

**The UN Secretary General's Study:
A New York City Response**

One road map, with suggestions for the future

Introductory note to the Readers:

We offer the experience and recommendations of our organizing committee for planning and implementing a local response to the UN Secretary General's Study on Violence Against Women (the Study), which was issued to the UN General Assembly in October 2006.

In March 2006 women attending the annual session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) came together in New York to discuss issues on which the Study might focus. In May, some of those same women gathered to organize a local response to the Study, in an effort to ensure the lessons of the Study would have the widest possible dissemination.

Among the organizations represented on that Organizing Committee were members of the local affiliates of the "Five O's" the international women's organizations that have spearheaded and supported much of the work of the CSW, including Zonta International, Soroptimist International, International Federation of University Women, International Federation of Business and Professional Women and the International Council of Women. Members of local community and professional groups joined them in this venture.

This publication is based on our daylong seminar entitled *Violence Against Women: A New York City Response to the U.N. Secretary General's Study*. Our intention is to provide other groups interested in developing a local response to this important work with a road map for planning an event. We met in December, two weeks after our conference, and debriefed about what worked and what did not work. It was at that meeting that we were recruited to write this report for you to use in planning your meeting.

This is our experience, which we hope will facilitate your extending the reach of the Secretary General's study.

Here is our road map and recommendations.

Good luck!

Marcia Goffin and Leslie Wright

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Background

The NGO¹ Committee on the Status of Women (NGO CSW NY) decided in August 2005 to initiate a two-year project associated with the UN Secretary General's Study on Violence against Women, due to the General Assembly in the fall of 2006. The NGO CSW NY established a subcommittee on violence against women to implement its initiative, appointing Leslie Wright as chair of the subcommittee.

Though members came and went, Wright, working with the NGO CSW's vice chair Denise Scotto, brought together the New York County Lawyers' Association (NYCLA) represented by Marcia Goffin, and the Wellesley Centers for Women represented by Susan Bailey. Working with volunteers from the NGO CSW, the partners produced a conference on March 4, 2006 at NYCLA. The conference focused on research, media involvement, and legal issues associated with violence against women.

At the conclusion of the conference, New York representatives of Project 5-O² came together to produce a follow up conference to the issues raised in the Secretary General's Study. This conference represents one way in which organizations can work together to implement recommendations from the Study that are appropriate for them.

Several members of the planning committee are advocates because someone in their lives was assaulted or murdered because of domestic violence. We remember them through this and our follow up publications.

¹ NGO refers to non-governmental organizations, or not-for-profit organizations. Members of the NGO CSW NY are affiliated with the United Nations.

² Project 5-O was established in 1980 to bring five major international women's organizations together to implement funding for projects that assist women in developing countries. It has evolved into a coalition for addressing advocacy on behalf of women, with particular emphasis on violence against women.

A Road Map for a Conference

Planning a conference is a commitment of personnel, time and money. It requires a group of motivated people – motivated to make a difference. Here is the way we did it, with recommendations for how to do it better!

Beginning – setting goals and a timeframe

There is never a good time to start something. You just have to do it. A conference like ours can be planned in several months, a year or even longer. Much depends on the resources available to make things happen.

The first thing you need to do is to establish why you want to hold this conference. We felt strongly that New York was a microcosm of the world, yet even with the UN in the middle of the City, few people know what the UN does, or even that there is a UN Study on Violence against Women. Our main goal was to call attention to the Study, and to show how the US and New York are linked to the rest of the world in our approach towards violence against women.

In our case, we started meeting in early May 2006. We took a break from mid-June through July, and began meeting weekly in August. We set a date for the conference and invited the keynote speaker, secured the facility, raised our seed money, and proceeded to set other goals and objectives.

v Whatever the time you have, you will need to set specific dates by which certain goals will be accomplished. Without that, it is difficult to make things work. Set your timeline by working backwards from the day of the conference and identify the details that you have to implement.

Another concern is that you allow enough time to get the job done, but not so much time that volunteers begin to lose interest. We operated on a short time frame using only volunteers. Volunteers will have other priorities, and may not be able to fulfill some tasks at the time needed.

v Allow for flexibility and plan back up for tasks. Choose volunteers committed to the project.

v Consider using email and conference calling in place of some face-to-face meetings. Travel time can be a time-waster!

If an organization with paid staff is managing the project, it will be easier to operate on a longer timeframe. It may be necessary, as the staff may from time to time have other priorities.

Setting up an Organizing Committee

Because we had already been working together at the UN and knew each other from the Conference held March 4th, we used the Project 5-O organizations as our base. All of the 5-O organizations have set a priority on eliminating violence against women and are prepared to manage this task through some volunteer or financial support.

v You can start with local affiliates of these international women's organizations if they are present in your city/country:

- ? International Councils of Women
- ? International Federation of Business and Professional Women
- ? International Federation of University Women
- ? Soroptimist International
- ? Zonta International

We added the following partners: New York County Lawyers' Association (Women's Rights Committee; you may also check for other organizations of women attorneys), battered women's shelters, Equality Now, other organizations offering assistance to abused women (these differ according to conditions in each country/community).

vIdentify who is active on the issues already and work to include them in a decision-making capacity.

We were very flexible about who could join, and in the beginning this caused some wasted time because some of the members could not make meetings or could not commit as we had expected. Also, because members came from different backgrounds, they had differing expectations. It was difficult getting to agreement about speakers, content, scope, target audience.

vAt some point you will need to decide that the Organizing Committee is complete, and no new members can be added. New members will always have ideas to contribute and may differ in planning perspectives. There is a time when decisions have to be made and when all points of view cannot be accommodated.

We used the Organizing Committee to assign tasks and to identify other volunteers who might be able to work on specific projects. They either volunteered, or were solicited for specific skills or resources.

Choosing the theme and format

We found this to be a difficult task. It took us most of the summer to settle on the approach we wanted to take. It seemed that the more diverse the Organizing Committee became, the more difficult it was for us to focus on just one topic of the enormous subject of violence against women.

For us, the task was complicated because the Study was not yet released and we could not obtain, even from friends working on the Study, an indication of what was going to be released. We were not sure whether we should focus on the study, or whether we should focus on one aspect of violence against women by identifying the most important subject for New York City³.

After much discussion about the topic and a great deal of learning about the communities and their services, we decided that the information we wanted to share meant that we needed more than an afternoon or evening meeting. It is at this point that you will need to decide what format you need for what you want to do. For example, you may want to do something other than a conference (please refer to Other Options section of this publication.)

We decided that we could focus on the Study since our Conference would be held around the time the Study was due to be released to the UN General Assembly, which was the body that had commissioned it. By then we had identified specific areas of focus – trafficking, human rights, patriarchy, communication among the various cultural and ethnic communities in New York City, the role of men, and training for attorneys, police and medical professionals. We felt these were important to include in our planning process.

³ It is important for the Organizing Committee to identify what is the most important area of the Study for your group to address. This can be different because of the circumstances of your country/community. This is a key exercise for everyone to do together and must be done early in the process so that you can communicate it easily to the others who are working with you.

Targeting the audience, formatting the program, identifying speakers and space

Once we decided that we wanted to have a conference, we needed to see how we would use the time, where to hold it, and what form the conference would take. More important, we needed to identify the target audience.

Because we were working with such a diverse Organizing Committee, we found it difficult to identify the target audience. Who was our audience? Service providers? Advocates? Community groups? We kept coming back to this point throughout the planning process.

We never really confronted this issue because we worked to accommodate all of our Organizing Committee members (see discussion above re: Organizing Committee.) We decided to try to offer something for each of us – focusing on the strengths of the group that was planning the conference. This was a weakness in our approach, which made the conference difficult to market in the end. We also recognize that we spent too much time on this part of the process, trying to include everyone's interests and perspectives.

v Set the parameters for the Organizing Committee and then move to identify the program, as there is a danger inherent in trying to satisfy everyone with one conference. We recommend that you establish these guidelines for working first and you will have less frustration.

The unifying element for us was the Study. We viewed New York City as a microcosm of the world, and New York's diversity as a reflection of the global community.

We wanted to hold the conference during the 16 Days of Action to Prevent Gender-based Violence⁴, which occurs between the International Day to Eliminate Violence against Women (November 25th) and International Human Rights Day (December 10th). We also decided on a Saturday, as the core organizers were advocates and working in other fields. Had we been appealing to service providers we might have chosen a date during the day and during the week. This decision was key to the audience we attracted. We selected two possible dates: November 18 or December 1.

We decided that we wanted to have all participants together for an initial plenary session, to communicate one specific message about the Study and to look at it from a community perspective. We also decided to address other, specific issues raised by the Organizing Committee in breakout sessions after lunch. The Organizing Committee brainstormed speakers and topics for the plenary session.

For the keynote speaker, we wanted an expert in international human rights to review the Study and comment on its relevance. We identified Catharine MacKinnon, a well-respected feminist attorney, as the keynote speaker. One of the Organizing Committee members became the contact person for this task.

v We recommend that one person be assigned to managing this task.

We sought community responders who would be able to respond to MacKinnon's comments, and who could address some of the concerns of the community. We sought to represent diversity through our choice of responders. Our contacts included perspectives from the international perspective, trafficking, domestic violence, sexual assault and the role of men. One organization took on the job of coordinating with the speakers for the morning plenary session.

⁴ The 16 Days, as it is commonly referred to, began at the Center for Women's Global Leadership at Rutgers University. For further information please go to www.cwgl.rutgers.edu/globalcenter.

The afternoon breakout sessions were discussed with the Organizing Committee. Members of the Organizing Committee took on responsibility for each of the breakout sessions, according to their special interests and contacts.

We looked at possible venues and sent letters to a number of universities seeking partners for the conference. NYCLA offered their facility for a nominal fee.

We organized the day, designed the brochure, and had it printed. We found a young artist who would design all our materials for a small fee, or donated if we could not raise the funds for a reduced fee. The convener wrote the copy for it. Copy for the brochure and the design for the materials were approved by the Organizing Committee.

One of the Organizing Committee members was associated with NYCLA and facilitated communication with them about using their space. It was only available on November 18th. When MacKinnon responded that she was only available on that date, the Organizing Committee selected it as the date for the conference, and confirmed that we would use the NYCLA space. Planning then moved forward as we invited the responders and Organizing Committee members responsible for breakout sessions began the work of planning the sessions, collecting resumes for presenters, and distributing brochures to members and other contact organizations.

Working out a budget and funding the work

The first thing we needed to do was to find out which of our organizations could operate as the fiduciary agent for the conference. We were not planning to become a new coalition, incorporating and applying for a 501(c)3 status to raise money for the conference. There was not enough time.

Soroptimist International of New York City acted as our fiduciary agent, separating out the moneys raised for the conference from their other funds. One of their members was on the Organizing Committee, and her function became one of taking the bills and receipts to the Soroptimist treasurer for payment, and the checks for deposit.

Each of the 5-O local organizational affiliates in New York City paid \$500 to be a sponsor of the conference. In addition, the NY Metropolitan Chapter of UNIFEM USA and the Institute for Research on Women's Health became organizational sponsors. That gave us \$3000 in seed money to pay bills. We were able to print our brochure and began to invite participants (see Marketing section for more comments about this.) Two individuals donated as sponsors, and 9 other people contributed money beyond the registration fee to help cover costs. We had in-kind contributions from 7 other organizations to print materials for the packets, to provide meeting space for the Organizing Committee meetings, to donate literature, and a local bookstore donated time and resources to organize the booksigning for Catharine MacKinnon's new book, ***Are Women Human?***

We wrote a case statement for members of the Organizing Committee to use to solicit funds from corporations. However, this function did not have organizational support, and became too dispersed. In the end, only one organization was approached, and \$1000 was donated to the conference from a corporation where a member of the Organizing Committee was employed.

One lesson learned here was that donations need a coordinator to assure continuity and follow up. With no one in charge, and no one who had done this before, the donations were not going to come in. There was too little time to correct for this problem, but fortunately the funds raised covered expenses. We raised \$4500 from donations and another \$7500 from conference fees.

Budgeted expenses included the following:

- ? Space (donated – small amount for staff support and tips)
- ? Design (brochure, email brochure, program, sticker for the packets, stationery, intro screen for the DVD)
- ? Printing of the brochure and program, stickers for the packets, copying for the packet inserts (some of this was in-kind)
- ? Packets (in-kind from a local college and from some other organizations)
- ? Name tags and other miscellaneous supplies
- ? Insurance (in-kind from Zonta International)
- ? Catering for two breaks and lunch
- ? Speakers' expenses
- ? Videography and production costs

Logistics:

Coordination - Who does what

Every event needs someone who can keep everyone moving so that the work gets done. In our case, the Organizing Committee Convener coordinated kept things moving and everyone on track. She was the one who brought everyone together, suggested the parameters for the meeting, and kept lists of tasks and where we were. When there were questions, there needed to be one person where you could turn to get help and guidance.

Though the convener's role was key, other roles held equal importance to the success of the project. Here are some of the roles that need to be filled – and some of the things that can happen when they are not filled!

Notices of and notes from the meetings:

We did not have enough volunteers to assign someone this task. Sometimes there was confusion because the convener did not get notices out, or confused meeting times/places.

We took our own notes, and only occasionally had someone take notes and send them around to others. That meant that we had to review for people who did not attend the last meeting. It wasted a lot of time. We urge you to have a secretary who manages notes and notices.

v We recommend that there be a secretarial function on the Organizing Committee – whether one group takes it on or whether the function is rotated, it needs to be organized. We feel it would have helped to have it out of the function of the convener, since so many other functions were part of her job.

Program

Each organization took charge of some aspect of the program. Though this was a good delegation of tasks, it meant that there was no coherent communication process. Speakers were invited and thanked through their contacts, which might have been organized more professionally. In our case, we were fortunate to have experts on the Organizing Committee who could take charge of the breakout sessions and could attract outstanding presenters for the panels.

vWe recommend that all data for speakers be centralized in the registration function so that they can be contacted and properly thanked by the convener in addition to the organizational contact.

Fiduciary agent

We needed to have one organization that could accept money as a donation and pay bills. A member of this group held a key role on the Organizing Committee. She made certain that bills approved by the convener were given to the fiduciary agent's treasurer, and the checks were cut and sent to the correct person.

Space

Most of our meetings were held at NYCLA, and a member of the Organizing Committee was the contact person for those meetings. When it was decided that the conference would be held at NYCLA, she also made arrangements for everything needed, including space to stuff packets, storage, receipt of delivered items, etc. There were some times when the organizing committee could not meet at NYCLA, and another organization stepped in and found donated meeting space. This worked well.

Catering

Again, this function was delegated to a member of the organizing committee, who contacted various caterers, reviewed costs and menus, and brought the information to the organizing committee for decision. She also was available to assist the NYCLA staff with set up and to guide the catering deliveries to the right place. She made certain that there were volunteers to help with this task and that the area was cleaned up after the breaks and lunch. This worked well.

Materials

The convener was responsible for bringing together all the information needed to produce the brochure, email flyer, and program. She also collected the information for the inserts to the packet that were being produced by the Committee and made certain that they were copied.

Other materials were collected for insertion in the packets. These materials were discussed with the Organizing Committee, and approved either for the packet or for distribution at the literature table during the conference. A volunteer from a local law school coordinated the packet inserts and the stuffing prior to the conference. Each organization copied or secured copies of items that they wanted to distribute. Our volunteer found organizations to donate in-kind copying for some of the materials that the Committee felt would be useful. This worked well.

Printing

The convener researched possible printers and located one that was reasonable and produced a high quality brochure. That printer also printed the program. We found that getting to the printer and picking up the printed material was a problem for us – most of us did not have cars, and the printer was located in an area that was difficult to find. Also, the weight of the paper was a problem.

v We recommend that you take these things into consideration. If we were doing it again, we would select a printer that could pick up and deliver.

Marketing

Once brochures were printed, all the members of the Organizing Committee were notified to pick them up to send them to their lists. We did not have a centralized marketing function. In retrospect, this was a mistake. A centralized function would have given us a centralized list for prospects, which could have assisted us in registration. We were two days from the conference with only 65 confirmed attendees. We ended up with close to 200, but we had a lot of last minute requests and walk-ins that created stress at registration that we would have preferred to avoid.

We created an email flyer that we sent to the Organizing Committee. However, this appears to have been unevenly distributed. Not everyone distributed this quickly.

By the time we decided to hold a conference, invited speakers, confirmed them, created the brochure and received it from the printer, it was already October. We had only 6 weeks to get the word out. This is not enough time.

v We recommend a centralized marketing function and at least 8 weeks lead-time for the marketing effort. Once you decide to hold a meeting, the collection of potential participants must begin immediately.

Another problem was that no one wanted to volunteer to accept email or phone calls from interested participants. This is a problem related to the fact that none of the sponsors had offices or paid staff. All of these contacts would have come to our homes! The last 3 weeks leading to the conference the convener's email and phone were not operational, which led to more confusion and a huge cell phone bill!

v We recommend having an email and phone contact for questions or late registrations.

v We further recommend appointing a Registrar to take charge of email, phone and mail registration contacts early enough in the process to be listed on the email and brochure marketing pieces. An important option to consider is the set-up of an event website that will contain all the information on the event for reference. The web address can be set up with an event general email address for contacts so no personal email is used.

v We also recommend an Internet registration capacity, as today many people prefer to register through the Internet and to pay via credit card. In some places there are systems that support the marketing, planning, budgeting and donations collection as well as the actual registration for the event. See Appendices for more information.

Publicity

Unfortunately, none of the members of the Organizing Committee were able to take on this function. We had no press list available, and that meant that it was not possible for the convener to get out a release quickly. Despite this, the convener was able to manage one interview with a local cable TV station, an interview with UN Radio, and coverage from the Women's Media Center on their website. In addition, the convener shared information about the conference with radio public affairs directors, but it did not result in coverage. New York is a difficult market to receive conference coverage. We have been receiving coverage in the newsletters and magazines of the sponsor organizations. For example, the conference was covered in the *Zontian Magazine* and in the newsletter from the Zonta Club of New York; it also appeared in the NYCLA newsletter. It is on the website for UNIFEM USA Metro NY Chapter.

vWe recommend that a release be sent to local media when the brochure is distributed, and that reporters be recruited to cover the story.

vWe further recommend that the representatives pursue post-conference coverage through sponsoring organizations on the Organizing Committee.

Registration

One of the Organizing Committee members recruited a volunteer who had experience doing registration for NGO events. In the absence of more sophisticated software (see online event information in Appendices) she developed a database for us using Access to capture the registrant

information as it came in. A simple set-up on Access produced the appropriate registration lists, name tags, and a contact list that we can use later for follow up.

Unfortunately, we had decided early on that everyone should register and pay to come to the conference – even the volunteers and speakers. This was unrealistic. Our speakers were actually guests who were volunteering their expertise and giving up a Saturday to come to our conference. In many cases the members of the Organizing Committee covered their costs.

Volunteers and members of the Organizing Committee all registered and most paid for their registrations. Students requested a lower fee, which we did not plan to have. Many of the attendees signed up at the last minute so payment information could not be verified and names needed to be added right up to the day before the Conference.

vWe recommend setting a cut-off date for registrations that allows mailed checks and registration forms to be received and recorded by the day prior to the event, so that badges and reports can be produced, and callers attempting to verify their registration can be responded to professionally.

vWe recommend that speakers and working volunteers be encouraged to register, but that a separate fund be set aside to pay for their costs. There needs to be good guidance as to who can come at a reduced rate – perhaps volunteers who are working at the conference and students or persons on limited incomes. The separate fund can pay for the costs associated with these decisions. Speakers' names and contact information need to be provided to the Registrar by whoever coordinates a session and arranges the speaker.

vWe recommend using online event systems for events involving primarily volunteer staffing and/or multi-sponsor events. If there is no other option available, the Microsoft Office Works Database or Access Database is can be used, or Excel, if a volunteer with expertise in using the program is available.

Packets, note takers, recorders, and other volunteers

We were very lucky that a young law student came to us to volunteer! She had contacts with the law school and her undergraduate school that gave us even more volunteers.

However, she had a frustrating time getting information from the Organizing Committee members about things to go into the packets. In the end, everyone did what they needed to do, showed up to stuff packets, and the job got done.

However, the note takers and some of the other volunteers were special problems. Our law student took charge of note takers. Law students guaranteed from one of the professors did not show up, leaving her without resources on the day of the conference. But she rose to the task and called in her friends for a favor and the event was covered.

The sponsor organizations supplied volunteers for registration. The Zonta Club of NY's Service Chair coordinated the Zontians to help with registration and other tasks. Others came from the Soroptimists to help with catering and other logistical issues.

Volunteers recruited to help at the last minute were added to the registration system and then did not come or sent a friend in their place, creating difficulties when registration was closed and badges had already been printed.

v We recommend that late volunteer arrivals not be added to the registration system, but be given a generic badge on which they can write in their name when they check in at the door.

Evaluation

The last week it occurred to us that an evaluation tool would be useful. We designed one that could give us useful feedback about the sessions. We found that the participants overwhelmingly appreciated the high quality of the conference. The catering was outstanding, and those who attended the breakout sessions gained a lot of specific information from them.

We may have set our sites high for this meeting, but it seems that the audience we got was the one that could make a lot of difference. We believe we can contact them again and that we will receive a positive response.

v We recommend that you have an evaluation tool as part of your plan, regardless of the kind of event you sponsor.

Recording the proceedings and audiovisuals

Because we did not know what resources we had available, we almost did not record the proceedings. At the last minute we contracted with NYCLA's videographer to record the morning proceedings. It is a pity that we did not record the feedback session in the afternoon, as it encapsulated the breakout sessions very well. We are working to produce the DVD of the proceedings and a short version for promotional purposes.

We were already familiar with NYCLA and we knew in advance that it was not a place where PowerPoint would work out well. We really could not use technology at this location, which was a disadvantage but not essential. For us it was a trade-off – a low cost facility vs. one where we paid more but had technology. We chose the low-cost, low-tech option! You may have to make similar trade offs when you organize your event.

vWe recommend that you record your event.

Clean up after the event

You will need volunteers to assist you in cleaning up after the event. That is when everyone is exhausted and wants to go home. So assign this task beforehand so your volunteers are alerted that they are on call.

A lot of material was thrown away that day. Most of the people who brought literature did not take it with them and it was a shame to see it thrown away. Most facilities will not provide storage for left items, but we were able to arrange to have some of the material stored for pick up on the following Monday.

v We recommend that you make arrangements for clean up with volunteers before the day of the conference, and that you arrange for storage of any items you are not able to take with you after the conference before the day of the event.

Thanks

Thanking your volunteers and speakers is essential. We have not completed this work as yet. One thing we did was to have a dinner the night before the event. Organized by one of the Organizing Committee members and held at her University Club, the dinner gave us all time to think about the conference and to be with each other in a social setting.

v We recommend some type of social event like this to bring the Organizing Committee together to say thanks.

The follow-up

We scheduled a follow up meeting to evaluate where we thought we did things right and where we thought we could improve for another time. It was from that meeting that the idea of this publication came.

There are still some things we need to do. We need to write articles for our sponsors to run. We need to complete paying our bills and render an accounting of money spent. We need to complete the work with the videographer. When we see what we have left, we need to publish a report of the conference and distribute it to the attendees.

Finally, our work is not done until we have trained others to bring attention to the Secretary General's Study, and it will never be done until violence against women is halted.

More Options (other than conferences)

Not all of you will choose to conduct a daylong event. You may not have the resources, the staff (volunteer or paid) or the energy for a conference. That does not mean that you will be unable to provide your community with an analysis that will bring the UN Secretary General's Report on Violence against Women to the attention of community decision makers. We suggest the following alternatives, and of course you will have ideas of your own:

? Media Strategy

Can you and your committee plan a media blitz that will reach the radio, television, print and Internet audiences in your community, summarizing or outlining the Study? What articles or commentary can you have published, identifying the Study and providing information about it? Identify the points in the Study important to your community, particularly those that will resonate with your community, and create energy to do further work. Create Public Service Announcements to reach women and men with related messages. Use materials created by UNIFEM to communicate about the international aspects found in the study.

? Lobby Day

Is there an issue related to the Study that requires legislative action in your community/state/country? Can you and your committee plan a day to approach members of your legislature? Or the executive branch of government or other government leaders in your community? Who are those principals who can initiate and move legislation that will implement the Study's recommendations? Identify them and organize a day of meetings to mobilize these individuals. This can be one part of a broader organizing effort.

? Arts Events

Can local artists create work that speaks to the issues raised by the Study? How and where can a display of such work occur? Identify artists and space for such events. Plan an opening at which the artists can discuss their works and the relationship to the issues raised by the Study.

? Educational Outreach

Schools are the first line in any educational outreach. Do you need to do a special presentation on an aspect of the Study that your organizing committee deems most relevant to your community? Or contact a curriculum specialist within your community's educational system? What age group in the schools do you want to target? What about

parent groups associated with the schools? What other educational groups, such as teachers in need of training on these critical issues, can you identify in your community?

But what about other educational efforts can you undertake in your community – is there an armed forces base in your community? Can you offer a continuing education course at the local college or university? What organizations are open to speakers from outside the organization? Many other community or volunteer groups need to be educated in the prevalence of violence against women as well as in ways to combat that violence.

? ***Meetings and Discussion Groups***

Local libraries are generally looking for public programs, as are many groups in the community. Also, your own organizations may have discussion groups or book groups. Bring people together to read the study. Read books that deal with the themes discussed in the study. See movies or attend dramatic presentations that have themes related to the study and discuss them. Hold parties in your homes where you show materials from UNIFEM and other organizations and use that as an opportunity to discuss the issues and raise funds to help be part of the solution.

? ***Coalition Building***

Which groups can be brought together to work to implement the recommendations of the Study? What other human rights groups exist in your community? Do religious-based organizations working on human rights matters exist in your community that you can work with? Can your organization partner with them to disseminate the idea that violence against women is a human rights issue? This concept needs much broader support than we currently see in our communities.

? ***Research***

What research must be done in your community to identify the problems of violence against women? Is research necessary, or have the problems been identified and recognized? If so, how can your group help to reach beyond the information and change attitudes and behaviors?

These are our suggestions for alternatives to the program that we offered. We are firmly convinced that any of these other projects will require the same organizing and planning effort that we undertook. We hope our analysis and criticism of our work will assist you in doing yours.

Write your other ideas here:

What comes next?

In March of 2007 the UN Commission on the Status of Women will meet again, this time addressing discrimination and violence against the girl child. It is unfortunate that this cycle continues. We hope that we can work with all of you to end it.

In our community we expect to have other conferences and meetings to call attention to the issues and to continue to bring the perpetrators of crimes to justice, save women's lives, improve their status, change the laws of the state to end trafficking. We have a big agenda here, and we join you in your work to change where you live.

To be in touch with us email us at ngowork-zonta@yahoo.com. Or join our listserv: globalvaw@yahogroup.com.

Appendices

Planning Made Simple

As a professor of Public Relations at St. Francis College in Brooklyn Heights, New York City, USA, I would like to outline a few simple guidelines for your planning that may help facilitate your experience. Here are a few things you can do that can make your planning go more easily.

Eight step process to public relations planning:

1. *Perform a situation analysis.* This simple step can be done with a small research group and should be done before you get started. Analyze your community. What are the burning issues that relate to the Study? Where are the Community's strengths and weaknesses? What are the threats and opportunities for action in your area? You may need to do an environmental scan, or a survey, to get an idea of what topic you would like to emphasize.
Research stories related to the topics in the news media and record the names on by-lines and reporters covering the issues. These will assist you in reaching the media later in the process.
Research names of persons quoted in the news, as they are local experts you will want to have involved in the process.
2. *List your objectives.* It is good to have a formal record of what you want to accomplish. This will assist you with evaluating whether or not you have achieved your goals with the meeting.
3. *Identify your target audience.* This can be difficult, but without it you will find your conference reaching the wrong people. In our case, we set this too broadly. We should have been narrower, but we aimed for a larger group and that meant we needed to be more inclusive. Begin to accumulate names and contact information early. You can send an early "save the date" communication, and begin to establish rapport and credibility with the target audience early.
4. *Define your strategy.* You may have several strategies to meet different audiences, such as a provider strategy, a media strategy, and an advocacy strategy. These will require a more complex organization in order to meet the needs of each one. Be sure not to take on more work than your group can handle with the resources and talents available to you.
5. *Identify how you are going to work, and lay out a reasonable timetable with dates for reaching each task clearly identified.* Most people think of this as the public relations plan, and in fact it is difficult to operate without it. You might want to start at the end and work backwards, putting in each deliverable at key points. Each strategy will have deliverables that need to be worked in to the overall plan. Be sure to identify the person or persons responsible at each point. If necessary, link this to the fundraising plan and identify "GO" or "NO GO" points of group decisions.
6. *Establish your Budget.* Early in the process you will need to identify those items for which you are financially responsible. It will be up to the group as to how these things will be paid for – either through in-kind or cash contribution. Develop a system for identifying and acknowledging the contributors in the program, and similarly acknowledge them with letters after the conference or event is concluded. This is particularly important for the charitable organization functioning as the fiscal entity for the group, if the group is a coalition.
7. *Develop your Evaluation.* Develop an evaluation tool and call a final wrap-up meeting of the group to review the results. It is good to tie the evaluation into the objectives or to other items that you feel important to collect information about, such as the facility or catering that could be used at a future date. Also, the evaluation tool can be used with funders for follow up meetings.

8. *Follow up.* Whether your follow up is a report, a DVD or something else, you will need to plan for someone to produce it for you. Be sure you have identified this on your timetable and in the budget, along with distribution. It could be that the sponsoring organizations have websites where the follow up could be uploaded inexpensively, and referenced to the participants for review.

These steps are a typical guideline for successfully running your project, whether it is a conference, meeting, advocacy program, or series of lectures.

Other examples of good practice:

From the New Zealand Report of the conference held November 25, 2007:

The NGO Committee on the Status of Women in New York has committed itself to a two-year project that can move the advocacy effort forward in tandem with the Secretary-General's special study on violence against women. Information is being solicited from Member States and non-governmental organizations. The Committee has called on the Project Five-O partners to take action in support of the study, which it sees as an opportunity to impact public policy. It believes the Five-Os are uniquely positioned to make a difference through international cooperation at the regional, country and local levels.

In this case, the VP of the ICW affiliate in New Zealand took the lead to develop their conference as an example of best practices for the National Councils in other countries.

The organizing NGO was Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) (PWWNZ)), an affiliate of the National Council of Women, Auckland Branch, which has as its key aim the monitoring, review and reporting on the status of women, especially New Zealand women.

Contact them for further information.

From Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development

APWLD has held at least three Regional Consultations on violence against women APWLD since 2003. These Consultations have offered an invaluable opportunity for engaging in a fruitful dialogue with women and women's groups working on violence against women in the Asia Pacific region. For Dr. Yakin Ertürk, UN Human Rights Special Rapporteur for Violence against Women, this consultation provided insight into the critical and emerging issues in the region and she was able to explore, with the participants, effective strategies for enhancing women's human rights and combating all forms of violence. The APWLD Regional Consultation implemented a model developed by Ertürk to use with organizations in other regions as a blueprint for holding similar events. Asia Pacific (through APWLD) is the only region that has institutionalized this mechanism of holding consultations with the UNSRVAW.

The 2006 Consultation responded to the topic of Ertürk's next thematic report to the Human Rights Council, which will address the intersections of culture-based discourses and violence against women.

Evaluation

This is often left to the end. Don't make that mistake. Plan your evaluation when you plan your goals and objectives. Here is a sample from our conference. We were interested in the performance of the speakers and in planning future action, which is what framed our questions.

Evaluation

Violence against Women: A New York City Response to the UN Secretary General's Study

1. How would you evaluate this morning's session?

? Excellent ? Very Good ? Fair ? Poor

2. What was most useful to you from the speech by Catharine MacKinnon?

3. What was most useful to you from the responders?

4. How would you evaluate the lunch?

? Excellent ? Very Good ? Fair ? Poor

**5. Did you take part in the book signing? ? Yes ? No Do you think that this event was worthwhile?
? Yes ? No If no, how, in your opinion, might this be improved?**

6. In which breakout session did you participate? (Please circle the one you attended)

- a) Trafficking
- b) Culture and Community
- c) Current Concepts Medical/Mental Health
- d) Societal Systems/Patriarchy
- e) Human Rights
- f) Role of Men
- g) Role of Law Enforcement
- h) Civil Remedies (CLE)

How would you rate the breakout session you attended?

? Excellent ? Very Good ? Fair ? Poor

Please comment on what you think might be improved in the breakout sessions:

7. How would you evaluate this conference experience?

? Excellent ? Very Good ? Fair ? Poor

Please explain, if you wish:

8. The organizers are planning a follow up to this conference. What would be most useful to you in terms of a follow up to the conference?

Name (optional):

Email:

Resources

The Secretary General's Study provides detailed information about the widespread nature of violence against women. It also details problems communities must face to deal with this global epidemic. Some suggestions of resources follow:

? *UN Secretary General's Study on Violence against Women*

The Study itself is a great resource to assist in organizing your planning for work to be done in your community. Look for <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/vaw/> In response, the General Assembly approved resolutions on trafficking in women and girls **A/RES/61/144** (<http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N06/503/07/PDF/N0650307.pdf?OpenElement>) and another on violence against women, **A/RES/61/143**, not as yet up on the website.

? *CEDAW*

The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly is often described as an international bill of rights for women. Text, information and history are available on the website.

www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw.

? *CSW*

The UN Commission on the Status of Women is a functional commission of the United Nations Economic and Social Council, dedicated exclusively to gender equality and advancement of women. It meets annually at the UN in New York, generally the first two weeks of March. There is a thematic focus for the meetings each year. For further information please see www.un.org.womenswatch/daw/csw.

? *UNIFEM*

The United Nations Women's Fund, providing financial and technical assistance to innovative programs and strategies to foster women's empowerment and gender equality.

www.unifem.org

UNIFEM has 16 national committees that raise money for its projects. One of our sponsors was the Metro NY Chapter of the US Committee for UNIFEM. Please see

www.unifemusa.org

? *5-O'S*

Project Five-O supports vocational training for women and girls in developing countries and countries in transition, and is funded by a coalition of five international women's organizations. www.project-five-o.org

? *American Association of University Women*

AAUW is committed to the equality of all women and girls, life long education and positive societal change. www.aauw.org

? *BPW International*

BPW challenges leading women in Europe and the United States to form an international organization to support and promote women in business and the professions.

www.bpwintl.com

? *Coalition Against Trafficking in Women*

The Coalition promotes women's human rights by working internationally to combat sexual exploitation in all its forms. www.catinternational.org

? *Equality Now*

This organization works to end violence and discrimination against women and girls around the world through the mobilization of public pressure. www.equalitynow.org.

? *International Center for Research on Women*

ICRW and its partners work to educate and empower individuals, institutions and communities to end violence against women. www.icrw.org/html/issues/violence.htm

? *International Women's Health Coalition*

The Coalition works to build political will and influence the policies of governments, donors and international agencies to secure girls' and women's sexual and reproductive health and rights. www.iwhc.org

? *National Council of Women*

The National Council of Women of the United States, Inc. is a coalition of organizations and individuals representing all races, creeds and traditions and is dedicated to the realization of full participation by women in every aspect of society. www.ncw-us.org. It is affiliated with the International Council of Women, ICW. Please also see www.icw-cif.org

? *PDHRE*

PDHRE is a well-recognized human rights organization based in New York. They are seeking ways in which to combat the patriarchy that has hurt both men and women throughout time. Please see www.pdhre.org for details of their work in human rights and women's rights.

? *Soroptimist International*

Soroptimist International is a worldwide organization for women in management and professions, working through service projects to advance human rights and the status of women. www.soroptimistinternational.org

? *Zonta International*

Zonta International is a global organization of executives and professionals working together to advance the status of women and girls worldwide through service and advocacy. www.zonta.org. The local organization in New York has a copy of this publication on its website, www.zontanyc.org.

We know there are many other resources you will find in your communities and we hope you will list some of them here, and share some of the more important ones with us.

On-line resources for Registration

There are many products available to handle online event registration, payment and management. A common pricing model is a set-up fee plus a per-registrant fee. One of the advantages these systems offer is the ability to handle credit card and PayPal payments, so a registration is confirmed immediately by email. Other advantages are in the information management area. Information the attendee enters online does not have to be entered by a volunteer, so volunteer time can be dedicated to the program and event.

These systems can be sophisticated and include the capability to support marketing, budgeting, website management and more. Here are some a recent search on-line gave us:

- 1) Cvent full featured product (www.cventville.com)
- 2) eRSVP fairly full featured product (www.ersvp.com)
- 3) Ready Talk Web Seminars/Events (www.readytalk.com)
- 4) ValueDOT LLC Consulting (www.valuedot.com)
- 5) Reg Online (www.regonline.com)
- 6) Count me in www.countmein.com
- 7) Gift Tool www.gifttool.com

We did not use these, but we include them as possibilities for your use.

Who was involved in NY

What follows is important. It acknowledges the organizers, the donors, and gives an idea of who supported the program. In our case, there were also a lot of volunteers who worked the day of the conference, and all the presenters were volunteers – including our keynote speaker. We think it is important for you to have some idea of what this might look like, so we include it here.

Conference Organizing Committee

Leslie Wright, Convener of the Conference Organizing Committee; President of UNIFEM USA Metro New York Chapter and President of the Zonta Club of New York.

Shaykh T.A. Bashir, CEO of the House of Peace

Lois Beilin, DPL./NGO Representative, Soroptimist International

Joan Boyle, International Schools Association

Joyce Braak MD, President, Institute for Research on Women's Health

Eileen Brennan, NY President, BPW International and Captain, NYPD, retired

BJ Cling, PhD, JD, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, Women's Committee of the New York County Lawyers' Association

Gilda Glasinovich, MD, Chair, The Council on the Status of Latinamerican Women, DESA Technical Adviser on Gender and Immigrant Populations

Marcia Goffin, Partner, Gould Reimer Walsh Goffin Cohn, LLP and co-chair of the Women's Rights Committee of the New York County Lawyers' Association

Julie Harrison Kleszczewski, Past President, NYC Branch, American Association of University Women (AAUW), Past New York State AAUW Director for International Relations

Shulamith Koenig, Founding President, PDHRE, People's Movement for Human Rights Learning

Sue Kuo, Nancy Sue-Jing Foundation

Nancy Lewis, AARP Volunteer UN Representative

Dorchen Leidholdt, Esq. Director, Center for Battered Women's Legal Services, Sanctuary for Families and Co-Executive Director, Coalition against Trafficking in Women

Katherine E. Mayer, Soroptimist International representative to the UN

Justice Richard Lee Price, New York State Supreme Court; Chair, Gender Fairness Committee; 12th Judicial District; Past Chair, Women's Rights Committee, New York County Lawyers' Association

Betty A. Reardon, Founding Director, Emeritus of the Peace Education Center, Teachers College, Columbia University

Karen Siegel, PhD, Area 1, District 3, Zonta International; Zonta Club of Greater Queens

Linda Stillman, PhD, Soroptimist International

Carol Themm, Vice President, National Council of Women, Soroptimist International

Sponsoring Organizations

American Association of University Women
BPW International, New York
Institute for Research on Women's Health
UNIFEM USA Metro New York Chapter
Soroptimist International of New York
Zonta Club of New York

Individual Sponsors

Susan Dorward
Leslie Wright

Contributors

Ruth Clay Bowman
Erin Gleason
Judy Lear
Justice Richard Lee Price
Dr. A. Morgan Sabah
Jacqueline Shapiro
Lynn H. Strudler
Christine Volkmar
Anita Wenden

In-kind Contributions

The International Women's Health Coalition
Manhattanville's Duchesne Center
Bookcourt – www.bookcourt.org
Sanctuary for Families
PDHRE
National Council of Women
New York County Lawyers' Association