



# **Term Report 2008–2010**



## 15<sup>th</sup> SCWO Board

President	Dr. Ann Tan	AWDS (Association of Women Doctors)
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President	Ms Junie Foo	FWA (Financial Women's Association)
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President	Mrs Laura Hwang	IWF (International Women's Forum)
3 <sup>rd</sup> Vice President	Ms Woo Choon Mei	SWA (Singapore Women's Association)
Hon Gen Secretary	Ms Susie Wong	BAHAI Office for the Advancement of Women
Asst Hon Gen Secretary	Mrs Joanna Portilla	PAWIN (PA – Women's Integrated Network Council)
Hon Treasurer	Mrs Mary Liew	NTUC WPC (Women's Development Secretariat)
Asst Hon Treasurer	Ms Mariam Alias	YWMA (Young Women's Muslim Association)
Board Member	Ms Lee Yen Yen	AWARE (Association of Women for Action & Research)
Board Member	Ms Maria Boey	Soroptimist International of Singapore
Imm Past President	Mrs Wee Wan Joo	ZONTA Club of Singapore



## President's Message & Overview

The term for the 15<sup>th</sup> Board is now over at this AGM. We have celebrated SCWO's thirtieth birthday – a significant milestone indeed and we have logged down in our commemorative journal some of the significant events and achievements that are etched into our history and helped shaped us into who we are. We are also happy to note that our membership now stands as 51 active member organisations a sign of our increasing relevance from the small group of farsighted passionate 14 member organisations when we began.

These last 2 years have been an eventful time for the board and I believe I speak for all the board members that their lives have been truly enriched by the experience of serving you our member organisations and our fellow women in Singapore over these past 2 years. On a personal note, it has been two of the most challenging years of my life thus far and I am grateful and honoured to be given the opportunity to lead SCWO. SCWO has been in the "business" of empowering women for the past 30 years and we have always tried to look at women holistically by targeting all their points of need, namely women and leadership, women and their careers, women and their health, work life harmony issues, and equipping women with life skills, and developing women to give back to society through volunteerism and philanthropy. We have fulfilled these by reaching out to women through our various initiatives, i.e. Women's Register, Conversations with Inspirational Women, Women's Health Day, IT Hub, Star Shelter, New 2U and Star Bazaar and the launch of the SCWO Service Fund.

Our Gala Theme for the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary was chosen as "Women – True Gems" to remind women never to forget their Innate worth and beauty. We also launched our IPC fund – the SCWO Service Fund to help us obtain more corporate support. We will continue to plug on with public education on CEDAW whilst working with the Interministerial committee on ways to help bring more of the articles into reality. We also aim to move quickly to bring our newest initiative of the Maintenance Support Central into a reality as there is a crying need to help the single mothers who shoulder on despite the lack of support as maintenance is not paid to them.

We have refreshed SCWO's image with a new logo and a new website to make us more accessible to the women at large. We sincerely hope that our members and the public will use our website on a regular basis as a source of information and inspiration.

Finally, we have refreshed our SCWO building with minor changes. The Wall of Fame has been redone to give the honourable ladies their pride of place. We have also done some cosmetic work to the rooms and put in newly donated furniture to brighten up the workspaces therein. We aim to really renovate our centre in the coming year to be able to house our newest initiative Maintenance Support Central and ensure that our building can stand proudly for many more years! We hope that you will support our Building Fund to meet this need!

Finally, the presence of more women vying to be on the board of SCWO signals a heightened interest in service to women amongst our member organisations for which I am truly happy. I wish the 16<sup>th</sup> Board an exciting term and deeply meaningful time of their lives.

Dr Ann Tan  
President SCWO (2008 -2010)

## New Initiatives

### Service Fund

We launched our "Service Fund" during our 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala Celebrations on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010.

The fund was set up to enable donors to contribute to our work in many important fields, as the Fund is a Charity with IPC Status (Institute of Public Character). It qualifies all donations for 2.5 times tax relief.

The Key Activities covered by the Fund are:

#### 1. Women in Need

##### Assistance Scheme

- i. To provide financial assistance for needy cases – Food vouchers to single mothers, lower income, and disadvantaged women. Micro-credit start-up projects.
- ii. Counselling Centre - To have a place where women in need can come to gather information on where they can get help from different agencies or with counselling sessions for assistance with problems.

#### 2. Women's Rights

##### Research, Publications and Public Forums

- i. To research, study and promote measures for women and family financial and social security
- ii. Continuing our work for better enforcement of maintenance orders
- iii. Review of rights and remedies under the current Women's Charter and revision of clauses that would improve necessary areas,
- iv. Review of CEDAW (Commission for Ending Discrimination against Women)

##### Wall of Fame

- i. Research the roles women played in building Singapore
- ii. Identify women leaders in Singapore who has made a difference to the lives of others
- iii. To ensure that these women are given the due recognition and that their contributions are not forgotten
- iv. To inspire and encourage women to play an active role in society.
- v. To induct a new entrant every 2 years.

#### SCWO Commences Work on Plans for Maintenance Support Central

SCWO has now commenced work on plans for a centre, **Maintenance Support Central** that would be designed to provide assistance to claimants at different stages of the enforcement process, including the following:

- legal advice on enforcement options
- information on aid schemes
- financial and family counselling
- credit bureau reporting
- video-link filing
- support in locating employment, childcare and housing in cases of need
- follow up monitoring of children's educational and emotional progress

### **3. Women's Progress and Development**

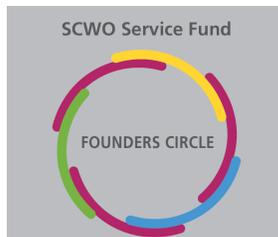
#### Education

Education of women through activities such as talks, symposia and outreach of on-line and other means on resources available to assist women in need. The workshops will be held to help, educate, inspire and prevent women, primarily but not exclusively, single-mothers, retrenched women, housewives, lower-income women and young women; cope with financial stress, work-life balance, gaining employment, being financially secure, and other courses that will benefit their financial, emotional and physical well-being.

#### Skills Upgrading

- i. Development of existing IT Hub facility to accommodate more housewives and unemployed women at a cheaper cost than commercial centres by training a volunteer force of trainers.
- ii. Training for retrenched women to upgrade their IT Skills.
- iii. Skills upgrading for those with employment.
- iv. Getting housewives and the elderly connected to the IT World.

### **Service Fund Founders Circle**



The 'Founders Circle' is a group of distinguished donors who have made a legacy of S\$25,000 or more to the Service Fund. We acknowledge and recognise them for their generous contribution that will go a long way in financing our programs and projects.

1. A Benefactor that would like to remain anonymous
2. Ms Joyz Chan
3. Mrs Laura Hwang
4. Dr. Jennifer Lee
5. Dr. Ann Tan
6. Miss Lilian Teo

The Circle will remain open until the end of 2010 to allow further entries to the plaque to be added. We will continue to appeal to the generosity of our well wishers.

## Logo



In 2009 we unveiled a fresh new logo that is representative of our core values of social responsibility and service to the women in Singapore. The circle represents the embracement of women and the overall roll of SCWO for all women's organisations. The different colours that make up the circle refer to the various causes that we strive to inform, advocate and educate about – in business, the social arena and for the environment.

## Website



The website has finally been completely revamped.

We have incorporated information that will assist our members in various areas.

"Resources - Useful Links" - we have researched the various funding there is out there that the members can tap on. There is also information on the various places for Legal Clinics and various Helplines. There are other useful links that they can get information from.

Under "Resources – Facts & Stats" there is information on the various websites that will be helpful for anyone needing to research.

The website also highlights Members events on our "Members Events" page.

The website will continue to evolve.

## Fund Raising

For the past two years, we organised three major fund-raising events:

		<u>Gross Funds Raised</u>
The Cinderella Ball	28 Feb 2009	\$116,000
Women in Art – Auction	22 Jan 2010	\$12,000
30 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala Dinner	31 Mar 2010	\$310,000

### Women in Art 6 – 21 Jan 2010



In line with SCWO's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary theme, the Women in the Arts Festival 2010' recognised and celebrated the diverse contributions that women artists have made in the art arena.

The closing of the Arts Festival culminated in an Auction Evening of wine and cocktails, during which selected pieces were put up for auction. The Artists generously contributed a substantial portion of the sales proceeds to the SCWO Service Fund

### 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala Dinner 31 Mar 2010



The committee worked tirelessly together with our secretariat towards a spectacular event which showcased home grown talents amongst our members for the entertainment for the evening. Mrs SR Nathan was our Guest of Honour for the night. We had enthusiastic response for the segment entitled SCWO Got Talent which had performers ranging from twenties to the eldest belly dancer who was 83 years of age. In our Gorgeous Grandmas segment we showcased the talents of Rock Guitarist Grandma Mary from our IT Hub, our resident singer from Women's Register Noor Quek and the graceful Mrs Jannie Tay from WBC. Young entertainers were the Angklung band from Crescent Girls School and Amni Musfirah from SOTA. The richness and the quality of the performances were deeply appreciated by the guests and most of those who came truly enjoyed the camaraderie that night.

## Leadership Programs

26 Jun 08	Conversations with Inspirational Women – “Irene Ang”
08 Nov 08	Leadership Forum – “I am Woman”
07 Mar 09	Power Lunch – “Women Engines of Growth”
21 May 09	Conversations with Inspirational Women – “Somaly Mam”
16 Jul 09	Conversations with Inspirational Women – “Women’s Everest Team”

### **Conversations with Inspirational Women – “Somaly Mam” 21 May 2009**

Co-organised with PrimeTime, this dialogue session introduced Somaly Mam, a world renowned Cambodian activist against human trafficking that had been named as one of TIME magazine’s 100 most influential people in 2009. During the full-house session held in Georgette Chen auditorium, she shared how she was sold into sexual slavery by her grandfather but overcame tremendous odds to achieve freedom and her journey from illiterate sex worker to a tireless fighter for human rights. She travelled the world, educating people on the evils of the trade and to garner support for her Foundation that has saved more than 4,000 girls since 1996. The session was facilitated by Ms Jane Horan and attended by more than 100 people.

### **Conversations with Inspirational Women – “Women’s Everest Team” Thu 16 July 2009**

The dialogue session was held after the NATAS Women’s Everest Team had successfully conquered Mount Everest after a gruelling five-year training period. We invited the members to share their experiences in juggling their professional and personal lives while pursuing their common love of mountaineering, recount their journey and subsequent exhilaration at their accomplishments. There were more than 50 registrants who attended the evening session, held at Training Room 2. Each of the members gave a personal account of her experience, thoughts and struggles, and shared beautiful footage and videos of the sights atop the world’s highest peak.

## Collaborations

		Collaborated with:
5 Apr 08	CEDAW Workshop with Muslim Women	AWARE
2 Dec 08	Forum – Is Feminism still a dirty word?	AWARE & UNIFEM
22 May 10	Women’s Health Day	Association of Women Doctors (AWDS), Singapore Women’s Association (SWA), Breastfeeding Mothers Support Group (BFMSG) and WINGS

## **Women's Health Day – Sat 22 May 2010**

Women's Health Day – "All You Need to Know" was jointly organised by SCWO and the Association of Women Doctors Singapore (AWDS) and supported by our other member organisations like the Singapore Women's Association (SWA), the Breastfeeding Mothers Support Group (BMSG) and the Society for WINGS.

The full-day public forum met with enthusiastic response from the 100-plus participants who attended the talks with topics ranging from breastfeeding to thyroid problems, depression, fertility and cervical cancer, amongst others. Prolific AWDS doctors engaged the audience with their educational and humour-filled sessions, eliciting much laughter and questions from the floor. Participants also took the chance to have free screenings for blood sugar, eye health, bone density and BMI generously provided by Bayer Healthcare, SWA VisionCare Programme, Sanofi-Adventis and Women & Fetal Centre. Heavily discounted cervical cancer vaccinations and subsidised Pap smear tests were among the great deals of the day.

Our corporate supporters like Nestle set up a free milk-sampling booth and Starbucks helped to raise funds for us by selling their coffee on-site. St. John's Ambulance Brigade also provided first aid support throughout the day.

Merck, Sharp and Dohm, and Amsco Healthcare Marketing Pte Ltd. sponsored the event.

## **International Women's Day (IWD)**

1 Mar 09	Fun Run / Walk
7 Mar 09	Power Lunch
8 Mar 10	Networking Evening with Board Members of Member Organisations

## **Public Forums**

### **Enforcement of Maintenance Orders – 27 Jul 2009**

The Singapore Council of Women's Organisations (SCWO) and its Taskforce on the Effective Enforcement of Maintenance Orders welcome the new measures announced by Minister Vivian Balakrishnan to strengthen the enforcement of maintenance orders. SCWO had voiced our concern with the increasing numbers of claimants and children who were financially hard hit by non-payment of maintenance, when we held a public forum in July last year.

In 2008, there were about **3,200** applications for enforcement of maintenance orders, and the majority of these applicants are of course women. So I don't think we have provided a satisfactory solution to this. So I am still open to ideas, and my Ministry is consulting Ministry of Law and the Family Court. If any of you have creative, even unorthodox ideas, please send them to me.

In response to MP Dr. Maliki and Minister Dr. Balakrishnan who both spoke in Parliament on this issue, SCWO put together a task force to study the problem.

The Task Force Objectives:

- SCWO conducted a preliminary literature review on the effectiveness of the enforcement of maintenance orders.
- A further study was then embarked upon by garnering data from 5 focus groups discussions with - Lawyers, Counsellors, Mothers, Fathers and Children.
- The study looked at maintenance for children and wives.

## Other Programs

12 Jul 08 Life Coaching Session – Tap into your Infinite Potential  
6&30 Aug 08 Creative Writing Workshop  
8 Mar 09 Independent Documentary Film Fest – “We want roses too”  
29 Oct 09 Life Coaching Session – Personal Branding with Julia Russell

## Networking with our Members

7 Aug 08 President’s Cocktail Session  
29 Feb 09 CNY Lo Hei & President Dinner  
7 Apr 09 A Celebration of Women – networking at the Asian Civilisation Museum  
7 Jan 10 Tea with our Members

## Working with our Partners in Government

10 Jul 08 Dialogue with PM Lee on Maternity Issues  
6 Oct 08 CEDAW Closed Door session with MCYS  
22 Jan 09 Networking meeting with MCYS  
4 Feb 10 Networking meeting with MCYS

## International Conferences, Seminars & Workshops

21 Nov 08	ACWO General Assembly	Manila	Ann Tan & Susie Wong
15-18 Oct 08	SEA Meeting on Application of CEDAW Framework	Kuala Lumpur	Nur Ain Mustafa
4-5 Aug 09	14 <sup>th</sup> APEC WLN Meeting	Singapore	
25 Feb-2 Mar 10	NGO Global Forum & 54 <sup>th</sup> UN CSW Session	New York	Ann Tan & Mei Woo

### 14<sup>th</sup> APEC WLN Meeting

In the first quarter of this second year of our term, the SCWO board and our member organisations were intimately involved in helping MCYS organise the APEC WLN and this culminated the two and a half day conference. Guest of Honour at the opening ceremony, PM Lee Hsien Loong spoke of the need to continually push women to greater involvement with community and encourage more women to continue to be economically viable despite having started a family. He also exhorted women to help reverse the downtrend in fertility levels in view of the current below replacement levels.

SCWO Board and Member organisations hosted the foreign delegates on the second night 12 locations all over Singapore. SAWL organised the first event, and the closing night was a gala organised by CWA. Dr Ann Tan and Ms Junie Foo were tasked to be the MCs for the event on the first and second day respectively.

Key note speakers were Ms Noleen Heyzer and Dr Chan Heng Chee.

### **Report on the Global NGO Forum for Women: Beijing + 15 27 & 28 February 2010, New York**

The two day Beijing+15 NGO Global Forum was well attended with many of the participants, especially those on the panel, having also been present at the Beijing Platform in 1995. The Forum has noted progress made and discussed many gaps and challenges which remain to be implemented. From the deliberations that followed and to contribute to the advancement of gender equality and empowerment of women and girls worldwide, a CALL TO ACTION was drawn up for countries around the world, and presented to the members of the United Nations community to continue to advocate for the rights of women and girls.

### **Report on the 54<sup>th</sup> CSW and the Beijing +15 1 & 2 March 2010, New York**

The 54<sup>th</sup> CSW saw the largest number of Ministers from various countries participating. It calls for a closer cooperation between government, UN system, labour movement, international organizations and civil society to follow up and review the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. And Gender Equality is a goal in itself to achieve all other goals.

### **GEAR - Gender Equality Architecture Reform**

GEAR is aiming towards the establishment of a new entity that hopes to be formed with a strong Under Secretary preferably a woman to push forward the Gender Equality Issues. Proper funding for this entity is needed to give it strength to carry out its mandate. This new entity is needed because of the current lack of coordination within the four (4) UN divisions right now which deal with women's issues.

At the end of the NGO Forum, the closing ceremony closed with the CSW officials receiving a copy of the **CALL TO ACTION** and all promising to rally behind the NGOs towards helping them to urge the UN to form the new gender entity and remain optimistic about reaching the goals of the Beijing Platform for Action and the MDG#3 and #5.

If you are interested in helping this reform, log onto this website and sign the petition by 10<sup>th</sup> June 2010: [www.gearcampaign.org](http://www.gearcampaign.org)

## Visitors

Our visitors in the past year:

11-12 Mar 09	Students from Raffles Girls School
7 April 09	Korean Officials from Gyeonggi Provincial Government
3 Mar 10	Zimbabwe Delegation from the African Democratic Institute

## The SCWO Board was invited to the following events

Jan 28 `10	Luncheon for Diplomatic Heads of Mission	MCYS
Feb 5 `10	Istana Reception for Mdm Sophia Pang	MCYS
Feb 20 `10	Soroptimist International 26 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations	Soroptimist
Feb 23 `10	SMOU/Wavelink Lunar New Year Luncheon & Hong Bao Presentation	SMOU
Mar 5 `10	AWA Int'l Women of the Year Award	American Women's Association
Mar 12 `10	Gorgeous in Pink Awareness and Fund-Raising	Breast Cancer Foundation
Mar 22 `10	Pakistan National Day Reception	Pakistan High Commission
Apr 23 `10	50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary & Woman of the Year	Her World
Mar 29 `10	Ee Peng Liang Memorial Scholarship & Inaugural Seminar	NUS
Apr 1 `10	Interactive Session on Singapore's Universal Periodic Review of Human Rights	MFA

## Membership

We were saddened to have been informed of the termination of operations for three of our member organisations:

DEW Credit Cooperative (A founding member of SCWO)  
Magdalena Singapore  
Women's Travel Club

We would like to thank DEW for donating some of their furniture and equipment to SCWO.

## Services

### Café



New Operators have been appointed to manage the Cafe, and they should begin operations in August 2010. The lease will be for 2 years.

We are looking forward to a new look and an exciting menu.

### Library



The Library is in the process of being re-catalogued. This catalogue will eventually be made available for viewing on the website.

### New2U Thrift Shop



The thrift shop now has a total of 40 volunteers led by Ms Penny De Jongh.

For the period June 2009 to May 2010, revenue was \$91,502.82 – an increase over the previous year.

### IT Hub



The IT Hub now has a total of 49 Volunteers, led by Mrs Esther Pung, and 35 classes for the year, and had a total of 296 students.

For the period June 2009 to May 2010, IT Hub's revenue was \$8,125.00 – an increase over the previous year.

### Function Rooms



The Function Rooms have continued to be well utilized and has been a constant source of revenue for SCWO.

For the period June 2009 to May 2010, revenue was \$140,289.40 – an increase over the previous year.

## **Employees**

Within the past year, we have had a few new employees: namely, Selina Gan replacing Fazlin Abdullah and Goh Yee Ling replacing Sia Wei Leng. We have also hired a new Administrator, Azrahayu Affandi, and an in-house matron, Junie Tan for the Star Shelter.

## **Volunteers**

We have a total of 120 Active Volunteers who have contributed more than 6,000 volunteer hours in the past year

## **SCWO Thanks the Following for Their Most Generous Support**

Alice in Wonderland  
B Spoke Launch  
Chang Mun Wai  
Déjà vu Vintage  
Dieleman Maria Helena  
Dr. Martin Huang  
Dr. William Chong  
Institute of Electrical & Electronic Engineering Women Affinity Group  
Lee Foundation  
Lim Mei Ling  
Low Chin Loo  
LVMH Fragrances & Cosmetics  
Mr Andrew Tan  
Mr Nasrat Lucas Muzayyin  
NCSS  
Ngee Ann Development Ltd  
Pacific Healthcare Ltd  
Pauline Chong  
Prime Time  
Pure Donation  
S & C Weiser  
Sigford Pte Ltd  
Singapore Island Country Club  
Singapore Jewel Fest  
Sophia Tay Siew Kee  
Students of SMU  
Tan Chin Tuan Foundation  
The Chooi Peng  
The Patisserie LLP

## **Going Forward**

### **Renovations for the SCWO Centre**

In 1997, with the assistance of MCD and with the support of the Ministry of Finance, and the National Council of Social Service, SCWO obtained a 30-year lease on 96 Waterloo Street.

In the coming year, we have been entrusted to start a facility called Maintenance Support Central where single-parent women are able to seek assistance and support in restarting their lives. Some of our services will include legal aid on receiving maintenance for their children from ex-spouses, counselling sessions on how to cope emotionally, where to locate affordable childcare services and job placements. It will serve as a one-stop resource centre for single-parent mothers.

The SCWO Centre has not been renovated in the last 10 years and is in desperate need of a thorough overhaul. We will be seeking funding to refurbish our building that is a great state of disrepair. The wooden beams are disintegrating, the paint on our exterior façade is faded and cracked, our mosaic has been terribly vandalised and the drainage system is inefficient. Internally, the toilets, air-conditioning, lighting and electrical systems constantly break down, resulting in interruptions to the staff at work and loss of income as we cannot rent out the training rooms.

We will require approximately \$500,000 for the repair and refurbishment.