in its advocacy.

More generally, AP and AIC have also always hoped that the blogging by AP Fellows would draw attention to the impact of Israeli occupation, particularly in the United States. This has certainly been achieved. The blogs of AP's AIC Fellows have been extremely well-written and among the most widely-read of any AP blogs, as measured by visitors and comments. This year's Fellow, Amali Tower, was criticized this summer by the NGO Monitor – a right-wing Israeli NGO "watchdog," which seeks to denigrate critics of Israel. Ms. Tower's blogs were avidly read by her sponsor, Herbert Parson, who sent several of her blogs to his Congressman. Mr Parsons described his own personal involvement as a "*terrific project. It was a very strong experience for me.*"

d) Indirect

Empowered Volunteers: "*I've had many international experiences, but Palestine was like no place else, and I learned so much from the people I worked with. Especially the Palestinians*"
Amali Tower, 2007 Peace Fellow.

e) Social change

AP's partnerships with MEND and AIC have not moved beyond the production of short-term outcomes, and one reason is that these partnerships have lacked a clear sense of the ultimate goal and of the intended beneficiaries. Both organizations represent a joint Palestinian-Israeli constituency, and AP has always hoped that it could support this important work. This has yet to happen. AP also hopes to support AIC's efforts to promote the Bilbao declaration, which presents civil society's model for peace.

AP remains convinced that the best way to affect long-term social change and build peace in the Occupied Palestinian territory (OPT) is to work from the grassroots.²¹ As part of this, AP hopes that its partnership with AIC will expand to frame a message of Palestinian-Israeli cooperation and outreach activities on their behalf in the US.

²¹ This was set out at length in Iain Guest's March 2007 research paper, and will be the focus of all AP's future work in the region.

e) Feedback:

“The (AP) press release is wonderful - thank you for your efforts on this. We really are optimistic that international pressure will help secure Ahmad's release this month, and your efforts are always most appreciated.” **Connie Hackbarth, AIC, November 13, 2006**

“Words are incredibly inadequate to thank you and your amazing staff at the Advocacy Project for your advocacy and concern about Ahmad and the issue of administrative detention. Ahmad would not be free today without the help of our international friends and partners. Thank you so much!!!” **Connie Hackbarth, AIC, May 16, 2007**

14. AFGHAN WOMEN (2003 - PRESENT)

AP partner: Afghan Women’s Network (AWN)

In early 2003 AP was asked to develop a communications strategy for the Afghan Women’s Network (AWN), one of the oldest advocates for women’s rights in Afghanistan. With funding from OSI, AP hired a communications specialist to work with AWN as an eRider and all-round information adviser. As with other AP partnerships, the goal was to help AWN develop information tools, strengthen the network and launch campaigns that would empower Afghan women after years of marginalization. This was a time of great promise in Afghanistan and women’s rights were high on the international agenda after the Taliban years. The AP project was evaluated by an independent evaluator in December 2003 and judged to have met its goals.

The partnership with AWN since 2003 has been less productive than the early project. After the impressive gains of 2003 and 2004, the challenge facing women in Afghanistan has grown more complex as the political and security situation has deteriorated. AWN itself has also undergone internal changes which have hindered its institutional development. Since 2003, AP has recruited four interns and Peace Fellows, who have focused on specific components of AWN’s advocacy – the website and individual campaigns. One campaign, launched this summer with help from an AP Fellow, presses NATO to develop a gender policy. If security permits, AP will work in the future with the AWN’s regional centers and smaller members.

a) Producing information and achieving information self-sufficiency

Information about the partner:

- As part of the 2003 partnership, AP produced content for a new AWN website and helped AWN produce an internal AWN newsletter, radio programs, a printed magazine (*Ertiqa*), and a photo library. Mary Moore also produced illustrated diaries on her work with AWN.
- **Blogs:** AP interns and Fellows have used blogging effectively. This year’s Peace Fellow, Audrey Roberts, returned repeatedly to the challenge of forcing NATO to adopt a gender policy.

Information by the partner: AP’s support in 2003 was aimed at enabling AWN to produce its own information regularly. Ms. Moore trained staff at the AWN’s two offices (Peshawar and Kabul) in communications and information, and helped AWN to create a new information

department and Communications director. By early 2004, AWN was able to produce its own information, meeting a key objective for the project.

b) Disseminating information and using ICT

ICT:

- **2003 website:** AP produced the initial content for a new AWN website, together with photos. Ms. Moore then helped AWN to turn this into a brochure site with essential information about the AWN and member profiles.
- **ICT assessment:** Ms. Moore conducted an ICT assessment, and provided eRiding training for AWN members and staff. Ms. Moore's work created demand for ICT within the AWN, and encouraged AWN to invest in ICT.
- **Inhouse ICT capacity** AWN hired a local ICT manager/webmaster to redesign the website, and within six months a new website had been posted in English language. This met another key objective for the partnership – AWN's self-sufficiency in ICT.
- **Using ICT to empower members:** AWN understands how ICT can empower women and reach members. This is seen most directly in the fact that AWN has invested in its website, and set up two internet cafes in Peshawar and Kabul, which are usually full. Looking to the future, AWN hopes to launch ICT training for its members.
- **Continued support from AP:** AP interns and Fellows have continued to work on the AWN sites since 2003. AP also continues to pay the hosting fees for the AWN site. This summer, AP helped AWN to submit a \$16,000 proposal to pay the salary of a webmaster. In future, the partnership should focus more on empowering the AWN's member organizations and individual members.

Dissemination:

- **AP bulletins.** AP has produced 11 news bulletins on the AWN's work and campaigns. These have been among AP's most popular bulletins: one was re-issued by over 15 other online services.
- **AP website:** In 2003, AP posted webpages by consultant Mary Moore, which attracted the attention of a donor and led to a substantial grant for girl's education.

c) Using information (networking and outreach)

AWN used the information tools developed in the 2003 project to launch a series of campaigns, which exploited the space that opened up for women in this early phase of the rebuilding of Afghanistan. The Karzai government created a constitutional commission to gather proposals from the Afghan people, and set March 2003 for a deadline. The AWN responded by mobilizing its members for a grass-roots consultation. It created two working groups, each comprising 15 members, in Peshawar and Kabul. Each working group prepared questionnaires which were distributed widely (including the refugee camps). On March 3, the AWN submitted its conclusions to the Commission. These were summarized on the AWN web site, promoted in an AP bulletin, and launched at a press conference in March 2003.

The AWN also started four campaigns during the period of the project: gender-based violence; disarmament and improved security; legal awareness, and more transparency on the UNHCR "iris-scanning" process. For the legal rights campaign the AWN held a workshop for lawyers. Two lawyers were chosen to follow four cases, and they ultimately obtained the release of one woman and two children. For the disarmament campaign, AWN member NGOs collected more than 10,000 signatures of women in the provinces, asking for disarmament. AWN organized a mass rally in Kabul – an important action by previously disempowered women.

NATO campaign: Since 2004, AWN has served as a mouthpiece for Afghan women, focusing in particular on the deteriorating security situation. This summer, AWN asked AP Peace Fellow Audrey Roberts to develop a campaign to press the NATO Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) to adopt a gender policy. Ms. Roberts lobbied intensively and effectively, and helped to establish a forum for discussion between the PRTs and women's civil society, jointly chaired by the PRT chief and AWN Executive Director. AWN then drafted gender guidelines, which are now being reviewed by NATO. One of the key recommendations, for "pocket gender checklists" was quickly adopted by NATO. Parallel to this, AWN has also helped persuade international agencies to incorporate gender into the CIMIC guidelines.

d) Indirect

- **Institution-building and fundraising:** Exceptionally, and at AWN's request, AP drafted a strategic plan for AWN in 2003 that addressed the gap between the two AWN branch offices in Kabul and Peshawar (Pakistan). The single newsletter also helped to create greater cohesion between the AWN's two branches. With greater visibility came a more active membership.²² AWN has since suffered from inconsistent donor support, the departure of key staff, and the exhaustion of managers. But it remains a key advocate for women's rights, and has many assets: committed members, experience, a strong regional network of offices, and a strong youth section. Since 2002, AP has helped to raise \$108,600 for AWN.
- **Empowered women:** Many individuals were empowered during the life of the 2003 project. AWN's Executive Director was elected to a high-level government panel. Her deputy was empowered to start her own organization on girls' education (The Oruj Learning Center). Scores of AWN members were given the chance to express themselves through AWN's radio and magazine - which many described as empowering after the Taliban years.²³
- **Empowered children:** AWN runs a youth group for girls, and AP is working with this group to organize a penpal connection with American students.
- **Empowered Volunteers:** The volunteers who have served in Afghanistan have been among the most motivated of all AP interns and Fellows. Four former interns have returned to work fulltime in Afghanistan. *"The hospitality, generosity and dedication of the Afghan women I worked with made my experience in Afghanistan a life-altering one. These strong, courageous and Muslim women activists helped me realize that female*

²² The AWN's membership grew from 24 member organizations and 900 individual members in early 2002 to 65 organizations and 3,000 members by December 2003.

²³ This was one of the principal conclusions of an independent evaluation of this project by Richard Blane, commissioned by AP in December 2003.

activism is possible in the Muslim context as much as the Western context.” Shirin Sahani, AP intern in Afghanistan, 2005.

e) Social change

Early years By 2004, it was possible to say that AP’s support has helped AWN to capitalize on widespread support for women’s rights in Afghanistan, and become an effective agent for social change. Overall, the years 2003-2004 marked a high spot for women’s rights in the new Afghanistan. Less than 10% of the delegates to the 2001 Bonn conference were women - but 2003 constitution guaranteed women 25% of the seats on the lower house. As the largest women’s network, AWN was able to claim its share of success. Many of the AWN’s recommendations - particularly those on family law - were incorporated into the new constitution.

Later years: While this early project showed the benefits of information capacity-building, the last two years have shown how difficult it is to sustain forward progress in a deteriorating political climate. The Taliban have attacked girls’ schools, murdered women, and sought to reverse the political and other gains. Women remain highly vulnerable (even if they are clearly not as disempowered as they were before the war). These threats are deep and structural, and will not be easily reversed.

15. AFGHAN GIRLS (2003-PRESENT)

AP partner: Oruj Learning Center

Since 2003, AP has helped a small Afghan non-profit, the Oruj Learning Center, to support the education of girls in the remote province of Wardak. The project arose in 2004 after a private donor read about the AWN’s work on the AP site. The donor wanted to support girl’s education in Afghanistan, and AP was able to put her directly in contact with an AWN official, Sadiqa Basiri, who had started a small informal education project in her home village, Godah (Wardak province). At the request of the donor, AP then helped to manage the project between 2003-2006 through interns and field visits.

The partnership began, as others have, by profiling the advocacy of AP’s partner, and posting the results on the AP website. AP has continued to report on the project and use the information to attract new donors and build the project’s sustainability. AP has also promoted Oruj and its founder, Ms. Basiri, at events in the US. The outcomes have been spectacular. Ms. Basiri was teaching 35 girls in 2003. As of October 1, 2007, her project is supporting almost 1,800 girls in six schools. More broadly, girl’s education is one of the reconstruction successes in Afghanistan.

As well as providing a major service, this project has advocated for girl’s education and also empowering women. Girl’s education key to social change in the country, and Ms. Basiri’s school was the first to employ women teachers in the region.

AP has learned much from being directly involved in this important program. But it was always our intention to step aside when the project was on stable footing, and hand over to others with greater expertise, and this was achieved in 2007. After helping to raise over \$136,000 for the

program, AP has been able to help Oruj identify long-term funding that will sustain the program for the next three years.

a) Producing information and achieving information self-sufficiency

Information about the partner:

- **Oruj reports:** Between 2003 and 2006, Oruj produced monthly reports on the project. These were sent to AP, to be sent out as AP bulletins and posted on the AP website.
- **AP diaries and reports:** AP sent two missions to Afghanistan, in 2004 and 2005, which produced material for a video film, diaries, reports and a draft strategic plan.
- **Blogs:** 4 AP interns and Fellows have produced a series of blogs between 2004-2006.

Information by the partner: AP's written material on the Oruj program has played a key role in attracting over \$130,000 for the schools. AP has also helped Oruj to develop a reporting and newsletter template, which Oruj then used in preparing reports between 2003 and 2006. This early, and intense, focus on information helped Oruj to become a stronger and more disciplined organization.

b) Disseminating information and using ICT

ICT and dissemination:

Oruj is not yet able to maintain a website on its own, and this increased the importance of AP's postings during the formative years.

- **AP website:** AP's site carries all of the Oruj reports, a series of diary entries, and a separate set of pages on a penpal project between the students of Oruj and a US High School (below). This summer, AP also posted a new partner page for Oruj, which can be used until Oruj posts its own website.
- **News bulletins:** AP has produced and distributed 4 news bulletins on the Oruj Project. One of these helped to secure a generous grant from the Government of Liechtenstein.

c) Using information (networking and outreach)

- **Networking:** AP has nominated the director of Oruj for several human rights prizes and used networking to identify new partners for Oruj.
- **Outreach:** AP has reached out to American schools to spread the message of girl's education in Afghanistan. In 2005, AP helped to arrange a penpal exchange between the Godah and Noor Khel schools in Afghanistan, and the Townsend primary school in Massachusetts. The letters were presented at a "Peace Night" that was organized by the Townsend families and attended by diplomats, media and townspeople. Many students on both sides are keen to continue the exchange but poor security in Wardak has made it hard to exchange letters.
- **Friends of Oruj:** AP is helping to build a loose "Friends of Oruj" group in the US that can promote the project and attract new funders.

d) Indirect

- **Fundraising:** AP's coverage has helped to raise over \$130,000 for Oruj. Of this, \$27,500 has come from the Hewlett Foundation, which has made a commitment to Afghan education and will ensure the long-term sustainability of Oruj's work.
- **Institution-building:** AP has helped Oruj to develop a three-year strategic plan and identify priorities (eg the training of women teachers and the construction of permanent buildings). Oruj took over the plan in summer 2006. During 2006/7, Oruj went through a difficult phase caused by the absence of its founder and Director in the US. But it has recovered, and recruited a project manager in Kabul. Oruj is now self-sufficient in funding and plans to form a 501c3 in the US, with American directors, to coordinate its US-based activities. These are all important steps towards self-sufficiency.
- **Empowered American students:** While the penpal scheme has proven time-consuming and logistically challenging, its impact on students in the US was profound. Several US parents told AP that their children spent long hours out of school studying about Afghanistan and working on the project. Their school work also improved. This, to them, was an indicator of empowerment.²⁴

e) Social change - Empowerment through education

AP's entire partnership with Oruj has used information to achieve social change.

The principal outcome – which would not have occurred without AP's intervention – has been the education of hundreds of Afghan girls in six primary schools. As of October 1, 2007, the number of students at the four Oruj schools stands at 1,799. Three of the schools have consistently met or exceeded the national average, in terms of exam results, attendance rates, and retention of students. Early in 2006 the project also recruited the first-ever woman to teach in the Godah valley, Wardak – perhaps the most significant factor in retaining girls in school. This summer, two more schools (600 new students) were added to the program.

The best indicator of empowerment is the high retention rate and low absenteeism. Neither can be taken for granted in rural Afghanistan, where girls risk disapproval from parents and village and also come under pressure to get married early (ages 14). The Fatima Zahra school opened in 1997 with 13 girls in first grade. Nine years later, 12 of the same girls were now in class 9. (Two students postponed their marriage to stay in school). Over a hundred girls at the Noor Khel school continued to attend classes on a mountainside after the school was burned down by

²⁴ One parent wrote the following after Peace Night: *“I am taking this opportunity to THANK YOU for a wonderful Peace night that will always be in my heart for years to come. Also want to thank you for opening up my son's mind and more importantly his heart. I know that living in America and having all that we have at our fingertips sometimes leaves children and adults immune to what goes on outside their four walls. They now see how they can make a difference with their voices and with the right tools they have learned how to reach out to others across the world. More importantly I feel they have connected with their Pen Pals which has turned our children into compassionate individuals and more wise beyond their years. As we know many people have lost the compassion for others what you have done is given them the tools to reach out and teach more and more people how to be compassionate and how to look beyond their four walls and hopefully change the world little by little by starting with the children who will one day be our future bright and peaceful.”*

opponents of girls' education. Several members of the upper class at the Godah school walk several miles to school.

Another key achievement has been the employment and training of women teachers. Until the arrival of Oruj into the Godah valley, there were no women teachers in the valley. Oruj recruited two. This summer, Oruj recruited 4 women teachers for the two new schools in Wardak. Using a grant from the government of Liechtenstein, which AP helped to raise, Oruj has also organized two rounds of teacher training. 12 of the teachers were women.

Long-term social change. The emancipation of women and girls in Afghanistan is meeting growing resistance at the level of villages and state. Hundreds of girls schools have been attacked and burnt, and women teachers have been killed. Two of the four Oruj schools have been burned down in the past two years. But it is to be hoped that too much progress has been made for it to be reversed. UNICEF figures show that the enrollment of girl students in Afghanistan increased between 2003 and 2005 from 12,000 (3%) to 120,000 (25%). The 1,800 educated by Oruj is a not inconsiderable number.

f) Feedback:

“I would like to thank you all for being interested and committed to helping Oruj achieve its goal of pursuing girls' education in Afghanistan. I extend a HUGE thanks to the Advocacy Project's (AP) staff for their non-stop support.” **Sadiqa Basiri**, founder and ED, the Oruj Learning Center.

16. NEPAL DEMOCRATS AND CIVIL SOCIETY (2003-PRESENT)

AP partner: The Collective Campaign for Peace

The Collective Campaign for Peace in Nepal is a network of NGOs and community-based associations. AP began working with COCAP in 2003. Over the past four years, AP has helped COCAP play a central role in the country's turbulent evolution from dictatorship and war to democracy. The partnership has given AP a chance to apply its model of information capacity-building with a strong community-based network, and show how this can contribute to profound social change.

There have been two distinct phases to AP's support for COCAP. During the first phase (2003-2006) COCAP and its members were preoccupied with an abusive, authoritarian king and a bloody civil war. AP served as an international mouthpiece for COCAP. We posted the network's bulletins, lobbied for COCAP members when they were arrested or beaten, and used our outlets to make the case for bottom-up democracy. This culminated in the peaceful revolution of June 2006, when AP provided COCAP with a vital outlet to the world.

The second phase, since the restoration of democracy, has created new challenges for COCAP and AP. Democracy in Nepal has exposed deep structural problems, including caste discrimination and poverty, and unleashed demands from minorities. COCAP's ability to serve its network members has been affected by internal changes as key individuals have moved on.

During these two phases, AP has recruited 7 interns and Peace fellows to volunteer with COCAP. This summer, in response to the new challenges of working with minorities, AP deployed a team of 4 Fellows to work in COCAP's regional offices. This allowed AP to field a presence in communities, and identify a number of local campaigns that could benefit from AP's model. AP is now following up and will probably recruit Fellows for the most promising initiatives next year.

a) Producing information and achieving information self-sufficiency

Information by and about COCAP during the dictatorship:

- **COCAP reports:** COCAP was highly motivated to produce material and its bulletins were an important source of information on the crisis in Nepal, and spur to lobbying. These were posted on the AP site (below).
- **AP diaries:** During a mission, AP's Executive Director profiled COCAP's youthful human rights monitors in online diaries.
- **Blogs:** Intern blogs told the story of COCAP's work.

Information by and from COCAP since the restoration of democracy:

- **COCAP newsletter:** This summer, AP Peace Fellows helped COCAP to launch a new newsletter. COCAP released the second issue early in October, without support from the Fellows, suggesting that it is again close to being self-sufficient in information production, which has fallen off sharply since 2006.
- **Blogs:** This summer, AP's four Peace Fellows produced almost 300 blogs, describing in words, photos and video, the challenges of life in rural Nepal. These blogs have provided essential background information on COCAP's members and target populations. One Peace Fellow exposed the grotesque problem of uterine prolapse, which affects 600,000 women in rural Nepal. Another wrote about torture under the new government. All four provided unique coverage on the isolation and discrimination that plagues Nepal's minorities.

b) Disseminating information and using ICT

During the dictatorship:

- **AP website:** Following the imposition of martial law in February 2005, COCAP's website was suppressed and the network had to rely on outside allies, like AP, to disseminate its information. AP posted all COCAP bulletins and became a window on the world for Nepal's embattled democrats.
- **AP bulletins:** AP produced 11 news bulletins from Nepal between 2003 and 2006, picking up news from COCAP.
- **Diaspora website:** AP helped to create the International Nepal Solidarity Network (INSN), which evolved into a mouthpiece for Nepalis abroad. Dinesh Prasain, the AP coordinator wrote: *"Thanks for you and the entire AP team for your continued support. The coverage on COCAP issues by the Advocacy Project has been really helpful. I have got all your newsletters. I circulated them among our members and friends in Nepal, and internationally, and we have also posted them on our notice board."*

Following the dictatorship:

- **ICT assessments:** AP's four Peace Fellows all produced assessments of their host's ICT needs and assets
- **ICT training:** Peace Fellows have drafted a major proposal to provide ICT training to all COCAP focal points and ICT officers, which AP will now share with donors
- **Hardware:** AP has secured two computers for the COCAP focal point in Ghaighat
- **Radio:** AP has supported an innovative project to produce radio programs on the forthcoming elections, that are broadcast in Baglung and posted online by COCAP – to be heard by the nepali *diaspora* abroad.
- **AP bulletins:** AP has continued to produce bulletins to complement COCAP's core message, of empowering its members.

b) Using information (Outreach and networking)

During the dictatorship

- **Online petition:** AP launched an online petition on behalf of Dinesh Prasain, the COCAP Coordinator, after his 2003 beating. This attracted hundreds of signatures from Nepali students in exile, and was handed to the Nepalese Embassy. No more attacks were reported against Mr. Prasain or COCAP members.
- **Speaking tour:** AP co-sponsored and organized a speaking tour to the US by Mr. Prasain in 2005, which allowed him to lobby the US Congress to withhold aid from the Nepalese government, while the repression continued. This tour produced coverage in the Washington Post and led to the creation of the International Nepal Solidarity Network (INSN), which also helped to keep the Nepal *diaspora* informed during the 2006 revolution.

Since the dictatorship

- **Online petition:** In 2007, AP helped Nepalis living board to launch a petition demanding the right to vote in the election. The petition attracted almost 3,000 names and is being used by its drafter to petition the Nepali Supreme Court.
- **Uterine prolapse:** AP is building a coalition of groups and individuals to support the work of Nepali associations in combating the crisis or uterine prolapse.
- **Radio Baglung:** AP is posting these programs on the Internet and promoting them with the *diaspora*, in an effort to mobilize support for their core message – the need to involve minorities in the democratic process.
- **Developing peace councils in rural Nepal:** Building on the work of two Fellows, AP is promoting the idea of community-based peace councils, as a way to involve minorities in democracy-building. This has been submitted to the US Government as a proposal.

d) Indirect

Institution-building: COCAP is one of AP's most transparent and democratic partners, and AP has not needed to offer any capacity-building, direct or indirect, with COCAP itself. AP's 2003 intern was able to do extensive and basic training with a number of COCAP's grassroots members. This year, AP Fellows took this decentralized approach to COCAP's regional offices, as described above. AP is also seeking to broaden support for COCAP among the *diaspora*.

However, it is important, in all of this, that COCAP retains its cohesion and ability to service members. AP's argument is that having common information tools can help, as it has helped other networks that AP has worked with in Kosovo and Afghanistan. For now AP's focus is on helping COCAP develop common information tools, like the newsletter, and helping the four regional offices to identify issues of common concern that needs support from COCAP central.

Empowered Volunteers:

- *“Overall, this experience was far more educational than anything I could have done academically (or even professionally) and I am so thankful to AP for providing me with the opportunity to have this amazing experience.”* **Jeff Yarborough, 2007 Peace fellow**
- *“I definitely feel more confident personally, and feel like all I've learned about development is so much more meaningful now...”* **Nicole Farkouh, 2007 Peace Fellow**
- *“On a personal level, I learned a great deal about myself and the amazing people and country of Nepal. It was always fascinating to see where my comfort zones were tested. (but) this fellowship pushed me to understand a people, to think in their terms. Quixotic mission, I know...and a treasured one.”* **Tassos Coulaloglou, 2007 Peace Fellow**
- *“I think that perhaps it is my interest in and understanding of community level dynamics and activities that has developed the most while here.”* **Mark Koenig, 2007 Peace Fellow**

e) Social change

AP's work with COCAP had had a measurable impact on social change. The community served by this partnership – Nepal's pro-democracy movement – used AP to tell their story to the world and highlight abuses. They then played a key role in restoring democracy. During the protests, COCAP's human rights team monitored the protests and intervened repeatedly to rescue victims on both sides.

Since the peaceful revolution, Nepalis have responded responsibly, by bringing the Maoists into the process and including minorities and women in drafting a new constitution. In the process, many of the roots of discrimination have been uprooted. To end a war and restore democracy peacefully is an immense achievement. It will not be easy to build on this. But COCAP will play a key role, and AP will be at their side, as we have been for four years.

f) Feedback

AP has recruited several interns for COCAP since 2003. Dinesh Prasain, the COCAP coordinator, later wrote that Kate Kuo (2003 intern) had been so effective that twelve individual COCAP members had asked for an intern: " *The entire COCAP family has been impressed by the commitment, skills and friendliness that Kate brought into COCAP. After Kate left, almost one dozen members have requested the COCAP Board to arrange for other interns like Kate to volunteer with their organization. Her contribution was especially valuable because we are still at a very early stage of our organizational development.* "

COCAP has paid generous tribute to AP's contribution since 2003: Dinesh Prasain wrote: " *The partnership between Advocacy Project and Collective Campaign for Peace (COCAP) in Nepal has been very productive for us. AP helped us especially during our initial days when we were struggling to institutionalize the network. The intern you sent to COCAP in the summer of 2003 helped the network and its member organizations with our strategic planning. AP also provided invaluable support to us by writing and disseminating through your newsletters and websites, the issues of human rights and peace COCAP was struggling with at home and wanted publicized internationally. AP has also linked us up with many important international personalities and institutions, including during my own recent (April-May 2005) Human Rights Speaking Tour in the US, which you in fact co-sponsored. What is remarkable to me is that you are spending so much of your time and energy to help us, even when we are your non-funding partner! We hope this partnership will continue for a long time.* "

COCAP will be a priority partnership for AP in 2008

17. ROMA IN EAST EUROPE – EMPOWERING THROUGH ONLINE NEWS (2003-PRESENT)

AP Partner: The Dzeno Association, Prague

AP has partnered with the Dzeno Association since 2003. Dzeno runs a professional news service and radio station for Roma in East Europe, and is also an advocate for Roma rights generally. Dzeno was already self-sufficient in information and ICT when it began partnering with AP in 2003, but was keen to expand its English-language service.

Since 2003, AP has recruited three interns to work with Dzeno, and helped Dzeno identify a networking partner (New York University) that can provide Dzeno with year-round volunteers. Dzeno has expressed interest in playing a more active role as a Roma advocate, particularly at the UN. AP will exploit its contacts on Dzeno's behalf.

a) Producing information and achieving information self-sufficiency

Information about the partner. AP's interns have all blogged extensively about Dzeno and also helped to write English copy for Dzeno's articles and radio programs.

Information by the partner. Dzeno is self-sufficient in information production, although is always in need of English-language copy for its news service. AP's 2004 intern Stacy Kosko wrote 70 articles for Dzeno's news and radio services.

b) Disseminating information and using ICT

- **Dzeno material:** Dzeno maintains a professional website and online radio station (Radio Rota) and these allow Dzeno to disseminate its information widely. Dzeno is considered self-sufficient in all aspects of ICT.
- **AP bulletins:** AP has also published two bulletins about Dzeno's work.
- **AP website:** Dzeno has a partner page on the AP site.

c) Using information (networking and outreach)

AP's published products have helped to spread the word about the Roma in Europe – a constituency that is very little known in the US, and AP's interns have helped. Stacy Kosko's blogs were reprinted in full in her local newspaper, the Nashoba Times (Massachusetts). AP interns has also produced greater visibility for Dzeno's English language service and allowed Dzeno staff to focus more on Czech-language products and lobbying.²⁵ AP's 2005 intern, Margaret Swink (Yale) helped Dzeno to produce a report on evictions in five European countries, and this has encouraged Dzeno to take a leadership role in lobbying against evictions. This work could not, however, be sustained after interns left.

AP's work with Dzeno has been largely limited to information production, although AP is now seeking to produce more sustained outcomes, by linking Dzeno with a journalism school in New York so as to secure Dzeno a full-time, year-round intern. Dzeno and AP have also discussed developing an outreach project to bring Roma advocates to the US, where they will lobby the US Government and United Nations against evictions and learn from US-based advocates for the homeless.

d) Indirect

- **Institution building and Fundraising:** AP intern, Kimberly Birdsall (Georgetown) helped Dzeno write proposals and secure a major grant from the EUMC; AP Intern Margaret Swink (2006) raised \$480 for a Roma community through her blogs.
- **Empowered Volunteers:** *"This internship was incredibly substantive, and I feel as if I have personally and professionally grown a lot. Working at Dzeno challenged me to think about the place of minorities in society, and to try and evaluate the human rights system from the viewpoint of those at the very bottom. Through my work here, I was able to gain advocacy and research experience, as well as an in-depth knowledge of the subject."*
Margaret Swink, 2005 Intern

18. TSUNAMI-AFFECTED TAMILS IN SRI LANKA (2004-PRESENT)

AP partner: the Home for Human Rights

The Home for Human Rights is one of the foremost human rights organizations in Sri Lanka. AP began working with HHR in 2004, and the partnership moved into an intensive phase after the December 26, 2004 Tsunami. HHR raised small amounts of money for two Tamil communities in the east of the country that had been ostracized by discrimination and forced to live in isolated

²⁵ During Ms. Kosko's internship, visitors to Dzeno's radio station and website increased from 17,000 a month to 25,600.

places. This left them exposed when the Tsunami struck and many villagers lost their lives. AP reported on HHR's work through *Advocacy.net* and the story was picked up by the Dutch Refugee Foundation, which offered HHR and AP a grant for a larger project.

AP and HHR then designed a year-long project that was aimed at empowering six Tsunami-affected communities through a mixture of direct emergency aid, information and strengthening village associations. Together, AP and HHR then sought to use the project to strengthen HHR's ability to produce information and use ICT more effectively. These goals were achieved and the training has allowed several beneficiaries to earn a living through the renewed fighting.

a) Producing information and achieving information self-sufficiency

Information about the partner/target:

- **HHR reports:** HHR produced 12 detailed monthly reports on the project, which provided essential information for the donor and general public. The reports were shared with other members of the Dutch consortium of agencies.
- **HHR press release:** In the summer of 2006, HHR produced its first press release
- **AP profiles/blogs:** AP visited Sri Lanka in 2006 and profiled the six communities for the AP site
- **Blogs:** Two AP interns blogged extensively about the project and its work. Intern Sarosh Syed (2005) wrote so effectively of one family that a reader donated \$1,000 to pay for the education of the child who was profiled.

Information by the partner:

- **HHR bulletins:** Prior to this project, AP published one printed magazine, but no online reports or press releases. By regularly producing bulletins on this project HHR broke the information barrier and created internal demand within HHR for ICT and information generally.

b) Disseminating information and using ICT

- **HHR website:** HHR used the Tsunami project to recruit a webmaster and develop a new website, which has been updated regularly - an important indicator of ICT self-sufficiency
- **AP bulletins:** AP published 4 bulletins, drawing on information from HHR and interns. The first bulletin, on HHR's work with the affected villages, attracted the attention of the donor.
- **AP site:** AP has posted an HHR partner page on the AP website

c) Using information (networking and Outreach)

- **Networking:** AP put HHR in direct contact with the Dutch Refugee Foundation, which was seeking a partner in Sri Lanka that combined human rights and Tsunami relief.
- AP helped to arrange a meeting between HHR's director and the largely Sinhalese *diaspora* in the US, whose director raised \$2,000 for the project and then visited HHR in Sri Lanka - a singular act of ethnic reconciliation.

- **Speaking tour:** AP organized a visit for HHR's director in Washington, where he met with donors and government officials.

d) Indirect

- **Institution building:** This project produced some important outcomes for HHR. It has generated a significant amount of money (\$28,711) for HHR and the Tsunami-affected communities. It helped to move HHR into social and economic rights. It encouraged HHR to make an institutional commitment to information which has helped to raise the profile of HHR's work on torture.
- **Fundraising:** AP's first fundraising for the Tamil villages was undertaken in early 2005 by HHR's AP 2004 intern, who raised \$1,500 from college classmates. AP's coverage also attracted another \$4,000 in donations for the immediate emergency. In addition to the project grant, AP's coverage has resulted in several acts of individual generosity. In 2005, one anonymous donor gave \$1,000 for a small education fund in response to a blog by the AP intern about two children who lost their mother. In total AP has helped to raise \$36,474 for HHR.
- **Empowered volunteers:** *"The fellowship was an infinitely valuable experience. I learned more about human rights advocacy and research, exactly as I was hoping, and I also gained experience working in a conflict zone. It helped me to develop the skills and understanding to work with community-based human rights organizations."* **Madeleine England, 2007 Peace Fellow**

e) Social change

Empowered community: The most important outcome from this project has been to empower 70 women who lost everything in the Tsunami, by providing them with sewing training and sewing machines. Many have used this to repair clothes and do small odd-jobs around the villages. When HHR conducted the final report in 2006, 14 of the women were earning between 1,700 and 8,000 rupees a month - several times what they earned before the Tsunami.

In August 2007, AP Peace Fellow Maddie England visited the communities and found that 7 women in one community were earning around 5,000 rupees a month from sewing. 37 men and women in another community were earning smaller, but still significant, sums from sewing.

The project also sought to **build social capital** by encouraging villagers to form several associations (women, widows, fishermen etc.), seek legal status, and organize. The beneficiaries were asked to contribute.

Several of the villages organized to claim their rights during the life of the project, and protest against discrimination. These petitions were channeled to village leaders by HHR, and resulted in the digging of wells and toilets in areas which had been neglected. Twenty young men, who would otherwise have been out of work, received technical training as mechanics.

Long-term social change. HHR and AP had hoped that this project would build the foundation for long-term social change in these six villages and put an end to the discrimination that had left them vulnerable to the Tsunami. It was clear at the time that this would require a long-term

commitment and sustained resources, but the resumption of the war has certainly added to the challenge. AP and HHR have continued to monitor the villages, and report to the Dutch donor.

f) Feedback:

“I am writing on behalf of the Tsunami Evaluation Coalition (TEC) which was established in the wake of the 2004 Asian Tsunami to promote a sector wide approach to evaluating the response. We receive your Advocacy net news bulletin which we have found very useful in the past and I think you might be interested in our ‘Initial Findings’ which we released to commemorate the year anniversary of the Tsunami. It would be fantastic if you could put these findings in your next bulletin.” **Laura Kitchin**, Administrator.

The Home for Human Rights will be a priority partner for AP in 2008

19. NEPAL’S DALIT (2005-PRESENT)

AP partner: the Jagaran Media Center; the NASO community (USA)

Dalit make up 20% of the population in Nepal, and suffer from deep and sustained caste discrimination. This results in illiteracy, poverty, and even forced prostitution. For much of Nepal’s history, caste discrimination has been legitimized by the fact that Nepal was a Hindu state, but the restoration of democracy in spring 2006 has given Dalit a historic opportunity to change the status quo and address the roots of their disempowerment. This invigorated Dalit advocacy and created an important opening for AP’s model of support.

The Jagaran Media Center (JMC), a leading advocate for Dalit rights, sought out AP’s help in 2005. Since then, AP has recruited 4 volunteers for JMC, and helped JMC to develop a network of community-based Dalit reporters and produce information from the villages. At the same time, in the US, AP has developed a partnership with the Nepali-American Society for Oppressed Community (NASO), a *diaspora* lobbying group.

AP is helping the JMC to train a network of Dalit journalists who can report on discrimination in the villages. Drawing on their information, AP is working with JMC and NASO to lobby the US government and development agencies to provide more aid for the Dalit and pressure the Nepal government to end caste discrimination.

a) Producing information and achieving information self-sufficiency

Information about the partner (outputs):

- **Online profiles:** AP has invested in profiling caste discrimination, particularly in the villages, and on the JMC’s increasingly effective advocacy. AP sent a mission to the villages of Nepal in October 2005, and profiled the many forms of disempowerment which affect Dalit. This was welcomed by the JMC director, Suvash Darnal.²⁶

²⁶ “We are so happy to read your blog and press statement regarding Dalit and JMC. It is very good. I am very surprised, how you find such types of detail information within your very short and busy visit. I have to learn more from you;”

- **Blogs:** AP interns and fellows have both reported extensively on caste discrimination in their blogs. Among those profiled - Ghandarba (musicians) and Badi women.

During the 2006 revolution, JMC produced its first-ever blogs from the front lines and posted these on the AP website – an important indicator of increased capacity that was also empowering for the authors.

Information by the partner (outcomes): This summer, AP Peace Fellows helped JMC re-launch its bulletin, which provides the only source of regular news from villages. The Fellows traveled widely in Nepal and met with 10 Dalit journalists, who have agreed to contribute. The bulletin was re-launched in July, and three editions have since been published. Peace Fellows trained and worked with Prakash Mohara, who will serve as the editor and ensure that the publication is sustained. AP is now working to find funding for the bulletin.

b) Disseminating information and using ICT

ICT:

- **ICT training:** JMC is self-sufficient in ICT at its headquarters, and updates the website regularly, but is seeking to empower its network of contacts that provide information on the day-to-day struggle in villages. AP Peace Fellows have drafted an ambitious proposal to provide ICT training (eRiding) for Dalit journalists in villages. AP is seeking support for the project.
- **Website upgrade:** This summer, AP Peace Fellows upgraded the JMC website, and introduced several innovations including a link to Flickr, the photo website.

Dissemination: JMC has reached a large audience through the following:

- JMC website
- JMC e-bulletins
- **AP bulletins:** Drawing from the JMC bulletins and intern blogs, AP has produced several bulletins on Dalit issues. These have been posted on the JMC and AP sites and are aimed at helping JMC to lobby against discrimination (below).
- The AP site (JMC partner page)

c) Using information (networking and outreach)

Networking: AP has invested in building an international constituency for JMC and its struggle against caste discrimination. AP has nominated the JMC for several prestigious prizes, helped JMC attend the UN working on minorities in Geneva (the first time that JMC has attended a UN meeting outside Nepal), and advised on the JMC statement to the group. This important contribution drew thanks from the UN and JMC. AP has also found new allies for JMC among the *diaspora* in North America, and the growing network of Dalit solidarity groups in Europe.

Outreach: With help from AP, Dalit outreach has become increasingly sophisticated and effective, in Nepal and abroad since the restoration of democracy last year. JMC itself has played an active role in mobilizing Dalit activists to act on the information it draws from the villages.

This year the JMC has been active in forging a common Dalit agenda. This was defined at a major meeting (The People's Assembly) in June, and printed as a 15-point declaration. AP Peace Fellows produced information on the Assembly.

AP has also worked on information it receives from the JMC. After a JMC investigation found that the UNDP was unwittingly supporting discrimination at the water pump, AP published a bulletin. UNDP took action and the practice ended. This prompted a letter of thanks from the UNDP.²⁷

Dalit awareness is having a profound impact. Throughout Nepal, Dalit are forming associations, delegating to advocates, petitioning, challenging those in control (including the Maoists) and taking collective action. This has started to produce some specific outcomes in villages.²⁸ In 2005, an AP delegation was able to witness the result of JMC's advocacy, when a JMC official helped villagers in Lahan district to break a long-standing taboo and enter a temple.

In the US, AP is working with the American Society for Oppressed People (NASO) an organization that represents the Dalit *diaspora*. NASO has posted the blogs of AP interns on its site, and sought AP's help in developing an action agenda. AP is currently helping NASO to push for greater protection for Dalit in the new Nepalese constitution and lobby the US Congress to put pressure on the Nepalese government to address the roots of discrimination. NASO has expressed interest in developing and funding projects in Nepal on behalf of JMC, and raising funds from the Nepalese *diaspora* in the US.

Also in the US, AP will organize an event on behalf of the Gandharba, one of the lower castes that produces musical instruments. The goal is to project a positive image of Dalit culture.

d) Indirect

- **Empowered volunteers:** *"It was exhilarating, frustrating, inspiring, and tiring. And though it was oftentimes not what I had anticipated my time would look like, it became something even more powerful than I thought was possible."* **Devin Greenleaf, 2007 Peace Fellow.** *"I wanted to thank AP for allowing me the freedom to think outside the box and explore my own creative nature. I also appreciate your encouragement for my ideas!"* **Ted Samuel, 2007 Peace Fellow.**
- **Cross-cultural bridges:** AP is helping to nurture a partnership between the Gandharba in Nepal and Mountain musicians in the US.

e) Social change.

Dalit advocacy has made huge strides towards removing the root causes of discrimination in 2006 by winning agreement from the newly-restored parliament to make Nepal a secular state. This must now be turned into specific provisions in the new constitution and strong laws, which

²⁷ Lisa Miller wrote from the UNDP office in Nepal: *"I just checked out the press release. Very well done, I thought."*

²⁸ In one village visited by AP and JMC, Badi women mobilized to rescue 105 women from prostitution.

must then be implemented. This will run into stiff resistance in villages, and poses a long-term challenge for JMC and Nepalese civil society in general.

JMC is making an important contribution, by strengthening Dalit journalism and ensuring that the Dalit perspective finds its way into the media. By build JMC's information capacities, AP directly benefits grassroots Dalit activists and encourages them to work for social change where it matters most – in the villages.

e) Feedback

AP received the following message from Bhim Bahadur who met with the AP mission in October 2005. It was one of several messages, written in difficult circumstances, which showed the commitment of Dalit to using information to claim their rights. *“Dear Sir, Where are you come back Nepalgunj. What are doing now? I am reporting here. I have know about activities. Don't forget me. Hear are danger situation. I work hardly but I have back without camera and Mobile. My email address is b_nepali1@yahoo.com. I am learning computer impress by you. Thank you.”*

The JMC and its grassroots partners, will be a priority for AP in 2008

20. MALAYSIAN HOMEMAKERS (2005 -PRESENT)

AP partner: the eHomemakers of Malaysia

Many ethnic Chinese and Indian women in Malaysia are prevented from working in the formal sector by discrimination, physical disability, and prejudice. Several hundred have formed an organization – eHomemakers - which helps its members use ICT to work together as a group from home and seek employment.

eHomemakers asked AP for support in 2005 and AP sent an intern in December 2005 to formalize the partnership. It was agreed that AP would work with the larger group and also focus on helping a group of disabled eHomemakers, known as *Salaam Wanita*, who make ecobaskets out of recycled paper. One of AP's goals – modeled on AP's work with the Bosnian weavers - is to empower homemakers individually by finding an outlet for their eco-baskets, while also using as tool for advocacy.

a) Producing information and achieving information self-sufficiency

Information about the partner: eHomemakers has to tread a delicate line between advocating for the rights of its members on the one hand, and not provoking the Malaysian government on the other. They insist in tightly controlling information and are reluctant even to be seen as a human rights group. As a result, AP has focused less on publicizing the group and more on helping eHomemakers develop its own newsletter and website.

- **AP Blogs:** Four interns and Fellows have produced blogs on the group, skirting the line between producing strong copy and not offending their host.
- **Promotional brochures:** Two AP interns/Fellows have produced brochures on the *Salaam Wanita* weavers and their products.

- **Video:** AP is currently producing a short promotional video on *Salaam Wanita*, working from material shot by this year's AP Fellow.

Information by the partner: The eHomemakers organization is now self-sufficient in information production. The staff launched their own online e-Bulletin in 2006, with help from the AP intern. This is now produced and distributed regularly. *Salaam Wanita* is still in need of support.

b) Disseminating information and using ICT

ICT: eHomemakers is well known for its innovative use of ICT. It has been profiled by the Social Science Research Council and received several awards for developing a new and patented software (DAWMA), which allows the organization to translate email messages into text and thus reach members who do not have computers. AP has provided the following ICT support:

- Low-level ICT trouble-shooting tech advice through interns.
- Identified pro bono IT support and submitted a request for free software.
- IT assessment and an online IT training manual.
- Trained staff 2007 in power point.
- Developed a new website on Salaam Wanita www.justmarketing.org
- AP Peace Fellow Julia Zoo will help eHomemakers to organize a panel for the for December 2007 GKP3 conference in Kuala Lumpur.
- **Business/ICT:** An IT assessment, a business plan for Salaam Wanita, an online IT training manual, and a survey on Malaysian business attitudes towards home-based employment.

After one AP intern, Melissa Muscio, introduced the Salaam Wanita weavers to simple ICT tools, the Group's director wrote: "*(Melissa) has been doing online training on us. We couldn't see how good it is till the output is on the computer!! She has also done a training manual for us. It is fabulous.*"

Dissemination:

- **eHomemakers websites:** runs two websites and produces its own copy for the sites. (Microsoft and Nestle sent congratulations.²⁹ This, plus the eHomemakers newsletter, is the main source of information about the group.
- **AP site:** AP has posted profiles of the eHomemakers on the AP site, and a partner page.
- **AP news bulletins:** AP wrote 2 bulletins in 2006 on eHomemakers that were widely disseminated through the Internet and picked by the Malaysian branch of Microsoft. This prompted the following message from eHomemakers: "*Just realized how powerful AP news is, Even our local Microsoft contact comes across it!!!*"

²⁹ The Microsoft representative wrote: "*I'm proud of you!*"

c) Using information (networking and outreach)

Networking: AP has sought to help the Salaam Wanita weavers use their eco-baskets to promote their message. This has resulted in several activities:

- **Speaking tour in the USA:** AP supported a speaking tour to the US by the Director of eHomemakers early in 2006, and introduced her to outreach partners. This led directly to the group's ecobaskets being displayed at the World Bank's handicrafts store (Pangea) and a small order AP and eHomemakers are following up with World Bank to provide support for the group. The goal is to secure an IFC capacity-building grant for the eHomemakers' Salaam Wanita basket-making business.
- AP is seeking an outreach partner for the group in the US, most likely a church or school, that will provide an outlet for a presentation.

d) Indirect

Institution-building. eHomemakers is one partner that has made particularly good use of AP's volunteers and Chong Sheau Ching, the director, argues strongly that the sort of skills provided by AP interns and Fellows are simply not available locally.³⁰ This year, AP was able to recruit an intern who lived in Malaysia (2007) and a Fellow for a period of 6 months (2007).

Empowered volunteers.: *“Since working in Malaysia, I am more sensitive to the risks and challenges of operating in a developing country. In particular, I learned how lack of human resources, attitudes toward social justice work, weak legal enforcement, corruption, and human rights abuses inhibit growth, unfairly target one segment of society, and breed mediocrity. I also now realize the importance of information, its power, and how necessary it is to be able to disseminate it freely. Our inability to freely disseminate information largely inhibited our ability to grow.”* **Mariko Scavone, AP Peace Fellow, 2007**

e) Social change

eHomemakers was formed to use information to empower its members. Still, the group is reluctant to confront the government and engage in overt human rights advocacy. Instead, it sees its long-term role as change by stealth. This, it feels, will come from building a business that will produce an income for basket-makers and changing the attitude of local business so that they will hire women working from home. AP will tailor its support accordingly.

e) Feedback:

“I want to thank you and AP again for including eH in your peace fellows program. Remember? I wasn't interested when you first told me about it. I was very skeptical about how much a foreign person can do within 10 weeks when activities take so long to materialize, barriers are thick, and funds are always short or none in existence.

But I was wrong. I am so, very so, glad.

³⁰ *“We will always need someone in IT, and someone in biz/marketing, and someone who can write. Cos this is our staff weaknesses (no funds to pay for this to build up the capacity to attract the funds). And it is difficult to get someone with all 3 skills.”*

This is the kind of North South partnership that should happen to solve social environment and poverty or human rights problems. It is efficient and effective. Everyone chips in and do what they can when they can to make a puzzle.

The Peace Fellows have rejuvenated my team, especially me, with the American optimism. Most of all, another perspective to look at things. They bring in information about what is available in the US that we can tap into. They are like windows that materialize in the 4-wall room I have been in. I can now see more light and shades.

The Peace Fellows are also very encouraging, something that is so crucial for eH's survival. Being the lone women social entrepreneur here, I do get constant discouragement, face unethical corporate ethics, and systemic 'discriminations' (which I am not allowed to write or talk about openly) due to certain policies. Sometimes I am down and want to give up, but during the time when there is a peace fellow, I am alive as there is someone, and now 2 of them, that I can debate, and mull over pros and cons with. And so, they give me strength to believe in the path I am walking on. U know how things are, when you are with a group of supportive people, and you talk about things that bother you, eventually, you actually solve the problem by yourself as you could see clearly where the bias, lacking and strengthening is/should be.

I do wish that one day eH can help AP's other partners." Chong Sheau Ching, Founder eHomemakers.

21. ENGLISH GYPSY WOMEN (2005-PRESENT)

AP Partner: The UK Association of Gypsy Women (UKAGW)

This grassroots advocacy group in Northwest England is a highly effective advocate for Gypsy rights that focuses in particular on evictions. The Association is a founding member of the International Roma Women's Network (IRWN). AP came into contact with the UKAGW after working with IRWN.

During 2005-2006, the UKAGW played a key role in distributing AP's bulletins on the Dale Farm Travelers. On the basis of this, AP recruited an intern to work with the UKAGW in 2006. This was not a successful internship, because of the UKAGW's lack of resources and institutional weakness. But the UKAGW members remain formidably effective as advocates.

a) Producing information and achieving information self-sufficiency

Information about the partner: AP has not written about the UKAGW as such, but rather on the Dale Farm Travelers (see next profile). These AP bulletins were picked up and re-issued with great effect by the UKAGW. This was probably the best example of how a committed advocate can use AP bulletins as part of a methodical campaign. AP helped the UKAGW to draft petitions to the UN and Council of Europe, protesting against the eviction of Gypsies in the UK.

Information by the partner: In 2006, the UKAGW started to produce and send out press releases and e-alerts, and start down the path towards information self-sufficiency. Unfortunately, they have been unable to sustain this.

b) Disseminating information and using ICT

UKAGW does not possess a website, but does have a limited but loyal database of contacts that receive its information. AP did help to grow this database.

c) Using information (networking and outreach)

Networking and outreach: The UKAGW members have all suffered from evictions themselves, and this has given them great motivation. More than any other AP partner, they have shown an instinctive flair, and an ability to use information to achieve social change. This was shown by the way they used AP bulletins in 2005 to advocate against the eviction of Travelers from Dale Farm, which is explained below. Their advocacy was largely responsible for the fact that the case went to the British High court, effectively suspending the evictions.

The UKAGW members were also personally empowered by this experience – an important outcome, given the lack of confidence that afflicts Roma and Gypsies.³¹

Institutionally, the UKAGW relies on two sisters who are under constant pressure and serve as volunteers. This does not mean the organization is unsustainable, because the two sisters are formidably motivated. But it does leave their organization dependent on their energy, and impedes their ability to partner with others. AP's 2006 intern, while hard-working and well-meaning, was not well used. Part of this had to do with miscommunication and unclear goals.

22. THE TRAVELERS OF DALE FARM (UK) (2005-PRESENT)

AP Partner: The Travelers of Dale Farm, UK

The Dale Farm Travelers live in a community in Essex England. 86 families have purchased land, but have been denied planning permission to build on them. This has rendered them liable to eviction, and in June 2005 the Basildon council voted to expel them from their homes. Over the last two years, the Travelers have mounted an unrelenting campaign to resist eviction. The issue is currently before the British High Court, which will rule early in 2008.

AP began working with the Dale Farm Travelers in 2005, when we issued a series of bulletins on the evictions threat. This summer (2007) we followed up by recruiting a Peace Fellow to work with the Travelers and help them develop information tools. While this has produced important short-term results, it has certainly not removed the threat of evictions or addressed the roots of discrimination that are at the root of the push for eviction.

³¹ After the Dale Farm evictions were halted, Rachel Francis from the UKAGW wrote: *"I did not go to bed until 4pm and here I still am. But it has been worth all the early mornings to get results like this. (It) is fantastic."*

a) Producing information and achieving information self-sufficiency

Information about the partner: AP has worked intensively with the Travelers to tell their story, which is inherently dramatic and newsworthy. This has taken the following forms:

- **Dale Farm bulletins:** Grattan Puxon, Secretary of the Association has produced a series of press releases (“Ustiben reports”), with help from AP. These are posted on the Travelers AP partner page.
- AP Peace Fellow Zach Scott produced 6 news bulletins on behalf of the Dale Farm Association this summer.
- **Blogs:** Peace Fellow Zach Scott produced a series of 20 strong blogs this summer, which generated a lively debate (and even some threats against Mr. Scott from locals).
- **The local press:** The Basildon Echo covered Mr. Scott’s Fellowship extensively and also sparked an intense online discussion.

Information by the partner (outcomes): This summer, AP hoped to train members of the Association in information production but found that the level of literacy was so low that there were no Travelers able to take on the role. This was a major setback. AP switched instead to promoting ICT (below). Grattan Puxon’s reports assume an even greater importance.

b) Disseminating information and using ICT

- **Computers:** This summer, AP found 2 computers for the Dale Farm Association and secured the funds for an Internet connection. But Illiteracy is so widespread at Dale Farm that the children can barely use the computers, or take advantage of the connection. AP will now work (from a distance) to find an ICT trainer for the Association.
- **AP bulletins:** AP has disseminated 6 news bulletins on Dale farm since June 2005.
- **Website and partner page:** AP posted a partner page for the Dale Farm Association, with the Association’s enthusiastic support. This is the Association’s only Internet presence, and carries all of the Ustiben reports and bulletins.

c) Using information (networking and outreach)

Networking and outreach: Dale Farm offers an excellent illustration of how AP publications can serve as a catalyst and “break” a story, which is then taken up by other advocates. AP’s first bulletin was published just before a key July 14 2005 meeting of the Basildon county council in England, called to authorize the immediate expulsion of the Travellers. The bulletin was immediately sent on by the UKAGW to the office of the British Deputy Prime Minister, members of the Basildon council, and the Travellers’ representatives. The Deputy Prime Minister responded early on the day of the meeting with an offer to help find new land. The council voted to evict the Travelers, but by one vote and along strict party lines, and the AP release was used by opponents of the evictions in the meeting to show that there was international interest in the case.³²

³² AP was referred during the council meeting to as a “human rights group.”

This publicity helped to ensure that lawyers applied for a legal injunction to stop the evictions, and the application was accepted by the British High Court, suspending the evictions. After the threat of evictions receded, the chairman of the council, Mr. Malcolm Buckley, said he had received e-mails from all over the world.³³ Ms. Francis and Ms. Beard, from the Association, wrote to AP that this outcome represented a significant achievement for their campaign and that AP's involvement had been a key factor.³⁴ Gratton Puxon, a leading Gypsy activist, also wrote to thank AP: "*Your intervention was really very significant.*" AP received calls from the Essex service of the BBC, which covers the Dale Farm area locally.

This continued in October 2006, when the AP Executive Director, Iain Guest, visited Dale Farm and wrote a news bulletin, which was picked up by the local Basildon press and the national media (Daily Express). This summer, the blogs of AP Peace Fellow Zach Scott achieved much the same result. Mr. Scott's activities were closely followed by the local press, and elicited much criticism from local readers.

d) Indirect:

- **Institution-building.** The Dale Farm Association possesses all of the familiar strengths and weaknesses of community-based civil society. It is strong in motivation, but weak in resources, literacy and social capital. This presents a major challenge for AP. Of all current partners, this is one partner that most needs a year-round intern.
- **Empowered volunteers.** "*The best part of my experience was the diversity of my day-to-day life. I was able to gain a variety of new skills while developing my flexibility. I also gained a great deal of experience working in a stressful environment with limited resources. The AP fellowship helped me to understand that even a small group of dedicated people can make an enormous difference. In spite of what all the cynics may say, one person can help to change the world in a positive manner. The fellowship also allowed me to see the power of media in shaping viewpoints. I now see how vital it is to use this information medium to my advantage during my career.*" **Zach Scott, 2007 AP Peace Fellow**

e) Social change

There is strong evidence that AP's involvement has helped to stave off the immediate threat of eviction and even help send the case to the British High Court in 2005. This summer, after it emerged that 14 families were not covered by the Court's injunction, Mr. Scott collected testimonies from the 14 which were submitted to the Court one day before the deadline. The Basildon Council conceded and withdrew the eviction notices.

Whether this translates into long-term social change depends, first on the outcome of the High Court case, and second on the Travelers' ability to hold together and address the roots of discrimination in their community. This is an immense task, and will require patient and persistent support from friends like AP.

³³ In a telephone interview with AP, Mr. Buckley complained that the council had received e-mails from all over the world as a result of the AP press release.

³⁴ "*AP was mentioned twice!! That really rattled their cage. I am so pleased we got a result.*"

e) Feedback:

“Zach arrived at a vital time and has helped see us through yet another crisis, extending the life of Dale Farm into its seventh year.” Grattan Puxon, Secretary of the Dale Farm Association, on the work of AP Peace Fellow Zach Scott.

The Travelers of Dale Farm will be a priority partnership for AP in 2008

23. MISCELLANEOUS ROMA GROUPS (2006-PRESENT)

AP partners – various

AP has produced news bulletins about the following Roma advocates, at the request of partners:

- Roma from Kosovo who have been rejected for asylum by the Danish authorities and detained in such dire conditions that they will be forced to return to Kosovo - even though the province is deemed unsafe by the UN. AP’s bulletin was written for use by the asylum seekers as they press the Red Cross for better living conditions;
- Isolated Roma communities in the far north and west of Russia, which have been threatened by evictions and suffered murders at the hands of Russian skinheads;
- Roma activists who invoked AP’s help in removing racist and offensive descriptions from the Web. AP launched an online campaign in 2004 that forced Dictionary.com to remove a racist definition from its pages.

24. WOMEN OF SERBIA (2007-PRESENT)

AP Partner: Women in Black

This year, AP took on a new partnership with the organization Women in Black (WIB) in Serbia. AP began to publicize WIB’s inspiring advocacy early in 2007, and on the basis of this we were asked to recruit a volunteer for the summer. This was arranged at the last minute, and the Peace Fellow (Gail Morgado) had less than 8 weeks in Serbia. However, she was able to generate demand for information at the group and a commitment to develop a newsletter. AP will now build on this promising foundation. AP is particularly keen to help WIB and the Kosova Women’s Network (KWN) build their partnership (The Women’s Peace Coalition).

a) Producing information and achieving information self-sufficiency

Information about the partner: WIB has a website, and produces regular press releases but agrees that both tools could have a wider impact. WIB is also currently engaged in four book projects. AP Peace Fellow Gail Morgado produced a video of WIB’s historic and courageous visit this summer to the Potocari site of the 1995 Srebrenica massacre.

Information by the partner:

- **Newsletter:** Ms. Morgado worked side by side with a WIB member (Mima) and shared a newsletter template with WIB. WIB’s management is committed to embarking on a newsletter once the resources are available.

- **Press releases:** WIB produced 3 press releases this summer.
- **Photos:** Peace Fellow Gail Morgado reviewed and updated the WIB photo library.

b) Disseminating information and using ICT

ICT:

- **Tech assets:** Ms. Morgado produced a tech binder for WIB.
- **Petition:** WIB co-sponsored the on-line petition calling for the arrest of Mladic and Karadzic.
- **Maintaining website:** Peace Fellow Morgado helped update the website with other WIB activists; trained staff members to effectively combine simplicity and conciseness with graphics and advanced technical techniques; used ICT tech such as U-tube videos of events and conferences; worked with her counterpart and other interested staff members.
- New partner page on the AP site.

Dissemination:

- **AP Bulletins:** AP has produced 5 bulletins on WIB's advocacy and the pressures facing advocates for women's rights in Serbia. All were widely disseminated.
- **AP website:** AP has posted a WIB partner page.

c) Using information (networking and outreach):

Early in 2007, WIB launched a new anti-fascist network (Haos) with several other Serbian peace groups. Its goal is to expose and prevent acts of extremism and nationalism. In addition, WIB also continues to develop its partnership with Kosovo Women (KWN) through the Women's Peace Coalition. Sixty women attended the second Coalition meeting, in Struga Macedonia. The participants mounted street theater and publicly called for tax money to be spent on food rather than the military. They also decide to send missions to Serb enclaves in Kosovo. This was disseminated by the KWN's newsletter, but not by WIB – highlighting the need to upgrade WIB's information capacity.

d) Indirect

Empowered Volunteers: *“This fellowship has had an enormous impact in my life, both personally and professionally. I am much more confident in myself and in my potential as a future diplomat and life-time human rights advocate. I have also made friends for life.”* **Gail Morgado**, 2007 Peace Fellow.

e) Feedback:

“To everyone at Advocacynet. Thank you for writing a press release about our recent statement about Kosovo. We have received many e-mails asking for the full statement and asking questions about Women in Black. It is good to be able to tell new people about our work and counter what the Serbian government is saying in regards to Kosovo. Thank you for giving us this opportunity to reach a wider audience.” **Women in Black**—Belgrade, February 09 2007.

“Gail Morgado joined in the work of Women in Black—Belgrade seamlessly. She established good interpersonal relationships within the group and in wider surroundings. Her social and emotional intelligence made an impression on us, as did her lively energy, enthusiasm, vital happiness (and that is especially important in a country like Serbia where apathy and hopelessness predominate among the young), helpfulness, and diligence. She was very beneficial to our work. She helped us in different activities. I would like to especially emphasize her contribution to strengthening our organizations’ public relationships—which revealed her knowledge and experience— and her ability to transfer knowledge and skills. Women in Black, especially me, maintain contact with Gail. The effect of the work of people like Gail is long-lasting and significant in the sense of spreading the values of international solidarity and interculturalism.

“It would be extremely beneficial to us to have another intern in 2008. It would be especially good if you sent a person like Gail, who has high educational skills (for teaching English, which is important for the youth, who, because of the 15 years of embargo and blockade are isolated from the world. Many do not know English).” Staša Zajović, Coordinator, Women in Black—Belgrade.

Women in Black will be a priority partner for AP in 2008

25. SECULAR PALESTINIAN WOMEN’S MOVEMENT, SEEKING TO MAINTAIN RIGHTS (2007-PRESENT)

AP Partners: The Women’s Affairs Technical Committee (WATC); the Friedrich Ebert Stichting

AP first reported on the advocacy of Palestinian women in 2001, and has supported their work from a distance since. In late 2006 AP Executive Director Iain Guest was able to profile the work of the Women’s Affairs Technical Committee (WATC) in Ramallah and Gaza as part of a research project for the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES). The paper found that secular women’s advocates are facing extreme pressure from Hamas, Fatah and Israel.

At the request of FES and WATC, AP recruited two Peace Fellows, Erin Wroblewski and Tatsiana Hulko, for the two organizations this summer. Both Fellows were asked to help their hosts develop information tools. WATC’s website had been delayed for over two years and the organization did not produce regular online information – an extraordinary record for a mainstream advocacy group with a budget of over \$700,000. FES, too, was keen to define and promote its important work in the Territories.

In addition, FES provides financial support for WATC. AP and FES hoped that by developing a FES website and newsletter, AP might provide an outlet for its Palestinian partners, including WATC.

a) Producing information and achieving information self-sufficiency

Information about the partner:

- **Blogs:** Ms. Wroblewski and Ms. Hulko were on the West Bank in June 2007, when violence erupted between Fatah and Hamas. They described the experience in blogs, and continued to post high quality blogs during the rest of the summer.
- **Website content:** The 2 Fellows helped their hosts to produce profiles of members and photos for two new websites (see below). Tatsiana Hulko (WATC) produced 7 illustrated profiles for the WATC website on municipal women leaders who received training from WATC in Jenin and elsewhere. She also translated material for WATC's bimonthly newsletter (*Sawt an Nisa - Voice of Women*). Ms. Hulko also wrote a feature article for the *Leading to Choices* leadership training manual of the Women's Learning Partnership which is now used in seventeen countries.

Information by the partner:

- **FES Newsletter:** Ms. Wroblewski worked alongside FES staff to produce a new newsletter, in German and English. FES produced two issues after Ms. Wroblewski left, meeting the goal of information self-sufficiency.
- Ms. Hulko worked with her counterpart at WATC to produce information material and update the website. Institutionally, WATC has suffered from a rapid turnover of key personnel, and this has affected the group's information capacity.

b) Disseminating information and using ICT

ICT:

- **WATC website:** Ms. Hulko helped WATC to open the website, which had been in development for two years.
- **FES website:** Ms. Wroblewski helped FES make major upgrades to the website: 10 reports on the events page; 14 input fields; a guideline for maintaining the site; a tech binder with essential information; an events calendar.
- **AP website:** The two Peace Fellows produced material for two partner pages on the AP website.
- **Database:** Ms. Hulko developed a database of contacts for WATC.

Dissemination: With their websites now functional, WATC and FES both possess the capacity to distribute their own information. They can also use the AP site, where both have partner pages. The traffic will be measured over the coming months.

c) Using information (networking and outreach)

- **WATC** has a large and active grassroots constituency of women members that are associated with political factions, in Gaza and the West Bank. A firm grasp of information would allow it to mobilize this constituency. This summer, WATC was preoccupied by the Gaza crisis and fundraising challenges. Once these become clearer, it is to be hoped that WATC will evolve into an effective network like other AP partners. AP hopes to recruit Peace Fellow for WATC in 2008 to help build support for information

- **FES:** Ms. Wroblewski has helped to arrange for Mustafa Bharghouthi, the prominent Palestinian civil society activist, to visit Washington and promote the role of civil society in advance of the Middle East Conference.

d) Indirect

- **Empowered Volunteers:** *“...This internship reinforced my belief in the grassroots activism and civil society initiatives. I had a great opportunity to see how the projects bear fantastic results and change peoples’ lives.”* **Tatsiana Hulko**, 2007 Peace Fellow.

e) Social change.

The stakes are high for the secular Palestinian women’s movement, and WATC can play a key role in mobilizing Palestinian women in defense of women’s rights. For this, WATC will need a sure sense of its role as a network.

f) Feedback:

“Erin Wroblewski enormously enriched the work of our office in a number of ways. Based on her understanding of the work of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung and excellent command of German she was able to quickly integrate into the FES office in Jerusalem and contribute to achieving the goals of the FES.

Her ability to translate nuanced texts from German into English and to adapt them to an English speaking audience was of inestimable value to our office. The PR work of the Foundation improved markedly. Erin wrote a number of articles and reports about our partners and projects and worked tirelessly to make our work public and to disseminate information about the excellent work of our partners to a larger audience. We have Erin to thank for the renovation of our Homepage and the translation of the complete German Homepage into English. The improvement of our PR work at the FES in Jerusalem, Erin contributed to the goal of mobilizing support for Palestinians, and awakening interest among Europeans and Americans for the work of the FES.

Our office profited greatly from Erin’s presence and we are very interested in continuing to cooperate with the Advocacy Project. Whether or not it is reasonable to send a Fellow to the FES in Jerusalem next year depends on the ability to fund a suitable candidate with a sufficient command of German and appropriate sensitivity for development cooperation in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.” **Knut Defthlesen, Director, the Friedrich-Ebert Foundation (Jerusalem).**

From the Women’s Affairs Technical Committee (WATC): *“During her stay with WATC, Tatsiana built a good relationship with WATC’s team at the main office and in the field. Despite her short visit, she demonstrated a good knowledge of WATC and its work and her contribution to WATC website is highly appreciated. We only wished that her stay was longer.”*

WATC will be a priority partner for AP in 2008

26. BLIND PEOPLE IN BANGLADESH (2007-PRESENT)

AP partner: The Blind Education and Rehabilitation Development Organization (BERDO)

BERDO applied for partnership in 2006, and requested a Peace Fellow for the summer of 2007. BERDO's founder, Saidul Huq, is a former Ashoka Fellow and a pioneer in advocating for the rights of the disabled. Peace Fellow Caitlin Burnett had a highly productive summer with BERDO. Ms. Burnett described BERDO's work in blogs, produced material for an AP new bulletin, helped BERDO to post a new website and launch a newsletter. BERDO now moves into the next phase and starts to use these information tools in promoting the rights of its disabled members at a time of political crisis and uncertainty in Bangladesh. This will involve innovative projects, such as microcredit and scholarships.

a) Producing information and achieving information self-sufficiency

Information about the partner:

- **Blogs:** Ms. Burnett produced 19 blogs which richly described BERDO's work for the blind in Bangladesh. They also looked in detail at BERDO's innovative work using microcredit to empower the blind

Information by the partner: Ms. Burnett played a decisive role in helping BERDO produce a website and newsletter – the first time that the organization had been able to develop information tools. This was the result of two months of patient training and side by side support.

- **BERDO Newsletter:** The newsletter will be published every six months, initially, while BERDO develops its information capacity.
- **BERDO Website:** The BERDO website was initially posted on the website of BRAC, a large Bangladeshi NGO, before finding its own host.
- **AP Bulletin:** AP produced one news bulletin on BERDO during the summer. The bulletin was particularly well received by Ashoka, which had given a fellowship to the founder of BERDO.

b) Disseminating information and using ICT

ICT:

- BERDO is some way from being able to manage the website and use ICT in advocacy, but the group is strongly motivated. The organization co-sponsored a conference at the end of August on the use of ICT by people with disability.
- **Network database:** Ms. Burnett helped BERDO establish a database of contacts, for future use in networking and outreach.

Dissemination:

- **AP website:** During August, the AP website proved indispensable as a temporary host for the new BERDO website. The partner page is now being developed, with input from BERDO staff.

c) Using information (networking and outreach)

Ms. Burnett's blogs were followed by a dedicated group of professional women from the Zonta Washington Club during the summer of 2007. This resulted in a lively exchange. The reaction of the Zonta correspondents was extremely enthusiastic. Mary Ellen Bittner, the president, told a meeting of diplomats in late October that the exchange had "done wonders" for her group members.

AP is developing a network of contacts for BERDO among disability rights activists in North America. Together, the two organizations will decide how to translate this into outreach.

d) Feedback:

"Our Peace Fellow, Caitlin Burnett, was our first volunteer to come from abroad to work with BERDO. She stayed with us for 11 weeks this summer. Before she arrived, we were worried about hosting a foreign volunteer. Now our attitude has changed. We are now looking for new ways to work with organizations from abroad. There are many resources that we are now aware of and we want to benefit from them. By making the best use of resources from around the world, we will be better poised to serve persons with disability in Bangladesh.

"Most importantly, our Peace Fellow helped us create the tools we need to reach out - now we have a website and will produce our first newsletter. These tools will help us connect to people across the world. We are always looking for funds, so if people have money to give that is great. But information is worth so much more than money. This partnership with AP is an exciting opportunity for information about BERDO to reach many people and organizations across the globe. Persons with disability in Bangladesh need to be incorporated into the development process, and AP has helped us share that message. We look forward to hosting another Peace Fellow next year." Saidul Huq, founder and director of BERDO.

BERDO will be a priority partner for AP in 2008

27. STREET CHILDREN OF NAIROBI (2007-PRESENT)

AP partner: the Undugu Society

AP began working with the Undugu Society in the summer of 2007, at the request of HOPE-HIV, a UK-based organization that supports grassroots organizations in Africa which work on HIV-AIDS and related social issues. Undugu provides education and other services for street children and disadvantaged children in Nairobi. This summer, they decided to make the switch from service provision to advocacy, and asked for AP's support. AP recruited Peace Fellow Jonathan Homer (George Washington University) to work with Undugu in the summer. Mr. Homer focused on describing the challenge that faces street children, and on helping Undugu train and develop a new advocacy department.

a) Producing information and achieving information self-sufficiency

Information about the partner:

- **Blogging:** Peace Fellow Jonathan Homer wrote 22 blogs, which provided a powerful profile of life of the streets of Nairobi. He particularly focused on the misuse of glue and other substances by street children – a possible future campaign by Undugu.
- **AP bulletin:** AP followed up on Mr. Homer’s blogs, by producing a news bulletin on glue sniffing.

Information by the partner: Undugu does not yet possess the capacity to produce a regular newsletter.

b) Disseminating information and using ICT:

ICT: Mr. Homer worked with Undugu to:

- **Update the website:** Undugu has added a lobbying and advocacy section to the Undugu website; the site itself remains largely static, because Undugu has limited ability to produce and compile new material.
- Purchase a webcam.

Dissemination:

- **AP website:** Undugu has a page on the AP website.

c) Using information (networking and outreach)

Networking: Mr Homer compiled a database of Kenyan advocacy organizations that work with Undugu, and AP will not build on this in the US by locating organizations that work with street children and social problems like glue-sniffing. Undugu is also building its own capacity to undertake methodical and concerted lobbying around three issues: glue sniffing; the purchase of uniforms; and the incorrect use of development funds.

d) Indirect

- **Institution building:** Peace Fellow Jonathan Homer invested in helping Undugu develop a new advocacy capacity. This involved working with Undugu management to recruit a new advocacy director, and organize trainings. Undugu will need support and help in following up and building on this.
- **Empowered Volunteers:** *“Writing a blog was a good experience for me as it required me to channel many of the emotions that working with street children would create into writing. It was a healthy practice for me.” Jonathan Homer, 2007 Peace Fellow.*

Undugu will be a priority partner for AP in 2008

28. WOMEN IN MACEDONIA, SUFFERING FROM ABUSE (2007-PRESENT)

AP partner: The Association for Emancipation, Solidarity and Equality of Women (ESE)

At the request of the Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC), an AP partner, AP recruited Peace Fellow Stephanie Gilbert to volunteer with the Association for Emancipation, Solidarity

and Equality of Women (ESE) this summer. This fellowship was arranged at the last minute, and the group was not well briefed on the AP model. Still, Ms. Gilbert helped to lay a strong foundation that can be utilized at a later stage by ESE.

a) Producing information and achieving information self-sufficiency

Information about the partner: Ms. Gilbert produced several publications about the ESE's work:

- 2 research papers on domestic violence, for a new ESE English-language website (including a comparison of the government's response to violence, and the implications of Macedonia's integration into the EU).
- **Backgrounder:** A 15-page background document on the ESE, for use on the new English-language website.
- **8 Blogs:** These included a profile of the challenge facing Roma women.

Information by the partner: Ms. Gilbert helped the ESE to start producing information:

- **Newsletter template:** Produced a newsletter template, to help ESE produce a newsletter, 4 times a year. The actual content will be produced within the next few months.

b) Disseminating information and using ICT

ICT: ESE has an IT employee on call, and hence is self-sufficient in ICT. Its ICT needs are therefore limited. Ms. Gilbert created two listservs, for use in fundraising and outreach.

Dissemination: Ms. Gilbert helped ESE develop several written fundraising tools which will require an expanded ICT capacity:

- The ESE website.
- The AP website (and ESE partner page).

c) Using information (networking and outreach)

Networking: Ms. Gilbert developed a database of over 400 regional and international NGOs working on domestic violence for use by ESE in advocacy.

Outreach: Ms. Gilbert tried to help ESE identify contacts abroad in the Macedonian *diaspora*.

d) Indirect:

Strong organizations: At ESE's request, Ms. Gilbert helped to develop a plan to reorganize the ESE Executive Board and create a Board sub-committee that will involve members more in fundraising; helped to develop a template for assessing the number of ESE beneficiaries; and designed a fundraising campaign, with press releases, thank-you letters and fundraising letters; news updates.

29. YOUNG PEOPLE IN MACEDONIA, SEEKING TO PROMOTE VOLUNTEERISM (2007-PRESENT)

AP partners: the Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC) and the Youth Cultural Center (Bitoula)

AP recruited a Peace Fellow this year for the YCC at the request of the Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC). This was arranged at the last minute, but Katie Wroblewski (Indiana) helped to group identify a number of ways to advance its main social agenda – to encourage more youth volunteerism in Macedonia.

a) Producing information and achieving information self-sufficiency

Information about the partner:

- **Blogs.** Ms. Wroblewski's 10 blogs were all republished in the South Bend Tribune.
- A video project to interview children for sponsors.

Information by the partner: Ms. Wroblewski helped the YCC to produce 2 newsletters.

b) Disseminating information and using ICT

ICT: Ms. Wroblewski helped YCC to:

- **Website:** update the English version; and create a Myspace profile which was used to promote the Bitola Open City festival.
- Create a database for their current volunteers.
- Create a design for upgrading YCC's website to include the ability to match volunteers with placements.
- Post an organizational profile on dosomething.org.
- Set up new system for sending out newsletters.
- Preliminary design for a volunteer placement website.

c) Using information (networking and outreach)

Networking: Ms. Wroblewski helped YCC to:

- Plan two campaigns on volunteerism that reach out to businesses, senior citizens.
- Compile a list of *diaspora* contacts abroad in the US and Australia.
- Develop a spreadsheet to track volunteers.
- Develop a template for a letter to be used with businesses.
- Identify a focal point at a local corporation for developing a corporate volunteerism project.

Outreach: Ms. Wroblewski helped YCC to:

- Plan and set up 2 major outreach campaigns to promote volunteerism: a) Celebration of Global Youth Service Day (2008); b) a corporate event. (Ms. Wroblewski also drafted a proposal for these two events.)
- Set up profile on international Youth Federation.

- Plan US-based activity (in preparation).

d) Indirect:

Institution-building: Ms. Wroblewski worked with her counterpart, Maja Petrovska, to develop proposals and help YCC plan for future outreach events. She also encouraged YCC to be more thoughtful and deliberate in approaching new donors for their organization. She is helping them to approach donors for supporting next year's Bitola Open City festival as well as created outreach material and a template for inquiry letters to approach *diaspora* groups and other donors that might be interested in funding YCC.

e) Feedback:

“From our perspective, and from what we hear from YCC, Katie is doing a fantastic job”:
Stephanie Rust, Chief of Party, ISC Skopje.

30. HUMAN RIGHTS VICTIMS IN THE SRI LANKAN WAR (2004-PRESENT)

AP partner: the Home for Human Rights

AP started working with HHR in 2004. The following year, we co-managed a project to support Tsunami-affected villages in Eastern Sri Lanka (described above). This project helped HHR to develop a website and produce regular reports. AP recruited two interns to work on the Tsunami project (2005 and 2006). This summer, AP recruited Peace Fellow Maddie England to help HHR upgrade and refine its information tools and strategy. Ms. England helped the group launch a new newsletter on torture and produce press releases on the alarming increase in abuses. From Washington, AP has also helped HHR draft two major proposals to create a corps of community-based “barefoot human rights advocates.” HHR’s goal is clear: work with communities to eradicate torture and other abuses, particularly against the Tamil minority.

a) Producing information and achieving information self-sufficiency

Information about the partner:

- **Blogs:** Ms. England wrote 18 blogs

Information by the partner:

- **Torture Monitor:** This new newsletter was launched in late July by HHR, with assistance from Ms. England. It contained profiles about torture survivors and basic facts about HHR’s program
- **Press releases:** HHR produced four press releases on disappearances and other challenges

b) Disseminating information and using ICT

ICT: HHR has an IT manager and is self-sufficient in ICT and website work, as a result of the previous AP-HHR Tsunami project

Dissemination:

- **HHR email dissemination:** Distributed the newsletter and press releases by email.
- **AP news bulletins:** AP produced 2 bulletins on disappearances and the launch of the Monitor. The latter was re-issued by 10 online news services including the Tamil *diaspora* association in the UK.

c) Using information (networking and outreach)

Networking: AP created a database (400+ addresses) for the torture newsletter; added 20 organizations to the HHR's own database;

Outreach: Ms. England:

- Wrote over 20 letters to UN treaty bodies and special investigators about events in the summer.
- Contacted several donors (USAID, Dutch Embassy) to seek funding for the torture program.
- Evaluated the joint AP-HHR Tsunami project in Batticaloa, two years on.

d) Indirect

- **Institution-building: Fundraising.** AP has drafted a proposal for the US State Department, to fund a network of community-based torture support groups; helped to restructure funding proposal for the HHR documentation unit.
- **Empowered Volunteers:** *“The fellowship was an infinitely valuable experience. I learned more about human rights advocacy and research, exactly as I was hoping, and I also gained experience working in a conflict zone. It helped me to develop the skills and understanding to work with community-based human rights organizations.” Maddie England, 2007 Peace Fellow*

e) Social change:

The long-term goal of HHR is to end the conflict and halt abuses, particularly against the Tamil minority. While HHR's own advocacy has clearly grown stronger over the past year, this larger goal is linked to progress in resolving the conflict. In future, AP will seek to work more from HHR's regional offices.

HHR will be a priority partner for AP in 2008

31. POOR FAMILIES IN TRUJILLO, PERU

AP partners – Supporting Kids in Peru (SKIP)

This summer, for the first time, AP recruited two Peace Fellows (Jessica Boccardo and Sara Zampierin) for SKIP (Supporting Kids in Peru), an organization that seeks to empower poor families and help them send their children to school. The summer was marred by a prolonged

teachers' strike. But the two Fellows did much to lay the basis for future AP support and assist SKIP's advocacy. In particular, they helped to organize and coordinate a network of NGOs based in Trujillo, which has continued to work together to lobby for better coordination in meeting the education needs of the poor.

a) Producing information and achieving information self-sufficiency

Information about the partner: The two Peace Fellows:

- **Blogs:** Produced 18 blogs on SKIP's work and the challenges facing the poor in Trujillo.
- **Video:** Started a video project, interviewing children for their sponsors; posted video footage on You Tube/Flickr.
- **Photos:** Posted 200 plus photos on the AP Flickr site, to assist new sponsors.

Information by the partner: The two Peace Fellows:

- **New newsletter:** Helped SKIP launch a new bi-monthly newsletter on the organization's work – a key indicator of information self-sufficiency.
- Developed a newsletter template.

b) ICT and dissemination: The two Peace Fellows:

ICT:

- **Blogging by the partner:** Taught volunteers to blog.
- **Website:** Updated website; Set up new system for sending out newsletters; redid the format; added new section on Education in the News.
- Created a **SKIP tech binder** (with passwords, SKIP online, volunteer listings etc).

Dissemination:

- **AP website:** Posted partner page.

c) Networking and outreach: The two Peace Fellows:

- Developed a donor database with all contacts information and potential donors
- Developed a NGO database and online directory (www.directorio-trujillo.org) with contact info, project info and info on local NGOs.
- Contacted almost 30 possible foreign donors and International Volunteer Associations. Got replies from 3 of them (YAP, SCI and *Educacion sin Fronteras*).
- Met with local NGOs to create one voice in the struggle for a better education. The NGOs met 3 times during the summer and have met again since. The NGO coordinating group has since published in a government newsletter and developed 2 large projects.
- Advocated for a new agenda on *mesas*.
- Visited schools.
- Visited and interviewed EPAFA parents and administrators.

- Taught English to SKIP children when the volunteers were absent.

Outreach in the US:

- Peace Fellow Boccardo presented at the annual dinner of the Washington Zonta Women's Club (September).
- Peace Fellow Zampierin purchased handicrafts from 2 mothers, for showing in the US.

d) Indirect

Institution-Building: Peace Fellow Zampierin worked to streamline and improve SKIP's use of volunteers:

- Listed funding opportunities.
- Helped volunteers apply to SKIP.
- Developed work task sheet for volunteers.
- Helped 6 volunteers post web pages.
- Obtained list of scholarships for secondary students.
- Updated volunteer postings online.
- Wrote evaluations for outgoing volunteers.
- Helped 75 parents to complete evaluations about SKIP program.

e) Feedback:

"We are very happy about the potential benefits of this new focus on advocacy and look forward to a long and productive partnership with the Advocacy Project." **Larry Wolfe**, SKIP Executive Director.

SKIP will be a priority partner for AP in 2008

32. CONFERENCE COVERAGE – PEACE GROUPS (2005)

Since its first project, on behalf of the NGO Coalition for an International Criminal Court (CICC) in 1998, AP has reported from several major conferences on behalf of civil society.³⁵ AP has had two broad objectives in covering a conference: first, to produce a professional product that helps partners achieve their lobbying goals from the conference; and second, to help partners become self-sufficient in information, sustain long-term campaigns and service their networks.

These two goals have usually proved difficult to reconcile. When AP was able to hire a professional team of reporters, the products were professional and the short-term objectives were met, but this left no time to build information capacity. This was shown by AP's experience with the UNICEF NGO Committed (above pages 18-19). But when the AP team focused on

³⁵ The International Criminal Court (1998); the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (1999); (the Executive Committee meeting of the UNHCR (1999); the Human Rights Defenders Summit (Paris 1999); the Special Session of the UN General Assembly on Children (2002); the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (2005).

information capacity-building, the quality of products tended to suffer. This is best illustrated by AP's partnership with the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) (2005).

GPPAC is a network of some 1,000 grassroots groups that had scheduled a major conference at the UN headquarters for July 17, 2005. AP was asked to provide information for the conference, and in the absence of clear instructions or a written agreement (a major failing of this project), we assumed that GPPAC saw the conference as an opportunity to lobby for change. But this was not the case. GPPAC viewed the meeting as an opportunity to exchange information and develop an agenda, and there was friction between AP and GPPAC after one issue of the newsletter attempted to lobby by criticizing the meeting's UN host. This was the result of a lack of communication between GPPAC and its AP information team.

Efforts by the AP team to help GPPAC build an information capacity were only marginally more successful. In an effort to provide GPPAC's grassroots members with a voice at the meeting, AP developed a blogging portal – *People Building Peace* – which was managed by a GPPAC volunteer. The portal received praise and was widely used at the conference, even if it was hampered by an overly complex design.³⁶ AP helped GPPAC to turn its lengthy agenda into a short and readable document. AP also worked closely with a group of some 20 GPPAC delegates and volunteers who generated most of the content for the newsletter and portal and were drawn enthusiastically into the project.

The commitment of GPPAC's volunteers, and the involvement of its regional coordinators in the newsletter, provided an even chance that the website and newsletter would be sustained past the conference and serve GPPAC's grassroots members, but this proved optimistic. Once the meeting finished, GPPAC spent several months rethinking its future structure and workplan, and gave itself no campaigning goals. By the time GPPAC emerged from the planning, its information volunteers had moved onto other things.

This project was hampered from the start by a lack of funding, which made it impossible for AP to produce high quality information tools and create a demand for information (and blogging) among GPPAC's members. More serious, GPPAC never saw a clear role for AP or a compelling value for communications and information. This was partly due to the network's single-minded focus on process, and its lack of any campaigning goals. This contrasted strongly with AP's first successful conference coverage at Rome in 1998, and showed, once again, that information tools will only succeed if they are serving a larger, clearly defined purpose.

The Advocacy Project, October 2007.

³⁶ Within ten days, the portal had been used by bloggers from 13 countries, and visited by individuals from 48 countries, including Palestinians and Israelis.