



# **Annual Report**

## **2010 - 2011**

## 16<sup>th</sup> SCWO EXECUTIVE BOARD

<b>President</b>	Mrs Laura Hwang	IWF
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Vice President</b>	Ms Mary Liew	NTUC WC
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President</b>	Ms Malathi Das	ZONTA
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President</b>	Mrs Joanna Portilla	PAWIN
<b>Hon General Secretary</b>	Ms Saleemah Ismail	U.N. Women
<b>Asst. Hon Gen. Secretary</b>	Dr Lee Oi Kum	Inner Wheel West
<b>Hon Treasurer</b>	Ms Lim Aye Ling	Inner Wheel East
<b>Asst. Hon Treasurer</b>	Ms Irene Boey	SBPWA
<b>Board Member</b>	Ms Dana Lam	AWARE
<b>Board Member</b>	Ms Jane Horan	PrimeTime
<b>Board Member</b>	Ms Kamariah Adnan	PPIS SMWA
<b>Board Member</b>	Ms Susie Wong	BAHAI
<b>Imm Past President</b>	Dr Ann Tan	AWDS

## 1. President's Message & Overview

A warm welcome to everyone here to the SCWO AGM 2011.

The past year has seen a high level of activity, which has certainly engaged a large number of our member organisations as well as the public. As the report which follows is a comprehensive list of these, I would like to highlight a few which stood out:

The **Amendments to the Women's Charter**, which was passed by Parliament and came into effect on June 1st 2011 which saw a number of the recommendations of the SCWO Taskforce for improving the Enforcement of Maintenance Orders adopted. We now have secured funding from NCSS for step-down financing for 3 years, and renovations have commenced to make **Maintenance Support Central** a new initiative for SCWO. We see that this will be a big step in helping divorced women and families to re-build their futures.

**"Equal Space, Equal Voice and Equal Worth"** We have just completed the **SCWO CEDAW Shadow Report** which was the result of consultations, 2 dialogue sessions with member organisations, the Closed-door SCWO-MCYS Consultation, extensive and exhaustive research and drafting by the SCWO CEDAW Team ably helmed by Malathi Das. This report, acknowledges the progress made on many fronts in Singapore, while also identifying and making recommendations for areas which we would like to see more progress on and resources allocated to.

**Women's Register and BoardAgender** were re-launched in March, to engage younger women through an online composite mentor platform and to promote gender diversity at Boardroom levels on public and private boards. BoardAgender is well equipped with the research and studies on how corporations with gender diversity at the top levels of management perform better.

I would like to thank my fellow board members, who have had to take on many more duties due to the high level of activities in the past year, the members of our 2 TaskForces on Maintenance Enforcement and CEDAW for their commitment and many hours of thought and toil, the Committees which ensure that the Star Shelter and IT Hub serve their clients well, and last, but certainly not the least, the Superwomen in our Secretariat who multi-task amazingly, especially in spite of the disruptions of the renovations, and made this and all our other projects so successful.

Finally, my thanks to all the Presidents and Members of the 51 "arms" of the SCWO, for your participation, continuing support and encouragement. Through the memberships of all our organisations, we are a significant force of 500,000, and in unity, we can truly be champions and enablers of women in Singapore!

With Affection and Admiration,

Laura Hwang

President, 2010-2012

## **2. Achievements and Initiatives**

### **2.1 The Woman's Charter**

For SCWO, we count among our achievements, the adoption of a number of our recommendations regarding better enforcement of maintenance orders. Amendments to the Women's Charter were passed by Parliament in February 2011. We hope this will pave the way to better prospects for ex-spouses, and their children, to re-build their lives. The amendments included:

- i. A man who defaults on maintenance payments will have to go for financial counselling and can be ordered to do community service
- ii. His maintenance debts can also be reported to credit bureaus, which would affect his credit worthiness
- iii. To protect the children if any, the court can transfer matrimonial assets – divided between parents – to a "Children's Development Account"
- iv. Maintenance debts will have to be declared on applications to re-marry
- v. The introduction of videolink filing for maintenance payments in default

### **2.2 Maintenance Support Central (MSC)**

NCSS has confirmed the funding of MSC for 3 years. The Georgette Chen Auditorium is in the process of being renovated to accommodate MSC, and it should be completed by end of June 2011. Nur Ain Mustafa, who is in the process of completing her Masters in Counselling, will be promoted to Social Service Executive in MSC. Initially, counselling services will be shared with the Star Shelter.

### **2.3 Women's Register**

The Women's Register was re-launched in a two-pronged initiative:

The first aims at providing an on-line platform for younger women to be connected to, and supported by, their more experienced counterparts in the community through a composite on-line mentoring programme.

### **2.4 BoardAgender**

The second initiative, is targeted at promoting the importance of diversity at Board room levels, so that the economic and social benefits of having gender diversity at top levels of management, on public and private boards, are realised.

We would like to record our gratitude to our Women's Register Advisor, Minister of State for MCYS, Mrs Yu-Foo Yee Shoon for her unflinching encouragement and support, from the very inception of this initiative.

### **2.5 Video – "We are 100"**

SCWO commissioned and archival documentary titled: "We are 100". It chronicles the last 100 years, and records the amazing progress made by women in Singapore over the past century. It includes the voices of our members, their children and grand-children, across SCWO's 51 member organisations as they pay tribute to the past and look to the future.

### 3. CEDAW – Shadow Report 2011

Consultations were held with our member organisations on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> February. Feedback from these meetings were taken into consideration for the preparation of the Report. On 1<sup>st</sup> June 2011, the draft report was presented to the member organisations for further comments. With the input obtained, the Shadow Report was finally completed and submitted to IWRAW and the UN CEDAW Committee.

#### List of Member Organizations who participated in SCWO's CEDAW Dialogue Sessions

##### **1st Dialogue Session – 18 February 2011**

1	National Trades Union Congress Women's Development Secretariat	(NTUC WDS)
2	People's Association Women's Integration Network Council	(PA WIN)

##### **2nd Dialogue Session – 25 February 2011**

1	Association of Women for Action & Research	(AWARE)
2	Breastfeeding Mother's Support Group (Singapore)	(BMSGs)
3	Indian Women's Association (Singapore)	(IWAS)
4	PrimeTime Business and Professional Women's Association	
5	Society Against Family Violence	(SAFV)
6	Singapore Association of Social Workers	(SASW)
7	Singapore Muslim Women's Association	(PPIS)
8	Singapore Women's Association	(SWA)
9	Singapore Business & Professional Women's Association	(SBPWA)
10	Singapore Business & Professional Women's Association (Mandarin Chapter)	(SBPWA-MC)
11	University Women's Association (Singapore)	(UWAS)
12	Zonta Club of Singapore	(ZONTA)

##### **SCWO-MCYS Closed-door CEDAW Consultation Session – 14 May 2011**

1	Aidha	
2	Association of Women Doctors (Singapore)	(AWDS)
3	Association of Women for Action & Research	(AWARE)
4	Business & Professional Women's Association (Singapore) 3rd Chapter	(BPWA)
5	Indian Women's Association (Singapore)	(IWAS)
6	International Women's Federation of Commerce & Industry	(IWFCI)
7	International Women's Forum	(IWF)
8	People's Association Women's Integration Network Council	(PA WIN)
9	Singapore Association of Social Workers	(SASW)
10	Singapore Association of Women Lawyers	(SAWL)
11	Singapore Business & Professional Women's Association	(SBPWA)
12	Singapore Business & Professional Women's Association (Mandarin Chapter)	(SBPWA-MC)
13	Singapore National Committee for UN Women	
14	Singapore Women's Association	(SWA)
15	Society for WINGS (Women's Initiative for Ageing Successfully)	(WINGS)
16	Soroptimist International Singapore	
17	Soroptimist of Singapore International (Garden City)	
18	The Tsao Foundation	(TSAO)
19	Women's Business Connection	(WBC)
20	Zonta Club of Singapore	(ZONTA)

## 4. Events

### 4.1 International Women's Day 2011

In Singapore, SCWO as the national co-ordinating council of 51 women's organisations, marked this historic event in several ways:

- 1) The making of the Video – “We are 100”
- 2) Inaugural SCWO Debating Tournament (Fri 25–Sun 27 Feb)
- 3) Celebration Dinner (Wed 9 Mar)
- 4) SCWO Mural (Sat 19 Mar)

#### 4.1.1 SCWO Debating Tournament

This was an initiative to engage the future generations of the workforce and thought leaders, by collaborating with the Singapore Management (**SMU**) University's Debating Society and supported by the Australian High Commission to organise the **Inaugural SCWO Debating Tournament** for students of tertiary institutions in Singapore, to hear their views, understand their concerns and learn from their hopes for the future. This is the start of an annual tournament, which we hope will develop to include regional and international debate teams in the coming years.

#### 4.1.2 Celebration Dinner

The Celebration dinner was held at the Regent Hotel Singapore was graced by our patron, First Lady Mrs Urmila Nathan and by Minister of State, MCYS, Mrs Yu-Foo Yee Shoon.

Highlights for the evening included:

- 1) Presentation of awards for the Debating Championship
- 2) The SCWO video “We are 100” was shown for the first time
- 3) The re-launch of the “Women's Register and BoardAgender”
- 4) A Special Presentation of a specially commissioned Quilt to Mrs Nathan to thank her for the 10 years of support to SCWO

#### 4.1.3 SCWO Mural

Social Creatives Ltd, a Social Enterprise created a Mural for the Walls on the front of the SCWO Centre. 100 women and girls got together to paint the mural. This was reported in the HerWorld Magazines and on several news sites on the internet.

## **5. Secretariat**

### **5.1 Premises**

As reported in the 30th AGM on 5th June 2010, the Centre was in a bad state of disrepair. With the generous funding from the Lee Foundation and the Singapore Maritime Officer's Union (SMOU), the Centre has undergone major repair and refurbishment.

### **5.2 Café**

Sunnyside Up commenced operations on 8 Aug 2010, but due to personal reasons, Ms Irin Ng had to cease operations in Oct 2010. Jason Ong then took over the operation of the Café and "Torte Café" commenced operations on 7 May 2011 after extensive renovations.

### **5.3 Function Rooms**

With the refurbishment of all the function rooms which now provide up-graded facilities, we have seen a steady increase in interest in the hiring of the rooms for meetings and other events.

### **5.4 IT Hub**

The IT Hub Report is attached.

### **5.5 Legal Clinic**

In partnership with Singapore Association of Women Lawyers (SAWL), Legal Clinics resumed in July 2010, and is held on the 1st and 3rd Monday of every month.

We have since seen 136 clients. The main issues brought up were: 1) Grounds for Divorce, 2) Maintenance, Property Division and Custody.

### **5.6 Library**

Dr. Gavin Ewin, a volunteer has been working on a program for online resources for the library. Volunteers are also in the process of re-cataloguing the library.

### **5.7 New2U Thrift Shop**

In October 2010 the Online Designer Blog Shop was launched by two new New2U Volunteers - Giselle and Jill. They are managing the online shop for donated designer items. They have diligently sorted through, pricing, ironing and taking pictures of the various designer clothes and bags for uploading on the new site. In addition, they have created a catalogue of these items which are available at shop's counter. The new site can be viewed at: <http://new2ushop.wordpress.com/>. The volunteers lead by Penny De Jong have continued their enthusiastic managing of the Thrift Shop that has seen it go from strength to strength.

## **5.8 Website**

The re-developed website was launched on 1 June 2010. Reaction to the new website has been very positive and there have been consistently high 'hits' on the website

## **5.9 Employees**

We have recently had to sadly say goodbye to Maureen Lee, who has been with SCWO since 2007. We wish her every success in her new endeavour – which is her dream of working with Children with Disabilities.

Nur Ain Mustafa who has been with SCWO since 2007, has will be promoted to Social Services Executive in Maintenance Support Central. Already holding a Degree in Sociology & Islamic Studies, she is in the process of completing her Masters in Counselling. She will be undergoing training in videolink filing for maintenance payments in default.

## **5.10 Interns**

5 – 18 May 2010	Ms Balpreet Kang – attached to Star Shelter
10 May – 18 Jun 2010	Ms Dawn Ang – worked on the updating of the databases
24 May – 25 Jun 2010	Ms Claire Charnnac – worked on the Research – Women & Employment in Singapore
10 Aug – 10 Aug 2010	Ms Jessica S. P'ng was attached to Star Shelter
14 Sep '10 – June '11	Ms Bhavna Ramchandani – worked on the CEDAW Shadow Report

## **5.11 Volunteers**

We would like to thank all our 171 volunteers that have assisted in one area or another throughout the year. To show our appreciation, we held A Volunteers Appreciation Lunch on 27 Nov 2010, where awards were given out to the following:

- 1) Longest Serving – IT Hub Mabel Teo
- 2) Longest Serving – New2U Tan Joon Lin
- 3) Most Number of Hours Sylvia Sumasto – New2U
- 4) Going the Extra Mile – IT Hub Esther Pung
- 5) Going the Extra Mile – New2U Penny De Jongh
- 6) A special award of Appreciation for all volunteers of the IT Hub

## **5.12 Visitors**

6 Nov 2010	Minister Robyn McSweeney - MLC of Western Australia
11 Nov 2010	HE Sylvia Bongo Ondimba – First Lady of Gabon
9, 10 Dec 2010	Vietnam Women's Union Study Visit
11 Dec 2010	Korean Democratic Women's Union
12 Jan 2011	Aichi Hananoki Int'l Exchange Association, Japan
13 Apr 2011	Korean Womenlink
14 Apr 2011	Macau Women's Commission
31 May 2011	Minister Robyn McSweeney – MLC of Western Australia



## 6. Research

A survey was carried out on **Work Life Balance** targeted at women in their 20's and 30's. This is a brief summary of the findings:

- More than two-thirds of respondents find it difficult to maintain a work-life balance.
- The vast majority of respondents thought that more flexible working arrangements (for example part time work) should be introduced by the Government.
- 40 out of 55 respondents found that childcare responsibilities and maintaining a work-life balance are the biggest obstacles to women's access to senior management.
- About 40% of respondents have work-life balance programs in their company while about 40% of respondents don't have work-life programs.
- 40% of respondents have personally felt discouraged from having children.
- 40% of respondents believe that being a working mother is perceived as being less committed to the firm.
- Almost 70% of respondents saw themselves married with children and a career in 10 years.

## 7. Working with our Partners in Government

**MCYS** held the following Networking and Dialogue Sessions with the SCWO Board and Members of PAWIN and NTUC WDS:

04 Feb 2010  
02 Nov 2010  
22 Feb 2011

**MFA** held two Interactive Sessions on the Periodic Reviews on Human Rights that SCWO participated in:

1 Apr 2010 – Attended by Laura Hwang, Saleemah Ismail & Selina Gan  
25 Feb 2011 – Attended by Saleemah Ismail

## 8. Attendance at International Conferences, Seminars & Workshops

UPR Seminar – 14 & 15 Sep 2010 – Grenada - Represented by Selina Gan  
APEC WLN – 19-21 Sep 2010 – Tokyo - Represented by Laura Hwang & Wee Wan Joo  
ACWO 14<sup>th</sup> Annual General Assembly – 19-20 Oct 2010 Hanoi, Vietnam - Represented by Laura Hwang, Malathi Das, Wee Wan Joo & Selina Gan

## 9. Speaking Invitations

		<u>Speaker</u>
09 Jul 2010	Embassy of Switzerland Dinner for Swiss President Doris Leuthard	Laura Hwang
27 Jul 2010	8 <sup>th</sup> Int'l Congress of Feminist Approaches to Bioethics (FAB)	Laura Hwang
19 Oct 2010	14 <sup>th</sup> ACWO General Assembly	Laura Hwang, Malathi Das
31 Oct 2010	Kamala Club – 60 Years Celebration	Laura Hwang
31 Mar 2011	MediaCorp Singapore Woman Awards	Laura Hwang
26 Apr 2011	Microsoft NGO Connection Day	Irene Boey
27 Apr 2011	SAAP – 40 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration	Laura Hwang
06 May 2011	ACWO Jakarta Meeting	Laura Hwang

## 10. Membership

- 1) **Aidha** has been incorporated as a company, limited by guarantee, and their membership has been converted to an “Associate Member”.
- 2) **American Women’s Association (AWA)** adopted SCWO as one of five charities that they would raise funds for in 2010/2011.
- 3) **UNIFEM** changed its name to U.N. Women on 2011.

## 11. Media Coverage

In 2010/2011, there was substantial media coverage on SCWO, the continued interest in the Women’s Register & BoardAgender initiative and Maintenance Support. A separate report on Media Coverage is attached.

## 12. Supporters

We would like to thank the following for their continued support of SCWO in 2010/2011:

ACP Magazines	Joanna Lin	Pistorio Camelo
Activa Media	Joanne Tan Mae Shen	Rose Siow Wen Szu
Alice Khoo	Joy Lim M.E.	RPA Agency Pte Ltd
American Women’s Assn	Joy Tan Whei Mien	Satsuma Ship Management
Ang Siew Lee	Junie Foo	Spore Maritime Officers Union
Ann Tan	Karen Soh	Spore Women’s Association
Arfat Bee Bee B Noor	Kevin Chua Yong Kwang	SOC – Alvernia Pte Ltd
Australian High Commission	Koh Soon Boon	Society for WINGS
Boncafe International Pte Ltd	KOP Group Pte Ltd	Sodexo Spore Pte Ltd
British Theatre Playhouse Pte Ltd	Kwan Im Thong Hood Cho	Sujit Singh Gill
C.S.E. Yap Pte Ltd	Laura Hwang	Sulastri Luhur
Celeste Holdings Pte Ltd	Lau Chun Wah	Tampines East CC WEC
Celina Tan Por-Chu	Lee Foundation	Tan Chin Tuan
Chan Ee Lin	Lee Oi Kum	Tan Peck Wah
Cheah Sow Peng	Lee Theng Kiat	Tan Wee Khim
Chew Kwai Yoke	Leong Lai Peng	Tay Shee Woon
Chua Beng Choong	Liew Ah Mooi	The Chooi Peng
Chung-Buk Council, Korea	Lim Ah Swan	The Bank of Nova Scotia Asia
Clements Robert Scott	Lim Hwee Hua	The Grace Shua an Jacob
David Widjaja Koesno	Lim Ka-Liang	Ballas Charitable Trust
Dorothy Chan	Lorraine Boon Ling Li	The Hour Glass Ltd
Engro Corporation Ltd	Low China Loo	Trina Liang
Eu Yan Sang International	MCYS	Tsian Pte Ltd
Flower Diamond Boutique	Mahmud Ebrahim Kasam	U.N. Women (UNIFEM Spore)
Fong Cheng Hong	Manju Chandran	Vestas Asia Pacific
Geraldene Lowe	MAP Pacific Pte Ltd	Vivienne Hong
Glitzzy Charity Drive	Mary Hoe Ai Sien	Vu Family Trust
Goh Soon Poh	Mayura Mohitia	Wee Siew Kim
Grace Liew Chai Yin	Miranda Mayfern Bien-Lim	Wendy Teoh Hui Ling
International Women’s Forum	NCSS	William Chong Lai Leong
Jacqueline Chua Lai Poh	National Trades Union Congress	Women’s Integration Network
Jennifer Lee	PACC Ship Managers Pte Ltd	Young Women’s Christina Ass