IWD events supported in Barbados and Dominica

WAND has continued its tradition of placing special emphasis on the observance of International Women’s Day (IWD). This year the unit sponsored activities in two countries, Dominica and Barbados. WAND supported the Dominica Planned Parenthood Association in hosting a one-day workshop for 30 young people on “Adolescent Reproductive Health” that examined major issues such as AIDS/STDs prevention, contraception and cancers of the reproductive system.

The unit also supported the Dominica National Council of Women which held a series of rallies on domestic violence under the theme “Men and Women Working to Break the Cycle of Violence”. Rallies were held in the country’s seven zones.

In Barbados, WAND and the Caribbean Policy Development Centre (CPDC) hosted a panel discussion, “Whither the Rights of Women: Critical Analysis of the Impact of Employment in the Informatics Sector on the Rights of Barbadian Women”. The event aimed to bring to public attention the plight of women who work in the Export Processing Zone in Barbados and particularly to get a better understanding of the situation facing women in the Informatics industry.

We also supported Women’s Media Watch (Barbados) in collaboration with the Women and Development Studies Group of the UWI Cave Hill campus, in staging of “A Lunchtime Affair”, an open-air concert in celebration of IWD. The concert featured a number of local artists and aimed to promote the activities of Women’s Media Watch.

In a message marking IWD, Tutor/Co-ordinator, Dr Judith Soares expressed the hope that women’s rights would not be seen as an anomaly but would be recognised and understood as human rights. “This is particularly important since the prevailing social, economic and political situation based on the principles of globalisation and liberalisation of trade has virtually negated the rights of women both regionally and internationally,” she observed.

WAND & UNDCP host ‘Women, Drugs and the Media’ workshop

“Women, Drugs and the Media” was the theme of a workshop hosted March 31, 1998, by WAND and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) office for the Eastern Caribbean.

The workshop, held at the Pom Marine Hospitality Institute in Barbados, attempted to sensitise the media and the wider community to the issues of increasing levels of involvement of women and children in the drug trade as a way out of poverty.

Tutor/Co-ordinator Dr Judith Soares said that both WAND and the UNDCP recognised that the mobilisation of civil society on the drugs issue had to be a key activity of the media and communities.

Participants included senior media workers and managers, community workers from Barbados, other Caribbean and international countries.

Barbados’ Minister of Health, Ms Elizabeth Thompson was the keynote speaker at the workshop.
Training held on producing and selling radio programmes

A UNESCO proposal to support WAND in developing radio production capabilities was advanced during November when a five-day radio production workshop was conducted for WAND staff and other participants.

The workshop was conducted at the WAND centre by Dwight Whylie of Jamaica who was funded by the Commonwealth Foundation. WAND staff were joined at the workshop by volunteer Jo Ann Homar, Andrea Holder a journalist with the Barbados Advocate newspaper and Patricia Donald of the Caribbean Conference of Churches.

The workshop conveyed radio production skills including interviewing and writing techniques, studio operations and programme marketing. As a special project, a five and a 15 minute programme were produced in the new WAND radio studio.

The studio was built by the UWI and equipped by UNESCO. WAND will use the studio to produce programmes that support its work and advances the Beijing Agenda through the Women Speaking to Women concept promulgated by UNESCO. WAND will also seek to execute cost recovery activities to cover staffing and maintenance of the studio and electronic media programme.

New benefits from IT workshop

A workshop on New Information Technology was held at the WAND centre spread over two half-days during November 1997. Two staff members were among the six participants who attended the workshop conducted by David Smith of the UWI’s Computer Department.

Among the topics covered were a definition of the Internet and how it works; Internet components such as e-mail, the Worldwide Web and news groups; relevance of the Internet; searching the Web and how Web pages are created.

Participants who were drawn from WAND, the Centre for Gender and Development Studies, UWI, Caribbean Rights and the main library at the Cave Hill campus, reported a higher comfort level in working with computers and the Internet after the workshop and found increased levels of usefulness in their daily work.

Women entrepreneurship addressed by WAND team

Tutor/Co-ordinator Dr Judith Soares and Programme Co-ordinator Jeanette Bell participated in a Canada/CARICOM Caribbean regional workshop in December on “Promoting an Enabling Environment for Enterprise Development”.

WAND was invited to participate in the workshop by CARICAD, and organised the session on “Women and Entrepreneurship” which was chaired by Judith. Jeanette chaired the thematic session on “Promoting Entrepreneurship among Women and the Youth”.

The workshop examined global topics such as the challenges of global competitiveness, strategies in small enterprise development as well as areas such as finance, business plans, networking, technical assistance and training.

Judith’s presentation reflected the observation that in our societies women are not encouraged to go into business, especially if they have to depend on commercial bank loans. For them to receive loans they need to possess the three Cs – class, colour and collateral – and should be male.

Jeanette Bell (right) and Jo Ann Homar seen through the studio glass and course facilitator Dwight Whylie states a point during the radio production workshop.