

## **Armenian Association of Women with University Education**

Armenian Association of Women with University Education (AAWUE), a non-governmental, non-profit organization, was established on December 13, 1995.

AAWUE is a nationwide organization that incorporates branches in Yerevan and in the country's regions. The Association has an associated status with the United Nations Department of Public Information (UN DPI) and is an associated member of the International Federation of University Women (IFUW).

### ***The mission of the Association is***

- *to support democratic processes and civil society building in Armenia and the advancement of women's status in the society as well as more active participation of women in politics, government and decision-making;*
- *to develop a new, democratic culture aimed at achieving gender equality in the society, at eliminating gender stereotypes and at raising gender awareness as well as at promoting ideology of equal rights and equal opportunities for men and women;*
- *to contribute to elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, to human rights protection and to lobbying for women's interests;*
- *to use the (yet largely untapped) potential of women for conflict resolution and post-conflict peace-building;*
- *to promote integration of the Association and of other Armenian women's NGOs into the international women's movement.*

During the entire period of its operation the Association has focused its efforts on the implementation of information, educational and research projects that aimed at enhancing women's civic and political activism by way of raising the level of their political and legal knowledge and of giving them technologies of organization of civic and political activities during a democratic changes stage in the country's development. It has dealt with the protection of women's rights and interests, conducted monitoring of the implementation of the basic UN and OSCE documents on the improvement of women's situation, on their advancement to power and decision-making and on the attainment of a gender balance in the society.

Within the framework of its *Center for Democracy and Peace* the Association has been making consistent efforts to promote democratic values and mentality, has conducted surveys of public views on a political situation in the country and designed strategies for NGOs to enhance their leverage on the processes of democratic changes.

The Association has also focused on institutionalization of gender education in this country and undertaken a gender analysis of the domestic legislation and of political practices. Over the years, more than 10,000 women and men refreshed and upgraded their knowledge through the *Women's Leadership School* and through educational programs.

Within the past 5 years about 4,639 college students and 3,650 high school students took gender courses designed and taught by the AAWUE members.

***The Association is operating as an entity engaged in social lobbying, in human rights protection at national and international levels and in analytical and information activities. It also conducts educational and consulting activities.***

AAWUE participated in the NGO Forum for ECE countries as a part of Beijing+5 review in January 2000 in Geneva and the special session of the UN General Assembly *Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century* from 5-9 June 2000.

In September 2000, AAWUE participated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> European Conference on *Gender Equality in Higher Education* in Zurich (Switzerland).

AAWUE participated in the 27<sup>th</sup> Triennial Conference of International Federation of University Women “Women and globalization” held in Ottawa, Canada, in August 2001.

In December 2004 the AAWUE representatives took part in the Preparatory meeting within the Beijing+10 process in Geneva and in February-March 2005 at the 49<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women in New York.

AAWUE representatives participated in the 43<sup>rd</sup> session of the *Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)* from 18-23 January 2009 in Geneva (Switzerland).

AAWUE representatives participated in the 54<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW54) at the United Nations Headquarters from 1 to 12 March 2010 in New York

AAWUE participated in the Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting on *Promotion of Gender Balance and Participation of Women in Political and Public Life* held in Vienna on 6 - 7 May 2010.

### ***Activities of the Association***

AAWUE implemented the following projects: ***Women and Development: Rights and Opportunities, Culture of Peace for Development, Woman and Society: Gender Equality in The Perspective of Democratic Development and Women’s Initiatives in Support of Democracy and Civil Society, Support to the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, of the UN Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and of the Millennium Development Goals, Civil society initiatives in support of gender equality for democracy, Gender awareness: the prerequisite of parity democracy.*** The projects sought to develop a new democratic culture, to transfer legal knowledge, to enhance women’s political and civic activism and to do advocacy promoting the culture of democracy and peace, tolerance and political and cultural dialogue.

#### ***In 1997-2010 AAWUE hosted 11 international conferences:***

- ***Women’s Rights and Issues in the Transforming Society: Reality and Prospects,***
- ***Women and Development: Rights and Opportunities,***
- ***Woman and Society: Gender Equality in the Perspective of Democratic Development,***
- ***Culture of Peace: Democracy and Dialogue of Cultures,***
- ***Women in Armenia in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Gender equality:women's civic and political participation,***
- ***Dialogue among civilizations: democracy and peace,***
- ***Women’s movement in Armenia: priorities and development strategies,***
- ***Consolidation of Democracy: Civil society in the globalization perspective***
- ***Participatory Democracy: Civic initiatives and responsibility***
- ***Transition period civil society and issues of democracy-building.***
- ***Prospects for attaining Gender Equality in Armenia: Political & Legal aspects***

### ***Women’s Leadership School***

In 2002 AAWUE established ***Women’s Leadership School*** to provide knowledge and skills to and to develop a leadership potential of women that have an active participation in political and/or civic life. So far, 26 groups of leaders and activists from NGOs and political parties (830 women) successfully completed a 2-month’s course of study.

## **AAWUE Centers**

**Center for Gender Studies and Information and Analytical Center of the Association were established in 1996, and Center for Democracy and Peace, in 2000. These centers conduct research, implement educational projects and are used as an intellectual resource for other AAWUE activities.**

### **Center for Gender Studies**

The Association initiated teaching of 20 gender disciplines in 11 universities and conducting of gender classes in 30 high schools in Armenia. To that end three gender schools were conducted on personnel development and draft standards of gender education were designed.

### **Center for Democracy and Peace**

Over 100 round table sessions with the participation of over 2,500 individuals were organized and conducted by the **Center for Democracy and Peace** in Yerevan, Gyumri, Vanadzor, Ijevan, Kapan, Dilijan and Goris in 2000-2010.

*The exchange of ideas and opinions and the dialogue during the round table discussions, debates and dialogue sessions are instrumental in women's acquisition of skills of maintaining and asserting their viewpoints and stand and to use newly acquired skills for leading the women's groups, for confronting the authorities and public officials with the issues that are of concern for the society and women and for pursuing their resolution.*

In 2002-2010 the Center conducted six sociological surveys to study the pre-election, election and post-election situation in the country, voters' expectations from presidential and parliamentary elections and the role of NGOs. The findings and analytical articles were published in *Elections & Democracy: Civil Society Factor* (2003), *Electoral Democracy: Is there an alternative to it in Armenia?* (2003)(Russian- and Armenian-language editions), *Democratization of the Armenian Society: Gender perspective* (in Russian) (2004) and *Democratization of the Armenian Society: Realities and Tendencies* (2004)(in Armenian), *Political participation in transition society: a gender equality dimension* (2006)(Armenian, Russian and English-language editions), *Women's Political Participation in the 2007 Parliamentary Election in Armenia* (2007)(Armenian and Russian-language editions).

### **National Information and Analytical Center**

#### **In 1997-2010 the Center of the Association published**

- 52 issues of the newsletter "**Women with University Education**" in **Armenian, Russian and English**;

**In 1997-2010 the Center of the Association produced more than 85 publications** on issues of democratic changes in the Armenian society, gender equality and gender studies, findings of sociological surveys and studies and of the monitoring of a gender situation in Armenia and of the implementation of Armenia's commitment to achieve gender equality in the society in transition. It also published the proceedings of international conferences and symposia and nationwide conferences of students and young scholars.

## AAWUE Publications (1997-2007)

- 11 issues of the Proceedings of the international conferences held by the AAWUE
- 38 titles in the *Gender Studies* series (in Armenian, Russian and English)
- 52 issues of the newsletter “*Women with University Education*” in Armenian, Russian and English
- Manual *Planning for Change*
- *Platform for Action* of the Fourth World Conference in Beijing (in Armenian)
- Practical Guide *Gender and Development* by Cecilia Andersen (in Armenian)
- Guidebook *How to Make the Voices Heard in the Society* for Women and Women’s NGOs (in Armenian)
- Monograph *Women’s safety in the society, family and elsewhere*
- Proceedings of regional seminars *Parity Democracy. Women’s civic initiatives in the extremely conditions*
- *Women of Armenia - Year 2000. Review of Beijing Platform for Action - reality and perspectives* (Results of the monitoring) (in Armenian and in English)
- *The Society’s Choice is Peace for Development* (results of the sociological survey)
- Proceedings of seminars *Women's Citizen Participation*, 2001
- Materials of the 1<sup>st</sup> nationwide conference of undergraduates and young academics and researchers *Gender Culture of the Present-Day Armenian Society: traditions & innovations*
- Materials of the 2<sup>nd</sup> nationwide conference of undergraduates and young academics and researchers *Gender equality as a precondition of parity democracy*
- Materials of the 3<sup>rd</sup> nationwide conference of undergraduates and young academics and researchers *Gender equality as a prerequisite for democracy: rights and implementation opportunities*
- Materials of the 4<sup>th</sup> nationwide conference of undergraduates and young academics and researchers *Gender equality as a present-day challenge*
- Materials of the 5<sup>th</sup> nationwide conference of undergraduates and young academics and researchers *Gender harmony, democracy & progress*
- Materials of the 6<sup>th</sup> nationwide conference of undergraduates and young academics and researchers *Gender equality as an imperative of modernity*
- Materials of the 7<sup>th</sup> nationwide conference of undergraduates and young academics and researchers *Gender equality in the society and in the family. Harmony and tolerance.*
- *Beijing in my life: 10 years later*
- *Conceptual basics of the State policies in the field of gender education. Draft State standards in gender education, 2004*
- *Gender situation in Armenia: consequences of the transformation processes and women’s empowerment within the context of the millennium development goals, 2005*
- *Gender education in the system of higher education: Draft State educational standards*
- *Political participation in the transition society: gender equality dimension*
- *Gender analysis of the poverty reduction strategy paper of the Republic of Armenia*

- *Monitoring of the implementation of UN Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Beijing Platform for Action (BPA) and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the Republic of Armenia*
- *Equal rights for women and men: Collection of international legal instruments, RoA laws and acts of legislation*
- *Implementation of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in the Republic of Armenia in 2002-2006. Alternative Report.*
- *Women's Political Participation in the 2007 Parliamentary Election in Armenia, 2007*
- *Civic movement in the perspective of the third millennium: new challenges, priorities and strategies, Forum proceedings, 2009*
- *Elimination of discrimination against women as a political issue and as a prerequisite for the formation of a democratic society, Forum proceedings, 2010*
- *Fundamentals of Gender Knowledge: Manual for general-education schools, 2009*
- *Gender and Journalism: Instructor's manual, 2010*

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