



# IFUW Young Members

Newsletter of the  
IFUW Young Members Network

*Unity in our diversity*  
June 2010

*August is here!!*

***August is here!!***

The 30th IFUW Triennial Conference in Mexico City scheduled for 5-9 August 2010 is just round the corner. Hopefully, many young members would get involved with various activities and find a role to play at the conference. Visit <http://www.ifuw.org/ifuw2010/> for details.

This is the last time I would be writing as IFUW Young Members Newsletter Editor. The journey dates back to June 2007 and it has been pleasant all the way through. I am honored to have communicated and made friends with quite a number of young members (and other members as well) by virtue of this esteemed position and I would like your continued support transferred to Romilda Boerleider - Dutch, member VVAO.

Sometimes, in the journey through life, you find yourself going back to some things you thought you were already done with- like going back to school. This becomes a necessity if you desire to be more flexible in your chosen career, increase your marketability or perhaps as a stay home mom whiles your kids are going up. No matter what the reasons are, it is a good choice. At this point you fall into the category of lifelong learners. During the Young Members Workshop centered on the theme "The Challenges to Women's Empowerment in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century", various issues and indicators that will increase our understanding of these challenges and how we can tackle them will be discussed.

Least I forgot, I had started learning some Spanish.....Es un gusto conocerle.... And my boys would just laugh at me. It has been fun!! I look forward to using my language skills.

On a final note, I would like to thank members for the support and commitment to the IFUW Young Members Newsletter, your dedication and contributions have been invaluable.

Hasta Mexico en Agosto!  
*Evelyn Aremu*

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## Hearing their voices— My Sojourn in Mousa’s Dialogic Space!

Nayyer Chandella

Autocratic instructions impose content on students who passively retreat into non-engagement. Whereas ‘Dialogic’ evolves hermeneutic community which Martin Buber (1965) called “the narrow ridge” or the ‘liminal spaces’ where inter subjective conversation generates knowledge and personal relations. So I have always aspired to create ‘dialogic spaces’ that allow my students to go beyond set assumptions and I wanted to see if other teachers were trying to create such spaces for their students as well. My quest for these ‘liminal spaces’ took me to Dr. Mousa’s class where I witnessed these spaces where students’ ability to construct ‘self’ emerged through dialogue between the students, the teacher and the text being studied. These dialogic spaces brought forth a dynamic classroom where the teacher attempted to empower his students by showing them how to “navigate” their worlds and “slowly move upstream against the current---if they had to! As a skilled “director” he negotiated “performances” of his students in a space that fit their needs. Though S/FL context could have made the task tough, the students and teacher shared a will to construct an environment where lived histories were encouraged.

Identities emerge through the sociolinguistic discourse practices of the classroom speech communities. Yet research shows how infrequently students move from one academic identity to another. I investigated the impact of tendencies of teachers to be “sealed” in cultural subjectivity thus ‘seeing’ only what they have already seen and know only what they have already learned. There is need of new ‘spaces’. My research investigates these ‘spaces’ where identities of students and their teacher were influenced by and revealed through dialogue. After meeting the teacher and observing the ways in which he facilitated his students to explore their ‘selves’, I knew, I would be able to examine my research question in his class I chose to be

here because of the teacher's explicit wish that his students be agentic.

Mousa created ‘dialogic space’ by: a) listening and respect, b) conversation and c) authority. I wanted to work with Mousa because of his strong beliefs in empowerment and agency, which I noticed during preliminary meetings. Mousa wanted to encourage students to be readers, writers, and researchers, and help them make sense of themselves and the world around them. He believed students should learn to question practices that they consider to be oppressive and attempt to take action against those oppressions within their local contexts. Students respected Mousa because he cared about them. In interviews, students indicated that they were aware of his commitment to building relationships, and they saw such commitment as evidence of his respect for them as learners.

*You can tell Mousa is a good teacher  
because you can't look  
around the room and think  
that any one person is stupid.*

Through creating the ‘dialogic space’ Mousa facilitated the conversation. Facilitation involved intervention to keep the conversation on track and to protect the rights of the marginalized. I interpreted this as Mousa’s effort to shape a space where students’ respect differences regardless of tensions that existed outside the class contrasted to autocratic instructions teacher’s voice in the dialogic space was enabling for all. The most beautiful moment of this space came when the teacher was discussing a short story ‘the black veil.’

Mousa was talking about how we drown the inner voice in loudness and suddenly one of the girls remarked “Hmmm ----no I was just thinking”

And Mousa hushed up everyone “Sssssh -----let her think!”

For me those 5 or 6 seconds summed up the beauty of the dialogic space characterized by relations of involvement. It is an essential human need to be recognized as a whole being.

An individual becomes empowered when this need is satisfied, and his or her past and present identities are acknowledged and supported. For me this amounts to ‘real’ learning characterized by multiple perspectives. Most of the time we experienced a monologic class where the teacher holds all the questions, the students respond to these questions and the teacher evaluates those responses. The questions are mostly data recall, naming and pseudo-questions, thus resulting in one true perspective and thinking is driven towards reduction of differences. In a dialogic class, the teacher and learner co-constructed knowledge leading to different perspectives and unlimited creativity.

Such was the dialogic space created by Dr. Mousa where there was good atmosphere and support for reflection. Teachers usually frame students’ response to right answer but questions in Mousa’s class were not merely to test knowledge but to guide students’ understanding too, not just for subject content but to make sense of the experience.

Because the goal of dialogic is co-construction of enhanced learning where the teacher facilitates

the process and not the direction it is a relation of involvement not merely verbal interaction. Thus students acknowledged Mousa giving credit to the integrity of the individual identity. Empowerment is in exercising agency. Agency was fostered as class interacted with each others, including the professor who supported subscription to alternative discourses that helped construct all as empowered ‘selves’

Empowerment leading to maturity- The culture of intellectual disquiet can be cultivated in a language class by challenging learners to use reading and writing as a means of confronting social inequalities, ethical and human issues and look for missing and silenced voice in every form.

Although the students didn’t agree they were able to discuss pertinent issues

Mousa created for them a new space by helping students excavate and reflect on personal experiences connecting it to the world of language and literature.

We may be objectively nothing more than a quintessence of dust (Shakespeare) but we can choose and we can transform

Leaving Mousa and his class, I was surprised at the change I saw and experienced. I was like the wind. I threw my head back and smiled proudly to myself. As I draped the red scarf over my head that covered my thoughts--but underneath the scarf I knew who I was!

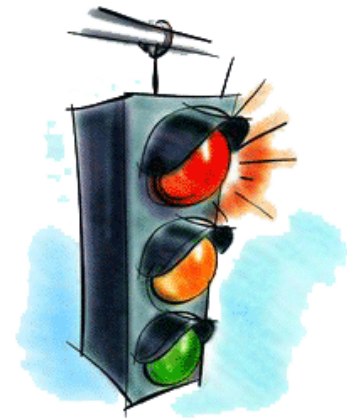
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Comparing our lives to others is fruitless.  
We have no idea what their journey is about.

## Young Members Workshop

Yvonne Hendrix

In 1975 the first world conference on the status of women instigated by the United Nations was convened in Mexico City. This was to coincide with the 1975 International Women's Year, observed to remind the international community that discrimination against women continued to be a persistent worldwide problem. Therefore, how appropriate that we are celebrating our triennium past and plans for the future in Mexico's capital city, the home of the iconic Frida Kahlo.



With Laura Chinchilla just celebrating victory as the first female President of Costa Rica, Hillary Clinton as the third female Secretary of State in the US, Sheikh Hasina Wazed recently elected as Prime Minister of Bangladesh. Plus Ellen Johnson-Sirlea, President of Liberia since 2006 in Africa and Angela Merkel entering her fifth year as German Chancellor in Europe, one could be forgiven for thinking that the 21st century has got off to a flying start as far as Women's Empowerment is concerned.

However appearances are deceptive. According to the UN although comprising 50% of the global population, women still represent globally only 18.7% of elected representatives, a figure which drops to less than 10% in the Arab region. A contributing factor to this is that many women still receive little to no education and as a result over two thirds of the world's illiterate adults are women. In short we still have a long way to go. How fitting then that the topic for this conference's Young Members Workshop should be centered on the theme of the "Challenges to Women's Empowerment in the 21st Century". Through the utilization of an "Empowerment Perception Barometer", a tool which has been developed to examine a range of challenges to Women's Empowerment and measure their perceived impact across the globe, the workshop aims to raise awareness, foster discussion and exchange ideas with the view to developing concrete plans to significantly enhance the Empowerment of Women internationally.

The primary leaders of the workshop are Rosy van der Vlies (Netherlands), Intisar Elterafi (Sudan) and Aleda Thomas (Nigeria). They will be supported by Michelle Imison (Australia), Monique Budike and Yvonne Hendrix (both from the Netherlands) as well a substantial number of Young Members across membership regions.

The workshop team invites all Young Members to join us for what promises to be a very lively and stimulating session. La organización del taller invita a todas las socias jóvenes a participar en esta sesión que promete ser animada y estimulante.

¡Nos vemos en México!

There are two ways to spread happiness; either be the light who shines it or be the mirror who reflects it.

*-Anonymous*

## Join a Network of Women Empowering Women and Girls

Eileen Menton



*Everlyn Suleh (with writing pad) meeting with members of the Bogiakumu Village Women Group in Kisii, Kenya. Over the past three years, she has visited or talked with representatives from 11 applicants and recipient organizations.*

The Virginia Gildersleeve International Fund (VGIF) is creating a network of women in developing countries to assist VGIF in identifying and monitoring the work of grantees. As a network member you will meet with women in your country who are working to empower women and girls. You need not be a member of VGIF. Limited funds are available to pay for expenses associated with visits.

VGIF provides small grants of 3-5,000 USD for grassroots projects that empower women and girls in developing countries. It is named for the co-

founder of IFUW, Virginia Gildersleeve, who was the dean of Barnard College and the only American woman to sign the treaty establishing the United Nations. Over the past 40 years, VGIF has awarded more than 375 grants women's groups in more than 80 countries. Projects are proposed by the grantees to address their local needs. Recent projects have addressed the impact of war, sexual violence, and HIV-AIDS; provided training to women on their legal rights; provided vocational training in a variety of skills; and addressed the need for access to quality education and maternal and reproductive health care. You can read about the grants we have funded throughout our history by visiting the Project Grants library at [http://www.thegildersleeve.org/p\\_projectsfunded.asp](http://www.thegildersleeve.org/p_projectsfunded.asp).

If you are interested in learning more, contact Fay Kittelson, the Executive Director, at [vgif@vgif.org](mailto:vgif@vgif.org) or visit with her in Mexico City. For more information about VGIF, go to our web site, [www.vgif.org](http://www.vgif.org), where you can join our mailing list and visit our grants library; visit us on Facebook, <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=6995526839>, or follow us on twitter, <http://www.twitter.com/vgif>.

It is time for parents to teach young people early on that in diversity there is beauty and there is strength.

- Maya Angelou

The experience I gained in the on-site project visits made me develop a passion in this area [international development] as it relates to poverty and development.

- Everlyn Suleh  
Kenyan IFUW member

## WHO Member States agree to Cooperate in Solving International Health Personnel Shortages

Lenias Hwenda

World Health Organisation (WHO) member states recently negotiated and adopted a historic Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel (the Global Code). The African Group negotiators played a significant role in negotiating a balanced Global Code which was subsequently approved by the 63<sup>rd</sup> World Health Assembly (WHA) on the 21<sup>st</sup> of May 2010 in Geneva. As the second instrument of its kind to be adopted by the WHA, the legislative body of the WHO, the Global Code is historic. The first code adopted in 1981 was The International Code of Marketing of Breast-Milk Substitutes. In the wake of global health workforce shortages, the Global Code makes recommendations on strategies for increasing global health workforce training, ensuring global cooperation to help source countries train and retain sufficient health personnel for their population needs, promoting non-discriminatory treatment of migrant health personnel in destination countries and scaling up reporting mechanisms to monitor progress on global health workforce imbalances. Despite being a voluntary instrument, the Global Code has provisions for monitoring governments' efforts to align their policies with its provisions under the auspices of the WHO. I negotiated as part of the African Group, negotiating on behalf of 46 African member states.



The discourse on the need for a Global Code was conceived from the realization that international health personnel migration exacerbated the critical global health personnel shortages and was undermining the health systems performance of poor countries. Africa, which has about 25 percent of the world's disease burden, claims only 3 percent of the global health workforce. Of the 57 countries facing critical health worker

shortages according to the World Health Report 2006, 36 are in Africa. The Global Code is a response to the need to find solutions to this problem and follows member states' request that the WHO Director General, Dr Margaret Chan adopt a code of practice in consultation with relevant partners.

The purpose of this Global Code is to redress the global imbalances in health personnel distribution resulting from migration of health personnel from poor to richer countries. The Global Code aims to mitigate the impact of health worker migration and strengthen health systems based on primary health care. It also serves as a platform for cooperation through bilateral, multilateral and regional agreements to promote the sustainability of global health workforce production to make it fair and equitable to all. The Global Code also attempts to harmonize other codes of practice which preceded it such as the Commonwealth Code and the UK Code.

*Health personnel migration to richer countries has severely impaired poor countries' ability to replenish their rapidly dwindling pool of skilled health personnel thereby undermining their ability to deliver health to their populations.*

The exodus of health workforce from poor countries is driven by the demand in high income countries which are facing the problem of aging populations and a greater demand for health personnel. For example, in 2002 Canada was shown to have the fewest per capita physicians compared to any other developed nation. Furthermore, according to Canada's 2010 population projections, the number of over 65 year olds is likely to outnumber children less than 15 years within 5 years. The proportion of Canada's working age population between 15 and

64 is expected to decline to about 60%. Shortages in countries like Canada are exacerbated by underfunding of health personnel education programs and failure to set comprehensive health workforce policies. Similar to Canada, most rich countries routinely train a proportion of their national health work force needs and offset this through international recruitment from other countries, most of them in Africa.

*Migrant health personnel also enable rich countries to cut costs because they are often paid less than domestic health personnel and they are excluded from incentives and benefits given to domestic staff.*

Under-investment in health worker training by rich countries is a cost-cutting measure. By training only a proportion of their national health personnel requirements, rich countries reduce their cost of training adequate number of domestic health personnel needs. The active recruitment of health personnel trained by poor countries by countries like Canada fuels current disparities whereby poor countries are in essence subsidizing the health delivery to citizens of wealthy nations. Whilst all countries today are experiencing a shortage of health personnel, the extent to which health worker shortages impact national populations' health varies greatly between countries. In many African countries where the health workforce levels are much lower than the WHO's minimum requirements, the result is many unnecessary deaths.

Differences in the degree to which countries are impacted by health workforce shortages influenced countries' positions in these negotiations. Consequently, achieving consensus leading to the adoption of the Global Code was an incredibly difficult, painstakingly slow and frustrating task for member states. That it took 6 years to reach consensus on the Global Code highlights the contentious nature of the issue of global migrant health workforce recruitment. Despite these differences member states'

willingness to abandon the pursuit of narrow self-interests was critical to reaching an agreement on the Global Code. Our negotiations were greatly assisted by the skilled interventions of the chair Dr Viroj Tangcharoensathien from Thailand who skillfully directed these negotiations. His excellent sense of humor saw us through what were more often than not, very trying circumstances.

It is against all expectations that member states actually managed to reach consensus on the Global Code. All member States are therefore to be commended for their spirit of consensus which proved that no matter how difficult an issue may appear where there is a will, there is a way. The successfully negotiation of the Global Code may be a beacon of hope for other equally contentious negotiations occurring in the WHO for example on the access to vaccines and other benefits during influenza pandemics. Member states' agreement on a Global Code is testament to the emerging paradigm shift in power relationships between countries and in global cooperation. Robert Zoelick, the President of the World Bank called it 'a shift in political tectonic plates' and pointed out the need for the international community to shift along with it. In the new dynamics of international negotiations, African countries are no longer necessarily insignificant players but active contributors in shaping international policies. The Global Code is recognition of different perspectives and circumstances in our attempts to build mutual interest between countries in meeting global challenges.

The final Global Code is a balanced and strong instrument that went beyond expectations and substantively encapsulates the basic principles that led member states to negotiations in the first place. The Global Code constitutes a significant international milestone because it affirms global solidarity by putting into action the shared responsibilities for promoting the right to health. It provides an important platform for balancing citizens' rights to health in poor countries with the rights of health personnel and their fair and just treatment in destination countries. Most importantly, it promotes global cooperation to ensure sustainable health worker training and

ethical recruitment practices by countries. The Global Code underscores the continued relevance

and important role that the WHO must play in meeting global health challenges.

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Effective leadership is the ability to inspire followers to listen to and follow a vision, the ability to innovate and drive an organization or people towards new ideas and directions.